ORAL HISTORY OF JAMES J. SANDMAN, ESQ.

First Interview – January 8, 2010

This interview is being conducted on behalf of the Oral History Project of the Historical Society of the District of Columbia Circuit. The interviewee is James J. Sandman. The interviewer is Paras N. Shah. The interview is taking place at Mr. Sandman's office at 825 North Capitol Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., on January 8, 2010, beginning at 8:30 in the morning.

MR. SHAH: Jim, please start off by telling me about your grandparents.

MR. SANDMAN: My mother's father was the chief engineer at the New York State capitol building in Albany, although I don't have any recollection of his working life. I remember him as retired. My father told me he wore a suit to work before he retired, which my father said was an indication of the significance of my grandfather's position. He had no more than an eighth-grade education, but he was able to advance through the New York civil service system by studying for and passing a series of civil service examinations. I don't believe my mother's mother ever worked outside the home. When I was born, my family was living upstairs from my mother's parents in what in Albany was called "a two-family house": two identical apartments, one above another, in a house. My grandparents lived in the downstairs apartment, and we lived in the upstairs one. My mother had grown up in that house.

My mother's father, Joseph Dugan, was a very kindly man. He was very religious. Their house was immediately behind our parish church, St. Vincent DePaul. He had the keys to the church and opened it up every morning for the first Mass at 7:00 a.m. I remember him best in his later years, after my grandmother had died, when he was living in a

nursing home. He used to come over to our house for dinner on Sundays. Before dinner he always talked to me. He would invite me to sit next to him on a couch in our living room. I don't recall him as a storyteller. I can't remember anything he ever told me. What I do remember is that he was a great listener. He wanted me to do the talking. He was very good natured, approachable, and likeable.

I don't remember much about my mother's mother, Anna Dugan. She died in 1954 when I was three years old. I do have two memories of her. First, when I would go downstairs to visit, she would put me on her lap at her sewing machine, which she kept in the dining room, and let me run the sewing machine. And I would always break the thread for reasons I didn't understand. When she ran the sewing machine, she never had a problem with the thread, but every time I touched the sewing machine, I broke the thread. The second thing I remember was that she would give me a piece of Bazooka bubble gum, which was strictly forbidden in our house. I am confident she knew she was breaking the rules and did so deliberately.

My mother's parents were real salt-of-the-earth people. They believed strongly in the value of education. They had four children: my mother, her two sisters, and her brother. My mother and her sister Mabel went to the College of Saint Rose in Albany, a Catholic women's college founded in 1920. I suspect it was unusual at the time to have two girls in a

family complete college. My mother went on to Columbia Teacher's College and got a master's degree there.

I never knew my father's father. He died at 29 when my dad was 15 months old. My father's mother's, at the time she was widowed, would have been about 25 or 26. She moved back in with her family when she widowed. My father's father had been a chemist. He had gone to college and had also done some work at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. He was originally from Baltimore and at one point worked for the City of Baltimore. A couple of years ago, my younger sister was showing my father how to do a Google search. My father doesn't do anything on the computer; she was just demonstrating to him how much you can find out from Google. She put his name in the search bar—"Edgar A. Sandman"—which was also his father's name. The first thing that came up was an article his father had written in the early 20th century—something about the water supply in Baltimore. My father was just stunned. He doesn't know much about his father, and this was a powerful demonstration of the power of the Internet. His father had a connection to Washington. During World War I, he worked at a chemical munitions facility the Army operated in Spring Valley, near where American University is today. This is a subject that since the early 1990s has gotten a fair amount of publicity in Washington, as they have unearthed remnants of dangerous arms and chemicals that were manufactured there during World War I. My grandmother believed that my grandfather's early death

was attributable to the chemicals he was exposed to there. He died of encephalitis. For years after his death, my grandmother attempted to get a widow's pension from the Army. My younger sister, who's the family amateur genealogist, has uncovered all her correspondence with the Army during the 1920s. She handled it all herself, pro se. Eventually she persuaded them that her husband's death was attributable to his work during World War I and received a widow's pension.

My father's mother, Miriam Sill Sandman, worked when my dad was growing up. She was the Registrar of Vital Statistics in Albany. She remarried when my father was 16. Her second husband was around 40 at the time and lived with his mother. After my grandmother married him, she and my father moved in with him – and his mother. I once asked Dad what that was like. He paused before answering and then said only, "It was difficult." I knew my father's stepfather as a grandfather. In the way he treated my siblings and me, and in the way we related to him, an outside observer would never have known that he wasn't our natural grandfather. He was wealthy. He was a funeral director in Albany and I guess you can make some money in that business. He drove a Cadillac. Every Christmas he would give each of my four brothers and sisters and me a brand-new $50 bill in a card. Fifty dollars in the1950s and the 1960s was a huge amount of money for a kid to get as a Christmas gift. He was a very generous man. My grandmother lived a life of leisure as I was growing up. She played cards with her friends and went to the country

club and had an active social life. We would go over to her house on Sundays after church. She and my grandfather also had a farm outside of Albany that they had bought for their son's enjoyment. They had one child, my father's half-brother. He was born later in life for both of them. They dammed a stream on the farm to create a pond and installed a raft and a diving board. They had a little rowboat that had a 1.5 horsepower engine on it. My siblings and I were the beneficiaries of this to the extent that we got to go out and spend a weekend at the farm. My grandmother was more one for adult conversation than for kid conversation. She gave us great presents.

MR. SHAH: You mentioned that your dad has a half-brother; do you remember his name or anything about him?

MR. SANDMAN: His name is William Hearley. He goes by Bill. He grew up knowing great privilege, very differently from how my father had grown up. He and my father are very different people. When Bill's father, Dad's stepfather, died about 1979, my father did something that says a lot about Dad's character. The will was read, and it was apparent that Dad's stepfather's intentions at the time he created the will could not be realized. He had a debilitating stroke in 1968, and for the last ten or more years of his life was incapacitated. He had around-the-clock private duty nurses throughout that period, and it depleted his fortune. By the time he died, he didn't have nearly the wealth that he assumed he would have at the time he drafted his will. His intention was to leave the vast majority of his estate

to his son and to trusts for his six natural grandchildren. The will had several specific bequests at the beginning, including one to my father and mother, and then left everything else to his son and his natural grandchildren's trusts. The specific bequest to my parents wasn't a large amount of money, but it was a thoughtful thing for him to have done. The way the will worked, the specific bequests came first and had priority over the bequest of the remainder of the estate. My father realized that taking his bequest under the circumstances would be to the detriment of his half-brother and his half-brother's kids and would not be consistent with his step-father's assumptions. So he forwent his inheritance. This despite the fact that he had strained relationship with his half-brother. He just thought taking the inheritance would be wrong. He never said a word about it. I learned what he had done from my mother. She wanted me to know what kind of person my dad was. They say the measure of your character is how you behave when you think no one is looking. Dad has a boatload of character.

MR. SHAH: Did your father have any other siblings?

MR. SANDMAN: No. He must have had a very lonely childhood. His mother sent him to "Miss Porter's School" through about fifth grade. She made him wear knickers well past the age when other boys did. I am sure it just mortified him. He's 90 now. He is to this day a shy man. I suspect that is a result of the circumstances under which he grew up.

MR. SHAH: You mentioned your mother had two sisters and one brother. Can you talk about them?

MR. SANDMAN: I knew the sisters better because they lived much longer than her brother. Her brother died when I was in law school in the mid-1970s. Her were both over 90 when they died. The oldest in the family was Mary. Mary was indomitable. She was incredibly strong and also had a great sense of humor. She had many tragedies in her life that she handled with a grace that's hard to describe. She had seven children. The youngest was born with Down's Syndrome and died at 12. Her husband died in 1963 when he and she were probably about 56 or 57. He hadn't done much to prepare financially for an early death, and she knew nothing about financial planning or about their financial resources. My father worked with her to get her affairs in order and to teach her how to manage her own affairs. I remember distinctly that after her husband died, every night after dinner, when my father would work for about ten or fifteen minutes at the desk in the living room on the family finances, writing checks and paying bills, he would have my mother sit with him and explain everything so that she would never suffer the fate that her sister had when her husband died early. I think of Mary as always smiling, as good natured, as adaptable, curious, smart, and funny, despite many hardships. One of her daughters died at about 30 in the late 1960s, they thought of pancreatic cancer. They later determined that in fact she died of what her father had died of in his fifties—the consequences of an unusual, genetic thyroid disorder that

either causes cancer or has effects like cancer. The disorder eventually affected all but two of Mary's children. I think four of her children pre-deceased her. There is nothing harder in life than for a parent to have to bury a kid, and Mary had to do it multiple times. But, to the end, she somehow just picked herself up and put one foot in front of the other. She was grateful for the life that she had and made the best of it.

I can't remember who was next in the birth order, whether it was Mabel or Joe. Mabel was a real character. She was very big on education. She was a teacher. She did substitute teaching work well into her 70s. She did much of her substitute teaching at her parish's elementary school, but in her later years she taught at a public school in a low-income neighborhood in downtown Albany. She was a progressive and active on social issues. She was an anti-war demonstrator. People sometimes think of older people as stuck in their ways and as getting more conservative as they age, but both Mabel and her sister Mary both got much more liberal as they aged. They use to do things together. And after both of their husbands had died, they were quite the pair. They would travel together. They would go to Europe together, and their stories of traveling together were hilarious. Mary would rib Mabel mercilessly because Mabel was a very diligent traveler. She would do all kinds of research in advance of a trip, and, according to Mary, would correct and add to the tour guides' commentaries as they visited the sights. Mary was embarrassed by this, but Mabel was going to be sure that she got her money's worth. Mabel

did acupuncture. She was into alternative medicine and crazy vitamins. She was a very memorable person.

Joe was the jokester in the family. Whenever he called our house and I answered, he would say, without identifying himself, "Is your gray-haired mother at home?" He would say this when she was in her thirties and might have had two gray hairs, but she was a little sensitive about it. He was a funny guy, a storyteller, a prankster. He died of lung cancer probably in his 60s. Because my aunts lived so long and I knew them as an adult, I have much more vivid memories of them than I do of my uncle.

MR. SHAH: Sure. Did your parents ever talk about their childhoods?

MR. SANDMAN: Only in recent years. Neither of them were much for storytelling. My father, in the past few years, has become a storyteller. I think the change is attributable to my mother's current situation. The two of them moved to a continuing care facility about five-and-a-half years ago. For the past three or more years my mom has been in the nursing facility there. They're at the same complex, but he lives in their apartment, and she lives separately in the nursing facility. My mom has had a series of small strokes. She has congestive heart failure and has fainting spells periodically. She sometimes has dementia-like symptoms, but at other times is very sharp. It's very difficult to conduct a sustained conversation with her at this point. She and my father used to talk a lot, and he misses the intellectual stimulation of their conversations. My mother is a very, very smart woman. Since my mom moved into the nursing facility, my

four brothers and sisters and I travel down to Florida where they live to try to visit them as often as possible. We have a schedule and take turns going down. Our goal is to try to be sure that they never go more than two or three weeks without a visit. One of the nice things about being from a large family is that we can share caring for our parents, so that means thirty visits a year for them, which is helpful. One of the unfortunate consequences is that we're never there together. Whichever one of us is visiting goes out to dinner with my father every night. During our dinners, he tells us things about his youth and about the Army and about college that we've never heard before. Because he can't really converse with my mother now, he's opened up with us. It has gotten to the point where he's telling the same stories two and three times—stories that until three years ago, we'd never heard at all. We have learned a lot more about his upbringing in his late 80s and since he turned 90 than we ever knew before. He has a memory for interesting people and amusing events. He talks about how difficult it was to grow up in the circumstances that he did, but he rarely uses the word "difficult." You hear him describe the facts and that would be the way you would put it. But he doesn't have any regrets about the way he grew up.

My mother was never much of a storyteller about her youth. We know about practical jokes that her brother played on her and things like that. But one thing that's always come through is the importance of

education in their upbringing, and they were sure to pass that one to all of their kids.

MR. SHAH: Do you recall when and how your parents met?

MR. SANDMAN: They went to elementary school together. After my father left Miss Porter's School, he went to the closest Catholic elementary school, Vincentian Institute in Albany—where my mother went. All of my brothers and sisters went to that school. My parents also went to high school together. He went to Union College in Schenectady and she went to the College of Saint Rose. They didn't start dating until college. They never went out together in high school. My older brother and sister had the same eighth grade teacher that my parents had, and she remembered things a little differently. She would recount to my brother and sister, in front of all their classmates, that she remembered my parents well: "Edgar sat in the fifth row and Margaret sat in the sixth, and they would hold hands across the aisle." My parents said that was complete hogwash, she just made that up. She claimed to have been prescient in seeing their relationship.

MR. SHAH: Do you recall when they got married?

MR. SANDMAN: They got married on December 28, 1945, very shortly after my father returned home from service in the Pacific during World War II. He was recovering from malaria, which he contracted on the troop ship coming home across the Pacific. He weighed about 130 pounds when they got married. They had gotten engaged during the war. I think he gave her the

engagement ring in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. They were going to get married when the war ended, but during the war people had no idea how long it was going to last. My mother talks about their "lost years" -- the years when they were in their early 20s that should have been a happy period, but which they lost to the war. When the war ended, they were determined to get married as quickly as they could. Dad spent three weeks in an Army hospital at Fort Dix in New Jersey when he first got back to the United States. When he finally got home to Albany, scheduling a wedding was a challenge. There were a lot of weddings going on in the United States immediately after the war. They snagged a slot at 8 a.m. on a Friday morning in the chapel of their high school. My mother didn't wear a wedding dress; she wore a nice suit. My father wore a suit. We have a picture of them on their wedding day, and you would never know from their attire what the occasion was.

MR. SHAH: Jim, can you describe your father's military service?

MR. SANDMAN: He was drafted in 1942. At that point, he was in law school. After graduating from Union College in 1940, he went to Albany Law School. He completed two years of law school before he went into the Army. He was drafted into what was then called the Army Air Forces. He was a radar repairman. He did not recall his military service favorably. He says he spent six months being trained in radar repair in Boca Raton and never once saw a radar machine during the course. He did not see active combat, although at one point he was camped near an air strip on an island in the

Pacific that got bombed. His position was a ground support position. He wasn't on planes. He moved around to various islands in the Pacific during the course of the war. For many years my parents kept the letters that he sent my mother during the war. He could not disclose where he was. He had to give the letters to somebody unsealed, so they could read the letter before it went in the mail to go home. There were a few instances where something had been clipped out or edited in some other way. They were really mushy letters— "My darling Margaret," they would start. They kept them in a metal box up in the attic. My brothers and sisters and I would go up there and do dramatic, over-the-top readings of them. We found the letters highly entertaining. One time my mother heard us reading them aloud. The letters quickly disappeared after that.

Dad had sort of a *Catch-22* military experience. He saw a lot of the silliness of the Army bureaucracy. He talks about how hungry people were for news from home. A magazine—*Time* magazine or a *Life* or a *Reader's Digest*—would arrive over there six months after publication, but people would be fighting over it to get any kind of news or pictures from home. He talks about how long it took everything to get there. A fellow soldier had the misfortune of having a fruitcake sent to him over there—everybody in our family hates fruitcake—and by the time it arrived, it was so rotted that it was almost unrecognizable. Dad says his fellow soldiers were poking it with it with sticks to try to figure out what it was.

My brother was in the National Guard during the Vietnam War and had to go to boot camp for four months. He hated the experience. I recall his talking to my father about it, and my father told him, at least you know exactly the length of your term. The hard thing about the war was you never knew how long it would last. There was no end in sight, no light at the end of the tunnel. For as much as you knew, this could be your life forever and you might die that way. It was a very disconcerting experience for a young person.

After my mother graduated from college, she moved to New York and went to Columbia Teacher's College for a master's degree in what we would now call special education. She taught the hearing-impaired. It was quite an adventure for a woman who had always been walking distance from school, including college, to go to New York and find herself a place to live near Columbia in 1940. She was pretty plucky, I think, and quite up to the task. I believe she spent two years in New York and then came back to Albany and taught at a public school, which was also walking distance from her house.

MR. SHAH: How long did your mother work at the school?

MR. SANDMAN: She worked there from about 1942 until my brother was born in 1947—about five years. She stopped working when he was born. After my parents got married, they moved into the upper apartment in the two-family house where my mother had grown up. Because they lived so close to the school where Mom taught, Mom would have her students over after

class. They were very enthusiastic and liked my mother a lot. Because of their hearing impairments, they often spoke simultaneously. My father found was amazed at my mother's ability to understand, communicate with, and relate to her students. I think it was very interesting for him to see her at her work and experience firsthand what she did in her professional life.

MR. SHAH: Can you talk about your father's professional life?

MR. SANDMAN: When he got back from the war, he still had one year of law school to complete. At that point, Albany Law School, I think like other law schools, was turning out multiple graduating classes in a calendar year to accommodate returning veterans who had started their legal education before the war and were eager to complete it quickly. Dad graduated at some point in 1946. New York decided that people in his position—who had completed two years at a New York law school before the war and one year after— did not have to take the bar exam. They could be admitted simply on motion of a bar member. I think they were trying to give a benefit to veterans. I think they recognized how difficult it would be for students to have to study up on subjects that they had taken many years before. So my father was admitted to the New York bar without ever having had to take the New York bar exam.

Dad did very well in law school. At some point, he was first in his class and got a scholarship for it. I don't know if he graduated first in his class or not, but he did very well. But when he went looking for a job

after graduation, he couldn't find one for two reasons. First, the market was flooded with recently returned veterans who were graduating from law schools in waves. Second, Dad was Catholic, and some law firms were quite explicit that they did not hire Catholics. They told him so. Discrimination on the basis of religion was not illegal at the time. Dad interviewed with one law firm where a partner in the firm, a Catholic, was also president of an Albany bank. This man, whose name was Edward Rooney, said "I don't have a job for you in my law firm, but I do have a job for you in my bank." My father needed employment , so he took the job in the bank. On his first day of work, with a college degree and a law degree, he rolled pennies in the basement. He started at the absolute bottom. I think he was making $1,200 a year. My parents struggled to make ends meet. They didn't have a car until 1950. My father took the bus to work, or walked, or would get a ride. My mother talks about mending his pajamas to make them last longer. But he worked his way up. He started with no connections. He had no family pushing for him. He was introverted. In 1968, 22 years after he started in the bank basement rolling pennies, he became president of the bank. Over the course of that time, he also became a community leader. He was on the boards of Albany Law School, Albany Medical College, the Chamber of Commerce, the College of Saint Rose, and a variety of other nonprofits. Governor Rockefeller appointed him to the State Board of Social Welfare. He was very generous with his time and, when he took on a board

position, he was very serious about it. He was sought after because people thought he added value as a board member. He was wise, thoughtful, and exuded integrity.

Dad had a very regular schedule, which in retrospect I envy. He left for work at the same time every morning, at 8:00. And he was home every night by 5:30. We ate dinner as a family at the same time every night, 6:15. We ate late among families in our neighborhood. Most people ate dinner at 5 or 5:30, and we were considered almost continental in our dining hour of 6:15. There were times when he would have to go to evening meetings at branch banks outside of Albany in rural areas some distance away. He went to New York periodically.

He became president of the bank when I was a junior in high school. Our living circumstances changed a lot over the course of my life. When I was born, my parents and my older brother and sister were living in the two-family house. There were five of us and two bedrooms. I shared a bedroom with my older brother and sister. We had a living room, a dining room, and a kitchen, and two bedrooms. In 1954, when I was three, my parents bought their first house. They paid about $17,000 for it. It had four modest bedrooms and one-and-a-half bathrooms. It was in a real family neighborhood. It was probably only half a mile from the house we had moved from, but the neighborhood had a very different feel to it. In the summer before I started high school, in 1965, we moved to a colonial house on one of the nicest streets in Albany. Albany does not

have a lot of nice housing stock. That was also a four-bedroom house, but my parents did a lot of work on it before we moved in. They paid $25,000 for it and installed air-conditioning and a new kitchen. It was not a fancy house, but it felt luxurious to us. By the time I was in high school, my family was living well, but never ostentatiously. The real luxuries I remember, starting in 1963, were family vacations. We went to nice resort hotels. My mother got tired of "vacations "where she had to cook for seven people every day, and she finally decided that the family vacation wasn't a vacation for her—all it meant was that she had to pick up her routine and do it elsewhere.

The greatest benefit of my parents' improved financial circumstances was that they were able to and did pay for the college and graduate school educations of all five of their children. What a blessing. That's a gift from a parent to a child of inestimable value.

While he was president of the Albany bank, he worked out a transaction with Banker's Trust Company in New York. At the time, commercial banks chartered by the state could not operate outside designated geographic districts, so there were real limitations on how much they could grow. Banker's Trust Company formed a bank holding company in New York state that the Albany bank became a part of. The holding company idea was very innovative at the time. It allowed common ownership of banks in different banking districts and made each of the member banks much more effective and competitive in its district. It

gave the member banks access to resources to compete at a much higher level than they would have been able to otherwise. In 1970, Banker's Trust asked my father to move to New York to become a senior officer of the holding company, which I have to imagine was a real tribute to him. People in New York City generally regard up-staters as hicks. I think Bankers Trust saw something in Dad. They thought that he could play in the big leagues. He and my mother decided to make the move. They picked up their lives at the age of 51, after having lived only in Albany—except for my mother's time at Columbia and my father's time in the Army—and moved to Harrison, New York in Westchester County, and lived there for about 10 years. Dad's office at Bankers Trust was on the executive floor of the headquarters building at 280 Park Avenue. It was a very hard transition. You don't make friends when you are 51 the way that you do when you are younger. It was disruptive to our family. By that point, I was in college, but my younger brother and sister were still in high school and had to move schools, which was particularly hard on my younger brother. The work environment was very different from what my father was used to. Living in a bedroom community outside New York left them unintegrated into either community—Harrison or New York City—in great contrast to the way they had lived their lives in Albany, where both of them were very actively involved, and where they had a real sense of community involvement at the local level.

Eventually, Dad became part of Banker's Trust Company—the bank rather than the holding company—as executive vice president. He tired of the work and he didn't feel well-utilized. He retired at 66, earlier than he had expected to. My brothers and sisters and I were a little worried about it at the time because work had been his life. He really didn't have hobbies, except for reading. Today, at the age of 90, he reads three newspapers a day. He ended up filling his time with a combination of consulting work for Dime Savings Bank in New York and volunteer activities. My parents moved back to Albany, and my father resumed many of his civic and charitable activities and board activities and eventually got to the point where he was so busy with things that he almost had to retire again to step back. Governor Mario Cuomo appointed him to the board of trustees of the State University of New York— the statewide public college and university system – in the 1980s.

After his retirement and return to Albany, Dad became chairman of the board of Albany Law School. He received an honorary degree from Albany Law School in 1991, which was a wonderful event for our family. It was conferred at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in Saratoga Springs, New York. While he was chairman of the board, he did something that reflected why he was such a great board member. He and a subset of the other trustees had the designation "trustee for life." Dad had noticed in his experience on the board there were problems with having trustees for life. There was one life trustee who was no longer able

to serve constructively, but they had no way to get rid of him. My father, when he was chairman, persuaded the board to eliminate the title of life trustee, and to do it retroactively, stripping the sitting life trustees of their permanent status. Dad was able to accomplish that in significant part because he was himself a life trustee and was willing to give up his life tenure for the good of the law school. His example made it hard for the other life trustees to object to the change. He is now a trustee emeritus.

MR. SHAH: Now beginning with your life, can you talk about where and when you were born, and where you fit in among the spectrum of children your parents had?

MR. SANDMAN: I was born June 16, 1951 at Brady Maternity Hospital in Albany, New York, about a half-mile from the house where my parents lived. I'm the third of five children. My older brother, Paul, was born in 1947. My older sister, Nancy, was born in 1948. They're about 15 months apart. My younger sister, Jean, was born in 1954, and my younger brother, John, was born in 1957. When I was born, my family was living in the house where my mother had grown up, in an apartment over her parents' apartment. The house was at 522 Yates Street in Albany. Google the address. It's a very modest house.

MR. SHAH: What was your childhood like?

MR. SANDMAN: I had a wonderful childhood. I had a wonderful, wonderful family life. There was never any tension in our house. My parents love each other. They have a spectacular marriage. I remember in high school that it was

routine for me to find my parents smooching. My friends didn't have that experience. To grow up in a house where your parents not only don't fight, but obviously enjoy each other's company and love each other, is an amazing thing.

My mother was very strict. Her reputation in our neighborhood was always as the strictest mother by far. She didn't brook any nonsense in our house. She was very well organized. She ran the house like a business, and she had many routines. All of the children had assigned tasks. My parents relieved themselves of post-dinner duties of any kind sometime in the mid-1950s, by which point my older brother, sister, and I were old enough to wash and dry the dishes and clean up. Each bedroom in the house had an assigned day for changing sheets. You changed one of your two sheets each week -- the top sheet one week, the bottom sheet the following week. You could tell which sheet to change by the size of the hem on the top, flat sheet on your bed. Flat sheets come with a wider hem on one end than on the other. If the wide hem was showing at the top of the bed, you changed the bottom sheet; the narrow hem meant you should change the top sheet. You were responsible for stripping the bed. My mother would then launder the sheets, iron them,

My mother hated it when kids yelled or screamed. She had all the neighborhood kids convinced that she was allergic to screaming – that if any kid screamed within earshot of her, she would have a sneezing fit. If

she heard a kid screaming, she would stand near an open window and fake ridiculously loud sneezes. She was very clever.

My mother always said that if you could survive our family, you were ready for the world. She meant that the relationships among five siblings provide a useful socializing experience. My older brother Paul was dictatorial. He thought he was in charge because he was the oldest. My older sister Nancy is a saint, the favorite of all her siblings. She is kind, generous, thoughtful, and accommodating. She became a confidante of all of her other siblings. My younger sister was kind of a girly-girl. My younger brother John got away with murder because he was the youngest, and by the time he came along my mother had relaxed her standards. The spacing among my siblings was interesting. My brother Paul is four years older than I am, so we were never in high school together. We both went to Boston College, but we were never in college together. We both went to law school (he went to Harvard) but were never in law school at the same time. He seemed much older to me because he was always far ahead of me in school. I overlapped with my older sister in high school for one year. My younger sister was four years behind me in school, so I had the same phenomenon with her that I had with my older brother: we were never in high school together. I'm very much a middle child – not only the third of five, but with wide gaps between me and my siblings who are closest in age to me.

`Albany was an interesting a place to grow up for several reasons. It's the state capital. As a result, there was more activity there than you would expect for a typical city of Albany's size. It's a small city. At the time I was growing up there, the population was about 108,000. Today it's about 93,000. Nelson Rockefeller was Governor from the time I was in third grade until my second year in law school. He was a national figure, very active, and had a transformative effect on Albany. The State University of New York at Albany acquired a huge campus within the city limits in the early 1960s and developed a large complex designed by Edward Durell Stone, the architect of the Kennedy Center. Rockefeller demolished a large section of the downtown to build a large marble complex of state office buildings now known as Rockefeller Plaza. Interesting speakers came to Albany, and top entertainers came to the Saratoga Performing Arts Center. Presidential candidates came to Albany. I covered Richard Nixon's 1968 visit for my high school newspaper. Bobby Kennedy was one of our senators, and he would come to Albany periodically.

I realize now, in retrospect, what a homogenous life I lived growing up. My experience was anything but diverse. I lived in all-white neighborhoods and went to schools that were almost totally white. Not only that, but from kindergarten through high school I went to a Catholic school where all of my fellow students were Catholic -- mostly Irish Catholic, like my family. Our neighborhood was religiously diverse. It

was a friendly mix of Catholic and Jewish. When I was in grade school, my brothers and sisters and I would go to daily Mass during Lent at 7:00 a.m. at our parish church. A Jewish man who lived next to us, Abraham Feldman, would go to temple every morning at the same time to be part of the minion. Many mornings he would give us a ride and drop us off at our church before he went on to his temple. I think he was intrigued by these kids going off to church. We shared something with him: we were all off to our early morning religious observances. He respected ours, and we respected his.

There was economic diversity in my education. Most kids that I went to school with lived in two-family houses. They weren't poor, but they certainly weren't wealthy. I'm confident that my family was at the top end of the economic spectrum among the people that I went to school with.

I had a very safe and secure and comfortable life as a kid. I loved and admired my parents. I never had to worry about the stability of my family or about where the next meal was going to come from or about making ends meet. That was a great, great luxury.

MR. SHAH: Did you have any hobbies or interests going up in Albany?

MR. SANDMAN: Not a lot, actually. I was never good at sports. I took horseback riding at one point, and I played neighborhood games of baseball and whiffle ball. I didn't learn to swim until I was in the third grade, but once I learned I was good at it and enjoyed it. I swam for a couple of summers on a country club swimming team. We spent a lot of time at the pool in the

summer and would try to go as often as we could. I liked to read, especially liked history. I have an autograph collection. After my freshman year in high school, I wrote to a number of people to ask for their autographs and was surprised at the responses that I received. I got autographs from Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower, Lyndon Johnson, Bobby and Teddy Kennedy, and J. Edgar Hoover – who, bizarrely, sent his autograph back on a slip of paper that had "Autograph" preprinted at the top. He didn't really need to tell me what it was. I can't recall any person who didn't respond to me. And these were real signatures, not autopenned, with the possible exception of Johnson's.

MR. SHAH: Do you have any memories of these family vacations that you talked about earlier?

MR. SANDMAN: Oh, yes. All of our family vacations were very memorable. One lesson I took is that family vacations can be a very important part of family identity and memories. When I was little and my family really didn't have any money, we would go to Lake Minerva, a reservoir in the Adirondack Mountains, and stay in a log cabin. We had to bring everything with us. We had to bring our dishes, linens, blankets, and towels. We would stay for four weeks. My father only had two weeks' vacation at the time, so for two of the weeks he would join us only on weekends. This place was heaven for a kid. Every cabin had its own dock and its own rowboat. The lake was small enough that we could go out in the boat by ourselves. We caught frogs, tadpoles, and sunfish. There was a scruffy little beach with a raft that we loved. There was a baseball field. It got cold at night, and we had fires and roasted marshmallows in the cabin fireplace. We went to

Lake Minerva with another family, the Cummings. My father worked Mr. Cummings at the bank. They also had five kids roughly about our ages. I think we went to Lake Minerva for three or four years. Then we moved to a nicer place on Trout Lake, also in the Adirondacks. They provided linens, sheets, and towels, and blankets. We didn't have to bring everything, but my mother still had to cook. Then, in 1963, vacations got much better. We went to a resort in Portsmouth, New Hampshire called Wentworth By The Sea—a beautiful old, white Victorian building. , and they had a par-three golf course, and a great swimming pool, and activities every night. I had to dress for dinner. I think we went there for two weeks. We went back to that place again in 1966. In 1964, we went to the Cavalier resort in Virginia Beach, which was not as good as the place in New Hampshire. We only went there once. We went to Bermuda in 1967. And then we went for several years to Chatham Bars Inn on Cape Cod, a beautiful resort. These were great vacations, particularly the resort hotels. We really looked forward to them, and I remember a lot about them.

My parents took us to New York City occasionally. I was on the Howdy Doody Show, which was a national television show in 1950s. I remember vividly that Buffalo Bob's suede cowboy outfit was powder blue in color, not the tan I was expecting. The color was chosen for how it would look on black and white television, because if there was any color television then it was very limited. We tried to get on the Steve Allen

show but weren't able to. A trip to New York was a big deal. New York is about 150 miles from Albany, but it is a world away. We would go down to the Yankee games during the great days of the Yankees in the early1960s -- the days of Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, Yogi Berra, and Elston Howard. My father knew some people who had front-row box seats behind the Yankee on-deck circle, and we saw these legends right in front of us. We went to the New York World's Fair in 1964.

MR. SHAH: Regarding your childhood, it seemed to coincide with the civil rights movement. Can you talk about that and whether that had any effect on you or whether that was even apparent?

MR. SANDMAN: I remember the civil rights movement, largely from watching television news. What I saw was shocking to me -- the dogs and the fire hoses being turned on peaceful protesters, including children. It was all completely foreign, unthinkable, very disturbing. The civil rights movement was something I associated with the South. It wasn't something I recall seeing reflected in anything going on locally in Albany until the later 1960s.. I do remember hearing some people use the "N-word" --- and knowing you should never, ever use that word. That word never would have been spoken in our house, and I never heard any talk like that from my parents at all. People didn't refer to "African Americans" or "Blacks" in the early 1960s. The terms used were "colored people "and "Negroes." When I was in high school, I volunteered at Providence House in the south end of Albany, the African-American section of the city. There was an after-

school program run by a young Catholic priest. Providence House was literally a storefront and provided a number of community services. They had an after-school program for neighborhood kids, and we would take them to the neighborhood parish gym to play basketball and do other activities with them. I was aware of an emerging social consciousness and had a sense of needing to be involved in doing something. That priest was an inspirational figure for me, very different from the other priests I knew. He became, at a very young age, Bishop of Albany.

I remember Martin Luther King's assassination very well. When I was a junior in high school, I went on a school trip to Europe for three weeks in April of 1968. We went to Paris, Madrid, Rome, London, and Ireland. The total price for the trip, including airfare, accommodations, two meals a day, and guided tours, was $550.00. You get what you pay for. We stayed in some very dive-y hotels. We flew overnight from JFK to Paris on April 4, 1968, the evening that Martin Luther King was assassinated. We didn't hear anything about it before we left. We learned of it when we got off the plane in Paris. That group of white Catholic kids got it immediately. We all knew of Martin Luther King. We knew what he meant and what his assassination meant. It was just unbelievable. We were hungry for news from home but were dependent on the foreign press, the foreign print media, to follow what was going on in the United States. The United States just erupted, with riots in cities throughout the country. I remember a picture on the front page of *Le Monde* of machine gunners

on the steps of the U.S. Capitol. We had no access to television, and there was no CNN then. The price of a long-distance telephone call home was prohibitive, so none of us could afford to call home and find out what was going on. It was frightening. We wondered what we were going to come home to.

I knew the names of the leaders of the civil rights movement, such as Medgar Evers, Stokely Carmichael, and Malcolm X. When I was a senior in high school, my English teacher assigned *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* . It was very eye-opening for me. I knew about his assassination in 1965, whenever it was, but before reading the book I didn't have an understanding of his place in black culture.

1968 was a horrible year for the country. I had the sense that the wheels were coming off -- between Martin Luther King's assassination, Bobby Kennedy's assassination two months later, the riots at the Democratic Convention in August, and Nixon's election. I had never experienced another period like that in my lifetime.