

John Howe

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Interview with John Howe

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

**Interviewed on July 25 and August 3, 1994
in the Office of Clarke A. Chambers
in the Social Science Building
University of Minnesota Campus**

John Howe - JH
Clarke A. Chambers - CAC

CAC: . . . John Howe of History and American Studies who's been on campus for many years and played major roles in department, the college, university, and beyond the campus. The date is July 25th. It is Monday afternoon. The interview is being conducted in my professional office in the Social Science Building.

John, as I was explaining before we turned on this machine, I find it useful to hear a little autobiography, how you got interested in history, something of your graduate training—not at great length—and your early teaching experience which was in the private university sector and then coming to the university, how you perceived the university when you came here; and then we'll be off and running from there. So, why don't we start? It's interesting where people come from and how they decide that, yes, what they want to be is an early American, early national period historian.

JH: I got my bachelor's degree at a little college called Otterbein, one of Ohio's myriad small colleges. I had no road to Damascus experience after which I knew for certain that I must be an historian. I imagined doing a variety of things and teaching seemed an attractive option. I liked to read. I liked to study. As best I learned in that little college, which was only partially, I enjoyed the range and variety of historical studies. So, that was that. Then I did my graduate work at Yale.

CAC: Is that a logical choice or did you apply lots of places? Did you really want to go to Yale?

JH: Interestingly enough, it was my father who got a Ph.D. there years ago. My mother got a Master's degree years ago . . . that encouraged me strongly to apply there, among other places. I've been thankful to him, for a bunch of things but that's one of them, ever since. So, off I went to Yale.

CAC: But Yale had the kinds of faculty that matched your particular . . . or, maybe, you didn't know what your special interests were at that time?

JH: I didn't know. I knew I wanted to study U.S. history. Beyond that, I wasn't clear. I rather imagined that I would work in more contemporary U.S. history but I got there and I—as was true of numbers of my graduate mates—sort of migrated to Ed Morgan who was the colonialist there.

CAC: Yes.

JH: He exercised a kind of magnetic attraction on lots of graduate students; so, I ended up working with Ed Morgan and concentrating on early U.S. History.

CAC: As a model of teaching, why were you attracted? Was it the field, or was it Morgan's personality, or his command of analysis? One thinks of *model* teachers, teachers upon whom one can model one's own career.

JH: I think it was a combination of several things. He was, then, just emerging . . . well, he had emerged . . . as one of the luminaries in early U.S. History. So, he was certainly one of the stars of the U.S. History faculty there, which was then quite small indeed. His manner with students, his openness, and his interest in students and what they were doing, and this kind of supportive function that he served for students, attracted me to that. And I found, fortunately, the seventeenth, the eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries interesting periods to study; so, it worked out well.

CAC: Okay.

JH: I did my degree there. Then, my first job was at Princeton where I was, effectively, an instructor for three years, leading discussion groups—or, as they were called there, precepts—in a variety of U.S. History courses and working with History majors, each of whom did two junior papers, semester long papers, and then a senior essay. Part of my teaching involved advising those students. The three years at Princeton were fine years. I made good friends and had a good deal of time of my own. I got the dissertation reworked into a book. It was a good place to be from when I looked for a permanent job. So, three years at Princeton and then came to Minnesota. That was in the late summer/fall of 1965.

CAC: Just at the time that we were remaking the whole History Department.

JH: That's right. It was you at the center of it.

CAC: Yes.

JH: At least, soon to be. I think Harold Deutsch was the chair still [unclear] at least. I had a little experience with a large, say, public university. In between college and graduate school, there was one year when I did a variety of things with, among them, several quarters of part-time course work at the graduate level at Ohio State . . .

CAC: I never knew that.

JH: . . . just learning a little more about U.S. history, kind of getting ready for serious graduate study. I had driven across the state of Minnesota from west to east one summer some years before as part of a family vacation but, as with many of us who end up here, had never been here before. A friend and graduate school mate from Yale had hired on here a year or so before, Allan Spear. He helped to midwife the decision to come. I also had a friend—not as longstanding—from Princeton days, who was then just finishing up graduate work there, Kim Munholland who was here. So, we knew some folks when we came, and we've been here ever since, and enjoyed it.

CAC: Was it a difficult transition to make from a private university, and doing tutorials and readings, into a large university where right away you had to take on large classes as well as research seminars?

JH: It was difficult in that it was so different. It wasn't difficult psychologically. I looked forward to it. Due to the nature of a public university and to the wider range of teaching opportunities that I'd have, I left Princeton with no regrets . . . having had three good years there, but quite ready to move on. It was quite different. It certainly was different in terms of the students you encounter in the classroom, and the size of the classes, and just the nature of the community.

CAC: Say something about the nature of the student body as you get exposed to it the first several years, as contrasted with your earlier experience.

JH: Several things . . . Princeton was an all male, point one.

CAC: When did they turn coed?

JH: I left there in the spring of 1965 and so it was about five years later, maybe about the early 1970s.

CAC: That's one big major difference.

JH: The students there were very verbal and in the precepts, or discussions, there was never any trouble, difficulty in getting students to talk. The difficulty was in shutting them up, and calling

them to account, and that sort of business. I had kind of gotten used to graduate chatter in seminars and the extremely verbal, actively verbal, character of Princeton students. I didn't find that here and that was a jolt. [laughter] I think though the largest difficulty I had, initially—and I still experience this—is in this difficulty of coming to know, following many undergraduates over time. You have these sort of capsule, quarter length, experiences with many students and they can go well, or not so well, but then the large majority of students . . . I mean, you hadn't seen them before that and you don't see most of them after that; so, it's very difficult. I still find it difficult, though I've found ways to get beyond that, to understand how those students really connect with my teaching in a particular course, and what it contributes to their overall education. At Princeton, it was easy to do that and often very satisfying.

CAC: Hmmm.

JH: It's a function, essentially, of the size of the community and the more homogeneous character, I think.

CAC: But presumably the graduate student body would provide some of those rewards in persisting?

JH: That's certainly true.

CAC: You plunged right into a variety of courses and research projects but, also, into American Studies. Didn't you begin to teach or have American Studies students in your classes when first you came?

JH: Yes.

CAC: Do you want to say something about that?

JH: Oh, I don't know what to say. I was invited, I think right away, to become a part of the American Studies faculty and that was attractive to me. I really can't remember whether I taught any American Studies courses, specifically, the first number of years. There were frequently, as there have been for most of us through the years, American Studies graduate students in History seminars . . .

CAC: Yes.

JH: . . . and sitting on American Studies' committees. It was mostly through the graduate students that I had connections with the American Studies Program.

CAC: Say something about your developing intellectual interests as they build out from your original research in early national intellectual history and then how you stage those in your own seminars. I'm trying to get a sense, with lots of people, about how they created seminar subjects,

and how the students responded, and how your own focus changed over twenty, twenty-five years.

JH: When I was hired, I was in some sense hired as a late colonialist. Darrett Rutman was still here as U.S. colonialist; so, I was hired to teach courses in the American Revolutionary period and the early national period, the early nineteenth century. I did that, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels, for a number of years. It then came to seem to me that those were overly narrow chronological boxes that I wanted to escape.

CAC: Good.

JH: My teaching, both at the graduate and undergraduate levels, then became more thematic, reaching across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and focusing on various ways on themes of political history. What I did in terms of teaching was also a function, to some extent, of who else was in the department and kind of working in early U.S. History or later in the nineteenth century, and sort of what needed to be done. One of the pleasures of this place has been, really, the opportunity to not have utterly free reign but to shape the kinds of courses, both graduate and undergraduate, you want to teach.

CAC: In what ways did the agenda of the teaching and learning of nineteenth century history change during these twenty-five years nationally? Certainly, there were new questions, and you were part of asking questions, and answering some of them.

JH: I think, at least in the last, say, decade or so, the change that has affected me the most is—maybe, collapse is too strong a term and demise is too final a term—the weakening of political history as a field of study.

CAC: Yes, traditional political history, certainly. Doesn't that concern with the party systems, for example, come in after you were here? Doesn't this really work its way out in the 1970s and 1980s?

JH: Yes. But I was speaking of the last decade or so, the most recent decade.

CAC: Okay.

JH: This was really, in part, in response to the kind of flowering of various kinds of social histories, and the expanding agenda of what is called social history, and in part also, the fact that the main organizing themes and methods of political history developed in the 1970s and early 1980s just sort of ran out of steam . . . the so-called ethno-cultural analysis of voting behavior and that sort of thing. It has kind of imploded . . . in part became so preoccupied with method and arcane vocabulary that its practitioners increasingly talked to themselves and had less and less to say to the profession more generally.

CAC: You found yourself not eager to go down that line?

JH: Right. Right.

CAC: But you did have to respond, for example, to a new concern with American Indians and their part in political history in the nineteenth century, or with American women, and so forth, and how to introduce those themes into political history, if you will, broadly perceived.

JH: Yes. For a few years, this must have been in the early 1980s, because there was growing interest in Native American history, in particular, and Indian/white relations as a part of that, and because we really had no one in the department to teach some basic courses, and because I had some interest in reading into those fields and learning about them, I taught a few courses in History and American Studies that really focused mostly on Indian/white relations rather than Native American history itself.

CAC: Sure.

JH: Then, as the field of American Indian history became more elaborated, it became clear we really should have somebody doing that kind of work specifically, why I backed out of that again. It was an interesting interval. That's been true in lots of ways in my career here. I've done all sorts of things, both of an administrative, quasis-administrative, sort—that we will come to talk about—and in terms of teaching. It's helped to stay fresh.

CAC: If this were a real conversation and not an interview, I would underline what you've said, that I think many of us here at the university, certainly this department but elsewhere as well, have a good deal of elbow room . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: . . . and the chance to respond to changes of national agendas, and scholarship, and teaching, and so forth. Did you find that you adjusted your classroom instructional styles?

JH: Over the years?

CAC: Over the years.

JH: Sure, I'm a much better teacher now than I've ever been.

CAC: And why? What did you do differently?

JH: I suppose it's just a matter of accumulating confidence but I've been working hard in recent years to put students closer to the center of what a course is about.

CAC: Yes.

JH: And at least in my upper division undergraduate courses anymore, I don't lecture. There are no lectures . . . I mean, I talk. There are classes built around discussion, and student papers, and a variety of kinds of—as the jargon these days says—active learning strategies. I find that much more enjoyable. I learn more than listening to myself talk. It's much more fun to find ways of putting students in positions where they have to think and puzzle things out. So, I'm having a much better time and, actually, enjoying my teaching much more than I ever have.

CAC: Is there a ceiling of size in which that method is possible?

JH: I don't know how long I can continue to do this but I've taken to controlling my courses at forty, for that reason.

CAC: Oh, that's right. If you have classes at 200, then it becomes another animal, doesn't it?

JH: Well, you can't do that. I have also, frequently, taught the first half of the U.S. Survey course, or Introductory course, with from 200 to 350 students. In that setting . . .

CAC: You have to lecture?

JH: . . . you have to lecture in a big auditorium. I, actually, have enjoyed doing that, too. When I first came, I was thrown—thanks to you and other senior colleagues who were here at the time—into the U.S. Survey Course, as all youngsters were back in those days. [laughter]

CAC: Yes.

JH: I never did it well and I got out of it as soon as I had enough seniority to get out of it; that is to say, I taught it six or seven years, I suppose and then I didn't for a period of time. Then, a decade or so ago, we came to realize in the department that it wasn't the best use of people's time to put beginners in those huge, large, complicated, and important courses. So, as with some other senior colleagues in the department why, I began picking up the Survey again. It's a very different teaching environment and requires very different approaches.

CAC: You bet.

JH: I found that lots of fun, too.

CAC: Did this renewed interest in the teaching of the Survey play any part in your participating in a multi-authored textbook of American History?

JH: When I picked up the first half of the U.S. History Survey Course, that is, from wherever up through the Civil War, through the middle of the nineteenth century, I had simply paid no

attention to how I'd taught it before and started over; and taking a lead from my own interests and much that was going on in the profession, I organized it around the interactions of red, white, and black Americans. That's proved to be a very productive and enjoyable sort of set of organizing problems. Then, after I had been teaching the course that way for a number of years, I had the opportunity to join a group of colleagues elsewhere who were writing a U.S. History text wanted for college and university use in such courses, and that were making a good deal over categories of gender, certainly, but of race, and region, and that sort of thing. Helping to write that textbook sort of built from the nature of the Survey courses I had been teaching.

CAC: Did that collaboration involve you, in an intimate way, with the scholarship that others were contributing to that series, or did you do your things freestanding? Did you read each other's drafts? How do you put together a multi-authored textbook?

JH: There are six of us altogether as authors, which is probably too many; it certainly pushes the limit of too many. There are two primary authors who took additional responsibility for sort of organizing the project, and seeing it through, and seeing to it that all the authors were working with similar organizing themes. It's to hold the book together conceptually and rhetorically.

CAC: Sure.

JH: Actually, it turned out very well, largely through their diligent work. We read each other's chapters and, especially, when we were first developing the book, met together on a number of occasions to suggest readings to each other and to talk about how the themes that carried throughout the book would be developed in different periods.

CAC: There is probably no better way to keep in touch with the whole field of American history than to engage in such a project?

JH: I think that's true.

CAC: Maybe, we can go to conventions and hear papers but that doesn't play the same intense kind of focused role?

JH: Not the same kind of comprehensive reaching out to synthesize and bring things together. In a bit, it's sort of like preparing for your prelim exams. [laughter] You try to figure out what sense does it mean all together—but a more profitable venture than prelim exams . . .

CAC: Ah. Good.

JH: . . . as it proves.

CAC: You weren't here very long before your capacity for committee work and administration became clear and you—your CV would suggest as early as 1973, which is only seven or eight

years after you came here—became associate dean of CLA [College of Liberal Arts], I gather with Frank Sorauf appointing you?

JH: Yes. Right.

CAC: You were associate dean for three or four years?

JH: For three years and then I filled in part of a fourth when another dean was on leave.

CAC: Say something about your initiation into college administration. You had been a department officer but never chair?

JH: Right.

CAC: Now, you jump right into the college level. What kind of an immersion was that? What did you learn about the college and how things are done around this large university?

JH: That's a long time ago and I'll think back on it as best I can here. As I recall at least, I had had some experience on a number of college committees; so, I wasn't utterly a novice to the college, that is, beyond the Department of History. I guess, I was reasonably known, otherwise I wouldn't have been thought of as one of several people who might do this kind of job.

CAC: Of course.

JH: I did feel quite naive and, maybe, even a little innocent about administrative matters and deaning, though as a colleague of Frank Sorauf one learned very quickly about many things.

CAC: Tell me about that, why?

JH: He was a very strong and active dean who grabbed hold of lots of issues, and moved agendas, and was quite demanding of his colleagues . . . involving his colleagues in decision making.

CAC: So, you were given important portfolios rather soon?

JH: The college was then divided, as I'm sure you recall, in sort of divisional lines.

CAC: Sure.

JH: So, I was the associate dean for the Social Sciences and had some responsibility for, at one time, representing the interests of the Social Science Departments in the college and, at the same time, sort of representing the college's interest, the broader college needs and interests, to them. There was also an associate dean for the Humanities and the Arts. I spent a lot of time, early

on, looking at data sheets. The college was, then, really just in the process of developing its data capacity—my goodness! enrollments, and budgets, and credit hours, and all that kind of stuff.

CAC: Yes, yes.

JH: So, I sort of participated in the evolution of the college's managerial mechanisms.

CAC: Ah.

JH: I learned a lot from that.

CAC: A lot of that was budget driven? It's related to retrenchment and reallocation?

JH: It sure is, yes. It wasn't long before we [unclear] those experiences, which we seem to have been in evermore.

CAC: Yes. One of your portfolios, I believe, was African-American Studies?

JH: The Afro Department was in the Social Science division.

CAC: Yes. That certainly must have been a major consumer of concern, and time, and energy, and thought?

JH: Yes. It certainly was—as I suppose is usually the case . . . it was certainly then—in terms of Afro but not only Afro, that troubled units sort of absorb extraordinary amounts of administrative time. And Afro. . . . I can't remember the year when it was established as a department here; it was before I became associate dean. As with many of the ethnic studies departments that were fashioned here and elsewhere in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were troubled ventures on a whole bunch of fronts in terms of what the proper mission of such departments were, that is, academic mission along with, maybe versus, community service mission, versus ways of nurturing minority students in a predominantly white, and big, and complex university, and trying to cobble together a viable faculty. There were difficulties of leadership in the department, of a fairly severe sort, during those early years.

CAC: And really troubles that weren't resolved until substantially later?

JH: I think that's true, yes.

CAC: Was your sense that the Arts College—that is, Mr. Sorauf and his cadre of associates . . . he was an assertive dean, I would share that with you—it seems didn't address some of those issues as forthrightly as the dean often did on other issues? That's a statement with a question mark at the end.

JH: [laughter] I didn't hear the question mark but I'll accept that it's there.

CAC: [laughter]

JH: The questions of whether universities, this university, should establish separate ethnic studies departments, separate budgeted and facultied, as opposed to developing interdisciplinary major programs that would draw upon faculties from History, and English, and wherever, was at that time, certainly, a very lively question. What's the best way to go? The question of whether there was, indeed, an intellectual field called Afro Studies or African-American Studies was much in dispute lots of places.

CAC: Yes.

JH: Those disputes were worked out here and they had to be worked out often at a time when resources were not infinite and when the college had been historically, still was, stretched in mission beyond its resources, that is, in which the college had smaller departments by faculty with more students relative to faculty than probably any other Big Ten school. In that situation, when those established fields are themselves under stress, and changing focus, and expanding their agendas—mercy sakes! women's history and the history of the non-western people, that is, greater attention to African history, and Asian history, and so forth . . . At the same time, we're also going to be tooling up an array of ethnic studies departments? Question mark there. There were vigorous, often heated, politically highly charged debates among faculty, among deans, among minority students and others, as to which way to go.

CAC: And in some of those, you must have been the only person present, as a liaison person? I mean, that it wouldn't be a whole faculty dealing with these matters? As an associate dean, you had to be liaison and broker in many of these affairs?

JH: Yes.

CAC: I'm suggesting that it calls on very special skills that wouldn't have been true ten years earlier.

JH: Yes to some extent, except that the real battles were fought in Morrill Hall, and in the press, and with the regents, and with the president's office.

CAC: Ah, I see. How would this be communicated to the Arts College, to Dean Sorauf . . .

JH: You'd have to talk to Dean Sorauf about that.

CAC: Yes.

JH: That was part of the complicated and fascinating politics of the whole thing because it was conducted on so many levels.

CAC: And some levels, you weren't privy to at all?

JH: Quite so. Quite so.

CAC: Yes.

JH: At times, it was sort of a fascinating but sometimes bewildering exercise to try to figure out just exactly who was pulling which levers on these questions . . . [laughter]

CAC: Yes.

JH: . . . and to try to anticipate what might be the situation next week and not be too surprised by it.

CAC: What did you learn about managerial skills and styles? Nils Hasselmo was an associate . . .

JH: He was sort of the chief associate dean, the chief executive officer at the time in the college.

CAC: So, you worked with Nils and Frank Sorauf? They are two pretty good teachers.

JH: Yes. Indeed! Yes, indeed. What does one learn? One learns to work hard, listen carefully, seize the high ground rhetorically and politically, that is to say, anticipate situations. I think I learned those things.

CAC: Did you learn how to live with stress, personally?

JH: Yes.

CAC: It's a pretty stressful job you're talking about for a reasonably young scholar, teacher.

JH: Yes, although Frank was a strong dean and the decisions that were made were his decisions on a whole range of issues. The deans of us had a weekly lunch meeting at which we would sort of share agenda issues and to air this and that. Then, we would meet in different configurations—not a large deanly group. There was the Dean Sorauf. Then, there was Hasselmo, and Howe, and several Humanities, Social Science deans, and, I guess, Roger Page, our student personnel dean. We would meet in different configurations to discuss specific issues; so, there was really a very enjoyable collegiality in the group.

CAC: Yes.

JH: But the decisions were made in 215 Johnson which means, among other things, that when they were made and when the sort of noise began, I was in the background—and that was fine with me.

CAC: Soon thereafter, you became Affirmative Action chairman for the college. What did that involve?

JH: [sigh] My recollection is that that happened sort of by default; that is, those were the days in which this college and university, as other colleges and universities, were trying to figure out what it meant . . . why it was important, too . . . to diversify the faculty, primarily in terms of faculty searches and hiring procedures. The college really had no procedures in place to help departments, work with departments, in their faculty searches, to seek out female candidates and minority candidates for positions. I don't remember just how the appointment came about. I was certainly interested in learning more about these kinds of issues and Frank, I gather, asked me if I would take this on and I agreed to do it, which was only for a year. I spent a good part of that year—how much of my time was given over to this, I don't know . . . 25 percent, maybe that much—trying to figure out how to work up data that would reveal to historians, and psychologists, and economists, and others, what percentage of Ph.D.s granted in the last five to seven years . . . kind of a hiring pool.

CAC: Yes. Was that kind of a formula that the whole university was moving toward at that time?

JH: Moving towards it, yes.

CAC: But the Arts College was taking a . . .

JH: I think we were out a bit ahead of the university, generally.

CAC: There were some departments—this is 1975, 1976—that were setting up their own internal procedures as early as . . .

JH: Well, certainly History was.

CAC: How widely spread was that?

JH: Oh, it was very spotty, very spotty.

CAC: The initiative to be ahead of the curve, as we say, related to what kinds of departments? How could one judge which ones hold back, and which ones don't see the problem at all, and which ones were ahead of the curve?

JH: All you had to do is talk to them to find out which . . .

CAC: But you knew though at that time?

JH: . . . faculties were more open to this sort of thing and which were less interested in this particular agenda.

CAC: But as a liaison person, you would have some kind of a sense of what kinds of departments were likely to be in the different categories?

JH: History was certainly among those on its own—perhaps as much as any, maybe, more than any in the college but certainly as much as any in the college—showing its own initiative in reaching out and using hiring opportunities to diversify the faculty. There were others . . . Psychology, Economics and, I think to a certain extent, Political Science, at least during that first year, didn't display much interest in it.

CAC: The first year of two or three or four?

JH: Well, but I was only involved in it this one year.

CAC: Yes, I understand that.

JH: So, that's the only experience I can speak to.

CAC: As an historian you would describe this to a chance placement . . . I mean, things are operating in different provinces in small units?

JH: Different sums of behavior, you mean?

CAC: Yes.

JH: Oh, yes, certainly.

CAC: There's nothing in a certain discipline that would lead them to be more assertive in this regard and others far more conservative?

JH: I think different disciplines, even at that point, had different records of openness to women in the field, and in graduate study, and in so forth; so, in that sense, one might say there were certain social orientations built into different disciplines. Whether there's anything in the intellectual fabric of Economics as opposed to History that has anything to do with it . . .

CAC: Or the sociology of the profession, if not intellectual science?

JH: Yes. I think it also had to do with individuals, chairs, and leading faculty members in different departments at the time and their own personal levels of interest in these kinds of issues.

I think there was modest progress made during that first year. One might say, we've been struggling with it ever since.

CAC: Your commitment in the mid to late 1970s was always to your own department and program in American Studies but to the college. Then, in the late 1970s, early 1980s, I suppose, because you were skilled and had a good track record in those other provinces, that you begin to be active in university affairs as well. I have, for example, from your CV that you were on the Consultative Committee 1981 to 1984 . . .

JH: Okay.

CAC: . . . and chair [unclear] years but you're beginning to be in demand in the university as well as in the college. Say something about . . . Now, you're making another jump into a larger pool?

JH: Yes. I kept looking for things to learn and interesting things to do. I still don't know, and as I look back on it—I still doubt, I guess—whether I saw myself as sort of following any clear purposeful administrative track. Sometimes, I thought that's the way I wanted to add and other times I thought, I'm enjoying these sorts of things for the moment but that's not my life for evermore. The kind of on and off, starting and stopping, quality of the vita reflects that. Wherever I've been, I've needed to feel a kind of personal commitment to place; and I've never been the kind of person to sort of privatize myself, though I'm much more that way now than I've ever been for a variety of personal reasons, which don't really matter here. So, even though the university is this huge, sprawling megalopolis of a place and it's not easy to say, "This is the university," to identify what is exactly the university—there are many parts to it—still ever since I came, and even before coming, I felt an interest in the place and a curiosity about several things, figuring it out and seeing at what levels I could function, kind of testing myself. All those things, I think, lie behind the rather dismayingly long list of activities.

CAC: Was the Consultative Committee a good place to test yourself out?

JH: Oh, yes.

CAC: Tell me about how that functioned in the early 1980s, this is late [Peter] Magrath?

JH: Yes.

CAC: How did it function? How did you meet? Who created the agenda? Who came to talk with you? To what degree was the communication from Central Administration to the faculty and from the Consultative Committee back to the faculty? This is a complicated, small committee, to serve all those functions that, presumably, it is . . .

JH: Yes. The Consultative Committee is mostly elected. I don't know whether it's changed by now but, back then, it was mostly elected from various parts of the university. As you say, it was not a large group . . . oh, goodness, ten elected members, maybe something like that. There were, then, a number of sort of ex officio members, that is, the chairpersons of other major senate committees, Finance and Planning, Educational Policy. There was a Student Consultative Committee and the faculty and the student committees would meet together on occasion, and separately on occasion, to discuss different kinds of things. We met regularly, as I recall, every other week with the president . . .

CAC: I see.

JH: . . . and on other occasions if we were discussing budget matters or educational policy issues of some sort. The vice-president for Academic Affairs, or provost, or some other high administrative pooh-ba would meet with us to talk about particular items.

CAC: And it was useful to that officer and useful to the faculty? I gather you didn't keep minutes? These were confidential? They weren't secret but, I mean . . .

JH: There were minutes kept. I'm sure there were minutes kept.

CAC: And public, publicized?

JH: They were publicized. They're publicized much more regularly now through E-mail, and bulletin boards, and all of that.

CAC: I'm thinking in the early 1980s.

JH: Yes. I don't know back then what a mailing list might have been for Consultative Committee minutes but they were not intentionally kept privileged. The concerns of the Consultative Committee could, in the course of an academic year, range across a whole array of budgeting, and educational policy, and administrative questions, giving advice to the president, or trying to get the president's ear.

CAC: How successful do you think the Consultative Committee really was in that mission?

JH: It depends a lot upon who was on it and who was in administrative positions. It varied a lot.

CAC: Whoever is interested in the history of the university . . . When you have a committee like that that is so central and at least it's perceived as having such influence . . . I've talked to lots of people who were on the committee at one time or another about what influence it really had. Were there major or were there important modifications? Were there initiatives that arise out of those deliberations? Or maybe that's not what . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Tape 1, Side 2]

JH: They had really two major responsibilities. One was to organize the business of the senate, that is, the senate agenda, and work with the other senate committees to help them do their work, whether it was Faculty Affairs, or Educational Policy, or what have you, social concerns. So, it was the steering committee of the senate, which is the sort of chief faculty and student voice in the university governance. The other main function was to consult—this is a much more informal function, not a decision making function—with central administrators and to serve as a kind of voice in faculty to the administration and of the administration to the faculty . . . a very dicey kind of task since we were few and this is a huge, sprawling, complex place. It was very difficult to think of sort of *the faculty position* or *the faculty voice*.

CAC: Sure.

JH: We met regularly with senior administrators. We could gain access—my experience was in usually quite a cooperative way—to budget data or to the kind of information that we needed to understand a particular issue; though sometimes, you'd have to push a vice-president several times in order to spring a document, or a budget sheet, or something, loose. This university has had a long tradition of a strong faculty voice in collegiate affairs and in university affairs, as these things go and that was generally recognized by central administrators. There was a lot of time spent talking. We would meet, also, with the regents.

CAC: Ah! Select regents?

JH: There were meetings once a quarter. We'd have a dinner with the regents when they were in town for their . . .

CAC: With the whole body?

JH: Yes. Sometimes, those were useful. There was often a kind of tension there because few of the regents, certainly few, were academics; and though most of them brought to their responsibilities a concern about the university, and its best interests, and so forth, most had little experience working with faculty. Faculty, for our parts, often didn't quite understand what regents' responsibilities really were or what their agendas were. So, those meetings often weren't terribly productive and sometimes, in fact, they ended up heightening instead of reducing the tensions that existed.

CAC: By chronological chance, you were chairman of the committee when things got rather tense in the later days of the Magrath Administration?

JH: Yes. It's true.

CAC: What role did the Consultative Committee play? Can you spin out that story as well as you can?

JH: Peter Magrath was the president. I can't remember what the pause point was for the evaluation by the Board of Regents of his presidency; the seventh year sticks in my head, but I don't remember. Maybe, it was ten.

CAC: No, no. It was six, seven.

JH: It was seven? Okay.

CAC: And I think it was like the analogue, if I understand the printed record at all well.

JH: It's fresher in your mind if you've looked at a printed record than it is in mine.

CAC: [unclear] the whole cycle of evaluations of departments and programs, which was university wide . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: . . . and the feeling that if all the programs should have that kind of review . . .

JH: So should the president.

CAC: Well, so should Central Administration and the president, right.

JH: Yes. He had had an earlier review, I believe, of some sort and to what extent and what seriousness, I don't know. I don't remember that this was the first but this was a more substantial and serious review than before.

CAC: Was it initiated or was it staged in the Consultative Committee?

JH: We participated in it. It was organized by the Board of Regents since they are the appointing body.

CAC: Ah, yes.

JH: The president reports to the Board of Regents. They're responsible for his or her appointment or termination, if that's the case. It was not clear at all what the faculty's role was going to be or should be in the eyes of the regents or in the eyes of the faculty. Those of us on the Consultative Committee at the time were interested both in being heard on this particular review and in establishing sort of the normality of a faculty voice in these kinds of reviews, which had not been established. The regents had hired a gentleman from Wisconsin—whose

name you probably recall; he was in the School of Education there—whose area of academic expertise was management of higher education and who did frequent consulting with trustees and regents who were conducting presidential reviews. There was an increasing amount of that going on with more regularity across the country. He was brought in to meet with the regents, and other administrators, and the Consultative Committee, as sort of the voice of the faculty, the closest thing to some sort of elective—it's hard to say, really, representative—group of faculty to be listened to on this issue. We decided that we ought to take this opportunity seriously, in a particular sense, because there was among our group, and among the faculty at large, considerable restlessness about whether the university had clear academic direction at the time. Numbers of us had become concerned as we met with the president. There was lots of talk, for example, about internationalizing the curriculum and the university; and yet, we had difficulty just as a particular example finding out what that was intended to be, and to mean, and so forth. The communications with the president were not altogether—not on particular occasions but there was a pattern over time—what we hoped they would be. In any event, we took the opportunity to . . . oh, I can't remember whether we made any effort to survey faculty opinion, generally. What do you think of the president? What are his strengths? How might he improve his performance? But, we certainly consulted, developed a process to have conversation with other faculty leaders and the chairs present and recent of senate committees, held some hearings, and so forth. Then, as it became clear that there was considerable faculty unrest and concern about the university and its directions, we rang in a number of past chairs of the Consultative Committees. We augmented our number.

CAC: This gentleman from Wisconsin was privy? He was there to hear these expressions of concern?

JH: Yes. Yes. We had, then, the meeting with him in the regents' room that I can recall very vividly. He was surprised in that meeting at the kind of level and uniformity of unease among the faculty . . . quite taken aback. Now, whether he hadn't himself listened carefully enough or talked to a wide enough range of people . . .

CAC: Were the regents present at that meeting?

JH: No, no. This is just with him and then the regents had a review committee. They had kind of packaged themselves into particular committees to handle particular tasks. How all of that, then, went in the regents' group, I don't really know. It was clear that President Magrath . . . his standing with the faculty was not strong and seemed to be weakening. While we all recognized that it's not a faculty's decision to make—the regents appoint and terminate—there was enough concern broadly based among the faculty and ardently enough held that the message had to be sent. And we sent a message. That wasn't all that went on in the review process by any means; but it was factor, I think, in the president's decision, not long after that, to step down and take the position that that was right.

CAC: Do you have any idea . . .

JH: Just let me say one other thing here and, maybe, you were going to ask more about this but it's a complicated business . . .

CAC: Oh, terribly.

JH: . . . figuring out what an appropriate faculty voice is in a process that is not, essentially, the faculty's province . . . ultimately.

CAC: Yes. Faculty is not the only constituency [unclear] the president.

JH: Absolutely.

CAC: If it's a question that you can't answer, that you just wouldn't have the evidence, that's fine. How on earth does a president go about placing himself on the market when he recognizes that, maybe, the time has come . . . that he's put in his six, seven, eight years, whatever it might be . . . but then to time that with the possibility of going elsewhere and to make oneself available for another job, another position, another university. It must be extraordinarily difficult.

JH: I think it requires a delicate sense of personal timing to pull that off appropriately. Not enough people do it.

CAC: You don't know how Magrath was able to finesse that one?

JH: The gentleman from Wisconsin—goodness! I'm sorry I can't remember his name—who sort of led the performance review for the regents . . . I understand this to be the case . . . helped Peter find that position. This is a guy who was firmly plugged in to higher education circles, and the various organizations, and very tight networks that are involved there.

CAC: There once was a time—to interrupt just for a moment—that presidents, after six or seven years, after they felt they'd contributed all they could or whatever the local scene might be, were always able to find foundation positions. Mac Moos did. Meredith Wilson did. That transition is an easier one in a way. One can seek out another kind of position with a foundation but to seek out another university, I should think, would be much more difficult.

JH: And I think it's true to say that this situation developed very quickly. It was a situation in which the viability of Peter's administration very much longer was in question.

CAC: Yes.

JH: So, it, certainly in his personal terms, was a crisis situation which really didn't allow time over several years to anticipate and move smoothly into something else. It is my experience,

though at the same time—I will get to this today yet or at some point, I'm sure—it is my participation in presidential search . . .

CAC: That's the next . . .

JH: . . . but it's relevant here to say that it certainly was my impression from involvement in that presidential search that what was, then, still very much an old boys' network that that network was very active and people took care of each other. Short of a problem of moral turpitude, which certainly was not the case here, there were networks to help people move and I even thought, at times in that upcoming president search as we talked with various consultants and search services, processes that sort of just cycled people through various kinds of jobs and moved them around from here to there, following each other as a herd of elephants almost. Oh, that's a little harsh. [laughter]

CAC: To be irreverent, back in the olden days, way back in the 1950s and 1960s and, maybe, even the early 1970s, book men who came around, used to do that for professors.

JH: Oh, really?

CAC: Yes. Be scouts and carry the good news from one place to another that somebody was seeking to . . .

JH: [unclear] [laughter]

CAC: Or be happy to go somewhere else. A lot of those contacts were made, particularly by . . . I think of a fellow by the name of Crist who was Knopf's field representative. He did a lot of liaison work to ease new chairpersons . . . new appointments.

The next logical development is you were chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the regents in the search for a new president after Mr. Magrath did resign and subsequently went to Missouri.

JH: That's right.

[pause]

JH: Yes? We're both pausing here.

CAC: [laughter]

JH: For no particular reason. Let the record show . . . for no particular reason. [laughter]

CAC: That was even a more difficult assignment, I should think.

JH: No, not more difficult but difficult in its own right.

CAC: All right. It was chance that had put you as chairman of that committee, as one president was departing and another was arriving? So that it fell upon you, not by choice but by your presence and your office at that time?

JH: Yes, right.

CAC: That's not something you would seek out?

JH: Uh, I found it immensely interesting to do.

CAC: Okay. You didn't resign?

JH: I didn't resign. I didn't turn away. No, that's right.

CAC: Share what you can about that search procedure from a faculty point of view.

JH: Goodness! my memory just fails and it will be embarrassing on the record to the extent that it does. The chairman of the Board of Regents at the time from southern Minnesota . . . a farmer of some distinction and accomplishment and so forth . . . he constituted a subset of the regents to serve as a Search Committee and Regent Lebedoff was appointed to chair that subset. There was, I understood—one would certainly expect there to be—considerable politics in the Board of Regents as to who was going to be on that Search Committee; though, obviously the decision to appoint would be made by the full board. I was asked to chair a Faculty Advisory Committee. We were clearly given the name, very conspicuously, of Advisory, the proper name since we that's what we did.

CAC: You bet.

JH: To work with the regents' committee, they hired in, not a commercial head hunting outfit but the Presidential Search Advisory Service, or something, of the National Association of Land-Grant Colleges and Universities, I believe, in Washington, an outfit that works with public colleges and universities to seek central major administrators. We, that is, the faculty committee, was given the primary task of an initial screening down process. I haven't thought back upon this, so I'm reaching back in memory even as we speak. I think, there were several stages at which—once all the advertising had been done, and the calls had gone out by some of the regents, and by some of us on the faculty committee, and by this search advisory service—a fellow came in to meet with the regents' search committee and with our advisory committee on several occasions to talk about how presidential searches are conducted and if they go wrong, why most often they go wrong and the pitfalls . . .

CAC: Bravo.

JH: . . . all that kind of stuff, which was really quite helpful since these searches don't happen very often and none of us on the faculty group had been a part of one before.

CAC: There's no institutional memory to help you?

JH: Yes. Yes. But the files came in, and people applied, and were invited to apply, and so forth; and our faculty committee did several levels of screening out. At each point, we'd pause and meet with the Regents Advisory Committee, and go over the list and try to explain why we had set aside X, Y, and Z, and what the pool now looked like, and so forth. It was certainly fully within the regents' purview to ask that names be put back in, and so forth, though there wasn't a lot of that. The kind of working relationships, at least at that point, went on pretty well.

CAC: Now, Mr. Keller is acting interim president?

JH: Yes.

CAC: That fall, the regents declared—perhaps, it was his initiative, I'm not clear; the record doesn't really demonstrate that very well—that he would not be considered for the presidency, at that time. Was your Faculty Advisory Committee partner to that?

JH: Yes, we knew of that. That was a very disputed decision among the regents.

CAC: And initiated by them?

JH: Initiated by one member of the regents, in particular, and, I suppose, there must have been several enough who thought that was appropriate to carry it but it was a very disputed question in the regents and, in fact, it violated regents' policy. There was a regents' policy that said, in effect, "Interim officials shall not be excluded from candidacy, from permanent appointment, to positions of which they are an interim" whatever it was. So, it was a very disputed decision. We certainly knew of it. Vice-president, then, Keller had been nominated, nonetheless, from a whole number of directions, and so our faculty committee simply put his materials in a kind of separate file, and let it sit. These searches are really quite interesting things. You think you've got a strong group of twelve or fifteen candidates, and as the search gets serious, and the contacts with those candidates . . .

CAC: They have to be very discreet at home.

JH: Sure. People did begin to disappear.

CAC: Yes.

JH: This person from this Washington office did some of this initial scouting and contacted a number people fairly early in the process to test the waters of interest and that kind of thing.

Then, that person kind of dropped aside. I must say, that the names that that person brought to us after sort of phase one of screening down—it must have been before the formal final deadline had passed . . . you really ought to think also about X, Y, and Z—the list of names didn't impress us. They seemed people who were sort of part of this revolving network of university presidents that kind of follow each other around, recycled, some of them quite tired, it seemed. The search became quite complicated. In the closing innings of the search, and when there were relatively few candidates still in the search who had interest in the university and in whom we and the regents had interest—the number was dwindling down—the question of Ken Keller's candidacy kept coming up in the news and in informal discussions. We, the Advisory Committee, had conversation with Regent Lebedoff fairly consistently and with the chair of the Board of Regents. Before it was over, we asked directly, "Should Vice-president Keller be considered as a candidate?" We were told, "Yes."

CAC: Even though the resolution was on the books?

JH: Yes.

CAC: Okay.

JH: In the end, our Advisory Committee wasn't going to determine who was interviewed and who wasn't but that advice enabled us to sort of pull the Keller file back and feel that we were in a position now to look at it carefully against the other semi-finalists.

CAC: Sure.

JH: In that way . . .

CAC: There must have been a good deal of relate and support by other members of the Consultative Committee for Mr. Keller?

JH: There was considerable. Yes. There was substantial tension among the Board of Regents over what the faculty voice should be . . .

CAC: I understand.

JH: . . . perhaps, especially but certainly in part, because of the Magrath review, and who's in charge and whose university is this after all?—those kinds of questions, which would be legitimate questions, it would seem to me for regents to ponder; certainly, we thought they were legitimate questions for the faculty to ponder—and considerable disagreement among the regents over the appropriateness and desirability of a Keller candidacy. There was substantial support [unclear] quite divided, quite divided.

CAC: So, the decision of the regents in the spring came as a surprise or you kind of knew that that was . . .

JH: What decision?

CAC: To overrule their own memoranda?

JH: No, I must say I don't think I was surprised.

CAC: Okay. Well, you'd talked with enough regents to realize that that might be a possibility?

JH: Yes. And it certainly seemed to the Advisory Committee there were several . . . oh, goodness! there were not many interviewed. There was a man who was the provost at Penn who is now the president, or became the president at Indiana—may still be. There was a gentleman named Laddie Coor, who was the president at Vermont, who was interviewed. There was a gentleman who was the vice-president for research at Chicago. Those are the only three I can recall, other than Ken Keller, who were interviewees. Various of us on the Search Advisory Committee participated in the interviews of those several people. That was interesting. We flew off in a corporate jet to Vermont to interview Laddie Coor.

CAC: Oh, I see. You interviewed them off campus?

JH: Yes. A hush-hush sort of corporate raider kind of stuff. Then, there was a very tense moment. There was this final list. There was the question, then, of whether the Faculty Advisory group would participate in the interviews. There was disagreement among the regents as to this. There was a minority, the exact numbers, I don't know, of the regents who said, "That's it. The faculty voice is ended. This is now a regents' decision." That was before the kind of formal interviewing took place. We thought that wasn't appropriate and there was a bit of a face down on that question and, as it turned out, several faculty were, at each case, were included in the interviews.

CAC: Then, you had to report back to the full Faculty Advisory Committee?

JH: Yes, we reported to our group and then fed in. The several regents who were involved in each of these interviewing moments reported to their colleagues.

CAC: Were you often called by the press during this procedure to get advanced tips or did they not?

JH: I don't recall that I was.

CAC: Okay. Because there are so many presidential searches and the regents are sought out and faculty people or people of importance.

JH: We were called an advisory committee and I think that helped to shield this from journalistic interest, which was fine.

CAC: Mr. Keller becomes president, in any case.

JH: Yes, he does.

CAC: I have thirty interviews still ahead of me . . . That's the fun of being an historian. You have to piece together different perceptions.

JH: Yes.

CAC: I want to move to another subject now. It wasn't long, thereafter, that you became interim director yourself of the libraries.

JH: True.

CAC: Were you sought out? Did you present yourself for this?

JH: No.

CAC: What were the circumstances? I assume that there was a search for a director and that they decided to do an interim director.

JH: Eldred Smith, who was the university librarian of ten plus years, had departed the office through a variety of difficult circumstances and Roger Benjamin was the provost at the time.

CAC: And Mr. Keller, president?

JH: Yes, still. Bob Holt, I think, was the graduate dean.

CAC: That's right.

JH: They had, apparently, sort of deep central administrative discussions about the status of the libraries, and what needs to be done, and so forth. The decision was made, I understand, to have an internal search for an interim appointment. There was some interest on Bob Holt's part and, I think, on Roger's part—maybe, on Ken Keller's part, too, I don't know—to do a little experimenting and to think, at least, about trying to follow . . . it really isn't the Harvard model . . . but to think about having an academic person as university librarian.

CAC: I think we called it the Harvard model because they clung to that model longer than any other university.

JH: Yes. I don't know the extent to which the university librarian at Harvard is really, in an operational sense, the university librarian.

CAC: I think, came not to be.

JH: Yes, I think that's right.

CAC: Sure. But I think, for eighty to a hundred years, I'll bet he was.

JH: Yes, I think that is true. There were several people in the libraries who were interested in doing that. I didn't apply. [laughter] I don't recall that I applied; maybe, I'm just into some kind of denial here.

CAC: Letters were written for you once your name was before the committee?

JH: Yes. Yes and I was told my name was in the hopper or something and would I be considered?

CAC: Somebody must have nominated you?

JH: Would I apply in that sense. I thought about it a little bit and here was another instance in which I'd learn something new and, maybe, be useful and freshen up things a little bit in my own life.

CAC: As a major consumer of library services, you knew where the problems areas were within internal governance, with budget . . .

JH: The libraries really were in a difficult situation in terms of their . . .

CAC: And you were rather fully aware of those at the time that you permitted your name to go forward?

JH: Yes.

CAC: Because not everyone was, but there was a whole array of terrible problems?

JH: Yes.

CAC: Okay. They were just moving into computerization?

JH: Yes.

CAC: It was along but there were lots of crickets still in that, right?

JH: Definitely so. And there were deep personnel problems, sort of management problems in the libraries. The libraries had fallen in priority with university administration and were making faculty angry over how they were being run or not run to serve the research and teaching missions. So, there were political problems of some consequence. I had never sort of analyzed them systematically but I was aware of most of it. It was, again, a case of where I thought, hmmm, I'll learn some things and I wonder if I can do that? If I can, it'll be fun and it won't last long. I was asked to do it and agreed to do it. I remember thinking when Roger Benjamin called and said they really wanted me to do this and could I come over and talk about it? I said, "Yes," thinking to myself, What am I going to demand?

CAC: More books.

JH: [laughter] I had been trying to get a parking spot in the West Bank ramp . . .

CAC: [laughter]

JH: . . . and I said, "I've been inching my way up the list. I'll demand that." It was no more than two days before I was to go over and talk with Roger that I got a notice from Parking Services saying, "Dear Professor Howe, you now have a spot in the ramp."

CAC: [laughter]

JH: So, I walked into Roger's office and I said, "Pay me whatever you're going to pay me. Let's talk about what needs to be done." [laughter] It was really quite fun. I agreed to do it no more than two years. I was in the job two years to the day. The first year, the learning curve was very steep and that was really fun. It leveled out a good bit into the second year.

CAC: You were able to address these basic issues? Let's take the issue of the governance, internal governance.

JH: Yes.

CAC: How were you able to resolve that or move it toward resolution?

JH: Part of that involved finding ways to reembolden, and support, and facilitate the librarians in the middle management group. Eldred had hired quite a good group of middle managers. We needn't talk about Eldred's successes and lack of successes.

CAC: Sure.

JH: One of the things that needed to be done was to persuade people again that they needed to risk. They needed to act on issues . . .

CAC: I see.

JH: . . . and to be supportive in that kind of way, to free them up.

CAC: And to protect them from some of the consequences of the risk?

JH: Yes. Yes. So, that was one part of it. Another part of it was to work with the library faculty and the Academic P and A [Professional and Administrative] staff, as well as the civil servant staff, in normalizing and regularizing personnel procedures because there was the broad perception in the libraries that salary decisions and promotion decisions were quite arbitrary and inconsistent across people and across time; and so, one big task was to work with various groups of librarians to regularize the personnel decision making for collegial decision making and administrative review.

CAC: You found that that indeed was the case, that there were not regular procedures?

JH: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. You couldn't just take faculty procedures that we had developed carefully in our Department of History or in the college and apply them but you could learn some things . . .

CAC: Right. That was part of the governance. Did it require an amendment of the constitution of the library?

JH: The library, as each collegiate unit of the university, supposedly had a constitution, and they had been working on one for a number of years, and it was all caught up in the internal politics of administrations . . .

CAC: Oh, yes.

JH: . . . so we tended to kind of work that side of the street a little bit but just to go ahead and work out the procedures assuming they would be incorporated finally in time.

CAC: In the framework. That required a good deal of mutual trust . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: . . . to pull that off without things being written down and passed as amendments, which was the case before you came in that nothing would be done because there was such a high level of distrust.

JH: Yes. Yes. I must say, I had a good time and I think a good many things were accomplished. I had some role in that but as I realized at the time, and as I've confirmed looking back on it, I really was in a kind of a win/win situation because there were so many problems

and there were so many people from Central Administration, to the faculty, to the library staff, that were so ready to do some things . . .

CAC: Yes. Yes.

JH: . . . that it was a matter, primarily, of figuring out, What are the key issues? What's the agenda of action? What are the central organizing problems that need to be dealt with? And how to orchestrate attention to them and how to make the administration, and the faculty, and the staff realize that, in fact, the interests are really very much in common. And I could do that. I knew how to do that. [laughter]

CAC: Looking back upon it, tick off some of the successes that you did enjoy, then, in that two year period. [unclear] had that you've already expressed, that is, there has been regularization of procedures for personnel decisions, promotions, salary and so forth.

JH: Right. Secondly, it was a matter of unleashing, emboldening again the leadership skills that were there in the area of computerization of library procedures. As an example, there were the two people really in charge of providing the leadership in that process of developing and bringing out the LUMINA system, one in sort of the technical services area and the other in the more generalized management area. I found her in a little obscure office over in the Health Sciences complex, down a hall from the Medical Science library. I went over to visit her and I said, "What in the world are you doing over here? "Well," she said, "it's a long story."

CAC: [laughter]

JH: "Well," I said, "you can't be over here because you're playing a central role in pulling everybody together in this development. You're coming back to the central offices." I did that within the first two weeks and it was one of the best things I did because it sent all kinds of signals to all kinds of people.

CAC: Who's this person that came to be a successful coordinator?

JH: Oh, goodness! I can't see the names.

CAC: Okay.

JH: Charlene Mason. Sorry.

CAC: Okay.

JH: There was that. There was the matter of regaining the administration's and the faculty's support for the libraries, which had largely been lost. That involved talking to lots of deans, and working with faculty groups, and persuading . . .

CAC: The Senate Library Committee?

JH: The Senate Library Committee . . . One of the problems in the library, of course, is it's everybody's baby, and it's nobody's baby, and it has no alumni. It's a political orphan within the university unless, above all, the faculty say, "Well, CLA's got lots of needs, for example, but also important to me are the library's needs."

CAC: That has to be mobilized.

JH: That has to be mobilized. I knew how to do that. I could speak to the faculty. I could speak to the library staff. I could speak to the administrators. I could speak to the regents. I knew much of them still.

CAC: Sure.

JH: As I said, it was a moment waiting to happen. There was so much frustration and so much readiness to change things that what I really had to do was to persuade people, it's now possible. This is the time to do it.

CAC: Yes.

JH: By the time of the second year, we increased the library's—this was in the process of this Roger Benjamin organized academic priorities planning structure—operating budget by \$4 million, or something like that, a part of which went to collections but to other things, too.

CAC: Even though the learning curve became less steep in the second year, as you describe the rewards you had in those two years, I should think you would have been tempted to make yourself a candidate to stay on.

JH: [laughter] Well, you know about that, personally, because we talked about it at the time.

CAC: I know but posterity doesn't know much.

JH: I had agreed to do it for two years. It became clear to me that it would not be a good thing to have a titchular head, a faculty head of the library, a faculty sinecure position, that the university librarian needed to be a hands on, deeply involved person. I did that for two years.

CAC: A professional librarian?

JH: No.

CAC: Not necessarily?

JH: Not necessarily but probably.

CAC: Okay.

JH: For those two years, I set my research aside. I taught half time.

CAC: Oh, did you really?

JH: Yes.

CAC: Ooof!

JH: Yes, ooof is right. Yes. I decided . . .

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

[Tape 2, Side 1]

CAC: . . . not to become a librarian, let that be your career?

JH: Right. Let me reach back to one previous question you asked which is sort of the major accomplishments, the needs of those two years. In addition, we developed a kind of a master plan for physical facilities for the libraries which anchored on two big projects, the smaller one having to do with remodeling some of the St. Paul Library but, fundamentally, with remodeling Walter Library, for certain purposes and, then, with proposing a new multi-purpose facility for overflow stack storage and housing the variety of very wonderful special collections we have. I really must take credit for that, almost individually.

CAC: If you didn't, I would credit you.

JH: It remains the kind of physical facilities master plan for the library.

CAC: The legislature has now accepted it.

JH: Which the administration accepted and the legislature has. So, that was quite satisfying. It was an interesting two years. Why not go forward? I think several reasons, I felt I had learned what I had to learn and, secondly, had put in place a whole bunch of changes on these various fronts.

CAC: You bet.

JH: I thought about that sort of on-going library agenda, and it didn't seem to me like it was certain to hold my interest over time, and I've always been a faculty member, and it felt strange to be on the margins of faculty life and existence.

CAC: The library is at the heart of the faculty concerns.

JH: The library materials are at the heart of faculty concerns. Librarians are not. The research that I had been doing, as I said, had utterly been on the shelf and silent for two years.

CAC: Sure.

JH: I was teaching half time but not attending most department meetings.

CAC: Couldn't.

JH: So, after some waffling back and forth, I decided not to be a candidate for the position.

CAC: I want to back up three minutes, that is, your commitment to a new building which would house overflow, but also house seven or eight diverse units of special collections and archives, where did that initiative come from? Who was pressing for it? How did you respond to it? To what degree was it really your initiative? Whom did you have to talk to move that along? That was a major consequence once set in motion.

JH: Yes. The situation was on the one hand of longstanding; that is, these remarkable special collections of various sorts, the Social Welfare Archives and Y.M.C.A. [Young Men's Christian Association] papers, etcetera, many of which—the Immigration Archives . . . even the university archives . . .

CAC: Oh! Scandalous!

JH: . . . housed in scandalous circumstances of longstanding . . . and yet taken all together, a remarkable collection of research materials. The other part of the problem, more recently developing, that is, the filling up of the Wilson Library stacks . . .

CAC: Yes.

JH: . . . and the impossibility of building another full service library because of cost and the growing experience in the University of California system and elsewhere of building sort of region repositories to hold not consistently used books, journals, and so forth, with various kinds of retrieval services, and on-site offices where scholars and students can go, and use the materials. There was some accumulating experience of that sort. It was my understanding that on the capital side of the university's budget, as on the operation side, the O-100 side of the university's budget, the library had to get its act in order. It had to develop some consistent plans

that stretched out into the future and that had a chance of gaining the confidence and support of the library committee, the administration, the faculty, senate, and what have you. So, it really was my idea . . .

CAC: Bravo.

JH: . . . in fact, to pull these various needs together and say, "Why don't we start thinking about these sorts of things?" We began bouncing them around. As I recall, I wrote out a draft statement that talked about, among other things, a multi-purpose facility that would serve several purposes and, then, had a wider political constituency therefore, and have greater chance of being accepted in the university planning process. That's kind of how that came to be.

CAC: Bravo. We've invested a very intense couple of hours now and, I think, I will just stop the machine here and we'll pick it up. There are about four or five other things we need to talk about.

JH: That will be fine.

CAC: You remain well informed and deeply experienced on all of them; so, we will convene again.

JH: Good! I'll look forward to it.

CAC: Thank you.

[break in the interview]

CAC: We're picking up now a broken conversation of several days ago. It is Wednesday, August 3rd and we're picking up the conversation where we left off. I am with John Howe. John, you wanted to make a correction, or an addition to the record. Then, we will go on from there.

JH: All right. Recognizing that this is not the Congressional Record and one doesn't read back into it corrections, and so forth . . . nonetheless, when we were talking before about the presidential search that brought Ken Keller to the presidency, I had trouble recalling the name of the then chairperson of the Board of Regents. The gentleman's name was Lauris Krenik, of course. So, now, it's in the record and if I'd not remembered, I at least found out.

CAC: Thank you kindly. I'm assuming that serious scholars will fill in that kind of detail—they'll have to from printed and manuscript records—but it is nice to keep the spoken record as clean and accurate as possible.

JH: He was a fine chair and he played, what I thought, was a very constructive role in some very difficult political times, especially, in connection with that search.

CAC: Yes.

JH: I was embarrassed not to be able to recall his name, so now, I'm a little less embarrassed.

CAC: As we reviewed, just before we turned on this little machine, there are four or five major university enterprises, some of them more significant now with the passage of time it would seem than others, but you were involved in the mid 1980s with all kinds of things. It was part of your education, I'm sure. One I go back to a little bit earlier and that is a review of university college. It is my recollection that that is in the context—my records show that it was 1975, 1976—of reviews that were associated with retrenchment and reallocation. Those very terms may not have been there but that was the purpose, and trying to redefine missions, and to see whether the university was the appropriate place to stage them. Your recollections of that committee, sir?

JH: This is the one to review university college?

CAC: Yes. It had taken on missions that were not part of the original mission in the early 1960s and early 1970s.

JH: Yes, it had. Henry Koffler was, then, the academic vice-president and Shirley Clark was his chief associate. You're quite right that the review of university colleges, the review of everything else in those days, was undertaken, at least, in the context of retrenchment and reallocation procedures. I was asked to chair a committee to review university college which was a kind of omnium-gatherum of a variety of non-traditional programs, The University without Walls, and the so-called inter-college program, and a third program that had to do with the students sort of designing their own individually tailored majors, and that sort of thing. It was, I think certainly mostly—whether altogether, I can't recall—a faculty review committee from mostly CLA, but not altogether. Russ Hobbie is another person who shows up on many of these kinds of groups.

CAC: Yes, he's on my list to interview.

JH: He should be. Good. Glad to hear he is on your list. Russ was probably there. We reviewed these various programs and found them to differ a lot, some to be more controlled in terms of their intellectual quality and content than others. We were most distressed by what was then called The University without Walls in which we found students were putting together programs largely based upon experience kinds of activities, either experience while at the university or prior experience, experience that too often seemed to us not grounded in study or self-reflection, and in which there were very few faculty playing very meaningful roles as advisors. We had been encouraged by Henry Koffler to be tough, and to report what we saw, and to call a spade a spade, and that sort of thing. We ended up doing that and recommending

that several programs be ended, among them University without Walls. As often happens in this place, and other places, too, that didn't come to be, though I must say, that following the spin off of our report over the next year or so, the loosest of those programs, University without Walls, was reviewed and tightened up. I think, it still goes on, at least it did for a period of years after that, and I think, in better form than previously. The review of those programs, of course, raised several kinds of questions, What's central to the university? and questions of outreach and servicing non-traditional students and broadening the definition of what a student is and that sort of business. So, in those ways, it made for some interesting discussions. I think, it was a good report. I'm kind of proud of it though I haven't looked at it in . . . when was it 1975?

CAC: Nineteen seventy five, six.

JH: Well, nearly twenty years.

CAC: I was thinking of an appropriate follow-up question without intruding too much with my own perceptions, which I happen to do occasionally anyway.

JH: [laughter]

CAC: It seems to me that committees of that sort were moving toward a criterion that the university should do what it can do best and if there are other colleges or agencies who can do that same work as well, that this should be brought under even closer scrutiny. I put the statement that way because this is 1975, 1976 and I, for one—I may be wrong—see it as a covert, I don't mean secret, but an implicit kind of anticipation of centrality and the notion of Commitment to Focus, the university will do what it does best. Do you have any sense that that would have been the case at that time, in an anticipatory way?

JH: Oh, I think even that kind of language was in the air at that time as . . .

CAC: I see.

JH: . . . budget problems sort of forced talk about priority setting and those sorts of things. The Commitment to Focus Program tightened the description and categorized the process by which those sorts of decisions were to be made. This was prior to that but those concerns and even some of that language was certainly in the air. There was talk, then, about if students could get sort of non-traditional programs at Metro[politan] State, then, why should the university be doing it?

CAC: So, that was part of the conversation?

JH: Yes. Sure.

CAC: Okay.

JH: Some of the counter arguments to that were, well, this should be after all a comprehensive university and students through these kind of individualized programs, through various tracks, can take advantage of the university's vast intellectual resources in ways that students at Metro State can't. Much of that conversation was in the air at that time.

CAC: You didn't recommend any administrative changes? I think that university college was without a dean at that time. I think it was chaired by an Advisory Faculty Committee with a faculty chair, as a kind of sometime thing. They had their own staff, of course.

JH: There had been a dean, Barbara Knudson.

CAC: Barbara Knudson. I think she came later.

JH: No.

CAC: No. She was aboard then?

JH: I think she was aboard then. She certainly had been aboard during the years preceding our review because one of our concerns was that there hadn't been sufficient administrative oversight of this, and certainly her name came up, and we had the review committee and conversations with her, in effect.

CAC: Very good that's corrected and I have her on my list to interview very soon.

JH: That would be good.

CAC: In a way, this anticipates a commitment of greater significance just a few years later, a decade later, with a task force on academic priorities, the so-called Campbell Committee, which was appointed in 1986, 1987 and you know better than I what the context of that was and what charge the committee was given by whom. Why don't we start with that then?

JH: Let's see. Roger Benjamin was then the provost. We're now calling the chief academic officer the provost. Ken Keller was the president and this undertaking was undertaken in the context of the Commitment to Focus blueprint that President Keller had developed, really even when he was still the academic vice-president. We, this task force, were given a very vigorous charge which was to make some very hard decisions on reducing the university's academic range and commitments, that is, to identify the academic programs that were of greatest strength, and centrality, and consequence, and uniqueness in the state. Those were at least five of decision making categories that Commitment to Focus had crystallized. As I recall, we were to operate as if we were in sort of a zero sum game financially and to establish rigorously a set of academic priorities. It was an interesting kind of experience. We worked very hard at it.

CAC: This is a large task force? What was its membership?

JH: Oh, goodness, I'm trying to remember. There were probably as many as twenty and then there were various . . .

CAC: That's a hard number to herd along.

JH: Then there were various ex officio members. Phil Shively, I think, was such an ex officio member. He was then chair of the Consultative Committee, or something like that. There were various people like that added on. We worked, as one would expect, in subcommittees having different tasks and domains. I chaired a group that tried to think particularly about the Humanities and the place of the Humanities. The discussions of the task force went on at sort of a global level, that is, thinking about large sectors of the university.

CAC: Did it include the associated campuses, Duluth, Morris, etcetera?

JH: Yes. There were representatives there from Duluth and Morris, at least from outside the Twin Cities' campus, though I don't think we were making decisions concerning those campuses.

CAC: Okay.

JH: I don't believe so but, here again, as is happening occasionally in this conversation, I'm trying to remember.

CAC: That's the hazard of oral history, generally.

JH: This was the task force, of course, that in the end produced, what proved to be some, very jarring recommendations, which is to say, following the counsel of provost Benjamin that we can't do all the things we are doing, and must make some difficult priority choices here, and do fewer things better, and following the provost's advice not to concern ourselves with the political implications of any decisions we might make.

CAC: Assuming that they would be his and the president's.

JH: Assuming that they would be his and the president's, exactly. We came, in the end, deciding that certain sectors of the university needed augmenting, and strengthening, and building, in keeping with those five criteria. Others must go . . . the zero sum game budget assumption that we were given. In the end, the task force recommended that the Dental School, and the Vet[erinary] School, and a gaggle of other programs . . . Mortuary Science . . .

CAC: KUOM [radio]?

JH: KUOM and the university art gallery.

CAC: The MacPhail Center for the Arts?

JH: Yes, MacPhail. You've refreshed . . .

CAC: I did some homework.

JH: Right, more recently than I . . . needed to go. As the record will show, the public record as well as the university record, the recommendations created quite an uproar.

CAC: This report was not confidential then to Mr. Benjamin in the first instance? Or was it? You didn't release it to the press?

JH: Oh, no.

CAC: But it got into the public domain very quickly?

JH: Oh, certainly. Through exactly what process, I don't know.

CAC: Okay.

JH: There was no expectation that it would be long a secret because it shouldn't have been at all . . .

CAC: But there was no thought of giving a few weeks at least to the provost and the president to review and [unclear] their political thinking?

JH: You'd have to talk—maybe, you have—to talk to Professor Campbell about what really happened. Our report went to Provost Benjamin and, then, what the immediate sequencing was, I don't know.

CAC: Okay.

JH: The task force, of course itself, drew a good bit of flak, as those two professional schools, each with an extended and powerful political constituency, marshalled their forces, ironically, certainly this was true of the Vet School, and it probably was true of Dentistry as well. By our examination of the record—we had considerable data of all sorts upon which to review and upon which to make our recommendations that among other things tracked the scholarly output, and record of faculties, and so forth—neither of those professional schools at that time appeared to be very strong, to have a very strong commitment to the scholarly dimension as opposed to producing dental and veterinary practitioners for the state. Those schools had been in our sights for some time. It wasn't until towards the end of our work—when push came to shove and we really had to produce a report and came to look the monster in the eye and say, "We really,

under our mandate here, must make some difficult decisions”—that we, finally, came to those decisions. Ironically—it’s true of at least the Vet School; it may have been true of the Dental School, I’ll bet it was—they both ended up with resources pumped into them. Once it was decided—which didn’t take very long—that they would not be terminated, having been weakened terribly in the national press by the proposal for their demise, they made what proved to be persuasive cases for new resources to recover from that thrust.

CAC: What kind of witnesses did the committee call while it was deliberating? I’m asking the question, implicitly, wondering whether there were signals from Morrill Hall from other persons who would not be directly accountable to the provost perhaps, but who had been part of the conversation surrounding the creation of the task force.

JH: I’m a little surprised that I can’t recall which. . . .

CAC: Okay.

JH: . . . perhaps, suggests we didn’t talk to many people outside our group.

CAC: Were the deans called in to identify or to discuss . . .

JH: No, I can’t remember. We did have, as part of the record from which we worked, detailed planning documents from each of the colleges . . .

CAC: Okay.

JH: . . . that would have been very recently completed and in which they had been instructed by the president, the provost, to set their own priorities, to describe their mission, to justify their existence, their ongoing existence, and their scholarly activities, and that sort of business. We took those self reports, those self studies, very seriously, in addition to a variety of quantifiable kinds of data.

CAC: I’m making statements but they really have a question mark at the end. I’m guessing that the Dental School and the Veterinary Medical School had substantial budgets . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: . . . whereas, KUOM and MacPhail would be of another order?

JH: Certainly so. Certainly true and in order to free up, I’m thinking \$20 million . . .

CAC: Okay. The records will show that.

JH: The record will show but I think it was a figure very close to that . . . \$19 to \$20 million for reallocation, one needed to look at some big fish. I think, it's true to say the most serious and ambitious—some called it at the time and some would call it now, misconceived also—effort to redirect resources internally in a serious way. [laughter] I must say, in the end not even Mortuary Science died.

CAC: MacPhail and KUOM did.

JH: They did in phased fashion.

CAC: It took several years to do it. So, that was the chief consequence really, down the line, was the folding of two vulnerable and marginal operations?

JH: The final outcome of all of this planning and decision making was not very inspiring and, for me at least, it illustrated most clearly the extraordinary difficulty—given the size, complexity, decentralizing, and kind of participatory governance of the university—perhaps even the impossibility, of significant redirection.

CAC: Some have said that it also had the unintended consequences of making it more difficult for Mr. Keller to get the university to commit itself to focus and to the undermining of his presidency.

JH: Oh, I think that's true. Our charge came from Provost Benjamin. There was conversation back and forth with him by Professor Campbell as we went along and as the sort of directions of possible decision making shaped up and we were encouraged to proceed. There was recognition in the task force of the potential, the certain political difficulties that global decisions of the sort we finally made would generate. We were assured by the provost that we shouldn't concern ourselves with that, that we should press ahead, and make our best academically grounded decisions. It seemed, shortly afterwards and certainly has in retrospect, that in a large part, it was a misconceived kind of venture. I think, it certainly weakened the president and it certainly weakened Provost Benjamin.

CAC: Both of them were soon on their way out—not because of this alone.

JH: Not because of this alone but this, probably, counted more singly in Roger's demise than in President Keller's.

CAC: The Task Force on Diversity which picks up the following year—I must confess I've been able to find very little about it in any of the records that I've looked at—I know note that you served on that also. [laughter]

JH: [laughter]

CAC: Perhaps, you could say a few words about that.

JH: I can say a few words. As President Hasselmo has recently said, "Commitment to Focus was not a bolt out of the blue." It pulled together and crystallized and, as it were, focused, tightened, and moved forward a variety of initiatives and inclinations that had been underway. It, in many ways, polarized the university community and public opinion. It had broad support and broad opposition both. One of the attacks on it was the kind of—in part mindless but not altogether mindless—charges of elitism, that the university following the Commitment to Focus track would be closing out kinds of students and in particular students of color. President Keller had addressed that directly and he argued that there was no necessary reason why a Commitment to Focus kind of program should do that—though it could if not guarded against and that it would be a failure if it resulted in a decline—indeed, if it didn't result in an increase in the number and success rate of students of color. Presumably, students of color, as well as whiteness, would come to the university better prepared under new admissions standards, and more focused programs, and more support, and that kind of thing. In any event, there was a task force set up to discuss and recommend a variety of ways to enhance and increase diversity on the campus, diversity meaning significantly gender diversity but more centrally at least—as I recall in that task force's charge—ethnic, and racial, and I think also, international student kind of diversity.

CAC: Hmmm.

JH: The largest part of the agenda was American students of color. I sat on it for several years as a faculty member who had been involved in a variety of things . . . I served those two years as university librarian. I have in my head there was some connection there, too. It was a group that also had a variety of subgroups and sub task forces to address questions of diversifying the faculty, diversifying the student body, increasing rates of retention for students at the undergraduate level and the graduate level, curriculum diversity, the whole array, the litany of diversity issues. My recollection is that some of those task forces produced meaningful reports and proposals that were acted upon by the administration in a variety of ways and others didn't. I think it was kind of a mixed bag. I'm not cynical about it. I don't think it was a sop thrown to critics of the university; but they were difficult issues and they still are for us, as we well know, and difficult issues to address, especially, at a time of financial stringency.

CAC: Yes.

JH: To find money to that, you have to take away money from doing something else, in effect. It was of mixed results, I think.

CAC: There were faculty of color on the committee?

JH: Yes. We haven't many but numbers of them were there. Yes.

CAC: I'll pick up some of them in subsequent conversations, I'm sure. Josie Johnson. Was she in on this?

JH: No, she wasn't.

CAC: She comes later?

JH: She coame later.

CAC: Okay. But you think in some part because of this initiative, or at least, it's the same initiative? I don't mean comes out of the committee.

JH: It's sort of the same initiative. It's a continuing ongoing initiative that, I think, the university and officials at the university take seriously. It's a devilishly difficult problematic agenda to make progress on.

CAC: You may recall, to flip back in time, because you were here in the mid 1960s that the History Department, at least Alfred Jones was here . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: . . . and had taught in a black college in the South and we had made a concerted effort twenty years earlier—I mean 1968 as opposed to 1988—to attract, and to hold, and to find incentives for undergraduate students and graduate students that would be of this quality.

JH: With some success.

CAC: I think more success then than most departments had ten years later.

JH: I'm sure that's true. It hasn't been very lasting success though.

CAC: Yes.

JH: But you're quite right.

CAC: We had a [unclear] that we had more good graduate students of color in the 1970s . . .

JH: Yes, that's right.

CAC: . . . and on into the later part of the 1970s and then that tended to fade.

JH: Yes. These issues require constant, continuing, unrelenting attention, at least they seem to for the indefinite future.

CAC: Yes.

JH: There are so many things to be overcome, both here within the university and outwardly in society.

CAC: It's difficult, is it not, for large and sprawling institutions to maintain a continuity?

JH: Yes.

CAC: To maintain an institutional memory?

JH: That and to maintain a kind of consistent agenda, even though this is an encompassing kind of agenda, because it is so diverse and pressures build in a particular area, and move to the fore, and then fade away. The central administrators, trying to keep their hands on everything or under control, are constantly kind of balancing and weighing things. It makes for a kind of brokering leadership. The pressures are in that direction.

CAC: I had occasion to read through the minutes quickly of the regents in the 1980s and the number of issues that were on the docket are just staggering. [laughter]

JH: Yes.

CAC: I mean, the diversity of those issues . . . it just bewildered me how any governing body could behave intelligently toward any of it.

JH: [laughter] Some would question whether it's possible . . . or whether it has been done very effectively, consistently.

CAC: A real systemic problem?

JH: Yes.

CAC: We move now to the Task Force on Liberal Education, which I have dates of 1990, 1991. Again, you were called upon by the university to play a major role as chair of that group and directly by Mr. Hasselmo?

JH: Yes.

CAC: This is more recent so your memory should be very fresh.

JH: [laughter] We'll see.

CAC: Mr. Hasselmo talked with you, I'm sure, at length as well as giving a paragraph charge to the committee. What was the nature of his perception of what that task force might accomplish?—let me say one more thing—because there had been a Council on Liberal Education dating from the mid 1970s. I think Don Smith was the first to chair that.

JH: Yes.

CAC: It had addressed some of the issues that your committee would fifteen years later. What was your charge?

JH: I had sat on that Council on Liberal Education for a period of time, too—not when Don Smith was chair. That council had—I can't remember when, in the late 1960s again—devised a set of liberal education distribution requirements . . .

CAC: Okay.

JH: . . . that, for its time, seemed progressive, and helpful, and had served the university and its students, I think, pretty well. But it had been in place for quite a long time. The Council on Liberal Education, in the meantime, had become, by my experience on it over four or five years, little more than an in-house kind of coffee club where a group of individuals got together, and read some things about liberal education, and talked to each other, and sort of stroked our beards, and went home. It had ceased to function, certainly, by the time the Liberal Education Task Force . . .

CAC: I served on it also. That's an assessment that would match my experience.

JH: All right. So, President Hasselmo did, in fact, ring me up one day and ask if I would do this. I had vowed to do less of this sort of thing hereafter. [laughter] But what does one say? I, at least, took over the weekend to say, "Yes." I was quite content to take this on. Again, it struck me as an important assignment—I'll get to what the assignment was in just a minute—and a challenging one. From time to time, I've asked myself, Can you do that? I asked myself that in this case and I thought, yes, I think I can do that. Let's see. So, I agreed to do it. The mandate was to devise a set of liberal education requirements appropriate for all baccalaureate degrees at the university, that is to say, that would be appropriate not only in the College of Liberal Arts or in the College of Biological Sciences but in IT [Institute of Technology], and what was then still the College of Forestry, and what has become the College of Human Ecology, and the Carlson Business School, and so forth, and a set of liberal education requirements that takes into account the contemporary university rather than the university of twenty-five years before—it had been twenty-five, twenty-seven years before this Council on Liberal Education had devised what was still the prevailing distribution requirements—and that would take into account changes, and fields of knowledge, and in the sort of discourse on what liberal education means now and should mean over the coming several decades. This, of course, went on in the

context of sort of nation-wide debate and argumentation over the failings of higher education, and what the liberal education should be, and the anxious arguments over maintaining the tradition, and challenging the canon, and all of those sorts of academic politics. So, there was an institutional situation. There was a local. There was an academic, scholarly situation. There was the raging, really quite raging, of national politics over what education is, and should be, and so forth. We plunged into the maelstrom and out came a report. We were asked to do this within a year's time. We were given a deadline and we were told, "That's a serious deadline." Now, there were institutions not nearly as large as ours that had taken two, and three, and four years to do it and had it, finally, blow apart in the firestorm of academic politics.

CAC: Let me interrupt just for a moment. Did you play any part in selecting some of the personnel for the committee?

JH: Some of the personnel. Most of the personnel was in place. I asked to see the list if I was going to chair it.

CAC: Hasselmo had the personnel of the committee already in mind?

JH: Not altogether but he . . . I don't know who had been working with him putting this together. Lynn Kuhl was then the provost.

CAC: Hmmm.

JH: They had worked with the Consultative Committee, with faculty governance, in some capacity. I found the proposed membership, for the most part, quite satisfactory. I had a few suggestions of replacements and not everybody had yet been contacted that was on that list, fortunately. I had a few suggestions. They were all taken and accepted. It was quite an acceptable group, quite a good group. It was an exciting time.

CAC: But smaller than the twenty members?

JH: Oh, yes. There were a dozen of us, fifteen at the outside. I don't think there were fifteen.

CAC: That's a workable size for a task force.

JH: It was a workable sized task force. We worked very hard. We tried to familiarize ourselves with much of the sort of national literature on, What is the meaning of liberal education for our time? We reviewed the similar reports that had been produced at a variety of big, complex public universities, and private universities, and small colleges. We interviewed. We tried to solicit the advice and consent, ultimately the consent, earlier the advice, of faculty and students and administrators on a range of issues and we produced a report. This initiative sort of reflected the times. Virtually, every place was doing something like this. It certainly also reflected President Hasselmo's commitment to strengthening undergraduate education here . . .

CAC: Yes.

JH: . . . which was something of a shift of emphasis from Commitment to Focus. In that document, undergraduate education was not the tail that the graduate and professional dog wagged altogether but it was argued that undergraduate education would be strengthened as the scholarly activity of the university focused on graduate and professional training was strengthened. President Hasselmo, sort of in the jargon of our own time, privileged or centered undergraduate education more clearly in his sort of revisions of Commitment to Focus—which he revised and certainly embraced in most of its regards—in emphasis and so forth. We worked very hard. It was very interesting. We devised, at least at several stages, working documents that we, then, circulated for response; and we went out of our way to make it an open process so that persons would be hard put at the end to say, “I never knew what you were talking about. I never knew what was coming.” Nobody listened to me.” People, of course, still said that but they . . .

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

[Tape 2, Side 2]

JH: We had held hearings. We invited faculty and students to meet with us in sort of town meetings scattered across several weeks and different points on the campus. The report had to do only with—only, only—with the Twin Cities campus . . .

CAC: Okay.

JH: . . . undergraduate education here, rather than university wide. We presented a draft document to the University Senate for discussion. We spent a lot of time trying to familiarize, especially, our faculty colleagues with what we were up to and running ideas by them to make it an open and consultative process into which people would buy. In the end, it was the document and the rather complex report which, certainly, reflected a kind of effort to bring together—in something other than just a crudely brokered way, that is, in a way that had a kind of pedagogical and educational integrity to it—and accommodate very different notions of what the heart of liberal education these days ought to be. It was a report that was to be acceptable and functional for the wide variety of undergraduate colleges we have here, and kinds of degrees, and kinds of preparation for life that these degrees are intended to produce. So, it was, of course, a highly political document, I think in the proper sense of that term. We talked, also, on a number of occasions, for advice and then by way of running drafts by, to student advisors in the various colleges who work with students often more closely than faculty. You know, you ask advisors . . . these are the ways we’re going with these kind of crosscutting requirements, and so forth, and some new concepts. In an operational sense, as you work with students and students try to plan programs, Is this doable?

CAC: Good.

JH: In the end the senate approved. There was a little bit of, fortunately not too much, absolutely bazaar response to the document. [laughter] It was accused by one professor of representing the kind of Stalinist mind control of Eastern European Universities.

CAC: [laughter]

JH: Well, there's nothing you can say in response to that except to ignore it. It's so absurd. It passed by a comfortable margin in the senate and has begun to be implemented.

CAC: Was it intended to be fiscally neutral?

JH: No.

CAC: There would be costs attached to it?

JH: Certainly so.

CAC: Okay. That was understood from the beginning by Mr. Hasselmo and by the committee?

JH: Yes, yes.

CAC: Okay.

JH: We tried to cost out, in a rough sort of way, what we're talking about, that is, developing new curricula to meet the field of study requirements, and the theme requirements, man and environment—now it isn't . . . the term—Environmental Studies.

CAC: Sure.

JH: Citizenship and Public Ethics. The recommendations are being implemented, I think in a significant way. They came about, of course, at a time when budget problems were getting even more severe.

CAC: I'm going to interrupt again. The additional costs would have to devolve upon each of the units, each of the colleges?

JH: Yes, the colleges. There was a commitment on the part of Central Administration to put money into . . .

CAC: To make it possible?

JH: Yes. To add funds, to commit funds to strengthening undergraduate education in the terms of the report. We tried to cost out, at least in a rough way, what this really meant. I can't recall now the figure we came to . . . \$16 million, or something like that. There was no way, at the time, that \$16 million in fresh dollars were going to come in; but there has been a commitment of resources, a transfer of resources, into undergraduate education in recent years, some of which relates to these recommendations, as well as to other things. The one thing that didn't happen which I think may prove to be a . . . well, certainly if not a fatal flaw, at least a real discouragement. A major sector of our report urged that undergraduate advising be strengthened. In fact, we almost said—I certainly thought—the most important thing we could do if we did but one thing to strengthen undergraduate education . . . if we could do but one thing . . . would be to leave the present old-fashioned distribution requirements in place and help students understand why we're asking them to do this. That is, grab them when they come into the uni-system, before they come into the system, so that they will regard these requirements as something other than hurdles to be gotten out of the way before they do the serious business of learning and so they would buy into it. We combined a new configuration of requirements and educational rationales with strong recommendations for strengthening undergraduate advising, generally in freshman advising, in particular small seminars, to talk about their planning of liberal education goals, and that kind of business. That's where lots of the cost would have come, at least the new costs, as opposed to the kind of hidden costs of people like me tooling up new courses and teaching new courses, instead of some old ones. And that's not happened and we continue to have in the College of Liberal Arts pre-major advisors who deal with—deal with . . .ha! . . . advise, in quotation marks—several hundred students.

CAC: Yes.

JH: There were some successes and some failures in the enterprise.

CAC: I learned yesterday of the counseling services that are available to students entering the Law School, which are extravagant, and very helpful, and particularly when put against the deficit in the Arts College . . .

JH: And other colleges, too . . . in the Arts College most astoundingly . . . just awful.

CAC: [unclear] demographically, we have 15,000 students.

JH: Yes.

CAC: There's been four years of this and I know that historians always look backward and don't predict, don't prophesy but what is your feeling whether the whole battery of things can someday come back to it and then will be implemented?

JH: I don't think there will ever be any full scale implementation. The faculty is not in agreement on this, among other things. There was great disagreement among the faculty of

different colleges, sometimes within the same college, over what undergraduates should be studying and what the logic and rationale for undergraduate studies, baccalaureate degrees, should be. In the Institute of Technology and the College of Human Ecology, in other colleges that have sort of professional programs, we bumped up again and again to the argument, we don't have place in our curriculum.

CAC: Sure.

JH: Our accrediting agencies, our professional associations require us increasingly to teach more and more, and more specialized courses. We argued back at them, "Well, that's one of the problems. That's one of the major problems exactly. We have to get away from that." We, of course, had no leverage to get away from that. In some sense, while I think progress has been made, I think the report which was not uncontroversial—that's okay—has had a salutary effect on the place, aspects of it are still being implemented. I participated in a seminar run by Jim Farr in Political Science last spring—a group of about eight faculty from all across the university—to develop courses appropriate for the Citizenship and Public Ethics requirement. It's something I was interested in doing. That's a seminar funded, I believe Jim said, by Ford Foundation money, several hundred thousand dollars, to present these faculty course development seminars over several years, courses that, then, will be entered into the curriculum. So, things continue.

CAC: Yes.

JH: But in some sense, I think, the bloom is off the rose.

CAC: Well, that later is a goal that John Wallace had, for example . . .

JH: Yes.

CAC: And a portfolio for it in Morrill Hall about this same time.

JH: Yes. Yes, that's right and had modest success for various reasons.

CAC: As kind of a concluding subject here, you've also had the opportunity, while you were doing all these things for the home team, to serve various professions nationally the last ten years, plus or minus. As acting director of the library, you had to meet with librarian directors around the country. You also served on various screening and program policy committees for the NEH [National Endowment for the Humanities], for Fulbright [Scholarship], for the College Board, and that outreach to sister professions and disciplines undoubtedly gave you a perspective away from home on the university. Is that too big a question? What did you learn about the University of Minnesota when you associated with all the colleagues from many, many private and public universities around the country?

JH: Well, that differed in terms of those different contexts. When I was the university librarian, I was, by virtue of occupying that office, a member of a number of national library councils and associations. That helped me to gain perspective on our library here and its services and, certainly, enhanced my appreciation of this library, in a comparative sense. It's one of the great academic libraries of the country both in terms of its collections and in terms of the kinds of services that it offers. That was, in that sense, reassuring.

I was a member of a Fulbright Grant Screening Committee which reviewed faculty Fulbright applications. That, in itself, didn't offer much perspective on colleagues here at the university or on the university. I did realize how easy it is to get a Fulbright anymore because so few people apply for them.

CAC: Ahhh.

JH: The Fulbright people have to scramble around . . .

CAC: What you're reading is that?

JH: Well, yes . . . have to scramble around to find qualified people often to fill these posts, even the distinguished posts, the Adams Chair in the Netherlands, and so forth.

CAC: Heavens sakes.

JH: The Whitman Chair in England. I think the explanation is several. There are lots of ways to get abroad these days.

CAC: Without having to teach and work in that kind of a setting?

JH: Yes. Point two, except for those few specially endowed chairs, you always take if not a financial bath, at least some kind of a loss to do them, to take them. Point three, there are a lot of working spouses these days and people are less mobile.

CAC: Ah!

JH: So, those kinds of things together. One does learn about . . .

CAC: There's a wonderful irony in the heart of that, isn't there? When national concerns become global—not that they haven't been for the past forty, fifty years—certainly, in very acute ways the need for that kind of study and experience and exposure is still very, very high?

JH: Yes. It is very high but, as I said, we are so globalized in so many ways these days that a Fulbright appointment, while it has certain unique qualities to it, is simply not as unique an

experience as a way of engaging another society in another part of the world as was the case when the Fulbright program was initiated and during its first decade.

CAC: You don't think the end of the Cold War had anything in relaxing the . . .

JH: No, I don't think fundamentally.

CAC: Okay. College Board?

JH: The College Board is yet a different kettle of fish, or can or worms, or whatever. I was associated with the College Board over more than a decade's time in a variety of ways. I began that association as a member of the committee that developed the U.S. History Advanced Placement Tests by which kids in the junior or senior year in high school take advanced placement courses in U.S. History in a variety of fields. If they do well enough on these national tests, they can gain college credit or at least exemption from certain kinds of college requirements depending upon the rules of particular colleges and universities. On that committee, which I was on for three or four years, and then on a set of other committees having to do with the College Board's work, those committees that were structured evenly between college university faculty like myself and school teachers . . . very impressive people. I learned an awful lot about teaching, and about good teaching, and how good teachers in the schools, the good ones, how carefully they think about things. Very impressive folks.

CAC: It would have been selected process? You got the cream on these committees?

JH: Yes, certainly so. Other parts of the College Board work had to do with being a part of a group that developed the College Board's effort at contributing to school reform, that is, to developing sets of definable standards. What students need to know and be able to do if they are to successfully make the transition from school to college university life, which has historically been the College Board's concern in administering the SAT [Standardized Achievement Test] exams, and in a whole bunch of ways.

CAC: I see.

JH: So, the College Board was trying to sort of reinvent itself in the context of the national debate and discussion over the condition of the schools and declining performance by students in the schools on a variety of measures and, also, in the context of trying to increase, in this same context, the pool of qualified students of color, prepared to go into and succeed academically in college and university life. So, this College Board program, I participated in, and helped work up, and write some of those standards. They were standards that were developed through a long and complicated set of consultations with school superintendents, state commissioners of education, school teachers, college/university faculty, all kind of folks, all across the country kind of boiled down and produced in the end a set of little booklets What Students Need to Know and

Be Able to Do in History . . . and English, and Mathematics, and Biological Sciences, and so forth . . .

CAC: Good.

JH: . . . guidelines that didn't have specific curricula to go with them.

CAC: But these are intended for an audience of K-12 teachers?

JH: Yes. Yes, especially secondary.

CAC: Nine-twelve?

JH: Yes. And have been adopted as guidelines and strategies by some states globally, by a number of school districts. Where that College Board initiative is right now, I don't know. I haven't been associated with it for a number of years. But that was quite interesting. It brought my thinking back to the university in the sense of highlighting, again, the problem of attracting and retaining students of color, how deep that problem is, how national that problem is, and how the university seemed to be trying to address it more seriously and responsibly than some places but less successfully than other places. So, in that sense, it connected back home here but that's the major way.

CAC: It's wonderful the way that things fit together as you have this recitation of your own career of one issue that overlaps with another. Let me end on a related note, more global, perhaps. In the number of interviews I've done so far and then speaking informally with others who I am going to interview, I've come to have a preliminary orientation with people that I interview. It works much better to do that. Perhaps it's because I'm starting with older faculty who've been around and can remember the 1950s, 1960s, 1970s—later I'll delve into other younger populations—I get a sense, as once one faculty person put it without nostalgia, I mean with the slightest bit of nostalgia, "Ah, the golden era," meaning the late 1950s through the mid 1970s and a dismay with the apparent overwhelming number of problems associated with this large institution but with higher education, generally. I get a sense of dismay and discouragement which is in some part related, perhaps, to the age peer group—although I have talked with some younger persons. Do you have any sense of that?

JH: Uh. I feel some of that. I don't deal in golden ages. I think our memory is very tricky. I think the world has changed, that is, the world of higher education and the world of this university has changed. I think that's true. I think there is on the campus now a larger sort of discouragement and privatization. I've gone through that myself.

CAC: And specialization?

JH: I don't mean specialization. I mean withdrawal . . .

CAC: Okay.

JH: . . . from citizenship, active citizenship, from willingness to commit psychic energy and stake. I think that is partly a function of an aging faculty, the relative lack of new blood and energy in the faculty. I think it's significantly that. I think at the same time there are other explanations as well; that is, higher education simply does not occupy the same priority, nearly as high a priority, in the public agenda as it did a decade ago. It doesn't in foundation agendas. It doesn't in political agendas of the state . . . the governor can talk all he wishes to talk about being the education governor and all of that here. That is in part that shift, that devaluing of higher education as a public policy issue and is in response to a whole bunch of things. The reality of poverty. My god! in our society, and the homeless, and the many social traumas that we face and when public agencies and officials say, "Where are we going to put our money, into hungry kids or professor's salaries?"

CAC: To say nothing of health reform.

JH: To say nothing of health reform and other pressing issues on the social agenda as well, it's not altogether surprising. I don't see that changing. I see the fiscal future of higher education generally . . . You see it all across the country. I think we're not unique. In fact, I think the university and higher education in Minnesota, which has historically been treated quite well, valued quite highly, is, perhaps, in our own immediate time valued as much as in most states, but the situation is just different.

CAC: [unclear] demographic and resource base?

JH: And financial hard times and the difficulties of the economy, generally, and all that kind of business. So, given the kind of creeping age profile of the faculty, and these fiscal realities, and the continuing kind of proliferation of knowledge which renders the whole thing even more complex and which renders our long entrenched administrative categories of departments, and colleges, and those sorts of things, in many ways, less functional in a more atomized, diversified . . .

CAC: At the same time, there's also a resistance to cross disciplinary [unclear] programs that would, presumably, break down some of those barriers?

JH: Yes. I think that's true. I think, that beomes a contradiction within the faculty.

CAC: Some have spoken of the tendency accelerated the last fifteen or twenty years . . . of faculty persons, not because of age, but because of a variety of signals that they get . . . to identify with their profession nationally rather than to the institution itself, that is to the discipline.

JH: Yes. Oh, I think that's true.

CAC: And it's true, it makes it more difficult to volunteer for citizenship projects on one's own campus?

JH: Yes. And I think our communications revolution will simply magnify and accentuate that tendency by a factor of X.

CAC: Say more about that.

JH: Well, it is so easy with a click of a key on the keyboard now to communicate directly with colleagues in Princeton, or in London, or in Bangladesh, and to ship texts and data sets, flash them in an instant's time across the world, to work actively as a colleague with somebody in another country just as easily as it is to work with a colleague across the river on this campus.

CAC: Hmmm. Have you found that true in your own personal research and study?

JH: No, not in my own. But it's most obviously true in the various sciences and in some of the—I guess we use the term—harder social sciences. But, it's increasingly true among humanists as well. So, scholars are less tied to particular libraries. They are less tied to the U.S. mail and to all kinds of things.

CAC: I see, yes.

JH: So, I think the building of national and international networks in academic communities will go on a pace and that polls people's reward system that we have locally, looks at that kind of stuff and says, "Oh, that's good" and looks at local kind of not explicitly scholarly stuff and says, "Some of that's necessary but it's not as good." So, I think that's another kind of structural reality of modern academic life.

CAC: [unclear] being able articulate it in many cases, that this is kind of a intuition that many persons would have, that the nature of their professional lives in the last ten years have really changed very substantially.

JH: Yes.

CAC: And the resources that they have access to change very substantially.

JH: Yes. We've talked vigorously, ever since the days of Peter Magrath, about internationalizing the university. Now, President Magrath had some difficulty at articulating just what that meant. [laughter] And many people do and it means many different things to many different people and yet we, for very good reasons I think, have established it as a positive good to internationalize the university, which is to say, bring in more international students—that's fine—internationalize the curriculum—that's fine—send more of our students elsewhere, send more of our faculty

elsewhere, exchanges, and all that sort of business. All of those quite defensible and educationally sound ventures disperse energy and attention . . .

CAC: Ah, yes.

JH: . . . and relationships . . .

CAC: Yes.

JH: . . . and pull attention and time away.

CAC: It is what some have noted, the relative decline and the influence of inter-departmental cross-disciplinary programs in this university. They were so strong in the 1950s, 1960s when they were underway and young; and I'm thinking of Humanities, for example, the old Natural Science Program, American Studies . . . do you have any reflections on that?

JH: Yes. I don't think that's an accurate observation.

CAC: And would arise out of some of the same factors that you've just been suggesting?

JH: Yes. No, I think two things have happened. One is that within what we continue to call disciplines, there's a much wider range of—if you look at it closely—inter-disciplinary work going on than used to be the case many years ago.

CAC: Within Anthropology, Politics, History?

JH: Sure.

CAC: Literature?

JH: Geography.

CAC: Yes.

JH: So, one doesn't say inter-disciplinary work is done in things called inter-disciplinary programs.

CAC: Right.

JH: The other thing to say is that I'd be surprised if one could demonstrate that there are fewer inter-disciplinary programs as budgeted departments or as inter-disciplinary undergraduate programs, or whatever on the campus than there were twenty years ago. I think there are more. They are different. American Studies is very different these days in what it does of an inter-

disciplinary sort as was the case ten years, or certainly twenty years ago, a very different beast but there it is. In the context of what is American Studies today, the program now is at least and strong and reputational as it ever has been . . .

CAC: Hmmm.

JH: . . . in its periodic context, at least as strong. It's just different. I have very little to contribute to it or to say to it given the kind of things I do anymore. So, on the one hand one might say, "Well, American Studies has gone to hell in a hand basket." I don't think that's the case at all. It's changed. It's different.

CAC: It may be that what you're saying earlier is true there. There's a greater range of interdisciplinary within the core faculty than would have been true when there was only one person in the core faculty twenty-five years ago.

JH: Yes.

CAC: Certainly, those of us who were adjunct to the American Studies program have been pushed to the margin or we've gone to the margin.

JH: We find ourselves on the margin.

CAC: Yes.

JH: The world has changed and there are any number of analogues to us active in that program today that weren't there fifteen years ago.

CAC: Well, we've touched on many things, my friend. [laughter]

JH: Yes, we have. And interesting. I hope it's useful to the enterprise.

CAC: I'm learning some things too late.

JH: [laughter] Oh, it's never too late, Clarke, to learn!

CAC: No, that's true.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

[End of Interview]

Transcribed by:

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