

Smith College Alumnae Oral History Project

Smith College Archives
Northampton, MA

Mary Ann Savage Habib, Class of 1962

Interviewed by
Kayla Ginsburg, Class of 2013

May 26, 2012

Abstract

In this oral history, Mary Ann Savage Habib describes struggling through her first year, the dating scene, seeing Martin Luther King Jr. speak at Helen Hills Hills Chapel, her decision to move to California after graduating, and working at the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections.

Restrictions

None.

Format

Interview recorded on miniDV tapes using a Panasonic DVX-100A camera. One 60-minute tape.

Transcript

Transcribed by Janet Harris with Harris Reporting. Audited for accuracy and edited for clarity by Kayla Ginsburg.

Bibliography and Footnote Citation Forms

Video Recording

Bibliography: Habib, Mary Ann Savage. Interview by Kayla Ginsburg. Video recording, May 26, 2012. Smith College Alumnae Oral History Project, Smith College Archives. **Footnote:** Mary Ann Savage Habib, interview by Kayla Ginsburg, transcript of video recording, May 26, 2012, Smith College Alumnae Oral History Project, Smith College Archives, tape 1.

Transcript

Bibliography: Habib, Mary Ann Savage. Interview by Kayla Ginsburg. Transcript of video recording, May 26, 2012. Smith College Alumnae Oral History Project, Smith College Archives. **Footnote:** Mary Ann Savage Habib, interview by Kayla Ginsburg, transcript of video recording, May 26, 2012, Smith College Alumnae Oral History Project, Smith College Archives, p. 3.

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Transcript of interview conducted May 26, 2012, with:

MARY ANN SAVAGE HABIB

by: KAYLA GINSBURG

GINSBURG: I'm Kayla Ginsburg sitting down with Mary Ann Savage Habib, for the Alumnae Oral History Project, and today is May 26, 2012. So thank you very much for agreeing to be a part of this. So I guess to first dive in, how did you choose to come to Smith?

HABIB: I went to a private school for two years and it was a boarding school, all girls and I really didn't have a clue about coming to another all girls school, but I had friends who applied here and I was applying at several colleges and -- including one that you were positive you could get into, and of course I did --

GINSBURG: Which one was that?

HABIB: I think at the time it was Carlton which is now quite a very good school, but in those days it was considered a sure thing. But I might have applied to the University of Maine because that -- I came from Maine and I knew I could get in there, so and then I -- I can't remember -- I think I applied to Wellesley and I don't know, maybe Oberlin? I didn't know what I wanted to do, which -- and Smith is great for that because you don't -- it gives you all kinds of chances to look into things, but I guess that's why. So when I got the letter, why I decided to come here, and I've never been sorry I came here, I just didn't know that there were some things that I still question, you know, that might have been done a little bit better, mainly on my part.

GINSBURG: Like what? Can you talk a little bit about that?

HABIB: I would say when I came in as a freshman, I had no clue what anything would involve, and so my advisor let me sign up for all of these classes that had like -- I was in an art course which had studios, and then I sang in the choir because I got in.

GINSBURG: With Ida -- Iva Dee Hiatt?

HABIB: No, it was the freshman choir.

GINSBURG: Oh, okay.

HABIB: Which was under Ruth Ring (phonetic), and I also took zoology, which was -- arrghh. But that had labs, and so you -- you know, I had no time because I had all these labs and then I had perhaps French and English and all the things in those days that you were required to take, and that's what I did. So I did not do well at all my freshman year. In fact I really didn't want to come back. I had no social life. I mean I was just racing from classes to classes, most of which I shouldn't have been in, particularly zoology, which was -- ohh, it was absolutely dreadful. I had loved biology, so I thought I'd be good in it. Well, I was not good in it. So --

GINSBURG: So what made you choose to come back?

HABIB: I guess perseverance. You know, you hate to -- I mean I could have stayed out a semester and then gone to the University of Maine probably and you know, had no trouble, but --

GINSBURG: And was that co-ed at the time?

HABIB: Yeah, oh, yeah. But that wasn't the reason, I just didn't -- I didn't have much of a social life here my freshman year. I certainly did after that for some strange reason I did, but -- so I guess -- I guess that was it. My main complaint was that I wasn't advised very well by whoever it was that was my advisor.

GINSBURG: For signing you up for zoology?

HABIB: Well, no, it wasn't even that. It was the fact they signed me up for too many things going on at the same time, so I didn't have the time to really put into it and when you're first coming into college, you know, you should be spending your time trying to figure out where the courses are going and where you're going and how to study and -- which I thought I knew how to do, but of course I really didn't.

The best thing about it was you come into this house system, which I still think is fabulous and you meet people from all over the country. We didn't have too many people from outside the country 50 years ago, but you meet people from states where you didn't know anybody and that was -- that's our diversity. Was that that you learned to deal with people. But as far as Smith preparing you in the long run for doing anything, it didn't. If you ask me, I mean you learn to deal with people but -- which is probably the most important thing in life anyway, but as far as getting a job, uh-uh. It did not prepare you for that.

And I think now -- I think that's changed from what I heard today and some other things. I think they are making much more of an effort, and of course, this is the tech-y age, you guys grow up with -- I mean here we are stumbling around, you know, trying to use the Internet and everything else, I mean and it's taken me a long time to get -- I'm not good at all, but I have children and grand -- my grandchildren are 20 times

better than I am, you know, at doing -- they just grow up with a laptop in their -- you know.

GINSBURG: No, it's true. It's true.

HABIB: Yeah.

GINSBURG: So what house did you live in?

HABIB: Gillett.

GINSBURG: All four years?

HABIB: Yes.

GINSBURG: And how did you end up meeting people in the end?

HABIB: Oh, for my social life?

GINSBURG: Right, right, yeah.

HABIB: You know, I guess we had mixers. I really can't remember, but I had some friends from Maine at the University of Connecticut and this one guy who I didn't go with of course in high school, but I mean he was a friend, you know. So he had a roommate and then they all -- they got so they came up here quite a lot, and I'd fix up people in Gillett and we'd all go out and party and we had a really good time. We'd go dancing and we'd have -- have -- it wasn't so much romantically attached, I guess, as we just -- they would show up, and we'd all go out and have a good time, and so then you've got -- meeting more people.

And so I was busy a lot of weekends. It was great. I mean, yeah, I'd go to Dart -- and you know, I met people too, you know, during the time and I guess once success breeds success -- it wasn't like you had -- they did have these mixers that I got thinking about. They were just dreadful, you know. They'd send you down to -- what is it, not Rahar's Bar, but it was -- is that still here?

GINSBURG: Oh yeah, Rahar's. No, it isn't, but I have heard it.

HABIB: Oh, it's famous.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: But I think it was the Hotel Northampton maybe had some rooms -- I can't remember but we had these mixer things that they --

GINSBURG: Were they Smith mixers?

HABIB: Yes, I mean the college must have sponsored them and mind you during the week, nobody got dressed. I mean, you know, you were wearing your gym suits, which -- I don't know if they still have those, probably, thank God, and you'd wear like sweatpants and you'd look horrible going around in curlers and everything else, and then on the weekends, everybody would be all smashing and whatever because boys were allowed to come into the dorms. Well, we -- they -- my senior year I think they actually allowed them on the floor for like so many minutes or so many hours. It was very restrictive. The doors had to be open and could only -- it was only on a Sunday afternoon, you could have them up there for two hours or something. Oh God, I mean it's unbelievable now.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: And then they had -- you had to be in the dorm by midnight and they had somebody sitting. You had to hold -- do watches. Have you ever heard about any of that?

GINSBURG: Door watch?

HABIB: Yeah. You had to sit there and check the people coming in from the date, whatever date -- a lot of girls went with people from Amherst and UMass maybe or wherever. I had a boyfriend at Dartmouth at one time. I used to go sometimes from up there, but it was good. In a lot of ways it was very much fun, but --

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah. So did you have any favorite Smith traditions while you were here?

HABIB: I liked Mountain Day. I always thought that was nice. I'm not sure I -- no, I guess I didn't. I -- our life was really centered about the dorm life, you know, and I'm not so sure -- some of the -- I don't know. I liked a lot of Smith, but I don't -- I guess I don't remember the traditions.

GINSBURG: And were you part of any clubs or organizations?

HABIB: Just the singing and then I did sing in the glee club after that. I didn't do much. I mean I did go to chapel some, but that was not -- I wasn't a member of any kind of a group. I think one of the highlights of attending Smith is I got to hear Martin Luther King live.

GINSBURG: Yeah, I wanted to ask you about that.

HABIB: And that was absolutely fabulous, you know.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: And the funny thing is I really don't remember exactly what he said, but what I remember is that he talked in a Boston accent, because he was at BU at the time and he really didn't have the southern accent that you always associate him with and he could go in and out of that dialect, which I don't think many people knew that. He was very smart and he was a friend of Richard Unsworth, who was the chaplain here at the time and that's how he happened to come. It was like a Sunday and I was talking to somebody name Barb Gadameyer (phonetic) and she -- she and I went, nobody else went in the house to hear him.

GINSBURG: Yeah. Was it well attended or not really?

HABIB: Just like a regular church -- no, not really. But it was amazing, you know, and he talked about how fortunate we all were and we were, you know, to come here. But he must have been teaching, I think at the time, or he was certainly associated with it. But of course, he left all his papers to BU, did you know that?

GINSBURG: I didn't know that.

HABIB: Well, the King family -- I mean they were very upset by that, and they tried to get some of them back, but they were in his bequest. I mean he gave -- BU has most of his papers, the King -- the King library in Atlanta of course has a lot of things too, but I mean I think most of those papers went to BU.

GINSBURG: So do you remember how he came there? Did the college sponsor him or --

HABIB: I don't think so. I think he was a friend of -- as I said, the chaplain's and he came -- probably he'd asked him to come speak and he did.

GINSBURG: And was he famous around that time yet or not really?

HABIB: Well, we certainly had heard of him.

GINSBURG: Okay.

HABIB: Because he had already been doing the -- you know the work in the south, but I mean --

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: -- but we didn't -- we probably didn't know much. I remember also seeing -- we had a television, and this was a big thing you know, we got a black and white set in Gillette House, so any kind of political -- I remember, you know, some of the elections we would sit and watch and at that time I thought most of the girls in the house voted -- would have voted, if we had

been allowed to and I'm not sure we were old enough at that time because he -- it was 21 and we might not have been 21.

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: But they probably would have voted the way their families did and most of them were Republican, and I was interested in yesterday they had a lot of -- we had had a big survey, and I think it was pretty much Democrat and progressive now, which I thought was amazing because --

GINSBURG: Back then?

HABIB: -- I'm sure that -- yes, back then, it would have been -- maybe middle of the road Republican, but definitely Republican. My parents were Republican.

GINSBURG: Right, right.

HABIB: Yeah.

GINSBURG: So how did you see the campus changing while you were here during your four years?

HABIB: Well, I think Mendenhall changed it somewhat. I don't remember anything about -- I think it was Wright before that.

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: I think Mendenhall made it more liberal perhaps. There might have been more African-Americans but certainly not many, I don't -- I think. I would say it would probably become a little bit more liberal under him, and he was here for I think ten years. That was after -- he was here after I left, and I can't remember -- I have no clue who came after that. I can't remember. I don't think it was Jill Conway was it then? She wasn't then was she?

GINSBURG: I don't remember.

HABIB: Yeah, yeah. Well, you wouldn't know. Anyway, it doesn't make any difference.

GINSBURG: Well, I'm supposed to know but I forgot it. But --

HABIB: I think it was more liberal under him and so it became perhaps less restrictive. I -- a lot of times, you know, I mean I guess I was unaware of a lot that went on here, although we certainly -- we never -- they were talking today about being invited to the professor's homes and -- we were never invited to anybody's home. I mean I think once I majored -- I had a

double major, art history and American studies and once I think I was maybe invited to somebody's home for a sort of a seminar or something, maybe twice. But very few.

GINSBURG: You could have professors come to your teas, right, or no?

HABIB: I guess, but I don't remember that. They'd come -- I don't even remember them coming for dinner. I suppose they did, but I really don't. I mean all I remember -- we certainly remember the house mother, because that was, you know, the figure.

GINSBURG: Did that affect the social life, the house mother?

HABIB: Oh, yes.

GINSBURG: Do you remember her name?

HABIB: Yeah, Miss Dillwagon (phonetic) was the name of -- and she was actually not so bad. I mean I've heard -- there were a lot worse ones, you know, and before that it was somebody I think named Mrs. Morrel (phonetic) who was kind of a motherly sort and they -- they did have problems. I mean there were some kids that didn't -- perhaps didn't have a very good life at home, or they'd keep them later than they should have -- I mean they went out of their way, both of them, even Miss Dillwagon was -- but it was quite formal. I mean people had to -- you had to sit with her at least one day a week at her table. We had -- all the meals were in the dining room. And you could -- you could skip them and go -- there was a student union thing, and you could skip meals, you didn't have to eat there, but most people did because of course you couldn't afford -- you're not going to be eating out all the time.

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: You couldn't afford that. So -- we ate most of the time there. But there was a pizza place and we'd go eat there sometimes or -- I never really did eat much at the student union, but there was one and you could.

GINSBURG: What was the student union like?

HABIB: Well, it was -- it had burgers and you know, it was okay, sandwiches, I guess. And people would eat there if you didn't feel like going to dinner because you had to dress for dinner (laughs).

GINSBURG: Right. Skirts.

HABIB: Exactly.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah. So how do you feel like when you -- you graduated in '62, what do you think that the expectations were for you as a woman, as a Smith graduate?

HABIB: Well, find a job. I did not consider much going to graduate school because my father really couldn't afford it and I couldn't afford to go. I -- so I didn't go to graduate school until maybe five, six years later went I went to library school. But -- because I figured I had to do something more worthwhile than what I was doing.

GINSBURG: What were you doing?

HABIB: Well, I -- I didn't have a job, but my dad ran a hotel in Maine, which eventually he went bankrupt and lost it, probably because he sent me to Smith, but -- among other reasons, but -- so then I went with a friend to San Francisco. We didn't have a job. Our parents must have been crazy to let us go, but I guess they felt they couldn't do anything about it and we did go. We stayed in a boarding house for about a week. After two days, we -- both of us found jobs and I worked for Encyclopedia Britannica. I mean it was in an office. Believe me, it had very little to do with Encyclopedia Britannica except it was administrative, you know, and we dealt with the salesmen and this kind of stuff. And she -- my friend who I went with, she -- also from Smith, she came from Montana, in fact she's interviewing now too.

GINSBURG: Oh really?

HABIB: Yeah.

GINSBURG: Is that Paula? Who is that?

HABIB: No, that's Roberta Boylan.

GINSBURG: Oh, that's right.

HABIB: And she went and worked for Bancroft Whitney Law Publishers and she eventually became a lawyer because of that job. Well, after a while I married -- I got married and then we lived in Oregon. Well, my husband went to graduate school and then we moved to Michigan and then I went to library school, because I had to do something else other than working in these scudsy secretarial -- but we didn't have any trouble finding jobs, which is something you guys are all -- it's a real problem, you know.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah.

HABIB: So I hope it gets better. You know?

GINSBURG: Yeah, me too.

HABIB: Yeah.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah. So after Smith, how do you feel like the Smith education affected your life after that? Or not even the education, just your time at Smith?

HABIB: Well, I think it prepared you to deal with people, which I think is probably the most important thing.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: It certainly didn't prepare me manually for doing anything. You love books. I mean I think you're not going to go to a college like this if you don't like to read. And of course, so that certainly prepared me, but I liked to read long before I went to Smith. And at Smith you didn't have too much time to do much pleasure reading, but you did --

GINSBURG: Still don't.

HABIB: -- go through *War and Peace*, you know. You went through -- I've always liked history, like you do, and so I -- but I think I liked that in high school too. It was not anything I got really from Smith.

GINSBURG: Mm-hmm.

HABIB: Although I certainly took a lot of history classes. I loved American Studies because you could do art and a whole bunch of things with it, and American Studies certainly prepared me for what I do now. So that was certainly -- it was great.

GINSBURG: Right. Can you talk a little bit about what you do now?

HABIB: And what I do now is called American History trivia. It's ideal. Going up I-95 will give you a whole new experience. Oh, I know that drug store in Edison, New Jersey, or whatever, you know.

GINSBURG: Really? You find that stuff out. That's awesome.

HABIB: Oh, yeah, it's like little bits and pieces here. What I do now is I work for a program called NUCMUC, which is the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections, which is still sponsored by the Library of Congress, thank God. It's one of the few things the library does for the public and Congress doesn't know much about it, but when they hear about it, they say what in the world is that, and then they say, oh, you helped Northeast Harvard Public Library, you did this, you did this. So we do.

We deal with little historical societies and libraries and city archives or country archives all over the United States. It's not foreign at

all and they have to send us descriptions of their collections, and which they do more or less and we put them -- those descriptions, we take them and put them in catalogues I call it and put them online to an international database, and eventually once those collections get described and put online, why people go to the historical societies and lots of genealogists out there and it's not like they're standing at the door in droves, they aren't, but eventually it pays off.

And it just gives them an added publicity and lately we've had some initiatives like during the civil war and we're going to do something with the War of 1812, so on our website we get -- we might describe collections that have come in that deal with certain aspects. The next one is going to be the African-American during the Civil War, but the first one was -- what did we do? I can't remember what the first one was, sort of a general overview and then the next one was like diaries and more individualized accounts, but then we're going to do one on women in the Civil War, and then also -- I think the last one is perhaps after the war when there were all kinds of organizations formed that would bring it all back and -- so it was more -- more the results of the aftereffects is going to be the last one. I probably won't be there when that's going on, so I don't know. They're not big deals, but it's -- we put photographs and stuff and it gives the repository some publicity. I mean--

GINSBURG: That's great.

HABIB: -- I did some work for Brattleboro Public Library. It's called Brooks Memorial Library and they sent me a good diary, and so I found a picture of the soldier and we put that on, and then they wrote us up in their --

GINSBURG: That's great.

HABIB: -- public -- so we got a little press too.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: I mean I had some more from Duxbury Historical Society in Duxbury, Massachusetts --

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: -- and she had actually interviewed me over the telephone and then some radio station called me, you know --

GINSBURG: Famous.

HABIB: -- to tell me -- no, I'm not. I mean it was -- so you get -- you know, it's good. It's a two-way street.

GINSBURG: That's great.

HABIB: And at least they appreciate what you do, whereas a lot of places don't. But I think that's one thing that we did do for people that you can say that Washington actually is there for people, which it doesn't often seem it is.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: So I've worked with the library for a very long time. I've worked for this program for probably 20 years though, so a long time. It's a long time, and it's been fun. It's time for me to go, and there's a lot of red tape, a lot of restrictions and it gets worse and they have -- I don't know they play with one ear across the street, with Congress, and so they worry about their shadow and --

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: -- and the management seems like it's gotten worst or at least when you get old, you get jaded, so --

GINSBURG: Mm-hmm.

HABIB: It's time for me to leave.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah. So you mentioned that Smith really prepared you for how to deal with people.

HABIB: I think so.

GINSBURG: And do you think that -- how do you think that Smith -- do you think Smith was an accepting place for people who would be seen as outsiders, like Jews, or racial minorities or --

HABIB: I do. I even think so then. I mean there was a fairly decent Hillel organization and I had quite a few Jewish friends, and of course, coming from Maine I didn't really have very many before, but I did -- I really did have and they came to visit me in Maine and I went to their houses and so that part of it is great. Yes, I think -- I think it did.

We just didn't have many African-Americans and we certainly didn't have any Muslims. And actually in my married life, I did not marry a Muslim, he was a Christian, but it didn't work out very well. But I got two wonderful boys out of it, so that's all right.

GINSBURG: So how do you think -- I don't know if you have a sense of this, but how do you think Smith has changed since you were here?

HABIB: It's become more diverse, I mean -- and I think it's become a lot more liberal, but I think probably the whole academia world has become that way. I don't think it's just Smith. That's just my -- I don't know, but it's totally different than graduate school. I went to library school at Western

Michigan University which doesn't even exist anymore and that's in Kalamazoo, Michigan. It was boring. (laughter) And -- but -- but that was a school of 10,000. You know, I mean so you're just going to class and you live somewhere else and you have a job and it's not like going to Smith at all which was so nurturing, I think, and I think Smith still is nurturing. I do think it's very idealistic in a lot of ways and I think you have to get over that once you get out of here.

GINSBURG: Yeah, totally.

HABIB: We met somebody last night on the street and if I had been her parents, I would have killed them, you know, killed her, because she has no clue what she's going to do, and she doesn't know where she's going to get money from, and I mean once your parents stop paying your way, I mean -- or you're paying a lot of it, why you've got -- you've got to think of what you're going to do.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: And it's going to be tough paying off college loans and one of my grandchildren, my oldest one who is a step-grandchild actually, he goes to Randolph Macon which is a southern school, it's mediocre at best, I think, but it's private and it is, you know, 40, 50,000 a year and he's really going to be zonked, but at least, I guess, he's going in the military. That's what he wants to do, so okay, you know, at least he has a job. I can say that or he will have, and rather that works out or not, but I guess in some ways he's less idealistic than somebody going to Smith, you know. Although Randolph Macon is certainly pretty idealistic too, and it's diverse. I mean it's an all southern school that's mediocre is what I think. He would have been much better off -- he didn't get into UVA, which is where he should have gone -- he should have gone to community college and then just switched over, because they automatically will take you if you do very well.

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: And that's what he should have done.

GINSBURG: Right.

HABIB: And it would have been cheap --

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: -- cheaper. And plus UVA is fabulous. He could have gone to William and Mary.

GINSBURG: Yeah, that's true. That's true.

HABIB: Virginia has really good state schools, despite the fact it's a very regressive in its government.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: It's pretty regressive.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: But --

GINSBURG: So you had the option to go to co-ed schools, so how --

HABIB: I did.

GINSBURG: -- how do you feel about the woman's college? What did it mean for you?

HABIB: I didn't think of it that way. I didn't. I mean I guess I didn't really care about that. I -- it was considered very good and that's why I wanted to go I think because of its excellent reputation, and I thought in the long run I'd be better off, because I really had the option of going to a co-ed school when I got out of the boarding school that I went to, you know, which was two years of that, and that was all girls, but I didn't mind it, you know, all girls. I -- I -- and I loved Smith, I really did. But when I look back -- and I guess the main object is that it really did not prepare me to get a job. I mean -- well, it did, but it didn't really give me the capability of doing anything. It's -- but I guess you can't think of it that way.

GINSBURG: So do you have any last sort of Smith stories -- like quintessential Smith stories that you really want to tell?

HABIB: No, except that I've made some wonderful friends here and I'm still friendly with them. And so 50 years later we go back and we just start in again, you know, exactly. And there were -- in my house I don't -- seven people died in my house, which is a lot.

GINSBURG: While you were at Smith?

HABIB: No, since then.

GINSBURG: Oh, okay.

HABIB: During the 50 years, so that's quite a few, but I was trying to think I think there were almost ten of us here and how many more -- I think each house had about 70 people -- or those bigger houses and that wasn't one of the biggest. They had maybe 70 people, so out of that it was equally divided among the classes, and I don't -- I don't know what -- I think it's the situation in the house was the best thing. That was where you meet people

from different places and certainly now it would be more diverse than it was then.

GINSBURG: Mm-hmm.

HABIB: But that's all right. Who cares? I mean coming from Maine, you're not going to be meeting people from Florida very often, or California.

GINSBURG: No, no.

HABIB: And my best friend -- one of my best friends is this lady right out here and she's from Montana. So I mean I never met anybody from Montana before. There were quite a few from California then. Because I had gone to boarding school, it was probably more diverse. You know, there you had -- you met people from other places. They did come from other places, so that part of it -- that part is -- I think that was fabulous and I think it probably still is.

GINSBURG: Yeah. Yeah, I think so.

HABIB: Most everybody here boards, don't they?

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah. Most everyone.

HABIB: Can you work? Can you come as a day student? I guess you can.

GINSBURG: You can but as a traditional student, it's sometimes hard to live off campus with (inaudible) --

HABIB: Yeah.

GINSBURG: But yeah.

HABIB: I mean can you have cars now?

GINSBURG: Mm-hmm.

HABIB: See, we couldn't have cars. I had a car in the end -- and one of my boyfriends had a car and once he got sick or something and he lent it to me for -- his car for six weeks. Boy, that was something, you know. (Laughs). But all of that has changed so much, you know --

GINSBURG: Yeah. Yeah.

HABIB: It's -- so anyway, it was very fond memories and I've always been very happy I came, but I -- as far as setting me up for life, I -- it did, but it was in its -- and now I think it is a little bit more -- I mean I don't mean that you need to go to a trade school or anything.

GINSBURG: No.

HABIB: But --

GINSBURG: Yeah, totally.

HABIB: I just think it might have done a little bit better as far as -- and it certainly could have done better as far as getting me through that first year, because whoever it was that was my advisor was -- just sent me in the wrong tree, you know I should not have been involved in taking two of those classes that involved so much time.

GINSBURG: Yeah.

HABIB: And that was wrong. You know, plus I -- I took French. Boy, was I awful in that, and I had taken French. I thought I was better in it, but it was dreadful.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah.

HABIB: And some of the -- there were a lot of -- I don't know if they still have those big huge lecture courses where you hardly know the --

GINSBURG: A few.

HABIB: I mean there would be 50 people, 100 people in the class and I don't think the professors knew us at all. And we'd do the blue book tests and we'd go in and they'd grade them, and I mean -- I don't think they even -- some of them even knew who we were.

GINSBURG: Yeah. Yeah.

HABIB: Which is more like a big -- a university is kind of like that.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

HABIB: Now do they have online classes here now?

GINSBURG: No, they don't.

HABIB: They don't.

GINSBURG: Yeah, yeah.

HABIB: Do you wish they did?

GINSBURG: No. No.

HABIB: You don't want that. Okay.

GINSBURG: Well, unfortunately that is our time up, but thank you so much, Mary. It was really a pleasure.

HABIB: Well, good.

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed by Janet Harris, June 2012.