CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

Charles McGehee

(Transcription of Tape 1, Side 1)

JP: We're here this morning to interview Charles McGehee in the Department of Sociology, and he is going to provide some very interesting information. This is March 15th. It is a part of the Living History Project sponsored by the Retirement Association. And we will be – this is Jean Putnam. I’m the interviewer, and will be asking him some of the questions that he has experienced in his long tenure at Central. We’re going to start, Charlie, with a brief history. If you can take us all the way back to your beginning and give us an idea of maybe where you came from, some of the schools that you attended, and ultimately how you got to Central.

CM: Well I was born in 1936 – October 24, 1936 in Kansas City, Missouri, and I went to public schools in Kansas City through high school, and I went to college at Baylor in Waco Texas from – okay, I graduated from high school in 1954, went to Baylor from ’54 to ’58, where I graduated with a BA in Business Administration and a minor in Sociology, which I discovered late in my career and it sort of changed my life after that.

After that I went into the Army, where I spent three years, three months and fourteen days – I know that exactly. And that was really the changing point in my life, because in the Army they sent me to the Army language school where I learned Russian. Didn’t think I could ever learn languages before, because I had a very poor background in languages in high school and college. In fact, I was told I had no talent for them. Wound up learning Russian in the Army, and spent my military time in Berlin, which in those days was Ground Zero. And as it turned out, the – just towards the end of my term in Berlin, the Berlin Wall was built, and I was extended for three months, which nowadays is called a stop-gap, or stop loss order, rather. And – but at those times I was extended by President Kennedy, and it was in that period of time that I met the woman who was to become my wife, and I went back to Germany after that. I learned German a little bit, and then I went back and I got a job, and worked at the Ford Motor Company in Cologne for an additional two years where I learned German much better, and we got married, and our first child was born in Cologne.

And while I was there, I met a young fellow who was living in the apartment house who was from the University of Oregon. He was doing his doctoral work in Political Science. And we got to talking, and became better acquainted, and I wasn’t particularly happy at Ford, and he suggested why didn’t I go back to graduate school. And I’d never thought of that before, but I investigated, and he was at Oregon, and so I applied to the University of Oregon, and before I knew I was accepted, even, I quit my job at Ford, packed all of our worldly possessions in three packing cases that was about one yard square – we didn’t have a lot – and I put our little baby in a little carrying satchel and moved off to Eugene, Oregon, where I got my Masters in 1966, and I went from there to the University of Nevada, Reno, where I ultimately got a PhD in Social Psychology.

And towards the end of that, which would have been 1969, I entered the job market, and –without dissertation, I might add – and it was sort of a growth area. Central Washington College, at that time – Central Washington State College, at that time, had a reputation as being very avant-garde in the Northwest. There was a lot of interesting things going on, and there were actually jobs – quite a number of jobs around at the time. But I came and visited people, and was attracted by the faculty, who were very exciting people, and so I took the job and we moved to Ellensburg in September of 1969. And two years later the bottom dropped out of the market, and I and nearly everybody else stayed for what turned out to be a total career. I retired formally in 1999, and continued on phased retirement for another five years, and stopped teaching completely in – that would have been 2004, I guess was my last full year. And so that’s how I got to Ellensburg.
JP: Well that’s a wonderful, wonderful story. When you came to the campus, what were your first impressions? Do you remember what you thought about the town of Ellensburg, or the campus itself, of the – you know, your first impressions.

CM: Well we had been living in Reno for the previous three years, and geographically the area here in Ellensburg was quite similar to Reno – that’s Eastern side of the mountains. It was essentially dry, although Reno was higher, and had more difficult winters, although the winters here were not – were very difficult at the time, too. So in that sense, geographically, it wasn’t a great change, and we appreciated the desert, and the mountains, and all that, so we were very happy. It was a small town, but Reno was a fairly small town and we didn’t have any problems with that at all, and we enjoyed it immensely. The college provided everything that you would want in terms of activities, and music, and drama, and athletics, and everything. The town was small enough. Our kids could walk – we could walk anywhere, for that matter. The kids could go to school. The neighborhood was made up of a lot of faculty members with young families at the time, and they were all going to school together, and so we were extremely pleased with it.

JP: Well good. Now you said that you were hired here in the Department of Sociology. What was your rank, and did you have any specific assignments when you first came? Do you remember?

CM: Well I was originally hired as a – as a Lecturer, I think it was at the time, the way the rank system was broken down, and later on, in a year or two, I was transferred to Assistant Professor. The expectation under which I was hired was to start a program of Social Psychology, which was in fact what my training had been in. That never did happen, however. That – as it turned out, you had to be a jack of all trades, and we taught everything, and I wound up moving into the area of Criminal Justice because the person who had been teaching that at the time primarily, Jerry Olson, went on sick leave and I took his classes, and I never left them after that, actually.

JP: Mmm – well, good. Now I know that you were here a long time. Can you recall – who do you think were some of the influential people that kind of set courses for the University, whether they be instructors, whether they be administrators – do you have any – any – anybody that you might pick out that you kind of felt were helping Central go in a particular direction?

CM: Well –

JP: Good, bad, or indifferent?

CM: In the 35 years I wound up knowing almost everybody, literally, on campus. It’s a pretty small campus, and – rather quickly became involved in campus politics, which probably at the time was very unwise since I didn’t have my dissertation and I had to do that, and I put it off, and put it off because I was having too much fun, and nearly got fired because I – matter of fact, I came within two days of getting fired over that, but I got it done. But my point is that it was a very active campus – very dynamic. Everybody, virtually, was involved in something. And this, of course, the period of Viet Nam and all that, and so there’s a lot of ferment and fervor on the campus, and there were meetings, and protests, and this and that, and so lots and lots of people were really involved, and it really didn’t come down to single people sort of running things while the rest sat back and did their own thing. Everybody was involved. You were involved, and just everybody was involved. You remember those days yourself.

JP: Right, yeah.

CM: So in that sense I can’t really point to anybody consistently all the time. At various periods some people would be more visible than others. I know that – well, Chester Kelly was always active. He was there before I came. And later on Beverly Heckert, and Katie Sands, and there were names like that that come up, but earlier on there was Milo Smith, Ham Howard, and Don Schliesman, and Dale Comstock, and people like that.
I got involved early on. I don’t remember what actually prompted it. It was right after Ed Harrington had become Vice President for Academic Affairs – I don’t remember – I’d done something that – written a letter or something that attracted his attention, and so he put me on a committee for reorganizing the College. One of the things when we first got here – when I first got here – was that the school was still structured around two basic Divisions: Arts and Sciences, and Education. And lots of programs which at other schools would have been in Arts and Sciences were in Education – Psychology, for instance. And the Humanities, as I recall were in the Arts and Sciences, and so on, and it was kind of a conglomeration that had had – been inherited from the early days of a College of Education which had changed substantially over time, but the structure hadn’t.

So Ed created this committee, and I wound up being on it, which was my first foray, really, into serious academic politics. But I remember that Ham Howard was on there, and I think Milo Smith, and Don Schliesman – there was quite a variety of people who at the time were, you might call, leaders, and they sort of acted as my mentors at the time. I learned a tremendous amount from them. They were very friendly, and very supportive, and very encouraging and accepting of new faculty. Because it was a period of very rapid growth. The year that I came in, in our department alone four people were hired into it. A huge number of people coming in. And that was happening across the campus. The faculty just exploded in the years roughly between 1967 and 1972, roughly. It was a huge period of growth. There had been a lot of growth before then, when Jim Brooks had taken over, because he had, by and large, fostered the movement from College of Education to the regional, general purpose College, and there had been a lot of growth. There was a lot of money around. The State was funding University much more actively than it would later on, and so lots of new faces, lots of new activities, lots of new ideas, lots of new everything.

So fortunately, I was part of that at that time for reorganizing the College. So we wound up creating the structure which essentially is that which we have today, namely the four Schools – that is, of Education, Arts and Science, Humanities, Business, and – how many is that? Whatever that was.

JP: Right. Well didn’t we split – we split the Sciences, didn’t we, and –

CM: Oh, that’s right – we had to have Social Behavioral Sciences, that’s true, and they were later melded into College of the Sciences. Yeah, there was that brief –

JP: Yeah, we seem to continually change those names as we go along.

CM: Yeah, right. But anyway, that was my first experience, and I’ve always valued that because of friendships and the relationships that came out of that, certainly, stayed with me over time.

JP: Right. And I think at that time we certainly were inter-departmental in our exchanges of ideas.

CM: We had a lot more contact between departments then than we would later on, as we got bigger, and especially as the campus began to expand physically.

JP: Right.

CM: Because we started out in the top of Lind Science Hall – there’s a little floor on the third floor up there – and the Department was clustered around a sort of a patio-like arrangement. I mean, the Fuco Pendulum has this big hole in the floor there, and we were – that was where we were, and you could literally sit out and look out your door and see in everybody else’s office door, and so there was lots of face-to-face contact. Later on the buildings in the north part of the campus were built – Psychology first, and we were moved up there, which was extremely alienating building. I don’t know – whoever designed it had a rat maze in mind, because you could go for days on end and never see another human being – just the opposite of what we had before. It was very disruptive, the design of buildings. So that came along, and then later on the new library, and the Anthropology/Sociology building, which is now called Farrell
Hall. We’ve moved into there, and – we tried to capture some of the mood that we had in the top of Lind Science Hall, but it was never as effective as it was there. But – but you’re right that the – as the campus grew, not only in terms of departments in size of staff, but physical arrangements, the relationship between departments changed and became much more isolated and everything, I think.

JP: Yeah, and I do remember we had inter-disciplinary seminars.

CM: Lots of those. Jim Brooks, at the outset, you know, he created this series of Spring Symposia, you know, and invited really well-known people, I mean, Kenneth Bolding, I remember, was here – people of that stature. And it brought the campus together, but it didn’t last all that long, did it?

JP: No.

CM: No.

JP: No, it didn’t. Well it’s interesting. Let’s move on here to some other [inaudible]. Now what changes did you recognize – I see you came in Sixty – so you were almost here from the – in the beginning of the Seventies through 2000?


JP: So there’s 35 years of a sense of which direction we might be going. What changes – do you think there were some changes during your tenure? Now we talked about departmental changes – where you were located, buildings. Are there any other changes that you can identify that might be different, such as – one of the things that we often talk about are the students. Did you see any changes from your first students, as you recall you first arrived, and what kinds of students you had – did they change at all, or did they pretty much remain –?

CM: [Interrupting] Let me come to that in just a second. I want to go back to something else, though, that I think was happening, and I’ve often thought about what happened to us over time, and part of it was the change of physical thing, but there was one issue – in my own mind, I think – really dictated, largely, the mood of the faculty from maybe 1972 until maybe ’85 or so, and that had to do with when we first began to run into budget cuts in the nineteen – early 1970s – when enrollments began to decline, and State funding declined, and we ran into hardship. We reached a point – I can’t put a year to it exactly, although if I went back I probably could – where Ed Harrington was faced with a decision of whether to cut faculty or not to make the budget cuts. Maybe you remember that? And he and – well, the Senate was involved to some extent, and Jim Brooks – decided they would save faculty at all costs, which at the time we really appreciated. It was a nice thing, of course, not to get fired. But in hindsight – I’m not faulting Ed for this, because we were all very appreciative, and he did what he thought was the best thing – but in hindsight, I think that decision was to have very long-term ramifications because what it meant was that many departments, such as those in Arts and Science and Humanities especially, wouldn’t hire any new people for years, and years, and years.

It was eighteen years in our department before we hired a new face. In Philosophy it went 27 years before they hired a new person. And I think in hindsight that that was really disastrous, that, because it meant that we had no new blood coming in. It meant that the old people kept doing the same things over and over again. They became grouches and groused about all sorts of stuff, and the mood of the campus lost its optimism, lost its hope, and lost its energy, I believe. Now you know, I’m not criticizing the decision because like I say, everybody was appreciative of it, but I notice in the departments that did continue to hire – Music, for example, Business – the mood in those departments was a lot different than in ours, because they did have new people coming in, and they did retain a level of energy – education, to some extent. But – which was dramatically different than the Arts and Sciences and Humanities, and that’s – the Arts and Science and Humanities has always been the focal point of the discontent on campus, not the other departments like that. So the mood of the campus really went downhill during that period of time because
we just didn’t have any new people coming in, and the old people just – we all got old together, and we all – we had all experienced everything together, you know, and each day was just like the day before, and not getting better, the State was cutting back, and so on and so forth, you know – so. So I think that’s important, and I really can’t document this so much – it’s a perspective – but I think that one could go back, and if you did research, then I think you could find some evidence of that. Okay, so that’s one thing.

JP: Which kind of leads me to another question.

MC: Well I was going to say, coming back to the question of students – the attitude of the faculty – students have changed, there’s no doubt about it, I think, but the attitude of the faculty towards students is just as important as what the students were bringing in with them. The faculty, to a great extent, were still living in the past – the good old days – and they were always judging students by – by what they had seen in the 1960s and ‘70s, and the Viet Nam era, and the excitement on campus, and not surprisingly when students came in, you know, that was a different world. They were increasingly the children of the Viet Nam veterans, and the Viet Nam era, and all that, you know, and that wasn’t their world. They were a world much more of high tech, much more of – of public entertainment, much more of television, much more of – of fast food, and everything else, you know, and – plus the fact that the public schools, at the same time, were also changing their approach to teaching, and kids didn’t learn – didn’t know the sorts of things that we thought they ought to know, they didn’t appreciate the sorts of things we thought they ought to appreciate, and generally didn’t measure up to our stands of the 1960s, which was the period of what – Haight-Asbury and all that sort of stuff, as well as the dynamics of the anti-War movement and all that sort of stuff.

I think it’s also fair to say, though, that students, at the same time, didn’t have a lot of the skills of writing, reading, math, and those sorts of things that they might have had earlier, and that’s also pretty well documented. There was more and more need for remedial support. But that’s not just true at Central. That was the entire country that was [inaudible]. Even Harvard – a third of Harvard students still require remediation even yet today, you know. So there were changes, you know, and the faculty couldn’t deal with what was happening around them, I think in large measure because we had become increasingly more living in this little cocoon of ours here – it was very soft, very comfortable. There were a lot of – was not a lot of pressure on faculty here – certainly no “publish or perish” at all, you know. Basically if you maintain a 98.6 temperature – body temperature, and about 72 heart rate, you were going to make it, you know. So it was a very comfortable place, but that comfort, at the same time, had consequences as well.

JP: Well that’s a great insight which reminded me, as you were talking about the faculty, the stability in most departments, but the – but the new hires in Business, particularly, as it was developing its area – that we had problems in the Faculty Senate with salaries because –

CM: Oh, yeah, well, yeah.

JP: You might want to speak to that – which was a part of it.

CM: Well Business is always – first of all they – bringing in new hires meant that they were – their salary level was being dictated by the external market tremendously, and whereas the rest of us was being dictated by legislative fiat, not the external market. We never experienced what was happening. If we had been, we’d have noticed that schools around the rest of the country that were continuing to hire were coming in at a premium – at least, you know, probably 5-10% over what we were offering at the time. But Business really pushed hard, and furthermore, Business – just the nature of its subject matter means that it also tends to be driven by the general market, plus the ability to generate revenue from business interests in the form of grants, and scholarships, and research, and this, that and the other thing, you know, which tended to enhance faculty salaries and income of the staff as well, and the rest of us never got any of that – certainly not in the Social Sciences – because we didn’t make money for anybody, whereas Business did, you know.
CM: It produced problems, I must say, in Music, as well. They had a lot of new people coming in. They were performance driven, and they could perform their hearts out and it wasn’t producing any merit or anything else for them either, you know. They had to do all these tremendous performances all the time, and got nothing out of it, you know. They couldn’t generate money for anybody, either.

CM: Well, I don’t know, in my mind, that – I know that the University is known for the Teacher Education program, I know it’s known for its Music programs, and Education, and the like, but those are program-driven.

CM: I don’t know that a University like this is ever known particularly for anything it does as a University, but I do know that I run into people quite frequently, when they hear Ellensburg – “Oh, I know Ellensburg!” “How do you know?” “Oh, I went to school there, you know? I really loved it.” And students typically have loved it here. They’ve loved the environment, and small – they loved the small town atmosphere, they loved the fact that they’ve had relatively close relationship with faculty because their class sizes have never been large compared with the big Universities, you know, especially at the undergraduate level. You know, go to the U, you know, and you can be in a class of two to five hundred without batting an eye – no problem at all. And so in that sense I don’t know that the school has ever done anything as a school to attract attention, but I’m constantly impressed by the fact that people come away having gotten something out of it that we may not even be aware of at the time. I mean, that’s one of the problems of teaching in general – you don’t know if anything you do is worth it until 20 years later, and then you may never hear it. And I run into people not uncommonly, you know – somebody will call my name in a parking lot in Seattle or something – “Oh, I remember I had you for this class, and I remember when you said that – this or that,” and I said, “I said that? I can’t remember that at all!” I’m suggesting, you know, that something has been working, but there’s no way to put your finger on it. It’s very seldom that people have gone away with a bad feeling.

CM: That’s been an issue, I think. It’s not just here, it’s always been. It’s an issue for every University town – the relationship between a school, which is so dominant – especially in a town like this, where Central is the largest employer, brings in I don’t know how many millions of dollars a year – the town is clearly dependent upon it. But at the same time, it’s a relationship where, not uncommonly, local business feel themselves lorded over, you know, and they’re sort of resentful, I guess, of somebody who has power over them even when they want to be nice about it. You’re just resentful of that, too. But I think in general the relationships have been really pretty good, and I’ve always enjoyed the relationships of, you know, Jarrell’s, and Wood’s Hardware, and the like, although the old, smaller businesses, of course, are dying out. They just don’t exist to a great extent anymore, and they’re getting fewer and fewer. Buttons just recently closed, and so on, and Ostranders, and so on, and being replaced, of course, by larger corporate entities which are good neighbors in the sense it’s corporate policy, you know, to support local things – their managers have certain obligations to treat it – all that – but it really isn’t the same, because – what’s been lost is the – really the personal relationships. But that’s not just Ellensburg or Central. That’s
everywhere. Well I – I generally – I’ve found it’s been basically good. I mean, there have been times, especially earlier on, where there’s been issues of discrimination in hiring with various businesses and so on, but I think that’s pretty well behind us.

JP: Now you, over your tenure – you’ve experienced – I think you’ve taught under four Presidents. You started with Jim Brooks, or was he –

CM: No, Brooks was President when I came.

JP: Jim Brooks was President, and then there was –

CM: Don Garrity.

JP: Don, and then – Don Garrity, and then –

CM: Ivory.

JP: A very short tenure with Ivory Nelson, and then finally with Jeri –

CM: Jim Pappas was actually interim, there.

JP: Wow, yes, he was interim, and then Jeri McIntyre.

CM: Right.

JP: How do you see – how do you perceive their –

CM: Although I wasn’t actually under – I was under Jeri as a phased retiree, but I –

JP: But never as a –

CM: No, I left at the same time Ivory left.

JP: Oh, I see. Okay. How do you perceive their leadership styles? Were there differences? Did you see some differences as you –?

CM: Well, yeah, and I think, in a sense, their leadership style has reflected, to some extent, the changes that the school is undergoing in general. Jim was one of us. He’d gone to school here. He was a friend of faculty, and all that. But he also found himself under pressure to modernize, and to change relationship because the Faculty Code, for instance, had come out of the relationship with McConnell early-on, where Central had been sanctioned by the AUP for seven years in the 1940s because of McConnell’s high-handedness – firing faculty unilaterally, and so on, and out of that came the Faculty Code. The Faculty Code, however, was written in such a way that the faculty had, really, command of campus, which of course faculty think they ought to do. Even to the point where they could veto actions of the Trustees, which was really contrary to State law. Never mind policy, it was really contrary to State law. And Jim found himself in that contradiction, and at one point, basically, had to lead the Trustees into – I don’t know exactly who led whom, but anyway he was present when it happened – where the Trustees took back control, which of course infuriated the faculty. And that was really the point – it was also about the same time when the University was being renamed as a University away from the State College, and was moving into the more or less modern world. We’d just reorganized – I don’t have the exact time-frame, there, but we’d just reorganized around this more modern structure, and so really what Jim was caught up – and he was, in a sense, transitional between the small hometown college and to the more modern, refined
Don Garrity came in, in that context, from a larger school in San Francisco – San Francisco State – and he tried to maintain the modern thing. Don was really old school, too, in many regards – not the small town thing, but the idea – he told me this later on, you know – in fact, he never had a contract. I don’t know if you knew that or not.

CM: No, he didn’t. He didn’t have an actual contract. It was a handshake. Those were the days where you took jobs in academia based upon handshakes, and he said after that, when he did get fired finally –

(Transcription of Tape 1, Side 2)

CM: Did you flip that one over?

JP: Yes.

CM: Okay. I was just checking.

JP: Well let’s see – let’s try to get ourselves back here, with this brief little – stop.

CM: Well I was talking, as I recall, about Don Garrity not having had a contract, and he told me afterwards, you know, that in hind sight it was very unwise of him – that the world had changed and he really didn’t recognize it. That – as it turned out – he didn’t get any severance for that. He got a year’s notice, is what it amounted to, like any faculty would have gotten, but they canceled – they fired him in mid-term, and, you know – it was really very unfortunate, the entire episode, I think. But anyway – so – yeah – so he was – he came into this world of change running an increasingly more modern organization with a lot of ideas and relationships of the past. And of course, part of his problem was having hired a Provost who was also in that phase. The faculty was still living largely in the 1960s. They were fighting everything that was happening, and I’ve often thought how ironic it was that Bob Edington, for example – one of the issues that’s been – was thrown up to him at the time was that he created a deficit – something like $500,000, as I recall – among other things had hired two faculty into Geology without funding for them, and the faculty just raised all sorts of cane about that. Well it turns out that those faculty members that he hired were Megan Miller and Charlie Ruben, who are the big stars – in fact later on brought huge amounts of money with them, and tremendous new ideas, and leadership, and so on, and that was because Bob Edington had the guts to do something, which the faculty didn’t understand and really, ultimately contributed to his demise. I mean, stylistically, you know, he tended to alienate people, but – the new rules requiring decisions and decision-making that really didn’t fit into the model that the faculty really wanted to think about, which really was basically maintaining the past – that’s my view of things.

JP: Well, to interject here, because I’m not sure whoever sees our tape – Bob Edington came in as the Vice President, or the Provost, I believe – did he come in when Ivory Nelson?

CM: No, no. He was before that.

JP: He was before that.

CM: He was – he came in when Ed Harrington retired. He replaced Ed Harrington. And Don Schliesman had been interim for about –

JP: That was in 1992.

CM: No, no, that was before that, because Ivory came in ’92. This would have been in the nine – I don’t know, maybe ’85 – I’m not sure – between ’85 and ’90 sometime.
JP: Well Ed Harrington and I retired the same year.

CM: Which year was that?

JP: Ninety-two. We both retired in ’92. Left the University in ’92, but –

CM: Okay, there’s some disconnect in my mind then, because Ivory was hired in 1992, and – and Bob Edington replaced Harrington, and he was here under Garrity.

JP: Right. He was here under Garrity.

CM: And he left – he left before Garrity left.

JP: No. Garrity left before –

CM: Because – because – because Harrington – Edington got a vote of no confidence.

JP: Right. He did. But it doesn’t matter because somewhere in our records – we don’t have to worry, it’s in there –

CM: It’s in there somewhere. Someone ought to go check that.

JP: But I just thought maybe for those – that Harrington – that Edington followed Harrington –

CM: He did, yeah.

JP: – as the Provost.

CM: And this was one of the issues always been – that – Ed was a very competent person who knew the old school, and Don Garrity had relied upon him to run things. And when he brought Edington in, Edington sort of upset the old apple cart, and Don was largely in – in – in the dark about a lot of this, and suddenly it came on his desk, and threw him off balance too.

JP: Right. And then following that era of Nelson – of left.

CM: Well Nelson came at a following –

JP: He came –

CM: Right. I was on the Search Committee.

JP: In ’92.

CM: Right, and the Search Committee was in it – because I’d been Chair of the Faculty Senate at that time – that’s how I got on there. And that was a problem, too, because the Trustees attempted to take over and run the school – really, that’s what it amounted to. The Trustees had always been kept at arm’s length by all sorts of Presidents in the past, and their job basically had been to rubber stamp what the Administration wanted. With the demise of Garrity, they had – that signaled their attempt to run things, and to dictate how things were going to go on. And so the Trustees, instead of turning the search for a new President over to the faculty, which typically is the case, they went out and hired a head hunter, remember. And the head hunter, basically – to whom the Trustees laid out the criteria for this new President, and the faculty – the number of faculty on the Search Committee was reduced to two or three –
there weren’t very many, and certainly not in a dominant position like had always been the case before, and as is usually the case in most searches like that. And they brought in everybody on the Committee from – not only townspeople, but the Foundation and everybody was – it was this huge Committee – students, and this huge Committee, and with the faculty I think there may have been only three on it. There was myself, Anne Denman, and I can’t remember who the third person was if there was three, and I’m not sure.

At any rate – already, Ivory’s tenure was tainted by the fact that the Trustees were running the show – caused a lot of anger. And the moment he walked in the door, he didn’t have half a chance, because – certainly with respect to the faculty, because of the way that the – high-handedness of the Trustees at the time. And he was brought in, and in his words was “to turn the battleship,” which is no easy battle, you know, and so that’s what he saw – that’s what apparently what the Trustees had told him. Make this thing totally modern – totally modern, and that involved largely displacing the faculty as a dominant force in the affairs of the school, and which – you know. So we’re really talking about a process that had been going on since the middle of Jim Brooks’s term. Up until that time – trying to take an institution that had been here since 1891 or something, and bring it into the new world – the modern world – kicking and screaming, in a sense, you know.

And Ivory’s style was a lot like Edington’s in the sense that – that when push came to shove, the faculty’s place was in the classroom, and not in the board room, and that the Administrators had to administer, and the faculty had to teach, and the two really shouldn’t bother each other all that much. But the faculty weren’t willing to give up things all that easily, and ultimately wound up voting no confidence on Ivory as well. And of course, all administrators always say that no confidence votes don’t faze them, but they also never survive it. You know? I mean, that’s true – whether it’s Harvard or Central makes no difference in the fact that they don’t survive that. And Ivory ultimately retired after that – retirement was okay. He’d hired his own Vice President after that, and the Vice President only lasted two years, too. And I ran that search effort, too, which is very interesting, because the Committee’s first choice was the Provost at Western Oregon.

JP: Are we talking about choice for Provost, or for President?

CM: Choice for Provost – Provost under Ivory. I chaired that committee. The first choice was a fellow by name of John Minahan, the Provost at Western Oregon – Monmouth, is it? He was a tremendous guy – he was a Philosopher. And so Ivory interviewed him, and he turned Ivory down.

JP: Hmmm.

CM: He said he didn’t think the two of them would get along very well. So Tom Wore, who was our second choice, wound up getting the job, but it only lasted two years because he couldn’t get along with Ivory, or Ivory couldn’t get along with him, or something. But anyway –

JP: Very interesting. And then, of course, following that there was a little [inaudible] with Pappas, but then –

CM: Gerry Stacey was the interim, I think. Is that the way it worked?

JP: No, it was – was Pappas – oh, no. Pappas took over after Garrity.

CM: Right.

JP: That was the interim there. Then Jeri McIntyre came aboard. Were you on that Search Committee?
CM: No, I was gone by that time, and there wasn’t even but one year. An older fellow — gosh, I can’t remember his name. I never knew him personally, because I had retired by that time and was out of the action. No, I was not involved in that search after him, because I was really gone then.

JP: Right. So you really don’t have any perceptions of her style, other than the fact that – you know – you were aware, maybe [inaudible] campus –

CM: Yeah, I’m aware that the faculty was very concerned with getting somebody who was – who would treat them well, and Jeri certainly has done that. She’s a master communicator, there’s no question about it. But at the same time, she’s confronted with the same sorts of issues. Even more so, now, with declining funding, changing mandate, relations with the Trustees, and Legislature, and all that sort of stuff, and – her style is certainly a lot different, but she still has to wind up doing the same sorts of things, because that’s all being dictated by external relations, you know.

JP: Right, right. Well that’s interesting. As you –

CM: I might add, by the way – excuse me. I might add, by the way, that underlying – I mean, one of the themes that’s started coming up already in the 1970s was “we could solve this if we had a union.”

JP: Let’s talk about that.

CM: Remember – that’s right. That’s right. Remember, we had a vote – in fact, my dissertation, when I finally finished it – ultimately I wrote my dissertation on – on faculty organization in higher education, and I analyzed the vote, and faculty relations at the time of the – I think it was 1972 already, when the first vote was taken. And I concluded out of that that the faculty wasn’t really interested in shared government. They wanted to turn the clock back to the good old days, and I’m still convinced that that was the case. Anyway, the first vote failed, but there’s always been that theme since then, that the faculty’s loss of stature, and power, and income, and everything else could all be solved if we could just get a union. Well, now they’ve got a union, and the question is are they going to be able to do anything differently.

JP: Right. Right.

CM: Some things compounded the problem during Ivory’s tenure. For example, the big push to modernize the infrastructure with computers, and most especially with software – Peoplesoft – put like, $5 million in that thing, and that was not funded largely by – by State support, as far as I know. It came, for the most part, out of faculty salaries and those sorts of things. So we went for years and years without salary increases, and merit, and all this sorts of things, you know.

JP: Right.

CM: And now they’re getting some – there’s been some – Jeri brought in some – some compensation and redressed some of those grievances like that, and the faculty now, they’ve got some commitment for some increases, too, but it’s not clear to me where that money’s going to come from. It’s going to come from elsewhere in the infrastructure – secretaries and the like, I suspect.

JP: [Laughing] [Inaudible – CM is coughing] There’s some water right there, if you’d like to use it. And I’m going to kind of peruse the questions here to see if there are some other directions we need to go. Just jump in if that triggers something that you might like to comment on. Let’s talk about – in terms of your own – your own hiring and your own job, as you began to teach more the Political Science side of Sociology, or – were there any changes in your job description, or did you – did you kind of pretty much stay in that – in that area, or did you move into any other areas during your tenure?
CM: Well I never had a job description in that sense. It was just all informal at the Department, you know, what needs to be taught and who’s willing to do it, sort of thing, and so I wound up teaching I don’t know how many different preparations. I taught Medical Sociology, Soviet Sociology, and all sorts of stuff, you know, based largely upon my own interests, and minimally what the Department needed. I taught theory rather regularly, and then everybody had either a Social Problems or Introductory Soc for the General Education requirement. I always taught Social Problems, and like I say, I got into the Criminal Justice area, so I created our Law and Society class, and – which I taught for many years – and Punishment Corrections – I created that class. Child Abuse – I created that class and taught that for many, many years, which became sort of a bread-and-butter class, and also for me turned out to be an entrée into some sort of minor research funds and travel, things like that, and so I made quite a bit out of that. So no – it was all done internally. I had no job description at all – just what people were interested in, and –

JP: So as you look at your contributions as a faculty member, what – what do you want to be remembered for? What were some of the things that you felt – where you made the most contributions, whether it be in your department, or otherwise? Where do you – where do you put yourself in retrospect? Or not.

CM: Well I don’t know. My view of the effects of people anywhere – I don’t, you know – people’s contribution is very seldom noted in lights on the Marquee. It’s not that sort of thing, you know.

JP: No.

CM: But in terms of the evolution of organizations and structures, and above all the effect on individuals as they, then, in turn affect other people – I know I – when I look at the academic policy here – I chaired the Academic Affairs Committee for the Senate for many, many years, and we rewrote the academic policy manual, and did all sorts of stuff like that. Nobody knows that. Nobody really cares how it got to be, but I recognize – recognize my own wording, and that sort of thing. But it gets changed from time to time, too, you know, so I don’t know that – you know, it’s just part of the ongoing process. I mean, I regard – this is the process, and people participate. I mean, who knows who swept the floors or painted the walls, you know, but somebody did it, and left behind a residue. What pleases me most, though, which I find most surprising, is when I – like I say, when I do encounter students that say, “I remember when you said this,” and I go, “Wow, they remember that, and I can’t even remember it,” you know? So that’s –

JP: Right.

CM: In fact, I ran into a young fellow just last fall at a bank, and we were talking about interest rates or something, he says, “Oh,” he says, “I remember you. I had this class from you.” And he starts spouting stuff in there, and he was a guy who was just a loan officer, you know.

JP: Mm-hmm. One never knows –

CM: You never know. You just never know that.

JP: – what influence played on other people throughout your lifetime.

CM: Of course, it can also be negative influence, too.

JP: Right, right. Well yes, I think most of us who were from that era of many years of no change – but I’ve always perceived you as not only as an outstanding Professor, you know, doing the may things that you do in the department, but I thought you were very active beyond that, into the Faculty Senate particularly – committees, search committees, the kinds of things where you’re involved with larger issues of – that are more either interdepartmental, or those kinds of things that are necessary, in terms of faculty making contributions.
CM: Well a lot of people regard those things as drags – committee work as drags, and I never did. I always enjoyed committee work, frankly.

JP: Somebody’s got to do it.

CM: Well even gladly. I was regarded as a creative influence – creative [inaudible], and so I didn’t even regard it as somebody’s got to do it. It was never a burden to me. I mean, there were committees, you know, that didn’t get anything done, and all that, but for the most part I found them very useful. If nothing else, I was learning something. I figured if I was learning something, then it wasn’t a waste of time.

JP: Right.

CM: I’ll tell you another thing. The greatest honor that I ever received while I was here – it was towards the end of my tenure that I was named Scholar of the Year by Phi Kappa Phi, and that was – really was very moving, because recognition by your colleagues is ultimately the very important thing, and the best thing, really, and that really touched me deeply.

JP: Well I’m glad that you brought that up, because that was an award. Were there any other awards or whatever that you might remember, or?

CM: Oh, there was one point that the student government gave me an award for something back in the 1970s, and I can’t recall what it was for, but –

JP: Right, right. Well, um –

CM: Oh, pardon me, there was one more thing that I did that I really am most proud of – very proud of, and that was having created the first academic grievance policy. And I remember very specifically what was happening – we had – the students were complaining about treatment by faculty, and in fact, I remember the incident, really, that precipitated it. It was by a person in your own department who will remain nameless here. She had told students they would get an “A” if they gave blood, and one guy couldn’t give blood because he had hepatitis, so he got a “B,” and he was furious because –

JP: Through no fault of his own –

CM: Right. And so we did a – I was on the – Chaired the Student Affairs Committee at the time, so we did a survey on campus about student’s experiences with faculty, and there was never a lot, but the ones that were coming up were really significant. It was clear that there had to be some mechanism for dealing with that. And so we created the first Academic Grievance Policy, and it’s still in effect today, as far as I know. It was very effective, yeah.

JP: Yes. That’s – that’s – I’m glad to know that.

CM: It gave students an outlet. It gave them an outlet, and the mere fact of having an outlet itself tends to take the steam out of a lot of grievances. It’s where there’s no place to turn that people really start getting angry.

JP: At least they know that there is something available to them.

CM: Yeah.

JP: Well, uh – is there anything else that we need to extract from you here this morning? Any other things before I do a little wrap-up here, or let you wrap up? I mean, we can go on, but usually what I do
here at the end of – uh – of our conversation is to give you an opportunity to – just to wrap up in general your feelings about your whole time here at Central – just as an overview, personally, of how you felt, or do feel about Central.

CM: I’ve always – I enjoyed the time here tremendously, and I know that there were faculty who were very resentful at having been here in our own department, and some other departments I could name, where they regarded Central as a step down in their lives. They’d gone to Cal Tech, or the University of Chicago, or something, and wind up in this Podunk school in the wastelands of Washington – the sort of academic backwater it’s been described, and all that. And they were sore heads their entire life, and that really bothered me a lot. In fact, there was one when we were still in Lind Science Hall over there used to stand outside of – he was one of these that had been to Cal Tech and was always irritated by the fact he was here, and so he’d stand outside of our doors and listen, and go tell the Dean what we were talking about! [Laughing] The Dean was Bernie Martin at the time.

JP: Oh, yes.

CM: Anyway, I never understood people like that. I don’t understand people like that today who grouse about their circumstances because they didn’t have to be here – they could have been anywhere. It was their own problem. So I’ve always appreciated this school. I’ve enjoyed being here immensely. I’ve enjoyed, for the most part, my colleagues, and certainly the life in Central Washington, and I have absolutely no regrets at all about that. You know, we didn’t get paid as well as – you know – if I’d have been at a bigger school I probably would have gotten ten, maybe fifteen percent more, but they would probably have asked a lot more of me, too. And so it’s really been a pretty low-impact sort of life. When I look back on it, I – I’m very grateful for having been here, in fact. I loved it, frankly. I loved working with people like you, and everybody else, for the most part. There are some that I wouldn’t give you the time of day for, but for the most part –

And I – like I said at the beginning, at one time I knew virtually everybody on campus, but now I come in and I don’t know anybody to speak of.

JP: Right. Well Charlie it’s been a pleasure to talk to you this morning, and we hope that we both keep a connection to the University as we continue our lives here in Ellensburg. Thank you.

CM: Well I appreciate your invitation. I’ve always enjoyed working with you, and your interview as well. Thank you, Jean.

JP: Thank you.