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Interview with Shirley Garner

**Interviewed by Professor Clarke A. Chambers
University of Minnesota**

**Interviewed on July 11, 1995
University of Minnesota Campus**

Shirley Garner - SG
Clarke A. Chambers - CAC

CAC: This is Clarke Chambers and I'm doing an interview this morning, which is July 11, 1995, in my office in Social Science Tower . . . a postponed interview with Shirley Nelson Garner who came to the university in 1970 in the Department of English and quickly became a very active member of the faculty in all kinds of ways, scholarship, teaching, and then finally administration. So, there are lots of things, Shirley, that we have to pick up. As I suggested before I turned the machine on, to have a brief intellectual, academic autobiography is helpful. How did you get interested? A particularly interesting aspect of my conversations with other is mentors. Very frequently there is a person or persons who really turn on or open up a field or the possibilities, etcetera. So, you just take it and wander.

SG: Okay. I really was always destined to go to college and the only college that was a choice for me was the University of Texas.

CAC: You were destined by your family, your parents?

SG: Yes. My mother was a school teacher.

CAC: Oh.

SG: In her family of five, there were two women who had college degrees. I majored in Humanities, a program called Command II which was for gifted undergraduates and it really was a Humanities general major. I only decided to do Literature later when I thought I might go to graduate school and I took Literature courses but I only decide to, in fact, major in Literature after I got a B.A. [Bachelor of Arts] degree and that was so I could go to graduate school. I went to graduate school because I realized I couldn't make a living easily doing anything that I cared about doing. I applied for a Woodrow Wilson . . .

CAC: This is the late 1950s?

SG: Right . . . and went to Stanford in Literature. I didn't understand it very much as a profession. I went into it because I liked to read novels and I didn't think about it as a profession very much until I was writing my dissertation. It never occurred to me that I should prepare myself in a professional way and what you needed to do to be a professor in the Renaissance . . .

CAC: But you knew that you were going to be a professor?

SG: No. No, I didn't.

CAC: What else did you possibly think you would do?

SG: I didn't really think very seriously about work. I was married and this was an attractive thing to do.

CAC: Your husband was at Stanford, too?

SG: He was at Stanford. I had a Woodrow Wilson [Fellowship] and we decided to go where we could get the best deal for both of us.

CAC: Good.

SG: So, that was Stanford . . . and mainly, because of the many, many perks they offered my husband.

CAC: And his field?

SG: Geology. He was widely sought because there was a very famous petroleum geologist at Texas that he had studied with who was an eccentric and somebody who was leading the field. I began to think about a Ph.D. as leading me into a profession quite seriously only when I was writing my dissertation and getting a divorce. I had chosen it in a really bizarre way, the topic and the field. I really liked medieval literature but I did think I could not master all those languages. I couldn't do old French or old high German, old whatever. I went into the next field that I knew the least about in order to learn about it. That's how I chose the Renaissance and that's not the way I would advise anybody to choose their work or their profession.

CAC: [laughter]

SG: I did that and I have to say, quite frankly, I didn't have any mentors at Stanford. I had, if anything, counter mentors.

CAC: Was there anybody at Texas to encourage you and define what you might do?

SG: No.

CAC: Isn't that interesting; so, your mother is really a . . . she's standing back there encouraging you?

SG: Yes. At Stanford, I remember going in to see the then chair of the department who was in the Renaissance and, also, in effect my adviser. I talked to him about minoring in American Literature and he was a very formidable man and everything I talked to him about he agreed with. I could do this . . . I could do that, whatever. Later, I realized, it was because he just didn't care. He should have advised me . . .

CAC: Yes.

SG: . . . to do Italian and that would have served me as a Renaissance scholar but he didn't. I remember thinking, he was so nice . . . what a relief.

CAC: [laughter]

SG: Later, this was all suspect. There were no women faculty at Stanford when I was there. I had an instructorship there which was teaching three sections of Freshman English, some to special students and it was very, very difficult. I told them the next year that I didn't know if I was going to finish my dissertation. I could not live on a TAs [teaching assistant] salary and I could not teach three sections of Freshman English. They appointed me to be the assistant to the director of Freshman English which was a half time job and then I taught one section; so, that was a reasonable work load.

CAC: How many women graduate students, if no faculty?

SG: What I was going to say . . . in my class, there were a lot of women graduate students. It was about fifty-fifty but only two of us got Ph.D.s and one of them, who was in a tenure track job, followed her husband to another job, ended up having to leave academia and her life went quite downhill for many reasons. So, I'm really the only woman in my class who got a Ph.D. and who became a tenured faculty member, etcetera—or at least that I know of. If people came back at some point, that's possible but I don't know any of them. I worked for some years in this position and while I was working there, the first two women faculty members were hired in many, many, many years. I remember asking Albert Girord, who had come there to accept a distinguished chair—one his father held in History, I believe—how I should describe the faculty in this brochure. I said, "Neither one of these people have completed their Ph.D.s; so, shall I put 'Expecting Ph.D.-Yale,' 'Expecting Ph.D.-Columbia?'" He said, "Well, one is expecting a baby and the other is expecting a divorce. Put whatever you want," and strode out of the room.

CAC: [laughter]

SG: I remember another man—who subsequently became the chair of the department . . . who was a very nice and very humane man—said of the woman expecting the baby, “She better not miss one day of class,” and she didn’t! She had the baby between quarters. [laughter]

CAC: That’s planned parenthood.

SG: That was the milieu that I came into.

CAC: Of course. You were enraged by this or discouraged or dismayed?

SG: I’ll tell you what, the first time it ever occurred to me to think about it was when a man that I was dating, who was a little bit older, said to me at one point, “It must be very hard for you as a woman coming from Texas to come into this environment.” He had a much greater sense of looking at people as women or men and also seeing me as somebody who had come from Texas to a very elitist institution.

CAC: Yes.

SG: The way in which that was a great shock to me was, until that point, I never had any sense that anywhere in the world Texans were regarded as inferior.

CAC: Ahhh.

SG: Never. At that time, Texas was the biggest state and so when all else failed, I was from the biggest state. To have people regard me as probably not smart, probably not well educated, as a kind of blonde pretty girl that they would talk to in non-intellectual ways was really a shock. Irving Howe came, while I was there, and he taught the Faulkner Seminar. During that quarter, anytime anybody wanted to say anything stupid, they would say it with a southern accent and they would use an expression that’s in *As I Lay Dying* [by William Faulkner], which is Dewey Dell’s, in which he talks a lot about, “I’m fixing to do . . . ” blah, blah, blah, meaning, I’m preparing to.

CAC: Yes.

SG: It was an idiom that I used all the time. I had to really struggle to maintain my confidence. A lot of it was quite unconscious and remembered with shock and horror later. But at the time, I think, no, I was just going through it in a quite unconscious, unself-reflective way.

CAC: Your other female friends would say the same thing, wouldn’t they, of the late 1950s and early 1960s?

SG: Probably. Probably.

CAC: It took sensitizing all the way around to see what these issues were.

SG: The one thing I would say about Stanford that was really very, very saving is that when you were accepted into graduate school in the English Department—I don't know if this was true across the culture . . . I think it to some extent was—you were one of them. They assumed you would get through, and that you were smart, and they would help you, and they supported you. In fact, I think, it was much easier to get through Stanford Graduate School than to get through the [University of] Minnesota Graduate School. There were two things there: one is the faculty just was committed to you; and secondly, they assumed that you were going to get through, and they were going to help you, and you, in some sense, were one of them—despite what I'm telling about Virgil Whitaker and whatever.

CAC: Yes.

SG: There was a general culture of support and acceptance and I'm very grateful for that because I really needed that. It would have been very hard for me to go to a kind of brutal place where the idea was to see who could make it and who couldn't.

CAC: Don't you suppose that at elite institutions—I'm thinking of eastern universities primarily but Stanford also—they figure if they select you, you are of the elite? Then you're kind of home safe . . . except that most of your other women colleagues didn't make it?

SG: Right. I applied at jobs on the east and west coast and in the middle but only in cities because I did not want to go to an isolated college town. I wanted to be near a city. Minnesota offered me the best job.

CAC: This was the late 1960s now but you come in 1970?

SG: This is like 1969.

CAC: At least in fields I know well, the market was probably the best it ever was right then.

SG: In English, they hired six people that year.

CAC: At Minnesota?

SG: Right . . . we've never hired that many since.

CAC: Of course not.

SG: I think actually Chester Anderson had gone to the dean with varied statistics, and had it kind of fit, and it was [E.W.] Ziebarth, and he allowed them to do it. He saw this and he said, "Okay."

CAC: It was a good time to be a dean.

SG: Five men and one woman—me—were hired. It was very funny. I had no sense of being hired as a woman, none, or that I was sought as a woman.

CAC: Do you think you were?

SG: Yes, and not only that . . . I didn't feel less qualified for that reason but they really needed to hire a woman. That was all very funny. Later, a graduate student told me that they had said something to Bob Moore, who had hired me, that they needed more women on the faculty. They had two Toni [McNaron] and Margery Durham and then they had hired me. He said in great shock, "Well, we've hired Miss Clark," which was my name, as though, Isn't that enough? We've done this. That was really funny. Toni was not on the Search Committee. Toni told me that they arranged to take the various people to dinner except for me. So, she said, "What about . . . you said there was a woman candidate?" Then, they said, "Oh." This was kind of the experience all along when I came here.

CAC: Excuse me. This is an interesting observation because Affirmative Action is then underway in some departments, if not at the college level? So, this becomes a much more open and forthright search procedure?

SG: Right. Then, what happens is I am hired into the field in English where there was the greatest resistance to women and the most virulent misogyny.

CAC: Meaning Renaissance and Shakespearian?

SG: Renaissance, yes.

CAC: How do you account for that?

SG: Oh, this is really interesting. Toni was already in this field.

CAC: She was Shakespearian, was she not?

SG: Right. I was hired and shortly after Madelon Sprengnether was hired. I don't know if there was anything deliberate . . . I don't think there was but, the fact of the matter is, we were all hired in the field where we were most likely to be unhappy.

CAC: You're speaking of the national profession, not the department here alone?

SG: The department here.

CAC: I see. Well, the Robert E. Moore chair was Shakespearian?

SG: No. He was Eighteenth Century.

CAC: But the most famous course he had was the Shakespeare.

SG: Well, but you see, one of the attractions in coming here is that Shakespeare was required, and it was very popular; and usually when you applied for a job, there was a Shakespearean and he taught all the Shakespeare until he died. So, you didn't look to teach Shakespeare for years and years.

CAC: Ahhh.

SG: This was a very attractive job in that a lot of people in the department taught Shakespeare. It still is but less so . . . it was a very popular course. Lots of people who weren't majors took it.

CAC: Why the resistance to women in Shakespeare?

SG: I think it had to do with the particular men.

CAC: Okay.

SG: And it was really women in the Renaissance. There were really four men . . . two of them are now retired—one of them dead—so, their leaving made a difference. But the other two still begin classes by saying that feminist criticism has no place, etcetera, etcetera. The Renaissance is one of the places where feminist criticism began and flourished in literature. Both of these men are still quite hostile to it. Our relationships are not as bad as the relationships with the men of a different . . .

CAC: It was generational.

SG: I think that's just generational. Effectively, that is the same culture here. [laughter] In fact, what's happened is, all of us have developed other fields that are more significant and, partly, it was because it was too hard to get through the mesh of Renaissance here.

CAC: I want to come back to that because the development of your courses is an interesting one as I've looked at it on your CV [Curriculum Vitae]. By 1969, 1970, feminist criticism in a Shakespearean context would have been novel . . . certainly not well-developed?

SG: Yes. I came here and Toni asked me if I would participate as a respondent to a paper on a Shakespearean panel at the Midwest Modern Language Association. It always meets at the end of October or early November. I was very flattered and said, "Yes." She said, "I especially want a woman to respond to this paper." I had no idea what she meant and I didn't ask her. I didn't know her well enough.

CAC: Sure.

SG: I also was very flattered but then—this is a real difference in graduate education—it wasn't the custom to go give papers for graduate students. The ideal graduate student got through quickly . . . that was the status mark, that you went through in four to six years. In fact, at that time, professors at Stanford didn't go to conferences a whole lot. They wrote books. That's a much later development that everybody goes to conferences and gives papers and graduate students who haven't done that in English just wouldn't be able to get a job. It's just expected. So, I was pleased that someone thought I could be a respondent to a paper on a panel about Shakespeare at a Midwestern conference but I was also really anxious about it. I was teaching three courses and very busy; so, as the time drew near, I didn't have time to do any of the things that I thought were appropriate to do. I read *Othello* in bed at night when I got through with the day, and I finally read the paper, and then I had time for a little bit of criticism. Reading it in bed at night, I read it differently and I read a lot through the women characters; so, I saw something really interesting in the play. When I read the paper, I was really shocked because the point of the play is that a woman that I've called a "hopelessly faithful woman" is suspected of infidelity. This man writing the paper was arguing that she really had been unfaithful . . .

CAC: Ahhh.

SG: . . . and that she was unfaithful with Cassio and part of the reason was . . . there is a line that she wouldn't have fallen without instruction, or something. The idea was implicit in his paper that the way women learned about sex was from men and so she had to be taught . . . and Cassio had to have taught her. [laughter] Well, this was a bizarre paper. I thought a lot about how I would deal with this paper but I also realized in the criticism that if I'd read it first, I would have believed it. I felt that Shakespeare presented polarized views of Desdemona within the play, inviting you to take something in the middle and that the critics tended to take the view of the pole that idealized her. I began to work on this as a paper and I spent a lot of time on it, and I read a whole lot, and I was very anxious because I really was taking a different view.

CAC: But much of what you're reading in criticism was not informed by feminist theory at that time?

SG: Well, it wasn't informed by feminist theory. I think it was informed by the Women's Movement, in that I was becoming . . .

CAC: Ahhh.

SG: . . . more conscious of myself as a woman, and of attitudes toward women, and then finding this reflected in the criticism, and so on.

CAC: Okay.

SG: I wouldn't have called myself a feminist. I wouldn't have recognized anything called feminist criticism. I wrote this paper. It was accepted by the first . . .

CAC: A response?

SG: No, no, no. This was after that.

CAC: [unclear]

SG: I wrote an article and sent it to Shakespeare Studies, which is one of the two major Shakespearean journals, and I was conscious of this as being a radical idea and I did not sign my name as Shirley . . . I used S. N. Garner.

CAC: Ah!

SG: This was accepted by the first journal I sent it to. This took a very long time, both to write and to come out; so, it really was not published until 1976 but it was a long time before it was sort of picked up. It's been now reprinted once and just recently, I just got the *Everyman* "Othello" which has a big section from it.

CAC: *Everyman*, "Othello?"

SG: No, the *Everyman* edition, the British . . .

CAC: I understand that but it's *everyman*?

SG: What did I say?

CAC: It's not *everywoman*?

SG: Right! Right, *everyman*, yes. True. I just got that and that's very interesting to me because after that, the articles that I wrote from a feminist critical approach got picked up very quickly. They got responded to and noticed. It was really just growing.

CAC: Sure.

SG: Then what I learned, which was interesting to me, is that Adrienne Rich, for example, was writing essays about literature from a feminist perspective and I never came across them. No

one ever showed them to me. No one ever told me to read them. In graduate school, I only had women writers in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century novels courses and in the American Poetry course, Yvor Winters was a very famous poet and new critic; and he responded saying that he taught a few women writers and these included Emily Dickinson and Louise Bogan. He responded saying something about . . . there are a few women poets that I teach but women by-and-large just don't have the temperament for poetry. [laughter] This is kind of the background I came from.

CAC: It's everyone's background.

SG: What I was saying though is that there were things that I might have read that might have led me more into this but I never encountered them. I remember a student, who liked me and liked my class, gave me a copy of Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* and she said she thought that I would really like to read this. I did like it and I read it. When I came here, I taught a course in Continuing Education for Women and I taught that book. I can't remember what the topic I was supposed to teach was but I taught that book and I remember looking up in the Encyclopedia Britannica stuff about Virginia Woolf just to get the outline of her life in case I was asked it; and they did not mention in that edition either *A Room of One's Own* or *Three Guineas*, which were her most overt feminist works.

CAC: Yes.

SG: That tells you where we were when I started to do this.

CAC: There must have been persons like yourself all around the country who were making their own way and stumbling on things?

SG: Right. And I'll tell you, it was very important to have Toni here as a colleague. Then, when Madelon Sprengnether came, the three of us I would say, mentored each other. I really had no mentor here. In fact, the men in my field were bent on defeating me and one of them wrote a horrible critique of my *Desdemona* article. I was fortunate that at that time, we were allowed to *see* what was written.

CAC: Yes.

SG: And I could respond to it. I was also fortunate that he was so freaked out over it that he wrote really, really foolishly. He was a lazy man. He said things about critiques that he hadn't read . . .

CAC: [laughter]

SG: . . . that I could easily trip him up on.

CAC: But you were non-tenured?

SG: Right. This is when I came up for tenure that this happened.

CAC: That's a hazardous role to have to play.

SG: Right, but I had to respond to this because it was so negative. In fact, it was also sent to a man at Indiana who was equally freaked out and equally negative, who said things like, "I am very unhappy that this has been published, and I'm on the Shakespeare Board of Readers, and if it had been sent to me, it would not have been." And he said things like, "Brabantio,"—who is Desdemona's father—"is not prejudiced against blacks. He just doesn't want his daughter to marry Othello." [laughter] What happened is this article so freaked out these men that it caused a crazy response and, therefore, it made them look foolish. I was very lucky in that because a cooler character could have written a more temperate and damaging . . . Anybody can do this in literature; it's very subjective.

CAC: Before we get too far into this, could you say something about the style of discourse in the teaching of literature when you were being trained, and then come here, and the style of scholarship criticism?

SG: It was much more formal and we were told to call our students Mister and Miss. I was very, very fortunate in that after I had finished my course work . . . Oh, one thing I want to say about the scholarship . . . there was at that time an assumption that you really could read everything written on your topic.

CAC: Ah.

SG: When I wrote the article on Othello, one of the reasons it took me so long is that I tried to do that. At some point, I realized—I had this big stack of note cards—I am never going to write this if I keep reading. I'm going to pick the next twenty things that sound closest to what I'm doing. I'm going to read those and I will stop. My first article is so carefully researched. It so carefully acknowledges all of the scholars who wrote on Shakespeare and I just would never do that now. There are too many things. You can't do it. Also, I would never get anything written of my own if I had to read everything written on the subject. I try to read the major things. I was very fortunate because I was teaching Freshman English and Freshman English was regarded, as it has been everywhere, as something graduate students are to teach . . . the faculty doesn't. It is a kind of beginner's course, etcetera.

When Albert Girord, who was a Harvard, accepted this distinguished chair at Stanford, they asked him what he would like to teach. He said, "I want to direct Freshman English. I think it is the most important course in the university and I will teach a section of that, as well as other things." He conducted the workshops that the teachers of Freshman English were required to come to every week. We hadn't done much of that before . . . we'd done some. He did that

every week and he talked a lot about teaching. We graded papers together and he took up all the papers, and talked about the responses, and read good and bad. He had us video-taped in classrooms.

CAC: Good heavens!

SG: [laughter] I had a lot of that. There was a real division at Stanford that came as soon as Ian Watt arrived because Ian Watt was of the old school and Albert was of . . .

CAC: It's hardly the school?

SG: Albert was the psychoanalytic reader or critic, though he didn't call himself that. He wrote fiction as well as literary criticism. He actually is fairly authoritarian but his manner is a more inclusive, cooperative, collaborative model. Ian is very, very cultivated, learned, gives dazzling lectures. It's important that the words be turned this way and that way. He is only moderately interested in anything a student might say to him. He would like them as people and liked to talk them but he is the master—and he was. He spoke many languages. He was very witty and very smart. He was a very formidable model. There were different poles and if I had had . . .

CAC: You were aware of that self-consciously when you were studying?

SG: Right. If I had had him to teach me how to teach, I wouldn't have learned all this stuff. Then, the wonderful thing was that there was this voice project at Stanford that was financed by the Office of Education and it brought John Hawkes who is a novelist and Albert Studant. He was in his forties when he came. He was the director of it and he brought writers. What they were trying to do was to relate the spoken word into written word and to deal with the puzzle of why students who talked well didn't write well.

CAC: Good heavens!

SG: Jack Hawkes, who had only made C's at Harvard . . . this is very funny. He was in Harry Levin's class, who was a famous Shakespearean, making a C and getting much condescension when his first novel *The Lime Twig*—which has always been, in a way, his most famous novel—was accepted at a press. He had a great deal of knowledge of how students are made to feel worthless and he hated elitist structures. He spent loads of time in class with individual students and their prose. He spent a lot of time trying to communicate what made things good and bad. Watching him teach was an enormously important example. There were things that I learned for the first time. He always signed his comments. I think he did that, in part, because he was a known person and it would mean something special that John Hawkes read your papers but it also meant something very different from having a disembodied comment that appeared to come from God. I learned from him to write in the margins instead of "clarity" . . .

CAC: Oh, oh!

SG: . . . I don't understand this . . . you know?

CAC: I know.

SG: And to be very individual in my response to papers. I also learned some from experience. I remember a student paper in which . . .

CAC: Excuse me. You said you had no mentors but what you are talking about here are models?

SG: Yes, that's true.

CAC: They're a different role but a very important one.

SG: Yes, that's right. Yes, I certainly had those very important models.

CAC: Oh!

SG: I've always been indebted to Jack, in particular, and Albert, to some extent, as teachers. They took teaching very, very seriously.

CAC: Earlier you had suggested that a prevailing model was that of appreciation in the teaching of literature with undergraduates and they are far beyond that?

SG: Also though, Albert is the one who said, "One's expecting a baby. One's expecting a divorce. Put whatever you want." I don't want to idealized them utterly but I really learned a lot about teaching from them.

CAC: That would have been a relative rare experience for anybody in any field?

SG: Right.

CAC: It certainly wasn't mine. Nobody said boo.

SG: The experience with Jack was a particular one. It had to do with this project and being his administrative assistant, spending time with him, etcetera. Students in his classes would have learned from him but teaching assistants wouldn't have had that opportunity much.

CAC: Now, you didn't find a large number of persons here when you arrived who were as far along in pedagogy as these two?

SG: No, except Toni really cared about teaching and was a good teacher. But, no, there wasn't that kind of interest much.

CAC: I'm guessing that the teaching, for the most part, was well or less well done, but it would have been a pre-set lecture and . . .

SG: Mainly lectures.

CAC: . . . some would be very particular about the words, and the rhythm, and the phrasing, and so forth . . . good teaching in that sense?

SG: And the history of genre and style, that kind of thing. Actually, I think the English Department has always had lively teachers who cared about teaching as well as some others who use the same notes year after year. In the Renaissance, Tom Clayton, divides his students because he's very difficult and he has his particular biases. He has a following of students, and he does lecture, and he's witty. The other teachers were not good teachers. They were lazy and condescending to students, all of them . . . and even one who is still here talks about his students as though they're really beneath him, and they don't know anything, are not worth much.

CAC: Other than Toni, and Madelon when she comes, who were your other models of really concerned classroom instruction here?

SG: Ed Griffin who also had been at Stanford when I was. He came here first. Oh, and then Charlie Sugnet who was a peer.

CAC: Ah.

SG: He was one of the people hired with me.

CAC: That year?

SG: Yes.

CAC: But your regents professor probably not?

SG: What do you mean?

CAC: He wouldn't have been as concerned with . . .

SG: Actually, Ted Wright really was.

CAC: No, no. I'm thinking of your southern gentleman poet who was a regents professor and certainly was still here when you came?

SG: No, he wasn't here.

CAC: He wasn't?

SG: Sam Monk?

CAC: Oh, god . . . the southern agrarian. [Allen] Tate.

SG: Oh, no, he was gone.

CAC: He was gone?

SG: He was gone.

CAC: I see. I'm sorry.

SG: The other thing that has been very important to me, and it's been very noticeable, people all around look to that period as the English Department's heyday. People who were in . . .

CAC: A bit earlier, yes.

SG: . . . like Toni and Ed have horror stories about these men. At one point, one of these men in the Renaissance, who was one of the worst, was telling stories about them and I asked him deliberately, "Tell me what was attractive to you about this period." He talked about Robert Penn Warren and Allen Tate—I don't remember which one of them it was—but he talked about having these parties that were very elegant and guests flying in from all over the country. It was clear that there was a party life with famous people and that was what was attractive. It wasn't, to them, an intellectual life and I don't think they had a shared intellectual life. I don't think those men knew how to do that.

CAC: Leo Marx, when he was here last year, commented on the heavy drinking that that department was into.

SG: Yes, and this man that I am talking about was alcoholic and people made terrible jokes. He dated a graduate student while he was married and people would say, "It's not really an affair. He's always too drunk by the end of the evening." They would think of it as a kind of flirtation. She was very, very beautiful and that this was a kind of flirtation. [sigh] This was so perverse. Also, there wasn't a very good sense of boundaries. For example, this man had separated and remarried his wife several times but during my untenured years, they separated. His wife moved into my apartment building, and would come upstairs, and in tears and desperation would tell me horror stories about this professor. I would just be trying to, on the one hand, be sympathetic and on the other, get rid of her and not listen because I knew this was just going to make me

vulnerable. They were terrible stories . . . how he'd given their daughter for her birthday, his current mistress's cast-off purse. [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

SG: This kind of horror story; so, these were not things I wanted to know about my colleagues.

CAC: Well, that changes the 1970s a bit?

SG: Yes.

CAC: You have more colleagues who are concerned with the issues you are, intellectual, but also teaching and learning?

SG: Yes. The English Department for a very long time has hired more and more women, more and more feminist scholars, and what's happened is that there are searches that don't call for any kind of feminist anything. The people who come and are best . . . just are feminists . . . and if they are not particularly feminists in their work, they are elsewhere; so, it's gotten to be a very strong department in terms of women.

CAC: How long did it take to gain a reputation for that here?

SG: Actually, our first Feminist Studies in Literature brochure was in 1980.

CAC: That's ten years. That's pretty fast.

SG: What happened is that we started talking one day about . . . English is arranged into subfields and we have these subfield research groups that are faculty and graduate students. They usually meet every two weeks, most of them at noon . . . some of them in the evening. People do different things. They usually read things together. Sometimes people in the subfield present their work for response and that kind of thing. We decided—we were teaching all these courses—to form a Feminist Studies subfield; so, we published a brochure and just listed our courses. We had Virginia Woolf's plate from . . . what's her name . . . the dinner party . . . visual arts?

CAC: Oh, oh, oh, yes.

SG: You know who I mean? Okay. That was on the front, a quote from Adrienne Rich, with a list of courses. Charlie Sugnet joined with us to teach Feminist Studies courses either in that first brochure or soon after. It was really interesting because the graduate director then called us in and said something like, What was the meaning of this brochure? We had come through the back door. We said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "You have to get departmental approval." I said, "No subfield has departmental approval."

CAC: [laughter]

SG: It was clear that it was the brochure. It was the naming it. It was the putting it together. Then, the next step was when Larry Mitchell was chair and we wanted a mailbox. We wanted a mailbox to put—stuff came to us—papers in that we were going to use in the next meeting. This was not something we were going to get easily. This visibility . . . as long as we were just doing it . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

SG: I was part of the founding of that and the first course, I remember, was a course—I don't know the exact title—like Women in Courtship, and it was coordinated by Toni and many, many people lectured in it, and I gave a lecture on Renaissance poetry and the courtly love tradition. I remember just being part of that. Then, the other thing that was very important in relation to that was our Faculty Development Seminars in which we talked about Women's Studies in our particular fields.

CAC: Sure.

SG: The thing that was really interesting is the course—I think it's still on the books in Women's Studies—is called Women in Literature. You could really imagine a course like that in the beginning because there was so little and now that name doesn't even make sense. It doesn't say whether it's women in literature, women writers . . . it's gargantuan . . . you can't do it.

CAC: Yes, sure.

SG: The other thing that happened is to the Introductory Course. That used to have lecturers come in from the different fields and they would talk about Feminist Studies in English. You just can't do that now. It's just too large. But that was the beginning when you could do that; so that course has changed.

CAC: How many different disciplines were drawn on for that course?

SG: I don't know. You'd have to ask Toni but really a lot.

CAC: Okay. So, it just had to be interdisciplinary?

SG: The Languages. Yes. History. I think Sociology, maybe.

CAC: Anthropology? Would Janet [Spector] have been doing . . . ?

SG: Janet probably because the courtship rituals and stuff like that in Anthropology would be so important, I would imagine. I don't know . . . Toni might remember. That's how that began. What also happened is there was a kind of synergism with all this going on. The English courses stayed Feminist Studies in Literature and then, all this stuff was developing in Women's Studies and these supported each other. What I've felt—I've argued this so many times and I don't think anybody in the administration really gets it— . . .

CAC: Still?

SG: Right . . . is that Women's Studies really brought strength to us departmentally because it allowed us both the intellectual exchanges, the possibility of teaching, colleagues, whatever, to develop more substantially in the department and it brought us students. It brought us new faculty members. So, Women's Studies, which is often seen as a drain on departments because faculty from departments teach in it and so on, has really been very important to many, many departments in the university. I don't know that many departments always get it either. What I found when I directed the center is that people would come here to be recruited and so sometimes departments would call me and say, "We would really like you to meet a candidate in History," say, "and talk to her about CAFS [Center for Advanced Feminist Studies]." Very often women would come and they would say—and departments wouldn't have arranged anything—"Who would be my women colleagues and what Women's Studies is here?" Even though they were going to teach, in say, Sociology and have only a tangential connection, they would want to know.

CAC: About this chronologically . . . this is accelerating in the late 1970s what you're describing?

SG: Yes, and this is really coming to be in the 1980s and it's kind of routine now.

CAC: So, it's underway in the later 1970s but really takes off in the 1980s?

SG: Yes, right. The other thing that happens is . . .

CAC: Excuse me, I'm going to interrupt. It's not until the 1980s that you get a significant number of persons from many different fields who are on site?

SG: Right. Yes, I remember hiring Joanna O'Connell in Spanish and Portuguese and she's just gotten tenure, I think last year, and Lisa Disch, who will come up for tenure this year. There were younger woman scholars who are gradually being hired. I chaired English last year but in the four years before that, when I directed CAFS . . .

CAC: Excuse me. For the future, CAFS is Center for Advanced Feminist Studies.

SG: . . . Minnesota is so understood as a home of Feminist Studies. Women's Studies and Center for Advanced Feminist Studies are so known and seen as a good thing for women faculty members who may come here . . .

CAC: Elsewhere?

SG: Yes . . . that departments would call and arrange these individual faculty members . . . or people being recruited would come and say, "I want to meet these people on the campus."

CAC: Sure.

SG: I remember candidates in French and Italian were so excited about what they learned about the Center and Women's Studies, and they would compare it with where they were, and they would say, "Oh! this is so wonderful. I'd love to come here. If there is a conference, will you invite me?" They would give me their addresses and phone numbers. This has over time really developed as a place where Feminist Studies is really important and known to be good.

CAC: I want you to put that into a bit larger context. What other centers would there have been in the late 1970s and 1980s who would have the same reputation and magnet?

SG: None.

CAC: None?

SG: No.

CAC: Pennsylvania? Los Angeles?

SG: No.

CAC: Well, this requires accounting then.

SG: One of the things that happened, I think, is that Feminist Studies, Women's Studies, have developed partly because of the perseverance of the faculty involved in those disciplines. It's been so slow to be a program, to be a department. In fact, we had to do two approvals to get to be a department. There was a really wonderful joke about . . . at some point [Fred] Lukermann said, "Oh, you aren't a department. You have to go through these processes." We had to do so much political work. We had to get all these men to come and speak for us and we had to speak. There was all this stuff. There was some meeting with Lukermann and so this all passed. There was some kind of vote and it all passed.

CAC: But it usually passed!

SG: It did.

CAC: I understand what you're saying.

SG: I remember Naomi laughing . . .

CAC: That's Naomi Scheman?

SG: Yes. After it was over, Fred said, "This is good," and blah, blah, blah. Naomi laughed and she said, "Gee, girls. Good job, you got it past me." [laughter]

CAC: [laughter]

SG: That's the kind of stuff. Also, one of the things that happened is that the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies was formed. Sara [Evans] became its director.

CAC: This is approximately what date? Again, for people who will read this and don't know it. This is so we'll all know this.

SG: Yes, okay. Let me have my vitae, I can tell you. I am director of the center in 1990; so Sara is it for three years before me.

CAC: So, it's 1987?

SG: Yes. So, Sara had gotten . . .

CAC: This is Sara Evans in History.

SG: Sara had gotten the Rockefeller Grant, Signs later, but we had gotten relatively little financial support. At the same time the Center for Humanistic Studies, who did not have a clear coalescence of colleagues, who had no intellectual agenda, was given a whole lot of money by Lukermann.

CAC: The Arts College.

SG: Wlad Godzich was given a very large salary to direct it. There were committees formed to give it an agenda. [laughter] I remember Kent Bales bringing a chart that Tony Zahareas had drawn that was totally incomprehensible. It was this chart with diagrams . . .

CAC: I've seen it.

SG: He said [unclear], "Look! This is what it's supposed to be." [laughter] These people could never get together because they were not really colleagues who could collaborate. They could never develop an agenda.

Let me see my vitae again. The year that I stood for chair of English which was in the spring of 1989, I went to talk to Lukermann about what would be my agenda as chair of English. In the process, I remember Craig Swan saying that they had dissolved the Center for Humanistic Studies; and so, there was going to be money going here and there. He kind of shook his head and he said, "They could just never get together. They could never bring in money. I don't know what went wrong here." I thought, everybody else does but this is what I mean. If the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies had had these resources, we would have done a whole lot.

CAC: Excuse me. The agenda is moved by women and a few allies located in departments where there was that commitment? Sara Evans in History . . .

SG: Right. A bunch of English, and Ruth Allen, and people around, and all of us doing stuff in Women's Studies, being part of the Faculty Development Seminars, doing some teaching, being on committees. That was kind of the crucible out of which . . .

CAC: It comes to be a significant cadre?

SG: Yes.

CAC: And a respected cadre.

SG: Right. We did it on overtime.

CAC: Sure.

SG: The other thing that is really interesting . . . Barbara Nelson and Sara worked on a project and Barbara [Nelson] in the Center on Women in Public Policy . . .

CAC : In the Humphrey Institute?

SG: Yes . . . and Barbara had an administrative assistant. At some point, she went to Central [Administration] and she and Sara worked this idea out. I think it was really Barbara's initiative. I think there was a kind of political carefulness so that Sara couldn't really go to central but Barbara could; so, she got on this occasion . . . She proposed that Central finance an administrative assistant that would be shared by the Humphrey and the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies; so, that happened. They gave soft money for this purpose. When that expired, I was chair, a director of CAFS; so, Barbara and I were going to try to get this made hard money. This was so interesting because the Graduate School said they were going to give money to centers for some such thing, or there was money that we could apply for. We wrote a very

big proposal. It's pages and pages with statistics on the number students, the amounts of money brought in . . . we rewrote . . . it's like thirty pages . . . it's incredible. They kept saying, "There won't be enough time to do this." We said, "Oh, yes." Then, they said, "We don't think we can get people to review it." We said, "Oh, yes. We'll give you names." They finally postponed it.

CAC: This is Central Administration of the college or of the university?

SG: This is the Graduate School.

CAC: Okay.

SG: This is where the money was located. Central was in on this somehow.

CAC: Okay.

SG: What happened is that it was clear that there were other units in the university in this position, and they wanted to compare them, and decide who to give money to but it was also clear that from the beginning, our proposal outshone everybody's, and they kept postponing to give other people time to catch up with us.

CAC: I see.

SG: They would never give the money. Barbara and I fought for this for two or three years.

CAC: You fought with it and what allies could you find in the administration?

SG: We finally went to Cathy O'Brien and we told her . . .

CAC: She's assistant to President Hasselmo?

SG: Right . . . that if this got turned down, we needed Nils to change it.

CAC: Excuse me, I'm going to interrupt again. Nils was associate dean of the . . .

SG: The Arts president.

CAC: No, no, no. He was associate dean of the Arts College when Women's Studies was established in the 1970s.

SG: Okay.

CAC: That's just a flashback.

SG: We had seen Bob Holt.

CAC: Then dean of the Graduate School.

SG: We talked a long time with Bob Holt about the first proposal. Then, Ann Peterson thought this was something that should be funded. Central held the money. She supported it. It finally came down to Ann Hopkins giving the money to Julia . . .

CAC: This is Julia Davis in the Arts College?

SG: Yes . . . to make 50 percent of it hard [money] and pressuring the current dean of the Humphrey [G. Edward Schuh], who at first said he couldn't give the money, couldn't give the money, couldn't give the money. Finally, he had to give the money. It was partly because of Barbara's power there. By then, she was already being looked at to be a vice-president at Radcliffe. What I'm trying to say is that all of these steps for us have been enormously difficult and if a department, or if a group of men, had done anything like this, they would have been supported—as the Center for Humanistic Studies was when it did nothing. That has not changed. I was doing this just a year before last.

CAC: But it finally comes off because of perseverance and also the strength of the individuals who were attached to it from different departments?

SG: Yes, and also some key people in Central Administration. It feels to me as though if Ann Peterson hadn't been there . . . if Ann Hopkins hadn't said, "I will give this money to Julia for this purpose . . ." We had to prove this. We had to put our vitae and just go through all this stuff.

CAC: While this is going on, a number of the women whom you cite are also becoming chairs of their own departments?

SG: That's true.

CAC: Sara Evans in History. You in English.

SG: Right. The other thing I would say is that CAFS and Women's Studies have provided an incredible group of women capable of administration and role models. Janet Spector as chair of Women's Studies did so many inventive things, even in conducting a meeting.

CAC: Like what?

SG: For one thing, the faculty meetings were scheduled so that every other meeting was an intellectual meeting and every other one was political . . .

CAC: Administrative?

SG: Administrative, I mean. To begin with, the agendas were really interesting. I don't know what you think about it. I think the level of administrative skill at the University of Minnesota is extremely low. I learned so much by being connected with these people so that I had models to do administration that the male colleagues around me just don't have. They just don't ever see it done well and, maybe, more now but they just don't see it done well. Do you know what? Somebody who was being interviewed for one of these jobs—Pat Mullen's, Janet Spector's jobs—told the interviewing group, which included staff members, that she would follow my example if she took this position of having a weekly staff meeting; and they thought this was a unique and wonderful idea. Now, I can't imagine chairing a department or a unit and not having an meeting with the academic support staff at least every other week but I've always had them every week.

CAC: Academic support . . . you mean, director of Undergraduate Studies, director of Graduate Studies?

SG: No, no, I consider that the executive committee. I mean the secretaries . . .

CAC: Oh, okay. The Civil Service?

SG: Yes, those people. I don't feel that it's essential that I be there every time; though, I pretty much tend to be there every time. I don't see how people know what each other is doing. CAFS had a very small . . . it was me, any graduate students we had who were administering a grant—so that would be one—the administrative assistant, and the secretary. We barely got through the meetings in an hour. That was very good. It had a lot of effects. For one thing, we would realize how much we were doing. It was an upper. The other thing is, we would be solving problems. We need to do this. How are we going to get it done? How are we going to divide the labor? Can we appoint a faculty member to help us, or a student? This kind of stuff and just reporting on what the center was doing. This was just a little group. When I came into English, they had never done anything like this. The assistant to the director of Undergraduate Studies, Bev[erly] Atkinson, has been there quite a long time and she's an ABD English student. She's very, very good and she has a very nice personality to collaborate on things. She was so pleased that we were going to do this. I told her that I would really like her response to things that were going on that I might not see and that I also wanted her help in making this go smoothly. The then executive secretary was so furious at the idea of having these meetings that she began to withdraw from me and ultimately brought a grievance against me—not with that as a primary cause but the idea of sharing responsibilities . . .

CAC: Rather than assigning hierarchically?

SG: Yes. What I'm trying to say is a lot of the things that seem to me kind of reasonable office practices . . . things I just don't feel many people around me have been good at . . . In these groups, I really just learn so much about doing it.

CAC: I'm going to make this a conversation for a moment—not that it hasn't been all along. Theodore Blegen, distinguished Scandinavian historian and dean of the Graduate School for many years . . . When I came here, I was told by many people, "Now, Dean Blegen, do you know what he does? He has a staff meeting every other week . . . Civil Service, professional, administrative, part time faculty who are in there . . . and they talk about what is happening in the Graduate School. When he went to conferences of other graduate deans, he would report on what was happening elsewhere." It was told to me with a kind of awe and admiration but not with any sense that anybody else was going to do it. That's a strange . . . you're talking this way now and it just put that into my mind.

SG: This person said to me that the staff person said on this interviewing committee, "Oh, what a wonderful idea." I said, "I really appreciate the credit but this feels to me as such common sense," otherwise, How do you know what's happening?

CAC: Have you worked Tim Delmont at all?

SG: I've been to those sessions he has for new chairs.

CAC: Is he sensitive to what you're talking about?

SG: Oh, I think so.

CAC: I think so.

SG: Yes.

CAC: That's a step in the right direction . . . the university recognizing?

SG: Absolutely . . . the university trying to help people do some of these jobs and having some kind of across the board understandings. Do you know what? I went to one of those this year. I've been to now two of them because I did that when I was director of CAFS . . . I went to a session. Then, I was invited to do it this year. There are people from all over the university.

CAC: Yes.

SG: I want you to know, somebody had come in a fairly high up administrative position . . . it wasn't just chair of a department . . . it was more than that. At some point, she said, "Oh, you mean there's a union here?" [laughter] I thought, is she in for something.

CAC: [laughter]

SG: The level of information . . . I thought, How could she not know this? Then, I thought, at many universities there really aren't unions of clerical workers, especially at private universities.

CAC: Yes.

SG: You can't read all the stuff that comes to you. You just can't. There is kind of these simple levels that the people need to know.

CAC: You're aware of it better than I but I've dabbled in a little administrative managerial literature and it would suggest that these things don't happen until there's a . . . It isn't 10, or 20, or 25 percent. There has to be a significant 40 percent or 50 percent . . . when then it can tip to a different kind of administrative style and procedure in larger units.

SG: What do you mean?

CAC: I mean that you can't do this one by one. There have to be enough persons around. You can't do it all by yourself?

SG: Right.

CAC: And there have to be enough people around to make it possible for others to do it or even yourself to do it?

SG: Right.

CAC: So, it's not a matter of pioneering? This is what the literature would suggest to me. Maybe, this is what you're describing . . . that it takes a decade to get enough persons who have had this kind of exposure, and commitment, and engagement to introduce different kinds of administrative styles?

SG: Do you know what I feel about . . . I've been really very low about the administration of the college. One of the things that I'm thinking about is this. When an institution is going well, people hire other people, they attract people who are like them. When it's not going well, the same thing happens. So, I feel that we are really reaching a low at this university, especially in the college; and I realize that when Lukermann's administration came to an end, it had been allowed to decline a lot. I don't think it was horrible from the beginning but by the time it ended, I think it had really degenerated. I was very hopeful that some things would improve and I think for awhile some things did improve. I think more kind of order was brought but after that, I think things are really discouraging. The people who are willing to do these jobs are not

any of the people that I see as administrative leaders. None of this group that I'm talking about that I see as such models will do it.

CAC: It won't surprise you. I've interviewed several persons in their fifties who have had opportunities to apply for this and [unclear] and they've come to just laugh and say, "I can't do that now." Yes, it's just not a friendly environment. We may come back to this theme.

I want to introduce another one though and that is, the constituents, the clientele for Women's Studies and the Center of Advanced Feminist Studies and how that changed. I'm thinking of undergraduate students, graduate students, primarily female to begin with, the sprinkling of concerned men, and then how does that change? How does that develop?

SG: I think the students who come now are more optimistic about the future of feminism than many of us are in that they don't see it as fragile—as I do.

CAC: Perhaps, because they take it as a given?

SG: Yes, I think they do. You know, I can't say very much about that. I do think that one of the things that's happened is that there is a lot of interest in feminist theory and this was not there at the outset.

CAC: There wasn't any?

SG: Right. So, once it's there. . . there's a thought now about whether there should be a track, for example, that people in social work might prefer as opposed to this highly theoretical track which people in the College of Liberal Arts [CLA] tend to like.

CAC: Does Jean Quam see that? Is she part of this conversation?

SG: I think, yes.

CAC: She would see that her students have different intellectual needs?

SG: Yes, I think so. She still stays alive with Women's Studies. Now, she's up on the same floor.

CAC: Yes.

SG: It's been wonderful to have her as . . .

CAC: She's an old partner of mine. We can team taught things.

SG: I think that's a difference. I also notice there's a real difference in new colleagues, younger women colleagues. Some of them stay on the edges of Women's Studies in the center. They think of themselves, in one sense, allied with it but they don't give much energy to it. I think it's partly because the publishing demands in each field are very great. There are some who are just right there from the beginning but others who really don't join with us a lot. I think that may have to do to some extent with the fracturing of women's interests when after you get a certain strength, then you can afford to have more differences and go in more different directions and when you don't have such a clear enemy out there. I think there's some of this that's happening.

CAC: To what degree does what you are describing relate also to the accelerating, increasing specialization within every field? I've heard this in the hard sciences, the soft sciences, biological sciences, philosophy. Everybody I talk to says that colleagues don't have much to share with each other anymore.

SG: I think what I see in the younger people who've been hired in English, for example, is very great specialization and real—in quotes—professionalism.

CAC: Because that's the way they have to shape their careers?

SG: I think that's true. In a way, that tends to cut against some of the interdisciplinary things . . .

CAC: You bet it does.

SG: . . . that they're also interested in. These people that I'm talking about are all interested in interdisciplinary things.

CAC: If they're going to make it, they better stick to their last.

SG: I guess that's true.

CAC: You guess it's true?

SG: I'm saying that our field, English, admits more of that than maybe another field does because, for example, I'm thinking of our new hires. They would feel really responsible to know a lot about history, and economics, and things like that in their area; and they wouldn't expect someone to say, "He really doesn't deal with the metaphors in the literary text." I think that's different from some people in . . . Also, if those people published an article in literature in *Science*, the English Department would think that was a very good thing.

CAC: I see.

SG: I don't think that's true in some other disciplines. I know some people who've been told, "You have to choose between this field and Women's Studies."

CAC: This would be coming from what departments?

SG: Sociology. I don't know about Psychology. I'm sure in the Sciences. In fact, somebody in Speech Communication told me that an article that had been published in *Hurricane Alice* was defined as service and that's very funny to me. That wouldn't happen in English.

CAC: Okay. But you've changed the values and the norms over a twenty-year period?

SG: Yes.

CAC: That's what you've been talking about the last hour?

SG: Yes, it's true. I don't think that's happened in all fields.

CAC: Well, from other interviews, I can assure you that it's not happening [unclear] other fields. You have spoken twice—and I think this is a relevant point to bring up—about graduate education and junior faculty, that is, non-tenured, tenure track faculty and you've used the word demanding, and competitive, and publishing demands, and so forth. Do you find this more severe now, not only in English . . . after all, you move around . . . you know lots of [unclear]. Would you say that was a national phenomenon or do you think this is peculiarly acute here?

SG: I think it's very acute here.

CAC: Why?

SG: I'm not sure, except I think that everywhere people have been anxious a little bit about tenure and I think it's had to do with the economic crisis in that they now have all these tenured faculty members that they have to pay and they can't get rid of. I read the Senate Faculty Affairs minutes that came my way and as chair of a department, I feel I have to read these. I'm really sorry because they really do depress me. [Ettore] Infante came to the meeting and he was saying that we have 90 percent tenured faculty and that he wanted to move to 60 percent tenured faculty; so, the committee members asked two very important questions that he never answered. They sort of insisted but he never did answer. (1) was, "Why?" and (2) was "How?"

CAC: [laughter]

SG: Clearly, he has something in mind that he won't say and my guess is because it's too upsetting.

CAC: But not free to share it now?

SG: Right.

CAC: Entirely too dangerous.

SG: Right. I think there are things happening here that are national . . .

CAC: Sure.

SG: . . . legislators wanting more accountability in certain things. I think a lot of what's happening here, we are led to believe is fated nationally, etcetera, which is particular, and is a construction of people in power because they want to do things.

CAC: Can you give a concrete illustration of that?

SG: One example would be sort of like what I'm saying about Infante saying we have to 60 instead of 90 and people are saying, "Why?" And there's no reason except, he feels it's better, or it would give him more money, or some such thing.

CAC: I'm going to interrupt again because this is an important topic, I think, to understand the culture and how it's changed the last twenty-five years. I talked to a microbiologist who said that the pressures of non-tenured really bright young persons to publish was so severe that they were being pushed into publication that really wasn't up to their potential but they get on board and then they've got to do this by their fourth year really, and you lose momentum; and he said, "It's cruel. We should really have a six and six; that is, you could have a six year appointment, and review it, and then another six years before you really get . . ." So, other persons are commenting on this very phenomenon. So, it's not peculiar, you see, to one division.

SG: No.

CAC: I've heard it all around the university.

SG: Right.

CAC: If that's the case, then I have to ask the question again, "Why at Minnesota? What operates here at Minnesota that would make it particularly acute; although, I think we are describing a national trend?"

SG: I don't really know the answer but I do know this that when I went to the CAC meeting of chairs . . .

CAC: Say what those initials are.

SG: I don't know what they are . . . the Big Ten.

CAC: Oh, okay.

SG: But when I went to them and I described what was happening in the English Department . . . my budget in two years will have been cut \$403,000.

CAC: [sound of a whistle]

SG: This year's cut in the college was \$1.3 million; so, English absorbed more than one-third of it. When I talk about that and say, "We have no prospects for hiring new people," they ask questions that suggest for English to be in that position, our university ought to be in a much worse position. They want to know, What on earth has happened? Is Minnesota in bad financial . . . ? I think what is happening to my department in CLA does not necessarily reflect what is necessary given the financial state of the university and that's just from conversations with other people. Julia has some stories like that. She talks to deans . . .

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 1]

CAC: We're engaged in discussing very serious matters that are difficult to understand. I've heard these questions, these observations, in different places but they are difficult to explain. We're right up against them and we don't know. Where were you going to take it next now?

SG: I was going to say Julia has reported that when she goes to deans' meetings, she says to deans, "Are you getting a budget cut?" And they say, "Oh, yes, a very severe budget cut . . . \$50,000." Then she said, "What is your total budget?" They say "Fifty million" or some huge number. Obviously, there are worse things that have happened in other places and worse things that have happened to colleges of liberal arts but it is not inevitable that we would be getting the cuts we've been getting. It is not fated, given the economy . . . it's not. This is being done somewhere. When I present these figures to people, they all express surprise but nothing has happened to change that occurrence of events. There's also something that's really quite bad. In cutting English in this way, it means that Women's Studies, American Studies, the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies, and CSCL, which used to be Contemporary Discourse in Society, now it's . . .

CAC: Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature.

SG: Yes, okay. It means all of those units have some pulling back. For example, Helen Hoy resigned.

CAC: She's in what?

SG: English.

CAC: Okay.

SG: She contributes to Women's Studies and CAFS in teaching. She is a corroborating faculty member for people in American Studies and to some extent CSCL. So, when I don't get money to replace her, Women's Studies loses a course . . . there are losses everywhere. This is another way this happened but it's in a different department. A search was cancelled for CSCL. A member of the English Department who shared between those two departments had been my graduate . . . I have to go back a little bit. I had a graduate director who had applied for a national fellowship. The understanding was that this man in CSCL and English would replace her if she got the fellowship. Because their search was cancelled, they have so few faculty members, when this happened—she did get the fellowship . . . it's an ACLS [American Council of Learned Societies], a very prestigious fellowship—when she got that, he said, "I can't do this now because we didn't get this hire; it was cancelled." Then, I had to go around the department trying to find people that I thought could . . . I'm very proud of my administration. For the first time, we have really people with diverse interests academically, and they are all highly published scholars with national reputations; and I don't want to change that. When I went around trying to find faculty members who could step into this director of Graduate Studies, the only person who could, happened to be the director of Graduate Studies in American Studies. She's done very little service in English; and so, actually, her younger colleagues persuaded her to do this because they like the direction of the department and they don't want to lose it. I also said there was a person who would probably like to do this but I felt would be incompetent. I said, "You have to understand, I cannot chair a department that cannot produce a graduate director among us who isn't highly competent and a model for our students to follow. I won't give my time that way. I'm not saying who can and who can't do it but I want you to understand I am not going to give my energy unless there are a group of you who are willing to help me." So, they put pressure on her. Elaine May was not at all happy about this. It truly was late in the year but I could do nothing about that. I've ended up giving her \$3500 for just the standard amount for a course release; so, hopefully she can get somebody to come from another department. This is the way that chain works. I talked to Elaine about it because I understood she was very cross about it and I said, "It is to somebody else's interest that we are arguing with each other over this. It is not to ours but this is the way it works." I see a largish problem happening to interdisciplinary units, partly because of what's happening to the units that support them; and making this case that cutting English cuts others so far has not changed what's happening. This is the dilemma. We give to other units and other administrative things 613 percent FTEs. We get in return \$42,000; so, I count that as one faculty member. That means we give five faculty members away. That means we have thirty-five faculty members. That's not enough.

CAC: You make very persuasive points with many concrete illustrations in how these forces subvert and corrode general education, cross-disciplinary and disciplinary programs.

SG: Right.

CAC: To what degree does it reflect also an intellectual component that I have been referring to earlier, that is, the increasing specialization within each discipline and the difficulty of launching real general education programs? I have in mind now the undergraduate program. Someone told me the other day, "There's no more general education in the sense that Minnesota was famous for from 1940 to 1980, let us say. There's no more of that." He was making an extravagant statement.

SG: Right.

CAC: See, that may be part of it, too? That's a question. I don't know.

SG: There's still the idea that we are supposed to be teaching a sizable number of undergraduates.

CAC: I had thought that was the case.

SG: In fact, what everybody says now is that it's the graduate education here that's being neglected in general, that nobody talks about it.

CAC: I see. You agree with that point of view?

SG: Well, it's certainly true in the college.

CAC: Okay.

SG: Nils, when he talks about "U-2000," it only deals with . . . I mean, they will say . . .

CAC: Primarily . . .

SG: . . . in graduate education.

CAC: Right.

SG: But it's an undergraduate thing.

CAC: But do you see that really playing itself out in implementation, that there indeed is a reinvestment in undergraduates?

SG: In all this concern about the Graduate School and whenever they were going to get a new dean . . . They don't have one? How long have they had an acting dean? . . . all year long. They don't have a new dean. They don't have any money.

CAC: I think they don't know whether the vice-president for research is not playing that role. I think that's one of the troubles but that's beside the point. Go ahead.

SG: They don't have anybody to be in . . . One of the things Ann Peterson said when she left—it's important that she's going to be the assistant in the National Science Foundation—was "Minnesota is making choices that suggest it will not be among the top twenty research institutions in the country about its graduate education." She was talking wholly about graduate education and she was talking about structure, and finance, and that kind of stuff. The council of chairs in the college complains all of the time about the college's lack of attention to graduate education.

CAC: To what degree does the market play in this . . . that there aren't very good jobs for people in Social Sciences and Humanities who do get their graduate degrees at the moment . . . unless English is doing much better than other departments, I know well?

SG: I don't know that English is doing better. We have the extremes of the governor who says things like—you did read his interview in the *Daily*, I suppose?

CAC: No. I missed that.

SG: He said, using himself as an example, "I'm in business. I don't want to major in history or philosophy." Those were his two fields he uses; so, there is an extreme out there of, you teach people to work.

CAC: So, we're talking about a cultural surround of values and norms, as well?

SG: Yes, right. I don't know in all states if governors talk like that. A lot of governors in states aren't very interested in the state university. They kind of leave it alone. I don't know that the governor of Texas has ever had an interest in the University of Texas. Certainly, I guess, the governor in California could have an interest in the state schools. We never had any. The only time I heard the president of Stanford say anything about government interference was when, quite recently, they overturned some kind of code of conduct that Stanford had about hate language. There was a court case and they found against Stanford; and he wrote a very wonderful statement in the *Alumni Magazine*, which I had great respect for him for because he absolutely maintained his intellectual position but it was very diplomatic for many of the alumni who would be very happy that this got overturned because they're notoriously conservative alumni. He said that he was still committed to seeing that such language was not used at Stanford, that because of legislative law this was the one state in the union where this would have been found. He acknowledged that they had lost and that he would modify things to suit that. It was very, very temperate but it was very, very strong . . . that we do not intend to have a community that encourages this or allows it and blah, blah, blah. I don't know if everywhere the governor is watching to see who's the basketball coach and who's the football coach . . .

CAC: Volleyball, more likely.

SG: [laughter] . . . and what the president's decisions are and commenting on the curriculum. That's undoubtedly a factor here that's not helping us.

CAC: We could go on with this but let me change the subject again—that's part of the function I have to perform—and come back to a subject that you started and that is, changing styles of learning and teaching in the classroom and the way they have changed since you've been in the profession.

SG: What is coming in in a big way is media and just today on my E-mail, we have a note from Peter Reed that there is a whole media resource, multi-media teaching unit, opening in the basement of Walter, I think . . .

CAC: To be up to speed by September when classes start?

SG: We are invited to come right now and look at them for various resources.

CAC: Peter Reed is one of your own?

SG: Yes.

CAC: Okay. What does this say to you?

SG: I don't know that Peter knows how to use any of it. I'll tell you what I have thought though. I had thought that students are going to really become accustomed to having media in one way or another in their classes, overhead projectors, movies, etcetera, and that I will have to do some of that. At some point, just being me will not cut it . . . that I will need some . . .

CAC: But looked at historically . . . What I know your career to be and what you were referring to earlier is what we define as active learning strategies, etcetera. Those strategy were not in place earlier in the 1950s or 1960s?

SG: No.

CAC: No. You and many of your colleagues really develop this. I'm inviting you to say something about the different uses of classroom time and style, function, what goes on, and the role of the students, etcetera. You know Toni introduced a lot of this.

SG: Right. I think a lot of it, I just take for granted, that the class is going to have discussion . . .

CAC: This is something you would not have taken for granted twenty-five years ago?

SG: No.

CAC: Okay.

SG: I do lecture some.

CAC: So do I.

SG: I don't think you can do everything by discussion.

CAC: Sure.

SG: I do have the class meet in small groups to some extent. I've had classes and seminars—they're usually Honors Classes—where I demand that in addition to an individual project, they do a collaborative project.

CAC: Now, where did that come from?

SG: I think I decided that it was a very useful thing to learn to collaborate in research because in our field research has been understood as a very individual thing. I've really learned a lot and, I guess, where I've worked on these collections that have been published through CAFS and others, I've really felt that's a very good and very exciting research effort. I've really wanted students to learn about that and to learn how to do that. It's been part of my intellectual life that really has come from the Center for Advanced Feminist Studies.

CAC: And you can pull this off in an undergraduate course on Shakespeare as well as a graduate seminar on whatever?

SG: Right . . . actually, almost better in the undergraduate class because I can give some undergraduate classroom time for them to work together.

CAC: Ah.

SG: Now, a problem which that has come up, which was interesting the last time I did this, is that the students in the class who were married and some with children had a real difficult time doing the meetings outside of class because they were on the evenings and weekends.

CAC: Sure.

SG: So, the people who were on campus or an easy commute . . . There was a problem at Minnesota because of the commute to campus and because of the kind of diversity of the student body to get people together. I have to think about that the next time I do it because it feels unfair to those students. Whether E-mail will begin to answer this problem to some extent

. . .

CAC: Tell me about that. Do you think that undergraduate students are going to have E-mail? They're going to sit in their homes and communicate with each other?

SG: Not entirely but they all have access to E-mail. They all have an E-mail address; so, they can all use it.

CAC: I do and I don't use it.

SG: I guess the question would be at home and whether they have access to it at home because I'm sure many won't. All my students do their papers on computers . . .

CAC: Sure.

SG: . . . so, if you have a computer with a modem, you could do this. What I'm saying is, it allows them, in effect, to have a running discussion with each other and they don't have to be face to face. It's not the same but it would let them do some meetings this way.

CAC: Okay. Now, because you don't have the class time in a graduate seminar, it's more difficult to monitor and encourage two or three persons to take a topic and work on it?

SG: What I've done though, I've just said, "We will do this . . ." I'll tell you where I've done this most successfully. In my Shakespeare Seminar, I usually teach four plays; so, I have asked the graduate students to choose one of the plays. They don't do it for the first one because we're already into that but I ask them to choose one of the three. I divide them up then and they have to put first, second, third choice so that not everybody does one play. Then I tell them that I want them to do a presentation to the class about the play and it will be the first class and it can be anything.

CAC: They have to make up their own mind what theme, what topic?

SG: Yes.

CAC: Fine.

SG: I encourage them in this to do Shakespeare in film because that's real interesting. Many of them do that. Many of them do just other things. They can read criticism or not read it or do whatever. Then, often their individual projects grow out of that. Some of them link up with each other and ask to do a joint project. I do allow that. One of the most interesting things that happened is that three students, who were part of a group, then developed their papers out of the group and they have subsequently given this as a panel at the Midwest Modern Language Association and they are all publishing your papers. [unclear]

CAC: [laughter] How widespread is that in your own department?

SG: Not very . . . not very.

CAC: It's primarily the women, plus Charles Sugnet?

SG: Yes. There are some men who do this, too. The other thing I would say . . . some of the most specialist, most professional people, connected with the Center for Medieval Studies and Barbara Hanawalt's operation, were very good at mentoring graduate students toward publication . . .

CAC: Oh.

SG: . . . including them when they can if they edit something. They don't do it through the kind of active learning stuff that I'm talking about. They wouldn't necessarily have a collaborative seminar but they're very good at helping students. In fact, a word that I'm a little uncomfortable with . . . A lot of the younger people talk about *professionalizing* their graduate students. This really means to see that you're up and running when you get there and there are a whole bunch of things that go with it.

CAC: Publication is high on that list?

SG: Right, right. Those people tend to be very active mentors. Not all of them are; some of them are very self-involved. They tell students important things but they don't really help them along. One of the things that I do that is different—it would never have been done when I was in graduate school—I did because graduate students asked for it. I developed a course called Writing and Publishing for English Graduate Students. This is a really interesting class. I had no idea the configurations that were going to occur . . .

CAC: I'll bet there is a real hunger for that?

SG: This is a class that I had be very small. I have to, I think, allow twelve people but that's a graduate student number but in fact, I've always had between six and eight people. I don't want fewer than six but eight is kind of perfect. I've only taught this twice now but I have faculty come in and talk about various things like, if they are an editor of a journal, what they look for. I have faculty come in and talk about how they started publishing. One person comes and brings reviewer's reports on her stuff, which are extremely negative—she's very successful—and things like this. It has very collateral, funny effects like one of the students told me that he really didn't know many of the faculty and he was a first-year student. He said, "I was so delighted at getting to meet all these people in your class." He got to meet the faculty because they would come. The other thing that really surprised me is the faculty talked much more personally about their professional lives than they usually do.

CAC: Good.

SG: Some would just tell surprising stories about failure, about whatever. Many of them give very good advice. They're very wise. That was something that happened. Now, from the last class—I think there were seven people . . . there may have been only six . . . one person did not finish the course and she was a person in drama and I think she's going to have trouble finishing things . . . period—three of those people have had their articles accepted in the first journal they sent it to and they've all come and said, "My article is going to appear." What they do is they bring to the class something that they have worked on. They don't just come *tabula rasa*, you know.

CAC: Sure, sure.

SG: They come with something. Then, we begin by each reading it and talking about it and having them say what interests them about it, what they're thinking about doing, what we think, and then we help them look for a journal that it ought to go in. We don't go and do that because they aren't in my fields.

CAC: Yes.

SG: They may or may not be.

CAC: I understand.

SG: What we try to talk about is how you are going to find the journal you ought to send this to. What are the steps you take to do that? I'm very, very pleased with this class and what's happened. People say really interesting things. The class gives graduate students time to work on a piece. It doesn't have to be a midnight. It's part of their course of study to work on this piece, to send it somewhere; so, that's a help. The other thing is just having to think about this week by week and report where you are. I encourage them to take a pass-fail and most of them do. The way they finish the course is they bring me their paper with a stamped envelope and I read it over and then, unless there is something really problematic, I mail it. [laughter] So, they are forced to send something somewhere.

CAC: Your colleagues who come in . . . that works best when the colleague is willing to share and make herself vulnerable?

SG: Yes. Some of them do just give information and that's fine.

CAC: Sure. Thirty-three years ago, I had just completed a manuscript for a book and it was accepted for publication and people working on dissertations . . . I shared with a session of the seminar the critical comments I'd had when the book was all finished. It turned out to be a penultimate draft. This was just an eyeopener that you had to work, and refine, and polish, and

then someone else could see something, and it's something you had to do all over again. Boy! I remember how shocked the graduate students were. This was a long time ago.

SG: The other thing is I think the students in the class really took each other's work seriously. They were wonderful critics of each other's work. They were very kind but very straight about . . . this is a book that people won't know and how is this going to be interesting? . . . stuff like that. They were really good.

CAC: Shirley, a half hour ago, we were talking about administration, and climate, and temper, and retrenchment, and you were pretty discouraged and dismayed but now, if this were on TV, we had a visual image . . .

SG: [laughter]

CAC: . . . you're having a pretty good time?

SG: Do you know what happens? It's really true that I have too much work and administration does feel like I need to be chair full time.

CAC: Oh! They just eat you up.

SG: I do think that people wouldn't want to do it for three years if they had to do it full time. What I'm seeing is that I do get discouraged in administration at times and going to class really helps. In a way, the job would be really hard if it was all administration.

CAC: All the fun would go out.

SG: I worry that I don't give as much time to my students. I don't prepare . . .

CAC: You can't possibly.

SG: My classes aren't as good and that makes me feel bad. I do need that to be happy at all. I think I wouldn't get . . . My work doesn't depress me; it's these political things.

CAC: I understand. I'm glad that you're joyful as well as dismayed.

SG: Right.

CAC: You were also made joyful by *Hurricane Alice* and that's a story that we should put on tape.

SG: Right.

CAC: Do you have time? Do you have to go?

SG: I have a lunch date at 12:00.

CAC: We're okay.

SG: I have to get to the English Department. That's all right.

CAC: It's 11:20 now.

SG: It's all right . . . we'll manage. *Hurricane Alice*, yes. We had been going, since 1983, and we decided to publish cheaply. We talked about other formats and I've always opposed them because we publish in newspaper format because I think we won't go out of business easily . . . because we are very cheap. We just got a grant from the Minnesota Arts Council for a double issue, which has just come out, and we have a very interesting constellation of students, community people, faculty. It's something that goes on and off the campus; so, I like that aspect because that's something that Women's Studies has lost some, that we . . .

CAC: Link to the community?

SG: Yes. In *Hurricane Alice* we maintain that; so, I feel very good about that.

CAC: Say something about the origin. Where did it come from . . . not the title . . . that's interesting, too, but why did you even start it?

SG: The reason we did it is . . .

CAC: You say we . . .

SG: Martha Roth, Madelon Sprengnether, Jean Strawn, and I had been to a play written by Marisha Chamberlain about Willa Cather. This was a play downtown. We went to the new French bar and we were talking about this play and, at some point, the conversation was so good, I said, "We really should have this on tape and we should write this. This would be a great written thing." Then, we started talking about nobody would publish this. We started talking about doing a journal where we could publish the things we wanted to publish and I said, "I have a great name for it." I thought of this before. I guess I thought of doing what the *Women's Review* books did. I thought of doing something that would be comparable to the *New York Review* books because they have such biases against women's work that that was much needed. Somebody else has done it and that's good.

CAC: They're pretty formless and free-flowing and uneven [unclear] . . .

SG: The thought is that the *Women's Review* books is contained by the *New York Review* books because it's so counter to that; so, we are much freer. I'm very happy that we don't have to be bound up in book reviews. I said I had an article and Martha Roth had a waitress journal that was really wonderful; so, we started talking about the things we would publish in it. Then, we talked to Toni. It was partly with her help that we solicited the first funds, which were \$1000 from private donors, to do the first edition. It just gradually . . .

CAC: Has it ever had institutional support?

SG: The only institutional support it has is that English gives it space, which is just a small office, much smaller than this one but it gives it space. We've had some postage from English, though we send our subscription out. They don't pay for mailing the journal but they pay for our routine letters and we have a telephone that they pay for. They've now given us a computer; it's a hand-me-down but it's fine. It doesn't come to a lot in dollars but we couldn't pay it ourselves and it's substantial support.

CAC: Your contributors and your readers include community people as well as academic folks?

SG: Yes.

CAC: You were saying earlier that that is one way that you maintain a link with the community?

SG: Right.

CAC: How large a readership do you have now?

SG: I don't know. I don't know that it's terribly large but we do send to book stores all over the country and I think we have a small subscriber's list.

CAC: Heavily regional?

SG: Yes, but we really do have readers all over the country and some international readers. Many libraries take us.

CAC: You said that you came up with the name?

SG: Yes. I thought of it as turning things upside down, turning a bad habit of naming bad things after women into something good and I thought of Alice because the wife of Bath's, her name is Allison.

CAC: Ahhh.

SG: When we got the logo for it—Jean Strawn knew the graphic artist who did the logo—Jean did research to try to help find the logo; so, there were a lot of interesting things that's written on the inside cover that suit . . . like at the center of a hurricane is an eye of calm and this kind of stuff; so, the name works out really well. You do know that there is subsequently a rock band who stole our name? [laughter]

CAC: High compliment?

SG: Yes. I think that's very funny, that's very, very funny.

CAC: Do you want to say something about all these committees that you've served on in the college and in the university, not in detail, but in general?

SG: This is something that's really changed in the academic culture. When I first came here, I was expected to do a lot of service. There was a lot of service to be done and I was expected to do that. I was expected to do as much of that and more than publish. That's true.

CAC: Really?

SG: Yes. In other words, I came talking about how I would turn my dissertation into a book and the chair kept talking to me about how I should write articles. I mean, there was a kind of diminishing. What I know now is that the younger generation, who has had these very high publishing expectations, does not want to give any time to service at all. They are shocked to find out that they really will have to give some now or we can't get things done. I think that's really, really changed. What I would have to say is that those experiences have been important to me because they've allowed me to know people on the campus. English has been very isolated and I think one of the reasons has to do with the fact that many of the faculty have not been engaged in interdisciplinary work. They've done kind of minimal committee stuff. So, that's been very helpful to me. The other thing I would say, that I forgot to say awhile ago, it's been important for women to be in Women's Studies and CAFS and, then, it's usually after that they go into a department. Like Sara was first director of CAFS and then she became chair of History. The same was true for me. Though I was a candidate for chair and only lost by three votes, I am a much better chair for having directed CAFS first. That has been a very important avenue. I would have to say this, too. That's allowed women scholars to do things that they couldn't do through their departments. Toni was always nominated within the department for a scholar of the college but the department, when it came down to its nominating, never chose her. She was nominated through Women's Studies and got it when English's candidates couldn't. That was their bias that would not let them choose Toni because she was the best qualified of the candidates. That was just it. Now, I don't know how that worked for Sara but she was indeed a Women's Studies candidate, not History's, for scholar of the college. There are a lot of things like that that Women's Studies and CAFS have allowed that women could not get through their departments and they could only get later. Maybe, Sara would have been chair of History

anyway. Maybe, I would have been chair of English anyway but I certainly do it a lot better for the other experience I had.

CAC: You do it better because you served on all these committees? There are about eight of them here.

SG: Yes. I'll tell you the committee that's been the most useful to me is the Judicial Committee . . .

CAC: I was going to inquire about that.

SG: . . . because I'm not afraid of having grievances brought against me.

CAC: Tell me about that.

SG: What I mean is I'm not intimidated. The English Department chairs and faculty fold up when you tell them a grievance is going to be brought or a lawyer is going to walk in the room. I just don't have that . . . In fact, after I had been chair for three weeks, a Civil Service employee brought a grievance against me. It was very interesting to watch people around me. I was perfectly calm. It was work for me and I didn't like it but I didn't have any problem going through it. I was determined to win it. [laughter] I was much tougher than everybody . . .

CAC: You were tougher because of your experience on the Judicial Committee?

SG: Yes.

CAC: Boy! am I glad I've talked with you. You're the first person that has ever suggested anything like that.

SG: Really?

CAC: I admire you.

SG: Why?

CAC: [laughter] Everybody else is just spooked out by the psychological and time burden of litigation; and they will not serve on the Judicial Committee—there are still people who serve—because it is just so onerous in time and in psyche.

SG: It's true. It's true. It's not that I would seek that out . . .

CAC: I understand.

SG: . . . but I'm saying that I really have learned a lot. I'll tell you, there are three things that have helped me be chair. One is extensive psychotherapy and the element of that that's been important is allowing me to understand boundaries and to both draw them for others and myself.

CAC: Ahhh. And to keep people from intruding on yours?

SG: Yes. The best example of this, that many, many people have now remarked upon, is that in the first tenure promotion meeting, there was a very difficult case in which the vote was going to be very close and this person, who had been up two times, forwarded to the college and turned down both times, and this was going to come up again. The associate dean had even met with me and said, "Don't bring this person forward." I said, "I won't have that choice of not doing that." I was thinking very hard about how I would respond as chair. At some point, when I could see that the vote was going to be close but that this would be a positive vote—I intend to be as chair as sort of quiet in the meeting and listen to what's going on—I said, "I'm going to need you to help me with something. I can tell from the discussion that I think this is going to go forward and in each of these categories, there is a major problem and something I'm going to have to explain away. I can see how to do this with this one issue but you're going to have to help me with the other two because I don't know what to say. I don't know how I'm going to write this in support of your vote." People looked really surprised because they treat the chair like a parent. We are children. We want.

CAC: [laughter]

SG: You are to provide; so, we're going to vote for this person and you get them through.

CAC: In my case, unruly children . . . but go ahead.

SG: So, people were really taken aback and the person said, "This person has held off sending this to a not very good press. They really aimed for Yale, and Yale is slow, and this is a pure act." I said, "But you see, part of the argument would be then, if it's pure, why is the promotion? If it's really that you want Yale to publish you, and Yale hasn't, and you choose to wait for Yale, or whoever, it doesn't really follow then that you have to be made full professor now. I don't see how I can make that argument; so, is there another one you want me to make?" People began to try to think how to do this. Later, somebody said, "This was really brilliant because you made the people who were going to support this . . . you put them in your position. Once put in your position, they have a harder time with this." [laughter] It's that kind of thing.

CAC: Your experience in psychotherapy helped you make that transference?

SG: It makes me understand really what is me, and what is other people, and that I don't have to be the parent to this department. It's like when I say, "I'm not going to chair a department that cannot produce a reasonable graduate director." Why would I do that?

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 2]

SG: . . . or they come and they want to complain a lot. I say, "Tell me what you would have me do about this," instead of just being the sounding board for complaints. Those are things I learned or those things come as a result of what I think is a main lesson in psychotherapy, which is where you leave off and other people begin; so that you aren't always enmeshed with whatever their thing is, whether it is promoting somebody who really isn't ready to be promoted . . .

CAC: Was it this experience that also led you to do some articles and papers of Freudian aspect of [unclear]?

SG: Oh, yes. That was a big part of my interest in that. What I would have to say is a lot of my interest, a lot of my success in academics, had to do with doing extensive psychotherapy. Often people come and they want to know things like, How do I get the insight you have about something? They can't get them.

CAC: It's a thirty-year process?

SG: I don't have an answer. [laughter] I don't have a helpful answer.

CAC: I was just going to ask for that but, I guess, I won't then.

SG: The other thing is, I think that being on the Judicial Committee and former office experience . . . I had to work my way through high school and I worked for the Air Force as a clerk typist. Then, I worked a year in a Humanities . . . I was the assistant to the administrative assistant in a college of liberal arts. Then, the jobs at Stanford as associate director of the Freshman English program had a lot of office stuff. So, I understand a lot about how offices work and how staff's work.

CAC: Ah, yes. Just hands-on functional stuff?

SG: Oh, yes. That's terrible important.

CAC: Sure.

SG: This is what happened when I came to be the chair with this executive secretary, who is now gone, but who brought the grievance against me. The former chair, who may become our associate dean, told me that everybody had an In box and everybody had an Out box. This meant that for the two senior secretaries, the accountant, the chair, and the associate chair things would come into your In box, you would do them, and you would put them in your Out box and nobody—he points to me—nobody is to take anything out of anybody's Out box except the

executive secretary, and she takes everything out; and if she supervises you, she checks it to be sure it's all right—in other words, the two senior secretaries, the accountant. If you are the associate chair or the chair, she is reading this to know what you're doing and to, also, see if there are complications, whatever. [laughter] I just listened and then I said, "I can't even go through my mail in a day. Nobody, nobody can go through all the stuff in the Out boxes and do anything else. This is crazy!" The whole office was being reduced to this woman's craziness because they didn't have any way to imagine or visualize office stuff. I can tell in the staff meetings that questions about logistics and things like this that sometimes the staff hasn't even thought of. These are things that if I hadn't done those other jobs, I really wouldn't know how to do. These are the three most important things.

CAC: Now, I'm going to ask two questions. The first one is: Are there major things that we have not talked about so far?

SG: As I think about it—there's not a lot to say about it—a major gap in our conversation, that I only just thought about, that I do see as extremely important to my prosperity as a professional person is psychotherapy and I have done that extensively, over a long period of time. I know that doesn't work for everybody but I wouldn't have had the ego strength or the confidence to do what I do without it.

CAC: Have you had one therapist all this time?

SG: No.

CAC: A series . . . did some work better than others?

SG: I've really only had two serious ones and I have had to do some trial and error.

CAC: Are either or both of them women?

SG: No. If I were choosing now, I might choose a woman but I don't really think that's necessarily important. The first therapist I saw was a psychologist and, at one point, because I had only one parent, he suggested that I see a woman in addition to him because he was getting too complex a transference. I thought that was pretty interesting. I did that for awhile and if I'd had enough money, I would have continued because it was very, very interesting for me to observe my different responses to them because I did respond very differently to people of different genders.

CAC: That is interesting.

SG: I think the psychiatrist that I see does not honor gender differences sufficiently, partly because I've seen him for a long time and partly because I'm strong enough not to . . . I see him and I can psychoanalyze him to some extent.

CAC: You're independent?

SG: So, I know we go into areas where he's not going to be helpful to me and I just say that. I just say, "You're going to take this position and it's not going to be helpful to me." If I started over right now, I think I would choose a woman, partly because I didn't live with a father and I didn't have brothers. It was very useful for me to see men in the first part of this.

CAC: I'm sure on this theme we could spend an hour..

SG: Right. I think we've spent enough. That was a theme I just wasn't thinking about that's been really important.

CAC: Fine. Good. My other last question always—sometimes nothing happens and that's fine and sometimes we have to come back and have another . . . it's a dumb question—How do you reflect on these things we've talked about? We've been talking for two and one half hours. It's been very engaging to me, very interesting. Do you have any reflections, less about yourself, really about the university?

SG: I guess, what I have been thinking mostly about is how this institution is going to change and how I'm going to finish my days of formal work life here.

CAC: How old are you?

SG: I am sixty. I turned sixty on August 8.

CAC: Okay. So, you've got five, six, seven years . . . whatever you want to do with it.

SG: I actually may have longer because I had children very late and one child will be in his third year of college, and one is starting college, and they both want to go to medical school.

CAC: Florence and I had a baby, the caboose, when we were forty-four; so, there was tuition a long time.

SG: Cecilia was born when I was forty-two; so, I may really want to work longer than I might ordinarily. I've been thinking a lot about how the university will change and if I can remain happy here. So, that's a kind of long term . . . I've watched so many men in my department—I say men just because there weren't women—really grow bitter, and disappointed, and want to sort of turn back on their whole professional life.

CAC: It's a real risk.

SG: I really wouldn't like that to happen to me.

CAC: Yes.

SG: Then, I've been trying to think my way through something. It doesn't allow time for much reflection though it does demand some kind of dream time, or something. I think as just chair of English, I am going to be in such an unfriendly environment to my department and then particularly if the second person in my department should become dean that I will be in such a personally unfriendly power structure . . . about how to cope with that and mainly how to cope with it emotionally because the only thing that's been hard for me as chair has really been the enormous anger I felt on certain occasions when the dean or Central Administration has behaved—I feel—so destructively to themselves, to us, and I have had no weapons against it. I don't want to spend a lot of my emotional energy like that; so, I'm trying to think about how to be in relation to these forces that I don't have any control over really.

CAC: Particularly when the force of retrenchment is external and difficult to deal with?

SG: Right. Those are really the places . . . What you ought to do is interview me next year. [laughter]

CAC: I've learned a lot. What a lucky job I have.

SG: Yes.

CAC: I've done sixty-five faculty and twenty *etceteras*.

SG: What I'm saying though . . . things will change.

CAC: Yes. So many I talk to see it changing much for the worse and they don't see really much of a glimmer. That's very wide-spread. It may need not be. In the long run realistically, we may all be wrong. You were very kind to come in and share with posterity.

SG: [laughter] I'll be interested to know what happens.

CAC: Well, we don't know what's going to happen.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

[End of the Interview]

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