

**The University of Scranton  
Weinberg Memorial Library  
Oral History**

**Interview with:** Ellen Miller Casey, Professor Emerita, English  
Stephen J. Casey, Professor Emeritus, Theology/Religious  
Studies

**Interviewers:** Frank X.J. Homer, Professor Emeritus and University  
Historian

**Location:** Weinberg Memorial Library, Helen Gallagher McHugh Special  
Collections, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

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**Begin Video File casey-2019.mp4**

FH: Okay. My name is Frank Homer. I'm a Professor Emeritus and University Historian at the University of Scranton, and we'll be doing this afternoon an oral history interview with two people – a husband and wife, one in the English Department, the other in the Theology Department, both now retired. And I will let them introduce themselves and then we can move on to questions.

EC: I'm Ellen Miller Casey and I'm the one who was in English, teaching Victorian Literature and directing the Honors Program.

SC: I'm Stephen Casey, Theology Department. We originally ended up coming here because of a mutual friend who happened to be a Jesuit, Bill Osterle, who was looking for someone – both of us laugh at this point because you can't do that kind of stuff now. Everything is a clear search. But in any case, he asked another mutual friend...and the long and short of it was I met him at a conference, and we were invited here. Ellen can tell you what she did at that point.

EC: So, when he got the interview, I wrote to all of the schools in the immediate area saying that my husband had an interview, I would be in town x weekend, x week, and if they had need of someone to teach Victorian Literature, I would be glad to interview. And it happened that the man who was teaching Victorian Literature at the U had just staged a major "I have this job and I want a raise", and his department chair said, "goodbye and good luck", which was not the event he expected. But they had an opening, as it turned out, in Victorian Literature...

FH: I'm trying to remember...in 1970 who was...

EC: It was '69.

SC: '69.

EC: T. Ryan was Chair.

SC: Should we give you his name?

FH: Yeah, I mean...

SC: His name was Lodge.

FH: Oh, Bob Lodge. I had him as a faculty member when I was a student.

SC: Yes.

FH: He was a marvelous instructor.

EC: Oh...

SC: Okay.

FH: And he went...I think he went down to Kings...I think.

SC: Correct.

EC: Yes.

SC: Correct. The funny part of it is we got here for the interview and we had an 'in' aside from that. You were a graduate of...

EC: Oh, I was a graduate of...my undergraduate degree was from Loyola in Chicago, which is a Jesuit institution and...

SC: Go ahead...

EC: Go ahead.

SC: And I was completing a degree in Theology from Marquette, which obviously is there, so...and...

EC: Our Jesuit credentials were good.

SC: Right. Yes. Right. And they noted that immediately. We were sent home. We went back to Chicago, where we left our child. And we were told not to do anything in a hurry. And I think it was Monday afternoon or evening...no, it was Monday evening because we were out during the day...we got a call and so on. So, we had an offer.

EC: Two offers.

SC: Two offers and, yes, to be honest, if it weren't for those two offers to us we wouldn't be holding the interview today. Yeah...

FH: So, Bill Osterle...and, by the way, I don't know...his brother Paul recently, I think within the last couple of months, passed away.

SC: Oh, I didn't realize.

EC: Oh...

FH: He, of course, was [unclear] with the Society.

SC: Yes, I knew that. Yeah. He was younger.

FH: Yeah.

SC: I think actually substantially younger...about...yeah. So, that's...that's our...

EC: That's how we got here.

SC: Yeah. We taught for forty years on an official contract. We did a little bit after that. She did more than I did.

EC: Right.

SC: And here we are.

FH: I'm going to ask about what you consider your biggest successes in your, you know, forty...forty...I don't think either of you made fifty, but...

EC: No, we made forty.

SC: We made forty to the date.

FH: Forty years. What would you say were your...and I'll let you make your answer, you know, obviously separately. Ellen, let's start with you. What would you say are some of your biggest successes?

EC: Oh, well certainly individual students that did well here and afterwards. So, if I were to say what I'm happiest about and proudest of it would be students that tell me...told me...they learned things from me. And then, I suppose in terms of other recognition, the Honorary Degree from the University. And when I got it, all the faculty stood up which was, I must admit, very nice.

FH: Steve, you want to...

SC: Yes. I can't claim an Honorary Degree like that. She was actually a little bit humble there. The faculty stood up, the students stood up, and everybody else stood up. So, there they were and there were numerous people who stopped us on the way out as we left. I agree with Ellen. A good deal of it is about the students. And then, until recently, we came back to the reunions and you see these people and they'd be there telling you, "I wrote a forty-page paper for you" and I foolishly said, "Forty pages...I don't think people write that big of a paper." It was a writing-intensive course. Only to go that fall and check and there were numerous forty-page papers. So, I should have known. The other thing is, in the course of the time of was involved here, I was involved in a number of things: the Judaic Studies Program, which in some ways I'm really proud of. I spent thirteen years getting it going, and all of that was due to someone failing to know what I think everyone should know: what you serve when you have visiting Jewish scholars. And, yes, we can all laugh now but it was a plate full of ham and cheese sandwiches. But they were on Jewish rye. Honestly. And I raised hell about this. And it's good, actually, to be a faculty member because they can't really threaten to fire you on the basis of that. And I got a "put up or shut up" and I took up the job. I did that. I was also quite heavily involved in the Peace and Justice Program at several points and a long time with the union. Indeed, I was among the people who had been in a union or two before I got here. And I was, along with a group of people, among the people who decided that we should see if we could organize. And, as you well know, at that time at least, we were among the very few. Now we're among the others, but it worked well. We had the best union organizer you could ever come up with...the University President.

FH: Who was not, of course...that was not his...

SC: That was not his thing. It was not his desired end. That was definitely ironic.

FH: Although one thing, you know, you didn't mention but I'm certainly going to make sure you talk about is the Honors Program. I know for years you directed the Honors Program. You...I think you continued to direct it almost until you retired.

EC: I did direct until I...I started in 1976 and I directed it until I retired.

FH: Now, the Honors Program had started actually...

EC: I inherited it. I did not begin it.

FH: Right. It started when I was a student in my either sophomore or junior year...1962 or '63. And the...I don't know who was the director, but Matt Fairbanks was very much involved at the beginning, Tom Garrett, Ed Bartley, and I think there might have been, you know, one or two others. And then I don't know who...who did you actually, you know, inherited the program from?

EC: I inherited it from Tom Garrett.

FH: Tom Garrett...okay.

- EC: And I...it was at that point a junior and senior level program, and I expanded it backwards. So, it covered sophomore year. So, you applied...so, under my direction, after a few years, you applied during the second semester of the freshman year and then were in the program for three full years.
- FH: Now one thing, and I know I've talked about to several people, and I know, you know, I know it was, you know, something you were concerned about in the later years. We have now got multiple program that, they're not necessarily called 'honors' programs but their directors, and certainly the students who are in them, like to think they are.
- EC: Yes.
- FH: The Special Jesuit Liberal Arts Program, the Business Leadership Program, and SOM, and there may even be others out there that I'm not familiar with...
- SC: Now the STEM one their working on...
- EC: There's now a STEM one they're working on.
- FH: And I wonder, because my...and correct me if I'm wrong, but the Honors Program has always had a rigor to it; in that, you know, every year you have people who apply to the program and get in, but they don't finish the course...more often than not because they can't do the Senior Thesis. The other programs I think have a, you know, their...their retention rate is...is much higher. And I'm wondering, you know, if you're concerned a little bit that the...the Honors Program...the genuine Honors Program is...is being somewhat undercut by other, you know, programs that are certainly valuable programs, but they are not...they are not honors programs.
- EC: I think...I think the Honors Program is somewhat undercut by the multiplicity. I have a mixed reaction. On the one hand, I think it good to have a maximum number of opportunities for students. And if those other programs work for them, then I don't want to say "oh, you shouldn't do *that* because we have this other one", because the Honors Program – as it's constructed – can't handle everyone that might want to be in a special program. I think the real strength of the Honors Program is its diversity of majors and the diversity within the program. And the other programs are much more specialized. And while I can see the attraction of that for students, I wish they were less attracted to it because I think that the diversity...the opportunity to both do a tutorial out of your major not just in your major, to be in classes in the Junior Seminar where you read a variety of books with a variety of majors, has a real advantage for the student as a student and for the student as a potential working person in the world at large. So, do I wish it weren't? I'm...you know, as I say, there are advantages and disadvantages.
- FH: And the Honors Program...you were the director. I'm trying to remember, but I think if I'm not mistaken, you reported to the Dean of the CAS...in terms of reporting-wise.
- EC: Yes. That was the reporting-wise.

FH: And I'm sure there were times when you said "well, the Honors Programs is not just CAS – this is for every student in every college."

EC: Well, it certainly was but the Dean...when I was there, the Dean and I had no debate about that.

FH: Oh, okay.

EC: The Dean agreed that it was for any student in any major, and I certainly made it open to any student in any major and we had a diversity of majors. So, though I reported to the Dean – you have to report somewhere – it wasn't a problem.

FH: And Steve, you mentioned the Union Fac. But I know you were...you were involved when the Union, you know, came in – I think - 1973.

SC: The Union when there wasn't really a union yet.

FH: Yeah, for several years we were...well, actually the original Fac actually goes back to before you came.

SC: That is correct.

FH: 1969 - when we had a lot of campus unrest - there was a [unclear] that the late June McGinnis presided over. And one of its recommendations was the creation of a Faculty Affairs Council, which was done. But for several years it was...you know, it collectively bargained but it was not under the NORB.

SC: That's right. We collectively bargained – I think they call it something like a 'free will bargaining'. So, in some sense, it did not have the binding force of the law when you do 'collective bargaining' under the NORB. I think...well, if you had told me the day that the two of us walked in here and began to feel out the place that there'd be a union here within a relatively short time, I would have sent you out to get reexamined. It just didn't fit. In lots of ways, it just didn't fit the place. And you know this, at least as well as I do...if not more. However, given changing situations, you remember the anxieties of those years. We were short on students. At one point, we had one of the dormitories...we had two of the dormitories, I believe, empty. And you obviously...

FH: I remember once when they had truckdrivers.

SC: And they had truckdrivers in another one and...which was, I think, mutually interesting on both sides. I think the truckdrivers couldn't believe where they were, and the students and staff couldn't believe the truckdrivers were here. But then it worked out well. There were no issues. I shouldn't suggest that. But there was that here. And obviously some of the changes that we've talked...will talk about our time at the University are related to some of that. This is the point at which we started thinking about women coming in, and should we be becoming a fully co-educational school and

the like. But the fact of the matter was, the first time we sat down we already had the... there were five of us: Tom Garrett was mentioned, John McInerney, myself, Jack Earl, and I think I just missed someone because there was five. We sat down and we began, and Father Hanley was a lawyer, and he made some broad assumptions about the fact that he was smarter than all the rest of us.

FH: And he was, of course, by profession a labor lawyer.

SC: Yes, yes.

FH: And, in fact, after that original fac was created, Dexter Hanley published an article...

SC: Wouldn't surprise me.

FH: ...in which he says, "this thing we have at the University of Scranton should be a model for other schools."

SC: Yes.

FH: And for a few years it worked. In fact...in fact, Dexter Hanley – to his credit - in 1971 the Nixon, you know, ordered a price or a wage freeze on...

SC: Yes.

FH: ...the country. And initially, it applied to faculty members. But Dexter Hanley went out of his way to make sure that it was only a few weeks into the semester before faculty got the raises that, you know, they had coming. Now, it's unfortunate that my...now, I don't know if you agree but Dexter Hanley...a few years, maybe two years...maybe even a year and a half before he publicly became ill...

SC: Yeah...

FH: ...his whole personality had changed.

SC: We should probably indicate, right at this point, because people listening...watching this are not aware of the fact that he turned up with a mass of cancer...

FH: Yes, brain tumor...

SC: ...on the brain on the side of his head which was appallingly big when we saw the amount of results when they brought him back and so on. It was pre a number of things we do now, and they were not aware initially of what was going on until it became – pun not intended – deadly obvious. I would...I would agree with you. I would also agree with you, however, that some...he was interested in 'putting one over' on us. There were a number of specifics that he assured us were one thing and, in fact, they ended up being another, which is always a very good thing if you wish to organize a union. If someone has been 'taken', they're much more inclined to look to that. The classic funny was that

he proclaimed to people in the community, being unaware of the fact that he was in Scranton, about how much smarter he was than the faculty. And he proclaimed that, at one point to a number of trustees – there were a number of trustees who were University graduates, and they were - you're not going to be surprised about this - in parallel years to a number of people on the faculty. And it is clear about ten minutes after one of these meetings, it had been relayed back to the faculty. It provided me with a really cheap but tremendous [unclear]. One day, when we were discussing what he was doing, and I said, "Dexter Hanley...Father Hanley...believes that he is smarter than we are." And of course, there was a lot of rustling in the place in the old Loyola Hall with the angled lecture rooms. And I said, "I'm willing to concede that he might be smarter than I am because [unclear] aside, but he's not smarter than all of us put together." And we got a...well, he put his foot in his mouth and I pushed it down.

FH: And of course, one his [unclear] which was a lot to do with precipitating the union was his unilateral decision on Rank and Tenure. Back then, the Rank and Tenure Policy...there were eleven people on the board and a 6/5 vote was considered a positive vote. Now, the President could overturn it, which doesn't happen very rarely, but Dexter Hanley arbitrarily said, "I will not regard 6 to 5 as a positive vote."

SC: Yeah. And yes, when away from campus somebody asked – they were having very distinct problems in a smaller... and we were a pretty small...Catholic college - what it was about, and I made that crack I made about him being the union organizer. Several people from the area – not from the University of Scranton but from King's and Marywood - died laughing because they understood. In fact, he was probably the single clearest person to go to [unclear]. When we went to...we took a year...well, we took more than a year. We took two full summers and a year off when I went back to Marquette. And during that time, the vote came up. And we assure you, that our votes were in there. We got them, we put them into the post office, signed, we got the receipt back and everything. It was an overwhelming blow.

FH: Oh, it was. I think there were maybe four, maybe six...

SC: I think there were four. Well, I think between the two of us I think we were right on four and we had over a hundred people. And even the process of going through the hearings indicated the type of thing you're talking about. A union could exist in an institution of higher education only at a certain level, I guess we should say. And the famous Yeshiva case would seem to have put us now [unclear]. The case had a lot to do with who makes what decisions – decisions about hiring, promotion, and the release. And faculty generally do participate in these. And the point you bring up, Frank, was important because when we sat down there, the expression 'a mature university' was employed. And as a mature university we didn't belong in a union because we had a substantial footing in decisions of administration and so on. That we were anywhere – whether it was in an academic institution or otherwise – we should not have been involved. The crack of one of the people – and I think it may have been Matt Fairbanks – was 'not mature, maybe adolescent'. And they drove the hearing examiner crazy. He...I think he probably didn't want to take another one in an institution of higher education again. But



the decision was very clear on their part. We had a very decisive vote to become a union and that's the one we're talking about. And I think the effects were clear.

FH: Right. Although again, the administration...you know, they grudgingly accepted the union, but they fought tooth and nail. They wanted department chairs not part of the bargain. They did not want librarians. And of course, they lost on both accounts.

SC: Yes. Can I quote Father Hanley? Father Hanley referred to the librarians as 'old ladies in tennis shoes.' And we relayed this back to the not-so-old-ladies – and I don't remember any of them in tennis shoes. And he had said that they were simply given rank and so on because he didn't want to give them the money, and the almost-exclusively women in the library agreed. And we have never had any problems. We have the best researchers around when it comes time for negotiations. We've always had strong support. And yes, we insured that they're there because legitimately they are instructors. Yes. So that was...that was an interesting thing.

FH: But speaking of Fac...I'm wondering...you've been involved on Fac as an officer, you know, for a long time...from its beginnings almost really up until you retired.

SC: Yeah.

FH: And the thing is...our union...yes, it's a union. It's under NORB. But we have been able to set up mechanisms where not everything is collectively bargained.

SC: That's correct.

FH: The Faculty Handbook Committee in its entity has got pretty much an equal number of administrators and faculty, and they can, you know, they can discuss...

EC: Oh, do they discuss!

FH: And Ellen was a charter member of the Handbook Committee...

SC: Charter member until retirement, right?

FH: ...and served longer on the committee, I think, than anyone ever did. And the Handbook Committee is able to deal with issues...now again, technically anything the Handbook Committee signs on has got to be...you know, the Union has to sign off on it and the Trustees...

SC: ...and the Trustees.

FH: But...

EC: And that's more than tactical, I mean...

FH: That's more than tactical, but usually the Handbook Committee...it grinds, you know, very small, but when it's finished it...Appendix 3, the Termination Appendix...

SC: Yes.

FH: ...that...that took about five years. But...and unfortunately that has been, you know, had to be invoked a couple of times. But it works.

EC: Yes.

SC: Yes. Can I comment on that? The...that's a particularly good case in that we never crossed paths. We attempted to maintain independent spheres. It was intentional and it was successful. The very first faculty meeting we were at somebody wanted to get an argument started between the two of us. This is the basics of why we did what we did. And unfortunately, he ended up in crossfire. I think 98.9% of our opinions cross each other, you know, with relatively little distinction, even. We went home, we sat down and had our meal and we said, "you know, we've got to avoid having that happen again in the future because our colleagues are not going to like us." But, interestingly enough, you mentioned that that was one of the products of the Handbook Committee that I sat on, and it is very, very successful. I also, unfortunately, was a grievance officer involved with one of our major release cases. That's all we're going to say about that. However, to back...the AAUP. We finally found out that our union would become affiliated with the AAUP, which is not that unusual although we are an odd duck in their group. And they ask for, as part of the general effort to assist all our colleagues everywhere, for our handbook and for...without any identification of individual people...our contract...the way it operates. And we sent it to them. We had solicited information from them. They had provided it to us. And we heard nothing. And I found this odd, so I was on the phone with a guy one day and I said, "So, what did you think about it?" He hesitated, you know. We have something invested in this, you know. He said, "Well, let me tell you something interesting." He said, "We have been asked and we gave a copy of that to a college that is similar to yours." And he said, "They said back to us 'How can we get this?'" I said "Negotiate, negotiate, negotiate!" and he was a labor lawyer and he laughed. So, yes...

FH: And the handbook came out...

SC: ...it was very successful.

FH: Again, it is part of the union process, etc. but it also functions often as a governance body. And I know, of course, that is, you know, on paper, you know, mixing governance and the union...

SC: It's a two-edged sword.

FH: But we've actually been able to have the two kind of mesh.

SC: Yes. And that was part of what some people complained about. I don't want to derail us here, but the institution – meaning the University – has a contract which is very different from...example: some of the Penn State campuses. I don't know much about Main, but I know about the other ones. Theirs is much more specifically something that would resemble what I experienced when I worked as a teamster or in the AF of LCIL. And we do not characteristically have that arrangement.

FH: And speaking of governance, actually one of the foremost governance bodies – specifically for the faculty – actually, I think, was born in the Faculty Handbook Committee. And Ellen, I'm pretty sure you are as much as any other single individual the founder, because I remember. I was on the Handbook Committee with you at the time, and I know we were...and we came to a consensus. There needed to be. The then University Synod just wasn't working. The faculty wanted something that would be, you know, more, you know, for the faculty. And...and I know it was out of those discussions that the...and I think you were...you had a lot to do with writing the very original constitution of by-laws of the Faculty Senate.

EC: Yep.

FH: Now, I know you weren't the first president. I think you might have been the second.

EC: I think I was the second.

FH: Hal I know...Hal was the first. But as I said, the Faculty Senate, which is certainly a governance body, really had its origins in the proceedings of the Handbook Committee.

EC: One of the things that I think was...has been so valuable about the Handbook Committee was the willingness at those meetings...which were always a diverse group...the faculty and administrators...but a willingness on both sides to articulate their positions, to listen to the other, to work toward an agreement. That's not always easy to do, but that's very much how the Handbook Committee has always worked. That's part of its history, it's part of its modus operandi, and that...so that by the time the Handbook Committee has agreed on something, both faculty and administrators are almost always willing to sign off because all of the positions have been articulated and fought about in some cases...certainly thoroughly discussed.

FH: And I would agree with you. And actually, there's an episode...for about two years, as you well remember, the Faculty Senate...or the Handbook Committee disappeared. It didn't meet because, at the time, we had a President who...who, you know, he's said it to me, you know, word for word: "You either have collective bargaining or you have shared governance, but you cannot have both." Something which I tried, you know, for about a half hour I tried to dissuade him of that, but he...but again, during that period, not coincidentally, the relationship between the faculty or the union and the University administration deteriorated to almost its worst, you know, level, you know, going back to Dexter Hanley.

EC: Yep.

SC: Yes.

FH: But I'm glad that the Handbook Committee is now back up and running...that the...

EC: Yes.

FH: The last couple of Provosts have recognized its importance.

SC: They should. I tried to convince...went off campus and a couple of places when this came up...I tried to convince people to recognize that there are a number of real assets to an administration when they have this kind of arrangement. Among other things, you always have someone who is aggressively importuning you for promotion, more money, etc. When you have a collective bargaining arrangement, you say "I'm sorry." Do the Pontius Pilate thing. "I'm going to wash my hands of it."

FH: Yeah. I mean there are some things, I mean the Handbook Committee can do... but the Handbook Committee has historically never involved itself in compensation.

SC: Correct.

FH: And, you know, when the contract...you know, it's a three-year...usually a three-year contract and the salaries are set. And if you don't like that, wait until the next round but...and same thing with Rank and Tenure. There...but the Handbook Committee can...it has tweaked the Rank and Tenure policy, but again it has always done it with the, you know, the...

EC: But there's a difference between tweaking Rank and Tenure policy and making decisions in individual cases.

FH: Oh, yeah. No, that process...

EC: And it has never done individual cases.

FH: No.

SC: The institution, the administration, the faculty, the Handbook Committee, and the Union all learned by the mistakes. And that's basically where the tweaks started to come in. The realization that you couldn't have someone proceed through their probationary period with 'good' to 'excellent' on everything and then get up for tenure and someone say, "I'm sorry, you're not going to be tenured". How does this happen? It shouldn't. And so we started reviewing the process, and I remember being involved and she remembers being involved in that at a different level. And we finally ironed it out. And everyone...should I say this?...including the faculty had to admit to their part of it. The faculty would like, on occasion, to do the Pontius Pilate act and say, "It isn't us...it was them who did that." And no. So, we worked it out and everyone has their position, and they have to accept that position. Yes, unusual. Unless AAUP had said something

differently, they were really, really pleased way back when, when I was talking to them and were continually thereafter.

FH: Well, let me...again, we were talking about successes. Let's look at the reverse side of the coin, in a way. What would you each say were your biggest...well, I'll soften it a bit...the biggest challenges...things that you found, you know, you weren't able to do what you would like to have done and were, at times, frustrated by, you know, the system.

EC: Well, my biggest challenge certainly in the early days was being the only woman in the room...and I mean that literally. There were, when we were hired...there were librarians with faculty status but there were no teaching faculty. And they hired three women the year that I was hired. The following year one of them left, and the year after that the second one left. So my third year here I was the only woman teaching faculty. And more than once I would be the only woman in the room at a meeting. And some of my colleagues were wonderful and some of my colleagues were less than wonderful about that. A funny story of how this could play out: I was not infrequently taken as a secretary. I must have been. But anyway, I was in my office one afternoon and I could see coming down the hall a man I presumed was a bookseller. And he's looking at a list and he's looking at...studying...and he gets to my office and he's looking at the list and he looks at the name that says, 'Dr. Casey' and he looks in the door and he says, "Dr. Casey??" and I said, "Yes" and then he tried to sell me books. But...

FH: And also, I know you...

SC: And then she came home...

EC: And then, yes, I told him the story.

SC: ...and she tells me. I said "Now, was this guy approximately 5'9"?" and so on, and she said "Oh, he visited you?". And he came to my door, and at this point in the department there was more than myself as a lay person. But there were a number of priests...not all Jesuits...but a number of priests. And he comes and he looks, and he looks, and I unfortunately was sitting reading, you know, a book with my feet up on the desk actually, and he goes "Father Casey?", and I said "Yes, but not in the way you're thinking." And he had no idea what to say to me.

FH: And you've told this story...I've heard you tell it numerous times. But...it may not be your first, but one of your earliest encounters with the then-President Father Galvin. You commented about how he, you know, he was trying to, you know, he was trying to...you know, "We're happy to have you here."

EC: He had a habit of being friendly and expressing that friendliness by doing this.

SC: Little punch on the shoulder.

EC: Little punch on the shoulder. I'm mean he didn't hurt anyone. It was just this little...

SC: Friendly gesture.

EC: Friendly gesture. And so he and I were talking one day, and he does this, and I suddenly realize that...

SC: His hand is frozen.

EC: And then he suddenly realized what he was about to do and freezes. He did not.

FH: Now, now...he was also an athlete...going back to his high school days...

SC: College days...and a coach.

EC: Yes.

FH: And he was used to being, not just other men, but...

SC: Jocks.

EC: No, you're right. With jocks.

SC: And a coach.

EC: That was a jock gesture.

SC: Yeah.

FH: But also, you know, when you came, you know, in addition to the Fac, but the controversy...the Vietnam War, the fight over co-education, visiting in the dorm parietals, all of that was, you know, going on within your first, you know, three years here at the University.

EC: Oh, yeah.

SC: Yeah.

EC: Yeah. We came in '69, and both the Evening College and the Graduate School were co-ed. They admitted both men and women. But the Undergraduate Day School was all men. So when we arrived it was an all-male school with an all-male teaching faculty. And it was a deliberate...I later figured out it had been a deliberate choice to hire some women teaching faculty. That was a deliberate choice to move the school to co-education, and it became...they did, in fact, move in '72 and part of the reason...and that also became clear if one was here and kept your ears open...because they were having problems with recruiting enough students. So one way to double the possibilities was to admit women as well as men. So in '72, the first women were admitted to the Undergraduate College.

FH: I mean, we've made it...

SC: Can we put two names in there? One of them responsible for a lot of the consideration in this is Father Bernie McIlhenny.

FH: Of course. And Father McIlhenny...there were some...the late Bernie Suppe, who I think chaired a subcommittee in the University Senate that was, you know...

SC: Yes.

FH: ...where co-education, the ball, got rolling. He was, you know, he was for it on principle. Bernie McIlhenny...it was a question of...you know, he was looking at the...

SC: Figures and...yes, yes.

EC: Yes.

FH: ...you know, climate of incoming students, and he told...and of course, at the time, his boss, then an AVP...Joseph Rock, was dead set against it and remained up until it happened and then he found ways of trying to take credit for it.

EC: Yes.

SC: The other person, however, was Steve Ryan...Dr. Steve Ryan...

FH: Steve Ryan, oh yes.

SC: ...from the English Department. And you have to tell him what he said to you about the...he said "Well, I think it's about time."

EC: Oh, yes. Steve was Chair of the English Department when I was hired and told me after I had been hired and was here that one of the reasons he had...that he thought it was a good idea for the men on campus to know that there were such things as intelligent women. And he said, "And I'm not just talking about the students."

SC: And maybe we can include the man who made the comments about the old ladies in tennis shoes, but...yes. Yeah.

FH: Yeah, yeah, yeah...

SC: So it...that part was very interesting.

FH: But it...

SC: She hasn't mentioned it, but I should comment that for the entire time...this is the union interested person...the entire time she was here she was underpaid.

FH: Oh, yes. From the Fac...I know this is some years ago...but Fac, on the one major study...

SC: Yep.

FH: Joe Fusaro, I think, was instrumental...

SC: Oh, yes.

FH: ...in putting a lot of the data together...

SC: Correct.

FH: ...for that.

SC: Good studies...

FH: And as a result, there were adjustments. They didn't come as fast as many would have liked, but they...at least they started to correct things.

SC: It is one of those things that evidence is clear enough. It was difficult. No body wants to discuss salary. Interestingly enough, after it was no longer germane...that was when Ellen and I were considering leaving...we announced that we had solved the problem. And it was still, in fact, the problem. And I will go no further on this part of it. An individual that we know at the University said to Ellen on Monday...a substantial individual at the University: "Maybe this is a foolish question to ask you, but were you underpaid? I shouldn't have asked you that, because it's obvious", he said. And he had occasion to know. And that was, you know, was one of those issues. And even though she didn't mention it, I'll mention it.

FH: But you've mentioned, you know, well...Steve Ryan, Bill Osterle, but, you know, over the years and, in fact, going on even in the later years...are there people who kind of stand out that you regarded as being, you know, important to your own careers and/or important to the University...who you would kind of single out?

EC: Well, I always hesitate to name names because they're the names you're not naming.

FH: Well...in this case, you know, the names you mentioned are being mentioned as a compliment.

SC: Yeah, some of the interesting things...both of us got along with Steve Ryan very well. And some years after he died, I'm out doing some...actually, I was at St. John's at a summer thing that I was invited to...and I ran across a book and discovered his interest in...when he was at Loyola University in New Orleans...in trying to overcome the problems interracially. And I remembered a number of times the little pushes and so on. I spent a substantial amount of time on with Shirley Adams, who was our Dean of the



Evening School and...well, the longest serving woman in the administration. I'm sure of that. And that was interesting because we were working on doing diversity with the faculty for curricular ideas and...so anyway, here I am and I'm looking at this booklet, and I discover that he was substantial in the organization and in the area there of a Catholic interracial conference and so on. So, back to the University. We did it, and I think Shirley got the job because 'the boys' didn't want to do it. And so she ended up being "stuck with it." But she took it and ran. We did a considerable amount of work on that. And we found out that there were a lot of allies like that. That also is what we are doing in our archival work. That also is one of the most disappointing things that happened here. About two years after we had done...it was one year for three years and then another one, and then another three years. And I wrote up the final report which is in the University's Archives. No thanks to what I'm going to tell you next. We put all of the stuff together...tons of stuff. And we put it on the computer. So it was all on the computer. We were told that we didn't need the paper, or anything anymore. Two to three years after we had completed, I turned in the final report and so on. I had someone who told me we had never done anything on campus, blah, blah, blah, blah. And so I listened to her. I heard her out. And then I said, "except we have." "No, we haven't", she said. And I said, "I think maybe you better go online." And the next time I saw her I said, "What happened?" and she said, "There's nothing online." Fortunately, I didn't do what I was going to do which was say "You should have looked harder", because I went back to the office and looked for forty-five minutes, and she was absolutely right. The entire thing had disappeared. Gone. There were numerous courses that had been submitted for the University requirements. I found two of them on there. I don't know how come they were still there, but there were two of them sticking out there. Those were gone. There were all sorts of other assets including lists of people. So with a partner in three different years, we did a series of these and we met with all kinds of people across campus to work diversity into their courses. It was one, by the way, in which we had...at least I felt...good cooperation of the School of Business and as part of the AACSB accreditation. Some of our other colleagues weren't quite so happy about it. But just as a...

FH: Right.

SC: ...what happened. And there were a number of silent supporters. You mentioned Ed Bartley. He was great. The two of us used to bring the kids to shift them between us, and he was always there. He made them comfortable in the old faculty coffee room.

FH: Right. Right.

EC: One of the most extraordinary people that was here was Lou Mitchell in the English Department.

FH: Oh, yes.

EC: He was a blind, black man and a professor of English...taught 18<sup>th</sup> Century Literature and was also a gourmet cook.

SC: And a concert level pianist.

EC: And a concert level pianist.

SC: With a Steinway in his apartment.

EC: Yes. But an extraordinary person. And students would...the rumor went around regularly that he wasn't really blind because he would, in his...because students will sit in the same seats. And so he would hear something and say, "Joe, stop that."

SC: You should ask Frank about that.

FH: Oh, yeah. I had him as a sophomore the first year he came to the University in one of the amphitheatres in Loyola...the old Loyola. I think actually he did have us all sit in the same seats.

EC: Ok, he might have.

SC: I team-taught with him three times and he had them do that.

FH: But, you know, the class was, you know, was almost beginning. But I had the Aquinas...that was the day the Aquinas came out...I was reading the Aquinas and he said, "Mr. Homer, you know, put down the Aquinas." And, of course, he walked. He walked from the campus to his home in the Hill Section. He crossed Mulberry Street.

EC: Yes.

FH: And again, you know, there were a lot of people who questioned the extent to which he was blind.

SC: Although, he would have told you "you knew it if it snowed."

FH: Oh, yeah, yeah. Then there's no...

SC: Because the snow kills the sound, and he had to ask students to walk him across the street.

FH: Because of course again, with people who lose their sight, their other senses often become much, much more sensitive or heightened, so...

SC: Yeah. We got very friendly with him. We were invited, as numerous people were, to the house and we invited him back. I don't know whether we made his level, but he certainly ate our meals.

EC: Yes.

SC: Yes...

FH: Well, Steve, are there any people in Theology? And, of course, now it's, you know, it's not...I think it was Theology/Religious Studies. Now I think it's just Religious Studies, I think. Although, I could be wrong.

SC: Well, I don't know. Father Rock...the only reason it was Theology and Religious Studies was because Father Rock didn't want it to be anything other than Theology.

FH: Oh, yes.

SC: And by which he meant the pre-Vatican Council, or as a theologian would say, the Tridentine way of doing things...all the way back to the Council of Trent which instituted theology as a requirement for the clergy because of the fact that they didn't know anything historically established. So, they had a way of doing it. And the way of doing it was rather narrow, rationalistic, didn't deal much with Bible and so on. And a lot of people felt liberated when that came in. And so there was a lot of change and he did not like the liberation. He, by the way, an interesting little story...would inquire of my students who lived in his dorm about what I was teaching. Our students were very savvy. One of them said, "You know,"...they called me Mr. C..."You know, Mr. C., he was talking to me the other night" he said. And I said, "Yes...?". And he said "Oh, I knew how to handle this." And he proceeded to tell me what he did. And so, yes, I mean there was a lot of change there. And in the department, Bill Osterle was obviously very crucial. Although Bill, after I got to be Chair, proved to be a royal pain in the neck... I'll be polite...on several occasions. Who knows, you know? But, you know, we got along...along the way. There were more inspirational like...like...

EC: Lou?

SC: ...Lou and Steve Ryan and so on than anything else. And there's a lot of long-term friendships in there.

FH: Right, right. But of course, for a lot of reasons, Joe Rock was not the only one within the administration who, you know, they, you know, they scrutinized both Theology and Philosophy...

SC: Correct.

FH: ...a lot more closely than they worried about their departments.

EC: Yes.

SC: Correct. And that's a tradition that's related to what I was talking about. And during the time I first went to Theology studies in 1965, and through the time, through the '80s, there was a massive change in that. And at this point, Catholic theological faculties are all, to speak of, professionally trained. And that includes the clergy, who maybe trained in seminary, but they are also professionally trained. And some of the outstanding scholars in Scripture and History and so on are, in fact, Catholic now. That wasn't true

earlier. Particularly not in the United States. I mean, there was a tradition in Germany, a tradition in France, and a few other places...a place like the Institute Catholique in Paris, and certainly the major German universities had theological departments and so on. But that's massively changed.

FH: Well, you know, going beyond, you know, your own, you know, Steve, the Theology Department, and Ellen, the English and the Honors Program, what are some of the other things you've seen over, you know, that last forty-some years that, you know, as far as what here at the University, are there other developments, other programs that you think have...have, you know, resulted in, you know, significant and beneficial changes to the University?

EC: Well, the move in majors, which the University has shared in...and we're not unique. When we came, it was essentially Liberal Arts. That was what you majored in. And there was a small Business component. And now there's Health Education and Human Resources, and the Liberal Arts majors have declined dramatically. Students and their parents want practical majors with which they can get a job.

SC: Immediately.

EC: Immediately. That's right. Immediately. And the fact that studies have shown that, you know, five years out...certainly ten years out...there's no difference in terms...and indeed the Liberal Arts majors more successful and earning more money. But it's that "what are you going to be doing first year out of college?" And so that's a huge shift, and that's not unique to the University. But it's certainly a very large shift in terms of where are there majors. So, the English Department...and most of the Liberal Arts departments have become...they don't have majors. That's an exaggeration...they're service departments.

FH: And I'm hoping...I think you probably share my hope, my optimism...that the new Humanities Center...the Slattery Humanities Center that is, of course, the brainchild of Scott Pilarz...and I don't know if you've met the new director, Greg Jordan. I had lunch with him. Jeff Gingerich took me out to lunch with Greg earlier this week, and I'm impressed. He seems like a very, very bright guy. And it sounds like what he's trying...I mean, you know, yeah, the History majors are never going to start getting more History majors, English majors, but those departments can start providing courses that will serve in a very substantial way. Other majors...you know, Economics majors, you know, they can know their economics, but they can write, and they have some understanding of the Humanities, the Classics, etc. Greg said one of the things they're apparently really going to be pushing is digitizing the Humanities so that students taking Humanities courses will be at the same time sharpening their digital skills.

SC: Okay.

EC: Okay.

FH: And developing courses, for instance, the History Department...[unclear] the History Department is hiring a new hire next year...someone to teach the History of Science.

EC: Okay.

SC: Hmm...

FH: And specifically so that they can offer a course that will be, you know, something that will be valuable to Bio and Chem and Physics majors.

EC: Hmm...

SC: Yes.

FH: And I think that's one of the things they're going to try to do to get the Humanities departments...

SC: Yes.

FH: ...to, you know, realize that you're not just servicing your majors anymore, and if you want to serve you've got to develop courses that will do that.

SC: We have still...well, when we retired we had...still have the kind of silo mentality about these...not to pitch our kids' schools. We have three children who did not go to school here for the obvious reasons that their parents were here and talked too much. They were in schools in which there was more mix across disciplines and so on. But I have to think about the fact that I spent, I believe six years, on the Health Professions Evaluation Committee. And we, in fact, have things going on that needed to be enhanced. And certainly Mary Engel pushed her students...some of whom were resolutely and tunnel-visioned only that "I only need Biology and Chemistry" and so on. And some of our top students, as demonstrated by the graduate acceptances they got...scholarships and so on, had already begun to realize that they needed to read and so on. She enjoyed...well, she ended up coming after me and it wasn't quite an offer I couldn't refuse.

EC: Well...it's hard to refuse her.

SC: Yeah, it's hard to refuse her. It's not quite like you're going to get hit with a bad review or something. But she wanted the people in there from Philosophy and Theology. And as you know, there was always...I'll call them what I want...but 'bench'...a 'bench' scientist working with a humanities or the people like the nurses and so on.

FH: Right.

SC: Working with...so, yes, we have to do this. I mean, I agree with you, but then when I came here, I had a colleague who referred to my courses as a 'hodgepodge'. They were definitely not the courses that came from the seminary curriculum. And the amusing part

of it was the three little kids were there and there was a woman on the local educational television who ran the Hodgepodge Lodge and so this became quite amusing. He resented the Social Ethics courses that I was teaching. And you should not include History or Sociology or Literature. You know? So yes, you're right...a lot of change in there. A lot of change, and I think it will make things better. You know, I noticed on here there was a question about, you know, strengths and weaknesses. We talked about this. We cheated and talked about this, and we agreed on something here. From the day we walked in here until the day we leave here, the students tell us that they like to come here because it's a very friendly place. And it's one of those things...it's a real asset. On the other hand, if we can take a moment and be the proverbial gadflies, it's also a liability. And we ended up seeing this...she comes home and reports to me. I taught every single year. I taught a course which was writing intensive, Catholic Social Ethics, and dealt with questions of race, violence, and the American scene. And so she comes home and tells me this...that she had been using a book that I had recommended...and she says "Oh, we were out evaluating books today." I said, "Yeah?" And she said, "Well...". And it is specifically a book, the title of which is *Why Do All the Black Kids Sit Together*, written by a PhD with a legal background about kids and education and, you know, segregation and all the rest. And one of the students says to her...she says, "Well, I didn't think the book was very good". He said, "Basically I came here because the people that were here were like me, and I like them, and they like me" and so on. And gadfly here says to him, "So what are you going to do when you go out?" "Oh, I intend to go back to somewhere like I grew up, and I intend to be with people just like me."

FH: Do you think that might be improving a bit? Because I know we now have...even though we still don't have as much diversity in the student body and probably even more so with the faculty. But we have programs that...that, you know, no matter what ethnic identity a student has, they have no choice but that they're going to be exposed to things whether they like it or not.

SC: Ah. That, I believe, is one of our jobs. Yes, one of my good buddies...we hung together with Sherman Wooden who was in Student Life, I should explain, and Sherman Wooden is a rather unusual person. He's an African American. He has a family which is both African and American...meaning white and black and mixed. And they've lived up north here, where no one would ever think, since the 1840s...at least they've owned land up there since that period. And there was a black community up there...pre-Civil War. And yes, we had things like that, and we worked on it and so on. And sometimes we're working against the grain. I don't mean to suggest all of them. I always had a...and she did too, for that matter...always had an edge. Born Chicagoan, born New Yorker. And people will say "Well, this place is different." Yes, I grew up in...and I...and we had difficulties bringing people in. Once of the most infamous situations for me was a woman who had heard me talking about New York and came over and said that...she told me that the high school that her daughter had gone to, which was in spitting distance of where I grew up in New York City, and "I can't bring her here", she said. "I mean, where are the diverse people?" And I said, "Well, you've got a case and let me tell you the statistics" and so on. I said, "Now, if you want New York, as in the city, if you want New York than you're really going to have to go to New York."

FH: Yeah.

SC: I said, "But, you know, and we would like...and I would love to see your daughter in my classroom." Yes, I hope we have moved ahead. Unfortunately, you know the percentages I know. They could be higher. But in town, the percentages are slowly changing too...

FH: Oh, yes, yes.

EC: Also...

SC: ...after years of no movement.

FH: You know, leaving aside racial identity, there is now...I'm trying to remember the name of it, but I see it advertised...there is now a program that is specifically reaching out to students who are first, you know, generation college attendees.

SC: Yes, yes.

FH: Because when I was a student, we were all...almost all...you know, it was the kids whose parents went to college...

SC: Put your hand up...

FH: But it seems to me that the University is now recognizing that our population...and now students come in whose parents didn't go to college...

SC: That's correct.

FH: ...are now...they need, you know, assistance.

SC: Yes, yes. And they often overlap.

EC: And...

SC: We were here while the Indian Subcontinental Group came into Scranton.

EC: Yes.

SC: And indeed were invited by John Gavigan, then Student Personnel...you know...

FH: Vice President.

SC: Vice President, yeah. We were invited and we met the first guy who ever came here. He came to a little party at our house. So, that's a big change.

FH: Yeah.

SC: So that's...

EC: Well, when...

SC: Go ahead.

EC: We were also the first in our families going...the first generation in our families going to college, and when...and so were most of my friends...and when you're all the first generation that's relatively easy. When most of the people in the school are second or even third generation and you're the first, that's a much more difficult position. It's not the same, even though that was first generation and that's first generation. But it is different when the people around you know the rules of the game, if you will, because their parents have played it already.

SC: Or their grandparents.

EC: Or their grandparents. Yeah, sure.

SC: Yeah, you're right. We are, I hope, preparing people for a 21<sup>st</sup> century diverse world. Because that would be a desire that both of us had through the entire time we were here.

EC: And I would hope we're preparing them to want a diverse world...not just to deal with it, but to see it as a good thing they desire.

FH: Well, let me...well, actually, we've done several oral history interviews already and one of the things that has come up more than once are people who, when I ask about "what have you seen changing at the University", they make reference to the fact that the University, in recent years, is being run more like a business. One of them was saying, you know, there was a time when the University was a really caring community and, you know, faculty and/or staff were hardly ever simply terminated. But now, probably in the last couple of years...not so much with faculty because, of course, we've got, you know, the Union and Rank and Tenure...but with staff, there have been staff who have been kind of summarily let go, and mainly because of, you know, financial considerations. It wasn't that they were necessarily, you know...

SC: Incompetent.

FH: Incompetent. It was felt that, well, we just can't afford to keep you on. And I wonder if you're at all concerned about the University becoming more of a corporation, you know, entity than a...than an academic entity.

EC: Hmm...I hadn't particularly thought about it as an issue. Part of my immediate reaction...and I don't know that I want to stay wedded to this...is it can be necessary. Just as your household budget doesn't necessarily provide for everything you would like



to have, so a university budget doesn't necessarily provide for everything you would like to have. And I would hope that the University would not be arbitrary and dismissive and uncaring, but I'm not sure that hard decisions might not have to be made.

FH: Well, and I think we're getting close to the end here, let me ask if you, you know, at this stage, you know, if you are optimistic about the University's future...given all the challenges that we all know are out there to any academic...and to the University of Scranton included.

EC: Yes, the University is a very different place than when we came, not just because there's women and it's co-educational, but also because it's now essentially a residential college when it was essentially a commuter college. It has, over the years, adjusted to differences in the world and managed to cope, and I presume it will continue. I certainly hope it will.

FH: Steve, are you...

SC: It has expanded certainly it's vision to expand the students...where they're coming from. And, of course, every time you talk to the students they come back, and they go "It has expanded all of the buildings." I, at the point where we talked...we started in the early years at the University, we were seriously wondering whether it was going to hold up. I am somewhat optimistic as Ellen is. We're in...we're in tough times right now. Next door you can go to a college if you're willing to, like you stand up for the military, if you're willing to spend four years there, you can get a public college's tuition. And this puts us in a rough position...in a really rough position, particularly among the diverse people that we're thinking about whose parents have never gone to college and so on. So, yeah, it's...it is tough. So...someone would say that's my Irish American and French-Canadian background...both known for being pessimistic.

FH: I don't know. I mean, is there anything you were expecting to for me to ask, or anything that, you know, wasn't on that...that list that you think would be important to include in this?

EC: I don't think so.

SC: No.

EC: We've pretty well covered it.

SC: Yeah, I think we discussed our...we prepared our scripts.

EC: Yeah.

FH: Well, Michael, I think maybe...I mean, we're a little over an hour so...

SC: Yes, an hour and ten going on.

MK: Yes, well, just enough time to get over to the [unclear].

SC: Amen.