

George “Bill” W. Linden, Professor of Philosophy
Transcript of interview for the History of SIUE Oral History Project
Interviewed by Ellen Nore-Nordhauser
April 4, 2006

EN: [EN laughing] It's April 4th, 2006. This is Ellen Nore, I'm interviewing Professor Bill Linden for the history of SIUE. [Recording stops] ...usually start by asking how you happen to come to SIU and why you stayed here after you got into your...

BL: Right.

EN: ...philosophical groove and...

BL: Ah, well I happen to come to- I was teaching in Texas, at North Texas State. And I happen to come to SIU because the president fired me several times in one week, and then hired me back and reassured me that he wouldn't fire me again. But he would, that I would never get a raise as long as he was President. So, the idea came through to me, but I wasn't that welcome anymore [EN laughs].

EN: Why was he so angry with you?

BL: Well, several things. One, uh I started a foreign film series, [EN laughs] which he thought was socialistic, two, I integrated the theater so that blacks could see the movies. Three, a chemist and I pay the poll tax for some blacks, and we won the county election.

EN: Oh, great.

BL: So, I got involved in politics. And ah, he didn't like that. I'm talking about the time and night from 1956 to 1962. I mean, some of this was before Martin Luther King became well known. In any case, he he fired my friend, the potter and my friend, the French teacher, that I had tenure. And so that's why he kept waffling on me. At the same time, my friend Bill [William Carlin] Slattery decided that he had to leave too. So, we came to SIU at the same time.

EN: Mm-hmm. Okay.

BL: 1962. And at that time, there were two philosophers here. Win... I can't remember his -, Win Shaw [phonetic] or something like that, and Gerald Runkle. And it was Runkle, who was influential in getting me hired.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Then later on, a couple of years later, a friend of mine who had also been reassured he never gonna get a raise [both laugh]. James Montgomery Brown wrote me a letter and said, Have any openings for English professors? And I said, Sure. So, they hired him. And as you know, he eventually ended up becoming Chancellor of the whole business.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: So that's what happened to these displaced Texans. [EN laughs]

EN: So, it was North Texas State was the more established institution than SIU.

BL: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Well, of course, as a Carbondale was established.

EN: Yes.

BL: But nothing here.

EN: Nothing here.

BL: No. No, as a matter of fact, here. We were renting Rock Junior High [East St. Louis, Illinois] for \$1 a year.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And then we had Shurtleff college [Alton, Illinois], which is now, the dental school is a Baptist College we bought. And then we had 2,600 acres of conspicuous pasture and mud [EN and LB laugh], with nothing on it.

EN: And did you teach it Alton or East St. Louis?

BL: Both.

EN: Both.

BL: Both. And at that time, SIU had a fleet of cars, I think we had more cars, and then the other state agency and we had our own Air Force [EN laughs], with several airplanes and the [Douglas] DC-3.

EN: And did you, did you um...? You came in '62, in the period of delight, Morris' "One University."

BL: Right.

EN: So, did you fly back and forth or drive back and forth to Carbondale a lot?

BL: Ah.

EN: Because you rather quickly became a leader.

BL: Yeah. [EN laughs] Well, I can't remember what the year- year was. But Leo Cohen in economics and I were appointed on a committee with a political scientist from Carbondale. And our job was to review all of the bylaws for all of the departments, institutes and organizations at SIU.

EN: Yeah.

BL: And I forget, there may have been 160 different types of units. And we boil that down to three types. And Leo and I had to fly back and forth to Carbondale once a week for these meetings and this work. And we finally got it done and submitted the results to Vice President, [Charles] D. Tenney. And nothing happened [EN and LB laugh].

EN: Oh.

BL: And flying to a national philosophy convention, Dr. Tenney was on the plane. And I said, Dr. Tenney, what happened the report that Cohen and I and the other fellow worked on, " Oh, that was an excellent report." He said, I said, "Yes, but what happened to it? When will it be implemented?" And he said, "Well, maybe next year, and maybe never." And of course, that's what happened. It was never. [LB laughs]

EN: Well, why did you have to do it?

BL: Because Morris wanted it done.

EN: Oh.

BL: And when Morris wanted something done, it got done, except for certain things. Like he told Rendleman, who was the vice president down there that they're going to have to remove the

Catholic church because it blocked the view of the Morris Library? And of course, that couldn't be done. [EN and LB laugh] I'm not sure you want to include that... [LB laughs]

EN: Why not. [EN laughs] So you have you met Delyte Morris than on a number of occasions?

BL: Oh, yes. Yeah. My, I met him. Particularly when I tried to hire a, a wayward priest to teach medieval philosophy.

EN: Mm-hmm. Yes. I remember reading about that in the files.

BL: Right.

EN: Yes. This was in about '67.

BL: Somewhere in there.

EN: Yeah. Uh-huh.

BL: In the '60s era. And uh...

EN: You were chair?

BL: I was chair. Right. And...

EN: And he, he had got here. He had also been a radical person in his, his...

BL: He had been a liberal person in the church and was not approved. I mean, he was looked with, looked upon with ah, disdain.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: That's not the right word. Un-favor, he was looked upon unfavorably by Cardinal Cody [phonetic] of Chicago. And of course, the net result of that was that he didn't come to SIU he went somewhere else.

EN: Was that because the church didn't allow him to come?

BL: I have no, I don't know. What happened behind the scenes.

EN: Was Delyte Morris willing to hire him?

BL: No.

EN: Oh.

BL: That was the point.

EN: Oh.

BL: And that was when I learned when reporters descended on me to say, "No comment." [EN laughs]

EN: That's right. That's why the story is unfinished in the files. He just, it's there and then suddenly, there's no explanation for what happened. Oh. So, he said no. Hmn. Well, who else did you hire when you were chair when you were you were kind of building the department?

BL: Oh, yeah.

EN: Yeah.

BL: Oh, that was incredible. I was... I think within a two-year period, we hired about 13 people.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Some of them stayed the full course.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Like John Barker.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Fritz Martin [phonetic] stayed until he retired.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: We had kept one fella from the Shurtleff College. First name is Robert. I can't remember his last name.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: But then we had a whole group of young guys that were hired and eventually left for other places.

EN: Did you hire Carol Keene here? Okay.

BL: Carol Keene, Charles Corr, Galen Pletcher.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Ah, Dave, David,

EN: [David] Seligman.

BL: Seligman. Right! Good for you. Ah, a Plotinus man whose name I can't remember, he didn't stay either, he he he moved away. So they're they're allowed some state Corr, Barker and Pletcher and others went onto other places.

EN: Mm-hmm. [pause] How big are your classes when you were teaching in Alton and East St. Louis?

BL: When I began um, I think my logic class in East St. Louis ran to be about 120.

EN: Uh.

BL: And it was a real big learning experience for me. Because in Texas- at North Texas, I probably hadn't didn't have more than two or three black students.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And they were all football players [LB laughs]. Before as I walked into that first class in East St. Louis, it was 90 to 95% black and I never saw so many different shades and colors in my life, you know.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And those kids were so eager to learn. And the new faculty who are coming in like Art [Arthur Alan] Stahnke and ah, he hadn't finished his PhD. And me and [sighs], oh, gosh. Well, there are a whole bunch. I mean, we were really idealistic. We thought we were going to build

another... Not not another Yale or Harvard, but certainly a real first-class liberal arts school here with PhD programs.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: In psychology and philosophy, and biology, and chemistry and so forth.

EN: Mm-hmm. And that's when you wrote in that period, you wrote a lot of reviews of the film's. Yes, they're still so wonderful to read.

BL: Uh huh. Yeah, I had a film series here.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: Then eventually, we had a course in film. And then I got a sabbatical and I wrote a book on film, reflections on the screen, which I can show you a copy of. [pause] So I zoomed into film and also very interesting theater because ah, I was friends with Jerry [Jerome] Birdman.

EN: Oh, yes.

BL: Who was in charge of the theater, he eventually went to Omaha, and then onto University Connecticut as Dean of Fine Arts.

EN: Mm-hmm. I think we saw play of his when we first came here, it was so wonderful and I'm trying to remember what it was, was it Marat/Sade maybe.

BL: It probably was.

EN: Uh-huh. Yeah. Well, one of the um, one of the... I was, I have this idea of making little booklet of writings from the very early years of the University and I, and I, I, I've read your speech that you wrote when, when John Kennedy was killed. I'd like to put that in this booklet.

BL: Oh, that'd be powerful.

EN: Yeah.

BL: I don't remember what I said, you know.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: But I do know that it was just an absolute utter shock. And my wife and I were convinced when we first heard the news that he had been killed by right wing nuts in Texas.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Because when we left they had billboards, you know, claiming that he was a communist sympathizer, stuff like that.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: And we had both worked in the Kennedy campaign. In fact, she had had a tea for Ethel Kennedy. Bobby [Robert Kennedy] was in town. And after he was killed, and then Bobby was killed, I never had... And then of course, after that, you know Dr. Martin Luther King. I never had anything to do with politics. I was just so disillusioned. But Jean continued to be a member of the League of Women Voters, became friends with Paul Simon's wife, Jeanne [Hurley Simon].

EN: Mm-hmm. Did you, um... Did you know Virgil Seymour?

BL: Yes.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: He was in sociology wasn't he.

EN: Yes.

BL: Yes. And he was he was constructing some kind of experimental cars or something for students. I don't know what the details were of it. But he was really a very intelligent and nice man. I believe he moved to White Plains, New York. But I he did quite a bit of work in East St. Louis. Of course, in those days, you know, we taught on both campuses, we had to drive back and forth. One of the disadvantages, if you forgot a book you had to drive....

EN: [EN laughing] Yeah.

BL: ...30 miles to get the thing you know.

EN: Where was your main office? Was it on the Alton campus or...

BL: No. My main office was in an old ha, an old house on the second floor of an old house right across from Rock Junior High in East St. Louis. And I shared it with a sociologist named Elliot Breadwick [phonetic].

EN: Oh, yes.

BL: And well, I mean, he wrote a history of the race riots?

EN: Yes.

BL: And so forth in East St. Louis. And he was a real eccentric.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: I walked in one day, and Elliot was sitting in the bathtub, completely clothed with an iron on his head. And I said, "Elliot, what are you doing?" He said, "Well, I found if I put the iron on my head and turn the heat to wall, I can think better." "Okay." [LB laughs]

EN: Gosh.

BL: So that was one of the great things about those early days

EN: Was... he was a young guy then. Right.

BL: He was a young guy yeah. But, you know, we had we've had some really eccentric characters, you know, psychologists who got Volkswagen shot fulla holes, because he wouldn't stop, but police, and he sued...

EN: Oh yeah.

BL: ...the church in Alton for ringing its bells on Sunday and waking them up. I can't remember his name we had some real eccentrics and also some very creative people. And the thing was that you were not just in a department because there weren't any really well-organized departments. So I'd have coffee with guys from political finance, economics, chemistry, all different disciplines - sociology, all different disciplines.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And there was a lot of interaction between the different disciplines Shea... That was the guy the other philosopher Win Shea.

EN: Win Shea.

BL: I think it was S-H-E-A.

EN: He wasn't the one from Shurtleff was he?

BL: No.

EN: Okay.

BL: He was, he graduated from Yale. And he left about a year or two after I came.

EN: Did you go over?

BL: Under circumstances I may tell you offline, but...

EN: Okay.

BL: It was a personnel matter.

EN: Oh.

BL: So.

EN: Okay. [EN laughs] Well, do you remember I remember, there's now I haven't seen a copy of this because that there wasn't a copy in the file- in the files, but I heard about an essay that you wrote about the buildings.

BL: Oh, yeah.

EN: And I'd love to put that in the book too. Just...

BL: The Visual Campus.

EN: Yes, the visual campus? If you have a copy of that, I'd love to see it.

BL: I I would like to see it too. I don't know where it is. I know that, you know that ah... My argument was that it was an absolutely gorgeous campus. If you owned a helicopter [EN laughs], but that you couldn't, you couldn't find out how to get into the building.

EN: Ah-ha.

BL: Which you couldn't. I know that uh... It was very good Japanese Zen aesthetics. Because the idea was that you were to walk in a leisurely manner and so forth, and that there should always be hidden corners, nuances to investigate. And I know that Obata was not too happy about it, I send it off to architecture journal, they rejected it saying, your argument is that this is not practical. But HOK is known for its practicality, it's one of those results is they came out to the Peck building and they knocked some holes in the wall and put in a couple of doors and you could find your way in and out of the building. [BL and EN laugh]

EN: You said something about the classrooms. The classrooms were like tin cans or something like that, too.

BL: Could be.

EN: But that was Delyte Morris, because...

BL: Yeah well...

EN: In Obata's original design, there were windows,

BL: Yeah, well, what they wanted to do is they wanted to, they wanted to have expandable rooms that could hold either any from from 12 to 224 students. so that they could expand and contract. They couldn't really move those walls as easily as they thought. They are gorgeous buildings, and they still are absolutely lovely buildings. And I think it's a shame that many of the faculty just don't see them. They're they're part of the environment, they don't pay attention. And when I bring visitors, you know, had friends from Germany, they were just astounded at the beauty.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: Beautiful buildings and those walls are beautiful. It's just that they made things difficult to get into how to do first, [EN laughs] but they still gorgeous. And all of that ah, quartz crystal embedded. Course we can't use the balconies. I mean, at first we could. But they're all locked off. You can't go out there anymore.

EN: Mm-hmm. Where was your first office?

BL: First office at SIUE.

EN: The campus, the main campus.

BL: It was in East St. Louis. In the basement generally. In those days, I've gone a long time ago. If you want to find a philosophy or a, a classical languages office, you go on to whatever campus it was go to the oldest building and go in the basement and that's where they'll be [EN and BL both laugh].

EN: So was your office in the basement of the Peck building when you move to Edwardsville.

BL: Oh. I'm trying to think.

EN: When the campus moved.

BL: I believe it was and then ah, then I was moved up to the third floor. As a matter of fact, when we first went into the Peck building, we went in the fall. And we didn't have any sidewalks. And we didn't have any, any ah, asphalt up to the service entrance of the building. We had orange pebbles everywhere to walk on. And it wasn't a question of whether you would get pebbles in your shoe... it was when you would get pebbles. And then, of course, when we had a rain, or when we had snow and it melted, we had acres of mud. And that fall, when we occupied the buildings, we had no heat. We had no heat all that winter. But Delyte Mars had promised the legislature that he wouldn't have us in there. And so we were in there [EN laughs]. So, we taught classes in parkas and so forth. There are no places for students to put their winter clothing, if they wanted to hang them up or anything. No places to sit in the halls, like there are now with the nice chairs and couches. No place to eat. Except they had a few ah, vending machines in the basement or library, only two buildings Peck and the library were done by that time. And they weren't completely done. But they were done enough to teach in.

EN: Where did you show the film's when you moved to the new campus?

BL: Ah. well, we didn't- I didn't start that until after the um, after the theater building was built.

EN: Fine Arts and Communications.

BL: We showed him in there. Mm-hmm. And I was astounded that I couldn't set up the card, a card table. To sell tickets. I had to have the union come and set up a card table and charge me for that.

EN: Hmm.

BL: But you know, when when we had the large philosophy department that you might be interested in this story. There were I don't maybe 15 maybe 17 of us at the largest the ah, the American Philosophical association was meeting in Minneapolis and I called the chair philosophy at Carbondale, Willis More. And I said, "Willis, SIU has this DC-3, I think the university should fly both philosophy departments to Minneapolis. And that would save them a lot of money on airline tickets." [EN laughs] And he didn't do anything. And I kept after him. And finally, I was in Carbondale. And I went to see him. I said, Willis, look you haven't done anything on this idea. He said, "Well, I just don't want to do it. Because if that airplane crashes, Delyte Morris is going to have to hire two philosophy departments. And I said, "Willis if that airplane crashes, I'm not going to be around to give a damn what Delyte Morris has to do." [EN laughs] "All right, he said, I'll go see John Rendleman, the Vice President in charge of that stuff." So he went to see Rendleman and Rendleman said it's out of the question it's too costly. it will cost \$5,000 to fly that airplane up there and the pilots will have to sit around for a couple days. And could go fishing. And well I said, "Well, how do you John, how do you know it's gonna cost that much? He said, Well, that's what it cost to fly the basketball players." And Willis said, "You fly basketball players! You are going to fly philosophers." [EN laughs] And that was it because that became a matter of principle. And sure enough, you know, that plane took off with the philosophers from Carbondale, landed in Alton. And we got on the plane and we all went to Minneapolis.

EN: Oh, that's wonderful. [EN laughs]

BL: When we got there. People are saying, "Oh my gosh. SIU is a fantastic place, why they fly their, they fly their philosophers in, in their own airplane." [Both laugh]

EN: Well, now you were you were president. Were you the first president of the Faculty Senate when it was formed?

BL: Ah, no, the second. Leo was the first.

EN: Okay. Leo Cohen.

BL: He was Leo Cohen was the first I was the second I was vice president, he was president. And of course, that was the year when we had all of the student destruction. When black students were upset as hell about Jackson State.

EN: 1970.

BL: And ah, the other all the other students were upset about Kent State. And we have a sociologist who marches on the post office. [Phone Ringing] Hello. Oh yeah. 10:30 tomorrow morning. Alrighty. Thank you. Bye. Dentist tomorrow morning.

EN: Oh.

BL: Yum. Yum. Yum. So, where was I?

EN: So, you were talking about 1970?

BL: Yeah.

EN: When, that was when you were president of the Faculty Senate that year or Vice President.

BL: Vice President

EN: Vice President. Okay. Yeah.

BL: No, it may have been president by then.

EN: Rendleman became the president of the campus in '68.

BL: Okay. He was president at that time.

EN: So '69 might have been the first Faculty Senate.

BL: Yeah, I think. And then... '70 was. And they [student protestors] took over Rendleman's office '70.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And I didn't know where he was [EN laughs] I would find out later. He was in his basement getting drunk on scotch.

EN: Well other other versions say he was at Holiday Inn.

BL: But I stood up on his desk, and said, we're calling an emergency meeting of the Senate.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And so we all everybody trooped over to the ah, what's now the Dunham building. The, you know which building I'm talking...? Right communications building. And we had an emergency meeting of the Senate. I still remember the chair of foreign languages, standing up and saying, "This meeting is illegal. Some people think there's a difference between now and 1936. And I see no difference whatsoever. I protest." And ah, Jerry Bergman says, "This is a legitimate emergency meeting. And I vote that we make decisions and adopt them in principle." And that passed. [Intelligible] called agreement.

EN: Communications.

BL: Yeah. He was a dear man was very perturbed that we're doing this. Well, what we did then was we set up committees to deal with all of the leading issues. And my friend, Tom Paxson, who's a marvelous Quaker, got the toughest job which was resolving the issue of the ROTC with the students. And most of the committee's, I must say, were chaired by a philosopher by Sal Engman [phonetic] and Bill Emblum [phonetic] And Tom. And of course, nobody was hurt. No property was damaged, nothing was burned. And I remember that the next board of trustees meeting was held right after that. Was held in the, in the union building here in in Edwardsville. And Rendleman came out if the meeting. And I think there were four or five other philosophy professors and I were standing in the hall. And he said, "My God, I'm surrounded by philosophers." And I said, "And you're damn lucky too." [EN and BL laugh] And John [Rendleman] and I became pretty good friends. I had to fly him when I became -for a while, short while Leo Cohen and I were advisors for the Board of Trustees. And then I had to fly with him when I was representative to the Board of Higher Education for, for Edwardsville campus. And I didn't realize he was absolutely terrified of flying.

EN: Oh.

BL: And I remember flying back from Carbondale once and the ice was forming on the wings of this little two engine plane.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: And I looked down, I said, "God, that's beautiful, look at the patterns of that ice, and how delicate or reflective at the sunlight it is." And John started turning blue and Barbra Jean said, "Shut up Linden." [Both laugh] And of course, another thing that happened then you know, was John and Paul Powell, the Secretary, Paul Powell died...

EN: Yes.

BL: And he went to his apartment in Springfield. And they found box after box, shirt, shirt boxes, shoe boxes just stuffed with money.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: They had no idea how much there was.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And they carried it all down and put it in the trunk of John's Cadillac. And they went back up to search some more to see if they could find anymore. And they decided they'd cleaned the apartment out. And they went down and the car was gone. And he thought, "Good Lord the mafia is onto this. And the money will never be seen again." Well, he found out that police had hauled it away because he parked in a no parking zone. So, he got the car back and then took all these boxes to a bank. And I think them took two or three days to count all that stuff.

EN: Yes.

BL: They came up maybe three million. I don't know how much. A tremendous amount of money. And they never tracked it. They never found out where it came from. I don't think they ever even found out whether Paul had been married or not. Or whether he had any children, or I don't know.

EN: So, I -he had, he had been, he was married I thought.

BL: Hmm, could be.

EN: And the wife was in ah, Vienna.

BL: Could be. Could well be. I don't know. But I do know that there was a group in the in the Senate who wanted to have a vote of no confidence on Rendleman.

EN: Really.

BL: Yeah. And he promised that he would never take a sample from that estate. And of course, he did. He took 10%.

EN: Mm-hmm. Executor. And then his fathers law firm got a lot of money too from it.

BL: Yeah. So, then I learned politics isn't what it always seems.

EN: No. Something else I thought I might put in the book is his press conference on that, where people asked him a lot of questions and he did a very good job parrying the questions.

BL: Well what he did was you see- What, I'll tell you what I believe i believe that John really wanted to be Governor of Illinois.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And ah, he withheld the news about the money [EN laughs] until the state election has been held.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: If that news had broken before the election, the democrats would have lost that election. And by withholding the news, he ensured that the democrats would win. And he made every Republican absolutely furious with him. And I think that is what then stood in the way of ever becoming a serious candidate for Governor.

EN: Did he ever tell you that he had thoughts about higher office in the state.

BL: No. But I, and Leo I and some others, were fairly sure that that was the case. He, he didn't feel comfortable with being a college president. No.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: I know he got himself a JD degree so, he will be called Dr. Rendleman but he was, he was not an academic person. He was a practical lawyer, and in some ways, a very good friend. I mean, when I was going to get divorced, he gave me a very good advice on how to ah, how to minimize the pain. Because he had himself gone through a divorce earlier. So and I appreciated that.

EN: Well, I I, I've been sort of thinking about write, maybe writing something separate from this and, and talking about how, how he was a good President.

BL: He was.

EN: He was a good president, and how he established democratic traditions on the campus and how he expected to deal with the unions.

BL: Yeah.

EN: Instead of trying to figure out ways to not to deal with them.

BL: Yes.

EN: And yeah, and he there... He he listened to the faculty.

BL: Yes, he did.

EN: I mean, you don't find in his papers, when the Faculty Senate did something you don't find, "What should we do about this?" You just, he just signed off.

BL: Right?

EN: Pretty much.

BL: Yeah.

EN: Occasionally, I think there was a, I think the three-course load went through the Senate in those years.

BL: Yeah.

EN: And there was a there was some question about that. But he signed it off, you know, he didn't.

BL: Oh, yeah. Runkle and I had big fights about that. Because he was Dean. Especially when it came this summer school. But the battle between Runkle and me was that I thought one course of almost one-month salary for summer. And his position was well, the standard teaching mode is actually 15 hours [both laugh]. But we cut it down, but it should be according to hours not according to the number of courses we had, we had, for a couple of years, several years. Actually, we had always had the policy if you taught one course you got one month's salary. If you taught two courses, you got two months' salary. And it became such a bitter argument between us that when I answered I would answer the phone and my voice would go up. Jean would say, "Hang up and just drop it." Well, they finally ended up with us going to see Robert McVicar, who is Vice President in charge of this campus, and I won. [EN laughs] It's just one course whether it's a three-hour course or four-hour course. And Jerry was so furious with me he couldn't remember my name. And we've been friends all this time.

EN: Uh-huh. Oh.

BL: We've gone up to night clubs in Miami, he and his wife and my wife... before before she had her brain surgery and her incapacitation. So, but, course we all forgave as time went on but he had some real battle. Now there's another thing on that as far as administration is concerned, I can't remember the year but Rendleman needed a Vice President. And, and had boiled it down to me and, or Andy Coachman. And I didn't find out until later, but he went to Jim Brown and said, "Which one should I pick?" Brown said well, "Linden will do an exciting job for you but you're gonna have to get rid of him in about a year [EN and BL laugh]. Because he won't be that obedient, he won't be very obedient." And so Coachman, Andy was chosen I guess.

EN: Hmm.

BL: Which was probably the smart decision because Jim was right. I was too much of a rebel.

EN: Well Coachman was a sort of a bureaucratic guy.

BL: Yeah, he was a nice fella. You know.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: A pencil pusher. When... [recording stops] ...lot of admiration, it was for was Robert McVicker. He, he was a Presbyterian, was very tight with money. And very serious about it. I think you can squeeze a penny and tell him, "Lincoln would sing a chorus." [EN laughs] And I made a mistake in my budget. I had overspent my budget by a couple thousand dollars. When I was scared to death. And I went to see him I couldn't avoid it. And I said, "Dr. McVicker I overspent my budget by a couple \$1,000 dollars. I don't know I could have, but I made a mistake." And I thought for sure he was gonna kill me. And he looked at me and he said, "George, how many children died?" I said, "Children, what are you talking about?" He said, "Nobody was really hurt. It's only money. We'll figure out something." [EN laughs] And from then on. And, you know, he was, he was in charge of Carbondale when all of that, the rioting and all.

EN: Uh-huh.

BL: After I was no longer President of the Senate, I was no longer chair or anything. I was just an ordinary ole philosophy professor. I was sitting in my smaller office [EN laughs]. Chair now I had that big corner office on the third floor.

EN: Yes.

BL: I see my and there was a knock on the door and I opened it and it was McVicker. I said, Dr. McVicker. What are you doing up here in Edwardsville? And why are you knocking on my door?" He said, Well, I'm leaving SIU. I'm going to be President of Oregon. And I just wanted to stop by and say goodbye to you." And I thought, "Wow, what a mensch." You know. I mean, he really was a nice guy. And yet, the reputation he had among some of the faculty. I shan't name names.

EN: I can name names, William Going, William Going says that he left the as the Dean of Faculty because of him. He didn't like him.

BL: Well, your Chair of History didn't like him either. Ericsson.

EN: Ericsson.

BL: Yeah. Course he didn't have much of a problem, well he said, "Well he'll come in, and cut my budget and laugh about it." But he didn't understand was that Jim had a nervous laugh when he had to do something he didn't want to do, he'd laugh.

EN: Yeah.

BL: [BL laughs] Oh my. So yeah, well Going, of course, he was a real challenge.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: When I came, the guy who's who's running humanities was uh... Boy, it's not surprising I'm repressing his name.

EN: Eric Sturley? John Ades?

BL: No. No. Sturley's mathematics, Ades is English, but the guy was in English.

EN: Bob Duncan.

BL: No.

EN: Oh.

BL: He was the guy he had been an editor.

EN: Joost, Nicholas Joost. Joost.

BL: Yost, spelled Joost. Yeah.

EN: Right. He was authoritarian.

BL: And he didn't like me because Runkle had hired me. And I wasn't kept.

EN: Oh.

BL: His purchase, you know. I remember I was just here. And of course, I was incredibly insecure. Because I was hired as an associate professor. I had been, I had been promoted quickly and given big raises at North Texas. Because Matthew's theory of administration was hire em' young, promote them fast, give them big raises, and then promote them beyond their credentials, and then kick the hell out of them for 30 years, because they'll be scared. They'll have a house and kids and they'll be scared. So I knew that I didn't have a, you know, solid enough credentials to be an associate professor at the first rate University. And I was under the belief that this was going to be a first-rate university. So, I was feeling very insecure, and scared. And I remember having lunch with a guy from psychology. I can't remember his name. And ah.

EN: Larry Taliana?

BL: It wasn't Larry, I did know Larry. He was a fine guy too. Anyway, I was having coffee with this guy in East St. Louis. And I told him how frightened I was. And I said, Maybe I should have stayed in Texas. And he looked at me and he said, "How old are you?" I said "34/35," 35 I think I said, "Well, why would you want to retire at 35?" And that really changed my perspective. But Joost. That first year, I remember I got a call from his secretary in Alton saying, "Mr. Linden, you have to see Dr. Joost this afternoon." I said, "May I use a University car?" "Absolutely not." [EN laughs] That's it! So I drive from East St. Louis up to Alton, filled with apprehension. "What have I done wrong now?" Because I remember, when I turned on the television a few days earlier, half of my ancient philosophy class was being arrested in St. Louis for picketing. And I went to Runkle, I said, "Geez, you know, my students are out, getting arrested for picketing a bank." He said, "So what? What difference does that make to you?" But I, because of my experience with Texas, so I thought, well, maybe it has something to do with race? Well, I got there at three, three-thirty, about a quarter to four. The Secretary finally allowed me into Joost's office. He said, "Sit down, Mr. Linden." I said, "Yeah." I said, "Well, what do you want to talk to me about?" He said, "I don't believe in objective exams." I said, "Well, I don't give objective exams." In logic, give problems if you want to call that objective, I don't give objective exams, I mean, I don't give multiple choice exams. "What else is there?" He said. "Nothing. That's it." And I walked out and got my car drove back to Collinsville and I cursed him the whole way. [EN laughs] I said, "That bastard, he could have told me that on telephone."

EN: He could have.

BL: He could have written me a memo. No. He had to have me come in and be scared.

EN: Maybe he just wanted to, to see you.

BL: He wanted to see me under pressure.

EN: Your body and yeah.

BL: He wanted to see me under pressure.

EN: Let, let you know who was...

BL: And he thought that I was a pretty worthless piece of crap. [EN laughs] Until my book was called is from that book was published. Then, "Oh, Mr. Linden and I always knew that you had talent." And so on and so forth. But then later on there was a grievance brought against him. And I was on the grievance committee. [EN laughs] A couple of people from English too and we rule against him. And then I was on his hate list again.

EN: Was that the women? Over their salary?

BL: I don't remember what it was.

EN: Mid '70s. Uh-huh. I didn't look at the grievance files, really.

BL: I think this had to do with changing a student's grade or something.

EN: Oh. Okay.

BL: But that was the case in those days. You know, I remember Barbara Schmidt when she got pregnant. Not only did not pay her, but she had to hire a replacement to take her place. I mean, there was, in English, there was real discrimination against women. Uh-huh. Of course, it wasn't the case in philosophy. Carol Keene was hired. And I remember, I wasn't chair then Charlie Car was we had we had the last time the APA [American Philosophical Association] met from Chicago. We met in the Edgewater Beach Hotel. And ah, Sheila Ruth came by, she was looking for a job. And I patted her on the end. And she turned and looked at me and said, "You better have a job to go with that." I said, "Come on. I'll introduce you to a couple." I introduced her to ah, her to ah, Charlie. Charlie hired her.

EN: Uh-huh. That was a quick comeback [EN laughs].

BL: Oh, yeah. This is just between us... Later on-After I got divorced, she and I fell pretty heavily for each other for a while. If you run across the graduation address I gave.

EN: Yes.

BL: Something about uncertainty. Accepting uncertainty. I think it was called. I sure would like to see that. Okay. That my friend said...

EN: When was it?

BL: My friend and Oklahoma Published that in their library journal.

EN: Oklahoma State or Oklahoma... University of Oklahoma?

BL: Oklahoma City. He's in charge of the Oklahoma City Library System. He put out a little thing called ad libs.

EN: Okay. Ad-Libs. Maybe I can get that.

BL: I don't know. The guy who was President at that time library system Lee Browning [phonetic]. Just died about two months ago I think.

EN: When was this? Do you know, have a year for it? I don't know I was dating Sheila. We went to Italy together. Mm-hmm.

BL: But I don't remember the year.

EN: Maybe is it was when Rendleman was alive?

BL: Maybe it was, yeah.

EN: So, it could have been '75. Okay.

BL: Yeah.

EN: Okay.

BL: It was one of the speeches that I really felt proud of.

EN: Okay.

BL: One of my big fans for my species was Jack Shehan. He put out a book on war films.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And had me write an essay on Dr. Strangelove.¹

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: And that time, and ah, during that period one, article on the Journal of Aesthetic Education, 10 questions about film.²

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: That became fairly influential. The Cowboy from High Noon to Midnight.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: I've got copies of all of those things if you want 'em?

EN: Sure.

BL: And I've got copies of a lot of my psychology stuff I started writing after I married Eve [Ferguson]. And some of my [intelligible] and stuff and I, a lot of it, you know, if I just got if I just written a book on the psychology of Indians and film, I'd have all three together. [EN and BL laugh]

EN: Well I've read your essay on Roshomon, and your essay on Black Elk, or one of your essays on Black Elk.³

BL: Well there's a new book out in 2004, Syracuse University Press [The Black Elk Reader]. And it has my essay on ah, Dakota Philosophy.

EN: Mm-hmm.

¹ "'Dr. Strangelove' and Erotic Displacement," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Jan. 1977).

² "10 Questions about Film Form," *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Special Issue: Film II, the Teaching of Film (Apr., 1971).

³ Five Views of "Roshomon" *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, Vol. 56, No. 4 (Winter 1973).

BL: And it has an essay on Job My Heart and Blackhawk.

EN: Mm-hmm. I think that's the one I've read. [Pause] And then you retired in '88. 1988?

BL: No, I think it was '91... wasn't it? [Linden retired in 1993]

EN: I don't know I can look that up.

BL: I was 62 years old. Okay.

EN: Mm-hmm.

BL: So we can figure that out. I was born in 1928. Huh, I don't know. It seems to me, it was 91. The year I retired was the year I had my heart bypass. And I believe that was 15 years ago. 15. Either 15 or 16 years ago.

EN: Larry McAneny retired because he had heart trouble early. And then he said nothing ever happened again, came back and did all this teaching.

BL: Yeah.

EN: ...and stuff. Yeah.

BL: I know when I retired Caitlin [phonetic] Fletcher was the chair. And I had to deal with the dragon lady.

EN: [Barbara] Teters.

BL: Teters. I had to deal with her directly.

EN: So, what it was before she left in July of '86.

BL: Oh so, it was longer ago than I thought then.

EN: Uh-huh. So, so maybe it was the early it maybe was the end of spring in '86 or something like that. I don't know.

BL: Gosh, I was retired longer than I thought then. State of Illinois losing money on me [EN laughs]. I really don't know.

EN: Okay.

BL: When you find out, tell me [BL laughs].

EN: I will... alright. Well, 2006 minus 15 is 91. So, I don't know.

BL: Yeah. That sounds like too late to you.

EN: Well, I don't know, I always I have a book. When I interview people in the room. I have a book there that Eliza Bowen did that where she indexed University periodicals for a certain period. It's been dropped now it's never- it hasn't gone on. But you can usually you can find someone's retirement date, their their exact date of retirement was also in The Observer, which I probably have it in my notes. But anyway, so you had a big heart bypass.

BL: Trip. Yeah. But I've never had a heart attack.

EN: You may just discover everything was clogged up. And...

BL: Yeah, what happened was I went to mail a letter, and I ran out of breath. And I sat down. And I dropped it and I went home. I went to see this young Doctor. He said, "Anything unusual happened." I said, "No nothing." I said, "I ran out of breath." Walking a few blocks to mail a letter. He said I want to be very aggressive on this. So, he took me to Barnes and they did an angiogram. They went and took pictures and I could watch my heart on their monitor. It was fascinating. You know, like watching the squiggly little worms and [EN laughs] stuff. They came back and said, "You've got severe blockage in three arteries. You're not going anywhere. You're gonna stay here." Then doctor had to get into a fight with the state insurance because they didn't want me to stay overnight when I wasn't being operated on.

EN: Oh.

BL: He said, "Don't you worry about that I'll fight it." So that's how that happened. I mean, another thing that was really great about that was before I had the operation, ah, Bill Slattery, who been through it said, "You and Eva go look at that recovery rate. Before you have the operation." "Otherwise you're gonna be paranoid." And I did and it was like a science fiction set up. It was round with a wedge and with a body with tubes in it and so on. So when I finally came to, here I was with all these tubes in me, and I'm being run by machines. I mean lungs are not functioning machine is breathing for me. The machine is circulating my blood, etc. And the immediate- and I'm lying in Ice.

EN: Oh, you are?

BL: Oh, yeah. Then they start to warm me up more and more with some- but the immediate responses, you want to pull all that stuff out [intelligible] it's really an incredible experience and, and then later, of course, I went in depression. Mm-hmm. And my friend Larry McMurtry [phonetic] had a quadruple heart bypass at John's Hopkins, at the same time. And he was really depressed, he was a lot worse off than I was. He ah, the title of his book- Dwayne's Depressed is based on that. And he's got a marvelous essay on it, which I have given to several people I've known who have had heart bypasses. I went to visit, and ah, the second morning, I think, I said, "You know how I feel?" And he said, "No." I said, "I feel like I died. And I don't know who I'm supposed to be." He said, "That's exactly how I feel." It was very different than having a gallbladder out. Legally, you're dead. Because your heart stops beating. But there is a gap in there -it's a loss of personality. Because of all these fancy machines, and you're just.... not there. It's a fascinating thing. And I can tell you more about him sometime. I mean his experience. Course his were worse than mine. But I didn't mean to get off on all that.

EN: No, that's interesting. Our friend Jean Violette is that several of those operations, but he never- he understood. I guess he had he had found out about the depression before his first one was, I think in '65, very long ago.

BL: Doesn't happen to everybody.

EN: No, no.

BL: And it happens more often to men than to women.

EN: And I had a brother in law who had another procedure he had irregular and had something done to his heart and he was terribly depressed afterwards, after that, but Gene told us about being depressed then and how it felt and it's interesting. So- so since your retirement, you have a whole new sort of a different tech trend. You are you still doing what you were doing before? Or did you get more involved in psychology?

BL: Oh, much more in Psychology, yes. And wrote papers in that I gave papers. I have given a lot of papers at the North American Adlerian Society. I was on their board for I don't know three or four years, I guess. Uh-huh. Then I teach in this summer school in different countries. I've been teaching the course on aging in Germany this Summer. Last year it was uh... Philosophy actually it was the meaning of life in psychology and psychology in Malta. And sometimes it's been men's issues. Anyhow, so I teach in the summer school and I'm a docent for the Repertory Theater in St. Louis. So, that's teaching in the sense that I go to Principia in Greenville and also high schools Edwardsville High... and tell them about the productions, and ah, the staging, the

lighting, so forth. And then of course, I've gotten more and more involved in The ManKind Project and ah. And I'll be staffing, a week training weekend in Sioux City, Iowa at the end of this month. And also twice to the international hours center. Unfortunately, my mentor [intelligible] brilliant intellectual property lawyer in Houston, gave a speech in Austin right before Christmas when I'm home, his sister coming [intelligible] living room for them at home. He's only 65 years old he's just a kid that was a tremendous blow to me. So, you know, just a marvelous man. So, you know, it's the unpredictability of life that is striking. [pause] My aunt [intelligible] said, "Life comes without warning and just as suddenly goes. Therefore, enjoy whatever entertains."

EN: Well that might be an appropriate spot to end the interview. With that nice.

BL: Oh, okay. [Recording stops]

BL: Perfect professors were young and energetic.

EN: Oh, oh, I see at the university.

BL: Yeah.

EN: Well, there weren't any... [Recording ends].