

Interview with Sara Evans

Interviewed by Ann Pflaum

Interviewed on July 25, 1999

Sara Evans - SE

Ann Pflaum - AP

AP: This is Ann Pflaum. I am interviewing Professor Sara Evans, who is a professor of history and who has also been chairman of the Faculty Consultative Committee [FCC] this past year. Is that the right committee?

SE: Yes.

AP: She is a scholar, having written an important book on the 1960s called *Personal Politics: the Roots of the Women's Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left*.

Sara, perhaps, I could ask you to give a little bit of background on how you got into the academic world and, then, how you got to the university. Then, I think we should talk a little bit about your book and, then, about your experiences in the 1960s and, then, when you came to the university and your experiences here.

SE: About my academic life... I have always loved going to school and every grade I was in I wanted to teach that grade. My father, when I was in high school—he was a Methodist minister—became the campus chaplain at SMU [Southern Methodist University]; so I experienced campus life even as a high school kid, kind of hanging out with him there. Then I went to Duke between 1962 and 1966. I think, really, it was reading Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique* that made it clear to me that I was not going to just get a teaching certificate and teach secondary school, but I wanted to go on and be able to teach in college. Like most careers, there are twists and turns along the way. I got a master's degree in political science with a focus on Africa. I did that at Duke because I had spent a summer in Africa and was very engaged with that.

Then, I took off some time, worked in Chicago for a year in some campus ministry as a secretary and got involved in the Women's Movement. As an undergraduate, I'd been very active in civil rights and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement. So when I came back to North Carolina in 1968-1969 to work as a community organizer, I also had a new sense of why I wanted to pursue

scholarship in American history and, specifically, in women's history, which was that I was active in the social movement and I felt we had to know our history if we wanted to make history. So, I started graduate school in the fall of 1969 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, with the specific focus on the history of American women. At that time, there were no courses in women's history. There were, in fact, no women teaching American history at Chapel Hill. There was only one woman on the faculty—she was a lecturer—when I first started. But there were a lot of us who were graduate students who were shifting in this direction and, in fact, there were a lot of us across the country, part of a fairly large cohort of women, who were kind of driven into academia by the questions that were posed to us by social movements we'd been active in and, in particular, the Women's Movement. So that's the story. There are, obviously, many other pieces of it, depending on what you need to know.

AP: What did you do your dissertation on? Then, how did you get to Minnesota?

SE: *Personal politics*, my first book, was also my dissertation. Actually, I initially thought I was going to do a dissertation on women in the Socialist Party in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. I did a series of seminar papers on different topics searching for a dissertation. One was on a bread riot during the Civil War, and another was on working women in Appalachia and a strike in 1929, and a third one was on women in the Socialist Party. I was really heading for that topic when I met Mari Jo Buhle who was, then, writing her dissertation on exactly that topic. That, ultimately, became a very brilliant book. So I decided to shift gears. In some ways, I took that original idea and shifted it forward seventy-five years. This is in, like, 1972 that I was searching for a topic and people were beginning to write stories about the origins of this second wave of feminism that were completely wrong. They didn't have any sense at all of linkages between feminism and the Civil Rights Movement, for example. They all told a story that was, basically, institutional and revolved around the founding of NOW [National Organization for Women] and presumed that everything that happened after that was a split-off from NOW. I knew there was a story there that was partly my story. Luckily, I had some friends and mentors who encouraged me to do this. I had an adviser who was very laissez faire and I remember going to him kind of with my heart in my throat for fear he would say, "That's not history. You can't do that." But, he didn't. He let me do it. He gave me rope. I had people like Peter Filene who was teaching at Chapel Hill then and Bill Chafe had come to Duke.

AP: Is Filene, F-I-l-e-n-e?

SE: Right.

AP: And Chafe?

SE: C-h-a-f-e. Bill Chafe had written one of the first books in women's history called the *American Woman* and it covered from, like, 1920 to 1970, and Peter was in the middle of writing another of the early important books, one called, *Him Herself*.

The third person that was important to me was Larry Goodwin, also at Duke, who was writing his book on populism, but also teaching Founding an Oral History Program, and I took a course in oral history from Larry Goodwin, which gave me the methodology that I had to have to do this book.

That's how I came to the dissertation topic and the dissertation is only somewhat modified in the book. The first two chapters of the dissertation were collapsed into one chapter and substantially rewritten. The rest of the book is very much the same as the dissertation with the addition of a bit of research. I did take a summer and go clean up some bits and pieces that I wasn't able to get before.

I finished my Ph.D. in the spring of 1976. I had two job offers. One was from Sarah Lawrence College and one was from the University of Minnesota. I made a decision to come to Minnesota and I've never regretted it.

AP: It's rather ironic from our part of the university, which, as you know, is Continuing Education... I hadn't realized that there was a line in the *Feminine Mystique* that talked about women's roles and said, "The only two institutions in the country that seem to have it right are Minnesota and Sarah Lawrence in their continuing education for women programs."

SE: [laughter]

AP: This is very gratifying to find that phrase. We had skimmed over the book and hadn't realized that it was there.

SE: Minnesota was a real pioneer in continuing education.

AP: Yes, indeed. When you were mentioning a Methodist father, one of the crucial legacies for the University of Minnesota was George Edgar Vincent, whose father was the founding Methodist bishop of Chautauqua.

SE: Oh!

AP: The theory was that you needed a summer institute for Methodists because they didn't, generally, come from a class that had higher education.

SE: [laughter]

AP: So the idea was a sort of college experience in Upstate New York, so the founder's son became the vice-principal and the principal was William Rainey Harper, who became a president of the University of Chicago. Harper and Vincent both went to Chicago in the wintertime and Chautauqua in the summertime. Vincent rose to be dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Chicago and was recruited at age forty-five to be the third president of Minnesota.

SE: Wow!

AP: The legacy that he brought was the idea that a very scholarly university, in a city like both Minnesota and Chicago, should have tremendous connections to the city. So this is a legacy from the Methodist/Methodist, kind of a social service legacy. It shaped Minnesota very profoundly. A lot of people think that Minnesota's only outreach comes from the land-grant tradition, but it doesn't. It comes from both the research and the land-grant tradition.

SE: I'm glad to hear that. That's a good story.

AP: Yes, it is a kind of nice story.

Back to you. So you arrived in 1976?

SE: Yes.

AP: The president of the university is [C.] Peter Magrath.

SE: Right.

AP: Who was the chairman of the History Department in those days?

SE: When I was interviewing, the chair was Clarke Chambers and when I arrived, I believe it was Stan Lehmborg.

AP: It was pretty predominantly male. There weren't too many women that I can think of.

SE: Oh! that's right. Carol Gold was on her way out; she was serving her final year. Then there was Carla Phillips and Kay Reiersen and that was it.

AP: Now, how many women are there?

SE: I'd have to do an actual count, but I think there's about a dozen.

AP: That's an amazing change.

SE: It's a very, very different place now. It's been transformed, in that sense. It's very different to go to meetings where women seem kind of normal there. I never was demeaned or treated badly or not taken seriously. I never had any of those negative experiences, but, in a group of forty-five people, if only two or three of them are female, then you're a pretty obvious minority and you don't set the norm.

AP: One of the things that Stan [Lehmborg] has written in the history is that the History Department seemed—I think Clarke [Chambers] has made the same point—to have a pretty

comfortable way of dealing with different points of view, that people didn't sort of all become homogenous, but they were able to sort of handle their differences with reasonable grace. Does that sort of square with your recollection of the department?

SE: Yes, basically. What I know is that there was some kind of a revolution that happened in the early 1970s and I wasn't there for it. When Clarke became the chair, I think the department underwent a real transformation in its practices toward being far more democratic. In fact, it is often perceived in the university as democratic in the extreme.

AP: How would one perceive it as democratic in the extreme?

SE: For one thing, most decisions need to come before the whole faculty. The chair is really not at liberty to make a whole lot of decisions without consultation. We involve everybody, including untenured faculty in all of our deliberations about tenure and promotion. Most departments exclude the untenured faculty from those deliberations, but we include them. It has a wonderful de-mystifying effect because they see what the standards are. In fact, they are often tougher on each other than some older colleagues might be.

AP: That's interesting.

SE: But they also don't feel completely outside the process. We are very open about issues like salary. Every year, there's a whole faculty discussion of merit and salary and it is not a secret what anyone makes. That's the kind of thing that's considered extreme.

AP: Certainly, one of the things we're finding in the history is this pattern of the melting away of a more autocratic tradition that would have been the norm before the Second World War and began to, in various ways, get transformed, some colleges earlier than others and others later. I think that it's pretty much a relic of the past where you would have a chief on the St. Paul campus. In the Medical School, they even call some of them chiefs.

SE: Yes, they do.

AP: In the old days, this was just very autocratic.

Did you find your research life was supported here and you were able to do the research you were interested in?

SE: Very much. When I came here, I think I did seek out intellectual communities that were outside the History Department. I became very active in Women's Studies, for example, right away and found an interdisciplinary community of people with whom to interact around my research issue. But I always felt the department was supportive and thought I should do it. I guess I got one summer grant and, then, I got a quarter leave and was able to turn the dissertation into a book. The department was always very clear about what its standards were for tenure and promotion, which is, basically, write a good book. Once I did that, I got promoted. It's a

process that always is an anxious process, no matter how foregone the conclusion, but it was as humane as I think it could possibly be.

AP: So you would have received tenure then about five years later, seven years later?

SE: Only three years later. I got tenure in 1979, right when my book came out.

AP: I see...very nice.

Then you've been active, I know, in various forms of university governance.

SE: Right.

AP: Are there any highlights of that that you'd like to comment on?

SE: Yes. The administrative positions that I've held include directing the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies—I believe I did that between 1986 and 1989—and chairing the History Department. I believe that was 1990 to 1993. When I was chairing the department, I also was active in CLA [College of Liberal Arts]. I chaired the Council of Chairs one year. I chaired the CLA Assembly one year. In the last two or three years, I've been involved in the Faculty Consultative Committee at the university level and chaired that last year. I served as head of the Executive Committee for the Commission on Women one year, like 1994-1995, which was a 25 or 50 percent time administrative position—I don't remember which.

AP: What is the comparative number of graduate students in History, say, as the century ends? If we were to look back at 1975 and then 1950, would we see dramatically different numbers of graduate students in History? That may not be an answer you have on the tip of your...

SE: I'm not sure I can answer that in any definitive way. When I arrived in 1976, there were a large number of graduate students and it continued to be very large. I think in the 1990s, we have reduced the numbers. We certainly admit many fewer students than we did my first ten years and I came in 1976. My guess is that the growth in numbers of graduate students could be tracked through the 1960s and the early 1970s, at about the same time that the department itself was growing. This department grew enormously in the 1960s. We hired a lot more people and we shifted from being a department that was predominantly Europe, with its strongest linkages being modern Europe and the British Isles, with a smaller group in U.S. history and almost nothing else. By the early 1970s, we had a department which represented every part of the globe. It was a pretty conscious decision to develop Asian history and South Asian history and Latin American and African. People like Stuart Schwartz in Latin American and Allen Isaacman in African were hired to create graduate programs in those fields and they did it and they did it magnificently well.

AP: Is Schwartz, S-c-h-w-a-r-t-z?

SE: Right. He's at Yale now. He chaired the department for a while.

AP: Is it S-t-e-w-a-r-t?

SE: It's S-t-u-a-r-t.

AP: And Isaacman?

SE: I-s-a-a-c-m-a-n.

AP: Is it called African History?

SE: Yes. It's one of the premier graduate programs in African history in the country now. Allen is currently the head of the MacArthur Program at the university.

AP: Is that the program that chooses the geniuses?

SE: No. It is funded by the same foundation. It's a graduate program in International Development and Peace and it funds a large number of graduate students and has developed a very rich interdisciplinary community around International Studies. Allen would be an important person to interview, I think.

AP: Okay.

SE: The development of that program is now at least ten years old and it has brought in millions of dollars to the university and has had a real dramatic impact on graduate programs.

AP: Before I turn to university governance, if someone says to you, "Explain to me the Arts College at Minnesota"...

SE: Ha!

AP: "What's it like?" How do you capture it? Do you have anything that you would say? I think one of the important things in a book is to try to get our arms around something as fundamental and important but also elusive as the College of Liberal Arts.

SE: Right. I was here many, many years before I understood what CLA was or really got it that the arts and the sciences were separated. It's such a Byzantine structure that we have at the university as a whole. Yet, over time, as I got more active in different parts of CLA, American Studies and Women's Studies in particular, but then moving into governance, its sheer size and diversity is kind of overwhelming because it's such a big college. Its big departments, like History and English, are huge and it has some very small departments too. It has an enormous, enormous range. I think because we're a big urban campus and CLA is scattered all around, it's kind of hard to have a feeling for the college until you get more involved in either collegiate-

level committees, which bring people together across departments, or interdisciplinary activities of one kind or another. I feel like CLA is becoming more visible to itself lately. I suspect that prior to my coming in the 1950s and 1960s, it was more visible to itself. But there was a time there in the middle, when it had grown huge and, at the same time, we faced a lot of cutbacks, that it was hard to see it. It was hard to experience it as an entity. And I came right at that time, so that's why it took me a long time... Does that make sense?

AP: It does, indeed.

Do you have any thoughts about the separation of the sciences? Do you think that was a mistake... a good idea?

SE: I suppose if were to do it over, if I had the option to ask someone to rethink this, I would tell them, "Please, do." I think we're caught between the issue of scale. When I just said, "CLA is so huge," the thought of making it even more huge is scary.

AP Right.

SE: Yet, the separation from the sciences, I don't think is a very healthy thing for us intellectually and in terms of curriculum and in terms of the visibility of the arts and sciences within the university when we, in fact, compete for resources with professional schools that have much more political clout and much wealthier, politically astute alums. [laughter] I think it's too bad. On the other hand, whether you could make it work as the giant that it would have to be, I don't really know.

AP: Do you have a comment on the quality of students? Have you had some strong students that you recall that you've advised? What is your sense of the quality of the academic life of the university from the students you've seen?

SE: Ever since I've been here, I've always had a few students who were as good, I think, as anybody anywhere. The first student I advised all the way through a Ph.D. was someone I had as an undergraduate first. I think we've always had a group of students who you could put up against any other group in the country or in the world. At the same time, we also have an enormous range of student ability. I have felt a change in the last few years as the university made a conscious decision to reduce the size of its undergraduate program and to raise standards a bit. This is not just a matter of excluding students who are not as well-prepared, but pushing high schools to prepare students better. So I think in the last decade or so, we've seen students come who are, in fact, better prepared than we used to. That group at the top remains the same all the way through, but it's how wide the gap is from them to the students who are struggling and like any large university, we have some students who are still learning how to write and some students who write brilliantly.

AP: As you probably are as well aware of as anybody, one of our dilemmas as an institution is balancing our tradition of access with a tradition of excellence.

SE: Absolutely.

AP: That's probably a good segway into your experiences in FCC recently. Were you at all involved in the General College question in the early 1990s?

SE: No, I wasn't. I was really on the sidelines when that was going on.

AP: Remind me when you became active in FCC so that we can talk about some of the issues that you might have encountered.

SE: My term on FCC was a three-year term and I've just finished the third year, so I started in 1996, I guess.

[End of Tape 1, Side 1

[Tape 1, Side 2]

AP: The tenure crisis, the sort of short version as we've written it up, was that there were, essentially, three different plans. The president had one. The regents had one. Then a third one emerged from the deans of the Law School. Could you give us your vision of how did this plethora of views come about and what have we learned from this?

SE: I can give you a quick version. I think I also asked Gary Engstrand to send you his 800 page...?

AP: Yes. We, indeed, have read his 800 pages.

SE: Okay. [laughter] It's not very analytical, but it's filled with information.

My sense of this is that there were strong pressures coming both from the legislature and from the head of the Academic Health Center, [William] Brody, in an alliance really. Brody may have initiated a lot of this. He built relationships with people in the legislature around the theory that the main problem the university faces is the lack of flexibility caused by the tenure system. Brody, basically, persuaded people in the legislature that if we couldn't break out of the tenure system, then we could not deal with any of the problems that we faced. He also drew in several regents who espoused this view and who were also quite hostile to [President Nils] Hasselmo, without any doubt. So the first year of the crisis, you can trace these. Hasselmo, actually, wrote a memo in which he said, "There is a problem and we have to do something." He said things that he later regretted saying. I don't think they reflected his belief, but they undermined our commitment to tenure. The Faculty Tenure Committee—Ed Fogelman is a key person to talk to about this—took the strong perception that the regents wanted a change very much into consideration and actually revised the tenure code along lines that were [unclear] began the

tradition of tenure and peer review that we now inherit over a very long period of time. So it was the faculty committee that rewrote the tenure code to include [unclear] tenure review, for example, and to clarify many things. That proposal was completed in June or May. It was approved by the Senate and some faculty were not thrilled with it, but a real consensus was built and a tremendous amount of work went into it. When you're laying out the different positions, it's really important to say, "The faculty had a strong position..."

AP: Which year are we in?

SE: Was this June of 1996? I can track it.

AP: That's all right. I can talk with Gary

SE: It's the year of the big crisis. In that June, the faculty, with the approval of Hasselmo, sent to the Board of Regents a revised tenure code. They never acknowledged receiving it or discussed it or debated it or in any way dealt with what had come from the faculty. Instead, they asked that law firm, Hogan and Harneson, to create a draft of a revised tenure code for them. The president, basically, pleaded with them to accept the version that came from the faculty and they, basically, refused to speak to the faculty. There was this famous meeting at Morris where the leadership of the FCC—I was a member but not a leader at that time and Ed Fogelman was head of the Tenure Committee—were sitting there waiting and willing to be consulted or invited to speak, but they were never invited to speak, nor was there any willingness to speak to them off the record either, or privately. It was at that point that the Board of Regents kind of went off on its own to get a version drafted, which, when it came in, had language like "Faculty has to have a proper attitude of industry and cooperation," which, fundamentally, undermines the basic principals of tenure. It was that version that Nils Hasselmo finally came out against. It was because of that version that the faculty signed cards to make it possible to file for collective bargaining because by filing for collective bargaining, we could legally stop the board from changing terms and conditions of employment until after an election. A lot of people who were not at all sure they wanted collective bargaining signed cards and encouraged other people to sign cards. Certainly, the FCC advocated, and so did the Regents Professors advocate, the signing of those cards so that we could stop what looked like a kind of juggernaut at that point: a board that was felt to be out of control to those of us who were watching from the sidelines. I know that that board was not totally unified within itself, but it was extremely difficult from the outside to see what was going to happen. The proposal that came from the dean of the Law School used a legal technicality, which is that the professors in the Law School did not sign cards and did not choose to be part of a collective bargaining unit should one be selected. So technically the Law School was not covered by the cease and desist order.

AP: So therefore, he could make...

SE: Therefore, they could make a change. He came forward. It was a brilliant maneuver when he gained the floor at a meeting, very much against the will of the head of the board who didn't

want him to speak, but was not publicly able to refuse him the right to speak. He put a different version on the table. I would say that that version was, in effect, the same as what the faculty had proposed in June. It wasn't exactly the same words, but in substance, it was the same.

AP: Were there not two Sullivan versions?

SE: It went through some revisions. As soon as it saw the light of day, there was outcry about this and that. Then there was another. It did go through some changes, yes.

AP: Who were the chairmen of the Board of Regents during this period? Did they change or was it one?

SE: During that period, Tom Reagan was the chair. These are all questions that you really have to verify with better sources and memory.

AP: Oh, absolutely.

SE: I think Pat Spence may have been the vice-chair. Jean Keffeler was probably the most important advocate of getting rid of the tenure system, as we have known it. She persuaded several other regents to support her position.

AP: Do you have any sense that her experience as a hospital administrator may have shaped that or do you have any sense of what may have shaped her views?

SE: I don't know enough about her to even speculate on that. I really don't know.

AP: Some people have even—perhaps the Pollyannas—said that things ended up better than they had been in spite of a very rocky interim.

SE: I think there's truth in that. We ended up with a tenure code that I think we can feel comfortable with and that, basically, affirms the position taken by the faculty. There is the fact that after that, after the Sullivan proposals were adopted for the Law School and the Medical School, we did have that collective bargaining election and it lost by the narrowest of margins. I think the fact that so many faculty, even having already won the major battle, would still vote for collective bargaining because they believed... I was one of them. I was not sure that without collective bargaining we could have a place at the table anymore. The closeness of that vote was a very, very strong signal, I think, to the administration. Because I've been very active in faculty governance since that time, I certainly think we are in a much stronger position than we had been. I also think we're in a stronger position because the faculty kind of got mobilized and started paying attention. People like me who had never joined AAUP [American Association of University Professors] before, but should have, realized that we needed professional association, that the rights we took for granted were, in fact, rather fragile and could be lost.

AP: Are there other issues in the waning days of the Hasselmo Era that you would like to comment on, that struck you as important or significant?

SE: That one was so overwhelming. Prior to that, of course, all the medical scandals were pretty overwhelming. I think we were in a state of gridlock because of the hostility of some members of the board to President Hasselmo. The mutual anger between them was so high. It felt like we were kind of a ship without a rudder for a while there.

AP: Do you have any summation thoughts about the Hasselmo years as president?

SE: I think it's very important to give Nils Hasselmo credit for the initiative which led to very dramatic improvement in undergraduate education at the university. Undergraduate education had become sort of forgotten at the university, after a period of enormous growth driven a lot by massive infusions of federal research money. When I first came in the 1970s, those were the dog days of undergraduate education when students stood in line again and again and again for every little thing they needed and the infamous courses that were taught with television monitors and very inadequate advising because we simply didn't have enough people. It was Hasselmo, basically, who said, "If we're going to be a great university, we have to offer first-class undergraduate programs," and he set in motion the process, the results of which we're beginning to [unclear], pretty wonderful. I would give him great credit for that.

AP: Do you want to make some comments about the [President Mark] Yudof years?

SE: The fact that, at the same time we resolved the tenure issue, we developed new leadership in the administration, several members of the board resigned, and so you had turnover everywhere. We really did have a kind of opportunity for a fresh start and that was very healthy for the university in the aftermath of this painful time. I think Mark Yudof has been a wonderful leader, in many ways. He is strong and clear and articulate about the needs of the university. He's very good at communicating that outside the university. He's a very strong decision maker. I have not always agreed with his decisions, but I did find in my role as a faculty leader, that I could take positions that disagreed with him and we could disagree and mutually [unclear] and that, in fact, sometimes, he will disagree very vigorously, as he's quite capable of doing, and, then, go away and think about it and come back and change his mind. So there's flexibility in him, as well. I think he has handled this basketball crisis about as well as it could be handled because he has not wavered from the central importance of academic integrity to the university. He has been careful to afford due process and not to jump to conclusions based on [unclear] report [unclear]. So I think he's been a really good [unclear].

AP: Is there anything that I have not asked you that I should that you would like to contribute?

SE: I suspect most of the things that I could talk about more, you will be asking other people about. There is [unclear] story in CLA about the growth of interdisciplinary programs in the 1970s, whether it's African-American Studies or Women's Studies, some of the area Studies programs kind of changed the shape of CLA. Some of those persisted and some didn't.

Certainly, Women's Studies has had enormous impact, not just in the History Department, but in many departments, large numbers of women and large numbers of scholars of women. I guess I just want to call your attention to that.

AP: Then there's been the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies.

SE: Right, which was an offshoot of Women's Studies.

AP: One of the points that Anne Truax has made in these interviews is that having a Women's Center separate from Women's Studies was useful because it allowed Women's Studies to concentrate on mere academic issues and evolve to the Women's Center other kinds of issues, which if there was only one entity, life got exceedingly complicated, sometimes, for other institutions.

SE: I think that's true.

AP: Are there any sort of giant people like Mary Turpie or others... Who do you look to as the women leaders on this campus?

SE: There are actually a lot of them. Toni McNaron is retiring now, but she has been a giant leader in many different ways, as one of the founders of Women's Studies, and, then, a real leader in the Bush program that she's headed up for a while. There are a lot of leaders. I could come up with an extremely long list. Elaine May... I mostly think of people in CLA, but there are quite a few like Margaret Davies in Ecology as a Regents Professor. Her work is very important and her impact on university programs is very, very important. It's hard to know how to pick them out. Now, there's a lot, but there used to be hardly any.

AP: Do you have any sense of our achievements in diversity? I'm thinking of color.

SE: I think we've had a constant struggle on that score. I think we have approached it with some genuine good intentions. My biggest sense of frustration is on the faculty, that there's been just this constant turnover. You hire people, but you lose them. I think we have to learn, as best we can, what it is that nourishes and nurtures people so that they find it good for them to stay here rather than to leave. I think the office that's headed up by Rusty Barcelo now, and that goes back through several different iterations in the past, is a very important office. I think Rusty is doing some really wonderful work there. Early on, we created African-American Studies and Chicano Studies and American-Indian Studies, but having those structures in place didn't necessarily mean we had the numbers in terms of numbers of students. I also don't want to fail to acknowledge how many different programs we had put in place. I will call your attention to one dean who I think made a big difference and that was Pete Magee in the College of Biological Sciences. He might be somebody to talk to about this, [unclear] caring about diversity very much. He made a real difference, but it also wasn't easy for him.

AP: As you look forward one hundred years and imagine ourselves looking back on the university, do you have any predictions as to where our strengths are going to be?

SE: One hundred years from now?

AP: Imagine that Yudof is lucky enough to face no major hurdles and things really go along and it becomes a kind of golden era for us, do you have a sense of what we'll be known for?

SE: Oh, you mean this period of time. Hmm. No, I think I might have to just make something up. [laughter] I do see us in the middle of enormous transition. If Yudof is lucky enough to not have some terrible trauma that brings us all down, not just him but all of us, then, what we will do is work our way through a transition and come out of it as still a major research university, but the transition we're in is not just a Minnesota transition. Higher education is changing structurally across the board and this is where our tenure crisis brought many of us to realize that we can't take anything for granted anymore because the pressures on this university are not unique. Universities are becoming more corporation-like in some ways. Corporations are also starting their own universities, just as education is taking up a lot of the [unclear] that used to be there. In Minnesota, we have a very, very large number of higher education institutions for the population. The university has an enormous task to interpret itself to the people of the state and to continually persuade them that it's a good thing to have a major first class research university here. This will have to be remembered as a time when we found our way. You can think of some images like navigating a very fast running river where there's a lot of shoals and sandbars and rocks and things in the way and it changes every minute. But there is a channel there if we can find it, a constantly changing channel. We have to find our way through it so that we come out still strong, without sacrificing the things that are at the heart of a research university and a university committed to liberal education.

AP: Do you have any sense of the touchstones for that navigation through these troubled waters? How will the pilot know what is required to be a great liberal arts college and a great research university?

SE: A lot of it is going to require effective leadership of a sort that is not the commanding, control kind of leadership, where the leader knows the right path and tells everybody else where to go. I think it's going to require the kind of leadership that draws on the resources of the university, which are enormous. Leadership has to persuade all the constituencies, but especially the faculty, of the nature of the problem and the nature of the challenge that we face and, then, bring people into the process of coming up with solutions. Right now, I don't have any clarity about what those solutions are, but I do have great confidence that we can come to them. There is no one else here who really knows what the answer is. We have to work it through together, as much as possible-: since nobody has the whole story.

Whenever I'm in a meeting with people from different colleges, I'm struck by how different our cultures are within the university and how we differently experience the structural pressures of change. Some parts of the university are now very hooked in with the business community, for

example, and some parts are quite insulated. Some parts are almost completely dependent on federal funding and other parts are not. Some parts have undergraduate education as central to their mission; other parts don't even think about it. So if we can't bring all those perceptions and experiences to the table at once, we'll never come up with solutions that are going to work for the institution as a whole.

AP: It does seem, indeed, like a tall order, doesn't it?

SE: It is, yes, and-it's a scary time [unclear].

AP: Any thoughts of institutions that you know about, other Big Ten schools or other schools, that we should look at as a kind of model or any books that you've read about academic governance that you think are impressive?

SE: One person you might call for some bibliographic advice is Gary Engstrand, who is the staff to the Senate.

AP: Oh, sure. I know Gary well, yes.

SE: Gary reads all this stuff all the time. He constantly sends out articles and references to the members of FCC. He would be a really good source. Another important thing to be...

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[End of the Interview]

Transcribed by: Beverly A. Hermes
Hermes Transcribing and Research Service
12617 Fairgreen Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55124-8213
(952) 953-0730
bhermes1@aol.com