

Summary of Zoom Session

1. Purpose and Opening of the Meeting

The meeting, led by **Naomi Katz Mintz**, focused on capturing memories for the class archive. Participants were invited to share:

1. A memorable day.
 2. Something meaningful they still have from Cornell.
 3. Something someone said to them that stayed with them.
-

2. Personal Memories & Meaningful Items

2.1 Speaker 1 – Taekwondo & Advice

- Took Taekwondo at the Noyes Center; paid \$15/month.
 - A friend asked, “Would it be worth \$15 to you not to get kicked?”—and he quit shortly after.
 - Lived in Algonquin Lodge.
-

2.2 Academic Struggles & Mentors

Speaker 2 – Organic Chemistry & Encouragement

- Struggled severely with organic chemistry.
 - Freshman nutrition professor tutored her privately.
 - Professor told her: “**You’re going to make a contribution one day.**”
 - Sharon kept this inspiration throughout her career.
-

3. Influential Courses & Professors

3.1 History of Science Courses

Multiple participants praised **L. Pierce Williams' History of Science** and related courses as life-changing.

3.2 Human Development

- Transferred from UVM.
 - Fell in love with Yuri Bronfenbrenner's large lecture on human development.
 - He told her to **write her own recommendation letter**, which he would sign.
-

4. Fraternities, Social Life, and Relationships

4.1 Fraternity Memories & Meeting His Wife

- A participant rushed Zeta Psi; humorous story about serenading brothers in a convertible during winter.
- His most meaningful "souvenir" was meeting his wife of 51 years at a freshman tea.

4.2 Importance of Fraternities

- Another participant was an Alpha Delt member and house president; social life centered on the fraternity.
-

5. Cultural & Social Life at Cornell

5.1 Concerts and Music

- Venues like **Bailey Hall** and **Barton Hall** hosted major acts.
- Simon & Garfunkel concert is remembered vividly; they humorously altered a lyric to "from Berkeley to Cornell."

5.2 Music in the Echo Room (Annabel Taylor Hall)

- Students gathered to sing with guitars in the building's echo room; a fond social memory.
-

6. Campus Politics, Social Change & Historical Moments

6.1 The “Street Takeover”

6.2 Guns on Campus (Contextual Reference)

Participants briefly referenced the famous 1969 Willard Straight armed takeover.

6.3 Dramatic Shifts in Women’s Status

One participant described how the class entered Cornell under curfews and “co-ed” restrictions, but left during a time of major feminist awakening:

- Early years: curfews; women treated as children.
- Later years: taking a course titled “**Evolution of the Female Personality**,” reflecting cultural transformation.

7. Study Struggles & Growth

7.1 Discovering Study Skills

- One participant scored lowest on a textiles exam; felt overwhelmed.
- Took Cornell’s “Reading and Study Skills” course, which transformed her academic performance.

7.2 Rediscovering Old Notebooks

Participants laughed about finding old notebooks full of doodles and sarcastic margin notes—evidence that they often tuned out lectures.

8. Travel & International Experiences

Another Participant – Africa Trip

- Visited multiple countries including Senegal, Ghana, Egypt, Kenya, and Zambia.
- Noted excitement of nations newly liberated from colonial rule.
- Met a professor in Zambia who later appeared again in her law school life.

9. Class Identity & Legacy

9.1 Feeling Like “The Forgotten Class”

- One participant noted their class was sometimes overlooked—e.g., their composite photo missing at a reunion site.

9.2 Motivation for Creating an Archive

Participants emphasized their responsibility to document their unique era—from campus upheavals to cultural shifts—so that the Class of 1971 is remembered.

FINAL SUMMARY

The Class of 1971’s Zoom discussion provides a vivid collective memory of life at Cornell during a turbulent and formative period. Participants recalled academic challenges, treasured mentors, fraternity life, concerts, major social changes, political protests, and personal milestones—including marriages that began on campus. The reflections capture both the humor and the seriousness of their experiences, illustrating the transformation they underwent—particularly the women—during their years at Cornell. The conversation underscores their desire to preserve these memories so the class will not be forgotten.