PATRICIA FAIRFIELD-ARTMAN ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

INTRVIRWEE: Jean Buchert

INTERVIEWEE: Patricia Fairfield-Artman

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[Begin CD 1]

PFA: —Dr. Jean Buchert on Tuesday, August 2nd, 2004. Dr. Buchert, as I indicated and read to you is my, my one interest, main primary question is: Tell me the story of your life.

JB: Well, I was born in a small town in Illinois near St. Louis called Belleville, Illinois in June of 1922, and lived there until I finished junior high school. My mother had died when I was four and my father remarried at about the time that I finished the 8th grade and he married my step-mother who was from St. Louis. He worked in St. Louis, that's fairly nearby so we moved to St. Louis at that point. To the big city and the big high school and so I graduated from Cleveland High School in St. Louis in 1939.

My father was a strict man of the old school who had worked his way up to quite a good job with just two years of high school, which was not unusual in those days. And so he saw no need for me to go to college. He didn't think women should do this anyway. He thought it would be fine if I married some bookkeeper or something of that kind. And so he refused to pay for my college education. So I worked at the company where he was an officer for a year and saved what I could. And as I recall, it was about $170 because he made me pay room and board at college. And I went down to the flagship university campus, then the University of Missouri at Columbia, that's in the middle of the state, 125 miles from St. Louis. And I worked, sometimes one job, sometimes two or three, for about a year and a half. And at that point, I was pretty well worn-out and nearly broke and World War II came along at that point in December 1941. And so I quit in the middle of that second year and went to work. He had required me to study secretarial skills in high school so I had bookkeeping, typing and shorthand, good old Gregg shorthand—

PFA: Yes.

JB: I still use it. And, as it happened at the end of my freshman year, I became acquainted with some University of Missouri students who were accustomed to traveling west in order to see something of the world while they took summer jobs. And there were several University of Missouri students who were working at Lassen National Park, which is northern California, not too well known, it ought to be better know. It's the site of the last

active volcano in the United States before Mount St. Helen's. So I had an interesting time working there for the summer and, of course, there was a group of us. And coming home, we took the long way home, you might guess, that is to say, we went by way of California—

PFA: [chuckles]

JB: —and the way down to Los Angeles and then we came home on the train. Coach, we slept in the coach seats at night. And we came across the Southern Route, as it was known and then across the Texas Panhandle to Kansas City and then home. That was the first summer and so when I decided to go back to work in the middle of sophomore year, I decided I wanted to go to a more interesting place than St. Louis, although it's a very nice city, really.

And so a friend of mine from that summer, also a Missouri student, was working out in San Francisco and she said, "Well, why don' t you come out here?" And so I did. And I went to work [chuckles] for the Army as a civilian with a Civil Service rating and it was the Army Ordinance Procurement Office for the nine western states, that is to say, the Army that oversaw contracting and manufacture of guns, ammunition, tanks, trucks, anything of that kind that the Army Ordinance Department used. And I stayed there for the duration of the War and it was wonderful, even then, San Francisco being the place it is. Of course, it had lots of opera and music, which I went to faithfully and wonderful art museums where I spent nearly every Sunday—

PFA: [chuckles]

JB: —because I was working a long six-day week and wanted some relief. So I used to go out to [M.H.] de Young [Memorial] Museum and admire the oriental art which is a very easy thing to do there. So after V-J Day [On August 14, 1945, it was announced that Japan had surrendered unconditionally to the Allies, effectively ending World War II], I resigned from my job and came back to the University of Missouri for the opening of school that fall. And at that point, since I had a savings account, I didn't have to work so much. And finished a bachelor's with honors in English and then a master's.

And at that point, there was the, rush of GI students after World War II and so I joined the teaching staff at Missouri for three years. And we taught these very good GI students who were highly motivated in these beaten up wooden barracks, buildings that had been built on the campus. And one of the professors that I got to know really well. I'd been in the Honors Program as an undergraduate in English, and one of the professors talked to me about graduate work and it turned out that he was about to accept a position at Yale, which at that time was considered probably the best English department, though Harvard would protest that. And he talked me into applying to Yale, yeah. And I went with a tuition scholarship and in those days tuition was only $500. You can think of the contrast now. [laughs]

PFA: [laughter]

JB: So anyhow I landed in the Ivy League, which was quite an experience. Most of the students, of course, were men, in the graduate school and most of them were from the top Eastern schools. There were a few others. And they would, you know, regularly give me the business in the dining room such as, "Oh, you're from a state university! Do you feel prepared for Yale?"

PFA: [laughter]

JB: And so my answer was only, "Well, we'll just have to see." But I had come with a master's degree and after a year, Yale agreed to accept the credit for the master's instead of making me start over. And so I was at Yale for, let's see, most have been '51 to '53 and I was quite interested in Italian Literature. I had sat in on some Italian classes at Missouri and had gone to the University of Wisconsin for a summer for Italian. And wanted to work on, this interest developed slowly, Italian influence on Elizabethan Literature, which was considerable of course—

PFA: Yes?

JB: —and I had already had a good deal of French also. [coughs] So at that point, I applied for a Fulbright [scholarship] to Rome and I think, thanks to Yale. you know, they have various influencing things, I got the Fulbright to Rome for a year—

PFA: Wow!

JB: —'53/'54. And then I came back and started working in earnest on my dissertation and after a year back, Yale had the policy then of trying to hurry the degrees in English, which are always very slow. Hardly anybody makes it in the minimal time. They encouraged me to get a teaching job so [coughs] I went—I taught at the University of Rochester in Rochester, New York for two years while finishing my dissertation. And very interestingly enough, it was the time when the women's colleges, namely, well, let' s say the Seven Sisters [unclear] not in those terms at Yale, were hiring male faculty because they decided that they didn't like an all-female atmosphere. They thought that they should have some men on their faculty.

So as it turned out, when I finished my degree, the Yale department heard of one job for a woman in English and it was in Greensboro, North Carolina. [cough] So I came here as an assistant professor in 1957 when, of course. it was still a women's college and it was the only women's college atmosphere I'd ever been at and by that time. We had 3,500 students, which made it very large. And it was quite a pressure cooker, I would say— [coughs] Could we stop for a minute?

PFA: Yeah. Sure.

[recording paused]

JB: So anyhow, I thought it was about the strangest atmosphere I'd ever been in. [chuckles] The department head was Leonard Hurley, who was a lovely man. He treated me as well as any supervisor I've ever had. And, I began teaching, of course, with the usual freshman and sophomore courses. One male professor near the top of the department had a strangle-hold on both Shakespeare and Chaucer, which is a very unusual situation for an English department. You know, that one person would have that kind of hold on courses. So I had to wait quite a while before I had an elective.

We also had classes on Saturday and so I began with six 8:00's since everybody at the bottom of the totem pole did and I am a night owl. So I found this rough I must say. [chuckles] The students were very nice, very obedient, they worked very carefully. There were very few from upper economic levels, I would say. Many of them came from farms, notably tobacco farms. And often their college career depended on the tobacco crop and its fortunes for the summer, but many of them were really very bright.

They, of course, lived under a good many restrictions. I had never heard of room inspections by committees of fellow students where, you know, occasionally they opened their perfume bottle to make sure it wasn't liquor, light brown liquid. And one of the first things I learned, of course, you have to give them credit for enterprising in a situation like this. They learned to put the liquor in the steam irons when they wanted to and I thought that was hilarious. [chuckles] They were under threat of, you know, suspension or something of that kind if they were caught. And since I'd been independent for so long, I was older when I entered the PhD program at Yale and I didn't finish until I was thirty-five. And I'd been independent for so long and, you know, in a sense rebelling against an authoritarian family too. I thought: "Oh my, what is this?" [chuckles]

PFA: [chuckles]

JB: And as a group, the students were, I would say, dominated by the ideal of the time which was: You might get a college education all right if you were lucky but that your future was in marriage. And what I noticed early on was that in sophomore year, if they didn't come back with engagement rings at Christmastime, things looked pretty gloomy, I'll tell you. Because they were all comparing rings and the ones without rings looked pitifully envious of the others and so on. [chuckles and coughs] And occasionally they would want to quit college for one reason or another and I would have frantic, very lovely, but frantic parents coming to see me, saying, "Oh, please, can't you talk her into staying in college?" And so you know, you got involved in students' personal lives in that way.

But also, there was a very strong group of student leaders on the campus who did a very good job at student government and the newspaper and the literary magazine, *Corradi*. And some of them were fairly free-spirited types. And some of that, I think, was due to the influence of some of the women on the faculty, women like Katherine Taylor who ended up with the title of dean of students. I forget what her original title was, but in a sense, duties were divided and she was the dean of Student Services or something of that kind. [clears throat] And some of the women on the faculty who had very good degrees and who, some of whom had been in the service, notably the WAVES. That is to say, the Navy branch for women, which had higher qualifications for one thing than the Army ranks had, I think it was tougher to get into the WAVES. Laura Anderton was

another one of those. So there were very active women students on the campus at that time and some active women faculty. Some of the other women faculty in fields like home economics, at that time were much more the kind of Southern lady type who could, they were pretty well steeled underneath, but they tended to keep their opinions to themselves to flatter the men in order to get what they wanted. You know, to speak sweetly to everybody, that kind of thing. So we really had two types of women faculty. But I think the women in English, by and large, had worked hard to make their own way. And one of the senior woman in English was May Bush who had a PhD from [Johns] Hopkins, from one of their top graduate professors so that though she was from the country club side of Greensboro and, you know, a prominent local family and all that and had some of the fluffy manners, also had the intellectual toughness that was very well pronounced. So the students, I would say, were very active.

One thing that distressed me a good deal was that before I came, the faculty had been involved in a very long, bitter fight over the previous chancellor who was Edward Kidder Graham. I never saw him. The stories about him were numerous and apparently, he had no idea of how to handle a faculty tactfully and they had disagreements over principles, you might say, in which he was more interested in following a kind of Great Books, Ivy League, Harvard-style curriculum. And some of the faculty had been trained in other traditions and apparently, he tried to force his ideas about curriculums, simply force them on the faculty and this had divided the faculty because they divided over Edward Kidder Graham and the way to do things. I think they all had reasonable standards, that was not the question—

PFA: Sure.

JB: —and it grew terribly bitter so that by the time I came, the English department was pretty carefully divided and most other departments were and they were hardly speaking to each other. And I found them, because of the long fight to get him out, it's one of the few instances I know of in academic history were, in essence, the faculty got a chancellor out of the job. There are other forces, of course, that helped with that but normally, you don't find that happening. You see if you get somebody out, it's the alumni—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —or maybe a major contributor to the campus, but anyway, they seemed to me to be almost exhausted by this fight and they remained permanent enemies in many cases for a very long period. And Katherine Taylor and Mereb Mossman had been on the pro-Graham faction and they were still very high in the administration. And I found it strange that someone like Mereb Mossman was able to acquire the power in the institution that she acquired. She had just a master's in social work but she was really clever at manipulating people and playing sides and retaining power. I was—I always felt the most indicative thing about her was a kind of joke and that is, for a very long time, under various chancellors for as long as she survived, she managed to retain the power to hand out the keys to the university cars from her office.

PFA: [laughter)]

JB: —you know, and that's an indicative of, to which the level the power reached. That together with absolute power of promotion, which, I guess, legally she had, but you know, wasn't terribly smart as a way to run a faculty. I was really never on her side. I was because she wasn't too kind. As we went towards co-education with [Chancellor] Otis Singletary, she wasn't too kind to most of the women on the faculty. She was, of course, good to her former colleagues in sociology but, beyond that, it was hard to know where her loyalties were. In other words, they were quite well-hidden and so on. And, I felt she wasn't a very good judge of personnel. [clears throat] But anyhow, it was interested to watch. And women's salaries were lower than the men's. And a department head would tell you that, "Well, the men had family responsibilities." And this was the justification for the difference. Well, many of the women, there were so many women around, had parents to support, various other obligations that sometimes were stiffer than what the men had—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —but anyway that didn't seem to work as far as promotions went. Various departments, I suppose, operated differently but, in general and certainly in the English department, one or two or maybe three full professors had the full word on promotion and granting tenure from assistant or associate. Was—In the English department, it was not until Bill [William G.] Lane came quite a bit later on that we had actual formal reviews of dossiers and promotions committees in all the ranks above the person were consulted in a systematic way as to promotions—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and the place was, as far as I could tell, pretty slow to adopt that kind of system. [clears throat] And that too produced, you know, as you might expect, produced a lot of bitter feeling—

PFA: Yes.

JB: Gordon Blackwell came in as chancellor the year that I came on to the faculty but he stayed just two years. I never did figure out why he took the job and I never figured out why he left. And then we had an interim chancellor, [William] Whatley Pierson, acting, who had been, had had a distinguished career at Chapel Hill but by then, was really quite elderly to be running a troubled campus. And of course, knew only a very few people. And finally, then, Otis Singletary was hired and I guess his main job was to bring about co-education. And it was a very stressful time because of the things that were given up in order to achieve co-education.

Admission standards were lowered for men so that [coughs] most of the men you got in the early days were not terribly bright. And somehow or other, most of the women,

faculty chairs, departmental heads, gave up the headships and men replaced them in quite a marked pattern. However, it was done, for whatever individual reasons, I won't comment on that. And on the student side, the thing that amazed me was that all those capable women students kind of abandoned everything to the men. So that very early on, men who were not nearly as well-qualified became heads of student government and managed the newspaper, the magazine. And the women were docile, sweet-natured helpers. And there were very few exceptions to that among the women—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and I don't know Otis Singletary was a hot-tempered man who kind of ran rough-shod over the faculty and did not really consult the faculty very much on most decisions or in most situations and this leads you to think that maybe he didn't respect them very well. I don't know. But very soon he left for some job that, I forget the organization, the Association of American Universities or something like that in Washington [DC].

And he made some speech to the faculty at a faculty meeting about: Well, he was going to a place, you know, that deserved him better or some such thing as that. He didn't put it in quite those words, [chuckles] but that was the idea. And he moved on. He—he made a point, he was much influenced, I think, I never said this to anybody on the campus, but I think Singletary was much influenced by the [President] John Kennedy administration. You see, this was about the same time. He had at least one older child whom we never heard about or never saw. Then he had two little kids, you know. Four and six or seven, something like that. And, of course, a lot of the women on the faculty fell in love with those two children and ooh'd and ah'd over them immediately. And, I thought, you know: You' re giving up your independence, your academic independence by doing this—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —but anyway that was part of the social background of the institution at the time. And, I don't know, one time I was on a committee counting votes for a faculty election for some of the high faculty positions and it was—ballots were cast during the faculty meeting and so when they were all cast, the committee had to withdraw and count them. And Singletary decided we were taking too long, so he came out to the back room, there was the kitchen area, I think, of the Alumni House and stood over us, pacing back and forth and, you know, snorting and sighing and really rushed us. And we made a mistake in the count as a result and it was for some high, like the Academic [Committee], like the Promotions Committee or something like that. And so we had to announce to our embarrassment that one of his favorites had not indeed been elected but that there had to be a recount. And, of course, he had a fit. And, you see, most of the faculty was intimated by this raging and the temper tantrums and the fast decisions and you name it. So anyway, when he left, I think there was a sign of relief on a large part of the faculty at that point—

PFA: Had it become co-educational through that?

JB: Yeah, during his tenure is when it became co- educational. And many people thought he was the one forcing the women heads out by one way or—You know, maybe by hinting—I'm not saying it was direct; I don't know how he did it.

In the midst of this, Mereb Mossman was not a feminist and she did nothing but go along with all these policies which, I guess, she was surviving in her job. You know, she became various things: She was dean of the college and then vice-chancellor and I don't know how the titles go. But anyway, she remained chief academic officer, which means she retained control of the academic ledger and the promotion system. So anyhow, let's see, the next one we got as chancellor was a man that was widely beloved and that was James Ferguson.

PFA: Yes.

JB: He had a very good PhD. He had been a dean at Millsaps [College] and understood the faculty viewpoint. That was all the faculty was asking for. And he was a very gentle man which meant that we used to hear rumors of how certain members of the Board of Trustees ran rough-shod over him. How much of that they did, I don't know. He was, he was our man pretty much, very popular.

PFA: So then Dr. [William] Moran came after him?

JB: That's right. And Moran came in to remain for fifteen years. I was on the Academic Cabinet when he was appointed and I was vice-chair of the faculty for two years in his earlier career—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —at the same time that Elizabeth Zinser was brought in as academic—vice-chancellor for academic affairs. Bill Moran is an interesting case. I—I do not agree with much of what he did. I realize he must have been under orders from somewhere. But nevertheless, one hopes that in a situation like this, if there is a question of academic policy and you know quality or direction or something like that. that the faculty would be consulted and the head of the institution would be with the faculty in that case. He came, he is interesting because he was an English major at Princeton, he told me once. But he said to me, "You know, I never could understand the 'Faerie Queene.'" [English epic poem by Edmund Spenser] That should have set off a bell in my head, I can tell you. But he went on to the Harvard Business School to work and take, I guess, a master's, probably an MBA in administration.

And the Harvard Business School is an interesting place for many reasons. It has a lot of good results, of course. The one thing it had was a kind of institute for new college presidents. They would go there for brief periods to learn something about, you know, business like running of a university. And this was the age when trustees and people like that were saying, "Oh, yeah, them faculty, they ain't never met a payroll." [chuckles] That viewpoint!

PFA: Oh, yeah.

JB: There was a lot of pressure: "Get a businessman to head this up so we can straighten it out." You know. And the man who started that program at Harvard, it turns out, happened to have married our previous dean of arts and sciences at Rochester who was a woman. And I visited them in their home in Lexington, up near Harvard, several times at one point in '63/'64. And his name was Bob Maree(?). He had a great deal to do with the introduction of the so-called Case Method that the Harvard Business School teaches in many of its classes. But his attitude towards faculties, I found appalling although I never argued with him. You know, he was not the kind of man I would argue with [laughs], though I was tempted—

PFA: [laughter]

JB: —You know, all faculty, faculty is faculty, I would tell my students, implying, you know, you humor them and you put up with them but they don't really count for too much. And, of course, see, I had come through Yale, that was my first introduction. I was finally close enough to an institution run the right way. That hardly ever happens where you have a head of the institution who has a good, strong academic background and is persuaded of the value of the liberal arts as part of education. And, yet, who has a good idea of systems and setting up committees and organizations, what have you. So that as a university, Yale runs extremely well. I can assure you of that. And I felt that Harvard was going along with this business, you know, of meeting the bottom line. Ain' t never met a budget, all that business coming through and I felt it was a disadvantage.

Well, Bill had—I think, I'm not sure, but I think he worked on that program at the Harvard Business School for a while. And then went to Flint, Michigan and got some kind of PhD in management. You see, that's a dangerous signal for this kind of thing. In Michigan, whether it was the University of Michigan or what, I don't know. But he was hired to come to Greensboro by a method that I found, again because of the Yale background, that I found somewhat objectionable. That is to say, when he came down here for interviews, there was something like one hour for meetings with the whole staff and faculty, a large group by this time and, therefore, dominated by one or two people who dominated the questions and answers, you see. There was no means for any smaller group from the faculty side to meet him. And granted those candidates meet various aspects—parts of the university, quite a system for going through and they meet mostly administrators. But various things became clear after a while: namely that he was interested only in bringing athletics to the campus. Big-time athletics, that is, with probably no realistic view of just how much it costs to bring in big-time athletics to a school in the situation we were in. In other words, you know, to build buildings.

And so when, as chairman of the faculty, I was concerned about academic problems that really should have been taken care of by the top of the university, questions of academic tone, certain ethical procedures, various things of that kind. When I would, by the rules, I was designated the official faculty spokesman of faculty concerns to the chancellor. So I would go see him and he was always very sweet, very nice, he'd pat my

arm, "Yes, Jean." And then the next day, he wouldn't seem to have remembered a thing about the conversation and most of the faculty members who got to see him at all reported this kind of: shall we say memory lapse about serious academic concerns. And that made it very difficult and—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —because the second rank of administrators, he had, by and large, did not have sufficiently broad view or education to, to take up the slack in what he was ignoring. And so that it was very hard to understand what was going on. And it made it made it all very difficult to manage the academic end of things and faculty concerns. The trustees, at that time, people on the Board and people like Jim Melvin [former mayor of Greensboro] who was a tremendous power in town and who, you know, has been campaigning for big-time athletics and nothing else for many years, trying to get them one way or another—

PFA: [laughs]

JB: —the latest is the baseball stadium downtown.

PFA: Yeah, right, for sure.

JB: He has his hands now on a lot of money through the Bryan Foundation and Louis Stephens head of Jefferson Standard [Life Insurance Company], and Chuck Hayes who was very well-intentioned who had never finished high school. Therefore, you know, if you wanted, it would have been wrong to do mostly, but if you had wanted to take any kind of academic question to the trustees, you see, you had a certain lack of understanding.

PFA: It was all male, the trustees?

JB: As far as—There may have been one woman, but nobody outstanding. And the thing is, of course, the chancellor here, as in most of the other campuses answered to Chapel Hill and as long as they kept Chapel Hill happy, Chapel Hill would not interfere—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and one remark quoted.

PFA: Is that a policy or just is it just of an unspoken policy, answering to Chapel Hill?

JB: I don' t know; some of it is legal power—

PFA: Okay.

JB: —some of it, I think, was Mr. [William "Bill"] Friday's dominance at the system, which ordinarily was a good thing—

PFA: Yeah.

JB: You could not always be sure. One thing from the Chapel Hill office that was quoted to me once was supposedly over there, they said, "Oh well, Greensboro is just great; they never gave us any trouble." And you see, you've got the background of subservient Southern women, the lack of representation of our alumni in the legislature. An Alumni Association that did not function to any degree that the [North Carolina] State [University] Alumni Association functions. For example, you got a weak sister situation—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and in that, we were always hoping for, you know, more of a voice in things—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and one thing that Moran did was to appoint a committee to work out a statement of mission for the university. And Stanley Jones at that point was vice-chancellor of Academic Affairs and he had been campaigning in the Academic Cabinet for just wiping out things like the foreign language requirement and he was backed, of course, by people, by some people in the business school, elsewhere also. But at this point, the business school was getting most of the attention from the administration. And, let's see, how does this work? Stanley Jones conceived of the idea and I don' t know whether it was entirely his or what, a large part of his background had been in university, [coughs] at the larger municipal universities. He ended up at the, yeah, University of Illinois at Chicago. So he used to argue with me. I used to argue with him. He was Phi Beta Kappa, I was the chapter secretary and I could, normally would take on anybody, you know, because I felt we should be doing some of the this. And he used to try to talk to me: "Jean, this is an urban university and it is that way, it's not going to be anything else."

Well, in the middle of this, this committee assigned to work up a new mission statement for the university came up with an urban university description. And I argued with Moran and Stanley Jones and various others: "Look, you have a distinguished history at this place as an institution of women, women's studies, you've got a nice rare book collection on women's history over there in the library and, you know, very strong nationally known departments in art and creative writing, especially writing. You see, this was day of Randall Jarrell [English professor, American poet, literary critic, children's author, essayist, novelist, and the eleventh Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress] and Peter Taylor [English professor, American novelist, short story writer, and playwright] and generally a strong emphasis on the arts and humanities. At the very least, you should continue this." But what they ended up doing was just weakening that whole side of the place, virtually destroying it.

PFA: So the women's studies program had not begun yet?

JB: Oh no. No. Well, it began under Moran. And, I've always felt it was wrong to change direction in that fashion, that it should have been kept and then other things built on it—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —but in the 70's, I was one of the people arguing for a foreign language requirement and that was in danger. I said, "Look, you got the various sub-professional groups here that are going to need languages, especially Spanish: nursing, teaching, law enforcement, you name it, go down the whole list and [unclear]." And, to this day, I understand that the business school is fighting a foreign language requirement even though they are now working on a study aboard program for their majors. But you wonder why, for example, this wonderful business school in an urban university has not grown to be a competitor for the strong business schools in the area, like Duke [University], [University of North Carolina at] Chapel Hill and Wake Forest [University]. Well, the answer is: You' re turning out under-educated students. And this is due to a narrow viewpoint of the majority of the faculty there led by the administrators they've had in the past. So we had various quarrels of this kind over the value of these intangibles in education versus the tangibles—

PFA: Yes.

JB: —and in the middle of all this, of course, the Alumni Association got very angry at Bill Moran. They got so angry, they continued fighting and they finally had to go to the Center for Creative Leadership for arbitration. And I knew some of the women in the Alumni Association and I said, "Why didn't you sit on him harder and make your wishes known?" I said, "This is the only, the only places who I know who in effect if they wanted to do it, could get the head of an institution out, is the Alumni Association." And they were saying, "Well, we just don' t like to do it this way." Here is the weak, Southern flower again at work. "Oh wow, we just don't like to do things that way." You know. And so I said, "Well, you had your big chance and you blew it!"

PFA: [laughter]

JB: So anyway, that's the kind of brief history of UNCG.

PFA: Yes. Were you at UNCG—well, you were but do you have any memories of the Civil Rights Movement?

JB: Oh some, yeah, sure, because I was here in 1960 and I know—

PFA: Hi. [speaking to someone entering the room] This is—Are you having a meeting? The [Greensboro] Sit-ins.

JB: What was I about to say. Oh, the Sit-ins. I haven't read Allen Trelease's book. I've got to get to that. He, of course, went entirely by the written record and, of course, with these various chancellors I have described and Mereb Mossman contributing the paperwork, what do YOU think it consists of? All right, this was during Gordon Blackwell's brief tenure. A number of our students were very much interested in the Sit-ins. They did go downtown to help. They were finally roped in—I forget some of the details, but they were, I think, told that they couldn't go. I think Allen had some kind of a record on this one in the book.

The atmosphere was interesting because, you know, you had to deal mostly in rumors and gossip at the time because nobody [unclear] come down very well on what was happening about this. And one thing that's important for Allen's record, I've got to have this out with him one day is that to realize that people around the university had the impression that the Cone Mills' workers, who were fairly all white, you see, and not unionized and Cone always fought the union, intended to come downtown and attack the black demonstrators downtown with knives. Now, how valid that rumor was, I have no idea, but that is the basis, I think, for trying to keep our students from going down there and getting hurt. Now there is a record of, at one point, when the white girls were really threatened, that some of the students from [North Carolina] A&T [State University] surrounded them and escorted them out of harm's way—

JB: —discussion in faculty groups about the demonstrations downtown.

PFA: Yes.

JB: I think some faculty members were probably very sympathetic with them but they would have been a small minority. It is again, you know, here again, you've got that long exhaustion still-influencing behavior from the Graham days. So beyond that, I can't remember much—

PFA: Yeah, that's fairly, pretty much—

JB: —but I've been told that Allen has something from a student who was threatened with suspension by Katherine Taylor, like this, for having gone downtown—

PFA: That's interesting.

JB: —but apparently, she can verify that. As for demonstrations on our campus, I don' t think there were any just small ones by individuals.

PFA: Someone told me that the Vietnam War when the Ohio State—

JB: Yeah.

PFA: —that had an influence on our campus?

JB: Yes, strange, I can't remember that reaction to—

PFA: Someone told me that, she didn't remember the civil rights, but she remembered that instance instead—

JB: Yes.

PFA: —as having a profound influence on some students.

JB: In terms of large demonstrations, I don't happen to remember any. That doesn't mean there weren't any—

PFA: Right.

JB: —what I remember best is my step-mother in St. Louis saying, "What are those students doing out there demonstrating like that?" She said, "Our whole neighborhood thinks it was right to shoot them!" Middle Western opinion—

PFA: Yeah, for sure. So do you still have contact with many of the faculty from that time?

JB: There aren't too many of them left.

PFA: Yeah.

JB: I see the group at River Landing [retirement community] at concerts and things like that.

PFA: I think—

JB: You know, a symbol for me of the strength of those faculties was the physical ed faculty, you have met some of them, the ones that are left. They were very broadly educated, they were the ones you could count on to show up at symphony concerts and, you know, I remember a group of us went to China with [James Clyde] Jim Cooley, [Jr.] who was in Chinese history at the time, about 1985 or sometime like that, before Tiananmen Square. And whose students showed up at the Tokyo Airport? The PE faculty's. There was a measure of the influence of the department, a very well-known one in the Woman's College days and shortly thereafter. And that, of course, thereafter, was pretty well destroyed as PE began to change and the emphasis turned to men. [laughter in the background] Sounds like we better get out.

PFA: Okay.

[End of interview]