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Phil Bradley Memoir

Bradley, Phil

Interview and memoir

Digital Audio File, 42 min., 14 pp.

UIS Alumni Sage Society

Bradley received a degree in political studies from Sangamon State in 1972, was the first student elected as university assembly speaker, and was then hired as SSU alumni director. He discusses early experiences on campus when the physical campus was not completed and classes were held in the First Methodist church. He reminisces about the first President Bob Spencer and his advisor David Everson, as well as early activities at SSU such as the China Intersession and a visit to SSU by Jimmy Carter before being elected president.

Interview by Mary Caroline Mitchell, 2009

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Narrator: Phil Bradley
Date: December 30, 2009
Place: Springfield, Illinois
Interviewer: Mary Caroline Mitchell

Q. This is December 30th and I'm interviewing Phil Bradley for the UIS Alumni Sage Society Oral History Project. And Phil, I'm going to ask you a few questions. Prior to attending SSU, what was the extent of any of your post-secondary education?

A. I went to Knox College for two years, flunked out, came back to Springfield, and in those days, all we had was a junior college, catholic junior college. So I went out there for a couple of semesters, got straight As, but that was as far as you could go in Springfield. And so I worked and then went to Illinois College for a couple of semesters.

And at that point, the education movement in Springfield had been successful in getting the university chartered and along with that, a community college. The public community college opened earlier than Sangamon State and so I went out there and took a couple of courses waiting for Sangamon. And then when the university opened, I was one of the charter students. So from the time I graduated from high school until I got my baccalaureate at Sangamon State, ten years passed.

Q. Wow. Well, what circumstances or goals did you have when you wanted to complete a college degree?

A. Well, (laughter) I really didn't have goals. I certainly didn't at Knox, I enjoyed it; I had a good time. They were interesting people. It was clear that... it was clear that, I mean that it was some kind of degree, doing any kind of professional work, and so it really was a matter of parental expectations and community expectations that got me out there. And it was happily a very different experience than I had at the other institutions that I went to.

Q. What years did you attend SSU?

A. I was there from when it opened in 1970 to 1972. I got the baccalaureate and then I was hired as the alumni director and so during my five years I was administrator out there, I took some classes towards the master's but never completed that.

Q. So you received your degree in 1972?

A. Correct.

Q. And what degree did you receive?

A. Political Studies.

Q. Ok.

A. That was the University's first commencement and I was the student speaker at the first commencement.

Q. And what courses did you take toward your master's? Was it still in political studies?

A. Well, Sangamon State was a very interesting experience in those days. It turns out that I would have gone ahead for a political studies degree, but the courses were pretty much the same as the courses I took for the baccalaureate. And, in fact, they had in those days a CLEP exam, which I took and apparently blew the roof off of. And they said, "Why don't you just take the courses we have for a master's instead of for the BA." And they would have counted them for a master's along with the CLEP program and I could have walked out of there in 1972 with a master's but didn't because part of the work that I had done in the interim was as a teacher at a catholic grade school in Springfield, Little Flower; taught sixth grade there.

I went there not particularly liking kids, not having completed a college degree and never having taken an education course. So I decided at Sangamon State that I really wanted to get a teaching certificate to prove that what I had been doing for five years was something I actually could be certified for. So when they offered me the master's degree, I checked with the state and you couldn't get a teacher's certificate based on a master's degree. So I said, "Well no, give me the BA because I want to get the teaching certificate."

Q. Right.

A. And so although I studied political science, my minor was education. And I did get the teaching certificate and have not taught a day since.

Q. Great (laughter). Describe when you first set foot on the campus; what was your initial impression of the campus itself?

A. Well, you didn't set foot on the campus because there wasn't one at that point. I signed up for courses in a storefront on Washington across from what was then Myers Brothers department store. And it looked like any political campaign office I'd ever walked into. There were guys sitting around at desks and there was this man named Bob Batson, who turned out to be a really interesting man but who appeared to be kind of like a gay antique dealer. He just kind of flitted about and he was very merry and very interesting and he signed me up for whatever I wanted. They really weren't sure what the courses were going to be at that point. That was in the summer and then classes started in the annex to the First Methodist Church downtown, so I walked in and it was kind of like going to Sunday school.

It was a typical state project. The campus was supposed to be done and it wasn't, so we're down there at the Methodist Church studying with all these strange people. It was an

interesting melding of Springfield and the outer world of academe. And then finally the campus was ready and we went out there and it was what was billed as temporary buildings.

I was at that point, a trustee of Lincoln Land Community College and we were in temporary buildings and they were really temporary buildings. They were plywood and kind of falling apart already. Sangamon's buildings were beautiful. They were nice metal buildings. They were obviously well designed. Some of them were very different as far as classrooms were setup, pillows on the floor. They had risers and you could sit up high or down low. But it was a very sturdy metal building, which had been touched by I think a guy named Takeuchi [who] was the university's architect and a very creative guy. And it was a wonderful set of buildings and it was a nice little campus.

Q. How long did you attend classes in the Methodist Church before the...

A. I think it was a month or two.

Q. Ok.

A. They had them ready to go by the end of fall, I think. And it was very modern and very nice, and you know it was a different world back then. 1968 is when the world really changed, so we were just after the change and everybody wanted to do their own thing and everybody was kind of loosey-goosey. I remember that one of the things that is so much different than it was then, everybody smoked all the time, all the classes. They had these little silver cardboard ash trays that you folded up, everybody had ash trays. And the conservative people were smoking cigarettes, but there were a lot of other people smoking a lot of other stuff around that campus at that time, too.

Q. (laughter) So your impressions of the classes, you had been at Knox, which I know has a long tradition. How did the way that the professors taught or the classes, how were they structured, how... did that impress you or was it difficult?

A. Well, I was very happy because I hadn't liked what I'd been in before. I mean Knox was full of creative people and very interesting people, but I didn't like getting up early. At Sangamon, you could pretty much make your own schedule and you could show up when you wanted to and the classes were much different. And I think it goes back to the nature of the institution; Bob Spencer was the founding president, said that you could learn more from a losing campaign than from a winning campaign in politics. And we all learned a lot at Sangamon State.

Ultimately, I suppose you could judge it a loser because it didn't do a lot of the things it promised and it went away. But we all learned an enormous amount out there whether in the classroom or outside the classroom. What really appealed to us was the whole, to me at least although not to everybody, was the whole idea behind Sangamon State. There were probably three colleges at that point that were all founded at the same time and watched each other:

Old Westbury in New York, Evergreen State on the west coast, and Sangamon. All three institutions watched each other, and they all had a very interesting background.

Sangamon State was started by local people who had the idea that we needed a university here. And what caught on and appealed to the town was the slogan, it's the only state capitol without a university. And that drove the drive... the movement to buy the land, the movement to get the university, to get the community college and that was the city's view that we had to have a university. Well, I think the city thought we were going to have a university like any other university. And the community college was certainly a community college like any other community college. Bob Poorman, who was the founder of Lincoln Land and his academic guy, got catalogs from Michigan and cut out the pages and pasted them down and it was to be just like other community colleges.

When Bob Spencer got here, in spite of what the locals thought, I think the Board of Higher Education and certainly Spencer thought this was to be a university unlike any other university. And that carried through in the governance and that carried through in the hiring of the faculty and that carried through in the offering of courses. So they were very different and many of them were very creative. They certainly didn't follow, for the most part, the standard syllabus-driven, stand up in front of the classroom lecture types that we were all used to. And I just loved it; I had flourished in that where I hadn't flourished in one of the best colleges in the country.

Q. Would you share the names of a couple of the most memorable professors, good or bad, that you had?

A. Spencer himself was one of the most memorable and I worked with him because I was the first student elected as university assembly speaker. And we didn't have a faculty senate and a student senate and all that. We had one big pretend governing body called the university assembly and there were faculty members and students and so on, and I was the head of it. So I worked with Spencer a lot and although he wasn't teaching at the time, he taught me and he taught a lot of other people around him. He was a very controversial guy, partly because he had this utopian idea of what the college would be like and he had written something called the blue paper. And it was very utopian and it was totally impossible to put it to work in the setting of a state university. So there was conflict from the very beginning, and we all learned a lot about academic governance from that experience.

Another guy I liked a lot was a guy I chose for my advisor named David Everson, who died much younger than he should of. But while he was here, was political studies guy, he was a very serious guy but also had kind of a twinkle in his eye and a laugh. We went two summers to the Lilly Foundation seminar in Colorado Springs. And they had the academic vice president who was John Kaiser, faculty member Everson, and a student – me. And we went out and it was three weeks of talking about the university and Everson was fascinating that summer. We were supposed to work on a problem, some problem that the university had to solve.

Spencer came out during it and so John Kaiser, who I felt was kind of a Marine type by the book kind of guy, and Everson and I were working on this problem. Well we didn't really want to work on the problem. And at one point the lady from the Lilly Foundation told the assembled group, "Now we've never had a college invited back for a second summer seminar." So the three of us made that our project, let's see if we can get invited back next summer because that was three weeks in Colorado Springs and they paid us to be there. So we accomplished that, and that kind of gave you an idea of what Everson was like. He was serious in the classroom but puckish outside the classroom. Another guy who... I forgot... I was going to talk about him. I'm sorry. Anyway, let's go on.

Q. Were you... So from the beginning of your experience at Sangamon State, you chose to have a leadership type position. You were interested in politics and government.

A. Yes.

Q. So you immediately went into the structure, all side of the campus because not every student would necessarily have that same outlook, correct?

A. Not everyone did although there were a lot of activists there partly because of the 1960s and partly because of the nature of the university and partly because of the nature of the town, because this is a very political town. And the people there the first years especially were all locals and they all... many of them were working in politics.

But you kind of... it just kind of hit you at every corner. I'm the kind of guy that I'm on two juries; I'm the foreman of both juries. I tend to speak and get recognized for that, so I was doing that at Sangamon. But having started this university, we discovered there were a lot of things that really weren't nailed down. We got about halfway through the first semester and people started talking about graduating. Some of them were just finishing one semester because they'd been in Vietnam or they, you know, they'd gotten married or they dropped out or whatever, and they were finishing up. A lot of people were going that.

Well it turned out there were no graduation requirements set in place for the university. And the Board of Regents or the Board of Higher Education, I don't know which one, said, "Well, you've got to have graduation requirements and people got to meet it." So they appointed, Spencer appointed a group, which also included Everson and me, and a faculty member named Dennis Camp. And the three of us were charged with writing the graduation requirements for the university.

And it was that kind of place; you could walk into a room and somebody would say, "Why don't you sit on this committee because we've got to do something to fix this or set this course." I mean everything was up for grabs and everybody was talking, should we have a catalog? No, other schools have catalogs; we're not going to have a catalog. We're going to have a descriptive brochure. Should we have graduation requirements? A lot of people thought we shouldn't. So everything was a discussion and the first hearing that we had on the graduation

requirements, there were probably 600 people there. Well, this is a university of, I don't know, 500 people the first year? I don't know.

So it wasn't just that I got into leadership, lots of people got into it and many people got frustrated because they couldn't have their way. A lot of them were faculty members. When I went to work then as the alumni director after graduation, I was in the University Relations Office and I did other stuff too because there weren't that many alumni, and one of the things I put together was the faculty directory. And it was because we were getting new faculty members; everybody was used to the little core that started it. But as we grew, we started getting new people. So we had a picture directory of each faculty member and their name and their degrees. And they could put a little saying if they wanted because you could pretty much chose anybody you wanted to take a course from so you needed some guidance in how to do it.

Well it turns out, that was enormously controversial. Many people thought that we were just selling out to the establishment and this was commercialism. Some of the faculty refused to have their pictures taken. And that's an example of every time you turned a corner because many people believed that it had to be different. If you turned the corner and you looked like another university somewhere, that was wrong and so you had to discuss it.

Q. Now were you employed at the same time you were going to the university?

A. No. Well, outside the university, yes. Yeah, I had been a catholic school teacher for five years, teaching full time. And then when I started back to Sangamon, I dropped down to half time and just taught world history and geography. So I just did that half time and then went to the university the other half. Now that was significantly different than the other colleges I attended because practically everybody at the university was working.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. And in those days, you still had the idea from the olden days that you sent the kid off to school and the kid didn't work and the kid went for four years and got a degree and maybe got married and started a career. Well this was totally different than that.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. There were all sorts of people who had had different life experiences than in those days you expected from a college student. And many of them were back while working and we and Lincoln Land suddenly had night courses. That was kind of different, suddenly had weekend courses.

Q. Uh-huh. That brings me to University Week, which in the early years apparently was a feature of the curriculum. Was that part of your experience when you were at SSU?

A. Yeah, they did it, I think, every year and I don't remember all of them. But the one that was the most remarkable and may have been the first, was the one on China. President Nixon had just started the opening to China, which was just an unbelievable thing for a Republican President who had excoriated this country for years to go to China. It really was a stunning development.

And so Sangamon followed that by doing a full China Intersession, they called it. I don't know whether Nixon had gone to China or had announced that he was going, but they had what they called "ping pong diplomacy." Our team went over there and played ping pong with the red Chinese, too. And so one of the major features of the intersession was ping pong tournaments, and I think we had some Chinese ping pong players here.

And the really interesting part of the intersessions, in those days, was that they really spent some money. And the world was very different then. Sangamon was given a lump of money and told to spend it. And there were no restrictions on it as there are with most appropriations and all that, so they just spent. My boss when I worked at University Relations, Chris Vlahoplus, was a fascinating guy and he said, "Just spend money until they tell me stop." And that's how the place operated. So the first intersession or the Chinese intersession was based on tons of money. And they brought speakers in from all over and it was fascinating.

One of the speakers and I'm pretty sure this was at the Chinese one, was a guy named Pat Buchanan, who was, I believe, the speechwriter for President Nixon. And I... it was my job to take care of him and show him around town and get him to and from the airport and all that. He was a fascinating guy and when we'd drive around, he's got these suitcases with these tags on them saying "white house staff" and all this, and it was really a very cool experience.

And the hope, all the intersessions were run like that. Students were hosts; students were introducing speakers. And we got to see and talk to and mix with some real opinion makers. One other guy who came out here was an attorney general who I just saw quoted the other day, is still around. He was involved in the Watergate stuff, and he was Bob Spencer's first cousin. (laughter) And we had conversations with him, you know, at night after the intersession was over.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. And they were probably better learning experiences than many of the classes. Food, we had Chinese meals, all sorts of stuff.

Q. What classrooms do you remember? You sort of described them but once you went to the main, to the temporary building campus, what was your favorite classroom?

A. Well, I didn't like the one with the pillows and risers and all that. The classrooms were all essentially the same. The nice thing was at Lincoln Land the chairs fit high school people and at Sangamon the chairs fit adults (laughter); that was a major difference.

Q. Did you have any classes downtown?

A. Yeah, I don't know whether I did or not. I think that was opened after I was a student.

Q. Ok.

A. The most interesting experience I had downtown, there was a... on the second floor was a kind of a large conference room and we used to hold the Board of Regents meetings there. It was my job to arrange for all the, you know, the tables and chairs and the water and greet the Regents and make sure they were all happy. And we also scheduled the room for other events. And I had, we had a guy who was a student there named Brent DeLand who later became president of the catholic community college here in town. And Brent was always kind of a wacko, you know, boycott grapes and all that sort of thing.

And he had this political candidate coming in and he wanted a room for him and I had never heard of the guy. And I said, "Do you want the downtown?" He said, "Yeah, we'll get a bigger crowd there." So I went down and got it all fixed up and Brent was there and the guy was due in fifteen or twenty minutes. There was nobody there, and Brent was trying to recruit an audience. He said, "Why don't you come and listen to him? He's really good. You'll be impressed." And I said, "No, I don't think so, Brent." So I went home and fifteen minutes later, Jimmy Carter showed up and spoke to the crowd. (laughter) And there were those kinds of experiences all the time, especially at the downtown campus because you got politicians in and out more there than other places.

Q. Since you worked there after graduation, you did maintain some contacts obviously, but in the years since you left Sangamon State, are there any professors or staff members that you have maintained any special relationships with or acquaintances?

A. Oh, I don't know, I mean it seems like most of the people I know in Springfield were there at one time or another whether they took a course or they got a degree. One of my good friends from high school was a guy named Bill Hall, who he and I were together for years and years and years as friends after that and before that. Bill was... when I graduated as I said I gave the student speech and I wrote it at Bill's house about six hours before I gave it. We stayed up all night talking about what it should be.

And another friend of mine, also now gone, is... was a guy named Roger Sweet, who was one of the original students. He was... he came back from probably flunking out of school and going to Vietnam and came back to Sangamon State. And Roger and I had been in high school together and we were very close at Sangamon State in student politics and all that. And I got him to run for and get elected to Lincoln Land Board with me. While we were at Sangamon State, Roger ran for Recorder of Deeds in Springfield.

And that was kind of... everybody thought that was kind of what you were supposed to do at Sangamon State. You were supposed to be a public affairs university, and you were supposed to be involved in public affairs and that was Roger's way of doing it. He would have done it anyway, but the university was encouraging it then.

And I've held several jobs in state government since then and I keep running into, kept running into people from Sangamon State all the time when I was in state government. And that proved that one of the things they were founded to do really did work because the Sangamon State spirit had formed all the state government. You could run into people in any agency who had been trained there to value public service, to value ethics, and to try to make the world a better place.

And part of that came out of a feeling of the 1960s that we needed to make the world better. Part of that came, I think, from Bob Spencer who had been a state senator in Vermont and who believed in public service. And part of it came from various other professors out there who... they all had different views of what a public affairs university should be, but they all really thought that you were there to improve civic life. And you saw that in many ways, from the founding of many social service agencies in Springfield that hadn't been here before that were to help the poor or the downtrodden and that were often the result of class projects that professors directed and students thought of and carried out.

And there was a time when I and I suspect it's still true, that you could go through most of the social service agencies in Springfield and find people working there who had been trained for it at Sangamon State and who maybe had founded it because of Sangamon State. It wasn't a technical school. It was as close to liberal arts as you could get and not be called liberal arts.

Q. Uh-huh.

A. And one example of that, one little dream that I think a lot of us had and some of the faculty had was that it would go beyond the backwater to a master's degree. And Chris Vlahoplus, who was my boss who had been one of the three top staff members for Governor Kerner, shared a part of a dream that a lot of people in Springfield had that the school would have a law school. There had been after WW II, something called the Lincoln College of Law in Springfield, which was a night school. And in the 1950s and 1960s, many of the lawyers in Springfield had been trained at the Lincoln College of Law, which went bye-bye at some point. But a lot of them thought that Sangamon should offer a degree in... a legal degree leading to people becoming lawyers.

So sometime in the middle 1970s probably you couldn't get the Board of Higher Education to approve a law degree for the school. You couldn't... the Board of Regents wouldn't do it, so Chris went down and got the legislature to pass a law establishing a law school in Springfield and naming the block north of the governor's mansion as the place where it was to be built. Well, the Board of Higher Education managed to kill that. And the reason they killed it was because the U of I didn't want another law school downstate. But they... the dreams of

anybody who ever thought about something technical or non-liberal arts always centered on things like law, which related to public service.

A. Uh-huh.

Q. And now, so the university that succeeded Sangamon has a degree in administration, doctorate in administration. And I think that comes from the early days of saying this is going to be the state's public affairs university.

A. Uh-huh. One of the things that we have been told in later years is because students didn't have that experience of living on campus, going away from home, they were all probably working somewhere else and coming to school that they there wasn't that same camaraderie that people made lifelong friends from traditional universities. But I hear you describing something different than that, that people didn't just come and go in their car and not relate with each other.

Q. Well, I think there were two groups – the people who had day classes out there tended to stay around more. You'd sit in the cafeteria and you'd eat and you would see people. You would do a committee meeting or you'd do something like that. I think it is more true that the people who were night students, drove out there, had their night class, and got the heck out of there.

And I always preached that there were two universities. That if you were a day student and you went out there, you'd see the secretaries and you'd see the faculty and you'd see the staff and you could wonder around and talk to anybody. If you were a night student, you might see somebody other than your professors and you might go downstairs and get a Coke. But generally speaking, you were there for one class and you saw one professor. And I think that's true all over. The fact, however, is that that is how American higher education has grown in the last few years. And now seeing a classroom full of people is maybe on the way out because a lot of people are sitting in front of computers at home taking higher education.

A. Uh-huh. Were there any campus practices that impressed you? How did people dress? Or were there certain classes, topics, certain courses that were unusual from your perspective?

Q. I had a friend and a guy who was a on the Lincoln Land Board with me who was a lawyer here in town at Brown, Hay & Stephens, the biggest, oldest law firm and his name was Chuck Stevenson. Chuck said to me one day, "Are they going to offer that psychodrama class at Sangamon State again?" And I said, "Yeah, I think so. They do it every semester." And he said, "Well that's great. I handled three divorces from that class last semester."

And that class was probably better known than any other at Sangamon State. I was all about going in and baring your soul and redefining yourself and looking at life. And there were a lot of divorces coming out of that class, but there were a lot of divorces at Sangamon State. The ethos in those days in addition to being different academically was to be different socially. And

there were lots of divorces from Sangamon State and lots of affairs and lots of professors having sex with students.

My wife was, works in the print shop and I met her there because I was doing publications for university relations. And we got married and we've been married 35 years, but that's the exception. Most people went out there and got divorced instead of going out there and getting married, although I know people in town and friends other than us who... my friend Steve Jones who I'd known since kindergarten, after we got divorced, he married a girl from out there. They've been married 35 years. Dick Austin, who was a local politician married. He got divorced out there, but then he got married also. So it was, it was a place where you kind of went out and experimented.

Springfield was a very straight-laced town in those days. It was a manufacturing town losing its manufacturing. It was basically a southern town, south of the Mason-Dixon Line. It had been a very segregated town and all those rules were nonexistent at Sangamon State. You came out there and you had all these professors from other places. Although many of them were good, I think you had a lot of them escaping from regular education, and they wanted to do things differently. And so you went out there and you did things differently, and I think it changed the town. I talked with social service agencies but it changed a lot of other attitudes in town, too, and that's what a university ought to do. It made people question where they were and I think it make this a much different town and region.

Q. Speaking of friendships and off-campus meeting places, were there places that you frequented with other students and faculty off of the campus?

A. Yeah, there were two places that I know of. One was the Curve Inn, which is still there. It's across from Little Flower [Catholic Church]... a tavern. And the other one was a place called the Navy Club, which was south of campus in an old school building. The building is still there; I don't know what's there now [formerly Crow's Mill and recently Bootleggers]. But the Navy Club, you could always find faculty members sitting around there and there were and lots of students in and out all the time. Those were the two main places.

Q. Do you ever visit the campus anymore or often?

A. Well, I haven't much. When I was a student out there, I was out there a lot. And then when I worked out there, I found lots of people who would come out and just cruise through. And if they had a day off, they would go out and do it and I haven't done that much because of my personal situation. I work in Chicago and live in Springfield, so I'm in Chicago five days a week and in Springfield on the weekends. I'm getting ready to retire and one of the things I plan to do is start going back to campus because like all campuses, there's always something going on; there's always somebody speaking about something. It's a culturally rich environment and being retired in Springfield and not going there I think would be a little dull.

Q. As you think back about the value of your education, how it has influenced your career and personal life, could you just share a few thoughts about that?

A. Well, it certainly has influenced my personal... my career and my personal life. I found my wife there. I got certified with a BA, which advanced my career. I was lucky in that after I gave the speech at commencement, Chris Vlahoplus wondered into my little universe to the assembly speaker office a few days later and said, "You know now that we've got alumni, we need an alumni director. Would you be it?" So I didn't have to apply for a job coming out of Sangamon State. I got a job that I never even knew existed and had never trained for.

And that led to a job in the governor's office, which led to a job working for the Associated... the Association of Community College Trustees. Ultimately I served as a member of the cabinet of two governors of Illinois. And following that, I went to Chicago and founded an HMO and have run it for 14 years and had a good career and, frankly, made a lot of money. And none of that would have happened if I hadn't gone to Sangamon State partly because Sangamon State opened me up to the possibilities and encouraged me in a leadership role and partly because I made lots of contacts out there.

For instance, I dine at a place called Gene & Georgetti's for lunch occasionally at Sangamon State... no, in Chicago, and it's a very highly political place. You can run into governors; you can run into Senators. They have a little mafia in Chicago that eats there regularly. And a guy who eats there also fairly often is a guy who's named Thom Serafin, who worked in university relations when I worked there. He was a student. And one day, I said hello to Thom and he was sitting at the bar with some guy and he said to the guy, "This is Phil Bradley. He's the guy who taught me how to write." Well, Serafin is one of the most successful writers and consultants in Chicago, and I felt really honored to be set there. But it's true; you ran into people there who had become somebody since and who could... very good contacts throughout life.

Q. So I don't hear that you took courses in how to run a business or how to do accounting.

A. I have never had a job that I was prepared for, and I think that's the secret of a good liberal arts college. I told you I taught school, I taught school after flunking out of college after two years and had no preparation for it at all. First day I walked into the classroom, there were 52 kids there, and I did it for five and half years. One kid that I know of went to jail; I taught several doctors and several lawyers. And I think what a good education does is not that you get the As and that you get, you know, 800s on your SATs or anything like that. It's that it opens you up and makes you think, and opens you to the possibility of what's coming next and Sangamon certainly did that.

And I think the university there today, U of I, is doing that, and that's really what education is about. I don't believe, now the computer has changed this a lot, but I don't really believe in preparing somebody to do this little job because right now I run a managed care organization. There wasn't even such a thing when I was born. There wasn't anything for years. I couldn't

have prepared to be a managed care CEO if I'd wanted to. And I think we're going to see more and more of this as we go on. And so the university's that know what they're doing, are preparing to, it's old fashioned, but I think the search for truth should be part of the college education and the search for knowledge is part of it.

Q. Well, thank you, Phil. And were there any other things that I didn't ask you that you would like to say in this history of your relationship with SSU?

A. Well, one of the things that Spencer used to say was, when he came to Springfield before the place opened, he would go down to Steinberg Baum, which was a big kind of a warehouse store, and sit and watch people come through the turnstiles as they were buying things. And he kept telling himself that those were the people the university was being built for. And sometimes I thought, "Gee, that's really neat. He wants to do something here for us that we care about." And sometimes I thought, "Who is this elite Easterner who thinks he's going to come out here and change our lives?" Well, both sides of that were true. They did want to do it for us and they did want to bring something to Springfield that hadn't been here before. And I think was the importance of the university's founding and that remains the importance of the university.

Q. Thank you.

End of Interview