James M. Rini '64
Dartmouth College Oral History Program
Dartmouth Vietnam Project
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Transcribed by Mim Eisenberg/WordCraft

[RILEY E.
CARBONE: So this is Riley Carbone, and I'm at Rauner [Special Collections] Library at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, with Dr. [James M.] "Jim" Rini. This is the 17th of August 2016, just a bit after 1 p.m., and this is an interview for the Dartmouth Vietnam Project.

So to begin, could you maybe give me some information about kind of the biographical details of your early life: where you were born, what date were you born on?

RINI: Sure. I was born in Cleveland, Ohio. When I was about four, we moved to Shaker [Heights, Ohio]. Started in school at one of the public schools called Lomond [Elementary School], L-o-m-o-n-d, up through fourth grade. By that time, the Catholic church had built a school, and so I was transferred from the public school system to the Catholic school system for the fifth through eighth grades. Then after that, I went to a Catholic prep school called Gilmour, G-i-l-m-o-u-r, Academy and from there to Dartmouth College. Graduated in 1964. From there, to Dartmouth Medical School, now known as Geisel [School of Medicine], much to my angst, finishing with a bachelor of medical science in 1966, and then transferred to finish the last two years of medical school at Harvard [University], graduating in 1968.

CARBONE: Wonderful.

So what were your parents' names? What were their professions?

RINI: My dad is, or was, Martin August Rini. He was a lawyer, a trial lawyer, a litigator, highly respected in Cleveland. My mother was a homemaker. She didn't go past high school, but she had a lot of great qualities, including organizational skills and a fantastic personality, where if the party was dull and she walked into a room, they'd be having a good time in 30 seconds. She was very talented in her ability to sing and

had the lead in all the operettas and was talented in terms of decorating and putting together fashionable clothes.

CARBONE: And did you have any siblings?

RINI: I had—

CARBONE: or have any sibling?

RINI: —three siblings: Mary Jo [Rini], three years younger; Terry Ann [Rini Patton], six years younger; and [Martine] "Marty K.," 14 and a half years. As you see, my mother had a penchant for double names.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

And so you mentioned that you started at Lomond Elementary and then transferred to the Catholic school?

RINI: Uh-huh.

CARBONE: So was the Catholic faith a big part of your upbringing?

RINI: It was a big part of my upbringing, but it isn't any longer. [Laughs.]

CARBONE: Can you expand on that?

RINI: I give them credit. I learned a lot of math, great math skills. A Catholic education is a very good education. And I had a wonderful chemistry course that taught me—that was tenth grade—that taught me a great deal about thinking and analyzing things. So I don't know what else to say about it other than that.

CARBONE: Sounds good. And so you mentioned that your father was a lawyer.

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: So can you tell me a little bit more? You had a comfortable upbringing, I am assuming, but what was—

RINI: Well, he was an Italian father, fully, 100 percent Italian. I think you can understand that. Sicilian in origin. And very strict. It was very hard to get a compliment out of him because he was always afraid that if he complimented you or praised you, you wouldn't keep working.

And a little story, a little vignette is that by junior year of high school, we no longer had to take physical education, so I no longer got a B.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: So had this report card with perfect A's. And as a lawyer, he—dealing with him was always by reason. The only way to deal with him was rationally. No emotional argument would ever get anywhere. So I handed him the report card after the first six weeks, and he put down the paper, put his glasses on his head, looked at it, handed it back to me and said, "Pretty good." And I said to him, "Is there any grade that is higher than an A?" He said, "No." I said, "Is there any grade on that piece of paper that isn't an A?" He said, "No." I said, "That isn't 'pretty good, that's excellent." And I walked away. That'll give you a little idea of what it was like.

CARBONE: And so what was Shaker [Heights], Ohio, like at this time?

RINI: Shaker [Heights], Ohio, was a really affluent suburb. Many people who were very successful. The school system was superb, which is one reason why my father moved from the house in which I was born in Cleveland to Shaker [Heights], to become part of that educational system. And today it's still a very nice suburb.

CARBONE: Was the expectation in your family that you would pursue higher education and go on to college?

RINI: Oh, sure, yeah. Yeah, my dad graduated from Notre Dame University] in 1928; from law school, in 1931. He had a sister who was five years younger—I had to think about the math—five years younger, who was a graduate of [Case] Western Reserve University in Cleveland. That's a woman who got a college degree during the [Great] Depression. That's pretty unusual.

CARBONE: Yeah. Certainly. And so what made you decide to attend Dartmouth?

RINI: Well, that's a long story. I don't know if you want the long—

CARBONE: Yeah, no, go into it.

RINI: So I was a very naïve senior in high school, and I was just enjoying learning, so I didn't worry about—peripheral things didn't even enter my mind. I didn't care about driving. My mother made me get a license so I could drive my sisters around. I didn't care. I didn't care about girls. I was just enjoying going to school.

So just before Thanksgiving senior year, she says, "Come over. We're gonna have to take a trip." And so we drove east. We had gotten names of schools from Gilmour as to a good place to go for pre-med. Dartmouth was on that list. So we stopped at Colgate [University], looked over Colgate. Stopped at University of Massachusetts. Stopped at Amherst [College]. I think we stopped at Williams [College]. Got to Boston. I was doing the navigating; Mother was doing the driving. I said, "Mom, park here. We're close to MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]." And without my realizing it, we were right in front of MIT. But I'm not hesitant to ask questions.

So this guy was walking down the street. Crew cut. Clipboard. And a slide rule hanging from his belt. And I said to him—I said, "Excuse me, but where's MIT?" And he looked at me and with his clipboard he went, "Uh-huh.," pointing to the dome. And I said, *Oh, dummy. Okay.*

Anyway, go up there, walk in. There's the Foucault's Pendulum swinging back and forth. I look around, look at some of the exhibits. About a half an hour later, I say to the guard, "Where's the men's room?" "Down the hall. Take a right. Two doors on the left." So I did just that: down the hall, took a right, two doors on the left. And it said 103-7. So I thought about it. *This is what he told me to do?* This is what I did. I pushed the door, and it was the men's room. That was it for MIT. I wasn't going to go to a place that they couldn't possibly put "Men's" on the men's room. That's—that's far too much emphasis on numbers.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: Next stop was Harvard, and I was there when the bells went off and everybody changed class, and I looked around. *My God*, I said, *this is not a regular college. This is Harvard, but it's just not a regular place.* So finished there.

Drove up to Hanover. In those days there were no interstates, so it was all back roads. It seems forever.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: In the dark, going around the mountains. Finally—finally got here, and we checked into the Hanover Inn. My mother was immediately in love with the place because the Hanover Inn at that time was not modernized as it is today, but just like an old-fashioned inn: very cute, quaint. We had a room with twin beds, and it couldn't be cuter.

And we get up the next morning, and we go, and I have an interview, and we talked to one of the admissions officers, and he says, "Well, you have to—you have to fill out a card to ask for an application." I said, "Oh, okay. Well, where's the card?" And I filled it out right there and handed it to him. And he said, "Would you like to see a class?" I said, "No." I said, "I'd like to walk around." "Would you like someone to go with you?" "No, no, we'll just walk around."

So we walked around. And I got to the steps of Dartmouth Hall, and a nice young fellow came by, and I asked him a question. Couldn't have been nicer. Answered the question. "Would you like to come with me? Would you like to sit with me?—duh, duh, duh, duh, you know, whatever.

So by this time, it's about 12:30—sorry, it's 11:30, and I say to Mom, "Okay, let's go." She says, "Go?" I said, "Yeah." "Have you seen enough?" "Oh, yeah. I've seen all I have to see." So we get in the car. We're driving down [New Hampshire] Route 10, and she says, "So where do you want to go?" I said, "I want to go to Dartmouth."

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: And she says, “But you didn’t spend any time.” I said, “I’ve seen all I have to see.” And that was it. [Starts to cry.] I’m still emotional about it. It’s ridiculous, but [it was] the best four years of my life.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Sorry.

CARBONE: Oh, no, certainly. We can take a minute if you need.

RINI: Silly. I’m good. [Recovers.]

CARBONE: You are?

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: You want to continue?

RINI: [No audible reply.]

CARBONE: Okay.

So you began college in 1960.

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: But that was also the year of the election of JFK [John F. Kennedy].

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: So can you tell me anything about the political atmosphere at the time, that election, significance to you as a Catholic family?

RINI: Well, 1960 I was 19, so I don’t know if I was allowed to vote then or not. Yes, definitely. I definitely—and I voted for Kennedy—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —because I was struck by his vigor and his intellect and, you know, knew nothing about all his background and the rest of that stuff that we now know now.—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —which makes him less than a savory individual. But, yeah, I was—I was taken by the—by the youthfulness and—and the talk, and I voted for him then. I wouldn't say—there were political organizations on campus, but for the most part, they weren't a really pervasive part of the student experience. There were people that were political, and there were other people that weren't. I just kept track of a few things. I didn't read the paper daily. I was more interested in doing my homework and the rest of that stuff. So he was part of the mix. I voted for him, and that was it.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I don't know if that answers your question.

CARBONE: Yeah, no—were politics a point of conversation in your family at all, or not so much?

RINI: Interestingly enough, not a lot. Some, but not a lot. My dad started out as a Democrat. He—one of his first jobs as a lawyer was saving houses from foreclosure. This is the Depression now. He came out of law school in 1931.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And people had no money, but they were honest, and there wasn't stealing, and, you know, if someone arrived at your door, you would just add a little water to the soup and they would be included. That was the way times were. And I just learned recently—this is very interesting—that in those days, when you had a mortgage, the mortgage was only—only for three to five years,—

CARBONE: Oh, wow.

RINI: —and all you were doing through that five years was paying interest.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So at the end of five years, you owed the whole amount of money. It's not like today,—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —where it can be drawn out over 30 years. So the banks were looking for their money. Nobody had any money. There was 25 percent unemployment. And they wanted to take the guy's house. Well, his job was to save the house. As a sidelight, just so you can enjoy this story. So he—that was a lot of what he did in—in—in his early career.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Nineteen forty-one, someone comes to his office and says, "Mr. Rini,"—oh, I didn't tell you the important part. The important part was they'd send a bill. If it wasn't paid at some point in time, he would send a second bill. If that wasn't paid, forgot about it. That was it. People didn't have any money. That was the situation. Nineteen forty-one, someone comes to his office and says, "Do you remember me?" He says, "Yes." He says, "I'm here to pay my bill."

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: That's what it was like. Totally different than today.

CARBONE: Yeah. That was good.

RINI: Yeah. So now, what was your question that I didn't answer?

CARBONE: I was—oh, just about your—the politics of your family.

RINI: So he started off as a Democrat.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And my grandfather had a building. My grandfather died early, and my father took over. He was the first of five. He took over managing the building. At that time, the building was occupied by lower socioeconomic people. They were renting. Mainly blacks. In those days, we'd call them

Negroes. And he would try to keep the building up. Gave them trash cans, keep the plumbing intact, but they just destroyed it. They'd throw the garbage out the windows. They put things in the toilet. He would go to collect the rents with a gun, believe it or not.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: In those days, you could carry a gun. You didn't need a license. Just things are totally different. Anyway—and at some point he realized, *This is nuts.* And so he gradually became more conservative and in today's parlance would be called a Republican. But there wasn't any emphasis to—on his part to educate me in appropriate political thought. It was more, "These are general principles," and then you look at the general principles and say, *Well, which party am I most aligned with?* is the way it really would have gone.

CARBONE: Yeah.

Going back to the—

CARBONE: There was a lot of talk—I should say—memories remem-—At Christmas dinner we would have my family, my aunt and my grandparents, and there was always a great deal of discussion about communism, Russia, unions. My grandfather was a worker at Eaton Axle [Company, now Eaton Corporation] or actually White Motor [Company] at that time; they became Eaton. And he made transmissions, axles and transmissions.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So he was a union member. And, of course, my dad—my uncle, who was a safety director at the City of Cleveland, more professional—they were against unions. My grandfather saw the value of unions, and so very lively conversations at the dinner table over holiday meals.

CARBONE: Was your grandfather an Italian immigrant?

RINI: He was an Austrian-Yugoslavian immigrant. Half Austrian, half Yugoslavian. He came when he was about seven, and

he still had an accent into his 80s. Never really got rid of the accent.

CARBONE: So going back to this building, it was in Cleveland?

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: And was that something that you were involved in at all?

RINI: Only to the extent that occasionally I would go with my dad to collect the rents. It was located at the corner of 26th [Street] and Euclid [Avenue]. It was a building that my grandfather had built, and it ultimately became a casualty to urban renewal.

CARBONE: And what was your perception of the race relations in Cleveland at this time? You mentioned that it was primarily African-Americans who lived in this building.

RINI: My perception.

CARBONE: Or just generally, what was it like at that time?

RINI: I'm not sure I can answer that because I don't—I'm not sure I really remember. You know, blacks were blacks; whites were whites. I related to the whites. I didn't have any negative feelings to blacks; it's just that our paths never crossed. I think that's the best way to kind of summarize it.

CARBONE: Yeah. Thank you.

Okay, so jumping ahead a little bit to your time at Dartmouth. So you came in, knowing that you wanted to do the pre-medical requirements.

RINI: Not right—not quite right. I didn't know whether I was going to be a doctor, a lawyer after my father and join his practice, which is what he desperately wanted, or an engineer because I loved math and science. But I got involved in the first term in pre-med because I was told it's easier to switch out of pre-med than switch in. And as a result, after about seven or eight weeks into the term, I realized that what I was really enjoying were the pre-med parts, and so I stayed in pre-med.

CARBONE: So were your classes here at Dartmouth primarily science classes? Can you take us through [unintelligible]?

RINI: A lot of science classes. I majored in chemistry, so there were a lot of—a lot of science classes. One of the reasons I majored in chemistry was you had to take so much chemistry anyway that I could finish off the major and leave space for other things.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And unfortunately, two negatives of my education here were (1) I was in the Choate Row dorms [sic; Choate Cluster], which were all freshman. It's my strong opinion that you learn a lot from your upperclassmen, and by putting people in freshman dorms, you cut off an opportunity to learn a lot from upperclassmen. Yes, you relate in class, and, yes, you relate when you're on a ball field and so forth, but it's not the same as living with a group that is much more mixed.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And it took me two years to get into Fayerweather as a junior, to get into a dorm that was—that was a mix of people. That was—that's one way in which I think Dartmouth let me down. Not that I'm criticizing Dartmouth, but that would be the one—one of the two negatives. The other negative has just slipped my mind, but it'll come back to me.

CARBONE: So you mentioned that you did not have this connection with the upper class through living in—

RINI: Freshman and sophomore year.

CARBONE: Yeah, living in the dorms.

RINI: Not easily, no. It wasn't easy, because I did, from the standpoint that when I went to crew—I rowed crew—I met upperclassmen, but it's not quite the same as living with—with them.

CARBONE: Yeah. Were there other groups you were involved with on campus?

RINI: That was pretty much it. There was always the pre-med group. We got to know each other, obviously. I spent a lot of time in the library. I was what people would call a “dirty booker.” I don’t know if that term exists today.

CARBONE: No. Can you—

RINI: Dirty booker. Dirty booker was someone who studied a lot, trying to get ahead. So, you know—and the guys that wanted to lay back and kind of coast were forced to compete with someone who was—

CARBONE: A dirty booker?

RINI: —competing. A dirty booker, exactly. [Chuckles.]

CARBONE: That has fallen out of use here at Dartmouth. [Chuckles.]

RINI: I’m sure. Things change.

CARBONE: On campus at that time, there was something called the Newman Club?

RINI: Yep.

CARBONE: Which I believe was a Jesuit organization? Can you talk more about that?

RINI: It wasn’t Jesuit.

CARBONE: It wasn’t. Okay.

RINI: It was Catholic. I don’t think it was Jesuit. Yeah, the pastor, the person in charge of the Newman Club, was Father [William L.] Nolan. Had to think for a minute. And that was one of the requirements of my coming to Dartmouth that my dad set. He said, “You must join the Newman Club.” So, being good, I did. He also insisted that I join ROTC [pronouncing it ROT-C] [Reserve Officers’ Training Corps], so I did. So freshman year I was in ROTC.

By the time I finished the first term, I realized I didn’t need to be in ROTC because I was going to go into medicine, so that

would all get taken care of ultimately. And I went to the Newman—I went to the church at the Newman Club, the Aquinas House, pretty religiously freshman year. And it was fall of sophomore year when Father Nolan gave a speech. He says, "Tell me why there are no Catholic intellectuals." He posed the question. And I'm sitting in the pew, and I'm saying, "Well, I've got the answer for that. It's easy." I said, "The church doesn't want you to think. They want you just to parrot back what they say."

A good example of that is the catechism. Why did God make you? God made me to show forth his goodness and share with Him everlasting happiness in heaven. I learned that in first grade!

CARBONE: Still got it.

RINI: And I haven't forgotten it. Just drilled it. And the Jesuits say, "Give me a boy of five to ten, and I'll have him for life." Well, those are some things that you learn, you know, you never forget. Well, like, that's one of them. And so I said to myself, *This is ridiculous. I'm a thinker, and none of this makes any sense to me.* So at that point, I gave up church, and I gave up Catholicism.

So Christmas, I get home, and it's—it's 9:30, and Dad says to me, "Aren't you getting dressed?" And I said, "Dressed? For what?" He says, "For church." I said, "Would it make a difference to you if I didn't go to church?" "Oh, me? Oh, no. Not—no, no, okay." That was the end of that conversation. I fiddle around. It's now a quarter of 12, the last opportunity to get dressed and go. Okay. He says, "Well, aren't you going to church?" I said—I said, "No." I said, "I asked you if it made a difference to you, and you said no, and I choose not to go." That was the end of that conversation. But, again, back to the logic. It's all logical.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: See? It's the only way to get to him.

CARBONE: Was that the reaction that you expected, or—

RINI: I didn't know what to expect when I said, "Do you care?" You know, I thought he might say, "Yeah, well, I do care. I would really appreciate it if you went to church." But he didn't, because he was—I think there was a certain amount of pride there. You know, I can't—from his point of view, *Well, I can't let him know that I care.*

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: See? So when he gave me that answer, I realized I had the green light.

CARBONE: Yeah. Wow. That's a profound change from having had a parochial education.

RINI: I had already changed. It was just a matter of making sure he understood it. [Laughs.]

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So anyway—

CARBONE: Wonderful.

Going back to the—you're a member of the ROTC [pronouncing is R-O-T-C] for your freshman fall?

RINI: Freshman fall, yeah. In fact, I loved it. And I met a Captain [Elmer W. B.] Hassett, another—

CARBONE: How do you spell that?

RINI: H-a-s-s-e-t-t. I don't know if you want to hear all this stuff.

CARBONE: Yeah, no.

RINI: They're kind of interesting stories, though. And he knew I was going to go into medicine, and he taught a mountain and winter warfare course, and we went over here to Vermont, to the cliffs, and we did learn repelling [sic; rappelling] and all this mountaineering, and I loved it. And he anticipated that, you know, I'd get into the skiing and so forth. And as it turned out, I didn't because I realized that I didn't—I didn't want to take time for ROTC.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I was too busy "booking."

CARBONE: What were the, like, weekly requirements?

RINI: Oh, well, there was, like, a drill every Wednesday afternoon or something.

So anyway, my first term was English 2. That doesn't mean anything to you. For those that had done well in English in high school, they were exempted from the basic first course in English.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Now everybody—most everybody gets remedial English because they can't come into the school without—high school hasn't really done them a—done them a—hasn't given them a good education. But in those days, there were people that came that really didn't need any remedial English, so I was in the English 2 course.

The worse thing about that was it was about the Dartmouth Bible and the Old Testament, and I had already had four years of religion. I didn't need any more. That's another whole story. I'm not going to get into that. You don't have time for that.

But—and then I had French 1, and I don't have an auditory memory. I have a very visual memory. And so language is very hard for me.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And then I was doing Math 7, an honors math course, with, believe it or not, [John G.] Kemeny.

CARBONE: Oh, wow!

RINI: And it was calculus. And I had had it set up so that I was basically busy all morning. At noon I had an hour's break, and then I had to go to drill, ROTC drill. And, okay, that's

enough time to have lunch, get changed, put on a uniform and go to the drill.

About four or five weeks into the term—this is, like, halfway now—I get a card. "We're changing your schedule." And what they ended up doing was changing it in such a way that I'd get no lunch. I started at eight, and I'd finish, like, at five.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: So I went to Dean of Freshman Students [Albert] Dickerson's office, and I said, "I want to talk to the dean. And Mrs.—I don't remember her last name now. Mrs. Whatever-her-name-was says to me, "Well, what do you want?" And I showed her the IBM [International Business Machines Corporation] card, because—you don't even know what those [are]—but IBM cards were with those little punch outs? That's how they did everything on the computer.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And I said, "You know, this schedule was working. Why change it now? What you've done is you've created a situation that really made it much harder. I'm doing enough as it is."

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: "I'm in honors English, honors math, and I'm learning French. I'm busy."

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: "And I'm rowing crew." And she says, "Well, we can't change it. The computer says that this is what you have to have." So I said to her—I said, "Well, to whom do I speak to go over your head?" And she said, "You have to talk to Capt. Hassett." Capt. Hassett was in charge of ROTC.

Went right down the road, two buildings, went in, talked to Capt. Hassett. He happened to be in College Hall [former name of the Collis Center] at the time; that's where they were located. And I explained it to him. He got on the phone, and there's this conversation—and you have to know that he

was one of these people with very light skin that gets red, you know, that has that ruddy—

CARBONE: You really see the emotion.

RINI: And bald. And bald. So he's—he's—he's talking to her, and he explains what the situation [is], and I don't hear the other conversation, but all of a sudden, he gets red, and he yells, "I don't care what the computer said! Change it!"

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: Shook hands with him. Walked back. Handed in the card. That was the end of the conversation.

CARBONE: A nice person to have in your corner. [Chuckles.]

RINI: Yeah. So anyway, just a little story.

CARBONE: Was there—you have kind of a unique perspective in having been a member of ROTC and then not been. Was there a sense of community that—

RINI: I wasn't in it long enough to—to appreciate it, if there was. The people that I traveled to Vietnam with definitely had a sense of community, and I think probably on campus they did as well, but I—I wasn't part of it—

CARBONE: Yeah, yeah.

RINI: —so I can't state that for certain.

CARBONE: Great.

And so is there any—were there any professors or faculty members who were—played a big role in your education in your time here?

RINI: Professor [Douglas M.] Bowen, organic chemistry, junior year. Junior? Sophomore year, sophomore year. This is the value of not missing a class. I told you I was very visual.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: We had just learned the alkanes. Of course, chemistry was the—that was the course where if you did well, you went on to medical school, and if you didn't, you were gone.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: You were cast by the wayside. And he came in, didn't say a word, went to the blackboard and wrote "alkane." And then, from that, two arrows—for all the possible reactions to other organic compounds.

CARBONE: Yep.

RINI: And I said, *That's brilliant. That's absolutely brilliant. That's what I'll do for every one of the categories: the alkanes, the alkenes, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera.* That's what I did. I had helped people with organic chemistry since, and I've shown them those diagrams, given them copies. I said, "You need to do this yourself. These are my way of remembering. You have to figure your own way. But this is a great way to organize in your mind. That way, you don't get—get the reactions mixed up."

Now, the reason that was important was (1) it was a great memory aid, but in addition, every exam had road maps. You probably don't know what I'm talking about.

CARBONE: I'm in orgo right now, so—

RINI: Oh, you are!

CARBONE: —this is—

RINI: This here? This summer?

CARBONE: Yeah, I am.

RINI: You are. Okay. Well, have you had a road map. You know what I'm talking about?

CARBONE: No, we haven't.

RINI: Road maps were—they gave you a compound, C6H606, and they did something to it, and they told you what they did,

and it gave you something else, C4H404 (I'm just making it up).

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: It went down, down, down, down through maybe seven, eight, nine steps, and it told you what you got at the end. You had to identify the original compound—

CARBONE: Mmm. Mm-hm.

RINI: —by working everything backwards. You couldn't do that if you didn't understand the reactions.

CARBONE: Yep.

RINI: It would be impossible. So right there was a major discriminator. Those that could do it had a good chance for a good grade in organic, and those that couldn't were going to end up with a C or, at best, a B.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And, as I say, it was a discriminator.

Other [sic] professor that I remember very distinctly is Francis Weston Sears. Again, you probably don't—that name doesn't mean anything to you.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: There was a physics book [*University Physics*] that he wrote with another physicist called Sears and [Mark W.] Zemansky. And that was the Bible in physics. I had a terrible time with physics. It was a matter of intuiting—I didn't have an intuitive understanding of—of physics.

My cousin, on the other hand, who started in Georgetown [University], having gone all the way through the Shaker Heights school system, in a public situation, decided he would go to Georgetown and get a Catholic education. But at the end of—end of a year, having seen the alcoholism and the homosexuality among the Jesuits, decided he's out of there.

His good friend, best friend was at Dartmouth, and I had become friends with him in the interim because we obviously knew my cousin in common. And Roger said to him, "You ought to think about Dartmouth." Charlie was gifted, and when Dartmouth called up the school advisers at Shaker Heights High, they said, "Just take him." So he became a classmate in the sophomore year.

CARBONE: Of the same grade?

RINI: Same grade. We're both '64s. He had an intuitive understanding of physics, so he helped me—he tutored me. And he had a couple interesting interactions with Sears, in which he showed Sears was wrong. And Sears was a gentleman. He accepted it immediately and improved his—Sears didn't teach so much as demonstrate. "This is going to happen, and here's the demonstration. You look at this, you're going to remember this." So if the demonstration didn't do what it was supposed to do, and Charlie called him on it once, he came back with a demonstration that did. It was a—so those two professors in particular, yeah.

CARBONE: Yeah, wow, that sounds like an impressive man.

RINI: And [Donald] Bartlett [Class of 1924]. There was a professor Bartlett, who taught humanities

CARBONE: Bartlett Hall!

RINI: Yeah. I don't know if he's a relative or not. Obviously not the same Bartlett. We had a humanities course. We read *The Divine Comedy*.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And we came in one day, in a room like this, about this number of kids, people, and he said, "You don't have to do anything." He sat there, and he read it to us in the original Italian. Now, that's an experience,—

CARBONE: Yeah. Wow.

RINI: —because it sounds like a song. It's very melodious, has perfect beat. It's lovely. It was quite an experience.

CARBONE: So, let's see, you went on to get your Bachelors of Medical Science?

RINI: Yeah, that's what Dartmouth Medical School, being a two-year school, did. Yep.

CARBONE: And so when did you make the decision to continue your education there?

RINI: At Dartmouth?

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Well, when—when it was time to decide where you're going to go. I said, *I'm happy to go to Dartmouth.*

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: And so can you just explain that's not a medical degree. You then went on to Harvard Medical School—

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: —to get your M.D.

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: Can you explain that process?

RINI: In those days—yeah, yeah, yeah. In those days, a medical education was two years of science, basic science: histology, pathology, anatomy, all that stuff. And then two years of clinical science: meet the patient, see how things relate, take the disease process that you see in the patient and relate it to the basic science that you learned in the first two years. Today it's much more integrated. You start to see patients your first year, but in those days, it was very discrete and segregated.

Harvard was very pleased to have us because we were all very well trained, and they taught their basic science, Dartmouth taught its, and then we joined the class on the clinical wards, kind of on par. The rate limiting steps in a medical education are the labs, the anatomy labs, the number of cadavers, the number of microscopes, all that stuff. To be able to add students to a group of doctors going through a hospital and interviewing patients, it doesn't make any difference whether you're one of six or one of seven or one of eight. So the medical schools could expand in the third year.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: The first two years they couldn't because there was only so much space, so many labs benches, et cetera. I hope that explains it.

CARBONE: Yeah. That makes a lot of sense.

So moving backwards and kind of exiting that academic realm, your senior year—you graduated in 1964. Kennedy was assassinated in November.

RINI: Of '63.

CARBONE: Sixty-three.

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: So that would have been the fall of your senior year.

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: What was that like, being on campus for that?

RINI: Well, there was a lot of un- —I wouldn't—no unrest, just a lot of sadness. And in Spaulding [Auditorium] they had a big screen, and it was all the—everything that was on TV was projected there. And I happened to be in the 1902 Room [of the Baker Library, now the Baker-Berry Library], "booking"—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI:`` —when someone came in about 2:30 and said, “Did you hear the President’s been shot?” and so forth. And that’s pretty much it. I mean,—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —it’s life and death, I guess, you know.

CARBONE: Moving on. So did you begin your specialization in radiology while at Dartmouth Medical School?

RINI: No.

CARBONE: No.

RINI: In fact, I came to reality in a very bizarre way.

CARBONE: How so?

RINI: The third and fourth years of medical school, I knew I did not want to be an internist. I didn’t want to take care of 76-year-old ladies with congestive heart failure. I’m more of a surgical mind. “This is a problem. This is the solution. This is what we’re going to do next.” That’s kind of how I think.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And internal medicine is you never get—you never get—there’s no end. It just keeps going. Surgery, on the other hand, is if it’s a gall bladder problem, we’ll take out the gall bladder, the patient will get well, and I’ll do another case, whatever it happens to be. So senior year, January of my senior year, to be precise, I elected to do a surgical anatomy course, and that was—retaking anatomy but doing it in a different way: examining the body through surgical incisions. So, for example, if you wanted to—you would do a subcostal incision to understand the anatomy for doing a gall bladder, understanding the anatomy for the liver, the kidney, all the things in the right upper corner.

And I was there maybe fourth or fifth time, and about four benches down the way, a fellow Dartmouth graduate but a year ahead of me, [Lewis L.] “Buddy” Bruggeman [Class of

1963, DMS '65], was talking to someone about radiology, and I—I—I—

Oh, I forgot to tell you something. And I decided that since I wasn't going to do internal medicine, I had to do surgery. So I actually got a surgical internship. I applied for it and got a surgical internship, so that's what I was going to be doing. But I wasn't real happy with surgery. It was a default choice, but I didn't have many other choices.

And anyway, he was talking about radiology, and I stopped and I listened, put down the scalpel. Forty-five minutes later, I said, *That's it. That's perfect. That's a perfect match for what I want to do.* After that, I went out and applied for radiology residencies.

CARBONE: And you did your residency at Cornell?

RINI: Yeah. That's in New York City, Cornell Medical [sic; Cornell University Medical College, now Weill Cornell Medicine]. At New York Hospital [now NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital], Memorial Sloan Kettering [Cancer Center], and Hospital for Special Surgery. All three hospitals are part of the Cornell residency.

CARBONE: And your internship was at?

RINI: University of Minnesota Hospitals [sic; University of Minnesota Hospitals and Clinics, now University of Minnesota Medical Center]. And that was in surgery. And they came to me, oh, maybe halfway through the internship and said, "You know, we'd really like to have you stay. I hope you'll apply for the residency." And I said, "Well, you know, I'm—I'm—I'm going to go into radiology, and I have a residency in New York." They said, "Well, you could go into radiology here." I said, "No, I made a commitment. I'm going to honor that commitment." And that's what I did.

CARBONE: So you graduate from Harvard Medical School in 1968.

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: And that's kind of a—

RINI: It's a bad year.

CARBONE: A bad year.

RINI: [Laughs.]

CARBONE: Can you tell me more about that?

RINI: Well, that was the year of [the] Tet [Offensive].

CARBONE: Yup.

RINI: Everybody graduating from medical school was drafted, or draftable. So you had a choice: You could sit back and wait to be drafted, or they had what's called the Berry Plan.

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: So I applied for the Berry Plan. And the last thing I wanted to do was be in any war zone. So I figured, of the places that are probably safer, it's probably safest to be in the [U.S.] Air Force. So I applied for the Air Force. And, as you know, it's just a lottery, and I was lucky enough—and it is luck, and there's a lot of luck in life—I was lucky enough to get the Berry, too, which meant I could do my internship and all three years of residency and then go into the Air Force as a fully trained radiologist.

CARBONE: And you were done with your residency by the time, okay.

RINI: I was done with my residency. I was at the peak of knowledge, very peak. Not experience, but peak of knowledge.

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: And so four years of college, four years of med school and four years of post-medical school training, I go into the Air Force in 1972.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Now, there's an interesting story with that. I don't know if you want to hear that or not.

CARBONE: Yeah, definitely.

RINI: Okay. So I get orders to go to Langley Air Force Base in Virginia. That's great. My entrance date is September 8th. I'm finishing my residency on June 30th. So I spend the extra two months in New York at Memorial Sloan Kettering, working on the staff there.

CARBONE: As a radiologist.

RINI: As a radiologist. As I was doing that, I get a change in orders. The change in orders is from Langley Air Force Base to Udorn [Royal Thai Air Force Base], Thailand.

You're smiling like you know all this, huh?

CARBONE: We had to do some research, so—

RINI: Oh! Well, where'd you do the research?

CARBONE: Just online, and I was given the blurb that you gave the Dartmouth Vietnam Project.

RINI: Oh, okay. Well, so you're familiar with some of this.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Okay.

CARBONE: But just so I can get more—

RINI: Okay. All right.

CARBONE: —quality information.

RINI: So there I am, 12 years out, and now I'm being sent to Thailand.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: That's the last place I want to go. I don't want to get killed. And so I say, "This is ridiculous." Now, what you need to know is that that particular slot had previously been manned

by a person who had one year of training, and suddenly they're taking me and putting me in that slot. Now, at the time I figured maybe it's because I'm single, and it's easier to move a single guy than a family or whatever, although it's an unaccompanied tour, which mean[s] the family couldn't go anyway. I had already bought a car. I had to get rid of the car, and I was upset.

So I tried to work getting it changed. I worked through a congressman in Ohio. No luck. And all the personnel decisions are made at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas. So when I refer to Randolph, that's what I'm talking [about]. Talked to Randolph. Wrote them letters. Nothing.

So next thing I know, I'm in Wichita Falls [Texas], Sheppard Air Force Base, in basic training. Two weeks, for officers.

CARBONE: Just two weeks.

RINI: Two weeks, basic training. And, you know, you get the law lecture, and you get the—all these other lectures, but two weeks later, I'm on my way to Thailand. And very unhappy about it.

Anyway, I get there, and I'm there, oh, maybe three weeks—

CARBONE: In Udorn.

RINI: In Udorn, yeah. You do not have time to listen to all my stories. You're going to have to be selective, and you're going to have to direct me, because the stories—we could be here till seven o'clock tonight, and I don't think you want that.

But one story is that the person in charge of the hospital was a Colonel [William T.] Kemmerer, and he was—he was a Regular Army, and he had 19 years in. He was doing his Vietnam tour, and he probably was going to retire at the end of that. And he was a surgeon. And he had two young, really top-notch surgeons to be with him, and he had two—again, when I say young, I mean my age, recently trained, top-notch internists. And he also had a one-year man who was going into OB/GYN [obstetrics and gynecology] and had a year of training in OB/GYN.

And about three weeks into this little tour, I was called about three o'clock in the morning to pronounce a Marine dead. They came to me and said, "He's dead. You gotta come pronounce him dead." So I got up, and I went over, and I talked to his buddies, and I asked them, you know, "What happened?" And they said, "Well, we were at a party. We were all drinking. He got drunk, and we put him to bed." I said, "You put him to bed on his side or his back?" "No, I put him to bed on his back." Okay.

So I go to look at him, and there's an 18-year-old, perfect physical specimen. I mean, absolutely perfect. Check his mouth. A lot of vomitus. Check him for needle marks and that kind of thing. Nothing.

And I get up the next morning at seven o'clock to go into the eating room, lunch room—even though it's breakfast, lunch and dinner—the lunch room. And I'm walking by the colonel—you know, it's the o'clock in the morning. I just put this out of my mind. Oh, I signed him out as "aspiration."

I walk by the colonel's table, and he looks at me and he says, "Aspiration." And that didn't mean anything to me at the time. And I stopped. I said, "Pardon me?" He said, "Aspiration? Here in Thailand?" So I stopped to think about it a bit, and I said, "Yes." I said, "I took a history. That was the history I got. I checked his throat. I checked for needle marks. Yeah, that's—that's—that's my diagnosis."

So at this point, the colonel thinks that he's been saddled with some idiot—you know, three weeks into it.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: He doesn't know me. *He's an idiot! What am I stuck with here?*

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: He scoffed at me. I went about my way. Three weeks later—you know, they send the body to Clark. There's an autopsy. Three weeks later, he comes into my office. He puts the

autopsy report on my desk. It says, “Aspiration.” So my star got a little brighter. So that’s one story.

Then the other story I can tell you was there wasn’t enough work for me. All the work that I—all the work for the whole day, I could do in a half an hour.

CARBONE: Really!

RINI: It was pathe- —it was—it was just—it’s just pathetic.

CARBONE: Not what you expected.

RINI: Well, you have to understand. If anybody got sick in Thailand [claps hand], air evac [evacuation] and gone. They’re out of there. I had a young—“young”; I’m going to call him 18, 19, whatever—with a big chest mass. Likely to be lymphoma. I gave him a pre-franked postcard with my name and address on it. I said, “When they tell you what’s going on, I just want you to write on the card and put it in the mailbox.” I never got a card. I’ll never know to this day—I have a perfect image of what he looked like, but I’ll never know to this day what the diagnosis was. It could have been other things, but the most common would have been lymphoma. That’s what it was like.

So anyway, half an hour. I’d read every film that was taken overnight and as they came in. I mean, it was 30 seconds, whatever. So we go to the lunch room. It opened at 11:30; closed at 1:30. All we would do is sit around and talk. I mean, there was noth- —there was just really nothing else to do. It was a social, cultural, pathological, medical—whatever wasteland. It was a waste- —it was a desert.

So the techs had a bed in my office, and they would—they’d use that at night. That’s where they’d take call. And I’d go back to my office. I’d lie down and take an afternoon siesta. So one day the colonel comes in—this is, like, three or four weeks into the thing—he sits down on the end of the bed, and he says, “You know,” he says, “I wish you wouldn’t do this.”

Now, you have to understand there's a little different relationships—he's a colonel; I'm a major, but we're both M.D.s.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And so there were—yeah, there was the military line of authority, but there was also the collegiality of being medical people—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —and working on the same team and pulling the same wagon. So he wouldn't say, you know, "You're ordered to sit in that chair." He would never do that. But he sat on the end of the bed. He was being very tactful, and he was a kind guy. He said, "You know, I wish you wouldn't do that." I said, "Colonel, I wish I wouldn't do it, too!"

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: "I need work! I'm goin' nuts here!" So ultimately what he did was he made arrangements for me to be able to get a Air Force vehicle, go into town, and go to the local hospital and talk to them about their cases.

CARBONE: Oh, wow! Very good.

RINI: Which was good, but not so good, because we had processors. We had—I have to tell you, the radiology equipment in Udorn was really excellent. I mean, really—I mean, when I saw it, I was just astounded. I'll come back to that in a minute.

But in town, it was primitive. It was hand developed, and almost all the people that develop by hand—they look at the film, and that's not the way to do it. You got to leave it in for the right amount of time.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So they're all streaked. It's terrible. I mean, you don't even want to look at the image, it's so bad.

Now, I was going to come back to something, and what was it? What was I going to come back to?

CARBONE: The medical equipment in radiology?

RINI: Yeah. I concluded, many years after this experience, that in view of the fact that we had three surgeons, two of whom were really top of the line, two internists, had an OB/GYN person, had a radiologist that was fully trained—that the reason they did that was they knew about the talks going on in Vietnam, and there was a good possibility that the POWs [prisoners of war] would come to Udorn—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —because we were the closest base to Hanoi.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: But I didn't realize it at the time, of course. Had no way of knowing. As it was, the POWs went to Clark directly, so they didn't come through Thailand, but I think that's one reason they staffed that particular hospital the way they did.

CARBONE: Yeah. In my research, there was mention of there being evacuations from the field to Udorn, but was that not your experience?

RINI: I don't remember any evacuation to Udorn. Remember, I was there in '72 to '73, long after the Tet thing.

CARBONE: The de-escalation.

RINI: We did have a [Douglas] C-47 [Skytrain], which, you know, is [Douglas DC-3], crash on the runway.

CARBONE: No, tell me more about this?

RINI: Want to hear about that? That's a long story.

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: So there's seven crew. The engine's on fire. The captain—the pilot says, "Feather the engine" to the copilot, and the

copilot feathers the good engine. It's a two-engine plane. Right on the runway. Six dead. One survivor. The survivor comes to us. It's one o'clock in the morning. And I hear about it, so I go over to look at the x-rays. And there's multiple rib fractures in the left lower chest. And the colonel's there, and he's looking at the x-rays, and I said, "Well, there's fractions here. He's likely to have a ruptured spleen." You know, we were going to need to operate.

And he looks around. One of the surgeons has got an infection. He's not able to operate. The other surgeon is gone on R&R [rest and recuperation]. It's the colonel. And I said to him—I said, "I can be your first assistant." I had a surgical internship.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So we took the patient to the operating room. We open the abdomen. Sure enough, there's a ruptured spleen. We took out the spleen. In those days, that's what you did. It's changed a little bit now, depending on how ruptured it is. And I could see that there was a tear in the diaphragm and blood coming through the diaphragm.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So by now it's maybe 2:30, and I say, "You know, we have to open the chest." He said, "No, no, it'll be okay." And I said—you know, you have to understand, that's M.D. to M.D., but it's still major to colonel.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So we keep working, and again, 15 to 20, 30 minutes later, I say, "You know, we have to open the chest." "No, no, it'll be okay." I said, "No, you know, he's gonna bleed to death. He'll bleed into his lung. You have to open the chest." And so we finished the abdominal surgery. We sew him up, and we turn him on his side. I talked him into, "Do a lateral thoracotomy." Sure enough, he's got a bleeding vessel from the left lower lung.

We then do what we'll call a wedge resection. Now, neither one of us was a thoracic surgeon. So it's not pretty, but it's very effective.

CARBONE: Yep.

RINI: And we stopped the bleeding. Fixed the diagram. And I looked at his chest x-ray, so I know that he's got fractures of ribs in more than one place. He's going to have a flail chest. I don't know if you—you know what—

CARBONE: Yeah, where the—kind of loose and—

RINI: Yeah. You've done a lot of research. Did you hear this story before?

CARBONE: No. No, I've never heard it.

RINI: How do you know about a flail chest?

CARBONE: Just kind of general knowledge.

RINI: Really?

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I can't tell you how unusual that is. So in those days, the respirator that everybody used was called a Bird [Mark 7 respirator]. Do you know what I'm talking about?

CARBONE: Nn-nn.

RINI: The Bird was a constant pressure respirator. So when you went to take a breath naturally, it would pump in air to a certain pressure, whatever pressure you set it on.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But with a flail chest, it's not going to help—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —because the pressure is going to be reached very quickly, and because it's flail, it's not going to go anywhere. Now, I'd

had a problem in Thailand, where I had to be air evac'd to Clark, so I knew the schedule of the—of the—of the Birds. And it's now about four o'clock in the morning. And I said to the colonel—I said, "He's gonna need a constant volume respirator. All we have are constant pressure. They have them at Clark. We need to call Clark and tell them to put it on the next air evac that leaves at 6:30. And we'll bag the patient till 11:30. It'll get here at 11:30. We'll bag him for five hours. And then we'll have—we'll have a respirator for him."

CARBONE: Mmm.

RINI: "No, no, it's okay." So we keep operating. We get near the end, and I said, "You need to make that phone call. We need that respirator." I said, "Listen, I can close this guy. I can sew him up. We're done. I'll sew him up. You go make the phone call." So he did. We got the respirator. The rule in air evac is the minute they're able to be transported, they are gone. This guy was so sick, he was with us for 30 days.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: We're talking about intensive care by the two internists, the three surgeons. His wife called, and all we could tell her was, "We're doing everything we can." Now, getting a call from States to Thailand in itself is a big deal.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: In those days. It's not so much now. But in those days, it was a big deal. And I felt terrible. But that was—"He's very sick. He's too sick to even transport, but we're doing what we can." Well, 30 days later, we got him on the air evac and he went back to Clark and ultimately back to the States, and he's the person that feathered the engine, so he goes to a court-martial.

CARBONE: Oh!

RINI: How do you like *that* story?

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: Okay.

CARBONE: A couple of things. This is great, but there's a couple of things I want to go back to. Just Clark. That's Clark—

RINI: Clark is the Air Force base in the Philippines.

CARBONE: in the Philippines.

RINI: Sorry.

CARBONE: And that was about five and a half hours away, you said?

RINI: I don't even know what it was.

CARBONE: Okay.

RINI: Yeah, you got that because I said the Bird on 6:30 and come—yeah. The plane left Clark, and there were a whole series of bases—

CARBONE: Oh.

RINI: —in Thailand, and it went to each one.

CARBONE: Mm-hm. Yup.

RINI: Took five hours, but it stopped at several bases. The flying time wouldn't have been that much.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But it would still make that route.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So even the body going back, it would still stop at each base.

CARBONE: And that was the point of evacuation for the most serious medical cases?

RINI: Air evac—well, there are two planes. There is the daily plane that made stops at every base, and then the air evac that

made stops if you had someone that needed air evac'ing. So it might not stop at every base because the three bases over there don't have anybody that needs air evac'ing. Bodies went back on the regular plane. Only people that needed air evac went on the air evac.

And that was basically a flying ICU [intensive care unit]. It was really impressive. I mean, they had everything, everything you could possibly want in an ICU on that plane.

CARBONE: Wow. That's very cool.

So just kind of the general details. What's the hospital itself like on the—

RINI: The hospital was comprised of trailers, temporary trailers. They were all hooked together, and once you were inside, you had no idea that it was a bunch of trailers. But on the outside, you could see there was just a series of rectangular trailers hooked together. And then they would have openings that made doorways into rooms and so forth, but you weren't—didn't realize that you were moving from one trailer to another.

CARBONE: Yeah. And you said it was well equipped with equipment and—

RINI: I had a fluoroscope, which—this is 1972—1969—up through 1968, New York Hospital, a major training center, was using fluoroscopy that still required red goggles. Now, you probably don't know what I'm talking about.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.] I have zero idea.

RINI: The beam was so—sorry, I'm going to have to get into a little background. With red goggles—you put on red goggles in the morning so that your eyes would adapt so that when you put the fluoroscopic screen behind the patient and the beam went through the patient onto the screen, you could see the faint images. Ultimately, they invented image intensification, which took the beam and then electronically magnified it and then gave it back to you as a picture.

CARBONE: No need for the red goggles.

RINI: And I'm not going to go through the physics for you because you don't care about that. But you didn't need red goggles. You could do it in daylight.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: New York Hospital got their first image intensifiers or their first fluoroscopes with image intensification in 1969, which is when I started.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: It was 1972 in Thailand, and they have—they have image intensification. They have a fluoroscope with image intensification. Un—It just blew me away. They also had a tomogram. Do you know what a tom- —

CARBONE: No, I don't.

RINI: Well, I can take a picture of your chest.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So I get everything in your chest, from the front to the back, on the picture. A tomogram will take slices. So I get just an image of maybe just the part that goes through your heart.

CARBONE: Yep.

RINI: But I don't get any of the other stuff. And, of course, it improved detail. This is long before CAT [computerized axial tomography] scanning, which is another form of tomography. But in those days, that was unheard of.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: And to have that in Thailand just blew me away. I mean, that was equipment over and above—if they'd asked me to write my expectations, I would never have written it.

CARBONE: Was your experience in Udorn at all what you had expected when you heard you were going to Thailand?

RINI: At all what I expected.

CARBONE: Because you mentioned earlier that you had no interest in going to a war zone.

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: And then you're in Thailand, and it sounds like, to some extent, it wasn't as—

RINI: Dangerous?

CARBONE: Frantic, yeah.

RINI: Yeah. Well, I guess the answer is it *wasn't* what I expected. I expected more of a war zone. But I was only there one or two weeks when the base got fragged. Snipers came on the base. The base—all the Thai bases were protected by the Thai military.

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: Not our military. And they—they eliminated the threat. And one of the sappers [a Viet Cong or NVA solder who gets inside the perimeter, armed with explosives; member of Viet Cong elite C-10 Sapper Battalion] had—basically had a explosive vest on and was hit by a bullet, and it exploded, and this huge boom, way off in the distance. But nevertheless, we felt the—the percussion through the air.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But that was—that was the worst of it in terms of my being, quote unquote, in a war zone.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: We claimed that we should have war—hazardous duty pay, but they wouldn't give it to us, but they gave it to the jet guys, the pilots and the jet jockeys, but they didn't give it to us. Anyway—

CARBONE: So, as you said, at Udorn Air Force Base, the Royal Thai military was also there.

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: What was the relationship between U.S. servicemen and the Thai?

RINI: You know, I don't know the answer to that because I was—the medical community was very parochial. We lived in the hospital. We talked to each other. We had lunch—breakfast, lunch and dinner together.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And we'd go to the officers' club together. But we didn't relate a lot to the other people—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —on the base. There were about 6,000 people there. There were five squadrons, three reconnaissance, two fighter and—these were young—we were older.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Except for the nurses. Certainly, the doctors were older because by the time they got to be doctors, they were, you know, late 20s early—

CARBONE: 12 years out of—

RINI: —early 30s. And the jet jockeys were—they were young. They were nuts. We thought [of] them as nuts. They did a thing called carrier landings. Probably never heard of that.

CARBONE: No.

RINI: So a squadron would get together. They'd buy a pitcher of beer. There were these big, round tables that made up places for the group to sit.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: They'd pour beer on the top, and then someone would take a running jump, land on his chest and slide across the table.

Those were carrier landings. So you look at that, and you say,—

CARBONE: My goodness!

RINI: —*These guys are nuts, and they're flying our planes.* And so we didn't have a lot to do with them.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: You know what I mean?

CARBONE: Yeah, 18-year-old wild guys.

RINI: Yeah. Or maybe 20, but, you know, they were—they were young and immortal. There was one flight surgeon who obviously was part of our hospital, and on his virgin flight, he went out over Hanoi. Never came back. I don't think they ever found his body, either.

CARBONE: Yeah. Were you—

RINI: Those were the realities. I mean, that was—

CARBONE: Were you somewhat insulated from that, being in the hospital, or—

RINI: Insulated in those kind of events?

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I would say we were, yeah, because there were other—you know, occasionally we'd go to the officers' club and there'd be some—some group that was very sorrowful because somebody had died, or somebody had been shot down. I had one—and just again—had one situation where a jet, fighter jet with two people on board went straight into the ground. We don't know why. And they eventually got to them. They were probably in the jungle, maybe ten hours. And they came back in a body bag, and they wanted x-rays of it, so I had to read the x-rays. But what all of it was, was a mish-mash of human tissue.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I ended up dictating, “Demonstrates a heterogeneous mass of a mixture of bone, soft tissue and calcium.” I mean, that’s all it was. And you can imagine what it was like, having been in the jungle for ten hours. For at least three days, they put in—you know, they put in perfume, but you couldn’t get rid of that smell. They couldn’t get rid of the perfume smell. Just pervaded the entire hospital.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: So those—those were some of the realities that—that—that one had a—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —had a face, yeah.

CARBONE: So you’ve mentioned needle marks, checking for needle marks and the, like, drinking culture, I would say, on the base. Can you tell me more about what—was that a prominent issue, substance abuse?

RINI: Substance abuse. I can’t really tell you about that because I don’t know. They—they wanted to make me a medical officer and have me sit in clinic, and I said, “I’m not a clinician. I’m a radiologist. I should be doing radiology. I don’t want to sit and see patients.”

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I got away with that, for the most part. Occasionally I had to do it. This one time—this is—this will be an interesting story for you. I had a young fellow come in, and he was probably 18 or 19. And he had his kepi [military cap], and he was moving it from one hand to the other. Obviously, very nervous, very nervous.

CARBONE: What’s a kepi?

RINI: A kepi is, like, that long, narrow hat that they put on. It looks like a V on top of their head. And I said, “Well, now, how can I help you?” And he said, “Well,” he says—and he was very

nervous, just very nervous. He said, "Well," he says, "I have a teelock." Ever heard of a teelock?

CARBONE: No.

RINI: A teelock was a woman that would shine your shoes, do your brass, wash all your clothes, make your bed, put on clean sheets, cook for you, basically with you, and sleep with you.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And he had a teelock, and teelocks were probably in the top one percent of the income class in Thailand. They made $15 a month, 50 cents a day. But that—that money was just huge.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And a lot of the airmen, who were jet jockeys—by that, I mean they—they worked on the jets—didn't want to go back because they could have a teelock for $15 a month. "Why go back to the States? I wanna stay here?" This is—for them it was fantastic. In any event, he had this teelock, and he's back and forth, back and forth, and I'm—I said, "Okay, but a lot of people have teelocks. You have to tell me more." "Well,"—and finally it came out. Turns out it's a guy.

CARBONE: Hmm.

RINI: There was a lot of female impersonation in Thailand. So I couldn't resist. I asked him—I said, "Well, you know, you got—you started this three weeks ago. How did—how did—how did it go on for so long?" He said, "Well, initially," he said, "she would say that, you know, 'Thai people don't touch there.'" That was only good for so long. And push came to shove. And then, you know, she's having her menstrual period. That's good for another week. Finally, push came to shove, and he discovered the reality. So I said to him, "First of all, you're not queer. You're not a homosexual." "Queer" was a word we used in those days. "You're not a homosexual. It's okay. You didn't know. It doesn't have any"—

It turns out that one of the—one of the guys had his wife on base. It was supposed to be unaccompanied, but a lot of the wives were there. She had experience in psychology, and she volunteered her time. And so I just referred him to her, let them talk it out. That's—

CARBONE: Interesting.

RINI: Interesting story, though, isn't it?

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: There was a song in 1972 or so that was called "Butterfly." I cannot find it now, and I can't find anybody that remembers it, but I remember distinctly—

CARBONE: It was an American song?

RINI: American song. And the teelocks would "Butterfly." The duty day was 12 hours, so they could take care of two people. And they were known as—that was known as "Butterflying."

CARBONE: Interesting.

RINI: Fly from one to the other, because, you know, once you're on duty, you're on duty.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So that's it.

CARBONE: And this was common—

RINI: Common.

CARBONE: —throughout the base?

RINI: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, very common.

CARBONE: Hmm.

RINI: Very common. I hadn't even told you about Fergie, and unless you press me, I'm not going to. I mean, that—we

could, as I say, be here till seven. A lot of interesting stories. But they're just stories.

CARBONE: They're fascinating. This is wonderful. Great information.

So as you've mentioned, you were at Udorn base from 1972 until—

RINI: Seventy-three.

CARBONE: —1973.

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: And so this was towards the end of the U.S.'s time in Vietnam. Were you aware of that fact?

RINI: We knew there were talks, and I like to say I ended the war. My—my base, to which I went ultimately, was Andrews [Air Force Base, Maryland, now part of Joint Base Andrews, Maryland].

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: And that in itself is a whole story.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And I was there the day that [President Richard M.] Nixon climbed up the stairs [onto the helicopter], turned around, gave the big V sign and took off and actually had his resignation as president become effective as he flew over the Midwest. I saw that [in] real time.

There was a woman next to me, a Hispanic woman, and she was crying, "Oh, this is so sad. This is terrible." And I'm dressed in uniform, and of course you're not supposed to be political in uniform, and I said to her—I said, "No, it's not. That's what he deserved. He was a criminal."

Ironically, we talked a lot about the 1972 election.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: By that time, I had become more aware of politics at the dinner table, and virtually everybody was very supportive of the president, but I said, “No, he’s a criminal. He did that—he did the Watergate break-in. I mean, how can you support him?” And two years later, of course, I was vindicated.

CARBONE: What was the reasoning behind their support of Nixon?

RINI: Basically that he was their commander in chief. They were a part of the military; he’s their commander in chief, I think is the major—I don’t think it was political party, Democrat or Republican. I think it was just, “Well, he’s my commander in chief. I’m supposed to support him.” I said, “Well, you know, you have to still think for yourself a little bit.”

CARBONE: Yeah. Interesting.

RINI: So we had a lot—a lot of conversations about that. And, of course, we had a lot of time to have a lot of conversations [both chuckle] because there was nothing to do!

CARBONE: So you mentioned that after Udorn Air Force Base, you returned to the United States and were at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, just outside of [Washington], D.C. So you came home, but you weren’t done with your—

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: —time in the service. What was that like?

RINI: It was just another stop on the journey. I didn’t—I didn’t react to the fact that I’m out of the war zone. I mean, I kind of came home, and life started again kind of thing, you know?

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Open the door, walk in the house, “Hi, honey, I’m home” kind of thing. That’s how it felt to me. I didn’t—it wasn’t—I don’t know what else to say. It was just kind of matter of fact.

The way I got to Andrews is an interesting story. If I’m talking too much, stop me.

CARBONE: No, I’d like to hear everything.

RINI: So the colonel and I ultimately developed a very nice relationship.

CARBONE: What was his name, this colonel.

RINI: Kemmerer, K-e-m-m-e-r-e-r. I think it's "-e-r"—"-e-r-e-r." I don't remember his first name. And, of course, I never called him by the first name. I called him Colonel or Dr. Kemmerer or something, but never by his first name, because that was the military. And we ultimately developed a nice relationship. And he came in one day in May. I'm due to leave in September,—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —September 8th to September 7th or whatever. And all this time, I've been in touch with Randolph. That's where the personnel stuff is done.

CARBONE: Mm-hm, Texas.

RINI: And they're asking me where I want to go, and I say, "Well, I know I want to be in New England. I want to go to Westover [Air Reserve Base in Massachusetts]. Westover Air Force Base is the closest to New England that you could get. Okay, fine.

And then, after I made that choice—and Randolph said "Fine," because they promised me—part of the deal of going to Thailand was they promised me, "When you come back, you can have the base of your choice."

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And I said, "Okay." So I ended up quieting down. And so I said, "Westover." But then I learned that they were going to close Westover. Well, the last thing that I wanted to happen was for them to close Westover and for me not to get my full two years in,—

RINI: Mm-hm.

RINI: —because if you don't do your full two years, you can be drafted again. I mean, it's a sick system, but that's the way it was. So when I learned that, I got hold of Randolph, and I said, "I don't want to go to Westover; I want to go to Andrews." That was the next closest.

CARBONE: Yup.

RINI: You've heard this story?

CARBONE: No.

RINI: No. "I want to go to Andrews." "Oh, no! You told us what you wanted. We gave you your choice. You're going to Westover." Back and forth, back and—no dice. So about May, the colonel comes in. He says, "The general is visiting from PACAF, Pacific Air Command, Air Force, P-A-C-A-F. "Would you sit with him and show him some cases?" Now, the colonel knew that when I came to Thailand, I came with boxes of slides. You probably don't even know what I'm talking about. But in my day, everything was on film, and we did—we went through files of x-ray cases, which we called "the museum." And as a group, as residents—there were four of us. A good case, we'd take a picture of it. And we all had slides of those pictures. And so I had six of these big boxes of slides. You've seen these slide boxes, I take it, I think. Just 35-millimeter film. I don't know. Probably holds—oh, my God—three, four hundred slides per box.

CARBONE: Oh, wow! So you have thousands.

RINI: Had lots of slides, of different pathological conditions.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And he knew that. It turns out the general was a radiologist, but he was a radiation biologist. He had done a lot of the work on Hiroshima and Nagasaki [Japan]. He wasn't a diagnostic radiologist. And the colonel is asking me to show him cases. Well, that's a tough situation because if I show him ones that are too easy, it'll be insulting. If I show him ones that are average and he gets them wrong, that's not going to be very good.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So I decided to show him cases that were impossible, ones that looked like A but were really B. Case in point: Had an angiogram that looked like lymphoma but was actually syphilis. So I showed him all these cases. And we sat there for, like, an hour, hour and a half. And when it was all done, he—he was a real gentlemen. Got up, shook my hand. "You know, I really enjoyed this. Thank you very much. It was great." And he disappears. Fine. Goodbye. That's it.

About 20 minutes later, he comes back. He said, "Would you do me a favor?" I said, "Sure, if I can." He said, "Would you allow me to send you to Andrews?"

CARBONE: [Chuckles.] Perfect.

RINI: The colonel made it clear that I was a good guy. That was a payback. And that's the way the military works in many cases.

CARBONE: Connections.

RINI: So one and a half days later, in my box, in Thailand, I had orders to Andrews. I had been working on that for eight months.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: He went through, just like that, done. So that's how I ended up at Andrews. And that worked out great, because it was a big center. There was a lot of work to do, and there were other radiologists to talk to and so forth.

CARBONE: Busier than Udorn?

RINI: God, yes! Oh, yeah, yeah.

CARBONE: Do you know the date of when you arrived at Andrews?

RINI: The exact date? It would be Sept—

CARBONE: Well, give me just general.

RINI: Well, September of ’73.

CARBONE: September of ’73?

RINI: Yeah, because I left Thailand either September 8th or 9th of ’73, and I went to Andrews. I probably—you know, there’s days of travel in there, but it would have been September of ’73.

CARBONE: So for many members of the military returning to the United States, they weren’t—they were met kind of with—they’re not welcomed homed [sic].

RINI: Right.

CARBONE: Was that your experience?

RINI: No, that wasn’t, and the reason it wasn’t was because, again, I was insulated. I was part of a medical community. I came in as a doctor. People that I related to outside Andrews weren’t necessarily aware of the fact that I had spent time in Vietnam—or in Thailand, at least, yeah.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: No, I didn’t feel that, but a lot of people did. And also it was later in the course. The war was winding down. It was clear that things were—were—were tailing off, so I think the—the unhappy and unwelcome reception that many of our service people got probably wasn’t—this is a guess—probably wasn’t as vicious as it was initially—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —you know, after Tet and so forth, when they came home, and they were just spit upon and denigrated.

CARBONE: Yeah. Interesting.

So this is a huge jump backwards in time, before Udorn, in fact, but—so you were a member of the ROTC your freshman year. And then in 1969 there was the Parkhurst [Hall] takeover here at Dartmouth, with Dartmouth students

protesting the presence of ROTC on campus. Were you aware of that at all?

RINI: You are—you are actually raising an issue that I was going to tell you. I was a surgical intern, 36 hours on, 12 off. I had no idea—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —of what was going on in the world, let alone Dartmouth. If I had a minute, I was sleeping. No, all through—and that was truly true of medical school, too. I was—you know, I was so involved in training and the time commitment of being on the wards and being tired and sleeping when I could and then reading when I could that to read a newspaper, *TIME* magazine, keep track of things—just didn't happen.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So it was, like, you know, I was in my own little sphere.

CARBONE: Yeah, missed some of that.

RINI: I had no idea what—I read about it since.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But at the time, no. I had no knowledge.

CARBONE: Interesting.

The other thing I wanted to discuss further was: So you were a major.

RINI: Yup.

CARBONE: And you have already mentioned that the medical community was rather insular?

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: And then also the age difference between those and kind of the airmen. Was there tension between these two groups at all, or can you talk about the—

RINI: If there was, I wasn't aware of it. I mean, you know, so we're at the officers' club and we're watching some of this nonsense, and we just—you know, my God, it's like watching teenagers doing something stupid.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And I will say that it led to a lack of respect. It's hard for me to respect these guys. At the same time, subsequently, knowing what they did in terms of flying airplanes and learning the—and having the ability to do that and making snap decisions and so forth, I've come to respect people—anybody that trained as a pilot, I'm very impressed with.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But in terms of what I was seeing at that time,—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —I was unimpressed. In fact, we were—we were kind of appalled.

CARBONE: Yeah. [Chuckles.]

RINI: We saw—it's probably best summarized as a true lack of maturity. So we're giving this airplane to someone who is just a child.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: Didn't seem to make a lot of sense.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And yet you wouldn't get 40-year-olds to do that.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: You know, the frontal lobes develop up through age 25. That's why a lot of the people in the military are 18 to 25. Then your judgment comes in, and you say, "Wait a minute. What's going on here?" So anyway—

CARBONE: You've mentioned kind of the ability of the United States military to get the most out of the service of members. Like, you've mentioned that if you didn't fulfill your two years, you were on for—still in the on the hook for more.

RINI: You were subject to the draft, yeah. Now, subsequently the draft was eliminated, but at the time that I was making those decisions, I had—I had no knowledge that—that they were going to eliminate the draft in two or three years. People that were just a couple of years younger than I never even had to worry about going in. I guess they got numbers, and if they got a high number, they were all set.

CARBONE: Yeah

RINI: And for the most part, many people younger than I weren't drafted because the war ended.

CARBONE: Was your—what was your, like, perception of the larger United States military at this time, and how did you feel—

RINI: Well, a lot of parts of it were very impressive.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I was impressed with the air evac system. I was impressed with the [Lockheed] C-5A [Galaxy], which is the big cargo plane. I had to fly that back to the States, so I could take my boards [U.S. Medical Licensure Examination] in June, and I had to go back to Thailand to finish off the—I took some of my R&R time to come back and take my—my boards in radiology. And so I flew the C-5A. Great plane. Really impressive plane. So there's some aspects of it that are really, really impressive.

And then there were some aspects of it that are just totally bureaucratic, and the only way you manage that is you read the regs, and then use the regs against them to get what you want. Well, it says here—so you need to do this for me. That kind of thing.

I don't know what else to say. I mean, the bigger picture of the fighting on the ground?

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I often wondered why they didn't just bomb Hanoi—Haiphong. That was the town—the city through which all the material were—was being resupplied to the Vietnamese. One bomb—one nuclear bomb in there would have ended it. Just that would have been it. There would be no supplies, and that would be the end of the war. They never did that.

Where was I going?

Three of the squadrons were reconnaissance. We were privileged to see some of the reconnaissance photos, so basically what would happen is there would be an air strike. The bombers would come up from Bangkok [Thailand]. The fighters would join them to protect them. And right after they went over whatever area, the reconnaissance planes would come in and take pictures.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And they'd show these pictures of railroad tracks that had been interdicted because the bomb blew up the tracks. And then the next day, the tracks would be rebuilt. And all this seemed futile. You know, we're not—we're not using the right—we're not approaching this in the right way. In retrospect, it was a political war.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Instead of letting—and that's what's happening in Iraq and Iran right now. it's ridiculous. I mean, we ought to let the military fight the war and be done with it. Why are we—sorry, I'm getting too political. But that was—that was my perception at the time.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And it hasn't changed.

CARBONE: I'm just—

RINI: That's okay.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I'm going to add to your list when you're done.

CARBONE: Really?

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: What—what—what do you want to add?

RINI: Well, I can do it later or I can do it now. I guess you want me to do it now. I need to tell you a little bit about Ferguson. When I arrived, there were three technologists that I was in charge of: a master sergeant—a master sergeant's the best thing that the military ever created. You don't get to be a master sergeant without being somebody special. Really quality people. And if you're smart enough to know that the master sergeant can help you through a lot of things, that's—that's a wise decision.

So I had one master sergeant and two E-4s. A master sergeant is an E-6 [sic]. These are grades. One E-4 was a nice fellow from Alabama, kind of a milquetoast guy but just a nice, compassionate, empathetic person,—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —who would do almost anything for you, and for the patient. The other fellow was a big, burly Irishman with a gift of the gab. And I don't even know where he was from. Tall, good-looking, real ladies' man. And a sociopath. And I had a lot of interactions [sic] with Ferguson. But just as an example of one of the things that happens in the military—and you get to know these things as—and you have to understand, I got to Thailand. I was in charge of three people and a department, and I had no real knowledge of what needed to be done!

Fortunately, the master sergeant would be—was very tactful, but would guide me, you know? "Well, Doc, you could do this, this"—you know. "Generally speaking, this is what people do."—you know. And so I would take his advice. Antibiotics would come to the transport management office, TMO, and Fergie had friends at the TMO, and half the

antibiotics would go to the hospital, and the other half—I'm just making up the number, but some percentage would go to Fergie. And Fergie used the antibiotics to treat VD [venereal disease] in the back room of the hospital. Now, he had spent time as a corpsman, on his own, in Vietnam, so, I mean, he was comfortable doing this stuff.

RINI: Mm-hm.

RINI: Totally illegal, totally illicit, totally unprofessional, just totally wrong. I discovered this, like, the second of third week. And I had to think about it a little bit, and I finally decided that what I was going to do was I wasn't going to say anything. I was just going to let it happen. And the reason is that if I told the colonel, the colonel would wipe it out, Fergie would be cast out, and he'd go off base and he'd treat all the VD [patients] off base. If there was a reaction, they'd die because they wouldn't get to the hospital on time. If there was a reaction in the hospital, they were right there. We could take care of them and save them. So I decided that's what I was going to do: I was just going to turn a blind eye.

There was a part of that that you needed to know. I'm sorry. That's it for that story. There was something else I wanted to tell you, but—oh, that ultimately came up with a conversation with the colonel several months later. And when I told him the story, he—he blew up. Again, another beet-red face. And I said to him—I said, "If I had told you, what would have happened?" And I explained it to him. And then he calmed down. He said—he thought about the wisdom of that—again, my star was a little brighter, you know.

And, now, what that did for Fergie, treating the VD [patients] on base, was it made him able to get anything. If it existed, he could get it.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And when I first arrived, I said—I looked around. I said, "Gee"—just talking out loud kind of thing. "It would be nice to have a bookcase." The next day, there was a bookcase.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: Fergie sat me down. He said, “Now, you know, Doc,” he says, “I was here, and I worked for Dr. So-and-so, and he recommended me for this commendation. And I worked for this doc, and I was in such-and-such, and he recommended me for this commendation.” And basically, he was telling me that he—he expected me to recommend him for commendation. I said, “Okay, fine. I understand.” You know, that’s it. So he was doing these favors.

Well, it turned out, long story short, he did something very unprofessional, and I called him on it, and we locked heads. And so there was a battle. And that’s another long story. But in the process of this battle, one of the things he threatened to do—and he had enough people that he could do this—he threated to—and I had friends on base who would come to me and say, “Do you know Fergie’s sayin’ this about you?”—you know. And one of the things he threatened was to make sure that my hold baggage—this is the stuff that you sent back—

RINI: Mm-hm.

RINI: —when you go—would end up in Timbuktu [Mali]. So I had to go to the colonel and say, “Colonel, this is the threat. We need to do something about this.” So then I had to tell him all these stories about Fergie, many of which I’m not going to go into here because you don’t have time, but—

And the reasons the guys wanted to have their VD treated by Fergie rather than in the clinic was that there would be no record of it.

RINI: Yeah.

RINI: Now, why didn’t they want a record? Because they knew that if they had a lot of treatments for VD, they would be passed over for promotion. Now, they were told, “That’s not true. That’s not true. We don’t—we don’t consider promotion to be based on your VD visits.” Well, go to the clinic, get a page. Someone has VD. The chart is stamped. About this tall [demonstrates]—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: —the stamp.

CARBONE: Three inches.

RINI: There's a little devil with a trident, and underneath it says, GNID [gram-negative intracellular diplococci], which is medical terminology for gonorrhea. And it's magenta.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: It's not—it's magenta. So you open the page, and there is—there is—

CARBONE: The first thing you see.

RINI: So I come in one day, and the colonel's in his office, and he's turning the pages—9, 10, 11. He's counting the magenta tridents. "I don't think we're going to promote him."

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: So there was proof that what they were saying was wrong. So they were told one thing, but the reality is something else. And that's very true for the service.

CARBONE: Yeah. Was VD rampant on the base?

RINI: Oh, rampant. Oh rampant, rampant. And I'll tell you another story. This is just stories. I don't know that you're really getting to the meat here.

CARBONE: No, this is great.

RINI: So everything has to run by regulation. So you come onto base, and I had to go through the briefing. And so you go to the briefing, even though I know all this stuff. And the lawyer briefs you about wills and, you know, how to make out a will and who you should name and all that stuff.

And one of the briefings was done by one of the GMOs [general medical officers] at the hospital. [Robert] Bob Bauer was his name, and he was the son of a preacher. And he had volunteered for Thailand, *volunteered* for Thailand. Why? (This is an interesting story in itself.) He was at Luke

Air Force Base [in Arizona], and Luke is a retirement area, and so a lot of—he had a lot of retirees that would be seeing him in clinic, more retirees than—than walkie-talkies like yourself.

And they would have four or five diseases. So he would ask them to make a list of what was wrong with them. They'd bring in the list, and he's say, "Okay, now, what's the most important?" And so the fellow would say, "Okay, it's my—my heart disease." "Okay, let's work on that. Now, what about this?" And he'd go through everything—and he had 15 minutes—and he said, "Okay, now, fine. This is what we're gonna do. Go out and make an appointment to see me, and we'll work on #2." He went out one day, and he looked at his schedule. He was booked for 15 med slots, eight hours a day, for three months.

CARBONE: Mmm.

RINI: He would *never* get out from under that schedule.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: There was no relief. So his out was *I'll volunteer for Thailand—*

CARBONE: Thailand.

RINI: —because if you volunteer, you went, automatically. And why? Because the service can then say, "Well, 30 percent of the people in Thailand are volunteers. They loved it." So that's how he got out of *that* situation. So now he's in Thailand, and he's been given the job of doing the briefings. And he's the son of a preacher. And, you know, you pick up a lot from—

What does your father do?

CARBONE: My dad is a middle school principal.

RINI: Okay, so you probably have picked up a little bit about how to teach and so forth, just because you—you've been there. Okay. Well, so he picked up a lot about to present a thing.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So he's giving the medical lecture, and he's talking about VD. He says, "Now, look. You don't want to get VD. You don't want to get 'the drip'," is what it was called. And he says, "So when you're done—make sure you use a condom. When you're done, get up and wash yourself thoroughly. And, you know, I know some of you aren't going to use a condom, and you really should, but you're gonna get VD, and you're gonna get the drip, and the problem with gettin' the drip is that you get scar inside. And you're not gonna be able to pee.—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: —"And you're gonna pay someone"—and I have to stop to explain something. You know what a sound is?

CARBONE: A what?

RINI: S-o-u-n-d, a sound?

CARBONE: A sound. No.

RINI: A sound is a long, smooth, J-shaped, cylindrical—about the size—the tip of your little finger—instrument with a blunted tip that is passed up the urethra. So he pulls out this sound—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: —like a tuning fork, and he raps it on the—on the podium. And it doesn't ring like a tuning fork, but it rings. And he says, "And if you don't do what I say, you're gonna pay some doctor to pass this up your pecker."

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: These guys sat up, like, "Whoa!" That's probably good for 12 hours. Who knows? Anyway, so that was the VD lecture. I'll never forget that. I wish I had a video of it. It was just—it just—it was absolu- —I mean, you know, every one of his father's techniques. He got their attention. I don't know how

long he kept it because at that stage, you know, hormones are hormones.

CARBONE: This was right upon arrival?

RINI: On arrival, yeah. They all had to go through it. Including me. So that was the VD lecture.

CARBONE: You—

RINI: So that's why—all that, by way of saying that's why guys wanted Fergie to treat them.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And that's why Fergie had all—he had contacts everywhere.

CARBONE: Did your status as a member of the medical side of the Air Force allow you benefits in that way at all?

RINI: I have benefits as—as—as a veteran, yes. [Chuckles.]

CARBONE: Oh, no, I was talking about on base.

RINI: Oh, on base?

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I had all the benefits that any officer would have. I wasn't discriminated against in any way. I was a major, and so we had a—I shared a trailer. The trailer was—this was—this was really a true trailer, just one—one—one trailer. A door at either end. A bed, a desk and a little place to hang your stuff. And then in the middle, a john that had—a bathroom that included a sink, a toilet and a shower. And so there were two of us, and we shared the common bathroom. And that's what they gave to the officers.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: It had small little windows that you immediately put aluminum foil over because that kept the sun out. It was brutally hot, so you never—you never—you never opened the windows, and you never—and we were there—we were

fortunate to have air conditioning. People that were not majors lived in a barracks. The fellow on the other side was a captain, and so he got the same kind of facilities. I'm not sure that all the captains got that. They may have been in the barracks. I'm not certain. I just don't remember.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But in terms of privileges, I had all the privileges of any officer.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: So following your return to the United States, you were then at Andrews Air Force Base.

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: What were you doing there?

RINI: Diagnostic radiology.

CARBONE: Diagnostic radiology?

RINI: Yeah.

CARBONE: And were you mainly—who was in the hospital?

RINI: All sorts of people. E-1s [privates] all the way through generals.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: It could be, you know, whoever—whoever was sick.

CARBONE: And were you treating people coming back from Vietnam, or were these people just staying on base at that time?

RINI: I can imagine I did both, but I don't—you don't always know.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: You know, you can x-ray a chest to read the chest. You don't know was this guy in Vietnam, was this guy—you don't even know if he was a general or if he was a colonel or whatever. You know, it's a chest film.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So I—I had a friend in practice who was an internist, and he'd come to see—in those days, you had to come to see their x-rays, and he'd come in and talk about his cases, and he'd say, "Aw, I'm entering the cave," because we worked in the dark. I mean, you had to.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: That's the only way you could see what you were doing. Yeah, you had to look at the light coming through the x-ray, so it was always—always windowless, and he always called it "the cave." So in a way, we were—we were isolated from the patient.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And that was truer in my early career, where everything was just plain film, relative to the later part of my career, where we did ultrasound personally and MR [sic: MRI, magnetic resonance imaging] and CAT [computerized axial tomography] and those things. We did a lot more things—the interaction with patients was much greater later, rather than earlier Barium enema was an upper GI [gastrointestinal] series. We actually saw the patients. But, I mean, early on and even late on—but there were a lot of other things that we did later, ultrasound being one of the major ones, where you actually were there with the patient, as opposed to just having—being present with the image.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But I'll just say one other thing, and that is that it wasn't so true in the Air Force as it was later in—in [my] career. We knew everything that's going on in the hospital because every complication had to go through some form of imaging, and they had to come to learn—to find out what the images showed. And today that isn't so true because now everything

is—is sent electronically, and they—I've—later in my career, I've had relationships with doctors who I never met, but that I know on the telephone.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: We've talked many, many times about numerous—numerous different cases.

CARBONE: So you come back to the United States in 1973, and then you're at Andrews Air Force Base. Was your sense that kind of the war was done? You know, the numbers of Udorn are being reduced at this time you had returned to the United States.

RINI: Yeah, I think so. You know, I don't remember it that well. To me, it was—here's a year at Andrews, I'm going to put in my time and I'm going to move on.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And I didn't keep track of a lot of the politics or a lot of the daily goings-on.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I got married in May of the year at Andrews. Got out in September of '74. I got married in May of '74. So there were other things on my mind.

CARBONE: Yeah. You're moving—

RINI: Everything was compartmentalized.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Yeah, probably a good way to put it.

CARBONE: So I know many—so in our research online, there's lots of veteran groups and things like that that maintain large presences online, so are you active in any way?

RINI: You know, that's a good question. The answer is no, I'm not, but I—but I—I support them. I support Veterans Count, a

big—I don't know if you're familiar with it, but they have a great presence here in New Hampshire. I am very partial to veterans, not so much for the Vietnam experience but just for knowing what's going on in Iraq and Iran and what they—what they've done.

I've been to the Pease Greeters once. You probably haven't heard of that.

CARBONE: Nn-nn.

RINI: Pease is a former air force base [now Pease National Guard Base]. It used to be a SAC [Strategic Air Command] base. It's in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. A lot of the planes going overseas and a lot of the planes coming back stop at Pease. There's a whole group of very patriotic people that meet these planes and greet these soldiers. You know, they can be Marines, Air Force, anything, coming back. They're given phone cards; they can call loved ones immediately. Going over, they're given packages that are likely to be helpful, like toothpaste and that kind of stuff.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And there's usually a little speech and a lot of—"The Star-Spangled Banner." It's a very patriotic thing. And people that do it say it's just wonderful. And some people have done it for four or five years.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I've done it once. You can learn when a plane is going arrive and go there and be part of it. I just haven't been motivated. Let's put it that way.

CARBONE: Yeah. You mentioned it's very patriotic people. Do you think your—the Vietnam War influenced your personal patriotism?

RINI: No, not at all.

CARBONE: No.

RINI: No. I'm a—I'm a patriot, but for other reasons.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: No. Vietnam didn't make me more patriotic or less patriotic.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: It did open my eyes to some of the futility of some of the things we tried to accomplish. As I said, I'm a surgical personality. Here's the problem. Here's the solution. I don't like it when the solution is inhibited.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And it makes watching some of this very hard. If I were 18 today and there was a draft and they drafted me, I absolutely would not go.

CARBONE: Really.

RINI: I would not go, because I would not work for a commander in chief that doesn't want to win, and he does not want to win. So I don't—I don't even know how these people do it, but I thank them for their patriotism.

CARBONE: Was that your—you mentioned that you did not support Richard Nixon. Was that your perception of him, that he did not want to win, or—

RINI: No, no, it wasn't—my—my—my negative opinion of Nixon was not because I thought he didn't want to win. I think he *did* want to win. No, my negative perception was because I saw him as a criminal.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: You see, Watergate could have happened, and he could have gotten on TV and said, "Dear Americans, I—I was responsible. I'm sorry. But I'm not gonna lie to you."

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And he still would have been president. [President William J.] "Bill" Clinton, the same thing. All he had to do was say, "You know, it's true. I apologize." It would have been the end

of it. They have never—the damn politicians never learn. You can't lie to the American people.

CARBONE: So it was the character that Nixon—

RINI: The character, right. He was a criminal, as far as I was concerned. You know, he was a criminal.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And he lied! You can't lie. I won't trust anybody—and that's when—well, to get into politics, though, but you know—you know what I was going to say about Hillary [Rodham Clinton].

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: Anyway.

CARBONE: So another thing that came up: Obviously, you were speaking with Professor [Edward G.] Miller earlier. Is that in—this past December, you traveled to Vietnam with 12 classmates, all of the Class of '64.

RINI: Mm-hm.

CARBONE: So can you just talk generally about that—

RINI: Well, it was—

CARBONE: —experience?

RINI: Yeah, it was a great trip. One of the classmates, I knew of; the rest, I didn't know at all. We all became very good friends. There was instant compatibility. The wives got along beautifully. Everybody meshed with everybody else. There was no cliquishness. You felt comfortable talking to anybody about anything. We have become even closer, even though we didn't know each other as classmates, and some of us have gotten together subsequently and I suspect long term will continue to get together subsequently—

CARBONE: Earlier—

RINI: —because we became friends on the trip.

CARBONE: Yeah. Much earlier, you mentioned that some of them had been members of ROTC.

RINI: Yes, several of them have.

CARBONE: But you had not known any of them on campus?

RINI: Right, right, right. Hugh [P.] Savage [Class of 1964] was an engineer. He was—and he was just in a total different track than myself as pre-med.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Lee [A.] Chilcote [Class of 1964] was—became a lawyer, and so he was into government and social studies.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I'm really more—

CARBONE: Different courses.

RINI: —science. Yeah. So it was a different track.

CARBONE: What was it—what was it like to—you had been in Thailand, but what was it like to return to Southeast Asia 50 years after you had been there?

RINI: Well, I had been to Thailand.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: But I hadn't been to Vietnam, so it was an all-new experience. And I had the opportunity to read about things and what had happened. Had a better understanding of the war. My knowledge of history is limited. I'm adding to it on a daily basis as I read about new things. And Vietnam was another opportunity to learn more history of the war and what went on. It was an absolutely, fantastic opportunity to travel with the classmates and the group and Ed Miller.

We had already done a trip to South America earlier in the year, and we had done a trip to Sweden in July. Normally, we don't do more than two trips.

CARBONE: "We" being?

RINI: My wife and I. Normally, you don't do more than two trips because it's a matter of allowing time for digestion and thinking and doing the scrapbook and looking up things that you didn't have a chance to learn at the time and getting background.

But when this opportunity arose, it was just one of those opportunities you just couldn't pass up—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —because it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It was never going to come again. And so we jumped on it in December, and very happy we did. We had already made arrangements for a trip to Australia and New Zealand in March, and we knew it was too much, but it didn't change our—our—our minds. We did it. We're very glad we did it. We're taking a rest right now.

CARBONE: Yeah.

Was there—did your time in Thailand lend any significance, additional significance to—

RINI: To Vietnam?

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I don't know that it really did or didn't. It's hard to answer that question. I've always been comfortable with Asians, so—I mean, I met them there, worked with them there. Vietnam was another group of Asians. I wouldn't say that the Vietnam experience impacted what I learned in Thai- —sorry, that the Thailand experience impacted what I learned in Vietnam.

CARBONE: Mm-hm. Did it give you all a different or new perception of the war?

RINI: Of the war? No, because I was part of the war.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But I wasn't part of the understanding of the war. I was just putting in time.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I guess that's the best description.

CARBONE: Yeah, no, I understand, very compartmentalized and you did your work with radiology.

RINI: And even when it was all over, I didn't go back and read about it. This is my opportunity now to go back and figure out what happened and so forth. No, that's my—that's all I can say.

CARBONE: You did mention that you had been back to Thailand.

RINI: No, no, I haven't been back. If I did, I made a mistake.

CARBONE: No. Okay.

RINI: Yeah. No, I've not been back to Thailand. My wife wants to go. I have no interest.

CARBONE: Really.

RINI: Because I've kind of been there, you know.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And there's so many other places in the world. It doesn't mean we won't go, but it's not high on my list.

CARBONE: Mm-hm. Wonderful. I—

RINI: Are you done?

CARBONE: I do not have any things, but if there's anything you would want to add or think that I failed to touch, I'd love to discuss—

RINI: I'm not sure that I've given you a new perception or any further understanding of the Vietnam War. I've given you some perception of what it's like to have been in the military at that time, but I'm not sure that I've really told you much about Vietnam.

CARBONE: Oh, I—I—I definitely disagree. There is so much that has been discussed that does not come out in histories of the Vietnam War.

RINI: Yeah. One of the things we did to kill time and to be somewhat culturally relevant was on afternoons, like Sunday afternoons, we'd hire a [Thai] baht bus, b-a-h-t, baht, the currency in Thailand. And for almost no money you got on one of these pickup trucks that had seats in the back?

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And we could go out into the countryside. And we'd stop and have a picnic and people around—we'd relate to them and so forth. Now, this is afternoon stuff, and the sun is intense, so we could only be there three, four hours max. And then we'd come back, and we'd all have headaches because they were salt depletion headaches.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And we'd go to the officers' club, order French fries, pour salt on them. Fifteen minutes later, the headaches were gone. It was just from replenishing the salt. But we had an opportunity to relate to the people that way.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: But that was—that's kind of minor. And I ended up taking—I did a lot of photography. That was one way I kind of kept my sanity. Did a lot of photography and a lot of it was of kids, children, because that's kind of a universal theme. That's pretty much it.

CARBONE: You talk about keeping your sanity. What were those forces that would have been working against your sanity?

RINI: Oh, I'll give you anoth- —here's another example. I told you about being a cultural desert. Here's a very good example: I'm not into rock music. I mean, I'm more classical, kind of, [Johann Sebastian] Bach and that kind of stuff. So there were two radio stations. There was the Air Force station that played a lot of rock, and then there was the Thai station that was all diatonic scale. You couldn't listen to that for more than 30, 60 seconds because it just—it's not in tune with what you've come up with.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I just read an article recently. (This is totally parenthetical.) But I read an article recently that there's no innate, cerebral, genetic input on the kind of music you like. If you take a new brain and teach it the diatonic scale, that's what it'll like.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: If you teach it the harmonic scale that we use, that's what you'll like.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So it's what you—what you've heard. You're programmed from the beginning. But you're not programmed genetically.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Okay, so you couldn't listen to the diatonic scale, and I couldn't listen to rock. So there was a complaint that "there ought to be some classical music." And you couldn't even go to the PX [post exchange] and buy it, because it was all rock because it was geared to the people that were on the base. It certainly wasn't geared to—to—to 30-year-olds. I mean, it was geared to all the jet jockeys, who were 17, 18, 19, 20, and the pilots, who were 25 or less. I mean, I'm guessing at the age, but in that order.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: So the radio station finally agreed that what they would do: They would play one symphony a week, and we could tune into it, and we could record it if we wanted. Because

everything came from Japan. You could—you could record—I mean, you could get any kind of electronic equipment you wanted from Japan. In fact, I just read the other day that one reason that Japan did so well is because they—they made a huge amount of money selling to the Americans during the Vietnam War. And one reason they're in recession now is because that all ended. Just an interesting sidelight. Anyway—

So the first—the first night, the first Saturday night—oh, and it had to be Saturday night from 11 p.m. to two in the morning.

CARBONE: Oh! [Chuckles.]

RINI: That's when they were going to do it. Okay. So they played a [Ludwig van] Beethoven symphony, which I recorded. Great. Okay, some music. And the next time, I think it was something by [Johannes] Brahms. Then it was gone. It was gone.

CARBONE: [unintelligible].

RINI: Because the people working on the planes, the mechanics, which we called jet jockeys—the jet mechanics said, "We can't work without our rock." Right back to rock, because that's what counted, moving those airplanes.

CARBONE: What—

RINI: We were very insignificant.

CARBONE: I read that, like, the relative ratio was about one officer to five airmen. Would you say that was—

RINI: I have no way of knowing that.

CARBONE: No way.

RINI: No, because I wasn't part of that, just wasn't part of that. We really were parochial.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: You know, the hospital was literally removed from the runway. I mean, we could see the runway. We could go anywhere and so forth.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: But that was our little cloister.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: And we were also dealing with people a little bit older, so we had more in common and had a little more ex- —depth of experience, so the conversations were a little more, for lack of better term, mature.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: I don't know how we got on that, but anyway—

CARBONE: So back to your photography.

RINI: Yeah?

CARBONE: So you mentioned it was mostly of children.

RINI: Yeah, because that's—that's what we saw a lot of when we did these little trips off base—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: —or if we did an R&R. I went to Chiang Mai [Thailand], which is a nice resort kind of area in the northwestern part of Thailand, and I did a little trip to Pattaya Beach [Thailand]. But, yeah, that—a lot of them were children, if I look back on things.

CARBONE: Was there a lot of interaction with local children and people on the base?

RINI: I wouldn't say a lot, no. No.

CARBONE: It was only when you—

RINI: When we went out,—

CARBONE: —went out. Awesome.

RINI: —yeah, yeah. Okay.

CARBONE: Anything else?

RINI: Not that I can think of. I'll think of three things on the way home, but—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.] Well, this has been wonderful. Thank you very much.

RINI: Well, you're very welcome.

CARBONE: Yeah. I've really enjoyed it.

RINI: I hope it's helpful. I don't know that—

CARBONE: No, this—

RINI: It seems pretty disjointed to me. [Laughs.]

CARBONE: That's on me, though.

RINI: Not necessarily.

CARBONE: Unchronological movement. But, no, this was wonderful. I learned a lot, and it's great to see the human side. You know, there's history and facts, but then you filled in some of the—

RINI: Oh, okay. From the human side, yeah. Yeah, there was a—there's a lot—I mean, I could tell you the story of Fergie. I've told it to a few people. It's kind of long and involved. But the long and short of it is that—

CARBONE: Why don't you go into it? You've mentioned it twice now, so I'd love to hear it.

RINI: Well, it's a very—it's—to be honest, it's kind of a—it's a significant part of the—of the Air Force experience, that *I* had, anyway. So as I said, he could get anything I wanted. But there was something that he did unprofessional, and I

told him ahead of time, “I want this. Don’t do this.” And he presented me with images where he had done exactly what *he* wanted to do and not what I wanted.

So I went to the master sergeant, and I said, “You know, this is unacceptable, and I don’t know how to handle it.” And he said, “Well, you’ll have a chance to handle it when you write the officer’s evaluation report.” Now, in the Air Force, there is a sheet of paper, and it’s got several categories, like leadership and “follows directions” and—all these categories. And you can rate them anywhere from zero to nine.

CARBONE: Nine being the highest?

RINI: Nine being the highest. And to get promoted, you need a lot of nines, maybe one or two eights. And so I—I said to the master sergeant—I said, “You know, I don’t think he should be in the Air Force. He’s—he’s—he’s a sociopath, and he’s disruptive, and I’m very upset about what he did on this one patient. How do I handle this?” He said, “Well,” he said, “ you—you don’t have to give him nines. You can give him sevens and eights. And in the box next to the number, you could put a reason.” He says, “Don’t put a reason.” This was—this was—this was the—the kernel of wisdom: “Don’t put a reason.” Because he will go get letters from all his friends saying—if you say he has no leadership capability, he’ll get five letters saying he has leadership capability.

I’m just making things up, but you understand the concept.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So that’s what I did. And I felt obligated—morally, ethically—to present him in—

CARBONE: A true light.

RINI: —the true light, which many other people before me either were intimidated or for whatever reason—maybe they were grateful for some favor Fergie did for them, but for whatever reason. But I was going to be—you know, all these nice reports and then this one?

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: So that's what I did, because I felt obligated.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And I did. Well, of course, Fergie found out, and then we locked horns. And I had a gold chain. You can buy gold—at that time, you could buy gold over there. You couldn't own gold because of the [President Franklin D.] Roosevelt recall of gold in 1934, but you could have it made into jewelry, and so you had it made into what they called a baht chain, and so I had this baht chain, and I kept it in the drawer. It was missing. Gone. Well, I know what happened to it.

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: They had insurance, so I got insurance. I had another one made up, and I didn't put—leave it in the drawer. And we went through the year locking horns. Ultimately, there was the challenge of the hold baggage, which I told you about. And that required my telling the colonel all about Fergie, which is a long story, and I'm going to go to it in a minute.

Ultimately, the colonel put me in charge—in touch with I think it's OCS, but anyway, they're kind of a watchdog group of Air Force officials, who worry about fraud and theft and criminal behavior.

CARBONE: This is OCS?

RINI: OCS, yeah. I'm not sure of the exact thing. So the colonel and I and this fellow sat down, and he said, "Don't worry about it. I'll take care of it. The day you ship out, just call me at this number and tell me, and I'll make sure everything is good." And that's exactly what I did. Because in the Air Force, you follow orders, and everything worked out. Everything got where it was supposed to go.

So in explaining what was going on with Fergie, is I had to tell him about the back-office operation for VD, and we got through that, and long and short of it, he understood that I was right, that he was a sociopath.

Now, as an example of some machinations, Fergie had numerous affairs on base. As I say, he was—he was really good. I mean, he—he could—he could seduce anybody in bed. It's just he—he—he was just really good. And it was kind of common knowledge. I mean, it wasn't like he was hiding it, slinking around. There he was.

He had volunteered for Thailand. Why? He volunteered for Thailand because he had a relationship with the base commander's wife at Hill Air Force Base [in Utah].

CARBONE: Hmm.

RINI: He had an affair going with the base commander's wife. Now, that is just stupid!

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: So the base commander started to put the thumbscrews on Fergie, so Fergie says, "Goodbye." Volunteers for Thailand. He's gone, right?

CARBONE: Yup.

RINI: Okay. So Fergie gets orders to go back to Hill Air Force Base. The base commander is not going to put up with this, and he's going to get even, and the base commander has enough power. So Fergie is desperately trying to get his orders changed. And to do that, you got to call Randolph. But that means you got to be able to get out of Thailand on a phone line. That was very hard to do. But he could do. You know, he had enough contacts. He could—he could get to Randolph. And Randolph wasn't going to change it, because the colonel made it very—the colonel, general, whoever what he was at Hill made it very clear that those orders are going to stick. "I want him back."

Okay. So Fergie then goes on R&R. He comes back five days later. You want to be a doctor, so you're going to learn a little medicine. He comes back five days later, and he is totally decimated. I mean, he is one very sick person. We conclude that he's had a pulmonary embolus.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: Do you—do you know about pulmonary emboli?

CARBONE: Somewhat, yes.

RINI: It's a life-threatening event. It comes about, among other reasons, from just being in bed or lying still. We figured he probably got to Bangkok, was very concerned about going back to Hill, drank himself into oblivion and laid in a bed for three or four days. And, you know, when he woke up, probably had more to drink and went back to sleep.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But he was totally blown away. So they obviously get him into the hospital. We take of him. We decide that he's had pulmonary emboli. Not something we're going to take care of in Thailand. We air evac him to Clark. Now, the rules are—the *rules* are that if you're air evac'd and you have orders to a new base, you go to that base.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Well,—

CARBONE: So should have been going to Hill.

RINI: He should have gone—be going to Hill. He talks the doctors at Clark—these are fully trained doctors!—

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: —in their 30s! They've had 24 years of education, at minimum. He talks them into allowing him to go back to Thailand.

CARBONE: Back to Udorn.

RINI: Back to Udorn. Why? Because he gets back to Udorn, he still can have a chance of getting the orders changed.

CARBONE: Wow. Smooth talker.

RINI: Think about that. I mean, he was—he truly was a sociopath. I'm very comfortable with that diagnosis.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Truly was a sociopath. And the proviso was that when it's time for him to leave and go back to Hill, he'll go by air evac. That's the only condition that these doctors extracted from him. Gift of the gab. I mean, he—he was smooth. I mean, he was as smooth as you're ever going to see.

Okay. So now he's—he's—he's come back, and he's desperately trying to get the orders changed. All this thing with the hold baggage comes up. I go to the colonel, and I'm telling him this story, and he says, "Okay, we can take care of that, but we ought to court-martial him." He said, "But you understand that if we court-martial him, you're going to have to stay here." I said, "Colonel, I don't want to stay here."

CARBONE: [Chuckles.]

RINI: "I want out!"

CARBONE: Was this towards the end of your—

RINI: Well, this was—May was the general that I had the conversation with [sic]. June was when he went on R&R. But the challenge of the hold baggage was before this.

CARBONE: Mm-hm. Okay.

RINI: So the colonel knew what was going on. But we talked about his coming back and should we court-martial him, and finally I said to the colonel—I said, "You know, poetic justice is poetic justice." I said, "We could court-martial him, and he might talk himself into a very light sentence. And I don't want to stay here, and you don't want to stay here. We both want to leave. Going back to Hill might be the most appropriate punishment."

CARBONE: Get his comeuppance.

RINI: So we decided we weren't going to court-martial him. And when it came time for him to leave in June, he went—he

went by air evac and ended up back at Hill. And I could leave the story there. But I have a lot of friends that I related to from the time in—

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: —from Thailand, and I got the follow-up. The follow-up is that sometime—he left in June. I left in September, and I'm going to think it's around about March is when I heard, March of—then it would be 1975.

CARBONE: The following—1973. Oh, 1975!

RINI: Yeah, because I went back—I was back in the States in '74,

CARBONE: Yes.

RINI: Okay. So it was spring. Call it spring of '75. He was at Hill. That's in Utah—no, it's in Arizona. Where is it? No, I think it's Arizona. He was at Hill. No, Utah. Excuse me, I'm almost positive it's Utah. Arizona is Luke, I told you, where the other—I told you the other story.

He was—he was at Utah, and he was in a bar with a friend, drinking. He's in the middle of the bar. He pulls out a gun, shoots himself.

CARBONE: Wow.

RINI: That was it.

CARBONE: Jeez.

RINI: There's a lot—now, from my point of view—you're going to say it's callous; I'm going to say it's one less sociopath.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I don't feel any guilt at all.

CARBONE: He was not a decent human being.

RINI: I think we're better off. I mean, because he really was—he was a bad guy.

CARBONE: Was that—would you say that there were that personality type, that sociopathic label—would you give that to other people in the military, or was he pretty unique?

RINI: Well, I've done a little reading on sociopathy. Not a lot, just a little, but there's a great book that I recommend to you.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: It's called *The Sociopath Next Door* [by Margaret Stout]. Have you seen it or heard of it?

CARBONE: No, I have not.

RINI: I strongly recommend it, strongly recommend it because, first of all, there's a—there's a whole spectrum of sociopathy.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: But one of the key facts is that four percent of the population are sociopaths.

CARBONE: That is mind boggling.

RINI: That's a huge number.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: A huge number. It's written by a psychiatrist. She's had lots of experience. Written in 2005. And you probably have related to people in your lifetime that you say, *Gee, that's sociopathic behavior.*

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: And, you know, it doesn't have to be egregious; it can be subtle. The key of sociopathy is control, and some people like to control other people just for the fun of it, just—just to—I mean, that's how they get their kicks. "I've got her doing this because I did that." And that's how they enjoy themselves. So I recommend the book, because there are a lot of good examples of—of how that's done.

And I mention it to you because four percent is a huge number, so were there other sociopaths in—in the—in the military? There had to have been.

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Have I met others? I know I have. Can I come up with one immediately? Yes, but I'm not going to get political. So—

CARBONE: Mm-hm.

RINI: Would you—did you read this book—

RINI: Oh, yeah.

CARBONE: —because of your experiences with him?

RINI: No, no, it was—[Chuckles.] A friend was walking by. She's a member of a book group. She says—because we talk a lot—Gale says, "Boy, I read this great book. You should read it." I said, "Well, what is it?" "Well, it's this." "Oh, okay. You're recommending it? I'll read it." I got it, and I read it. That's the only reason.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: If I hadn't bumped into her, I would have never read. I wouldn't have even looked up "sociopathy."

CARBONE: Mm-hm. I just asked because it seems as if your relationship with Fergie was a defining aspect of your time in—

RINI: Fergie was a big part of my life in the sense that my life was boredom, seven to seven, fix day, seven to seven, fix night, seven to seven. Weather was essentially the same. The only time—change was when we had the monsoons. Conversations at the table dealt a little bit with current events, but for the most part, there wasn't a lot of intellectual depth or—if you know what I'm trying to say.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: So day after day after day after day is boredom.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: Fergie added a little spice. [Chuckles.]

CARBONE: Broke up the monotony.

RINI: Yeah. So I guess—you know, when I think back to what I experienced, it was Fergie.

CARBONE: Mm-hm. Interesting.

RINI: Yeah. Yeah, interesting story.

CARBONE: Yeah.

RINI: I don't tell everybody those stories.

CARBONE: Thanks for sharing them.

RINI: That's it. I don't know. What else can I say?

CARBONE: You've said a lot—of great a lot. There's no way [chuckles; unintelligible].

RINI: Okay. You can turn it off now.

CARBONE: Oh, okay, yes.

[End of interview.]