

3-1-2013

## Interview with Barbara DeHaan About Her Ethnic Background (FA 601)

Manuscripts & Folklife Archives  
Western Kentucky University, [mssfa@wku.edu](mailto:mssfa@wku.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_fa\\_oral\\_hist](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_fa_oral_hist)



Part of the [Ethnic Studies Commons](#), and the [Folklore Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Folklife Archives, Manuscripts &, "Interview with Barbara DeHaan About Her Ethnic Background (FA 601)" (2013). *FA Oral Histories*. Paper 64.  
[http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc\\_fa\\_oral\\_hist/64](http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_fa_oral_hist/64)

This Transcription is brought to you for free and open access by TopSCHOLAR®. It has been accepted for inclusion in FA Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of TopSCHOLAR®. For more information, please contact [topscholar@wku.edu](mailto:topscholar@wku.edu).

**Adler:** This is Betsy Adler. It's June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1995 and I'm interviewing Barbara DeHaan for EthniCity.

**DeHaan:** My name is Barbara DeHaan. I live at 106 \_\_\_\_\_ Nicholasville, Kentucky. I work at Jefferson Pilot Insurance Company as an accounts clerk.

**Adler:** Which was formerly Central Bank.

**DeHaan:** Kentucky Central Life.

**Adler:** That's right. Oh, golly. And your birthday?

**DeHaan:** September 19, 1938. I don't even know when I was born.

**Adler:** Do you want to try again?

**DeHaan:** September 18, 1938.

**Adler:** And where were you born?

**DeHaan:** I was born in Georgetown, Guyana, South America.

**Adler:** Can you tell me what was your family like?

**DeHaan:** My family were nine in the family, nine kids, four boys and five girls. And describe them, my father was an accountant. My mother was a homemaker. She stayed at home all the time to take care of the kids. And my grandparents lived with us all the years until they passed away. I was ten when my grandfather died and I was sixteen when my grandmother died. They always had an older member of the family lived with us at all times through all the years of my life. That was my father's parents we lived with and when they passed away my mother's mother came to live with us. We always had an elderly one around the house.

**Adler:** Where did you fit in among the nine kids?

**DeHaan:** I was in the middle because I'm the fifth child, the second girl, the fifth child. So, I kind of fall right in the middle.

**Adler:** With that many kids did everybody have to help out and everything around the house?

**DeHaan:** Oh, yeah, not really help as much as we were taught by my mother that we had to learn to do certain things. And we were an average middle class family. Which we did have maids come in and clean the house and stuff like that. At a certain age after you were twelve you had to make your own bed and we were assigned... You start by sweeping the steps as the first chore you get as a child. You had to do something so you had the stairs to sweep coming down. And we lived in an upstairs-downstairs. All the bedrooms were upstairs and we had the downstairs. We all had to pitch in, as you got older you had, the girls had to learn to cook. And every Sunday we were assigned a different one had to learn to cook a dish. So, our mother made sure that we were equipped for life, I think. [laughing]

**Adler:** How to clean and how to cook.

**DeHaan:** Right. [laughter] We couldn't appreciate it at the time. [laughing]

**Adler:** I can imagine. Did the boys have to learn to cook and did they have chores?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, because most of the boys are older and she said that they would be on their own at some point so they had to learn. They had to do the same chores.

**Adler:** So, they had a Sunday learn to cook day, too.

**DeHaan:** Uh-hmm, they had that, too. So, they all can cook. They are all good cooks, my brothers are.

**Adler:** What kinds of things did she teach you to cook?

**DeHaan:** Well, oh, basic, our staple is rice. We grow a lot of rice in Guyana and we cook everything with rice. Different types of meat with rice; we eat everything with rice. They used to eat beef stew without rice. We had to put rice with it. And we saw this as a means... almost everybody in Georgetown that I know of had soup. Made a special type of yellow split pea soup.

You don't see yellow split peas in Lexington but we, we find it when we go to Chinese food store. Because we still cook, I cook basically like I grew up. And...

**Adler:** I think I've seen it at the co-op.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, we find it at the co-op or at the Chinese store. Yeah, we cook a lot of that. Everything we cook in the rice, you know we cook rice. We cook different peas, different kinds of peas that we make that we call a cook-up rice.

**Adler:** Cook up.

**DeHaan:** Uh-hmm, everything goes into the rice, you cover it up and cook it up. [laughter]

**Adler:** That sounds good. So, you put the rice and the water and everything in. You don't cook the rice first.

**DeHaan:** Everything in. No, you cook everything together. You just cover it up. We use coconut milk instead of plain water but I use more water because my husband has cholesterol now. He doesn't need so much coconut. But I still get a sneak of it in.

**Adler:** That sounds good. What kinds of things did you do growing up? Did you play games and things like that?

**DeHaan:** Oh, yeah, we didn't have TV when I grew up we knew nothing about TV. So, we mainly played games with our sisters and brothers. We were, our family was so big we didn't have a lot of friends around. So, we all played together. We had a big backyard so, we were not ever allowed out front. We played in the backyard all the time and we played cricket which is a game you don't know too much here.

**Adler:** Like the English game.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, we had all the English stuff. Yeah, we were basically English so we got our influence from England. Some net ball and some kids' games we play a lot. Pat-a-cake and that type of thing, hop scotch. My mom liked to sew. So, she taught us how to sew. We had to do a lot of handwork, crocheting and knitting and stuff like that. And I got involved with the, we had community class of the May pole. It was a community fair that we had that I told you about. And I \_\_\_\_\_ the May pole. I was in it from four years old. I was a flower girl with the queen and as I grew older I was a maid of honor then a \_\_\_\_\_ [?] of the May pole. And I taught that to the other kids for about ten years.

**Adler:** Is that hard to do?

**DeHaan:** Not really, uh-uh. It's fun to do. [laughing] No, it's not hard at all.

**Adler:** I was thinking there's a May pole at the Living Arts and Science Center.

**DeHaan:** There is?

**Adler:** Yeah.

**DeHaan:** I saw a school did it for the closing of the school. I said, "Oh, look they did that."

**Adler:** It looked like they did a good job, too.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, they did. They did a good job. Somebody came and brought that. Yeah, I was so tickled when I saw that. I said, "Oh, I love to see." I had so much fun with that. And then I was in the majorettes and I was a Girl Scout. We call Girl Guide [?] at home. And I got involved with, we had a youth group at church. I used to be the secretary and the vice-president at one time. It seemed liked I was involved in everything. As my mother said, I liked to get involved. So, every afternoon I had something to go to. I was on a tennis team. I used to play tennis. So, I was very active growing up. And all of us were. We were really a sports family. My father taught, he was a soccer coach. So, we were always on the soccer field. We were, I was involved in different sports.

**Adler:** Did you play soccer growing up, too?

**DeHaan:** No, we only, only boys played at that time until we came up here. Now, my daughter got into soccer here. But girls didn't play at home at all. We just used to go watch the boys play. We were always there at every game. We were like cheerleaders. [laughing] But radio was our big thing. We had our radio stories like they have soap operas. We listened to radio stories at night. I, I loved the radio. I still do. I enjoy the radio more than TV right now.

**Adler:** What were some of the stories? Were they in English?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, yeah, we are an English country. Guyana is the only English speaking country in South America. A lot of people think I speak Spanish or French or something else. But I never did. We just did Latin or French in school. But I never did really use it that much. I'm, I understand Dutch because my background is Dutch. My maiden name was Dutch. I was a \_\_\_\_\_ [sounds like Maranda]. And then Marato [?], my husband his background is Dutch. Both grandparents were from Dutch Guyana. So, I used to go over there a lot. But something else we liked to do - picnics. We did a lot of going in the country area and having picnics and traveling through the interior. I like to do that weekend travel.

**Adler:** What was that like?

**DeHaan:** That was interesting. We liked to go look for creeks and picnic around there. Have a big bonfire and do what we called bush cooking, stuff like that. That was one of my favorite things.

**Adler:** Did you camp then?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, like camping out, yeah.

**Adler:** At camps or what?

**DeHaan:** No, we didn't stay overnight. We'd go for the day and then we'd come back. Sometimes if we do go far enough, we have like a rented house. We didn't stay out... I don't like it out camping. I can go all day but get me in a house at night. [laughing]

**Adler:** Nothing like a shower anyway. [laughter]

**DeHaan:** Right.

**Adler:** What is the climate like?

**DeHaan:** It's hot. We have the Atlantic that runs along the coast there but it's still hot. I think the average temperature is eighty-five degrees. And the rainy seasons and sunny seasons where there's not any rain. But it's, a lot of breeze blowing. It's like being in Florida.

**Adler:** It's not like here where it's hot and then it stops.

**DeHaan:** No, it's sticky here, right, you still have that breeze because you've got the Atlantic on the length of it, the coast. It wasn't unbearable, well, as a child I didn't think it was. [laughing] Maybe now it might be.

**Adler:** I know, I sometimes think it has gotten hotter as I've gotten older.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, I think as you get older you feel the heat a lot more. We don't have, cause we stayed outside all the time. We were rarely in the house. We played outside all day long. So, we really didn't feel that much because we don't have air conditioning in houses. We had fans but we didn't have air conditioning. Just basically simple life. Not as stressful as you would think of it in the states. I don't know. It seems to be more stressful up here. Everything bothers everybody. Cause we have sun and rain and we go out and meet somebody and talk to them, but we never say, "Is it hot today?". Or that phrase that I run into all the time. People are always remarking on the temperature. It's either too cold for you or too hot for you or something. I don't remember that at all growing up. [laughing]

**Adler:** Was that probably because it didn't change as much so people weren't used to the more extremes.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, right. Probably that was the problem. That might have been it. We didn't have the extreme temperatures. Cause early in the morning it would be cool, like about sixty degrees and then after sundown it gets cool. Because we have the sea wall that runs along the Atlantic and a lot of people would go for walks at night to see the waves come in. And you'd see people in sweaters. And probably seventy degrees or seventy-five degrees, you know. But we thought it was cool.

**Adler:** Yeah, I know, that's my, I have in-laws who live in Hawaii and if we visit them at Christmas they won't go swimming because it's winter. [laughter] Sounds like if you grow up in that type of climate you sort of learn what the seasons are. It's not as obvious as to the rest of us.

**DeHaan:** We didn't get the winter because we knew when it was winter because it seemed to have gotten cooler at some times of the year it seems to be cooler. And it wasn't I mean cold. When I say cool again about sixty degrees. I don't think it ever got below that unless you are way in the mountainous area. It would probably get cooler there.

**Adler:** What was school like?

**DeHaan:** School was, basic fun for me. [laughing] It was, how can I describe school. We had instead of, we called forms, instead of first grade, second grade, we say form one, form two which is the English style. And we did all of these things, the same things you do here. But I think we started earlier. It seemed like we would start kindergarten or send the kids out to school like at three and a half. They would be able to do the alphabet and count much younger than the kids here. Because my youngest one came up at five and he was already doing all the things when he gets to kindergarten here, I mean he knew everything already, you know.

\_\_\_\_\_ [?, daughter's name] was seven and they had to put her up a grade because they gave her a test and she knew all the stuff they were going to do at first grade. So, I think we start younger. Most of us graduated at sixteen.

**Adler:** And what would you do after that?

**DeHaan:** Well, uhmm, after you graduated you had to do different courses that they sent from England. You have to have two or three. You could take like history, math, whatever. And then you could do advance courses after you get, after that first high school, you could... you can come out there and start to work or you can continue and do higher grade. And then most people who wanted to go to college went to England because we didn't have any colleges at home. And most of the girls who didn't go to England like I didn't. I did shorthand and typing and started to work at a co-op bank. And my sisters, one went to nursing school in England and one went up, she did teaching. But the boys, one in electronics and one was a photographer. Frank, he came to the states to continue. I think before the sixties everybody went to England. After sixty-two, we decided to come here because we didn't recognize any degree from the United States. If you came to United States and did, say, engineering or anything it wasn't recognized. It had to be an English degree because it was not the same quality.

**Adler:** Could it be another European country, like France or Italy or Germany or somewhere?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, I figure another European country. England was like our mother, you know. It was just automatic that's where you go. But I think some people probably went because it started going, after sixty-six we got independence. They went to like Germany and Russian and different countries.

**Adler:** It must have been pretty expensive to go to school in England.

**DeHaan:** Oh, yeah.

**Adler:** You had to get transportation and things like that.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, I'm sure it was tough. [laughing] As... all of us couldn't go at the same time. We had to stagger them. Especially if you have got a big family and a whole bunch of kids.

**Adler:** So, you were, you went to, you learned, what? You were an accountant?

**DeHaan:** No, I did shorthand and typing.

**Adler:** Shorthand and typing.

**DeHaan:** And then I did bookkeeping, uh-huh, and then I worked with the co-op bank. And then I did \_\_\_\_\_ [?] machines and I went into the accounting department and did like mostly bookkeeping and typing and stuff like that. And that's what I basically stuck to here. I stuck to that and I kept just doing accounting courses here and there. And I came up here, my husband went to the University of Illinois and he did engineering. And I just did odd classes in accounting. I really don't have a full fledged accounting degree [laughing].

**Adler:** But you know it all.

**DeHaan:** Well, I know most of what you should know, the basics.

**Adler:** Do you like doing that sort of thing?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, I always liked working with figures somehow. I just always enjoyed that. I prefer doing that than anything else. I didn't like being a secretary. I tried that. I started out first. The first boss I had [laughing] I just didn't like it. He thought he could ask me to do anything and I said, "No, I don't think I like this job at all." [laughter]

**Adler:** More than shorthand.

**DeHaan:** Right. I said, "I don't care to do shorthand, typing letter, get them out. But when it comes to asking me to do private stuff, no, I'm not going to buy your wife's gifts. I'm not going to make you coffee. That's not my classification." So, I got out of that and that's why I went out and work more with, well, now they use computers, we used the \_\_\_\_\_ [NPR ?] machines at the time. I just said I will never go back to being a secretary. [laughing] That wasn't my cup of tea.

**Adler:** So, how did you , how did you meet your husband?

**DeHaan:** Oh, that was a trip, that was one of our trips that we took. Five girls that I used to run around with, and we used to go on weekend trips. And spend like leave Thursday afternoon and come back on Sunday and we would, we went to different parts of the country. This time we went up to the airport where a friend of mine was married and living at the airport. Her husband was an air traffic controller. And she met us and played, we used to play basketball and she was on our team. And she said, since I got married and live out there, it's twenty-five miles away, ya'll [?] won't come and see me. So, we said, "Oh, next trip we are coming up to visit you." It was Easter weekend. So, we come up Thursday afternoon and come home Sunday. So, the five of us went up to visit her and we stayed at her house. And that Thursday after we got there she said there are two bachelors that live across the street and I invited them over to meet ya'll. So, they came over that night, we were sitting down and talking. The two of them just looking at the five of us. [laughter] And I was just fascinated with my husband because I thought I knew everybody in Georgetown because I was in everything. So, they, that night I kept saying, "Hmmm", he was drinking, you know, he would take a sip of a drink and he would smoke and put it down. And every time he'd puff a cigarette, he'd take a sip of a drink. I thought that is weird. I'd never seen anybody do that before because the girls never smoke. Boys smoke at home, girls were kind of taboo for girls to smoke. But boys it was a macho thing, you know.

So, the next day I was expecting a friend coming from \_\_\_\_\_ [?, sounds like Cernom, counter 242] and I was suppose to meet him at the airport. And two of us were to drive back into town bring him down. But the guy we stayed with he had to work. They were all air traffic controllers. My husband was an air traffic controller at the time. And he had to work that morning, so, he said he'd come back that morning and pick me up to go to the airport. He called and said he couldn't get away. He'd send this guy, his name they called him by the last name, DeHaan. So, he came to pick me up. He took me over to the airport, so, while we were going over we were just chatting and you know. And we kind of got to know each other waiting on the plane. [laughter] You know. Because I was telling him about all my old boyfriends and all because I had another boyfriend who had just gone to England on a scholarship. So, I was telling him all about him and I was telling him how I met this other guy that was coming in. Joyce and I met him and we were taking him to Guyana and he was taking us out. So, when the plane landed he wasn't on the plane. So, we went and asked what happened. It was an excursion coming over. And said, they had three people couldn't fit in this plane. And these three guys volunteered to stay back. [laughing]

So, he had to take me back to the house, so, we get to chat again. [laughing] It was almost like two hours between going to the airport and waiting on the plane and now this; so, we kind of got to know each other. So, then the next day they went into town and he came back and he had met my sister at party. So, he came over and he asked me if I had a sister by this name and I said, "Yes." It was strange he hadn't met either of us and he met both of us within a week. So, he's from New Amsterdam which is about sixty miles away from Georgetown. And he had come to work in the city and then he got a job as an air traffic controller. So, when we left that weekend I sent a little note when I got back home to thank them for taking us around because he was taking us to the creek and driving us all around the place. And he said that I, from the letter it sounded like I wanted him to call me but I didn't say that. So, he called and we started talking on the phone. We spoke on the phone for about two months before I saw him again, you know. [laughing] And then we started going out. So, Easter was our first meeting and then we got married in December the same year. [laughing] So, we didn't waste any time. And that's thirty-three years ago this year. A lot of people thought it wouldn't last they said I didn't know him. [laughing]

**Adler:** Lots of phone conversations you can get to know someone pretty well.

**DeHaan:** We got to know each other pretty well, yeah. We talked a lot on the phone.

[laughing]

**Adler:** So, how did you end up coming to the United States then?

**DeHaan:** Well, after he was in air traffic for seven years. We got married at \_\_\_\_\_ [?] airport and we had four kids all born up there. And then one of his best friends got a scholarship to go to Chicago to the University of Chicago. And he got up there and he kept writing and telling him, it's really nice up here and you should come on and do a degree because they were all in the twenties and they say their boss was like forty and he has a long way to go. They're not going to move anywhere, you know, and try to do something else. So, he encouraged him to come up. So, he came up on a vacation and saw they place and applied. And got accepted at the University of Illinois. And he just, I came up the following year and we stayed there until he graduated. The same month he graduated they had \_\_\_\_\_ [can not understand words here, counter 296] invited him to come down here for an interview and they pursued it and pursued it and kept coming until he stayed. Because I was ready to go back home and I did. I did pack up once and went back home. So, I

went back home and he came here. And he kept writing and sending all these pictures of Lexington. I said, I don't know where Lexington is. I don't know anything about Lexington. You promised you'd go get your degree and come home. So, then finally, I broke down and came back up in June. He came here in December. I waited until school closed and brought the kids up. The kids didn't go with us in Chicago. They stayed with my mom and dad. And they came up here. We only came for a short while and we are here I think it's twenty-one years, or twenty-two years now. [laughter] Because 1973 December he started.

**Adler:** He an engineer.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, he's an industrial engineer. But he's done almost everything in twenty-three years. He's been all over the plant. Now, he's at the office in Lexington Green. He's just likes to go to the plant to exercise, they have exercise equipment here. He goes over to the plant still keep in touch with everybody there.

**Adler:** Well, that's good to keep in shape, too.

**DeHaan:** Oh, yeah, he loves that.

**Adler:** Uhhh, tell me, well, so, how did you end up getting a job in Lexington the?

**DeHaan:** Well, after we got here and the kids, after the kids were in school and everything I did some refresher courses in office equipment and stuff here at the adult ed. And the \_\_\_\_\_ [?, counter 321] sponsored us to stay here. So, we went back and got our papers and came back. So, when we came back I was eligible to work. I started work in '77. And the first job I got was a place called Thomas Houston. It used to be a photo finishing place. And I did there until they sold out and closed down. Then I went to Colten [?] Manufacturers and they sold out. [laughing] The I went to Kentucky Central and they sold out. So, I got a streak behind me of selling companies. [laughter]

**Adler:** People are going to look and say "wait a minute, we don't want to hire this lady". [laughter]

**DeHaan:** But they're for sale, they do get sold.

**Adler:** That's right, maybe they do want to hire you. So, it looks like you are going to be able to stay with Kentucky Central or Jefferson Pilot.

**DeHaan:** It seems like I will be able to stay there until I retire, hopefully.

**Adler:** Well, good. What did you think about Lexington when you first saw it? He was sending you all these pictures. What did he send you pictures of?

**DeHaan:** Uhhh, all the different scenery the different sights and stuff. Lexington appealed to me because it reminded me a lot of Georgetown, very beautiful. We came and the first place we lived was off Richmond Road. And Richmond Road driving along Richmond Road there is a street we have in Georgetown called Bricktown and it's the same, just tree-lined, the same way. Everything was like that street. And I always loved to ride along that street because it just reminded me of home and the trees. And it was, from Chicago to here was a big difference because Chicago, you have, eighty degrees out all day and it's eleven o'clock at night and it will be still eighty degrees. And the difference here, when the sun goes down here it cools down just like at home. It tends, the temperature changes. And as I, I think I fell in love with it. The only thing I didn't like about it here is it wasn't, it didn't have a lot of things to do. Like I like to go to live plays and stuff which are rare here. In Chicago they always had one at least once a month you could get to go see a show. And that was just... We didn't know anybody other than the people at \_\_\_\_\_ [?, sounds like Square D]. We had a couple of get togethers with them off and on but most every weekend we took the kids, pile them up in the wagon we bought and we drove every street to see where it went. That is how we learned the whole Kentucky really.

We drove Harrodsburg Road, we went to Harrodsburg. We drove Nicholasville Road went to Nicholasville. We just learned the city by ourselves. I think we saw all the caves because we traveled every weekend. You know, until the kids got into soccer and then we were at the soccer fields every weekend.

**Adler:** So much for traveling. [laughter]

**DeHaan:** And then the gas went up. [laughing] That decided it all. They are grown up, they are now grown up and ready to leave town.

**Adler:** Did they have trouble adjusting here or did they like it? How old are they?

**DeHaan:** The oldest one had the most trouble. He was eleven. And the first day of school he came home crying. He said the kids were so unruly. He said the teacher, you know, the teacher comes into the room at home and all the kids stand and say, "Good morning" or "Good afternoon". Cause it's a little different here. Our teachers move around. The teachers come to the classroom. Here the kids have to move to different classrooms. So, they are accustomed to the teacher coming into the classroom, and, you know, you are respectful to the teacher. Said the kids would be fighting or playing and the teacher would walk in and she'd be knocking on the desk or something and nobody would turn around. And he was so upset. [laughing] He really was, it took him awhile. The others seemed to adjusted a little better than him. He had the hardest time getting into it. But he finally got a teacher that he could relate to and the two of them got on pretty good because I ran over to the school and told her that he was having problems with the kids behavior and that type of thing. So, she kept an eye on him, she really did. I don't know where she is. Mrs. Donald. I haven't seen her.

**Adler:** What school was this?

**DeHaan:** Cardinal Valley because when we first came we lived off, the second place we lived, we lived off of Richmond Road for three months and then we got a house because we were in an apartment. We got a house at Holiday Hills and they went to Cardinal Valley. I don't know what happened to Mrs. Donald. I used to run into off and on, she was always looking for Julian. [laughter] Yeah, that was her favorite child.

**Adler:** That made it easier for him, I guess.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, that made it a little easier for him.

**Adler:** Well, what do you think about Lexington now?

**DeHaan:** Well, it has grown so much it is unreal. I can remember these areas were just forests, you know.

[end of side one, tape a]

[side two, tape a, audio starts at counter 131]

**Adler:** You came in '74 first, and then you came back.

**DeHaan:** '74, uh-huh, and we left at '75 Christmas we went back to Guyana mainly to pick up our visas to come back permanently because then we had a two year work permit. And we decided to stay for a year and he worked at the \_\_\_\_\_ Company at home. And Square D [?], he kept in touch with them because they knew that he wanted to help out there for a while. And we came back '77, March and we had moved again when we came back. They went to Tates Creek School at that time. At that time we were used to going through the Jacobson Park every weekend which was just a track.

**Adler:** This was pre-soccer. [laughter]

**DeHaan:** Right, there was just a track there. Now, they got involved in soccer in '77. That's when we started playing soccer.

**Adler:** What aspects of your heritage do you think were important to maintain and pass along to your kids. I mean they were old enough to remember what it was like where they were born, weren't they?

**DeHaan:** Ahh, the older ones did. Julian, I think he remembered quite a bit. Discipline is the main thing. I insist... People ask me how I bring up four kids in Lexington and didn't have a problem. I never did have a problem because they were not allowed to do a lot of things. Cause we were, you know, because my mother was very strict with where you go and who you go with, that type of thing. So, any where there were going, I took them. They were not allowed to drive until they were eighteen. They did driver's ed at school but they were not, I wouldn't let them have their permit to be able to go out and drive until they were eighteen. Any where they went I took them and brought them back. I mean if a friend wanted them to spend an afternoon or something, I'd take them. I'd have to know who it is and then I'd bring them back. I did not agree to school [?] parties. I don't believe in them. I tell them after...

**Adler:** You mean that they couldn't go to any or you wouldn't have any?

**DeHaan:** No, they weren't allowed to go to them.

**Adler:** A party at school?

**DeHaan:** At the school. I didn't, I don't, I mean, it's probably okay but I didn't know the people and I didn't want to get involved in things I didn't know about. That's where they get into a lot of trouble and they're... The teachers are supposed to be there, you know, the kids do all kinds of stuff while they are there, you know. [laughing] So, I told them the problem would be their first party. I had parties here at my house. And all the people that I met I'd invite their kids to come. And you know, but I didn't know the people and I told them I didn't know them and I didn't want to get involved with things that I don't know about. And here a lot of things are, you know. So, they were basically kids that came home in the afternoon. They were not allowed to go out. With both worked but they were in the house until we get home and then they go out and play until it gets dark and then they come in. They weren't allowed to play at night. We lived on \_\_\_\_\_ Road. We lived on the end of like a cul-de-sac and the kids always wanted to play, they called hide and go seek after dark. When they come in for dinner and these kids would come and ask if they could come out and play hide and go seek and I tell them "No". And they always wanted to know why and I just explained to them, I don't believe in certain things and you're just not going to do it. [laughing]

But I didn't have a problem because I think we, they understood me because I told them basically certain things you just don't do. And I didn't have a lot of, you know they didn't fight about it. They accepted it. And they enjoy reading. We went to the library once a week and got enough books to last for the week and they'd go to the room and read. They were not TV kids. I didn't allow TV either. TV was totally on Saturdays and Sundays. Saturday morning and Sunday evening and that's the TV that they got. But they read all the time and they still do. The only thing they like to look at on TV - sports. I remember a woman stopped me on the street, I sold Avon, I still do. And she said, "What do you think about MTV?" It had just come in. And I said, "What is it?" I didn't know. She said, "Ask the kids, they'll tell you." So, I came home and I asked who I think would have known, the second boy, he gets into everything, he hears everything.

**Adler:** Yeah, they find out even without the TV.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, and he said, "Oh, that. I won't watch it." [laughing] I still didn't know what it was. [laughing] I never sat down to watch it so I didn't know because they knew that they weren't suppose to look then. I turn the TV off. After the news we had dinner, we always

have to sit the table and have dinner. And after dinner they would start their homework, the TV's off. So, I'd sit there and read if they needed help, you know, somebody needed to help them with their homework. Well, we never, my husband wouldn't turn it on, he loves to read, too. [laughing] So, we were a reading family.

We didn't have a lot of problems with the kids in terms of discipline because, you know, one, the youngest one we had a little more problem with him because he got more into the kids here when he was in, I think when he went into the tenth grade at Lafayette. He got friendly with a child that had just moved into \_\_\_\_\_ [?] where we lived. And we didn't know the family at all. And I think he was a single parent family. And at school they were playing in the classroom or something and a note was sent home which I didn't get. [laughing] But I found out at the end of the semester that he had an F on a subject that was shop. So, I went over to the school and I was very angry and she said she is sure a note was sent home. I said if you didn't get a response, you know, because I had two others at Lafayette before and she knew I would have been over there. And they were trying to defend themselves. So, I just said, "We won't fight about it." He left the school the same day and took him to Lexington Catholic and he got right in. [laughing] I didn't have problems after that. He tried to act like he didn't want religion because he had enough out of school just between God and him and the next thing you know he got an A in Religion. So, we didn't have much of a problem. [laughing]

So, I really can say they turned out to be pretty good kids. I have a good friend who lived near to me when I was in \_\_\_\_\_ who always said she could not believe I did those things cause she'd always call me and say there's a party at the school and her twins were in my daughter's class and she'd say, there's a party at the school tonight can you let Kerda go. I say, I didn't hear anything about it. I know nothing about the party. She said, "Oh, please let her girl. The boys want to go..." I said, "The boys can go but she's not going anywhere." She said, "She's going to rebel. She's going to do this." She sees she's still in college trying to get her marks. She says she can not believe those kids did not rebel. [laughing]

**Adler:** Now what's her name, your daughter?

**DeHaan:** Kerde.

**Adler:** K E R D ?

**DeHaan:** K E R D A.

**Adler:** E.

**DeHaan:** A as in "ah". It's a Dutch name.

**Adler:** That's a pretty name. Does it mean something?

**DeHaan:** Ahh, what did Kerda mean. She met a girl here from Holland who told her the meaning but I can't think of it now. She did tell me. I know DeHaan means rooster, we do know that and I've got a big rooster in there. [laughing] My great grandparents had. My mother brought it all the way up because we found out what DeHaan means. [laughing]

**Adler:** You said something to me the other day when we were talking about, uhmm, we were talking about the difference in culture between here and there partly and the whole idea of visiting people, dropping in on people. Can you tell me...

**DeHaan:** Well, we were basically, I as, I tried to figure it out why people don't just like to drop in and visit and I decided that it's because I don't think everybody has phones at home. That you had, that it was easy to call and say, "I'm coming over." You just went for a drive or a walk or whatever and just stopped by. And people won't do that here. And I find if you don't call before people kind of look at you strange or something, you know. So, I had to get in the habit here to call first. [laughing] But for some reason I got more into, I haven't really gotten

into too many of the Lexington people cause, because of that, I like to just, I'm out while I'm passing somebody; I think about them; I stop by. But I don't like this formal thing unless it's something formal. As I tell people they can stop here anytime if I'm cooking, I'm eating, you're welcome to join me. If I call and tell you to come on over expect that I'm having a formal party, you know. If you want to stop by we'll sit in the kitchen and we talk and stuff like that.

**Adler:** So, do people do that?

**DeHaan:** Well, mostly the West Indians or the Africans or stuff like that. Those are the people who mainly do that because they are accustomed to that.

**Adler:** Dropping in.

**DeHaan:** But not an American, not somebody from here will do that. They would always call first and see if you are home. Usually they only come if I invite them. [laughing] But there are other cultures here that I know, have met because I've met Jamaicans, Nigerians, you know, people from everywhere are here and I've run into and I have a friend who is from the Bahamas, he's here. Those I expect anytime. I was telling a girl passed by here walking and she was telling me she met this girl who is a realtor and she thinks she's from Nigeria. And I said, "I don't think so." I said, "Some reason I think I know all the Nigerians in Lexington and they are few." I said, "The only realtor you could have met is a Jamaican." I said, "I can tell you her name is Jackie." She said, "Yes, that's it." I said, "She's from Jamaica." When I first was at Kentucky Central everybody came to me and they heard I was from South Africa, from Jamaica, from everywhere other than where I was from. So, people get you so turned around when they...

**Adler:** You probably forget where you are from yourself. [laughing]

**DeHaan:** They just hear a different accent and they put you in any corner, I suppose. I don't know. But they never listen to what you say.

**Adler:** They didn't.

**DeHaan:** No, people just don't. Because I mean up to about a month ago, I met a girl in the lunchroom and she asked me if I was from South Africa. I said, "I'm here eight years and you don't know where I'm from." [laughing] "Ya'll are a sorry bunch." [laughing]

**Adler:** Was she new?

**DeHaan:** No, she's not new. She's been there just as long. She's in a different department. But, ah, they just listen to rumors. They wouldn't, you know, they just feel that you should be from there because you like somebody from there, I don't know. [laughing]

**Adler:** But you have a very different accent.

**DeHaan:** It is but they don't know. They have never been anywhere. [laughter] You notice most of the people in Lexington that I work with have never left Lexington. So, they don't have a clue of what anybody sounds like. And they obviously haven't met anybody from anywhere else. So, it's really, you know, different from them.

**Adler:** Now, how do you meet the Jamaicans, the Nigerians and those like that?

**DeHaan:** It's strange how you meet them. I met, most of the ones I met at church. Like Jackie where did we meet Jackie?

**Adler:** What's her name?

**DeHaan:** Jackie. Well, there last names just left me. But the husband is Ivor [?] and she is Jackie. I'm trying to think where I met them, I don't remember. But whenever people come to the university most of them, somebody at the university tends to know that I'm from Guyana or some place and they will call me and tell me, "Oh, do you know these people are here?" And they'll tell me who they are and stuff like that. Because when the kids were in the university they all went to UK. All four of mine went to UK. I was over there to everything that was going

on, every play, every show, every, you know, concert. My daughter was in the band. I was over there for practices and everything, you know. I was always visible so people knew who I was, you know. So, they would let me know people that were coming in. But then people came to work here. Another girl from Guyana was at the University of \_\_\_\_\_ [?] and she is now at K State. We have three families at K State that are Guyana.

**Adler:** That are teaching?

**DeHaan:** Uh-huh, that are all teaching. And there's one girl from Nicaragua. I always say that wrong. But she was at school with my eldest son and she teaches at K State now. She just started teaching at K State. And she was working part-time at Kentucky Central while she was at school. And she said her boss told her that there was this woman from South Africa on the twentieth floor and you must go meet her. She's real nice. So, she said, I don't know anybody from South Africa why should I go meet her, you know. [laughter]

**Adler:** She was from Nicaragua?

**DeHaan:** Uh-huh. Then one day my son came to me and I came down to the lobby to bring him up and she was coming in at the same time and they knew each other because they were in school together. And she said, "Oh, Julian" and he introduced her to me and she said, "You are the person that they said is from South Africa." [laughing] "I didn't know who is was."

**Adler:** [can not understand what is said here]

**DeHaan:** And you heard that too. [laughing] Imagine her boss saying that. But we just happened to meet. When my son was at UK, the eldest one, when he was at UK he used to be, he was an undergraduate and he used to be with a lot of the graduate foreign students. He tend to like to meet them somehow. And they had a potluck and they were all suppose to bring a dish and he came and he asked me to make something for him to take to school. And I made a dessert that we call Tricole [?]. And when he took he said in the room was this girl another graduate student from Guyana that he didn't even know was there. And she came over and asked, "Who made this? This is a Guyanese dish. There's got to be somebody that come from Guyana. This is the only thing I knew from home that I remember." She left from home when she was six. She grew up in New York. [laughing] So, she started asking who made it and somebody told her Julian did. And they think he's from Guyana. They weren't even sure.

**Adler:** Or it might be South Africa. [laughter]

**DeHaan:** So she went over to him and she said, "Are you from Guyana?" And he said, "Yeah." She said, "I knew, I knew that tricole, I knew." [laughing] And from then she lived at my house.

**Adler:** Was she real homesick?

**DeHaan:** Well, she was, she really enjoyed meeting us because she said she didn't know anybody before, you know, to bring back the old things that she knew. And she graduated from here. She works for the UN now. She's in Senegal right now. She comes over every other year. And when she comes in she stops in New York sees her parents and comes straight up here and spend a week.

**Adler:** Isn't that nice?

**DeHaan:** Last time she came she got married in Senegal and she brought a twenty day old baby. She came over, delivered the baby and called me... no, it was twelve days when she got here, traveled with this baby up here. I've got pictures of me with this baby. I said, ...[laughing]

**Adler:** Teeny, teeny baby.

**DeHaan:** And her husband spoke, was French. And it was strange. She brought her sister who spoke nothing but French and I was in Louisville at a conference and came back during the

night and they were already asleep because the kids were here. I woke up the next morning and came down, and his sister came down and she was sitting at the table and I didn't realize that she was like that. I said, "Hi, how are you?" And she smiled. And I asked her something else and she just smiled. I said, well, I couldn't remember what she said about this girl. [laughing] Then I knew he was French, they spoke French here. And I decided, huh, a different situation, she's not understanding anything I'm saying, you know. And then Kerda came down and Kerda started to relate because she spoke French. I understand but I don't speak very well. So, she got us together on the right track. She said you want to ask her what she wants to eat or something. But it was fun having them. But her husband was learning. He was teaching himself English, so, he understood more. And they came and spent... She's suppose to be back this July, I think. That was two years ago. That baby's two.

**Adler:** Will she bring the baby?

**DeHaan:** Oh, both of the kids. She has two kids

**Adler:** It's not a baby anymore.

**DeHaan:** Right, she has two kids now. The older one came when he was three months and then the younger came a couple of days old. So, I haven't seen them since they left the last time was two years ago. Because he came back he was walking and talking. The first time he came he was in a little carrying thing.

**Adler:** Oh, golly.

**DeHaan:** But she always has to come back and visit. This is home. She loves it here. [laughing]

**Adler:** Does she get back to Guyana at all?

**DeHaan:** No, cause all, her parents came up, both of them are in New York. So, she, I don't think she went. But she went to South America and did her first two years with the UN. And then she decided she wanted to go to an African country. Because she had done a lot of French and Spanish and different languages. She wanted to use them for a language. I think she was in Ecuador for awhile and then she got over to Guyana a couple of times. But and through different people we tend to meet others. That's how I met other Nigerians through this one Nigerian girl whom Marta \_\_\_\_\_ [?] and I met her at church. She has twins that I'm god parents to and they're twelve this year. Time has flown. [laughter] But we basically just have home parties. We get together with each other. Like during the summer we have hamburgers in the backyard and cook out or something. And they'll bring a friend.

**Adler:** Well, tell me about the Caribbean-American...?

**DeHaan:** Oh, the Caribbean-American Association. Yeah, that's the one we just formed because we realized there were five or six Guyanese in Lexington and we decided to get together and do some of the things that we like to do at home like modeling and tea parties and stuff like that.

**Adler:** Now what is modeling?

**DeHaan:** Well, at the tea party you'd have kids model in dresses or hats or you know. We do that in August and I'll remember so you'll be sure to get to come.

**Adler:** Oh, good, yes, I'd love to.

**DeHaan:** And we do it in Hazel's backyard because mine isn't fenced. My is much too long. Hers is just good size. We have it outdoors because everything we did at home was outdoors. You know, mainly in the evening it is cool we can have parties outdoors and stuff like that. So, we like doing outdoor type of things. But, uhmm, when I was growing up I used to go to the YMCA and did, we called it old fashioned dancing. But this was like, not the clogging,

the line dancing basically. Then I used to model with the Y and then I took sewing classes with Singer and at the end of the session you had to make a dress and do, have a modeling session. They'd have all the girls to model. So, when I got married and I moved to what I called the country which is the airport area that all those guys lived on. It was an American air base. And the houses there were used there for the air traffic controllers. And it was kind of a resort, you know. And I'm accustomed to doing things in the city, so, everybody said, "She'll never last." So, what I did was bring them to my resort, you know. [laughing] At least once a month I'd have a tea party and invite all my friends from the city to come up and get all the kids up there to model for us or do the dance that I used to do. I had the records and so would teach them. And we'd all get together and have fun. Sometimes I throw fundraisers for things and each of them would pay a dollar, two dollars, whatever. We'd have fifty people sometimes. My husband never figured me out because he, he had grown up, basically as an only child. He has a sister and a brother that are like twenty years older and he was always alone. He could not understand all these people around. [laughing] But he has learned over the years. He likes to get away and have his quiet moments.

**Adler:** What did you serve at these parties?

**DeHaan:** We served pastries, patty it is like a little meat pie. And we'd have sandwiches and different colors like we do cheese. Like \_\_\_\_\_ [?] and color them in different colors. And we'd have different types of cakes. And you must have tea. And I found, I was in Atlanta last year and I found a mango tea. And I brought that back and at our tea party last year everybody, oh, my mango tea went. And luckily I went to the shop, what's that called on Regency Road?

**Adler:** The coffee and tea place, yeah.

**DeHaan:** And she had mango tea, too, I didn't have to go all the way back to Atlanta to get any more. She did have it, so, we asked her about it and she brought it.

**Adler:** I'll have to look for it. That sounds wonderful.

**DeHaan:** It is delicious.

**Adler:** Yeah. Ummm, when you cooked for your family, when you had your kids here and stuff what kinds of meals did you cook? Did you tend to cook more American things or...?

**DeHaan:** I still don't know American things. [They both talk at same time; can not understand either] But, ah, no, I cook basically the things I knew at home. And I cook, incorporated American stuff. The kids came home from school they would say they had this at school. And my second boy, Shawn, he's the one who always tried to get me to do things I don't know. He wanted fried chicken. I don't fry chicken. [laughter] He said, "We had it at school." So, I went to the grocery and I found some, it was like shake and bake, it said like fried. [laughing] And I stuffed chicken in the bag and stick it in the oven and said, "There's your fried chicken." I don't oil. I don't like hot oil. I cook with very little oil. But that's not the way they cooked at home. The old people used oil but I never did like it. [laughing] I guess one gallon, thing of oil last me six months. And I never did like hot oil. But I wouldn't fry chicken. I've never fried chicken. I've been married thirty-three years, I've never stood over a hot pot of oil to fry chicken.

**Adler:** That's what the Colonels for anyway.

**DeHaan:** Exactly, if they want fried chicken. I'll bake it. I love to bake. Everything goes into the oven. I love my oven. I always tell my husband two things we need is an oven and a bed and a telephone, three things. I can't live without my oven and my telephone. And the right

to lie down and go to sleep. You can take everything else and give it away or sell it. But make sure I've got those things.

**Adler:** Were you able to adapt recipes to microwave or don't you use that?

**DeHaan:** Yes, my microwave has program and I do a lot of fish in the microwave. I love doing my fish in the microwave. And it's easy because everything is programmed in. You can just use the programs in there. They had spaghetti at school and I learned to do that from the box. I learned to make lasagna from reading the box because that was something, a new item. When they tasted things at school that they liked, I tried it. [laughing] And I could kind of master it after awhile and they enjoyed it. But we basically, our main dish is rice and stews.

**Adler:** What would you put in the stews?

**DeHaan:** Ah, usually beef stew but I cook it with a lot of carrots and potatoes, you know.

**Adler:** Potatoes and carrots.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, you cook the beef stew with potatoes and with the carrots in there and then you put it over the rice.

**Adler:** Over the rice.

**DeHaan:** And we eat a lot of green stuff, any greens, we use greens with shrimp though. Everything has to have shrimp in it. I like a lot of seafood. But now I hardly eat beef. I eat a lot of fish and shrimp and chicken, turkey, chicken. I stay away from the red meats. Just got away from that over the years. Most everything I bake. On Sundays I like to bake most of my meat and then during the week I will cook noodles. We have a dish called chow mein. You don't see it here too often.

**Adler:** How do you spell that?

**DeHaan:** Chow mein, it's just like the chow mien.

**Adler:** Oh, chow mien.

**DeHaan:** But it's not cooked the one you see in the Chinese grocery, Chinese restaurant.

**Adler:** But that's what it is called?

**DeHaan:** It's the same thing. If you go to some of them if you ask for lo mien, that's what we call chow mien. And our lo mein is similar but different because the lo mien things are not mixed in, it just lay on top. And I think the Chinese we have at home are from a different area than most of those that have come to Lexington because you've got some of the similar names but it is not cooked the same way. They cook a little differently. And different areas of every country cooks, you know, they cook differently.

But, we have a lot of Chinese at home. We have a lot of Indians at home from India. Indians came as indentured slaves. So, we have a lot of Indians. In cooking I use a lot of curry, too.

**Adler:** So, do you know how, do you cook a lot of Indian food as part of what you cook?

**DeHaan:** Yes. Curry and \_\_\_\_\_ [?, name of dish] I get all the students from UK come up here to eat that.

**Adler:** What is it? Roti?

**DeHaan:** Roti, it is like a like a tortilla [?] but soft. They make it with flour and water basically.

**Adler:** Oh, okay.

**DeHaan:** And my daughter at UK is mostly with international students, too. So, usually at the end of the semester we have a party for the whole bunch of them at least. Forty or fifty of them sometimes. And when they come back to school again [laughing] ...

**Adler:** Have another party welcoming.... [laughter]

**DeHaan:** Have another party, right. She's with international.

**Adler:** Well, that's nice.

**DeHaan:** Yes. So, they are usually up here a lot. So, we meet a lot. Last year she had group of Indian kids from Pakistan and different places. And one came over and I was clap the tortilla cause you bake it on a pan and you pick it up hot and you've got to clap it. And he came in and he started right off, he said, "Auntie, can I do that? Can I do that?" [laughing] He said, "I always help mom at home." He felt right at home. And the Indian kids called, like we did, all you parents' friends are your Aunt automatically if it's a friend of your mother's. Like his, my kids call her Aunt. We're not really related but it's automatic and her kids would call me Auntie Barbara. And I think that's just out of respect cause kids here will come right out and say Barbara, you know, unless the partents say to say Mrs. DeHaan. But they will pick up on your first name right away. But we never did. We always put that handle to your name. So, they come over and they are very much at home at our place. We had some Ethiopians, they came by to a couple of the parties. We have kids from all over at UK and my kids seem to find them. [laughing] I don't know.

**Adler:** Well, good for them.

**DeHaan:** And they enjoy it and I don't mind having them because I know they miss a lot of that culture that they grew up. And then to come and see familiar things, you know, the feel very comfortable. Because one called me yesterday and she said, "I really enjoyed that meal that we had. I wonder when I can come back again." [laughter] I said, "You are welcome anytime."

**Adler:** That's nice that they can drop in like that.

**DeHaan:** Oh, yeah, they feel comfortable. Kids drive up here and just come in my house and say, "What are you cooking today?" You know. [laughter] I then I've got to turn around and add an extra pack of chicken. [laughter]

**Adler:** Oh, dear. Well, did you grow up hearing any kind of stories or anything like that?

**DeHaan:** Yeah, we are...

[end of side two, tape a]

[side one, tape b]

**Adler:** Well, I know Hazel told me an Ananzi story.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, Ananzi stories are a lot of... I wish I could have though of that tape. I have a sister-in-law who lives in England and she writes children's books. And we picked her up on NPR one morning, we heard NPR and she was being interviewed and she was relating. And I thought, "Oh, I haven't thought of that in years." We taped it. I can't tell you where the tape is from the top of my head but that was certainly. My husband remembers stories but I don't.

**Adler:** So, do you tell them, does he tell them? Would he tell them?

**DeHaan:** I think he could. He can remember things easier. I have to hear you start something and have something trigger me and then I remember it. But I, my grandmother that I grew up with her sister she was never married. She was a nurse at the \_\_\_\_\_ [?] and we spent vacation, like August, two week with her. And she used to tell us all these stories that we believed, you know. Like when we were little she would tell us that, she was a mid-wife and she was going to deliver a baby, and she said, "If ya'll be good I'll tell you when the baby is coming and you'll get to see it delivered. Well, we would be playing out in the yard and she would leave to go up, the expectant mother came in and she would go up to the hospital and she's say, "Ya'll stay up here and I will call you when the baby is coming in." And for some reason a plane or a big bird or something always seemed to pass when the baby arrived. And she would come running out and say, "It just got here, did you see that plane fly by?" [laughing] I mean it was always delivered.

**Adler:** What good timing.

**DeHaan:** She's call us up and we'd get to peek and see this little baby. And we would believe that it just brought it in. [laughing] It took us years to realize...

**Adler:** That it didn't come on plane.

**DeHaan:** Well, I think we were a little naïve, I, I was. I was a little naïve for a long time because my youngest sister was born and I was in high school and I was thirteen and I used to, when I got home, we rode bicycles out and I'd raise home in the afternoon just to take her for walks to the sea wall. And I would, one afternoon, she had a nice big pram and I was pushing this pram up on the sea wall because we lived five blocks away from the ocean. So, we used to go up there a lot. And this girl who was a maid to some people and she took the kids up there. She looked at me and she said, "Is that your baby?" And I said, "How on earth can I get a baby at thirteen?" It didn't dawn on me that I could. I didn't know I could. [laughter] So, I say I was naïve for year. It took me a long time to figure it out. [laughing]

**Adler:** That's okay. Sounds like she grew up too fast.

**DeHaan:** Well, I don't know. She was just curious because I had this little baby. When she was a baby she thought I was her mother because I took her everywhere, you know, I always had... It was just a doll to me, you know. And my mom was, she was forty-one when she got her and she was so embarrassed because she, everybody said, "She's getting another, she's got another child." And she did not want to take that child out. She stayed in the house for the whole nine months and I think a year after.

**Adler:** Oh, no.

**DeHaan:** She was so embarrassed. [laughing]

**Adler:** Oh, dear. Now people think nothing of it.

**DeHaan:** I know. But she was sure she was going through menopause and then she discovered she was pregnant. She said that was, she really... she had a nervous breakdown after. She was in bed for two years. She couldn't handle it. So, I basically was the...

**Adler:** Good thing you were still in the house.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, cause then I got out of high school when my oldest sister she had already started in broadcast and she worked with the one of the radio stations. I was the next oldest, so, when I got to high school instead of going straight on to work I stayed home while my mommy was sick and kept me sister. We had maids come in the house but I just felt like I needed to be there with her because mommy wasn't able. And I said, "Well, I can go to work after." It wasn't that important, you know. My father was there. We didn't have to buy that much, you know. But I didn't start to work until I was eighteen. But, well, she was, she was fun. And we are still very close. And now she is grown. That's is not her. I will show you a picture of her. She is 6'3".

**Adler:** Wow, golly!

**DeHaan:** And I'm still 5'5". [laughing]

**Adler:** You're the little sister.

**DeHaan:** I'm the shortest, the smallest of the whole group. My daddy was 6'3", my mommie was 5'5" and I'm the only one who took after her of the nine kids. Everybody else is either 5'10", 5'11", 6' something. It's amazing when my girlfriends, they see Dawn, they say, "What happened? Where is Dawn?" That's her. [laughing] She just grew up and left us.

**Adler:** Do you remember any kinds of holidays or festivals or celebrations or anything that you celebrated? And do you still do that now?

**DeHaan:** Uhhh, not really. We celebrated, most of the time we celebrated holidays with a lot of people which here, I can't basically. Because like Easter, we didn't do the Easter egg hunt. We had a parade downtown but that was it. And Halloween we didn't do the candy deal with the kids. Halloween was when you became a teenager we had Halloween parties at the YMCA or any group would have a Halloween party. But we didn't do any, or home that would have Halloween parties but we didn't go around getting candy and stuff like that. And that candy thing or things like that, I don't know how that got into place or Easter egg. [laughing] I don't know when that developed. I think that is basically an American thing. I don't think they do that in England either. I haven't been there but... We have, now, we have different holidays at home. But basically we had Easter, Christmas, August Monday. The first Monday in August we call \_\_\_\_\_ Monday was a church celebration. So, we used to have that as a public holiday. Where we mostly go on picnics.

And we have, Easter we fly kites. Easter Monday is a big, big thing. We have kite competitions and everybody goes up on that sea wall, I told you about. And you get all the breeze that gets the kite up in the air. And I went home in 1990, my mom was sick. And I got down there on Good Friday and I said, I hadn't seen kite flying for so many years. I was dying to see that. It is not something you can picture. I can't get a picture of it. I took pictures but it, it just don't do. You can't capture it. You have to see it. And we went to the hospital to see my mom and we left there and went straight up to the sea wall to see the kites flying and it was just awesome.

It's just something. We had to make our own kite. This year \_\_\_\_\_ [unsure of words here, counter 94] to come and make their own kites. With the nine of us we had competition right there, trying to see whose kite can do better than the others, you know.

**Adler:** How did you learn how to make them?

**DeHaan:** My dad probably did. I don't remember. He was always there with the little sticks you had. We had those thin sticks that were made and the paper. And I think he made our frame and we paper it with whatever we wanted to. We had a brown paper that we used most of the time. And we cut out magazines and get all the different things you like and stick it on there and then you had to get the frills and the tails and different things. But...it was always a competition on the kites at home.

**Adler:** Were they like kites like diamond shapes or box kites? What kind of kites were they?

**DeHaan:** No, ours were, well, they had the box type after but ours were a basic kind of oval and it had to have a peak in the front. You put a frame around and it had a T shape and that stuck as the wind blew it. But you don't see too much of those here. I never noticed and it's made out of paper. Here they use plastic.

**Adler:** I can remember making kites when I was little out of paper.

**DeHaan:** Ours were made out of paper and decorated in our fashion. And I think it would start at five o'clock in the morning, get picnic baskets and the earlier you get up to the sea wall, you get a tree. You get your family around a tree.

**Adler:** To get the shade.

**DeHaan:** To get the most shade, [laughing] and then the kids go out to fly the kites. [laughing] But my dad used to take us, we used to always go. Where we lived straight down the street was kind of like just clubs, sports club, they each had a building. And he was involved with the post office club and we would go there and fly our kites. But as we got older, we went out on our own we used to get up early with our girlfriends and we'd all go up and get a tree. That was neater. [laughing] When you were little you had to go with dad.

**Adler:** Yeah, right. Did you teach your kids how to make kites?

**DeHaan:** My husband did. He made the frames and got them to decorate them.

**Adler:** Is that a national holiday?

**DeHaan:** At home, yeah. Yeah, we got Friday, Good Friday off and Monday. So, that's why we usually take off from Thursday afternoon. And sometimes we had to get off from work early Thursday and after we got older and we didn't have kids and we went out of town. So, other weekends we took off. Like I said, there were five girls and if one of us got a boyfriend or one of us met a guy and all five had to go and check him out. When I met my husband, he always tells people this story. He invited me to come meet him downtown to have a drink. And I stopped and called one of my girlfriends and stopped and picked her up. And we rode bicycles everywhere. And then we stopped and got another one. Three of us turned up at this place to have one drink. And he said, "Oh, my God, what if I have enough money." He said, he didn't. He had to wash dishes that night. [laughter]

**Adler:** He did.

**DeHaan:** He said, he almost did. He said he had to stick to one drink. [laughter]

**Adler:** More than he bargained for.

**DeHaan:** So, we, we always went and wanted to find out what his family looked like now. All five of us had to go up to New Amsterdam for a weekend and that was August Monday. That weekend we all five went up to find out where he lived, what the family looked like. [laughter]

**Adler:** Did you get to meet the family then?

**DeHaan:** Uh-hmm.

**Adler:** Are were you just kind of spying?

**DeHaan:** No, we went in the house. And his sister said she was wondering which one of them, you know. [laughing] But the joke about our weekend was neither of us knew anybody living in New Amsterdam. So, to get to go, I was twenty-three, I mean and still I had to ask my mother a week ahead of time. And she wanted to know who I'm going to, who I'm going with. So, I was going with Margaret to Margaret's aunt. Margaret has know aunt. Well, Margaret told her parents she was going to my aunt. We were just praying that they didn't call each other. [laughing] One girl had a grandparent up there. She got to go to her grandmother but Neville had a cousin who had a big house and he let all of us stay with them. Then we walked to church Sunday morning and then he lived up the street from the church. And we all walked up from church to visit his house. So, we were looking in everybody's yard looking for the addresses. We finally knock on the door. He was in shock again. [laughing] It was like we all would come together. He should know by now we don't walk along. [laughing] So, after that

\_\_\_\_\_ [can not understand words because of laughter, counter 151] she said, "Ya'll were something else." Cause she met one of my girlfriends, last year we went to DC and met one of the girls that used to hang out with me that we haven't seen in years. And she was, we were talking about those days, and she said, "I don't know if we could do that now." [laughing] But that's what we did. If any of them say a guy that we liked we called one another, "Do you know where he comes from? Do you know where he lives?" And we'd find out everything about him before we'd go out with him.

**Adler:** Was that standard?

**DeHaan:** Basically. Here, that's why they have so much divorce. People don't know each other. They don't even want to find out. Because kids would leave and go off to college and then they come back and bring this guy and their mother accept them. Where does he come

from? Who is his parents? Nobody knows. Next thing you know they are planning a wedding. They never met the parents before. They could be drug addicts. They could be alcoholics, you know. You have no idea what you're getting involved in. Because this afternoon at work a girl was saying that to me. She said her husband's sister called and wanted her daughter to come and spend a weekend at some farm in Kentucky. And she said, "I just don't like her to go there. They are so nasty. I can't stand those people." I said, "This is your daughter's aunt." [laughing] She can't stand those people but she's married to the brother.

**Adler:** I guess you don't always get along with your in-laws.

**DeHaan:** I don't know. I get along fine with mine. [laughing]

**Adler:** Well, is there, is there anything else that you want to talk about, about Guyana or about your heritage and its importance to you and your family?

**DeHaan:** Well, family is very important to us. We always feel close-knitted family. Although we are all spread out all over the world now. My sisters, I've got sisters and brothers in England, here, all over the states, we keep in touch at least once a week. We talk to each other. And I think parents are the mainstay of children's upbringing and they should be a little more vocal in what they do, how they do it and where they go and who they see and that type of thing. And don't let the kids come and tell them what they want to do. I think they start it to young. Because two or three year olds, they want to go across the street and they let them, you know. You've got to start from very young to discipline your kids and I, I'm very strong in the area. I certainly didn't have a problem with my four. They still come home all the time.

I have, I met a girl that's from Richmond that worked with me and she said if she was one of my kids, the first pair of shoes I bought, she would have left home. I said, I got a thirty year old that still lives at my house. I have, I don't have any restrictions on him now and he still comes home every night. [laughing] I said and you, if you were at my house you would want to stay, too. I said, now, I'm strict but you can tell the difference between, I mean, strict and loving and strict and not loving, you know. They knew that they had a lot of love around and they had a lot of understanding. And I explained why certain things weren't done. You just, certain things you just don't do. But they, they didn't have a problem with it. But I think it's the way you are brought up, you know, it helps a lot, how your attitude is and everything. I think too many people feel that they have to have everything. A lot of that brings a lot of divorce and it's just not good for the kids. Too many kids are from broken families because of one parent mainly just no understanding. My parents were married sixty-two years before my dad died. My grandparents were married fifty years before my grandfather died. So, I come from a lot of long lives. So, I don't it's, it is a little different in discipline, I think. Mainly, the problem, I think they give them too much too early. That's my main thing. Mine never had a TV in the room until now and he's thirty and still hasn't got a TV in his room. [laughing] We have a common TV room and if you want to see it, there's where you sit. And we all see the same thing. A different attitude I think in the way people discipline their kids.

**Adler:** Okay, let me come back to something that you mentioned, the May Pole. Was that a tradition in Guyana?

**DeHaan:** Yes.

**Adler:** That people do a May Pole on May Day.

**DeHaan:** Every, every, well, the whole month of May because there is one area that would do it on the first Saturday. We had it every Saturday. We could do that, go around the whole city. We had the church, schools. Most of our schools are church schools. We had every church had a school attached to it basically. Then we had the YMCA and the YWCA and they all were

involved in different community things. And they did one, too. And most of the communities did a fair. The May Pole was with other fairs. And we had the May Queen and the whole entourage. We had maids of honor, at least six. And we had flower girls walking with queen and we crowned the queen and then we did the \_\_\_\_\_ and the May Pole because the queen always gives the word to start the \_\_\_\_\_ at the May Pole. And then the rest is the fair goes on. People stay here and watch and they have other things going on at the same time. But it's a tradition all the month of May, the May Fair. I can leave the one we did, where I grew up is an area called Kitty.

**Adler:** K I...?

**DeHaan:** T T Y. We do ours, I think it's the second week in May. Because the YMCA always has the largest one and that's the first week, the first week of May. And then it would go around. We can move from one to the other, see different ways of doing it because it's not just one way to \_\_\_\_\_ the May Pole. Because I have a book, I think, like different \_\_\_\_\_ you can do. We've got the spider web, the regular little plat [?], you know, it's called dancing the May Pole. You dance around the pole doing different dances, ribbons go into different weaves and comes out very pretty. And the kids have to practice that at least three months before. I usually start in February when I taught it.

**Adler:** To make it come out accurately.

**DeHaan:** Uh-hmm, they practice, we practiced three days a week from February to May before, so, they will know exactly what they are doing. [laughing]

**Adler:** Did they wear costumes or what did they wear?

**DeHaan:** We wore special dresses. Everybody had the same style dress but we would have different colors. And organdy material is particularly light and that made a real nice dress. But every year we had a different pattern for our dresses. That was a big thing to pick the patterns for your dress. [laughing] Had to get involved in all that. And they, yeah, they just used. And your, like if I wear pink, I'll have a pink ribbon and each, we have all the colors of the rainbow, basically. And they used the costumes. And something else we did, I didn't mention, our schools, we always wear uniforms like the Catholic schools. Each school is identified by the uniform they wear. You know which school they're, your going to. It's not hard to tell a child walking down the road which school they went to.

**Adler:** Where they belong.

**DeHaan:** Uh-hmm, yeah, our schools. We used uniforms at work, too, most of the places. Most of the government offices used uniforms. The banks used uniforms. We all dressed in specific colors. We could change it around but everybody had the same colors at the same time. Instead of everybody trying to figure out what to wear this morning and I miss that. [laughing]

**Adler:** I imagine.

**DeHaan:** So, we didn't have the problem of having to tell people that they are not dressed for work.

**Adler:** Appropriately or inappropriately.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, right. Cause it was, the office I worked in at the Credit Bank they used to buy you material. Cause everybody sewed at home, had to, they may have a few people that didn't sew but they had seamstresses, too. But they buy the material and they give you the material and you made your own. We decided, we'd all get together and decide on a specific style whether we made skirts and tops or all one thing or what. And the office would buy the material and give it to us. So, we just had to make them. Those were the different expense. We

had, I think we had three different dresses. If you wanted to make five that was fine but you can wash them and wear them. [laughing]

**Adler:** That would be sort of nice to have.

**DeHaan:** It was nice to have the kids in the uniforms at school, too. And you don't have to fight over who has the hundred dollar sneakers or ten dollar sweater.

**Adler:** Although, I understand they do anyway. They find ways anyway to compare what they have. Who has what.

**DeHaan:** To have a fight. I don't remember having fights because we always dressed alike. My mother liked to sew. She would make, she loved to make us dresses. And I know she, we never went anywhere without a new dress. If, we had a neighbor across the street. We were pretty close. She did not, she had one daughter. She did not like to make children's clothes. She liked to make adult clothes. And every time her daughter's birthday, she knew Mommie's going to dress us in new dresses and send us. And Babsie's, she would have on her old dress. So, she would wait until four o'clock in the afternoon to call and say, tell my mom to send the girls over. Today's Babsie's birthday. Well, we know Babsie's birthday, we lived there all the years, you know. Mommie already had the dresses made. [laughter] She could never get over it, the three of us are three or two years apart. Three of us used to go over there together. [laughing] We would walk over there in our new dresses and Babsie there...

**Adler:** There in her old one. Oh, dear!

**DeHaan:** [laughing] And she, we always had a fight with her over that. Because she, she used to get so upset. Say, "It's not really a party, party." [laughing]

**Adler:** This is just what we were wearing today. You just happened to call. [laughter] It sounds like a lovely place to grow up.

**DeHaan:** It was. I really enjoyed it.

**Adler:** Has it changed a lot?

**DeHaan:** It has. It has changed quite a bit. They have TVs in every home now and that is a big change. And there's a lot, since we had independence there are big changes because we had this guy who farmed, it's a cooperative republic now and he \_\_\_\_\_ himself off of China and he banned everything that we didn't grow in the country. So, you couldn't get a whole lot of stuff for three or four years. But he's dead now and I think everything is going back in. They can import stuff things now. There was a whole period of time there, you go home, you take some apples and a child didn't know what it was because we didn't grow apples at home. And, you know, it was kind of strange. He was giving them a rough time. He told them they must grow what they want to eat. And everybody didn't know to grow, you know. [laughing] My mother can do that. She can put a seed anywhere and she can grow. Some people couldn't do it. I had an aunt who wasn't good at growing stuff either. There's lot of changes because the economy is way down. The Box Side [?] Company, I don't know what it is doing now but I think \_\_\_\_\_ it is probably gone. And the Canadians used to run that and he had thrown them out and tried to Guyanize it, as he called it. And they didn't know what to do. That's why we went back in '76, they were trying to get somebody in to do something. And when they found my husband was an industrial engineer, they grabbed him and took him up there and had him doing all these reports and all this, you know.

**Adler:** Did it help any?

**DeHaan:** Well, at the time, he said, they took the reports and never told him they would use anything or anything. And then a year later, one of my sisters were at home and she said that it was in the papers where they using this report from Neville DeHaan. And he said, "Oh, I though

they threw it away.” [laughing] So, they actually used it. Did implement some of the stuff that he did tell them to do. But most of the people that went back at that time didn’t stay for very long because of the government situation.

**Adler:** Hello.

[someone comes to the door]

**DeHaan:** You got a minute?

**Adler:** Hi. I’m Betsy Adler.

**Man who comes in:** Nice to meet.

**DeHaan:** Yeah, she’s interviewing me about Guyana and things we did and how we grew up and things like that.

**Man...:** Oh, what for?

**Adler:** I’m doing a project called EthniCity. And we are interviewing people who are members of different ethnic groups in Lexington to find out what’s important to them about their heritage and what they are keeping and what they had to change when they came here. And why they came to Lexington and things like that.

**DeHaan:** So, she got Hazel and Hazel sent her to me.

**Adler:** What is was like growing up. [laughter]

**Man...:** Two perspectives from Guyana. [laughter]

**Adler:** No, actually they both make it sound like a really wonderful place.

**Man...:** Well, I guess anybody’s home, you know, it’s wonderful to them. Yeah, it’s all right. Speaking of \_\_\_\_\_ . [laughter by Adler and DeHaan]

**DeHaan:** So, that’s basically the things that I remember and I kind of keep the things that, you know, close to me. I like family around, I like people around. I mean, everybody is my family. As I say I bring the UK kids can come and spread out all over this house and they’re family, you know. They come and eat and drink and whenever they’re coming, I know I’ve got to get at least twenty pounds of chicken to cook.

**Adler:** They get tired of dorm food, I guess.

**DeHaan:** Oh, yes, they enjoy when they come over here. But I tell them, wice a year is as much as I can handle. [laughter] So, when we are out of town, one, last Easter when we were out of town they asked if they could use the place. They even brought some professors and they had a big picnic in the backyard because I heard about it. My neighbors passed and said, “I met such nice kids coming from your house. And I heard about it and I hadn’t even...”

**Adler:** That was daring of you.

**DeHaan:** The one next door, she is an eighty-four year old and she sees everything. She was fascinated because these kids were from Africa, different parts of Africa. And she said everybody came in and all shook hands. It was so strange to see men shaking hands, and hugging the girls. She said it was so nice that she sat over there and watched the whole thing. She told me the whole story. I said, “Ya’ll just couldn’t misbehave, I would have known.” [laughter]

**Adler:** I’m surprised they didn’t invite her over.

**DeHaan:** You can’t see her though.

**Adler:** Oh, you can’t.

**DeHaan:** No, we planted a tree to kind of hide her but she’s got a little hole that I think she sees through.

**Adler:** She’s got a periscope that she used to get around it.

**DeHaan:** And then the other guy that lives, he lives on the other side, he walks. He said he was passing when some of them were living and there were two of the professors he knew and some of the kids he that taught. They were leaving at the time and so he said, "They looked like they had a real nice party." I said, "So, I heard. I wasn't in town."

**Adler:** Did that bother the neighbors at all? Or did they know that you were going to be doing that?

**DeHaan:** No, it was just this one, this couple over here they've got two kids and they are hardly ever outside. And if you're not outside you don't hear anything. Cause, I mean people can be playing music over there and we don't hear it. Once you're inside, you don't hear it. But when they're in the backyard you see them if you walk by. But they cooked out in the backyard. They had fun. I tell them they are welcome to come anytime they want to have a get-together. And they do. They usually come to have the parties. They usually just call and say, this person has a birthday and they want to use your house. I say, they've got the den and the backyard. But that's enough for them.

**Adler:** Well, that's nice...[audio goes off]  
[end of interview]