

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEWS WITH PRESIDENT BETTY LENTZ SIEGEL

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Betty Lentz Siegel

Interview #1

Monday, 14 December 1992

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
KSU Oral History Series, No. 25  
Interview #1 with President Betty Lentz Siegel  
Conducted by Thomas A. Scott  
Edited by Thomas A. Scott  
Monday, 14 December 1992  
Location: President's Office

TS: Dr. Siegel, I know that you were born in Cumberland, Kentucky in 1931. I wonder if you would begin by talking about your mother and father and your sister, as well as the environment you experienced in Kentucky.

BS: Cumberland is a very little town. It's about 3,000 people. It runs into another little town called Benham. As you get higher up the mountain it runs into another little town named Lynch. Each one of those little towns served a particular purpose. Cumberland was the little town where trade took place. Benham was a company town that belonged to one union, and then Lynch was another town that belonged to another union.

TS: To the union?

BS: Yes, those were two coal mining towns. Cumberland was not a coal mining town, but it was a little village to which the miners came. Benham and Lynch were about three miles apart, each one of them, going over the mountain to Virginia. Those two little company towns had company housing, and they had company stores. If the coal miners had any monies to spend, they would come down to Cumberland where they could go to a department store or a grocery or whatever. I grew up in that little town in the Depression. My mother and father were very young. My mother and father married after they graduated from high school. My mother was seventeen, and my father was nineteen. It was an interesting time for them to be starting off by themselves. My father did go to work in the coal mines. His father was a mining engineer who had been killed in the mines. My favorite uncle, Uncle Cecil, had been killed in the mines in exactly the same way as his father had been killed.

TS: Did it cave in?

BS: It was a cave-in, and it was on the last day that he was going to work in the mines. That was a heavy load for my grandmother, as you can imagine, to see the same accident. Slate fell on both of them at different times in her life. Cumberland was a neat little town even though it was quite small. My family had settled that town. We were the ones who literally began that town.

TS: About what time was that?

BS: My family goes all the way back to the 1700s. They were Scotch. They moved into that whole area around there. Their name was Hogg, and the Hoggs and the Lewises and the Creeches and the Huffs are all names you'll find on tombstones dating back to the 1700s there. All those are my people. Whenever I go to the family cemetery I'm struck by how long and committed that family has been there. My grandmother and my grandfather on my mother's side were very powerful figures in my life, particularly my grandmother. My grandmother was sort of like the community steward. I think she was a saint. Her name was Rose, which she was indeed. She was a community leader, a pillar in the church. She was, I think, the most respected person I've ever seen in my life, universally, by everyone that I knew. She was known as a person who was a shrewd businesswoman. She ran my grandfather's farms. He was incapacitated very early in his life, and she ran everything.

TS: Did he die young or later on?

BS: He died very old as a matter of fact; but he was incapacitated and couldn't work for a long, long time. So my grandmother did everything. Her mother lived right next to her. My great-grandmother was another significant factor in my life. My great-grandmother was known as being one of the most politically astute people in the county in those days, and it was quite an interesting place. My great-grandmother was one of the chairpersons for the Republican party in that part of the state. She was constantly taking the train to go to Frankfort, to the capital. She outlived three husbands. When she died at 76, while she was out raking the yard in November, she was just getting ready to go to Frankfort. She was getting ready to marry again. She was written up in the county newspaper as being a woman who had an unusual political pull. She said that the only thing that she really could be faulted for by people was that she married three of the best-looking men in Harlan County and denied them to the other women.

TS: What was her name?

BS: Her name was Leah Lewis. On the same street—Field Street—that ran straight to the center of town, my mother and father lived; my grandmother lived at the end of that street; my great-grandmother lived beside her and my great-aunt lived beside her.

TS: An extended family.

BS: It really was. My minister lived across the street. The mayor lived across the street. Let's see, the preacher, the mayor, the postmaster, the high school principal. As I walked the street to go up to town, everyone on that street knew where I was going and what I was doing. My music teacher lived on that street. It was fascinating.

TS: You couldn't get away with anything.

BS: I really couldn't. I was the first born on both sides of the family, on both my mother and father's side. They all thought that I should be absolutely, you know, the best. [laughs]

TS: Now how did the Lentz's side of the family. . . ?

BS: My father's family was named Lentz and Cope, and the Copes are a very old family in Benham. My father lived in Benham. My grandmother's first husband was the one that was killed in the mines. She married again. She married a lawman named Doll Trent. He was so good-looking that he was named Doll, but as a lawman he had an interesting life. He had a broken nose from fighting.

TS: He probably had to fight with a name like that.

BS: He had to fight. He was a gentle, loving man, a wonderful grandfather. My grandmother, my father's mother, was a wonderful woman, a mountain woman. She had a third-grade education and simply couldn't read or write; but she was, without a doubt, the most astute businesswoman I have ever seen. She ran a boarding house and made a lot of money when nobody was making money in the Depression. She ran it; she was terrific. She was as much a saint as my other grandmother was. So I had wonderful role models. My great-grandmother died when I was sixteen; so I remember that I had all these wonderful long visions of women. Going back to my great-grandmother, Leah Lewis: I was telling this story just the other day. During the First World War she had a big farm. She peddled her ware from the back of her horse. She would ride six miles a day by horse up to Benham and Lynch selling her produce from the back of her horse. The story is that she made each of her four children, after the war, a gift of \$10,000.00 a piece in cash from her sales.

TS: She must have been politically powerful even before women had the vote.

BS: Oh, yes, she was an extraordinary woman. My great-grandmother and my grandmother took different ways to show leadership. My great-grandmother was not a pillar of the church. She was busy in Frankfort and went there all the time and was a power. Anyone who needed to know anything about the politics of Appalachia contacted my great-grandmother. I saw that. People came from far and wide. My grandfather's brother was a State Supreme Court Judge in Kentucky. He had worked with Roosevelt during the time of the Depression as one of his attorneys. So we had a Washington link, we had a Frankfort link, and we had a local link. Then my grandmother, Rose Hogg, was the community leader. My mother was the consummate businesswoman, but in a different way. My father went through the Depression. He was very determined that he was not going to work in the mines himself for somebody else. He began to work hard; and he came to own the mines, which was a wonderful saga of his own perseverance.

TS: Was he an engineer, too?

BS: No, just out of high school and went to work.

TS: What kind of job did he do?

BS: He was in the coal mines for a while.

TS: I mean, like shoveling coal or working in the office?

BS: Shoveling coal. Everybody went to shovel coal. Nobody could do anything else but that. Then he saved his money, and he bought a little sawmill. Then he bought another sawmill. Then he bought a coal mine. Then he bought another coal mine. He ended up having a lot of coal mines. Not the major mines, but he had union mines and non-union mines. It was a marvelous saga of an amazing growth. None of his colleagues that he went to work in the mines with did anything except work in the mines.

TS: Was Cumberland in Harlan County?

BS: Yes.

TS: I know there were a lot of labor troubles up there in the '30s. Did your family get in the midst of that?

BS: Oh, sure. I can remember as a child hearing my father early in the morning getting up and talking about what was going to happen that day. His mines were dynamited in some of the union wars. Some of his trucks were overturned, and some of his workers were hurt in the union wars. He would be calling the Attorney General in Washington. I remember that very, very clearly. I didn't know what an Attorney General was, but I could hear him trying to get through to Washington. "Can you send us some help? What is happening that we can't get any help?" Then, of course, he had union mines, too. So he had to learn how to negotiate with the unions and then how to run mines without the union. This was a very hard time. The union wars of Kentucky are very vivid in my mind, because Letcher County, which was right over from Harlan County, is known as one of the most violent counties around. Hazard, Kentucky was a very hard place. Harlan County and Hazard, Kentucky in Letcher County were all hotbeds of great wars. As a child, we were aware of those wars. In the little town where I lived I can remember there was at one point machine guns mounted on the roofs of the theater that led up to Lynch and Benham to keep the union people from interfering. I'll show you a map to show you how it worked. This is Field Street, and it goes up to Main Street. Main Street comes around this way, and this [fork] leads to Benham and this leads to Lynch. There was only one way to do it. You can't go any other way except up the road.

TS: You're drawing Field running perpendicular to Main.

BS: The movie theater was [at the fork in the road]. They mounted machine guns to keep the union people from coming down and going up to where the little truck mines were and some of the other things. It was a fascinating time. Letcher County was on over this way [on the map]. What you'd find is great union wars, and children were aware of that.

TS: What directions are we talking about when you say, "Over this way?"

BS: From Cumberland you go up the hill [in an eastern direction to Lynch]. After you get into Lynch, it's only seven miles to the top of the mountain. Then you're in Wise County, Virginia and over to Appalachia. Black Mountain has real significance. It's the highest mountain in Kentucky. It's 4,145 feet up.

TS: My brother taught school one year in Evarts, Kentucky.

BS: Oh, yes, well, you know where Harlan is. The businesses have dried up. There's nothing there. So that's the hard part about it.

TS: It was in the '60s when my brother was there, but 90 percent of his students' parents were unemployed.

BS: Yes, it's sad to see a proud people not having anything to do. In the mountains they used to tell stories of how people would walk over the mountains. It would be about 14 miles. They'd walk over the mountains and work in the mines and then come back. You could find highwaymen up in the mountains in the old days, and they would take people's wages from them and often leave people for dead. So that was a tragic walk. But Cumberland was a marvelous place to grow up, for me, because Benham and Lynch drew immigrants from all over the world. They came to work in the mines, and they were a literal microcosm of what the world at large was. I grew up knowing Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Russians, Romanians, Italians. . . .

TS: And that's really unusual for the South.

BS: It's the most unlikely place of Appalachia, it seems to me. What would be close to it would be West Virginia, but even more so, it was so remote. At one time Lynch had the largest coal tipple in the world. It was one of the largest coal mining communities in the world with a coal camp with all the houses built around it and hospitals and schools. These immigrants came there. Do you know what a coal tipple is?

TS: No, I don't.

BS: A coal tipple is a great long, long shaft in which the coal is sorted. You put the coal in it, and it goes down. What you find is the coal sorting. The longer the tipple, the greater the industry around it. I grew up going up through Benham and Lynch seeing coal slag heaps smoldering, the residue of the coal. I don't remember it being very sunny, because there was an overcastness from the smog. The further you got up into Benham and Lynch the mountains were very close. There was only one road through there. People were on the side of the mountains except for little clearings. The smoke hung deep over the valley. In Cumberland we saw more light than we did up there. But the sound of coal trains moving was interesting. I associate all of that with Kentucky.

TS: Let's talk a little bit about your schooling. You started college at Cumberland College.



BS: Cumberland College is in Williamsburg, and that's quite different from Cumberland, Kentucky. Cumberland College is 100 miles away. It's a very proud, old Baptist college. My great-uncle was president when I went there. Uncle Lloyd was my great-great-uncle, and he had studied with John Dewey and wanted to put into practice a philosophy of John Dewey in a mountain school. The year that I went there he had just retired, but he was still very much involved in the life of the school.

TS: Now Uncle Lloyd was . . . ?

BS: Uncle Lloyd Creech. He had at that time the distinction of being [Cumberland College's] longest tenured president. He was replaced by a man named Dr. Boswell who since has won that wonderful honor of being the longest administrator of all the presidents.

TS: What was Boswell's first name?

BS: James Boswell. He was at my inauguration, if you remember. He is a wonderful man; sort of my inspiration, my mentor. Uncle Lloyd had been president a long, long time; and he was a bachelor. He owned a lot of coal land. Since I was his darling, he enjoyed having me there. He was quite a reclusive kind of man, but brilliant. He was a lawyer, an educator. He would take me out on Saturdays to his mines. He always collected the money every week from his mines. So we would go out every Saturday. He would drive me in his great big old Buick car. It was a 1936 car, and when I went to college it was 1948. So, he had had that car for a long, long time. We would go over rocks and roads and fords. He'd go up to the mines, and he'd get his money.

TS: Will you tell me about Dewey's influence? How did that affect the curriculum and the courses at Cumberland?

BS: One thing that he was able to do was he was able in those days to bring a host of people who were extraordinarily well trained. They would make their life in the mountains. Cumberland College was in a town of seventeen millionaires. You have to get the picture of a little town of 3,000, a little mountain college with the highest endowment of any college in the state at that time. These seventeen millionaires who lived there were all coal barons, and they lived in great huge mansions in Williamsburg, Kentucky. Large for us, not by Atlanta standards, but large for us. Those people gave mightily to the college. He was able to keep enrollment steady and to keep tuition exceedingly low for these mountain people. None of us had to work, unlike Berea [College]. You had to work at Berea. We didn't have to work, but we all got wonderful assistance. The tuition was really quite low. What he wanted to do was provide a quality experience. The professors I had at Cumberland College were the best professors I had in my entire life. None better.

TS: What do you remember about them that was . . . ?

- BS: I remember all of them. There's not a one that I don't remember, indeed.
- TS: What made them better professors, do you think?
- BS: Of course, we were mountain children; and we came with limited experiences, in a way.
- TS: Had you been to a public school?
- BS: All public schools. Those were the only schools that we could go to. But we had come from schools that didn't have very many resources. Each of those professors there was superb; they were so intellectually keen. We called them by their first—Miss Bess, Miss Nell. We never called them doctor. We called them professor. Those are old-fashioned ways of doing it. But each one of them had come to commit themselves to that kind of education. Frankly, I think they caught my uncle's spirit. They wanted to be of service, and they were. Professor Evans, my favorite teacher, was one that I used in my inauguration address. Professor Shields, my English professor: I never had anyone better. Miss Nell was my music teacher, and was absolutely—you've got to get a picture of these very gracious, very articulate and well-informed older professors for mountain children. They were polished and urbane and sophisticated and opened us to worlds that were different from anything we'd known. It was just like a second coming for me. Everything was wonderful. I was invited back to Cumberland College on its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary about four years ago. They picked 100 distinguished alumni, and I was one of those. Isn't that nice? So I came back. I was the one that gave the address at the convocation, which I thought was very flattering, as you can imagine. To do that, I accepted not only my own medal of achievement, but my great-great-uncle's medal of achievement. So I am the recipient of two medals, one for him and for me.
- TS: So I guess you had relatively small classes there and a lot of close contact.
- BS: We had not necessarily small classes. We had 20 and 30 in a class. But it was a wonderful residential kind of environment—a total involvement in the life of the college.
- TS: Where the faculty really devoted their whole lives to the students and to the institution?
- BS: It was ideal. I went from there to Wake Forest, which was a very uptown version in a sophisticated way, but the professors at Cumberland College were outstanding and more memorable.
- TS: They may have been better at Wake Forest at delivering papers at a convention but not necessarily in the classroom?
- BS: I think when you go from a very relatively unsophisticated college to a sophisticated college, and I use that term advisedly, but to find that in the relatively unsophisticated college that the level of instruction is so fine, then that's the way you begin to say, "Hey, that's very exciting that they can do that with limited students." Not limited students but students that were promising but certainly not of the scholastic background of the ones at

Wake Forest. When I went to Wake Forest it is my understanding that—it had been a men’s school and a very proud distinguished record of men—when they opened the doors to women that the women had to be either salutatorians or valedictorians of their classes before they were admitted. When women went there they were always surrounded by other very fine [female] students.

TS: I have a similar story to yours about Cumberland. I just recently interviewed Judson Ward at Emory. He was talking about how his English teacher at Marietta High School was named Cap Evans, and he said Evans could teach Macbeth better than anybody at Emory taught Macbeth. That seems like a similar thing.

BS: Well, Miss Bess, a superb English teacher at Cumberland College, could teach Emerson like no one could teach it. I just think that’s remarkable.

TS: Why did you go to Wake Forest?

BS: I went to Wake Forest because I really wanted to stay in the Baptist tradition. In those days it was rather expected that you stayed in the trajectory in which you had placed yourself. When I went away to Cumberland College I had a scholarship to Stevens College in Missouri, but it seemed so far away. My mother had gone to boarding school at Cumberland College as a young high school student, and my grandmother had gone to boarding school there. So I went to school there. I think—my uncle used to tell me this—I was the 33<sup>rd</sup> in my family to go to Cumberland College. It was a tradition. My sister graduated from Cumberland College.

TS: It must have always been co-ed at Cumberland College.

BS: Yes.

TS: Was it a junior college?

BS: It was a junior college, but now it’s a four-year college with a master’s level.

TS: I ran in a cross-country meet at Cumberland College once away back. I remember it was the hilliest course I think I’ve ever run.

BS: Oh, yes. Wake Forest was such a sophisticated school to me, and it was at the old Wake Forest. It was surrounded by a wonderful brick wall, and it was the epitome of what a very almost Ivy League college would be like. It had trained ministers. It had trained doctors. It had trained lawyers. And the atmosphere was really what I anticipated Ivy League to be like. It was a wonderful school. I have a great dedication to Wake Forest in my life.

TS: By the time that you went to Wake Forest were you already majoring in education?

BS: No, I didn't major in education.

TS: Oh, you majored in history, didn't you?

BS: History and English. I had a double-major. I started off in college to be a pediatrician. I found that that was not for me. I didn't like chemistry. I didn't like it at all. I didn't like Zoology. I didn't like any of the sciences. What I really liked was history and English. At Cumberland College I had wonderful advisors who said, "If you don't like it, why do it?" I said, "I want to go back and be of service to the mountains of Kentucky." "Well, be of service in another way." So I was encouraged to do that. At Cumberland College my uncle had been such a free thinker, you could take what you wanted to take. I took English and history. I had almost 30 hours of English and 30 hours of history before I went to Wake Forest. So when I went to Wake Forest I had to take beginning Spanish at the same time I was taking advanced Spanish. I had to take math. I had not had any math at Cumberland. I had no language and no math. I had never taken a religion class. I had taken history and English. So when I went to Wake Forest I kept adding. As I recall, I had 50 undergraduate hours in history and 50-something undergraduate hours in English. So I just kept on taking what I wanted to take.

TS: How did they determine when you had enough to graduate from Cumberland College? Did you just take so many hours and you'd graduate?

BS: Yes.

TS: Did they teach "learning by doing" type programs at Cumberland?

BS: No, they didn't follow John Dewey to that extent. I think it was in the freedom of the curriculum. I took a seminar from my uncle. He only taught it to three people, and it was on John Dewey. I was interested in the philosophy, and it was heavy into the philosophy. I think that's where the allegiance to John Dewey came in. My uncle used to say that he was the only person, along with one other, who'd ever made an A under John Dewey. It could be hearsay, but I thought it was a good story.

TS: By the time you were at Wake Forest you were majoring in history and English. Did you have plans of what you were going to do with a history and English degree at that time?

BS: I took I think about eighteen hours [of education courses]. I'm not sure what it was. It was a long time ago. But I decided I'd get a teaching certificate. I did take a teaching certificate and student-taught in English and history and liked it very much. After I left Wake Forest I wanted to go and get my master's. I went to [University of North Carolina at] Chapel Hill, which was a sister kind of institution. At Chapel Hill I started off majoring in history and English for the master's. I found that I was intrigued with the psychology of teaching and the philosophy of teaching. So I decided that I would minor in English and history and major in education. I got my master's in nine months which I thought was an unusually short length of time.

- TS: It is—especially since you were changing fields at this point.
- BS: Yes. I was only twenty-one [when I started]; so I had my master's at twenty-two. Then I taught in high school for three years.
- TS: Was Chapel Hill still the liberal place it had been earlier?
- BS: Very liberal, wonderfully liberal. Of course, Wake Forest was very liberal. Wake Forest prided itself on being the most free-thinking of all the Baptist institutions. It's always been known as that. As a consequence, great, great freedom in the way philosophy and religion were taught there. There were no restrictions on professors. They were wonderfully evocative in the classrooms, and provocative. It was very exciting to be in that kind of setting. No restrictions, that I recall.
- TS: So you received your master's before you did any teaching. Then you say you taught in public schools for a few years.
- BS: Three years, then I was invited to come to Lenoir-Rhyne College as a professor. I was the youngest professor.
- TS: Where had you been teaching?
- BS: Kannapolis High School.
- TS: On the basis of that high school experience, Lenoir-Rhyne invited you to come?
- BS: At Lenoir-Rhyne, as I say, I was the youngest professor there. It was very exciting to be a professor at twenty-five.
- TS: I taught for one year right down the road in Morganton. It was called Western Piedmont Community College. I taught there for one year, and then I came here.
- BS: Sure, I know it well. You know that part of the world then.
- TS: Yes, that was Sam Ervin's hometown. I've been through Hickory a number of times.
- BS: Hickory was an interesting town, sort of a mercantile city, furniture city. I loved Lenoir-Rhyne. My father's family had been Lutheran. My mother's family had been Baptist. My great-aunt was a dean of women at Lenoir-Rhyne, although we had never known each other. I don't think she even knew when I was selected to come there.
- TS: What was her name?

BS: Laura Bowden. My father's family were from Mount Pleasant. His father was the mining engineer who had left North Carolina and went to Kentucky to marry and to work in the mines. Lenoir-Rhyne was a wonderful place. I was there three years and then decided I wanted to get my doctorate. So I went to Florida State to get a doctorate. I stayed there two years on leave of absence.

TS: On a leave of absence? That was a good arrangement, although you never went back did you?

BS: Yes, I went back for three years after I got my doctorate.

TS: Okay. Then from there you went to University of Florida, is that right?

BS: No. I went to do a post-doctorate. Three years [at Lenoir-Rhyne]. Then I took two years off to get my degree. I finished it in two years. Then I went back to Lenoir-Rhyne and taught three years. Then I went to Indiana University to do a post-doctorate in clinical child psychology. I stayed there two years.

TS: Now, is that where you met Joel, at Indiana University?

BS: Right. I went there and then from there we went to the University of Florida in 1967.

TS: What were you doing at Indiana University in your post-doctoral work?

BS: I had a wonderful job there. I worked in a research project with perhaps the dean of adolescent psychologists, a great, great model for me. His name is Boyd McCandless. This research project had a lot of money to study the psycho-social development of culturally and economically disadvantaged children. That was in 1964 to 1966, and that was at the time of the great movement toward doing good things for people through intervention. It was a study of intervention and what happens when you really put into operation strategies to help people help themselves. It was a wonderful opportunity for me as a psychologist. Then I studied to do the post-doctorate in clinical child psych. I'd been a developmental psychologist. That's what I got my degree in, one of the areas of my degree at Florida State. I wanted to add the clinical component to the developmental or educational. Then I moved into that, and I also taught graduate programs there. So I was a visiting lecturer at the same time I was doing my post-doctorate—at the same time I was involved in a research grant. I worked in the clinic complex which was a group of all of us, many different specialists—reading specialists, health specialists, psychiatrists, psychologists, all worked together. What a time! Wow!

TS: Were you thinking about southern Appalachia when you were working . . . in terms of disadvantaged?

BS: No. I knew that I would not go back to Kentucky. That was—interesting isn't it? Because I grew up thinking I always would. Yet I belong to a group of people that Harry

Caudill refers to as the out-migrators of Kentucky. To get an education you had to leave, and to leave you never came back. The Kentuckians figure strongly in my life, and I belong to a group of people now called the Kentuckians of Georgia.

TS: I remember reading Harry Caudill's *Night Comes to the Cumberlands*. It's been years and years since I've read that.

BS: We were friends. He used some of us as examples of out-migrators in his writing. Do you know how he died? He was a very strong mountain man and loved the mountains. He was from Whitesburg where my people also had been from. Letcher, Harlan and Whitesburg and those counties are all part of my world. He knew he was dying. He took a chair out looking up to the mountains and shot himself, committed suicide.

TS: Well, I guess it was where he wanted to be. . . . You did your post-doctoral work and then went straight from there to the University of Florida to teach education?

BS: I went to teach, what's called psychological foundations. To teach psychological foundations was the grandest thing in the world. The University of Florida was a dynamic, liberal, hotbed of energy. Extraordinary federal monies were coming in to the University of Florida. It is a prestigious university. Of course, Indiana University was my ideal of all universities: Big Ten, exciting, cosmopolitan, intellectually fervent. At the University of Florida, even though it was a very southern climate, the energy level was tremendous. I loved it so. I was in a very dynamic department. I worked with a group called the Institute for the Development of Human Resources. There was a lot of federal money. We were about important things. Project Head Start. Project Follow Through. They used twelve of us as consultants all over the country in those days.

TS: We skipped real quickly across Florida State and your doctoral work there. What did you think of Florida State?

BS: Oh, Florida State was like Cumberland College revisited. I came under the influence of the grandest professor who was my major professor. I served as his assistant. Dr. [Herman] Frick is one of the most meaningful people in my whole life. We called ourselves Fricksters in honor of him, those of us who were his protégés. He had sixty graduate students. He was in my inauguration, too. He was remarkable. I felt when he presented the hood to me, it was like a laying on of hands. Last year I went back to Florida State to win the Distinguished Alumni Award and speak at breakfast and talk about the influences in my life. I talked about Dr. Frick, who was very important to me. At the end, I got all the way through, doing very well, I thought, trying to get through without a flub. I described to them my graduation, walking across the campus at dusk with all of our robes on and how that Dr. Frick put my hood on. I said it was the laying on of hands, using the biblical . . . . Then that's when I started crying. I thought, oh, that is what Florida State is about. So when I think of Florida State I have nothing but the warmest, warmest feelings. Dr. Frick always said that my program, he thought, was the best integrated of any graduate student's program, because everything that I took and had

happen to me connected. He always took great pride in that. He was a John Deweyite, too, by the way. I learned all that I know of philosophical foundations from Dr. Frick. He was marvelous. His picture is on my desk.

TS: It seems that everywhere you go is the greatest. Is that a frame of mind that you have that you've developed over time or have you always sought out the people who could really teach you something?

BS: That's interesting. I think that every stage is like running a race. Hurdles are perhaps presented to you, which are the developmental milestones that you have to reach; but you're ready for them. You don't do them out of order. They're a part of your gathering momentum. When I went away to Cumberland College I was really ready for a large world. It enhanced my world; and at Cumberland College I felt as if I were intellectually, socially, emotionally stimulated to grow into another level. Then I went away to Wake Forest, and there it was again—another total growth experience. Each one is different. Then to go to Chapel Hill which was considered the epitome of southern universities in those days—I expect it still is—it was just a wonderful academic community. Then to go to Lenoir-Rhyne, a model little residential college again, very Lutheran. Lutherans have a marvelous receptivity to education. They're strong about it. They're serious. Then to go from there as a young “hotshot” professor and then go down and have an exciting experience for a doctorate and to be in the company of a professor who thought that I was a colleague, not just a student: It was wonderful! Then to go from there to Indiana, the great Indiana University, world class, a hospitable place for learning in a global sense. Then to go to the University of Florida with all that vitality. Every place has been so exciting to me.

TS: I know you won an Outstanding Teacher Award at the University of Florida as well.

BS: I came down there in 1967, and then they had 3,500 teachers. To be named the first recipient of the Outstanding Teacher Award at the University of Florida was quite a thing. I had been there two years. You can imagine a bright light of my life was winning that award. It was \$1,000. It's altogether interesting that the award we give [at KSC] is \$1,000. The president feted us and asked us to speak. There were three of us that won it that year out of different disciplines. We were each asked to speak all over the campus about what teaching was. Can you imagine?

TS: Did you have any desire at this point to get into administration or was this something that just happened?

BS: Oh, no, heavens no. I came to the University of Florida as an assistant professor, and I was awed by the expertise that everyone had—3,500 faculty members of all disciplines in one campus, medical, law, engineering, everything. At the end of five years I was named a dean. If you can imagine, that kind of rise is very meteoric.

TS: I was noticing in your bio that you kept getting promoted with remarkable speed from one rank onto the other.



- BS: By the time I had been at Florida six years I had become an assistant professor to a dean, a full professor in that time. So that's pretty good.
- TS: When you were a dean it was continuing education, but it was considered academic?
- BS: It was called the Dean of Academic Affairs for Continuing Education. It was right under the vice president. When the president made that appointment it was a new position created. He said that all of the activities other than in the instructional classroom were to come under that new job: all international programs, anything that was not in the classroom. And over eighteen colleges in the university! So it was a remarkable job. It was mandated that everything would come under that. There was no way that you could do anything in that university unless it came through that division, if it were not in the classroom in the regular instruction. So it was a major job.
- TS: Was it tough leaving teaching directly in the classroom for an administrative post?
- BS: I had never seen myself as an administrator, but why would I? At the time of my appointment there were no women deans and no women department heads at Florida. Not only did I think of myself as a relatively young, developing faculty member; but why would anyone as a woman at that time think of herself as being dean. They had about 100 people, I think, who were nominated for that position. I'd been on a major committee called the View of the Future. I was the faculty appointment to the committee that worked with the deans and the vice presidents and the president. That was rather nice to be appointed to that kind of prestigious committee. I think I was one of the candidates for that reason. When they asked me to be dean, I couldn't imagine why I would be appointed to do that. I went to see the vice president; and I said, "Why do you want me to do this? I am not an administrator. I have no experience, nothing." I had never been a department head, although I'd been chair of many major committees in that space of time in my five years as a faculty member. He said, "Because you love the institution." I thought that was a good answer. He said, "You see things from the big picture." And I thought, "H'mm." He said, "If you'll just take it for a year, we would be forever grateful." I thought, well, okay, that's all I have to do, right? One year. Then, of course, I fell in love with it.
- TS: Did you learn anything in this job that you've applied at Kennesaw in terms of our continuing education program?
- BS: One of the things that I learned in that job was that service is exceedingly critical to an institution. My mentor in those days was the president of the University. His name was E.T. York. He's still one of the great role models in my life. He later became the Chancellor of the State University System of Florida. He was not the president when I was appointed, but he took over, I think, about two years after that. He was my significant role model. He coined an expression that the University of Florida should be FIRST. FIRST, the acronym, meant Focusing Its Resources on Solutions for Tomorrow. From him I began to grow in ways that talked about how the institution is a force for

social change and a force for contributions, outreach. What I learned from that job and from him was that an institution that is cloistered would not be an institution of the future. I give him the credit for being a significant moving force in my life and leading me to see a deeper, more inclusive way of looking at higher education rather than being exclusive. Private colleges at that time were much more exclusive; you know, 18 to 22. He taught me, I suspect that all my background taught me to be receptive to it—to see an institution totally committed to being inclusive, being public, being egalitarian, being interactive. I learned from Dr. York's example. So that was a wonderful experience for me. Then, too, to be an administrator who sees all units of a university, it's powerful. We're talking about a major job. This was an exciting job. Ironically, during that period—I was so new—I was constantly being asked to take on vice presidencies or similar positions. I didn't want to do that at that time. My husband was a faculty member at the University of Florida. We had two little, very small children. I didn't want to leave. But it was interesting that was a trajectory very early that I could have taken a lot of ways had I wanted to move. People saw that as a very important job.

TS: It sounds from the way you describe it that you maybe could not have had a better job on the campus to give you a broader view.

BS: I don't think so. At that time it was the most marvelous job in the world. It was tight monies. Federal monies were being dried up. But I interacted with dentists and lawyers and engineers. It had been almost a dying unit, a little office of continuing education. Then to be given extraordinary status at that institution and the president determined that would be the big thrust of the university! To have that kind of clout from the president's office and to be right in the vice president's suite was very exciting. We moved it from a quite small thing to a major institution. We had at one time 70,000 students that came through Continuing Education, yearly. If you can just imagine how many—that's not an urban setting. So, anyhow, we taught with television. We taught Cuban dentists by teleconference before it was popular.

TS: You must have been among the first then to really get the conception of the nontraditional student as the typical student of the future.

BS: Oh, yes, indeed. Dr. York would ask me and others to accompany him to meetings for land grant institutions. Ironically, at every step of my career administratively, I have either been ready to accept the mantle or did accept the mantle of national leadership [in professional organizations of my peers]. Just before I left Continuing Education, I was asked to be the chair of the council of all the deans [of continuing education]. Then when I left [Western Carolina University a similar thing happened]. I've always been in a trajectory of being there to be president of an association. I've been close to being nationally involved in each of the units that I've been associated with.

TS: Why did you decide to go to Western Carolina after this experience at Florida?

BS: I felt very strongly that I had never been an academic dean. I could have stayed at

Florida and moved into another level. At the same time I had been a dean of Continuing Education, although I had to learn a whole new vocabulary, I had kept my identity as a professor of psychological foundations. My colleagues and I had thirteen grants in invitational education. Bill Purkey and his wife were our dearest friends, and we had developed an alliance for invitational education. I had always kept that identity as an educator as opposed to just being an administrator. This was a time in Florida of great exodus. This was a time of great cutbacks all over the state. Professors who were quite good were getting offers outside that were much better. I succumbed to that. Western Carolina was a small university, but they asked me to come to be the Dean of the School of Education and Psychology, which was the largest school in the university. I had as many faculty members at that school as Kennesaw had as a college [when I came here]. That was very interesting to me. So I thought, “Won’t it be interesting to be a dean of an academic unit—to give, in a sense, more vent to my educational side?” This would be like you becoming a dean of Arts and Sciences. That might be something you might want to do.

TS: It’s not.

BS: Okay, but in a sense it would be taking you into a deeper part of your identity. When I interviewed at Western, I had no intention to go over there, but it was always interesting to go for the interview.

TS: Did they ask you to come or did you apply?

BS: Oh, they asked me to come.

TS: So you hadn’t even thought about it until that time.

BS: No. The president [“Cotton” Robinson] was a good friend of this whole idea of outreach. So I met with him. I told my husband, “I’m not interested in going at all.” I met with this president; and he said, “Come join me. We’re going to move this university into a whole posture of outreach. We’ll cover Western Carolina. We’re going to be a model of innovation.” And it was. So again, another critical juncture in my life. He was remarkable! What a role model! From him I learned—and he did think of me in many ways, I’d like to think, as an equal.. He thought we were very much alike, although we weren’t. He was much more hard-hitting, much more driven. His name was “Cotton” Robinson. He said we thought alike about outreach and promise. He was a big dreamer. I was known as “Cotton” when I was little. We both had cotton hair. As far as I can remember he never said, ever, ever, an angry word to me. He just seemed to appreciate what I did, and I appreciated him. He did a lot of things that were very far-sighted. He alienated a lot of people in the process which I think [resulted from] his vision and his great enthusiasm for things. But we got things done beautifully. He dreamed big. From him I learned vision and learned that a college can be very interactive. The whole college, without a great reputation, can do that. I felt that the five years that I spent there with him as a dean were hard years, because that was the beginning of the decline of

education. Education had to move out. We had to be so innovative, and we went up and down the breadth and depth of North Carolina and Tennessee. We really made great inroads. It was wonderful to have the best people working for me.

TS: That was at the time of the baby boom generation being beyond traditional college age and enrollment declining.

BS: Yes. I thought we were a mini-version of the larger institution; so we worked twice as hard as we might have in another place.

TS: I know from some of your colleagues at Western Carolina that you were already doing a lot of traveling in your job. Had you always done that at the University of Florida?

BS: Exactly. I believe very, very strongly that if you're not heard—and Clark Kerr says it better; he says if you're not heard outside your institution, you're not heard inside. He was just saying that you have to be very interactive on a national scene. I was gone a lot. But I felt that was what put Western Carolina University before the people. If anybody asked me in North Carolina to come and give a talk, I'd do it. All the people in my group did it, too. Oh, what a good group of people to work with.

TS: Well, I think we've finally reached Kennesaw State College. Why don't you talk a little bit about applying for the job at Kennesaw and why you wanted to come here.

BS: It's an interesting story for me. I had never heard of Kennesaw State College. Somebody had recommended me. I don't know whom. I didn't apply. They wrote me a letter and said [that I had been recommended]. This is how I remember it. I hope I haven't embellished it too much. But I didn't know where it was. It sounded interesting. The ad sounded very, very interesting, but I didn't apply. Nancy Dickson, one of my colleagues at Western Carolina University, got back from a trip one weekend and said, "I've just been down to a great place." I said, "Where?" She said, "Marietta, Georgia." I said, "What's in Marietta, Georgia? Where have I heard [of it]?" Oh, that's where a little college is. I was just nominated [for the presidency there]." She said, "Oh, it's a great place." She said they drove out there and looked at the campus and said it was wonderful. I said, "Well, that's interesting." As I recall I looked at the advertisement. That was the last day to send in letters. I called down to Kennesaw and said, "If it is appropriate, may I use this phone call as a yes? I am interested in the job." That was the way it was. So I sent in my papers. Then they invited me down for an interview. I think just on the basis of very casual things I might not have been here. I had been one of the finalists for Valdosta [State College's presidency] earlier. I knew that Georgia was a wonderful system. When I went back and looked at that long, dynamic advertisement (I've forgotten how it was worded, but it said, "Come join us"), the intent that I read between the lines was, this is a college just waiting for greatness. And I didn't know where it was.

TS: I think someone told me recently that you applied at Georgia College [and State

University], too; so you knew a lot about the Georgia system.

BS: I hadn't applied. I'd been nominated again. I didn't apply to any of those. I interviewed at Georgia College, and it was a wonderful school. Valdosta was a wonderful school. But when I think in terms of what might have happened, I think that I was just so lucky, so fortunate to have been asked to come to Kennesaw.

TS: Kennesaw may have had more potential than those two?

BS: Well, I don't know that. They all had their own potential. But it's just, at least from my point of view, the fit of a college that could be so interactive would be so exciting. It could be so egalitarian and could be a model of the nontraditional school. That just excited me tremendously. My background is very rich in residential colleges, you know: Wake Forest, Chapel Hill, Lenoir-Rhyne, Cumberland College. To me it was very exciting to think about [Kennesaw's potential].

TS: You mentioned a little bit what your impression was. Maybe you could expand on it. What did you really think of Kennesaw College, at that time, when you first came here to be interviewed?

BS: At first, it seemed so new, so young. Remember now, I'd been to Cumberland, Wake Forest, Chapel Hill, Florida State, Indiana, Lenoir-Rhyne, the University of Florida, and Western Carolina University. In the meantime I'd taught at the University of Southern Mississippi and the University of North Carolina at Asheville, and I'd studied at the University of Nevada. Well, I'd been in ten or more kinds of college experiences, either as a visiting professor or as a professor or as a student. To see a very new college was a little bit unsettling, because it didn't have any richness of tradition. It was really quite new looking. It looks new. I'd never been to a junior college. I'd never been at that kind of college before. I'd never been to a public, junior college or commuter college or community college. But one of the things that I really enjoyed about the interview was that it was so comprehensive. I was struck by that. It was like being in three doctoral examinations. You all were so armed with questions, and I found it the most stimulating experience in my whole life to go through their interview.

TS: So it was different here than from other colleges?

BS: Oh, yes. I couldn't believe it. I had had many opportunities to deal in that kind of setting. Some I had backed away from. Some I hadn't gotten. Because you don't get everything out of the box. You've got to be the right fit. I was just so stimulated by the questions. I have a tendency to process as I talk. Some people think very cautiously before they talk. I think other people are thinking aloud. I found that a marvelous experience of helping me focus my thoughts and my life and my experiences into some kind of rational way of seeing how it might fit with the college. The questions and the people were so stimulating. To this day I remember that as one of the highlights of my life. It was a good experience.

TS: I remember the faculty part was over in the Humanities Lecture Hall, I think. I'm not sure how many candidates that we actually brought in. It must have been at least five there. A couple of them were presidents at other colleges. I remember the faculty was far more impressed with your comments than with those of the other candidates. I think maybe you thrived in that atmosphere better.

BS: I did. I loved your questions. I really loved the people. I think I was so smitten that I really wanted the job. I had been at other interviews at which I had been half-heartedly interested. I might be interested; I might not. But I remember saying to my husband afterwards, "Oh, this is wonderful. Those people are wonderful." It's people that make the difference. I've always been blessed by liking the people with whom I find myself. I really thought [the interview at Kennesaw] was great. It was marvelous.

TS: When you came here in 1981, one of the things that happened was that you appointed the View of the Future Committee. You already mentioned that you were on a View of the Future Committee earlier at the University of Florida, which I presume gave you the idea.

BS: Well, as a matter of fact, it didn't. It really didn't. It's interesting. I never really put them together in just that way. The View of the Future of Florida was much more caught up with what a research institution does. I found that none of the process was helpful to me at all in what we did here. It was quite different. Let me go back to just one thing, because I think this is kind of a good story that I want to have in the interview. On the day of Princess Di's and Prince Charles' wedding in July (do you remember?), my husband and I were on the beach in our condominium. We'd gotten up very, very early to watch the wedding. After the wedding was over my husband and I walked on the beach. I said, "I guess I didn't get the job." It's interesting, because they hadn't called me. I hadn't heard a word. I was sure that they would have made up their minds before this, so I guessed I'd have to wait to get the letter when we got back home at Cullowhee. We were walking on the beach; and I said, "I don't define myself in terms of this job. I want it, but I don't think it was meant to be. It's okay, but we have such a good life at Western, such a happy place and the jobs are so good. The children are happy. It's okay. It's wonderful." We walked back in and the phone was ringing in our condominium. It was the chancellor of the State University System of Georgia. He said, "Betty, we want you to take the job." I said, yes, immediately. I didn't ask what it paid. I took the job, just like that. So in the space of one hour I'd gone from thinking that my life was absolutely fine and that I didn't define myself in terms of that job. On that day, I remember, that's what happened.

TS: We had our Search Committee here. The Search Committee had to send two or three names down to the Board of Regents, but I don't believe they were supposed to rank them, if I remember. I think everybody on campus knew who we wanted, but still we couldn't say so in writing. I guess the regents had their own committee, and then the chancellor really made the choice. I remember we were all hoping at that time that he'd make the right choice.

BS: I don't know whether he did or not, but I hope he did. I've been very, very happy here. It's been a very hard ten years, but a very rewarding ten years for me.

TS: The View of the Future Committee: What was the inspiration for creating it here?

BS: The first year that I was here I remember talking to a lot of groups and asking them about what they wanted. The interview, because it was so comprehensive, gave me an opportunity to hear a lot of good ideas. I thought, if we're going to grow in this college together, it shouldn't be from the top down. It should be what people really want it to be. We could shape it in this way. I don't know what possessed me to come up with the questions that I did—perhaps in my reading; I really don't know—but I thought the questions that we asked were very good ones. I simply said, "Let's look at what our mission should be." Behind my asking of mission, I thought that you all were very cloistered; but you didn't want to be. It was comfortable. It was good. It had served you well. But maybe you were ready for another level. The questions always prompted me to think that. When you prompted me to think it, my questions back were those that you accepted. I mean, you didn't go and protest. You said, "Well, that's interesting." I said, "There ought to be more interacting with the community." Instead of saying, "That's not our place," I saw people nodding and saying, "Yes, that's what we should do." It seemed that the dialogue we had in the interview was a significant one. I thought, "If we're going to look at our mission, can we use that to help us focus more?" The second question was—and these are locked in my memory—"How can we make the learning process more inviting?" We are a school that had had a lot of [student] failures. Not bad failures, but students were dropping out, because it was a revolving door. Although we always had good students, we also had students, remember those days, with few successful experiences. The third, "Who are the publics?" You were prompting me; and I was prompting you to say, "Our publics are outside." It's not just the little college, "Harvard in the Pines." Y'all were proud of that, but I found that to be limiting. I think you all did, too. I think what you were saying to me was, "Should we be more interactive?" I was saying, "Yes." And you were nodding yes. We began to play off that. The fourth thing was, "How can we make administration more facilitative?" You had lots of wonderful rules in place that served you well in your developing years, but it seemed to me that you all were eager to move away from an authoritative model into a more interactive model. You can be very vulnerable as an administrator to say to people, "I will invite you to be more interactive with your administrators." Many people who are very hierarchical believe that that's a lessening of your power. Others who are more interactive would say, "No, that's a sharing of the power. You get more power, if more people buy into it." [The latter style] had worked for me in administration before, and I felt very comfortable in an interactive way. I think some of my detractors may very well have thought that I was a naive administrator but you remember that I had been in administration for ten years before I came here. So I wasn't exactly just out of school. My role models had been those who had been interactive, and the role models under which you had worked had been more authoritative. Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis was a wonderful charter member of this campus—the charter president, the inaugural president.

But his style was very much hierarchical, which served him very, very well. I think every person should find what serves you well and then provide ways in which others can also flourish in that environment. What I wanted to do was to say, “I am not naive. I invite everyone to participate in this discussion.” If you’ll recall the chronology at the end of the year, no administrators were involved in any of the discussions—remember that?—which I thought was marvelous.

TS: We were all on a million committees.

BS: Exactly. I said, “At the end of this time, you will present it to administrators. Then we will hear what you have to say, and then we will interact.” Frankly, I think Helen [Ridley, the chair of the View of the Future Committee] and all of you on that committee were absolutely brilliant. I thought that was the most brilliant bit of work. Absolutely.

TS: What were some of the things that came out of that report that we implemented? Can you go back and remember?

BS: [It is still] very vivid in my mind. I think that we began to see that the mission of the college would change and that there was some widespread consensus—not totally. Some people would always be detractors in any situation, in any dramatic change. But change had to be dramatic. We had to move very, very quickly. If you’ll remember, the first year I was here, I talked to 161 different civic groups about Kennesaw State College. That’s a lot of speaking. What I found was that people out there thought of us as being like the little college that could. They were waiting for us to be more involved in the community. The mission did begin to change, and it changed with the idea that we would be public and proud of it. We would not be “Harvard in the Pines.” We would be Kennesaw in the Pines. You all [the faculty] may not think so, but I thought it was very dramatic. The second thing was how can we make more personal the learning experience. If you’ve got non-traditional students, how do you help them be successful? There was a moving away from any kind of failure model—although it was not a failure model; I don’t mean to say that. But instead of thinking in terms of not letting success be a part of our package, success became our reason. [Our goal was to] make programs for students to come [and be successful] and not feel that they’re failures.

TS: I think in junior college days we were so intent on making sure the students who went out were well prepared to succeed anywhere else that oftentimes we lost a lot that never went on elsewhere.

BS: But you were right for your time. What I thought Dr. Sturgis did brilliantly was he hired the right faculty. He always had it in his head that he was wanting it to be a superior college. He always knew that. So the minute I came, everybody thought, “Oh, she just wants it to be a regional university.” Yes, it was in my head. It’s always been in my head.

TS: Is that right, to be a regional university?



- BS: Yes, a regional force. I had come out of Florida, and I came from North Carolina. Both of those states have regional universities. A regional university is just what we are right now. Everybody says [I always wanted Kennesaw to be a regional university]. Well, I consider that a compliment. That's just what I wanted. Just like Dr. Sturgis wanted it to be a four-year school.
- TS: I think in the '70s we were so busy finishing up our doctorates or things of that sort that we didn't really have time to look beyond the campus, but by the time that you arrived we all had our doctorates and we were ready.
- BS: You were ready. When I thought about how do we make it more responsive, you all became success-driven. Those were the days when we looked at Writing Across the Curriculum and we looked at CETL (the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning). We looked at our goal as teachers. We looked at what kind of success experiences we could put into place, so that we were beginning to think about the freshman experience. Instead of thinking of turning the freshman away, we'll make him successful. We created CAPS (Counseling, Advisement, and Placement Services), [putting these three activities] together. We started thinking about Leadership Kennesaw. All those things were by design. These are great legs to put success experiences on. Who are the publics that we serve? What kind of centers do we want? That's where I began to put a lot of emphasis on Business. Much to the surprise of everybody, Business just grew. Remember, when I came, you had 12 Business faculty. Now you have 74.
- TS: Did we even have a chair of Private Enterprise?
- BS: No, you just had the beginning of it. The machinery had been placed, but the money for it came that year. That's when we began to look for it. The centers then became very critical for the publics we served. That's when we started talking about having events on campus that call attention to the publics. You see all that was by design from the View of the Future. I said, "How can an administration be more facilitative? We'll have a council." Remember that, a College Council. We would draw from more and more people. Remember that when I came, Tom, we didn't have any department heads. We didn't have any deans.
- TS: Except the Academic Dean.
- BS: Exactly. So what I'm saying was there would be more involvement. From the View of the Future came the idea that we will have schools set up. You'll remember that instead of big divisions, [we set up four schools]. Do you know how much we did in those first three years? It was unbelievable.
- TS: I guess it was '83 that we did the reorganization?
- BS: Exactly. I had to fight for that down at the Board [of Regents]. No new positions. I had

to appoint all the deans and all the department heads from within. Not one outside department head and not one outside dean to get us started in that direction. That was very tough. So to me, when I think in terms of the View of the Future, I think that it was a fantastic clarion call and that it was implemented. If you were to go back and look at the View of the Future—and I do that periodically—I am just amazed at how well y’all did. To see what you all prompted; it was easy for me to sell. I said, “Hey, this came from all over the college. How can we as deans and administrators not be listening to this? How can we not be more facilitative? We have no choice.” Tenure—instead of just opening the door and saying, “I want this one to be tenured” or that one, we had to have a process. We had to put into place a whole tenure and promotion process. We didn’t have it. We didn’t have any written statutes that could help us in those ways.

TS: It sounds to me that we were fortunate in a sense that we, the faculty, wanted to go where you really wanted to go anyway.

BS: Sure, that’s the beautiful thing. In 1985, when we were named to the wonderful book on *Searching for Academic Excellence* (the book is on twenty colleges “on the move,” their leaders, and secrets from America’s best-run colleges), the thing that they hit the most was that the perspective of the president and the perspective of the institution are in sync. I think that we were then in sync. After that, of course, then came the dramatic period of growth. We were preoccupied with how you manage extraordinary growth. At the same time we were new in administration to a new style; we were new in our interactive posture; we were new in our success-driven efforts. All of that meant amazing growth. No buildings or money, and putting all that into place. So, I consider the next three years were extraordinarily difficult years. I feel as if I have been president of three different kinds of colleges. I really do.

TS: In eleven years’ time.

BS: I feel that. I feel very strongly that it’s been like four, four, four. Right now I’m president of a college still evolving. I’m not ever bored with this college, ever. I didn’t have a bored moment at this college. It’s always intriguing to me what else there is to be done. I’m very sensitive to how words describe things. So the first three or four years I talked about how we’re going to grow. You’ve heard this a million times. We’re going to grow in size. We’re going to grow in services. And we’re going to grow in stature. I felt that my job as president was to [deal with] stature. How can people see us? How can we tell the story of Kennesaw at the same time we’re doing all this service and at the same time growing? The next three or four years I talked about we’re going to grow in specialization, business. That was the reorganization. We will grow in sophistication. We will become computer leaders. You can see all that by design. We’ll move into centers. Then we’ll become more selective in what we do. Then you saw that we raised our entrance requirements. We stopped Developmental Studies’ growth. We pushed down the line. So those are the three. The last years have been, it seems to me, moving much more into how things connect and then, finally, I think, into distinction. The last three years have been characterized by state and national visibility, taking the lead. I think it’s kind of an exciting saga, don’t you think?

- TS: It will be interesting to see what the next three or four years bring.
- BS: Right. I'm very excited about the next three or four years. I want to start again the View of the Future in a different way. How do we organize now for the next period of our growth? I think it's always interesting to think about the stages. We're in a developmental stage, and I liken this to what Erickson refers to as the "Eight Stages of Life." We've been at the stage of identity, and we've been in the adolescence of our college. Now we go into our young maturity of the college. We're 30 years old.
- TS: It's interesting that just a few years back everybody was so sensitive when somebody in the public called us a junior college. I haven't heard that concern in some time. It's just totally gone away.
- BS: You've got to remember, though, we've got about 400 faculty now. About 300 of them have come since I've come. We have very few of you who were here when I came.
- TS: I'm feeling like an old codger, talking about "back in those days."
- BS: To think about that, the new faculty don't know our role as a junior college. They may look at us and say, "Why aren't we like the University of North Carolina, Charlotte?" So that's why I think we have to have story-tellers. We need people to say, "You don't know what it was like. It was a wonderful junior college. We did some wonderful things. We planned well." They need to be told that. It's not just that we emerged as a four year college with some promise. We can't forget those wonderful years. They were great.
- TS: Back to your early years: One of the early decisions was intercollegiate athletics. Would you say a little bit about that? We'd never had intercollegiate athletics before you came.
- BS: Well, we used to talk about an expression that was coined by I've forgotten whom, that said that we were a contemporary college for contemporary students in a contemporary setting. Then I began to think, "We've got all these students who are over the traditional age; but, by the way, we also have a number of students who are not over the traditional age." That was at about the same time that I was looking at colleges for my sons. I was struck by how much the quality of life on a campus was important. One of the things that I found that is elusive is how you create a sense of community on a campus that is a commuter campus. I was riding around with [James D.] "Spec" Landrum who was my development officer then, and had a very fine athletic career in his own right. I said, "Ah, Spec, it grieves me sometimes to see all these beautiful fields on the campus; and nobody's ever on them. It's sad to me that I don't see people out playing sports and, you know, really involved. What I really need is an athletic program." He said, "I certainly agree." I said, "I need somebody like you; no, I need you." That was exactly the way it happened. I said, "Build me an athletic program." He said, "Are you serious?" I said, "Yes, I'm really serious." So that's where it began. That was relatively early in my

tenure here, and some of the faculty members just had a fit. They never told me that, but they did.

TS: They didn't tell you?

BS: Well, they told people to tell me. Nobody ever rose up and just criticized me to my face for that. I said, "We ought to have a place where kids can do something different. We can have things that will make people proud here." Spec started a lot of different things. We tried to see which things would go. Rather than doing all of those sports, then we began to narrow it down and say, "These are the things we can make a difference in — softball, baseball, basketball." We started off with a lot of things. Then we got it back down again. Now we're ready to go back out again. Just in the space of six or seven years here we've gone from nothing to being NAIA champions. We're going to NCAA, by design.

TS: Was there a community desire for us to have athletics?

BS: Yes, there was. People said, "Why do we not have that? We go all the time to other places. Why don't y'all have that?" There was no group exodus up here to tell me to do it, but it's just that people in the community would come. Then of course, we started; and very few people were there; then a little bit more. Somebody said, "Shouldn't we get a little pep rally?" "Yes, we should get a little pep rally." "Should we get cheerleaders?" "Yes, we should get cheerleaders." So then it began to go, and I think it's been wonderful. I'm not the kind of president that follows every basketball game. I should, but I don't have time. I find that very exciting.

TS: What about the student reaction? Did they want it? They had to pay for it.

BS: Sure, I think the students wanted it. Some didn't; of course, some people think that a college experience is just a class, which I think is sad. That's another whole lecture, and I won't go into it. I really believe that it's exceedingly important for colleges of our kind to not fall too much into a way of thinking that teaching a class is all that we're about. I think we're a collegiate experience. I'm enough of a traditionalist to say that a college ought to be a lot of things to a lot of students. If you're simply looking for an accumulation of courses, then you're missing out on college. I think it's community. It takes all things to make a community. Some people may find the academic experience wonderful, but they want athletics. Somebody else may find the academic experience wonderful, but they want clubs. Remember now that we didn't have many clubs to speak of. No honor societies at all. Then we built all that, too. All of this has happened as a consequence of some of the Views of the Future.

TS: You've been involved with the NAIA as a director?

BS: I was on the Executive Committee of the NAIA, which is another interesting thing. People ask, "Why do you have to be gone to NAIA?" I think it gave me an opportunity

to really see the importance of athletics and how you govern athletics. I have a great respect for athletics as a consequence of my association with that. Had we stayed at NAIA and had I stayed on the Executive Committee, I was in the process of moving up to that leadership.

TS: I'm thinking of Georgia Southern, for instance. Does having a football team or a successful basketball team help when you go to the Board of Regents and want, say, university status?

BS: I don't think so. I don't think that's important at all. I think athletics is just another aspect of what you provide at a school. I wouldn't be interested in that for that reason at all. Really, I haven't even thought of that. That's the first time I've been asked that. I can't see that that would make any difference at all. If we had a football team it would be because we think it's important enough to have a student body that has that available to them. That would be the only reason.

TS: We did not have any graduate programs when you came here. Was it a major fight to persuade the Board of Regents? Would you talk a little bit about that?

BS: Yes it really was. I felt that I had the support of the faculty on that one. We were the only four-year college between here and Chattanooga. If we were going to be really an interactive college, a metropolitan college, then we had to have graduate programs. At the time, it was felt that we would not need any graduate programs at all. Georgia State met that need. We made a very strong case for the master's in business and the master's in education. It was with much misgiving from a lot of people. We were able to get that to happen though.

TS: In the 1970s the Board of Regents, Chancellor Simpson, thought we should stay a junior college and feed into Georgia State. So after we became a four-year school did the same attitude prevail?

BS: Same thing, so no graduate programs. We were not given any money for that. We were the young kid on the block and always low funded. Because of our growth we could never catch up. At least they would never give us the money to catch up with what we should have been doing. We've always had to do with less than our population, our growth, has necessitated.

TS: Maybe we could wind up with the graduate programs, the politics of how it came about. I know that when we became a four-year school a lot of people like Joe Mack Wilson and Al [A.L.] Burruss had a lot to do with it. Was it a similar situation where we had a lot of community supporters?

BS: No, it didn't come about that way, Tom. I'm certain that community support was helpful to us in those days, but this became an exercise in really amassing very good data and making the arguments very compelling. The board was unresponsive at first, and I could

understand why they would be. We were new. We had just been building our four-year program. They thought that for us to take on additional responsibilities of a graduate program while we were still building our upper division courses would be difficult for us. Indeed, it was. By the same token, we knew that it was very important for us to have a graduate program. As you can see now, with almost 1,000 graduate students, it's been very exciting for us. So we used our own data in heavy defense. The memos back and forth and constantly saying, "Give us the opportunity to do this. We can take on more even though we do not have a full four-year program in place. We feel the strong need to do this." I think the weight of our own arguments and the collection of data were compelling.

TS: Just as soon as we started offering junior/senior courses, about 1978, students would come in and say, "When are we going to have the graduate level?" I would say, "Probably about the year 2000."

BS: So you see, we've moved on a very fast timetable. It's been to the credit, I think, of all our faculty that they have been equal to the task. I think in terms of developmental milestones in my own life. I think I mentioned that there's a hurdle that you do [at each developmental stage]. You're equal to it, because you're ready to take on that new responsibility. I would put our faculty up against any faculty anywhere as a model, because rather than foot-dragging, they simply were equal to the task of moving on into a new direction. It's an absolutely remarkable saga of being receptive to change. Certainly not batting one thousand, but enough support to say we can do that. It's very critical.

TS: I certainly appreciate your time and your insights.

BS: Don't you think that's exciting to think that we might have said, "Oh, we're not going to do this; we're going to wait?" The impetus for many of these things came from the faculty. First it came from the View of the Future. Then it came from when we reorganized. Then it came from departments wanting to find their way, to find their comparative advantage. Then they found the resources of talent that would help them get a master's or help them get to the next level.

TS: Referring back to my interview with Judson Ward, he was down at Georgia Southern at the time Marvin Pittman got fired during the 1940s. Part of Pittman's problem was that he was changing the institution so rapidly and there was so much resistance. So it is difficult to make rapid change without creating opposition.

BS: Again, I just think it's very important to note that at every step along the line there have been faculty at our college who rose to say, "Is this what we're . . ." They constantly kept asking me, "What is our mission? What are you doing this for?" I kept saying back to them, "Remember the View of the Future. We said that we were going to be an interactive institution. We said that this was part of our script. We want to have people involved in the college council that were more than just faculty." I have said again and again, "Remember this." "Oh, yes, that's right, we do." Then we moved on to the next

level. I think it's been faculty driven more than most colleges. The impetus, it seems to me, has been both from the top and from the faculty. And from the staff and students. I think it's been constantly sorting it through. It may not have gone where I wanted to go or it may not have gone where others wanted to go, but together I think we forged something that could be acceptable to most of us.

TS: One of the unique things we might want to talk about in future interviews is that staff is more involved in decision making at KSC than anywhere I've ever heard of.

BS: I love that because I think faculty and staff and students are that formidable grade of influences in the college. Just to have a grade of one or two is not going to make a very strong grade.

TS: I certainly appreciate it today.

BS: I do, too. You're skilled. You made me talk when I was tired.

Betty Lentz Siegel

Interview #2

Friday, 24 September 1993



Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
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Conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Ann W. Ellis [Pullen]  
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Location: President's Office

TS: We are going to emphasize your career at Kennesaw State College today in the questions that we want to ask. I thought what we'd start with is just a general question: If you would reflect a little bit about what you consider the greatest contributions that you have made at Kennesaw State College. I know there are many things, but two or three that you would put at the top of the list.

BS: I'll probably come back to that many, many times in our discussion, maybe with a different way of looking at it, but that's an interesting question. When I came, I was struck by the strong foundation that you had at the College. It was so solid; you know, good, good faculty members, good community support and great teaching. It had a wonderful reputation but an unknown reputation. It was amazing to me that nobody outside, maybe Cobb County, knew much about it. If I were to describe my life, it would be that I like to see the future. I've always been very future-oriented. "What can you do to shape your life that you are the only architect on this earth of what you can bring about?" And I've always been interested in how institutions are shaped and families are shaped. I think that if I were to look back, I really believed when I came that Kennesaw State College had extraordinary promise of being an exemplary school. I thought if you could take that faculty and this pretty place. . . . I remember coming on the campus for the first time, by myself—I had come previously with other people—and I thought, "What an absolutely lovely place!" Dew was on the ground; it was fall. "Oh," I thought, "what a promising place."

And so I'd like to think that the decade of my administration has been one in which we were equal to a remarkable challenge of becoming very, very contemporary. When I use contemporary, I don't mean it of that particular time but very much reflective of what was the future prototype of a college going to be. We didn't have to sever old ties, but we could be so futuristic. The first year, whether you like it or not, I thought the View of the Future process was brilliant. I think everything that happened about that was brilliant. It was top-down, bottom-up. I got out of the picture; I trusted the faculty, and I trusted that they would come up with what would be interesting. Ironically, they came up with what I would have wanted them to come up with. But I really didn't have input into it. I felt that early document was a powerful way for us to build together, and I asked four questions. I keep coming back to those four questions: First, what is the mission of our college? I was leading you all to say, "Here's a new kind of college." You know those early years—what can we be in this area? How can we serve this area? We just asked the right questions, I think. And the second was, "How can we make

teaching and learning more personal, more inviting?” What we had had was a great dropout problem. We had been good at teaching, but we hadn’t been good at retention. So I thought we needed to build a college that would be one that would not only be good for just the classroom, but outside the classroom as well. The third thing was, “How can you make administration more facilitative?” So, we began to think in terms of how we can be more civically involved in administration dialoguing with faculty. Those were very helpful moments. And the fourth one was, “What are the communities we serve?” I thought that opened us up.

If you’ll remember the process, it came from all of you all dialoguing. No administrators were involved in it at all. At the end you came back and presented to me, then we presented it to the administrators and then we began to work on that. So, it was almost as if a whole college came to work together around a dream. As I look back on those ten years, I don’t think that anybody who came in the last two years understands how exciting those years were and how far we’ve come. For us to move away from a college of 3,500-something students to 12,500 in less than twelve years—a decade—and to get the buildings that we’ve got, to get the programs in place, to triple the faculty, to have not much money. We did it with energy; we did it with creativity; we did it with innovation; we did it with tenacity. We did it against hardships; we kept adding new people, having to re-acquaint them.

I consider it an absolute remarkable case study. We didn’t have time to reflect too much. We made some great starts; we made probably some false starts. I don’t own them. I really don’t think in terms of the false starts because I think that we were in a posture of strategic thinking all the time. We may not have had a strategic plan, but we really had extraordinary thinking going on. Sometimes people don’t give us credit for that strategic thinking. They think of it as just being, “Ah, well, why don’t we have a plan?” Yet many of the things that have happened to us that have just been extraordinary have been as a consequence of thinking it through in a different way and moving quickly on it. Who would have dreamed a decade ago that we would have such an extraordinary master’s program? Who would have dreamed it? I didn’t dream that. You know, I knew that we could be great, but the accolades that we have won. . .

I remember the first accolade we won where we were named in *Searching for Academic Excellence*. Some people said, “Well, why did we get it?” I was appalled at that question. We got it because we deserved it. Seriously, what have we done? If you know higher education and you’re a student of higher education, you know how hard it is to do that kind of thing. So as I look back over it, I would say that we moved to a prototype, okay? Now, other colleges may have done that, but for a college to redefine itself, to re-engineer itself, to rethink its mission as a group. Not totally, certainly; many people hate change. Some people find change too fast, and it was too fast, but we had to capitalize on that. So to me, to move from a very quiet, good, somewhat cloistered college to a place where we took our measure—I love how systems work anyway. Very early I said, “The first several years we grew in size, stature and service.” The View of the Future enabled us to do that. And by the way, it was never easy. We were constantly re-explaining,

constantly cajoling, constantly listening and drawing back when you had to. There have been times when I drew back and said, “Oh, it’s too fast. People are too tired. I have to go at it another way.” The next three levels seem to me to be: (1) Specialization. We decided what we could do best; we [hadn’t been focusing] on that. (2) Selectivity. Remember those years in which we really had to think in terms of maybe defining a group that really couldn’t profit from our college experiences? You know, we made a difficult decision, still maintaining access, but moving into sophistication. Remember, we’ve come from nowhere in technology to being sterling. Nowhere. You can’t do these things in ten years. We don’t have money. So, we did it! It astonishes me that we have been able to do so much. (3) Then, moving with that same connection with the S’s, last year I talked about steeples of distinction.” I’ve been looking for ways in which our college can position itself. That’s why, when I think in terms of prototype, I think of what we’ve done with those seven S’s to get to where we are. Steeples of distinction. This is so important for me as a college president to be able to say: “We can plot what we did, backwards, and we can see that we were right in our discovery of the route.”

And I give our people, all of our people in 1982, a great deal of the credit because it was they who explored tough questions. And look how visionary they were! Think about that! Think about that! They weren’t schooled in colleges. Many of them, their first-time college experience was here. But you all came up with it. To me, all along the way, those first four or five years afterwards—remember the View of the Future? You all said that you wanted a CAPS Center. You said you wanted to do this. You wanted a hearty ten-year process. You wanted to offer graduate school. You wanted to teach in your discipline. You didn’t want to be just a generic teacher. Remember those things? Okay, now, you’ve got to do that. To do that, this is what we’ve got to do. It was a wonderful time because it was a small college. I felt so intimately involved in the life of the college. Then you can almost plot... most college presidents leave after four years. They come in, they’ve got their thing that they want to do, then they move on and they recreate their thing. And you have some college presidents who are nothing but building people. They get buildings in four or five years. Others come in and knock heads, and then they leave and they knock heads. Others come and they are gentle; they walk you through hard times, and then they go to another school and they walk them through hard times. What we have here is an interesting case study. Here’s a college president who’s been here for twelve years. Many of the staff have been here some time, but you’ve got all new faculty. You know, we’ve got two-thirds more new faculty than we ever had. So what you find here is that we, as an administrative team, have had to change as the college changes.

Despite what Bill Kinney has said to the press, I have never sought a job, ever—which is interesting. I didn’t seek this job; I didn’t seek any job. He hasn’t read my mail because he would know how many jobs I have not accepted. One of the things I have found is that it is easy to accept another job. It’s the easiest thing in the world! I mean, I’m saying this for all presidents. If you really want to be president of another college, you can do it. You really can. If you don’t want to, it shows in your interview, or it shows in your reluctance, whatever. But I literally have never wanted to leave one day since I’ve

been here. I can say that and nobody will believe it, but why would I want to leave? What I'm saying to you is I think I have been president of three different kinds of colleges. To me, I have had the most exciting odyssey, I think, as a president anybody could have. I moved away from the small college and then—I think I'm going somewhere with this; let me ramble. I think that what we've done is move into a very comprehensive, exciting college. I've had to change my view of the presidency as a consequence of this dramatically changing college, and so now I'm in this wonderful position. I don't need to go to another college to start off again doing the things that I think I can do. What I would like to do would be to redefine and re-engineer my presidency. I'm very, very philosophical about it.

This is the year I think you would say—I would hope that you all would say—that we have been very successful in the community. We have built a kind of view of Kennesaw; that is, we have become a player. It's hard. All of these meetings that you go to as president are very, very hard. Fighting for a place in the sun. I'm with twenty-seven other presidents every day I go out, and so I've moved deliberately into the posture of wanting this state, this nation, to know about us. Once we got things in place, then you saw a natural revolution. The president would then move into. . . how do you create a kind of climate in which people think of us as being a hotshot, a prototype? I don't mean hotshot as in "hot dogging it." I mean that we are a hot spot, a rising star, that we are burning as bright as we can. So we moved into that.

Now, as I look at us, we are much larger than Florida State when I went to it. We are much larger than Chapel Hill when I went to it. We are much larger than Emory, and yet, of course, we still have miles to go; we're thirty years old. What I'm interested in is, what is the next stage? I'm really in a fantastically regenerative mood. I mentioned to the faculty the other day, I'm bloodied but not bowed [by the controversy that followed the decision to let powerful Congressman Newt Gingrich teach his Renewing American Civilization course in Fall Quarter, 1993]. I'm really not. Someone was asking me the other day, have I lost sleep? No, I really have not. Now, I've been working long days, long hours and all that, but I really haven't lost sleep about this. It kills me that we have been perceived in the press in a negative way. Can you imagine what it does for us as a college?

TS: Sure.

BS: I just think that we have weathered this very well, but that is not contributing to my reflection. I want to say that. That is not contributing to it. It has very little to do with my reflection. Once I made the decision that it was academic affairs, an academic issue, then I could live with it. Regardless, once you're on that trajectory, you live with the decision if you're defending what is academic freedom. Now, if we were to find out that there was something untoward about it, improper, then that's another question.

TS: Is it your feeling that there was nothing improper about it?

BS: I think there was a gray area, but I think the GOPAC (GOP Action Committee)

involvement in developing names looked gray. As I can see, there is no involvement in the curriculum. They have not influenced Newt Gingrich in what he has to say, okay? And that's what I'm concerned about. If there's influence on the course, then that becomes something else. Some donors for the project. . . I would rather that GOPAC had never been involved, wouldn't you?

TS: Sure. Do you have a sense that he used the college?

BS: I don't know. I think certainly the fact that he wanted to have a college platform is smart.

TS: Sure.

BS: But, then again—I think I can speak for Tim [Mescon]—I think Tim thought that it would be an opportunity for us to use the technology and the course in such an innovative way that we would move away from the old traditional business school model into one that is foresighted. Frankly, I think the idea is a great idea, to down lay all that. But back to my point about the rejuvenation. Now what I'm interested in is, what is the heart of the college? The heart. So those focus sessions that I asked for are to try to help me to determine what is the heart of the college and how we can see beyond what are the issues. It was I who insisted that I retreat this year, and it still didn't get at what I wanted, which would be rest, relaxation, renewal and recommitment. I still believe that that's very important. That goes beyond issues. Last year I pushed for issues, issue resolution. I got weary as a president by not having clear information on what were the issues, and one of the issues was workload. I ask again and again, "What is it?" so that we can resolve it—not to be punitive. Let me know, "What is it?" Is it real, and if it is real, then I can help you. The minute I began to see what was real and what was not, I moved.

Presidents don't control everything, but you say, "Hey, we're going to do something about this." And you try to work it through. So, the rejuvenation part of this for me is that I think you have, as in life. . . colleges are like life in that they reach stages. I believe in stage theory. I'm a psychologist; I teach stage theory, and that is that you must constantly be monitoring what is happening in the stage. What are the outside forces? What are the inside forces; how you shape your life? I do believe in being the architect. You have very little control over some things, but what we do have control over is determined by our attitude, our values and how you constantly reaffirm those. Check them out; see if they're right or not! So what I'm saying is, are we right? I am convinced that this college is really in a great place. I really do. I love it!

What I see is, we are poised for another level of greatness, you know? Another great level. In your own [History] department. . . I really believe in History that if we can just find the handle, I want a center in your school. I want it for you all. I'm an historian, for heaven's sake. I'm an historian, not of your quality, but my major is history; my [other] major's English. I don't come back to my disciplines all the time, but I keep saying, "Oh, history, a dynamic time. What could we be doing that would make us absolutely unique, that could make us right there, that fills a void in this state?" If it's southern history, if it's—whatever it is—southern women, southern transitional period. Is it the combination

of literature and history? You know, whatever it is, you all are going to find it in this decade. I guarantee it.

AE: I think there are a lot of possibilities for this school.

BS: Oh, you've got two new people that I thought were interesting—that you brought in, that shared your vision. You could almost plot it. You build on a real good base, and then you move to the next level. And see, we don't have a bad base. That was the beauty of Kennesaw; that's what the beauty of [Horace W.] Sturgis was. He just dealt so well by bringing you all. You all were here. You know that; you all were great! Then you move to the next level; you build on that base, and you move to the next level. I think you all as a history department look. . . boy, you could go in so many different directions.

TS: Where on the life cycle do you think the college is at this time? Are we teenagers; are we young adults?

BS: I used Erikson's Eight Stages all the time in my own teaching. Let's see. . . five, six, seven, eight. Okay. And the first stage is trust. You all know this, I guess; I'm sorry to bore you if you do. There's trust versus mistrust, and the next stage is autonomy. The next stage is initiative; then industry, identity and intimacy. The next stage is generativity, and the last stage is integrity. Now, this is a wonderful way to describe the eight stages of life. Trust is. . . if you don't build on trust, the opposite is mistrust. Each of these has an opposite. The opposite of autonomy is guilt, I think. I always confuse these, and I'm sorry, but shame and guilt occur as a response of the autonomy in the initiating stage. It's not autonomy and lack of autonomy. . . it's not initiative and lack of initiative; it's what it does to you as a psyche. The personality's affected. Industry is—let's see, oh, whatever. Goodness. I'm trying to think what is the opposite of that? Shame, guilt, whatever. Identity is isolation; and generativity, the opposite is self-absorption. The opposite of integrity is despair. And so it is.

AE: I had forgotten the opposites of those.

BS: I had, too, but I'm still working on industry. Lack of industry, let's say. If you get up to here, this is zero—birth to about eighteen months. This is eighteen months to about four; this is four to six; this is six to nine; twelve; and on up. Identity is the beginning of adolescence. Now, what I think we've been steadily moving toward is to the stage of identity. The opposite of identity is ego diffusion. You try everything. In my mind, we have been accused of being ego-diffused, but we are not. I think that if you trust people who are students of colleges, then you find that this has a method. All that we are doing has a method in its madness. You don't build a new school, a public administration, lightly. You build it because you see where it fits, the connection. I believe that we have not been ego-diffused. I think that we are in this stage of identity.

Now the interesting thing is, if you ever get off of this pattern, if you get over here too busy with too much going. . . you cannot get from there to there. This is a very critical point; you have to go all the way back and build trust again. What I am saying to us now

as a college, if I use this form, is that we must go back in this period of identity. Do we trust the process? Do we trust where we are? Do we trust what we are doing? Do we trust the people in Georgia? Do we trust the place? Do we trust the community? Then we affirm that, and then we come back up with great autonomy again after we have this year of examination. We become even more initiated, even more industrious, more identified, and then we move into the next stage, which is intimacy—at one with all people. To me, I think that we have not yet solidified the new people who've come with the old. We have not solidified the opportunity of change with the old seeing themselves as partners. I'm constantly amazed at how you can progress so rapidly, and you can get so caught up that you forget that you have wonderful people who were there in the beginning that may feel disenfranchised.

TS: Like you say. . .

BS: Am I making sense?

TS: Oh, absolutely. I think that there are a bunch of different directions that we could go from what you've been saying. I think something that really summed up a lot of things was your emphasis on strategic thinking in the college. We wanted to ask some questions about administrative philosophy, and I'm going to let Ann take the lead on asking those.

BS: Okay.

AE: Administrative philosophy and leadership style, which are, I think, rather tied in together.

BS: Yes, they are.

AE: We wanted you to comment some on how you view your leadership style and particularly whether you think your leadership style is different because you're female. That's been an issue that we've talked about before.

BS: I think my leadership style is different for two reasons: First of all, I believe that as a psychologist. . .being a psychologist doesn't make me a better president, but being a president has probably made me a better psychologist! I really believe that because I've learned in the presidency many things that I didn't know as a psychologist. As a psychologist, you really believe that thoughtful, careful reflection—you know, talking it through—will be the answer. I don't believe that anymore. I don't believe that that's the mode I follow in the administration. I'm very much a student. I really am a reader, and I really am a student of our education. I bet I take more notes than anybody in the world. I'm a student. I go to the meetings; I take it all in, I really do. So I think that what I had was, as a psychologist, a predisposition to believe in people problems. Very early in my administration, I said, "Make decisions fast about curriculum. Don't make decisions fast about people." That's quite different than another view. "Ah, that person can be fired; that one can't."

I've constantly labored over what is the way to see this person from where they're coming from. If a faculty member may be perceived as a real jerk by somebody, but if I know that faculty member, I have an opportunity to talk with that faculty member, I have a tendency to say, "That's an interesting person. I wonder why he didn't make it here? What happened?" I'm always looking at that, and I think that's been a part of how you can characterize my administration. I like to listen to people a lot; I like to talk to people. I like to go out to eat with people. Yesterday I had lunch with three faculty members, and I walked away so energized. . . just wonderful. To me that's been the whole heart of the academy: People. Ideas.

Administratively, I think I definitely have a woman's style of management. Now, I will give you a caveat on that. I believe that the woman's side of management is not called that in management; it is called the new theory of management. It is a psychologically intuitive approach to management that has been associated with women. It is not basic to women; it is very much a part of ways women lead because we have been acculturated to do that. When you put down I have a woman's way of leading, it really is as a student of leadership. All over, it talks about how hard it is to move leadership by people. It's easy to manage, to be hierarchical, to be rational, to be talked down. It's hard to be intuitive, to be participatory. So, if that's associated with women, or men, it's considered softer. So rather than saying it's a woman's way of leading, I would just prefer it to be an intuitive way of leading. It's participatory, intentional, interactive and invitational.

AE: I would agree. I would personally rather it not be identified as a woman's style.

BS: It's not a woman's style. I did it deliberately just to show you that I'm a person with the phenomenon of that, but it's not a woman's style. Tom, if there's anything about you that I find very, very appealing, it is that you're sensitive. My husband is an exceedingly sensitive man. I think that's a wonderful quality. My husband knows that I can be hard as nails, okay? But we prefer to be in our family as intuitive and participatory as we can be. Now, we don't often do that, but is that a woman model or not? No. It's a fact that he's an unusually sensitive man, and unusually sensitive men are making very fine leaders today. So it's not a woman's thing, but the fact that I am a woman. . . it has been said that I am leading like a woman. I'm not. I'm leading like an intuitive. I've worked with some really interesting women, and I can tell you that it's not being a woman that makes you operate out of that softer version. Right?

AE: Oh, yes, I would say so.

BS: Some of the toughest people I know—some of the unyielding people I know—have been women leaders. Some of the most remarkable, intuitive, participatory leaders have been men. So, you see, if I had to say it again, I wouldn't have played with that so much with you. So you'll have to clean that up a little bit. Does it make sense to you?

AE: Yes. Certainly.

BS: Can you imagine what people thought when I said, "I'd like to not have any



administrators involved with the View of the Future”? Well, what do you think my fellow administrators thought? “Boy, she’s opening up a can of worms.”

AE: I’m not sure how positive they were, but the faculty was positive.

BS: They weren’t positive, believe you me.

TS: Are you talking about administrators on campus?

BS: On campus. “Are you out of your mind? You’ve opened up a can of worms. Isn’t this just like a woman.” See, I wasn’t really operating as a woman; I was operating as a psychologist, as a person who’s comfortable with that. I mean, I was a dean ten years before I became a president. People think I just emerged out of the classroom and then became president. I was a dean at a major university—University of Florida—of administration, dean of academic affairs and dean of a college. So I know what it’s like to run a school. And our school was stellar, I thought. So it wasn’t that I came in foolish or naïve. But they really thought, “Oh, you’re asking for it. You’re going to get it.” Then when suggestions came out of the faculty.... “Ah, they don’t know what they’re talking about!” You know? Even today I find that it’s sometimes hard. “Here’s flaky Siegel going off on total quality management. Why are you interested in that? Why are you concerned about what the staff is feeling?” Some people say, “Well, staff, they’re lazy.” Or they say, “Well, they’re not getting the job done; why do we have to be civil to them?” Well, to me, is that because I’m a woman? No, I think you would say that. You would say that.

AE: I think one direction we were leading with the question was that it seems that whatever leadership styles may be common to men and common to women, it is an issue that you are a female president. You’re a female administrator who for many years has had to deal with regents and with our faculty. We were curious to know whether you think there are particular difficulties that have occurred because people perceived you as a female leader with certain characteristics?

BS: People ask me that a lot.

AE: I’m sure.

BS: I don’t know if I am myopic or not. I give a lot of talks on leadership all over the country. I truly have not. . .that really hasn’t bothered me. Maybe it’s because I’m a psychologist. And one thing women have done in groups. . .being the only woman in the group, you allow a lot of discussion to take place. You know, you really do. Women are awfully good at facilitating conversations. We’ve learned to do that, haven’t we? It’s been a role that’s been expected of us, and we’re comfortable with it. I find it pleasant. If I’m in a meeting with all men—and remember, I’m a psychologist, so I’m interested in group processing—and they don’t know that their body language is giving it away. . .I mean, that’s what I teach. They don’t know that they’re taking on certain roles. I had to monitor my own role because I know as a woman I’m smiling a lot and all that stuff.

Anybody who's a good social psychologist begins to understand all those things. But women have been awfully good, as I say, "And now, Tom, what do you think about that?" And "Charlie, what do you think about that?" Men, of their very nature, have not been acculturated to say, "And what do you think about that, Ann? I'd like to hear from Ann." Sensitive men have, but not other kind of men. The first time I was the only woman in a department of thirty-five men. . .see, that was a very interesting phenomenon in my life. I've always been the first or the only one. The first day I went to my meeting, Art Combs, the great Art Combs who became my guru, said, "We need someone to take notes. It will not be Betty." That was in 1967.

AE: Yes.

BS: And, you know, most people. . . "Betty, you've got a pencil, would you. . .?" You know? He said, "It will not be Betty." And the president of the college, when I became a dean, he led me to see myself as a full partner. It was just a marvelous affirmation. To me, when I'm in a meeting—and I'm rambling and I apologize—but when I'm in a meeting, I'm aware of people thinking of that as being feminine. But it is more importantly sensitive, so I would rather say that what I am trying to do is create a kind of climate in which people try to treat people well. I'm constantly amazed at how we don't treat people well.

AE: Along perhaps a similar line, there's been such tremendous growth in the college that there have been numerous changes in administrative structure. . .from the old division structure into departments, and there have been several different academic vice presidents. I wonder if you would comment a little bit on the changes in administration, changes perhaps in how you see academic vice president changes and how you see the role of deans and department chairs.

BS: Back to the earlier point about people referring to women's management as being soft. Would you all like to know how many people I have changed or replaced since I've been here?

TS: How many?

BS: Just think about central administration. How many vice presidents of academic affairs have we had in ten years?

TS: I guess really the first was [James W.] Kolka, and the second was Ed [Edwin A.] Rugg.

BS: Well, we had Gene Huck.

TS: I had forgotten that he had the title of vice president.

BS: Yes, I made him the vice president. I have literally let two vice presidents go since I've been here in eleven years. Now, how many vice presidents of student affairs have I let go?

TS: One, I guess.

BS: Two.

TS: I guess I've forgotten one. Carol [A.] Martin when you started.

BS: Toby [Eleanor T.] Hopper.

AE: I'd forgotten Toby Hopper.

TS: That's right.

BS: Right. Okay. Now, there have been some dean changes.

AE: In Education certainly.

TS: We've changed once in Education.

AE: And in the School of Business. . .

BS: Yes. Both of them went back to the classroom.

TS: Then [George H.] Beggs and Herb [Herbert L.] Davis have stayed.

BS: Yes, two deans have stayed. But what I'm saying is it would be interesting for you all to see other presidents of other colleges. Do you think that's a lot or a little? That's a lot of changes.

TS: Is it?

BS: Yes. That's a lot of changes. So even though I've smiled a lot, people don't even think about that. Did they just walk away from those jobs? I don't think they did. I think what they did was, we looked very carefully at what directions we needed to go to try to see what the right fit was.

TS: Right.

BS: Do you remember the time that [with] Jim Kolka we changed directions. Well, you puzzle over those. You don't make those decisions lightly, but you try to think, "Who is the best person to lead us in this stage where we're going?" So you can make hard decisions. You can smile a lot and still make hard decisions. Those are the decisions of presidents. Those are not the decisions of anybody else. So when you think in terms of building a management team, you want to get the team in place. And you will allow some things to go on in a management team until you are really sure. You look at the consequences. As a president, if I had five vice presidents, and people came to me constantly and said, "One of your vice presidents isn't working out." Well, do you know what he does? And do you see it from this perspective? If you see it from this

perspective and you still think he needs to go, then you know, I can honor that. But it really has to be the presidential decision of who goes and who doesn't from the vice president's point of view. Am I making sense?

AE: Yes, very much.

TS: Yes.

BS: Okay. See, you can't even remember the vice presidents; you can't even remember that. What you're trying to do is surround yourself with people who really can complement your style. I think on my team, I have. It's like that leadership quad; I'm an expressive, but I'm really a driving expressive. Then you've got drivers up here, and you've got analyticals over here, and you've got amiables over here. Okay? I can plot this exceedingly well; any of us can, once you know the data. So the data's clear, and we've done this with our staff. I'm an expressive administrator. I like to talk with people; I like to talk about ideas; I like to see the possibilities. I like to think, "Oh, that might be interesting. Let's look at that." Sometimes my expressiveness is perceived as a route to go, and yet when I'm expressing, I'm thinking as I talk. It's not the result of my thinking. I'm using that as an idea, a sounding board. Roger [E. Hopkins] is probably a driver. He likes to get it done. He doesn't like to mess around. He can't stand talk. He likes to say, "I told you so." The glass is half-full or half-empty. He says, "I'm not quite convinced." He operates very well in that way. When we are working well, he can see where I'm going and help me facilitate it. When we're working not well together, he says, "It won't work." "It will work!" "It won't work!" Spend more time with the staff; you'll see that they need to be heard. You see, Ed [Rugg] is very much an analytical, and so Ed would be the one to whom I'd say, "Ed, listen, you're not seeing it right." See, when I talked with Ed about workload, he wanted to get all this data. You know, that's not what I want. What I really want to know is who is teaching big classes, who is teaching small classes? You see what I'm saying?

TS: Sure.

BS: Well, why did I want that? To punish the faculty? No! What I wanted to do is figure out where are we getting, or not getting, some people who really need to be relieved; that was really the intent. But analyticals love to give you lots of data. Amiables like to see how it will go, how it will be reflected. How you can bring people together in an atmosphere of just kindness and civility. You need all of this, and all of us are all of these. Ed is a driver, an expressive, an amiable, you see. I am an amiable. People think that being an extrovert is easy. People think that being an intuitive is easy. People think that looking at possibilities is easy. People think that being a lonely scholar, being an analytical, is hard. It's so naive to assume that one is easier than the other. It's hard; all of it is hard. So, asking your question about academic affairs or whatever, what I'm interested in is how each one is in place. Do we need another George Beggs? No, there's not another George Beggs; there's not another Ed Rugg. You just find another person at this stage in your development, and it'll be interesting for us to see who this person will be.

AE: Yes, it certainly will.

BS: Am I getting at your question? I may not be.

AE: Yes, yes. That's what we were interested in is how you viewed the changes in your leadership team that occurred over time.

BS: I think as part of the generativity—and I'm being very, very open—that teams need to be constantly looked at. You need to go back and ask “What is working, and what isn't?” You get locked into a way of looking at things. For example, you could almost plot how we would have seen this Newt Gingrich situation; you know, you really could, because I've seen it. What we have to do is, I have to look for new alliances now. I have to think in terms of, “I'm changing.” And I'm one to be reflective. You see, one of the things that I've been told is that we don't have time to be reflective. As a psychologist, I know that if you don't reflect, you will burn out. You will kill yourself. You can't keep on going like rats in a maze; you have to back away. But the driver doesn't think so. The amiable might agree but doesn't know how to do it. And the analytical. . . we don't have a precedent for it, but you have to intuit. I intuit on this campus that we're at another stage, so I'm talking about the heart. But now you say, “Is that what this college needs at this time?” I think it is. *I think it is*, and I'm the only one that's president. And all I can do is say that I see all these diverse things from this position. I'm not thinking as an academic vice president; I'm not thinking as a vice president of business affairs; I'm not thinking as a vice president of student affairs. I'm trying to see it as a president. Now, if the driver were up here as president, what would he be needing to understand? He'd need to have me saying that, wouldn't he? If I'm the right president for this next decade, then it will be because I have read this as well as I can and tried to take what I can do to make this college then look for its next stage. I've given you the rationale. I believe that we've got the stages. We've got the people in place. I think we've done the Seven S's. I think we have to find out what is the next stage, and we can do that in the best combination by being introspective.

AE: You mentioned a while ago that you saw yourself as redefining your leadership a little bit. Do you think there are certain times in the evolution of the college that you have wanted to take a more conscious role in the day-to-day administrative affairs and other times you didn't? And how would you correlate those with your current thinking about redefining leadership?

BS: I'm really most comfortable, most happy and most productive in a visionary stance. But I do love the day-by-day. I do like to ask questions. I love to find how things are going. Sometimes I think in a college as large as ours, you can get so removed that you don't know what's going on day by day. So this year I'm going on advances or retreats. I'm going with Human Relations all day long; I'm going with Student Affairs all day long; I went with you [department chairs] all day long. I'm going to take Development on a group. I want to do something for staff at this college. I believe that staff is not . . . I don't know what it is, but I've got to find a way to do it. I don't know what to do about it. I hear one thing, and then I think, “Hey, why is it that we're not attending to staff

needs enough? Why is it that staff feels that they're second class?" Not all of them do, but most of them do. So I'm really going to try to be pushing that.

TS: Is that the main complaint you hear from staff that they feel they're second-class?

BS: They feel that they aren't treated well. Not all, certainly. Of course not. But enough that you worry.

TS: Not treated well by whom?

BS: By their supervisors. So that's been behind my total quality management. Can we be more supportive of them? Faculty keep asking, "Where are we going from here? Are we going to be a regional university?" See, those arguments don't bother me at all. I don't understand how faculty are concerned about that because whether we're a regional university or not, we must act as if we are a regional institution. That's all that matters to me. I spend an inordinate amount of time with regents and community people talking about this. We've got two meetings of the advisory council next week talking about regional university status. Whether we get it or not, I'm not going to slit my wrists. Everybody says, "Well, this is what Betty wants us to be, a regional university." I want us to be a regional institution. I also want us to be recognized for what we are. So, my position has always been, recognize us for what we are. You don't need to give us money to be a doctoral granting institution. Let us evolve to that level, and then we'll get the money.

AE: How do you react to the proposed plan that was in the paper; you know, to put us under Georgia State? Do you think that's really a realistic possibility?

BS: I don't think it is, and I don't think it'll happen. I think they'll keep the four research institutions separate. They will not be considered regional universities. I don't know that I really like the idea of there being a lead institution. You know, a bureaucratic.... As I mentioned to one of our regents the other day, we're regional, and if we're not acting regionally, monitor it. But if you are acting regionally, we may be doing exactly what we ought to be doing without being a lead institution. We are the four-year college here, and so monitor it. We've got the state divided up with regional institutions already. You don't need to give everybody the title. But maybe you do. To me, the simplest thing to do would be to give us all the titles that are already fully functioning, comprehensive universities. Only six states in the union now have the term "college" for institutions such as ours. Listen to these major states: New Hampshire, Vermont, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Jersey and Colorado. They still use "college." King College. . .

AE: Probably most of those don't have many colleges anyway.

BS: Exactly. Some of them have one or two.

AE: That's very interesting.

- BS: See my point? When people say, “Well, we don’t have a lot of work. . . .” Every other state in the union except those six.
- TS: And the New England states have the model of all the private small colleges.
- BS: Exactly. So why in the world is Georgia acting as if that’s the model we want to have? I don’t understand that.
- AE: On another line, but still having to do with leadership style. . . . Since you have become president, we have made enormous strides in hiring and retaining minorities and women, dealing with salary inequities and all sorts of things. I wondered if you would comment on your role in that process.
- BS: I’ll take *some* credit for the minorities because when I first came, I was struck by the fact that here we were in Atlanta, and we didn’t have any minorities. We didn’t have any minority faculty; we didn’t have any minority students. I remember going to my first commencement—second commencement, I guess—and I turned to Ed, who was my assistant and said, “Where are the African Americans? Where are the black families?” And, you know, it just wasn’t talked about. So I said, “We’ve got to do this. It’s crazy. It’s not appropriate. We’re a public institution.” They said we had only 4 percent in the community. [Ed. Note: African Americans were 4 percent of the total Cobb County population in 1980.] Well, we don’t have 4 percent in our college. So we began to work on that. The minority recruitment was by design, and then we opened it up to the community. Remember, I went out and talked and built an advisory council. I said, “I pledge you that we’re going to do this. I pledge you.” And so we did, and now, of course, we’ve done better. Oh, we’ve lost some; but again, we’ve lost them because we’ve chosen well. People have gone on to great jobs from here. And we’re not through yet.

I remember that about two years ago, I guess, the black faculty met, and they thought that they were not being appreciated. I guess one thing that bothers me about fast growth is that you believe that you’re getting things in place, and you come back and find that somehow there’s slippage. But there’s always slippage in an administration; you have to constantly come back to that. The women were easier because I inherited some terrific women. I didn’t know that some of the women that I had inherited had not seen the climate very user-friendly in another time. Somehow, maybe having a new president and having a president that was a woman gave them an opportunity to know that I was very seriously interested in women’s studies.

If I were a man, I’d be interested in women’s studies because I think that any president who doesn’t read the chilly climate, who doesn’t read what’s happening to women, is a sorry president, indeed. I can name you dozens of presidents that I admire who are very interested in women’s studies. My dear friend, Joel Jones, at Durango in Colorado is very interested in Indian studies. Well, why? The population of the Indians. You have to be. I mean, for us to close our eyes—that would be like Carl Patton down at Georgia State saying, “Well, you know, I wonder if we should do something for blacks?” Well,

he's got a big population of blacks, you know? So you have to be attentive to that. I had great women faculty as well as great men faculty. When we built departments, we got more women department heads, I guess, than any place. What we don't have is women around my president's table. We have had. I can assure you that I've been very comfortable with my team, but we will be looking very carefully because we do need diversity at all levels. Why is that? Because it brings happiness to the mix.

TS: Let me ask some questions about your relationship with faculty, if I could. I'd like to start with the development of the tenure and promotion policy, which I mentioned a little bit earlier. Would you just talk about your role and how we developed this very elaborate system—it seems to me at any rate—that we have now on campus.

BS: It came from the View of the Future. [In the past] decisions were made on tenure, as you'd expect at a small college with no department heads and no schools. But the process was one that was president-driven. I don't know; I wasn't here. But I can imagine that Dr. Sturgis, knowing everybody, would have said to Gene Huck, who was the dean of the school, "Who comes up for tenure this year? Who should we tenure?" They didn't have any department heads, you know, and the division heads were just division coordinators. I'm sure that they had a great deal of input into who got those honors. The View of the Future said, "We want to have input into this. We want to have an opportunity to have our peers look at us and to look at our peers, and we want to have a different criteria. Is it just the fact that I'm teaching my classes, or am I doing something else?" Remember, I said that Bowman asked if he could write a book. We laugh at that because it seemed so naïve. He's not a naïve man, nor am I naïve; but it was, at the time, hard to think about somebody taking the time off to write a book. So, it was driven by the View of the Future. We then put committees in place, and the committees began to study it. The committees studied it; they made recommendations; it was approved by what existing stations we had then. And that's the way it happened.

TS: How do you feel that the system has worked? I guess I'm thinking maybe you sometimes think from your intuitive perspective, "Well, I would have never tenured that person if it had been up to me to start the process."

BS: Sure, of course you can say that. Tenure to me is not a gift. It's not an automatic gift. It's something that you really do earn. I hold it very tightly. I was asked that question Monday when I gave a speech at 7 a.m. to the Vinings Men's Breakfast Club. One man got up and just really with passion said, "Why in the world do you all allow tenure on campus?" I had no idea I was going to get that question. I didn't even think about it. It's a part of my life. But he was just adamant. "You know, everybody has those professors who just go about their lives and they don't have to worry about anything." Of course, I had to give him a little lesson.

To me, what's happened in the tenure process is that, as faculty got very much involved in the criteria, and as the conditions changed at our college, then you're having tenure decisions evolve as the college evolves. In the past, I remember when I was at Lenoir-Rhyne College. I was in the English department and then the Education department.



They didn't let me teach history there; I've got to wonder about that. I was just walking down the hall one day, and the head of my department said, "Oh, by the way, you got tenure yesterday." "Really? No kidding. That's grand." But I hadn't written any papers for it; I hadn't done anything. It was just decided. But if I were to go to Lenoir-Rhyne today—and I'm on their advisory board—I'm sure that they have a very comprehensive tenure process in place.

Is it harder to get tenure now than it was then? You absolutely better believe it. You better believe it because you have a number of people coming up. It's not just whether we like you and you're doing your classes well, but are you doing some of the things that are demanded of you? Where tenure is threatening now, where the changes and rules come, is when people come in under one set of circumstances, and then they [the circumstances] evolve and change. And they're still operating under the way that they came in.

TS: That's been the history of the college, hasn't it?

BS: Sure. And that's hard. Somebody comes in and says, "Well, I thought you'd love this entirely new teaching." Well, we do; but we want you to do more than just meet your classes. So I'm doing all this advisement. We want you to do more than that. That is evolutionary. I think it would be painful if someone couldn't adjust to that, and I would, of course, be unhappy about that. But on the other hand, as the college evolves, no one in today's world can expect that the circumstances of work are going to be the same tomorrow. It's such a fine operation now. I don't know that the academy can be removed from that.

But the important thing is to help people get to the place where they can be. If there's a breakdown in the department in which you haven't told a person how they can grow, if you haven't encouraged them and made it possible for them, then we as administrators must suffer, don't you think? If you've got a new professor and they're on the wrong track, and then we let them get up to tenure and say, "Oh, sorry," then we're remiss. We have to be humane. We have to say, "You know, it's not going well. What can I do to help you? You seem to be at odds with your college." Or, "You don't seem to understand when I ask you to do community service." You say, "How can I help? Do you need a class release? Do you need extra time? Do you need to go back and get your doctorate?" Then you become the facilitative one. If you haven't done that, then it becomes capricious or arbitrary and actually uncivil.

AE: Oh, I strongly agree. I think that's where the three-year review is, in fact, critically important. The faculty member gets a check not just from the department chair, who's been giving checks, but from a lot of other people.

BS: And if you've been cautious, you've been compassionate, and you've tried very hard to get to the place where you've given as good a counsel as you can, then that professor says, "You don't like me. What a capricious decision." "No, I really tried at every step along the way to help you. At this stage, I'm sorry; we're not renewing your

appointment for next year.” Then you’ve done all that you can do. That’s what we want to do. We want to help department heads; just like everybody else, they get very busy. I didn’t realize I hadn’t had my year-long check-up in two years, and I think, “Oh, I’ve been too busy.” My secretary just absolutely could have killed me yesterday. I said, “It can’t be eighteen months; I know it isn’t.” “Oh, yes, it is.” “What?!” You get really busy, but it’s so much more important if you plan very carefully to give them systematic, comprehensive, compassionate reviews. So at the same time you’re increasing expectations, you’re saying, “I think you’re equal to it; let me help you do that.” If we’re remiss and we’re not doing that, then we can do it better.

TS: I want to ask a question that you have probably answered so many times on campus that I’m sure you’re tired of answering it. As we become a regional institution—as we are a regional institution—how do you now define the job of faculty? I mean, what should faculty be doing?

BS: In a regional university, in a university of our size and complexity, I really expect faculty to be supercharged about how they can expand their teaching repertoire. If we’re still teaching the way we taught and we’re not learning new ways to deliver teaching, new ways to advise, then I think we should be confronted in a positive way. This is part of life. You’ve got to grow in your job. I think in a very fast paced college that is exacerbated. You say, “Oh, the rules have changed.” Then it becomes our job as administrators to provide an opportunity for you to grow. So the CETL becomes more important; workshops become more important. We need to send our faculty to more conferences; that becomes important. If teaching is really going to be the critical thing, it’s not teaching as it used to be; it’s a new way of looking at teaching. Not that it’s going to be terribly difficult, but you’ve got to expand your repertoire.

I think much is going to be expected of faculty members. Many of us love to teach the way we’ve taught, but there’s more to that. We need to have more dialogues on teaching. We need to have our departments talking about some interesting ways of teaching. The session they had on tandem teaching was wonderful. That’s the kind of dialogue. We need to have more staff development to have our faculty do it. You all as a department have a hard job because you say, “Do I make them come?” Well, in a business, would you make them come? Think about that.

AE: Yes.

BS: If the president of Coca-Cola says, “Everybody’s going to go to a staff retreat, and we’re all going to learn some new things.” Do you think they’re going to say, “I don’t know. I’ve got papers to grade. How can I?” If John [G.] Medlin [Jr.] at Wachovia Bank calls a meeting of all the people in the bank and says, “We’re going to have somebody come in and speak to us at an annual meeting of Wachovia”—like a faculty retreat—can you imagine that a person who had worked for Wachovia would not come? Why would a faculty member not come? Why would we have a faculty meeting, and faculty wouldn’t come?

AE: I would say exactly what you're saying regarding other pressures as more important. But it depends on how it's presented, I think.

BS: Why would we, as a college, entertain the idea that people would not come to meetings? At a college? They work here; they get a check here. It is professional. I move you to an administrative hat now because I think that, as a faculty member at a college, I would not have dreamed of missing a faculty meeting. I was supposed to be there. You're supposed to be there. And this is everywhere; but that doesn't make it right. I would expect us in fast times and hard times to be more professional. "What is professional?" Can we literally say that we are a faculty member and we don't come to meetings? That we don't grow in our profession? That if we have a faculty retreat you don't come? I think that's going to be a big job for department heads. Like tonight, I'm having the chancellor and all his staff for supper at the Jolley Lodge; it's very important. Do you really believe that I would look happily if Paul [A.] Benson, my vice president of academic affairs, didn't show up to that? It's been on the calendar for a month. He might say, "Well, I just didn't feel like it." What would I think? What would I think if my deans didn't come? What would I think if you didn't come, as a department head, if I were having something like that?

AE: (off guard) I was just going to say, "Am I invited?"

BS: (chuckle) No, but do you know what I'm saying?

AE: Yes, I see what you're saying. I just had a momentary heart attack!

BS: If you were asking for a meeting of all your staff, and they didn't come.... And there are people who don't come. Does tenure enable you to do that? I didn't mean to get on this point, but I'm just saying that we need to look at what is the fully functioning professional thing to do as an academician. It is to want to constantly grow in your field—to constantly learn how you can deliver the system better. You must constantly know that you are a mentor to students—that it's not just what happens to you in class; it's out of class as well. How can you expand your life as a faculty member so that you invite students to see you as the wonderful people that you are? That you encourage them and support them and inspire them? That's what I'm talking about. You are an ambassador for this college everywhere you go. When you go out and you're working in the community, you are an ambassador to this college. If you, as an ambassador, say, "Lord, I wouldn't belong to that college. If I could just get out. . . ." If you say that—do you see what I'm saying? What is the professional role? If everybody in the world is downsizing and we're not, what are we saying? That it's a guarantee? I don't think we can send that message. I think that what we can say is, "Let us all with renewed commitment...." There comes the commitment again—to commit ourselves to what it means to be a really caring, fully functioning professional. That should be our job, and if other colleges don't do it, that's a pity; right? Pity!

AE: I think perhaps sometimes faculty just don't realize how competitive the positions which they hold have been. I mean, out of the one hundred and whatever applicants we got for

their job. . .

BS: Sure!

AE: People want to be at Kennesaw; it's a privilege to be at Kennesaw.

BS: As department heads, you're in a really wonderfully hard job, but how do you create the kind of climate in your department in which you say, "Professionally, it's important for us all to come together. We really need to have this growth time together. Every one of you is important." Just as you and your class. . . you don't want people to miss. Why?

TS: It's important to be there.

BS: Because they contribute. It's not just the fact that you're missing something, but we miss your contribution. I say to my students, "When you're here, it's not just the fact that you're sitting here, but you can make a contribution. You can enlighten us in a way." So, if we ask that in our classes, and we don't ask it of our faculty. . . . What was your question? I've gotten so far afield. I'm so embarrassed.

TS: Well, you've been answering the question, in part. The question specifically involves the regional university concept and how the job description. . .

BS: It will change. We're going to have to grow more; we're going to have to find new ways of interacting with the community. I really believe that. Right now people are always talking about bridges—bridges with business, with community, with schools—and one of the things that you all can do. . . . In History, for example, we need to have dialogues with history teachers all over the state!

AE: Yes!

BS: You've got a great teaching faculty. But again, I think you need a conference on the teaching of history in new and exciting ways. Tandem! My Lord, you could build a state conference around that. People could come and see you: "Oral History: Transition Between Here and. . ." That whole area up the road. Storytelling. What's your connection with storytelling? I just had lunch with the president of Southern California on Sunday. He was here talking to a group of us, and he is doing great new things now in science and literature. He's a scientist and engineer. He's also doing research on the storytelling in the gospels. Again, marvelous things could begin. See, we've got an advantage with our Core [curriculum]; we could do tandem things. . .

AE: Yes, in a lot of ways.

BS: . . . in exciting ways and be known for that. When you heard them talking about it the other day, the benefit was to the faculty.

AE: Yes. Not just to those on the lower level, if I can add a plug, but to those doing some of these very unusual upper level courses, like the physics and history course. There are

some really interesting ideas. . . .

BS: That might be very professional.

TS: Your emphasis has been in teaching and service. What do you mean by “applied research” when you put that into the mix?

BS: By applied research, I mean that people who talk about that in a teaching college you don’t do applied research, I think they’re missing the point. If you’re doing wonderful tandem courses, what is an applied research effort that would flow from that? I’d want to know how you compare those students in that class to other students. I’d like to know what are the faculty rewards that come from that. To me, that’s a research paper. That’s something that could be presented at a history conference. Not only do we describe what we’ve done, but this is the research that we’re doing. When public schools are talking about cooperative learning, we’re preaching it in a college. Most colleges aren’t doing cooperative learning. It’s the big buzz word in education. And so, what we’re saying is, that’s applied research.

AE: That’s right.

BS: Everything that you do, it comes back. You say, “What we’ve found with applied research is that if it’s applied to a larger market, it can be applied to a school.” We ought to be doing some significant research on teaching. Pedagogy at our conferences.

AE: So, from your perspective, as we are in a regional posture, research regarding teaching is as valuable as our old style scholarly research.

BS: Exactly. Both are important. One is pure research. Certainly you would want to research some commander that you saw in the Civil War that you really are intrigued with. That has a place. And we’ve got the SALT students.... The SALT students, I think, was one of the best ideas I ever had. I was just going down the road, thinking how can we give savor to faculty lives. Salt. Salt. You know, a biblical thing. And I played with that. Student Assistance for. . .Leadership and Teaching! It came together. If you’ve got students who can help you, how wonderful it would be! We’d put no limit on that. If you want to use it three-quarters, use it. How exciting that would be to apply. If you’re teaching your class differently, you have an opportunity to use that in a program on history. You can go to national meetings. I taught it this way; now I’m teaching this way. This is what I’m feeling. I’ve deducted this. So you have empirical as well as intuitive feeling about it.

TS: You’ve described the oral history project before as fitting the applied research mold. How do you view the Carpet History Project that we’re in now?

BS: Beautifully applied. That to me is an even larger version of that. Look at the many different faculty involved in it. Everybody’s got a piece of it; everybody’s seeing it from something else. As a president, I see that as wonderful. Shaw Industries, [he’s] been on

our board. We have lots of contacts that will have a far-reaching effect. You could write this up as a wonderful study—how we did it. What are the ramifications of it? How would you replicate it? What have you learned from it? What would you not do again? How would you market it? How would you sell it? How would you keep it going? Do we have that as part of our ongoing process at the college? Yes!

TS: It was interesting, in one of our carpet meetings recently where we had faculty from across campus, we were in effect holding a graduate school seminar. I had never experienced anything like that before on campus, I don't think.

BS: Exactly. Sure. If I were the department head in another department, I would be looking at that and saying, "Hmm. How do they do that?"

AE: That leads to another question. There has been some comment made recently about divisions on campus between certain of us and the School of Business. I personally think it's extremely overstated because we're working with the School of Business on this project and others. But do you have plans for bringing together those faculty members across campus in cooperative dialogue? Is this something you envision, and is it something your office is thinking of? Or is it something that ought to be done?

BS: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, you know this program that Bob [Robert W.] Hill is putting on next week? Have you gotten any notice about that? That came from a discussion with Bob Hill and Jo Allen Bradham. We were talking one day and I said, "Wouldn't it be interesting if we had more discussion across the units? I have a little bit of money. If you all want to do something for the thirtieth anniversary, I will give it to you if it will provoke and prompt discussion." That's how it started. That's exactly how it started. They went back together, and Bob invited two people who are going to be exceedingly different in their points of view. What we hopefully will have will be a dialogue. I would want you all to come. I would want you to reach out and say to some faculty member who will not necessarily think that they ought to come.... You've got two new faculty members. You've got more than two, don't you? And you might want to say, "What a wonderful opportunity for you to see. It's worth your time on Thursday afternoon and Friday morning. Go see your colleagues in action." You know, same thing. You're not a department head, but you could very well say, "Hey, Charlie, I wouldn't miss this!" And he may say, "Well, I've got things to do." "Well, tell me about it. I'm going to spend two days with him."

TS: One thing you created—or somebody created—on campus was the mentor system, where I'm the kind of advisor to our two new faculty members who have come in this year.

BS: Exactly. Sure. But that was an attempt to get new faculty very early interested in this, and it depends on whether you're going to do it or not. I can say, "Do it," but if you don't follow up, then it's lost opportunity. It depends upon your commitment. I was at a meeting this week in Indianapolis—it's been a busy week, as you can tell—at the meeting of a company that I'm on the board of. One man spoke and said that trying is not enough. You know, it's just a simple thing, but you decide to do it. You decided to

come over here today and to do this interview. You decided, and you did it. You can say, “I’ll try to get there,” and that means he won’t get there. They won’t get there. “I’ll try to be there by ten.” He won’t be there at ten; he’ll be there at eleven. But if you say that you’ll be there, and I’m coming to learn.... So I’ve tried to do those things. Remember those times in which we had Howard Gardner on campus; we’ve constantly had outside voices. I think those outside voices have been very helpful to me, in that often they affirmed what we were doing, or they prompted what we might do. That gave us an opportunity to hear outside voices—what’s happening—and bring it back and be a monitor. I sent Richard [F.] Welch [Associate Professor of Communication] out last year, remember? He came back, and although you say, “Well, nothing happens....,” does it or not? Maybe you just get it going. That’s what you’re doing when you lay seeds. So, I want to use Richard again this year and do more dialogues about that. As a department head, I’d want to create a kind of climate in which you had discussions of things that are happening on the national scene.

I talked to a faculty member once—I never will forget—on this campus, and I said, “Surely you’re reading in *The Chronicle [of Higher Education]* what’s happening to colleges and universities. We’re hemorrhaging red ink.” And the faculty member said, “I don’t read that. I read things about my discipline.” And I thought, “No wonder I’m not being heard.” If you don’t know that colleges all over the country are in disarray because of the cutbacks, then you would be very upset if the president said we’re not getting but a 3 percent raise this year. “Hey! What do you read?” Well, they don’t read the same things you read as a department head. They don’t read the same things you read as a community person. So we’ve got to constantly tell them what’s happening from our point of view and seek what they’re feeling. I want to learn more about the disciplines and, before you think I’m crazy, what I really want to do this year—and I’ll try it out with you . . . I’d like to meet with all the departments this year.

AE: Good.

BS: I really want to because I think in direction-setting, it would be very helpful for me to know what you’re doing. Let me tell you some questions I’d like to ask if I were going to get a briefing from you about your department right now. I’d want to know—without me going to get the data—how many majors do you have? How many faculty members do you have? What percentage of them are new? What’s the kind of average teaching evaluation that you get in your department? And this would just be from me to you: How many faculty members do you have now who are on released time this quarter, and what are they doing? What are some interesting new things that you’re doing with that release time? Some of it is just a reward; some of it can be. And then I’d want to know, what have been the highlights of your last year, from your point of view? Do you have any new courses in progress? What can I expect of those courses? This gets to the good part... What are the trends in the discipline that you all are confronting now? I’d like to know that; I’m not an historian anymore, if I ever was. What are the promising directions that you see the department going in, and what are you going to need to get there? To me, that would be interesting to know. I really believe that Ed Rugg can give

me the top of that. But if I were to come to your department, I guarantee I would really learn a lot. I wouldn't want you to think that's wasted time for me because I think it would help me to know where you are at this period of my own understanding.

AE: Well, you did that several years ago, and I think it's an excellent thing to do.

TS: Yes.

BS: Is it a good time to go back and do it?

AE: Yes, yes. I agree strongly.

BS: I was saying to some faculty members after I left the tandem thing the other day, "Please invite me to your class. I really would like to see what you do." And I think I can serve you better as a president if I know what you're doing. Would you be offended if I were to say that I'd like to do that?

AE: No.

TS: No.

BS: Really? You wouldn't feel that I was micro-managing? I'm not. I'm really asking for information.

AE: No, I think it's an excellent idea. As we talked about a while ago, there are periods when more micro-managing is needed than others, and I think this is a very good time to do it.

BS: But like last spring, I said, "If we have a backlog, why are we not getting off the backlog?" And from that I said, "We will do some things in the summer." It worked; but it might not have. But it worked. To me, our having that kind of conversation was very, very helpful.

TS: Backlog of students getting into classes?

BS: Into some classes. And I said, "Well, if it's happening, what can we do to get it ready?" And so what we did is, you remember, we raised the number of students so that you couldn't just teach to five people, so that we would get the backlog. We sent out letters saying the backlog will be filled. You know, we really worked hard at that. You department heads really got in there, and it worked.

AE: Yes. I think it was extremely helpful.

BS: More departments. Okay. That to me might have been perceived as micro-managing, but I didn't know it until I knew it. I can help get some resources for it if I'm more aware.



AE: I personally don't think it's micro-managing if you're stepping in and helping to solve a problem.

BS: I don't think it is either, although some people would think that.

TS: I think faculty would be delighted that we know that you know what we're doing.

BS: I think it would be very helpful for me, and I hope it would be for you all. How did we set that up, if we were going to do that? When's a good time? See, there's a doubt.

AE: Well, the problem is somebody in our department, and probably in others, is teaching almost around the clock. The one time in our department I think nobody would have a class is. . .

BS: Friday at lunch.

AE: Friday afternoon.

BS: Well, why don't we do it on Friday afternoon? You've got a big department.

AE: Yes, we've got thirty people on the roster.

BS: Exactly.

TS: It's remarkable, the change.

BS: Right.

AE: That's including the part-time; there are thirty.

BS: But I'd like to do that this quarter. I'm going to come to the department meeting. Let's see; when do you have one? Monday?

AE: Deans and department heads, yes. Monday.

BS: Just mention that. You're the first person I've talked with about it.

AE: Good. Do it.

BS: These are just notes for me to think about as I'm dictating. I'm always thinking, wouldn't that be a good idea, or wouldn't that be a good idea. Some of them never get going, and others do. I'd like to do that.

AE: Well, I think it's a very good idea. On a few other kinds of questions, I wonder if you would comment a little more on your relationship with the Board of Regents and the Chancellor's Office over your tenure as a president?

BS: In the Florida system and in the North Carolina system, the presidents meet with the

regents; those are the two systems I'm familiar with along with Georgia. In Georgia, we are not allowed to meet with the regents in the session. We don't go to regents meetings. We do not present at regents meetings. The board office presents for us. So that's been interesting in the sense that you don't have that kind of personal entree. On the other hand, I think I've been blessed because we have the community connections that I've tried to make. Joel [H.] Cowan, one of the regents, and I were in the Society of International Business Fellows together. Barry [Phillips] and I were in the Society of International Business Fellows together in the same class, and he's the head of the regents. Joel Cowan and I have been good friends for a thousand years, you know. We worked on the Growth Strategies Commission for the governor, and I have spoken at his school. What I'm saying is that that's interesting—another linkage. James [E.] Brown, a regent from North Georgia, was the president of a company that was owned by the holding company that I'm on the board of, National Service Industries, Inc. So he calls me his boss, jokingly, because I was on his board. So there are three board members that are exceedingly important to us that I know personally. Five of them are people that I have worked with in another connection. Most presidents who have not had that opportunity to work in the community have not been so involved. So, I do have an opportunity—certainly not to influence outcome; they have not been on our campus; but they know the president very well. They may not know other presidents so well, but Kennesaw needs the visibility that we can get. I'm just saying that it enables us to at least be in their consciousness, okay? I do not go to the regents independently of the chancellor; I wouldn't dream of doing that. But if we can be of help.

[When] the chancellor recently indicated that we should offer input about regional university ideas, we have. So with that freedom, I went up to see James Brown and had a long session with him over lunch. I went to see [Dr. W.] Lamar Cousins and had a long session with him. At Kiwanis Tuesday—Joel Cowan and I serve on the Global Center Board—so I talked to Joel Cowan. I said, “Joel, let me tell you what I believe about the regional university.” I was invited to do that so, of course, I could do it. I could say, “Joel, hey buddy, how'd it go?” And Barry, I'm going to call him and talk to him, too. When you're allowed that opportunity, it's due to that personal diplomacy that you've built along time of trying to get the friendship network going. It comes back and helps you, I think.

Betty Lentz Siegel

Interview #3

Wednesday, 27 October 1993

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
KSU Oral History Series, No. 25  
Interview #3 with President Betty Lentz Siegel  
Conducted by Thomas A. Scott and Ann W. Ellis [Pullen]  
Edited by Joshua Aaron Dix  
Wednesday, 27 October 1993  
Location: President's Office

AE: We wanted to know a little bit about some of the national professional organizations that you've been involved in during your presidency and what type of activities you've been engaged in. We know you've played a tremendous leadership role in them so we just wanted to hear a little bit about it.

BS: Well, I have been very, very fortunate and have also learned a lot from my association with national associations. I've always felt—along with Clark Kerr, who's sort of the guru of higher education—that if a president is not heard off campus, then chances are they shouldn't be heard on campus. I've always liked that quote primarily because I'm comfortable with it; I'm comfortable with the concept, but also because I think that in today's world colleges cannot be cloistered, if they ever could have been cloistered, and that presidents must be—and I've used this term often—boundary monitors. You're supposed to go to the boundaries to see what's happening and then bring it back and translate into programs. So I've recently—I'm doing this by preamble—doing a talk and—you heard just a little of it at the department heads meeting. I think I mentioned this. There are some factors that I think are basic to leadership, and I have eight things. I'm writing on that; I'm playing on it. It's not yet a full-formed speech, but I believe that the presidents and CEOs that I have seen that are most accomplished, most admirable, are those that have those eight qualities.

Just for the record, I mentioned that first you must be a *generalist*. You lose your identity, I think, appropriately as a disciplinarian—and I think presidents by the very nature of their job must be broad in their perspective. I'm no longer a child psychologist. I wouldn't presume to teach child psychology again. Although, I think I might be able to with some reflection, but I wouldn't want to teach it again. I would want to teach leadership. I would want to teach what I've learned in the presidency.

The second quality is to be a *futurist*, and to me how could you possibly go through the fast water—white water rapids—without knowing some idea of where you want to come out? You know, you don't just go into a canyon without thinking there's got to be an exit. So to me, I think futurism has always intrigued me. I used to be in the Futurist Society. As a professor, I used to give talks on futurism. To me, it fits in with my life.

I think a third thing is you really have to be an *activist*. You have to really consciously pursue change and to embrace it, not to shy from it, not to be reluctant about it, but to simply say, "Yes, that is part of life." I read an article called "To Grow or Die" by George Land, and to me I've always thought that that's a message to live by. When you

stop growing, you die. To me, that fits in with the concept of being very much an activist.

The next thing that I say—you've heard me say this many times, Ann—you must be an *optimist*. By the way, there's a new book, not so new, now, called *Learned Optimism* [Martin E. P. Seligman, *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991)]. A very intriguing book, and it points out the psychological, physiological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual contributions that optimism makes to your life. To me, as a president, I literally do not lose sleep about this college. Okay? I want you to know that. I do not lose sleep. I think I try to do the best I can. During this whole situation, we've just recently been through [over Congressman Newt Gingrich's controversial class on Renewing American Civilization,] people ask me, "Did you lose sleep?" No, I really didn't. I believed we did the best we could do. [We] made the decision that at the time of action was the only course I could take to defend what we had to defend—hindsight, no question—but at the moment of action. I think you have to be an optimist. I believe in anything that helps. I heard Bernie Marcus speak last night, brilliant talk, from Home Depot. He talked about optimism. It's just [that] the attitudinal set is critical.

The next attribute, I would think, would be a *populist*. You really have to be of the people, understand the people. The other day, I gave a talk to the scholarships. I wasn't meaning to give a talk, and I didn't know, I was going to give a talk, but I gave a talk. Some things have happened in my life that mattered, as poor, and all those roots. People nodded and affirmed. So to me, what I think is there are values that run through all cultures. I had lunch the other today with a Tibetan Fulbright Scholar at Emory, and I said, "Tell me about your people." He said, "We are honest, we are hard-working, we are simple people." I thought the eloquence with which he spoke of that was so—I loved it. To me, I think those qualities must be those of the leader. You should never get beyond your raising. Really, don't y'all? I think those to the manor born have a harder time understanding what it means to be a common man or woman. My uncle has this epithet—"An uncommon common man." I've always thought of that as being remarkable. That is indeed what we are—all of us are common people. You seek to be uncommon, but you don't forget your roots.

The next thing that I would say in that same genre: [be an] *ethicist*. You have to believe that what you're doing is the right thing to do. So, from that, I've always taken out of leadership studies, "Do the job; do the right job, right. So to me that's the ethical nature of it. I think leadership must be ethical. We ask that often, and sometimes, you think that people do expedient things. That's what I want to be, not that I am, but I want to be. You want to do the right thing. Nobody wakes up that I know and says, "Today I'm going to make life absolutely as unethical as I can." I mean, really, I think academicians, certainly, would be faulted if we thought that. All of us should, I guess.

The next things, I think, are just fun things. Those are the six hard ones, and then I've added that you really ought to be—I don't know how to use this term, and I had trouble explaining it with your group—[an] *essentialist*. I just coined a new word: essentialist.

You really need to concentrate on what is important. This quarter, I have things stacked up, endless things stacked up that I want to read and to write and to attend to, but I elected to go to twenty-four departments. I elected to do it. The sheer amount of time that it takes for me to go two hours for each department, you know...twenty-four, I mean I have a very busy schedule, as you know, and you do, too. That was not intended, but I saw that it was needed. So you have to say, "That is more important than this." When you forget that, you get through it.

And then the last one is be a *humorist*. Don't take yourself so seriously. This, too, will pass. Today, I was having lunch with captains of industry at Equifax at a board meeting. I was just struck by the fact that they were all kidding me about "Hooter" [a campus controversy over whether the basketball arena should be named the Hooter Dome from the school nickname, the (hoot) owls. The term also has a sexist connotation from Hooters Restaurant.] And I said, "Now, listen. Let me tell you something. 'Hooter' mattered to us. This is not funny." I used your example of your t-shirt, you know, "more than a mouthful," and I said, "That's not funny to women." And I used the example of how I used that term with Kenny. Didn't that make sense? It did to me.

AE: Yes, it surely did. I think it did to Kenny, too.

BS: Well, this was an illustration...

TS: Bill Kinney?

BS: No.

AE: No ...

BS: Kenneth, one of our black students, rode up with me to a conference, a human relations conference, the other day. He said, "Dr. Siegel, why did you do that? Why did you change Hooters. You know that it's such a cute name." I told him I did it because it offended people. He said, "It's a cute name." I said, "Give me a name for African Americans that you would bristle over." Of course, he said, "N...;" it's a harsh, ugly, awful way to describe people. I said, "That's too tough. That's too hard. Give me another one." He gave a slightly less offensive term, and I said, suppose we used that term in the name of our basketball arena and had a little mascot that represented the same racial stereotype, and we would have all these black athletes come out and play in the "... Dome." He said, "Oh, we couldn't."

TS: So he got the point.

BS: He said, "Oh, we couldn't. That means something..." I said, "But now, the majority of our white students would say, "What a cute name for our little [mascot]." He was just appalled. I said, "Now, you can, I think..." I don't know what possessed me to think about that, but I think that's pretty good.

AE: I thought it was a very good way to prove a point.

BS: I really did. Afterwards, I thought, “Gee, maybe that’s what we ought to do more of.” Well, if men think, “That’s just cute. I’ve never heard that about women.” And then you say, “Hey what if we did this...” So I think we have to take the offensive on this. But I laughed, and when Governor [Carl] Sanders the other day in a joke said, “President of Hooter University...,” I laughed. You know, this, too, will pass. You can’t combat all the time, but I think you have to do it with good humor. By the way, what I was just saying—those seem to be to me the qualities of leadership. Being a futurist and an activist led me to believe that the national scene was what was needed at Kennesaw. When I was a dean of education, I was in the national scene, and when I was the dean of continuing education, I was on the national scene because I thought it was important to use those qualities to bring not only recognition to the unit that I served, but to bring back from the association something to the units I served. In Kennesaw’s case, I thought we had a wonderful story, but not very many people knew about it. It was important for me to represent our college.

I early became involved in the American Council of Education. I served on the board, very quickly. You don’t hire presidents just automatically as a president; you hire someone who has lots of experiences, and I had lots of experiences in education and associations, national associations. It breeds on that. I used that, and that was what was written up in the book on *Searching for Academic Excellence* [J. Wade Gilley, *Searching for Academic Excellence: Twenty Colleges and Universities on the Move and Their Leaders*, American Council on Education/MacMillan Series on Higher Education, 1986], the importance of being seen in a national perspective. So I was on the board. I serve on the board of AASCU—American Association of State Colleges and Universities. This is something that is not known, but it is an interesting point. The same year that I became the president of all the AASCU institutions, I was also asked to be the president of all the American Council on Education presidents, which is over 3,500 presidents. But because I had been asked by AASCU first—I thought that was the most wonderful honor in my life because to head two national associations—to be asked to do that in the very same year was a tremendous encouragement to me. But I couldn’t tell anybody because the next person who took it would not want to know that somebody had been asked that. But I was asked by both.

AE: What kind of work does that entail?

BS: The president of AASCU in a sense plans the national conference, determines what the theme will be, determines what the direction AASCU will go in that year in terms of its commissions, and its committees; all those things have become part of the president’s job. They now refer to it as a “chair,” rather than “president” because we’ve just named the executive director of AASCU the president. It fits in with other associations. But it really is to lead, and it is the honor of honors to be asked to do that. The year before I was named, I gave the President to Presidents lecture. I think of all the things I’ve ever done, that one was the one that gave me the greatest satisfaction because they ask one president every year to give the President to Presidents lecture in AASCU, and the

criteria is that you must have something important to say, and you must be able to say it well. So this was wonderful. My talk was on the presidency. I talked about civility, compassion. The reason I liked doing it was because I labored over it. It said what I wanted to say. I may have said it one hundred times before, but it was the culmination of what I wanted to do. “The Changing Role of the Presidency: Civility, Cooperation, and Caring” was the title.

I moved into other leadership roles, and ACE [American Council on Education], and one of those was the leadership commission, [where] I worked on the National Leadership Commission. I helped determine leadership programs for academic vice presidents and presidents, and that was marvelous. We planned major initiatives on leadership. Of course, I was on the National Identification Network with the ACE fellows, and that again was a very prominent opportunity for me. Then, in AASCU, I worked on the National Commission on the Terrell Bell Report on Education. We came up with a major statement of AASCU on what was the mission of AASCU institutions. That was a major, major effort and took much time.

Then, I’m on the President’s Commission for Teacher Education for AASCU. From that, we were coming up with the national guidelines, so I served on those national commissions, and it really helped me and helped the college, I hope, in our getting visibility. I think being named in *U.S. News & World Report*—you know how that’s done, don’t you? It’s done by presidents. It’s done [so] that they know what’s happening at other colleges, and then their colleagues determine what colleges are on the move. So it was a very big compliment that whatever you talked about in those meetings will be picked up, and so I know Marietta College in Ohio is doing a really great job because I heard about it over and over again from the president. You see? I think those are ways that come back to help.

AE: So you see your leadership role as being mainly useful in providing visibility to the college—obviously useful personally—but on our campus?

BS: I think that’s one aspect of it. I think it’s very important; if you don’t have something to say inside, you don’t have something to say outside, whatever. But the presidents that I most admire are those who are very much involved in the national scene. I think if you don’t go to national meetings, you can’t be a futurist. I think it comes back to help me in a critical loop. I’m a very apt student of higher education, and I really like to go to meetings and bring things back. I like to be well read, and I like to know a lot of things, and that’s where the generalist comes in. On the national scene, we began in athletics, and very quickly, I was named to the Executive Committee of NAIA [National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics], and served on that committee for five years. That committee planned policy for NAIA in athletics. That gave me another platform, and also another opportunity to learn, so I really became enamored with NAIA. Then Dr. [William] Purkey and I together have an International Alliance for Invitational Education, and we have 1,200 school officials who belong to our alliance. We’ve had eleven or twelve grants on how you invite success as a teacher of public schools and superintendents and principals. We have this International Alliance with 1,200 members,



and we have an international meeting every year. We're preparing materials for public schools, so both of us have been on major national programs talking about public schools.

In the state, I wanted to move into as much visibility as I could, so the governors have named me to three state-wide commissions, and the one that was the most important for our college was a [Georgia] Blue Ribbon Commission on Growth Strategies, and it met eighteen months, and it was literally a veritable "who's who" of the gubernatorial and city leaders in the state. Very few, I think only one or two educators, which was very exciting to me. We met, and it was tough; it was hard work, major work. That was very exciting. [I also served on] the Martin Luther King Commission, and then the Job Training Partnership Commission. So that was the Job Training Partnership Act: very big commission on the world of work toward the year 2000. Then other state activities—I early became associated with Leadership Atlanta on an executive committee. [I was] the first woman to be on the Executive Committee of the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce—the very first woman on a lot of things, but that goes with the territory. All with Leadership Atlanta, Leadership Gwinnett, Leadership Savannah, Leadership Augusta, Leadership Columbus—I've spoken to all those groups—and Leadership Cobb, every year. It gives me an opportunity to know who are our players in the state. Then, I'm on the Executive Committee of United Way Atlanta, which is over all of metropolitan Atlanta. Then I moved into some leadership roles with schools. I'm on the Board of Directors of Pace Academy, the Academy for Children and Youth, [and] International School. I'm on the Board of Lenoir-Rhyne [College] and have been on the Board of Cumberland College. You see, all those then become important education aspects, and so they used me as a public school person on private school boards. That's kind of interesting.

Then I got involved in the Society for International Business Fellows in 1985, and that's the group that studies international affairs, and then we go to the London Business School for study. The Society of International Business Fellows was a collection of people from all the southern states who are involved in international affairs. Don't you think that helps me when I do international affairs things? You better believe it. So these are all big people. Another thing I liked was being in Renaissance Weekend and being invited by Phil Lader to be with that group. We've been with it for seven or eight years. The thing that, perhaps, I like most about these kinds of meetings is that I belong to a group, and there are only three women on this one. This is the Business-Higher Education Forum, and it is a tremendous organization—fifty to sixty top CEOs in the country and college presidents. We meet twice a year. It's a deep-think tank, and from that come position papers. We have them on international affairs, healthcare, work force 2000...it's been remarkable. We meet for three days around a roundtable that seats sixty people, and it's multi-lingual, and we have guests from all over the world to come and speak. It's unbelievable. Johnnetta B. Cole [former president of Spelman College] and I are on that and Barbara S. Uehling, the former [chancellor] of the University of Missouri [1978-1987], and we were the only three women in the entire group.

AE: That's remarkable.

BS: I think so. And there are only two state college presidents, George Mason and us.

AE: That's an interesting selection.

BS: It's Harvard and Vanderbilt and you know, the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina system, the Chancellor of the University of Florida system. But as far as I know, only two state regional university presidents. Penn State maybe, that would be a state college. But anyway, it's just heady. Every year we come out with a big collection of things like this. When you see that I'm supercharged by these kinds of activities, I really am.

TS: A lot of these groups sound very intellectually stimulating.

BS: Oh, they are. I also belong to a group that picks about eight presidents a year, and they come together, and they meet in a leadership seminar. The leadership seminar is to come—and your expenses are paid—for you to come together to read the classics for a week.

TS: Oh, yes.

BS: This is the textbook.

AE: Oh, how delightful.

BS: Isn't this wonderful! You start with the "Allegory of the Cave" from Plato's *Republic* and you read every day. You come together, and you discuss that afternoon, and then you go to Tanglewood that night. Tough assignment, huh! It's in the home place of [Henry David] Thoreau's best friend. That has given me a lot of opportunities for a wonderful liaison. You add to that corporate participation, and I'm on some corporate boards and one of the corporate boards, National Service Industries: President of Delta; president of Wachovia; president of Atlanta Insurance, Jesse Hill; Bernie Marcus from Home Depot; these are my colleagues, and that is very exciting to be on a board with people like that, to know them and to get their attention. That's the reason why we have such a big major gift from Erwin Zaban, who's the chairman of the board of National Service. It is a major gift—over \$100,000. I know that they do that.

AE: That's the kind of...

BS: Equifax today—I just had this meeting and we have an extraordinary array of people who are very helpful. Bill Dahlberg, president of Georgia Power; Ray Riddle, president of National Service Industries; John Clendenin, president of Bell South; these are all wonderful players and more. Then Larry Prince, who's Genuine Parts—you know, these are Fortune 500 companies. This morning I had breakfast with Frank Skinner, who is president of Southern Bell, and that was the United Way breakfast of the Executive Committee. So I guess what I'm saying is that every time you go out, you're making

friends to the college; and I was there [when] Carter & Associates made a presentation. Well, Carter & Associates are the ones who are doing the fast track on the Science Building, right? So of all the people who are having breakfast this morning at the executive meeting, Carter comes in and says, “Oh, by the way, Kennesaw State College has just won the first one out of the box on the...” and so everybody applauded. I thought, “Gee, this is really great.” To be singled out of the audience, to have our college singled out of the audience, among a very impressive group of people...that matters, I think. We’ll see. Hopefully, every bit comes back to help us.

AE: You’re making so many contacts and doing so many stimulating things; do you have any actual procedure for sharing some of those things on campus? I know you do it a lot informally, but is there any institutional way that you share information, perhaps in seminars?

BS: No, but perhaps I should. I’m on the Atlanta Gas board, and there again, it’s a veritable “who’s who.” Otis Brumby is on that board. He’s one of our trustees. I don’t see him that much, but I see him at those meetings. Those are all ways in which we’re trying to extend the community to the community. I’m using that as friend-raising, which will be fundraising. We say that it takes from seven to ten years to get a major gift from any one person, okay? Seven to ten years, that’s the hard data. I just got a plan of action for today. I said in the meeting, “I want a one-page briefing by month about what the development office is doing, who they’re seeing, what they’re talking about.” We’re ready now to move into some major fundraising on our campus. We can’t do that. We’d have to stand in line behind twenty-seven other colleges and universities. Once we’ve got the friend-raising, we can do it. It takes a long time to make friends. It really does.

AE: Yes, we have been interested in how your fundraising activities have changed since you became president. It sounds like you’ve been cultivating contacts that are just about to mean something.

BS: Oh, yes. We are light years away from where we were before. It took us a long time to get the Jolleys [Lex and LeoDelle] interested in our college. How many times do you work, and you lay a seed, you know? The major gifts that are coming now, they’re really going to take off. I think this is going to be the finest decade that we’ve had for fund-raising. I know it will be the finest for fundraising. On every front, we’re moving in fund-raising.

TS: If the average college president changes every four or five years or so, it would seem that those institutions would be at a disadvantage, if it takes that long.

BS: Well, I talked with Clark Kerr about this—thank you for asking, that’s a very important question—and I indicated to him that that is the easiest thing in the world to get another job. You all may not believe that, but it is very easy to get another job as president. People don’t think that; they think it’s very hard. You just have to decide that you’ll go anywhere. I got an offer today—a search committee approached me about Ohio Wesleyan, a fine college. I’m not just saying this, okay? But that’s about the seventh or

eighth one I've gotten since September. But if you don't want to go, it doesn't matter. I don't want to go. They [the staff] have a form letter out there that says, "Thank you so much. I have things to do, and I want to stay at Kennesaw State." And that's not just me; that's most presidents who are doing a pretty good job. They will be sought after. One of the things that you have to realize though is that if you leave every four years, you recreate what you are most successful at. In the book *Searching for Academic Excellence*, they talk about the things that they thought I might be helpful at—working in the community, having a view of where the college ought to go, you know, they mentioned those things. Well, I could go to Florida State, and what would you do? You'd spend the first year getting to know everybody, affirming the good things that you see. You'd work with the community, get to know all the legislators; you'd speak everywhere, right? You'd carry the message. Second year, you'd begin to say what are the steeples of distinction I'd want to have at Florida State? Third year, you'd get some new appointments. You'd change some of the vice presidents; see what I'm saying? Fourth year, it begins to get kind of locked in. What happens at the end of the fifth year if you decide to go to Michigan as Dale Lake wanted to do? Well, he goes to Michigan, and what does he do the first year? He gets to know everybody...you see what I'm saying? What happens is the college reels from that.

I talked to Clark Kerr, and I said, "You're always saying that people have to leave after four and five years." He said, "Because it gets harder. Don't you understand? It's harder. People don't want to stay where it gets increasingly more difficult. You know who's against you. You know that no matter what you do, you're not going to move some people. You know, to be bitterly criticized for things." Someone has said that if you go as a president, the first year you make a decision, 90 percent of the people like it, 10 percent don't. The next year you make a decision and 90 percent of the people like it, 10 percent don't. It's a different 10 percent. By the time you've made ten decisions, you've alienated everybody once. He said, "That's why presidents do it. They want to get out of the uncomfortable nature of being president and being criticized." Did I use this with you all the other day about criticism? I don't know why I thought about this but, as a college professor, I used to read my evaluations avidly to see if there were any good things. Sometimes, there'd be a lot of good things, but there would be one negative thing that just killed me. To this day, I can remember my red face and clutching my chest, "Oh, mea culpa. Oh, they got me." Isn't that awful? And then I thought, you know, you learn to live with it. I don't even remember the names of the people anymore; they've faded. But I said as a college president, honest to goodness, what is the hardest thing to take is criticism. Everyday of my life as a president, I have been criticized. Today—it must be outside—I got a letter—where is it? Oh, it's hopeless today; I can see that. But I got a very mean-spirited letter, anonymously, in which somebody said, "I wouldn't send my child to a school where you have a conservative speaking." Oh, I mean, it was just...

AE: Most of them wouldn't send their children because you have a liberal faculty.

BS: I know.

AE: You can't win on that one.

BS: It was anonymous; it was mean; it was meant to be anonymous; it was meant to be mean, and that one I didn't even know. I can discount that. But, everyday, I know no matter what I say or how I want to say it, somebody is criticizing me badly.

TS: Do you get a large amount of "nut" mail as president?

BS: Oh, yes, I got some very bad "nut" mail.

TS: I just wondered because I even got a "nut" mail letter on the Newt Gingrich thing, and I was just thinking that, I mean, this was some guy that thought that we should be condemning Newt Gingrich because he was covering up the Marxist attempt to overtake the country.

BS: Oh sure, yes. But I get "nut" mail—you get "nut" mail of all kinds. Just recently, I got "nut" mail from staff people who said—unsigned—"Dr. Siegel, how in the world could you possibly have allowed sod to be placed around the business building, when you're taking bread from my children's lips?" I mean, just really, and I thought, "Lord, did I go out deliberately and take bread from her children's lips?" And that staff person didn't know that we get a budget for sod that can't be used for salaries. It cannot be. To me, everyday of my life, I have bad criticism. So, there's no amount of good things that can happen to you that can make you feel good after you've had all that. I was just wondering if a faculty member everyday could possibly live with such criticism. I don't think so.

AE: Well, one thing we're curious about is how you deal with the stress and with the constant criticism that any president would have, not just you.

BS: Any president has it, but it just bothers me. All of a sudden, I just wondered why people say, "Well, you're sensitive to criticism." Well, if you *are* sensitive to criticism, you'd want to help everybody. You don't want anybody to feel unhappy in your presence. But as a college professor, I didn't know that everybody criticized me. I just got it at the end of the year, one statement or two in the class, and I'd say, "Oh."

TS: Fortunately, we don't hear what the students say behind our backs.

BS: Exactly. The dean never came in and said, "How come you got this one negative criticism?" In all my years of teaching, I may have gotten two times when somebody came in and said, "You let the class out early, and this was a very important..." I was a new professor. I still remember that. I let the class out early. You can't do that at that college. I thought, "What?" So I learned not to let the class out early ever. But as a president, I think you get all the criticism at you. People really believe that I was the one that let Newt Gingrich come here. Tim [Mescon] is exempt; Ed [Rugg] is exempt; the department is exempt; it was my doing. That's the problem that you have.

TS: The buck stops here?

BS: Well, it's that, but it's also that daily grind of criticism. You're trying to do a good job, as everybody does. It's unremitting. That's the thing.

AE: Do you do anything in particular to cope with it better? I know you go to movies a lot. Seriously, are there ways that you personally deal with it?

BS: I think you have to come back to what we were talking about before. You have to be optimistic. Perhaps people don't understand about the sod. So when I went to the staff members I said, "Please don't write me anonymous letters. I can't find you to tell you what I want to tell you. I would like to talk to you about it. But again, thank you for taking the time, even anonymously..." Now, I know that sod was an issue. I would rather hear the negative than not to get it all. If people are chafing under it, somebody's got to deal with it, don't they? It's a swap out, certainly. I think you have to learn to be bitterly criticized, and I think you have to learn to be bitterly disappointed, as a president. As a college professor, I must say that I wasn't really very disappointed with things. You know, I generally got the classes that I wanted. I generally got the office that I wanted. I generally got the raise that everybody else was getting or a little bit better. I generally did all right, you know? As a college president, it's *defeating* to know that you worked so hard for something, and you don't get what you want for the college. It's not you personally, and one of the things that you learn is not to be so vain about who you are because I am asked repeatedly to do things because they want the office of the president. They don't care if I come. "Would you come welcome everybody?" "Oh, they want me to welcome..." They don't want me to welcome, they want the office of the president [to be] represented. So you learn not to take yourself so seriously. So what? This will pass. It's job. It's a good job, but I don't define myself in terms of being president. I like to think that after all is said and done, it's transferable. If I were in the classroom, I'd be very happy; I know I would. I was. But I've been an administrator longer than I've been a faculty member. That really shook me up because I've always thought of myself as being a faculty member, and then all of a sudden, here I am; I'm a president for twelve years and a dean for ten years. That's a long time.

TS: How do you balance the things you do off campus with your responsibilities on campus?

BS: I'm asked that a lot about how you do that. I believe that if you were to look at the things that we do on campus, you will see that it's a full plate.

TS: Sure. You could stay here twenty-four hours a day, every day.

BS: Exactly. Every month my secretary figures out that I must have spent at least twenty-five out of thirty-one days at night, every night. So, if I do that, then it's time that I'm spending for the college. Like yesterday, I got to work at eight o'clock, and I got home at ten o'clock. I just realized that I was watching *[NYPD] Blues*. That's one of my favorite new shows on television, and I had had literally one hour to myself in the entire day. Not lunch, not dinner, not.... So what I learned to do—and I'm disclosing a lot—

whenever I have to be gone for national meetings, I will spend an inordinate amount of time the rest of the week on campus. I don't want to be a president who's off campus. I don't want to be. I don't want people to think I'm a president off campus because I'm not. But I want people to believe that I give, while I'm here—I think you will see this—that I come to as many things as I can; I'll come to parties; I'll come to anything that people ask me to, even if it means that I have to wait to do this because I want people to think that the president is available.

AE: We were talking a while ago about your fundraising. I wonder if you would say a little bit more before we get away from it about the Kennesaw State Foundation and some about your relationship with the foundation. Do you personally appoint members to it?

BS: No, I do not. I never do that. No, no.

AE: We don't know quite how that's done.

BS: The foundation is run by committee. I don't have any authority over the foundation at all. They are truly volunteers. They do not answer to me; I do not answer to them. They are purely advocates of the college. They are appointed. In certain years, the committee oversees that. They have the president of the board, and the president of the board works with me, and I go to the Executive Committees. I do give updates on the college. They are to assist me in any way that I find that I need for the college, and I assist them.

AE: Who is on the committee that appoints them?

BS: They have a nominating committee.

AE: Of the trustees?

BS: Of the trustees. We have sixty trustees, and they each have a role. Some are on the Scholarship Committee; others are on the Executive Committee; others are on the Hospitality—whatever—Audit Committee. They all have a role to play, and I report to them, but they do not censure me. They don't have any control over me. I'm only responsible to the Board of Regents.

AE: Oh, yes. We just didn't know how much control you had over the nomination. Control may not be the word.

BS: No authority. They are purely friendship volunteers. Very, very valuable.

AE: Oh, yes. Do you think they will ever be all alumni? I guess it's really to be community...

BS: No. Actually there really should be two kinds of boards. Alumni boards are different from foundation boards. We have some trustees—alumni on there. But they should be people—and I always use this term—that offer their work, their wealth, and their wisdom. Their wealth is not money, although it can be. It is their wealth of friends. If

they hadn't been such good supporters—we have so many good Democrats on our board that they would really have been angry at the college for the Newt Gingrich thing. Because they are trustees they said, “What is really going on?” I said, “Well, you see, it came up through the department. It was a special topic. It was approved. It's approved by the [business] school. If I do this, the school will think that I can always step in and stop everything.” “Oh, that's it.” “What about this GOPAC?” “Well, we're monitoring it. The foundation will not accept any money from GOPAC [The Republican (GOP) Political Action Committee, headed by Newt Gingrich, that trained Republican candidates for office].” So, they would listen, and they would understand. The more they understood, they would say, “I see why you did it.” They may not agree with it, but they can say, “I see why you did it.” And this is why the foundation is taking the grant, and no money from GOPAC, absolutely not. Do you see what I'm saying? They've become very important to us. I say, “Let me tell you about it. Why we did it.”

TS: On the Newt Gingrich thing for the next quarter, what was the process on that? Did that come through your desk or is that something that the department does?

BS: That was an interesting one. We give an open-ended adjunct professor letter. You're neither one adjunct, but you do it all the time. What do you do? You just have an open-ended letter—“Your appointment begins...” so that anytime you want to use somebody, you don't have to write another letter and send it to the board, is that right? It's open-ended. Same thing with Newt. He's an adjunct professor. And we had a choice—shall we tell him no, that we can't do it again, which would be out of our posture—but we don't know. What is the contractual arrangement that we had with him? He thought we had it for three years, okay? But the board [Board of Regents of the University System] tells us that we can't do it again. But, they said if you have a contractual arrangement, then you can see it out this year. So we're waiting to hear from the board. In the meantime, Ed [Rugg] was saying, “We've got to send it to press. We've got to send it to press.” So we said if it goes to press we can cancel it; or if it goes to press or not, we can cancel it.

AE: In the schedule.

BS: In the schedule. So what happened, I think, is that, in this hiatus, someone who is in charge of sending in all of the adjunct professor letters on business sent a letter to Newt Gingrich and just picked it up as you would any other letter, and it went out to him, which compounded it. But that was not the issue. We had an open-ended adjunct letter, and we had a contractual arrangement, Tim [Mescon] did, with him to run this class. So that's where we are. It wasn't to do anything untoward. We sent it—and, evidently, they sent it out before we even got any word. We didn't know the regents were going to do that, by the way.

TS: You didn't?

BS: No, lord no. Heavens no. Frankly, we didn't think they would do it. Not a hint. No. I know that there were individual regents who wanted to do it, but I did not know that it



was going to be on the agenda; the chancellor never said one word to us; the president of the board never said a thing, and we conjectured. We sat around this table, and said will they do it. “No, they’ll never do it. They’ll never put that kind of rigidity into the system.” But they did, and as a president, I am in full compliance with what they did.

TS: While we’re doing unpleasant things, maybe it would be a good time to shift to something—

BS: It’s not unpleasant.

TS: I think that if you were going to lose sleep over anything, it would be the NCATE [National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education] situation.

BS: Yes. I’m very, very disappointed in our showing on that. I’m not losing sleep over it though because NCATE—we believe in this situation that we were not given a fair assessment. I believe we did deserve some of it, okay? I would be remiss if I were to act as if we didn’t. There are some changes that are taking place in education that really need attention. But they do not deserve not to be accredited. We wrote a rejoinder to NCATE that we feel was addressed, but not addressed in the way that we would have liked. We feel that we have made a strong case, and I’m just disappointed with their action.

AE: To what extent do you think we got tarred, if you will, with the brush of things that we could do nothing about? Facilities, resources, things that are really up to the students.

BS: NCATE very much plays off of that. But again, one of the things that I think we were hurt by in NCATE was some of the inaccurate information that may have been given from some of our faculty members. NCATE was not released by us—the preliminary report—it was released anonymously by a faculty member or faculty members. Yes. When we were told by the paper that they wanted to put in the preliminary report, we said back to them, “This is only a preliminary report. Please give us time to adjust and make corrections.” But they chose not to, and they put the entire report in, which is unheard of, and what we know is that there are at least three Georgia colleges in the last several years that have been denied accreditation by NCATE the first time. And by the way, those are outstanding colleges, two of them are, at least—I know them; I don’t know of the third one. I’m sure it might be outstanding as well. But that didn’t get into the press, and for us to get into the press—and there again, that’s disappointing to think that someone from our school would want to take that route. Similarly, with the Newt Gingrich situation. The [faculty] petition [raising concerns about the course] literally was sent to the paper. I don’t know who sent it.

TS: On the Newt Gingrich?

BS: The petition from the college.

TS: Well, I don’t know either. I know who didn’t send it because I know Hugh Hunt [one of

the leaders of the petition movement] was very upset.

BS: Well, I was upset because I was out of town, at a meeting, and when I got back—my secretaries do not open confidential mail—the letter, the petition was addressed to me confidentially, and so, when I got back, I read it. It had already been released to the press.

AE: Well, we found that very curious, too. [That] is all I have to say about it.

BS: It is curious, sure. And again, we must try to develop a sense of community. [Some] people feel that anonymous behavior is conscionable. It isn't. How much better it would have been had we had the opportunity [to discuss the issue]. Some people may feel that there's no other recourse [than to go to the press], and that's lamentable. We would want to believe that there are other recourses. Certainly, through our senate and through our caucuses, and so on, like that. It's sad to say, but it happens.

TS: On the NCATE, as I understand it, we have been really trying to adjust to output evaluation ever since the last SACS [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools] evaluation.

BS: Sure, and that's not what they honor.

TS: And you're interested in inputs.

BS: Exactly. Inputs. It doesn't help to say that NCATE is going through troubled times all over the country. It doesn't help because it sounds defensive. I don't want us to be defensive. I want us to take our medicine, and I want us to do what's right. But NCATE has really been under a great deal of scrutiny lately. And the very fact that one-fourth of all the colleges that go up for it are not given accreditation on the first round tells you something. These are good schools of education; they just may not be making it. But as long as our state affirms NCATE, and I affirm NCATE, I think we ought to be as good as we can be. I'm disappointed. We will be good. I guarantee it. Nobody thought we were not going to get it, by the way.

AE: Yes. When the final report came out, though, the packet of materials that were prepared, I think, did a great deal to pave the way for somewhat better reviews of the press than the original thing.

BS: Yes. We were unprepared.

AE: Who would have thought they would get put in there?

BS: No one thought that they would. Why should they? There was no reason for them to. But someone thought they should. Someone sent it in.

TS: With this negative review, do you think it will help get more money for the college?

BS: There may be some attention. I personally don't like that way of getting money.

TS: No.

BS: Also, I think we should have done better.

AE: Do you think the Chancellor's Office, though, will recognize that in fact we need more resources?

BS: Oh, the Chancellor knows that that's a factor, and it's not being presented as well as it might. I think we could have overcome that, I really do, and I think that's where we really have to do some work. But we'll do it.

AE: An aside, but it was interesting that [Kennesaw-based syndicated columnist] Bill Shipp's column on Sunday...

BS: Used that example, sure.

AE: ...used that example. That the Chancellor should have seen to our resources.

BS: The Chancellor has tried. You know, I want to be supportive of the Chancellor and supportive of the regents. They have a hard time. There's limited money. I don't like to use that argument. I believe that we should have been so much better that we would have transcended that. But, we can get there.

AE: We talked about your leadership off campus and leadership in the state and so on, but would you say a little bit more about your role in leadership on campus in forming the Leadership Kennesaw program, John Gardner's KSC 101, and your relation to the students.

BS: Well, I appreciate that because those are things that I'd like to be remembered for. I really did try, and [I] am trying to create a sense of involvement in the campus. The Leadership Kennesaw program was the one program that I feel most strongly about because we don't bat 1.000. But the faculty members who have come through that, for the most part, have been those who see the bigger picture that they didn't see before, and they feel a sense of bonding that they didn't feel before, and they feel a sense of some ownership of the college that they might not have felt before. I think in that sense, it's been an awfully good program. I think KSC 101 has been my effort to acquaint faculty members with an expanded teaching repertoire, so that they can understand better the multi-age students that we have. I think that's been an insightful way and a non-hurtful way for them to grow, and I believe that's been a wonderful opportunity. I really have not made any apologies for insisting that people come. I think my job as president is to look down the road and say, "We want to build a sense of community, we want to do this." I think the things we do to try to honor teaching have been leadership. I think that what we've tried to do to empower staff.... I fought hard for a senate that would have staff representation. I know that that was not popular with the faculty, and I knew that I

moved out of my role. But I thought if you all had presented only a faculty senate up to me, I would have vetoed it. So if you remember those days, I went back to you and those were days in which I came here and said, “I’m going to veto this,” because I wanted to be more broad-based than that. Let’s work on it another way. That got a lot of criticism, as you can imagine because the faculty would have preferred for it to be faculty. I really believe it’s better. I think we’re trying hard to empower staff.

I think what we try to do is build a sense of student successes. I really want to be known as a president who cared for students. I think what we’ve tried to do with SOAR orientation, CAPS [Counseling Advising Programs Services], SALT students [Student Assistance for Leadership in Teaching—for junior and senior Presidential Scholars with at least a 3.7 grade point average], and Ambassadors. Those are all initiated in this watch. The involvement of student organizations has grown—athletics, team spirit, a sense of identity—those are things we’ve worked hard at. We still have to work hard at it. I had a wonderful meeting with the student services people yesterday talking about new things to do. New exciting things to do. We were all just energized when we left; we were all so excited because we have “miles to go before we sleep.” When I think in terms of what a president can do, we had to move from a college that had no departments and no schools, and we had to move the whole school in that direction. To me, that was very hard. How do you make the selections for the dean’s jobs? And I was given opportunity to make new schools and not a dime to buy a dean with. Not a dime. Not a dime to buy a department head with. Do you remember those days, how hard it was?

AE: Surely.

BS: So to me, if we’re going to be remembered, I’d want to be remembered for leadership on campus, and how we shaped the school with our administrative teams to get to be a pretty darn good school! People come to us to study us, and I think that that’s wonderful. I think it was just a lot of people catching the spirit and wanting [to] see what we’re doing with our part-time teachers, or what are we doing with our faculty orientation that’s good. Other schools may be doing it. But for us, it’s new and fresh. I feel very strongly about what we’ve been able [to do]. I think we’re in a really good place.

TS: Are you happy with the way the senate is working?

BS: I am; I really am. They tackle some tough questions: faculty load and faculty evaluations. We’re not through yet, but they’re just getting their wings. They’re learning how to live together. It’s a beautiful group. I’m meeting tomorrow with the three past presidents of the senate for breakfast. I just asked them to come and join me to ask, “How’s it going?” As we review three years of the senate since we’ve got it going, where do we need to go from here? I think it’ll be a good session tomorrow morning for breakfast. But we’re starting off the day, then tomorrow that way. I think I need to know how they’re doing. I have met with the caucuses. I like to meet with people. I hope you know that. I wear them out. But I do. How can I learn it otherwise?

AE: You’d be a bad president if you didn’t like to meet with people, I think.

TS: I think there have been a few over the years.

BS: I do.

AE: You mentioned the original reorganization. How soon do you think we will really be able to split off the School of Fine Arts, and how will that affect your fine arts center that would be so wonderful for our campus?

BS: You know, I would really like it sooner, rather than later, and to me, we know that's the way we want to go, so why should we wait? Money. Whether we can get it approved or not. Are we ready to? Perhaps not, but then again, that hasn't stopped us in the past. I think it's timely. Today, it was on the news that I was going to try to be a supporter for raising money for the arts. That's an informal group, by the way, that's working, and the symphony is now at our college—the symphony is now in residence at our college. I want to help raise money for the symphony because it's ours. It's not little Cobb Symphony out there any more. It's Cobb Symphony Residence at Kennesaw State. I met with [pianist] Lorin Hollander the other day; I don't know if you all saw him or not but he was wonderful. He said, "Dr. Siegel, I would love to come. If we could get a chair here, I would come and be in residence at your college."

AE: Wonderful.

BS: Yes! Yes! I'm going to meet him in the future. It's either going to be here or I'm going to go to New York; we're going to talk about it. Now that's all hush-hush because it's going to take a long time.

TS: Maybe not quite that long.

BS: But he did talk with Hillary [Hight, a music professor] and with me and with some others, and we said, "Oh, imagine having a world class artist in residence on our campus." Wouldn't that be wonderful!

TS: Sure.

BS: We'd build music camps around him, and education people around him; he's a teacher-educator.

TS: I would think something like that would make it easy to go out and raise money.

BS: Ah, you see...so to me, when I think in terms of why do we need a school of performing arts, don't we? It can be a real coup for us, I think. And what if we don't get it? I've just been appointed a special representative to the Cobb Executive Committee of the Chamber to be supportive of getting monies for the arts. You see all this? It's taken me a long time but step-by-step-by-step to get to the place where, someday, we're going to get that center, okay? We really are.

AE: Well, this may be the time to do it. This is a personal feeling....

- BS: Where are the people against it? Why are people against it though?
- AE: The people that I've talked with are not against it. I think there's support for it. I think there's some concern about the money that may be involved, whether we can find it and whether with the change in the Chancellor's position it will be approved. I think, at least, the department chairs and others that I've spoken with think it would be better to go ahead and do it at this point, rather than bring in a new dean and then do it.
- BS: Exactly. I know. I think better sooner than later.
- TS: While we're talking about buildings like fine arts buildings, I wonder if I could ask a few questions that have to do with buildings. First of all, it has been kind of the popular wisdom that we should be having a great deal of trouble getting buildings because we have a Republican delegation in Cobb County [in a state where the governor is a Democrat and both houses of the General Assembly are controlled by the Democrats]. It seems to me that you are figuring out ways to get around that. Would you like to speak a little bit about that?
- BS: I think our case has done that. Do you know years ago, I kept saying to you all, "Let's grow and if we don't get it, we'll stop. Let's grow and if we don't get it, we'll stop." So what I've tried to do is say to you, "Let's give it a time. Let's try and see if we can do it." We've been very successful. Right now, we will have a science building, a multi-purpose building, and then we'll have another multi-purpose building on the line, and then we have a seven million dollar building for students—these are in the pipeline. One article just hurt me so, when they were talking about me talking about these buildings. They said, "She said with immodesty, 'How about that. We're getting that.'" I was embarrassed by that because it's not immodesty that makes me talk like that, it's a sense of "isn't that fantastic that we've been able to get that." This is a coup. This is not personal aggrandizement; this is just something that our college is being recognized for, and we're getting it; it's been a long, hard struggle. When everybody else is looking for something, too, our size, our stature, our passion, our advocates, our reputation, make it hard for the regents to say no to us. If we were quiet, acquiescing, unknown, unpromising, we would still not be getting it, even though we had grown. So for me, all the things that we do to put that in place so that we can be seen, admired, hopefully—a thirtieth anniversary is not a causal thing. Why do you think it's important for us to do the thirtieth anniversary [of the Board of Regents' 1963 decision to charter the college]?
- AE: I think it's to get recognition for having been here thirty years.
- BS: Yes. If I had one person tell me this, I've had fifty people tell me, "We don't have time to do this. Let's not do it. What a drag." But yet we have gotten more mileage out of that one event on the campus than we could have gotten out of years going down to the board.
- TS: Did the governor's [Zell Miller] support [for the science building] materialize as quickly as it looked that it did?

BS: Yes, it was just like that.

TS: He came out and you showed him [the plans]?

BS: Exactly. Nobody talked to him about that; nobody talked to him about that beforehand. Just like that.

AE: Well, community relations, too, not just with the governor, but we had all those community people there, and what a fine presentation that was. That was very nice.

BS: Fantastic! Fantastic! We were working hard on the governor. I sat with him when he was named the AASCU [Association of State Colleges and Universities] Educator of the Year. What do you think we did? What do we talk about? We brought AASCU, and the AASCU presidents loved that. He gave a stirring speech. Every time I've introduced him, I've talked about him being an educator, you know, educated-minded, and he's of the mountains, so it was just wonderful! I was just completely taken aback. But now I think that we will get it whether [the local delegation is] Republicans or Democrats. Don't you?

TS: It looks like it at this point. He said it, indeed.

BS: This is in the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*. "Miller promises more for Kennesaw State." That's nice, isn't it?

TS: Did you run an end-run around the Board of Regents on this?

BS: No. It's been on the list. It's four. But the Chancellor was really very surprised. He said, "I can't believe this. I can't believe that he did this. I wish we had ten more in front of you, so that we know that he would put all the others in there, too."

TS: Does it create tension with other presidents?

BS: No.

TS: Do you all work closely together?

BS: We know that it's hard to get on the list, and we know that there are extenuating circumstances that will keep you off the list, and we know that it takes years to get on the list. We know how political it is. We may say, "Oh darn, I wish we'd gotten one." But we applaud the fact that Southern Tech got one. We want good things to happen to all of us. I really don't think there's any rancor with the presidents. I'm happy when Southern Tech gets on it. I really enjoy Southern Tech. We are good friends, the president and I. I'm happy when Gainesville College does, and we're good friends. So we try to build a sense of camaraderie. We hope we get it, too. There ought to be enough for all of us who need it and deserve it.

TS: How are the decisions made? I think I know the answer, but maybe I don't. How do we

establish our priorities on this campus that this is what we want?

BS: Okay. We listen to all the groups, and we have all the vice presidents sit around, and we talk endlessly about space needs. Then we work with the board, and the board tells us what probably is a probability. I had met with students, and I said that one of the top priorities of mine this decade that I would really work hard to get some student help. I find it offensive that students don't have lounges at our school. Ed [Rugg] would come in and say, "Oh, but you don't understand, we need more class space." "Well, you don't understand, Ed. We really need more student community space, too." So Paul [Benson] and I would work with that; Ed and I would work with another group; Roger [Hopkins] and I would work with another group, and I really promised the students that would be my priority. Two years ago, we had a choice of sending down a priority. I wanted to send down that we needed a new student union, college union, and we worked with the board, and they told us that if you send it down you will not get it, but if you send down something else, you will get it—you'll get on the list. So I made a decision, and I had two days to make it in. It was during spring break—Easter break—whatever it was. Students weren't here, so I could not call students together. No way; I had promised them that I would do this. It was a terribly hard time for me. I went ahead and sent down the multi-purpose building, and I sent it down, and I said, "We will put student services [in there]." I couldn't get the student union, but I would do it that way. Then the students had a fit. I had to go meet with them and tell them, "I have to tell you that my support is strong, but I had to be expedient. I had to get a building, and I got half of what you wanted, but I got half of what we needed, too, in the other way." They took it hard, as you can imagine, but I said, "Let me tell you what I'll do. I will personally see to it that you are given opportunities to visit other student unions all over the country, and you come tell me what you need, and we will make it a priority." They came back, they did their homework, and I said, "If we can't get it through the board, what can we do? They then—listen to the dynamics of this—they said, "Let us use student fees and creative financing to get the building." Now, here we've got the new multi-purpose building with half of it devoted to student services...it's an unbelievable coup, I think. Then we're given this new seven million dollar addition with a five hundred-seat theater in it. And with the student food, and it's going to be great! So God was with us.

TS: Seven million dollar addition to the student center?

BS: Yes, seven million dollar addition to the student center!

TS: Plus, what, fourteen million for the general classroom?

BS: Yes.

TS: That's great.

BS: Think about that. Plus, another fifteen million for the next multi-purpose building, so



we've got the science building, thirteen million; the three million dollars for the land—all that came this summer, you all—we're talking major big time.

TS: I wanted to ask you about the thirty acres [between the original campus and I-75, north of the Waffle House]. What will the plans be? We were thinking parking I thought at one time, but now it looks like other things.

BS: All that was by design.

TS: Okay.

BS: What it was always designed for was to put buildings on it. You've seen this, Ann, many times, but what we've done is we're stretching the road right here, Tom, and the road will be there. [Dr. Siegel indicates the reconfiguration of Frey Road to circle east around the edge of the thirty acres].

TS: Is that already in the works?

BS: Oh, my goodness, that took a lot of doing.

TS: Did it?

BS: Yes.

TS: With lobbying the county commission?

BS: Oh, sure. And going down to the Department of Transportation.

TS: [Wayne] Shackelford [head of Georgia's DOT]?

BS: Shackelford. That's taken a lot of time. Oh, yes.

TS: So that's already determined.

BS: Oh, yes. And in the process, Shackelford said he wanted to support us; county commissioners, I worked with them; the mayor I'm working with; every day—so this land will be ours. We want to be able to build a bridge over there; we want to build a crosswalk; we want to build that on our land. We were really sweating that this summer. We really needed this land. So when the science building came out, I was going to put the science building there. We had to downsize the science building, and it did not become an architectural statement that I'd want over there.

TS: Where you're pointing to is across Frey Road.

BS: Exactly. So what we did was move the science building in here, and so what's going to happen is when we move all the parking from here [between the Carmichael Student Center and Paulding Avenue] this will be the mall. The science building will be on the

mall. All this parking will be taken away from the student union.

TS: So that all will be grass to Paulding Avenue.

BS: It'll just be a mall [to the Science and Mathematics Building].

TS: Oh, the street's going to disappear?

BS: Yes, right. We're just going to have it all together. That's where the street is right now, so we're going to be changing that. We'll have to because this is the new student union addition.

TS: Oh, it's going on out toward Chastain Road.

BS: Yes.

TS: It's just going to keep on...

BS: It's going to be built on; it's going to be a major—it's going to be different. So what we're going to do here is a multi-purpose building. It's going to be great! It's going to be big and tall, and it will be up there on a hill.

TS: The multi-purpose building now will be across Frey Road, but Frey Road won't be there, the other side of the quadrangle [will].

BS: That's right. And this will be maybe the new communications building; this might be the new whatever; these are all down the road. See, what we want to do is come all the way from the music and theater, all the way. This end becomes the undergraduate kind of cluster of buildings. This end becomes student services and education, but education with a master's and business. You see you've got these buildings, then maybe for the graduate programs. I don't know; we're just going to play with that.

TS: All the faculty parking lot is going to disappear, it would seem.

BS: It's going to be a high-rise.

TS: A high-rise? Oh, really, I thought we weren't going to do that.

BS: Well...

TS: Okay.

AE: I think we're going to have to.

BS: We're going to have to.

TS: So that would be out from the business building and going on eastward.

BS: Oh, yes, we'll have to do it. Because we're using up our space. We want high-rises, and we want this to be the walking part of the campus. Nobody will be driving through our campus anymore.

TS: Are we going to run a shuttle?

BS: Oh, sure. We'll have to.

TS: Great. When are we going to have the track?

BS: See, I've already met with all the county officials about that. This is a twenty thousand seat sunken stadium. I've got a lot of balls in the air on that one. I've met with county officials and high school people. These are all things that you all don't ever see. But these are things that are very important for the life of the college. So I've met with these people and talked with them endlessly about ways in which we could have the football events here, and soccer events, and major athletic events, and major rock concerts; whatever it is. All those things on this that would be sunken, not high, and with parking here, with shuttles. This building will have 1,200 parking spaces underneath the building.

TS: You're pointing to the fine arts building.

BS: Fine arts. When people come in, they come right in here, and they park underneath. They'd never have to come on campus and interfere with traffic. Oh, this is such a good plan.

AE: It is, indeed.

TS: Now who drew out the plan?

BS: This was given to us by Byron Chapman at the request of John Williams, who's the biggest, richest man in Cobb County, and who likes the idea that he will give me a million dollars for this, if I can get it matched.

TS: For the fine arts?

BS: Right.

AE: How wonderful.

BS: Everything fits, if we can just swing it off. Sometimes, we're lucky and sometimes, we're not. But, Lord, this wonderful summer—see, the summer was so great. We were thinking that we were going to come out with a grand plan, and then the Newt Gingrich situation [the controversy over the funding for the course Gingrich taught at Kennesaw that led the Board of Regents to ban future courses by current officeholders] sort of shot us out of the water for a while. But maybe we've seen the worst of that.

- TS: To what extent do you think the college is hurt nationally by the county commission's decision to stop funding for the arts, and the anti-gay issues associated with that?
- BS: I said something the other day to the communications people, and I really believe that the arts—it's mixed, okay? I think what has happened is that the people who are passionate about the arts are really going to be much more supportive of the arts. It's sort of a backlash to that sort of position. On the other hand, they're hurt because, in this county, people seem to think recreation is more important than the arts. So it's a mixed bag, and I immediately said, "I think we're going to have more support for the arts than we've ever had before." As long as you think that they're getting money, then people don't feel so much that they need to. On the other hand, I would rather them not have done that, certainly. I would rather they had continued on with their support. I think it doesn't help for us to be known as so reactive to such pressures. They do have the right, I suspect, to make those choices, but it's lamentable that they made it towards something that means so much to people. I guess they have the right—I think they took the right—don't they?
- AE: Yes, they adopted it after they...
- BS: Exactly.
- AE: You've said a lot about your View of the Future II, if you will, and the new site plan. Are there other plans you have in your head for future program development? Of course, we don't know what will happen with the new chancellor, but just things that you would like to see happen on campus.
- BS: Some of the things that I was talking about with you all the other day in the history department—I really want to see us more interactive across disciplines. I think that would be important. I really want to see us in a time of great technology and distance learning to be much more supportive of student life on our campus. If everybody's going to be doing distance learning from Georgia, why would they come to Kennesaw? They'd come because they really like more than just a parking lot, classroom, parking lot. So I really want us to build more of a sense of community for the students. I want to see faculty more involved in the life of the college. You may think that we are already, and certainly we are to a degree, but I want to see us invest more in the total life of the college. I may be old-fashioned—I think I'm young-fashioned—I think what I'm seeing is a need for identification rather than isolation. That maybe was old-fashioned, but I think it's very new. Colleges can be truly repositories for learning centers that we haven't even tapped yet. I don't know about you all, but I sure don't want all my learning to come on television. I really don't. I think the minute that we start thinking that, we're in bad trouble. Talk about isolation of little cells, computers talking to computers, TVs talking to TVs. I don't know about you, but I've seen lectures on television that I don't follow. But if I see a lecture on campus, I am engaged. You have to get up and go. Bernie Marcus last night spoke of Home Depot—standing ovation—standing in the aisles. His lecture was as good as it gets. There was passion; there was excitement. The students who came there, they couldn't get enough of it. Do you think they would have watched that on TV? You see? So we've got to think, what brought all

those students there? Four hundred students jam packed into Stillwell [Theater]. Turned them away. They wanted to see this great man speak, and it was magnificent. When we have Lorin Hollander, I could watch him on television—I don't want to watch him on television; I want to meet him, hug him. You know what I mean? So that's what I think our college should be, and I'd like to see our faculty members frankly supporting the symphony. I really would. I would just like to see our faculty member supporting Maya Angelou. I would like to see our faculty members coming to the historic preservation, whatever. You see there's a rule of psychology I used to teach my class, and it's the statement of [Jean] Piaget, the great Swiss psychologist, the more you see and hear, the more you're capable of seeing and hearing. The more you learn to cope, the more you're capable of learning to cope. It is an axiom of child psychology that children who are culturally not stimulated, they literally don't know how to be stimulated. You don't go to something and say, "Well, I've had it for the year; I don't have to go again." What you say is you want more and more and more.

Last night, the night before last at Lorin Hollander's [concert], I saw people there that I've never seen at our college before. So that was an event. When you have the children's lit conference, that's an event. Do you see? When you have your teaching of history conferences. You can't just do it from distance learning. That's a supplement, not a substitute. I want a sense of community of students. I want them to come to be prepared to have a full and rich and invigorating life across ages, and I want to see programs that are extraordinarily service-oriented. That's my dream; I may not get it. I want to see us use the service mind set, so that when our students leave here, they say that they are Kennesaw proud grads. They know what it means to put something back. Bernie Marcus said that repeatedly last night in his lecture. Helping has a lot to do with profitability; you don't rest on yesterday's successes; you do service because it's the right thing to do, because it's involved with your heart to help mankind. Bernie Marcus, head of Home Depot says that. Shouldn't a college president be saying that? Shouldn't we as professors be saying that? If they can go build houses for Habitat for Humanity, can't we do that? I think a sense of community for students, a sense of investment for faculty members to love the college and to want to do good things for students and impact. I want us to an old-fashioned, new-fashioned college.

AE: I like the old-fashioned, new-fashioned; that's a nice sentiment.

BS: And I want us to grow in size. I think that it's important for us to at least get to 15,000. I think then we become comprehensive; we have all schools with the potential for graduate schools. You know that we have a full-bodied component, and all the disciplines are well served by what for us will be the terminal degree. We're not there. We still need a lot of faculty in each of the departments, and 15,000 students will enable us to buy those faculty. Yet it will not take that much more of a drain in our program development. We can continue to develop programs.

AE: Do you think once we get to 15,000 there will be community pressure to go for 20,000 or do you think there is some sense that we will get to a point where we've got to...?

BS: I don't see us as getting much larger than that. I think 15,000 or 18,000—at one time I had thought 20,000—but we'd have to have a lot of resources to do that. We're going to have enough space to do us for a while.

TS: Are we going to have a strategy to curtail the enrollment?

BS: No. I think what we'll do is just read it very carefully. If the mood is in the country to continue on with this growth spurt, then we'll ride it better than most. If the mood is for students to come to continuing education, then it may be. In a time of recession, students always come back to college. In a time of great growth, of resources, then people want to go into the work force and then come incidentally to college. We'll have to look at that. We'll have to read the future.

TS: But if Cobb County is going to have 800,000 people by the year 2010, then...

BS: Then it may very well be that we do, sure.

TS: Growth's almost inevitable, isn't it?

BS: Sure. And it may be that down the road—and I wouldn't say this for public consumption—but with the configuration of new ways of looking at universities down the road, we may be united with Southern Tech. We may not, but that's a possibility. We could be united with Dalton and Floyd. I wouldn't put any of that past us, as we get this large center moving, pulsating in the nineteen counties that we serve. It's a possibility.

TS: It may very well be that there is a type of student who thinks we're too big already.

BS: Sure. If that is a possibility, then we have to constantly come back to say, "We need student lounges; we need to treat students with dignity. We need to find ways so that people can be a part of clubs that we know this research is real, that the students who get more involved in college have more prognoses for success.

TS: It would be nice if students had a place to sit down, while they're waiting for a faculty member to come back to his office.

BS: Sure. We have to do that. That's what we have to deal with. Not just program development, but how we improve the quality of life on the campus. I'm absorbed with that. I've been religious about this. Every week, I eat in the lounge. I go there deliberately to see students and to see faculty. I wish every faculty member would do that. Where do you eat for lunch?

TS: I usually go back to my office.

BS: To me, Tom, see that's an abomination.

TS: Oh, I know, but it's not really, because I'm accessible to students, when I'm back in my

office.

BS: I know, but you're not accessible to me.

TS: Well....

BS: Wouldn't I love to have lunch with you some day and just pick your brain? It's fun for me to talk with faculty members. I learn something every time I sit down there. I sit with a faculty member I didn't know before.

AE: That's an interesting point. I just don't eat lunch much.

BS: It's marvelous. I go over there, and I see a faculty member I've never seen before and never talked with. My staff knows this. "Oh, you're going to lunch today. You always enjoy it so much." I may start off reading a paper, but there comes in somebody, "Hey, come on over. Let's sit and talk." It's fun. I invite you to try it. I really do.

AE: It's a good idea.

BS: Oh, do it. You'll have more fun. And it will remind you of colleagues across the campus that you don't even know. If you sit only with the history faculty, you ought to be ashamed.

TS: I wouldn't think of it!

BS: You know each other so well, you need to....

AE: We have talked, not entirely facetiously, because of the Newt thing, about how productive it's been to be with people in the school of business working on the carpet project. We've learned so many interesting things.

BS: Yes. They feel the same way about you. How would you have done it, if you hadn't had that opportunity?

AE: Well, that's true.

BS: You can make those moments. I think the secret of my success at the University of Florida, honest to goodness, was the fact that I showed up pregnant, that was one of the things that I told you all about, but the second thing was that I really got to know most of the people at the University of Florida. They had three thousand faculty members. But I think that if you were to go back there to those days you'd say, "How do you know that person over in dentistry?" "I met him at a party. I see him." You know. To me, I think that's the way I became dean. They know that you know the institution.

TS: Right.

BS: You all are saying that—you're being kind but it really is...

- AE: No, I think there's something to that. You have to be out on the campus and get to know people. Because we've gotten so big, there have been fewer and fewer chances to get together with people on the faculty in other disciplines.
- BS: As a department head, Ann, you are very much respected, and it would matter so much to student affairs people if they could come and visit with you.
- AE: Well, it's a good idea.
- BS: It really would. It matters to them. They respect your opinion. People are very highly respected on campus, and yet you don't even know it. You may not even know that you've got followers over there. I know which ones they like, and I know which ones they don't know.
- AE: I didn't, but I'll be glad to talk to them.
- BS: It would be wonderful; it surely would.
- AE: I think that is a good idea. I think more coordination with units across campus would be immensely important.
- BS: I went to the English department and said, "Why don't you have book clubs? There are book clubs all over the country, and everybody always tells me how good you are, and I've never heard you all do that. Why don't you do a book club for our school, for our college?" "Well, Dr. Siegel, we've been talking about that for ten years." And I said, "Well you haven't done it yet." I think it would be fascinating to hear Nancy King do a book review of, let's see, *Jazz*, Toni Morrison's new book. Wouldn't you like to hear that? I think it would be fascinating. Do it on a Monday night from 5:00 to 7:00; we can have supper together and have a little book club. I think it would be marvelous—cross disciplines. You all think I'm crazy.
- AE: No, I think it would be fun, but I was just thinking, you reach a point where you've got to go grade the tests, though, so, I mean, I think there is a saturation, but at some times, you have to make decisions.
- BS: Of course, but you know this, too, if you only grade tests, or if you think your job is only classroom grading tests, then you're missing some wonderful opportunities for some personal growth.
- AE: Well, I think...
- BS: I'm being interviewed by a young man who's writing a book called *Peak Performers*. He's going all over the country interviewing people, and it's marvelous. He interviewed me about a week ago, I guess, and he's coming back today for the final interview. He's interviewed Bernie Marcus and Ron Allen and some of these others—and he's finding so



many exciting things about leadership, and he said they all say the same thing.

AE: I'm interested in seeing the book in that case.

BS: Okay, do we have any other sessions that we will have?

TS: Well, I think we're just about through our list of questions now.

AE: Are there topics you would like to have talked about, and we haven't gotten around to asking you about?

BS: I'd like for us to go back and let me have an opportunity to talk about some of the people who've mattered to me in my odyssey. I'd like to give name to faces and to talk about how this college has been well served. This has not been the accomplishment or the lack of accomplishments of the president. The president is only one of many, and I would really like to have the opportunity to say, "Hey, I was really touched by the fact that so and so and so and so did this." Those people did some really neat things . . . just to point some people out.

AE: I think it's a wonderful idea.

BS: I'd really like to have that in this session.

TS: Good, good, we'll do it.

BS: And to talk by name of mentors that have been for me—that have helped me along the way. Townspeople and community people, students, faculty—I'd like to talk about that. I think they're the unsung heroes. I may get some credit for some things, but where would I have been if people hadn't encouraged me?

TS: Well, we'll schedule an appointment then, and we'll do that.

BS: I don't know how to ask the questions right because I certainly...

TS: Well, I guess we'll just have to ask who has mattered and let you run with it.

BS: There's a new concept in student affairs called "Mattering." Isn't that neat? So many people have mattered to me here; it's been part of the reason why I really don't want to leave. I really identify with this school. It makes me kind of teary-eyed . . . . I walk across the campus sometimes, and I just absolutely am staggered with how much I love it so. That sounds sentimental, hopelessly; it probably is. I remember walking on the campus the first day, and the dew was on the ground and I thought, "This is absolutely heaven." Through the eyes that haven't seen it—you all have grown up with it, but it's very, very real to me.

AE: Thank you.

Betty Lentz Siegel

Interview #4

Friday, 5 February 1999

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
KSU Oral History Series, No. 25  
Interview #4 with President Betty Lentz Siegel  
Conducted by Thomas A. Scott  
Edited by Thomas A. Scott  
Friday, 5 February 1999  
Location: Bentley Rare Book Gallery, Sturgis Library

TS: President Siegel, when you came here in 1981 we had a little bit under 4,000 students. We had relatively few majors and no departments, no schools, no colleges, no graduate program, no athletics. I could go down a long list of things that this very young institution, which had just come out of its junior college phase, didn't have.

BS: One thing that it really did have though was a dynamic faculty. One of the things that I'm most privileged to inherit from Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis was his strong commitment to hiring the very best faculty he could, who in turn had that strong commitment for serving this institution. So when I came I thought we were poised, literally, on the cusp of going to the next stage. I often said during those early days that I stood on the shoulder of a giant. To use another metaphor, I drank from a well I didn't dig. That dynamic faculty, during the interview process, indicated to me that they were eager for the next step. I used that often in my first year here at Kennesaw, and I would refer back to it. I remember when we talked about how important it was to be pro-active, to move to the next step.

The way that I immediately got excited about what the next steps might be was through the View of the Future. Very early in that year I used the opportunity that I'd had in the Search Committee and in the selection process to talk with faculty about some of the things that they wanted to do. The View of the Future gave us that opportunity to explore four different ideas that came to me as a consequence of that early conversation: The first one had to do with what should be our mission. I think our mission was evolving. We had been "Harvard in the Pines," very cloistered, concentrating on teaching. Nonetheless, we needed to expand our definition of what our mission really was. The second aspect of that was what can we do to personalize learning, which meant to me, how we could make learning more inviting to the students that we had. Not necessarily the students that we might have been like ourselves, but students who were non-traditional and who needed to have a very personal approach to success at a university or college then.

The third thing is how can we make administration more facilitative, so that you can offer as administration opportunities for faculty to explore and then to be facilitative of that exploration and bring it to fruition into programs. Then the fourth thing was what are the communities that we serve? That was leading us into being more pro-active, not only with the communities that we serve but literally pro-active with the community that we serve on the campus. Because communities within communities within communities

were what I was seeing very early.

So that bright faculty, that very, very wonderful group of long marchers, were the architects for the new view. You didn't need an outside voice to do that. It was here, just waiting to be orchestrated. I felt my role as president was to point the way. Here are some things that we might do, and here is the way that we can get as wide a dialogue as possible. So from that we very early began to discuss that our mission needed to be more pro-active, that we were not to be cloistered but that we would take our place in the constellation of the state university system in a very good way. We were already seen as having high standards, but it was important for us to take our place in the constellation. We were unheard of in many quarters. So we felt that our mission was one of interacting with the different groups that we had, but also to heighten our sense of mission. Then we began to concentrate, rather dramatically I thought, on our programs for success.

From that early second point of how do we make more inviting our teaching grew the CAPS Center, a very exciting program; grew the freshman experience program; grew ways in which faculty could move more into teaching in their specialties rather than being so broad-based in their offerings. Then with administration I felt that we had a clear challenge, perhaps a mandate, from the faculty that we move into some other programming. Very early I sensed that we would be needing program development and we needed to grow, I felt, not so much with the underpinning of the general education in those days, but with the majors and the graduate programs that followed on that. Now, I always said in those early days that we are a liberal arts college with strong professional schools. I still think that. We must have the qualities of a very fine liberal arts institution, but we must build on that strong foundation in business and education and nursing and public affairs.

When Ernest Boyer was here on campus he said that we operate very much like a residential liberal arts college, we feel like that, but yet we are the prototype of the college of the nineties. I've never forgotten his quote. I thought that was a strong affirmation of the kind of college that we could be. So pursuant to that goal then came a whole series of endeavors. To what should we dedicate a graduate school experience? So we began to focus on that which seemed to be most current in the early eighties, a strong Business School. When I came we had about twelve people in the business school. Today we have almost ninety. So the business school began to grow. We always had the strong commitment to Education. We had more faculty in Education than we did in Business, but Education needed to continue to be very strong. So you see graduate programs in business and in education and, of course, graduate programs in professional writing. These are all aspects of building a strong professional growth.

Another thing I think that really worked was to think in terms of how we take the campus off campus. That was when we began to think in terms of what should be our centers of excellence that would draw the faculty out into the community, to serve the community. You're a perfect example of that, Tom, you know. You took your interest in oral history, and you began to service the community. I think as an individual you can do that and

certainly as a faculty member you can do that. The Family Enterprise Center and the Al Burruss Institute became significant ways in which we serve the communities. Your own Center for Regional History & Culture. Those are the kinds of programs that were the collaborative that we began to take to the communities that we serve. Strong programs in music and art began to develop. I think we can see how those early four pressure points that we felt on us at the time then grew into program development, grew in change in policies, grew in the processing that we went through to arrive at the consensus building to lead us into the next decade.

TS: You've been here eighteen years now. So it's long enough that you can reflect over a fair amount of time. What are you proudest of? What do you see as your legacy—there may be a lot more to your legacy to come in the future, but now what are you proudest of that we've done?

BS: I wanted us to be in the best sense of the word an interactive university. I wanted us to be dynamic, innovative, inviting, inspiring. I thought that those terms described the college or the university of the future. I've always been very future-oriented and very receptive to change. As I read what was happening on the national scene, I wanted to bring back from the boundaries that I explored as president to put into place those things that seemed to be most important as you thought ahead. I think most presidents can look to buildings and think of that as being their finest contribution. We have had wonderful growth in buildings; but I don't think of that as the legacy. I really don't. I think of the legacy as taking a strong, young faculty and adding to it each five or six years an extraordinary new faculty and adding to that another five or six years another strong commitment. I think we have had an extraordinarily interactive eighteen years. In fact, I feel as if I've been president of three different kinds of institutions. I think that that's really self-evident.

The first five or six years of my presidency Kennesaw State was a very small college and known as a small, aspiring college. Yet at the end of 1986 we were named in *Searching for Academic Excellence* as one of the twenty top colleges on the move. That major study gave us the impetus to see that we were really moving in some new directions. We grew dramatically. Then we moved into another stage. I used to play with the words that describe those early years. In the first six or seven years I said that we would grow in size and service and stature. In the next six or seven years I said we would grow in sophistication, we would grow in selectivity of what we did, we would grow in specialization. You can almost plot that. Then our next six or seven years I think we have grown into steeples of distinction. I think it has been what we did that was innovative, what was integrative, what was inspiring, and what was interactive.

The focus has been on those things which resulted in student success; on graduate programs that are tailor-made for the cultures that we represent; on collaboration with business, with industry, with healthcare, and with all the professions. We built strong advisory boards for each department. We've come very, very close, I think, to reaching a point where our organization really is exemplary. I think we have wonderful colleges,

and the new School of the Arts is moving us in some new directions. I think the next five or six years are going to be critical. One of the things that I'm very much involved in is the importance of teaching, service, and applied research on campus.

I know this is the Year of Honoring Service. I think your college [Humanities and Social Sciences] has an extraordinary opportunity to be exemplary on the national scene. One of the ways that I think that I would recommend to all of us in your college would be that you're in the liberal tradition. It's the foundation, and the foundation should not be a collection of courses. To do that is to be pedestrian. I think Kennesaw State's faculty is so bright, so hard-working, so dedicated to personal and professional growth—I see that every day—that we ought to be about how we see connections. Connections are very important in the business of education. In fact, Mark Van Doren says that connectedness is the business of education. So I think what we can do in your college, particularly with the freshman experience—how you acquaint students when they come in with a sense of community and building a sense of identity, being mentors to students in those classes—would be an invaluable contribution to their lifelong ambitions and goals.

I think the general education program, largely driven by your college, although it has components of all the disciplines, would be a wonderful way for us to think how you build a strong sense of civic engagement. Then, finally, I most wish, philosophically, emotionally, psychologically in my own life, to [improve] the senior experience. The senior experience to me at Kennesaw could be something that is more than a class that deals with the senior major. It should deal with what meaning [this degree has] for my life. I would love to see this. This is my affirmative that we would have a senior experience program at Kennesaw State which would involve our students in such a way that they would have to make personal meaning of what they have studied and to see how it related. To me that is worthy of my energies to help people to explore the possibilities of doing that. And if you notice, all three of those are connected. The freshman experience connects you to the university, connects you to the whole experience of higher education. General education connects to the disciplines. Hopefully, we should not let that be a collection of courses. Then the senior experience, connecting that to what is your philosophy of life.

I've used often the last several weeks a quote of Carl Sandburg's. He used to say that you need to go to a rock and sit on a rock once a year and ask the questions: Who am I? Where have I been? Where am I going? My pastor at Big Canoe said the other day that he would have added a fourth point. And that would have been, Why am I here? I would love for our students, as busy as they are, as non-traditional as they are, as cumbered with much doing as they are, to be asked by us as a university, by our faculty, what does this all mean for you? Then that would be a legacy that we would give to them that would make them better leaders for tomorrow. Now, I didn't have that when I was in school. I went to a small, private, liberal arts college. I think in and of itself it was wonderful to be at that small kind of college and to have hands-on experiences and so on like that. But I didn't really have that connectedness. I think today with our kind of student who is so busy, older than the traditional, so cumbered by a lot of responsibilities,

that we owe it to them to help them see meaning more than a classroom course. Otherwise, we are simply one of many different kinds of institutions.

By that same token, that means that what do faculty do outside of teaching? You see, I think teaching is very large, a large responsibility. Teaching is not meeting a class, although we meet classes very well. I think teaching is a calling. I've always believed that. And if it is a calling, then we as teachers have an amazing ability to influence the outcome of our students if we but move into that posture. You won a Distinguished Teacher Award; you know that. You didn't get that because you're brilliant in what you know. It's because your students perceived you as being brilliant in how you made that come alive for them.

TS: Thank you.

BS: And so to me that's what brilliant teaching really is, mentoring. The service that you pay in a university is more than just being on a committee, you know. That's part of your professional [responsibility], but I want people to say, "I love this community. This is not just a little center to which I go and teach a class, but I care about this institution." This institution is a special kind of place. Being a special kind of place it's a community, frankly, where people can come and have the most wonderful dialogues about what they know and what they think and what they believe; and they can do that in the most inviting of environments. Isn't it wonderful? Of course, I'm talking about my own interests, I'm sure, and it's shared by many other faculty. A laboratory is a special place. Libraries are special places. This room [the Bentley Rare Book Gallery] is a special place. There's nothing like it in business, there's nothing like it in the professions. But the teaching profession is a special thing. To teach without being a part of a larger institution makes it much more of a factory model, doesn't it?

So to me service is not to be given just to get tenure or promotion. It's because it's part of an institutionally driven mission, but the institution is made up of a collection of faculty and staff and students, all committed to a life of learning. Anything that advances that becomes very important. Institutional service is not something that you add on; it is a part of what is the academy. Our research is not something you add on; it can be as applied as saying how can I better this course tomorrow, and how do I compare this course to that course, and what worked and what didn't? That's applied research, and it can be as involved as pure research, because we honor that as well. I don't see those as add ons to teaching. I think that's part of the wholeness of the academic experience.

TS: I like the way you explained that because I think we can get excited about teaching, get excited about scholarship, get excited about going out in the community and doing things, but it seems like institutional service just doesn't sound as exciting.

BS: Yet what would we be if we didn't have the institution? We would simply be a factory model, and I don't know very many faculty members who like that. Think back to your

own graduate experience. What did you like about it? You liked the meeting with your professor over lunch. You liked the sharing of coffee with colleagues. You liked the late night discussions. You liked the library in the closing hours. You know, you liked the hospitable inviting environment. That just doesn't happen. You have to work at that. We can't just be the beneficiaries of it without saying that that's what I do to make this special. The Student Union belongs to all of us; the library belongs to all of us; the laboratories and classrooms. Service to make it as good as it can be is not a birthright, you know. It's part of what our responsibility is to be a professional.



Betty Lentz Siegel

Interview #5

Tuesday, 19 July 2005

Kennesaw State University Oral History Project  
KSU Oral History Series, No. 25  
Interview with Betty Lentz Siegel  
Conducted by Dede Yow  
Edited and Indexed by Jan Heidrich-Rice  
Tuesday, 19 July 2005  
Location: President's Office, Kennesaw State University

DY: Where do you want to start today?

BS: [laughter]

DY: Oh, where is there to start with you? Your twenty-five year legacy? I told you I was reading that 1992 interview, and I was so touched by some of the comments that you made. One of the things that you said [is that] at your inauguration you had Dr. [Herman] Frick, who is your major professor at Florida State [University]. And you said it was like a laying on of hands.

BS: It was a laying on of hands. I think all of us need mentors. Gordon Klopf once wrote a wonderful monograph on mentors; he said that mentors are like midwives who usher in a new identity to those who are mentored. I've always loved that because it's so cordial, it seems to me, and invitational. So I think that Dr. Frick ushered in a new identity for me. I went to Florida State, and it was a wonderful time in the history of Florida State. It was known as an institution that was really on the cutting edge with work with community colleges, certainly with the work of Dr. Frick at Florida State in administration. He was one of the noted people in the Southern Association [of Colleges and Schools]. He was telling schools that they must be about integration and that the whole segregation movement needed to be discontinued with a new way of looking at inclusion brought forward. So Dr. Frick was known as a hero in the state. He would be very definitive about telling school systems, "You are not in compliance, and we will work on this idea of inclusion."

DY: Good for him.

BS: And so he created in people a sense of what is the righteous, good thing to do. I always was imbued with him as a figure of great integrity, and I wanted to be like him. He made every one of his graduate students feel as if he or she was his favorite. Well, I knew that I was his favorite, but everyone else said the same thing. They really did!

DY: I bet you were his favorite, too.

BS: Actually, I was his assistant. That was a real coup to be a graduate student and to be asked to be his assistant. I had the pleasure of sitting in on some of his sessions in which he would tap his pipe and share with me his observations. I had the best graduate experience of any student ever anywhere; I am convinced I really did because of Dr.

Frick. I would go with him on Southern Association missions in which he would study schools. It gave me an opportunity to learn the importance of accreditation and to see the importance of group thinking on long-range planning, which is the heart of any Southern Association accreditation site. We liked ourselves so much that we coined the phrase that we were “Fricksters”; we were like Dr. Frick. We wanted to be like Dr. Frick; we didn’t know that we were, but we wanted to be like him. So all over the university, certainly in the College of Education, they’d say “The Fricksters are here!” It was a group of us who were just really dedicated to the quality of his life. He was so encouraging. I remember that I went through my—not orals, but what do you call it? We had to take so many hours in social foundations and psych, and it was a critical, defining moment of whether you would get your doctorate. I remember that his words of affirmation were always so splendid; you know, “Oh, you did beautifully on the exam!” But empty affirmation is not what I was talking about. It was the inspiration of the man to want to live up to his expectations and the encouragement that he gave me.

I remember early in my career, he just pushed a book across to me and said, “You need to read this book.” It was a book called *Individual Behavior [A New Frame of Reference for Psychology]* by Art [Arthur W.] Combs. It was like Emily Dickinson says: “When you read something the top of your head feels as if it is coming off.” I read [Combs’ book] and I said, “Oh my gosh, this is exactly what I believe, and I could never articulate it.” And then it is altogether interesting that my dissertation had to do with Art Combs’ research. There are no coincidences. I applied to the University of Florida for a teaching job, and I did not know at the time that I applied nor accepted that Art Combs was on the faculty at the University of Florida. So from Dr. Frick to that book to that dissertation to Art Combs . . . And Art Combs became easily one of the best, most loving friends I ever had in my life. Of course, my research reflects the Art Combs model; all that is to say that it came from a professor. Everything that I seem to be seems to come from great teachers. When Dr. Frick had his retirement party, there were sixty of us who were doctoral students, sixty that came back.

DY: All sixty came back?

BS: Yes, sixty, and which one was asked to speak? I was asked to speak. That’s the picture [pointing to a photograph in the office] of the day that I spoke for Dr. Frick. It has a sadness to it. I’m never asked to speak about Dr. Frick. I’m going on too long, but I want you to know the dynamics.

DY: No, you’re not. You’re doing exactly what I want you to do.

BS: But Dr. Frick became quite ill, and he died; and his family asked me [to speak at the funeral]. First of all, I had asked him to come and speak at my inauguration. Of course, he did come, and you know it was like the laying on of hands. The reason that I say the laying on of hands is that when I got my doctorate at Florida State, all the doctorates are standing up, and I’m the only one glowing; I’m smiling. And when Dr. Frick put the hood on me, I just burst into radiant smile, everybody said. It was really very significant. I had painted a funny coat of arms for him, and the coat of arms depicted four different

things about his life. It was the Fricksters' Coat of Arms, and I gave it to him for my graduation present. He loved it! It showed his little car with wings on it flying down to make another trip; it showed his briefcase overflowing. Another aspect of it was his pipe and the many times that I would sit there and hear him doing all of that [tapping noise]. And I had a quill and some books showing his scholarship. He loved that, and he kept that in his office till the day he died.

DY: Those quadrants, those four . . .

BS: The four. One is the car . . .

DY: I see for you.

BS: Oh, how nice.

DY: Except the pipe. We haven't set up a pipe for you.

BS: Jellybeans!

DY: Okay. The briefcase overflowing, the car, the fact that you have put Kennesaw on the map. I mean, it's lovely.

BS: He was very proud of me, and I was proud of him. I had the pleasure of giving the main speech at the Southern Association meeting, the annual meeting, and from the podium I was speaking about leadership. He was sitting in the audience, and I mentioned him as my mentor, and he just cried; he thought it was wonderful.

DY: I bet he did.

BS: Anyway, I was asked to speak at his funeral, and I declined. I said, "Oh, Doug,"—to his son—"I cannot do it. I cannot do it." He said he understood. I just, well, now I can't even talk about it.

DY: Legacy.

BS: Right.

DY: Legacy is so . . .

BS: But I did go to the funeral. .

DY: How long ago was this?

BS: It's been about twelve years, I guess. I was an honorary pallbearer. I always regretted that I didn't do that. So there's a message in this story. On an anniversary at Florida State I was asked to speak for Dr. Frick, and I couldn't [because of a conflict]. But I wrote the big statement for them, and in it I talked about the fact that I couldn't speak at

his [funeral]. I did speak [at his retirement]. It was a big thing; out of sixty graduates they picked me to do it. I was privileged to be at his anniversary—this is an anniversary of his death—and what he had done at Florida State. So I wrote a long two-page [speech]—and I worked on them a lot—and at the end I said that when I couldn't speak at his funeral, I really regretted it. I shared it with another person who loved Dr. Frick, Mabel Jean Morrison, another wonderful graduate from Florida State. She's magnificent! Oh, she is an inspiration to me. We've been friends for a thousand years.

So I was talking to Mabel Jean about the fact that I felt so badly that I had not been able to speak at Dr. Frick's funeral, and she said, "Oh, Betty, you did the right thing. You had to grieve. It was important for you to grieve and not to forget the purpose by thinking about what you had to be saying." And I thought that was wise because I really did have to grieve. I didn't want to be "on." I didn't want to be presenting; I wanted to be feeling. So I said, "Oh, Mabel Jean, thank you. Thank you for telling me that." She forgave me, and I forgave myself. At the end of my essay, I said that Mabel Jean Morrison had helped me confront something that I had felt so badly about. I said it really quite well. [laughter] But, you know, I really worked at that! And so help me; guess who read my essay at the meeting? Mabel Jean Morrison.

DY: Oh!

BS: Don't you love it! I mean, this is very important for me because I do believe that things come around. Things are in motion, and if you are very lucky, I guess—blessed—then you begin to see how things fit.

DY: But you don't always know, do you?

BS: No!

DY: You have told a story, and it has stuck with me for all of these years. It is about your coming to Kennesaw and the fact that you all were down at the beach.

BS: Yes, I told it earlier this morning. I hadn't told it in years.

DY: Isn't that just . . .

BS: It's true!

DY: A wonderful, wonderful story!

BS: But see, again, we must be open to possibilities. We must be attentive. I have two ruling emotions in my life. This is rather a personal thing, but I really believe that, "Be still and know that I am God." That's the spiritual centeredness that I really believe in. You must be still. There's a wonderful quality of stillness. People think that I'm hyperkinetic, but I'm really still in my heart. And the other one is, "God helps those who help themselves." Well, one is from the Bible, and the other is from Benjamin Franklin. So to me, I have to constantly guard against being still and letting things happen. And the

other is thinking I've got to take charge, you know. I've got to be involved; I've got to be in a sense of place and to be vital and to be active. So when I am asked to be reflective in moments like this, it always prompts me to be still and to let the voice that is compelling me to be honest. That can be a flaw, I'm sure! I'm sure people will see it as, "Oh, my goodness. Why be so self-disclosing?" But I also worked with colleagues in the field of self-disclosure who say, "When you are disclosing, you are at your most vulnerable." People can either treat it badly or accept [it], and you never how it's going to be perceived. But transparency is a new term in business, a new term in leadership. So when you talk about transparency, it is owning whom you are and then moving in the direction [so] that people will not treat you badly. I did an interview for PBS this morning—it was very interesting. I thought she did a beautiful job of asking me the right questions, and I went on and on and on. But I do believe in lifespan development. I believe in [Erik] Erikson's stages of life.

DY: Yes. I want you to talk about that a little bit.

BS: When I think in terms of Erikson . . . I use it [Erikson's Eight Stages of Psychosocial Development] today because I think it's important for us to know that each age, someone has said, is a dream that is dying or one that is coming to birth. You'll find strands in my writing and in my speaking, and it is that there are periods of life in which you can go in some new direction. In the interim time in which you are seeking new directions, you are at your most vulnerable.

DY: Right, right. The transition stages.

BS: Exactly; the transitional stages. But it's like *Gift from the Sea*. I used to quote that all the time from Anne Morrow Lindbergh, in which she said that if you're a sea animal that lives in a shell, that when you reach a certain stage, you have to leave your outgrown shell. When you leave your outgrown shell, you are at your most vulnerable; but it's the mercy of currents and eddies that would take you away from where you need to go. You're at the mercy of some animal that would feast on you. But then she says that you could never go to a more commodious shell until you leave your outgrown shell. Well, that's a phenomenon of life. So I become much more thoughtful, philosophical—and I use the term spiritual, I think "being of spirit." You'll find that in my writing now and in my thinking and in my speaking.

DY: And in your teaching.

BS: And, interestingly, I find it the thing that most people relate best to me when I'm speaking. People sort of probably think this is self-serving, but I love it when someone asks me to speak. Now I don't often love the day that I have to speak. It comes at the wrong time; I'm not feeling good. It's been a horrible day; there have been forces that I have no control over. But the minute that I begin to interact with a class or an audience or whatever, it's a phenomena that I have found works to make me feel happy. I will simply say to myself, "Love the audience; they don't expect to see you in a bad mood. Love your class; they didn't put up with your bad day. Just go in there and love them."

- DY: That's right. That's a good philosophy for every time you walk into the classroom.
- BS: Then I say to myself, "I'm going to ask them to come walk with me." And I can tell when the audience wants to walk with me. When they do, it's a combination of the class being in sync; we're hearing each others' voices. Their voices are shown to me by their body language, their receptivity, by what they do. An audience, a class, can tell you, "Go on." Or they can tell you, "I'm not there yet." So I've learned to read that and to grow from it. So I come away from those sessions growing; it makes me feel good that someone is in dialogue. I love conversations; I love dialogues. I love across disciplines, and so I think that's been reflected in my interest in the university, in the faculty as a group. Every president has faculty members that may not agree with the president, but I've always found that when I visit with faculty and get to know them, I really empathize with them and see where they're coming from. Because I really am a faculty member.
- DY: You always have been.
- BS: I went back to the University of Florida last week for a meeting with the dean of the College of Education. She accompanied me up to my old office. I was there in '67, on the third floor 312.
- DY: Oh, boy! A trip down memory lane!
- BS: Right. I went down memory lane to my old office, and it was no bigger than this couch to that end of the table. That's where I began. No window. And I saw myself as an absolute learner right there. It was as if years just rolled away. I left my door open all the time so that somebody could come by and I could talk to them. [laughter]
- DY: Because you mentioned University of Florida . . . We are talking about mentors and those who shape our lives or helped us shape our own lives. Something that you said, this was in 1992, you mentioned E.T. York.
- BS: E.T. York is truly one of the giants in my life. There are just some people who are the essence of integrity. Dr. Frick was one, and Dr. York is one. When I became a dean at the University of Florida, I looked for role models. I looked everywhere. Who would be my role model? It was a time in the 1970s of great growth. You know, people were building kingdoms and that sort of thing. E.T. York was a rock of integrity. He became the acting interim president when President [Stephen C.] O'Connell retired. He was a vital figure at the University of Florida; then he became a chancellor of the State University System [of Florida]. So he is what I would want to be in education. We see him all the time.
- DY: He is what you became, or he is what you helped this institution to become.
- BS: Well, I learned from him, see. He was my mentor at the University of Florida. He early involved me in one of the most important procedures that happened at the University of Florida. He coined this phrase, "Focusing its resources on solutions for tomorrow." He

moved the entire university into a program of extraordinary outreach to the communities. Everything I learned was about that. He mentored me on outreach, and he inspired me by his capacity to bring people together. I was Dean of Academic Affairs, and during my tenure there he asked me to take over the development of the affirmative action plan for our university.

DY: Oh, I didn't know that.

BS: Yes. Nobody knows that.

DY: I didn't know that.

BS: If you're wondering about my interest in diversity, it came because I wrote—with a lot of help, of course—but I wrote the affirmative action plan for the University of Florida. How about that? So when people think that I am pushing diversity, they don't understand. To move the University of Florida in the direction that was the sanction of the president that we were going to make the University of Florida have an affirmative action plan and live with it. Dr. York was my mentor. He asked me to lead it up so I did it. I'm proud of that, and nobody ever asks me about it.

DY: You should be proud of that.

BS: I really am. You know what I'm talking about; University of Florida was a flagship university. To be a dean at the same time and to do that at the same time—it took a year. It was the hardest year of my life. I was dean, and I was also director of affirmative action. Well, we did it. It was approved by the university, and it was approved by York. It was approved all the way up and down, approved by Washington. We did it!

DY: I want to quote you something you said in 1992. I wrote these down; they struck me as such gems. This is what you said about E.T. York: "What I learned from him is that an institution that is cloistered would not be an institution of the future."

BS: Well, that's true. That's exactly what he thought. We had to be involved with the community. The "View of the Future" did this; I didn't direct it. You know I didn't get in the "View of the Future"—the first one. They had to do it on their own, but they came up with it.

DY: You didn't have any administrators. Faculty only.

BS: Faculty only. Absolutely. And they came up with the idea that we should ask, "What is the community that we serve? What are the communities that we serve?" So that just opened up the whole door for all of us to be involved in external affairs. And I learned that from York. It was wonderful. I saw him on vacation. In fact, he invited me to come over to the University of Florida to meet with the dean of the College of Education, so our friendship continues on.

DY: And you keep going back and touching where you came before.



BS: Always. Always. We are where we were. I do that with every university that I've been in. I go back to Cumberland College religiously. My uncle was a president there, my great-uncle [Lloyd Creech].

DY: The longest serving until James Boswell, right?

BS: Yes. Thank you for knowing that. He was a mentor. I've had the best mentors in the world. Dr. Boswell mentored me as a student. He was at my inauguration. I always come back and loop up. I don't lose friends, I'm glad to say.

DY: Yes, that's important. One of the things I want to hear you talk about is an overview of what you see as your legacy.

BS: At the university?

DY: Yes.

BS: There are strands that I like to think have been evident. I've been fascinated by the idea that we should be operating like a residential college even when we were not.

DY: Yes.

BS: And so to do that, I felt that we had to resonate with a way of looking at students' success that would be more than a collection of courses. Now those are all terms you've heard me say a hundred times. We could have played out a good script, educating students, giving them degrees, giving them an opportunity to better their lives, but I always wanted us to act like a residential campus. I did. I wanted us to care about students outside of class as well as inside of class. So when we began to move into student success and the First Year Experience, we had detractors. People thought it was just a diversion or that it wasn't important. And I think, "God love all those people who helped us in that early opportunity to see the rightness of that." I think of Cary [Carol L.] Turner and . . .

DY: [G.] Ruth Hepler.

BS: Ruth Hepler, Nancy [S.] King, and others who never lost sight. Hugh [C.] Hunt, [Jr.], Bowman [O.] Davis, [Jr.]; the list goes on. I'm leaving people out, but you know the point I'm trying to make.

DY: Yes, I do.

BS: Believers, who believed in the importance of teaching, and then saw how important it was for us to have out-of-class experiences with our students. So the First Year Experience was designed for success. Now to see us be one of the top twelve colleges in the country for what we're doing, that pleases me; that really pleases me.

DY: Indeed it should. And the fact that we now have the University College.

BS: Exactly. University College. University College is a dream!

DY: And we have this manifested in our curriculum.

BS: Yes. That's the legacy. Please don't think of this as being vainglorious, it's just that these are the things that I'd like to be remembered for. Now other people may say, "You didn't get it," or whatever.

DY: Oh, I think you've gotten these.

BS: Well, I think our diversity grows; I really do. I think that the opportunities to work with staff, they've been so wonderful. The leadership programs that we have for staff, the way that we've worked with CETL. Diversity is also a part of what I think is faculty support. Now, I may not do everything that the faculty would want me to do. I wish I could. But then again, I have been a proponent of faculty, and CETL is an example of that. We have poured a lot of effort into the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

DY: It's wonderful. And I am the CETL Faculty Fellow for Diversity in the Curriculum now!

BS: Yes!

DY: For three years I have it!

BS: Wonderful!

DY: Oh, you should see the programs I've got lined up.

BS: I'm not surprised! And I'm delighted that you're doing that.

DY: I know. Such a great legacy.

BS: That's a marvelous legacy to me because it involves how we will think of teaching. The Lee [S.] Shulman model—you know, scholarship reconsidered. And Ernest [L.] Boyer. Those are all things I'm proud of; I'm proud of the people that I've brought in as advisors. When I brought in Ernest Boyer, I listened to him. I listened to Art [Arthur] Levine; I listened very carefully to Howard Gardner. I listened very carefully to Lee Shulman and Charlie [Charles] Glassick. These are all people who were my heroes and they've taught me. George Keller taught me about strategic thinking. So I've learned from them.

DY: And Gordon early on.

BS: And Gordon Klopf, of course. Oh, dear Gordon.

DY: He did Leadership Kennesaw with us.

BS: Yes, he did. And so I think in terms of what we've done for the culture of the faculty, and then I like to think of what we've done for the culture of leadership for the staff. Our leadership programs for faculty, staff, and students—these are leadership programs that take every one of us to another level of accomplishment. I like to think that the International [Center] has been a legacy. I think the strong energy that's been poured into International defines our university now, and the institute that we have is a marvelous accompaniment to all the years of laboring and putting resources and attention into that.

DY: That has come back; it has come back.

BS: And I'm very proud of what we've done in athletics. To move so dramatically. The theme that I like about athletics [is] we used the theme where athletics and academics are teammates. I've always believed academics and athletics can be teammates. One doesn't wag the dog, but it's got to be part of the whole spirit of the campus. Another thing that I am very proud of, and I think will really continue on, is the concept of community service—the social compact. We're not there yet. I wish we were; I wish we could absolutely identify engagement outside of class in part of all of our general education courses. I would like for our students to have a real commitment to seeing education in action. And I'm not talking about going to work on a Habitat for Humanity [house] as much as I am talking about what is the importance that drives you to do that. How does it come back to help you in the academics, and how does academics help you to do that? You liked the statement that I read at commencement, didn't you, that [my son] David [Siegel] did on Habitat for Humanity? It was good, wasn't it?

DY: Yes, yes. The commencement was very moving.

BS: Thank you.

DY: That was when you made the announcement that you would retire. It was done so beautifully, telling a story like you always tell a story. The passport metaphor.

BS: Yes. I use the passport, the passport to life. But my son had written an article on the Habitat for Humanity that I had helped build. I didn't read it at that commencement, but I did read it at the commencement before. He talked about what you learn by watching people, what you learn from the example of service. All the women administrators joined me, and we built this Habitat for Humanity [home]. So he was watching the day that we dedicated it, and [wrote such] beautiful prose: "I didn't take my hammer to work there; I didn't do the drywall." But what he was saying is that being around people who did that helped him to find his ideal life; his ideal was what he learned from that. It was just so beautiful. Nancy King was crying; she thought it was so well done. "I drink from a well I didn't dig," I used to say; and the same thing with that Habitat for Humanity.

I didn't know that my son would be so profoundly moved by just going to that ceremony, but he was. So you never know how you cast your influence. To me, I really want us to be involved in community service, not because it is a cute activity to be used in a class,

but because you [give] something back. And the legacy, of course, that I am most interested in now is the assigning of meaning. What do we do to assign meaning? So this thrust of ethical leadership, I think, could be, should be, a defining aspect of our university.

DY: I'm glad to hear that. And that's where you're going to be teaching and working.

BS: Exactly. We've had so many faculty members who have gone through the MayMester, in which they've looked at ethics across the curriculum. We're doing wonderful work with the summit meetings that we have on ethical leadership. Then there is the Oxford experience that we're going to be having in which we're going to be working with presidents all over the country. They'll come and join us at Oxford [to look at] how we transform our universities into being places of meaning. I'm very happy with that. Next May the institution will be leading a program at Oxford in which business people, government people, non-profit people, and university presidents will all work together on how we work for a sustainable society. These are high-level conferences.

The first one this year is going to be in Oxford. It's going to be for a small group of presidents to talk about how we use self as instrument for the transformation of higher education. It'll be through Global Ethics. So we're going to be doing the think tank, and John Hume from Northern Ireland—the peacemaker [recipient of the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize]—is going to be with us along with Frances Hesselbein. Howard Gardner. These are people of distinction who are going to be working with a group of about ten or fifteen presidents. We're going to hammer out a manifesto, a declaration of what we believe about why institutions should be places of meaning. And then next year we'll take that into how we work together to make society become thinking about that. So these are very important discussions. On Saturday I'll be involved in a program that, frankly, I initiated, on spirituality of leadership. It's going to be at a national meeting in Montreal, and twenty-something presidents will be talking together about that. So these are all strands of a web or a honeycomb. It's how they all are related. They're all related; they're in alignment. What we try to find is how do we align them and give them support and recruit and enroll others in the vision? But this vision is not my vision. I cast out a net several years ago and asked, "Who [on the faculty] wants to join me? We're talking about servant leadership. Anybody want to join me?" Dozens of people wanted to join me. They came and we worked through servant leadership. At another time, I said, "Who's interested in ethics around here? Anybody?" I visited some faculty, and I said, "Y'all are doing this in ethics and I didn't know it?" I went to another department and I said, "You are doing this in ethics?" So then I just sent an e-mail out: "Anybody interested in ethics come join me."

That's how the center got started and then how it became an institute, [RTM Institute for Leadership, Ethics & Character]. This is not Siegel's Folly. This came through layers and layers and layers, and then we had these courageous conversations this year. I'm very proud of dialogues that we started at this university, the courageous conversations. Last year in our strategic planning I had what we called courageous conversations with fifteen community groups. I met with legislators; it's all part of our master planning.

They told me what the campus should be known for, what it was known for—wonderful dialogues. I met with all the faculty in ten-year increments, the faculty that came.

DY: Oh, the cohort groups.

BS: The cohort groups.

DY: I read those. That's fascinating.

BS: That's very good stuff. Cohort groups of students, cohort groups of faculty, cohort groups of alumni—all these were just last year in our annual planning. It's just been amazing. And then to add to all that, certainly [I'd include] my dialogues with the students. I did sleepovers with the students, in housing. From that we got extraordinary information about what students really believe about our campus. So we've got all these courageous conversations, and it started off with me reading this section in a book on *Leader to Leader*, Frances Hesselbein.

DY: Who's the author?

BS: David Whyte; he's a poet-writer.

DY: Oh, he's coming to speak here. Oh, I'm so excited! Yes!

BS: Yes! And he wrote this article on courageous conversations. He said you have to have five courageous conversations if you're doing any thinking and planning. The first one should be with the future; so I like to think that at Kennesaw, we're futuristic. Then the second one was that you must have a courageous conversation with your team. So we've been doing courageous conversations and asking, "What if? What if?" That's how we got general education, general college. We simply said, "What if we were to just have a general college right now? University College?" And then before we got up from the table, we had the framework. Then, of course, it had to be incorporated into the warp and fibre of the campus, but it is. It started with a "what if" question. And then the third one was courageous conversations with your clients. And that's why I went to do a sleepover with the students. I wanted to see what our clients were saying—not only with our students in the housing, but with all students everywhere . . . just a year of doing that.

Then the next one was courageous conversation across disciplines. So that's what we've been doing with different groups on the campus; groups with staff, and we did this with all the deans. What is a courageous conversation? They had to learn from each other. Then the last one was a courageous conversation with yourself. I'm taking my own team on a retreat in the mountains, and we will be talking about, "What do we say to ourselves? What is it that we need to be saying to ourselves?" And I'm asking them to walk with me as I explore my own inner life and for them to explore their inner lives. Some people may get it; some people won't. But we're going through a serious statement with Judy [Judith M.] Stillion leading us on meaningful aging. It's a beautiful

example. We came up with a statement of what we really value; what is true happiness—the happiness indicator. It was fascinating. It was one of the best things I've ever done.

DY: What came up?

BS: Oh, everything! We had as many deans as could be there with us and my own team. You can do the test on Web, and it was great! So we know what our happiness quotient is, and so when we go on retreat, we are going to take that which we learned. Again, Dede, it's layering. You layer the cognitive; you layer the emotional; you layer the why, the what, the how.

DY: The cognitive, the emotional, and the spiritual.

BS: Exactly. So you layer. I like the term layer because it's implicit. When you think in terms of a mountain, it builds through the layering that you do.

DY: And it's not hierarchical.

BS: It sounds hierarchical. But it's not; it's not.

DY: No, it's not.

BS: It's building. You're building on the foundations, and you're constantly building on foundation. You cannot build on sandy soil; you've got to build on strength. And I think that's what we're doing. What I'm so excited about at this stage in my life is [the] extraordinary excitement that comes from planning that is going somewhere. You see how things begin to fit, and then once you get that thinking in order, and you layer and layer and layer, then you're building the foundation that you want. So the foundation that I see is that we're poised; we're ready for the next step.

DY: Here's my question.

BS: What?

DY: Where do you want to see us go?

BS: As president, I really want us to take the founding layers that we've got and take them into—what would be the term? Not just excellence; I think we're already there. Artful execution. You can be intentional about it; you can be planning it. But to me to be artful means you do it with grace.

DY: Yes! It becomes aesthetic as well as being a foundation.

BS: And aesthetic is not just being artistic, but it's artfully inviting, artfully—what would be a better term?

DY: I don't know. I know the concept that you're thinking about, or at least I think I do.

BS: Well, again, we used this thing very early, three or four years ago: Success to significance. But that was predicated on the fact that we were very successful. How do we move toward significance? So to me significance is making a difference. When we [dedicated] the Remembrance Rock out there [outside Kennesaw Hall]; I used the idea from [Carl] Sandburg, and I've used it over and over and over again in my thinking. We must go to the Remembrance Rock and ask, "Who am I? Where do I come from? Where am I going?" Those are the questions that Sandburg asked. My minister at Big Canoe in a sermon that just pleased me so said, "You should have asked the fourth question, which is 'what is the meaning?'" Then I've been playing with that. And I'll add the fifth question: "How do I matter?" So to me I want us to be a university that matters, not just for what we have taught [our students], but for how we have taught them to live the good life. The good life is a life of service, not a life of self-aggrandizement, not a life of possessions. Now, that sounds so idealistic. Oh, yawn, this is just another philosophical [statement]. It isn't. If we ever, as leaders, stop talking about meaning, then we need to hang it up.

DY: I agree.

BS: We really do. When we're teaching, when we forget to think about "What does it matter? What does my teaching matter?"—if I don't believe that, then Parker Palmer would not be on my plate. Parker Palmer tells us we must have the courage to teach. It's not just *what* we teach but *how* we teach and what we believe about teaching. See, those to me are very critical questions. These are the questions that we as academics ought to be asking. When we ask what new program do we need, what's in it for students, not what's in it for faculty? What's in it for the institution? I'm all over the field in my answers, but maybe you can make some sense out of it.

DY: It's making a lot of sense. And the fact is, when you came in to this institution, this institution was very insulated.

BS: Yes, it was.

DY: I came a year after you came, so I missed your inauguration. I hate that! However, the changes that you made in this institution, that you instituted . . . They had no formal tenure and promotion system.

BS: Oh!!

DY: I know; I know! You just sort of groan "What can I possibly do?"

BS: We didn't have any departments.

DY: Didn't have any departments. Literally, there were no departments. There were divisions; we had no departments. You had to make some hard decisions along the way. You had to fire some people.

BS: Yes.

DY: You had to make some changes that were important and that showed that you could do that. Of course, you are this wonderful and warm and open person who can do what needs to be done and do that smiling.

BS: I have my detractors.

DY: When you look out at the physical campus . . . There's a wonderful piece in that 1992 interview. You're riding along with Spec Landrum. You look out and you see a field, and you say, "I wish there were students out there playing Frisbee. That's what I want to see!" It just touched me so. And now they're not only playing Frisbee, they're playing lots of other things.

BS: [laughter] Athletics. Oh my gosh.

DY: And we want a football team.

BS: Oh, yes.

DY: We've got our resident halls; we've got our University College in place.

BS: But there are always detractors, you know.

DY: That comes with the territory.

BS: It does; it does.

DY: You can't deal with a much more cantankerous bunch than faculty. And that's what you want, too. I mean, ideas, energy, opposition—so that you think through it.

BS: [chuckle] I would hope that with the aging of the professoriate that the new faculty and the existing faculty would want to believe in a sense of place. I would really like to have our students have the most dynamic, vital, out-of-class experiences with their faculty. What I've found [is that] every one of the great teachers of my life has been one who gave something outside the class—some sense of camaraderie. I can remember just sitting and watching Dr. Frick as he interacted with other faculty. My office was next to his as I was his assistant. So he'd say, "Betty, come in. Let's have a cup of coffee." Those moments—my goodness! That's where I learned the best.

[With] E.T. York, my best experiences were when we would be talking over coffee about the university. With my own graduate students, I can guarantee you that they would say their best experiences with me were not when I was analyzing their doctoral dissertation. That's what we ought to pass on. When we don't have office hours and when we don't have time for students and when we don't meet them out of class . . . or if we do the classes on our own level without thinking about [their needs], then we would be remiss. Our university is better than that. I think our faculty are better than that.



DY: Oh, I agree. I think there are issues of integrity here, too.

BS: Exactly. It's called academic citizenship, okay? Institutional citizenship.

DY: Oh, that's a wonderful term.

BS: It's academic citizenship. I gave a talk very, very early in my career, and dear Ruth Hepler affirmed me. I can remember her affirmation on that speech. It was a retreat that first year—maybe it was the second year—and I talked about a hierarchy that I thought we ought to be about. I said, “We should care. Knowledge is everywhere.” So I built a little pyramid, and I said, “Caring is the bottom line.” I remember quoting, I think it was Harry Emerson Fosdick: “You may not love everyone, but you can give them unconditional, positive regard.” I haven't used that expression in a long, long time, but I can remember doing it that day at a retreat. I said, “You should care about the institution; care about your colleagues; care about your students. Caring is the bottom line after knowledge.”

It's still a pretty interesting hierarchy. I'll give it to you very quickly if I can remember it. The second line is respect, and respect is that all people are able, viable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.” So that became diversity and inclusion and different ways of teaching. The third level was success. “How do we use pedagogy—understand how you grade and how you teach and how you select materials?” So success is the pedagogy. And then from that comes another hierarchy, and that is recognition: “I see you; I am aware of you.” It's a level up from just success. “I picked some of the things that I really recognize that you are best at.” The university must recognize accomplishments.

And the next level is to validate. To give recognition is one thing, but to validate by your approval, by financial rewards, and by other rewards. And then I move into a psychosocial dimension, and I love this. We've worked on this for a long, long time; nobody's heard me preach it except that one time: We must help ourselves and others to assert, to invest, and to cope, and the highest, next level is to relate. So we have to teach people how to assert and to not be killers. To cope, that's self-evident. To invest: “I'm not just passing through.”

I heard a man say the other day from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities—I love this! He said, “At some universities a faculty member will think that they were separated at birth; they were the ones who were supposed to go to Harvard, yet they ended up at this university.” And I think we've got to get over that. It is to invest in this place.

DY: I think we're over it.

BS: Oh, I hope so.

DY: I think we're over it. I think we've been over it for ten years.

BS: I hope so. But I still have some people that I think feel that way.

DY: Maybe they do, and they haven't found their place.

BS: Yes. Then the next level, to relate, means relationships. It's always about relationships. It's very difficult to do, but that's what we're doing. And then the last level is celebration. Celebration. I think that's pretty wise—that a university must be a caring institution, and it must respect differences. It must create success opportunities; it must recognize excellence and validate it, affirm it. And then finally the individual learns and the institution learns to invest and cope and relate and to assert. To assert means not to kill, but to be assertive. Not to—what's the opposite of assert? Not to be combative but to be assertive.

DY: Well, the opposite of assert is to withdraw.

BS: Withdraw, sure. Engaged, of course.

DY: Engaged, yes.

BS: To assert, to be engaged. So I still think that's a pretty interesting hierarchy.

DY: Where do you think we are?

BS: Ahhh.

DY: Do you think we're at celebration?

BS: No, not yet.

DY: You don't.

BS: No.

DY: We're still relating?

BS: I think we're very far along in what I would perceive as a hierarchy, but I think the one thing we need to be more assiduously working at is the commitment to the common good—preparing our students to be socially responsible, community based, and professional. I want them to go out with a sense of social mission. How are we going to have a better world unless we really have people prepared to do that? Civically engaged. Civically and responsibly engaged leaders. I think we do pretty well, but it hasn't permeated our university.

DY: It hasn't permeated our culture either.

BS: Right. It needs to.

DY: We're perhaps where we should be in terms of where our own culture is in this country.

BS: Exactly. Sure. We've got to be globally responsible people.

DY: Of course we do.

BS: Civically engaged. You can't be socially responsible if you're just intellectually responsible. You have to be committed; you have to have some action. If I had my druthers, I would have all of our leadership programs involved in a service component. Certainly we're getting there, but I would have every one of our students in general education doing something in which they had to learn from their experience.

DY: There's no reason why we can't do that.

BS: I don't think there is either.

DY: There are many, many ways to implement civic engagement that have intellectual integrity.

BS: Exactly. But it's going to take some work. Faculty members and administrators are going to have to work hard to make that happen. You see what we did with the Institute for Leadership, Ethics and Character [ILEC]. In four years it's become a remarkable thing—social learning, self-learning, integrated learning. We've had a lot of people who went through the program, but I don't see it as much as I would like. I think our university could become known as one engaged with the communities that we serve. We're engaged with the colleges. I would like to see every one of these students, as a part of what they're learning in class, going out and seeing what it's like to make a difference.

DY: I would, too. That's what we want our children to do.

BS: I know. Sure.

DY: And, of course, that's what we want our students to do. I think that your paradigm—caring, respect, success, and recognition—can work with students, too. One of the things that I think has always been interesting to people who know you, to those of us who've worked with you, is that you've come in as the first woman president in our system, and you have served the longest, have you not, in this university system?

BS: [chuckle] Yes.

DY: I read in an earlier interview—and I agree totally with you—that gender finally does not make that much difference. You have very sensitive, caring men; and you can have regressive women or uncaring women.

BS: Of course.

DY: But tell me if you think it's fair to ask [about] the changing role of women on our campus since you have come here.

BS: Well, one of the things that we have been very proud of is trying to have diversity that's not just color or religion, but gender and all aspects of difference. I think we've done wonderfully well with our recruitment and with our encouragement. So, to me, I think that what we're looking for is a leadership that transcends differences, that honors differences. It's not a man or woman way of leadership, or an African-American or Caucasian way of leadership, it's leadership that's basic. We're heading in that direction all over the country, all over the world. Leadership cannot be control and command. I used that today in another talk. But command and control—you can't make people do things.

DY: No, you can't.

BS: All you can do is just invite them to do what we think is in the best interests of our society and of our institutions and so on. The mentors in my life have been men, except in my own family. People don't understand this, but in a different time and a different place, I didn't have a single woman professor at Wake Forest [University]. Never. I didn't have a single woman professor at Chapel Hill when I got my master's. At Florida State I had some seminars in which men and women shared [the teaching], but I never had a single class under a single woman professor. I'm sure they were there. I'm just saying that in my doctorate and post-doctorate, I did not have a single woman professor.

DY: I'm hearing the same thing with these distinguished faculty interviews, even in talking to women in disciplines that were women-friendly.

BS: Exactly.

DY: Nancy Zumoff said she's had a schizophrenic existence because she's a mathematician.

BS: I know that. Think about it. So to me, when you talk about if there's a difference in men's and women's leadership—I had no role models. Where would I have gotten one? I had no women leaders.

DY: Grandmother. Your mother.

BS: I go back always to my mother, my grandmother, my great-grandmother

DY: But not in the world.

BS: Not in the academic world. When I first came, everybody made so much of the fact that I was a woman president. I thought it was curious. I said early on that I would hope to see the day in which I'm not known as the woman president but as a president who happens to be a woman.

DY: Yes. That's what southern writers have been saying for a long time.

BS: Yes! Well, women have been saying it for a long time!

DY: Women have been saying it!

BS: I went to a Pearl Cleage play last night [*Flyin' West*] about pioneering women. It is superb!

DY: Is it?

BS: Oh! She is so good! It's a wonderful play! And they gave out five awards last night to pioneering women. I got one! [laughter] I did last night.

DY: Congratulations!

BS: Isn't that neat?! The Alliance Theater did this big program.

DY: Oh, the Black Arts Festival?

BS: Kenny Leon had a big program last night, and [actress] Phylicia Rashad got one of the awards. Shirley Franklin and I and . . . .

DY: Isn't she wonderful?!

BS: She's fabulous. And the other woman; she's won four Tony Awards—a good-looking African-American woman. Why can I not remember her name? She played in *Aida*. She's a great singer.

DY: Now, when they said that you were a pioneer, how were you a pioneer?

BS: They saw it as a woman leader in higher education.

DY: Yes. Given our conversation, that's really what I was thinking. But how do you see it?

BS: Pioneer?

DY: Yes. It's a very interesting term, isn't it, to you?

BS: Well, a pioneer to me [refers to those who] set out for uncertainty; the way was uncharted for them. So to be one of the first women in the Southeast to be named a president of a state college—I would have that title of the first woman, but another colleague from Longwood [University], Jan Greenwood, took her job two months earlier than I did. So the two of us were the first women in state colleges in the South. That was an early distinction. So uncharted.

DY: And not necessarily hospitable territory.

BS: Exactly. Fortunately, I have been nearsighted all my life, so I didn't see it.

DY: [laughter]

BS: No, I'm serious. I have not seen slights, and I'm sure they must have been there. When I was named dean at the University of Florida—the first woman dean there and the first woman dean at Western Carolina—the president had a black tie party for me and for another dean who was a man. My husband and I stood in the receiving line, and everybody thought he was the dean.

DY: Of course.

BS: So you know . . . that kind of gets you.

DY: [laughter]

BS: It's very interesting. But one goes on. [chuckle]

DY: You tell a story, too, about when you were the only woman in a seminar, in a group, and he said, "Somebody here is going to take notes, and it's not going to be Betty."

BS: That was Art Combs. Art Combs said that to me. I was the first woman in this department ever; it was a large department at the University of Florida. Art Combs was a section chief, and he said, "Betty will not take notes. You will not take them." I loved him! [chuckle]

DY: You've been talking all along about my first question or topic here, which was mentoring. We're talking about legacy, too. So what is going to be your legacy of mentoring? How are you going to continue your mentoring?

BS: Well, one of the things that I really want to do as I step down . . . People asked me why I wanted to step down in January or February. I think it is important for people to know that I am so wedded to generativity that I really thought that I would be sad whenever I stepped down from the presidency if I stepped down and went on summer vacation. Does that make sense?

DY: It sure does!

BS: It doesn't to anybody else except you. Everybody else is, "Why are you doing this?"

DY: It sure does.

BS: I said, "Because I don't want to go into vacation. I want to keep generative." So I said, "I am going to go do something very exciting intellectually, from one intellectually exciting thing to another intellectually exciting thing." As the chancellor has pointed out, I have to stay until another president is appointed. If the new president doesn't come in January, I have to be here. I agreed to that; I thought that was wonderful. I want to do it. It's important for me to do it that way.

DY: It's important for us, too.

BS: So I will go on to something exciting, and then I will have a summer vacation, and I'll really love it. Then I will go to another university and be a Scholar-in-Residence; I will do that for a semester. I want to do it. Perhaps to FSU—

DY: Wouldn't that be fabulous?!

BS: Actually, I think it would be wonderful to be someone that people might come to and say, "Tell me about women leadership, and tell me about this." Or, "What do you think about that? How did you do that?" Wouldn't that be fun?

DY: Oh, yes. That's Erikson's eighth stage: Wisdom

BS: Wisdom. So I'd like to be a Wise-Person-in-Residence.

DY: Wise Woman-in-Residence.

BS: Exactly. Wintering into wisdom. And one of the things that I've loved is the fact that you can winter into wisdom; you've heard me talk about that. My husband is a really avid scholar in Beowulf, and we had a Beowulf conference here. His professor, Alfred David, was a colleague of Seamus Heaney in the translation of the Beowulf. So they asked Alfred David to come, and Joel [Siegel] got to introduce Alfred David at the conference. Wonderful, wonderful. And Joel was like an avid graduate student all over again. At the end, I asked Alfred David to inscribe the book—the poem. He took a long time thinking, and then he wrote this down: "Be true to your values. This I tell you from one who has wintered into wisdom." Good! So I developed a new group of colleagues, and they're the Wintering into Wisdom Group. I love it!

DY: I love that alliteration!

BS: There are about thirty-five or forty community people that I absolutely adore, and we meet every semester to do something that helps us to understand our wisdom. They are all the wisest friends I've ever had, and they will tell you that they're called the Wintering into Wisdom Group. Neat. So I want to winter into wisdom. We have a new program on sages, and so I'll join that group, good Lord willing, as a sage. I want to teach in the doctorate, and the doctorate is going to be the legacy. I want us to have a doctorate.

DY: I want us to, too.

BS: Yes. That's another part of the legacy.

DY: When do you see that coming?

BS: Oh, I think next year. The doctorate is there. I mean, we've already got it ready to go down [to the Board of Regents].

DY: I thought it was ready to go.

BS: It's ready to go. And we've been given approval to do it.

DY: So you will come back?

BS: And teach in the doctorate and work with the institute. You know that I have a chair endowed in my honor.

DY: Yes, I do.

BS: Good Lord willing. One never knows, does one?

DY: No, no.

BS: Yesterday I got a call, and one of my friends said, "We're going to have to put—the person will remain unnamed—in a nursing home. She is really failing dramatically." He left that message on my answering machine, and then I called this afternoon about an hour ago, and he said, "Oh, she's up; she's fine. We're not going to have to take her to the nursing home. It's fine." You know, in a moment—in a day, an hour, a week—life changes.

DY: Yes, life can change irrevocably.

BS: So the important thing is to live life well as long as you can. These are not trite statements, are they? People really resonate, it seems to me, to the fact that all we have is time; what we don't [focus on] is what to do with it. So what I want to do is to be as generative as I can for as long as I can. Everybody should. I can't imagine a life of quiet desperation, as Thoreau says. I don't want it to be.

DY: That most men live, right?!

BS: But as long as you have health, you ought not to complain about much.

DY: How true that is.

BS: I really believe that.

DY: And Thoreau does say that. "Give me a day when I can walk out and I can feel the sun."

BS: Yes, sure.

DY: Something you said, and I said it in my own class today. . .

BS: What was that?

DY: We were doing poetry, and you said, "We have to have storytellers."



BS: Oh, I do think so. I collect storytellers, Native American storytellers; I have for years. I don't like jokes. I don't tell jokes, nor can I listen to jokes; but I love stories. That's very southern, very mountain, isn't it?

DY: Oh, it is.

BS: Another project that I want to be working on—and I've been working on this project for years in my thinking and not done it—and it's on "Mountain Women: Vein of Iron." I've called five universities; I've called Eastern Kentucky [University], Morehead [State University], Cumberland College, Western Carolina [University], and Appalachian [State University]. And Kennesaw. I want us to come together as a collaborative and to share our wisdom on mountain women. I want to do this in connection with Northern Ireland, University of Ulster. They have a Scotch-Irish Center on Appalachian Studies. Each one of those presidents is sending me a list of the people on their campus who are involved in Appalachian studies. I want them to help me. I want to get a scholar from each one of those universities, and I want them to come together for us to plan this conference on "Mountain Women: Vein of Iron."

DY: Oh, that's beautiful!

BS: Western has an art show; Cumberland has a museum. Eastern Kentucky has an exhibit, and Morehead has a crafts program. Cumberland has Jean Ritchie, the great singer. I think it would be fascinating, don't you?

DY: There's our literary person, Lee Smith. *Black Mountain Breakdown*.

BS: Lee Smith. *Fair and Tender Ladies*. Mary Hood. Got it?

DY: Yes. Well, I better see if I have any more questions. Let me just ask this. Could you run down a list of significant changes that have occurred?

BS: Significant changes that have occurred at Kennesaw?

DY: Yes.

BS: Goodness. Well, I go back to something that I've said before—that I feel as if I've been president of five different kinds of colleges. The first five years we grew in size and stature and service.

DY: I remember that.

BS: The second five years we grew in selectivity and sophistication and specialization. The next five years we grew into steeples of distinction. So I feel as though I've been president of five different kinds of colleges.

DY: What kind are we now?

BS: Right now we are interactive, entrepreneurial, international, inspired, engaged.

DY: Engaged with the community.

BS: Engaged. Interactive: that would be athletics, as well as interactive with the arts. You can just see the areas where we've really gone to. This is the period that we're in right now—interactive, engaged, inspired, entrepreneurial—I said international. Those are all very important terms.

DY: Oh, they are.

BS: And they describe energy dynamic, and I think there's a synergy now. I would like to think that what we have is an aligned university. I always come back to my original alignment. When you're in alignment, it's when the people and the place and the programs and the policies and the processes seem to be aligned in this web or honeycomb or whatever metaphor that you want to use for leadership. Frances Hesselbein uses the web approach; I rather like that, spiraling outward. And it's not unlike the symbol for growth in the shell. It's also not unlike the diagram that we use in our thinking in self-concept, you know, the spiraling. So I think that's where we are right now, in alignment, and in the alignment we're poised for the next step.

DY: And alignment has that metaphor of the planets being aligned for the momentous event.

BS: Exactly. So we are coming of age.

DY: You don't think we're here yet?

BS: No. I think if you look at Erikson's eight stages of life, he talks about generativity. We're part of a young generativity now.

DY: Yes.

BS: We've moved from intimacy into early generativity. I use other metaphors of wellness. There are some institutions that are sick, there are other institutions that are not sick but not well, and there are other institutions that are intermittently well. I like to think that we're in the process of being well in all aspects of what I consider to be the dynamics of administration and teaching and leadership.

DY: Well, in the seventh stage there's going to be the productive, creative working together.

BS: Exactly. When you move from intimacy that means you are establishing relationships.

DY: Outside of yourself, too.

BS: And inside with the colleagues and with ideas. I'm playing broadly with Erikson, but I'm thinking in terms of institutionally. The intimacy stage is a very important one. The opposite of intimacy is isolation, so we're trying to bring things together and to make the

alignment work. Once that is bringing things together instead of isolation—everything working in sync—then you move into the generativity part. [Kennesaw State University is] a young professional. We're between forty and forty-five years old. We're relatively young. We're at the stage in which you're going to be entering into generativity pretty soon, see? So forty-five, fifty, fifty-five—that's the generativity stages.

DY: Getting better all the time.

BS: Yes, I think so.

DY: Thank you.

BS: Thank you, Dede!

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