

**Oral History Interview of
Gary Elbow**

**Interviewed by: David Marshall
June, 20, 2012
Lubbock, Texas**

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Transcript Overview:

This interview features Gary Elbow, Professor of Geography at Texas Tech University. A native of Oregon, Dr. Elbow discusses coming to Texas to teach at TTU, faculty tenure issues, and the various administrative changes he has seen over the years. He discusses his graduate work in Latin American geography and culture and the various projects he has been involved in at Texas Tech.

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David Marshall (DM):

Okay, the date is June 20, 2012. This is David Marshall interviewing Gary Elbow at the Southwest Collection, Texas Tech, Lubbock, Texas. And if we could just begin with your full name and date and place of birth.

Gary Elbow (GE):

Yeah. I'm Gary Stewart Elbow—S-t-e-w-a-r-t—and I was born in San Francisco, California on November 15, 1938.

DM:

Okay. And now how did your family come to be in San Francisco? Was this where they had lived for generations or what's the background?

GE:

Well that's a long involved story (laughter). My grandfather moved to Berkeley probably in the mid-twenties sometime, early to mid-twenties. And he was in the insurance business and eventually migrated across the bay to San Francisco. And my father went to the University of Oregon. [He] probably started there in 1928, 29—somewhere along in there—and met my mother who was from a place called Tillamook, Oregon, and that'll come up again in a few minutes. They eloped with my grandmother, my maternal grandmother. I don't know how happy my father was about that, but anyway—and got married, and this was during the Depression and it was 1933 I think, and they moved to San Francisco because my grandfather had arranged a job for my father—not at his insurance agency but at somebody else's insurance agency. And so my father worked at the agency until after the war, and then we moved to Oregon. He wanted to go to med school so he commuted from—Tillamook is on the Oregon coast, so it's about eighty miles from Portland, and he commuted every day into Portland to the University of Portland to take pre-med courses and back. He did that for two years and applied to medical schools and never made it in. He was competing with all the vets and he was older by that time. But anyway, I went through all but one year of public school and high school—you know, I guess it would've been what, two through twelve—in Tillamook, and then went to Oregon State University. It was Oregon State College at that time. It was 1960.

DM:

Your father went to University of Oregon and University of Portland and you went to Oregon State?

GE:

Yeah. Well, my uncle had come back from World War II. He'd been in the Navy in World War II and he and a bunch of his ex-G.I. buddies were at Oregon State and I got to know them and I thought it looked like a pretty neat place, you know, and actually as things worked out I probably

should've gone to the University of Oregon. I would've been better suited to the—you know, Oregon State's the land grant college and Oregon was the liberal arts college so I probably would've been better off at Oregon but I went to Oregon State.

DM:

Okay. If you don't mind, can we get the names of your mother and father also?

GE:

Oh, yeah. It's Gus A. Elbow Jr. and Genevieve Smith Elbow.

DM:

So you grew up in Tillamook, you graduated from high school there—

GE:

In 1956. I said '60 but it was 1956 when I graduated and started at Oregon State. And I started out as a pre-med major. That lasted for about a semester, and then I switched into pharmacy and I woke up one morning seeing myself in a green jacket standing behind the counter of a drugstore and decided that wasn't for me, and so by that time I had a whole bunch of sort of generic introductory science courses under my belt, so I graduated in something called General Science, which was the nearest thing to liberal arts they had there. And got interested in earth science and geography, and so I decided to go to the University of Oregon to do geography, and I told my father I was going to do that and he said, "What do geographers do?" and I said, "They go to work for the government." I don't think he was very impressed with that.

DM:

(laughs) Oh, okay.

GE:

"Feeding at the public trough" was the response I got. But anyway I did that and I worked in a plywood mill at night and did—I think I was taking six hours a semester or something like that for the first year and then I got a T.A. appointment, and the second year of my full-time attendance in the master's program I was working on a thesis on blind seed disease and grass burning. The Willamette Valley was a major center for production of ryegrass seed, and ryegrass is subject to a mold—or a fungus actually—that's called blind seed and what it does is it kills the seed so the seed is produced but it never germinates, and they're producing ryegrass per seed so if the seed doesn't germinate it doesn't do them much good, so they burn the fields and that kills the fungus and then they can keep going and that was kind of a messy operation because it generated a whole lot of smoke and air pollution and that sort of thing, and so I was going to do a thesis on that and I collected a bunch of data and I had an opportunity to go to Colombia for a summer—the country of Colombia. And so I did that. I spent the summer in a little place called

Ubaté, which was way up in the highlands, a little but north of Bogota and got hooked, you know. I thought, Hey, Latin America's pretty neat. So I went back to Eugene and sat in on freshman Spanish and by that time they'd decided that they needed somebody to generate a master's thesis out of the work that had been done in Colombia. It was a field program. And so I dropped blind seed disease and did some work on what we called minifundia agriculture. You know, latifundia is a fairly common term for big-plant holdings. Well minifundia is the opposite. That's the little tiny ones, the peasant farming stuff. So I did a thesis on that.

DM:

Did Oregon State have some kind of a connection with Colombia? Studies in Colombia? How did that come up?

GE:

Well, this was University of Oregon at that time.

DM:

Oh, University of Oregon. I'm sorry.

GE:

But the man that I went down with—his name was Gene Martin—had a connection in Colombia. The university didn't, but the university had gotten a grant to—and this was, you know, back in the days when we were trying to get Americans to go overseas and learn something about the world. And so the grant funded faculty to take graduate students off during the summer to different parts of Latin America, so we had one fellow who took a group of students to Costa Rica and there was the group to Colombia and—I can't remember. There were two or three others at different places, but the two—the Costa Rica and Colombia were the geography faculty. So that's how that happened.

DM:

Okay.

GE:

But when I finished the thesis and when I decided that I was interested in going on for a doctorate and I wanted to be a college teacher, I decided that.

DM:

How did that come about by the way?

GE:

Well, in those days—I sound like an old timer here. *In those days*—but anyway, this was right—you're looking at the baby boom coming down the road, and college enrollments were growing. There'd been a big bulge in enrollments right after World War II with the G.I. Bill people, and then it dropped off and it was coming back up again.

DM:

Do you need some water? Help yourself if you need some.

GE:

Okay. So that meant that there were lots of jobs available and it also meant that the universities were putting in new programs and salaries were going up and, you know, it looked like a really good career and it was fun. I taught a class at the University of Oregon as a masters student and it was Geography in North America and I can remember I had a kid in the class who was from Canada and all I knew about Canada was [that] it's up there somewhere. And at the end of the class he gave me a book of statistics on Canada, which was sort of a hint I think. But anyway, I got better as time went on and enjoyed it.

DM:

No better way to learn that to teach, it seems like.

GE:

That's right. Or learn what you don't know. But anyway, I got hooked on teaching. So we had a faculty member who had agreed to take a job at the University of Pittsburg and I wanted to get away from the West Coast. I wanted to go off someplace different, and so I applied to several places in the East, and Pittsburg was one of them, and since this guy was going there I decided I'd follow him along. And so I ended up in the geography department at Pitt, and they had a Latin Americanist who had just arrived. He'd been living in Venezuela. He was teaching at the Central University in Caracas and decided to come back to the US, and so I worked under him—his name was William Smole—and stayed at Pitt for a couple years and met my wife there, who happened to be from the Northwest and who'd gone to school at Willamette University in Salem, forty miles away from me. She moved into the apartment next door to mine in Pittsburg and—

DM:

This is Margaret?

GE:

This is Margaret, yeah. And so at the end of the two years I had applied for an NSF grant to go to Argentina and look at the problem there and it didn't get funded, but about that time a temporary position opened up at the University of Colorado in Boulder and so I went there for a year, and

during that year, the guy that I had gone to Colombia with ended up taking a temporary job with the US Foreign Aid Program in Guatemala, then he had brought several students with him from the University of Oregon to Guatemala to work on projects, and the aid people were thinking there was a little bit of potential nepotism there, and so he was looking for people who technically weren't University of Oregon people. And I technically was no longer a University of Oregon person, so I ended up going to Guatemala. I went there on a three-month temporary summer appointment and the idea was I'd earn enough money during the summer so that I could stay on for a few months and do a dissertation project and come back, and so that sounded good. And I'd been there a couple of months and they asked me if I would stay another nine months, and the deal was that they needed somebody to stay over and I was the only one who didn't have some sort of a firm commitment and went back, and so I agreed to stay, and Margaret and I had become engaged by that time, and I was going to go back to—her family was living in Redding, California then. I was going to go back and we'd get married and come back to Guatemala, and at the last minute they told me if I left Guatemala then the job—the new contract for nine months would have to be run through Washington and go up for bid, so in other words, if you want the job you stay here.

So I sent Margaret a telegram—that was back in the days before cell phones—and said, "Cancel the wedding and I'll send you a note." So I explained. Anyway, we got married in Guatemala with a marimba band and orange champagne. But anyway, we ended up staying two years. My nine months turned into another nine months, so I was there until '69. I came back in July of '69 and went back to Pitt. I was supposed to finish my dissertation and I didn't, but while I was there I got the job offer here. And so I came to Lubbock as an ABD [All But Dissertation].

DM:

That had to have been quite a change for you, having lived and grown up in the Pacific Northwest, lived in the Midwest, and then down in Guatemala.

GE:

Well actually, I tell people that the culture shock was greater coming here than it was going to Guatemala. Don't tell Margaret I said this, but we were driving—I had a Ryder rent van and she had a little Volkswagen. We were tandem-ing down the road and we stopped in, I guess it was Oklahoma City to get something to eat. We walked out of the restaurant and the cashier said, "Y'all come back now," and Margaret started crying and she cried all the way to Lubbock. (laughter) And I came with the idea that we'd stay a couple of years and move on, you know, and that was forty-two years ago, so moving on didn't pan out.

DM:

What about the climate and the terrain, or lack thereof?

GE:

Well, that was part of it. I had never lived this far away from the ocean or from mountains. But, you know, it grows on you. And the other thing I've always said about Lubbock is the nice thing about it is it's easy to get out of. You know, twenty minutes to the airport.

DM:

That's right. That's right. How long did it take Margaret to adjust?

GE:

Well, she had a tough time because she couldn't find a job, and one of the things that I figured, I had a potential offer at Beloit College in Wisconsin, and that's a little tiny town, and I thought, Well, she's a social worker and so her chances of getting a job in Lubbock—the population here was about a hundred and sixty thousand at that time and it looked a lot better than Beloit. It turns out I was probably dead wrong. It took her about six months to find a job.

DM:

Oh, okay.

GE:

But then she found a good one. She went to work for an organization called Family Service, which is still here but it's under a different name—Family Counseling or something like that.

DM:

Did she teach at Tech a little bit too?

GE:

She started that about 1978. Yeah, she became director of that agency and then decided that administration really wasn't her cup of tea. She had to fire somebody and, you know, there were some things that were tough for her. And then the board of directors changed the job description for the director. They wanted her to do a lot of fundraising and she really wasn't interested in that. And so by that time, she had made friends with somebody who had gone off to New York and gotten his social work degree and came back and they went into a private practice together. And at about the same time, a part-time position opened up here and she started teaching here, and that evolved into a full-time position. And then in '86 she enrolled in a doctoral program at Columbia in New York, and so she lived in New York for two years and I had a little pied-a-terre, you know. I could leave here at five in the afternoon on a Friday and be in New York—in her apartment—by midnight. So pretty good deal. Leave there at about the same time and be back here in time to get a night's sleep before my classes on Monday.

DM:

Still, that's a pretty tight schedule.

GE:

Yeah. Well, it worked out. I never missed a flight.

DM:

How often would you go up there?

GE:

Oh, maybe once a month. We had a great good time.

DM:

Let's summarize a couple of things here so far. I have that you got your bachelor of science at Oregon State in 1960?

GE:

Um-hm.

DM:

And then your master's—

GE:

M.A. at Oregon.

DM:

Yeah, M.A., at—

GE:

In '64.

DM:

University of Oregon?

GE:

Yes.

DM:

Okay. And then PhD at Pitt—

GE:

Pitt.

DM:

In 1972?

GE:

Yeah, yeah.

DM:

But you came out here in '70, you say, with ABD?

GE:

Yeah. It took two years to get.

DM:

All right. So you accepted a faculty position here—oh no, it was a—what did you call it—it was an instructor position?

GE:

No, no. It was an assistant professor—

DM:

Professorship?

GE:

Yeah. That was back in the days when you could do that sort of thing, but you know the condition was that I had two years to finish up, and I squeaked through.

DM:

(laughs) Okay. What was that like, trying to develop courses, or did you have most of your courses developed by this time, after teaching?

GE:

Oh, no.

DM:

So developing courses, finishing a PhD, all in a new location—

GE:

I had a lot more energy in those days, you know. But yeah, what I'd do is of course I'd spend the day working on the courses, and go home at night and work on the dissertation. It didn't seem so bad at that time.

DM:

Was this in the—what was the name of the department that you were in?

GE:

Well, when I came it was geosciences, and the geographers were out in a temporary building. It was the top half of a World War II barracks. You know, there were two stories and they'd cut it off, and dropped it out on some foundation blocks out behind where the biology building is. It was kind of between biology and geosciences.

DM:

Was that a leftover building from the G.I. Bill days when everybody was flocking in?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

I know they had a lot of temporary buildings.

GE:

Yeah. X-47, it was called.

DM:

Who else was in the department at that time?

GE:

Well, Bill Conroy had been brought in to be the department chair, and so the promise was that there would be a geography department. They just hired a dean named Lorrin Kennamer—dean of Arts and Sciences—who'd come from the University of Texas, and he was a geographer, and one of the conditions was that they create a department of geography.

DM:

I see. Okay.

GE:

They hired Conroy to be the department chair, and Claude Davidson who was a University of Texas PhD, new, fresh PhD was here, and Otis Templer. And Otis is still here on the campus. In fact, he's somebody that you might want to interview.

DM:

Otis Templer?

GE:

Yeah. O-t-i-s, T-e-m-p-l-e-r. And he's still got an office over in Holden [Hall]. He's retired but he teaches one course a semester to hang on to that office, mainly. So that was the four of us who were the geographers, and we were trying to build a program, and we got along pretty well, actually, most of that time.

DM:

What were some of the courses that you developed at that time?

GE:

Well, one of the things that astounded me was that we didn't have a physical geography course when I came here, and so that was one of the things—I'm not a physical geographer. I peddled myself in those days as a cultural geographer. I probably consider myself to be more of a human geographer now. But anyway, I had taught physical geography, and so I agreed to start that out, and Otis was also very interested in physical geography, so we kind of traded off. And we set it up as a two-semester course.

DM:

Was it sophomore level? Junior level?

GE:

Freshman level. It was designed to satisfy the science core curriculum and so we had a guaranteed audience, but we hoped that we'd recruit some majors out of it too. I don't think we ever got very many, but it was fun to teach. A lot of students. We'd hike over from X 47 till we were teaching in one of the BA auditoriums.

DM:

Oh, okay.

GE:

Although we bounced around. I taught one time over in the ag auditorium, which was a real dump.

DM:

(laughs) What would it seat, the ag auditorium?

GE:

It was seating probably one hundred and twenty, one hundred and thirty. Something like that.

DM:

And this was back in the early seventies?

GE:

Yeah, it would've been '71 or '72.

DM:

Some of the mammoth classes were already up and running in the seventies, weren't they?

GE:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. When we taught it in the BA auditorium, I think we got 160 or 170 in there.

DM:

When did they start these mammoth classes?

GE:

Well, Holden Hall was completed in '75, and Holden 104 holds 286, you know just right under 300. And the other, [Holden room] 150, holds 180. Those were—you know, by some standards, those aren't mammoth. You know, the theater used to teach their movies class over in the Allen Theater to seven, eight hundred students.

DM:

I heard something about a course being taught in the municipal coliseum. Does that ring a bell?

GE:

It doesn't ring a bell.

DM:

Well that might just be legend. (laughs)

GE:

We used to kid about teaching courses in the football stadium. But one of the problems Tech has always had, and still has, is we don't have enough large auditoriums, and that has been a real constraint on our ability to teach real monster courses. The big BA auditorium—what is it, LH

101 or LH 100—anyway, I think that one holds close to four hundred. The biology auditorium holds close to four hundred. Those are the two biggies, you know, and then they scale down from that. We could use some more of those big auditoriums.

DM:

When you came out here, was your emphasis on teaching, or was it divided between teaching and research? Where was your heart? What did you really want to do?

GE:

I guess my heart was probably more with teaching, but I also understood that if you were going to have a career at a place like this—and really anywhere, but especially here—you needed to be doing research too. And Grover Murray had come here in 1966, I think it was, and he really transformed Texas Tech. I think probably if you want to identify one modern transformative president, it was probably Grover Murray more than anybody since I've been here, anyway.

DM:

I've heard that said many times in regard to the university physically, but also other aspects like the curriculum. Can you talk about aspects like that?

GE:

Yeah, absolutely. Texas Tech, at the time I came here, had a lot of terminal master's faculty. The faculty was very heavily loaded with people who had had some kind of a connection to Tech and maybe got a bachelor's degree here, or a bachelor's and master's, went off and finished a PhD or in some cases maybe just stayed on after the master's teaching. And so it was pretty much a regional operation, and Grover had a totally different view on what the university should be, and of course there was a lot of money around, and the legislative component here—we had George Mahon [who] was chair of the House Appropriations Committee and he had his hands on money, and Preston Smith was the governor, and—oh, what was his name—I think he was the lieutenant governor. Anyway, there was somebody else in the state government from Lubbock who was very important. And we had, of course, Johnson and Yarborough in the Senate, and so money was sort of rolling in, you know, and things were on the make.

The med school had been started I think probably two years before I got here, the law school a year before I got here. So this was an exciting place. Things were really hopping, and the idea at the time was that we were going to become more than just a regional university. We were going to become competitive with University of Texas and A&M.

DM:

This is the same time that the name change occurred also?

GE:

That's right. The name change occurred the year before I got here.

DM:

Sixty-nine.

GE:

And I still—somewhere, I still have a bumper sticker that says Texas State University on it. (laughter) Without the San Marcos appended to the end of it. So yeah, and people were still bitter about that, and of course that was Delwyn Jones who had been in the state legislature for his first round, had pushed the Texas Tech University name, and so people weren't too happy with Delwyn. Well some were. A lot of them weren't. And I can remember getting letters back from Latin America addressed to Texas "Teach" University. You know, they didn't know what Tech meant, and some people called it Texas "No-name" University.

But there was a real sense that it was a university on the move, and so in terms of research, I knew I was going to have to do research, and you know, that was fine. I think Texas Tech has been very good to me in terms of providing opportunities, providing support, and that sort of thing. I have no complaints at all. I've had a good career here.

DM:

What were some of your first research interests after you got out here? Was it still Latin America?

GE:

Yeah, it was definitely Latin America. I did some other kinds of things but mostly it was Latin America. I did some more work on Guatemala. I got a couple of grants in '73 and '74 to go back to Guatemala for two summers, did some work on agriculture down there, and then came back here.

DM:

What was that? That's the Agrarian Land Use—seems like that pops up in one of your—I was looking at some of your research. That might have been Colombia. It might have been earlier.

GE:

Yeah that was the Minifundia Land Use was the Colombia one. That was master's thesis and I published a couple of things out of that.

DM:

What was the emphasis in Guatemala then, when you were at Tech?

GE:

Well, my work was as a planning advisor, and so I was working with municipal governments, and one of the things that I did, because the municipal governments down there didn't have a clue about what kinds of resources they had. So I would organize them, and I had money to do this, and I hired local high school students to go out and do a census. And the trade-off, the way we did this, the towns at that time in Guatemala didn't have what they called "nomenclatura," which was street numberings—house numbers. So we would agree to give them a house number if they would agree to respond to the census. And they were all excited to get a house number, you now, it was a big deal.

So we'd say, Okay, here's your house number, so-and-so, and by the way, how many people live here? You know, da da da da da. And so we were coming up with information, essentially a population census, but we also were doing things like inventorying the number of students per classroom in schools. We were looking at the number of hospital beds available if there was a hospital. We were looking at industries and trying to get some handle on what their income level was. Now that wasn't easy to do.

DM:

I was wondering. Would you just outright ask?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

And they might offer that?

GE:

Go ask the manager and see if you could get some kind of an answer, and of course it may or may not have been correct. But we had, in the town where I was living, I wasn't living in Guatemala City, I was living about a forty-five minute bus ride out. And we had a Bayer Insecticide Plant and a Tappan Range Plant which was making enamelware and little stove-top gas propane stoves. And we had a tool works; they were making machetes. It was Collin's Tool Company from Connecticut. So these are all foreign.

DM:

All American though.

GE:

Yeah it was—well, Bayer was German. And we had a couple of fabric plants—textile plants—and some other stuff. So it was—oh, a Fuller Paint Plant too, which was mainly packaging, you know. They'd import the paint in barrels and put it into cans and label it "Made in Central

America,” you know, that was—the Central American common market was relatively new, and these companies had come in in response to that, the idea that there was going to be a larger market than just Guatemala.

And so we were looking at those plants and what their employment was, and if we could get a little bit of a handle on how much income. And then we’d go to the city council and say, Well, you know, you guys are—because what they do is, if they needed money for something, they’d go to the plant manager and they’d say, Hey, would you give us fifty dollars for such-and-such? And this may have been a company that had, you know, millions of dollars of income, so fifty bucks, sure. Go away and don’t bug us anymore, you know. What I was trying to do was to get them to sort of regularize the system so that they could get some sort of fixed income from those plants rather than just—because the plants were using municipal water, they were using other municipal sewage facilities, such as they were, and that kind of stuff. So, you know, let’s get some income from them.

And they needed streets to be paved and they needed all kinds of other stuff. I was also trying to get them to prioritize, because one of the things that would happen is you get a municipal council and mayor, and they would want to leave a monument, so they’d want to put something up that they could put their name on. But what the town really needed was paved streets and improved sewers. And the water system.—they were taking their water out of a hill that was actually the side of a volcano about five, six miles down the road. And they would build up enough hydraulic pressure that every once in a while, like about every couple of weeks, it would blow the pipes. And so they’d shut it off and go replace the pipe and then it’d go for another couple of weeks and *whamo*. So they needed to have some improvements in their water system, and so these were all things that, you know, I figured those companies could pay for. I don’t know if they ever did get around to doing that. The taxes were all collected by the national government, and so they had to be—you know, you had to go to the government and beg for money to do any kind of a project.

DM:

Did you have any work directly with the national government also or just the municipal?

GE:

Yeah, after I had been there for about a year I became the liaison with an outfit called Infom which was the *Instituto de Fomento Municipal*, which translates as the National Municipal Development Institute, and they were sort of a combination of bank and project shop, and so they would provide advising and planning for projects, and planning down to the point where they do the engineering even. And so the city governments would go to Infom and ask for a loan and a project, and then Infom would set up the project and implement it. So that was how most municipal development projects were carried out in those days.

DM:

Besides the occasional monument?

GE:

Yeah, besides the occasional monument and kiosk in the park or something, you know. But anyway, I did a comparative study for my dissertation of—Guatemala was divided up between Indians and non-Indians, really. And at that time—this is kind of a paradigm that's changed over the years—but at that time, it was seen as sort of a continuum that you started out with the Native Indian population, and that over time they would become Hispanicized and so they'd give up their native language and they'd quit dressing like Indians and they'd start, you know, moving out of the villages into the cities and go through a cultural transformation.

DM:

Let me interject a question there real quick. When this occurred, this assimilation, did it occur as far as dress is concerned? Did it occur with men first and then the women would follow later?

GE:

Definitely. Definitely. Women are much more conservative than men.

DM:

That's the case among the Tarahumara [Indians] and it's the case among the Mennonites down in Chihuahua.

GE:

Yeah. I think that's a fairly typical kind of thing. The men get out and mingle, you know, because they're engaged in work. And in Guatemala, a lot of the Indians were working as migratory laborers on plantations down on the Pacific Coast. There were a lot of big cotton and sugar cane and other kinds of plantations—coffee on the slopes going down to the coast. And they all had heavy labor requirements—seasonal labor requirements. And so you'd get recruiters coming up with big trucks and they'd load these guys into the backs of the trucks and haul them down to the coast. So they were being exposed. They were learning some Spanish, in some cases a lot of Spanish, and beginning the acculturation process. The women would stay back in the villages and not be exposed as much to those kinds of changes.

But anyway I looked at three villages at different points in that transformation. One of them was primarily Hispanic—"Ladinos" is the term they use in Guatemala. The other one was partially transformed and the other one was heavily Indian. At least that was the way I conceived it. And so I was looking at how that gets expressed in different kinds of functions within the towns, how much of a traditional market did you still have, how much of it was in what we think of as stores, how were people distributed in terms of residential—were there Ladino barrios and Indian barrios and that kind of stuff, you know.

DM:

What was your general conclusion there?

GE:

Well, I did a fancy model at the end that looked at the level of isolation of the communities, and of course the obvious, that the Ladino communities were much more integrated into the national system, and the Indian communities were less integrated, and the more Indian they were, the less integrated they were, or maybe it's the other way around and the less integrated, the more Indian they were. But anyway, it was a pretty obvious kind of thing. But I did a fancy incomprehensible model and made it look complicated.

DM:

So the Ladino communities were the ones that were able to more likely approach the national government successfully for improvements, and that created a greater gap between them and the indigenous?

GE:

Yeah, I think it did, and then about the time I left, there was sort of a low-key civil war going on while we lived there, and I was living in a place called Amatitlán, and I had been there for about three weeks I guess. I was living in what had been a vacation home for some people. It was a little one-bedroom thing, and it was right at the base of a big hill—really a cliff. It was a huge big fall, really. Good thing there wasn't an earthquake while I was there because I probably would've been flattened.

Anyway, about three weeks after I got there, I'd been hearing what I assumed were gunshots echoing off that cliff, and I climbed up to the top of the cliff one day and I ran into these two Guatemalans with a Japanese guy, and the Japanese guy was—I can't remember if he was a textile salesman—he was there on business, and these Guatemalan guys were working with one of the businesses that he had been negotiating with. But he didn't speak very much Spanish and they didn't speak any Japanese, but he spoke English. And so I showed up at the top of the hill and so they recruited me to be the translator, because he could talk to me in English and I could translate into Spanish.

And so they convinced me that I should get in a car with them and ride back down to the bottom of the hill, and there was this back road that was not the main highway that went down. It was kind of a shortcut. We got down most of the way to the bottom and there had been a little landslide, so we couldn't get through, and we turned around and most of the road had been cut in pumice. It's really soft stuff, and they'd been taking pumice out of this one area so it was all scooped out, and we looked over and here were these three bodies lying there. We went over and looked. They had been shot during the night.

DM:

So these were executions you were hearing maybe, when you heard gunshots?

GE:

Yeah. I never did find out. One of them turned out to be a barber from the next town down the road. I don't know who the other two were. But that was kind of typical of the stuff that was going on in Guatemala at the time. The US ambassador was killed while we were there, and a couple of military attaches were killed while we were there. So it was kind of rough. But after we left, things really blew up. In the late seventies it just all kind of—well, yeah, late seventies. Mid to late seventies, it all kind of fell apart.

And during the time we were there, most of the violence was in the Ladino parts of the country, and the government was able to infiltrate those communities and kind of figure out what was going on and it gave them the possibility of being more effective at counterinsurgency. I guess that's the best way to put it. But after we left, the unrest began. You know, it was communist-inspired. And it moved into the predominantly Indian areas, and it was Indians who had gone off to Cuba or to Mexico and become coopted and come back. And the Guatemalan military had a lot more trouble infiltrating the Indian communities than they did the Ladino communities, and so their response was, if they suspected something was going on, they'd just go in and wipe them out. And we'll never know how many Indians were killed. Whole communities were wiped out. Phil Dennis and a guy named Pete Heller and I went down in—must've been '84—to Guatemala, and the university had an aid contract. And so we went down to Guatemala to work on that aid contract, and we were supposed to be looking at this Agrarian Reform Colony up in the northern part of the country up close to the Mexican border. And we got down there and we were the guests of the Agrarian Reform Agency. And this guy was working for the Agrarian Reform Agency and so he was taking us around to show us what was going on, and we got into this one community, and they had—at that time, the Guatemalan government was forcing the Indians to do civil patrols, and they'd give them a rifle and a certain number of bullets and send them out on night patrol, and then they'd come back the next day and they had to account for the bullets. They had to turn the rifle back in, you know.

So we asked in this one community about civil patrol and how many people are here and some stuff like that and what we got back was, Well, there were—I can't remember the exact numbers, but there were a lot more women than there were men and there were women on the civil patrol, which was really unusual. So we started asking why, and they said, Well, because one day the army rolled in with a truck and they took off thirty-five men and some number of women, but it was predominantly men, and we never saw them again, you know. They just disappeared. So women are doing this because they have to, because there aren't any men here. And that was the sort of thing that was going on. So we really got our eyes opened about that, but it also reflected—you know, back to your point that it was the Indian communities who were far more impacted by those kinds of things than the Ladino communities had been earlier, because they had the ability to target specific individuals in the Ladino communities but they couldn't in the Indian communities so they'd just clean them out.

DM:

Golly. What about before these civil uprisings? What was the relationship between the Ladino and the native communities? Was there difficulty there?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

In the early years when you were first living in Guatemala?

GE:

Oh yeah. You know, since the conquest, it had been a dominated society, and the summer of '73 when I was down there, I stayed in the attic of a restaurant. She had a bed and a bath upstairs and so I rented this facility from the woman who ran the restaurant, and her husband worked for the electric company. He was a minor executive of some sort. And I was talking with him one day, and he was talking about the way you solve—that if you could get rid of the Indians, Guatemala would be like Japan: industrious and yada yada yada. His solution to get rid of the Indians was that you castrate all the men and impregnate all the women, and he was serious about it. It wasn't just babble. He really meant what he was saying.

DM:

This was a pretty normal attitude?

GE:

Well, that was extreme. You know, I wouldn't call him normal, and certainly most people wouldn't have said something like that even if they might've thought it. But there was definitely a strong sense of prejudice against Indians in Guatemala, and they had a guy named Juan Chapin on the radio. Chapin is their nickname for themselves. And Juan Chapin would get on with this Indian accent, because a lot of the Indians had learned Spanish as a second language, so they spoke with a very distinctive Indian accent. And he would parody that, and all the Ladinos thought that was really funny. So yeah, it was a rough kind of thing that way, and I think it still is probably. I haven't been back to Guatemala for—gosh, I guess it's been close to twenty years now.

DM:

Have you ever faced any prohibitions from Texas Tech about doing your research over there?

GE:

No. Never any problems.

DM:

That was an issue a few years ago with Mexico. Several groups were going down but that was nixed because of the rising problems.

GE:

Yeah, I was going to say that that had more to do with the drug violence, I think.

DM:

That's right.

GE:

Yeah, I knew when that happened. That's unfortunate. I think it was probably a wise decision but it's unfortunate.

DM:

I just wondered how often that happened.

GE:

Well, I don't think people up here were really aware of how bad things were in Guatemala, because we were working for USAID, the university had a contract, and so Phil and Pete and I were able to get into places and do things at a time when nobody who was operating independently could've done that. You know, you probably would've gotten into trouble if you tried to do that. So it was a special kind of thing. But we had a number of Tech faculty who went on that aid contract. Pete was in sociology and Marietta Morissey, who was also in sociology, she went, and Charles Aulbach [who] was a grad student in Land Use Planning Management and Design, went down there, and Neale Pearson went down. Oh there were three or four others I can't remember. There were some ag people who went down. So it was a pretty good-sized contingent. There were probably ten or twelve of us who at one time or another went down there. But I knew the country and I was the only one who had had prior on-the-ground experience in Guatemala which gave me a big advantage.

DM:

So that was a major aspect of your research. Were there other areas of research that you have been involved in?

GE:

Well I had a Fulbright to Costa Rica in 1983, and that kept me down there for six months and I was kind of doing the same sort of thing I had done for my dissertation in Guatemala. I was looking at municipal development and I worked with the organization that was an equivalent to the one I'd worked with in Guatemala, to Infom—it was called Epam in Costa Rica, but it was a

municipal development organization—and lived in San Jose for six months, got to know the country pretty well.

DM:

Yeah. Let's talk about your teaching here a little bit. That was one of your emphases when you came in. You've been teaching here since 197—are you still teaching some courses?

GE:

Yeah I teach one course a semester.

DM:

Right. Okay. First of all, you were talking about developing a department here. I'm curious to know, because you hear, kind of from the outside, about the problems with students learning geography in American public schools, especially. I don't know what the situation is in higher education, if that spills over.

GE:

Oh, yeah. You bet it does.

DM:

Can you talk about that a little bit, and if that is a situation that's improving? Has it always been that way?

GE:

Well, I think it's been that way for a long time. I think the US—there's an article by a British geographer which says something about the way to teach geography in the United States is to go to war. (laughter) You know, who knew where Afghanistan was, you know, or Iraq, or Guadalcanal in World War II. So there's a certain amount of truth to that although it is a little bit cynical.

DM:

I think that's very true because teaching history courses, you know, you have to teach geography when you're teaching history. But it is related to these major events.

GE:

Yeah, that's right. Well and this is one of the things that happens is you get a classroom full of students and you start them out with a map quiz and, you know, they can't locate—Chicago would be at the mouth of the Mississippi.

DM:

That's got to be disheartening.

GE:

Yeah, it's pretty discouraging. But then that's what our job was, and our main course back in those days, and it still is to a certain extent, was world regional geography, and that was taught to the early childhood majors who were going to become elementary schoolteachers. They had to take it. They didn't like it, but they had to take it. And the idea was, of course, that if they were going to teach geography they had to know some of it, and a lot of them, I think it was the first time they had ever been exposed to it, really.

You know, the high stakes testing in Texas is something relatively recent. It's over the last fifteen, twenty years. And so prior to that, there would've been a lot of schoolteachers who never taught geography. You know, and nobody ever checked to see whether they were doing it or not, and so it just didn't happen. And so you get these kids in who couldn't read a map, and didn't have a clue where anything was, you know. I think if you'd asked them how to get from Lubbock to Dallas they couldn't have figured it out. So there was a lot of geographical ignorance.

DM:

I wonder what the TomTom—if we're going back to that—you know the TomTom, or the little thing you have in your car that says, "Take a left now."

GE:

Yeah, I think those things purport to make it easy to find your way around. I'm not sure they really do. You find a lot of people who get lost using a GPS.

DM:

I think so. I think so, but it seems like it's going to create illiteracy again, you know, because they think there's not a dependence on—or a need to know. Anyway, sorry.

GE:

It's all right. It's all right. Well, it's always been tough, and it's hard to get enrollments, and as you're probably aware, there was a geography department created in I guess it was about 1972 or '73, somewhere not too long after I came here. And it survived until about '95 or so I guess and Jane Winer told us that we should seek cover. This was at a time when they were cutting back on funding and the state and the board of regents was looking for programs to cut.

DM:

Was it combined with some other departments? Sociology, geography—

GE:

No, it was economics.

DM:

Economics, geography—

GE:

Yeah, and that was an interesting process. Dean Winer merged several departments at that time. She merged anthropology in with soc. [sociology] and she merged German in with the romance languages. There was a department of Germanic and Slavonic languages and a department of romance languages and that was the creation of CMLL. And it seems to me like there was another one but I can't remember now what it was. But then she came to us and she dealt with us a little differently than she did the others. She said, "I think you ought to do this," she didn't say, "You will," and explained why she thought we should. And then she said, "Well you go figure out where you want to go." And so we actually had an interview process and we interviewed with Alan Kuethe who was chair of History [Department] at the time, and we interviewed with—I guess it was Paul Johnson who had just come in as chair of soc/anthro/social work—and Richard Peterson was the chair of geosciences and—I can't remember who was chairing poli-sci at the time—and economics, and Lewis Hill was the chair of economics. And history didn't want us, poli-sci couldn't figure out what to do with us, and so that left economics and history and geosciences, and Kuethe said he'd take a couple of us but he didn't want the whole department. And then geosciences said, well, they'd take us but Peterson was concerned that there was too much overlap between the physical geography classes and the atmo. and geology classes that they were teaching, and that scared Otis off. So economics was the last one standing on the list, and economics at that time had two full professors, and their doctoral program was under the gun, and so they were looking for some instant legitimacy and we had three full professors. Otis was a full professor and Claude Davidson was and I was. Bill Conroy had left by that time.

DM:

And wasn't replaced?

GE:

Yeah, he was replaced by a guy named Rick Giardino, and then he eventually went off to A&M and he was replaced by Ron Dorn, who stayed for about five years and went to Arizona State, and he was replaced by Kevin Mulligan who's still here. No, Jeff Lee replaced him—I'm sorry—then Mulligan came later.

DM:

The reason I was asking, I wanted to see if there has been a reduction in faculty members in the middle of all this merging of departments.

GE:

No, actually we picked up a faculty member along the lines, so there were five—six if you count me, but I'm not on their budget, so I really don't count. But anyway, we ended up with economics, and that was not a very happy marriage, so I think we're doing much better. We're with geosciences now. That was one of the first things Lawrence Schovanec did when he came in as dean was to say, "Okay, you get out of economics and go over to geosciences."

DM:

At least the department has remained intact throughout. I mean, with a merger, yes, but the department—

GE:

Yeah, we didn't get split up.

DM:

Right, which would've happened if history had taken a couple of faculty.

GE:

Yeah. When we were with economics, we essentially operated as an autonomous unit. The economists didn't mess with us and we didn't mess with them, you know. But it really wasn't a department. It didn't function as a real department. So I think, as I say, we're a lot better off with geosciences.

DM:

What about the demand for courses in geography? Has that increased over time?

GE:

Well, that's changed remarkably, and the thing that's done it is geographic information systems. You know, you were talking about the GPS systems in cars, and geographic information systems actually began probably in the late seventies or early eighties in a very primitive sort of way. As soon as desktop computers got to be beefed up enough—well, we're probably talking later than the early eighties, probably mid to late eighties. But anyway, when you get desktops that can handle a reasonable amount of data, then they began to develop programs to download satellite data into computers and then processes and maps, and that has expanded as computer capabilities have expanded, and so now, it's a very, very hot technology, and so most of our majors are engaged in GIS, and Mulligan is the person who teaches GIS courses. They're in the process of developing what will be probably, eventually, a new major. I'm not sure it should be, but I probably won't be around to be consulted on it. The—what's he calling it—geographic information science and technology, GIST, and they've got a line to hire another GIS person, so they'll be two of them, and Kevin's wife, who is also a specialist in that, has got an institute—or

a center—that's operating in the basement of the experimental science building, and they're supporting themselves on contracts. So that's where most of our students are going now, and they can walk right out into a job.

DM:

Um-hm. There's also a lot of application in GIS in other disciplines it seems like, so maybe more collaborative work.

GE:

More collaborative work and bringing people into the classes from other disciplines also. Yeah, it's hot in engineering, civil engineering in particular, petroleum, it's important all over the ag school—NRM in particular, but they all are engaged in one way or another with natural resources. GIS is important. But it can be used in social applications too. The archeologists use it, historians use it, so yeah, it's got very broad applications.

DM:

As far as the student that comes in for the core courses in geography, how do they compare to students in the early 1970's who came in the door to take core courses in geography? Has there been improvement that has prepared them for college work in geography?

GE:

Well, I have kind of a biased view on this because, for the past six years, I've been attached to the honors college, so I teach—at one point I was teaching all honors courses, and now I'm splitting between honors and geography. And so the honors students are definitely better prepared, but if we had had an honors college back in the 1970's, you might've seen the same thing. You know, it's hard to tell, but I was impressed when I came here from Pittsburg that the students in Texas were not as well prepared as the Pennsylvania students had been. And it's hard for me to really compare with current students because I'm not teaching big introductory sections of non-honors courses anymore. But I will say this: I've been teaching the geography capstone, and it's really discouraging. It's discouraging because we've got some students who are just fine. You know, they can compete with anybody anywhere. They're great. But there are also students—and these are graduating seniors—who just don't get it. You know, they probably shouldn't be in college, and they're going to go through and get a degree.

DM:

This is with improving entrance requirements.

GE:

Well, that's what we say. But there they are, you know. This is one of my gripes with what the geographers are doing, and I've talked with some of them about this and I don't know what's

going to come of it, but they go through the GIS classes and they can do a map that'll absolutely knock your eye out, you know. It's absolutely beautiful. But if you ask them to interpret that map, tell you what it means, they short circuit. You know, they can't do it. And I get that because one of the things I do in the capstone is I require a research project, and the one I did this year was to ask them to get a data set, produce a map from that data set, and then interpret the map. And you'd think I'd asked them to fly to the moon.

DM:

They can do tasks but it's the critical analysis that's the problem.

GE:

That's right. It's just not there. And you know, as I say, there's some of them that just go off and do it and you never see them until you get the finished product and it's fine, but I'd say at least half the class really was not equipped to do that kind of a project. And they're going to go out, presumably, into the world and go to work. And at some point, if they're going to be more than just a pencil-pusher, they're going to have to be able to do the analysis, and they're not there.

DM:

I know we're talking in generalizations and we're talking from, you know, our own biases here, but what is your general opinion on the quality of students from the early seventies and the present? Can you make a general assessment, as far as preparation for college, as far as work ethic?

GE:

Well, I would say that probably the work ethic was a little better maybe in the seventies. I think we're getting a lot of kids who are coming to college now who probably wouldn't have come to college back in the seventies, who maybe shouldn't be coming to college. But the idea of course is that you need a college education to get a job, and I don't think that's true but I think that's the perception, and there's a lot of family pressure on these kids. You know, you get a group of parents together whose kids have graduated from high school, and well Johnny's going to UT and Suzy's going to A&M and Charlie's going to Vassar—not Vassar but—

DM:

It's a status issue.

GE:

Yeah. So you don't want to be the one who says, "Well my son just entered into an apprenticeship program to become a journeyman plumber," but the son who's going to be the journeyman plumber may earn more than the kid who went to Princeton in the end, you know.

DM:

Yeah. And might be happier. (laughs)

GE:

Yeah. Yeah. But there is a real prestige thing there, and so I think we're probably overeducating.

DM:

Have the higher entrance standards had any effect at all, as far as you can tell?

GE:

No. I don't think very much. They make us look better, and the SAT scores go up, but I don't think it makes a lot of difference in the overall—and maybe I'm wrong about that. It may be that you're getting a little bit different percentage mix and it just doesn't show up very clearly, you know.

DM:

Do you have any memorable students or classroom anecdotes to share?

GE:

Oh, I've got the one kid—this was back when I hadn't been here very long, and I got a student evaluation that told me I should watch Billy Graham. (laughter) And I thought, Well, no, I don't think I'm going to do that. Beat on the textbook, you know.

DM:

Besides that, have you ever gotten any fundamentalist opposition, like "You can't teach that, you're wrong about that?"

GE:

Not really, and I've always expected it. The interesting thing was when I was a grad student at the University of Oregon, we did get that one time. But I've never had anybody here challenge it, and I have a theory about that. The theory is that they're told in their churches that you're going to get exposed to this sort of evil stuff in the university and you can listen to it and you can go ahead and respond on the exam the way you're supposed to but you don't have to believe it.

DM:

Uh-huh. I'm sure that doesn't keep some from speaking out though. In fact I know because I've heard it myself.

GE:

Oh yeah, and I think when you get them in Michael Dini's classes and places like that they—

DM:

Some biology classes, and biology professors complain about that, and anthropology.

GE:

Oh yeah, Bob Paine is always complaining about it in anthro—physical anthropology classes.

DM:

Everybody has a classroom anecdote anyhow. Can you think of any others?

GE:

Oh, I will ten minutes after I walk out of here.

DM:

Yeah. That's fine. Well let's move on. We talked about research, but I also wanted to touch on your Mennonite study. You studied Mennonites down at Seminole, I believe. You had a paper on that. Can you give me the gist of that?

GE:

Yeah, that was a really interesting sort of thing. You know about Mennonites in Mexico. There were two colonies in a very general sense, one of them in Durango and one of them in Chihuahua, and in the seventies when Echeverria was the president of Mexico, he did some land reform. He was the last one, really, to engage in land reform. And the Mennonites got really nervous because they were holding land that had been granted to them under the Obregon Administration back in the twenties, and they had all kinds of exceptions for that from the land reforms laws, and they got very nervous that Echeverria was going to come in and expropriate their land.

DM:

Which they had spent a lot of effort improving.

GE:

Oh yeah, and so some of them got the idea that they ought to move, and I never did get this totally straightened out, but I think that what was going on is that they got tangled up with a real estate guy down in Seminole, and he sold them a bill of goods, and they bought this ranch that was ten and a half sections on the Andrews-Gaines County line, and three of the sections were in Gaines County and the other seven were in Andrews, and what they didn't know was that the water rights on the Andrews County side had been sold off, and they did have water rights on the Gaines side, so they ended up with more land than they had water. But the other thing was, they believed that if they came to Texas and bought land, they could become legal immigrants, and of course they couldn't. So they got up here and had bought the land and settled on it and were

having a lot of serious acculturation issues. I think the way they got connected with the realtor was they'd been coming up here and buying used farm equipment and taking it back to Mexico, so they knew people up here and they were used to coming up, you know, for that business. But in terms of coming permanently and bringing the families and all that, that was really a new experience and it was rough for them. And they also—they're like Southern Baptists, they schism all over the place, and so if you blow your nose somebody's splitting off to go somewhere.

DM:

This was an offshoot of the main group in Canada, right?

GE:

Yeah, they had left Canada after World War I, because the Canadians were threatening to make them teach in English, not, that they couldn't teach in Plautdietsch, and of course what happens is it's the most conservative ones who move because they're the most resistant to the kinds of changes that—it was the provincial government in Alberta or Manitoba or the other that was going to force them to use English. And so that was how they got involved with Obregon, and another group went to Belize and there was a group that went to Bolivia at about the same time, so they're scattered around, but the Mexico ones in particular came down as a result of some of the stuff that went on during the war, and the anti-German sentiment, of course. Differentiating between a Mennonite and a German-German is—

So what I was looking at was this whole process of coming up and settling and what happened to them. And of course eventually Lloyd Bentsen got a personal bill through Congress that got them all legalized, and there were six hundred and fifty of them I think who eventually wound up being covered by that bill. There are a lot more now, and there were more at that time. I don't think everybody was covered, but once the bill went through nobody paid any attention to them anymore.

DM:

As I recall from your paper, this thing down in Seminole fell apart by '79 pretty much?

GE:

Well yeah, it fell apart but it didn't. They're still there.

DM:

There are still some there but their numbers have diminished?

GE:

I suspect their numbers have actually gone up. I haven't gone back down there for a long time.

DM:

I know you see them around.

GE:

Yeah, you see them around and I think if you went to Seminole and asked around I think you'd find that they're now a part of the community. They've been incorporated. It would be an interesting study.

DM:

Oh yeah, it would be.

GE:

The last time I was down there, there was a Mennonite neighborhood actually, new houses that they'd built—

DM:

In town?

GE:

Yeah, in Seminole out on the East side.

DM:

Is it a unique architecture? Can you look at it and tell?

GE:

No, it just looks like regular houses.

DM:

Brick house, huh? That's interesting.

GE:

Yeah but there were maybe—"neighborhood"—there were maybe twenty houses or something like that.

DM:

That's a study waiting to happen all right.

GE:

Yeah, there's some interesting stuff still down there. And there was another group—I can't remember where now—but there was another much smaller group in Dawson County somewhere. I can't remember.

DM:

Well let's move on and talk—are you doing okay?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Let's talk about faculty. You've been tied in with faculty issues, you've served on faculty senate I think, haven't you?

GE:

I've held every office that the Senate has.

DM:

You've been the parliamentarian for many years, it seems like.

GE:

I was parliamentarian for about five years, I guess.

DM:

Okay.

GE:

Something like that.

DM:

How many years on faculty senate in some form or fashion?

GE:

Oh, I don't know. I was president back in '79, '80. The transition—Cecil Mackey—and Lawrence Graves became the interim president when Mackey left. And then I was secretary the year prior to that, and I was vice president sometime in the late eighties. I can't remember what year that was. And then doing the parliamentarian stuff.

DM:

So I suspect that you've been associated with faculty senate more than most—I mean *much* more than most.

GE:

Oh yeah.

DM:

So you're the right person to answer some general questions, one being similar to what I asked about the student body. How has the faculty body changed over time?

GE:

Well, it's a lot less feisty than it used to be, and part of that may be a function just of situations. But of course the faculty senate—one of the really interesting things when I came here was—and Murray was president—was we had what was called the Faculty Council, and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council was the entire faculty. We would have, once or twice a year, a big meeting where all the faculty were supposed to gather, and Murray would preside, and he'd tell us the facts of life and we'd stand up and salute and walk out. And then the Executive Committee was the body to whom Murray would submit things if he needed faculty input, or it was the body that would submit things to him if the faculty wanted some response from him. And the Faculty Council of the whole did vote on things, but as I say that was once or twice a year and it was pretty much what Murray wanted to vote on.

So when Cecil Mackey came in he was just astounded, number one when he realized he was supposed to preside over the meeting and the Faculty Council he didn't think that was right, and so he suggested that a Faculty Senate be created, and he went to the Board of Regents and got them to sign off on it. I don't know how he ever managed to get that but he did. They probably didn't realize what he was creating. So in—I guess it would've been '78, about halfway through the school year, the Executive Council ceased to exist and the Faculty Senate came into existence with a constitution, and I became the third president of that new organization.

And things went along pretty well until we had—when Mackey left Texas Tech in fall of '79 I guess it was, to go to Michigan State—he took the presidency at Michigan State—and Lawrence Graves, who had been dean of Arts and Sciences, became the interim president. And then the Board of Regents appointed a committee—two committees actually—to look for the new president. And there was a—I don't remember exactly what the names were—but one of them was a screening committee and the other one was a selection committee.

The screening committee was the committee that was created for political purposes, so that was the one you put all the people on, you know. If somebody needed to be represented in the selection process, they wound up on that committee. And the selection committee was the one small committee with three or four people on it that was to make the final recommendation to the board of regents. So the big committee would call out the losers from the list, and then the small

committee would go through the survivors and pick the final three candidates or four candidates, or whatever, who would be brought in for an interview.

So the board of regents picked the faculty senate representative to be on the selection committee, and it was Louise Luchsinger who was the vice president of the senate at the time, and so I got pretty bent out of shape about this because I felt that the senate should have decided who their representative was and that if you're looking at it from the point of view of how that person should be selected, it probably should be the president of the senate or it should be somebody, if not the president, then somebody that the senate selects. And it was a little delicate because Louise was the vice president, but anyway, Wendell Aycock, who was the secretary of the senate that year, and I met with Regent Pfluger—he was the chair of the board at the time—and talked with him about the problem and pointed out the issues. And so the compromise was that I got appointed to the screening committee. Okay, you know.

So that was the first time, I think, that the senate had really had some sort of engagement with the board of regents. And it continued to be, I think, fairly outspoken in terms of the way it responded to the administration and the way it responded to the board of regents. And of course that selection process ended up picking Lauro Cavazos, and he looked like the ideal candidate. You know, he was Hispanic, he was a Texas Tech alum, he had come in from med school experience but he was not an MD, he was a PhD, so he had—

DM:

And he would be over Health Sciences as well.

GE:

Yeah, Health Sciences and Tech were together at that time under a joint presidency. And so he looked like the perfect person. Well, he got here and he wasn't the perfect person. Part of this had to do with board stuff and part of it had to do with him and his med school background, but he decided that we needed to have a new tenure policy. The tenure policy that we had at the time had been negotiated between Murray and the faculty and National AAUP because we'd been on AAUP probation for having sacked some people.

DM:

For ten years or so, right? Wasn't it?

GE:

Yeah, yeah, and there was a condition that Murray laid on the university to accept the presidency. He said, "I will come only if you get off probation." So the tenure policy was written expressly to meet AAUP standards, but by the time that Cavazos came in, there were some people on the board of regents who were really opposed to the whole concept of tenure, and if they couldn't get rid of it they'd certainly try to weaken it. And so they probably—and this is speculative—but I'm guessing that they kind of leaned on Cavazos and he didn't object very

much and so by that time he'd hired a—you know, Cavazos came in and he fired—I'll see if I can remember the names—he fired the provost, who was a guy from the philosophy department. I'm not remembering his name. And he fired the dean of the college of human sciences, Donald Longworth, and he fired the guy who was running what was the equivalent in those days of the development office. It was very small. It was sort of a one-man operation. And he did all that on a Friday, just sacked them. So that didn't go over very well. But Charles Hardwick was the provost, so he kind of got off on the wrong foot.

DM:

People saw arbitrary action here.

GE:

Yep, yep, yep. So he hired a guy by the name of John Darling to replace Hardwick as provost, and Darling came in and he was kind of a strange guy, but he did pretty much what Cavazos and the board wanted, so they created a committee, and Bill Conroy was—I'm not sure if he chaired the committee, but he was a member of the committee—and he was interim dean while Larry Graves was over being interim president, and I think Graves never went back to being dean and Conroy stayed on for a short time as dean and then he went to New Mexico State and Don Haragan became the interim dean and then became the interim provost when Darling left. But Darling formed this committee and they drafted a policy—kind of tweaked the existing policy a little bit—and he didn't like that. That wasn't good enough. My memory of this is not perfect, but it seems to me that what happened was that the policy that was drafted by Conroy and company went to the board, and the board was about ready to sign off on it, and Marilyn Phelan was the university council at the time, and one of the board members asked her what she thought about the policy and she said she thought it would be difficult to implement and that was the end of it.

DM:

And this was at the board meeting. This was unexpected?

GE:

That's right. Yeah. Everybody assumed that it would go through, and I don't know if it was a set-up or what happened, but that meant it went back to the drawing boards.

DM:

And this was in—?

GE:

It would've been '82 maybe, '81, '82, somewhere in there.

DM:

This meant that this thing was going to drag out for two or three years, as I recall.

GE:

Well, what happened was Darling wrote his own policy and sent it to the faculty for a vote, and the faculty voted against it but they went ahead and presented it to the board anyway, and that led to the vote of no confidence in Cavazos and all that stuff.

DM:

And the real sticking point on this issue was—I'm trying to remember. I've read your paper—

GE:

You've been busy haven't you?

DM:

(laughs)—was trying to establish means of removing faculty, basically.

GE:

Yeah. Oh, yeah. That was the whole—

DM:

That was the main problem, or not allowing faculty to review protests of negative tenure review.

GE:

Yeah, it was always—the whole idea of tenure policy reform was to eliminate the barriers to getting rid of somebody.

DM:

Right.

GE:

And our argument always was, Well, you can get rid of somebody, you just have to build a case.

DM:

Right. Exactly.

GE:

And their argument was, That's too hard.

DM:

Um-hm, yeah. Can I refer to this paper on the recording so that people listening to this can access it?

GE:

Sure, sure.

DM:

I think you published this in 19—

GE:

'85.

DM:

Eighty-five. It's *Tenure at Texas Tech University*. It's in the *Symposium* and it's here at the Southwest Collection.

GE:

Yeah. There was a funny thing about that. The full title was *Tenure at Texas Tech University: A Step Backward*—

DM:

Exactly.

GE:

And I was off somewhere downstate one time and somebody was telling somebody about it. "*Tenure at Texas Tech University: A Step Backward*? Do you mean tenure's a bad thing?" (laughter) And I said, "No. There's a context to this."

DM:

Oh gosh. Well what was the fallout from that article? You published this article, it was kind of a heated time. I mean, it could not have made—

GE:

Well really there was never any fallout from the article. The article was the result of all the fallout from the process, so what I was really trying to do—two things I was trying to do—one was to document what had gone on, because I thought it was important to get it out; the other thing was because I was involved in those days with some of the state organizations, so get the information out to other campuses so they could see what had gone on and there but for the grace of God go we.

DM:

Right.

GE:

So the article—you know, I never heard anything from the administration. I don't know if they ever even read it or knew it was around. Of course, by the time I wrote the article, Cavazos was pretty much on his way out. I can't remember if it was '86 when he went to the Department of Education, but it was pretty close then when he left, and Darling had already gone. Cavazos fired Darling. The story went that Darling did go to Mississippi State where he was interviewed for, I think it was for presidency, and they asked him about the problem at Texas Tech, and he blamed it all on Cavazos and that made it into the Statesville, Mississippi newspaper and Cavazos found it, and when Darling got back he'd been moved into the College of Business. (laughs)

DM:

(laughs) He'd lost all administrative responsibility.

GE:

Yeah, he got cut off.

DM:

Do you think that Cavazos then had Darling write up this—presumably, he had Darling write up this tenure policy without input from the faculty.

GE:

Oh, yeah.

DM:

Was he not aware of the earlier problems? Did he not know the history of this tenure issue and that AAUP had censored Tech?

GE:

I suspect he didn't. You know, it was not a very well-known thing. You would've had to—the people who had been here in the sixties knew all about it of course because it was a big deal when Murray came in, and so, you know, people like Otto Nelson and Jack Collins and Aycock, who had been a student here at the time, and Edna Gott—you know, and there were a whole bunch of us—Margaret Wilson. Those folks were all aware of the history, but Cavazos had not been at Texas Tech since the forties when he was a student, and so he came back in essentially naïve with respect to the institutional history during that twenty, thirty-year period of time. So no, I suspect he really wasn't aware.

DM:

But at the same time the board of regents must've been even more naïve not knowing about the academics and tenure?

GE:

Oh, I think the board of regents was not naïve. I think they didn't care. I think they had their own agenda, and the attitude of the board of regents in those days—remember, this was people like Fred Bucy and Don Workman who were very conservative and very opposed to the whole concept of tenure and who looked upon faculty sort of like you'd look on a ranch hand. You know, there was definitely a dividing line there.

DM:

It was an attitude of, We will control this university, this kind of thing?

GE:

Yeah, yeah, exactly. And so I think whether they knew about the history or not, I don't think it would've made any difference. I think the whole idea was, This is what we think is right for the institution and so we're going to do it.

DM:

Where do we stand now? Is tenure in danger? Are we ever going to repeat this thing again?

GE:

Well, I wouldn't go so far as to say we won't ever repeat it again. This is Texas, after all. (DM laughs) But we just got through with a two-year negotiation between the office of the provost and the board and the legal counsel and the faculty senate over a new tenure policy that was just adopted and approved by the board, and it was vetted very carefully by faculty, primarily Lewis Held and his committee on faculty welfare, and I think that was an open process and it resulted from real negotiation. I don't think that either side really was trying to lobby the other side. I think there were legitimate concerns on the part of the board and maybe the administration that it was very, very difficult to deal with some really nasty situations, and we had a faculty member here on campus who had been around for years. I think he was here when I came, or came very shortly after I did, and you probably know who I'm talking about but I'm not going to say it on the tape. He was—I don't know if he was manic-depressive, not bi-polar or schizophrenic, but he was certifiable, and he was getting worse over time and I think he wouldn't take his meds. So it got to the point where he just couldn't be in a classroom any longer, and they needed to get him out, and they had good justification for doing it. I mean, this is one of those cases where busting tenure was the right thing to do—there wasn't much choice—and the university administration found it very difficult to do that.

And so I think they felt like the tenure policy needed to be modified a little bit to facilitate that process, and I was not part of those negotiations and I looked through the policy because Lewis asked me to, and the changes looked fairly innocuous to me and apparently they did to Lewis because he accepted them, and if anybody would've objected he would have. So I think it probably was an appropriate change and a process that would simplify things.

DM:

So after going through this bout in the early eighties this was a refreshing exercise, huh?

GE:

Oh, yeah. It was a totally different process.

DM:

People were respectful on both sides?

GE:

Yeah, yeah. I think definitely so.

DM:

Good. Okay. That's good.

GE:

And I think we probably need to do the same sort of thing with the grievance policy. The grievance policy is kind of a disaster. It's another one that Darling created, by the way. It's got about twenty steps that you'd have to—it's sort of like running the hurdles at a track meet. So that needs to be worked on too. But yeah, I think things are a lot smoother now. It doesn't mean they're perfect. There are still some issues out there. But in a general sense, things have improved greatly, and if we are going to aspire to be an AAU institution, they've got to continue to improve. One of the things that AAU is going to look at is faculty governance and the extent to which we do it right or do it wrong. So I think that the ambitions that the administration has for the institution kind of force them into a position where they have to be more respectful of faculty participation.

DM:

Well it's always good to see something that's looking better, you know? It's improving over what it was thirty years ago.

GE:

Well I hope I'm not being overoptimistic. I don't think I am.

DM:

When did you become an administrator and how did that—can you just lay out your administrative career?

GE:

Oh, that's a long, involved process.

DM:

Just in short.

GE:

Well, in about 2001 I guess it was, Gary Bell was a pretty good friend of mine, and I think he'd probably been talking with [James] Brink, and they were looking for somebody who would be the director of the new 2004 reaffirmation accreditation with SACS-COC and so Bell asked me if I would be interested and I said, "Well, I guess." So he put the bug in Brink's ear and Brink put the bug in Bill Marcy's ear and so they asked me if I would—actually it was John Burns at that time—and they asked me if I would do it. And so I said, "Well, okay, here's the deal. I will turn sixty-five in 2003 I think it was, so I will agree to retire when I finish the project if you will take my position and hire somebody to replace me," because I was concerned that if I retired I wouldn't be replaced. So I was using it a little bit as a lever, and the other thing I held out for was that by that time geography had merged with economics and so we had this secretary's office that wasn't doing anything and I said, "Well you wall off half of that secretary's office and create another office which will be the SACS-COC Reaffirmation Accreditation office." So [he said], "Oh yeah, all right all right all right."

DM:

Good.

GE:

So I ended up being the great god of accreditation.

DM:

With what title, by the way?

GE:

Director of Reaffirmation, I guess. I never paid much attention to what the title was.

DM:

It wasn't an assistant provost title?

GE:

No, no. It was strictly tied to that specific job. No I had no status in terms of the higher administration. So I did that, and about 2004, the Honors College had created a couple of degree programs. They had the—it was called Natural History and Humanities; it's now Environment and Humanities, and they were creating the Honors Arts and Letters program. And so they were going to be hiring full-time faculty, and Kambra Bolch, who was the associate dean at the time, was not a faculty member. She was strictly administrative appointment. And they needed somebody who was a tenured faculty member to be an associate dean to deal with the tenure issues for the faculty who were going to be hired and coming up through the ranks, and by that time, Susan Tomlinson was already over there and—I'm trying to think who else would've been there—maybe Susan was the only one at that time. Oh, Haragan, but we weren't going to worry about Haragan.

So Bell said would I be interested in being the associate dean, and I said—but at that time I'd decided maybe I wasn't quite so anxious to retire, and so this was a way to defer retirement for a little longer, and I thought, Well, I'll go till seventy. So I agreed to do that, and so for about a year I was doing both associate dean and finishing up with the SAC's business. We got reaffirmed and I stayed on over there in Honors [College] and then by 2008, Bell and I were not getting along very well and so I agreed to leave. So I contacted Valerie Paton and Liz [Elizabeth] Hall, because I'd been working with Valerie, and I said, "Well, before I retire, do you have a use for me? I'm available," essentially. And I sent that note on a Sunday night, and before the end of the evening I had a response back saying yes, and that was when I went over to the provost's office. And initially I was to be the chair of the core curriculum committee and I was supposed to run—I mean, this was when we were still on probation.

DM:

Right, right. What year was this that you went over there?

GE:

It would've been 2008, fall of—officially September of 2008. And so I went over there and we got off probation and I kept working on trying to clean up the core and clean up the core and clean up the core, and then about a year later, they asked me if I would take over commencement and new degree programs. So my major responsibilities now are core curriculum, new degree programs and commencement, but I do a lot of other stuff on the side. I work a lot with DaNay Phelps on the issues having to do with transfer credit, and that sort of thing. I work with the credit-by-exam people.

DM:

That's right. You work with CLEP nationally, right?

GE:

Well, yeah, that's—

DM:

Different.

GE:

Yeah, those are independent things. No, the credit by exam thing is with Pat McConnel and I don't know to say she reports to me, but she has a committee and I chair that committee when it meets, which is not very often. You know, it's kind of one of those things where it meets when there's a need to meet. So those are my main responsibilities. And it's been a good experience. That office has changed markedly in the past four years, and it's a very pleasant place to work. You know, you put in long hours and you work hard, but everybody gets along. It's become, I think—and not everybody might agree with me—but I think the old provost's office kind of had a gatekeeper approach to things, and the office now is much more facilitative. The idea is, All right, what can we do to help you get what you wanted to get? And we'll tell you how to deal with the coordinating board or whatever it is. So you get a little bit of reward out of helping people do what they want to do.

DM:

Right. Right. You've been around for forty-two years, I guess. Can you make some general comparisons between administrations that have come and gone? And I know you've talked about Cecil Mackey and Lauro Cavazos. Maybe a little more recent. Maybe you can give your opinion on going from the president system to a chancellor system, the differences between Montford and Hance. And I know that's a lot, but just in general terms.

GE:

Well, okay. Let me start out with this process of creating a system. I was on the selection committee when Wallace left to go to Tulsa, and we were formed as a presidential search committee, and at that time I wasn't on the faculty senate but I ended up on the search committee rather than the screening committee, so I was one of three people on that committee. We started out advertising for a president, looking for a president, and then about halfway through the process, all of a sudden the board of regents decided, No, we're going to look for a chancellor and we're going to create a system.

What happened, I think, was that they discovered that Montford would be willing to accept appointment as a chancellor, but Montford didn't have the right credentials to be president. And so the way they finessed that was to create the system, and I think they wanted to create a system anyway, partly as a defense. Texas Tech was vulnerable as long as it was an independent, freestanding institution. And they think there was concern that the legislature would, at some point, just arbitrarily decide to attach Texas Tech to the UT system or the A&M system—it

probably would've been A&M—and that if we were going to protect ourselves, we needed to become a system. And so the way they rationalized that was to split the med school off from the university, which was probably a big mistake and we'll come back to that in a minute. But that decision, then, was made in the middle of a presidential search, so all of a sudden it changes around, so we knew very quickly—Ed Whitacre was the chair of the board and he came down and talked to us and it was very obvious that they knew who they wanted to be chancellor, and that the chancellor then would appoint the president. So that's when Montford becomes chancellor and he appoints Haragan to be president. The problem was that the board never really laid out the turf for the two administrators, and so Montford and Haragan were constantly back and forth. I'm sure Don talked to you about this.

DM:

Um-hm, and I'll refer to the interview with Donald Haragan on this issue too.

GE:

So it got to be very tough for Don, because every time he'd take a move, Montford would head him off. Montford would already have made a decision. So you had a chancellor without a real system and you had a president without any power, and it didn't work very well and that was why Don quit after four years, you know, and I know he's talked about that. And that's not a criticism of Montford, by the way, because I think Montford was a very good chancellor and he did some really good things for Texas Tech. That arena out there is essentially a legacy of Montford. The English and education compound is a legacy of Montford. He did a lot of other good things while he was here. He raised quite a bit of money. Hance won't admit that, but he did. (DM laughs) I mean he was the one who really got us started on contemporary fundraising, you know, in terms of how you really go about doing it big time.

DM:

By the way, has this chancellor system allowed Tech to look better in the search for tier one, for example?

GE:

Well, no. Actually, when I said, "I'll come back to that," that's what I was going to come back to. No, that's all right. You anticipated and I probably would've forgotten. No, what actually happened when we split the med school—if we had the med school still as a part of the university, we would've qualified for NRUF [National Research University Fund] in an instant because we would've had all that research money from the med school and we would've been a lead-pipe cinch. As it was, we just made it under the wire. It was (pants). So it would've been a lot easier, and in terms of ACU [Association of Commonwealth Universities] membership, I think that's also something that would be easier if the med school were still part of the

university. Our profile would look a whole lot better. But in order to create a system, you had to have at least two institutions, and so the med school had to be split off. That was the only way to accomplish that, so that's why that happened. So you gain on one end and you lose on the other end, and I guess it's a moot point because we did qualify for NRUF and things are looking reasonably good in that area.

DM:

All's well that ends well, huh?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Can you draw some comparisons between the Montford Administration and the Hance Administration?

GE:

Well, let's see if I can think of an analogy: the Romans versus the Huns? Montford was a smooth operator, and he was not hyper-conservative. You know, he was kind of a moderate, and I don't think—I mean he obviously was politically active on the state level. He had to be to function as a chancellor, but he was doing it, I think, outside of overt party politics, and Hance is a totally different kind of animal. He's become very, very conservative. He wasn't necessarily when he was in Congress. I mean, he was conservative when he was in Congress but he was a conservative Democrat, and he's now become and very conservative Republican. You know, he shifted with the party, and he's also much less smooth, let's say, than Montford. You know, Montford was very diplomatic and would maneuver behind the scenes to do things with subtlety, and there's nothing subtle about Kent Hance. You know, he comes on like a freight train. And I think Hance has done some good things. You know, he's been effective in a number of ways, and maybe, given the environment in the state now, Hance has been more effective than Montford could've been, because we're in a totally different statewide political situation than we were ten years ago.

But Hance is a lot harder to deal with in many ways. I'll give you an example: two members of the board of regents sent a letter to Hance and to President Bailey and to Provost Smith asking that instead of commencement—for the past year and a half or two years we've been singing the Star Spangled Banner at the beginning of commencement, and we've been asking everybody to sing and putting the words up on the jumbo-tron and playing the music—and they felt it would be better if we had a student sing the National Anthem, so they sent this request. So Hance forwards it down, and it's "make this happen." You know, it isn't, "send it to the committee and ask them what they think about it." And I don't think there was—in fact, it was something we had considered, and decided at least for the time being not to do it that way, but I don't think

there was any particular opposition to it at all. So it's something we would've been more than happy to do and did do as a matter of fact, but it's just the way in which things get handled, you know.

DM:

It's the level of respect for the people you're dealing with.

GE:

The process, yeah.

DM:

So I guess the answer to this question might already be obvious: which of the two was more faculty-friendly, or has been more faculty-friendly? Have there been issues, more difficult issues between faculty and one of the other?

GE:

Oh, yeah. I think Hance has gotten involved—I'm not sure he's doing it as much now as he did earlier, but he's gotten involved in some things that he probably shouldn't have gotten involved in, that he should've left to the president. And I know of particular cases where he's called people in and reamed them out for things that they were doing as part of their role, and that they were doing with very good intentions. You know, and it isn't a matter of calling them in and saying, "Would you explain the background to this decision that you made?" It's calling them in and swearing at them and telling them, "Why did you do this stupid thing?"

DM:

So again it's the issue of professional respect, or lack thereof.

GE:

Yeah, yeah. And intimidation, you know. I think that's—part of it is "I hold the power." So yeah, that's unfortunate and uncalled for.

DM:

What are a couple of the larger issues that faculty might have had with Hance? Are there any strong points of opposition worth mentioning?

GE:

Well, I think that there's a certain amount of tension between—it's not just Hance; it's the whole administration I think—and certain areas of faculty over the whole NRUF business, and the focus on research, and stem areas in particular, has got people in the non-stem areas a little bit

nervous, in particular visual and performing arts, but it applies also to some of the areas—history obviously would be one of them, humanities, CMLL. I don't need to pick them all out. You know which ones they are. But I think there's concern that the priorities have changed, and I'm not sure that the priorities really have changed. I think there's just much more noise about it. I've been in a social science operation for forty-two years and we've never had adequate support for social sciences and humanities at Texas Tech.

DM:

This is not a new thing.

GE:

That's right. So I don't know that it's any worse than it's ever been, it's just more apparent.

DM:

What is your personal perspective on the push for tier one, the forty-thousand mark? Do you have any opinions to express on this subject?

GE:

Well, forty-thousand is arbitrary, you know. Why not fifty-thousand? Why not thirty-five thousand?

DM:

How did that come about?

GE:

Kent Hance. Forty-by-twenty is a nice little catchphrase. I assume it came from him. I've been on the subcommittee of the planning council, and the subcommittee I'm on is one that's involved with Priority One, which is increasing enrollment and retention, and we generate a bunch of target numbers stretched out to twenty-twenty. And the way we generate those is just sort of, let me throw a dart and we'll see where it lands, you know. (both laugh) There's no way to come up with a reasonable kind of target in a scientific way. So it's always, All right, we know that we're supposed to be at forty-thousand here. We know that we're primarily going to do that through increasing graduate enrollment. That's been established because that's part of our research emphasis. So undergraduate enrollments are going to be capped in a subtle kind of way, I think, and we're looking at something like five thousand students per freshman class. Now that's not a cap because we'll still be bringing in a lot of transfer students, and we're assuming that the number of transfer students will continue to go up, but we're not going to be recruiting new freshman in increasing numbers.

DM:

And you cap it with increasing entrance requirements?

GE:

Well, probably you just cap it by saying, "We're full," you know. But you may be able to do it—what we do now is we have specific entrance requirements and if you meet them you're in, and if you don't meet them then you've got to jump through some hoops. And so what we would probably do is leave the automatic in group the same and create some more hoops on the lower end—make it harder. You know, the lower you are the harder it is, so screen them that way. But we're looking at ten thousand graduate students, which is, I think, more than doubling the amount of graduate students we have and I don't know how we're going to accommodate all those students. They're talking about building four or five new research buildings, but that's going to be tough.

So these numbers that we come up with are just grabbed out of the air, and maybe forty-thousand is a good number. I don't know. But what it's going to do is create all kinds of unanticipated pressures, and one of those—you know, I work with graduation, and we're graduating something on the order of six-thousand-plus students a year now, and we're just about at the limit of what we can accommodate in four separate ceremonies over in the United Spirit Arena. So do we start going to Sunday and going to five ceremonies? Do we—and we're also just about at the limit of how many hands President Bailey and Chancellor Hance are capable of shaking in a two-day period. So how do we handle it? And that's one of the things that the committee's working on right now, is do we go—and I think we're going to have to—to some sort of a college-based commencement system? And do we have a big universal kind of commencement where everybody stands up and degrees are confirmed and then they go to their colleges to get their diplomas? And if we do that, where do we put them? You know, we can't seat more than about twelve hundred kids on the floor of the USA, and if you multiply that by the number of people who will come to watch the ceremony, we can't house too many more than what we've already got up in the seating areas. So I don't know where we would have a university-wide ceremony other than the football field, and December is not a good time to be sitting out in Jones AT&T Stadium.

DM:

Now we're going to start hearing about a covered dome. (laughs)

GE:

So I don't know. As I say, we're working on it right now, but it's going to be traumatic, I think.

DM:

And that's just one of a hundred areas of pressure increasing.

GE:

That's one of a hundred areas of the pressure of increasing enrollment, exactly. You know, I started out by saying we're short on lecture rooms, big monster lecture rooms. Well, how do you handle that population without big lecture halls, you know? How do we handle—we are maxed out on lab space now for the sciences, and so one of the issues for the core curriculum is that we're having trouble offering up enough science labs to accommodate the students who need to have a lab science for graduation, so where are we going to get more lab space? And that's teaching labs; it doesn't have anything to say about research lab space. So we really are up against it. I've got a Korean faculty member—geographer—who's coming over here in August to spend a sabbatical year, and I'm having to put her in essentially a cubbyhole of an office over in McClellan Hall because there's no office space available in Holden, you know, to put her with the geographers. And we've got graduate students three and four to an office over there. There's just no space. So if we go and add another five thousand graduate students, you know—

DM:

(laughs) Oh my, what challenges.

GE:

Yeah, it really is.

DM:

Have we covered things pretty well at Texas Tech? Are there big areas that we've missed that we need to—we're kind of running out of time today, but are there other things that we can pursue later on?

GE:

Oh, I think—one of the things I was going to suggest is that you might want to get me and Wendell Aycock together to talk about some of the stuff that went on back in the mid-eighties with the tenure crisis, because Wendell and—I mentioned Jack Collins and Edna Gott, and Edna's gone now and Jack is retired and up in Wisconsin, so neither one of them are available, but Wendell is still around.

DM:

Jack Collins is in Wisconsin?

GE:

Yeah.

DM:

Isn't Otto Nelson up there too?

GE:

He's in Minnesota.

DM:

Minnesota, okay.

GE:

Yeah, yeah.

DM:

I'd love to do that.

GE:

Yeah, we could have a lot of fun talking with you about C.A.G.E. [a newsletter about the 1983-84 tenure crisis circulated by Collins, Aycock, Gott, and Elbow]. We did a newsletter during that time. You've got it in your—

DM:

Oh, let me look at that.

GE:

All of our materials, I think, are over here. I brought them all over.

DM:

Oh, good. Thank you for doing that. Remember us, too, if you're accumulating more materials.

GE:

I've got a whole drawer-full of stuff on the Mennonites I think is—

DM:

Do you? If you want a place to put that—we have your article.

GE:

Yeah, I've got a lot of stuff that I've collected while I was doing that work.

DM:

Okay, just contact me if you want to—

GE:

Yeah, I'll go check and see if I can track it down. It's in a file over in Holden Hall, I think.

DM:

How difficult is it going to be to arrange with Wendell Aycock? He's not—

GE:

Oh, he's here.

DM:

Is he on campus?

GE:

Oh yeah. Well he's not this summer but he's around, here in town. He loves to talk.

DM:

Oh, good. We'll sit down and we'll set up a video camera if that's okay, and get you—

GE:

Yeah. Well Wendell is somebody you ought to be getting an oral history interview from anyway because he's been here—you know, Wendell is—he's getting pretty close to a fifty year pin, because he was a graduate student here—

DM:

Was he?

GE:

And so they gave him tenure on the pin status, being a master's student, and then he went off and got a PhD at South Carolina but somehow or another his credit toward the pin continued and so now they're giving him all kinds of years of service.

DM:

Okay.

GE:

Some of which he earned—most of which he earned, but a few of which he didn't.

DM:

(laughs) All right. Well, I will see if I can contact him. You say he might not be around in the summertime?

GE:

Well, he's not on campus. He's here in town. You can send him an e-mail.

DM:

What does your schedule look like? Are you more available in the summer than the long semesters?

GE:

Oh, it doesn't make—I can make time either way. I'm going to be gone the next—well, through the middle of July would be kind of hard, but after mid-July I'll be around.

DM:

Do you have anything else to add today and we'll pick up again then on the tenure issue later on?

GE:

No, not really. I guess, you know, I'll repeat what I said earlier, which is Texas Tech's been very good to me and I feel like I've had a good career here.

DM:

Forty-two years. You must kind of like it. You're still here.

GE:

Yep.

DM:

And you didn't retire at seventy, either, did you? (laughs)

GE:

No, and my wife says, "You're never going to retire."

DM:

(laughs) Well, if you like what you're doing.

GE:

Well, it has its days. Let's put it that way.

DM:

I'll shut this off.

End of Interview