

Summary

1. Opening & Context

1. **Small turnout**
 - Hosts note that only 15 people registered, the smallest number so far.
 - They reflect on whether interest in the Zoom format may be diminishing.
2. **Purpose of the meeting**
 - To collect memories for a Cornell archives project documenting the Class of 1971.
3. **Participants joining**
 - Several classmates join the call for the first time.
 - Naomi encourages new attendees to share their memories.

2. Archival Materials & Student Life Artifacts

1. **Daily diary entries**
 - One host describes writing detailed daily entries that captured weather, social events, rehearsals, and campus incidents (e.g., Willard Straight takeover).
2. **Historical interest**
 - The other host observes that such materials are exactly what future historians would want—documentation of everyday student life.

3. Major Campus Events Recalled

1. **Willard Straight Hall Takeover (April 1969)**
 - Naomi notes her calendar entries:
 - April 19: “the blacks took over the Straight.”
 - April 20: They left after 30 hours at 4:30 p.m.
2. **Barton Hall Teach-in/Sit-in**
 - Happened shortly after the Straight events.
 - Participants acknowledge these events as central to sophomore-year memory.
3. **Ackerman Tenure Protest**
 - Mentioned by Naomi and confirmed through recollection and quick reference:
 - Professor Charles Ackerman was denied tenure, prompting a demonstration on April 17.

4. Freshman vs. Sophomore Year Experiences

Participants discuss the *transition* from freshman to sophomore year.

A. Academic Adjustments

1. **Scheduling mistakes**
 - One participant: freshman year included poorly scheduled classes (8 a.m. deadlines, scattered timetables) that she corrected sophomore year.
2. **Major differences**
 - Another participant: sophomore year meant more rigorous, major-specific courses (e.g., organic chemistry with competitive curves).
3. **Changing majors**
 - A third participant: failing an 8 a.m. materials science lab (due to missed classes after Friday nights) pushed him out of engineering and into Arts & Sciences and economics.

B. Influential Professors

1. **Lack of awareness of professor prestige**
 - Several participants admit they didn't understand at the time how prominent their professors were.
2. **Specific recollections**
 - Alfred Kahn (economics of deregulation)—later worked in the Carter administration.
 - Clinton Rossiter (Government).
 - Various sociology and political science faculty.

5. Social Life, Housing, and Culture

A. Dorm Rules & Later Changes

- Freshman year: no alcohol in dorms, no opposite-sex visitation.
- By graduation: co-ed dorms and co-ed living arrangements had become common.

B. Co-ops, fraternities, and residences

- A participant lived in a fraternity (Sigma Nu), later regretted joining.
- Another lived in Algonquin Lodge (co-op).
- Stories of cooking on irons, cold dorm rooms, and improvised refrigerators (balconies in winter).

C. Clubs & Social Groups

- Discussion of “Ivory Tower,” a women’s drinking society, and similar student traditions.

6. Personal Growth & Political Awareness

A. Social and intellectual awakening

Participants highlight how Cornell exposed them to:

- Political activism
- Vietnam War debates
- Racial tensions and civil rights issues
- Feminist courses (e.g., history/evolution of the female personality)

B. Shifting views during college

1. **Vietnam War**
 - Some recall arriving with “establishment” views and becoming more critical through exposure to alternative media and coursework.
2. **Engagement in protests**
 - One participant participated in the Barton Hall occupation.
3. **Exposure to diversity**
 - Another emphasizes how Cornell broadened her worldview beyond the provincial small town she grew up in.

7. Daily Life Reflections

Participants share snapshots of their daily routines and concerns:

- Balancing academics with social life (or with athletics, as Jeff describes with varsity basketball/baseball).
- Music exploration at Willard Straight Hall.
- Learning through lived experience more than through coursework.
- Navigating new friendships and shifting identities during turbulent historical times.