

## CWU LIVING HISTORY PROJECT

### ROBERT GOECKE

Smith: Today is January 27, 1998. This is another in the series of the Living History interviews. Today we are going to interview Professor Robert Goedecke, who has been a member of the Central's Philosophy department I am Helen Smith, and your camera operator is Bonnie Klucking. All right, Bob, this morning you've been fore-warned. Please start with a thumbnail sketch of your life up until you came to Central.

Goedecke: Just to go over the facts, I was born in Gary, Indiana in 1928, and raised in that town. I left when I was fifteen to go to college at the University of Chicago. I spent a lot of time in Chicago, and I went to Harvard briefly, got my M.A. in Philosophy there, and then came back to Chicago where I got my Ph.D. Then I taught at various universities and came here in about 1970 I've had a family. I was not in the military. I've been mostly a teacher of Philosophy.

Smith: All right, and what brought you to Central? You had been to all these other places, and how did you end up here? Was it in 1970, did you say?

Goedecke: Yes, somehow I contacted Chester Keller, and he was interested in me, and I was going to go to Western, but somebody said that there were more openings at Central, so I came to Central.

Smith: And what rank did you come?

Goedecke: I think I came as a full professor. A professor of Philosophy, and stayed that way.

Smith: You stayed that way.

Goedecke: Yes.

Smith: Until you retired in what year?

Goedecke: I think it was ninety-three.

Smith: OK. From seventy to nineteen ninety-three, then.

Goedecke: Yes.

Smith: All right, then. When you first came on campus, then, can you tell us, what was your academic assignment? What were you asked to teach?

Goedecke: Well, in those very early years, there were lots of students here, and I was teaching Introduction to Philosophy, and then several other courses in Philosophy. But we had large introduction sections.

Smith: How large?

Goedecke: I think about a hundred. There were five or six of us that were teaching a section each.

Smith: And where did you teach those large classes then?

Goedecke: In Randall.

Smith: Oh, in Randall Hall.

Goedecke: That series of lecture halls in Randall.

Smith: When you came here you probably had some feeling about the quality of students in other places. How did you find the quality of those students in, let's say, those Intro. classes, those large Intro, classes?

Goedecke: It varied at first. I found they were very resistant to taking tests, particularly what we call pop quizzes, but after we got to an understanding of that, I thought the students here were just as good quality as any students at any institution. There were a number of veterans that were coming in from the Viet Nam War. Of those, a select minority were very serious, and quite mature, and did good work.

Smith: It seems to me in talking to Freshman students that they seem to come in with this horrible fear of anything in the Philosophy Department. Did you run into that with the freshmen? Or were they just scared, quiet?

Goedecke: I ran into one or two people that were looking forward to it, but the others were quiet. If they had any doubts about Philosophy, they didn't say them to me.

Smith: But you did then find the students that were really, they could be matched against students any place?

Goedecke: Yes. There were some very good students.

Smith: Well, what about problems on this campus? You can address that from any angle you want to. Problems between the faculty and administration, or the faculty and the Board, or were there any problems?

Goedecke: Well, I remember just the...this was a long time ago, so I remember the historic problems. At the beginning, I'm sorry, but there was a great deal of dope addiction. Students were wandering down the streets muttering to themselves in the middle of the night, and I was sort of shocked at that. And then that ended, and then I can remember a problem about streaking. Students would take off all their clothes and run through the basketball game, or run through a dance.

Smith: And that lasted, what? About a year?

Goedecke: It lasted about a year. But since then I don't think there have been any problems

Smith: What about problems between groups on campus, faculty and administrators? Were you, did you feel that those two groups were kind of at war with each other?

Goedecke: Well, there is a perennial tension because faculty all think they should be paid much more, particularly more than so-and-so. So that leads to jealousies and tension between the faculty and administrators, but that's perennial and it's sort of trivial, I think. That's just a problem in human nature.

Smith: What about faculty relationship with the Board of Trustees? Was there any?

Goedecke: I don't recall that the Board of Trustees seemed to have any direct influence on our lives. I knew one member of the Board of Trustees for a while, but he was asked to resign, Herb Legg, he was on the Board of Trustees and I knew him. Then he didn't stay on. And then the later Board of Trustees, there was very little communication. I could recall one trustee tried to come into the Sub. And sit down and talk to the students, and they were amazed. And had very little to say to him and he quit talking to them.

Smith: Nothing in common.

Goedecke: Well, there was just no relationship.

Smith: Well, which, now you were in this length of time that you worked here you worked under probably several presidents and administrators, which ones come to mind as being particularly effective?

Goedecke: Well, I certainly, first I met Chester Keller, who was a chairman. He was a very effective administrator, and teacher. And then James Brooks was a very interesting and human man. And then Harrington was very effective. And then later, Garrity was very effective. I remember these people as being effective, doing their job and doing what they could for the faculty.

Smith: What about other faculty members, perhaps in your own department or even out of your department that you felt were particularly effective?

Goedecke: I thought the faculty in my Department were good and adequate, and friendly. Who struck me at the beginning were the people in the Music faculty. I think Wayne Hertz was a very effective man, and he ran a series of concerts that were excellent. And then Herbert Bird was a wonderful violinist, so the Music Department, I think, struck me as being particularly good at that time. Although, I gather there were other good Departments.

Smith: Well, and still to this day, I think the Music Department...

Goedecke: Yes, it's grown, and it's very active.

Smith: Well, let's start down through this long list of topics here, and see what kind of comments you have, for instance, about the salary schedule. I assume you felt it wasn't high enough, but maybe you have other comments.

Goedecke: Well, I just read a comment by somebody that everybody thought they would be a success if they were making about twenty-five per cent more than they're making now, so I think in America everybody would like to make twenty-five per cent more than they're making tonight. I, personally, had no great gripes with the salary schedule...

Smith: You thought it was fair?

Goedecke: It was very modest, and I hadn't expected much money from teaching.

Smith: So you were a realist when you came into the profession.

Goedecke: Yes. Yes.

Smith: So what about academic freedom? That's very important, and sometimes it causes great anxieties. Did you feel that in your work at Central you had academic freedom?

Goedecke: Yes, I felt I had tremendous academic freedom. I was never pressured to stop saying anything, or to go and do something one way or another, or take a particular hook rather than another hook. No, there seemed to be complete academic freedom.

Smith: And that was important, of course, to you?

Goedecke: Ah, yes.

Smith: What about collegiality? Was it a friendly place to work?

Goedecke: On the whole it was tremendously friendly. I met people who later went on to establish national careers. Like Phil Garrison, and Joe Powell, and the artist were fairly friendly. And then in Political Science there was a man named Ehyn Odell, who seemed to be a leader of a group. He was very friendly, as was his whole group. I must say I think I found a substantial...

Smith: Not only a rich friendly environment, but intellectually stimulating.

Goedecke: It was adequate, yes.

Smith: Good. Now what about this old problem at Universities about town-gown relationships? Did you think it was a problem, or...

Goedecke: I met people in the town, but as a philosopher I must say I met people that were, I don't know what you would call them, they were on the artistic margin. Like Dick Elliott, and there used to be a man that ran an odds and ends store on Third Avenue, who's nick-name was Captain America. And I knew the Sheriff. I knew Bob Barrett, so it seems on a personal level, if you approach somebody without any critical attitude, or elitist attitude, they were perfectly willing to converse, be friends, and so on. Jim McGiffin at the paper, and Anderson of Anderson Hay and Grain were...

Smith: So you didn't feel there was any little built in antagonism toward the eggheads here on the campus.

Goedecke: Well, somehow, on the whole, I felt that this was largely a ranch town, and that they accepted the University, but as different, but as long as you weren't critical of that, then you were accepted. But the atmosphere was that of a Western ranching town.

Smith: Sure, that's what it is. Indeed, something we might as well face facts.

Goedecke: Yes.

Smith: All right, so you felt comfortable then, going down to the hardware store and all around town.

Goedecke: Yes, ... grocery store.

Smith: Indeed. Universities usually have very big plans about what they're going to do in the future, and they make these long range plans, and I'm sure you were involved in some of those.

Goedecke: Yes, I was.

Smith: Speak, if you will, to the effectiveness, or how you felt those worked?

Goedecke: Well, I'm always a little skeptical of long range plans. They seem to be another name for short range plans. So I was on a long range planning committee, and all we discussed was what will we do next? So that was done fairly well. And it was discussed that you couldn't make long range plans. Then when I first came, there were plans to have a very large University with twenty thousand students..., The student enrollment dropped, so apart from long range plans were immediate plans of how do we save the University? Now we're in a period of somewhat longer plans, with buildings being erected and plans being erected for a larger student body, but these plans can change.

Smith: Well, do you think it's a waste of time, then, because I know a great deal of time and effort is put into these committees, as you well-know, having served on them. Is it worthwhile?

Goedecke: Well, I think long range planning is a sort of a euphemism for serious short range planning. People wanting to know what they're going to do next. But if they look at it as (?) like away, they call it long range planning, but I think the state is doing this, too, with the Growth Management Act. But there're so many contingencies that it's very difficult to make a genuine long range plan, so the long range plans keep changing. But they're done seriously, so I'm for it.

Smith: Indeed. Were you ever on a building committee, a committee that was planning a new building on campus?

Goedecke: No, I've never been on such a committee.

Smith: Well, do you have any thoughts, then, about the building naming policies on campus?

Goedecke: I think this University established a different policy of naming buildings after prominent, living professors.

Smith: Amazing.

Goedecke: Yes, it is amazing. So I taught in Randall Hall and I knew Reino Randall, who seemed like a very gracious, thoughtful, artistic gentleman, and that seemed to be a good idea. And I think Dean Samuelson was very pleased that the Samuelson Union was named after him. I think he used to walk around in it and stop people, and say, "You know, this building was named after me?"

Smith: It was terribly important to him, as it would be.

Goedecke: It was a wonderful idea. I'm sorry the library hasn't been named after somebody alive. That hasn't been implemented recently, but it was a charming policy, certainly. It was a great honor to the people that were named this way.

Smith: Did you feel any push to publish or perish, you know that old phrase that is bandied around on campuses?

Goedecke: I published some articles, but I was not pushed into them, and there was no notion that I'd perish if I didn't publish articles, so, as far as I can see, it was...

Smith: Tell us about the articles. Where they appeared, and the subject matter.

Goedecke: At first I wrote an article on corporations, and in the old days there was still some question about the dominance of corporations in American life, and I thought if corporations possessed most of the property, they should also have some responsibilities for employment, and so forth. I think that's now, out of the question, corporations freely operate without the question of providing employment just as such just don't come up. And then I wrote articles about structuralism. Structuralism was a fashionable philosophy for a while which I still admire.

Smith: Explain it to us just a little bit for anybody looking at this film. In ten words or less.

Goedecke: Structuralism is that there is a basic logic of how human beings grasp basic things, like fire and water, and life and death. And that this logic is the same in all human beings, or at least in all primitive human beings, and it makes for basic logic which I think has been unrecognized, a logic of the Universe, and a logic of life in the Universe. So, I thought, a very living profound philosophy, and it's been replaced by, I don't know what you call it, "Deconstruction," an anti, and irrational philosophy. And that's what it's called, I think Post-modernist treatment of literary texts of some, it's all very irrational, so, at that time

there was rationalism, and I corresponded with the head of structuralism, Levi Strauss... became, sort of, pen-pals, friends over the ocean.

Smith: Others? And I assume that these were published in professional journals, in philosophy journals.

Goedecke: Yes.

Smith: Were there others that you'd like to speak about?

Goedecke: Oh, at that time there was the question of which came first speaking or writing. I think I wrote something on that in a journal. I may have written some other articles, I must say I can't remember exactly what they were, right now. I wrote an article on Spinoza. Early, I became rather cynical that hardly anybody read the journal articles on philosophy. Now I think they do read them, but at that time I didn't, so mostly I spent my time in corresponding with people. I corresponded with Levi Strauss, and then I had an old friend, James Watson, in Biology who had discovered DNA I corresponded with him. Then I found a novelist named Frank Waters who wrote sort of mystic novels about Indians of the Southwest, and we corresponded. So I think I found more practical stimulation in friendships. There was a Father Seidel at St. Martinis, and was a relatively unknown scholar and philosopher and writer, and we became good friends, too. But it didn't result in much publication.

Smith: But it sounds as though it was very enriching for you.

Goedecke: Oh, yes. Yes, it was.

Smith: For our future viewers, give us a little run-down on Levi Strauss, he is, of course, renowned.

Goedecke: Yes, well, he's a great anthropologist, and now he's a member of the Academy Francais. He's still alive; he must be ninety years old, but at the time he was an active thinker, and he started out with Indians in South America, studying their face painting and then mythology. And because I was close to the Yakimas, I was became sort of a student of the Yakima Indians and their myths, and got to know some of them. Then Levi Strauss's books came up, so they got to the Indians of the Northwest, and I know something about that, so, at one point we traded information about fish, there was some medicine involved to a certain fish that lived in streams, and I was able to supply him with some information of it. One of the more positive things in life I did. I have a foot note to a French Anthropological Journal. But, Yes, the interest in Indians... His writing on Indians helped my understanding of... and then the Indians of the Northwest have a particularly rich mythology. I think Darwin Good<sup>9</sup>' has done work on the art of the Southwest Indians, although I never have talked to Darwin, but he's done a tremendous amount of work in this area.

Smjth: Now, was your interest in the Yakima Nation, you were close to them... Did you simply mean proximity, or spiritually?

Goedecke: Well, you have to know... I remember we went down to some dance, some Indian dance just when I was first here, and they were still quite hostile towards the whites. You could see it. the hostility, that we were outsiders, but then I made great friends with Indians who had come to campus to go to college, and they on a more friendly basis, introduced me to some relatively unpublished data about the mythology, sticking in that the Yakima Indians believe in ghost Indians inhabit the woods. And then their penchant for gambling. And in general, their attitudes towards living with whites, and still trying to maintain a certain culture of their own.

Smith: Which must be very difficult.

Goedecke: Yes, Yes I'd have to say, yes.

Smith: Or impossible. What's your philosophy on the research vs. the teaching situation? Do you have an opinion about which is more important, or more important to you personally?

Goedecke: Well, I was immediately given lots of students, and a full schedule, so I became involved in teaching, and it always seemed to me that when I was here that there was a need to prepare for classes and to do exams and so on. Research in philosophy is hard to define, it's not quite like research on leaves.

Smith: The lab is different.

Goedecke: The lab is the world, so there was time to do research, if I'd had time to settle down, I think, I'd have done more research, but I didn't. I wrote a couple of novels at the very beginning, but they weren't accepted, and then I tried to do research on structuralism, but structuralism has been replaced by deconstruction, so I feel that somehow there were opportunities for research that I neglected.

Smith: What about hiring policies and practices? Were you ever involved in any of that? Do you have any comments on that?

Goedecke: Well, I don't know whether to bring this up, in an uncomfortable period we had a drop in enrollment and we were in a period which must have lasted several years in which the whole existence of Central was in question, and it wasn't hiring. I think it was called RIFing.

Smith: Which stood for, what?

Goedecke: Somehow, edging.

Smith: Reduction In Force.

Goedecke: Reduction In Force. That was it. So I ended up teaching in Seattle and the Tri-cities, and Moses Lake. Classes that were sort of made up, so that we could have enough enrollment so we could keep philosophy as a Department going. I think I spent years doing that. Driving down to Tri-cities, or driving over to Seattle.

Smith: Did your Department lose any faculty members?

Goedecke: Yes, we did.

Smith: At Reduction In Force time.

Goedecke: Yes, in terms of losing people, I don't know whether to say this now or not, but we lost everybody up to me. I was the person that was going to be RIFed next, and in terms of seniority, I was on the bottom of the seniority scale. So I had to spend a lot of effort trying to stay on. Good friends of mine, who were hired later, moved to San Francisco, or Iowa, or someplace. They were RIFed. I think a lot of people were RIFed. I think maybe at other colleges even more so at this time.

Smith: It was an extremely tense time.

Goedecke: Yes, yes it was.

Smith: Very nervous.

Goedecke: Yes, that was sort of a bad time which lasted for years. It seems, I think, it's over now. The Departments seem to be expanding.

Smith: Do you have any comment on faculty unions, or faculty organizations to protect one another?

Goedecke: Well, I've never been involved in faculty unions. There are some people who are, and I'm not sure if some faculty's rights were trampled on, or something, but I felt that some faculty was getting bad shrift. The administration would listen to counter-arguments, and on the whole, the administration tried to be fair, I don't think they...at times when a President just doesn't like somebody, the people could always move, so I've heard of people being let go, but I was not upset by it, and I didn't think a union would help. Apparently now there is a union, simply because again, the faculty think they want more pay and a union would give that.

Smith: But you personally felt no need to have a union represent you as a faculty member?

Goedecke: No. I remember when there was some pressure, somehow Chester Keller was very good at getting the entire state teacher's union to back me, so a number of people from the state teacher's union wrote me. But then later when I asked for backing, I was involved in a political campaign, they weren't the least bit interested, so it was just for that one sore point that they became active and there wasn't any general faculty union at that time.

Smith: Do you remember, over the years you taught here, any particular campus emergencies that came up?

Goedecke: I think before I was here there had been demonstrations for and against the Viet Nam War. I got here just sort of at the end of that time. But I missed those. The great emergency that I remember coming up was the volcanic eruption.

Smith: Give us that year.

Goedecke: Gee, I don't remember what year it was. Fifteen years ago I think it must have been.

Smith: 1980.

Goedecke: 1980, yes.

Smith: 80. And what did that cause on campus?

Goedecke: Well, they had to stop classes. What I remember, some students stopped me; he was supposed to give his Senior Recital at the Music Department on that Sunday. The Sunday was the day after the eruption and it was still a disastrous situation, so somehow he wanted the music going and he was hoping, and he went to the Hertz Hall, and there wasn't a single person there, but he played anyway. And he had his recital to say he did it.. .to an empty hall. And then he went outside and saw some bird hopping around trying to find something to eat, and he felt great identification with a poor sparrow, or something. So that was an emergency, only I think it was all handled. We just waited for the dust to settle, and then went back to class and tried to keep the dust off, but as far as I know that's the only serious emergency. L and L, Ice stopped one cold winter vacation, some ice.

Smith: Yes, the pipes froze, and many professors' offices were inundated.

Goedecke: Yes. That was a bad winter.

Smith: What about any awards that you have received from either this University or your Department?

Goedecke: Well, I was made President of the Northwest Philosophy Association. Again that was years ago.

Smith: That still qualifies.

Goedecke: Yes. I think that's the only award I got.

Smith: Then reflect, if you will, on what you feel your contributions to, first of all your Department, and then, perhaps, to the University at large.

Goedecke: Well, I don't feel, what are you going to say, exaggeratedly proud about this, I tried to help keep intellectual life going on at the University, and tried to encourage other faculty, who were maintaining a life, like the people on the Symposium Committee, I was for such an intellectual life, and I always tried to do that. I lectured. I gave public lectures at times, and I don't know how to say this formally, but informally, there are students who are alive. They're somehow intellectually alive to things and I tried to encourage those students, and live with the other students whose interests were in other directions.

Smith: Well that is, after all, the idea of a University, so...

Goedecke: Yes, is to keep intellectual life, to keep ideas real, and active. And I tried to do that.

Smith: What about new classes that you developed, or curriculum development in your Department? Were you involved in that?

Goedecke: There was a time very early. They were doing cross-departmental classes, where professors from various Departments, Psychology or Anthropology would teach together. I was involved in that, and then I was involved in inter-departmental courses given by History. There was one on Ancient Egypt that somehow I had to lecture on. The Philosophy of Religion of Egypt. And then the Anthropology Department gave some courses on Indians, and there would be the Anthropologists, the Chairman of the Department at that time, whose name I've forgotten, an Indian, and myself. And we would study the Hopi, or the Navaho, and in a cross-departmental way. I did more of that than developing courses. I developed a course called The Meaning of Life for the Philosophy Department. But I must say that was partly just in response to getting students to be introduced to Philosophy, who did reject the normal, formal philosophical approach, and at the beginning that was very significant. I had people then who were interesting; I had the Head of the R.O.T.C., who'd been a prisoner of war, one of those prisoners of war in Hanoi. He'd been in that infamous camp, and he came and talked to us about trying to talk by knocking on the wall to the prisoner in the next solitary confinement. That was very good. That I must say. It ran out of steam, but in the beginning it was a very good course.

Smith: How long did it last? Did it go on for several years?

Goedecke: Oh, yes, it did. But somehow, at the beginning there were interesting novels, and then there were interesting local people who we could get to talk about very unusual experiences in life, but then somehow that went down, or my morale disintegrated, or something.

Smith: Died a natural death.

Goedecke: Yes. I think it did. Yes, it was not a permanent fixture. Now I teach in the Douglas Honor's Program, which try and teach the Great Books of the world. It used to be the Western World, now it's the whole world, and that's very high level with very high level students. I must say I find that very enjoyable.

Smith: Do you feel that, including, as you just said, the whole world, has diluted that program at all, or has it enriched it?

Goedecke: I feel very old. I feel if medicine hadn't worked, I'd be dead at the present time. I became an enthusiast for the Western Rational Tradition. That seems to be under attack now. And so we're reading,

we're reading books of the Far East which can be interesting, but which I find philosophically somewhat doubtful, although we're open to them. I don't know, if they keep expanding, we'll be studying Indian myths, which I've already spent (?). They haven't done that, but we're reading books of the Far East, but not of the Yakimas, or the Kwakiutle or Tlingits, or so on.

Smith: So do you think that the, are the courses in Western Civilization dead, those courses that are strictly Western civilizations?

Goedecke: Yes, they seem to have been revised by Historians who are very sensitive to current, currents of fashion, so that now it seems to be all world civilization, and they study histories of African Nations. (?) of Indian ... To me the Far East is a mystery beyond mysteries. I do not know what the basis is for Hinduism. Introspectively, I can, Introspectively I can sympathize with them. I can read about them. But that's the mysterious East. How Java got to be Muslim, I don't understand that, but it is.

Smith: We didn't really go into other courses that you taught after your big intro courses. Now you've talked about your Meaning of Life Course, that you developed. Were there others that were particularly enriching?

Goedecke: Well, the History of Philosophy Course which, again, concentrated on Western Rational Tradition, that was interesting. And I taught that, both Greek Philosophy and Modern Philosophy. And then I must say, I must have taught other courses in... I taught one on Spinoza. I taught one in language, various ones in language, but nothing of permanent type.

Smith: Well, let's move on then. Out of the class room into committees. You have mentioned one committee that you had served on. What other campus committees?

Goedecke: I think I served on the return to campus of people who had been dropped. What was the method by which they could apply for re-admission. I served on that for about a year. Then I served on the Campus Budget Committee, which I thought might be very important, but it turned out, we didn't seem to have much access to details of the budget. So, that was largely a formality, empty formality. I don't recall serving on other committees.

Smith: And are not too unhappy that you didn't?

Goedecke: If I thought that we were not making any significant progress, I was not unhappy, that it'd be over. But I think I served on a committee as to whether we should have the failing grade. Or whether we should abolish it, and just pass everybody. We decided to stay with the failing grade, but that lasted for about a year. We had endless disputes with students.

Smith: And what's your personal philosophy on that?

Goedecke: Oh, I thought we should keep the "F" going, because when, I think, some students want to fail, they should be allowed to fail. We failed the man who is now, he plays Coach, on the television series.

Smith: I have forgotten that actor's name.

Goedecke: Yes, I have forgotten it, too.

Smith: In his Bio, Central does, in fact he's very proud that he flunked out of Central.

Goedecke: If we hadn't been able to flunk him, he would have been a miserable failure.

Smith: In recent times there has been some conflict about some of the courses that are offered on a University campus. Some people feeling that they are not intellectual enough. Do you have any thoughts on that? And remedial courses, of course, come in here.

Goedecke: Oh, I'm all for the remedial courses. They seem to be necessary. I'm sorry, but I just see the current value system with despair. When I started we were still in the midst of a conflict with communism, and it seemed we should examine our philosophic roots to know where we stood. But now that that's over, we seem to be in materialism in which everybody's just out to see that I get mine and I take care of mine. Which is certainly realistic, but the main emphasis of that (?), there are a lot of courses in technical subjects which I'm saying I would recommend to my own children, as opposed to a course of Nineteenth Century English Literature. While in the old days I would have said if you're in a college, you should be studying the liberal arts, but that's now subordinate to practical courses.

Smith: So it doesn't bother you that a University has some technical courses and some remedial courses. That does not bother you as an intellectual person?

Goedecke: Well, it bothers me, but it bothers me so much because it's so overwhelmed. It's the course of history. That's where we're going now, so you can't try and stop the tides, I don't think. I demure, but then, in a very quiet way.

Smith: So you're a pragmatist, and you're going to go with the flow?

Goedecke: Well, I still teach these courses (?) and I enjoy doing it, and I'm happy there's still some liberal arts courses left, that we do teach metaphysics, and logic of philosophy.

Smith: Did you when you retired, go on phased retirement at all?

Goedecke: I did for a while, but I was very sick, so I quit that. I'm sorry that I did. I liked it. That was a trauma. I had the flu all the time.

Smith: How much did you teach? One class a quarter, or...?

Goedecke: Yes.

Smith: And you found that that was enough stimulation, that it kept you interested?

Goedecke: I don't know, somehow, either I was tense, or I was sick at the time, I've had several operations since that time. I think I was just too sick to go on, even on a phased retirement which I think is very good. So, informally I'm on phased retirement now. I still teach during the week.

Smith: One full course, each quarter?

Goedecke: No.

Smith: Or is it just at your pleasure?

Goedecke: These are discussion sessions, and I do two of them, so I have to read two different books for the week, and that's enough to keep some life going.

Smith: What have we not covered that you want to be sure to get on the record about your life here at Central?

Goedecke: Well, I suppose I could say that when I was first here I was overwhelmed with the non-curricular leisure life. You hike in the country, and ride horses, and climb mountains. And so I did a great deal of mountain climbing. I hunted deer. People asked me to fish, I could not get interested in fly-fishing, but a great many people fly-fish.

Smith: Indeed they do. What about family that have attended Central? Have you had children that have attended Central here? Give us a little run down on that.

Goedecke: I think my ex-wife has a Master's Degree in English from Central, and taught here for a while. And then my son Richard got a degree in English at Central. And Anne got two degrees in Psychology, a B.A. and a M.A. in Psychology. Allison got a B.A. in Political Science and after that was offered by the University, that she could go to N.Y.U. Law School; she didn't go; she went to Yale. But she did very well. And then Tracy got her degree here. I think in Education. And then Stephanie got a degree in Physics out of here. And Tricia got a degree in English as a second language. She just got her Master's Degree last summer.

Smith: Well, you individually have supplied Central with a lot of students.

Goedecke: Practically all of my children have come to Central.

Smith: Not only come, but have got degrees.

Goedecke: Got degrees, yes, and some advanced degrees.

Smith: That's amazing.

Goedecke: Yes, it is. It just quietly happened.

Smith: We need a special medal for you for keeping the University going.

Goedecke: Anne went later than Allison, who was younger, and was talking to Ray Smith at one point about what a wonderful course he had. And Ray said, "You're a good student, and I had a good student years ago. Her name was Allison." Oh, that's my sister. So he didn't know it was different names. but, yes, they came here and got degrees and apparently did pretty well. Central did a great deal for me in terms of educating the children.

Smith: Anything else that we may have missed?

Goedecke: No, I think if you got that, that was it.

Smith: Well then, before we close I really would like you to kind of give us a little summary in one of either two areas, or both if you like. Either your philosophy of teaching, or your just general attitude about your life at Central. Speak to either one of those, or both.

Goedecke: Well, I must, again to be honest, I think, as I reach old age I'm much more modest in my goals. When I was younger I was arrogant and brash, and I think, probably did some impulsive things which were, I wouldn't have done at the present time, but in general, teaching is an attempt to get students interested in what you're studying right now, plus get interested in their own minds and the ideas that are around. If they can then carry this on the rest of their lives, I feel that the job of the teachers has been done. I tried to do that, but feel I was pretty much a total failure at that task. If I had it to do over I would try harder and try to succeed more.

Smith: Something has just crossed my mind, I have a memory that you were interested in acting, and indeed have done some acting. Is that true? Is my memory correct?

Goedecke: Oh, again, those were sort of wild hobby things. I was in the Stanley Kramer's Movie, The Runner Stumbles, I got a bit part in that, and then somehow I was in a play here called... It was a Helen Jackson play about a haunted house, something like that. I was just terrible. I was in that. My friends told me, "Don't even go to the theater again." And then I got involved in being an extra for Northern Exposure. In several episodes I'm seen walking across, or staring at somebody. At least I got to see what it was like to film a television serial.

Smith: Did you find it's really a long boring process?

Goedecke: Oh, yes. You spend most of your time just waiting. Even Seinfeld spends most of his time just waiting.

Smith: The glamour is a myth.

Goedecke: That's right. The glamour all appears on that three minutes on television, but it's been hours of just sitting, waiting with no knowledge of when you're going to be called, or what you're going to do.

Smith: But that should have been an interesting hobby to take you away from all this intellectualizing that you would be doing in your setting in the Department.

Goedecke: Yes

Smith: That's great. Thank you, very, very much for taking time to be here. We appreciate it a whole bunch. And thanks for the interview.

Goedecke: OK. Well, thank you Helen, Bonnie. It's good to see you.