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## Naomi Lynn Memoir

### Lynn, Naomi

Memoir

Digital Audio File, 12 hours 6 min., 114 pp.

UIS Alumni Sage Society

Dr. Naomi Lynn was President of Sangamon State University and Chancellor of University of Illinois Springfield from 1991 and 2001. She also served as Interim President of Lincoln Land Community College. Lynn played a significant role in the merger of SSU with the University of Illinois in 1995 and later when University of Illinois Springfield changed to a full four-year institution. She discusses the beginning of her career as a woman and a minority in the academic field of political science and public administration, which had been dominated by men. She and Cullom Davis discuss their collegiate time at SSU/UIS.

Interview by Collum Davis, 2010

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#### **Appendix**

Naomi Lynn *Vita*, 2010.

Narrator: Naomi Lynn  
Date: June 25, 2010  
Place: Springfield, Illinois  
Interviewer: Cullom Davis

Begin Recording  
Tape 1

Q. This is an oral history interview on June 25, 2010 with Naomi Lynn. The interviewer is Cullom Davis. Naomi, we're going to be focusing towards your years in Springfield. I guess you would call them culminating years professionally. But we want to touch on some aspects of your childhood and education and family that might have a significant bearing on the person you became. So I guess I want to begin, I believe you were born in is it New York City?

A. I was born in New York City, April 16, 1933.

Q. Ok. Not the best year to be born I would say. Those were tough times. You don't remember that part of it. But your parents, who were they?

A. Ok, my mother's name was Maria Luisa Lebron and my father's name was Carmelo Burgos.

Q. Burgos?

A. Yes, that's not an uncommon Spanish name. There is a city in Spain named Burgos, and if you find any Hispanic culture, you will probably run across a Burgos.

Q. And was your mother also Hispanic?

A. Yes and they were both born in Puerto Rico.

Q. Oh, ok. In those days, when did they immigrate?

A. They did not immigrate because at that time Puerto Rico was already part of the United States, so they were already American citizens. They came to the United States in the late 1920s.

Q. Yes.

A. They both attended the same Presbyterian Church in San Juan, but there was a twelve year difference in their ages so they barely remembered each other when they met again in New York City. My father had been in the army when he decided to leave the army, he moved to New York.

Q. So he served at least during World War II?

A. He joined the army in 1920 after World War I and left as a Second Lieutenant in 1929. He enlisted after Pearl Harbor but was turned down at the last minute because of health issues. He came from a poor background and the army gave him the opportunity to finish high school. Later he studied accounting and did some college work, but he never completed a degree.

Q. Was he a career army man?

A. He was a career army man for nine years. Most of his career was in public service. He started in the army, worked for the post office and then for the Department of Immigration and Naturalization, which was part of the Department of Justice. My parents also owned small businesses. They owned grocery stores and a dress shop. They were hard workers. My mother worked in the stores and then when my father came home from his job, he would join her at the store. They were hardworking people.

Q. Ok. The young couple, your parents, lived in what borough?

A. Manhattan, they always lived in Manhattan. They moved to St. Petersburg, Florida in the 1950s, but by that time we had left home.

Q. Were you the first born?

A. No my sister, Ruth, is 18 months older than I am. I also have a younger sister, Judy, who was three years younger.

Q. So your first consciousness of being in the family was probably in the late 1930s, wasn't it?

A. Probably the late 1930s.

Q. You lived in Manhattan in an apartment.

A. At that time there were few apartments for sale. Families owned brownstones or rented apartments. We lived in different neighborhoods, different apartments. I remember moving to different parts of Manhattan as I was growing up, and then we settled in the upper west side into what is now known as Hudson Heights. Neighborhoods have changed so much since I left New York that those identities do not mean much to me.

Q. Ok. Was your neighborhood as you first remember it, was it Hispanic or not?

A. No, it was primarily Jewish.

Q. Not Italian?

A. When I was younger I remember neighborhoods that had many Italian, Greeks and Irish, but most of our neighbors when I was in high school were Jewish. There were probably many Protestants and Catholics, but I did not identify them that way.

Q. Ok. At home, were you a bilingual family?

A. Yes, especially when I was young, but my parents insisted that we speak English at home. They often spoke Spanish to each other. I understand Spanish but if you ask me about a specific word, for example. "How do you say 'briefcase' in Spanish," I would not know it. But if you say "briefcase" in Spanish, I would understand what you are saying.

Q. Ok you recognize the words. You can pick it up?

A. I can pick it up very quickly. I remember that when I attended the United Nations Conference on Women in Mexico City, I travelled with a friend who had studied Spanish and was quite fluent. Her vocabulary was more extensive than mine, but I noticed that after a few days in Mexico people would direct their Spanish to me. I realized that even with my limited vocabulary my accent was less pronounced than hers.

Q. Do you remember as a young girl being deeply conscious of your Hispanic heritage? I don't mean just language.

A. Yes and no. Sometimes I was very conscious of it and other times I didn't pay that much attention to it. It wasn't as big an issue as it is today. There were so many first generation Americans at that time, and we did not have a large Hispanic population in New York City until after World War II.

Q. Did your parents vote?

A. Yes, they were very interested in politics. My father was not as politically active as he may have wanted to be because he was limited by the Hatch Act.

Q. The Hatch Act, that's right.

A. He was a strong Republican. He was very critical of Roosevelt. My sister remembers that when she was in grade school they announced that Roosevelt had died as was surprised to see the teachers crying. It was then that she realized that not everyone considered him a villain.

Q. Interesting. Did your parents have you helping out at these stores?

A. No, no. I don't remember being asked to work at one of their stores.

Q. Sacrificing, you didn't need anything? Or they did want you to?

A. I don't know. We just took it for granted because we were very busy in our Presbyterian church, and in the young people's group. My father belonged to the Masons so we were also active in the "Daughters of the Eastern Star."

Q. Well, I take it they were also very traditional.

A. Very traditional.

Q. Raising a family, particularly girls.

A. I don't remember going to someone's house to spend the night unless my mother knew the family well. That was not permitted.

Q. Sure, sure. Did you chafe at that at any point?

A. Not really.

Q. Now your parents had three daughters.

A. That is correct.

Q. But this was a patriarchal family?

A. Not at all. My mother was very strong. She was the disciplinarian. My father spanked me once, and it was so unexpected that it made a lasting impression.

Q. Now just a little bit of looking back from today's perspective on this childhood of yours, what influences from your parents and your home do you detect in your own life and career?

A. Of course, their emphasis on education. It was assumed we were going to college. We were expected to do the right things. They set an example by being hardworking, good people.

Q. Faith?

A. Yes, religion was an important part of our lives. There was never any question about Sunday school or church attendance. My father had taken some seminary courses and was an elder in our Presbyterian church. Most of our activities were centered on the church. All my extracurricular activities were related to the church because our church had after school programs and in addition we participated in Presbyterian sponsored conferences and meetings.

Q. What about more personal values? Marriage for their daughters?

A. In terms of personal values, they were very traditional. Neither of my parents approved of smoking or drinking. We were expected us to treat adults with respect. I never remember hearing either of my parents use vulgar language and it was not permitted in our home.

In terms of marriage for their three daughters, it was understood that we were not to even think about it until after we finished college. My mother hoped that at least one of us would be a doctor, so marriage was always secondary.

Q. Well, it was a reasonable expectation that the first thing to do was to get the credentials for a career and then at least begin pursuing it. They sound like very interesting people. Did they even like the schools you attended? Was there a sense because you did so much extracurricular activities at church that they were a little suspicious of extracurricular or other influences.

A. Well they did keep us busy. I took music lessons; I took dance and learned to play the piano. My major instrument was the accordion. Living in New York City we were also exposed to many cultural activities. We discovered that on Saturday afternoons we could go over to the Met and for fifty cents stand in the back and listen to great music. We also went to museum exhibits so it was easy to keep us busy. Of course, all three of us loved movies.

Q. What about your summers? Did the family travel?

A. Not really. We just went to the beach for two weeks.

Q. Sure, Long Island?

A. New Jersey shore.

Q. Ok, so they would rent a cottage.

A. Yes, and we also went to summer camps.

Q. These were camps in New Jersey?

A. No, upstate New York.

Q. Upstate New York, Adirondack.

A. I remember going to Christian Endeavor Camp in Lake George. When we were in high school, we attended church conferences.

Q. But it was church campground sort of place?

A. Yes, young people came from throughout the city and state. We did not take mission trips like they do now.

Q. Did you or your sisters ever consider a career in the ministry?

A. After my sister Ruth graduated from Maryville College, she went to Union Seminary, but at that time, of course, they didn't ordain women.

Q. That's right.

A. She became a director of Christian education. One of her first jobs was at Iowa State University where she worked with a campus minister.

Q. You know this begins to seem – I know it wasn't, but it begins to seem like a fairy tale childhood - strong parents, relatively comfortable, important values, conservative, family oriented.

A. It was not all perfect, but we had a good life.

Q. Were you and your sisters very close emotionally?

A. Yes, we were very close; Ruth and I still are.

Q. Your sister, Judy.

A. Yes, but sadly she died of Acute Leukemia when she was 33 years old. She left two young boys.

Q. That is very sad.

A. She was given a year and survived four.

Q. Well, that is very sad.

A. We are close to the two boys, David and Tom. David is a musician in New York City, and Tom is an engineer in South Carolina. David doesn't have any children. Tom has a son and daughter who we consider our grandchildren. We have never missed a confirmation or graduation. They are an important part of our lives.

Q. How long did your parents live?

A. My father did in 1960, and my mother 2000.

Q. Well, a simplistic look at your eventual interest in career and your family values would say, "Well your father had been in public administration and developed an interest in it." He was interested in politics different from your politics, but...

A. We talked about politics all the time, argued politics all the time.

Q. One could maybe see a feminist in you and your mother a little. She didn't act like it then, maybe she did.

A. Both my parents could be accurately described as "feminists." I never remember my father saying that we couldn't do anything because we were women. They were both feminists who were ahead of their time.

Q. Seems odd, doesn't it?

A. Although my mother did not describe herself that way, she was a committed feminist.

Q. It seems odd to me that one of my impressions about Hispanic culture is paternal culture, patriarchal culture and maybe I'm dead wrong, but it seems to me...

A. It was absolutely against stereotype. When I was in grade school, my teacher asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up. I said, "I want to be the first woman Supreme Court Justice of the United States." She said, "Women can't do that." If I had said that at home my parents would have said, "That would be nice." [laughter] My mother was absolutely convinced that if you worked hard, there was nothing you couldn't achieve.

Q. Well, that's a great tribute to your parents.

A. That is.

Q. I agree. I'm trying to think of any other early, by early I mean through your adolescence, influences or experiences that you think may be pertinent.

A. When I was in high school, I was getting very bored in high school and my parents took me out of a public school and put me in a private school – Rhodes Prep. It was right across from the Modern Museum of Art. That made it possible for me to finish high school in three years.

Q. Now did you like Rhodes Prep?

A. It was just a place to go to school. I remember being impressed, though, that the professors had PhDs. Some of the students were already involved in theatre. I just wanted to finish school so I could go to college.

Q. I'm guessing that you graduated around 1950 or 1951?

A. 1950.

Q. You mentioned earlier the first exposure to a Maryville graduate, but what put that center stage?

A. An Assistant Minister at our church was a Maryville College graduate. We had already heard about Maryville from a popular counselor at one of our camps. My sister mentioned to our minister that she was interested in Maryville and he encouraged her and put her in touch with a parishioner at his previous church who also intended to go to Maryville. Ruth and Trudy became roommates and lifelong friends.

But another related anecdote is that Jim Barr was single so our young people's group was always trying to match him with someone. An attractive young Julliard student named Ruth (a different Ruth than my sister) started singing in the choir. And like typical teenagers, we watched their friendship develop with special interest. We were excited when they started dating and then they married. Ruth was just delightful.

A few years ago Jim returned to Maryville for his 60<sup>th</sup> year class reunion. Ruth had passed away, but their daughter was with him. We reminisced about our days at the church. His daughter asked me where I was living now. I said Springfield, and she said her mother and her family are all from Jacksonville. It turns out Ruth was Paul Findley's sister. Small world.

Q. Of course Paul.

A. Paul is still alive, very talented.

Q. Prince of a man. Well, so you just decided that your sister had made the right choice when she decided to go to Maryville College?

A. It was the right decision for us. My parents had three daughters within five years of each other so affordability was important. It was founded in 1819 so it was a well-established liberal arts college with an excellent reputation. At that time there was no statewide higher education system in New York. Most of the public colleges in the state were teachers colleges or private colleges.

Q. I think Maryville is near Knoxville.

A. Sixteen miles from Knoxville.

Q. Well, we're going to break here to change the tape and if you want to take a break.

End of Tape 1 Side 1  
45 minutes 17 seconds

Begin Tape 1 Side 2

Q. I just have to introduce the second side of the tape, interview on the 25<sup>th</sup> of June with Naomi Lynn. Did you, I'm curious now, having graduated from Rhodes, and then you applied to Maryville and anywhere else or was that your single application?

A. No, I just assumed that I could get in.

Q. Sure, of course, and you did. Then did you take the train there or did your parents take you?

A. No, we took the train. I had probably flown just twice. We generally took the train.

Q. Did the train require changing trains or was it basically...

A. It was a straight-through train to Knoxville. As we made stops in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and so forth our classmates would get on the train so by the time we arrived in Tennessee we had quite a group.

Q. You had a big trunk or how did they ship it?

A. Yes we shipped the trunk.

Q. Well, describe the campus of Maryville and your initial reaction to it.

A. It is a beautiful old campus in the foothills of the Smokey Mountains. I don't know how many acres it has, but it has more acres than buildings—kind of like Sangamon State. Of course, when you're describing a school established in 1819, you have a lot of history and a lot of old buildings. I loved it. I adjusted very quickly and very easily.

Q. Were the girls' residences old rooms that had been converted?

A. Maryville was one of the first colleges in the South to admit women.

Q. Dormitory buildings.

A. There were dormitories, but some housing at one time had once been private homes.

Q. Was the enrollment then maybe a thousand?

A. It had been over a thousand after the Second World War. But by the time I got there, it was about seven or eight hundred. It is still just over one thousand

Q. What about the faculty?

A. Maryville College has always had a highly-qualified faculty. The students were more conservative than most of the faculty.

Q. That was very interesting that you had a more liberal faculty than the student body.

A. That is right. You were required to take one course on the Bible. We were also required to take an ethics course our senior year.

Q. Interesting. The ethics course because you understood the theoretical language as well as the...

A. The course covered a great deal of theory, but the professor also taught practical ethics. There was an emphasis on making moral decisions. I consider it one of the most important and valuable courses in my long academic career.

Q. But it was a...

A. We had to take it. It was a required course. There were two requirements that were especially helpful. One was the ethics course and the second was a senior thesis. When I went to graduate school, I found writing a master's thesis much easier because of my previous experience.

Q. Right. How did you decide on a major?

A. I planned to major in sociology, but I took a political science course as an elective and had a gifted and interesting professor. I changed my major immediately. I knew that that was what I wanted to study.

Q. It had to be political science.

A. It had to be political science.

Q. This was in part because of his inspiration?

A. Absolutely. I also took quite a few courses in history and English literature.

Q. What was the subject of your senior thesis in political science?

A. My senior thesis was on the fair employment policy.

Q. Yes. Socially Maryville was kind of a restricted campus?

A. It was. Female students could only go to town on Tuesday nights, but most nights there was a social activity on campus. For example, after dinner there was always a dance at the gym, and, of course, there were many athletic events.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. I was a debater and participated in regional and national tournaments. I was active in student government. My senior year I was chosen "Girl of the Year." [laughter]

Q. You were "Girl of the Year"?

A. Yes, it was a big deal.

Q. Of course it was.

A. In a small college you really get a chance to blossom because the opportunities are there.

Q. Those were great years, weren't they?

A. Those were good years, very good years for me.

Q. You say you met Bob there?

A. Yes. When I met Bob, he was engaged, and I was dating his roommate. Bob graduated, went into the army, and then to Korea. I thought that he was married. But while he was in Korea, his fiancée broke their engagement.

When he returned from the army, he visited the campus. He found out I was no longer dating his roommate, and he asked me out. We started dating, and we got married three months after I graduated.

A. In August of that year. I was twenty-one in April, and we got married on August 28, 1954.

Q. And got married where?

A. New York. Yes, in New York City.

Q. Your parents approved of Bob?

A. Oh, yes, they thought he was wonderful! After we got married, we went to Knoxville and both enrolled in graduate school at the University of Tennessee. But then I got pregnant and had to drop out. We lost that baby, but he got his master's degree there.

Q. In business?

A. No, economics. While he was completing his degree, Bob was offered a job at the college so we moved to Maryville. Then the Ford Foundation decided to fund business college graduates who planned to teach. Ford asked each state university and some private colleges to nominate one person to receive a two-year grant to work on their PhDs. The University of Tennessee recommended Bob, and he chose to attend the University of Illinois.

Q. Because it was his home state university and he hadn't been to... I mean he...

A. He could have gone anywhere, but that was where he wanted to go so we moved to Urbana. We now had a baby daughter so the three of us headed to Illinois.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. But it worked out well for him; he did finish in the two years, which was very unusual. I also went to graduate school on his Ford Foundation money. So I got my master's degree, and he got his PhD during that same period. I did something unusual. I spoke to my major professor about a thesis topic, and he agreed so I wrote most of my thesis before I completed my course work. That was ideal for us because I could work on my own schedule while Bob did his course work. He babysat and worked on his dissertation while I finished my course work.

Q. Who was your chief advisor then?

A. It was Dangerfield.

Q. Yes, was it Rodney?

A. It was Roger Dangerfield.

Q. No, that's the comic. [laughter]

A. Well, I know his name.

Q. Dangerfield, he was a well-known comic.

A. I had Lewis and Norman Grebner for History. I had excellent professors and would have gone on, but when Bob left, I left.

Q. Now was your thesis in the area of administrative?

A. Foreign policy.

Q. Oh, foreign policy rather.

A. It was in the efforts of peace groups to influence foreign policy in the period between the two world wars.

Q. I was a grading assistant for Norman Grebner. We almost overlapped at Illinois.

A. That is right, isn't that interesting?

Q. So you ended up really liking Urbana?

A. Yes, we had a very positive of experience. We had a baby, and both of us were going to school. We didn't socialize very much, but we made some good friends.

Q. Did you live in graduate student housing?

A. No, the first year we rented a small house and then we decided that was too expensive. Instead we found a garage apartment near the county fairgrounds.

Q. Fair enough. Where you spent maybe two years?

A. Two years in Illinois.

Q. And then moved on to...

A. We went back to Maryville.

Q. Went back to Maryville?

A. Went back to Maryville and stayed there until 1964. We might want to talk about civil rights.

Q. Well, I was going to say let's do that today. You mentioned the civil rights.

A. In Maryville, it was very interesting. We were active in a small Presbyterian church that was very, very divided. People we loved and who helped take care of our children and so forth had a very different philosophy about what should happen than we did. It was very painful. It was like a divided family. It was a very sensitive issue.

We had a minister who came from New York, Dave Mair, who felt very strongly that the church needed to take a stand on civil rights. At this time there was a lot of intimidation going on and we were very supportive of the civil rights movement. It was a scary period.

I remember on one occasion we were with Dave Mair when his mother was visiting from New York. Dave announced that he had decided to join the demonstrators in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. His mother was concerned. Dave attempted to reassure her by saying that

picketing was better than exercising at a gym, and that if he was arrested, jail food was better than most diets. Bob, with his sense of humor, added “and a beating is better than a massage.” [laughter]

Q. He really walked the walk in civil rights.

A. Oh, yes. He went to Hattiesburg. The evening he left the Klan came and surrounded their home. His wife, Pat, was alone with a new baby. The Klan burned a cross on their lawn, and she was terrified. But then she thought, “I just can’t let them do this to me.” So she stepped out on the porch and waved goodbye to them as they drove away. Years later when we visited them in Michigan, Pat had the remains of the burned cross in the family room as a conversation piece. Still, it had been a very scary evening for Pat.

Q. You mentioned integrating a pool.

A. Some African-Americans wanted to integrate the public pool, and we were asked by good friends to go to that pool that day to support their efforts. The Klan asked everyone to stay away. The police and police dogs circled the pool in an effort to contain any trouble. We went to the pool, but as it turned out, the African-Americans didn’t come into the pool until after we left. It was a frightening experience especially because the Klan was taking down all license plate numbers as a form of intimidation.

The positive part of the experience was that the leadership in Maryville did not want to be known as a Hattiesburg. Whatever their views on race, they were progressive enough to want to protect their community and keep it from violence.

Q. Were racial tensions the reason you left Maryville?

A. It probably made it easier, but the offer from Missouri was twice Bob’s Maryville salary. In 1964, Bob was offered a position by the University of Missouri at Columbia. He taught in an MBA program at Whiteman Air Force Base. Missouri had a contract to offer the MBA to all the Launch Control Officers at the Minuteman missile base. The officers had been pilots and navigators and it was quite a change for them to work deep underground in the knowledge that if they ever had to shoot the missiles it would mean that their families had already been killed. It was stressful and somewhat boring so this was their carrot. These officers were highly intelligent and hardworking.

Q. Is that Wrightman? W-R-I? Doesn’t matter.

A. Whiteman, Whiteman Air Force Base, yes.

Q. And it’s in western Missouri?

A. Yes, it’s in Knob Noster, Missouri.

Q. Ok. The program was offered right on the base?

A. Right on the base, yes. We lived in Warrensburg, Missouri, which was about eight miles from the base.

By this time we had three daughters. I started taking a few courses at Central Missouri State College, which was located in Warrensburg. Taking a class was always my hobby. I had also taken courses at the University of Tennessee when we lived in Maryville. When we moved to Warrensburg we had our fourth daughter. When she was a year old, a stranger knocked on my door and introduced himself as Don Powell, the head of the Political Science Department at the college. He told me that someone at our church had mentioned that I had a graduate degree in Political Science and that he had suddenly lost a faculty member and wondered if I would be willing to teach that fall. That was the first of two coincidences that started and helped my career.

Q. You hadn't been looking for a job?

A. No.

Q. But it seems like you must have had in mind having a career.

A. Not really, I had four small children. My first response was negative, but Bob thought it was a great idea and talked me into accepting the position.

Q. I am sure when Bob insisted you do it, he also was prepared to help out with the kids.

A. Of course, yes, and we could hire help.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. We had a neighbor who would take care of Jo-An, the baby. We also lived right across the street from the campus. Judy, our third oldest, was four years old and in preschool. Marylou, the oldest, and Nancy, and the next oldest, were in the lab school on the campus.

Q. So they were well situated? Bob's job was at Whiteman.

A. Whiteman Air Force Base.

Q. That was a full time job?

A. Yes. In about a year or so the man who hired him, a friend from graduate school, left, and Missouri appointed Bob to direct the program-which he did for two years. We were there four years. I didn't teach at the college that long, but we lived in Warrensburg for four years.

Q. Oh, ok.

A. Then Bob was offered the position of Dean of the College of Business at Kansas State University.

Q. That was a big jump.

A. Yes, that was a big jump. He was very young to have that position. But a Vice President at Kansas State had been a young assistant professor when Bob was at Urbana and he recommended Bob. That was before you had to do national searches so if you had an opening, you could just call contacts and get recommendations.

Q. It was all in a phone call.

A. That's right. It was initially a personal contact and then he went to the campus for an interview.

Q. Did you get a job there at the same time he took the job?

A. No, I didn't. I was disappointed to discover that although they had over a hundred graduate programs, they didn't offer a PhD in political science. I decided I wanted to complete my PhD. I applied to the University of Kansas in 1968. They reviewed my transcripts and accepted me. Later some professors in the department told me that when they learned that I had four children and would be commuting 85 miles they concluded I wouldn't last more than two months. I did, and they became my biggest supporters and advocates.

Q. You were the role model, just not the norm.

A. Women in political science were unusual and I suspect mothers were even more rare. In Urbana I never had a female political science major in any of my classes. At KU I had some MPA female classmates. I never had a woman professor in political science in any school I attended.

Q. It is a sad commentary but it rings true for me. I mean I certainly, I had one graduate professor.

A. Even in history they were rare.

Q. Oh, very rare. Usually if they were on the faculty, they were relegated to mostly advisory for students who wanted to become teachers. I mean it was usually some sort of sideways thing.

A. Yes. Now about 28 percent of professors in political science are women.

Q. I had all sorts of experiences when I was teaching, too - colleagues who would basically degrade the qualifications of a woman graduate student. It was just that they said, "Well she doesn't need a degree."

A. Oh, I heard that.

Q. So I don't want to get talking about myself, but it is all familiar.

A. You know exactly what I am talking about.

Q. Yes, I do.

A. When I was at KU, I was offered a part-time job at K-State teaching political science. I decided I wouldn't do it because I knew too many people who were ABD's [All But Dissertation], accepted faculty positions and never completed their degrees. After I completed my degree, I accepted a part-time position at Kansas State University. That was the typical dead-end job for women, especially faculty spouses.

This is before affirmative action so discrimination against women was accepted as routine hiring practice. They had an opening in political science and were doing a national search. The idea was that if you could get a faculty wife who worked for less money part-time, then, of course, she would never be taken seriously for a tenured position. [laughter]

I had good teaching evaluations and had started writing for publication so some of my colleagues were supportive. The choice came down to me and another candidate from the national pool. We tied in the final vote, so the department chair decided that he would start the search again, but neither of us could apply. After the second search, they found a suitable candidate and offered him the position. Then Richard Nixon...

Q. Bless his heart.

A. Bless his heart, they froze all hiring at the federal level and the states followed suit. Remember the big freeze at all the colleges? Well, the man they offered the job said he had changed his mind. Then the Dean informed the head of the Political Science Department, "In about a week, we are not going to be able to hire anyone and we will freeze all positions for the remainder of the year." The department chair decided our department could permanently lose the position, so he called a department meeting, and they decided to immediately offer me the position.

But there was one person in the department who was vehemently opposed to hiring me. His idea was that they would put me in that position for a year and then would not reappoint me. Can you believe that? So I had a tenure-track position that was so hard to get, and at the end of the year, my colleagues were content with my teaching and research and rejected the suggestion that I not be reappointed.

I'm happy to say that I published, went through the rank to full professor and finally became head of the Department of Political Science.

Q. You rose up the academic professorial level fairly quickly. First of all after one year, you were in a tenure position, tenure-track position.

A. Tenure-track position, yes.

Q. I noticed that you were an assistant professor for five years.

A. That's true.

Q. You by then taught well and published your share of materials. Was that fairly standard?

A. Yes, that was. No it wasn't in five. Was I promoted in five years?

Q. I think so.

A. I am surprised because usually promotion to associate professor comes with tenure. I am pretty sure that's when I got associate rank.

Q. Yes, right. I am challenging your memory.

A. Ok, I may have. I don't remember getting it that much earlier.

Q. Now how did you manage a full teaching schedule, a growing administrative load and travel? How did you juggle all that with maintaining a home and family?

A. First of course, I had a supportive husband. We had decided that I wouldn't do that unless I had good household help. We had a few people who did not work out, but generally the people who worked for us were very good and reliable. This sounds strange, but until I went to Atlanta, I never worked farther than I could walk home.

Q. So that you could be available.

A. Yes and I also never liked to drive.

Q. But you were experienced numerous and frequent instances of gender discrimination?

A. Often.

Q. But you lucked out a few times, the timing and everything.

A. The timing, getting the position, I lucked out. After that, of course, I worked with the other women on campus to put an end to that nonsense. We had a wonderful academic vice president, John Chalmers, whose wife was not a career woman but was sympathetic to the notion of gender equality. They had daughters. I'm sure that was a factor in their support.

At this time the federal government asked all the colleges and universities that were receiving federal funds to develop affirmative action plan. John Chalmers asked me to help write the plan for Kansas State University. He sent me to a conference in Washington, D.C. where, of course, I was radicalized even more. By this time I had many co-conspirators. [laughter]

Q. I think about what you've just described. That experience at Kansas State and KU was kind of a breakthrough for you.

A. Absolutely.

Q. Maybe even politically or philosophically, I mean you had been a feminist over the years.

A. But I didn't know I was.

Q. Yes, but with this incident, you really became a feminist.

A. Absolutely. Bob had always been more liberal. And to put it in perspective, our parents were conservative Republicans.

Q. Oh, yes, yes. I remember.

End of Tape 1 Side 2  
47 minutes 53 seconds

Begin Tape 2 Side 1

Q. You had discussed you getting a job at Kansas State, which I think was in 1970.

A. That's correct.

Q. I don't want to put words in your mouth, but I inferred from the way you talked about that was this really was your step in the academic door for all practical purposes.

A. That was my step, my realization that I enjoyed teaching and could have an academic career. That I could teach. When I got my PhD, I was hired as a part-time instructor at Kansas State.

Q. Also then that was kind of a personal discovery of the kind of sexism that your mother would have probably not have tolerated given her family history.

A. Yes, she would have said something. [laughter]

Q. Yes, right.

A. So she would have recognized an injustice. For me it was a real eye opener because this was before affirmative action. Discrimination against women was just accepted. Those who came after me were the beneficiaries of affirmative action.

I remember when I was being considered for a position at Kansas State, our neighbor, who was a chemistry professor, complained that my husband was a dean and earned a high salary so it was not fair for me to take a position. I lived through all that. The amazing thing is how accepted that point of view was, and how openly it was expressed.

It wasn't until I started working at K-State that I realized there was something terribly unfair going on. As I mentioned earlier the provost at the university realized that eventually all the universities were going to have to write affirmative action plans. So he sent me to a conference, the Women's Equity Action League meeting.

Q. Where was that?

A. In Washington, D.C., and that was my first real meeting with feminists. Later I became active in the American Political Science Association and was appointed to their Commission on the Status of Women. Some faculty women also formed the Women's Caucus for Political Science. In 1975 I served as its national president.

Q. You must have been identified at Kansas State University as a leader since you were asked to help with Affirmative Action.

A. When I started my career, I didn't benefit from affirmative action, but was asked by the provost, John Chalmers, to go to Washington and identify the major issues that were related to affirmative action plans. I had faculty friends who were as committed as I was to achieving equality for women. One friend, a faculty spouse who taught part-time, was Dorothy Thompson.

My work on the formal side of affirmative action on campus was in addition to my faculty activities. When legal requirements necessitated the appointment of a full-time affirmative action officer, Dorothy Thompson took the position. She went to law school and stayed in that position until her death from breast cancer. She was brilliant, tactful, and had a great sense of humor and was a great colleague. There were others including the sociologist Cornelia Flora.

Q. Cornelia?

A. F-L-O-R-A. We also started writing and publishing on women's issues. But whenever Cornelia, Dorothy and I had lunch in a restaurant anywhere in the Manhattan [Kansas], inevitably someone would come up to us and ask, "What are you conspiring?" [laughter]

Q. So you were considered part of a ...

A. Oh, yes. They knew who was trying to make changes and who wasn't. I laughed as I thought about it.

Q. So there was a wonderful convergence for the three of you at a national movement in its infancy and your own career.

A. Yes, the American Political Science had many women who were active and challenged the sexism in the profession. One year the women organized and raised the issue of holding a national meeting in Chicago because Illinois had not ratified the ERA. They decided to challenge the location selection at the annual business meeting. In addition to other women, they encouraged all supportive men to go to the business meeting, literally calling some of them out of restrooms. They managed to get enough votes to pass a binding resolution forcing the association to cancel its contract with Hilton in Chicago.

Q. Yes, right.

A. The next year the political science establishment passed a resolution that all major changes had to be done through mail ballots. [laughter]

Q. Male ballots?

A. Mail-in ballots.

Q. Oh, M-A-I-L ballots. I thought you meant male ballots. [laughter]

A. No, no, no. I meant M-A-I-L ballots, so you couldn't make changes like that at a business meeting.

Q. Well, there was still a male domination at the university. Were feminists probably a little rare?

A. Not at the university. There were changes taking place in the Manhattan, Kansas community, but unplanned and almost by coincidence. In the 1970s, Manhattan had a woman mayor for the first time, a women head of the board of education, a women president of the chamber of commerce, and a woman county chair.

Q. My heavens.

A. It received national attention. By then I had been doing some writing on women and politics so I received my 15 minutes of fame. CBS sent Meredith Vierra to Manhattan to do a segment for the News Hour with Dan Rather. They spent the day in Manhattan, and asked me to comment and to explain what was happening. As I recall, I called it a silent revolution because that was really what it was. Women were taking leadership roles so quietly that no paid much attention until all of a sudden we seemed to be everywhere.

Q. Did this in any way candidly put Bob in any difficult position as Dean of a college?

A. No, he had some support, especially from people in other departments. Also Bob was a little bit of a maverick because he was the only active Democratic dean they had ever had in their history. He had a very successful career at Kansas State University.

Q. Now you said that Bob wasn't particularly troubled, but I know he was, as your spouse, supportive.

A. He was incredibly supportive and I will give you three examples. The first one was when our daughter, Mary Lou, was born. I wanted to name her Mary Lou. Bob said, "No, she has to be Mary Louise because if she becomes president or the head of a large corporation, she needs a dignified name." That never occurred to me. That was a sign of feminism, earlier feminism.

Q. Oh, he was thinking...

A. The second time is when they knocked on my door at Central Missouri State and they asked me to teach a course. I said, "I can't do it, I have a new baby and I've been out of the field." When Bob came home, he said, "No. You really must do it."

When he decided he was tired of administration and for a lot of reasons he wanted to step down, he encouraged me to get a job in administration in some role reversal. So he is just an incredible man. I mean he has supported encouraged, and nurtured me every step of the way.

Q. Well, that's a great tribute. It doesn't surprise me in the slightest. It's obvious and he's been happy to boost your ambitions and even spurred them.

A. There were many supportive men at Kansas State University. One of my colleagues, Bill Richter, suggested we offer a course on Women and Politics. I taught one of the first courses on Women in Politics in the United States, and now just about every political science department in the United States offers such a course.

When I taught it, I had to write my own material. If women were mentioned at all in American government textbooks for U.S. politics, it was simply comparing them to male voters and dealing with tables.

Q. Demographic data essentially.

A. Exactly. That was beginning to change, so I was very proud of that.

Q. In the American history books, the women leaders didn't tend to be mentioned, didn't tend to be people like Eleanor Roosevelt, but instead from Kansas, Mary Ellen Lease, who was kind of an eccentric character.

A. Eccentric characters, yes. Carrie Nation was a good example. It was an eye opener for some male historians, and let me give you an example. James MacGregor Burns, the Pulitzer Prize winning historian, was active in the American Political Science Association. In 1975 he decided that he wanted to run for President of the American Political Science Association, and so he came to the women's caucus to get support.

During the question and answer period, Professor Sarah Schramm asked him why in his writing about President Franklin Delano Roosevelt he never acknowledged Eleanor Roosevelt's influence on the president's policies. Jim was surprised by the question and answered that in his study, he had never found a specific example of her influence. Can you believe that?

Q. Oh, brother.

A. As an historian, I think that was of interest to you.

Q. Ok, good. Now I noticed in one of your resumes that beginning around 1975, you and Dick Vaden coauthored a series, maybe six or seven articles and one with Allene.

A. Yes, his wife.

Q. So I'm trying to reconstruct from my own knowledge of both of you. How did that friendship start and when did it begin?

A. Bob hired Dick to teach in the College of Business, and Dick's wife was in the College of Home Economics. Dick and I discovered a mutual interest in public management and later women in management. We also published in the area of civil service reform.

Q. That's interesting because by and large scholars in our fields are trained in solo work, at least were. The notion of collaboration wasn't taboo, but it was kind of against that lonely scholar's thing.

A. I did some work alone, but I did enjoy collaborating with others.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. That is not really when it started. After I finished my dissertation, I shared it with an historian at Central Missouri because I knew he had an interest in my topic. He liked it and suggested I try to get it published.

I replied that I would love to have it published but I just did not have the time. He said that if I would acknowledge his work, he was sure he could get it ready for publication. I immediately told him that if he could get it published, I would not only give him credit, I would list him as co-author. [laughter] So he basically arranged it into a book, which we had published.

Q. Congratulations. So you and Dick developed a professional writing relationship in addition to your social relationship because you became very good friends.

A. Our families always celebrated Christmas together. On New Year's Eve, the four of us would go to Kansas City and celebrate New Year's.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. My collaborations have always been very positive and intellectually very stimulating. I did some seminal work on women and politics with Neal Flora.

Q. You keep mentioning Neal. You mean Cornelia?

A. Cornelia, yes, and her husband's name is Jan.

Q. Ok, ok.

A. Jan is a man and Neal is a woman.

Q. Ok.

A. I wrote an article on the Johnson voting record with Dave Brady, who is now a professor at Stanford. We won an award for the best paper presented at the Midwest Political Science Association. I learned a lot working with Dave. He's gone on to do some very good work at Stanford.

End of Tape 2 Side 1  
47 minutes 15 seconds

Begin Tape 2 Side 2

Q. Oral history interview on June 28<sup>th</sup> with Naomi Lynn. Interesting. Let's turn to your emergence in an administrative capacity at Kansas State. We talked about having been an acting head of the political science department.

A. Then I became head of the political science department.

Q. Yes. You not only became head in 1982, but you served several stints as acting head, meaning that you were there in place of or until an election would be held.

A. Well, basically I was there when the chair took a year's sabbatical.

Q. Ok.

A. He took a sabbatical.

Q. You became...

A. Then when the position became open and they did a national search for chair, I applied, and my colleagues chose me to head the department.

Q. Were you the only woman still on the faculty at that point?

A. Oh, no, no, no. There had been two women before I arrived. One left the position before I arrived, but a woman taught constitutional law, Orma Linford was there.

Q. I'm sorry, what was her name?

A. Orma, O-R-M-A L-I-N-F-O-R-D. She was a fighting liberal; she was six feet two or three, beautiful, beautiful, and regal. Someone told me that in her earlier incarnation she had won a beauty contest. Of course I don't think she would ever admit that. Her father was the football coach at Utah State, and she was raised a Mormon. She rebelled against everything. One of the first things she did was start dating African-American football players [laughter] and all that.

She really believed in the First Amendment. Freedom of speech to her had no limits. She was supportive of the anti-Viet Nam movement on campus. I often think about her. She was very helpful and supportive of me. She died, accidentally. She fell down stairs and broke her neck – horrible, horrible accident after we had already come here. Anyway, she was incredible.

Then Linda Richter, who recently wrote the chapter about me in the public administration book, applied for a full-time position and was hired. I hired several women when I was head of the department. I remember once in an interview someone said to me, "Why are you hiring women? Are you showing favoritism to women?" I replied, "No, I just don't discriminate." [laughter] We had some really good women teaching. A lot of them went on through to successful careers, but Orma was my big fighting liberal.

Q. I can see why. She was tall.

A. She was six foot four, and she wore high heels. She was amazing.

Q. So in general you spent four years as the... oh, excuse me, two years as head of the department until you left. Things went well by and large?

A. Oh yes, I had wonderful colleagues. The provost was great and the dean was supportive. Even when I had a bad experience with a local newspaper, administrators were very supportive. The whole thing started because I got a grant to study women and politics in 1972. It was the first time there was going to be an equal number of men and women at a national party convention.

This meant that at the Democratic convention, we would have a large pool of women in politics to interview. The Republicans also encouraged women delegates, but because they did not mandate equity they had a smaller number of women attending.

I received a small grant from the state and used it to attend the Democratic convention. It was not a partisan decision but a practical one. The editor of our local newspaper heard about my plans and wrote a scathing editorial saying that he thought it was totally inappropriate for a Democrat to take state money to go to the Democratic convention and do such a trivial thing as study women in politics. At the time I was much more sensitive to criticism so it really bothered me. Anyway it turned out to be a positive experience and the dean was very supportive, although he did not enjoy the experience either.

Q. Yes, about how you are wasting money.

A. People were very supportive of me. The provost was very supportive. I had some friends in the community who were very active in the Republican Party, and they were a little bit concerned about this. They asked me why I had chosen to not go to the Republican convention. I responded that, "It would actually be better for my study if I could do both, but I only got enough money to go to one of them." So the Republican women raised money and gave me a grant to go to the Republican convention. [laughter]. Isn't that great?

Q. Playing both sides against the middle, good for you.

A. Yes, they were wonderful.

Q. Now which convention was this?

A. 1972 in Miami.

Q. 1972?

A. Yes, in Miami.

Q. We were there together. I was an alternate delegate.

A. How about that? That is fascinating. The Republican convention wasn't as interesting because they were renominating Richard Nixon.

Q. The Democratic one was too much drama [laughter] chaotic.

A. Oh my gosh! If you had been dropped there from Mars, you would have immediately known which one was which.

Q. Anyway, I don't want to get on my experiences. Then you remained coordinator of public administration. Was that a new program?

A. Yes, I established the public administration program.

Q. So it was a coordinator; it wasn't a department?

A. No, it wasn't a department. It was sort of political science.

Q. Part of teaching public administration.

A. We were starting to offer an MPA, and we had not done that in the past. I was very active in public administration professionally and was later elected national president of the American Society of Public Administration. You really needed that degree, and we were able to do that – offer that degree.

Q. You were teaching public administration at that time?

A. My areas of specialization in political science were international relations, comparative politics and public administration. I started teaching international relations, public administration and American government. I added women and politics and practical politics. Eventually I stopped teaching courses in international relations and comparative politics.

Q. You also had an appointment working with affirmative action.

A. It was just part of my other duties. I did that before I became department head.

Q. Now I think we are going to frame it that you'll understand the context of my question. By the 1980s I would surmise that being both a woman and Hispanic brought your name and identity to the attention of recruiting institutions.

A. Yes, but not so much Hispanic because no one asked me about ethnic identity when I started my career. I was just not done. My ethnic identity was emphasized when I became a candidate for president of Sangamon State University.

Q. They were probably looking for some way to boast about how this was a breakthrough.

A. I don't know. All I know is that it came out in all the press releases. Of course, in my letter responding to my nomination I mentioned it. I thought it was important because in Atlanta for the first time I became active in some Latina activities, something I had never done before. I took on my identity more because it was an issue. It had never been an issue before.

Q. Right, right.

A. I remember being told that when you apply for a presidency, people want to know about you, who you are. Before this, it's more - you are an academic, nobody cares about your ethnic background. At least they didn't then, they do now, I think.

So when I got the letter saying I had been nominated as president of Sangamon State University, I'm sure I mentioned it because by that time it was an issue. Presidents play a different role; people really want to know who you are.

Q. What's your identity?

A. I had gone to a few workshops on becoming a college president in which they said it was very important to talk about yourself.

Q. They want to know who you are.

A. They want to know who you are.

Q. Well, it's a 24 hour job.

A. Twenty-four hour job and they want to know as much about you as they can. Have there been any scandals? Have you been in the paper? Where have you lived? Where did you grow up? Things that one never thought about volunteering in the academy, you have to volunteer. But I know my interview went well, and I felt good about the interview.

Q. But you were becoming nationally recognized in your years in Atlanta.

A. Yes, yes. In Manhattan I was well known in the community. I remember they had an article in the paper listing me as one of the most influential people in the city, which I thought was a joke. [laughter]. But when I went to Atlanta, I was president-elect of the American Society of Public Administration so I was well known in academic circles.

Q. Right.

A. By then I had also served on the Executive Council of the American Political Science Association, which no one at K State had ever been before. So academic in my career was advancing but not... I don't remember the order.

Q. I know, I have a copy of your resume with the years here. Were you ever tempted or invited to pursue a career in electoral politics?

A. Oh, yes. People in Kansas were always asking me to run [laughter].

Q. Legislative seat?

A. No, I think it was mainly city council member, but I don't know remember. They periodically needed somebody to run and they said, "Would you be interested in running?" I wasn't.

Q. You weren't?

A. Well, I wasn't. I worked in campaigns; I was a good campaign manager. When my friend decided to run for Congress, I was very active in her campaign. She won and served two terms. I also worked on Bill Roy's campaign; he was the first Democrat elected to Congress in that district in Kansas.

So I enjoyed that role very much. I worked on many political campaigns. We were very active, especially getting Martha elected to Congress. She was the first woman to marry another member of Congress.

Q. Yes, that's right.

A. She married Andy Jacobs, a Congressman from Indiana.

Q. Andy Jacobs, right.

A. I was their maid of honor [laughter]. Their marriage received a great deal of national TV coverage. Unfortunately, the marriage ended in divorce.

Q. Were you active in Georgia?

A. No. When they hired me in Georgia, they made it clear that I was not to get involved in partisan politics. We were located three blocks from the state capitol and that would have been totally inappropriate. I agreed with their reasoning and followed that same policy in Springfield.

Q. Well, I recall in Springfield when you were even in a more visible position, you never hid that you were a Democrat.

A. I think I did. With the exception of close friends, no one knew my party preference.

Q. Really?

A. My priority was the university and I supported anyone who helped us politically. Karen Hasara welcomed us to Springfield, became a close friend and always helped her alma mater. When she ran for mayor I supported her, but technically that was a nonpartisan office. I did not vote in any primary until after I retired.

Q. Smart.

A. I'll tell you who was probably surprised that I wasn't Republican - Jim Edgar.

Q. Really?

A. Yes, he was a supporter and of course a wonderful governor. About two years ago my son-in-law, who is a very conservative Republican, came to an event in Urbana and I introduced him to Edgar. Marvin said, "Oh, I'm so happy to meet you. You are one of the few Republican office holders she really respects." I could tell by the look on Jim Edgar's face that was a big surprise.

Q. Well, that was the prudent thing to do.

A. I felt it was my job to walk both sides of the aisle and get support. We received a great deal of help from Raymond Poe, Larry Bomke, and George Ryan.

Q. You were close with Gwen Klingler?

A. Oh, yes. She was an outspoken, committed and loyal supporter of UIS. We could always count on Gwen to help us with legislation. She also became a close personal friend. After I retired, I voted in a Republican primary because I thought she was being treated unfairly.

Q. Yes, she was. We are at a point where I think we should pause to give you a chance to rest. We'll take up Georgia State at the beginning of our next session. Then, of course, we will get to the piece de resistance.

End of Tape 2 Side 2  
23 minutes 4 seconds

Begin Tape 3 Side 1

Q. This is an oral history interview on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010, with Naomi Lynn and the interviewer is Cullom Davis. Naomi, let's start by returning to your successful years in Atlanta.

A. In 1984 I accepted the position of Dean of the College of Public and Urban Affairs at Georgia State University. The college had a wide range of programs.

Q. Now this wasn't a department was it?

A. It was a college. We had criminal justice, social work, a hospitality school, public administration and English as a Second Language. We also had two two-year programs in labor studies, aviation and commercial music.

Q. Music?

A. I learned a lot about music and saw a lot of the popular entertainers. We were invited to the Country Music Hall of Fame celebration. Of course, at the hotel program, we were invited to hotel and restaurant openings so I learned more about hospitality administration than anything else. But we had a potpourri of the programs that were in our college as a matter of convenience, rather than for any legitimate academic reason. Eventually we dropped the two year programs. We had English as a Second Language.

Q. Were you also involved then in international student matters?

A. We did have international students because we offered a degree in ESL and because students came to our college to prepare to take their TOEFL exams.

Q. I forget what TOEFL means, it's an acronym?

A. Test of English as a Foreign Language. It is an English proficiency test required for college and university admissions.

Q. Test of foreign language?

A. Test of English. Most foreign students take it in their countries, but occasionally they take it here. Georgia State gave the test, but also prepared students for the test. Some stayed with us, some did not. Another program at Georgia State that was impressive was their development studies. They really took care of students. By this, I mean that if you applied and you had gone to a very weak high school, they admitted you to the development program. You did not get academic credit, but they spent time preparing you so when you went into the regular classroom you were ready to compete.

Q. It really worked.

A. It worked. Let's say a student scored high on their ACT reading but low in math. They were put in a special math class but in the regular English class. I don't know if they still have the program, but it did provide an opportunity for disadvantaged students to succeed in college.

Q. What about public administration?

A. We went from a school that was not well known in public administration to one that was highly ranked. It is even better today, so I feel very good about the years there. I was able to attract talented people.

Q. Were you able to get additional faculty positions?

A. Yes, I asked for some when I accepted the position as dean and I added some strong faculty.

Q. Let's go regionally. What in Georgia State's opinion was its chief competitor or model for excellence?

A. I really don't believe that they had a model. They were under the same governing board in Georgia as Georgia Tech, but Georgia Tech was a different type of institution. Atlanta has excellent private colleges, foremost is Emory University.

Q. Private school?

A. Yes, private schools. There are many colleges, and there was an art institute. Atlanta has many schools including some historic black colleges so it was an educational center. We were always working with one school or another. For example, the American Political Science Association received some funding from the Ford Foundation and established a national summer program for African-American students to encourage them to seek careers in political science.

They asked me to help with the program, and I worked with faculty, mainly from Spellman and Morehouse. They brought in students from all over the United States. One of the students they brought in was Jim Smiley from Sangamon State University. I got to know him through this program. When I became a candidate for president of SSU he contacted me and told me he was on the search committee. It is a small world. I mean what are the odds of that happening? [laughter]

Q. It is a small world.

A. Isn't that remarkable that a student out of that program would end up on the search committee at Sangamon State University?

Q. Yes [laughter]. We talked somewhat about how as the first female leader of an...

A. Academic institution.

Q. Academic institution, you dealt with some sexist traditions that were institutional and maybe also ... I don't know, but they were sexist and you dealt with them. Well, how would you summarize that – directly or subtly?

A. I would have to say both because it depended on the situations. In Kansas it was more direct because I was involved in issues about getting women faculty equal pay and equal treatment in tenure decisions. That, of course, had to be very direct.

Q. Right.

A. There was no subtle way to say, "You need to look at that pay scale and make sure you are not discriminating on the basis of gender." But at Georgia, it was more subtle. I found it helpful to have lived in the south so I had some understanding of the culture. I remember at the beginning of a meeting of administrators, the university president said to everyone, "Doesn't Naomi look beautiful today? Her husband should commission a painting of her."

I was the only woman academic dean so he probably felt compelled to compliment me. After this ritual everything went on as usual and I had to protect my budget and my back like everyone else. You had to be careful not to be complimented right into ineffectiveness. Oh patronizing.

Q. Patronizing. I call it patronizing, yes.

A. Yes, I was used to that.

Q. Yet you never resented it publicly. You had great finesse.

A. I had learned that very early in my career. I warn women to be careful because they can be complimented right out of their budgets or their positions. I have been told that happened to my successor at GSU. She didn't last very long. They reorganized the college and appointed a new dean, and I didn't think she even knew what was happening. I never met her.

I wish I had more time to talk about the second woman dean who was hired while I was at Georgia State. Her name was Marjorie Knowles and she served as dean of our law school. She had been solicitor general in the Carter Administration. She was very even handed, but she didn't suffer fools.

Because she was more direct, we were in danger of becoming what Rosabeth Kanter describes as the good one and the bad one – the good Dean and the bad Dean. Fortunately for us, we both recognized this, and we became good friends and very supportive of each other.

A. Excuse me, what was Margery's last name?

A. KNOWLES. She was much more direct than I was. She was an excellent dean and helped get them through the accreditation at the law school.

Q. I think you got your victories through patience and some finesse, but you got your way.

A. In the end. There are two different styles that work and you can work off the other person.

Q. Yes, but you made friends and she probably...

A. She made friends, and I certainly respected her as did people who worked closely with her. Then she stepped down as dean. I don't know if she is teaching or not. She was on the board of TIAA for many years. You may have voted for her.

Q. I'm guessing that also in Georgia whereas you were in Kansas, you were known before you were in those positions. So you were a known, trusted and popular colleague whereas in Atlanta, you were unknown.

A. I had to establish myself.

Q. You had to establish your territory.

A. At the school, I think I knew two people before I arrived. The city was very open and cosmopolitan. A common expression was, "There is the south and then there is Atlanta." Atlanta has an old upper class African-American community of college graduates. It is a wonderful city, a great city.

There was another thing that was interesting about Georgia State University. The Provost was very religious. He was a Southern Methodist minister on the side. It was quite a shock to pray before each faculty session [laughter] and to pray before every meeting. When I came home I told Bob, "I am having a little culture shock." He said, "Well, just remember that you are in the largest religious public university." As soon as the provost retired and a new president came in, he put an end to that. It was a strict violation of separation of church and state.

Q. Who was he? You said he had been supportive of you.

A. No, no. Not the provost. It was the academic vice-president who was supportive.

Q. What was the President's name - Noah Langdale?

A. He was there for thirty-three years. He was totally unpredictable. You never knew when he called you to his office what he really wanted. Once he called me to his office to discuss the movies. He would never take a position on a controversial matter if he could avoid it.

If a controversial issue came up, he would say, "On the advice of the academic vice-president, on the advice of the provost, on the advice of the dean," or whomever he could coerce to agree with him, "I have decided to..." For example, a chair of a department in my college had been forced to resign before I arrived. The president asked me to review the record and send him a memo agreeing to the decision. The person in question was threatening to sue the university so the president was trying to make me the scapegoat.

I said, "I'm not going to do that." I said, "First of all, I'm not going to open myself up to ridicule. If we go to court, I will have to say that I wasn't here. I was in Kansas or something." So I didn't do anything and he didn't force it. But that gives you an example of the mentality.

Q. Strange place. Had any wisps of that occurred in your interviews?

A. No, because I only met with the president for a few minutes. I spent most of my time with the academic vice president who was a very good academic vice president. He was the one who really had to tolerate a lot of this foolishness. For example, when his turn came to pray before a faculty senate meeting, he told the provost it was against his religion. "I believe in what the Lord says, pray in secret, so I go in the closet and I pray there." He had to put up with a lot more than I did. He did his best to protect his subordinates.

One of the deans (Jerry Robbins) had come to Georgia State as an American Council on Education fellow and was assigned to spend half the day working for the president and half the day working for the provost. When the provost got angry and frustrated with the president, he would say to Jerry, "Write him a note." Then Jerry would give it to him and the president would say, "Respond and tell him what I think of this." Jerry said, "I was going crazy; I was writing myself insulting notes all day." [laughter]

Later in his career he came back as dean of the College of Education so he must have written good notes. He was a good colleague and just an interesting person. He was a musician and had many different talents. I learned to live with it and enjoyed it and met some great people and these were great people.

Q. Did you do any institutional development along with that?

A. I did. I worked with the foundation, which wasn't as developed, of course, and did raise some money. In fact, my biggest gift came from a lead provided by the provost. It was from the widow of Cecil B. Day of Days Inn. We named the school the Cecil B. Day School of Hospitality Administration.

I went to all the events and got very involved in the community. One of the wonderful things about Atlanta is that it is a welcoming city. It is a city of volunteers. After five years in Atlanta I was selected for Leadership Atlanta, a very select group of about 60 individuals who each year are chosen for their work for their city and encouraged to continue to assume leadership roles.

My biggest supporter and mentor was Dan Sweat. When I was chosen as dean, he was on the search committee as the community representative.

Q. How do you spell that?

A. S-W-E-A-T. Dan Sweat had been the deputy mayor of Atlanta. He was now heading what was now called the Atlanta Progress. Atlanta Progress was made up of all the major CEOs in Atlanta. Only the CEOs could attend meetings; they were not permitted to send substitutes. Dan was known as “Mr. Atlanta” and was probably with the exception of the Mayor the most influential person in the city.

He had been on the search committee and had noticed in my resume that I had studied public administration at the University of Kansas. KU was a nationally acclaimed city management program, and Dan had high regard for its graduates. He was supportive of my appointment, helped me appoint an advisory council and was always available when I sought his help.

When President Carter was criticized because he had done so much for people around the world and not enough for Atlanta, he decided to start the Atlanta Project. He asked Dan to lead it because he knew that Dan would get it done right and that Dan’s name would help ensure its success. [Beeping in the background]

Q. Go ahead. [Tape stops and then restarts.]

A. It was so successful, and such a role model of what communities could do, that many cities invited Dan to consult with them. The Atlanta Project slowly spread throughout the United States. I invited Dan to Springfield, and with his help led a group of community leaders to Atlanta. Later we established the Springfield Project, which is still in existence.

Q. Springfield?

A. Springfield Project. Dan developed stomach cancer and died shortly after visiting Springfield. He is still my model in terms of effective leadership. He tackled everything with integrity. He had a way of confronting people directly but not being offensive so that they were not angry at him even when they disagreed with him.

Q. That’s a good thing.

A. He was not only an interesting, warm, perceptive, and wonderful person but probably the most effective leader I have ever worked with.

Q. That’s quite a tribute. You managed to get your PhD actually in 1970.

A. In two years.

Q. That is impressive.

A. I have met many outstanding men and women during my career. One of my graduate school friends at the University of Kansas, Janice Mendenhall, had a top level position with the General Services Administration in Atlanta. We reconnected when I moved to Atlanta, and she helped me with my biggest project—the bicentennial celebration of women and the constitution.

Q. Oh, I missed that. That was obviously a national effort.

A. To make a long story short, our nation was celebrating the bicentennial of our Constitution and no one was focusing on how the Constitution had influenced the role of women in our society. I believed we should have a meeting or conference on the founding of our nation and on the changing role of women on our Constitution. I mentioned it to friends in Manhattan, Kansas and not much was coming from it.

When I moved to Atlanta, I ran into my friend, Janice Mendenhall. I knew from our KU days that she was interested in women's issues. She knew the head of the Carter Presidential Library, Donald Schewe, and she arranged for us to have lunch. He immediately offered to take the project to Rosalynn Carter. Mrs. Carter was very enthusiastic and made holding a conference and developing educational material a major project for the Carter Center. She assigned a staff member, Dayle Powell, to lead the effort.

With Rosalynn Carter's help, we put together an excellent planning committee. Mrs. Carter asked the former First Ladies to serve as honorary chairs. The only one who declined was Jackie Kennedy who expressed her support, but said she had a long held policy of not participating in these types of events. Betty Ford, Lady Bird Johnson and Pat Nixon accepted, and Lady Bird Johnson attended the conference.

We had a marvelous committee, which included Liz Carpenter (former press secretary to President Johnson), Ruth Mendel and a very busy local committee. I was in charge of the program, which was incredibly rewarding and sometimes very challenging. We had outstanding women who volunteered to make major addresses, and we had to turn them down because we had all the spots on the program filled.

Our speakers included Coretta Scott King, Geraldine Ferraro, Erma Bombeck, Bella Abzug and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, to name just a few.

Jimmy Carter insisted that we not have more than 4,000 attendees and he may have been right—we actually had more than forty-five hundred women at the meeting in Atlanta and they came from all over the United States. My problem was that everybody wanted to come and turning down people was very, very difficult. Sandra Day O'Connor was the opening plenary speaker.

Q. I'm sorry. Who?

A. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor.

Q. Sandra Day O'Connor, of course.

A. I chose to introduce Barbara Jordan, and she came in her wheelchair. We had to build a special ramp for her to come up on the stage. It was one of the joys to actually introduce Barbara Jordan, who played such an important role during the constitutional crisis over the impeachment of Richard Nixon. She wanted to come; she wasn't well, but she wanted to be there.

Q. Well, this was a big news event.

A. It was a big event and it was incredibly satisfying. It wouldn't have happened without Rosalynn Carter. Another thing Rosalynn Carter did was to make sure that tapes and papers from the symposium were organized and edited so they could be used in schools and would become part of the history of the struggle to change the Constitution to achieve equality for women. I edited a volume on some of the papers from the conference that was published by the Howarth Press.

Q. Was a lot of this work that was done biographical in nature of women?

A. Some of it was. It depended on the speakers. The paper on Mary Otis Warren, who was an anti-federalist and prolific writing in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, by its nature would have been biographical. Some dealt with legal position of women, some with women's suffrage. Some talked about the rights of women in cases in the Supreme Court.

Q. Constitutional law.

A. One of our panelists was Sarah Weddington, the chief counsel in Roe v. Wade. It was a lot of constitutional law, and it was a lot about politics. It was pretty far ranging in subject matter.

A few years later, some of the African-American women who were there decided that they would sponsor a conference on women in the civil rights movement. I was delighted to be asked to introduce Coretta Scott King and Rosa Parks at the meeting. They had both attended our Women and the Constitutional Conference, but it was special to introduce them on a panel on civil rights.

Q. Of course it was.

A. Rosa Parks was at our conference. Let me give you an example. A young woman came.

Q. Let us just stop here for a second. [Tape pauses and restarts.] You were talking about Rosa Parks.

A. Rosa was at the Constitutional Conference. She was on a panel on “Heroines of Constitutional Change.” But there were other women, not on the program, who played an important part of our constitutional history. For example, one woman who I had met years earlier in Kansas reintroduced herself. She was Louise Brown, the plaintiff from Brown vs. the Topeka Board of Education. I was pleased that she was invited to participate in the Women and the Civil Rights Movement conference.

Q. Oh, of course.

A. So there were many women who had been involved in important cases at the conference. Later on, some of them came back for the civil rights conference. But those were the kinds of people who wanted to come and were on the program. They played an active part in changing the Constitution.

Q. So this conference, was it about 1976?

A. It was on the Bicentennial of the American Constitution.

Q. But it was a Constitutional Conference?

A. Yes. Our conference was at the tail end of the celebration, February 1988. I have the program if you want to see it. Do you want to see what the program looked like?

Q. Well, you described it very well.

A. It was quite a meeting and it was very rewarding.

Q. I bet.

A. Probably the most rewarding thing, activity I was involved in as a woman where I felt I took a leadership role and felt good about it. We made something happen, and it was a series of coincidences again – if I hadn’t gone to KU with Janice Mendenhall, and if she hadn’t vouched for me, and if Rosalynn Carter hadn’t been so interested.

Q. Of course, sure.

A. But without them, it wouldn’t have happened, no question about it.

Q. Now I know that you managed even though you were a full time dean and active in civic affairs to continue your scholarship. Forgive me, this is an entrance. You chose some things

that you could do with your brain and based on knowledge you had that wouldn't be an enormous job like conference proceedings, say?

A. Oh, yes and other activities.

Q. Yes, articles.

A. Articles and I edited a book on public administration with Aaron Wildavsky, a well-known professor at the University of California-Berkley that is still being used.

Q. Yes, Right.

A. I was asked to write a chapter on public or political science as an organization for the Political Science Association and I did that. I think I was pretty busy.

Q. Well, that's my point.

A. I remember when I was in Georgia, serving on the National Council of the American Society for Public Administration and as its national president, I was also on the national council of the NASPAA.

Q. NASPAA.

A. The National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration, but I did not serve as its national president until after I came to Springfield.

Q. I think during that time you were also very active in APSA, American Political Science Association.

A. Yes, I was. I think I may have been out of the Executive Council.

Q. From 1981 to 1983, I think.

A. Oh, ok.

Q. Then you became a trustee.

A. Yes.

Q. That's right. We'll just pause there. [Tape paused]

A. Bob's folks moved back to Springfield in 1965. Bob's father died in 1973. In the late 1980s Bob's mother began to develop memory problems. We encouraged her to move into the

Presbyterian home here in Springfield, but she would not leave her apartment at the townhouse.

Q. That was in a townhouse?

A. Yes. Bob's brother was working for the World Bank and did a lot of international traveling and lived in Washington D.C. So Bob tried to check on his mother, but he was working full-time so it was very difficult.

Our daughter, Nancy, had been working for Folgers Coffee in Cincinnati and had come to Atlanta on weekends. She was offered a job in marketing by Eveready Batteries that meant she would be moving to St. Louis. We were very upset because that meant she wouldn't be coming to Atlanta to visit us as often, but our one consolation was that she would be able to see her grandmother and report back to us.

Somewhere along the line I found out that there was an opening at Sangamon State University. I don't remember if my friend, Bob Denhart, who had been at KU with me, heard about it or I told him. In any case he nominated me for the position.

Q. So he had seen you and you said but he offered to.

A. Yes.

Q. I don't think I asked him, but the details are vague now. His name was Bob Denhart and he had been at KU. He is one of the most prolific writers in public administration, just a good professional friend over the years. He knew a little about our situation, and I had done reviews for books he had written. We just thought it was really funny because I was not very interested at all except for the location.

Q. That's an awkward thing to tell a search committee, isn't it?

A. Well, I didn't tell them the reason. I would not have applied had it not been for Bob's mother.

Q. But that had to be between you and Bob.

A. Well, yes.

Q. Did it fit your ambitions?

A. My friends didn't think it was a good match for me. I wasn't that ambitious anyway, so that wasn't a big deal. Mainly I didn't feel the fit was as good as I would have wanted. The upper division model seemed outdated to me. Then I think was Jeanne Marie Cole told me that

Wayne Penn was interested in the position. I thought, "Oh, no." So that also made me hesitate.

Q. You had never known Wayne?

A. Yes I had known him at KU.

Q. Oh, you had known him.

A. Not well. He was an Assistant Professor at KU when I was there. I never had a class with him, but he had a reputation as an excellent teacher. Occasionally I would run into him at a meeting or something, so I knew him, liked him and respected him. Jeanne and I had done some work for the UN in Thailand and I knew her from ASPA, so I called and I told her I was considering applying for the position.

She said, "But you need to know. I'm not going to support you because Wayne Penn is a candidate." But, of course, there was no guarantee that he would get the job. When I did come for the interview, Wayne told me, "I really want this job, but if I don't get it," he said, "I really want you to because I think you and I can work well together." That was typical of Wayne.

Q. Yes.

A. So I applied.

Q. Now you were comfortable?

A. Nominated.

Q. I understand that, but you were comfortable at Georgia State, though. A little tired of it?

A. I think I might have been a little tired of it. I think seven years of being dean is really long enough. Bob did it for fifteen years and he got very tired of it. He decided he didn't want to do administration anymore. I wasn't that tired of it, but I think I ready to look around.

Q. Ok. You could have considered, you could have felt comfortable about a more prestigious institution.

A. Yes. I was positioned to go to a provost position, academic vice-president, at another school. On the other hand, this was very important.

Q. Bob had completed his work in Georgia, hadn't he?

A. Not really. When he retired from Kansas State he planned to teach because he was tired of administration. He encouraged me to apply for administration. At a business school meeting, he met an African-American woman who was the dean of business at Atlanta University, a historically black college.

She said to him, "If you come to Atlanta, you can do some teaching for us." He started to teach and he was there for about a month when the head of marketing walked out. They said to him, "Would you be willing to be the department chair of marketing while we search for an African-American." He thought he couldn't say no because he could do it with one hand tied behind his back, so he agreed.

A year later, they had another situation come up, and I don't remember the details, but the dean was fired. They asked him if he would be acting dean for a few months while they looked for an African-American dean, and ended up being dean for four years. [laughter]

Q. So he was drawn back into it.

A. Yes.

Q. So you applied keeping it confidential with respect to Georgia State?

A. No, I told the academic vice-president at Georgia State that I was going to apply. I didn't tell the faculty I was looking for another job. I did tell my boss. We had a new president. Noah Langdale was gone.

The new president had been academic vice-president of Emory University. His name was John Palm. He came in, and there were a lot of changes and things that needed to happen. The dean of the College of Business had wanted to be president. When he didn't get it, he left. This gives you some idea of what Palms was facing as new president.

John started replacing deans with interim deans. I was finally the only dean he wasn't replacing. The Atlanta Constitution described me as "the dean with no equal."

Q. With no recourse?

A. With no equal.

Q. Oh, equal, so you are a dean.

A. Everybody was an acting dean except me. John Palm decided to keep me.

Q. Bet you were flattering him the whole time. [laughter] No, just kidding.

A. Meanwhile, Palm is offered the presidency of the University of South Carolina. So he leaves without completing his second year at Georgia State. The students were angry, everyone was angry. In fact the students staged what they called an “outstallation.” [laughter]

Q. An “outstallation?”

A. They called it an “outstallation” because they had barely finished installation of John Palm’s installation. The Board of Regents appointed a retired dean of the College of Education as acting president. The new acting president called me to his office and said, “You are the only permanent dean I have.” I said and I really believed, “I will be very supportive. You can count on my help.” He got my support and help. Unfortunately a few months later I left.

Later whenever he ran into me at meetings, he would tease me about my short lived support. That was the environment I was in where I was surrounded by acting deans and I was the only dean that John Palm for whatever reason, seemed to get along with. I never figured out what was going on.

Q. But you were the one with institutional stability and you decided to resign.

A. But it wasn’t for that reason.

Q. I understand.

A. I could have stayed there. I got along with John Palms and the acting president and a year or so later they appointed an outstanding president. I also enjoyed living in Atlanta.

Q. Obviously your credentials had been attractive to the search committee here while your motives were confidential.

A. Yes.

Q. Now some may have suspected.

A. I didn’t tell anyone. Now in my letter I did say that I knew Springfield.

Q. Yes.

A. And that I had family living here. That was one of the reasons I applied. I alluded to the fact that Springfield would not be a strange community; it was not. I had been coming here for a long time, but I never hinted that Bob’s mother was an issue or that she was having any problems. I just mentioned that as a plus. I felt the search committee would be interested in a candidate who knew Springfield, who had a degree from the University of Illinois and so forth.

I mean I was trying to play up my strengths. I had ties to the community. Bill Forsyth's mother lived in the same building and Bunche Bunn's mother lived in the same building as Bob's mother. I had met some people from her from church, but Georgia and Chuck Northup were the only ones I really knew.

Q. Yes, ok. It seems like it was a relatively short search process, maybe four months or so.

A. I think it was, yes. There was a large pool of candidates, but they narrowed it down to four-three women and Wayne. I don't know if Wayne would have gotten it if I hadn't applied. I have no way of knowing. But there were four of us left standing. The other two women eventually got presidencies, so that was nice and indicates it was a strong pool.

Q. Strong pool. Who was chair of the search committee? Was it a board member?

A. It was chaired by Brewster Parker, a member of the Board of Regents. There was somebody from the union. You remember that I had a labor program in the college in Atlanta so they called labor leaders and asked about me. I always attended their events so they knew me well and were very supportive, I cannot remember the name of the labor representative on the committee.

Q. Labor Studies?

A. Not Labor Studies but the union. He was in charge of the union here.

Q. There was Ron.

A. Was it Ron?

Q. Ron.

A. No, that was faculty. I mean the city, the head of the union here for the city.

Q. Oh, I don't know.

A. He was on the search committee. He was one of the community representatives.

Q. That's right, I knew him.

A. He called the head of the union in Atlanta who I did know, which was very helpful, too.

Q. Yes.

A. It was really funny because all these things played in. It was sheer coincidence that they would have a labor person call the labor people who had been involved in my labor program. Of course, they all knew me. So it was luck and not planned.

Q. Coincidence and timing.

A. Coincidence, luck, timing and you often hear people talk about the importance of timing, which I believe. But when you look back on decisions that are made, a lot of them are all the things we mentioned previously plus luck. Planning had nothing to do with any of those; it was just being in the right spot at the right time.

Q. You obviously met with the search committee before you actually visited campus. Did you meet at O'Hare or in Atlanta?

A. No, we met in St. Louis at the airport.

Q. Did you have an impression of the search committee as being pretty sharp?

A. I liked the search committee. I felt they asked good questions. They gave me a chance to talk about my philosophy of education. I know about searches; I had been involved in some. I thought that they were a very good search committee.

Q. That was encouraging, wasn't it? It was an example the institution's maturity.

A. My negative feelings, my reservations came when I came for the campus interview. I wasn't sure that it was going to be a good fit. As far as the search committee was concerned, I thought they were all very interesting, strange configuration of all kinds of relevant people – faculty representatives, staff. In fact, Carol told me...

Q. Carol?

A. She represented the staff union here for a long time. She was in the staff meetings. She worked for Nancy Ford. She is retired now, but she told me I was the only one who talked about staff.

Q. You pushed all the right buttons.

End of Tape 3 Side 1  
46 minutes 45 seconds

Begin Tape 3 Side 2

Q. This is continuing an oral history interview with Naomi Lynn on July 19<sup>th</sup>. You were talking about the search committee and Carol, who represented the staff.

A. Oh, I know who chaired the committee – Reagan Smith. Reagan was on there.

Q. How did he impress you?

A. He was very friendly, just very helpful with information. I already told you that our friend, Jim Smiley, was there. Pat Langley was on the search committee. Dave Murphy was on the search committee. A representative from the union, Rich or Rick, was on it but I can't come up with his name. I thought the committee was very good. They were good at follow-up questions. They didn't just let you give a short memorized answer. I think it was an excellent committee.

Q. But then you said you visited, which would have been when? In the spring of...

A. Then they had four finalists come to visit the campus and it probably was in March or April, somewhere in there.

Q. Yes.

A. There was a lot of anger and they asked one issue that will give you an example of the tone of the meeting. Basically one faculty member said that they had a hit list of people they wanted out because they had damaged the institution. They needed a president who was willing to replace all of them. I remember responding, "No, I won't accept a hit list. I have to make up my own assessment, and I'm not sure you want a president who would take that list." In fact, anyone that would accept that list would be a weak president. One questioner, I remember who almost cross examined me was Nina.

Q. Nina Adams?

A. Nina, yes.

Q. Who just died, by the way.

A. Oh, she did? I didn't know that.

Q. I just heard it.

A. Oh, when did that happen?

Q. I don't know.

A. I'm sorry. I got to really like her. Over time I developed...

Q. Well, she was that kind of a prickly...

A. On another occasion after I was president she practically told me that as president, I couldn't express my opinions. But there was a lot of anger in the room, and the hit list was the one that really got me. I thought that something was terribly wrong. When I got home, I told Bob, "I don't know if I should withdraw, because I may not be the right person for them. It might be my temperament."

Q. You could see the real tensions and factions.

A. And anger.

Q. Anger.

A. There was lots of anger. I had been on the faculty senate and got into trouble making myself so I understood it. But nothing like this. There were two impressions I had. One was of anger. The second was of a time capsule. They were conservative in that they were still in the 1960s and we were in 1991. I expected some of that, but I had never been in a place where time had stood still. That was a shock. I went home and I said, "They are back where we were back in the 1960s or the 1970s." You've observed that.

Q. Absolutely. There was demand for change in the 1960s, but once they got change.

A. They were so conservative. They weren't looking ahead. Every stand at every discussion was about what was antagonistic to administration, even though I knew that it wasn't about me. They didn't know me. It was Durward.

I had to think about the wisdom to come here, but there was something about Sangamon State I liked and attracted me. I liked its public policy emphasis. They were pioneers in recognizing the importance of all students doing public service.

Q. Outside experiences?

A. Yes, now everybody does it. But contributing to the community as part of what it is to be an educated citizen is important.

Q. They were. Not the original – there were some schools but very few but that was Spencer.

A. Very few. That just absolutely impressed me.

Q. You thought that the public affairs activities were seen adequately?

A. Yes, that was my interest in the whole state capital.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. I had been working in politics forever and felt very comfortable in the milieu.

Q. How about the public administration faculty?

A. The needed an accredited program. It needed a lot of work. On the other hand, I had gotten the one in Georgia State accredited and built up nationally, so I knew that was an opportunity, although I knew I had to represent all colleges and majors. I wasn't here to represent only PA [Public Administration].

I liked the board member; they wanted SSU to become a four-year institution, and they made that very clear to me. I thought that was an opportunity for us. Bob was very helpful and helped me to think this through.

When I came home and I said that I am unsure about accepting the position, he said, "You want to go to a school where you can make a real difference not where you will just make a marginal difference. If you go to Stanford you probably will set them back or they'll stay the same." [laughter] "If you go to SSU," he said, "when it is over, you will know that you made a big difference. You are not going to be happy going where you are only going to make a marginal difference." He knows I like a challenge.

Q. So you were offered the position and accepted it.

A. Accepted right away. I remember that I had to provide a medical report. They wanted to know I was healthy.

Q. Good to know you were healthy.

A. They called me and made me an offer. We did not go into detail about salary and benefits. I hate to admit that because it is so typical of women, and I counsel women not to be afraid to negotiate.

Q. You had a residential home at that point.

A. Yes, in Atlanta, but it was made clear to me that I was expected to live in the President's House on campus, which was fine with me.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. They did have a problem because Durward was very slow in vacating the house.

[Tape Stops]

Q. We are returning to recording having just discussed some problems in moving into the presidential home. How long did it take for you to develop a pretty firm list of the most urgent priorities for your leadership? Think about that for a minute. Then tell me if you can, as best you can in rank order what the most urgent priorities for you were.

A. Well, when I came they had not finalized a budget in Illinois, [laughter] so we actually weren't sure how we were going to meet faculty payroll.

Q. That's right, there was a crisis.

A. So we had a crisis and, of course, the immediate crisis was out of my hands to some extent, but trying to explain to people why they might not get paychecks was very uncomfortable. We had to borrow money to take care of immediate problems. One of the stories I liked to tell is that when we arrived, I spotted a campus gardener with a good sense of humor. He saw me coming and in a stage whisper to his friends, "I knew that if they appointed a woman we wouldn't get paid."

Q. I know who you mean. I know him – a good sense of humor.

A. But anyway, that was immediate. The other one that was pretty obvious to me...

Q. Excuse me, now that was a relatively temporary thing?

A. That was a temporary thing.

Q. But that was because of the state's budget crises.

A. Yes, right. The day I came in, it was happening. I think the second problem was related to the anger we already discussed. It was almost impossible to work with people or make changes when everyone is angry and/or suspicious. SSU was going through a strategic plan at the time I came. It was a good committee and they were headed, I thought, in the right direction.

I have always believed that the worst thing a new president can do is come in with a plan, a vision that is not a joint vision. It has to be a shared vision. So I started coming in from Georgia and meeting with the strategic planning committee before I started working full time. That was going well, but the main problem as I saw it was the anger, the animosity and the lack of trust in the administration. Everything you did was suspect.

Q. Now this was on the short term?

A. Everything you did was absolutely suspect. People would come to my office and tell me why I should fire some people. I had office visitors who suggested I replace Wayne with them. They wanted me to fire Carl Long and some were angry at Michael Lennon. Of course, those were

the three strongest people I had, so I wasn't about to do it. They were also angry at each other and gossiped, I thought, rather maliciously about each other.

I heard things about faculty that wasn't any of my business. We needed to get some ground rules going and needed to find a way to speak to each other in a civil way. It may have been Pat Langley, I have forgotten, who gave me a paper about a school in Ohio that had problems similar to ours and had brought in a mediator to help create a more positive environment.

In a course I taught I had used a book written by a group of people who ran a consulting firm connected with Harvard. I read in the newspaper that they had been used to settle the war in Nicaragua, [laughter] so I said, "Let's go find them. It's a good investment." I thought it was important for us to have a meeting with faculty, union, Board of Regents, and administration all in the same room confronting the issues that divided us.

We did, and we learned some ground rules to help us deal with each other in a civil manner. During the meeting they had some simple rules, almost Mickey Mouse, but they worked. If anyone mentioned Durward's name, they had to put a quarter or a dollar in a jar.

Q. They had to pay a fine, some testing and some civility exercises.

A. How do you deal with each other and how do you talk about yourself. For example, one of the very antagonistic people would say, "Well, we'll see how she does. Then we will know if we can trust her." They responded, the question is, "No, what are you going to do? Not what is she going to do." They tried to turn it around and it was very helpful. Then we had some follow-up meetings.

One thing that I found extremely helpful was that the president of the union was tired of all this animosity. Rich Shereikis wanted me to make this work. He was very supportive and he gave me hints. When the union had meetings, he would call me off the record and he would say, "Now, this is going to come up."

Q. A decent guy.

A. I think that having Rich there was very, very helpful. I kept meeting these really wonderful people who loved the institution and wanted things to go well. Mike Lennon would come to my office just to talk about our mutual interests. Judy [Everson] was supportive. Nancy Ford was very helpful. Wayne [Penn], of course, Carl. I had regular meetings with all the administrators and I asked for their help. I said, "Now, I can dig a hole and jump in or you can keep me from doing it. Your job is to keep me from making a major mistake."

I said, "I want a devil's advocate here. I do not want sycophants. I do not have a plan that can't be changed or improved. I want you to challenge my plans. What are the issues going to be?" We started that exercise, and that was very, very helpful.

But the main issue for me was peace and, of course, trying to get people to get rid of some of the anger. So I would say that was the number one issue.

Q. You took steps through this kind of sensitivity training and then just one on one.

A. Right.

Q. This didn't get solved overnight.

A. No, no. It took time, and then we had a conference on sexual harassment on the campus and brought in Bernice Sandler who is a national expert on this. We had staff, faculty and administrators at the meeting. You had to have a good excuse not to be there. We talked about why it was important for us, too.

We had some setbacks. I was disappointed in some things. We had a professor who had an affair with a student. He locked her in a classroom while he appealed to her to leave her husband. She wanted to go back to her husband. From my perspective, action needed to be taken.

I was shocked at that. That was early and I think it is shocking that women on campus who claimed to be feminist were not supportive. They saw it as an administration vs. faculty issue, which it was not. I thought, "You can't defend this. This is absolutely wrong."

Q. Right.

A. The offending professor was pretty friendly with one of the other faculty members. Anyway, I just thought, "How much of this talk of feminism and sexual harassment is sincere and how much is not?" It was also important to mend Town & Gown relations. And we had to work on the budget and finances. That was another goal. We had to bring the faculty together to work on common goals.

I had to find ways to work with the unions. I tried to find money for the faculty and staff because I felt that the union needed some successes. If they didn't have any success, they would be frustrated. Everything was a struggle; everything was a fight.

Q. Sure.

A. You could make a list. Someone objected to everything, almost to the point where, well let's just say it was interesting. The first year, it was very difficult. I wasn't sure after the first year whether I wanted to stay. I would make a little progress and all of a sudden, I would lose. I just wasn't sure I was the right person to bring it all together. Things needed to be done. After the first year, I'm not sure that I can tell what or why, but things changed and I began to feel more comfortable. By the second year we were making progress and I began to enjoy my job and was feeling much more comfortable.

Q. Well, I suspect it was that there was a growing trust in your integrity and your willingness to listen and the absence of really any secret agenda.

A. There wasn't any secret agenda. I think people in my office thought I came in...

Q. Took a while, I'm not surprised - even a year.

A. Yes, well I'm just saying the first year was the worst. The second year got better. Nothing is perfect, everything has its problems. I made the commitment to stay five years. I felt very flexible. Bob's mother passed away in 1992. I stayed because I wanted to stay. I was called about jobs all the time. I would look and not apply or take additional steps. It was obvious that I wasn't really looking for a new position.

Q. I understand. But after the first year, you felt more comfortable in your campus relationships?

A. The first year was very difficult. We won't even talk about Emily who is so smart and so balanced, who knew everything.

Q. Let's talk about your staff; Emily you inherited.

A. I inherited Emily [Schirding].

Q. Had she been in the top position?

A. She had worked for Durward and then had left. Then Durward asked her to come back and she was here when I arrived. She knew everything; she was very brilliant, very sensitive, and tactful with everyone and knew so much that she was willing to share with me.

Q. She was what? Your executive assistant?

A. She wasn't then; I gave her the title later. I gave her the appropriate title because really that was what she was doing.

Q. Of course.

A. She did not have the appropriate title. She was in charge of the office and my secretarial staff but she could have run the place.

Q. Now I can't remember who some of the other high ranking personnel in your office were.

A. We had a woman attorney before who left and then Lawrence [Johnson] and Doug [Anderson] came in later. We had an affirmative action officer, Marjorie; I can't think of what

her name was. She had been appointed to that job by Durward. She tried her best, but she was not an attorney and returned to her faculty position. Lawrence Johnson, who was an attorney, replaced her. It was a very difficult job. We had Horace, who was very angry about everything. Remember Horace? He was doing research, staff research.

Q. I don't even remember him.

A. So little by little, we replaced the staff.

Q. How about in community relations?

A. We had Porter. Porter McNeil, was that his last name, McNeil?

Q. Yes.

A. Porter did community relations and when he left I hired Cheryl Peck.

Q. Peck?

A. She had worked for the Board of Regents and she really did not get along well with Rod Groves.

Q. Oh, Cheryl Peck. Yes.

A. I hired her, so little by little I got my own staff. Then Polly Myers was there, and she was wonderful. Bob said she was always aghast at things Bob would suggest for social events. She would say, "You can't do that." You know how positive she was about everything. She was my right hand. [laughter] She ran everything and just a wonderful woman. She didn't have a mean bone in her body, did she?

Q. No.

A. I laughed at Nina Long when she told me I would get to appreciate Polly, but warned me that initially I would wonder if Polly was insincere because she was so gushy and complimentary.

Q. Nina Long?

A. Nina Long,

Q. Yes, right. That's a crisis being otherwise...

A. Polly's actions were very sincere and she took on everything, knew everyone, told me who I should meet, invited people who she thought should be invited. I inherited some very good people. Carl was an excellent budget person.

Q. Carl Long?

A. Carl Long.

Q. Yes, I agree. I thought he was terrific. Then wasn't Horace Butler still there?

A. He was. You mean Homer Butler.

Q. I don't know how effective he was.

A. He was in charge of students. Everybody liked Homer.

Q. Right.

A. I was very lucky to have Wayne and Emily and key positions and for Polly to do the social events, and in personnel Steven worked closely with the unions. Steven developed acute leukemia and died within two weeks of diagnosis.

Q. Who was that wonderful woman, that legendary woman in Springfield who headed the personnel department for a while?

A. Oh, yes, I liked her. Yes, I can see her daughter. She was so active in the community. I know who it is. She was Velma.

Q. Velma Carey.

A. Velma Carey, yes. She was very good, too. Of course, I also inherited Allan.

Q. Oh, Allan.

A. Woodson.

Q. Woodson, right.

A. He was in charge of personnel.

Q. That's right, he was.

A. Velma reported to Allan.

Q. Yes, right, right. Ok. You said when you first talked with the search committee that they were thinking about going to becoming a four-year university.

A. That was the Board of Regents.

Q. Board of Regents, right, yes. They thought this was necessary.

A. They thought this was a good thing to do.

Q. Yes.

A. One of the banks had a reception for me when I arrived at first. No, not first.

Q. First National?

A. I believe it was Bank One. When Phil Bradley went through the reception line (he was chair of the Lincoln Land Community College board) he said something akin to, "If you even think of going four years, you will be run out of town." Can you believe that? I liked that. [laughter] Our own graduate and I laughed.

Doc Davidson basically told me the same thing – that would never do; we could never go four year. On the other hand, Karen [Hasara], the former mayor of Springfield, she and I became friends. She was one of the first people I met.

Q. Karen Hasara?

A. Yes. We became very good friends and have been very close since.

Q. She thought she was open to it?

A. She was open, absolutely.

Q. She was a state senator then? No, that was Doc Davidson. She was a state representative.

A. State representative. Davidson was the state senator. She was supportive in every way. I think that is one of the reasons why we have stayed so close because she was so open and helpful and did everything for us when we arrived.

Q. Who was the mayor when you came? Houston?

A. No, it was...

Q. Ozzie?

A. Ozzie.

Q. Ozzie Langfelder.

A. The deputy mayor was Churchill, Bob Churchill. Both of them were very nice.

Q. Yes but you didn't do a lot of interaction.

A. Well, I did with them because I would see them periodically and Bob Churchill was always very helpful and very open. Senator Vince Demuzio, of course, I got to know him, and I got to know the women legislators. I was very lucky that there were women in the legislature who were very friendly. So I decided I would entertain them and host meetings with the women in government at our home. I got to know most of them and worked with them. At least once a year I chaired a dinner for Women in Government. I got to know Judy...

Q. Barr Topinka?

A. Yes, I did know her but not well. Judy Erwin is now the head of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. I don't know why I am forgetting everyone's last name. Dick Durban came over and was helpful. Within two weeks of my arrival, Senator Paul Simon invited me to breakfast and was always helpful. The Board of Regents was having some problems. We were only three schools in the Board of Regents as you know.

Q. Right.

A. I really enjoyed John LaTourette, the president of Northern Illinois University. He is a character. He was delightful.

Q. He was.

A. The president of Illinois State was always a problem for the Board of Regents.

Q. Rod was the executive director.

A. Yes. When I came in he was very supportive and very helpful, but over time the Board of Regents came under attack and eventually the BOR fired him. Northern Illinois was a powerhouse and Illinois State had been around a long time and we were the new corner. Northern Illinois and SSU got along well.

Q. Good, good.

A. It was Illinois State that wanted to be off by itself.

Q. That's right.

A. When we wanted to go four year, they fought us tooth and nail.

Q. Yes, I know.

A. I don't know what their problem was.

Q. True. You haven't talked about the president of Lincoln Land, how you dealt with him.

A. Oh, yes, Bill. That was very interesting. My sister, who is in the community college system, knew Bill Law so we met on friendly terms. He had a hyper personality, and he was very concerned we would go four year.

Q. Oh, boy.

A. I tried to work with Law, but frankly I did not consider him relevant to our success. You run into people who view you as a competitor when you don't think they are a competitor because community colleges are a different model. Our students came from there so we support and encourage LLCC. When Norm Stephens became president of Lincoln Land it was easier because he had a better understanding of higher education, and he didn't think we were competitors.

Q. No.

A. In fact, he helped us. Norm had a bad experience there, but he helped us go four year. Richland's [Richland Community College, Decatur, IL] president, Chuck Novak, was also helpful. When an attempt was made to get a petition through the state Community College Board opposing our going four year, I was told that our two neighbors, Norm Stephens and Chuck Novak, refused to support it. The excuse they gave was that signing it would cost them community support. I understand that Tom Thompson also refused to sign so the petition did not go anywhere.

Q. That was the Illinois Central College?

A. Yes. I always got along well with Novak and Stephens because we did things together. Under the leadership of the president of Springfield College, the local presidents started meeting once a month.

Q. Brent DeLand.

A. Brent DeLand. We started having breakfast once a month or so and meeting with each other so we could find out what was happening. Of course, Brent was the one with most of the problems and controversial issues.

Q. Interesting guy.

A. Then his replacement was Sister Suzanne. With the new leadership at neighboring schools we had good friends. Most of our opposition came from Illinois State. The president of Illinois

State who was there when I accepted my position was fired and replaced by David Strand. Dave also seems to believe that any gain for us was a loss for them.

Q. I remember hearing about that.

A. Yes, he was quite vocal at IBHE meetings.

Q. Part of the agenda was exactly what you had in mind for the four year program.

A. Sure.

Q. I assume at the time you were trying to seize on the notion of a very small cohort of honors programs.

A. One of the reasons, of course, was that that was the only way we could get it approved.

Q. Yes.

A. They weren't going to approve anything but a small, honors college. How we got to be a four year institution is a long and complicated story and is tied to becoming part of the University of Illinois.

Q. One at a time. Let us talk about the four year institution.

A. That came later. Our detractors fought us every step of the way. When we went with the University of Illinois, there was fear that our new position would help us gain four year status. That, of course, was when Bob Kustra got interested in all this.

Q. As Lieutenant Governor?

A. Lieutenant Governor. He was doing a lot of the work for [Governor] Edgar on higher education. When we became part of the University of Illinois, it was made clear that that did not mean that we would automatically go four year. There were always two conversations going on – the political conversation and the real conversation.

Q. Right.

A. The political conversation like what Stan Ikenberry said. "This does not mean four year; it just means that you are part of the University of Illinois." At that time, the focus was on whether we would remain separate, go with Southern Illinois or go with the University of Illinois. Ikenberry was concerned about our joining them because of our faculty union. He finally figured out how he could solve the problem—by insisting that all components were part of one university.

Q. The faculty would have to be institution wide.

A. Yes. He got a union lawyer to help him work through that once he decided he wanted us to become part of the University of Illinois. All of this thinking and maneuvering was taking place because Governor Edgar had announced that he was going to reorganize higher education. It was well known that part of the reorganization would mean that the Board of Regents and the Board of Governors would be dismantled. Of course, I wanted to go with Illinois because I knew that we would be a weak player in the political chess game that was starting.

As far as I was concerned, it was a no brainer because if you are left an orphan somewhere, other things being equal, you go with the rich uncle. You don't go with someone else who is hanging on by a thread. We were vulnerable, so we had to do something. Now what happened was that Edgar did not have the votes to get it done. But in the next election the Republicans gained control of the House and the Senate so reorganization was inevitable. I immediately took steps to protect our interest.

Q. Really?

A. Oh, yes because we had all the Republican support, but we didn't have the Democrats.

Q. Because they were headquartered in the Chicago area?

A. No, because the union opposed reorganization. The colleges under the Board of Governors were unionized. It was more important politically to them than it was to the Republican Party.

Q. Sure.

A. The union organizers saw reorganization as giving the governor too much power and could threaten their unions.

Q. There were cross currents of all kinds. This could be a case study in political leadership.

A. It is. Poor Jack Van der Slik wrote a book about the reorganization of higher education, but he didn't talk to the right people.

Q. That isn't a good book.

A. He didn't fully understand what was really happening. In addition while we were being told that this meant only that we were going with the University of Illinois, the sophisticated listeners understood that this strengthened our efforts to go four year.

Q. Did you in your conversations with Ikenberry have that understanding?

A. No, no. We both understood that that was the first step.

Q. Ok, you did understand that it was?

A. But we didn't talk about it. I was very careful in my conversations about that in the same way that when I talked about an honors college it was pretty obvious that was also a first step. [laughter] Everybody knew that to get approval of four years we had to emphasize the honors college. No one of any sophistication believed that approval meant we would be limited to such a narrow program in the future. Then when George Ryan was elected governor, he just decided we would become a four year institution. He told the members of the board, in effect, "You vote for this."

That's the push we needed. We almost had it done under Edgar, but Kustra and we pushed a little too hard and Dick Wagner (the executive director of the Illinois Board of Education) did not get along, and we lost the vote.

Q. No.

A. To this day, I suspect we had the needed vote of the woman from southern Illinois. As political scientists, we count votes before meetings. She broke her leg, and Harry Crisp offered her a ride to the meeting on his private plane. By the time she left the plane she had changed her mind. I cannot say that that is what did it, but I am very, very suspicious.

Q. Very suspicious. But Wagner had changed position on you?

A. He had been dragging his feet because he and Bob Kustra didn't get along. Bob Kustra may have not kept Dick in the loop and just announced it would happen. Dick was a professional and resented it. Dick had always treated us fairly and in an evenhanded way so I am not sure what happened. We just didn't have the votes. During the second round, we were better prepared.

We had George Ryan willing to say, "This is going to happen." I believe that some of the members of the board who were getting reappointed did not think he was going to reappoint them if they didn't support us. The student representative to the Illinois Board of Higher Education from Southern Illinois University continued to oppose us, and after it passed made a motion limiting the number of students we could accept. It died for lack of a second because everyone who voted for our going four year understood that we would grow. The motion failed. I hope that there are minutes of that vote because that makes it clear that there was no real intent to limit our enrollment and keep us small.

Illinois State University aggressively lobbied against us. They had an impressive and powerful local senator named John Maitland who they convinced to oppose us. I had a great deal of respect for Maitland, so Karen Hasara and I went to Bloomington to visit with him. Karen was also a state senator so she was the right person to plead our case. We spent about an hour with him. It was obvious that ISU believed that if we grew into a major campus with the

University of Illinois title, we would be competing with them for highly qualified students. It was obvious that he felt he would be betraying his constituents if he did not oppose the change in our status.

Q. I understand.

A. That didn't bother me, but we worked very hard to get that four year program passed by the Illinois Board of Higher Education. The first time we overplayed our hand, we wouldn't have overplayed our hand if Bob Kustra hadn't overplayed his.

Q. Yes.

A. He started to put the pressure on people and in a way that was...

Q. Too muscular?

A. Yes. As much as I liked him.

Q. We have to stop here.

End of Tape 3 Side 2  
46 minutes 1 second

Begin Tape 4 Side 1

Q. This is June 25, 2010 oral history interview with Naomi Lynn. The interviewer is Cullom Davis. Why don't you start? You have something you want to talk about.

A. I just wanted to make something clear. When we became part of the University of Illinois, we understood that it did not mean that we would automatically become a four year institution. We all agreed that it was necessary for obvious reasons that I'll go back to, but that was not something that we could get support for as part of a package deal.

Q. From the Board of Higher Education?

A. From the legislature.

Q. From the legislature, right.

A. Going with the University of Illinois required legislative action; we only needed the support of the IBHE to become a four year institution.

Q. Right.

A. The merger with University of Illinois was really a legislative issue.

Q. Yes.

A. It was not something that was approved or had to be approved by the Board of Higher Education.

Q. That's right.

A. The merger was in a bill that passed very quickly. The politics of that is very interesting. We received help from many people. I wanted to go with the University of Illinois because we were reorganizing higher education, and the board members were going to be appointed by the governor.

The more powerful political players were obviously going to be appointed to the Board of Trustees of the University of Illinois. The Board of Regents was going to be dissolved. During these discussions we found ourselves in a difficult situation. We were reporting to a board that would not be in existence in a few months. This was a very tenuous relationship.

Q. Oh, Board of Regents... the Governor or whatever it was – the Board of Regents.

A. The Board of Regents governed three schools - Sangamon State, Northern Illinois, and Illinois State. There were some controversies between the Board of Regents and Bob Kustra. The Board fired the chancellor, Rod Groves. They brought in a retired administrator from Northern. It was pretty obvious that the Board was on its way out. Some board members accepted it. Others were very clear that they wanted to fight and fight to the end, so we were caught in the middle.

That created quite a bit of tension during that time. We had to protect ourselves and our future because four outcomes for us were being discussed. We could be on our own. We could go with Southern Illinois, who really wanted us. Even Illinois State reached out and thought they would like to have a Springfield campus, so people were thinking that we would be the weak institution who was up for grabs or could be absorbed by other schools. But we knew we had a lot to sell because we had one major strength: We were located in the state capital.

Q. Right.

A. Stan Ikenberry had recognized us as an asset when this had come up a few years earlier, had not really taken any steps because he was concerned about the union.

Q. Yes,

A. He was able to get lawyers who told him how to get the legislation written to solve what he considered a major barrier. Southern Illinois was very interested in us because they already had a medical school in Springfield; Ikenberry did not believe that would be in the best interest of the University of Illinois. During this time Southern Illinois was having some problems itself, and had more serious problems after that, so it was not in our best interest to pursue that alternative.

Q. I don't remember. Was Kustra in favor of us becoming part of SIU?

A. Initially, yes. Over time, as he realized that the University of Illinois was opposed, and after study and review he agreed that it would not be a good move for us. But he had been associated with Southern in the past, and there was a medical school here, so he had good reasons to give it serious consideration.

Q. Sure, he had his reasons. That's what I thought. Did you two interact separately?

A. I was constantly in touch with Bob. I would go see him because I wanted to know what was going on. I did not want us to be blindsided. A fear I had was that we could end up as a sub-campus of the University of Illinois, which would have been one of the most convenient models for everyone.

I was determined that it was not going to happen, that we had to be a third campus with the same rights, privileges and standing as Chicago and Urbana. That was my number one priority. I would go see Bob periodically and remind him how important it was to us and to the city that we be treated fairly. Then the local community came in behind us when they realized what was happening.

Q. People like Howard Humphrey?

A. Howard Humphrey, Ralph Hahn, Bill Forsyth, Mike Bohr from the Chamber of Commerce. Of course, I tried to fill them in on what was happening. They realized that we had some vulnerabilities. They had worked hard to help found the campus, and so they had a vested interest. They were extremely useful. We all took the position that we would only accept being a full third campus.

Q. Now, you already had to deal with the fact that Lincoln Land was not happy with the four year student foot in the door. But did they take a position?

A. The community colleges stayed out of it because it was really... I'm sure that there were some people who were nervous, politically astute that this could lead to four year and that was the controversy.

Q. Right, I understand.

A. Where the community colleges lobbied against us, it was about us becoming four year. So we had to make it very clear that this did not mean that we would be a four year institution.

Q. Strictly honors.

A. No, no – The honors college had to do with four year status.

Q. Oh, I see.

A. It had nothing to do with that.

Q. Cap scholars? Not even that.

A. Not even Cap scholars; that was the four year issue. That's why I wanted to keep those separate.

Q. I understand, yes.

A. This was about where we would be located in higher education. It was about whether we would have our own weak governing board with limited resources. It was about not being placed in a system with weak institutions. People said some ridiculous things. Some of them were even amusing, "Oh, if we go with the University of Illinois it will hurt our reputation." That is extraordinary.

Q. Well, it is a massive institution.

A. Yes, but that was a different issue. There was fear of losing our identity and being absorbed. That was a legitimate fear. The other was ludicrous. I think that most people saw that it made sense for us to go to with the University of Illinois.

Most of the opposition was not on the basis of education or academic considerations. It really had to do with protecting the faculty union, with some exceptions about being absorbed, which I thought was very serious. That's why it was important that we remain as independent as possible.

The union issue was an interesting one because there was a tremendous amount of loyalty, as you know, to the union. There were some faculty members who really believed that the union had protected them and that without the union they would not have assurances that they needed for academic freedom. There were others, a small number for whom, the union was their top priority. SSU was secondary.

Q. Yes, sure.

A. During the discussions on campus we did not know how the union issue was going to be settled. Many union advocates supporting going with Illinois until they discovered it would mean no more union. The way the bill was passed was that it was presented to committee and right out of committee for a vote that same afternoon or first thing the next morning. They passed it on a fast track because they did not want the union to have time to organize against it.

I was in the Capitol building that afternoon and Bob Kustra heard I was in the building. He found me and handed me a copy of the bill. I took it to a corner and I started reading it. I had some idea of what was in it because I had been talking to people, but still... I said, "How many days before it goes to committee?" He said, "You have until noon. It is going to committee this afternoon, and it is going to be voted out of committee in two hours." I walked over to the committee hearing and continued to read it on a back row.

Q. Now this is when the Republicans were in charge, weren't they?

A. They had both houses. A lot had happened because the union...

Q. They would have got in trouble. The Senate had that character from DuPage County.

A. His name started with a "W." I can't think of who was the Speaker. I can see him.

Q. This was a Republican congress.

A. It was Republican controlled. We did have at least two Democrats who believed this was a good move for us. One told me he would vote for the merger if the vote were needed, but he would hate to go against the union. One of them had been our student and he said, "This is all pointing to the future of Sangamon State University." He said, "I won't do it unless I have to." I said, "I understand. I hope you don't have to do it. I don't want you to do it, but I appreciate it." We had supporters.

Q. Yes, right.

A. We had friends who were sympathetic, and we did get some Democratic votes. But anyway it went out of committee on a fast track. By the time the union realized what was happening, they had no choice but to appeal to the courts. It was very interesting and strategically an error on their part; they went to the federal courts. If they had taken it to state court, they might have come before more sympathetic judges in Chicago. It is possible we would have gone with the University of Illinois and kept the union.

Q. They thought it was a federal issue. They would have had better luck that way.

A. I am not sure why they did that. I never understood why they did that. I assume there were. They would have had support from some members of the Board of Trustees. As I recall,

they named Ikenberry, the Board of Trustees, me and several others in their complaint. But anyway they didn't go very far with it because the federal judge did not support it.

Q. Was that here in town or was it referred to Chicago?

A. No, it was referred to somewhere else. It didn't matter. It was dismissed very early as I recall. I don't think there was very much there. It was actually very, very quick, but that was a very separate issue.

Q. Oh, I understand.

A. Separate from the four year which was, both of them were painful, but the four year was a little more difficult.

Q. Yes.

A. That was what I wanted to go back to.

Q. I was aware of that, so I am glad you made it clear on tape that this was a very separate issue of the U of I. So that really happened pretty quickly, probably around 1994 or 1995, something like that?

A. 1995.

Q. 1995.

A. Then we started working on the four year right away.

Q. Yes, right.

A. I got support from [former U of I President] James Stukel and from others at the university. The four year one is a more interesting one. I have been very interested in academic standards. In my discipline I had advocated for accreditation standards for public administration because our programs seem to be all over the place in terms of curricula.

We accomplished this and it raised the quality of our offerings and what it meant to have a degree in public administration. We started peer review, and then we went into accreditation and I was very active in that movement. I have a real concern about what goes on in the classroom, what happens to professors. In Kansas State, we were interested in the treatment of women and related matters, but when I came here, I found something alien to my experience. One of them, of course, was the two year program. The other I mentioned earlier...

Q. Yes, well...

A. In one sense Sangamon State was very conservative. One of the appeals for the original faculty of Sangamon State was that it was different and offered a different educational model. It seemed to me that in some cases the emphasis was on ideology rather than on what was in the best interest of the students.

I think that Durward Long tried to put more emphasis on academic standards. That's my impression. Perhaps the president before him made the same effort.

Q. Lacy?

A. Lacy, yes. I don't know what they did, but they had moved away from SSU's reputation as an institution in which students sat in circles and voted each other grades. That may be legendary. But they had some things that were—I am trying to think of a good example – things that were not really geared for students but were more ideological. I am trying to think of an example.

Criminal justice – they called themselves the Department of Social Justice. Nobody knew what that meant. Very early I began to get letters from graduates saying, "Why don't you let people know or write a letter saying that that is a legitimate criminal justice program. It will help me when I apply for graduate school."

I understand the logic. The faculty wanted the public to know that they were looking at criminal justice not just from the perspective of crime and criminals, but also on how we make a good society where we solve problems and where there is social justice. But meanwhile, of course, most of the criminal justice departments around the country were doing that. The title did not really help students, but it made the faculty feel good. Those are trivial examples to make a more important point.

So some of that was done and changed and called it criminal justice, which was what it was. The same thing, of course, was in political studies. I understood why they wanted that title rather than political science because in the 1960s and early 1970s when behavioralism came in, there was a big debate about whether political "science" was really a science or a normative discipline. They came to understand that they needed to be both

Q. A consensus?

A. You don't hear that much. I think behavioralists are beginning to realize that you have some responsibility to create a civic culture. We are going back to an emphasis on citizenship and those kinds of things.

Q. Right.

A. The normative advocates are beginning to realize that it is a lot better to argue their case with some information and data that can be replicated by others. So that was a very strong division; now it seems a little naive. Do you know what I mean?

Q. Well, encouraging, of course, yes.

A. Both sides have come a long way. After a little bit you get into these squabbles that seem life and death, and then you realize that you have something to offer each other. I think that has happened with political science.

Q. I think there are some good departments that are still heavily, heavily tilted toward behavioralism, but the discipline in general may be...

A. Is a combination of the journals. When I was on the executive council, we would get letters about the journals that complained that you had to be a math major to read them.

Q. Some departments are like that.

A. That's par for the course, but that one I understood.

Q. Yes.

A. Some of the other things that were going on I didn't believe were focused on educating students. It made the faculty feel good, but in the long term, it wasn't the best thing for the students.

Q. Yes, they might have a degree in social justice that wouldn't have any sort of recognition in the employment world.

A. No. The curriculum and the courses are almost exactly what you found in most schools. I had a criminal justice department at Georgia State, and I didn't see too many differences.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. Anyway, I think it was a leftover from the 1960s. There was a self-righteousness about the attitude, but little about what it meant for the students. Then you have the archaic upper division models. It made more sense when we were founded.

Community colleges were being established around the country; four year colleges did not always welcome their graduates so a friendly place to transfer had real appeal. Well, what happened over a small period of time was first of all as the population fell, the four year institutions were very happy to welcome transfers from community colleges.

The second thing that happened was that students who transferred to schools and were welcomed by students with experience at those schools adjusted and did better than those who were coming to upper division schools and felt they were just repeating their freshmen year. The upper division schools also noticed that the students often were more loyal to their community colleges so they had difficulty building a loyal alumni base.

Q. The upper division schools were at a real disadvantage.

A. I gathered all this information and insight as I sought to understand the upper division model. That was a belief that upper division schools resulted in a poor public image and that students benefited from a full university and college experience.

Q. Yes.

A. So what happened was that of the 27 or so upper division colleges existing in 1975, only four are still upper division. I believe Governor's State is one of the few remaining. As you may know, they have tried to move to four year but they are surrounded with powerful community colleges that oppose the move. Upper division colleges were an interesting experiment that failed. We did not want to change just for the sake of changing, but because we sought to provide the best educational model possible to our students.

Now I am going to assume that there were some people here who from the very beginning realized that it was not going to be a good model. But they also realized that they had to accept the model because that was the only way they could get a university in Springfield. We were talking about political decisions. That was a battle for another day. I am going to assume that that happened.

Q. I think that is reasonable.

A. Every decision made in Springfield seems to be political and or a compromise. That is why I don't want to second guess and say, "Well, why were people so foolish to accept that upper division school?"

Q. [laughter] I think that I was that way.

A. Let us assume that, and they believed that.

Q. We didn't have a governing system that supported such an idea. They were a bit conservative, so anyway I think you are right.

A. So I came into an institution that had a model already rejected by most of the country and was considered an ineffective way to provide a quality education. I am sure that members of the Board of Regents were often asked why they still had a college with such an archaic model. I know I heard it. In fact, I was contacted by some people from Tyler, Texas.

Q. Oh, sure.

A. They were an upper division, and they were very unhappy. They had a lot of data on this and offered to share it with me if I took steps to become a four year college. They were fighting the same battle with community colleges. So it was always a political issue. There wasn't any question about what was best for the students and for us. The only people who opposed it at SSU were faculty who didn't like any change and a few who had never taught freshman and were afraid of what having a younger population could mean. For those of us who taught at four year institutions having freshmen was just routine. Why not?

Q. Right.

A. But I would say it wasn't too controversial because we were hiring new people and they had all been at four year institutions and they wanted it to be a regular college. When we looked at our faculty, there was really no reason why they wouldn't do well with freshman and sophomores.

Q. Of course.

A. They would inspire and help them. We had everything except the right model.

Q. Was there a lot of resistance to the four year model on campus?

A. Not that I know of, maybe a little bit of foot dragging.

Q. Maybe it was on the U of I part, but I don't remember. Maybe they sugar-coated it, but I don't remember a lot of insistence because it wasn't really so much a union, it was...

A. No, that wasn't a union issue at all.

Q. Ok.

A. I don't remember any serious opposition. The only thing I heard was, "Well, it's a different game. We will have to worry about freshman and all that." But every institution, every university or college – any change is going to have controversy.

Q. Sure.

A. I thought that considering all of the controversy, this was really... [laughter]... I think everybody understood this one.

Q. I think you are right. The timing was good in that it was maybe...

A. The time had come.

Q. The come had come for this and already...

A. It was almost an embarrassment to Illinois that we were still using a model that the rest of the country discarded.

Q. Ok. That helped. The only real resistance was from the community college system, I guess.

A. And the private colleges.

Q. Oh, the private colleges.

A. Around here. Those were our two big...

Q. Your local legislative leadership was supportive?

A. Not originally. Our state senator at the time they hired me questioned me about this during and open interview.

Q. Oh, Doc Davidson?

A. I am told that Doc said to one of the other candidates, "You will go four year over my dead body." The candidate replied, "Well, Senator, we all have to go some time." [laughter] Doc didn't say that to me but he made it clear I wouldn't keep my position long if I moved to go four year. Doc believed that commitment was being disloyal to Lincoln Land.

Q. Of course.

A. I took exception when one of the members of the Board of Trustees at Lincoln Land told me that I would be driven out of town if I tried to do it.

Q. That was ..., wasn't it?

A. Yes, but let us not put his name in here. I try not to mention names of people. But anyway, that struck me as funny at the time and, of course, he has been a loyal supporter since, alum and everything. Once he stopped serving on the Lincoln Land Board...

Q. Sure, he was defending

A. He was defending and he thought he was. His style is not what I would have chosen, but he didn't bother me. He really didn't. I was more amused than I was bothered by him.

Q. So what were the hoops you had to jump through then to get there?

A. There were so many, there were so many.

Q. Do you remember any?

A. The Illinois Board of Higher Education had to approve it. When Bob Kustra was appointed chair, we thought we had it, but we overplayed our hand, I think. We lobbied the board and some of them resented that. There was a member of the community colleges state trustee board who was absolutely determined that we were not going to get four year. I believe I discussed him earlier. I went to his final meeting as a long-time member of the Illinois Board of Higher Education. He was being honored. He said to them, this is not an exact quote, but basically he said to them, "If you really want to honor me, then you won't ever let Sangamon State University go four year."

Then we had a man from Jacksonville, who was active in their Chamber of Commerce, who also was with an organization of taxpayers against education.

Q. Yes, that is a fact.

A. He was very unhappy with Lincoln Land, too. He said, "They said they wouldn't cost us any money, and they cost us money." He followed us around as we lobbied. It didn't work.

Q. It wasn't John Power, the publisher of the paper?

A. He was against us, too. He called us "Socialist State University" in his editorial. The Jacksonville Chamber invited us to talk about our program. It was pretty obvious when I got there that they wanted to say that they had listened before they sent their people out to oppose us.

Q. This is the Springfield Chamber?

A. Jacksonville.

Q. Oh, the Jacksonville Chamber.

A. No, Mike Boer from the Springfield Chamber was absolutely wonderful. He came with us to the IBHE meeting to speak on our behalf and worked the legislature for us. We lost the vote by about two votes or one vote. One was the woman who accepted the plane ride.

Q. Oh, that's when you told that funny story?

A. Yes that funny story and I am maybe being unfair to her, but I believe... nice woman. But the next time around, George Ryan was governor. Jim Edgar did not want to get too involved in

this partly because he had reorganized higher education. He had supported us but not as actively.

When George Ryan came in, he decided this was important and I do not know who convinced him. Many people took credit for it, but I was never sure who had done it. It was pretty obvious to anyone appointed to the IBHE by George Ryan that he expected them to do this for us. He really believed that we should be a four year institution, and he did not like that we were one of the few state capitals that did not have a four year institution.

So in the same way, he wanted the Abraham Lincoln Library, and he really succeeded in doing it. He also wanted us to have a direct link to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum.

Q. That is interesting that he had that prejudice toward us.

A. Right, it manifested itself the whole time he was governor.

Q. Yes, yes.

A. So once we had his support, when they took the next vote, it was unanimous. In my presentation, I talked about the model that I saw for the foreseeable future, which was an alternative to Urbana and Chicago, more like a private college at public expense, a liberal arts college.

I said that I wanted a strong liberal arts college with some professional programs like public affairs because that was our mandate, and because at that time we were starting to work toward getting it accredited. I never believed that any of my comments precluded us becoming in the long term a comprehensive university.

Q. Right.

A. It wasn't until the last few years and after I retired that we began to discuss limiting ourselves to a small liberal arts college. Stanford is a liberal arts college and yet comprehensive, but I stressed the liberal arts because I really believe that generally colleges are judged on the strength of their liberal arts. The general broadening education they give their students. I never saw it as contradictory goals.

We had a strong public affairs program and many business majors. These programs were part of our history and tradition, which are also found in comprehensive universities. And we talked about being small because we had limited resources and to grow we needed to expand our faculty. We had to take it one step at a time and an honor's type college was a good first step. I was trying to be careful; my timing wasn't too far off. I knew what resources I would need for the first two years, especially with a new program. I knew that we would have to buy the first class and so forth.

Q. Right.

A. I was also being very careful to keep them from saying that we should not grow. The thing that scared me most at the very last minute turned out to be the most useful thing that happened. The trustees from SIU made a motion that we could never grow past 700. I mean everybody understood that things change.

Q. So the motion didn't succeed?

A. I think died from a lack of a second. I wish they had recorded that because later when they said, "Well, you weren't going to grow," we could point to that motion that was turned down by the IBHE.

Q. They didn't.

A. I don't know if it was recorded. Everybody in that room understood that we were going to start as a small college with a quality, private-like education. What has bothered me more than anything else is the interpretation that we should seek to become a small (emphasis on the word small) liberal arts college. Small is a description, it is not a goal. Even that definition included professional programs and remaining true to our public affairs mandate. That was why we were established.

Q. I agree.

A. I have never understood why. Now I hear people saying, "We are going to be a small liberal arts college." You can't be there...

Q. That is no conflict.

A. No conflict, you can be a comprehensive university and be a liberal arts college.

Q. Right.

A. I had never heard that argument. I don't even know where that came from because I had argued for the liberal arts and had been in a product of a liberal arts college. I served on the board of a liberal arts college for twelve years. We can be both.

Q. It didn't have to be one or the other.

A. Of course not. That is ridiculous.

Q. Right. That has been a real tragedy in my estimation.

A. What I am talking about is making sure that we recognize that there this is a certain body of knowledge that an educated person has to have. That involves a liberal arts education. You don't ever want to graduate somebody from a liberal arts college or from engineering or whatever who doesn't know anything about history, about other cultures, can't write or read. That is what I was talking about.

Q. Right.

A. So this mix-up has been a little bit troublesome, but that is another story.

Q. That has also been indifference.

A. I hope the next person coming in will appreciate this. To say "small" is not a goal. Sometimes it is just a description of reality.

Q. Well, this was an amazing set of accomplishments in your third year, I guess.

A. No, I had been there five years.

Q. Oh, five years.

A. We had two years under Illinois before we went four year.

Q. You don't get an institution to change like a battleship, but those were immensely fateful changes and beneficial, too.

A. I am very pleased with those decisions. There were painful moments connected with them, but in the long term I think they were for the best. There are some examples but those two had a powerful impact on the institution.

Q. What impressed me from a distance because I wasn't intimately conversing with you on these issues at the time was the sophistication with which you dealt with people on campus and off campus on some very sensitive, delicate issues and kept to yourself some of the discussions you were having to have with other people that would have perhaps been damaging.

I am not explaining that very well, but I just think you struck me as very astute in the way you handled some of these potentially explosive issues. You had to be able to say, "Well, this is what the legislature decided," even though you were actively working for it, but you couldn't do it all publicly because these were very private.

A. I had some loyalties to the Board of Regents, but they were going.

Q. I know.

A. They were leaving us dangling because they... poor Rod, he had been fired. There was no more Board of Regents. At the same time, I didn't want to...

Q. You didn't want to be too public.

A. I didn't want to add to their troubles.

Q. Right, right.

A. They were going through so much and they had been very supportive of us, very supportive of me.

Q. Exactly.

A. I had no problems with the Board of Regents. I did spend some time on raising academic standards. That was a little bit of a culture shock. I believed that you had to have some faculty who were making original contributions. There is also a place for faculty members who integrate information. There is a place for people who are bringing something new or they see a void. For example, for me there was the realization that there was limited information or understanding of the role of women in politics.

Q. Right. You saw that need.

A. Some faculty here were very creative and were doing interesting things. I did not believe they were getting the recognition they deserved, and that surprised me because everywhere else I had been even though some people didn't want to do these things, they applauded and recognized the value of those who did. There was a campus climate...

Q. Collegial expectation or something.

A. They were among the most respected people on the campus, and someone told me that Bob Spencer didn't think that was important. I don't know if that was true or not.

Q. Well, he talked about a star system, but I think he was talking more about...

A. Yes, fear of stars.

Q. Yes, but how did you deal with that?

A. I talked to Wayne.

Q. We have to stop here for a second.

End of Tape 4 Side 1  
47 minutes 28 seconds

Begin Tape 4 Side 2

Q. This is a continuation of an interview with Naomi Lynn on August 9th, 2010. How did you deal with this absence?

A. First of all, I had to understand it. I started reading Boyer, who was very big at that time. Remember all the Boyer books about scholarship and integration and discovery.

Q. No, don't remember that. Boyer, was that his name?

A. Ernest Boyer.

Q. Oh, Ernest Boyer, yes.

A. I started reading that kind of material to try to get a handle on this. One thing we had talked about and decided was that we were going to look at developing more explicit standards for tenure and promotion. Not everyone had to do the same thing, but they had to do something. In other words, if you were going to say that you were strong in integrating, show some proof that you were doing it. If you had publications, show them. This is all pretty standard, but the difference was on more emphasis on the walk and less on the talk. We were also more explicit about expectations with new hires.

Every institution has someone who says, "Well, so much of what has been written is trash. If I can't write a book that is going to win the Pulitzer Prize, I am not going to do anything." You know how that goes?

Q. Right, right.

A. They [laughter] clearly outdid themselves here, but I had heard it all before. I had been around the block a few times, as they say.

Q. Of course you had.

A. That didn't surprise me. I found that rather amusing. Little by little, and I think with Wayne's leadership, we started to slowly raise the academic standards. We really had to do it.

Q. Was it one of those intrinsic personnel decisions?

A. It was personnel and intrinsic because I really believed in it. But it also became part of the personnel policy and was discussed by deans and departments. Wayne took the lead on this,

so that we made the tenure decision much more serious. A great deal of emphasis was on the fact that tenure is the most important decision you make. It is not enough that your colleagues like you. Collegiality is not an academic standard, and Wayne was very good at this. He managed to convince personnel committees that they needed to do this for their students. Slowly and carefully we were raising the tenure and academic standard.

Q. Were you satisfied?

A. No, I wasn't.

Q. But you thought there was progress?

A. Oh, there was real progress made. We were denying tenure to faculty who were not doing their jobs. We managed to get rid of people who should not have gotten tenure. They had a lot of protection from the union.

Q. Oh, I know.

A. They saw their job was to protect the employees, which really wasn't. Their job was to make sure that everyone was treated fairly, that due process was not lost. But their job was to ensure that students got the education that they merited, and that they were not being taught by people who really didn't know what they were talking about or didn't care or were too lazy to work. As you know, all of us who are faculty like to work like independent operators. To some extent in academia, you could be as lazy or creative as you want to.

Everywhere I have been, there are some people who do it all. [laughter] It never occurs to them to do less. It was just who they are. They didn't want to just pontificate in the classroom. They wanted to take what they were teaching to their peers and say, "Criticize me but tell me why."

I cannot imagine anyone saying to Jim Burns, "You can't publish because that would make you a star." Sangamon State had them, too. So can you imagine someone saying to you or Mike Lennon, "Don't do anything."

Q. Just go along.

A. That wasn't going to happen. One of the things about Sangamon State that I don't think people fully appreciated is the wide range of faculty it had. For whatever reason – philosophical, ideological – they didn't want to discriminate, so they placed them all in one category, and that is not fair.

You have a responsibility to the students to teach them up to your highest standards. That is a kind of a contract with the students. You can't just send out a syllabus and then say two weeks

later, "Oh, the heck with that. I know I told you that I was going to cover that, but I don't even know that textbook. This week, I decided to start from scratch."

Q. [laughter]

A. You know what I am saying?

Q. Yes, of course.

A. The focus has to be back on the student. I think Wayne in particular adhered to that as a value. He really believed that we need to focus on the student.

Q. Which is strategically a good way to approach that because it is true.

A. That is what I am saying.

Q. It is true, but I also think it is practical.

A. That is why we are here.

Q. We are all here to serve students, and we are not serving them very well.

A. Educate. We hadn't talked too much about that, but that to me was the joy. Another thing I liked about being here, in addition to discovering these pockets of excellence and getting to know some wonderful faculty members. I had come from an institution that had 35,000 students. My college is smaller, of course.

Q. Right.

A. Here I had the opportunity to get to know just about everyone. I don't think there was a faculty member I didn't know when I was here.

Q. That is true.

A. There is something, even though some of them, you know what I am talking about, were disagreeable.

Q. Some of them could be defined as...

A. Nevertheless I knew them.

Q. Right.

A. I think there is something, at least for me, rewarding about knowing the people you are working with even though there is a barrier and we didn't socialize much with some of them. I knew just about everybody. I liked to eat in the cafeteria and join faculty for lunch. I usually knew them and their department.

I had another rare but special experience at Sangamon State. I got to know many of the founders. How many presidents of an institution get to meet the founders?

Q. I didn't follow that. You knew Bob Spencer and the founding faculty and some of the community people.

A. Yes, I met them and we talked about their dreams and plans for this university. People like Mary Jane Masters, Howard Humphrey, Bud Lohman and George Hatmaker. In some cases they believed Sangamon State was not the institution they had anticipated, but they all expressed hopes for our future. I had, of course, never had that experience before because I had been at much older institutions.

Q. I know you did a lot of development work. I remember at least one campaign that I believe preceded the merger with the U of I. You seemed to me to take to that naturally.

A. I tried. I needed help. I don't think I was too effective until I got some staff help. Then we started hiring people just to help with the fundraising. I really think that people don't give you money until they have a chance to know you and that takes about a four or five years. People have to respect you, trust you and then they give you money.

Before I came to Sangamon State, I spoke to a college president who announced that someone had given him a million dollars. I said, "What a wonderful surprise that must have been." He said, "I worked for eight years to get this gift." I went to every event and even to an out of state wedding to which I had been invited to please the family. This was an off-the-record kind of comment, but it was very helpful.

Q. Yes.

A. But it wasn't until we went with the University of Illinois that we started a real campaign.

Q. That's right.

A. I met with Bill Nugent, who was the head of the foundation at that time and asked for help. Charlie Hahn was working on our campus but had not had any high level experience. I asked Bill if I could borrow someone from the Urbana campus to help with fundraising. This is just one of the benefits of the merger.

Q. Bill said that? Bill Nugent?

A. Nugent.

Q. Yes, right.

A. I said to Bill, "Do you have a professional fundraiser we can borrow?" I had raised some money in Georgia at Georgia State for its hospitality school and so I had some experience, but I knew I needed some professional help.

He said, "There is a woman who had been with the College of Engineering. Right now I think she is a wee bit restless." Something was going on in the College of Engineering; I never got the full story. He said, "I will talk to Vicki Hensley and if you like her, I may be able to spare her two or three days a week." As soon as I spoke to Vicki [Hensley Megginson], I knew she was what I needed. She came and she led us to a successful campaign.

Q. Yes, of course. So it really was more the U of I connection that enabled you to professionalize and accentuate the development.

A. Yes, before we got help from the university, we were raising small amounts. We had some good people on our Foundation Board, but we were not attracting major gifts.

The man who was head of the foundation when I came was a former minister. He helped raise some money, but he really wasn't experienced. As you know, it is not a game for amateurs. It is a profession. If you get someone who says, "I want to give you this big gift," you want to at least say, "Here's our lawyer, here's the banker, this is what needs to be on the form." That's the kind of backup we needed.

Q. Right. They had all that stuff.

A. You need lawyers. I can't even say anything about it.

Q. I think it was really impressive beginning with Bill Nugent that everyone there on that was just first rate. It was very professional.

A. Oh, yes. Bill Nugent's successor was just as helpful. Bob and I became friends with him and his wife.

Q. Who was this? Current president?

A. Sid Micek, yes.

Q. Yes, that's right. Great guy.

A. He is so generous, so willing to help. But that was just one more advantage of going with the University of Illinois. It would have been almost impossible to raise large sums without

their help. Before we went with the university, our budget was so tight that we had to anticipate a certain number of deaths and retirements to balance our budgets. Our budget was so tight that at the end of the year if someone didn't leave suddenly or die, we couldn't meet all our financial obligations. We had to estimate [laughter] how many we would lose. I know I shouldn't talk about it.

Q. That's all right.

A. But that was reality.

Q. You don't name names.

A. Yes, exactly. That is one reason we had to go with the University of Illinois. You can't have a dream when you have to put an institution on hold because you are spending all your time surviving.

Q. Right.

A. This is just another example of an advantage of the merger. Bill Nugent and Sid Micek, became supporters. They took a liking to our campus; they liked the people here.

Q. Remember the graphic guy, Jim? He was a close friend of Vicki.

A. The librarian?

Q. No, he worked for the foundation. He did all their graphic design. Wonderful guy, lives on the way to Champaign...

A. Not Gaberdine, somebody else.

Q. Yes, Gaberdine.

A. Not Jim Gaberdine?

Q. Jim Gaberdine, yes.

A. He has given us money.

Q. I know he did, I know.

A. I think it was because we were the new kid on the block and some trustees wanted us to succeed. People felt sorry for us because we didn't have anybody from UIS on the Foundation Board or the Board of Trustees. We did have community leaders like Googan Bunn and Howard

Humphrey on the Foundation Board when we came in. We also had people on the Board of Trustees who had no ties to us but became advocates and friends.

Q. Right.

A. They would spend time working with us, like Susan Gravenhorst. My gosh, she was like our own personal trustee. She looked out for us. She looked out for everyone; she really believed in the university and her standards were very high.

Q. You really did have friends. They may not have been UIS alumni, but they were local people or people who just liked the idea.

A. They had power. Googan, Howard Humphrey, Forsyth, Ralph Hahn, even if they weren't on the board, they were able to help. Bill Forsyth was so enthusiastic about everything we did. He was enthusiastic from the day I came on this campus.

Q. That is a wonderful tribute.

A. He had heard about me before I came to Springfield. His mother lived in the same building as Bob's mother, and Bill told me that she told him all about me when I became a candidate.

Q. Yes, you mentioned that, right.

A. We had people who had never heard of us who decided to take us up as a cause. So we have friends.

Q. Who would have thunk? It is wonderful.

A. Yes, it is. You meet such wonderful people who had no reason to do this. They did it on their own. They developed an interest and that interest led to support.

Q. I want to add since we have been talking about things of cosmic importance in a way, I want to ask a question that occurred to me the other day. That is, I think I know the answer – how it came to pass that the university officially decided to name most of its interior streets after great Illinois writers? Do you know the person who had anything to do with it?

A. No, no. That was my idea.

Q. Your idea?

A. The reason was that everyone wanted someone that they wanted to name a street after.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. It was getting sensitive.

Q. Usually it is politicians.

A. Some of the faculty or students had a favorite professor who died or passed away and they wanted to name a street. Well, you only have so many streets.

Q. Oh, ok.

A. You have a whole new generation of people who were going to come in, make their own contribution. What are you going to do? Take down that person's name? Then some people wanted to name them after wildflowers and so forth. You weren't on that committee?

Q. No, I wasn't on it.

A. I worried about this. One of my favorite professors who was in the psychology department died. Someone suggested we name a street after him. I was tempted, but I knew that was not the right way to make a decision. When he died, people said, "We ought to start with naming a street for him." It is not the way to do business.

Q. Right.

A. But it was very sensitive because everyone really cared about the person they really wanted to honor.

Q. Of course.

A. So I was going by the state capital, state library one day.

Q. Of course, on the building, yes.

A. I saw those up there and I thought, "We are an academic institution. Who is going to object to our honoring our state's greatest authors?" That is why I did it. It was a defense mechanism.

Q. It was a great idea, inspired. I just always assumed that you worked with Judy and that she had maybe planted the idea, but it was your idea.

A. No, no.

Q. Well, it was an inspired decision because those are names that last forever and should.

A. That's what I can remember. I can't think of anybody else suggesting it to me. I know it wasn't Judy because she was already out of the office.

Q. Anyway, it was a very wise decision because you can think only in the short term when you do that sort of thing. I remember President Spencer saying, "Being in the state capital city, we will never be able to name a building. It will only be when we have two buildings, so we can name one for a Democrat and one for a Republican."

A. You don't want to play that game.

Q. Of course not. That's why he insisted on calling the buildings A, B, C, and D. He didn't want to succumb to that except for the library. He thought that Norris Brookens had been a remarkable, perceptive member of the board.

A. This is because everyone had their favorite person.

Q. Sure, of course.

A. Which I agree with but I didn't get any political pressure.

Q. Sure.

A. The pressure was internal, not from the outside. I learned this in Atlanta, and that is you never, never do anything that is a political favor because if you do it, you have to do it for everyone. Most of the time when politicians call and ask you to hire someone they do not expect you to do it. They just want to tell the constituent that they made the call.

You also want the reputation for not making political hires for anyone. They are only annoyed if they believe you have done it for others. "She won't do it. She doesn't do it for anyone." I have had many calls and pressure.

Q. Of course, of course.

A. This is especially true after a change in administration. Everybody who lives in Springfield wants a job. Thank goodness, we had the reputation...

Q. Of not doing that.

A. People don't understand the pressure in Springfield isn't about accepting unqualified students; the pressure here is to constituent jobs.

Q. Right, right.

A. Get an interview.

Q. Look where it got the U of I. That was a real scandal.

A. Exactly, exactly. That's one thing and that is out of...

Tape paused.

Q. On the Board of Regents, did you get to know Brewster Parker?

A. Yes, I did.

Q. I thought so, but he hasn't come up.

A. He was the chair of the board when I was hired. He hired me. I did all of my negotiations with him. I liked him. I can honestly say I never had one negative experience with a member of the Board of Regents.

Q. Really? How about the staff?

A. None that I can remember. Now I wasn't always happy with the way things were handled and I didn't always agree. They were very polite. If they disagreed, they seemed to handle it well. I didn't like it when they spent time squabbling with each other, but I can't even point to one negative incident where I was directly involved.

Q. Well, that is good. So you had good relations there with the Board of Higher Education?

A. Yes and a few people who are antagonistic to our university. I liked Dick Wagner. He and Rod didn't get along. I had to work a little to stay out of the middle of that.

Q. Well, Dick was far more the effective, I think, than Rod. Rod is a nice guy and good friend of mine, but I didn't think he was effective and didn't have clout.

A. He worked very hard, yes. I liked Dick Wagner and admired him very, very much. He only let me down once, and he explained it or attempted to explain what happened and why he did what he did. I said, "Dick, it is forgotten, which is really true." One thing I really believe – is never bear a grudge. In fact, I had my friend at Kansas State, Orma Linford, who once said to me, "Naomi, I am going to give you grudge lessons because this is causing us problems." Generally it doesn't pay to bear grudges.

Bob Kustra overplayed his hand, and I helped him by overplaying mine. It was too much pressure on the board and we were caught in the middle. But when I run into Dick Wagner, I am always so happy to see him and have great affection for him.

Q. Oh, sure. Never hold a grudge on that. You can understand why he was under pressure.

A. Oh, yes. From his perspective, he was doing the right thing.

Q. Well, it was also easier and eventually you ended up winning [laughter], so it was is always a little easier.

A. That does make it easier. You are absolutely right, that did make it easier. But I see him periodically and I am always happy to see him.

Q. Well, that's good. Ok. We still have some time left. Can you think of any other issue or relationship on campus that was a matter of great pride or great distress on your part?

A. I remember an unpleasant incident involving Ron Sakolsky and Dennis Fox. They were arrested for disturbing a campus event. I was not there that night. I probably would not have had them arrested although I found out later that Ron had attacked one of our police officers, and the officer had to go to the hospital to treat his injuries.

Ron and Dennis started an email campaign against me, which went all over the country. Today that is a common occurrence, but at the time it was unusual. They emailed every professional organization, every one they ever knew. They forwarded hundreds of emails to Ikenberry and to all my former institutions. Their interpretation of the event was totally different from what really happened.

Ron did get a little scared. He thought he could go to jail. I had to intervene with the state and the police to keep them from pressing charges. He did not mention this in his campaign.

Now these are very common, but it wasn't common then to have this kind of professional smear campaign. I didn't answer it and asked people not to answer on my behalf, but faculty members did anyway. I didn't laugh it off, but I knew enough not to respond and feed them.

Q. Right, right. What kind of work did you most appreciate from Dave Everson working in your office?

A. Well, both Dave and Judy and Nancy Ford worked in my office at different times. I knew I wanted somebody in the president's office who was academically strong and respected by the faculty. Judy Everson was highly recommended.

She came and, of course, she was perfect and very helpful. I forget how I ended up with Dave [Everson]. I don't think he followed Judy. I think there was somebody in between who worked in there. But then Dave came in, and I really enjoyed working with him. He was one of the few people I could sit with him at the computer and we could almost finish each other's sentences.

When controversies came up, he saw the humor of it. He had been the principal negotiator for one of our faculty bargaining sessions so I had dealt with him in the past. He was also a political

scientist so we had some in common. There was something very special about him and I valued our friendship and working relationship.

He had one bad experience while working for me that bothered me greatly. He attended a meeting to represent me, and a faculty member who was a friend of his accused him of lying. That really hurt Dave so much that he came in and he told me that he needed to resign from his administrative position. It hurt him more than I expected, especially since he was a man of integrity who would never have lied to colleagues. I guess I had faced false accusations before, so I probably would not have found it so disturbing. [laughter] Something I find about faculty is that they are more sensitive than those of us who have been through the wars.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. So at first I didn't understand. Then I thought, "This is ridiculous. I am not going to let him go. He is a good person." I wrote that faculty member an angry letter but not an insulting letter. I forget my precise words, but basically I said that I was disappointed and angry that she had called someone of such high integrity a liar. I added that although I had disagreed with her on many issues, I had never publicly questioned integrity nor the motives of other faculty with whom I disagreed.

She never answered me. But she took Dave out to lunch. I am told that she cried and apologized to him. I suspect she realized she had attacked one of the most popular and highly respected faculty members on our campus. David decided to stay in our office.

Q. He was a great guy and a personal friend and I take pride in having known him.

A. He was a wonderful man.

Q. I was stunned when Dave took that job because he just, he seemed like he was always writing these mystery stories and he was already a professor in political science.

A. He was a wonderful writer. He did so much for my writing.

Q. I just didn't think he would be the kind of guy who would work comfortably, but he turned out to have great skills. Judy had to help him buy a wardrobe that would be appropriate.

A. I sent him to an ACE training meeting for assistants to the president; he asked to go. He took it very seriously. He was such a great guy. I envied his wonderful writing skills. How he saw something and just put it together in such a wonderful, wonderful way – just lifted the burden of things that needed to be done.

I have never worked with anyone I enjoyed as much as working with him. When he died, oh my gosh, over the lunch hour, he just said, "I will be gone for an hour." He went to the fit club and had a fatal heart attack. Then he was gone. It took me a long, long time to get over that.

Q. Well, he was a great guy. It turned out that I think he thrived in that job.

A. He was wonderful. He did it well. He was honest and told it like it was.

Q. He said, "I am doing it because I have got to raise my retirement."

A. Except for that one instance when he left.

Q. Yes, but he also enjoyed it. The political scientist in him enjoyed it, and he liked you.

A. Oh, he was so kind.

Q. He enjoyed it, so it was a great match.

A. He and Emily [Schirding] were a good pair. A student would come in and they would have a story, "My check didn't come in from Nigeria." It was usually true. Dave would say, "Well, I am going to have to make some phone calls." The phone calls he would be making were to Judy. He would say, "Write me a check." [laughter] Then he would say, "Now give them the other half and let them borrow it."

A couple of times I said to him – they were both so wonderful – I said, "You are going to go bankrupt doing this." [laughter] I didn't know how happy Judy was about that, but she is very generous, too. But I laughed. We had a lot of fun. I laughed with him. He told me this and I will tell you that in administration we never laughed so hard in that office. It isn't making fun of people; it is just seeing how ridiculous things are.

Q. He had a real sense of the absurd, and he could laugh and tease.

A. Absolutely! People would go by our office and they would ask, "Why are you all laughing?" Of course, I never could tell them, but if you don't see the humor, I don't think you could last in administration. David, of course, had a good sense of humor. He saw the irony. He was just a good human being.

Q. Well, you have already told me that throughout your married life have relied on Bob for advice and reassurance. I know it was still the case during your years here.

A. He provided encouragement and support.

Q. You mentioned how he had encouraged you to take this job because you could make a difference. Of course, you did.

A. He supported my decision to go back to school and earn my PhD. Without his encouragement I probably would not have done it.

Q. That's right, that's right.

A. Screaming and kicking and made me accept a job at the last minute that I wasn't prepared for. [laughter]

Q. I was always profoundly impressed by his loving to give up the limelight himself so that you would have a chance.

A. He got tired of it, I think, too. He was very supportive, extremely supportive. I can't even imagine who I could have married who would have supported me as much.

Q. Did you ever reject his advice, do you think? That's an unfair question

A. I am sure I did if I disagreed with it. He rejected my advice because we did role reversal.

Q. Sure, of course.

A. There were times when he... he tends to be... in fact I was laughing about it last night. We had dinner with Bayard Catton. He was in town. He was a colleague. Years ago I knew him through ASPA and professional activities and so forth. We took him and his wife to the Yacht Club, and they were talking about being the prophets of doom and that they both had that tendency. [laughter] I tend to be very optimistic. Bob...

Q. He's the dark side of things?

A. Yes. He is. He can think if anything can go wrong, it will go wrong – even exaggerated. So sometimes, I have not taken his advice because I thought or I hoped that it would work out. So, no, I haven't always taken his advice.

Q. Right, ok.

A. Absolutely not. Of course, he has given me some good advice, a lot of good advice.

Q. You mentioned some of that.

A. But sometimes I say, "No, that would be folly." [laughter]

Q. Do you have a tendency when you had any spare time over dinner at night or over a drink to talk about things that were on your mind?

A. Oh, yes. We share everything. I can't think of anything I didn't share that concerned me. If it was on my mind, I would share it. I tend not to keep things to myself.

Q. That's a good quality.

A. I don't share as much as perhaps I should with friends, but I do with Bob and with certainly our daughters as well.

Q. Yes.

A. So I am a little more private than I probably should be about some things.

Q. You may have learned that some things it is just as well to keep it in the family.

A. That's right.

Q. Literally, in the family. [laughter]

A. That's right.

Q. Well, do you want to talk about your decision to retire at UIS?

A. Yes, we could talk about that. That was not a difficult decision.

Q. Yes, right.

A. I had always thought that 10 years was enough with some exceptions. People use the expression in higher education, "Friends come and go but enemies accumulate."

Q. Yes, right.

A. There is a question about how effective you are going to be over a long period of time. I was feeling pretty good about the way things were going. That's one thing that Bob did. He stepped down as dean when things were going pretty well for him. Not a good idea to leave just because things aren't going well. Sometimes you don't have a choice.

When things were going well, we had merged with the University of Illinois. Jim Stukel was supportive and best of all we had become a four year institution. It seemed to be a good time to consider retirement.

This was really funny because I started talking about retirement and Wayne and Carl said, "But we want to retire." [laughter] I said, "Seniority has its privileges." We can't all go at once. I get to go first and then Wayne said, "Then I'll go." Then Carl and he didn't do it, so that was funny. But I had planned to retire in 10 years. Bob and I had agreed 10 years would be enough.

I went to see Jim Stukel and I talked to him about retirement. He suggested I move off campus because that would justify an increase in pay that would count toward my retirement income.

Housing allowances are counted as income, but campus homes are not. I hadn't even thought about it at a practical level.

Q. Right, right.

A. So they said, "Your pension is based on your four highest years." He said, "If you will move off campus, then I will do what we've done with all of the other chancellors who get a housing allowance."

Q. So that becomes the base for retirement?

A. Yes. So they really took care of me. They said, "We will make the adjustment that we have to make." But I hadn't even thought of that; I wasn't very money conscious. I should have been. I think they also told me that if I stayed longer and stuck around for a few more years that I could teach. I didn't want to do that. I didn't want my successor to run into me every time he turned around. Who is going to do that? I liked my job.

A lot of people get tired of their job and that is why they go back to teaching, which they also loved. But I loved my job, so it didn't make any sense to retire and to end up going to committee meetings. In political science when you have been out of teaching you have to spend a great deal of time retooling. It is a discipline that is always changing. I am not sure I wanted to do that. Mainly, I did not want to be the former chancellor standing out in the hall.

Q. You had no desire to do that, right.

A. You set a bad example for everyone. So I had decided that I wouldn't do this until I was absolutely certain I was going to leave. So I bought my house and got everything in order, then I went back to Stukel and told him my retirement plans. I said I would stay until they appointed a new chancellor. Of course, I did not know I was going to come back and that it would be a long goodbye. [laughter]

Q. That's right. I am trying to get that straight. You retired officially.

A. I had a big the party and I had all these gifts and I had Convocation. I said goodbye to the faculty; I did everything. Then in May or somewhere in there...

Q. 2001.

A. George Ryan got involved and Tom Lamont...

Q. Yes, right.

A. Tom believed that he had been encouraged to seek the job and that he was being treated unfairly by the search committee. Frank Kopecky was chair of the committee. Tom got the

governor involved. George Ryan announced he didn't like the pool of candidates. I don't know the details. I was not directly involved in this as I should not have been.

I was, of course, very protective of our faculty. I truly believed that the people on the committee were all doing what they thought was right and were doing a good job. I didn't know some of the conversations that other people were having. So I was very disturbed by this whole thing. To this day, I am disturbed.

Q. I bet, I bet.

A. Anyway, the whole thing blew up and the faculty got irate and protested political pressure on an academic decision. Jim Stukel was caught in an uncomfortable situation and was very unhappy with this whole thing.

Q. Understandably.

A. Stukel was accused of having promised the job to Tom. Something I knew he would never have done. He was too professional for that. I was getting letters. In fact I still have a file with some letters. I don't know why I never threw them out. Then Jerry from the Board of Trustees got involved, and the situation escalated until Stukel had no choice but to cancel the search.

Then there were some people who were offering it as interim positions to politically connected people. Imagine how that would have gone over. Rumor circulated about all kinds of arrangements. One person who had applied and not been chosen for consideration by the search committee was told he would get an interim appointment.

Q. Someone other than Tom Lamont?

A. Yes, this was after Tom was out.

Q. Ok, Ok.

A. They needed an acting chancellor because they had to start the search again. By this time Tom had withdrawn.

Q. Right.

A. Jim Stukel just finally came to see me one day and he said, "Would you please come back?" He said, "We need somebody to settle the faculty so we can start a legitimate search again." I thought it would not be controversial and that the Board would support his decision. Of course, I said, "Yes." But it was kind of embarrassing to come back.

Q. Because that was then a whole another year or six months?

A. Yes, it was until April. Ringeisen started in April.

Q. Right.

A. I stepped down just as Ringeisen started.

End of Tape 4 Side 2

47 minutes 55 seconds

Beginning of Tape 5 Side 1

Q. This is the fourth and presumably last oral history interview with Naomi Lynn. The interviewer is Cullom Davis. The date is August 26, 2010. Naomi, we almost got through your departing from the university except I don't recall what kind of nice farewell celebrations there were. Or were they any?

A. People were overly generous. The major retirement party was held at the University. I was surprised and pleased at the large number of people who attended. The newspaper reported six or seven hundred; the staff said it was closer to one thousand. In any case it was a large crowd and some very generous comments were made.

Q. Was there a master of ceremonies for that?

A. Yes, there was. I am embarrassed to say that I can't remember who it was because it was...

Q. Sure, sure. Maybe... I remember he presided...

A. I don't remember.

Q. Over the kind of formal merger and when Jim Stukel came to campus, I know there was a nice ceremony for that.

A. But I don't remember. The food was wonderful. It was just a marvelous celebration. Some friends came from out of state, and I received several gifts. One that I remember was sapphire earrings with diamond clusters.

Q. Nice.

A. That was from the Board of Trustees. Then Judy Irwin, who was then a state representative... she was in the Senate, I believe presented me with a picture of the Capitol

signed by all the women legislators. The reception made me feel good about my experience, and it was a very moving, wonderful reception.

Then in Urbana we had several things. One was the Alumni Association – gave me a lifetime membership and gave Bob a lifetime membership, and they gave us a trip to Europe as a gift from the Alumni Association. They were embarrassingly generous. The whole experience was wonderful.

Q. In a relatively short time, you made a lot of friends and that counts for a lot. When was the announcement by the Vaden family of their gift?

A. That was in the fall.

Q. Ok.

A. They were there but at that time, I guess that's when Val decided he wanted to do something for my retirement. I think it was inspired by the event, and he told me later he had decided to do this for my retirement because I had been so enthusiastic about living in Lincoln's hometown. We had talked about Lincoln and the building of the presidential museum so he knew of my interest in Lincoln. Val decided the family should do something special commemorating my retirement. They did not tell me.

I knew nothing about it. The whole thing was a big surprise. They did not tell Bob. I think they were afraid he would accidentally tell me, but the result was that he missed the announcement. We were having the faculty awards event when Vaden family suddenly appeared.

It was obviously a surprise because I couldn't believe that anyone could surprise me about something that important. It took a lot of conspirators to make it happen, so that was an amazing surprise. I appreciated it so much because I knew what it would mean to the university, but also because it came from my extended family. I thought of the Vadens as part of my family.

Q. Absolutely, you did. It was Val working with his father and mother who thought of the notion of a Lincoln and Civil War theme?

A. Val's mother had passed away. I think they thought more of Lincoln, but it is difficult to separate Lincoln from the Civil War, so I don't think that they would make that distinction. I think they thought of it as something that interested me and that would mean a lot to me. Of course, they knew I would appreciate anything done for UIS and it would be valuable to me.

Q. So apparently they picked up on the initiatives under way at that time, some of them highly political to have the university house Lincoln research.

A. Yes, I think this was right before it became so political. I don't think it was political at the time that they did it. Oh, there was one other retirement gift I have to mention because I appreciated it so much.

Q. Sure.

A. It was the scholarship that was founded in my name because that really was very important to me. That was announced at my retirement reception, and I was very grateful.

Q. That was funded by?

A. By friends, by members of my advisory board – they raised \$50,000. That was quite a bit.

Q. Oh, yes.

A. They also gave me other gifts, but scholarships are so important to our institution. In fact, we had already established a scholarship a few years earlier in memory of Bob's parents because his mother I'm sure would have gone to college had there been a place for her to go in Springfield. Scholarships are so important. Serving and educating students is why we are here.

Q. Is this particular scholarship in your honor focused on a particular area?

A. No, no it was not.

Q. Just a general one?

A. A scholarship that would be given to undergraduates. I don't have all the information in front of me, but it was a wonderful recognition of something that they knew I would value more than anything else. I should have mentioned that first when I was discussing my retirement because that was the most meaningful gift I received.

Q. Of course it was.

A. I was just so grateful for that.

Q. So you anticipated this, relatively quiet, not by any means sedentary, but a relatively quiet retirement.

A. That is correct.

Q. How quickly did the Lincoln Land...

A. I had been retired about a year, a little over a year when Lincoln Land lost their president, and they asked me if I would serve on the selection committee for the new president. I co-

chaired it with a trustee and really enjoyed doing that. We found a very strong candidate, impeccable credentials and so forth. We did have an outside consultant who was supposed to do the background check and should have known what was happening in the candidate's family.

Q. Oh, that's right.

A. It turned out that his wife had been in business in their community and had been charged with some irregular business dealings. About the time he was coming and meeting people, she was indicted. He came to Springfield and offered his resignation, which the Board reluctantly felt they had to accept because they had just had major controversy and bad press over the firing of Norm Stephens. Fortunately, the candidate knew that his community college would welcome him back because they were very sorry to see him go.

Q. That was what, Kansas?

A. Kansas. Two of the Lincoln Land Trustees then asked me if I would be willing to serve as acting president until they completed a new search. I had been asked that before. [laughter] I went to Lincoln Land, and I was happy to do so because I knew Lincoln Land pretty well because they had been supportive.

Q. You had no reservations about doing that really? I mean they changed...

A. Not too many. We all understood I didn't know a thing about community colleges, [laughter] but it was going to be short term.

Q. Right, right.

A. I am glad I did it. I learned a great deal. I appreciated community colleges much more after the experience was over. Of course, my sister had always been in the community college business, and she was a community college president. I don't think I thought about it very long. I think Bob and I talked about it.

Q. Sure, sure.

A. There were some things that we had planned to do after retirement and we just put them off.

Q. Right.

A. It was a very positive experience for me. The staff was supportive, the faculty, the trustees. I ran a few workshops for them on the role of the trustee. I had opportunities to do programming.

Q. But the institution was not in terrible trauma. This was not a paralyzing... they had lost was it Norm Stephens – whom I thought very highly of.

A. Norm Stephens, correct. He was so supportive of us but he ran into some problems with the board. He was very supportive of our moving to four year status and had been, I think I had mentioned earlier, had been very helpful when the community colleges were very nervous of our becoming a four year institution.

Q. So their board is what you haven't said but implied by the fact that you didn't connect with workshops. You felt it was too heavily engaged in micromanaging?

A. They recognized that they had some problems. There was a tendency at Lincoln Land for the staff to go to board members and for board members to talk directly to the staff. I never did solve that problem for them, but I tried. [laughter]

They had some new board members, Carol Posegate, who, of course, had been involved in higher education for years. She is a lawyer; she had been the attorney for the Board of Regents. She had a deep understanding of what the proper roles would be. The chair at that time, Roger Rutherford, was very interested in changing the culture and some bad habits that hindered Board performance. So they asked me to conduct a two-day workshop. I forget how many, I think it was one, but I did do that and I enjoyed doing that. I found it rewarding.

Q. And you worked well with Rutherford?

A. Yes. He was an excellent board chairman.

Q. Good. I didn't know him. From the press, I had the impression that he was very political.

A. Well, he was very much involved in the Norm Stephens situation. For some people, he was the villain. I think there are two sides to that story. I think he agonized over what his position should be on the Norm Stephens thing and concluded the right thing to do was to fire.

I think he felt very comfortable later that he had made the right decision based on what would be best for Lincoln Land. He suffered for that controversial decision. He ran for judge and lost. Many people thought if it hadn't been for the Norm Stephens incident, he would have won.

Q. The only other board member I knew just from an old friendship, not close, was Carl Oblinger. Was he on the board when you were there?

A. Yes, he was. I don't want to review every board member who was there. [laughter]

Q. That is right, of course.

A. He was supportive of me. I had a good relationship with him.

Q. Oh, I understand, ok. So that was relatively uneventful. It was kind of transitional.

A. I don't think it was uneventful. [laughter] I then had to help with the next search where we hired Daniels.

Q. But you maintained pretty good relations with the faculty and staff.

A. Oh, the faculty and staff were helpful and very supportive. They had a lot of possible potential areas of stress during the academic year.

Q. Yes.

A. But I was very impressed with the faculty. They are committed. I guess I had some philosophical issues – one of which, of course, is about what it means to be a community college. Lincoln Land takes so much pride in all the honor students they bring in that they sometimes don't, in my opinion, don't focus enough on their student developmental work.

I would have liked to have seen more discussion on developmental work. This may have changed; it has been a number of years. But instead they wanted to spend too much time talking about how well their students do when they transfer and how many honor students they get. That's understandable, but that can be a distraction. I thought it was a little bit of a stretch.

Q. Yes, I understand. That lasted less than a year?

A. Less than a year.

Q. Until maybe the summer of the next year?

A. I don't remember, it may have been in the spring.

Q. Ok.

A. Ringeisen had come in April. I remember thinking that it might have been useful to have a calendar today, but I didn't bring one. We can clarify later. I can look up all those dates.

Q. If you don't mind, one thing I don't think I followed sufficiently at the conclusion of your chancellorship was looking back on the progress in development work on campus. You mentioned you had at that time a campaign. I want to ask you. Personally I know that you were comfortable doing that kind of work – that was natural to you. I don't know what percentage of your time, and maybe you can guess how much of your time you devoted to that.

A. I would define development broadly. For example, I never stayed home one evening if I could go out and be seen in the community and be active so that we were making friends and identifying potential donors and establishing ourselves as active community members. Bob and I did this as our own contribution. It was not uncommon for us to go out every night because people seem to appreciate our presence and because we believed it was the right thing for a university president to do.

I used to also go to the student government meetings. They invited me on Sunday afternoon, and I finally decided that we needed one day as a family. Except for that, it was unusual for me not to be out in the evening. When I came home at 5:30, I would say, "Ugh." Then when I came back at 10:30, I would say, "I am so glad that I did this." I always had a good time.

The other side of the coin is that I remember so many things that I might not have done that I really, really enjoyed. In fact if you asked me to list five evenings where I was bored or thought it was a waste of time, I would have a hard time doing it.

Q. Hard pressed to name them.

A. But I connect those development activities to friends and fundraising. I spent a lot of time on that. When we started our campaign, which really started when we became part of the University of Illinois, I decided to devote even more time to fundraising.

Q. Yes, right. Well, I know the great help from Vicki and others and from the people in Champaign Urbana, but you did a lot of button-holing yourself.

A. Yes.

Q. Do you feel like you can talk about some of the bigger achievements you have in that?

A. No, it's difficult for me to separate it, and I'll tell you why. Once we identified a donor and I don't want to cite who they are, I always had help. If someone mentioned to me that they wanted to make a gift, I would always notify the staff member. Charlie Hahn was there at the beginning and Vicki and so forth. I don't think any one person does it.

I don't think they give money if they don't respect the institution, if they are unhappy with what is happening. I think it would have been difficult, and I say this carefully, for Durward to raise money because he was so controversial. But I don't think any one person or chancellor really raises all the money on their own.

Q. I understand.

A. I just am so grateful to people who helped.

Q. Well, an awful lot of community people and...

A. I asked, for example, one of the smartest things I did was to ask Howard Humphrey to chair my campaign, which he did. Of course, he was so helpful and I was so grateful.

Q. I was amazed, it was a brilliant idea.

A. He was just absolutely perfect for this. When I came in, I was surprised the college did not have its own advisory board. I called Googan Bunn because I had met him and he had asked me to serve on the Bank One Board. And I asked him if he would help me put together an advisory board. I knew he would know the appropriate people to put on the board. He agreed to chair my board and one of the first people he asked to serve was Howard. I don't want to go through the whole board, but I don't want to minimize the role that that board played.

Jack Clark, the newspaper editor, became a real friend and supporter. In fact, once he was almost too helpful. By this, I mean that he was considering censoring something about UIS. I knew that if you get associated with censoring reporters, you are creating future problems for yourself.

So I called Jack and urged him to print the unpopular item, and we both laughed about it. [laughter] The person involved was Doug Pokorski who covered higher education for the newspaper and was one of the best higher education reporters I have ever come across. Again, I came with a little bit of experience and I knew that when you have a reporter who is objective and who tries to be fair, you have to be very careful that you be supportive of them.

Q. Can you remember the issue for that?

A. I don't remember the issue.

Q. Did he uncover something?

A. No, not controversial, but they thought it would not be good for us. The controversy was our going four year or something like that. I think it had to do with our going four year.

Q. Ok.

A. I think dealing with the press is so important. We had another staff member who on a regular basis would complain to me about his coverage in the paper. He then started to call the section editor. I found out about it and thought it was totally inappropriate. I told him that I was going to call the editor, and I told the editor, "I want to apologize for X. I think that reporter has tried to be fair and has been fair to us."

Dealing with the press is important and sometimes becomes part of my job. I had another incident where I had to call somebody on the newspaper, a small one. This is interesting – a faculty member had said something in class, and a student had taken offense.

Q. Gee, what a surprise.

A. Yes, what a surprise. [laughter] This was an African-American student and the implication was that the comment had been racist. The newspaper editor called me about it, and I asked the faculty member about the incident. She described it to me very carefully, and I believed that it happened exactly as she said. The publisher called me and said that he was thinking about putting something in the paper about it.

I told him that I thought that was unfair to the faculty member, that it was a freedom of speech issue, that the comment repeated to him had been taken out of context and that I found the whole thing offensive. I described to him my understanding of what happened. I didn't tell the faculty member because when the conversation was finished, I wasn't sure I had convinced the publisher not to do it. The one thing I have learned is that faculty are very sensitive, and they take criticism very seriously. But he didn't do it. So she never knew how close she had come to receiving unfair press.

Q. You managed to quietly work things out.

A. There were a couple of times I had quietly worked something out for a faculty member so that they wouldn't get bothered by something or they would think that I would get concerned about it when I didn't take it that seriously. You don't get too many incidents like that, but I remember that one. That one bothered me. It worked out ok, but I don't like to call the press. In that case I did because there was no way the faculty member could have defended herself.

Q. My general recollection was that by and large, we enjoyed a pretty healthy relationship with the *Journal-Register*.

A. We did.

Q. Jack Clark was not my favorite fellow, sure, but I think he turned out to be fair and a real supporter. This is an achievement that I lay at your feet because he had just never evinced that kind of attitude.

A. He was so supportive at advisory board meetings; he really wanted us to succeed. As I said, once he was more supportive than I wanted him to be, but he was trying to do the right thing for our institution. I had positive feelings about him, as I did with, of course, Pat Coburn. Pat and I became very good friends. I am very, very proud of our relationship with Jack.

Q. Right. I don't know how one measures the goodwill created in a community about a university, but it was obvious to me that those many evenings and events that you and Bob attended paid off richly. For a change, the university became cocktail party conversation that was favorable. They all liked you. You and Bob were very active. You worked hard at it but you were also successful.

A. I hope so; we tried.

Q. Sure did.

A. I tell you it was not a burden. [laughter] It was not a burden.

Q. Yes, well it is nice of you to say that. There were some evenings probably that you wouldn't have minded taking of your shoes and sitting down.

A. That's true. [laughter]

Q. Your dedication was obvious. Now I have read, I did have the opportunity to read this book, "Outstanding Women in Public Administration." I read the very, very laudatory chapter about you. It is written by somebody who knew you pretty well. This was not some stranger.

A. No, absolutely not, colleague.

Q. But the author was very factual in their praise of you. This obviously wasn't a surprise; you knew this was going to be happening.

A. Yes, when the editors decided to do a book about women in public administration, they solicited names for inclusion in the volume. They asked people to... I am not sure how they decided, but if you wanted to write a chapter about someone, you could submit their name. I think that is the way it was done. I actually was not involved.

Q. Yes, right.

A. So then Linda called me and said, "I am going to write a chapter about you and it has been approved by the editors." So I knew about it ahead of time.

Q. I have forgotten how you knew her.

A. From Kansas State.

Q. Linda Richter?

A. Richter, right. Linda and her husband taught in the political science department with me at Kansas State. Of course, I became department chair and they had been very supportive and very involved.

Q. Do you remember the title of that chapter?

A. No, I don't. I have a copy of the book. I can read it.

Q. It is called, "People, a Rich Canvas."

A. That's right.

Q. She used a metaphor of art and diversity.

A. It came from a book that... I guess it was part of a book that Margaret Mead's daughter had written that inspired the title.

Q. Yes, I think I remember.

A. I think it was from Margaret Mead's daughter's book about her mother. I think that is where Linda got the idea for the title, [laughter] since I wasn't involved in writing it obviously or anything about it.

Q. Well, it was obviously...

A. It was very flattering.

Q. So your professional stature had already been created by your service of the organization and your publication, but this was kind of frosting on the cake a little bit, I guess, in terms of public recognition.

A. Pleasant surprise.

Q. Yes, ok. Well, do you want to talk a little bit about your wonderful family? You made reference to them periodically.

A. We have four daughters.

Q. Yes, I know that.

A. One lives here in Springfield. JoAnne works for McFarland. Nancy is in Minnesota. She is a consultant on marketing.

Q. And her name is?

A. It is Nancy.

Q. Nancy, that's right.

A. Then the oldest daughter is Mary Lou, and then Judy, who lives in Kansas. They are not in order.

Q. I understand.

A. Wonderful, wonderful women and I am very close to them. I talk to them often, and they are my advisors and friends.

Q. Well, it was always evident to Ann because often we would see you celebrating some occasion at the Yacht Club with your daughters and their families. It was always a very nice thing.

A. Wonderful, wonderful girls - women.

Q. Is your sister...

A. My sister is retired, and now she is living in Washington, D.C. She had a wonderful career. Her last position was chancellor of the Houston Community College System, which is one of the largest community college systems in the United States. They are second or third—I have forgotten. She has had a very good career. She has been helpful. We are all very, very close.

Q. Is she widowed?

A. No, she is married and her husband is still alive. I did have a younger sister, Judy, who died and that might be what you are thinking of.

Q. Oh, yes.

A. I am very close to Judy's two sons. Tom's children are like our own grandchildren. We are closer to Judy's two sons than to Ruth's children because of the situation, although we are close to all our nieces and nephews.

Q. Good, good. Well, I think we should close with a little bit of reflection, which is a little different from recollection. Largely we have been recollecting events. You have a good perspective on that, and so some of this is in what you have already said. But now having said all of that, I think it is appropriate for you to look back from today's perspective on your accomplishments at UIS and what that experience did for you.

I want to see both of those things. I want to ask you to be perfectly candid. Don't worry about being immodest. What do you think in summary your presidency and chancellorship did for the university?

A. Well, it made it a university, a real college. As a two year institution, graduating institution, it simply could not achieve its potential.

Q. Right.

A. It was handicapped not by its own doing or strength but because of what was happening in American higher education. We needed to be a four year graduate institution in order to serve our students well and to offer more to our students than we could with a limiting model. So I would say the first one was making it possible for students who came to study to take their appropriate place in higher education, both in terms of the education they received and the respect they deserved.

I would say that was the first thing because when all is said and done, we are here to educate students. We were doing a good job, but we were working under a disadvantage that really did not serve the best interest of our students, our graduates and our community. Achieving our goals required getting four year status.

Positioning ourselves to develop our full potential as a university necessitated our merger with the University of Illinois. This was a second important step. Third was taking action to maintain and raise academic standards to assure the quality of the education we offered. Fourth, our innovation and experiment with online teaching. We didn't discuss that, but we are proud of our record on distance learning.

Q. Now those are big, big accomplishments on anyone's list, but you may have some others that are not quite so global.

A. They are not so global. [laughter] Those are so important to me because I have tried to not talk about anything but our students. We are pleased with the progress we made on Town and Gown relations and the contributions we make to state and local government. There was a lot of talent here that wasn't being tapped. I believe the community today sees us as an important asset.

When I arrived, I do not believe the community realized how excellent most of our faculty was. Many were competitive and could have taught anywhere, but they chose to stay here. There was a tendency to focus on individuals who called attention to themselves for behavior that was not worthy of the institution.

I think I was able to let people know and talk about the strength of our faculty. I inherited some outstanding people. I believe we overcame the fear of having a star culture. I believe that today we are willing to recognize those who are doing outstanding work. We take pride in their accomplishments.

Q. Yes. Do you feel actually the faculty has been improved somewhat?

A. There is no question about it.

Q. It is a strong cadre of young faculty.

A. That is right. When we interviewed candidates, we paid more attention to how committed they were to their discipline and how much they were willing to grow and how much they were willing to be active in their profession. I thought it was always important to be active in your profession. So I think I did help change that culture somewhat.

Q. I agree. That enough?

A. I think so. I had so much help from so many people that I always think it is... you don't want to talk yourself into ... [laughter] accolades that you didn't do it on your own.

Q. Yes, that's right.

A. That always bothers me.

Q. I understand. How about how the experience affected you? I am sure that it tired you, it was an exhausting job. But how did you grow or discover things about yourself in this position?

A. I discovered many things about myself. [laughter] I had studied administration and had been in institutions of every size, but mostly large ones, very large institutions. I found that very helpful. I found out that I didn't know everything. [laughter] I think I knew that, but I had a lot of adapting to do at work when I came here. What seemed negative and a little bit discouraging at first, in the long term turned out to be positive.

I just learned so much about working with people. I really never was in what I would call a pathological organization or department. I know they exist in places, and I was told that this was a pathological institution. But once we got over the first year, I did not find that to be true. I had some disappointments. I mentioned earlier people who let me down by decisions that they made and by not supporting what I considered to be injustices. But I think you find that everywhere, in everything.

Q. Ok, yes.

A. That is such a good question because the whole thing since I've been here has been a learning experience. It is one thing to understand organizational and behavioral theory, and it is another thing to put it into practice. Some things that I taught were right on target and other things were just not practical or more challenging than the theory suggested.

I think I was less sensitive here because I knew I would face anger and was coming into a tense situation. I knew they were not angry at me because they did not know me. Plus when I arrived, there was so much anger [laughter], but I hadn't been here long enough to offend anyone. I learned to put that in perspective.

That has helped me in my personal life, too – to put things in perspective. I also learned that knowing how to teach it and write about it is not the same thing as doing it. [laughter] But there were some other things that were so true. I had never had to try it before.

End of Tape 5 Side 1

47 minutes 45 seconds

Beginning of Tape 5 Side 2

Q. This is an oral history interview with Naomi Lynn on August 26. Now you had an example of...

A. This is an example that may be trivial but it was extremely helpful to me. I learned immediately that I was not necessarily getting good feedback and that I had to encourage it. One of the things that I did that I had never done in any other position because I didn't quite have to do this was to make a suggestion and then sit back and ask them, "Tell me why it won't work, why it is not a good idea?"

Q. Ok, you had to explicitly invite...

A. Yes

Q. Well, good. So you freely acknowledge that the whole period here was a rich learning experience for you. I guess one could say looking at your career, not your life – looking at your career, that this was a capstone experience for you. It drew upon your writings and teachings and administrative experience, but you also learned from it.

A. Oh, absolutely.

Q. Now, in this entire endeavor you had an executive assistant and policy advisor. Do you want to talk about him?

A. Well, of course, without Bob, I could not have done it. I was thinking about how important it is to have a supportive spouse. I don't believe that there are many men of that era who would have been as supportive because we were married before the women's movement, before the conscious effort to recognize a woman's potential and to permit her to develop her talent skills.

I was just very, very lucky in two ways. My father was very supportive. He never believed that his daughters should not do everything possible; he encouraged us in every way as did my mother. Bob was that way with our daughters and with me.

Bob encouraged me to finish my PhD. When they knocked on the door and asked me to come and teach, I said, "Oh, I can't do that." He told me that that was something that I should try. Then when he retired and I became chancellor, he was there to listen to me. He never, never acted as if, "This is what you should do."

Q. Right.

A. He was very willing to say, "This has been my experience and now it is your day. I am going to concentrate on other things," which he did by stepping down as dean and suggesting I move higher in administration. I was just lucky.

Q. Well, yes. It was remarkable. In fact, I was thinking – can you think of a comparable circumstance of high leadership in which a woman has been able to rely so heavily upon her spouse?

A. For support?

Q. For support and advice and confidentiality and judgment? There must be some.

A. There are some and I have known many two-career couples – the Richter's and the Flora's are excellent examples.

Q. Ok.

A. I don't know anybody who has been as supportive, I guess my friend, the Birds from Maryville. She is an attorney and she was very independent.

Q. Bird?

A. B-I-R-D, Agnes and Frank Bird. I think about him because he died two weeks ago.

Q. Oh, sorry.

A. She has been dead for a long time. They were a wonderful model couple for us as a young couple – they were older than we were. They were just interesting to watch. He was so supportive of Agnes.

Q. Well, you have put it very...

A. My brother-in-law, my sister married well. My brother-in-law, Don, is wonderful.

Q. Oh, your sister, Ok, I didn't know that. Did he hold an employed position when they married?

A. Not when they married. When they married he was working on his PhD in nuclear engineering at Iowa State. He was also an academic.

Q. He retired.

A. He retired a few years before she did. They both were working for a while when she was president of the school. He did some work, but he has been very, very supportive of her. I cannot forget my own brother-in-law.

Q. No, of course. That says a lot about your parents and about your judgment in selecting spouses.

A. They were all kind of strange relationships to begin with. By that, I mean that Bob was engaged to someone else.

Q. I remember that story.

A. My sister broke her engagement twice before she married him. Today she would say, "What was I thinking?" [laughter]

Q. Well, let us hope it was fate in both cases.

A. It was fate, yes.

Q. Well, I have nothing more to say unless you want to have a final word.

A. Not really. I haven't really and I should have and I apologize. I haven't given this a lot of thought – everything has been spontaneous.

Q. Well, that is the idea, really, but it is your floor if you want it. If you don't, I think we will just close.

A. Again, you assured me editing rights. I want to give this some more careful thought. I have and will continue to be very honest.

Q. You have, I know. Ok, thank you.

End of Tape 5 Side 2  
8 minutes 8 seconds

End of Interview  
12 hours 6 minutes