



Maxine R. Kleindienst

The Leakey Foundation Oral History of Human Origins Research: Maxine R. Kleindienst

Interview conducted by
Bernard A. Wood
In 2023

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Interview: 05/10/2023

Bernard Wood (00:00):

Okay. So Maxine Kleindienst, can I begin by thanking you very much for agreeing to do this? And my first question is, could you give us your name so that we understand how to pronounce it?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (00:19):

Maxine R. Kleindienst.

Bernard Wood (00:22):

Maxine R. Kleindienst? And what does the R stand for?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (00:28):

Rose.

Bernard Wood (00:29):

Rose? Okay, it's a very English name, but I guess it's a pretty - it's not just English. I just happen to think it's English, but it's probably not.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (00:41):

No, it was my grandmother's name. She was Austrian.

Bernard Wood (00:45):

Oh, okay. And you are now retired, but could you tell us what you did immediately before your retirement, and when you retired?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (01:00):

Well, I was a professor of the University of Toronto, but I was working on the Mississauga campus, which is called today, UTM, University of Toronto at Mississauga.

Bernard Wood (01:16):

That's to the west of Toronto, is that correct?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (01:20):

That's correct.

Bernard Wood (01:21):

Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (01:22):

It's a big suburb.

Bernard Wood (01:27):

And you chose to move away from the main campus to go and work there?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (01:33):

Yes, I did. It was by far the nicest campus, aside from which they would allow me to do my teaching in the summer and I could go to Egypt in the winter.

Bernard Wood (01:48):

Oh, that makes a very sensible decision. Okay. Right. And if you could just repeat the name of the institution?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (02:00):

It's the University of Toronto at Mississauga.

Bernard Wood (02:05):

Thank you very much.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (02:08):

But I was a member of the graduate faculty so, technically, I also belonged to St. George, which is the main campus.

Bernard Wood (02:17):

Okay. Thank you. Thank you. So you've already hinted that there is an Austrian influence in your family, but could you tell us something about your family background?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (02:35):

About my father's side, I know very, very little, aside from my grandmother's name and some of her relatives I have. I do have some records. My mother was Finnish. There, I have know more about the background of where they came from and that kind of thing.

Bernard Wood (02:53):

And where was that?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (02:55):

My mother's family immigrated to northern Minnesota when my grandfather worked in the iron ore mines.

Bernard Wood (03:06):

And when did they migrate to Minnesota?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (03:10):

My mother came to the US in 1903.

Bernard Wood (03:15):

Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (03:17):

And my dad's family immigrated to Iowa in 1898.

Bernard Wood (03:25):

Okay. Okay. And so where were you brought up as a child?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (03:32):

Oh, I was brought up in a coal mining camp called Superior in southwestern Wyoming. It doesn't exist anymore.

Bernard Wood (03:41):

Wow. Wow. So your father was working in the mine? Or at the mine?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (03:51):

My father was a miner, yes, although he really was a mechanic servicing the big machines.

Bernard Wood (03:58):

Okay. And these were open cast mines?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:01):

Oh, no, that's - the D.O. Clark Mine is one of the deepest in the United States.

Bernard Wood (04:06):

Wow. I see. Okay. And what was your mother doing?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:11):

My mother was a county public health nurse.

Bernard Wood (04:17):

Oh, that was a busy family?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:19):

Well, she was the nurse of what was then the biggest county in the United States.

Bernard Wood (04:26):

You have lots of deepest and biggest in your background. So could you tell us, do you have any brothers and sisters?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:37):

No, I'm an only child.

Bernard Wood (04:39):

Okay. And you went to school in this place that doesn't exist?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:44):
Superior, Wyoming, yes.

Bernard Wood (04:46):
Yes. And then you went to high school there?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:50):
I went to high school there, yes, class of '51.

Bernard Wood (04:54):
Okay. And then where did you go for undergraduate?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (04:59):
I did one year at Wyoming, and then I moved to New Mexico, Albuquerque.

Bernard Wood (05:06):
With your parents?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (05:08):
No, no, for university.

Bernard Wood (05:10):
And why did you move to New Mexico from Wyoming?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (05:13):
Because I wanted to do anthropology.

Bernard Wood (05:17):
You wanted to do anthropology as an undergraduate?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (05:20):
Yes.

Bernard Wood (05:22):
I'm not sure I knew what anthropology was as an undergraduate. So how did this come about?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (05:28):
Well, there was one professor at Wyoming who was an anthropologist, but there was no course in anthropology. I was also interested in geology, but he recommended New Mexico as a good place to go and do anthropology and archeology.

Bernard Wood (05:49):

And so who were your instructors and mentors in New Mexico?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (05:53):

New Mexico? Well, Frank Hibben was the archeologist. Leslie Spear was probably my mentor. I can't remember the others at the moment.

Bernard Wood (06:09):

Okay. Okay. So when did you decide to go to graduate school? Or were you always intending to go to graduate school?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (06:21):

Well, I did archeological field school at Arizona. I met some people there who were undergraduates at Chicago, and I decided that was a good place to do graduate work.

Bernard Wood (06:38):

So that's how you picked on Chicago?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (06:44):

Yeah, I was a good friend with Patty Jo Watson, if you've ever heard of her?

Bernard Wood (06:50):

I have, but I would be a liar if I said I knew why. But I have heard of her.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (06:57):

Well, she's pretty famous for publishing on theoretical archeology.

Bernard Wood (07:05):

Okay. Okay. And did you apply to any other graduate programs?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (07:12):

I applied to several others. Actually, I could have gone to, let's see, Oregon, Utah. Those were the main ones, I think.

Bernard Wood (07:27):

Okay. But you decided on Chicago?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (07:29):

Oh, yeah.

Bernard Wood (07:31):

And what was the arrangement at Chicago? Did you have to sort of choose an advisor from the get-go? Or were you just part of a group of graduate students and then your advisor emerged from your interests?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (07:53):

No, well, originally we were just all part of a group. But, once we had the MA, which was pretty much proforma... You did your exams, but then it was just pretty much proforma. For graduate work, you were really assigned to whoever had the money to take you to the field. You didn't choose your PhD work. You were given it.

Bernard Wood (08:19):

Okay. Well that's an interesting... Okay. And so did Francis Clark Howell have money to take you to the field?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (08:29):

That's right. He had the money to take me and Glen Cole to the field.

Bernard Wood (08:34):

And where did you go?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (08:36):

Well, through Nairobi. We went to the southern highlands of Tanzania to a site called Isimila.

Bernard Wood (08:47):

Imila?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (08:49):

Imila.

Bernard Wood (08:51):

Isimila, that's what I thought. Okay, okay, okay. And was that a site that had been excavated before? Or were you the first people to excavate there?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (09:01):

No, we were the first people to excavate. There have been several others since, but we were the first.

Bernard Wood (09:08):

Right. So when did you go to graduate school?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (09:21):

'56-'57.

Bernard Wood (09:27):

Well, you must have raced through graduate school because-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (09:33):

Then I did '56-'57, went to the field '57-'58, and then in '59 I finished my thesis.

Bernard Wood (09:41):

Sure. Okay, wow.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (09:42):

It was kind of rushed.

Bernard Wood (09:43):

Wow, okay. And was your thesis mainly based on Isimila? Or did it take account of other work that was going on in East Africa at the time?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (09:57):

It was based on Isimila, but I also had permission from Desmond Clark to use information from Kalambo Falls and from the Leakey's to use some information from their sites in Kenya, Olduvai.

Bernard Wood (10:11):

Okay. So who was in your cohort of graduate students?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (10:20):

Glen Cole, Sally Binford, Leslie Freeman. Gosh, an egyptologist, whose name I always forget, who's quite famous.

Bernard Wood (10:36):

And so was it a close-knit group? Or did you all go off in your different directions?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (10:42):

Oh, no. We all went off in different directions. We were really assigned to whoever got the money to take people to the field, because I was expecting to go with Braidwood to Iraq and Iran, but Clark Howell got money first.

Bernard Wood (11:03):

I see.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (11:07):

I'm an accidental Africanist.

Bernard Wood (11:10):

I see. Well, that's an interesting, an accidental Africanist. That would be a good title for an autobiography. So was there any academic tradition in your family? Did your parents go to college?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (11:28):

My mother was trained as a public health nurse. She did some university work. And I had cousins and so on. My uncle was a lawyer, so there was some academic tradition in the family.

Bernard Wood (11:43):

Okay. Where did you get advice about what to do and where to go?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (11:54):

Where? At Chicago?

Bernard Wood (11:56):

No, before you went to Chicago? Was it mainly you? Or your parents? Or your relatives?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (12:05):

Oh, that would be mainly me, and I had met some other people at the Arizona Field School. A number of us we met there, Patty Jo Watson, and some others.

Bernard Wood (12:16):

Yes

Maxine R. Kleindienst (12:18):

And a couple of the others went to Chicago, and I decided that was a good place as well.

Bernard Wood (12:23):

Okay. So you got your PhD in 1959. Could you give me this sort of the five-minute version of what's in your PhD?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (12:37):

Oh, well, it's outdated now, but I guess I did the first attempt at doing a typology for the upper Acheulean in East Africa. So it was not only for Isimila, but I was given access to the Kalambo Falls collections by Desmond Clark, and to some of Leakey's collections in Nairobi. So it was a thesis on East African Acheulean, and I forget the exact title.

Bernard Wood (13:14):

And my understanding is that your typology has proved to be very influential and long-lasting. Was your interest in it-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (13:34):

I didn't do it all by myself. Glen Cole and Clark Howell and I really developed it, but Glen refused to put his name on it because he said people would use it. He didn't think that was a good idea.

Bernard Wood (13:51):

I see. He didn't think what was a good idea?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (13:54):

That people just simply used it, applied it to their material without much consideration of whether it really fit or not, which they sometimes do.

Bernard Wood (14:06):

Okay. So he was skeptical? He didn't want to link his name with something that was just used without too much thought?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (14:25):

Right.

Bernard Wood (14:26):

Okay. How much influence did Clark Howell have on the typology?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (14:34):

Oh, well, actually we were following what had had been established by Francois Bordes in some degree, but not in detail. But his principles is what Clark had us to follow, and which weren't very different from our principles as being trained in North American archeology, actually.

Bernard Wood (15:05):

Okay. Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (15:06):

But it really Glen had as much to do with it as I did, but he just didn't want his name on it.

Bernard Wood (15:13):

Right. So you got your PhD in 1959, and did you get a job then? Or do you know a postdoc? Or what did you do?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (15:29):

I got an NSF. I got an NSF postdoctoral fellowship. That will go away.

Bernard Wood (15:39):

Okay, okay. So you've got an NSF? You've got a postdoc -?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (15:45):

Yes, I had a postdoc. I was affiliated with the Johannesburg Witwatersrand, Wits.

Bernard Wood (15:55):

Okay. And who were you working with at Wits?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (16:00):

Basil Cooke, sorry.

Bernard Wood (16:04):

Basil Cooke?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (16:06):

Yes.

Bernard Wood (16:08):

Okay. But he's a geologist?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (16:11):

Yes. And also, to some extent, with Philip Tobias. But then I knew the archeologist Revil Mason, and other archeologists rounded about.

Bernard Wood (16:17):

Okay. And how long did you spend at Wits as a postdoc?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (16:19):

Yes. And also, to some extent, with Philip Tobias. But then I knew the archeologist Revil Mason, and other archeologists rounded about.

Bernard Wood (16:26):

Okay. And how long did you spend at Wits as a postdoc?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (16:31):

Well, I had a year's postdoc. I wasn't there much of the time. Actually, I traveled all around South Africa, and then north to... Well, I was in southern Rhodesia, northern Rhodesia, so I ended up in Livingston looking at Kalambo Falls. Before then, I had an old Land Rover and I drove north to Nairobi, worked at the Coryndon, then the Coryndon Museum.

Bernard Wood (17:00):

Yes. But you didn't drive from Johannesburg to Livingston?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:06):

Yes, I did.

Bernard Wood (17:08):

You did?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:09):

I drove all the way to Nairobi.

Bernard Wood (17:11):

You drove all the way from Johannesburg to Nairobi.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:13):

Right.

Bernard Wood (17:15):

Okay. And then when did you go to Olduvai?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:20):

Well, I worked with Mary in '60-some for... Haslett and I dug the bulk of FLK in '61 or '62, something like that.

Bernard Wood (17:36):

Yes. She mentions you participating in the '60, '61, '62 sort of period.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:46):

Yeah. And FLK North, I helped with that. I was at work. I helped with that excavation.

Bernard Wood (17:52):

Wow, okay. And then she specifically mentions your involvement in excavating in beds three and four?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (18:02):

Yes. Well, in effect, they invited me to excavate in bed three, bed four at JK.

Bernard Wood (18:04):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:46):

So I got NSF funding to do that.

Bernard Wood (18:20):

And did you have any employment?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (18:23):

No.

Bernard Wood (18:25):

No?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (17:46):

No. I had affiliations with the field museum and the University of Chicago, but I didn't have employment.

Bernard Wood (18:35):

Okay. So, apart from the one year of the NSF postdoc, how were you living? How were you putting food-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (18:45):

I had NSF funding, grant funding.

Bernard Wood (18:49):

Okay. And when did that stop, and when did you get, as my late father would've said, a proper job?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (18:58):

Oh, well, when I finished at Olduvai, actually, I... Well, I married the fellow who did the geology at Isimila.

Bernard Wood (19:11):

Okay. And when did that stop, and when did you get, as my late father would've said, a proper job?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (19:15):

We were married by the district commissioner in Nairobi. And then, well, I joined him in his... he was an exploration geologist at that time for Falconbridge Nickel Mines. So, I and Fiona Barber, I don't know if you've ever heard of her? She worked-

Bernard Wood (19:19):

Yes, I have.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (19:20):

Okay. Fiona and I drove across from Nairobi to Cameroon, and then she flew back to South Africa, and Eddie Coldeman and I took the boat to Capetown. And then I traveled with them. He and his partner were doing exploration geology around South Africa. We went to Madagascar, Botswana, so on, where they were doing exploration.

Bernard Wood (20:17):

Maxine, if may call you Maxine, you sound extremely-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (20:23):

Everybody calls me Max.

Bernard Wood (20:25):

Okay. Well, I'll call you Maxine.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (20:27):

Ok.

Bernard Wood (20:28):

These are sort of stories of adventure and travel. I mean, to drive from Nairobi to the Cameroon, that was not an easy thing to do in those days.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (20:46):

Well, it's essentially impossible now. There were dirt tracks. And the only problem, it was the end of the rainy season, or the beginning of the rainy season, and we got stuck a couple of times. We had fun extricating ourselves.

Bernard Wood (21:08):

Right, okay. And so how are you as a Land Rover mechanic?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:15):

Well, fortunately, that we didn't have to do much of.

Bernard Wood (21:17):

Right, okay. And so how are you as a Land Rover mechanic?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:15):

Well, fortunately, that we didn't have to do much of.

Bernard Wood (21:21):

Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:34):

Very fundamental.

Bernard Wood (21:36):

Right. So when was your first job in a university as a faculty member?Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:34):

Very fundamental.

Bernard Wood (21:36):

Right. So when was your first job in a university as a faculty member?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:37):

'72, I believe.

Bernard Wood (21:36):

'72?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (21:40):
University of Toronto, Scarborough.

Bernard Wood (21:43):
In Scarborough? And so, for the period between your PhD and 1972, you were doing archeological research but essentially as a sort by invitation?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (22:04):
Well, I had funding to do archeology. And then, well, after I married, we moved to Switzerland. Actually, we ended up buying an old farm in Fribourg and I had a son, so I didn't really go back into to employment till we moved to Toronto in '70. And then I started doing some teaching as a teaching, as a teaching assistant mind you, at Scarborough in '72, I think it was. Well, I wasn't even tenured, and I got tapped by Rufus Churcher who was assistant, who was associate dean, to be chairman of the department.

Bernard Wood (22:52):
And that was in 1978?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (22:55):
'77.

Bernard Wood (22:57):
'77? Okay, so you went from being a teaching assistant to the chair of the department in pretty short time?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (23:05):
Tenured full professor, yes. Tenured full professor they awarded me. As chairman of the department, I had to have that.

Bernard Wood (23:15):
Right. And why did you decide to go to Toronto?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (23:19):
Well, my husband's employment was in Toronto. The family moved to Toronto.

Bernard Wood (23:26):
Okay. So let me just go back to your time with Clark Howell. And was there any advice that Clark Howell gave you that was particularly important? Or you remember?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (23:42):
Clark? Clark was always very supportive, but I don't remember specifically in terms of advice. As a mentor, yes, he was always very supportive of his students, very positive in his

thinking and any kind of advice he gave. I suppose, I just tried to follow his example when I had graduate students as myself.

Bernard Wood (24:15):

Okay. That's interesting because it would suggest that it was basically... I trained as a surgeon before I went into full-time paleo-anthropology, and, basically, you learned by looking at what somebody who knew what they were doing was doing. And that was the Clark Howell method, presumably?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (24:46):

Yes. It wasn't instructive in that sense. But what he did do was give you context to people in different fields, like Phillip Tobias or the Leakeys, that he knew would give you a hand up.

Bernard Wood (25:08):

How did he help with your writing? Or were you always a good writer?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (25:13):

I was pretty much a... That was my own. I liked writing and I guess I just kind of trained myself. Well, I had some good high school teachers. Paradoxically, the Union Pacific Coal Company gave all of us a very good education. Not my intent, mind you, but the people who would work in the coal mining camp tended to be rather unusual people.

Bernard Wood (25:46):

Yes, I can imagine. I can imagine. So if you drafted a manuscript and you gave it to Clark Howell, would he just write comments on it? Or explain why he wrote those comments?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (26:09):

He would write some comments, but usually you would discuss them with him. But I don't remember, specifically. If you had a comment, you'd ask him what that was about.

Bernard Wood (26:24):

If you could read the writing?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (26:28):

Well, it was better than Desmond's.

Bernard Wood (26:32):

Oh, Desmond I know has a reputation for really, really impenetrable writing.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (26:39):

Yeah.

Bernard Wood (26:41):

So, tell me, if you went to Toronto in 1972, you were mentored by Clark Howell, you had met Philip Tobias, you'd met Desmond, which other archeologists were you in contact with and were you aware of?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:09):

Oh, that's too long a list. You're asking me at 90 years old to remember all that?

Bernard Wood (27:20):

Revil Mason, you talked about.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:22):

Revil, Ray Inskeep.

Bernard Wood (27:27):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:28):

I knew Lee Isaac, of course Charles Keller.

Bernard Wood (27:36):

When did you first meet Glen?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:42):

Glen? When did I first meet Glen? I honestly don't remember.

Bernard Wood (27:47):

Because he mentions you quite often in his Olorgesailie book.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:54):

Well, Glenn and Charles Keller and I were sort of the three people in North America who really were interested in the Acheulean.

Bernard Wood (27:62):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (27:63):

We kind of met at meetings, sometimes co-authored things.

Bernard Wood (28:15):

Right. So that was a pretty small group?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (28:17):

Well, that was it until they began to have students. That pretty much was it in North America. There just weren't many people interested in the pre-history of Africa, especially

in the Pleistocene pre-history. There were some interested in the Iron Age and later Pleistocene, but it we kind of were the triumvirate interested.

Bernard Wood (28:44):

No, that's the impression I got from doing a little reading before we had this conversation, but it's good that you can confirm that. So you retired from academia, or at least your full-time post in academia in the 2000s, is that right?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:11):

1998.

Bernard Wood (29:15):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:18):

Because we were forced to retire at 65.

Bernard Wood (29:22):

Forced to retire at 65?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:24):

Yeah. We had no choice.

Bernard Wood (29:27):

So this was the bridge-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:29):

I did some teaching afterwards, some contract teaching after, but we were forced to retire at 65.

Bernard Wood (29:38):

Would you have liked to have gone on working?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:40):

Oh, sure. Most of us would. They can now, but then we didn't have a choice.

Bernard Wood (29:46):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (29:47):

But then I got involved with the Dakhla Oasis project in 1986, and from then on I was interested-

Bernard Wood (29:58):

Tell me about that?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (30:00):

Well, it's an international project which began in 1977-78, working in the Dakhla Oasis, which is in the center of the Egyptian western desert. And then I started doing the Pleistocene archeology, and there was a Holocene pre-historian, his name is Marion McDonald. And we expanded our interest to Kharga Oasis because Caton Thompson had pioneered work there.

Bernard Wood (30:36):

Yes?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (30:38):

And there were better opportunities for UTH dating there, and ESR dating actually as well, too, although we have ESR dating at Dakhla as well. At Dakhla, the ESR sequence on faunal habitation goes back to MIS17. And in Dakhla, we actually have what could be Oldowan 2.3 million in Kharga.

Bernard Wood (31:12):

Right. And how large was this group who was doing this that you were part of?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (31:18):

Oh, we were very small group. I was a Pleistocene pre-historian. I had a couple of very good students, Bob Keegangack became the geologist, and he brought some very good students to the field to do the stratigraphy. But we had a very small group of pre-historians, and then Rufus Churcher did zoology and paleontology for us as well as the old stuff.

Bernard Wood (31:50):

Right. And so just to go back to your career at the university in Toronto, you had your own graduate students?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (32:04):

Yes. They've done well, some of them. A lot of them.

Bernard Wood (32:13):

When was your first graduate student? When did you start to be involved with graduate students?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (32:20):

Well, I had some involvement from as soon as they made me chairman, of course, because I was chairman of the graduate department.

Bernard Wood (32:42):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (32:42):

But my own students, the first one was Peter Shepherd, who became the, well, the archeologist at Auckland. He's retired now, of course. Another one, Joanna Casey was Carolina, South Carolina. One of my students was the chief archeologist of the Yukon, so on. They did all right.

Bernard Wood (33:02):

Okay. And did you enjoy having graduate students?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (33:07):

Oh, yes. I did undergraduate teaching, but I didn't like the big classes very much. I much preferred smaller classes or seminars. I usually did smaller-class undergrad and graduate seminars.

Bernard Wood (33:29):

This is a difficult question to answer, but what do you think your graduate students... what did they get from you?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (33:48):

Rigor in research, I think.

Bernard Wood (33:51):

Rigor in research? Okay. Okay. And were you like Clark? In other words, you led by example? Or did you instruct them in this rigor?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (34:09):

Well, I suppose they got a lot of red ink on things if they weren't being rigorous.

Bernard Wood (34:20):

If they weren't being rigorous? So can I just ask you about professional organizations? Were there any that were particularly important for you?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (34:38):

You mean the societies?

Bernard Wood (34:40):

Yes.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (34:42):

Well, I've dropped most of them now, but I keep the Society for Africanist Archeology, still. And I did, belong to the Society for Physical Anthropology and, of course, American Anthropological Association, Society for American Archeology, all of those at one time.

Bernard Wood (35:13):

And, in the seventies and eighties, were those meetings an important sort of locus for the exchange of ideas? Or did you just go because you thought you should go?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (35:34):

Well, some of them, I went because I had to go as chairman to the American Anthropological Association. Although I do remember the meeting when Margaret Mead began to talk about grandmothers and all the men stood up and walked out. That I remember. But mainly, SAfA was very useful. It was where our African archeologists actually exchanged ideas and learned about new things.

Bernard Wood (36:15):

So, just to go back to your research interests, the impression I get is that Clark's role, apart from any other role that he had, was his Rolodex, or his address book, or his network of people that he knew.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (36:48):

Very much, very much.

Bernard Wood (36:55):

This was an important resource for you?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (36:57):

Oh, yes, very much so. He provided that for all his graduate students. So it was very useful to know Kenneth Oakley and be able to get into the back rooms of the BM, for instance.

Bernard Wood (37:05):

Okay. Okay. And you could do that with an introduction from Clark?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (37:09):

Yes. Well actually Kenneth Oakley, I think, taught a semester at Chicago as well. They got to be friends. That was the other thing that Clark did. He brought in people like Tobias, like Kenneth, others, as teachers, as instructors for our term at Chicago. So we got a lot of contacts that way, and a lot more breadth that way when Chicago was teaching archeology still.

Bernard Wood (37:48):

Right. And so if you had to pick one research opportunity that came your way that was probably more important than any other, what would that be?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (38:08):

Well, I think it still goes back to that first site that we dug at Isimila which, actually, I finished the publication. It may actually even appear this year, finally, if my son negotiates the last figure with the editor. It's never been published properly.

Bernard Wood (38:37):

So you are going to write up the-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (38:40):

It is written up. It's been sitting in the Journal of African Earth Sciences for a long time. But the editor suddenly came to life and said, "Do you want to finish this?" So I did, with the help of my son and my daughter-in-law. My son is the son of the man who did the original mapping of where... the fellow I married, he was at Isimila. So that one actually is going to be published one of these days this year, we hope, finally.

Bernard Wood (39:18):

It's not bad for a 90-year-old. So which of your current publications are you most proud of?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (39:29):

Oh, well, I have the little book called the Oasis Papers Eight. I think that's a good report of what we did at Dakhla and Kharga, which are fascinating.

Bernard Wood (39:46):

What about the early papers about the typology?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (39:52):

Well, people keep citing them. Glen knew they would.

Bernard Wood (40:04):

So the co-author, you never had, he was-

Maxine R. Kleindienst (40:07):

It wasn't a bad typology, we'll put it that way. I think I did all right, but I didn't really do it all by myself. Glen wouldn't put his name on it.

Bernard Wood (40:20):

Right. So, can I ask you another question? Is there an archeology paper that somebody else wrote that you wish you had written? Or at least that you really admire?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (40:39):

I know you asked me that question, and I was trying to think of something. And the trouble is, all the mess of publications are just out of my head.

Bernard Wood (40:49):

Right.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (40:54):

I honestly can't answer that.

Bernard Wood (40:57):

Okay. What was your impression of Glynn Isaac?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (41:02):

Glynn Isaac?

Bernard Wood (41:04):

Yes.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (41:05):

Oh, he was a great person. I was very saddened to hear when he passed. We were good friends. And we'd sometimes sit next to each other in meetings and exchange commentary on the speakers. And I'd remember once he was sitting next to me and leaned over and whispered that the speaker, whoever it was, "could stand a few courses in logic."

Bernard Wood (41:44):

That, I can just about picture from Glynn. Yeah. So if you had the scientific equivalent of a fairy godfather or a fairy godmother, what would you like to know that we presently don't know?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (42:07):

What would I like to know? Well, it's a little obscure, but there are stone built structures in Dakhla and Kharga Oases that we don't have an exact date on, but they're probably MIS4. We would very much like to know who those people were, because they seem to have been only... Well, there's a little bit in Nile Valley, but, basically, they seem to have been very dedicated oasis-dwellers. And we have no skeletal evidence. In fact, we have no really good date, no direct dating evidence either. It's a very strange lithic unit with stone-built structures at about... well, as old as MIS4, which would be the oldest in Africa.

Bernard Wood (43:09):

Something that really impresses me is that you are an archeologist, but you spend more time talking about people than you do about artifacts.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (43:23):

Well, people, each artifact represents somebody doing something.

Bernard Wood (43:35):

Yes. But with respect, in my experience, it's not a universal characteristic. But it's interesting that that's the way you put it. When you were on the faculty at the University of Toronto, which were the parts of your job that you liked? And which were the parts of your job that you really didn't like?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (44:06):

Well, I didn't mind being an administrator. I'm okay at that. I liked the smaller graduate seminars where we could actually look at things or discuss them in detail. Although I often dismayed the undergraduate students by giving them thought problems to do. Which some of them did not like very much, thinking.

Bernard Wood (44:31):

Yes.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (44:32):

Something that you could actually have a pro and con answer to.

Bernard Wood (44:36):

Yes.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (44:37):

Something that you could actually have a pro and con answer to.

Bernard Wood (44:42):

Well, that's something that we're still struggling with these days that I don't think people are willing enough to think about alternative explanations other than the one that they seem wedded to.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (44:57):

True.

Bernard Wood (44:59):

So what did you do when you weren't working?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (45:09):

When I wasn't working? Well, I brought up a son.

Bernard Wood (45:15):

You brought up a son, and you had family, and he had children. But did you have any hobbies?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (45:27):

Oh, well, hobbies? My hobbies tend to be playing with my computer. Not games. I mean, just looking for interesting information, that kind of thing. And when I could, going fishing, we liked to go fishing.

Bernard Wood (45:51):

Really? And what did you fish for?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (45:54):

Well, we would drive up to the North Shore of Lake Superior and fish for salmon.

Bernard Wood (46:03):

Wow, good for you. Were they good to eat?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (46:10):

Oh, yes, sure. They're very good to eat.

Bernard Wood (46:13):

One other question is that if, for some reason, you had not been able to be an archeologist, what would you have done?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (46:29):

Well, what I wanted to be was a geologist at Wyoming. And the then head of department said the only way to do that was to marry one, which was kind of paradoxical because I did. But I then went to New Mexico where they weren't so narrow-minded, so I have an honors minor in geology, majored in anthropology, and an honors minor in geology.

Bernard Wood (47:00):

Okay. Well, let me ask the question again, if you had not been able to be an archeologist or a geologist, what might you have done?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (47:17):

My other minor was psychology, strangely enough. Which is kind of close to anthropology, I guess.

Bernard Wood (47:25):

Yes.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (47:26):

What would I have done? I don't know. I kind of got hooked on archeology when I was five years old. There was a book, a child's book by a very famous southwestern archeologist, which was called Little Rose of the Mesa, the book. And her name is totally out of my head, and I should know it. But, honestly, I read that as a child and I said, "That's what I'm going to do." And I never really got sidetracked very much. Then I found out about geology and Pleistocene archeology and that kind of thing later on.

Bernard Wood (48:22):

Before I ask you whether there is anything else you want to add, can I take you back to the Olduvai days? Can you give us your impressions of Louis Leakey and of Mary Leakey?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (48:30):

Well, Louis was a lot of fun. And he had this vast store of natural history, I think most of that died with him, so he could expound on that. And he did that in Nairobi, actually, at the

Coryndon Museum as it then was. We'd have lunch on the roof, and then he'd give us a little lecture on natural history. And that was very, very informative about all the ecology of all the different fauna and how their behavior interrelated and so on. So that was something I treasure yet, because sometimes I read things about animal behavior and I say, "That isn't true. I don't think that's quite true."

Bernard Wood (49:30):
And what about Mary?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (49:33):
Mary? Mary was a friend, and we certainly respected each other. Unfortunately, they invited me to dig at JK, in the year that I and my Danish assistant were doing that, Mary was really having trouble with menopause. There were a couple of unhappy incidents, one of which is nothing to do with me, but she always blamed me for the fact that one of her dalmatians got humped by Mike Mike's yellow dog. I was in camp that day. I was the only European in camp that day. Now I know who opened the door and let the dog out, but it sure wasn't me.

Bernard Wood (50:26):
Okay. Yes, I think anything to do with Dalmatians was a bit of a no-no?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (50:37):
Well, they were good dogs. Especially her old Victoria was a wonderful dog.

Bernard Wood (50:41):
Oh, no, I wasn't talking about the dogs, Mary had a very... the dogs were very much a big interest of hers?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (51:02):
Oh, well, she was a breeder.

Bernard Wood (51:05):
Yeah.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (51:07):
Which was another matter entirely. So, well, they were good dogs.

Bernard Wood (51:12):
Okay. And as far as archeology, did you see eye to eye about how to interpret the archeology?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (51:22):
Hardly. Well, if you read what Mary says about JK, she regards it as having Acheulean and developed Oldowan. As far as I'm concerned, it's all Oldowan, and the small tools are small tools made by Acheulean people.

Bernard Wood (51:50):

Okay. Can you explain that in a slightly different way? Mary suggesting that there was a mixture of industry?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (52:05):

The larger artifacts, the hand axes, she would regard as Acheulean. And the small quartzite things, cores and small tools and so on, she would regard us developed Oldowan. As far as I'm concerned, the Acheulean people made small tools and big tools, which is something we discovered at Isimila.

Bernard Wood (53:00):

Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (53:00):

Because I remember when Louis came to visit us at Isimila. He saw these small quartz artifacts, and he said, "Oh, you have a mixture of Acheulean and later stone age." And we said, "No, no, no, no, no. It's all Acheulean." And he didn't really believe us until he went back and started working at SHK, well in bed two, and started finding little quartz artifacts himself. And then he said, "Oh, yes, you're right. They're all Acheulean."

Bernard Wood (53:04):

And then, lastly, what was your impression of Desmond Clark?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (53:09):

Oh, Desmond was a great fun, but he's also a control freak. People don't like to acknowledge that, which is what came out when he began to fail, I'm afraid. And actually, people say there's some young men who are totally misunderstood. I withdrew with contribution, what I was writing for the last volume of Kalambo Falls, because I wanted Desmond to be able to publish. And I knew he could hear the angels singing. I just withdrew because it would've taken me... I was teaching full-time. It would've taken me another year or so to finish what I was doing. Now that stuff is handed off to, what's his name, [inaudible 00:54:18] that's working there now.

Bernard Wood (54:06):

Oh, yes, yes. Okay. Okay. So is there anything that you would like to say that we haven't already talked about?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (54:19):

I don't know. It was a very interesting time when there were very, very few of us working across the whole continent, and even fewer in North America. So it was a very interesting time of interaction between a very small group of people who were interested in things. But now there's so much more opportunity with all the DNA and the genetic tracing. And I don't think people are doing... They're using all sorts of new methods, for instance, to work on Acheulean, but they're still doing the same thing. They're comparing shapes. It hasn't

advanced much. There are a few people who are doing experimental archeology with Acheulean like Key. I read his papers. I've never met him, but I think he's doing great experimental work.

Bernard Wood (55:23):

Right. And so you think that, essentially, the methods may have changed but the questions haven't got more sophisticated?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (55:34):

That, unfortunately, I think is true. People are still more worried about morphology than they are about, "What did they do with these things?"

Bernard Wood (55:42):

Okay.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (55:43):

They say, "Oh, they can do all sorts of different things." Oh, yeah? I'm not sure they weren't playing games with them. For instance, there's one site at Kharga Oasis, which was an ancient lake, and in the lake beds are all sorts of scattered hand axes. That's it. That's all. Not cores, not flakes, hand axes. And the only way I can think of their... because they don't move very well, just washing in. So the only thing I can think of is they used them as skipping stones or something. They played games with them. Why not?

Bernard Wood (56:30):

Well, well, it's been an enormous pleasure to have this conversation with you. I want to thank you, and I want to thank your granddaughter. And, yeah, just good luck with the forthcoming publication.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (56:34):

That's fun. Yes.

Bernard Wood (56:35):

I want to thank you, and I want to thank your granddaughter. And yeah, just good luck with the forthcoming publication.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (56:47):

Well, there are several chapters in the forthcoming Pleistocene Handbook, if you know about that?

Bernard Wood (56:54):

No, I don't.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (56:56):

It's supposed to be out this month by Springer, the Handbook of Pleistocene Archeology of Africa.

Bernard Wood (57:03):

Really?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (57:04):

Several chapters there that have my name on them.

Bernard Wood (57:07):

Okay. And who is editing that?

Maxine R. Kleindienst (57:13):

David Rice is one, mainly, I think.

Bernard Wood (57:18):

Okay. Well, I look forward to reading them, and congratulations. And my hope is that the angels are not calling you for some time.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (57:34):

Well, thank you. Not you, either. Thank you.

Bernard Wood (57:39):

Thanks very much, Maxine.

Maxine R. Kleindienst (57:41):

Bye

Bernard Wood (57:42):

Bye-Bye.