

Gerald J.T. Runkle, Dean and Professor of Philosophy
Transcript of Interview for History of SIUE 50th Anniversary Project
Interviewed by Ellen Nordhouser
April 14, 2006

Ellen Nore [EN]: This is Ellen Nore. It's April 14th, 2006. I'm interviewing Professor Gerald Runkle for the History of SIUE. [Recording stops] I I sent you some questions.

Gerald Runkle [GR]: Yeah. I got them.

EN: The first one was, I think, how you happened to come to SIUE and why you stayed after you became a notable scholar and teacher.

GR: Oh, [GR laughs] are we on tape now?

EN: Yes.

GR: Well, thanks for the "notable scholar" business. But um, I came to ah, SIU because that was the only job offered to me. I was at Doane College [Nebraska] and had gone about as far as I could there, as far as pay and promotion is concerned. And uh, I also felt in a remote location, out on the prairies of Nebraska, so when, ah, SIU contacted me, I jumped at the opportunity, and I never regretted the decision.

EN: And this was in 19?

GR: 1959.

EN: 1959. Were you contacted by Harold See or by?

GR: By uh, Dee Lovell.

EN: Oh. Okay.

GR: Who had been my colleague at The University of Georgia. He recommended me to, I guess, to Jim Turner at East St. Louis. So, the call came out.

EN: And did you come for an interview, or did you just get, over the phone, get a job offer?

GR: I don't remember. I really don't remember. I would think that they would. Would have had the money to bring me out for an interview, but I'm not sure.

EN: Okay.

GR: Maybe not, though. Ah, Maybe Dee was so convincing that they figured that they didn't have to interview me, and I was so desperate to get out of Nebraska. [EN laughs] I I'm inclined to think that, had I come out for an interview, I'd have turned down the job. Because, uh, the

place of operation was the dingiest comer of the dingiest city in Illinois, [EN laughs] East St. Louis. Oh, it was, it was a disaster area, and had I seen my future office, which was one end of a cloakroom [EN laughs] in an abandoned junior high school, I might have thought twice. The lonely prairies of Nebraska might have looked pretty good to me. [EN laughs] But once I got out here, I was very glad. I stayed, and I liked my colleagues very much, and I liked the Administration. I always felt I was treated fairly by them. I loved the new Campus. And so, I made the right move. I stayed for 30 years, so that indicates something.

EN: Mhm-hmm. Yes. Did you, um, where? Did you live in Collinsville, or East St. Louis, or in Alton when you came here?

GR: Yes.

EN: All of them? [EN laughs]

GR: You said A, B, or C, yes to A and B. Actually, I lived in uh. [EN laughs] I was just making a joke. [EN laughs] Ah, we lived in Belleville the first year, in an apartment. And then, ah, then the second year, we bought a house in Collinsville. In the fifth year or so, we bought a house in Edwardsville.

EN: Mhm-hmm. Just when they were building the new campus.

GR: Oh, that was exciting.

EN: You moved to Edwardsville.

GR: You know, thinking about those days, we all lived on hope. Because there was nothing there to appeal to us. So, we lived in the hope of a new Campus. There was no money for a new Campus, so we had to pass the bond issue. And I gave five or six pieces a week on behalf of the bond issue. But, we all felt, even during the darkest days, that we were on a mission of some kind like we were bringing light or soap to the unwashed because there was an area that really needed a university.

EN: Yes.

GR: And the enthusiasm that I experienced and my colleagues too during the first years in East St. Louis was never duplicated. We thought we were really making a difference. Here were people who had never seen a college! Whose parents had never seen a college! Here it was offered to them! Then with the final building of the uh, of the uh campus... Why are you taking notes? Isn't this on tape?

EN: I always take a few notes.

GR: Oh.

EN: Yes. It's on tape, but I always take a few notes.

GR: Okay. Be my guest.

EN: Okay. [EN laughs]

GR: What were we talking about?

EN: You were talking about East St. Louis and how you felt as a whole and how excited people were to have a college there.

GR: Oh yeah! It was hotter, hotter than the dickens in that closet. Except in winter, it was without heat. [EN laughs] But, I never heard anyone complain. I can't remember anyone complaining, ah, and that was partly due to our leadership, Harold See and Jim Turner. There was an esprit de corps. I guess there was that experience in Alton as well, but we certainly had it in East St. Louis.

EN: What, what kind of groups did you speak to [when you were promoting the bond issue in the fall of 1959]?

GR: Kiwanis, Lions, Democratic Club, Republican Club, um, the Bar Keepers Association [EN laughs], the Library Association. Some of the places that ah, I went to were pretty fearful. East St. Louis—some of its clubs were well, it was, it was uh, an education. I- We all had a canned speech, and, uh, it was always good to have something funny in the speech. And I tried to think of something funny. What I used with moderate success was the story about the guy traveling down the road. And ah, in front of him was a truck. Every five minutes or so, the truck would stop, and the guy would get out of the car and bang on the side with a big broom. That would go on; about ten minutes had passed. Finally, the driver asked the truck man, "What do you do that for?" He said, "Well, this is a one-ton truck. I have two tons of chickens, and I have to keep half of them in the air at all times." [EN laughs] The point was that we had no classroom space, we had nothing! But we had all these students were clamoring for an education, so we had to knock 'em around to keep half of them in the air at all times.

EN: Do you? Did you know Harold See?

GR: Oh, yes. Harold See was a man with ah, with charisma. Part of our esprit de corps, I think, was due to his leadership. He was a guy you could talk to. He was a guy who was square with you, and he had this uh, he had this uh, great idea of a university in southwestern Illinois. I was thinking of that, ah, Robert Kennedy quote. Ah, if I can remember it. He really lifted it from George Bernard Shaw, ah, "Some people look at the past and ask, 'Why?' I look to the future and ask, 'Why not?'" That characterizes Harold See. I've probably garbled the quotation; do you know the quote?

EN: That sounds perfectly right to me.

Norman Nordhauser [NN]: Sounds good to me.

EN: Yes.

GR: He was always busy, always zooming, zooming around from East St. Louis to Edwardsville to Alton. He had a telephone in his car!

EN: Oh.

GR: In 1959, boy, that was something! This man not only has, uses a University car, he has a telephone in it! And he had to have a telephone because he was hard hard to pin down. He was usually on the road, so that was the place he could accept his telephone calls.

EN: Well did you feel you were part of this generation that had come out of World War II and was going to change the world?

GR: Yeah. Yeah.

EN: Did you have a feeling like that about the country...

GR: I think so, Ellen. I think that it was that. Most of us who were veterans and, uh, this was 1959. We weren't just back out of the Army, but uh, I think we saw uh, I think we saw a...we had gotten a free education.

EN: Yes. I know.

GR: And we knew how important it was to us.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: And what a boon the G.I. Bill was. And ah, in effect, we were bringing a civilian form of the G.I. Bill to Southwestern Illinois. That's a good point. I never thought of it, but that's, that's the way it was.

EN: And you? Who, among your colleagues in East St. Louis, do you most remember? I know Rob.

GR: You mean present company excluded?

NN: Yes.

EN: We were. Yes.

GR: East St. Louis or the whole 30 years?

EN: The whole 30 years is fine if you want to do that.

GR: Well, in East St. Louis of course, I remember Dee [Lovell], who brought me there, and Jim Turner who was in charge of things. And uh [Robert] Erickson, who came the same year I did, um, they were the. And Leo Cohen, also the same year. Now that was the East St. Louis group.

We were pretty close. Um, uh, Alan McCurry came a year later. Um, and then, a colleague that I really, uh really admired and who did a lot for the Humanities Division, or school as it came to be called, and also for the Department of Philosophy was ah, Bill Linden.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: He was a wonderful teacher, terrific administrator, and uh, just a wonderful guy to work with. But in mentioning him and the others, I don't wanna, I should have never started that because it's like getting the Academy Awards, thanking everyone, you always forget somebody. I think, ah, Art Stahnke was a part of that ear...was involved in that East St. Louis group too. I remember him as the, as the eh, kid on the block. We'd be playing bridge in the, in the, uh, Cafeteria, and he would ah, kind of kibbitz. He'd look over our shoulder but didn't really have enough confidence to join in the game yet.

EN: Well, during the time when Delyte Morris was President and he was trying to have "one university" amalgamated, of Carbondale, East St. Louis and Alton, and then of Carbondale and Edwardsville, you were very much ah, involved in leadership of the Faculty.

GR: Yes. I was on the Faculty Council, the University Council, and every other damned Council.

EN: Yes. [NN laughs in background]

GR: And uh, you're right. Delyte Morris talked about "one university." He disliked the idea of Southwestern Illinois Campus, which some people tried to use. It took him years to arrive at the idea of a separate University at Edwardsville on a par with that in Carbondale. He was afraid that his ah, his power would be diminished somehow, so he had to keep everything everything close. Ah, so in pursuit of his idea of "one university," we had these endless meetings, these long, dreary trips to Carbondale, [EN laughs] and they had long dreary trips to Edwardsville, or East St. Louis, or Alton or wherever it was. Ah, I must say, I did not like Delyte Morris. He was a man, a timorous man, who hated to delegate power, who postpone -procrastinated everything, ah, and who was utterly lacking in a sense of humor. [EN laughs] He and [Harold] See—I think he, ah, got uh, he became afraid of See because See was becoming too popular with the townspeople, with the faculty, and with the students. And when he fired See, See didn't teach a single class, yet students were out there demonstrating and marching with signs like, "Morris can't see See, and we can't see Morris." [EN and NN both laugh] Someone got the brilliant idea that, instead of burning up all this rubber going back and forth to Carbondale, that we'd meet in a central place.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: And I forget the name of the town, Marissa...

EN: Marissa. I think it was.

GR: There was a restaurant called Or's Restaurant. I remember someone saying to Morris, "We meeting at the Or House again next week?" [EN, NN, and GR all laugh] He didn't bat an eye.

EN: Well, did your? Were you always interested in anarchism? Or or was your interest in...

GR: No, I wrote this long, and I'm using the word, "dreary", a lot. But I wrote this long, dreary book on political theory, which dealt with ideas of what was the best form of government. Then when it was all through, ah, I thought, you know, "I've assumed that government at all was desirable. What about the, a society with no government? How about taking individual liberty that this country is built on to its limit, to its ultimate, as Thomas Paine did, and say that the best society, a government is one, the government that governs the least and the best society would be one with no government at all." So um, I had a brief flirtation with anarchism. Unfortunately, I had to reject it. [NN laughs] But I still have a, I still gave a distrust of government, and uh, I still tend to believe that people who need to exercise power over others have something missing in their own]makeup. The idea of dominating others, or leading others, of dictating to others, is still, as [Edward Estlin] E.E. Cummings would say, to change it, "Is a lot of crap, up with which I will not put." [EN laughs]

EN: Uh, I know, well, a couple of years ago I had a student who wrote a senior thesis on Anarchism, which was quite thoroughly plagiarized from your book.

GR: Oh, really.

EN: So, you know you're still having influence...

GR: I hope you weren't too hard on him.

EN: The sincerest form of flattery.

GR: Pardon.

EN: No, I wasn't too hard on him. No. After I saw the first draft, I did explain to him that he had to acknowledge his source. Fortunately, I was able to go just right around the corner, I was reading it and said well this doesn't quite sound like what this student might write, and I went around the corner to the Philosophy [Department] Library. And plucked your book off the shelf and opened it up and there... [EN, GR and NN all laugh]

GR: And there was Kropotkin!

EN: Yes! Right. I just wondered if you were inspired by events of the, of the decade of the 1960s and early 1970s?

GR: Well, in a way I was. Ah, because the name of the book is *Anarchism: Old and New*.

EN: Yes.

GR: And the old was the kind of traditional, well-known anarchism, which had some contemporary followers. But the new, I looked at the so-called anarchism of the student left, the so-called anarchism of existentialism, and the so-called anarchism of the radical right. And ah,

this was right form, this what I meant by the “new anarchism,” which I finally decided was not really anarchism at all. But, it’s strange that some very democratic people were anarchists, and ah, some very undemocratic people were anarchists. There are all kinds of anarchism. And, ah, I tried to show the various kinds. But, getting back to Morris.

EN: Yes.

GR: I don’t know you may have too much on Morris anyway.

EN: No. I don’t have.

GR: Most of which you can’t use anyway [NN laughs] but uh, Morris is given a great deal of credit, and, ah, I would give him some credit for building a university out there. They say that he had a certain “in” with the Legislature, that he could be quite persuasive. But there were a great many citizens there in that two-county area who bought that land...

EN: Yes.

GR: ...and begged someone to build a university on it. And the enthusiasm of the faculty and Administration it, was such that we often felt that Morris was impeding us, [EN laughs] that he was delaying us. “Why not now? Why not now?” “Well, let’s, let’s think it over a while.” I have many Morris anecdotes, but I’ll just give you one. Which I don’t suppose you’ll use. We were building, chiefly through Bill Linden, building up the biggest Department, biggest Philosophy Department in the State. [EN laughs] And I thought we ought to have a Communist. I thought we ought to have a Catholic and other weird types. And ah, so, I was reading about the strike at St. John’s University. And I can’t remember the name of the priest who led that strike. I said, I said to Bill, “That’s the man for us!” So, we contacted him. He was a Thomas Aquinas Scholar.

EN: Yes.

GR: Educated at uh, oh, what’s the fine University in Canada. Catholic University. La...La...La - Laval University. And so, we offered him a job and sent it through. Morris didn’t want to send it on. [EN laughs] And I said, “Well, we want him. If you don’t, then it stops there.” And then, he called, and I was in his office, he called ah, the Bishop at Chicago in Laval, about this guy. And Morris kept waiting for me to withdraw the nomination. He said, “I can’t get this man through the Board of Trustees.” And I said, “Well, then let them reject it, or you reject it, but I, on behalf of the School of Humanities cannot reject him!” And he just did not have the guts to say, “All right, that’s your view, but I don’t want him. No!” He just pussy-footed around for two hours! Until finally he said, “Well, send it through. We’ll see what happens.” What happened was that it never went past his desk.

EN: Oh. Uh-huh.

GR: Wouldn’t that have been great, to have a Catholic.

EN: Yes.

GR: Strike leader on the faculty?

EN: Yes. It would have been.

GR: But enough of Morris.

EN: Enough of him?

GR: Yeah. Although, I oh...

EN: No, go ahead.

GR: We'll move on to something else.

EN: Well, I had asked you, what was the differ...

GR: Well why didn't

EN: No, go ahead.

GR: Well, no let's go onto something else.

EN: No.

GR: One more Morris story?

EN: Yeah, one more Morris story. [GR laughs] Because don't have enough of him really from our faculty. Very few. [Long pause]

GR: Well, I'll just mention that he permitted the Library to be named after him, [EN laughs] which I thought was wrong. And in the self-aggrandizement of the man finally led to his undoing, as you know.

EN: Mhm.

GR: Well, I was on the Carbondale Campus many times and talked with many of the uh, old stand-by's there. And ah, one of them looked at me very seriously, and said, "No one bucks the Old Man." [EN and NN laugh] He was 50-45 years old. I wish I was a young man.

EN: Thank you!

GR: I wish I was a young man, old man like, "No one bucks the old man." It was true. He had 'em buffaloed.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

NN: Did you ever go down there on the famous air force?

GR: Oh yeah. [EN laughs] Sure. I got air-sick. Here, I fly a lot myself.

NN: Oh, that's right.

GR: But I got airsick on the plane.

NN: Oh, jez. [EN and NN both laugh]

GR: I only went once or twice. By the time you drove up to Alton, waited for the plane, got on the plane, and then drove into the campus. Did you ride it?

NN: No. No. I just heard about it. From everybody, the, the fleet. [NN laughs]

EN: Do you remember moving into your office into the new buildings in 1965.

GR: Yes, and it turned out that the Humanities Division moved into Peck and into the basement. [EN Laughs].

EN: Oh!

GR: To the dismay of most of us. [EN and NN both laugh] And, we had to tell them, "Well, Humanities has always been the foundation for higher education. [EN and NN both laugh] Live with it!" Well, my office eventually was on the third floor, but when we first moved in, it was in the basement.

NN: Suppose science was there too.

GR: Pardon?

NN: Science was there too and the other, or did they have their own building?

GR: Well, no. We had the, ah. Science eventually got its own building.

NN: Yeah.

GR: But it was mostly Social Science and Humanities.

EN: Did you like [Gyo] Obata's design?

GR: Oh, yeah. I loved the Campus. Very much.

EN: I know Bill Linden wrote an essay that was very critical of the buildings.

GR: Uh-huh.

EN: And.

GR: Well, we we disagreed on that. [Long Pause.]

EN: Well I.

GR: We traveled a lot, with the, ah, Harold See was not the only one who had to get a car. Something just occurred to me. There was a guy named Knopefel. I can't remember his first name.

EN: Yeah.

GR: He would often get a car in East St. Louis to teach a class in Alton. And the Division Head was a jack-ass named Nicholas Joost. [Laughter] Joost chewed him out for not filling out the form correctly.

EN: Oh.

GR: "You've got to fill in where it says 'time you parked.' You've got to fill in all these blanks." So, the next time Knopefel took a car, he took the car, and at the bottom, he filled out everything. At the bottom of the form, it said "Remarks," and he wrote, "Today, I saw a bluebird." [EN and NN laugh]

NN: Oh, jeez. [GR and NN laugh]

EN: Were you the first Chair of Philosophy?

GR: Ah, there was a man named Shay here when I came. Ah, and there were two of us. I don't know whether they called me "Chairman" or not. It would have been pretty silly, with just two, to call me "Chairman".

EN: Two people...

GR: I don't remember. Joost eventually fired him, and I thought Shay was a pretty good man. Joost and I did not get along. Joost ah, was Edwardsville's version of Delyte Morris. When I said I really liked my Administration, I did, uh [Robert] MacVicar and [John] Rendleman and Bruce Thomas, and ah, Jim Brown and ah. All those people I liked very much, but I did not get along with Nicholas Joost. Uh, what was I gonna say about Joost...aye.

EN: You said he was Edwardsville's version of Delyte Morris.

GR: Yeah. Oh, yeah. I remember I was coming up for tenure, and uh Joost called me in. He said, "I've really gone around this, over in my head, upside and around and around. I didn't know what to do because, you know, I don't care for you at all, Runkle." [EN and NN laugh]

EN: Oh, dear.

GR: At least, he was frank enough. He said, "So, I went to ah, I went to church." what, what Catholics go to, confession or something, and ah, "And I searched my soul and finally realized that, in spite of everything, you did barely," I think he said.

EN: Barely! [EN and NN laugh]

GR: "Deserve tenure." I said, "Thanks a lot." [EN laughs] But, you know, I kind of wish that he'd turned me down.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: Because then, I would have had him! [EN laughs] Because I flattered myself that I deserved tenure, and everyone realized that.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: He would have stubbed his toe badly if he had turned me down.

EN: Yes. He probably would have.

GR: So, he was the first, he was in charge of Humanities, and then ah, his failure to leader. His failure in leadership became clear to everyone and he was fired, and I took his place.

EN: Yeah. Okay.

GR: William Going was responsible for that. He was another administrator that I liked.

EN: Yes.

GR: Obviously, he chose me over Joost. [EN laughs]

EN: It must have been a heavy cup for Joost to drink, to have you follow him in that position. It must have been. He must have regretted it.

GR: It was fun! [EN and NN laugh] We we had a lot of fun. One of your questions was things that I remember about the development of the University. We developed Working Papers, and we took the leadership in that. We developed collegiality. We established standards for promotion, standards for tenure, standards for raises, standards for travel. Ah, and we grew, and I enjoyed every minute of it. And then later on when some of the, I don't know how long I was Dean. It was according to our working papers, you held the office for three years, and then, there was a vote of a, ah, confidence vote.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: And if you passed the vote, you'd serve another three years. I think I served four terms. But I'm not sure. After four terms, I wanted to get out. Because the job had turned out to be quite

different from what it had been originally. It was a matter of making reports, justifying this , and justifying that. Instead of looking to the future and dreaming of the future, we were, we had to ah, look at the past and ah, and ah reassert the past and summarize the past and quantify the past [EN laughs] and fit it into various ah, categories that I guess was, were necessary for the bureaucratic structure that the University was. We were responsible. It was responsible to the legislature and so forth and had to make all these surveys, but I got tired of it. That's when I quit.

EN: And this was the mid-'70s. Mid-1970s. About 1975, or '76.

GR: Oh, let's see.

EN: I don't remember.

GR: I don't remember either. But...

EN: That's all right. I have it in my notes.

GR: I became Dean perhaps in let's see '59, '64, I think around '64...twelve..., yeah, you're right Ellen. Take me into the late '70s as Dean.

EN: And then Carole Keene followed you.

GR: Yeah.

EN: Yes.

GR: Well, actually Dale, Dale Bailey followed me.

EN: Oh, okay.

GR: And I thought he was a fine fellow, but the faculty didn't care much for him, and then, ah, Carol [Keene] followed him.

EN: Okay.

GR: She was a very popular Dean.

EN: Mhm-hmm. Did you know John Rendleman? Was he a friend of yours? Ah, did you?

GR: Oh, no, I wouldn't say he was a friend of mine. I, ah, If I had a, infrequently, I'd have parties and I'd invite him over, and he came and got drunk but, [EN and NN laugh] ah, and we mingled in various University affairs but ah, I played golf with him once, but I wouldn't say I was a friend of his.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: But I liked him and respected him. That was one of the important things in the development of the campus. We not only got a campus, but we also got a President who could hold his own with the, whoever they had at Carbondale.

EN: Mhm.

GR: When we moved to the new campus, we united the Alton and the East St. Louis people. But then, when we got to the campus, instead of uniting with the Carbondale people, we separated and went our glorious way.

EN: Yes.

GR: And Rendleman was uh, Rendleman was a very good leader. I was very comfortable in having him speak for our campus. [Pause.]

EN: I guess I asked you about the difference between being a Chair and being a Dean.

GR: Well, ah.

EN: But that doesn't seem very relevant.

GR: They're two different jobs, of course. I always continued to teach, and I continued to study, while I was a Dean. So, I never felt that I, I think that I think Dean is uh, I looked on it as a part-time job. And.

EN: You never felt, as they say, that you had "gone into administration."

GR: No. Not really.

EN: As though down a black hole.

GR: And when I resigned, I refused to use the term, "step down." [EN laughs] That always griped me when guys would say they were, "Stepping down." "You mean, you're 'stepping up,' don't you?" I think the Administration is something a lot of people can benefit from, and a lot of people can do well, but ah, for me, it was not my cup of tea as a permanent thing. I know some people, uh, who are just made for administrators. This is something that they could do and make a career out of it. I couldn't do that, but I think Rendleman was a case. And I'll tell you another guy who was a terrific administrator but who did not stay with it was Bob Erickson. I don't know if you remember when he was Division Head? He was a damned good Division Head. But, he thought he should be a scholar, and so he [smiles] "stepped down." And he would have-I wish he would have stayed in Administration.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: This ah, this is something they could do and make a career out of. I couldn't. I think Rendlemen was that case. And I'll tell you another guy who was a terrific, ah, administrator. But

who did not stay with it. Bob Erickson. I don't know if you remember when he was division head?

NN: It's before my time.

GR: Well, he was a damn good division head. But he thought he should be a scholar. And so he ah, "stepped down." [GR and EN laugh] And I he would have. I wish he would have staid in Administration. He was a very good teacher, but he was an very, he was an exceptional administrator. He wasn't, wasn't, wasn't a scholar at all. I don't think Rendleman was a scholar either. But, those two people could could run things. They could appeal and command the respect and devotion of their people.

NN: Well he's [Erickson's] the guy who hired me so.

GR: Pardon?

NN: Erickson's the guy who hired me so that you know.

GR: Well, no one's perfect. [EN and GR laugh]

EN: Well, after John Rendle... John Rendleman died in March 1976. And then we had Kenneth Shaw for a brief period.

GR: Then, we had [Andrew] Kochman.

EN: Yes, we had Kochman. He was the Acting President.

GR: Yeah. And Kochman was dismayed that he was not offered the presidency.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: Really dismayed. Then, we, who did we get?

EN: Kenneth Shaw.

NN: Buzz Shaw.

GR: Huh?

EN: Kenneth Shaw. Buzz Shaw.

GR: Oh! Oh! [EN and NN laugh] Yeah. He was an overnight wonder.

EN: And then, and then, for a very long period, we had Earl Lazerson. I think that was the time. That was the period you retired during his Administration.

GR: I, well I I got along fine with all those people. I don't know much about their, about the presidencies. But I got along with them fine. Only Joost and Morris [EN laughs].

EN: I know that um, um, Professor [William] Going told me that he, he.

GR: Oh, you talked to Going!

EN: Yes, a very very long time ago.

GR: Very, ah, I bet that was a very useful interview.

EN: It was. He has lots of stories about things.

GR: Oh, he was a good man. He was an administrator and a scholar.

EN: Yes. Uh-huh. He's still, He's going to uh. This woman in the the English Department is writing a book on Harper Lee, and he's writing an introduction for it right now. He's still, he's still writing some things. But, but he didn't like [Robert] MacVicar.

GR: Oh, he didn't like MacVicar?

EN: No, he told me that's why he left.

GR: Oh.

EN: That's why he stepped down from Dean of Faculty was because of MacVicar. And you mentioned MacVicar as one of the people that you really liked.

GR: Yeah, but I didn't know MacVicar very well. Maybe I didn't know him well enough to dislike him.

EN: Okay.

GR: He wasn't there very long.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: I remember Going, and telling me that he was stepping aside from the Dean's office. And he asked me to provide him with an office in Peck. [EN laughs] And he didn't tell me why. Why didn't he like MacVicar?

EN: Well, he just said, he felt he was a crude man.

GR: Well, gee, he probably thought I was a crude man. [NN laughs]

EN: No. [EN laughs] I think he, he, I don't know, he seemed to feel as if he didn't have um, he didn't have the right qualities to lead. That's what he said.

GR: Well, that's pretty vague but, he's gotta call 'em as he sees 'em.

EN: Yeah. And then he was very fond of Charles Tenney. This man from, who was at Carbondale later became.

GR: Yeah he was uh Tenney's right-hand man, he was the guy who tried to get Tenney to clear his desk, but McVicker, gee what [snaps] That means I need another beer. [EN and NN both laugh] He tried to get Morris to clear his desk. Tenney was, I liked Tenney, I liked Tenney very much. He had everything that, uh, Morris thought he was bad. Tenney I thought he was good. He was very, very easy-going, easy to get along with.

EN: Well, um, from your own vantage point, what would you say were major developments in the history of the University?

GR: Oh, gee. I don't know.

EN: I think I asked you that.

GR: The new campus, of course, was very important.

EN: Yes, the new campus.

GR: And, the ascendancy of Rendleman was very important.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: I think also important was the way the, uh, University handled itself during the student riots.

EN: Yes, I'd like to hear more about that.

GR: Ah, we lost some classroom time. There were teach-ins and sit-ins and so forth. We lost some classroom time, but they never closed the University. Ah, the students, in view of the pressures, I think, handled themselves very well, and the faculty, I thought, handled themselves very well, and MacVicar too! Er' not MacVicar...[Snaps] Rendleman too. He knew just how far to indulge them and when to threaten them with the, with the law. We we weathered that much better than Carbondale did. You know what happened in Carbondale.

EN: Yes.

GR: I think that, in a way, the University came of age in that period. We realized that we were not isolated from the world, that we had something to say about contemporary matters, that a certain, ah, indulgence, a certain tolerance was necessary on our part, ah, and we let the voices be

heard, even though we often disagreed with them. Some of those Black Power things scared the hell out of me, [EN laughs] but we let 'em. Let them be heard.

EN: Uh-huh. Did you know [the poet], Eugene Redmond, when he was a student at SIU?

GR: Who?

EN: Eugene Redmond, he was a poet.

GR: Oh, yes. He was a. I knew Gene. I knew him in East St. Louis.

EN: Yes, he was from, he is from East St Louis.

GR: And he was one of the bright Black kids that were attracted to the University.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: I never dreamed that he would ever, ever be a member of the faculty because he just didn't seem to have the gravitas that we expected in a faculty member like Hummer [Norman Nordhauser] and me. He was a, he was a very, he was a very, he was a very happy-go-lucky guy, a very [snap] careless guy, and uh not very concerned about his classes or about making a grade, a grade but he turned out to be quite a poet, I guess. I knew Eugene. I liked him.

NN: He has a lot of gravitas now.

EN: A lot. A lot. He brings these poets, really famous poets, from everywhere, to the campus.

GR: Oh really?

EN: Yes. He's pretty. And he, um, well as a graduate student at Washington University, I think he started by winning their poetry contest his first year there.

GR: Mhm-hmm.

EN: Anyway, I was just wondering if you knew him. I haven't interviewed him yet. But hoping to at some point.

EN: Do you remember any other students that you had? Or anything about students?

GR: Bruce Cook was a very ah, good political theory student who became a very successful lawyer. He was from East St. Louis.

EN: Uh-huh.

GR: And uh, I remember a girl who was from Belleville I believe, who finally took a very high job in Belleville Junior College [Belleville Area College, BAC - became Southwestern Illinois

College, SWIC in 20001] at a very high level, I can't ah, Rita! Rita something-or-other. And, of course, um, [snaps] the Black fellow um, from East St. Louis, [Edward] Hudlin. Ed Hudlin.

EN and NN: Hudlin.

GR: He took many of my courses.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: And he played, um, they put on a play. *Othello*. And Hudman played the part of Iago. [EN and NN laugh]. And, uh, Don Taylor's daughter, whose name eludes me, uh, Desdemona.

NN: Oh.

GR: Pretty good play. We had a lot of interesting people come to East St. Louis. Speaking of the student left, we also had the, in the very worst days, we had the guts to invite Jane Fonda to come and make a speech. [EN and NN laugh] It wasn't a bad speech. Were you there for that?

NN: I don't remember that. I should.

EN: Maybe it was when you were in, when we were in California on a..

NN: I was on leave for one year.

EN: It was '72, and that was the year I think she went to.

GR: In the Philosophy Department, I think a person who dealt most successfully with the student radicals were, ah, Charles Corr, among others. I better not name 'em, or I'll skip somebody. I know Corr. He did yeoman service in holding things together.

EN: Hmn. That's interesting. Yeah. Well how, how has Philosophy changed since you became a philosopher? You see.

GR: I'm not sure. I'm not sure I was a philosopher.

EN: Oh.

GR: Ah, a philosopher is someone who, by definition, loves wisdom, and I guess I loved wisdom. Uh, there are other people who study philosophers, but that doesn't mean that they love wisdom. So, I would call myself a philosophizer [EN laughs], which is a study of the love of wisdom.

EN: Okay.

GR: Um. [Recording stops] I began to lose interest in it. In fact, much of my writing was in politics rather than in philosophy.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: I I, this modern, modern Ordinary Language Analysis. You'd write 30 pages to explain what one term meant. [EN laughs] Then, the other side of it was Logical Positivism, or Logical Empiricism, where nothing could be said that was not either uh, it was either analytic or synthetic. [EN laughs] If it was analytic, it was either true or false by definition. A self-contradiction would be false by definition. A tautology would be true by definition. That was a meaningful statement. The other kind of statement, the synthetic statement, which could possibly be false, true, or false. According to these logical empiricists, ah, it had to be ah, it had to be an empirical statement. Intuitive statements, theoretical work, metaphysical work, epistemological work, even the whole field of ethics, as a normative science, all these were excluded. The logical positivists would say, "What do you mean?" So, you'd have to identify your statement as synthetic or analytic, empirical or, and their second statement was, "How do you know?" Then, some people got the smart idea when they were asked, "What do you mean?" They would come back with "What do you mean by 'mean'?" [EN and NN laugh] So, this led to another whole several stores of vapid philosophizing on language. Ogden Richards wrote a book, *The Meaning of Meaning*. The first review of it was "The Meaning of the Meaning of Meaning." [NN and EN laugh] So, you could see there was no end to it.

NN: President Clinton used that at some point, didn't he, about, "Is"?

GR: He had a he had a notion. He knew that words were ambiguous. [EN laughs] But, of course, you know that that's not true. Words are not ambiguous. They are ambiguous in this or that context. That's Chapter 4.

NN: Right [EN laughs]. I was, I'm curious, if I may throw in a question.

NN: Yes. About the growth of the Philosophy Department.

EN: That's what I was.

NN: That's an amazing achievement.

EN: Yes.

GR: Well, you can give most of the credit to ah, to Bill Linden. I was urging him on, of course, but Bill did the work. He found the guys and he justified the positions.

NN: Now that, that's quite an accomplishment

GR: At one time, I don't know what they have now. There were 22 full-time Philosophy positions.

EN: I think there are 16 or 17 now. But it's still.

NN: It's still a large.

EN: It's still the largest Department [of Philosophy] outside the University of Illinois. In the state of Illinois.

GR: It is. Well, we were out to beat Illinois, but I guess we didn't do it in any lasting way.

NN: Well maybe the times were on your side this has been quite...

GR: It's a very simple matter. The only reason we could do it was because we made a Philosophy course a requirement in various disciplines. These were not all elective students filling those holes.

EN: Yes. You had Critical Thinking, and Business Ethics and Engineering Ethics, Nursing Ethics...

GR: Nurses had to take Ethics too. My daughter had to take ethics.

NN: Was there quite a fight over that? Or was that not resisted at all?

GR: No. No. The nurses wanted it, and we gave it to them. I don't even think we did any politicking, although when we were asked to discuss it with them, of course, we put our best philosophic foot forward.

EN: I think that, in introducing Interdisciplinary Courses, that Philosophy created a niche for itself, made itself indispensable too, in the middle '70s here.

GR: Yeah. And for some of the majors uh, American Studies uh, we handled the black problem by having Black Studies as a specialty then American Studies. And then Women's Studies, I developed a course, called The Philosophy of Women, which ah, dealt with the various philosophical conceptions of women from Plato on. And uh, I taught that, and Shelia Ruth audited that course, and after that, it was her course. [EN laughs] And that was the basis for the Women's Studies Program.

EN: That's interesting. Hmn.

GR: Well, I liked the idea of having a major concentration composed of contributions from several disciplines.

EN: I think we are coming back to that now, to more interdisciplinary majors. They're gonna bring back American Studies.

GR: Oh, I didn't know it was gone.

EN: It was abolished.

NN: It eventually faded.

EN: It was abolished. Now I think it's coming back.

GR: I think journalism is another thing that could be interdisciplinary. I don't know if they have a journalism program anymore; we had a half of one.

NN: Mass communications.

EN: We have mass communications. And most of the students wanna be newscasters or Sportscasters or DJs.

GR: They don't wanna work for the Edwardsville Intelligencer.

EN: No. [EN laughs] Well. Do you have any any final thoughts on the University.

GR: Well, I have some.

EN: Or some extra thoughts?

GR: amusing recollections.

EN: Yes, I'd like to hear them.

GR: Well, you might remember this, Norman [Nordhauser]. Don Taylor had a woman who was majoring in Sociology. Her name was Hester, Hester Penny, I think. And she was middle-aged, a rather dimwitted woman, [EN laughs] and but she worked hard, you couldn't throw her out. And so after about six years, with tutoring and special assignments as so forth, she graduated in the summer with a major in Sociology. We all congratulated Don, and he said, "Forget it! She's enrolled in Graduate School." [EN, NN and GR laugh].

NN: We've heard different versions of that story before from different departments.

EN: Yeah, that's right. [Bird continuously chirping]. Is that your bird? You have a bird? In a cage?

GR: No, I don't have a bird.

EN: Oh.

NN: What's that sound?

EN: It's a mockingbird singing outside.

GR: Oh really? I can't hear it. But my hearing's not good.

NN: It'll probably end up on the tape.

EN: That's how loud it is.

GR: It'll probably make more sense than I do. [EN laughs] [shuffling paper] Well, there are two things that bothered me, I gotta get this in.

EN: Yes.

GR: About the development of SIUE. One was the mass lectures. I suppose you still have them.

EN: Um only in, only in the IS courses, Interdisciplinary Studies are still a mass course.

GR: [GR grumbling] When I tried to teach a class of 200, I know I did not do well. I don't think, I don't think that's educationally sound. And then, they have discussion groups with the Teaching, the TA's who don't know what they're talking about. That's one thing that bothered me...

NN: I think that was part of the rapid growth of the '60s. The enrollment kept going up and up and up.

GR: What is the enrollment now?

NN: Uh, it went back up again, so it's what...

EN: They're about 13,500.

NN: They had dropped down to ten or eleven, and now they're back up to thirteen, but I think those mass courses are not so common anymore, they were a product of the rapid growth. History hasn't had those in last thirty years or so.

EN: No.

NN: They just don't do that anymore.

EN: No. One of the University's official commitments now is to small classes. Now one of our official commitments.

GR: Good, well I hope you live up to that commitment.

EN: And we had more freshmen applying for admission next fall than we could take, and so we could be quite selective. Yes.

GR: Really? Well, that's the first I've... That never happened when I was there.

EN: Yes.

GR: Well, you have more admissions.

EN: And, and there are better students coming there now.

GR: I do hear that noise. What is that noise... Is that the player....

EN: That's a bird singing.

GR: Well, the second thing that bothered me was, well, the bird was the second thing. But the third thing was uh, what I thought was grade inflation. I thought...But, how do you tell a guy listen, "You're giving too many A's." How do you tell someone that?

NN: Was there any pressure from the Administration or was it just individual instructors doing it. Or was it the birds. [NN laughs] [Bird still chirping]

GR: I was never aware of any pressure.

EN: I think there is a bird in your chimney. Like, I'm gonna... [Recording stops]

NN: Student responses to your course.

GR: Yeah. That's a temptation.

GR: Sure is. Pete Simpson, ah, there was pressure. Pete Simpson always gave everyone A's. You got an automatic A. Is he still at the University?

EN: No, he died a few years ago

GR: Oh.

EN: His was, he, his work habits weren't acceptable to Earl Lazerson. So, he was put over onto the Observer.

GR: He what?

EN: He was put over writing for the Observer.

GR: Mhm-hmm...

EN: And then, um, I think he left about 19, he probably left in about 1985. Just left.

GR: Are you the University Archivist?

NN: No. No. No.

EN: No.

GR: Well, what is your connection to the university? Professor of History?

EN: Yes, I was an Associate professor of History. Never applied for full Professor.

GR: But you're a full Professor now aren't you.

EN: No, well, I'm an Associate Professor Emeritus now.

GR: Oh, you're retired.

EE: I'm sort of retired, but I'm still teaching.

NN: She's in that early retirement, she's in that early stage of retirement. She's still doing quite a bit of teaching... But ah, did you have that offer when you retired? You know, you could sign a contract...

GR: I guess so I don't remember clearly, but, uh, I would, I would not have entertained the idea.

NN: No interest, no interest. But some faculty, when they retire go from, "I never wanna teach again." To, or, "I wanna teach a lot." Ellen, ah, has done, she's in that stage where she's still doing two courses.

GR: Well, you both are.

NN: Well, I need to be on that I'm on the call staff for every now and then. It's still teaching, but ah, Ellen's doing more.

GR: I remember sitting in the Faculty lounge, and someone would say, "Well, I'm going to cast pearls before the swine," And someone else would say, "Are you sure they're real pearls?" The person would answer, "No, but I'm sure they're real swine." [EN, NN, and GR all laugh]

NN: I remember, we associated with Leo Collin.

GR: No, that was my line.

NN: Oh, that was your line? About the teaching and meeting the class. No, another one. Where I think I once said, "I'm going to teach my class." And he corrected me and said, "No, you're going to go meet with your students."

GR: Oh. Yeah, that's Leo. Yeah, that's Leo.

NN: Yeah, you'll find out about the teaching later. And he made a distinction between teaching and meeting. And ah, that struck me...

GR: Well, that was the thing about Leo. I still can't get over that. He was, he was one of my best friends on the campus. A very smart fellow too.

EN: Well, he was like you. He was a leader in that period. He was always on the same committees as you were, wasn't he? Seems like you and he were always elected to different things...

GR: He was very well respected and well-liked.

NN: Did you have any dealing with Paul Sultan?

GR: Who?

NN: Paul Sultan. I'm thinking of other people in business school, maybe you didn't ...Sultan was a big name in the biz school. Do I have his name right? Sultan?

EN: Sultan. Yes, Paul Sultan.

GR: Oh, how do you spell it.

EN and NN: S-U-L-T-A-N.

GR: Oh, I remember the name. But no. I do not remember the guy.

NN: Maybe it was later.

GR: Well, he was there when I was there, but our paths never crossed.

NN: I was thinking of other leaders in the school...

EN: Okay. I interviewed Eric Sturley.

GR: Yeah, he was Chief Academic Advisor over in, uh, Alton. He was a very kind fellow too. Well, is he still in Edwardsville?

EN: Yes, he does. He does live in Edwardsville. Right.

NN: Is the tape still on. Good. Get a lot of the bird!

GR: He ah, rode his bike to school a lot. And I got a bike, and I rode my bike to school. And ah, I remember I was coming down that long hill off St Louis street, that bike path.

EN: Yes. Uh-huh.

GR: And I was coming, I was going too fast, and I didn't make the turn at the bottom.

EN and NN: Oh!

GR: I plunged off that little bridge at the bottom,

EN: Oh dear!

NN: Jez.

GR: And I cut my head. And ah, Sturley came by right about that time. [NN laughs] And I ask him to, I was to give an exam that morning, and he went to the secretary's office and got my exam and had it given, so I didn't miss the exam, and then he had the University Police come out and pick me up. They took me to the University doctor, who sewed me up.

NN: Jez. Wow.

EN: Did a lot of faculty ride bicycles, or were you and Eric Sturley?

GR: There were not many. Jack Ades rode a bike a lot.

NN: Oh, yeah.

GR: They're the only ones I can think of, and all from the same neighborhood there at ah, Grandview.

EN: Mhm-hmm.

NN: Edwardsville has just wonderful bike paths. They just keep expanding and expanding.

GR: Well, that's good.

NN: There aren't that many faculty using them. But the people do around town.

GR: Uh-huh.

NN: So it's quite a bike path town.

GR: Uh-huh. That's good, with all that space its a good place to bike.

NN: Yeah.

GR: What a blessing that the university had had all that land and being able to *keep it!*

EN: Mhm-hmm.

GR: Gee. I think I grew up and a very good friend of mine, an emeritus at UT. And I go up to their a lot to their campus. And our campus is ten times as big as the University of Texas [in Austin],

EN: Really?

GR: Yeah.

EN: Oh.

GR: I think of all those huge buildings there huddled closely together [EN laughs] and of how we were in our spaces, uncrowded on Campus.

EN: Have you been back to Edwardsville recently?

GR: Ah, All I know. Yes, I went back there. It was about five or six years ago. Visited the campus, and I think I ran into you [Norm]. In Peck about five or six years ago.

NN: Yeah, possibly. Yeah. Well, if you're up there you're gonna have to run into us again. [EN and GR both laugh] You have, you have a daughter that lives around here, Austin, or something where.

GR: Yeah, she just got... [Recording stops]

GR: And then Rendelmen. Ah, my only friction with Rendelmen. Rendelmen converted that into an office space. And when I saw it, I said, "What an act." Well, what did I say, "This is an act of extravagant arrogance." [EN and NN laugh] And that got back to him, word verbatim. And so he gave us that little room with no ventilation. I'm surprised we all don't have lung cancer. Smoking like crazy in those little rooms.

EN: Yes. [EN and NN laugh]

NN: That's right.

GR: You remember the rooms...

EN: Yes, I do remember.

NN: Cigarette smoke, yeah.

EN: Secondhand smoke.

NN: You know, I live in Madison County, so we could get a lawsuit outta that. [EN and GR laugh]

GR: Yeah.

NN: I don't know if you actually appreciate that joke, you know, President Bush actually visited the area. He came gave a speech in Collinsville when he was in favor of Tort reform.

GR: Mhm-hmm.

NN: President...[Recording stops]

GR: Something that happened there in the classroom. Ah, I was teaching in, I don't know what the course was, but David Hume was the subject. We were arguing and discussing David Hume's views on something, maybe it was his views on natural religion. And ah, the student was quite persistent, but finally, I thought we had to move on. So I said, "Well, we've got to move on. When I go to Heaven, I'll ask Hume just exactly what he meant by that," and the student said, "What if he isn't in Heaven?," and I answered, "Then, you ask him," [EN and NN laugh]. He fell for that; I had him set up.

NN: Oh. That's good. That's good thinking. [NN, EN and GR laugh]

GR: Well, Ellen, you're not eating any of these munchies!

EE: Oh.

NN: Well, we've got to be careful we are going to surprise my brother and then they're gonna wheel out the munchies.

GR: But you don't mind if I indulge.

EN: No, you indulge.

NN: I've had, I've had some. Ah, my brother is, uh, he has his children town and his grandchildren so theirs a whole...

GR: And he's not expecting you?

NN: No, he's not expecting us, but there's a whole entourage... [Recording ends]