

L: OKay Bill  
B: Test, test test test  
L: THat's good, sound one  
B: Test test test test....Tess of the ??? (laughing)  
L: Try it again  
B: Test test test.....  
L: Okay  
B: Okay okay okay  
L: Looks clean to me  
B: Okay, Tape goes off  
L: gets this thing cranking too  
B: Now, are those wires out of your way and are you comfortable?  
L: You can give him that thing to put on his belt if you want. We have plenty of, I don't know if you want it  
R: Oh, what's this, so I wont trip over it  
B: If it's uncomfortable you can just put it on your sleeve.  
R: Oh I think it's okay, whatever it is. Not quite an umbilical  
B: It will give you a super charge.  
R: I was going to say, if I get sleepy it will bring me up, beats caffeine.  
L: How we are handling this is to pretty much forget about the equipment,  
R: Okay, well that's all right with me  
L: We've got plenty of tape and we just let it go,  
B: Why don't you just begin by telling us when you began to ah, become friends with John  
R: Well I think I must have met John some time around....1954 or so I suppose, when we were both ah, in Keene, at Keene high school although he had been in town before that but I have no very strong memory of knowing him before that.  
B: He was what, a year,  
R: He was a year behind me in school, right, yeh  
B: Where did you get to be chums and,  
R: Well, I think probably we were first drawn together because we both played in the band and ah, I think, as I was saying, John started out as a horn player but I don't think that lasted very long and he ah ended up as a bass horn player, a tuba player and ah, that's how I got to know him because I also was ah a tuba, or more precisely a sousaphone player. So we, we worked together in that, suffered through many a parade and many a session of trying to learn to play the right notes and all.  
B: Um, what drew him toward music? Was that his mom's wish or his wish or?  
R: Well I think his mother was always ah, quite willing that he should persue various things and he was musical. He had a beautiful tenor voice, as I recall, and ah, I remember accompanying him ah, on more than one occasion, as a singer he sang in a little barber shop quartet that we had once, a very informal group. And so there was music in his blood obviously. He sang in the high school choir, the so called a capella choir, I think throughout his high school years and ah, then the instruments. I suppose he got drafted into playing the bass horn the same way I did, by some music director who wanted him to do that, but he ah, he did that for at least the latter part of his high school time.

B: Um, who else was in your group?

R: In the um, in the barber shop? or the ah,

R: No, not necessarily musically but,

R: Oh, our friends

B: Friends yeh,

R: Well yeh, we had, we did have sort of a group and, and I know that you've probably met them all. Ah, there was Jean Felch, who was in my class, Gary Howard who was also in my class. In fact I think all of us were, ah, let's see, yeh, Tony Reddington, Jean Felch, Gary Howard um, that was the ah main, and then ah, Max Young, when Max was living and we were all members of the KHS class of 56 whereas John was 57. I hadn't thought of that. I'm sure he had friends in other classes too but, but ah, we, we were something of a group and we'd do things together.

B: What brought you guys together?

R: Well, I don't know. MAYbe it was our ah, zany sense of humor or something, I don't know. Well it was music, in part, and ah, also our similiar interests, I suppose, which you can imagine what those were. I see we've got the accompanymment of ah,

L: What is that, I can hardly hear you anymore.

R: Yeh, well it's some kind of machinery and I probably know the guy who's driving it if you want me to speak to him I can. It depends where he's going.

B: Maybe he'll go by. Are they on the move.

L: That's all righht, no don't worry about it

R: Don't worry about it?

L: No

R: Okay

B: Now as we see it,

L: Now who's this Tony Reddington?

B: He's another high school class mate

L: Is he someone we should talk to

R: YEs,

B: Well if we can find him, yeh

R: I think it would be (Tape goes off)

(SNAP SNAP) Hello, hello

B: .....to leave.

R: Well I don't know, I didn't feel that I would have had any, any um, clout with him and as I say, he was a couple of blocks away by that time.

L: We're all set

R: All set

B: Trying, for the ah, the home there, trying to get an idea of this group and the school. Socially were you all pretty much the same.

R: Ah yes, we used to kick around together a lot um, we would get together and just talk about things, we would ah, go to, you know, basketball and football games together. Jean Felch had an old coup that we used to call the Felch Mobile. It was a convertable with, what do you call it, a rumble seat in the back, and we used to pile in that and go off to football games and, and ah, then every ah, spring after a point, we had what we called the Max Annual, which was a party named in honor of a friend of ours in our class,

Max Young, who had been um, killed in an automobile accident in the spring of, oh well our freshman year in college would have been John's senior year in high school, and we would go out to this wonderful victorian, or postvictorian mansion called the Chimneys in Dublin, which was owned by Tony Reddington's stepfather actually, Ozzie Wade, and we would have these wonderful parties and we would take, yes a lot of records and some food and a lot of beer and we would just go out and have a grand time and usually spend the night and, nobody around so we could crank up the old Beethoven Symphonies because there was no one around to bother and we had our run of the place. It was one of these great palacial houses. It has since burned down, sad to say, but it was quite a mansion and ah, we had it all to ourselves, so

B: Were there other groups that were different from your group?

R: Well ah, I suppose there were and, and there were certainly other groups that John was a part of other than this one. I say most of us were not, strictly speaking his classmates, we were kindred spirits in other ways but yes, there were cetainly, in fact, I guess we all had different groups of friends dependeing on our interest but John had a way of ah, how shall I say it, befriending and, and ah, becoming, having cordial relationships with a lot of, a lot of people. Different kinds of people, people with different interests. So I can imagine that he had, he had lots of friends.

B: How did ah, I read once that he was sort of slighted by athletes, that he's a frail kid,

R: Well, I suppose it's possible, yes, yes, I suppose it's possible, even as I was. I was not athletic in high school either and I suppose that that certainly was true of John. I wasn't aware of this particular thing. I don't remember his talking about it but I can imagine it was a dynamic, yes

B: I was wondering if, if he tried to excell in other kinds of things to kind of see different ways of acheiving some sort of,

R: Well I suppose he did. My impression of John is that he had many talents. He was very bright, he was musical, he was literary, he wrote beautifully, as you know, and ah, and of course ultimately, his interest in the church and all of that. I think that he gave full rein and with ah, his parents blessing, to all of his talents and interests. Um, I don't know if I woould describe Joh as someone who tried to excell. I think that he was, he was a young man of many interests, social and otherwise, he almost always had a girlfriend for example. In fact he had one girlfriend for just about all the time I remember that he was in high school and I guess maybe beyond, but ah, I would say that he was more of a, ah, he tended to live thoroughly and with a great deal of variety and persue his various interest. I was more of the one to be kind of a grind and a parfectionist and try to come out on the top of everything. I don't think John was like that.

B: No insecurities or doubts?

R: I think he was very, very strong in his own, yes, I think that, although of course, he had, went through changes and

his vocational goals changed some over the years, as you might expect. I think it's safe to say that he felt very secure um, as a person. He knew what his gifts were um, and I think that ah, he had very strong models in his parents, both of whom were very strong people and very well known and respected in the community ah, so ah, I would say that he, ah, he had quite a good grasp of who he was and what his gifts were. That doesn't say that he wasn't ah, maybe kidded by the athletes for not being athletic.. I think that's bound to happen.

B: Ah, how, he cut up someone in high school

R: Oh yes, he was quite a character. Well I don't need to recount the famous story of the falling off the roof ah, which I'm sure everyone, you've probably got this on tape and everywhere else. But ah, that's sort of the ah, the ah, how shall I say, the most dramatic example of John's as you say, cutting up, yes he, he nearly ah,

B: Any other stories that come to mind?

R: Ah, well, stories of that sort. Well, these parties at the chimneys were, were pretty wild. I can remember we not only took the beer with us, we drank it, you know, and by the time we drunk it all, we were ah, running all over that place. I can remember, yes, they were fairly, fairly wild parties. Although John was by no means, I don't think he was any wilder than the rest of us, I mean, in that sense. But he did, he had along the way some rather heavy relationships with ah, females and ah, I think that he learned a lot from those. Like most young people and most young men, I think he had, he had to come to grips with his sexuality and ah, you know, try to, he talks about that in some of his letters, you know, the trying to ah, trying to deal with eros and he certainly had a very strong ah, a very strong sexual drive and that got him into some tight spots I think.

B: I'll ask about that in, ????. How about social issues. This is 1956, 1955, Eisenhower years, I mean Little Rock wasn't too far away. Was there any, was your world pretty much Keene and what was happening at the high school or did it go beyond that or?

R: I think when we got together and has these um, bull sessions or whatever you want to call them that we had so often ah, either at his house or our house or Jean Felch's place or wherever, ah, I think we probably did discuss ah, world affairs. I can certainly remember having long conversations about the problems of the world, at least with other friends. Um, with John, we were more likely, I think probably more likely to talk about um, issues of, you know, romantic issues, girls for example, that we were attracted to and why. I can remember a few in particular and usually it was unrequited love from afar, I might say. But we would compare notes on that, we would talk about a lot about religion and theology because he was already very interested in that, and so was I and so was Jean for that matter. So those matters we would discuss and probably things going on in the school ah, yeh, world affairs I'm sure we did although I can't now, so many years later, I really can't remember what particular things we talked about but, I'm sure,

B: I was going to ask you, were you all from republican families pretty much?

R: Um, no, as a matter of fact my um, my mother had been voting for democrats for some time. I don't know what John's political orientation was but judging from the way he reached out to others and certainly was very soon to be if not already, very interested in social out reach and of course the whole civil rights thing. I would certainly suspect that whatever political orientation he had um, you know, supported that ah,

B: He worked for Senator Cotton

R: Did he?

B: Yeh, so I assumed the family had republican ???

R: Well it would be very likely. In fact I can remember when my, my mother being a democrat took a lot of, was under a good bit of pressure from her friends because they were all republicans and of course she was voting for Roosevelt and all that and no one else was doing so. So I wouldn't be surprised.

B: BUT by 1964 he was strongly involved in how terrible Goldwater was and how good LBJ was and. So we're kind of interested in, we think he comes from a family with sort of traditional conservative political views and yet by the 60's he's kind of cornered by this movement to the left.

R: Yes, it's not surprising in a way, is it, because if you go back, as you and Larry have, to his childhood and his youth, ah, you see that from a very early time he was very other directed. I think more, one of the remarkable things about John was that he was so, one of the reasons that so many people liked him I think, including older people, was that he was very, one might almost say, galeant but in a genuine sense. It wasn't a matter of, it wasn't insincere at all but he would tend to, when he was with older people he would be very kindly and very polite. He was a real gentleman you know but he reached out to everyone. He was freindly, he would speak to people on the street and I think that kind of concern for others and then as, as I think you have pointed out, his, jis special feeling for the south which, ah, is not entirely clear where that came from, but certainly must have been, in part, a result of his experience when his father was stationed there during the war, in the army. Ah, it's not surprising that he ended up putting his life on the line for the ah, for the rights of others.

B: So you're ssaying it probably came out of his warm, caring for others rather than from any kind of political.

R: YEh, well I don't know Biil, because as I say, I can't remember that we talked about politics a lot, maybe we did, but certainly as a person, he was inclined toward ah, inclined in that way, democratically if you will to take that term in a larger sense um, and of course he had mrvelous model, marvelous model in his father who was a very selfgiving man, remarkably so. As I guess I've said, my memory of Dr. Daniels, Phil Daniels, was of his seeming all the time on the point od exhaustion. You know, very nice, gentle, lovely fellow but ah, one had the impression that he was just constantly going off nad taking care of people in the middle of the night and what not, not getting enough

rest himself and I know that he had other ailments that finally caused his death. But I think John grew up with that model of giving, you know, living a life for others so that when he hit people like theologian, talked about a life for others and the cost of discipleship and all of that, it reverberated. It was something that John could walk in to very easily.

B: Could you explain that a little bit, about ????

R: Yes, Deitrich Bonhoeffer, the German theologian who was ultimately martyred, was hanged by the nazis, ah, wrote a number of books and one of the early ones is called the cost of discipleship and it was a book that had a profound influence on John. In fact he recommended it to me within, I would say, the last year before his death ah, and I didn't get around to reading it until after his death but ah, the minute I, the minute I opened it up I could see, I could see why it was such an influence on him.

L: How do you spell the name?

B: It's not his real name

R: B-O-N-H-O-E-F-F-E-R

L: Well we've been reading Stringfellow.

R: Yeh, well Bill Stringfellow would have been another, in fact, Stringfellow will have known him. I think I read a tribute by Bill and implied that he knew John or at least had met him, yeh. Yeh, Stringfellow would certainly have, have been a strong, someone he would have reverberated with a lot, surely, yeh because Stringfellow lived out his life very much that same way, going into the slums and being a lawyer for the poor and all.

B: So how would you define that trip in cost of discipleship as Bonhoeffer and Daniels would?

R: Well, it's, it's ah, I haven't done my homework you know, ah, I would have to review the cost of discipleship to give you an elusive answer to that but, but it's a ah, it's a central tenant of Bonhoeffer's theology which of course takes off from the, from ah, Kreiss Agapay, the self sacrificial love in the sense that one does live, and I think it's Bonhoeffer's phrase, "A life for others" In other words, one is willing to lay down one's life, of course that all goes back to the gospel of St. John II, "Greater love has no man than this" which is on John's tombstone, that he lay down, then this, that he lay down his life for his friends. Ah, I think that's another book that meant a great deal to John of course was St. John's gospel um, I think that that was a, how shall I say, it was a tendency that John had from a very early, from his very early years ah, which was probably both, I don't know, like everything else probably partly hereditary and partly an example of his father and so, he was always more willing to take a risk, I mean falling off the roof, I mean that wasn't a very noble cause, but as an example he was always willing to do more risky things than for example I would have been willing to do I'm sure. So then as he matured in his faith um, I think he came to a very deep understanding of what that means in christian times, which is not to say that he sought martyrdom, but he was on the other hand, aware of the danger um, aware of what he felt it was right to do and what he was

called to do and went ahead and did it. Even in the face of, of obviously,

B: Was there evidence of this in your group, this serving others or at the high school that you can remember or befriending some of,

R: YES, yes, I think Joh tended to, he tended to befriend people who were, ah, how shall I say, a bit out of the mainstream. Yes, I think that's fair to say, again I would have to find some specific examples, but I can remember some examples of ah, of ah, young people that had either physical disabilities or came from some kind of different economic background maybe or educational background or so, and John was, yeh, John was very undiscriminating, in a good sense, undiscriminating in his love for others and ah, I think that characterized him, from as far back as I can remember, ah, and then of course, as his faith deepened, the model of Jesus reaching out to all these fringe people, you know, the lame and the blind and the women and children and all those who were marginalized in society then that, of course, a direction in which he was already heading in. Course he's always been a christian in that sense but I think he, he went through some experiences which deepened his faith a great deal. He started out the way I did I guess, being baptized in the congregational church and going to church as a youth and all.

B: So when did he ah, I guess it was his senior year, I don't know if you were there, but that's when he changed to the episcopal church.

R: Yes um, I technically wasn't there in the sense that that was my first year of graduate school and John's senior year and I was busy learning everything I was supposed to learn about music history, or thought I could anyway.

L: Well when he was baptized that was your first year of undergraduate school.

R: Oh, that's right, I'm sorry. Yeh, I'm a year, I'm in the next phase. Thank you LARRY.

1: Your Welcome

R: My brain is, no, no, you're quite right. Let me back up now. First year of college, okay, well I was yeh, freshman I guess involved in other things too. So I wasn't around then and I'm also thinking of this other sort of reconversion experience. Ah, no, the actual first break that he made with the um, when he sort of changed from the congregational church to the episcopal church would have happened yes, already when he was in high school. Just exactly when, I'm not sure um, which makes me think it might, well you fellows probably know exactly when it was so I won't waste time with that one, but um, he certainly, by the time we got involved in very heavy theological dialogue and sort of mutually influencing one another, he was already well committed to the episcopal church, which I think yes, I think he saw he was very taken with the liturgical church with the drama of the mass and all of that and although he couldn't, theologically, be a catholic, he did go to mass with Jean Felch some, I think that was part of that whole transitional period um, he found the episcopal church, as so many people have, a kind of weanadia you know, between the two and somewhere along in there, he left the

ah, it was the big congregational church at the head of the square where his mother remained but he went over to St. James.

B: We always wondered about that. We're from pretty much the same generation as he was, older than John, um, my experience with religion with my peers is fleeing from religion. I remember Life magazine God is dead and then we get these stories about people in Keene who are talking about religions so fervently and there are references of John to Caroline and he wants to make this relationship the most holy nad spiritual;. It all strikes me as very strange, I don't know what was going on or,

R: Well, I don't either, I'm not enough of a sociologist, you know, I'm not a sociologist so I don't know what currents were at work. I do think that our society has gone through some real changes and of course the period where John's faith was really blossoming was a time, well I suppose we were still you know, on the post WWII sort of religion boom where churches were well attended and people were taking their families to ah, to church. It was certainly long before the disillusionment of the late 60's and the Watergate and the Vietnam and all of that um, sort of the campus and other uprisings of around 1969, 70. So all I can say is that the climate was probably conducive and then, what can we say the movement of the holy spirit I guess. He was with ah, some people who had some similar interests, namely me and Felch, I mean Jean was always, to this day. In fact I've kept in touch with Jean Felch and to this day he is ah, he is still very interested in matters of the faith and he has stayed in the catholic church but, but ah, I think he was just, Johnny was in with ah group of people who were interested in these matters and we tended to

B: And on the other hand you had this other side which ??? Did they ever conflict.

R: A little like Thomas Murtin You might say. Yes Joh knew the seemier side all right and oh yes, I think they certainly did conflict and he had a lot of trouble keeping those things in balance, as I say his sexual drive or eros or whatever and then this other higher calling which he felt was on his life and ah, another way that he really wanted to, wanted to live but, but as he said in a letter about, "I got pay in eros" he said, "You know the one is always having to be encouraged to the four, namely I got pay and the other one is always having to be padded down and kept under control, namely eros" And so he was very well aware of that conflict, that's for sure.

B: Well it's interesting, the times go the other way. As the 60's evolved it's the eros that ???

R: Oh definitely and yeh, yeh look whats happened ah, starting then and even still is happening in the churches, the mainline churches. Ah, it's a question of declining memberships and, not all churches but the mainline churches and ah, yes, I often speculate of what would have happened if John had not ben killed and if he had gone on as he intended to, be ordained a deacon and a priest and maybe end up serving some parish in New Hampshire, which is most likely I suppose. Although he might have gone south too. But where would he have been in all of this? Well you can

be pretty sure that he would have continued to be active in civil rights um, but eventually what would his relationship would have been to the institutional church as he, as he got through the period of great, and let's say youthful ah, enthusiasm, sure, it's I suppose pointless to speculate but ah, tempting to do so.

L: Well, we've speculated. We thought, myself, I think Johnathan would have finished up at the seminary, probably been a priest for 5 or 6 years and maybe he would have stopped and done something else.

R: Yeh, think he might have gotten disillusioned with the institutional church you mean, or.

L: YEs um,

B: Well he had already done that in Selma when he protested the ah, went to the bishops Cunningham.

R Yeh right, he certainly got a veiw of the institutional church at it's most unfortunate, shall we say, yes. Yeh that's right, he came to a direct head on with the, St. PAul Selma and with the church structur. YEH that's for sure.

B: Even to get permission to go down there, knocked on heads with the ah, ???? at ETS. I guess that was not as smooth,

R: I don't know the story there. I would be surprised if he had a lot of trouble. Knowing John Colburn who was dean then and later Bishop of Massachusetts and ah, strong advocate of my own ordination um, I doubt that he, in fact John Colburn was very influenced by this whole thing and was subsequently to leave ETS and to go into a sidewalk of academy, just sort of dropped out of sight for 2 or 3 years after that and I think, he told me once that he was profoundly influenced by John and John's example. Of course John Colburn was a much older man but. But I doubt that John Colburn would have stood very much in his way. What other kinds of problems he might have had, I really don't know. With the church structure, with the diocese of New HAMPSHIRE which was of course his sponsoring diocese. I don't know about all of that.

B: I'm wondering if there was a pull not only between eros and agapay but also between rebellion and conforming. Kind of draw to a tight authoritarian liturgical system.

R: YEs, I hear what you're saying, I hear what you're saying. I think those two strains ran very strongly in John. Yes, I think you're quite right. He was obviously, he was, yeh, it's interesting you should say that because my memory of John is of his being very ah, lively and alert to all sorts of things as I think I said somewhere, from the obscene to the divine ah, and yet, being in his person, very ah, very much a gentleman, very well dressed, he tended to always sort of look nice you know, the shoes shined and all of that and to have, and obviously was attracted to a relatively formal organized kind of church. Both in it's liturgy and other ways too. So yes, I think that's true and lets' face it, he went to, if I understand you correctly um, and you correct me if I'm wrong, but I think he went to VMI precisely because he felt he needed the discipline. Is that true?

B: Yeh

R: Yeh, that was my impression and I think he probabl't said that along the way. We were all very surprised when he went

to VMI.

B: He had never talked that over with anybody?

R: Well he probably did, I'm sure he did and I'm sure that he, we may have even talked about it, although as I say, by the time he was choosing a college I was already in one and probably not, in quite as close touch, but ah, I think he probably subsequently talked about it and if that's the impression that you got than I think it's probably true that he, that he felt that he ah needed that kind of discipline because given his um, ability, I don't know about his high school record but it probably was pretty good. It could have been anyway ah, if he put his mind to it and certainly his board scores and all of those things, he must have been a very outstanding student and my suspicion is he could have gotten into lots of colleges and maybe did. Not that VMI is a bad school mind you but being a military institute ah, of course when he got there, he entered greatly into all aspects of the life, including academic and ah, was, one of mentors was an english professor there and that's why he went on to HARvard in English.

B: Did he ever talk to you about ah, while we're on VMI, his experiences in the south or, he's quoted in one place as talking about he was attracted toward Johnny Red, I forget what peice of it

R: Yes, yeh he talks about the poor misguided Johnny Red in one of his essays. Um, I think he had a real feeling for the south and I think that combined with a lot of other impulses, the feeling a need for discipline, the ah, let's face it, the tendency toward spit and polish. I mean he really liked to get sort of dressed up and lookgood, you know, and the idea of a uniform and having everything in place, I think that sort of appealed a part of him. Um, and then the fact that VMI is in the south, I think all of those things went. went togetehr to to take him back down there I mean, yeh to go to college and then again into the deep south for the civil rights thing. Yes, I think he did, he had a deep seated love of the south, which I'm not sure I understood at the time, but I think looking back on it now, it was always there, there was something very much of the, now of course, look at me, I was a born brought uyp Keene New HAMPSHIRE and didn't know anything about the south at all but what always seemed to me there was something of the southern gentleman about him ah, he, as I say, he was very galant and very much the gentleman and would always do, always do the right thing and I say that not in a perjorative way but he would always write a thank you note, he would always bring a gift, you know, he apologized no end for not giving us a wedding present when we were married in August of 64 and he mentions it in a letter he was having a lot of other things going on in his life at that time and he just didn't get to it, but he made up for it. The following Christmas, I'll show it to you later, he brought us this beautiful wedgewood peice and with a nice note and everything. That's my memory of John, sort of being very, very gentlmanlyin the best sense.

B: Now what would you say he wanted the discipline for?

R: Oh his rebellious nature I think he felt needed that kind of control. I think he felt that maybe that kind of

discipline could, could ah, get him organized. Yeh, yeh, I think he had a real, what we used to say, a wild streak I mean, much more than I did. I was a fairly dull guy. I think by comparison ah, emotional and dramatic maybe but not, I mean, I'm sure I never would have done the things that he did. that whole escapade of falling off the roof and other things that I heard about. I was too conservative, I was too cautious by nature. It had nothing to do with politics but just too caustious by nature I think, too much of a coward you know to get ah,

B: Well what I wonder, I'm just interested, what must have convinced him that this was bad. Some people might say that was something to ???

R: Well yeh, all I can say is that, that a kind of, a kind of profound sense of the many sides of his personality, that there was some, in some letter that I was readng recently um, he talks about, oh I think it's in that little story that he wrote for the Enterprise um, which I showed you. Not the stranger but the other one and ah, in which he talks about the fellow who was rather wild egg, the priest in the story. What's the name, what is that clooege I just showed it to you I can't think, we'll pick it up later. Ah,

B: the Chicago ???

R: Yeh, the priest in that story was a sort of wild kind of guy actually too but at a point of real crisis in his life when his girlfrined leaves him and goes off and marries someone else ah, he goes through this tremendous trama and then he goes to his priest and his ah, gradually sort of realizes his vocation and goes and becomes in this case a Roman catholic priest and ends up working in the slums um, but I think an awareness of those many sidedness, the many options of the sort of thing that his rebellious nature and his sensuous erotic nature could have led him to and did in a short run, led him to some, at least, well I remember at least one fairly, well I don't want to say sordid, but fairly unfortunate sexual relationship which I think he lived through and realized how awful it was and got out of it, you know,

B: Was thid in high school or?

R: No this would have been later on,

B: 62?

R: YEH in the early 60's right, during that period right.

B: Was her name Georgiana or something like that?

R: Yeh, yeh, I think that was it and he tended, there was something about him that tended to, he tended to get into these, into these situations. So I think an awareness of taht and then of course the whole, I say, when this whole thing began to come clear to him in christian terms, I think he, it all sort of came together for him. Putting all of that wildness, if I may call it that, that sort of risk taking tendency. I mean I think about it sometimes, if I were in that would I have done that in the first place?

Would I have gone south, you know when the time came for me ah, to apply for, you know I thought of applying for one of these Woodrow Wilson teaching fellowships and go teach in some poor college in the south. Well I backed away from it, I wont say I was afraid of it but I did something else, I didn't do it.

B: I think a normal person would do it, average person

R: So John comes along and he hears the call from Martin Luther King, he personalizes it, he feels this is what he has to do. The holy spirit is moving him. He goes off down there, he throws caution in the winds he figures he can get along through his academic thing somehow but he puts first thing first. He goes down there, gets involved with the people, feels that this is a very right thing for him to be doing and then ah, puts himself in jeopardy. He knew he was in danger that last time he came and talked with us on the porch there in Keene, 28th of June I think it was in 1965 and he, he told us, he knew that he was being followed, by a car with a shotgun in it, you know, and ah, so he was aware but he had to go back. He felt that he had to go back and ah, so I just put myself in that situation. I don't think I would have done that. I don't think I would have had the courage although I was a person of faith, you know, and then when the moment came and the guy was there with the gun, would I have pushed somebody out of the way and taken the shot myself? I don't know, maybe I would have but I somehow see it as part of a pattern of John's willingness to put his life on the line. He was not what you'd call suicidal certainly, but and he was aware of problems of that orientation ah, but ah, in fact I can remember one strange episode which you may not want to put on the film but, we were at one of these wild parties at the Cimneys and we were all completely crooked and for some reason, we took it on our minds to go up on the roof or something and I remember my saying something like I was going to go from the lowest point on the house to the highest point and I don't, I had no intention of jumping off the roof because I was much too self preservative for that, but I was crooked. So I went down cellar and then I came running up, staggering up I suppose, to this great main stairwell and I said something about going from the lowest point to the highest point and John actually grabbed me and kind of, I think kind of forced me to the floor. I seem to remember his sort of grabbing a hold of me and saying, "You're not going to go up there. You're not going to go up to the roof" and I thought this was rather remarkable because I had no intention of hurting myself. I was just having a good time. But I think he was aware of, of through his own experiences in his own family and others he knew and he'd worked in an institution, no he hadn't at that point, I take that back but he was to later on, work in that institution up in Ithica. But he had an awareness of that tendency and I think that if he had any of that in himself, it was, how shall say, it was under control, it was focused. I wouldn't call Johnny suicidal but on the other hand he was much more willing to put his life on the line ah, then I think I have ever been.

B: Part of that might be his early, sort of rechanneling of sort of this nonconventional behavior,

R: YES

END SIDE ONE

L: Is this it?

R: No

L: The one that's ringing,

R: Oh yes, it does occasionally ring.

L: Would it be all right if I, or would you rather I didn't?

R: Ah, Lorna might want to, Lorna are you here?

Lorna: I'm here, I just didn't want to interrupt.

R: Yeh, Lorna, you remember Larry and Bill, Larry Benaquist and Bill Sullivan, Lorna Russell.

Lorna: I remember spilling wine on you.

R: Yeh, he's the one you spilled your drink on, right um, Larry's asking about that clock.

L: It just bonged in the middle of an interesting story.

Lorna: Oh, well just open the little door and just ah, by hand just stop the tension. And all I have to do is just tap it.

L: Okay thanks, thank you very much. That's a beautiful clock.

R: Yeh it is.

L: See this Bill with all this,

Lorna: Yeh good old french ah, it's from a different time. It bongs and it,

B: It bongs on it's own.

Lorna: No, I mean from a different era.

R: It bongs rather gently

Lorna: Something reminded me, I don't know whether you wanted to share, you were just telling a story and I thought, something which I heard and I didn't know if you wanted to share the poem that you had. (TAPE GOES OFF)

B: I had a couple other things to ask you about VMI. Things that come to mind, um, he had to test himself as a man physically.

R: Yeh, that could have been part of it, that could have been part of it, um, I being, I suppose a rather intellectual, nonathletic, flabby, skinny weakling, whatever, myself, I wasn't as aware of that being a problem to John. It certainly was a problem to me. Ah, I always wanted to be big and strong and athletic and I never was and I suspect that that may have been part of his reason for going to, for going to VMI but I don't ever remember our talking about it, no. No, I always looked at it more in terms of disciplining his wild ah, ah, spirit, which I think we did talk about a lot. BUT it could have that other aspect too, surely, yes.

B: How about his father's military experience?

R: Yes, well that could have been an influence too I suppose with the early exposure to the military and all.

B: I mean all of this time, who was he, was he trying to please more than the other or both of his parents or, I mean does he, how would that work? Or was he completely free of that influence or?

R: That's a tricky one. I.....I was never quite sure of what his relationship to his parents was. He was obviously very fond of them and, and ah, you know, when his, I played for his father's funeral and I can remember his organizing all of that and telling me to play "Onward Christian Soldiers", you know, the way it ought to be played and all of that and I know that his father was a great model and

inspiration to him and I think as close as a busy physician ah, could be. I don't think he spent a lot of time with him but, ah, his relationship with his mother, now maybe this is just my point of view as a fellow adolescent, whatever, high school kid growing up, but I always felt a certain tension between him and his mother. His mother ah, was a very lovely lady whom I was very fond of and always was friendly with, but she had a certain, a certain aloofness and I always felt that although she was very low key, that there was always a lot going on underneath and there were times when John would, ah, maybe get a little out of hand or a little wild or say something that she didn't approve of or something, when she would give him that wide-eyed stare, you know, as if you better shape up. So I always felt that, that, you know, it's chicken and the egg, you know, what comes first, whether it was his wild streak that made her a little bit authoritarian or whether it was ah, you know, the other way around. Maybe he was kicking up his heels and because he had an authoritarian mother or, I don't know. Maybe I misrepresent Connie ah, but, but um, I always felt that there was a bit of ah, a bit of tension there. It may have been no more than a mother trying to ah, have her sort of wild son come out all right, you know, I don't say it was anything deeper than that and she certainly was very proud of him, supportive ah, she encouraged him to do all sorts of different things that he seemed to have a talent for ah, but I think she, if she were here to tell us, I think she'd say that she had quite a time of it bringing him up, with Emily too of course, who had a pretty wild time of it too. I think they were quite a pair, so.

B: If you took Emily, I don't know if she was having trouble that early or not but, MAX Young's death. Did any of those things bother him?

R: Oh, I'm sure they effected him a lot. He was, well, to start out with, I think he was more um, he was more aware of death, of sickness and death than most of us were since his father was a physician and I I think that may account in part for his maturity about that sort of thing. I mean he was much more ease, well look at his stories. There's almost always someone getting killed, you know, and I wouldn't say so much that he was obsessed with death as that he was very relaxed and easy with it which is unusual for an adolescent. Um, and I think because he had seen a lot of it. So perhaps when, lets say the news of MAX Young's death came through, perhaps he wasn't as jolted as I was, I don't know. I know we were all effected by it because he was one of our close um, but I think that may have some rather deep ramifications or implications of John's whole attitude towards death. I think perhaps his, his apparent, who knows, his apparent fearlessness may have been, part of that, that he was more, more is anybody ever at home with death. But he, he was more willing to face it. I mean, he'd seen it many times, yeh, with his father's death and all sorts of other, I'm sure that all sorts of people along the way that um, that his father would have been, although I guess his father was a pediatrician, is that true or?

B: I think a GP, he delivered a lot of babies but,

R: So he also would have to do with a lot of dying patients then too yeh, right. So I think John had a lot of exposure to, to death and ah, a very good friend of the family was Foley, the undertaker, I don't say, I don't know how significant that is, whether John ever actually worked with him or not. But I know he was a good friend and when John was killed ah, you know Foley was a, a rock, more than just an undertaker for Connie. I know he took care of a lot of, the arrangements were rather complex and he stepped right in there. So I just had a feeling, I have a feeling now in retrospect that John knew a lot more about death than most of us did at that time.

B: How about at the Daniel's house there's a legend for its caos.

R: Yes, it always was (laughing)

B: Is there a relationship between VMI or the discipline in his house or?

R: Yeh probably, yeh John, John ah, yeh, there probably is. Although I would, it would be presumptuous of me to suggest what it might be. All I can tell you is that I spent a lot of time in that house and it was, I would say organizationally speaking, a disaster. I think, you know, housekeeping was not one of Connie's things. Ah, and ah, I think it is fair to say that John was fairly meticulous. Now, now I wouldn't want to go to court about that because it may not be true in his personal, you know, I don't know whether he left his clothes around the floor of his bedroom or not, but certainly in his personal appearance, his dress, his way of doing, well his writing, and his way of ah, his mental wife if you will. We're very careful and very meticulous. He always, he knew what he was doing, I mean, even, even in those days he could expound some theological position or something. He was kind of, as I think ah, Lany Conmore said, either in that sermon he preached back in November or informally, he said that when he first met John, he was sort of afraid of him because he seemed so much like a jesuit in the way his mind worked, you know, but, I think John did, he had a mind like a steel trap and he was very sharp and loved a lot of things and they were right there when he needed them. So, it could be that, that ah, there was a aspect of that whole atmosphere that maybe bothered him a little. On the other hand, who knows, he may have, may not have been so neat in every aspect of his life.

B: We're just, everybody's confused you know, we get responses to the scripts saying well why did he go to VMI, we're just trying to explore that. The obvious reasons, the discipline.

R: Yeh, I think that's pretty solid. I don't think anyone would disagree with that in fact I'm sure we talked about that. Yeh, but the other things, I have to admit, are speculative on my part and I wouldn't want to, I wouldn't want to say, except I remember yes, I remember what that house looked like and, you know, things were piled high and most of around, well the front room, the living room where people went in and sat was always fairly clear so people could,

B: Was there an air in the house to having to devote a certain social standards, like you know, the doctors son,

R: There might have been that kind of pressure. The Daniels' would have associated with some of the sort blue blood families of Keene, surely, the doctors, the lawyers, yeh, the, infact, if you know anything about the socioeconomic layout of Keene, it's probably still the vestiges of it are probably still there but there were certain wealthy families and then there were you know, doctors and other people who were wealthy perhaps for different reasons but, but there was a kind of elite, there's no question about it and the Daniels' would have been a part of that um, both because people knew and liked Phil and all and also simply because of, you know, where they lived in town and the people they would have known. So there might have been and some of what I saw in John's social polish may have been sort of forced on him. My impression was that he lived easily with it though. He was very at home being a galant gentleman yeh, that's

B: So there's that side and then there's the willingness to meet the other half and

R: Yes, yes there was and I think that, again, an early model in his father who must have had patience of all sorts and conditions and um, yes, yes there was that.

L: there wasn't ????? about it. We know that speaking to poor people in the south who never got the sense of being ????

R: No, not at all, no I think John, John was a very genuine person, he really liked people and he had a way of forming, very quickly ah, a really strong bond with people he liked. Young people, he liked children, he liked older, just everyone and it didn't matter what color their skin was or how much money they made or anything like that.

B: Before we leave the Keene, was there ever any talk about black/white relationships?

R: Well Keene, well as you know, because you live and work there and you've researched this project for many years now, there was hardly any, there were hardly any black people in Keene except for the Miller family on Elm Street um, and then ah, I think there was one Jewish family that, you know, the daughter was friends of ours. So I think the whole idea of, no I think interracial matters were not something we thought very much about. We all knew George Miller, you know, and ah, his family and we liked them and there was no, no problem there but then again, it was just a matter that it didn't come up. Obviously John, if John had been in the same, because John had been in the south, he would certainly have been very early on been introduced to the problem of racial strife and division.

L: Did he ever talk about any of the great events and integration that were going on in the ??? the court decision of 1954 any of the racial problems in um, Montgomery, because there were articles about those in the Sentinel I remember.

R: Yes, um, gosh Larry, I can't remember. I suppose maybe he did. We talked about all sorts of things and it could very well be that he did but it would be pure fabrication of me to say that he was talking about those things back then.

L: But it wasn't something that you would recall?

R: No, I don't recall it.

B: Well lets go up to 61 because you did that.

R: I all ready did that I jumped ahead

B: Now we heard that one of the reasons, well one of the reasons that he dropped out of Harvard and gave up his scholarship or fellowship, but one was ah, he finally began to confront his father's death, that he had delayed that. I don't know if that came up in your conversation.

R: Yeh, I think that might be true ah, when was his father's death exactly?

B: When he was junior at VMI

R: When he was a junior at VMI. Okay it would have been my senior year in college because I remember I played for Dr, Daniels' funeral which was huge. I mean everybody came and it was a, I think ah, a color honored guard because he had been in the military, and it was quite a thing.

B: We have his journal when he was over there.

R: HAVE you, really, is that right

B: Yeh, we got it transcribed and put over in the historical society. It was pretty interesting.

L: We found it in Putney, it was handwritten in pencil along with another journal.

R: It was a huge funeral and I remember it was a thrill for me to be asked to play and I was delighted to do that. It was in the big church, the church at the head of the square, not the church that I had gone to, but ah, yeh, I remember that very well. So that must have been, yeh I must have either come back for that or it was during a college break or something. Um, I, let's see, 59, 60 yeh, I wasn't in as close touch with John at that particular time. That is to say, not close enough to know how he was dealing with his father's death. I know that he, he sort of took charge and was very much, my memory of him that day was that he was very much in charge of things and thanking people and sort of seeing that everything went right um, but it could, yes it could be that he, that he um, didn't really, maybe went through some denial or so, delayed, he had a delayed grief reaction or something.

B: You say that he asked you to play Onward Christian Soldiers?

R: Yes, ah, he asked me to play for the funeral and, which I thought was all ready nice since I was not the organist of the church but rather a friend of his who, well, he knew was an organist, but ah, you know, he must have worked this out with the organist of the church, ah, yes and I remember that, I believe, now I have to look in my records but I think he, they didn't sing it but I think I played it as they went out with the casket and I remember his definitely coming up and telling me that just let her rip you know, whatever it's worth

B: Why would he want that song?

R: Well, it has military imagery it's a um, it's some people call it, of course today it's very unpopular because of all it's militaristic imagery and sort of triumphal image of the church ah, but I think back then, it probably would feel, I don't know if John even chose it, he might have even chosen the music for the funeral for that part. He might have even chosen that piece um, precisely because of the military ah, conection, you know, I really don't remember his, you know

B: It fits in with that whole idea in some ways of militance concept I talked about. Of course being at VMI too. It's interesting, as far as we know, during this period, if he doesn't become an agnostic he's close to it at VMI.

R: Yes, yeh, I think that was a bleak time for him spiritually yes, yeh, um, I say I would not have been in close touch with him then except we'd probably see each other in the summer time but I would not have letters or anything from him during that time. Kind of,

L: Well you were at Princeton.

R: Well, you tell me ah, yes I went to, I graduated from college in 1960 and I was at Princeton from the fall of 60 to the spring of 63 so we would have,

B: Where was your undergraduate?

R: I went to Amherst so when he was at VMI I would have been in Amherst, yeh, right

L: I see, all right. So you would have just been in the middle of your senior year at Amherst?

R: Yeh, I graduated from Amherst in 60, yeh, 59-60 would have been my senior year and John's junior year at VMI right.

B: So you didn't have a long conversation about it?

R: We didn't, I think we were both very much into other things at that time except for his father's funeral, and I suppose we got together in the summer time. I was, when I was in college I know I was painting houses, we must have had our Max annuals and a lot of conversations in the summertime but I think during the year um, the whole VMI period is kind of a blank for me. I mean I have strong memories of John in high school and then strong memories of the yeh, the 1961, 2 in there and then off and on up until the end. But the VMI period is kind of a blank in my memory and I think the reason is that, you know, we were both in college doing a lot of other things, activities, whatever, girlfriends, I don't know and so I never heard very much about what he went through at VMI. I know that he, he did excel academically and he was very influenced by this English professor whom I never met, ah, I think he won a Woodrow Wilson scholarship.

B: Yes he did and a Danforth

R: And a Danforth also, wow, yeh, and I know he went off to graduate work in English but I don't I wasn't I say, in close touch with him then so whatever spiritual crisis he was going through ah, I was not privy to that.

B: Did you know intimately or somewhat closer during the Harvard?

R: Ah, more yeh, I think, we had, we were more in touch then especially, well actually it was more the, no, no Bill, not so much the Harvard year itself because I'm thinking now and I think I've got my chronology straight. The Harvard year would have been my second year of graduate study. I was cramming for my PhD exams which occurred in the spring of 62 so I wasn't paying attention to much of anything else including my own girlfriend, um, I was grinding away down there trying to learn everything um, so when I got through that I would have taken my exams in May of 62, John had you said, by that time had dropped out of Harvard. So we were both in a position to really have more time to have long conversations and all of that so I think it was, it was

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probably whenever I came back, I did come back. That summer I did, summer of 61 I stayed in Princeton and just ground away at facts of music history but ah, that following summer I did come back and that's when we would have had a lot of contact.

B: and what was John doing then?

R: Working at Flowers I think the electrician um, and ah, I think maybe, you'll want to edit this tape, I think maybe Emily was institutionalized at that point. Because he spoke of going, taking all these trips to see her and try to balance everything out.

B: I think they were switching her from one place to another.

R: One institution, she was in Concord for a while wasn't she?

L: ???????? in Hatford

B: She was at a private one then they had money problems I think. and she had to come to Concord.

L: In one letter to his mother he talks about um, catching her just before she and ??? were going off to Mexico.

R: Oh great yeh, oh yeh she had a lot of, there were a lot of things there, and I know that, I know that that whole thing was very, well how should I say it, it took a lot and ah, but he put a lot into it too, I'm not saying that he didn't want to try to do everything he could but he really through. I think since they were, at that point a family without a father, I think that he really felt it was his

L: We better hold it, we're going to pick up their conversation

R: Oh okay,

L: So you got to spend a great deal of time with him during,

R: Yes yes, and we had some rather, some rather important conversations during that time. In fact one of the letters of his, one of the letters that I have kept was a rather brief note and I'm trying to think of the date. I believe it was dated June of 62 I'd have to check that, yeh, if I have a copy right here in fact. BUT he says in that letter I think that, you know, "Thank you, you've given me a push that I really needed" I think more happened in that conversation than I realized and I think we've been talking about vocation and he was, see he'd had a lot of time. I think that year was important for him because although he had to work and he had various romantic attractions and so forth, and then of course the thing with Emily which was constant, you just never knew what was going to happen next in that. I think for all of that, he did have time to think. I mean, just because of, because of having sort of dropped out of the Harvard program, he really was having more time to really think about things, and I think he was making some important decisions and of course it was soon after that that he really went to the bishop and the commission on ministry or whatever it would have been and the dioceses of New Hampshire to really ask them, back in those days you had to be sponsored to go to seminary ah, so they had to really approve before he could go, and I think that's the time in which he really felt that that's what he should do.

B: Was he active in the episcopal church?

R: Um, yes, yes he was, now again like forgive me if my chronology is confused ah, it was at least four years off earlier, but I believe he was teaching sunday school, singing in the choir and what else I don't know, but yes, I do beleive that while he was in that time and in Keene that he was very active in St. James and of course ah, Chandler

Macarty would have been that rector at that time and I know that Chandler was a big help to him and in his, the process of ordination always has something to do with the parish. It has more now than it did then, but he would have also had to have the support of his parish to get started on this.

B: Still even at this time there's that conflict between the wild side and submitting himself to the ministry. How did he handle that. Was that any different from the way he handled it in high school or,

R: Well I think he was older and more mature and more experienced, more sophisticated, certainly, theologically he'd read a lot um, in fact I've always been fascinated, you probably could help me with this, and maybe in another life we can get to it, um, I would like to, I'd love to know exactly what he read ah, I have surmised from some of the things he's said what some of his influences were and I'm sure that they included a lot of the ah, well the Carol Engine Divines and people like George Herbert and John Dunn and those people but also C.S. Lewis, I'm sure um, the, when I was in the hospital oh this is a little later around christmaa time of 63, I had a kidney stone attack, I had already started teaching here in fact and I was, but I was not married at the time and I was in the hospital in Keene and John came to visit me and he brought me the most wonderful book, it's called God In My Unbelief and it's a, one senses a, it's fictitious but one senses that it's autobiographical written by a man named J.W. Stevenson, who I've never been able to track down, but I think he must have either been a scottish presbyterian, clergyman or knew very much of that scene. It's a beautiful book, it's beautifully written, I have reread it more, I think I have reread it twice which is unheard of for me, ah, to go back and reread something. But he brought me that book as a kind of a, you know typical of John, you know as a present when I was in the hospital, and I think he must have read it and been very influenced by it. It's a beautiful story about a fellow who became ah, you know a scottish presbyterian pastor and his experiences of going into this parish as a young man and being accepted or in some cases being not accepted but finally sort of making his way into the hearts of these rather close-mouthed and ah, you know, private people, anyway

L: Like religious um, All Things, James ???

R: Right and beautiful, yeh right, really yeh and so he brought me that and I'm sure he would not have brought me a book that he hadn't read ah, and then other things along the way that I, well of course Bonhoeffer eventually, of course when he got to seminary he got to read all the, you know theologians and tillic and all those people. But prior to that, I think he read a lot and was very influenced by things that he read.

B: He wrote out his dissertation, I don't know if you've ever read it but we have a copy, on Camu

R: Oh did he, now that's interesting

B: Loss of faith, very much into existential thinking

R: Isn't that interesting. Now see that's a whole closed book to me, that's a whole chapter that I'm not ah

B: He didn't share that with you

R: No, well maybe he did and I forgot but I didn't ah, well yeh, maybe there was more of that back there than I realized when I talked him. I would not have, well I did read some in college and all but I would not have known very much about that whole feild myslef.

L: Well it made me think, if you have a divinity degree yourself

R: I doo, but that was much later yeh

L: So you graduated from Princeton, you graduated from Princeton with a PhD in music, you're a music history teacher, in 63

R: Well I didn't get my PhD until 66 but I left Princeton in 63

L: You were at EDS?

R: Yeh right exactly

L: And then when, it was later on in the 80's that you took divinity ????????????

R: Yeh I went back to seminary much later, I, was over 40 I think when I went to seminary, yeh that was a much later thing.

L: Did you ever have a parish?

R: I am what's called a priests associate at a parish in Renthem, a trinity in Renthem. I have never been the rector of a parish. I've done a certain amount of pastoral work but I've, I've continued to, It's funny, I was reading a letter of John where he says that he welcomes me into the church which at that time in 1964 meant that I was going to be a confirmed in episcopalian, in other words, I was going to do what he had done all ready, both in the congregational and the episcopal church, by that time I had married Lorna with an episcoaplian, ah, but he welcomes me into the church and apparently I was still, I was also talking, still talking about ordained ministry and he said something to the effect that, "You may dicover that you're ministry is in college teavhing" prophetic because I think that's where it's come out much much later. I rea;ize that, yeh I try to be open to parish ministry and even applied for a couple of positions and it just didn't seem to work

L: I like just the definition of ministry. It's a secular definition that includes and act of life out in the world. It's very consistent with other aspects of John.

B: So, 62, summer of 62 when John, Now most of your conversations about whether to and how to and um, get into the church, ???????

R: Yeh, right, and that's a lot of what we talked about I'm sure and ah, and ah, I think

B: What's the driving force for John at that point?

R: Well I think ah, probably, in a sense, a reaffirmation of thins he had always belived ah, I say the gospel of St. John was always important to him um, I think the um, probably some things I say that I'd love to know what he was reading. I sense from reading his letters, one can almost hear the rhythm of C.S. Lewis and some of the imagery, I'd like to know exactly what was in his library. But anyway um, and then I think just ah, things that were coming clear to him which I in my enthusiasm, see at that point, I'd just been through a kind of crisis in my second year of graduate

school where I had quote "decided" that I was going to drop it all and go off to seminary, which interestingly enough, would have ended me up in the congregational line of thing which I think might not have been right for me, but anyway, um, I was all, although I decided to stay and graduate school and finish my ah, work there, non-the-less, I was able to speak very enthusiastically about all of that, it was a dream of mine also and I think that, that that's probably what encouraged John and from what you say, he'd been through a lot more of a crisis in his faith than I had even realized um, but, but perhaps this was the kind of, I don't accept total responsibility, I think there were lots of other influences there too, but that may have meant a lot more to him tahn i realized at the time in terms of focusing him in a particular direction.

B: Were there other things on his mind or was that a?????

R: Well he had a lot of ideas about ah, well actually that was a little later , yeh, now we're talking about this is the preseminary time ah, he talked at various times about doing a lot of different things. I seem to recall that he was at various times, interested in, oh golly, medicine ah, being a psychiatric social worker, does that ring a bell, yeh, ok I'm not making that up then, that was later, ok, ok, um, and I think even after he got into seminary and can see ordination as the outcome of this, even then he wasn't sure what he would do. Whether he would go up and serve a prish in New Hampshire, whether he would go back to the south ah, that sort of thing

B: Well why do you think that was so hard for him, I mean that's rpesnt throughout, from high school on, finding the right road

R: Finding the right niche, yeh

B: calling if you would, doctor, even in the seminary school, he talks about dropping out and be a psychiatrist.

R: Yeh, ok then I didn;'t make that up. I thought that was a pull. Um, I don't know except that John was a very ah, complex person, a very , vocation was important to him, I think even brfore there was so much stress and colleges and having a career and making a name for yourself and earning money. I think it was an inherant sort fo drive um, I think he was, if I may say so and I say this in complete charity, I think he and I both were very, in that sense, image persons ah, essence persons too I hope, but I'm using that TA lingo, I think he was very much an image person and that it was important to him to be something and have that as kind of his identity. Lorna and I go around and around about this because she thinks that maybe males are more like that anyway, I don;t know, but she say, I don't think much about my image in society but I just do this and then I, she's much more an essence person I guess in that sense. But I think Johnny and I were alike in that we, it was very important for us to have a kind of identity ah, so that's all I can think is that it was a constant process of trying to sift through ah, getting input from friends and talking, he was very open. He had a lot of people that he talked very openly and deeply with about that and about all sorts of things. Yes it was a constant dynamic and I think Larry's probably right that if he had lived, that ah,

tension or whatever you want to call it, would have gone on, probably throughout his life. I can very well imagine his, as a middle aged parish priest just suddenly going off and doing something else

B: Like Bill Schneider

R: Yeh like Bill, yeh, all sorts of

B: And a lot of other people

R: A lot of other people really, yeh, yeh

B: How about male identity, either now or in seminary school?

R: Um, in terms of his self image as a male

B: What a male meant to him and was he comfortable with himself as a male?

R: Oh I think so, yes, I think so and ah, maybe this is a trivial reason, but it springs to my mind, ah, I think you've all ready mentioned how he had a way with woman ah, he did and I don't say in any manipulative way but just that woman liked him. Girls and woman of all ages liked him and I think it's because he was very, he was not only charming but he was very other directed and kind and thoughtful, I mean, he would do things that were considered and were, kind and loving, but I think in so far as a the male ego depends upon the female affirmation and I think there's something for that anyway, John would have felt very secure in himself as a male in that sense, no not as an athlete, not as a macho strong man, I think he, like me, he was probably disillusioned of anything like that long years since, I mean way back in school, I don't think he was anymore athletic than I was and the first time I realized that I couldn't throw a ball right or hit a home run or anything, you know, it was hard for me, but I gradually came to grips with that and realized well ok, I can't do that. I can play the organ and I can do other things. And I too always had girlfriends, I mean we, we had no reason to doubt our ah, masculinity from a sexual standpoint because we were constantly, in fact, that's a lot of what we talked about, you know boys, we were all sexed up all the time and that's a lot of what we talked about when we got together. In fact we had one, you'll have to cut this or edit this tape, whatever,.....all the typical romantic, you know, love from a distance because Julie, I took Julie to a couple of dances, I don't know whether Johnny ever did, but I did and it was just stiff arm all evening. I think she was afraid of me, and no wonder, she should have been. I was very fond of her and she

B: A lot of his relationships were really not spiritual in some ways.

R: Well yes, that's right and some were a bit of both ah, yeh, that's right, I can remember some older woman and yes, they often were that's right.

B: Did you know Mary Elizabeth Macnoughton?

R: I didn't know Mary Elizabeth Macnoughton Bonnet, although I did correspond with her later in the early 80's when I wanted to set some of John's poetry to music. I remember writing to her to see if she had any. But I never knew her, in fact I didn't know her when I got the John Daniels and saw the letters. No, I never, I'm still not clear in what phase, you know what stage she entered the,

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B: Christmas of a 64, he met her someplace in Walpole at  
christmas  
R: Oh, ok, fairly late then ok, well see  
B: That was the last  
R: The last romantic  
B: Well Judy Uppam  
R: Yeh I', not sure that was a mutual  
B: From Judy's side  
R: I think Judy was very fond of John, I've kept, it would  
be nice to see Judy, I've kept a little in touch with her, I  
see her at the seminary from time to time and  
L: She's been great with us  
R: Oh yeh, I think she was very fond of John  
L: A lot of woamn are still carrying torches for John now  
R: Yeh, well you know Judy never married  
L: There's a woman in keene who told me,????? last year  
B: It was Caroline  
R: Oh CARoline Pierce Sturgess, yes right, she's married  
three times since  
B: Is it three, she arried ?????  
R: Let's see, Caroline Pierce, Gary Howard was the first one  
L: I think Bill asked it this time, the questiona bout class  
distinction. We got the sense from what we've, that it's  
possible hat connie would have been a tad a little toward  
someone from the wrong side of the tracks, to use Caroline's  
description of herself when Caroline would come to the house  
????????  
R: That's interesting, yeh, I have this theory that Connie,  
you know, more or less, well I say rule with an iron hand  
but she had a very, she was a very strong and ah, yeh I can  
imagine that if she didn't aapprove of one of John's  
girlfriends of whom there were always, there always was one  
and I mean, I don't think John was ever for long without a  
female heart throb, ah  
B: Another concept I was going to kind of persue with you,  
you can shed some light on, was um, within the seminary, the  
conflict between abstract theology and the sort of

End of Tape One



B: 1963, so it wasn't long whether you got involved and then when you worked at Providence and then the state hospital. All those, and in his writings, he talks about the abstract versus the hands on, did that cover a topic with you?

R: Yes I think that was always a real tension or conflict with John because he was so bright and so intellectual and I think he could have been a wonderful theologian, you know, if he put his mind to that um, and yet, I think he, like me, felt, because look at me. I hadn't done any academic but I think we both always felt that, that interaction with others, that ministry with people was really the heart of the matter ah, Jesus being our model, so I think there always was, yeh, this image, which I was reminded again, reading that short story this morning, which I can't remember the name of still, um, but reading about this fellow, you know, this whole image of the slum priest. I think this was a very strong image for John and I think it probably, I don't know, I would suspect it took him, it may have contributed to taking him out of the academic program he was in at Harvard, simply because that was very obviously going to lead him into a scholarly career and probably in college teaching. I don't know that for a fact, but I suspect that that may have been part of it um, and certainly he had, it was an option with him, you see, he could have been a scholar or theologian of any sort, a scholar of any sort or a theologian and ah, so it was a real option for him and in that sense he would have felt, ah, intention about it. But he was very gifted, I've often wondered what kinds of oh, you know, books he would have written or sermons he would have preached. I mean he all ready wrote some marvelous things that I can go back to now and be fed by, but just thinking of what he, well it's, it wasn't the plan. Let's face it, he's had far more impact this way than he might have had in writing sermons for the rest of his life.

B: Did he talk about the Providence experience with you?

R: Yes, yes, he did a bit. He ah, he says in one of his letters to me and Lorna, in fact it was the letter he wrote after we were married in August of 64 and he wrote to us in October and then he came to visit us, in fact on his way to the Providence thing, because he would take the train down from Boston and get off in Mansfield and he'd stay overnight at our house and then he would go on, get on the train again and go to Providence because it was the Providence local he could take at some station and get on the T in Cambridge and just go all the way to Providence on public transportation. So he did talk about that. he was involved in a program with some students from Brown and RISD, I think and some other places and they had a kind of an out reach ministry to street kids down there, really, but all I gather, his work was under the aegis of this mission of the diocese which I'm not sure which church it was but it wasn't

B: St. John's

R: Was it St. John's under the cathedral church

B: ????

R: Oh, okay, yeh, well he was probably the victor of that yeh, um, yeh he must have worked under some clergy person.

B: I don't have absolute proof, I think they were, that was an interracial group, yes, oh I'm pretty sure it was. that was my impression, yeh, I'm pretty sure it was um, and that a lot of these kids had, you know, real problems, drugs and records, you know, criminal records and ah, and then he ah, I think he enjoyed that work very much and wished that he had more time to put into it, one of the many things that he felt an affinity for, working with young people and he enjoyed working with the other students too, I think I can imagine he got along very well with them and had a lot of fun with them. He did talk about that some.

B: I'm wondering in this period, joining the NAACP, doing this kind of vista like work, peace corp, if he's getting caught up in the ecos that's developing in the 60s. That kind of Kennedy/Johnson ah, business

R: Oh I think he is, I think, oh yes, I'm sure he was.

B: Do you remember anything like that coming out or any chats, any talks about that. I mean, sometimes you can do that without articulating. You just

R: We probably did. We probably did talk about it ah, I dearly wish that I could reconstruct that and many other conversations um, but surely that fall, he came to visit us in the fall of 64, in Mansfield, he was our first house guest as a matter of fact. We put him up on the couch I guess, a folding couch, ah, cot, but ah, I really, well Lorna has a good ah, a good memory, I suppose she might be able to dredge up some of that. But I don't remember specifically his saying anything about feeling and urge to go down there or so, but of course, you know what happened when the call came, when Martin Luther King called for volunteers, he just felt that's what he had to do.

B: Did you have any chats with him about his Selma experiences or, any ???

R: Ah, about being in Selma you mean, or, um,

B: Did you see him at all in 65?

R: HE came to visit us that one last time, I did not, now, lets see. No that's not true. I visited him at the seminary sometime in the spring of 65. MAYbe when he came back to take his exams. I think I did because I have a distinct memory of visiting him at the seminary, I'm not sure that I had been there before but I have a very strong memory of visiting him. I think he was, he might have even been managing the bookstore then, but at least he was, or was that the previous year, the previous year okay. BUT anyway, I do remember visiting him and we had a, there was a fellow named Dick Ullman, who is now the arch deacon of Southern Ohio who went on to be a priest and ah, he was, and been a friend of mine i Amherst and he then went to EDS so we knew him and I remember definitely hearing Dick Ullman talking in the men's room or something and joking with John. So I did visit him then with....what in mind, just to visit him I suppose, because at that point I had kind of recomitted myself to finishing my graduate program, um, I wasn't thinking of going to seminary at that point, nor would I have gone to an episcopal seminary. So I guess I went probably just to see him. Ah, then, whether Lorna was with me at that time or not I don;t know. She would have been doing graduate work at Harvard and whether she came up

too, I really don't remember. But then the one I really do remember is when he came to visit us at 23 Pleasant Street, our old homestead and we sat out there, my sister and my parents and my niece and I, when he came back for the last time and he had his Volkswagon all loaded up there and ah, he came up and sat on the porch and smoked cigarettes and talked with us and it was the last time we saw him alive and I do remember quite a few things about that conversation.

B: Could you tell us some.

R: Yeh, he talked a lot about his work down there, he, that was when he mentioned, my sister said ah, "aren't you in a lot" you know, asked, I don't remember the exact words of course, but asked him if he weren't in a lot of danger and he said yes that he definitely was. That he had been, in fact, followed by somebody with a shotgun, um, he had made some moves at that time or was to when he went back, I guess when he went back to ah, not to just use the little volkswagon but to get a bigger car that would go faster, yeh, is that true, okay. I say these things and then I wonder if they are true. But I think he said that, and he had gone, you know, when Viola Liuso had been murdered and he had gone to the Colly Wilkins trial and it was a farce. I mean it was just a, you know, well one can say that his trial was to be too, but it was just a h, an insult to the whole idea of justice, and he told us quite a bit about that and that he had been there and that it was just ridiculous. A, he told us quite a bit about his ah, his work, ah, what he was trying to do down there, ah, what he was doing, how he had gone back and gotten a lot of help from his friends sending him notes and things and how he got through his ah, exams. A, I recounted in a letter to Bill Schneider which he excerpted for obvious reasons, but I'll never forget John's last remarks and, it's sort of, I guess it's very appropriate that this should stick in my memory, and John would get a big kick out it, ah, the last thing he said, when he stood there as he was going to get into his volkswagon and leave, my mother, we came out to say goodbye to him and my mother told him to be careful and he just grinned and he said, "Well, you know what my father used to say 'keep your mouth shut and your bowels open'" and he grinned and off he went, and that was a very typical kind of, you know, little parting shot from John and he was that kind of guy. Wonderful sense of humor and always a kind of flare and ah, so off he went to his death, although I don't say that he knew that. But he knew he was in danger al;l right and ah

B: Had he changed do you think from the last time you saw him?

R: Ah, no, I don't think so. My, but that's maybe not a meaningful statement. That's just an anecdotal statement because I didn't see him frequently during that period. But I would say, my memory of John from the summer of 62 on, was of a man who was buoyant and committed and sometimes over extended and sure he had all of these different things that he had to do and was trying to keep all the balls in the air, but of a man who knew his vocation and who was ah, joyously pursuing it I would say, yeh. In that sense he had, yeh he had certainly, that was a change over many years

before I guess, surely, when, before he had that kind of a clear sense of a vocation. But I think he, if anyone ever knew exactly what he was doing, he or she was doing, ah, I think it was John. I think toward those last months and perhaps even years, at least the months, I think he knew very well what he was doing and that was affirmed for him in all sorts of ways. The response that you have sampled because you've talked to these people, the response that he got from the black community, the friends he made the ah, admittedly, okay the enemies to but I think he, and the support he got from his, from his seminary, from his friends back there and from the faculty who did everything they could to make it possible for him to do this. I think that he, I've often thought that if we, you know, C.S. Lewis talks in The Screwtape Letters about the law of undulation, you know how we vacillate and it's certainly true in matters of the faith and ah, and I think that if John was subject to the law undulation, he was an up node, he was in a node rather than an antinode at the time of his death. I think he went out with his boots on and ah, I don't say that he wanted to die or that he brought it on or that he was suicidal or anything like that but I think on the other hand, he went out in the full flood of his faith and would, would not have wanted it any other way. If that's what it meant, if that's what discipleship that was okay with him.

B: Where were you, we always ask this as a last question, where were you when you heard about John's death?

R: I was at home in the apartment where he had been, um, a few months earlier and ah, that was, and Lorna was there and the call came from, I'm trying to think now, I think I'm right in saying it came from my brother-in-law, Jay Galliger, to whom I, I wrote a letter that's in that folder I'm going to give you, but anyway, ah, Jay lived in the same house, he married my sister and he was a newspaper man, in fact he had been managing editor of the Sentinell, and ah, I believe it was Jay who called and at that point it was so soon, I mean it was just the next day, I really don't remember, maybe Lorna would remember what time of day it was, but we were there and I think he, I remember his saying, because the facts were not clear at that point and he said that John Daniels had been killed in the south and that he thought that there had been a demonstration or something and somebody had fired into the crowd which of course wasn't true, but at that point the facts were not very clear ah, and we were just stunned. We were absolutely devastated. We were so fond of him and he was the one, the one friend from that early time who meant so much to both of us although Lorna, admittedly, had only known him for a short time, but from hearing me talk about him you see, knowing how much he meant to me. Later on we developed another very close friend, faculty member here who was interestingly enough, who was also killed in an automobile accident later on. But at that time, John was certainly the closest friend that we shared. It was a terrible blow to us and I think reading over the letters that we wrote to Lorna's parents for example and to my parents, all of who were living at that time, ah, it was very difficult for us to deal with that. Um, I maybe dealt with it a little, well

it's better. I could rationalize more easily about it than she did but she was very turned off by the whole thing. I think at that point, she wrote a letter to her parents, this is my wife now, saying that she, you know, this was after we'd gone to the funeral and all, and saying that she just thought it was terrible and they, having an open casket was awful with John's body looking the way it did, of course it didn't look very good, um, and ah, I don't know, she was just very bitter about the whole thing. The cruel logic of a woman, as Edward Arlington, Robinson, whoever it is, says but ah, I think I was more able to see it in christian terms, but it was none the less a terrible blow to me emotionally. He was my, he was my best friend I mean lets face it, I think that's fair to say. My closest friend from the Keen days. Now I have kept in touch with Jean Felch and I would certainly want to include him in that and I had a very good friend in college, my roommate. But I think taking a larger view, John was certainly, at that point, my best friend. So ah,

B: Okay, well why don't we take a little break and then film

R: Okay, okay

B: Now, you saw in high school, the daring part of John, willing to take chances, how that, maybe you can take a breath or maybe go into how that relates to the course of discipleship.

L: And just ignore me again

B: Yeh, you just look over here

L: So, what um, you just let me know when you want me to crank Bill

B: Yeh

L: Okay, so why don't you begin thinking about that, just talking about that

L: And then Bill will signal me nad I will just do what I have to do

B: This idea of John being different than you and most of those in a sense. Even at an early age he was willing to do things for people

R: Yes, when do I start?

L: If you could treat it the same as if it were the tape recording and just forget about the image entirely.

R: Okay, forget about the image, but I should look at you, look at Bill, forget about you.

L: Right, please

R: Okay, well John certainly was the kind of person who was willing to take risks and I think that he, he lived his life in a more, I would say, other directed and courageous way certainly than I did and I think most people did and I think that that ah, well (BEEP) that manifested itself in various ways ah, I will not retell the famous story of his climbing up the ladder and falling off the roof, but ah, I think there were ah, other examples of that willingness to, yeh, to take a risk and to live more dangerously than the rest of us did and I think that certainly did stay with him throughout and obviously later on when he, when he got more and more into his theological studies and was reading such books as Bonhoeffer's Cost of Discipleship which I know had a

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profound influence on him. I think that he, he really identified with that. He realized that that is in fact what is called for in a disciple. The willingness, as it says in St. John's gospel, to lay down one's life for one's friends, which is not to say that he purposely did that in a suicidal way but on the other hand, he held his life lightly and was willing to, to risk it for others and I think that's exactly what Bonhoeffer meant by a life for others.

L: That was great.. We have plenty of film if you want to do another

B: We'll do a couple of more

L: I like using film for awhile. Yeh we've got about a quarter of a tank or so

R: A quarter of a tank (laughs)

L: Everything is shut down. Se I was thinking of the story of when you were going to climb the roof, and ah, that Johnathan held you back

R: Oh, oh gosh, that's a very strange story I don't know. Well I don't know what to make of it

L: It actually indicates that ah a timidity on his part.

R: Either that or so much familiarity with ah, potential suicide and death and danger and all of that that he interpreted my actions as heading in that direction. And I was just struck by it, because that was the farthest thing from my mind.

L: Well I think the other thing would be ah, let me think about this a little bit, just a couple of observations on that last day that you saw Johnathan.

B: Yeh, maybe you can think about this dichotomy early on between daring and authority, that works out and you might want to speak about that. You talked about the daring and now maybe how there was that other side which might explain the VMI ???

R: Yes, that sort of thing that we talked about. Surely....

B: So you can begin at any time.

L: The daring and authority conflict.

R: Right, yes I think that John certainly did experience a kind of tension in his life. He had somewhat a wild and adventurous spirit and certainly was constantly (BEEP BEEP) more or less constantly involved in some kind of ah, romantic venture and yet on the other hand he felt, probably because of that, he felt a real need for discipline and I think one can, at least in retrospect, one can see these 2 things going on together. Why was he attracted to a very liturgical church with a more or less formal hierarchy and a more or less objective formal type of worship um, because of that. Why was he attracted to the military. I think part of it is that desire for order for organization and discipline in his life, a desire and a feeling that he needed it and ah, I think that probably was a, a kind of tension throughout. I've always felt and I think that you have confirmed, that's a lot of why he went to a military institute for his college years.

L: Cut

B: Great. Is there anything you want to say about, although we haven't talked about it, about service, John's concept of service or anything like that.

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R: Well

B: What it means to you after thinking about it all these years. We talked a little bit about disciple ship and I'm thinking about what you said about John's closeness to people.

R: Yes, yes I think I could say something about that, I think I could say something about his, his ah, how shall we say, the ah, the tension between his pastoral and his intellectual or theological sides, yeh, I think one can certainly talk about that.

L: Want to give that a shot?

B: Yeh

L: Okay, let her rip and I'm just here

R: Oh, nothing is on, okay. Well we seem to be speaking of John as a man of contrasrt and as a man of tensions and ah different sorts of leanings and I think one sort of striking tension was that between his intellectual capacity, he was very well read. He obviously had considered a career in the academic, he obviously could have done that and had a real flare for it (BEEP BEEP BEEP) and was in fact embarked upon that at a point ah, the conflict or the tension between thta intellectual life and the more of what I would call pastoral aspect of dealing with people. I think this was always someting he had to deal with. I think when we, in our conversations it would frequently come up. I in fact ended up mainly in the academic life um, and it's hard to say what would have happened ultimately with John. I think he would have dealt with that probably throughout his life time. As I said, he would have made a wonderful theologian or preacher or scholar really in any field he had chosen. BUT I think he always felt that somehow the heart of the matter was with people and that was where minstry really centered and so he, he was constantly reaching out to others, in fact, living theology which I'm sure was not a term original with him, is one he uses in one of his essays and I think he certainly knew what that was and lived it out in his life.

camera  
off

L: GOOD

B: Are you done with your film.

L: I've got about another 100 feet in the other container. So if you want to do another take feel free.

B: Just the ????

L: If you want to, I think those three are pretty good unless there some ah resason that we, I'm trying to think how it would look in the film to have Carleton talk about that last. Yeh I'm thinking about the structure of our film. In your questions that you asked, Carelton asked, on the more abstract side are really important. I wasn't thinking of, it's such an powerful story of sitting on the porch but we've got that on tape.

B: You can show the porch

L: Yeh maybe we could take a picture of that house

R: Sure my sister would be happy to have you do that. In fact she may even have some memories of John if you ever want to hop in and see her

L: What's her name

R: I could give you her name and address if you want. I don't have a pen. If you feel all right about that Bill

END INTERVIEW(TAPE 2)