

**Oral History Interview of  
Donald Haragan**

**Interviewed by:  
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Lubbock, Texas**

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## Transcript Overview:

This interview features Donald Haragan. Haragan discusses administrative changes at Texas Tech, the mission of the university, and how Texas Tech changed during his years as an administrator.

**Length of Interview:** 00:57:57

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### Keywords

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**David Marshall (DM):**

The date is October 21st of 2011. This is David Marshall interviewing Don Haragan at his office at Texas Tech and this is the third in a series of interviews. We have gone chronologically in the first two and we are going to wrap up with some general questions. So let's start if you don't mind. If you could tell me what in your opinion are characteristics of a good administrator are? You've held pretty much every administrative post here, you've dealt with other administrators extensively. So this is—you're the person who can tell me this kind of information.

**Donald Haragan (DH):**

Well I like—in the first place, there is no university that has become famous because of its administrators. Universities make their mark because of the faculty, their students and their alumni; and that's what defines a university. So it was always very clear to me that a successful administrator at a university is one that provides an environment in which faculty and students can excel. Because it's the faculty and the students that make the difference and define what a university is. So to say you know that someone is a good administrator in an institution of higher education is that simply they are doing everything they can to provide that environment in which the faculty of that institution and the students of that institution can be the best they can be.

DM:

Mm-Hmm, so that's good. So it's really a very simple concept.

DH:

It is. It's a very simple concept. I've always said too, it's never going to happen because the way that our society is structured. But to me the highest pay—the greatest rewards at a university should go to the distinguished professors. But instead the greatest rewards go to the football coach. I don't think administrators, necessarily—I mean administrator is just another job it's not the mission of the institution. So I have always thought it is very important to do the best you can and to reward the professors who are professors who are productive professors. When I say productive I mean in scholarship in teaching, the entire job that the faculty member at a university has, which is, to first of all, to discover new knowledge which is research and secondly share that knowledge with the students which is the teaching mission.

DM:

Right. Okay. Well let's look at the time period that you came here to Texas Tech and if you could just talk about general administrative changes at Tech. If you'd look back to the time, you arrived and the differences now. Maybe you could talk about the chancellor system and other major changes like that, that have occurred and positive and negative aspects or positive and negative aspects of specific administrations if you'd like.

DH:

Well, I came here the year after the decision had been made to change from Texas Technological College to Texas Tech University. And that at that time was a change in name only because we hadn't really changed the university in any way. We just decided that we had reached the point, or someone decided, not me, it was the year before I came, had reached the point that we were a collection of colleges and as such should be a university and not a technological college. That was quite the controversy [Phone rings] you're probably aware of that.

DM:

Do I need to—?

DH:

Might be an important call.

DM:

Alright.

DH:

So, that was in 1969 that the university changed its name from Texas Technological College to Texas Tech University, and there was quite a bit of controversy that I understand. I was not here when all that was happening, there were still a lot of unhappy people when I arrived. Because there was a large contingent of folks including Texas Tech folks, most of the faculty and whatnot that wanted the name of the university to change to Texas State University and not Texas Tech, because that would be very confusing. But the alumni the old timers they wouldn't hear of that. I mean Double T was something that was engrained with the folks so eventually that won out and it became Texas Tech, and still to this day I'll get mail addresses to Texas Technical University. They think it's a sort of abbreviation for Technological and of course it no longer is. So probably back in those days if I had been asked—of course I had no ties with Texas Tech before I came here, I would have thought that probably Texas State University would have been the best name.

DM:

Why is that?

DH:

It just—well, it's something that's used across the country. And when you've got the University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State, you've got, just various states have two universities and one is referred to as state and the other not.

DM:

Seems like it immediately catapults you into the top two. [Laughter]

DH:

Well, all the other technological schools of course, we're not MIT, and there is the reason why they do what they do. They're not nearly as broad as far as what they do at that university. Same way with Caltech, it's very different from the University of California. But we changed the name to Tech without really—I mean the university is not focused on that at all. We are not focused on technology here. Technology is a part of what we do, but we're certainly not focused on that. So that was a big change, and I think when the name changed to university there wasn't any real reflection of that change in what we did on the campus. Texas Tech, this was in 1969. '68 when they made the name-change, and Texas Tech, we actually put in the first admission standards for Texas Tech when I was provost in 1986 or so. So, probably the quality effort that we started, the road towards, what are we going to do, really made Tech get it up into the top universities in the country. And of course we are still talking about that and still working on that. But what are we going to do next to enhance the quality of the university and in 1986, I was provost at that time and I put other committee that was headed by Dr. Joe Goodin who was the Dean of Arts and Sciences at the time. This committee made some recommendations and I accepted the recommendations without making any changes at all and they proposed a three year step-up of admission standards. There were a lot of people who did not like that idea. I don't know not necessarily because they didn't want Tech to become a more quality university but simply because there was an attitude at the time, and still among many people they probably share that same attitude. That you give everybody a chance. You afford everyone for a chance to perform. My synopsis of what had happened as a result of open admissions was that what we were doing is admitting students to the university when we should have known full well that based upon their past performance that they weren't going to be able to compete. But we admitted them. And so you could predict what happened. The attrition, the freshman attrition rate at Texas Tech was huge. It didn't mean it was still a difficult place to get out of; it was a really easy place to get into. So when we started getting freshman attrition rates up to 40% and above it just seemed ridiculous. We were doing a disservice not just to the institution; we were doing a disservice to these students. I always wondered, you know, how many of these students lost all their self-confidence and never tried again. You know

DM:

Two semesters worth tuition and fees and a year of their life.

DH:

Right. But had they gotten the remedial help that many of them needed, they didn't have a good high school experience? Had they gotten that remedial help by going to a junior college, a community college, perhaps then later they could have entered the university with a firmer footing and done a better job. So I never had any doubts at all that Tech needed to do something with its admission standards. We told the board, at the time that we are probably going to lose enrollment. Because the good students—when I say good students, higher ranking students out

of high schools, we weren't recruiting many of those in those days. Doesn't say we didn't get some good students. We got some good students, and they went on to become—really made contributions to society. But when you look at the top students in the high schools the top grades, the top test scorers and whatnot, we weren't attracting many of those students. So what happened then when we put in those admission standards, is that we lost—I forget the number now, but our total enrollment went down by 2000 or more, because we were losing students, not admitting them to the freshman class. And then we successively in three years put in higher and higher admission standards.

DM:

Did enrollment continue to drop over those three years?

DH:

Probably the first two years it did. I can't remember whether it started recovering by the third year or not. But it did start recovering and the fact that it did exactly what we predicted it was going to do. That when we first put in these standards we were going to see a different enrollment. But when people began to see that we were raising standards here some of the high school counsellors would start recommending some of their best students to Texas Tech, which they have never done before. So, I don't know whether it was in that three years, it may have gone down steadily for those three years. But eventually, as we predicted it would, it started picking up. And I think that made a huge difference in who Texas Tech was, because at that time we started attracting some of the really bright Texas students to Texas Tech and a lot of students who were—it was ingrained in them that they needed to go to, for public education to either UT or A&M, we started getting some of those students. So I think that was a major change in where the university was headed.

DM:

How is that compared to today? The philosophy on campus is it more toward enrollment is it more toward admission standards. Do you have a take on that?

DH:

Yeah, I do. Because I talk to, particularly to the chancellor about this, I was not strongly in favor of setting a goal for enrollment for the university. I didn't have a say in that matter. I was already gone from the administration and Chancellor Hance really thought that one of the things we needed to do was grow as an institution. So his goal was 40,000 students by the year 2020. What I suspected it might happen, and I think it has happened although we don't report a lot of times average SAT scores. But I think the quality of students has suffered some. Not much. But it has suffered some by this goal of getting more and more students rather than getting more and more but getting better students. So I think we've seen our average SAT scores slide. At one point we were up to 1132, I think and I don't know what it is this semester, someone told me that it's



below 1100 now.

DM:

So they're actually—oh, the average scores. Have the admission standards ever been lessened from what you all brought them up to in 86?

DH:

Yeah, you always—those are the firm admission standards. But there're always—you can't set absolute standards that everyone meets. There's some sliding room in there. And I think what's happened there is that that sliding room has gotten larger. You know, there are other issues to consider. Funding issues from the state, and obviously if you have more students, you're going to draw more funds. But the way that education is funded in Texas, I think we lose, really, on every student that we—I don't think we're paid, we have to generate those funds. So anyway, I think the whole thing was that University of Texas was large had 50,000 students and A&M had 48,000 students and by golly, Texas Tech is going to be big also. But big is not always better.

DM:

Was that pretty much the same attitude back in 86 when enrollment started dropping because of higher admission standards? Did you have people who were only interested in enrollment figures?

DH:

Yeah we had some regents who were obviously weren't opposed to the extent that they stopped it because we convinced them it this was the thing to do. But there were some regents I think, that were really concerned that if we start losing enrollment it might keep going in that direction. I've never known any example where that had occurred. I don't know any examples where raising the admission standards hasn't resulted in an increase in enrollment. I mean increase in enrollment with better students, because you are competing then on a different level.

DM:

So it might be a [inaudible] that it comes back up.

DH:

I think that's just the general trend anywhere that that has been done. I think that's the general trend. It comes back up on the average with higher quality student. And like I say, I've never been—I like the idea—there are two questions that one should ask; and one is: should all high school graduates have an opportunity to enter a university in higher education at the university level? And my idea on that is: the answer is no because you are doing a disservice, not just to the university, but you are doing a disservice to the student. So to say that all high school students should have an opportunity to study in higher education, I say yes, they should. Should they have

an opportunity of any form of higher education at the university level v/s the community college, I think the answer to that is no. We've got to fit the experience to the individual and that individual, if they are not prepared to enter the university that they should get to the remedial training they need so they can succeed later. So anyway, we've been on that path, and at the time we put in the admission standards there have been some slight changes in the SAT score levels. But our average SAT was 900 and in some cases even below 900.

DM:

And when you talk about wiggle room you're talking about percentile in the high school graduating class as a factor, SAT or ACT is a factor, and then there are other factors that are considered so that it's not—it's a little bit fluid.

DH:

Yeah, it's a sliding scale. We base most of the admissions on our objective. And it's based on performance, high school performance and especially on test scores. And the higher your test scores, the lower your GPA can be. The higher your GPA, where you graduated in your class the lower the SAT. So that's the sliding scale. But then on top of that, we asked some students to write essays, to try to make an assessment for those students that are right in the mix in between. So we got to take as many things into considerations as we can and try to assess whether—and what we are trying to assess is whether this student has a legitimate chance of doing well and eventually graduating from the university.

DM:

I believe in the old days of Texas Tech, the presidents like Radford Knapp for example, would go around and speak at high school commencement ceremony—He did lot of recruiting. Recruiting was part of his job description.

DH:

I did that.

DM:

Did u do some of that?

DH:

I did a lot of that.

DM:

Oh. A lot of it.

DH:

I did.

DM:

Oh, okay.

DH:

I did probably most of that when I was provost than I was president. I was provost for 11 years and I was really involved. Particularly when we started putting in admission standards and whatnot, I was really involved in the recruitment and worked very closely with the director of admissions at that time lady named Marty Grassel. I worked really closely with Marty and traveled all over the state, to schools, and recruiting fares and whatnot. But I thought it was important that we do that. We had to change our image. We had an image of an also-ran and we were trying to have an image of competing with the top schools in the state.

DM:

I just assumed that that wasn't much of a responsibility of the president anymore because there were so many others responsibilities and that might have been mostly turned over to admissions office. That's interesting to hear?

DH: I just thought that in the time in our life of the university, the time in the life of Texas Tech that that was the time when—like I did some of it when I was president as well but most of this was done when I was provost. But it was time to get out there and if we were trying to sell the university as a different type of university then they've seen in the past, we have to get out and do a [inaudible] So I talked to high school counselors, I went and met with parents and students on these recruiting nights at various cities across the state. So, to me that was one of the important parts of my job. I did a lot of it and you know, some presidents do, some provosts do, some provosts don't, and some presidents don't. But everybody's got their own priorities and the things that they think are the most important to accomplish the goals that they set. And at that time, that was at the top of the list of my goals: was to try to build a quality institution based upon the student body that we recruited here.

DM:

Now what other issues have administration here at Texas tech dealt with besides student admissions?

DH:

I think there's always the competition with the other universities in the state. Where you compete there is not just—the faculty of the university have three charges. They have a charge to—and most people would not put it at the top. I put it at the top. They have a charge to discover new

knowledge. Because without discovering new knowledge you can't get to number 2 which is sharing that knowledge with students. So that's the research and teaching mission of a university, and every faculty member has that responsibility, not to have [inaudible] notes and teach from the same notes next year as you taught from this year, but you're actively involved in your field of teaching and research. So, I always put it at the top, the discovery of new knowledge as what a university needs to be. And that was the place where Texas Tech needed to change as well. Because the faculty members that we had here back in the 50s, and the 60s were really not brought here to do research. It was mostly a teaching university and we cared a lot for students who even then. But we cared for them so much that we thought we needed to put in some standards to save some of these students from themselves, which is one of the reasons why we put in the admission standards in the first place. But as we grew as an institution, research became an important part of the mission. And as you know it still is an important part and where we're really pushing growth right now is graduate education and research, and I think that's as it should be. We need to move in that direction. So I see that, along with the recruiting business, the sort of the change of the development of the mission of a major university. We go through those growth pains just like every other university did. You know, when I was back at the University of Texas in the early 50s, there was very little attention given to research and there was very little attention given to admission standards even back in the early 50s there. University of Texas of course, soon after that, started doing what we did and probably even in a bigger way, because they are still the university of choice due a lot of a lot to their location, in the central part of the state. We are sort of isolated out here. So we have to work a little bit harder to get those students. But the University of Texas certainly was not the quality institution they are today. And today let's face it they're a world-class institution.

DM:

How was the administration able to encourage further research at Tech?

DH:

Well you don't do that with—you do it through the hiring process. So it takes time and particularly in a university where you're sitting here with a high percentage of tenured professors that never as their part of mission did research. And we had a lot of those people here. You can't all of the sudden turn around and start punishing people that were brought here under entirely different circumstances. So it's a matter of attrition. As those people leave, you replace them with people whose mission is research as well as teaching. And it's certainly been my experience, over the years, that the best teachers we have are also our best researchers, because they are excited about what they're into, they're excited about new developments in their field. And that's why it's been such a pleasure for me to teach in the honors college, because we got some really bright students who get really excited about the things that we talk about.

DM:

So you had to reconcile to the fact that these things are going to take quite some time.

DH:

Oh yeah. Absolutely. It's a slow evolutionary process for a university to change. There's lot of inertia that have to be overcome.

DM:

It seems like administrative changes as they come along, that there would be some concern that the next administration might not hold to the same standards. Has that been a problem or have there—?

DH:

Well I think at least in my experience we made that part of the search process. The type of person that we were looking for is the type of person who shared those values that we had as part of the institution. Certainly there have been times where we probably have not held to that as much as we probably should. But that's the idea. If I defy the university and then go hire someone who can fit that role in moving the university ahead toward those goals that had been established. Now that doesn't mean you can't change goals, and of course, we have a board of regents that dictates a lot about what we do or what we don't do. I have some disappointment in the way that has gone over the years, because boards of regents have gotten so politicized.

They're political appointments and—you know it used to be we'd have Democratic Governors of the states that would appoint Republicans to the boards and vice versus. Shoot, that doesn't happen anymore.

DM:

It's all solid political parties.

DH:

Yeah, Governor Perry has been in office for the Republicans—we haven't had anything but a Republican on our board in a long time. But he's been there a long time. So it's really politicized now—

DM:

And how far does that bleed down in your opinion. If you have a complete Republican board of regents, how far does that bleed down into the academic hierarchy of the university?

DH:

I think it depends on how strong your leadership is. Being the chancellor and the president, you deal directly with the board. And there's the place where that interface occurs.

DM:  
Right.

DH:  
And you need to have a strong president and a strong chancellor who can present things to the board and describe for them the impact on the university and whatnot. And without that, then the board in some universities have really suffered, because the board dictates what's going to happen. And in most instances they're in no position really, to do that. Boards are extremely important to a university. But they're not there to divine what we do at the university.

DM:  
There's yet another major challenge for a university president. (laughter)

DH:  
Absolutely.

DM:  
Would you like to be a university president again?

DH:  
(Laughter) No, that's why I think—I've always felt very strongly that any administrative position, you come in and since you've been selected, you do those things the best you can, that you think are necessary, and then you get out, and let somebody else come in. You don't—if you're really doing the job right, you're going to step on some toes. Any big decision you make, you're going to step on some toes. And eventually you've stepped on a majority of the toes.

DM:  
Right.

DH:  
And it's not anything bad or anything, it's just fine to move on.

DM:  
Your ability to be productive would begin to suffer it sounds like.

DH:  
You need the support of the faculty and the staff. When you lose that support, you're not going to be able to do the things you need to do with the university. And I felt that way even when I was a department chairman, when I was the Chairman of the Department of Human Sciences. You know, things were going pretty smoothly and we had done a lot of the things that we wanted

to do, but after about five or six years, I just decided it was time for somebody else to come. So I quit. And a lot of people said, "Well I wonder what he's mad about?" I wasn't mad about anything. I wanted to go back and do teaching and research and let somebody else do the administration for a while. And I did the same thing as president. I was president for five years and I figured, we've accomplished most of the things that I wanted to accomplish. Let's give it to somebody else and let them take it. Now in my case, it wound up I wasn't permanently out, because I got called back as interim president after I left, and then low and behold interim chancellor. But that was not something I lobbied for, believe me.

DM:

Then you're the epitome of interim.

DH:

(Laughs) That's right! That's absolutely true. The epitome of interimity.

DM:

Can you give your take on the Tech's push for Tier 1 status?

DH:

I think that's in keeping with the same type of quality ambitions that we had when we were talking about admission standards. There are a lot of people who don't—I may be one of them—when you say "Tier 1" people interpret that in a lot of different ways. They don't know what it means. What we're talking about here is really research. Because the legislature has decided that if a university meets certain criteria, they're going to get some extra money, essentially. You're going to be funded more if you reach these criteria. And most of the criteria are in research. Not all, for instance having to Phi Beta Kappa chapter, has been extremely valuable for us, and we only had them a few years. And incidentally the reason we didn't get the Phi Beta Kappa chapter sooner, is because of our lack of admission standards for freshmen admissions. But as soon as we got those jacked up, we started being considered. And finally we're given a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa. And that's one of the things they're looking at. The library is another thing they look at. Are they a member of the Research Library Association? Well, we are. And that has bumped us up too, so. It looks like now, of those universities that are competing for the next quote "Tier 1" slot, Tech is in as good a position as anyone to be there. Research, productivity is another one. And they're looking primarily at funded research. Looking at dollars again, some people have taken exception to that. Certainly there's a lot of research that can be done without large amounts of money, and that should continue. Scholarship is not just funded research. If you're a philosopher, if you're an artist, if you're an English professor, research means a different thing to you than if you're an engineering professor, or a physics professor. So it's not just measured in dollars, but one of the things they are measuring right now is the funded research. "How much money do we get?" Because that shows the confidence that other people have in the university in

doing scholarly work. But it's focused mainly on the sciences, and on engineering, agriculture, those people.

DM:

Do you feel we're well on our way?

DH:

I do. Yeah.

DM:

Want to take a guess as to when this could happen?

DH:

Tier 1, you're talking about? Well, I think there's going to be an announcement pretty soon. I don't know exactly when, as to whether we have gotten—whether we've met the goals that the legislature has set. But we have to meet those goals two years in a row. So we're looking downstream at least a couple of years before that would happen. But you know, the first announcement is made, if we've made it through the first year, then maybe we're just looking at another year to see if we meet those standards. But you know, they have to evaluate what we say has happened here. But I think the Tier 1 effort has been a good effort for the state as a whole, because we haven't competed with other states. And you look at the money that's brought in by the State of California, through the universities. And of course right now they're going through some tough times there as well. But California has essentially nine major research universities, and they just completely swamp us when it comes to the money that comes to the state just because of those universities. So, the State of Texas should—needs to move in this direction. And I think right now we have two universities—well two public universities that would meet the criteria. We have Rice University, certainly meets to criteria as well. But Texas Tech, UT Dallas, and the University of Houston are probably going to be the three next schools that would boost up into that category. And it's something that builds on itself, David. And I mean, once you start moving in that direction, then you can accelerate in that direction. Because you start—people start becoming more interested in your university and being a part of that university and what's going on there. So I think what they're doing right now with the Tier 1 thrust, is really good.

DM:

It's very exciting.

DH:

I'm very supportive of what they're doing.



DM:

Let's talk about another change in administration over the last several decades and that is fairly recently an installment of the chancellor system. Can you talk about that? Your opinions on having a chancellor in the system as opposed to a president? And then a separate president at the Health Sciences Center institution?

DH:

Sure. I think when we did it, we didn't need it. But it set up a super structure so that we could grow. And we started on that process. Most of it has been in the medical community where we've established, now, a complete medical school—four year medical school in El Paso as part of our system. San Angelo State has become part of the system. So we set up a structure for that growth to become a system. When we first set it up we were walking all over each other, and I was a part of that. Because I was the—John Montford came and he was the first chancellor, and when he became chancellor is when I became president. So that whole process—in fact for a while I was interim president of both institutions, before John was hired. When Bob Lawless left, Bob Lawless was the final permanent president of both institutions. And when he left, I became the interim, let's see, yeah, the interim president of both institutions. Then when Jon Montford came, he had the responsibility as chancellor, he had the responsibility to appoint two presidents and I was appointed President of the University, and David Smith was appointed President of the Health Sciences Center. At that time, we had more administration than we needed in my opinion. But as things have evolved, like I said, they tried to set up the structure so that we could grow into that structure, which we're now beginning to do. I think there's still problems among the president and the chancellor as to who has the responsibility and for what? But there were many more of those problems early on that had to be worked out, and I think for the most part they have been worked out. They're still problems. The chancellor appoints the president, so obviously the presidents are going to have to work with the chancellor and not get too far off of the track that the chancellor sets for where the university goes. But at the same time, the university presidents need autonomy to do what they're going to do. And I'm not one who thinks that a good chancellor is one who's always looking over the shoulder of the president to try to maneuver them in the direction that they want to be maneuvered. If the chancellor doesn't like what the president's doing, he should fire the president and get a new one. But don't look over the president's shoulder every day, and try to run the institution. It should be the president's responsibility to run the institution.

DM:

Is that also your philosophy on administration in general? At any level?

DH:

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, you hire someone to do a job right, and you give them a job to do and you evaluate how they're doing at the job, but you don't try to do the job also. You let them do

it. And if they're not doing it right, then the fairest thing to do is get rid of them and find somebody that will.

DM:

Sounds like common sense

DH:

(Laughs) Excuse me, I've got this cold.

DM:

Oh no, that's fine. So a lot depends on the temperament of the chancellor. How much leeway he's going to give to his presidents.

DH:

Sure.

DM:

Can you make comparisons between the Montford and Hance's chancellorships?

DH:

I think that, probably John had more structural problems than Kent had, essentially because John was the first. And you know, I was president, John was Chanc—we didn't know we had to work out our relationship and there were times where we were—we didn't agree, you know, on things. But I think I told John the exact same thing that I told you, and I think for the most part he agreed with the concept. That the presidents are going to have to be left alone to run the university. And I told John that's what I thought my charge was, and that's what I wanted to do. And if I'm not doing the job right, he should find another president that will, but not look over my shoulder. And I didn't have a problem with that, because I think John basically agreed. John and I had known each other, I mean, John had done so much for Texas Tech, when he was chairman for the Senate Finance Committee. He was really our friend in Austin before he became chancellor. So he was familiar with the university and familiar with what we were doing. But as the first chancellor, he had a lot on his plate and a lot to fight through because we had to work it out as to who's going to have the responsibility for what, because we only had two institutions, university and the medical school. So if someone asked me the question, "Well do you think you really needed a chancellor?" No. We didn't really need a chancellor. But we did set up a structure that will allow us to grow, and not wait till later that we have grown and have a problem, and then establish a system. So I think we did the right thing.

DM:

How are Montford and Hance similar and how are they different?

DH:

That's a good question because you know, they're both politician. Good question, I never really thought about that. I think probably, Kent may be a little more hands on? You know, you really have to—when it comes to the relationship, between the chancellor and the president, I was never a real president when Hance was the chancellor. My whole time as president was spent with Montford. And John and I had a good relationship, we were honest with one another and had no problem talking above board. But I don't know, it could be that Kent may be a little—certainly when he first came here, he was—he tended to be more hands on and getting involved with the president. I think for the most part they've got that worked out now. But similarities are greater than the differences between those two, because their backgrounds are so similar. And so it would be difficult for me to try to compare them on a scale that would allow me to say, "Well in this category one is, better or worse, or they're the same." They're both good guys. I'll tell you, one of the things that Kent has going for him now is that he's a Texas Tech person. That's different from John. John's a University of Texas grad. He was president of the student body at the University of Texas. So when he came here he had a lot of orange blood still left. Now I think a lot of that had already been drained because he was our senator from Lubbock, and really supported Tech in the legislature. But he was still a UT grad. Kent is Texas Tech through and through. He went to school here, he got away long enough to go to law school, I guess at UT, and then came back here and opened a law practice and taught a little bit in the College of Business; taught business law for a while. When they started out of the starting gate, he was more a Texas Tech person than John was. But I think at the end, John was every bit—he was a Texas Techsan. And like I say, we had a great relationship, and I worked with him very well. When I came back as the interim president, he still was not here. It was David Smith who was chancellor. And so—it would be difficult for me to compare them. One on one I think they both did a good job and they were—they both really cared about Texas Tech, and to John's credit, we had our first successful capital campaign when he was here, and that's so important to the Universities today. Now Kent has picked up that gauntlet and apparently we're doing quite well in this campaign. I don't know any figures or any numbers, but apparently we've raised a lot of money and a billion dollar goal, and that's pretty doggone significant.

DM:

Sounds like a lot to me.

DH:

I know we've already raised over 700 million, so. If that's true, then we're well on our way to getting there. Although the economy doesn't look like it's going to turn around anytime soon.

DM:

Right. Right. Well you've mentioned a little bit about the faculty change, and especially the improvement in faculty hires, getting faculty who are research oriented. Do you have anything to

add to changes in the faculty body over the last several decades?

DH:

Well I think that in many disciplines, particularly the third part of mission of a faculty member is service. And service meaning that you use your expertise in some way to contribute to the community and contribute to the state. And I think that's something where we've seen some—we have a lot of people serving now on various boards and committees and whatnot, using their expertise. And you know, these people get called upon because of the expertise that they have in various areas and I think today certainly, we have more professors that have that respect where people are after them. They want them to provide information for whatever it is that they're involved in. And in the beginning, you know, Texas Tech was just a teaching university, and you don't want to belittle that, because teaching is still a very important part of our mission. And we still have some faculty members here, that, essentially just teach. They don't—they're not into research. But some of them are so good at the job of teaching, particularly undergraduate students, and they identify so well with those students that you probably need a few of those in the mix as well.

DM:

On that token, do you have some faculty that are more geared towards research and not very good at teaching?

DH:

Yeah. In fact, I think we probably have some research professor appointments where they do nothing but research. And maybe help supervise some graduate students. So you know, different strokes for different folks. We want people that can do a good job at teaching and people who can do a good job at research and service. And if we can find all of that in a single individual, boy that's great. But sometimes we can't.

DM:

Right.

DH:

And certainly if we have an outstanding teacher, we want to keep that teacher here for our undergraduates. Honor College is a good example. Honor College is really driven by teaching. These are all undergraduates that are in the Honors College. So this is not a big research college at all, although we expect a scholarly type of productivity, and our faculty will keep up with the field, whatever the field happens to be. We don't require as much in the way of research. Teaching is weighted more in the Honors College than research. And we've got some really good teachers—of course they come from around campus.

DM:

Well how has the student body changed in the last four years or so? You have talked about admissions improvements so that you're getting a better academic quality of student. But just the students in the classroom, do you notice any differences between them today, than when you arrived?

DH:

I think the biggest difference I do notice is the quality of student. To what extent that has to do with the raising of admission standards, I don't know. But I think overall, we have a higher quality student on the basis of the level they are in their academic achievement. I think Texas Tech has always been a prominent second choice for a lot of kids in Texas and we talk a lot about this. No doubt heard that theory. And I think it's true. Most students want to go to the University of Texas, some students want to go to Texas A&M. The ones that want to go to A&M wouldn't consider going to University of Texas. So we start to fall into second place for both of those groups. And now slowly but surely we're getting a few people up here in first place, that want to go to Texas Tech. Because of what we do here, because of our reputation. And that's where we want to continue to be headed. We want to be on a level playing field.

DM:

So students have improved academically. How about in other areas? Like, self-discipline, for example. Are you seeing any generational differences? Or is that a dangerous area to step into—making not an assumption, but a—that kind of comparison over time?

DH:

Well, it's hard to make a group comparison like that. Obviously we have—students don't all but too early the same age. And we have some students that come to the university that are already mature adults and they're ready to get on with it. We have some others who are really not ready, and they're very immature. We see that a lot reflected in some of the antics that go on here at athletic events and whatnot. But you know, the idea that kids are going to be kids is true. They don't all grow up at the same level. So I think there's a place in the university for that and I was thinking that overall, although the environment has changed over the years, I think that the students and their relation to the environment hasn't changed all that much. I think it's still pretty much the same. Except, once again, that we have better qualified students now entering the university as far as their academics, so probably the level has been raised some. And certainly in the Honors College. You know, when I'm teaching an honors course, every student in my class is an honors student and it's just an absolute delight. It's so much different than teaching another class where you have your share of these immature students, and you know, you need to help them too. It's not bad. It's a delight to have a class where people are really anxious to learn and are interested, for the most part, in what you have to say. So I've really enjoyed being a part of the Honors College.

DM:

Well I understand that you have a life beyond the university. (Laughs).

DH:

Hopefully. (Laughs)

DM:

What are some of your other interests? For example, I know you're a pianist and you have been all of your life, it sounds like. Since what, the age of five?

DH:

Yeah I think I started taking piano lessons at five.

DM:

Do you still play?

DH:

Oh every day, practically I guess. Oh yeah, I go home to sit down and play the piano at least four or five times a week. It's a great joy. To me, music overall is a great joy, for me. I just—I sang in a barber shop quartet for many years and I really enjoyed that.

DM:

Do you still do that?

DH:

No, I don't. I was a tenor in a barber shop quartet. I can sing three parts. I can sing tenor, lead or baritone. I can't sing bass.

DM:

Do you have to falsetto to get to—

DH:

Absolutely. If you're a tenor you have to sing the falsetto. You can't get the—and that does something to your vocal chords too. So, over the years you lose that ability. But I was singing barber shop before I ever came to Lubbock, and one of the first things I did was join the group here and sang with them. But I haven't sang with them now for a number of years.

DM:

Are there a number of active groups here? In Lubbock, barber shop groups?

DH:

There's just one or two. One women's and one men's.

DM:

Now are the members of this men's group recognizable names around Texas Tech? Are they people from Tech mostly? Or from the community?

DH:

Mostly from the community. Although there's some from Tech. No, one time the chapter here was a very large—I directed the chorus group for several years. We had about—we put on stage about fifty or fifty-five people. Today the whole idea of barber shop singing has lost a lot of its luster. And I don't think they probably put more than twenty, twenty-five people in the chorus to sing. But the big joy of singing barber shop is quartets. Singing with three other guys, and you're carrying your load, you don't have a whole hassle of other people there trying to carry that same load. And I think in 1968 I sang in a quartet that placed twelfth in international competition. We really had a good quartet. This was when I was living in Austin. And three of the guys actually lived in San Antonio. I was the only one that lived in Austin. And we used to meet in New Braunfels to rehearse. But that was a really good quartet. In fact they still haven't forgiven me—well two of them have died now. They haven't forgiven me for moving away. (Laughs) [inaudible] But music has always been very important to me. I enjoy sports a lot. I don't play much anymore. But I used to really enjoy playing baseball; and basketball. I'm a big spectator sport fan and I still love basketball. I get out to as many of our baseball games as I can. I can do a little bit more of that since I've retired. So spectator sports is a big thing for me and participation used to be a big thing for me, as well.

DM:

Any individual sports?

DH:

I was never any good at golf. In fact I played a lot of tennis but I wasn't very good at that either. (Laughs) Team sports are what I mostly played: basketball and baseball. I haven't picked up a golf club in many, many years. Just one of those guys that, my temperament wasn't adjusted to my game. I'd just get so unhappy with myself that it did more damage than it did good.

DM:

At least music sounds therapeutic.

DH:

It is, indeed. Still. Very therapeutic.

DM:

Other outside interests that we should know about? Not that that's not enough.

DH:

I don't know. Just, I guess young people in general, getting involved with various organizations that work with young people. Whether it's at the high school level or the university level, I've done that on various levels. And I really haven't been over the years, very active in the community.

DM:

As an administrator at Texas Tech, or personally speaking?

DH:

No I was on the original Board of Economic Development for Lubbock, and it had nothing to do—well the university was a part of that. But this was an appointment outside the university. And I have been on the chamber of commerce—well if there's a board out there I've probably served on it one time or another. So I am very active in the community and have been for a lot of years. And that—I really care about that. Lubbock's a good place. I think that to the extent that I can sell Lubbock—Lubbock has a bad reputation. You know, ask anyone.

DM:

It's the best kept secret.

DH:

It really is the best kept secret. But when I came up here, I've probably said this before, I had no idea I was going to be here for 42 years, for God sakes. I thought I would be here for a couple of years and then I'd be outta here. Once this program was over that I was interested in coming here for. But my wife and I just decided that this wasn't a bad place to raise our family. So we decided to just stay here and 42 years later, here we are.

DM:

Do you think that you'll remain here? Do you think about retiring to some other place?

DH:

No no, I don't. It depends on a lot of things: your health and whatnot. And we have two daughters that live in Texas, neither near here, so I guess it's a possibility at some point. We might go get closer to them. But we don't have any thoughts of that right now.

DM:

Well I don't have any more questions. Is there anything else that you would like to add?



DH:

Well there's no reason why if I think we can't get together again. You know? But right now I think we probably covered it pretty well.

DM:

Okay. Well thank you very much. Let me see if I can figure out how to stop this—

*[End Session]*



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