

## **Margaret Hillman**

Submitted 6/17/2020

Spring 1986, Age 18

My mother and I went to see David Haas do a concert at a church in Rhode Island. We had met David prior to this at NPM chapter workshops, from when I was 14, and an NPM convention in Providence, RI. At the reception after, he invited us to go to the after party. We discussed the College of St Catherine, which he said he was affiliated with in some way and we exchanged information so he could tell me more about it. He told me he taught some classes there, but I have since been told this was not true. During the after party, he asked me to rub his shoulders, which I did. After the party, he walked us to our car. My mother was some distance ahead of us. He grabbed me and kissed me at some point. I didn't really have time to think about it. It was sudden and overwhelming.

A week or two later, he called me. We talked about the school, mostly, and he asked me to send a tape of me singing. After a few weeks and several more calls, he invited me to fly out to St Paul to see the school. He offered to pay for my flight, but I told him I would pay for that myself. He said he did not have guest space at his home, but would get me a hotel room. My mother was not overly happy with my taking the trip, but I was excited to go and learn more about the Liturgical Music program at the College of St Catherine. Overall, by the time I left, we both felt it was safe to do.

I flew out to St Paul from Massachusetts in April 1986. He picked me up at the airport. On the way to the school, we stopped at a bank, and he kissed me when he came back to the car. He took me on a tour of both St. Kate's and St. Thomas, including his office. We went out to dinner and he brought me to the hotel without incident.

The tour of St Kate's included introductions in the Music Department and Campus Ministry. He was very familiar with the entire campus and had welcome and access everywhere we went.

The next day, he had to go to a funeral and I was left on my own all day. When he returned, he seemed bothered that I had left the hotel. He brought "dinner" with him. Fast food of some sort. I remember brown bags and french fries. There was no table, so we ate on the bed.

After a while, he kissed me. When I resisted going further than that, he became angry, accusing me of leading him on and berating me. He said I was being childish and this is what adults expect in relationships. He continued kissing me, ignoring my objections, removing my clothing and his. He performed oral sex on me, and instructed me on how to do the same for him. Really, instructed is too mild a term. He physically straddled my face and demanded it. This is the part I have flashbacks

# INTO ACCOUNT

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS + ALLIES

## **Margaret Hillman**

Submitted 6/17/2020

Spring 1986, Age 18

about, this particularly terrifying and humiliating moment. This was my first sexual experience of any kind. I expressed some relief that he had not gone farther. There were points I believed he would and could not see that I could stop him. He seemed hurt and offended that I could think such a thing of him. How could I not? There was really no consideration of my boundaries or limits, certainly not my consent. He left after a while, returning the next day to bring me back to the airport.

When I returned home, I did not tell my mother what had happened. She was emotionally fragile and it would have been harmful to her. I did not feel I could tell my mentors or friends who were all so delighted that I was singled out as someone would be good for this school by him.

I did attend the college for two years, starting in 1987. Fortunately, I had met my husband by then and David was engaged to Jeanne Cotter. I was never alone with him again.

I have seen him from time to time over the years at conventions and occasionally attending a concert with my husband, but we have only spoken briefly. Sometimes he would greet me warmly, shouting out his hello from a distance. Other times, he would act as though he barely knew me, which I preferred.

How has it affected my life? I am very slow to trust. I spent months trying to chase my husband away because he was, in my mind, unbelievably kind, gentle, and respectful. I didn't know how to trust that. I am prone to occasional panic attacks. I jump at shadows. I can force myself to be brave, but be overcome with doubt and fear. Hyper vigilance is my way of being.

Raising my children, I taught my son to always be respectful of what a woman's boundaries are. I taught my younger child to never take abuse of any kind in a relationship, to keep safe.

This has affected my faith. I am so angry when I see that the church knew there were issues back around this time and still allowed him to continue. At the same time, I wake up in the middle of the night, head spinning with guilt for not coming forward sooner, or flashbacks.

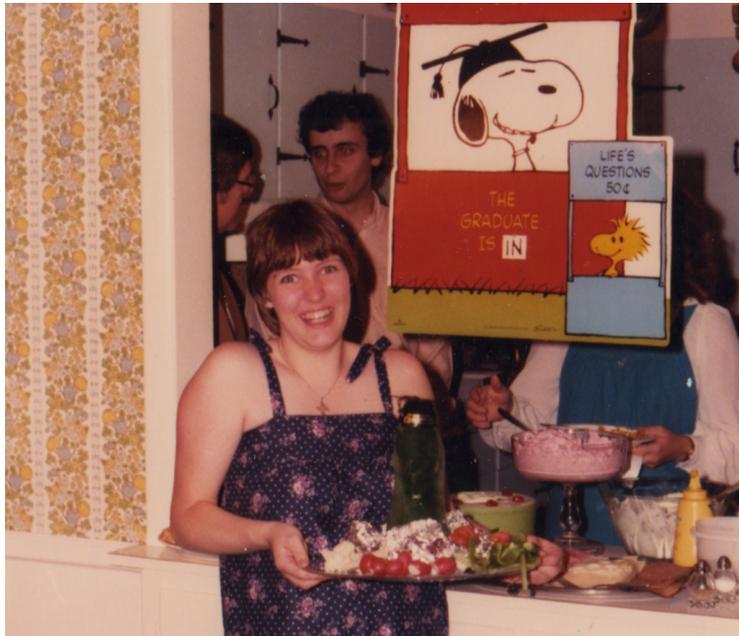
I am a cantor and his music is everywhere I turn. It is making it very hard to perform my ministry right now.

visit us  

# INTO ACCOUNT

SUPPORT FOR SURVIVORS + ALLIES

**Margaret Hillman**  
Submitted 6/17/2020  
Spring 1986, Age 18



Hey - Out of all the  
Guys I know &  
love, for some reason  
who hold a special  
place with me. So  
often I wish that  
you were older or  
I was younger, because  
you mean a lot to me  
I hope that I  
never lose  
track of you. I  
love you - Stay my  
friend - David

visit us  