

**Interview with Doug Anderson**

**Gabriela Helf, Interviewer**

**October 9th, 2020**

**Interview Conducted over Zoom**

[04:14]

GH: My name is Gabby Helf, part of the Macalester Class of 2023, conducting interviews for the Macalester Oral Histories Project. Today is October 9th, 2020, and I am interviewing Mr. Doug Anderson, Class of 1950, over Zoom. Mr. Anderson, can you start off by saying your name, where you're from, and what year you first came to Macalester?

DA: I'm Douglas N. Anderson, [I] go by Doug. I graduated from Macalester in 1950.

GH: Where are you from?

DA: We're [he and his wife] in Miramar, Florida. Originally, we grew up in Jackson, Minnesota.

GH: Got it. How did you get to Macalester?

DA: I knew some people locally in Jackson that were going to Macalester and talked to them about it. Our coach had graduated—football coach—had graduated from Hamline [Hamline University, Saint Paul, MN] and he was lobbying for Hamline but I chose Macalester.

[05:25]

GH: Why Macalester as opposed to any other school? As opposed to Hamline, for example.

DA: I knew something about Dr. Chester Shiflett, that he was a great chemistry chairman of that department, and the courses that were being taught. And that was of interest. Chemistry was my major. So I was really *focused* in that way. The other was the international emphasis was attractive as well.

[06:09]

GH: What was your impression of Macalester when you first came there?

DA: I think that I was very impressed in some ways but also (*laughs*) startled in other ways. I ended up—for the first semester—sleeping in the gymnasium, underneath the basket.

GH: Oh wow. Why? (*laughs*)

DA: Only a foot locker and a rack right at the end of the—right underneath the south basket. So that was a little bit alarming and upsetting, but we all got used to it.

GH: Wait, why was that so?

DA: Because there wasn't [any] dormitory space!

GH: Oh! Wow.

DA: They were working on Bigelow Hall but it was behind schedule.

GH: Ohhhh.

DA: When we moved in after Christmas, we moved into a dormitory that was for men and had been done primarily for people coming back from the military in 1946—after World War II—but when we moved in, the colors were pink (*laughs*).

[07:31]

GH: (*laughs*) That must not have been very comfortable. You mentioned that you were a chemistry major, why were you drawn to chemistry, and can you tell me a little bit more about the department?

DA: I was drawn to it because I was doing very well in the engineering type subjects. Chemistry was a good major as a prelude to chemical engineering. At that time I planned to go on to the University of [Minnesota] after two or three years and graduate. As it turned out, I decided to stay [at Macalester] and then go to graduate school later—which got postponed by the Korean War [a war fought between North and South Korea from 1950-1953].

GH: Right.

DA: Because I was activated.

GH: Right. Were there any particularly memorable faculty members or students from your time at Macalester that you'd like to talk about?

DA: Well, Chester Shiflett—Dr. Chester Shiflett—was an outstanding professor in chemistry. He was my—what do you call it—mentor—well there was an actual title for it. But, he was great and very encouraging. And as a matter of fact, when I went to graduate school at [the University of] Minnesota he asked me to come back and teach freshman chemistry laboratory when I was going to graduate school.

[09:13]

GH: Did you come back and teach?

DA: I did. It was during my time in graduate school at [the University of] Minnesota. After I was out of the service.

GH: What years was that?

DA: That would have been [19]52 to [19]54.

[09:39]

GH: Had Macalester changed at all in your time away?

DA: Well it was only two years, so—

GH: —that's true.

DA: And I didn't have a lot of exposure because I was going to graduate school at the same time. I didn't spend a lot of time on campus, other than when I needed to teach the course.

GH: Yeah.

DA: Preparations—

[10:01]

GH: That makes sense. When you were a student at Macalester were you involved in any clubs or extracurriculars?

DA: I played football. I was a member of the 1947 championship football team. We played basketball and I think we played a little soccer—intramural type activities. I was also part of the Atheneans society, which was a men's group that got together—people with common interests. Things of that type were of interest to me. Also, we did a fair amount of activities to encourage students who were struggling. [It was a] bit of a mentor thing for people struggling in the same classes that we were in.

GH: This was through the Athenean Society?

DA: Which was a good project, yeah.

GH: Yeah. That sounds like a great—

DA: Yeah, yeah. And it was one that I think saved a number of people from leaving the college.

Is there something like that today?

GH: There's a tutoring center on campus where students work and help other students with various subjects. It sounds very similar to what you were doing. Were there a lot of students who had been in the army and then came to the school?

DA: There was a lot of students like that. Macalester had the Macalester Village [Macville] at the south end of the campus which was built for military students during World War II, then when we were there it became housing for married students and some other students who couldn't get in the dormitory as well.

GH: Were there a lot of married students?

DA: There were a lot of married students because some of them had been in World War II for three or four years, so they were not freshmen right out of high school at all. So they were—

GH: Yeah

DA: —they would come back, get married, and decide to go to Mac. Some of them had been there before they went into the military, just for a year or two, and then were called up into the army—or whatever else—during World War II, and then came back because they wanted to. Some of them were pretty well filled-out guys that made that championship football team work right.

GH: Oh yeah, (*laughs*) that makes sense. That's very interesting because obviously those big age differences aren't much of a factor today.

DA: Oh, I'm sure.

[13:26]

GH: Have you kept in touch with Macalester friends over the years? I'd be interested to know about that.

DA: We went to a fair number of reunions. We lived in the Saint Paul area because I went to 3M [American multinational conglomerate operating in the fields of industry, worker safety, U.S. health care, and consumer goods] and so we were there for a number of years. It was easy to go to a game or two and actually participate in other activities (*long pause*) with people we knew. Dr. Mosvick, [Roger Mosvick, Class of 1952, Professor of Speech and Communication] was a roommate of mine during Macalester time. He was then on the staff of the college, and so we got to connect with him as well.

[14:25]

GH: That's awesome that you were able to stay connected. So I guess we'll transition to your life after Macalester. Can you tell me about what you did immediately after graduation?

DA: Immediately after graduation, about three days later, North Korea invaded South Korea and they immediately put a notice out that they were going to activate military units like the National Guard or Reserve units. So I was put in one of those. I activated the day after Christmas that same year. I did some interim work in my hometown where I worked in the highway department during the summers. They had me working on designing roads, like as a civil engineer assistant. During that time [summer 1950 through December 1950] I had that job, but the activation was on the 26th of December, 1950, so there wasn't much time there. We quickly ended up in Fort Rucker, Alabama.

[15:52]

GH: When were you actually deployed overseas?

DA: We were a special unit called Special Missions Korea. That unit was part of the XVIII Airborne Corps and we had two deployments. We trained [at] Eglin Air Force Base in Florida for missions to rescue prisoners of war. Those prisoners of war that we were rescuing were mostly F-86 pilots. The Russians wanted to know how to fly [the North American F-86 Sabre jet] because the kill ratio on a F-86 against a Russian-made, was very favorable to the US. They wanted to know about the airplanes and they wanted to know how to fly those airplanes. So they were taking them [US pilots] to Russia and they were never returned. And we were trying to



rescue them—we did rescue many of them—before they were Russian [prisoners] —to take them out of China. They were actually prisoners of war in North Korea—prisoner of war camps in China. Two different ones that we went in and were able to get out a lot of pilots and destroyed the camp.

[17:18]

GH: That's amazing. So you flew in those prisoner of war rescue missions for a while. How long were you doing that work?

DA: We deployed in the fall of 1951, but there was a lot of training before that. We were over there about six weeks doing the missions for that round of rescues. There were other missions that went along with that as well, and so that deployment was in the fall of [19]51. In the spring of [19]52, we had gathered a lot of information about what was going to happen on the Russian and Chinese side because we raided a facility that the military suspected was actually an operations center for the Korean War by the Chinese. It wasn't being run by the North Koreans at all. We raided that facility—just inside of China but right at the border with North Korea—and we found that on the top floor was an operations center where the North Koreans were underground. It was all being directed by Chinese senior officers and some Russian advisors. That was the last mission on the first deployment. We found out all kinds of information including things like there was consideration of an armistice. We got documents that [were] in Russian, *and* in Chinese, *and* in North Korean that were analyzed. We interrogated some people. We actually captured three Russian officers who decided to defect in that mission. One was a general, two were what we call “super colonels”[?]. And found out a lot about what they were planning. Then

we went back to the US, went through all the analysis and everything like that, and then developed another trip for the spring of 1952. The first mission was always take out the communication center so they couldn't talk to each other and tell that we were coming, and then we went to where they had a—in North Korea—where they had a prisoner of war camp where they brought all prisoners of war and sorted them and sent them to different places. We were trying to track down where the pilots were, which we found out a lot about there. That time we found out that there was a camp just across the border from Russia where they were sending the F-86 pilots and also B-29 pilots and navigators. That was our *last* mission on that deployment. Each one of those was about six weeks, but it took longer to train for it and then to actually execute the mission. We proved that they were, number one, taking it into Russia, number two, that they were killing some of the pilots during interrogation, and a Chinese officer actually led me to where they were burying it on this campsite. So we had evidence that they were killing our prisoners and also that there were a lot of atrocities going on in the camps to all of our prisoners in both the prisoner of war camps in North Korea and the prisoner of war camps in China. So the last mission we did, that was all used as documentation for a complaint to the UN [United Nations] in 1953. Part of the documentation for the US presentation about that [atrocities in the prisoner of war camps] to the UN.

[22:09]

GH: That's incredible work. Now I'm curious, were there other Macalester 1950 graduates who were also in the military during the Korean War? Did you know of any others?

DA: Yes, there were others, a number of them. Some of them were reserve people that were called from international guard units. Some had gone into the reserve when they got out at the end of World War II. Particularly if they were short term service during World War II. Some went in in 1945, which was essentially when Germany was collapsing and the atomic bomb commits the Japanese to surrender. Five years—

GH: So after—oh, continue, continue.

DA: Five years later we were going through Japan. They were friendly and supportive in Yokota Air Force Base at the time that we went in and out of Korea.

[23:23]

GH: I want to transition into your career after the military, how did you land at 3M?

DA: When I got back in the fall of 1952, I went to graduate school at [the University of] Minnesota.

GH: Oh right, right.

DA: That's when I was also teaching at Mac[alester]—the freshman. During that time I discovered that there were opportunities for summer work at 3M. I applied and was accepted for the fall and the middle of my masters work at the University. I was able to have a summer job. That was just like a three month interview for me and for them. I did interview some other

companies when it came time to interview, but I chose 3M based on my positive experiences there. I recommend that highly to anybody, in any career that you're interested in.

[24:35]

GH: What was your job title at 3M?

DA: I was an analytical chemist in my first job at 3M and moved on from there.

[24:48]

GH: When we spoke earlier in the week, you mentioned that you reconnected with the military while you were at 3M. Can you tell me more about that?

DA: Actually, you have a list of that and I think I've got a copy here (*paper rustling*)— Because of what we had done, we were pretty much a Delta Force Group today. Able to do things that other Special Forces or—even during World War II what's called OSS [Office of Strategic Services], now became Special Forces—but there were no Special Forces during *Korea* except Special Missions Korea. And that led to the—right after Korea they started the ten Special Forces and some other units like that, but we were recruited because we had proven what we could do during Korea. Some people were coming along and they wanted a team to be able to do that anywhere in the world and then link into the XVIII [18th] Airborne Corps with the 32nd Airborne and, I think, 25th division [unclear]. This unit had to do basically the kind of things that they finally formed Delta—in 1979—to be. That ongoing unit, to be that continuous base. But we were actually doing it because they wanted people, like myself, who were actually in businesses.

So we were not full time, but we were focused because of the specialties that we had developed during the time we were in the military. But we were later—we were traveling overseas in our secular jobs—at 3M and others like that—but that covered for us to do various things in various parts of the world, including mapping the electronics of Russia and China with recorders that we carried with us.

[27:23]

GH: What was your most memorable experience from that post-military, international work time?

DA: Probably the most memorable one was going to Moscow with the 3M team that was negotiating for a wholly owned subsidiary in every country in the Soviet Union and being able to help make that happen. And we did develop them—not us, but 3M and others—develop companies in those countries. 3M Estonia, 3M Latvia, 3M Russia, 3M in various countries.

GH: I just want to get a timeline, what year did you begin that work in Moscow?

DA: Our Moscow trip was in 1989.

GH: Okay.

DA: So that's kind of the benchmark. That work started much before that.

[28:49]

GH: Got it. I'd love to just hear a little bit more about those peace-building efforts that you just mentioned.

DA: Well the other half of the negotiation in Moscow was under [former Soviet Politician Mikhail] Gorbachev at that time. And Gorbachev was the first one [Russian leader], and probably the only one, that's ever really been open to the possibility of really negotiating peace. We were to start that process with the approval of—I think it was President Bush at the time and James Baker. They agreed that we couldn't try to develop a relationship. They wanted bribes for us to be able to do these kinds of things, but we negotiated to do a seminar that would help the Russians and other countries be able to adapt to a free enterprise system. They had operated under communism for so long they didn't understand at all what free enterprise meant or how to get there. So we really equipped them to do that. We also did that in some of those satellite countries later, but not with that team, it was separate.

GH: Got it.

DA: All of those countries had operated for more than fifty years under oppressive communism. They didn't *know* they didn't know what free enterprise was. So they had to learn that. And they didn't trust each other. So when we started doing seminars in all those different countries, [within each] country, we worked with business, government, and church leaders who worked on a cooperative basis and they go through seminars together and they start to trust each other, which

worked very well. And they actually did build that very well, particularly in countries like Estonia, Latvia, a few others.

GH: That's impressive and that's incredible work just kind of dismantling those beliefs and practices. Now I'm curious—

DA: Now—

GH: Oh continue.

DA: There have been others that did some of that type of work from Mac, some of them have passed on, but there were people that I knew at Macalester when I was there and I knew later, that were CIA and other organizations where they worked in similar types [of work].

[31:45]

GH: Yeah, I guess and that is a great transition into my next question, which is, do you believe that your time at Macalester influenced this career path and this type of work?

DA: Well, the chemistry training at Mac was great. That's really what qualified me for the summer job. I'd been through the U [University of Minnesota] graduate school as well. So that was a very strong base, and Dr. Shiflett was very good about doing that. It was a Dr. Scott there too, that did organic chemistry as well. That gave me the base. But you can't stop with the academics. You gotta keep running quickly when you get on top.

[32:44]

GH: Putting the academics aside, were there any values you picked up at Macalester that you think influenced you? The others who were doing similar work that you mentioned earlier, do you think that that influenced you in any way?

DA: Well, that's a little more vague area, but—

GH: It is a vague area.

DA: But, a number of us got together at 3M and actually spent time at Macalester and the other schools that they had gone to. But we also developed at 3M a high school program where they spent a day on the job with somebody at 3M. We started with our hometown in Jackson. I brought a bunch of seniors in high school up there and spent a day at 3M—on the job just following somebody around in an area they thought they were interested in. That was a great impact. That continued and 3M actually built it into a whole thing around the whole Twin Cities area high schools. I don't know if that's still in operation or not, but it was a great way for people to spend a day on the job, seeing what a job is like, going to lunch with a person, meeting some other [unclear], and just getting *some* immersion. Problem is, the jump without something like that is difficult for seniors in high school to make—the jump into college life. If the college *doesn't* have ways to do that, it's going to be difficult to make the jump to it.



[34:56]

GH: I just want to circle back to your time at Macalester and I want to know if you have any—you mentioned that you have returned to Macalester since your graduation for reunions—

DA: Yes.

GH: How do you feel that Macalester has changed since your time there?

DA: Well it changed in a number of ways, but I think over time it took building more and more relationships between the community and interaction with the community, and interactions with the alumni. I think the alumni, not everybody, but a lot of alumni, feel good about their time at Macalester and good about the equipping it did on the job. But making that transition is, I know you're doing more in that area, but making that transition to a job is not an easy thing.

GH: Yes.

DA: And most people are naive about it because it really comes out unexpected, so they don't achieve what they could have achieved if they had a bridge they could [build] through people that they know in their hometown or their school or whatever it might be. The other thing is, when you know where you're going, you can't wait til you graduate from college. You should know well-ahead of time where you're going to go, what kind of job you're going to do, because a lot of people make choices because it's comfortable or it's easy or there's glamor to it or whatever it may be, and they don't have a realization that they should be choosing that career

path now that is going to lead them to where they'd like to be promotion-wise or otherwise. If they want to be in a job that is not a promotable area and are satisfied to do that, those people are needed out there too, but there's plenty of people that way. People need to make successful transitions from high school to college to graduate school or wherever they go, and they need some help to do that from people that know. The college can help, but the college needs the help of alumni who are knowledgeable. I don't know how extensively that happens at Macalester now, certainly—hopefully—they've made many strides since I was there.

GH: Yeah. Do you notice any differences between the culture of the students? I know you haven't been back—reunion this year was virtual—but do you know anything about changes in student attitudes or values?

DA: I haven't had enough exposure to know.

GH: Okay.

DA: Actually, I'm interacting with a football player right now—Stephen Immel—who's a linebacker on the football team. The coaches had alumni like myself work with the graduating seniors. I think it should back up [happen prior to senior year] and say, what do I need to do with my career back here, so that when I get to be a senior I really understand it.

GH: Yes.

DA: It's a good effort, it could be improved by backing it up. And that should happen in any area, any academic area in college.

GH: Yes.

DA: For example, I know people that I've brought to a job, from Macalester, from other places, who have gotten into the job, but *that* job is the end of the road. There's not a promotable route to where they're going to be successful. There are people that shouldn't go beyond that, and they're in the right place. But to get the right people to the level they need to be, they need to have a career path. That really stood [unclear] there, and how to get there and the process.

[39:46]

GH: Yeah. Yeah, I guess that answers my question about what advice you would give to a current Macalester student. Do you have any knowledge from your international experiences that you'd want to share with a current Macalester student? Your international experiences specifically.

DA: Mary [Doug Anderson's partner] and I have vast experiences. I've been in eighty six countries.

GH: Yeah that's incredible.

DA: Mary's been in thirty eight [countries] and a lot of those were great experiences. A number of them were learning experiences, some of them were survival experiences. I've been back in

Korea, I've been back in China, I've been back in Russia and those were people we fought during the Korean War. Some of that's not something you want to talk about with those people, but there are ways I think that that could happen. I think it needs a creative session, a mixture of people that have done things—like ones that are coaching the football players. I have mostly just [experienced focused areas where] that is actually happening, but that [mentorship] could happen on a broader scale, I think. I'm ninety two, how much help can I be? Well, I can be a help because [it doesn't] matter if it was fifty years ago or twenty five years ago or today, still gotta make the right career judgments and find the right path so you can get to where you want to be.

GH: Yeah

DA: Not to where it feels comfortable or where it feels exciting. You can have a passion for something, whatever it may be, and you're excited about getting there. I've heard some of the students that have talked in various programs in the last couple of years. They're excited because of linguistics [for example] or something that's exciting. Is there a career path there? If there is, which there undoubtedly was, how are you going to get to that point at a level where you can really make a difference?

GH: That's great advice.

DA: And I think the real statement is, everybody's objectives should be to get to the point where they are capable of serving themselves, as well as serving the company or the college or whatever it is, at that level, not down here someplace.

GH: Yeah.

DA: How and what is the path to get there.

GH: That's great advice and a great outlook.

DA: That's the biggest gap, I think, in the whole education system. First of all, getting people through high school in an environment that creates the desire to go beyond.

GH: Yeah.

DA: Most high schools don't.

[43:21]

GH: So I want to wrap up the interview with—I just wanted to ask if you have any final Macalester memories that you would like to share?

DA: Well, one of them is, next door to me in Kirk Hall was Don—Don Wortman. Don became deputy director of the CIA for one of the areas. His brother was a spy in East Germany and did all kinds of things. There have been a number of people. Their roommate was—we called [him] Fritz Mondale, his name was Walter Mondale—was Vice President.

GH: Yeah.

DA: We had a very interesting discussion. I was kidding him about convincing me to be a Republican.

GH: *(laughs)*

DA: He kind of thought that was funny, but—

GH: *(laughs)* Yeah.

DA: But I stayed in contact with him for a number of years.

GH: Wow!

DA: We both [unclear] Minnesota. Even though I didn't agree with him. I actually ran into him in Sweden one time. He was there, I think, as Vice President. It was hard to get to him [laughs] even though we were in the same hotel [unclear].

GH: Yeah.

DA: But I think everybody has an opportunity to go where God has equipped them to be. And there are different levels. It shouldn't be arguing and trying to force those things on people. It should be [unclear]. We need to equip them, not subsidize and put them back. Some of the

discussion going on today, how they need those [subsidies], really are, I believe, abusive because they force them to live where they are, at whatever level they are, and not achieve what [unclear]. So we need to equip them to get them where they need to be, not force the system to make it.

GH: Yeah. Well that's a good concluding thought. I just want to say thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me and sharing your story with the Macalester community. Now would you like me to send you a copy of this interview before it goes online?

DA: I'd like to see a copy of it sometime, *when* is not really important. I'm also willing to do more [unclear]. I showed you the books. This is the Cold War [period of geopolitical tension between the United States and the Soviet Union and their respective allies]. Incidentally, there's one mission in there—in Austria—where a woman that was a head of the TV, the top announcer in Austria, was determined to communicate into Eastern Europe—Vienna is right across the Danube River from Eastern Europe at that time. I was speaking at a conference that I spoke at a number of times in Europe that was focused on positive change in your life. She picked that up, because she was connected with the Austrian government and the intel operations. She had me do an interview that was broadcast into Eastern Europe. She did it [the interview] in a coffeehouse, actually.

GH: Wow.

DA: Her name was Gabriela.

GH: Oh! (*laughs*)

DA: Yeah.

GH: What a coincidence!

DA: That wasn't her real name, but that was her TV name.

GH: Wow. That's funny.

DA: So you got a namesake there.

GH: I have a namesake, yeah. That's great! Full circle experience.

DA: Any of this, these books, I can make a copy for you.

GH: Okay, yeah! I'm going to talk to my supervisors about the next steps but—and then did you get the form that I sent?

DA: Yes I did.

GH: Okay.



DA: I think I sent it but I'm not sure, I'll check.

GH: Okay! Yeah that would be great just because we both need to sign that before this can go on the internet.

DA: The subjects that are in the Cold War book are very, very interesting.

GH: Yeah they seem incredible.

DA: And they could be a great learning experience.

GH: Yeah.

DA: Particularly in history—not just in history—in political science and those other areas.

GH: Yeah.

DA: So if that's of interest well, I can give it.

GH: Yeah! I will definitely talk to them about it.

DA: Okay.

GH: So thank you so much for taking the time to do this, I really enjoyed our conversation.

DA: Well thank you for being willing to do this and how well you did it, I appreciate that.

GH: Thank you. I will email you and keep you updated on the process of how this is going to get uploaded.

DA: Okay, great.

GH: Okay, thank you so much Mr. Anderson.

DA: Thank you.

GH: Have a great rest of your day.

DA: And you do the same. Thank you very much.

GH: Bye.