DR. ELISABETH HIRSCH INTERVIEWED BY DR. HAROLD HOGSTROM

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Hogstrom: This morning we are interviewing Dr. Elisabeth Hirsch. Dr. Hirsch is a former faculty member at Trenton State, now retired. Good morning, Dr. Hirsch.

Dr. Hirsch: Thank you very much. I'm glad to be here.

Hogstrom: This is part of our Archive series and what we want is to get your remembrances, preserve them so that in the future other people will be able to view these tapes and learn what the college was like and to learn about you.

Dr. Hirsch: The College is very important, I think, more than I am I suppose.

Dr. Hogstrom: Yes, but a college is only the people who make up the college, the faculty and the students. So let's begin with you. I wonder, would you tell us about yourself. You were born in Germany.

Dr. Hirsch: I was born in the Rhineland and moved when I was two years old to Berlin. I went to school in the gimnasio in Berlin and then I studied at universities in Berlin, mostly in winter mostly because of all the nice things that you could see, theaters and all that. Opera. Summers I went to (Fitel) and then Mabo (?), stayed longer in Mabo because I took my Ph. d. there. History and philosophy and I took philosophy with Martin Heidegger who was then the "great star" in the firmament in philosophy in Marlboro (?). And after I was through with my Ph.d., I was awarded a Rockefeller fellowship, but that was awarded in Berlin to do research in Paris, at the Bibliotek Nationale. And after that here there was a year I decided to publish a manuscript on tolerance, "Humanists of the Sixteenth Century" and because it was on tolerance and was never published. And it took me two years to do that. I had a chance to go to Portugal at that time too,

but I preferred to do that manuscript first and after I had published that I took also a two years teachers' training course which I enjoyed very much, "Psychology in Practice Teaching" and after that I did not go really into teaching. I stayed with research. I got into that manuscript and I got into contact with a professor at Yale University who had done similar things that I did, much as I had come to the United States so he tried to get for me a research fellowship at Yale University. Before that went through, the formalities and all that, I had a chance to go to Portugal and later I did some research and later published a book on that subject, but that came later. But anyway, in '37, '38, came to the United States, Yale University was a great experience for me, and then I met my future husband, we got engaged, Felix Hirsch, who also later played quite a part at Trenton State College.

Hogstrom: He certainly did.

Hirsch: as Librarian and Professor of History. He was teaching at Bard College, you see, and so after I went back to Germany and brought over books and quite a few things that you would need as beginners, you know, salaries were very low. It was important that I went back, and I wanted to see my parents, also. We were, all told, about 18 years at Bard College and the two children were born there. I taught philosophy and my husband was librarian and also taught history which he always liked to do. I think we were about 18 years. '54, we went a year to Europe and I did research there on that Portuguese subject there --then we --my husband was engaged as librarian at Trenton and that's how we came over here. And then in '55 I moved also to Trenton and taught for the first year at Rider College philosophy. It was then a business college really and I was quite pleased that the students didn't object to my philosophy. Well then, of course, Trenton State, the President was then Dr. West who was an outstanding administrator -a very cultured person and he one day came to our house and asked me if I wanted to teach languages at

Trenton. The teacher who taught languages didn't quite reveal her true age but they found out and she retired all of a sudden. Well I told him that I would really like to teach philosophy and he said, well, we don't have any position yet in philosophy, but I assure you that we will introduce a liberal arts college and then you can teach philosophy, and so I said fine, and I taught German and French. I had studied French in gimnasium and also wasn't hard, so I could teach beginners. And in a way I wanted to, you know. The students, I think are always nice no matter what you do. So I wanted to --should we go on?

Hogstrom: I wonder if you would enlarge a little bit about the paper you said you could not get published because it was on tolerance.

Hirsch: Oh, no, I could --I meant that it was not published at the time in the sixteenth century because you know it was against Calvin and Luther who were intolerant of all those people and it was not published at that time --it was never published and I somehow found out, it was quoted in another book, some part of it. I found out that it was very interesting so it wasn't (written). It took me two years to do that, it was quite a proposition, but it brought me to the United States and it was worth it. It was very worth it, I must say.

Hogstrom: So you took on Calvin and Luther.

Hirsch: Yes --not Luther so much because this person was a Calvinist and he got in trouble with Calvin. They disagreed on certain religious teachings you know.

Hogstrom: This was Cervitas?

Hirsch: No that was Costello. Cervitas I took up later, and he wrote it but I published it. After Cervitas was burned at the stake by Calvin, you see, and then there was a great outrage by many people and he was leader that Costello was his name. To accuse Calvin of intolerance was very, very sad, but I don't know how much we improved. Here in this country certainly, but look

around in the world, you don't know.

Hogstrom: And in the 1930s in Europe there wasn't a great deal of tolerance.

Hirsch: Oh, it was so awful, I was so happy I was out. And Hitler of course was terrible. My parents, my father was a scholar in Berlin, let's say a linguist, and a friend of his ---shortly before the war broke out invited them to come to Denmark and so they passed the war in Denmark and my father died and my mother came over here, but soon she died too. Yes, that was a very bad.... I cannot go into that, it was a sad story, very sad.

Hogstrom: And you did your PhD at Maarburg.

Hirsch: I did my PhD at Maarburg, yes.

Hogstrom: And Heidegger, Martin Heidegger was the Chairman of your committee?

Hirsch: Yeah, it was so that he examined me in philosophy, as a matter of fact in his house, privately. Yes, you know the university was small, you knew your professors, and they knew what grade they would give you. It was really more or less a formality and so we talked about the philosophical problem about Kant and I was shaky obviously, and he said to me, well, know what you can do so don't worry about it. I just want to discuss a problem and so I felt better then, he didn't quite --you know a young student and a famous professor, that is always kind of an exciting, let us say, situation. And then, in history, you could also say the subject you wanted to be examined on, I don't remember what I did. I think it was on Napoleon, as a matter of fact. Everybody at that time was Napoleon ready and now we don’t think that much about him. And that was that except I knew the Professor very well. He asked me about military strategy and I had not the slightest idea --I only looked at him and indicated that that was not what I wanted to be examined in, so he changed the subject. I had studied for two years, and they knew pretty well.

Hogstrom: So by this time the Germans had lost their animosity toward Napoleon. After all, Germany had fought against Napoleon.

Hirsch: Yes, that is true, but you know there was --I think --a hero worship. You know, the hero in history, there was something that --and I know an Italian historian visiting me once and I had a picture of Napoleon on the wall, and he said, how come, you write about Castillo and --, he was right, you know. But he was introducing a civil law in Germany, you know, so he did some good. And then Goerder said Napoleon was a man – a truly human being, this was kind of a – I don't know. Now I would not say that anymore, but at the time –

Hogstrom: Yea, he was also a butcher.

Hirsch: Yes, he was, but he was a great man. He was – if you think how the French Revolution started, it was awful, the cruelty, the guillotine, killing so many people, so in a way it was a relief, but then he ran over Europe. That was a problem again. I also had a third minor field, that was a minor field, German literature, and I had as my special field, Thomas Mann, and he had just published The Magic Mountain --I hadn't read it, because there was no time. I read a Master's Thesis that Kean had written about, and he examined me and he knew about it too and from his questions 1 gathered what 1 should say about it. And later I saw him --it happened to be a very good conversation, I felt very good about that. So I went through all right.

Hogstrom: And your thesis --your PhD. thesis, was in philosophy.

Hirsch: Well it was combined, it was on John Bodell, his view of the world and his political theory, so I had both in there. That was published later then.

Hogstrom: Now Heidegger is currently thought of as an existentialist and I know that you have reservations about calling him that.

Hirsch: Yes, I have reservations. He had reservations. Yes, let's say an existentialist like Salt (?),

he starts with man and his situation, and man has to fashion his existence. That was to say he was free, he would say he was free to fashion his existence. But Heidegger wanted to get away from that, to put man in the center. He wanted rather the world or what he called the being of man in the center. So man has to listen, whatever it is to nature, then you know, any other human being listening to other human beings, it is that kind of thing that you are not in the center, but you listen to something and then it's being that is responsible for how the world is really.

Hogstrom: Salter's version of existentialism is you might say arrogant because, would you not agree, it's egocentric, it places man at the apex. and everything else is….

Hirsch: That is true. That is true.

Hogstrom: And Heidegger rejected that and posited in place of it a philosophical system in which man was not at the center of things so much as presiding over them.

Hirsch: Well, yes, listening to what was given to him later, I don't know how to explain that the world that man lives in let us say is not into a world that not your making but then you have to cope with it, but that is a world that is outside you, not the world inside you. But of course you have to make your world too, that is true enough.

Hogstrom: How do you think Heidegger might have reacted to what man is doing to his world in terms of ecological damage? Things like the Aswan Dam and developments in deserts through ...

Hirsch: He could have very much, the modern technology that overwhelms, he would say, nature. He was very much against it long before we had a movement here of that sort, because that is all. Man, you know, is not the master of the world.

Hogstrom: Yeah, there's an arrogance in that

Hirsch: You are right, I agree with you. You are absolutely right. It is arrogant. That man thinks he can do whatever he chooses. Nature is there nature, a rose is a rose, and you cannot do

anything with a rose, because a rose is a certain thing that you have to respect as a thing or object that it is and that is what Heidegger means. You have to respect nature and listen to it and not destroy it.

Hogstrom: Goerter talked in very similar terms. Do you think that this attitude toward nature is something that comes out of German romanticism?

Hirsch: Goerter. Yes, it is a little bit there --maybe you are right. Some called Heidegger a romantic. I have nothing against it, Heidegger romanticism. (ha, ha) Because we are now in a way the opposite. We think all men's minds can do, of course if you sit here and sit there and talk, it's terrific, but the human mind has discovered, but it isn't the whole story, see.

Hogstrom: Perhaps we should talk a little bit more about what Trenton State was like when you first came here, and then perhaps how it changed, how you saw the College changing.

Hirsch: Yes. Well, of course, President West was very much in charge.

Hogstrom: I gather he was a “strong hand at the helm.”

Hirsch: Yes.

Hogstrom: But a very cultured man.

Hirsch: Extremely cultured, and you could disagree with him. If you had a discussion with him and said I didn't see it, okay, but it didn't necessarily mean that he gave in but I think that he was great for the college, after all a normal school, he developed it into a teachers' college. The only trouble with him was he didn't want to extend the college, make it bigger. You simply couldn't keep it that small as it was. He reacted strongly against that.

Hogstrom: What --why do you think he resisted?

Hirsch: It was more personal. It was certainly more enjoyable for students and faculty who had not so many students. It was more impersonal I think students would agree with that and ---

Hogstrom: Could they be more selective.

Hirsch: No, not necessarily. I don't think so, but the relationship was a closer one, you know, now everywhere now, it's so big that it's no more, in Germany it's the same thing, the professors haven't that much time to care about individual students. And I think that was West's point. He always called downtown, the Education Department. He didn't agree with that. He had also reached, I think, the retirement age, and so on, but it was a great period, I think, and he was very sympathetic I think for the liberal arts, so a few years I taught languages but then he suggested that I take one section of sophomore lit, soph lit as they said, and see how the students react to philosophy. Well, I enjoyed it, and I think quite a few students enjoyed it. At the end of the course, the then chairman brought in a questionnaire asking the students whether they would rather have a lit course or philosophy, and two-thirds answered philosophy and one-third said literature, but of course for the department, the literature department, it would have meant to give up one section and they didn't want that. So that fell through and I started with the Extension, I think I had five students there, --

Hogstrom: The Extension, these were people who ---

Hirsch: The evening. I enjoyed it. I enjoy teaching anyhow no matter who or what, but it didn't lead to anything until they introduced the elective program and then they put philosophy into the elective program. And then I could really start teaching because students would elect it. And then I first taught philosophical problems, that is ethics, political philosophy, theory of knowledge and things like that, and the students reacted very well. There was always about 12 in a class and that was a good size.

Hogstrom: Kind of a seminar.

Hirsch: It <u>was</u> kind of a seminar. And I enjoyed it very much. It was really what I like to do.

Hogstrom: So for a while you were the Philosophy Department. All by yourself.

Hirsch: I enjoyed that.

Hogstrom: But that did not last.

Hirsch: It took quite a few years though. I must say, it took quite a few year, but we took --by and by we had another teacher in the department and of course I also taught then Comparative Religion and that followed the progr-am, the Danforth Program in Religion, where we had for example Suzuki, the great Zen Buddhist, and Langer, and Gudonov, and the students were very enthusiastic about them and so I decided to introduce...

Hogstrom: Excuse me for interrupting, but you mentioned the Danforth Foundation, did you mean that the College had received some kind of a Danforth Grant?

Hirsch: Yes, the Danforth Grant, that's right. They did that at quite a few colleges to promote religion. Of course in Comparative Religion you don't teach one religion. And I started one year with the Asian religions, and the first course I remember very well because they were excellent students, very responsive. Very, very responsive. And then later I also "remember one student who came to classes saying "Buddha is crazy!" I think it is so strange for some, I understand that.

Hogstrom: Did you ever have any Western chauvinism, I mean, did any of the students feel that you should not waste their time by studying....

Hirsch: They didn't need to take that course, and I mainly taught the Eastern religion, Far Eastern religion. Later we had another professor, he taught then also Christianity and Judaism--I didn't go into them because there really wasn't much time for that. But I had also some, you have also now and then criticism. There was a Fundamentalist student. He talked compared to the Bible and so on, why do you --everything's said, you don't need to interpret things, well you couldn't

do anything about that. And I didn't go into that. But there was another one and he talked about Kant and philosophy and Kant had said if man would by instinct, and not by his reason, he would always know what to do. And the students would say, well, how can Kant say that man should have instinct rather than reason, but of course he didn't mean that. He thought instinct would be better, he didn't mean to say that but animals for example would act by instinct. That was then, maybe it's not quite true, but anyhow Kant thought man would have to use his reason but reason, you'd be right and wrong. You cannot always be sure, you see --but otherwise the students were very attentive, I had very good students in philosophy too and I really thought it was very enjoyable, and many students were for the first time to college and away from their families and so they were very open, very responsive and this was very nice. I really had a very good time.

Hogstrom: ·What --would you say that three quarters of the students were the first members of their families to attend college?

Hirsch: I don't know if there were that many, but certainly quite a few, yeah. They were open. They knew that it was quite a chance for them, originally you know there were 35 now too. Very funny, you know, sometime students wouldn't come to class. I forgot the name but the faces I remembered, so one student, before exams you know, I said to him you weren't here for quite a while, what's the matter with you? And he was stunned because he thought I didn't know it. I remember faces. I had a visual memory, very much so. Not much otherwise, but visual is very strong. So, that happens too, you know, obviously.

Hogstrom: My impression is that in German universities attendance is a sometime thing. You attend mass lectures or do not attend them. As you wish.

Hirsch: Well, the seminar you have to attend. Well in away, the professor also does the lecture course. He has to sign it that you were there. Well, he couldn't always--in Berlin you know they

were extremely big, those classes.

Hagstrom: And did they take attendance?

Hirsch: They had to sign in that they were there...

Hogstrom: They had to sign in?

Hirsch: Yes, it was credited toward the final examination, graduation from the University whether you took the Ph. d. or what we call the State Examination that entitles you to teach. I have said the books you know.

Hogstrom: So I've heard about the Office d'tenden at the Universities, men who discovered that they enjoyed the life of being at University and decided that that was what they --profession would be and who are still running around in funny little hats drinking from steins and carrying on with the boys in their forties.

Hirsch: Whom did you say...

Hogstrom: Oh, I was told this by, as a matter of fact, a German professor of mine, and he referred to them as Office Studenten, you never ran into any of those?

Hirsch: You mean Studenten (Hogstrom: students), feminine students.

Hogstrom: No, no, men at places like Heidelberg. Not attend classes.

Hirsch: And not attend classes! No, that's up to you. If you like the

Hogstrom: No, no,

Hirsch: But I tell you that those were still --they had to be admitted. But I took a course in German literature by a professor who would always say, "Please the next male student." He would never allow a studenten to participate in the seminar. He had to admit them but he didn't like to have

them there. So it was very strange. That was one experience only.

Hogstrom: So you experienced some sexism.

Hirsch: Yes, but that was one. A very famous professor, you know.

Hogstrom: Heidegger was not so prejudiced.

Hirsch: Oh, no, no, no. There was no problem and the world was just right, and as a matter of fact, we were quite emancipated. I had a friend who -- had a boyfriend --and it didn't work out, you know, and she was quite unhappy so I wrote her a letter which she recently sent to me, saying that you know a girl nowadays doesn't need to get married. She can have a career. That was on our mind. Of course we could not teach at the University, but in America you could teach. There was no objection and we had also women who fought for women's rights and all that. That was even before my generation, in fact, famous women, but on the whole, you know, you could pretty much have a career at that time. And sometimes news in a way is now so strong here that we had already kind of established it, but the highest level now.

Hogstrom: There were not many women on the faculty in Universities.

Hirsch: Not many. No. One or the other. As a rule no.

Hogstrom: How about the judiciary? Were there many women in the legal profession?

Hirsch: No. And science not either. At that time. My field of philosophy was already too absorbed for girls. (Hogstrom: Really?) Oh yes, I should teach art, study art and have a job in a museum. That would be lovely you know.

Hogstrom: A genteel job.

Hirsch: Yes. That was a more feminine thing, you know. They didn't really, you know. They thought I should get married young, but I didn't. I didn't want that.

Hogstrom: When did women get the vote in Germany?

Hirsch: Oh, I don't know. The vote they had -- (Hogstrom: before the ....) Oh, yes, before my

time. My mother, as a matter of fact, took already teachers' examination to teach at the _____. That was possible. You could teach at school, yes. You could teach, you know, high school or grade school, but she never did. She got married young, and so she didn't.

Hogstrom: What is the difference between the folkschuler and the gymnasium?

Hirsch: The folkschuler == the gymnasium --well, the folkschuler is free and nobody had to pay, but in high school your parents had to pay for it.

Hogstrom: High school would be the gimnasium (?).

Hirsch: What you call the high school and then came the gimnasium on top of that. But who hadn't the money had to go to the folkschuler. Then the Weimar Republic created a new kind of school where those that went through the folkschuler and were good students could then have an education like the gimnasium that leads what we call --to the--and you could study at the university.

Hogstrom: So the classical studies were --the folkschuler did not normally include the classical studies?

Hirsch: No. More simple things, you know just ordinary things, but no languages or things like that. But they took that up, you see; they could change and accept it. Before that was not possible. If you had no money, that was just it. Except rarely people, they may have been promoted, don't know that. Hogstrom: What level of education was required for everyone prior to ---

Hirsch: I think 16 years or so, you had to be in school until you were 16.

Hogstrom: Under the Weimar ---(Hirsch: Yes, before too)

Hirsch: 16 too, but we were 19 when we left the gimnasium. The boys were 18, so we went ...

Hogstrom: So the gimnasium was post secondary?

Hirsch: That includes your first two years of college level.

Hogstrom: Let's return to your years at the college. I know that you saw a lot of changes and a lot of controversy, and one of the controversies that we were involved in together was one that had to do with a president, a former president, a man named Heussler.

Hirsch: Yes, I think I had problems with other departments that didn't want me to do that kind of thing, you know, but I think nothing was really very serious. The Dr. Heussler thing was for my taste, really painful, undignified, because he was a scholar and had wanted to change the college to a liberal arts college. One sign of that, by the way, was that he made philosophy and comparative literature into a department and the languages that had never been done before, so it showed that he had a great sense of scholarship too. I think he was resented, you can understand, a college that was a teachers college kind of resented some things that he wanted to do. But that was no reason, the way they acted against him, you know, there were very ugly scenes, students would occupy the hall, his office was --of course instigated by the professors. I believe in young people. They're decent. Don't you? If they are not, others don't....

Hogstrom: I have no way of proving this, but I was told by some of my students at the time that there were classes being taught on this campus in which the subject had not been mentioned for the first five or six weeks of the class because every class had been devoted to

Hirsch: That's true. That's true. They instigated the students really; they didn't really know that much about Heussler.

Hogstrom: Another thing was happening at that time, dreadful business, and that of course was the anti= the agitation against the Vietnam war, which had nothing to do with Heussler, but ..

Hirsch: Probably that was kind of a sense of position, you know, but other things too. At that time also the Black students were very much involved in their causes and sometimes I regretted

it because I had very good Black students and then they didn't come to class, I understood that fully. You know, there was a cause for them, equal rights, it had to be thought out, but they could have done much better if they would have followed their duties, and I think once one of those borrowed...classrooms. .. it got burned.

Hogstrom: It was a cinch of circumstances, as I recall, I think ..

Hirsch: The students, all the students were very much involved in this or that, you know, but one class my best student was a Black student.

Hogstrom: I had the impression that most of our very best students were most deeply involved in those agitations, and you sympathized with them because What business had we in Vietnam?

Hirsch: Oh, exactly, that was true...

Hogstrom: And how could we have ...and what right did a white person have to say to a black person that he should not agitate for his rights.

Hirsch: On the whole, I wouldn't know of any who was biased in that respect, I don't think so. Not at all, but the Sixties were the time and everybody had a cause, fighting for .. I mean it was kind of the spirit in the Nation, don't you think? It was affecting the college too, and in a way maybe Heussler was a victim of that spirit too.

Hogstrom: It was an exciting period. There was certainly a great deal of anti-authority spirit.

Hirsch: Exactly, anti-authority, right --but, this was a very painful episode, and the college cannot be very proud of that I don't think. And the strange thing is that Dr. Brower who had, he was a very friendly person, was able to calm the spirits of the community. He did then introduce the same things that Heussler wanted to introduce by and by.

Hogstrom: I remember writing to Dr. Brower shortly over a year and a half passed after Heussler had left and telling him, congratulating him on some of the decisions that he had made, decisions

that followed the plans that Heussler had had, I did not point that out in my letter, but I did say to him that I felt that the way that I could lend my support to him, the most valuable support I could lend to Dr. Brower would be to be absolutely silent about my support.

Hirsch: That is true. I did not commit myself at all because there was talk with not only him but others who wanted to be President, I felt I didn't want to commit myself too much, but I think that Brower was good for the college. (Hogstrom: He healed it) He was a healer. And then he introduced, or supported, the liberal arts curriculum. I hope the students realize that it's better for them too that they had a liberal arts.

Hogstrom: I must say I underestimated Dr. Brower and I regret that.

Hirsch: Yes, he --I think he --I've had quite some contact with him and he supported me, some did not. And you supported me, and I always thought he was very nice, friendly person, qualified and so it was a good thing that he became the president of the college after Heussler. But for Heussler it must have been a very sorry episode that happened. It should not happen to any man, the way it was done. I think a position is justified in some cases, maybe, but the way you oppose a person. You could not be too extreme, the faculty was divided and it was ugly. I t was really ugly, the whole thing, but I must say that apart from that I enjoyed my teaching very much at the college. I think it developed very much with Dr. West. West had started it really, but then there was a break, it got bigger of course, other courses as well, philosophy became a department, languages became a department as well--the only thing is languages never got off the ground, isn't that true? Even now. But now again the stress is --there was a time when they said that languages are not necessary, but the world is so small in no time you are anywhere. It's a great asset to know languages. I think it’s enjoyable too so I don't know. Now is the trend you know for languages. Of course the students, I think they must be thrilled to have sciences, but I think

the humanities are important. The education of the person, a human being, the honor is intellectual you know, scientific education, so don't you think the liberal arts are there for educating the man, the person. That is very important. You know the President for the Endowment of the Humanities, Mr. Bennett, he came out for it now. That the colleges should, not only concentrate on sciences or professional education, but they should not forget the humanities, I think that is very true.

Hogstrom: I was amused at the modesty of his recommendations, because the recommendations are so modest that it makes you wonder just what is the condition of the study of the humanities. For instance, he suggested that no student should be allowed to graduate from college without having thoroughly studied a great classic. A great classic.

Hirsch: But he also said American history in the old they didn't get enough. I taught by the way in the beginning, Western Civilization, and whether it was very good, but they didn't know enough about American background, that was quite true, and history, American history.

Hogstrom: I had a student the other day who was discussing a play "Little Foxes" by Lillian Hellman, and --I think that was in 1900, when the student said "The Black people were still slaves." Hirsch: They didn't know.

Hogstrom: No. I mentioned Abraham Lincoln and the Emancipation Proclamation, the Civil War, and then she decided to _____.

Hirsch: Still, the whole climate has tremendously changed, I think. But now I think they are inclined to stress the sciences, because it's so thrilling what they can do, I agree with that, but I do think that we should not forget those things that really are important to the person to educate as a human being --he didn't see it, not yet. Well, I don't know whether we covered everything or you have another ... Hogstrom: Well, let me see if there's anything we really ought to --what are

you up to these days, I know you're retired and living over in Pennswood Village over in Newtown, a lovely place, I was told that the concentration of female PhD's in Pennswood Village of advanced years is the highest in the country.

Hirsch: Is it? Well, that I don't know --maybe it is true. Well, I try to go on the way I did even when I was at the college in the late sixties. But in the Sixties I had won a fellowship to study abroad for a subject and I published that in 1967, a book on the Portuguese humanist who was a friend of Erasmus. That was quite nice. I must say I didn't find it too difficult to combine my duties as a wife, mother, teaching and writing, I never knew that I could --I did do that. I think it is partly because I am a person who is organized. I always do things that I have to do right away, even now and it saves you time, because if you're distracted and do other things, some things you never do. You forget about them also, and so I think that helped me in a way and now I'm going on as much as I can you know.

Hogstrom: You have two sons. (Hirsch: two sons, yes) And do I recall correctly that one of your sons is working in Washington!

Hirsch: Well, yes, with the Department of Energy now, but it's really located in Maryland, across from Washington, and the other is in Long Island, publishing, Barron's, a publishing house.

Hogstrom: And both are Academics? Or ...the son in Washington is on leave, I believe.

Hirsch: Yes, he is from Seton Hall University. He taught chemistry, chemistry is his field. And of course he is very much interested in the modern computer business, he has word processing and all that and it is fascinating.

Hogstrom: And you have grandchildren?

Hirsch: Yes, four grandchildren, two boys and two girls. I tried to go on and, you know, I think there is one thing everybody and every woman should prepare for the time when he retires,

especially a woman. Because the children first --they get married, but the children --there comes a time when the children are out of the house and we should let them go and then there isn't much to do, you know. But nowadays of course a woman has the chance to get involved herself in a job or anything, I feel ... I don't go along with a family because a family --the mother has a place and the father has a place with the children. And the one family is not my type. I think it is difficult for either the man or the woman who has a child to have a job and take care of the child. It's very difficult. I didn't do any professional thing for eight years. Until the children were in school and then I could do things again. But I enjoyed it. I think children are very enjoyable. A part of your life, really.

Hogstrom: Yes, the eight years was really worth it, the investment.

Hirsch: Oh, absolutely.. I still, when we lived on the college campus, which was ideal, I went for walks with them, and I enjoyed walking myself, and I think women should think in those terms that children are a joy, small children, they are so unspoiled. We do a lot to them, but we cannot, you know we don't know them, they develop, you don't know when they're small, all make mistakes. You cannot help that. But if you enjoy --that's the main thing I think --and everyone should do that. Hogstrom: Do you feel that children become what they become principally because of nature or because of nurture?

Hirsch: I think what is involved but I fully agree it also depends on how your parents were with you. And education of the leaders of society is very strong and that has all an important influence on you, but I, I mean my sister and myself, are very different, coming from the same family. In fact, I felt that my father especially was very understanding. For example, in Germany, you know you write with capital and small letters --that's a headache. I once came home on vacation and everything was wrong. I got a failure on it. So my father took me on his lap and I see that

stuff and he said “don't worry about it. That's very artificial. No other language does it.” And this Germany in former times didn't do it either, so that kind of thing, understanding, is a very important thing, but I think a lot is in you, don't you? You're born with a certain characteristic. But probably, there are people who are born in very sad circumstances, I agree, it can do something to you, but a normal environment I think would help you, but bring out what is in you, I believe in that. There is in people something, all people, and not only the ____ the ____ thing, the environment that they were in. I don't believe that. Hogstrom: Stalin had that idea that he could create a new Soviet man.

Hirsch: Exactly, but I don't believe that. But I think each generation is different, and that has to be that way. You live according to your times too, but by and large how you do it is your own making. You cannot relate to it in this or that way.

Hogstrom: And by the time you get to be an adult, it's too late to blame anybody but yourself.

Hirsch: You cannot blame anybody. It's better to blame yourself. It's easier, you don't get so upset about it, and you say okay I feel very strongly it's not the world at all that does something to you, it's you and your relation to the world. Maybe you didn't relate well, I must say it's only in extreme cases where it's different. Some people have no chance, you know, and I counsel that, I can only speak of normal situations, whatever normal means, normal situations. But there are situations which are plenty difficult for children. We have to admit that too.

Hogstrom: Well, I guess we've about come to the end of our taping here. Thank you very much, Dr. Hirsch.

Hirsch: It was a pleasure for me.