

Lt. Col. Darlene Brabant
Camp Johnson, North Carolina
Interviewer: L.J. Kimball
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L. J. Kimball: Darlene, where were you born?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was born in Providence, Rhode Island. My Dad was stationed at Marine Barracks in Rhode Island, 1957.

L. J. Kimball: That's one of my favorite places. I went to Naval War College up in Newport. Of course, have fond recollections. Other than trying to get from Newport to the airport in Providence and back again. When were you born?

Lt. Col. Brabant: 1957.

L. J. Kimball: What date?

Lt. Col. Brabant: June 13.

L. J. Kimball: You say your father was in the Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes.

L. J. Kimball: How long was he in the Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: For 12 years.

L. J. Kimball: What occupational specialty?

Lt. Col. Brabant: He was initially an infantryman and then he was an exchange man, worked for the PX.

L. J. Kimball: Now, you say he was up in Rhode Island stationed there when you were born?

Lt. Col. Brabant: He was stationed at Marine Barracks, I think Kingston, Rhode Island. There used to be Marine Barracks up there.

L. J. Kimball: I kind of wonder what they did up in Kingston, Rhode Island.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I don't know where Kingston is. I assume ship stuff. I have no idea.

L. J. Kimball: There may be a Naval Shipyard or something up there.

Lt. Col. Brabant: That's what I assume.

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L. J. Kimball: It probably disappeared years ago, don't recall it being there. So, you were a Marine Corps dependent?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was a Marine brat for a while, yes.

L. J. Kimball: Do you think that had some impact on your desire to go on to the Marine Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: When I finally decided I was going to go into a branch of the service, it did. Originally I had no intention of ever becoming a service member.

L. J. Kimball: Was that because your father being in the Marines also?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, just wasn't where I was headed. I wanted to teach school and I did that for a year. It was horrible.

L. J. Kimball: So, you traveled around as a dependent then?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was born in Rhode Island when he was stationed there. We were also stationed here at Camp Lejeune, though I have no recollection of it, I was a baby. Parris Island, Quantico. So, we traveled around. But I was younger. He got out when I was 8.

L. J. Kimball: Eight. Where did you settle down then?

Lt. Col. Brabant: In Stafford, Virginia for awhile because he had been stationed at Quantico and then they moved us to King George, Virginia, which is where my folks live now.

L. J. Kimball: And you spent the rest of your childhood at King George?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes.

L. J. Kimball: Right in the middle of the cockpit of the Civil War.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. Lots of interesting stuff there. Fredericksburg.

L. J. Kimball: That's a fantastic place. What are your recollections of childhood? Family life before you left the nest?

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Lt. Col. Brabant: Well, very positive. I come from a big family. I'm the oldest of 5. My parents are very home, family people. So, doing things with them, playing sports with my brothers and sister and just very positive.

L. J. Kimball: Were you kind of a free spirit?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. I'm an in the box person. Always have been.

L. J. Kimball: Toed the line. Did your father impose Marine Corps discipline on you?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No.

L. J. Kimball: Where did you graduate from high school?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Midway through my junior year in King George High School, I transferred to Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire, a prep school. I graduated from there in 1975.

L. J. Kimball: At that particular time did you know what you wanted to do with the rest of your life?

Lt. Col. Brabant: To teach school.

L. J. Kimball: Did you?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. I did.

L. J. Kimball: Where did you go to college?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina. Western part of the, well, Central, Western part of the State.

L. J. Kimball: Why Davidson?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I wanted a small school. I wanted a liberal arts school. I didn't want one of the elite, Ivy League schools, which was where all my peers at Exeter were going. But, I wanted that kind of an education and Davidson could fit all those wickets. So.

L. J. Kimball: At what point did you decide that you wanted to go into the armed service?

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Lt. Col. Brabant: After I graduated, I graduated from Davidson in 1979 with a degree in French. I know it was really helpful. But, also with a teaching certificate. Taught school for a year. I hated it.

L. J. Kimball: In North Carolina?

Lt. Col. Brabant: In Virginia. They have a reciprocal agreement. They had a reciprocal agreement.

L. J. Kimball: Where was it in Virginia?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Colonial Beach, Virginia.

L. J. Kimball: Is that up near Norfolk?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, it's, well I guess it's halfway between Norfolk and King George. It's about a half hour from King George. It's in the Northern, that part of Virginia. K through 12 with 500 kids. It was not a lot of fun. I had a horrible experience. Quit teaching on my birthday, June 13. Came home from fishing a couple of weeks later and the man who recruited my brother was talking with my folks. He was now an OSO [Officer Selection Officer] Recruiter. And convinced me that that was what I wanted to do with my life.

L. J. Kimball: Be a Marine.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Be a Marine, yes. And I didn't have a job and it looked good, sounded good. When he left that's all I wanted to do.

L. J. Kimball: What was it that appealed to you about the Marine Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I have no, I don't have any recollection. He was a, Xerox did a good job with him. He was a salesman. I think probably I had a desire to serve my country. I had gone to France as a Junior with my Mom on vacation. Just for a couple of weeks and it struck me how different that country was from this country. They're, I mean they're both, they're not third, neither of us are third-world countries and they're both democracies and there are a lot of things that ought to be similar, but I was, from that experience, happy that I had been born in America. And that I was an American and I felt like I ought to serve my country in some way. So, actually a patriotic reason for joining the Marine Corps as well as being sold the line from the recruiter.

L. J. Kimball: And for practical and economic reasons also.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, lots of factors.

L. J. Kimball: Where did you go? What's the process? I'm not familiar with women's acquisition.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Same as, I was a civilian source officer, OCC. Officer candidate class. I was an officer candidate. I signed the dotted line, July 11, 1980. There wasn't room in the October class. There was room in the February of 1981 class, so I shipped, got in my car and drove to OCS in February of 1981. At that point, I was a WOC, Woman Officer Candidate. I don't know how familiar you are with the way the Marine Corps trains women.

L. J. Kimball: Just assume that I don't know anything.

Lt. Col. Brabant: We change every two years or every six months about how we're going to train. At that point, in the February 1981 class, we were completely separate from the male candidates.

L. J. Kimball: Physically removed.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Physically, organizationally, they were in Charlie Company a big, which at that point was a big, brick barracks down at Brown Field, OCS at Quantico. We were in a white elephant, that has since been demolished. There were 26 of us when we picked up woman. We had classes by ourselves. We did not go to class with them. We PT'd by ourselves. We saw them, you know, marching to and fro but we did not do things as a joint unit.

L. J. Kimball: I have a recollection of women's OCS being over near HMX.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Not when I went through.

L. J. Kimball: Where physically were you located? Were you located at Brown Field also?

Lt. Col. Brabant: If you were, do you know where the barracks that I'm talking about. As you go into Brown Field, you pass the actual air field and on the left is a big, brick building. I don't know if they even use it anymore. Because they built some new buildings. But, if you just keep going back, there's now an auto hobby shop or wood hobby shop back down that road. There used to be a white elephant down that road and that's where 26 of us were.

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- L. J. Kimball: Alright. I have a vague recollection, it's been so many years. I know the Marine Corps Museum is around there.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: That's to the right, yes. If you go down that, you know that main drag, there's only one way in and one way out to Brown Field. If you were to go down the main drag and turn right and cross a railroad tracks, you would get to the museum.
- L. J. Kimball: O.K.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: If you were to not turn right and just keep going straight you'll get to an auto hobby shop.
- L. J. Kimball: There is what, Larson's Gym?
- Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, that's way closer to the main side.
- L. J. Kimball: Well, with having gone through OCS, or during OCS, did you say whoops, I made a mistake or did you find it very enjoyable?
- Lt. Col. Brabant: I found it enjoyable. I expected to get beaten, literally. My Dad and my brother at that point was also an active-duty Marine. He was, I think he was either corporal or sergeant in the Marine Corps. I expected to get sworn at. I expected to get maltreated. None of that happened. I was happy. I was getting paid. I was PTing every day and I was getting paid. It was a good deal. I enjoyed it.
- L. J. Kimball: So, you weren't disillusioned by the experience, you got motivated.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, I did.
- L. J. Kimball: When you left OCS what did you do?
- Lt. Col. Brabant: I graduated. I was commissioned in April of 1981 with 12 other women. We had 50% attrition. So, there were 13 of us that were commissioned from that class.
- L. J. Kimball: Why do you suppose there was 50% attrition? That seems like a high level.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: We had a lot of physical drops. We had one that was forced to drop. I don't really know. I think there were several women that came not at all mentally

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or physically prepared for what OCS was going to be about. I had been running since the day I decided to sign on the dotted line, though had never done it before. I knew that if whatever I could take care of that they couldn't pick on me about, would be a better, one less problem. I don't, not everyone came with that attitude. Some came on a lark.

L. J. Kimball: A little conflict avoidance there.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, exactly. So, I assumed that that was part of the reason why we had such a large attrition rate. We at that point and I think it's still true today, women were not in each TBS [The Basic School] class. The next TBS class, it was scheduled to pick up with women and picked up in June. Echo 5-81. So, there was a period of time between April. I think the 17th was the actual date of commissioning. Though my date of rank isn't that. Between April and June where they had us work with the TWSEAS [Tactical Warfare Simulation, Evaluation, and Analysis System], the TWSEAS systems, practical warfare systems, evaluations, analysis system or something like that.

L. J. Kimball: There at Quantico.

Lt. Col. Brabant: There at Quantico with AWS [Amphibious Warfare School]. With the AWS students. So, we for 6 weeks did computer operator kind of things. And then we picked up with Echo 5-81.

L. J. Kimball: At that time in basic school, were there women lieutenants completely separate from the men lieutenants?

Lt. Col. Brabant: At that particular point and time we were, we were the 5th platoon of Echo 5-81. There were 20 some of us in that platoon as well. When we did tactical things they formed us out to the platoons. I'm a B, Brabant, so me and the first other 4 people in the alphabet went with 1st platoon and they rationed us out like that.

L. J. Kimball: How about classrooms? Were you integrated in classrooms?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Completely.

L. J. Kimball: So you were pretty much integrated?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. PT, rifle range.

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L. J. Kimball: BOQ?

Lt. Col. Brabant: We had a wing, they had a wing, just like, each platoon had a wing. So, it wasn't that unusual the way we were billeted.

L. J. Kimball: How long was basic school?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Six months, as I recall.

L. J. Kimball: Having gone through that experience did you still have your motivation?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I will tell you where I lost my desire. It was in between because I didn't want to go to TBS, but after I got done TBS I was ready to rumble. I think most lieutenants are ready to get to their first duty station. You just want to be done training.

L. J. Kimball: Turn the fleet on its ear.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes.

L. J. Kimball: How was service selection conducted in those days?

Lt. Col. Brabant: As far as MOS [Military Occupational Specialty]?

L. J. Kimball: I mean MOS selection.

Lt. Col. Brabant: My recollection is providing three choices by, you know, 1st, 2nd, 3rd to my platoon commander. And getting the word back of what we ended up as.

L. J. Kimball: What MOS's were open to you? Or if it's a smaller number, what was restricted to you in those days? Other than combat arms.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I think probably, combat arms was obviously restricted. A lot of that combat support was, we couldn't be engineers. For instance I know women can be engineers now. Which is interesting. Obviously couldn't be pilots. No, we could not have been pilots. The, sort of office MOS's were the MOS's that were open. 34's, 01's, public affairs, air traffic control, air defense control. MOS was open to women at that point. Supply. All the types of things we teach here were open.

L. J. Kimball: Motor transport?

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Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, that was open.

L. J. Kimball: What did you choose?

Lt. Col. Brabant: 34. I wanted to be a 3402, I'm sorry. At that point a disbursing officer. My Dad is an accountant. I enjoyed accounting. I didn't realize that they had nothing that real accounting in the Marine Corps and disbursing had nothing to do with each other.

L. J. Kimball: Your first choice was disbursing?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. I have no idea what my 2nd and 3rd choice was.

L. J. Kimball: And you ended up being what?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Disbursing.

L. J. Kimball: Disbursing.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was high, I graduated high in my class.

L. J. Kimball: Well, did they, was the MOS selection by class standing from top to bottom or did they divide you up in thirds?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I believe it was done from top to bottom. I know that they've done that, that quality spread now at TBS where they take the first, you know. They do some magic with thirds. To the best of my knowledge and I was just a student, so I don't really know. But, to the best of my knowledge there wasn't any of that done.

L. J. Kimball: Who was the Director of Basic School, do you have any idea?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No idea.

L. J. Kimball: O.K. That's understandable. I just thought you'd recollect that. Alright, you find yourself being selected as a Disbursing Officer and then what happened to you?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I went, I reported to my first duty station, because a Disbursing Officer Class which is what it was called then, DOC was not going to pick up until April of 1982. This is November. I graduated from TBS in October of 1981. I

went on my leave and reported into Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, North Carolina.

L. J. Kimball: To serve as a disbursing officer who did not have the advantage of going to disbursing school.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Correct. Which actually worked to my advantage I think because once you got to school, you had a clue about what was, what they were talking about.

L. J. Kimball: Whenever it's appropriate, tell me when you met your husband too.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Well, that's way in the future.

L. J. Kimball: So, you went and had a little on-the-job-training there at Cherry Point and then you went to Disbursing Officer School which was where?

Lt. Col. Brabant: It was here at Camp Johnson. It was called Disbursing Officer Course. I'm now the CO of Financial Management School. There was not a Financial Management School per say, was not the name of it when I came through as a disbursing officer student. I don't know what the name of the school was at that point. I don't know if it was even named a school, but I came here. I think I was one of three women. All three of whom had been at TBS. We were all at TBS together, so I came here for that. That was interesting.

L. J. Kimball: Was the school located about where you are now as Financial Management?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, it was not. We have a new recreation center at Camp Johnson. I don't know if you've had a chance to see it. It used to be the chow hall.

L. J. Kimball: No.

Lt. Col. Brabant: For many years, I don't know how familiar you are with Camp Johnson. The school was on that side, the chow hall, the recreation center side of Camp.

L. J. Kimball: I know where the chow hall is.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Not that chow hall. This is what is now the rec center. Used to be a chow hall in this where I went to class was over in there.

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L. J. Kimball: Yes, I'm sure at one point I knew where it was. I just don't recall. And that class was how long?

Lt. Col. Brabant: That was about two months, I want to say. We had class, we stood duty which was interesting because we used to do duty with a loaded 45. The officer students did duty with a loaded 45. One of the things I remember real vividly is that the female enlisted students were put in another barracks, different from the male counterparts, back in the far corner of the camp. It had a big, red line around it. It's so different from today, that's why it sticks out in my memory so vividly. And one of the things the duty had to do with their loaded 45 was go down there and make sure there weren't any men skulking around. It's a different world today, I'll tell you.

L. J. Kimball: The red line was to keep males out.

Lt. Col. Brabant: It was just simply a line. It wasn't barbed wire or electrical fence or anything. But it was very...right.

L. J. Kimball: Well, up to this point where you graduate from your disbursing course there. Were you all sweaty palmed about being a Disbursing Officer?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, not really. I had been...well, when I reported to Cherry Point and they made me the second to a warrant officer, chief warrant officer, Four Kellison was the Fiscal Officer and he was a crusty old warrant officer. He taught me how to be a Fiscal Officer. So, I already knew what I was going back to and I knew that job. I was learning other parts of the disbursing officer world. At that point.

L. J. Kimball: Well. Having gone through Disbursing Officer's Course. Did you at that particular point feel that you were being treated differently than the male Marines?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, I did not. I've not felt that in general terms, ever in my career. I think because I am a 34. And this is a field that is traditionally had a lot of women in it, so there's 34's are used to other, if it's 3404 officer, because we're now, 3404's, or enlisted Marine. They are used to dealing with women in their field. I was told for instance, at OCS and TBS, oh, you're going out to the fleet, you're never going to see another female. There were two other female lieutenants in the Cherry Point Disbursing Office. So, I didn't, never had that experience, or didn't have that experience in the work place, anyway. I had trouble getting uniforms and things like that. It was almost

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impossible to buy a Charlie shirt [khaki]. Just couldn't find them in your size.

L. J. Kimball: They all had to be special ordered.

Lt. Col. Brabant: You just search for them until you find them because they weren't stocked in any great numbers in any of the exchanges or cash sales.

L. J. Kimball: Where did you go after Disbursing School?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Back to Cherry Point.

L. J. Kimball: This was 1982?

Lt. Col. Brabant: 1982. I did my, finished 3 years at Cherry Point in November of 1984 and then went to Okinawa as a Disbursing Officer with 3rd FSSG [Force Service Support Group] at Camp Kinser.

L. J. Kimball: I was in Okinawa then, at 3rd Division Headquarters, as the Operations Officer.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Were you at [Camp] Hansen?

L. J. Kimball: No, Courtney. Camp Courtney.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I had friends that were there. Because our TBS Class kind of, there were a lot of people did their first three-year tour and ended up at Okinawa together at the same time.

L. J. Kimball: There was a...

Lt. Col. Brabant: We paid you.

L. J. Kimball: Good, that's why you're always nice to your Disbursing Officer.

Lt. Col. Brabant: That's right.

L. J. Kimball: There's a woman Lieutenant Colonel at Camp Courtney.

Lt. Col. Brabant: At that point?

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L. J. Kimball: And she was the Assistant Division G1. I think she was probably more toward my year group than she was yours. Her maiden name was Beavers, I believe.

Lt. Col. Brabant: The whole year in my career that I spent in the fleet was at 3rd FSSG, that's it. I've been in the Marine Corps for over eighteen and a half years now. About eighteen and a half. One year in the fleet and that was it.

L. J. Kimball: From there, where did you go?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina. Series Commander, Company Commander, S3, XO at Battalion.

L. J. Kimball: Did you have to go through some kind of school there?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Recruit Training Officer's Orientation Course.

L. J. Kimball: O. K. At Parris Island.

Lt. Col. Brabant: The Drill Instructors School taught it, and they still do today.

L. J. Kimball: How long were you there?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was at Parris Island for two and a half years doing those, several billets. I was a company commander for sixteen months of those two and a half years. After that, I had applied for the SEP program. Special Education Program, Naval Post Graduate School. So, I was short toured at Parris Island, half a year, and went to Naval Post Graduate School to get a Master's Degree in Information Systems Management.

L. J. Kimball: Where did you stay when you were at Monterey?

Lt. Col. Brabant: We lived out of town, Pacific Grove.

L. J. Kimball: It's we now?

Lt. Col. Brabant: We, yes. I got married, I'm sorry. I got married when I was at Parris Island. My husband had been a family friend and after I'd been there, after I'd out posted my series, which was, I don't know, April, May. I got married on May 10, 1986.

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L. J. Kimball: What rank were you then?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I was a Captain.

L. J. Kimball: What rank was he?

Lt. Col. Brabant: He was retired.

L. J. Kimball: He was retired at that point? You didn't run into him at Parris Island?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, no, no.

L. J. Kimball: You ran into him, where?

Lt. Col. Brabant: My family knew him. So, we knew each other sort of marginally.

L. J. Kimball: Oh. And his name again was?

Lt. Col. Brabant: McGuigan.

L. J. Kimball: First name?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Tom.

L. J. Kimball: Tom McGuigan. He was an O3 [Infantry]?

Lt. Col. Brabant: He retired as a Sergeant Major, so he was a 9999.

L. J. Kimball: But before?

Lt. Col. Brabant: He was an O3.

L. J. Kimball: O.K. So, you went to Monterey with your husband as a dependent now. Lived out in Pacific Grove. I went to Post Graduate School on SEP Program also.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Did you? In Monterey?

L. J. Kimball: Yes.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Isn't that a deal?

L. J. Kimball: Yes. Well, you talk about, you kind of screwed up your face when you said the word French. I don't know what application that had in the Marine Corps. Even more so, I was an infantry officer, parachutist. I got a Master's Degree in Nuclear Physics.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Oh, my Gosh. Really. So, you're a smart guy. I always looked at the EE [Electrical Engineering] guys like, I know you're smart. You're a lot smarter than I am.

L. J. Kimball: It was one of those things where you put your choices down. I was an advisor to the Korean Marine Corps at the time. I had a very good boss and he told me I had to have a specialty if you wanted to survive and prosper in the Marine Corps. Then I read about the Special Education Program. I had ten choices. I started off at the top with Business Management, things like that, which I saw had a general applicability regardless of your occupation specialty. You could deal with people, management, leadership. It would always be valuable. So I went down the line and listed all the possible courses, fields I could get into. Then got to the bottom line. I had seen something that said, Ordinance Systems Engineering. For an Infantry Officer, that means bombs, explosives, artillery, rifles and that sort of thing. So, I put Ordinance Systems Engineering as my tenth choice. That's what they sent me to. Ordinance Systems Engineering. And what they didn't tell you at the time was that in Ordinance Systems Engineering, you either took physics, double E or chemistry. And for chemistry you had to have a lot of prerequisites, which I didn't have. Double E was witchcraft. So, that left me in nuclear physics. So, I know. I had a house right on the Bay, at seaside.

Lt. Col. Brabant: It was shell shock for us because we moved from South Carolina, you know where a nice house is \$80,000 to, and our mortgage was \$400, to Monterey where you couldn't rent anything under \$1,100. It was a shock for us. But, Monterey is beautiful. I would go there. I would do it again in a heart beat.

L. J. Kimball: The nice thing was that when I was there, the Fisherman's Wharf area had not been renovated. So, it looked like as it did when John Steinbeck wrote...it's probably completely overrun with tourists. It was still fairly open then. I bought a 3 bedroom house overlooking the Bay for \$28,000. So, it was a very good tour.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Oh, my Gosh. It's not like that anymore.

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L. J. Kimball: I worked my butt off.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I didn't...did you have children?

L. J. Kimball: Yes, I had two while I was there.

Lt. Col. Brabant: We had no children, so and my class day was usually, or class week was usually four days. I had one term where I had classes on Fridays. So, I'm good at academics. It's something I do well, I study well. So, we, I played a lot of golf. I studied well and I studied hard, but I didn't have children to mess with my attention span. So, I could come home, do my studying and then play.

L. J. Kimball: Wasn't it great to be young? I couldn't possibly go through that routine now. But, when you're much younger I remember I'd go home, fool around with the kids, watch Monday Night Football and sit down and study for four hours. Then you get up early, especially if you had a test the next day. It didn't seem to bother me. For anxiety release I went out and played rugby. Had a hell of a time. It's a beautiful place. When did you graduate from Postgrad School?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Graduated in March of 1990. Yes. I got there in August of 1988 and I graduated March of 1990.

L. J. Kimball: Is there some commonality, some useful stuff you pick up in informational systems that you can use in finance.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Not necessarily. I have spent in my eighteen plus year career, I've only spent six years in my MOS. So, it hasn't been a great driver like it was, whether that information. . . I did a pay back tour. It was at Headquarters Marine Corps. Manpower Information Systems. So, I didn't have to do finance stuff at that point.

L. J. Kimball: Did you go to Headquarters Marine Corps right after you left Postgraduate School?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I did. Kicking and screaming.

L. J. Kimball: Don't blame you. When did you get to Headquarters Marine Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I got there. I think I reported in April of 1990. Did my thirty days leave thing. It had to have been April or May of 1990. Lived in Stafford, Virginia. Commuted in a van pool. Someone should write a book about van pools, if you want to write a book. They are a different world. For three and a half years I was stuck at Headquarters Marine Corps. Had a great job. Interesting job. Crappy commute. I traveled a lot. Got involved with all the information systems that run the manpower of the Marine Corps, staffing goal models and finding assignments. All sorts of different, recruit distribution models. All sorts of different information systems that support man power assignment decisions that are made in the Marine Corps. It was interesting, very interesting. A lot of contracting. A lot of working with different people.

L. J. Kimball: One of the reasons I never wanted to be stationed there was the commuting.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Oh, the commuting.

L. J. Kimball: The amount of hours in your life that are lost and the anxiety of being out there driving in that traffic too many hours a day.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Even on a van pool, because I never drove. The van pool driver drove. I think I paid \$100 a month. But, it just was horrible. I would not do it again.

L. J. Kimball: Was there something that could do when you were coming and going?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I read, on the way up I slept. On the way back I read *Reader's Digest*. My husband's mother had died, not too long after we got there. I hadn't been there a year and she died. She was a pack rat in Philadelphia. She had a million old *Reader's Digests*. So a lot of the time I read the *Reader's Digest*. I read books. We battered, battered back and forth amongst the van pool members. We knew each other better than we knew our spouses.

L. J. Kimball: What did you husband do after he retired from the Marines?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Fish, hunt, play golf. Got an Associate's Degree when we were in Monterey, in architectural drafting.

L. J. Kimball: Did he attend MPCC?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. Monterey Peninsula Community college.

L. J. Kimball: After you left Headquarters Marine Corps where did you go?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Back to Parris Island. First, for the first two years as the Deputy Comptroller and then for the last year and a half, fifteen, sixteen months I was the XO of the 4th Recruit Training Battalion. That had been where I was my first tour. At that point, when I first got there it was Women Recruit Training Command and then we became the 4th Recruit Training Battalion.

L. J. Kimball: What year were you there at Parris Island?

Lt. Col. Brabant: The second tour I was there, 1996 to, no that's wrong. 1994 to 1997.

L. J. Kimball: How were the women recruits treated differently than the male recruits when you were there?

Lt. Col. Brabant: My first tour they were treated very differently. We had the Women Recruit Training Command. We did everything internal to our battalion, our command. We processed them in. The men stood at the yellow footsteps. The women came to the 4th Battalion WRTC, at the time. So they all, all our support was right there. PCP, Physical Conditioning Platoon, and those types of things were all done right at 4th Battalion. My second tour, the training was not as different. However the women were still doing the MCT, the Marine Combat Training, as part of their recruit training package.

L. J. Kimball: **Tape 1 Side 2** During the second tour your women recruits went through MCT as part of recruit training. The whole program is still twelve weeks.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Correct. The men at that time had a shorter program.

L. J. Kimball: They didn't stay there twelve weeks?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Correct.

L. J. Kimball: How long did they stay there?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I want to say it's eleven. In 1996, Winter of 1996 when the Marine Corps began the Crucible, they remolded Parris Island, recruit training. There was a big hoop-la made about how we were increasing Boot Camp to twelve weeks. Women had been there for twelve weeks for awhile. What they did for the women, is they took the MCT out of the recruit training program of instruction, brought it up here. Up here being Camp Geiger. Where the men

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had been going through MCT for quite awhile and we took that time and did other things with it for female recruits.

L. J. Kimball: So, you'd do other things?

Lt. Col. Brabant: They implemented, what they did with the male recruit training is, put the Crucible on there for one thing. They gave a lot of time back to the Drill Instructors. Lot more time, locker box scenarios, talk about core values and things like that. Because recruit training schedules are always packed jammed tight and you just don't have time to do the kinds of things that you need to do as far as getting those civilians transformed into Marines and understanding the Marine culture. Honor, courage, commitment and those kinds of things. So, it took the MCT part out of the female recruit training and gave our female Drill Instructors back the same time the male Drill Instructors were getting back and made the two programs of instruction more similar to each other.

L. J. Kimball: Where did they get their MCT?

Lt. Col. Brabant: The female recruits began coming up here as they do now to Camp Geiger for MCT.

L. J. Kimball: The male Marines?

Lt. Col. Brabant: They'd do that as well. They had been doing that. When I was at Parris Island, my first tour in 1987, General Gray, the Commandant restarted the MCT, that type of thing. I don't know if enlisted Marines were going through an ITR [Infantry Training Regiment] process when you came in the Marine Corps. But we had stopped doing that in the Marine Corps, ITR. Used to be, a million years ago when my husband came in the Marine Corps. He went to Boot Camp, came straight up to Camp Lejeune for Infantry Training Regiment. Then continued on into the real Marine Corps, if you will. Everybody did that, regardless of your MOS. It had gone away for awhile. General Gray re-instituted it. So, that Marines went to Boot Camp, went to MCT, Marine combat training on the East Coast at Camp Geiger, except for the women. Only the men did that and they went to their MOS School.

L. J. Kimball: When did your husband join the Marine Corps?

Lt. Col. Brabant: 1960.

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L. J. Kimball: So, he's an older man in his 50's now.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, he is. His late 50's.

L. J. Kimball: That's a terrible thing when you talk to another Lt. Colonel who was commissioned when you were a Lt. Colonel.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. My XO and I were talking this morning and I was telling him I needed to come here and we were going to talk about Camp Johnson, me being in disbursing class in 1982, "when were you there?" In 1982. "Oh, you don't want me to tell you where I was in 1982." "No, I probably don't, Captain." He wasn't in high school yet.

L. J. Kimball: After you left Parris Island, then where did you go?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I went from Parris Island to Command and Staff College as a student, which was an interesting thing for me. It was the first time I had been Marine Corps PME [Professional Military Education]. Any kind of resident PME, because I did the SEP thing. So, I didn't go through AWS. Did my year there and while I was there I was screened and selected for command and came here as CO, Financial Management School.

L. J. Kimball: O.K. What year were you at Command and Staff, did that straddle a couple of years or just one year?

Lt. Col. Brabant: It, academic year, 1997 to 1998.

L. J. Kimball: In 1998 you came to Camp Lejeune to take over.

Lt. Col. Brabant: July 14, 1998, I took command.

L. J. Kimball: This command screening process is something new to me also.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Don't get too used to is, because I think it's going to go away. I'm not sure if it's the best thing to do or not. They haven't decided that and apparently General Jones [CMC] has not either.

L. J. Kimball: Personally, having seen the Navy operate a command selection process over the years, I didn't go along with it. Of course, they didn't ask me.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I think the thing that it does for us is that it keeps, holds the “bubba network” at bay. If you weren’t some colonels or generals, guy or girl, you’re not going to get command, under the old, that’s my perception of the old way of life. And if you just don’t happen to be at Camp Lejeune when a billet becomes open, it might be perfect for you, but you’re not going to get it either because they’re not going to necessarily bring people in unless it’s a bubba. So, it does that. It opens the command billets throughout the Marine Corps up to the whole population that’s available. What I don’t like about it is I think it produces a have and a have not kind of dichotomy. If you go to this school you get command screened and you go to a Top Level School and you’re down the colonel path or general path, whereas other people are falling by the wayside. Whether that’s accurate or not, I don’t know, but I think that’s a perception of a lot of senior people in the Marine Corps. Senior being lieutenant colonels and above.

L. J. Kimball: I suppose that’s one perspective it would be very easy to acquire if you’re one of the people who are not selected for command. We all know that people who don’t get selected for schools, still get promoted. Some people who don’t get selected for promotion, still have useful lives and are entrusted with responsibility. But, if you don’t make the command cut, a lot of the reasons why you would join the Marine Corps are overcome by events. How do you maintain your motivation if you know you’re never going to have a command, never going to lead Marines up and down the hill with a bayonet in your teeth. That sort of thing. That would prove to be a real squelch.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. It’s my understanding that General Jones is re-examining whether or not we should do that. Whether or not we should have command screening. I don’t know how he will pick commanders. I don’t know, just something, because they delayed it. Delayed the command screening board until after the general officers symposium this year.

L. J. Kimball: Where do you live now?

Lt. Col. Brabant: In Jacksonville.

L. J. Kimball: Where about?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Parkwood Estates. It’s part of Northwoods.

L. J. Kimball: I know where that is. I've got some friends, Lt. Col. Steve Sayko lives up there. I'm sure there's a lot of others too.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, Northwoods is a big area.

L. J. Kimball: Did you ever have any children?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. I admire women who have the capability of holding a career down and having children. I do not have that much energy and I'm way too selfish to have children.

L. J. Kimball: During your career, your time in the Corps, did you ever personally experience discrimination or sexual harassment because of the fact that you were a woman?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. I have not. I think that's simply by nature of the types of billets I have held because I've been in the disbursing office which is traditionally populated with women. I was at WRTC and then 4th Recruit Training Battalion which was all women, so the chances of discrimination was less. SEP program. Headquarters Marine Corps. The female officers in the Marine Corps used to think when I was at Headquarters Marine Corp, now I know where you all were hiding when you're not at Parris Island. Because there's a million females at Headquarters Marine Corps. I've had occasion to run into men who have not worked with women before and just have no idea what to do with me. One of the other action officers, when I was at Headquarters Marine Corps. We were captains together and then he was promoted to major, as a pilot. Had never dealt, I can't remember what he flew. 46's [CH-46] maybe. Had never dealt with a female officer. Had no idea how to handle me. I was an anomaly to him. He just had to figure out what I was all about. There's no big secret about me, but, I've run into that a couple of times in my career, but not... I've been lucky enough to always be peers and not something that was, my gender was not held against me. I've run into men who want to touch you and I've just always been able to back myself out of that situation.

L. J. Kimball: Touch you, just in the sense of being friendly as opposed to harassment. Because you're a woman.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. And I've been TAD with people who give you the, sort of sneer but never had, didn't go down that path.

L. J. Kimball: Now, now in your position as certainly a more senior officer you've had an opportunity to work with and counsel younger Marines. Have you from your knowledge dealt with or seen other cases where women Marines were dealt differently, in a discriminating manner, or sexual harassment?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I have been involved with women who felt that they were, whose perception was that they were treated differently because they were women. It's hard, not something I saw first hand. So, it's hard for me to tell if that's what really happened. But, if that women's perception is that, then to her, it really happened. Nothing terribly, you know, I'm aware of situations where you had actual physical assaults or harassments so deep that the woman could not continue to work.

L. J. Kimball: You say you have not experienced that.

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. Again, disbursers, 34's were pretty much used to dealing between the genders fairly easily.

L. J. Kimball: When you're outside the office and you're in an environment where there are male Marines, do you ever find that they acted differently toward you or didn't respect you as much as they would a male Marine?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I guess I don't go in thinking that's going to happen.

L. J. Kimball: So, you never noticed that then.

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. I get aggravated like at the gate, when I'm in civilian gear. It happened this morning. We've got little Devil Dogs. We have little students on the gate. I have a nice blue sticker, probably like you do and I was in PT gear. I came in to run. They didn't salute. I always think, they think I'm a wife. That happens from time to time. I think they think I'm a wife. I'm not a wife.

L. J. Kimball: Is that through some gate?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Students.

L. J. Kimball: Devil Dogs you call them, something like that?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Young Marines.

- L. J. Kimball: They're Marines. They're students here.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. They're not Young Marines. They are real Marines who have been through recruit training and have been through combat training. They're awaiting training.
- L. J. Kimball: I was thinking you were telling me they were something like Junior ROTC.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: Oh, my God, no.
- L. J. Kimball: Well, that is a peculiar because usually a young Marine, just out of Boot Camp, in experiences like that will salute anything that looks like an officer.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: That's the first time that's happened to me on that gate. When I go through a gate anywhere and have a Marine who is either slip shod or like, you've got to break his arm to get it up to salute, because effectively that's what they're doing. I always feel like they think I'm a spouse. I'm not a spouse.
- L. J. Kimball: I know, just because we have erasers on the end of our pencils, that human beings will make mistakes. I don't know if this happens deliberately or it's an accident. It's always been my experience that Marines at gates don't make decisions. If they see a blue sticker they salute it. Even if it's got four stars on the front and there's a teenager driving the car, they salute it when it comes through.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: Not always. You're a man.
- L. J. Kimball: That could be the case.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: There's not a question in their mind. I've had that happen more than once. Also, have, the other thing I've had happen is in the civilian world, actually. If my husband and I go somewhere or talking about the Marine Corps. Because he still looks like a Marine, they will, whoever we are talking to, will automatically assume he is an active duty Marine and I am. . .
- L. J. Kimball: The spouse.
- Lt. Col. Brabant: The spouse.
- L. J. Kimball: Spouses over there, Marines over here, that sort of thing.

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Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes, it's interesting.

L. J. Kimball: Do you take offense at that?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I take great glee in it. No, he's actually retired, I'm active duty.

L. J. Kimball: That's the story the retired women sergeants major told me. That they go to some Marine function and the husbands are supposed to go over there and the spouses are supposed to go over there and it never occurs to them. . .

Lt. Col. Brabant: I bet they have some interesting stories.

L. J. Kimball: It's fascinating. Especially if you can imagine being here in WWII. Do you see things in the Marine Corps, especially as they relate to women Marines that you don't like? Would like to change?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Fewer and fewer things. I think the Marine Corps is getting better with, the Marine Corps is just a bunch of Marines, there's not a Marine Corps, there's a bunch of Marines. I think we're better at dealing with each other as far as gender goes. I think part of that is because now little girls play football with little boys. There's, from a societal viewpoint there's more of an integration of men and women and I think that continues as they get older and come into the Marine Corps and do whatever they've got to do. For me I think it is improved. I can get uniforms now. Most of them, not all of them. Field grade covers are still a pain in the butt. But, those things are easier. I have much less patience with some of the problems that I do run into. Things that have been, uniforms always come to mind, because it was just a pain. Well, why don't you go down to, what's that place? Bolognese and get what you need. Well, you know what, Major? They don't carry women's uniforms. Yes they do. No, they don't, call. So, things like that and that's like a civilian firm. I have no control over what they do and don't do. That gets aggravating. The Officer's Wives Club? It's 1999. Get a clue.

L. J. Kimball: What are your dealings with the Officer's Wives Club?

Lt. Col. Brabant: None, my husband doesn't want to belong.

L. J. Kimball: Would he as a spouse be eligible for the Officer's Wives Club?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. But, he chooses not to.

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L. J. Kimball: Well, do they, the Officer's Wives Club come after you?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No. It's just the term, Officer's Wives Club. There are officers who have husbands, not wives.

L. J. Kimball: So, it's the term wives. You prefer the Officer's Spouses Club?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I don't care. It's their problem. They can figure out what it should be called. There are little things like that that aggravate me more, simply because they have been that way for eighteen years and it's 1999 and we need to get a clue. If you look at some, what were we looking at? Some document I was looking at, like a brochure and it referred to wives. It's 1999. People have husbands and that gets frustrating. But, those are minor compared to those Sergeants Major you were talking about. They had real issues. These are minor issues. These are just aggravating things.

L. J. Kimball: I don't know if this is a perception that you encountered recently and I don't know if you've experienced it in your career, but for many years after we had women Marines there was always the perception, at least by the males that the reason that the women would join the military was because they were lesbians or looking for husbands and that sort of thing. Do you see any of that?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I don't. But, I think I'm probably too old in the Marine Corps. Because I'm not looking for a husband and I don't hang around people who are looking for a husband.

L. J. Kimball: You don't understand, anyone that's younger than I am is not old.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I'm sorry. Too old in the Marine Corps. It would be interesting to see what the younger women or enlisted students and our young officers think of that statement. I don't see that. The lesbian thing. I was at Parris Island. When I was at Parris Island on my first tour we went through one of the witch hunts. Because of the way the Department of Defense now looks at homosexuality. That whole sort of mentality has changed. But, when I was there the first time, it was one of the witch hunt times and it was horrible. I left there with very bad feelings. It was a horrible experience. I was married, I was obviously heterosexual and wasn't an issue for me, but I had friends who's names were slung through the mud because of that. So, that was horrible. I don't know. I don't know, that, you know you join the Marine Corps because of those two reasons still, if that mentality, still

exists. I've heard it before as I've grown up in the Marine Corps. But, I haven't heard it lately.

L. J. Kimball: I don't know for myself from my reading, or from personal experience if there's any truth in it.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I don't think, I know why I joined the Marine Corps. I was not going to get married. I had no intention of ever getting married and I'm definitely heterosexual, so it wasn't the reason I joined the Marine Corps.

L. J. Kimball: We can see how a perception like that can influence the perception of the male Marines towards the female counterparts, if they seriously thought that was true.

Lt. Col. Brabant: There are still. . . life is not wonderful. We still have things that happen between the genders. We've had a couple of DACOWITS visits here, Defense Advisory Committees on Women in the Service. Two years ago they found this installation in need of repair as far as gender issues went. That was their perception. I don't know if it was quite as horrible here as their perception was, but. You know there's a feeling that West coast Marines, because there are no females at Boot Camp at San Diego had a different and worse, less positive attitude about women in the Marine Corps. I'm sure TBS classes that don't have women, I think they still have TBS classes that don't have women. Those officers have a different perception, those male officers than female. When I started TBS, the males were upset that we were going to be in there with them. When we graduated they figured out we could do what we had to do. But, that's because they saw it first hand. So, there's still that, that goes on, I think. There's still a sense that you have to prove yourself as a woman. That you have to be better than your male counterparts to be equal.

L. J. Kimball: Do you recall what some of the attitudes were that were pointed out that might require some adjustment?

Lt. Col. Brabant: More female, having more females in positions of authority. There weren't good role models for the enlisted students. For instance, OB/Gyn medical issues, having difficulty in those types of, pap smears.

L. J. Kimball: Insufficient medical support for women Marines.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Not only OB/Gyn, but physical problems with women. Stress fractures. One of the things, that is, seemed to be a problem while I was at Parris Island. We had a lot of women who were being hurt. Stress fractures always comes to mind, because we had a lot of stress fractures to recruits. And if they can, as they get later in training, if they can hide the fact that they're injured, they will, because they know if it gets found out they're going to be recycled, back to a medical rehabilitation platoon. That continues when they come to MCT and they get here and this is the first time they can be hurt and they don't have to worry about being in a hell hole for another three months. That ability to handle those types of injury wasn't being done very well, medical at that point. I'm trying to think what other types of things they brought up. Mentoring, lack of mentoring.

L. J. Kimball: Was that the origin of mentoring program that you have here, a DACOWITS [Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Service] recommendation?

Lt. Col. Brabant: That was my understanding. I wasn't here when they came, but that was my understanding.

L. J. Kimball: Is that for all young Marines, or just women Marines?

Lt. Col. Brabant: That's for all young Marines. We had a visitor here, just July 13, 14 this year. Mr. Kaufman who's a member of the DACOWITS group and he, as he explained to us. I was the acting XO, Battalion XO. They look for, you know, their initial charter is for issues with females and the services. But, they also look for quality of life type issues for all Marines. And they do. They talk pretty clearly with young Marines about what's on their mind.

L. J. Kimball: Both as a dependent sponsor yourself and from your observation from contact with other family, related people. Do you have any observations on how the Marine Corps takes care of it's own in the way of dependent support?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I'm not sure that we, because we're resource constrained, do all that great of a job. Medically. Medically, dental. I have a dual status husband. We play that. If it's better for him to be a dependent because he can get dental care, then we'll go that way. If it's better for him to be a retiree because he can get glasses then we'll go that way. So, we can play both ends against the middle. I'm not sure, Tricare in this region is working very well, I don't think yet. I've been under Tricare in other regions and it worked fine. Worked real well. Just isn't working real well in this region. I think there's

a lot of frustration from families on that. As far as family support type things, key volunteers, family resource centers, I think we're doing a lot more than we used to do and I think that's a good thing.

L. J. Kimball: Do you have any feeling of how the Marine Corps compares to the other services in the care and treatment of dependents?

Lt. Col. Brabant: No, you know, I don't at all. Not at all. I have a couple of Navy friends. I don't have any idea.

L. J. Kimball: Are you familiar at all with the history of Montford Point, here?

Lt. Col. Brabant: This is the first place the black Marines were trained. I think, 1942, as a matter of fact, early 1942. We still have the Montford Point Association here. There's pictures in the hallway as you can see. It's interesting to me. You can sort of even still today see that these were probably substandard, what's the word I want?

L. J. Kimball: Structures?

Lt. Col. Brabant: Structures, yes.

L. J. Kimball: If I can put in a peripheral remark here, I think that's of one of the myths that's been propagated. Because if you look at the construction that was...

Lt. Col. Brabant: The main side is the same thing?

L. J. Kimball: There is absolutely no difference. And they talk like, the black Marines moved into second class quarters in the middle of a mosquito laden swamp. Where in Camp Lejeune is it not mosquito laden? The black Marines were segregated physically, but there was nothing in the facilities constructed here at Montford Point that was any different from those constructed elsewhere during the same period.

Lt. Col. Brabant: That's something, I don't know. They're just icky. Come to my school and see how icky they are. Of course it's 50 years later.

L. J. Kimball: If you've been over to the older structures at Camp Geiger you can see that.

Lt. Col. Brabant: You're right, yes. What is the history of Camp Geiger, do you know that?

L. J. Kimball: That was the first place that the Marines were sent. While main side was still under construction. They of course wanted to put the First Marine Division together because of the strategic plans which would incorporate the division in the Southwest Pacific area. The Marine Corps never had a division before. It was something of an interesting perspective. There were no T/O's [Table of Organization], no instruction manuals, nothing to tell you how to operate a division...Marine Corps never had a division before. This was something completely new. So the Marine Corps formed the First Division and of course within a matter of hours the Second Division so the First Division was the "first division." They started getting regiments together from Quantico and Parris Island and from afloat to bring here to constitute a real division for the first time. They needed a place to stay and Main Side was basically under construction, so they threw up Tent Camp over at Camp Geiger, obviously named after Roy Geiger, afterwards. That's where they put two of the infantry regiments [1st and 5th Marines] because the third regiment did not join the First Division until later. The First Division was never together with three regiments until after the Guadalcanal landing because the third regiment [7th Marines] was shipped all over the place. The Eleventh Marines, artillery regiment, under Pedro De Valle was down there at Verona. Really shoddy tents. At the same time they were putting up the tents they were also putting up some wooden and metal structures, the service and administration buildings, warehouses, washrooms. In fact just recently the old WWII era heads were torn down. They used to have staff meetings there because they were the only warm place in the camp with those steam pipes in the washrooms. The Marines used to go over and sleep on the shelves, hold meetings there because it was the only warm place to be during the winter. There was a Tent Camp One, which was closest to Highway 17. When WWII broke out, both Main Side and Tent Camp were expanded. They began Tent Camp Two. Then at other times other material became available. Canvas became strategically restricted material. Obviously you'd rather have a Quonset hut or brick building, but the reason they stopped erecting tents was there wasn't enough canvas. They built these little huts with fiber board, little "Green Huts," both at Camp Geiger and at Montford Point and then they went to Quonset huts and then they went to brick buildings. Because of Roy Geiger's great contribution, he was an aviator, but none the less, he probably commanded more Marines and Army ground troops, more units, the largest force in the field ever commanded by a Marine officer, he was actually an Army commander, they named it after him. There's a lot of history.

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Lt. Col. Brabant: Tom and I wanted to, my husband and I have talked about taking this tour, because when you're stationed someplace, you just don't know. I've never been stationed Main Side, Thank God. I don't want to, thank you very much. This is the first time I've been, except for TAD to school, at Camp Lejeune. So, I'm in this little mini-camp, if you will. So, I don't know a lot about Camp Lejeune. One day we will do that. It will be interesting.

L. J. Kimball: Well, if you want a guide or something, give me a call. My rates are reasonable.

Lt. Col. Brabant: O.K.

L. J. Kimball: For a fellow Marine, I'm actually free. Do you have any parting observations, what do you think of Camp Johnson?

Lt. Col. Brabant: I'm enjoying it. It's I think that we do a lot of things better now. I love to watch. . . I go in my classrooms and I watch the students being interested and I watch them interact with each other. There doesn't seem to be any gender issues there. It's an interesting tour, it's a good tour. One thing I've thought about lately that has to do with women. Is we had Battalion PT yesterday and one of the exercises we do before we run is push ups. I was thinking just recently. When I first came into the Marine Corps, women did bent knee push ups.

L. J. Kimball: On their knees.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. And at some point, and I have no idea when, we now do push ups like normal people. I don't know when that transaction occurred but it did.

L. J. Kimball: Having been a male Marine, I can see that from a perspective. It makes a lot of difference in accepting women as equal, when they start running PFT like a male PFT. I'm sure at some point it's cultural changes. When women as a whole become, achieve much the same physical ability as males, the physical fitness test will become more similar.

Lt. Col. Brabant: It's the same now.

L. J. Kimball: You run three miles, you do the same sit ups.

Lt. Col. Brabant: Yes. We do a bar hang.

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L. J. Kimball: You do a bar hang. It's getting closer.

Lt. Col. Brabant: I think, they have talked about both of us doing push ups which would make sense. Because it's something that both can do fairly equitably. Because women will never do pull ups, not equitably with men.

L. J. Kimball: I remember when I was younger in the Marine Corps, we had a physical fitness or physical readiness test, I can't keep them straight, but I know that we did push ups.

Lt. Col. Brabant: It may have been, not since I've been in. I came in in 80.

End of Tape