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2007

## An Interview with Nancy Master

An Oral History Conducted by Claytee D. White

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The UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project

Oral History Research Center at UNLV

University Libraries

University of Nevada Las Vegas

2007

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University of Nevada Las Vegas, 2007

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Recorded interviews and transcripts composing the UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project have been made possible through the generosity of CSUN (grant initiated, presented, and shepherded through the CSUN political process by Andres Moses) and the Libraries Advisory Board. Lied Library provided a wide variety of administrative services and the Special Collections Department, home of the Oral History Research Center, provided advice and archival expertise. The Oral History Research Center enabled students and staff to work together with campus community members to generate this selection of first-person narratives.

The transcripts received minimal editing. These measures include the elimination of fragments, false starts, and repetitions in order to enhance the reader's understanding of the material. All measures have been taken to preserve the style and language of the narrator.

The following interview is part of a series of interviews conducted under the auspices of the UNLV @ Fifty Oral History Project. Additional transcripts may be found under that series title.

Claytee D. White, Project Director  
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## Preface

Nancy Master grew up in a little town called Greenville in Western Michigan. Her dad was in middle management at a refrigerator company and her mother was a librarian and a teacher. Nancy and her two sisters experienced an idyllic childhood, climbing trees, riding bikes, and swimming in Baldwin Lake.

School and church were important activities in Nancy's life. When she first went to college, she was sent to Michigan Girls' State, but switched to the Michigan State campus and found that she liked that much better. During the summer of 1967, Nancy and some friends got involved in the Civil Rights Movement. They went to Mississippi to teach and ended up experiencing an intimidating visit from the KKK.

Nancy taught school in Jackson, Michigan, and also continued with her own schooling. She took time off to work on her dissertation and was eventually hired to teach history at University of Wisconsin. Since there were so few openings for history teachers, she decided to take a library degree. She and her husband Larry and their daughter came to Las Vegas in 1980 at the suggestion of Nancy's uncle, a doctor who had established a practice here. Larry was hired at Roy Martin Junior High, and in February of 1981, Nancy was hired to teach library skills classes at UNLV.

When Nancy first came to UNLV, she worked the reference desk. She became interested in faculty politics and was soon on the senate. She served on the executive committee under Bill Marchant, Sheryl Bowles, and others. Eventually she took over the chair position herself.

These days Nancy works with the history and political science colleges. She does some teaching and proctors for students taking UNR classes on the UNLV campus. Her outreach community work includes Habitat for Humanity and mentoring projects for children-in-poverty. Nancy considers UNLV the great love of her life, after her family.

ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER AT UNLV

UNLV Oral History Project @ Fifty



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Claytee D. White 7/14/2006  
Signature of Interviewer Date



**1: Nancy Master with Rust College students, 1967**



**2: Nancy Master with Rust College students, 1967**

**This is Claytee White. It is July 14th, 2006. We're in the Reading Room in Special Collections in Lied Library. And this morning I'm talking to Nancy Master. Nancy, how are you today?**

I'm fine. How are you?

**Good.**

Good.

**Nancy, I just want to start with a little about your early life. But, first, can you just tell me when you came to Las Vegas?**

I came in January of 1980.

**Oh, so you haven't really been here for a long, long time.**

Yep, 26 years now.

**It doesn't seem like 1980 should be 26 years.**

I know it. It's a long time ago. A lot of changes in Las Vegas.

**Well, yes. So tell me about your early life, where you grew up and a little about your family.**

I grew up in a little town in Michigan called Greenville, Western Michigan. It's near Grand Rapids, which is quite a big city. I have two sisters. My dad worked for a refrigerator company. He was in middle management. My mother was a librarian and teacher, although she stayed home with us until we were in high school, I guess. Then she went back to work. Nice place to grow up. We went to the Congregational Church there, very important in my life. My parents, grandparents and great-grandparents had gone there. That was the center of our life, you know, the school and the church in those days. Then television came and that just changed everything.

**What kind of recreational activities, though, before television?**

We played outdoors. My mother let us out at eight and don't come back before five. That was during vacation.

**But wasn't that wonderful that she could do that?**

It was. Yeah, it was.

**We can't do that anymore.**

No. It was a great life. We rode our bikes and just ran free and played all kinds of games and climbed on my grandparents' apple trees. Oh, I suppose we had fights with the boys across the



street. There were a bunch of girls that are still my friends, actually, after all these years. Yeah, it was a good life. We went to the lake. We were very close to the lake.

**Which lake?**

A small lake called Baldwin Lake. Michigan's just full of lakes. So we were all good swimmers. And, of course, in the winter, we ice-skated and did that kind of thing and had snowball fights.

School was important because school was the other center of your life besides your family and your church if you were affiliated with a church, which I was. That was real important in my life, my church. Just as I grow older, I see how important it was.

**And today is it still important?**

Yes, it is, actually. It still is, yeah.

**And the same type of church?**

It is. I was a Congregationalist, which is just mainly a Protestant. Today I'm a United Methodist and it's no different. Yeah, in fact, a lot of the things that I have done in Vegas -- outreach and that kind of thing -- is through the church.

**Good. Tell me about where you decided to go to college and how that came about. And did you always know that you would go to college?**

I really did. I think it was real important to my parents. My dad went to college, a two-year school. My mother went to a four-year teacher training at Michigan State University. I don't know. I was a very good student. I liked going to school. I just liked school. I don't know. I always did like to read.

But I had a chance to visit a lot of campuses in Michigan. And I went to what's called Girls State, which is a leadership thing for junior girls. They have it still today. The school sends you. That was at the University of Michigan. I didn't like Michigan at all. Didn't like the campus, didn't like the attitude. So I went to Michigan State's campus and I really liked it. It was more of an outreach, the land grant idea. You know, at first I didn't want to go to the same school my mom went to, but I found I really liked it. And it was a beautiful campus, which most people know. So that's where I ended up and I really liked it.

In fact, I think I shed a few tears that first day when we said bye-bye to mom and dad, my roommates and I. And then after that, I never looked back. It was a great experience. It was a

different world. It really opened up my world. I think college does that for people if you allow it to do that. In those days, of course, it was a real privilege to be in the university, not a right.

**That's right.**

Yeah. And I mean I worked like everybody, but...

**Did you work while you were on campus?**

I did.

**What kind of work?**

I worked bussing dishes, the usual lovely activities. I also worked in a library, eventually, but mostly just very easy kind of jobs.

**How did your mother feel about you following in her footsteps?**

I think she liked it. She didn't say too much. She just said, "Oh, you'll like it." I think she thought I was going to pledge the sorority she belonged to, Kappa Alpha Theta. They were very bright girls. Actually, her sorority sister was later the wife of the president of Michigan State, John Hannah. And, actually, John Hannah was certainly one of the premier college presidents in the mid 20th Century. He also served in several government jobs. So I had that connection. But I just never went that route. I went through rush and it was okay. But by then the school was so big that you didn't have to belong. So I chose not to. That was the end of that. And all my friends, except for my one friend Sue, pledged. All my friends were independents.

**Okay. Now, what about your sisters?**

My sister --

**Are there one or two sisters?**

There are two sisters. The older one, of course, was married by then. They were both secretaries. And then later my younger sister got into computers and she worked in the schools as their computer person.

**But you're the middle child.**

I'm the middle child.

**There's supposed to be something wrong with you.**

I know. There probably is. A lot. They would say so.

But we're very close. They married young and had their families fairly young. But we're still

close. They live in Michigan and Ohio. So I see them a lot. We are a close-knit family.

**How do they feel about you living in Las Vegas?**

Well, they thought it was crazy at first. "You're moving where?" I said, "To Las Vegas." Well, my husband's brother, Frank Master, is and was a doctor here. He just retired. So in 1980, Larry wasn't real pleased with his job in Indiana with the state Department of Education. He has a background and a doctorate in education. So Frank said, "Well, why don't you come out to Vegas?"

So he interviewed -- I'll never forget that interview with Carol Sorenson, who was one of the first female big shots in the district. She said, "Oh, well, here's the contract." And it was very easy. I mean they had this -- so we were on our way.

**Now, what is Carol's last name?**

Sorenson. I don't know if Carol -- I assume she's still living. She's part of a group of Mormons that -- when we came here, the district -- a lot of the principal people in the district were of a Mormon background, which was not unusual. I mean they hired non-Mormons, obviously, but it was so much smaller then. She remained a good friend to Larry throughout his career in the district. She was a really great person.

I believe his first principal at Roy Martin Junior High was also -- yes, she was one of the first female principals, Lois Lawson. She's deceased. He liked working under her. So he had a good experience his first few years and made some really good friends.

So that's what brought us here. Larry came six months ahead of me. He came in the fall of '79, and I came cross-country in January of '80 with our daughter, who was very small then, and the dog.

**Did you travel cross-country by yourself?**

Yes, I did. Yeah, I did.

**Now, tell me what you did after finishing college.**

I taught school. I was just talking with Jen Cox about my first year of teaching.

**Where was this?**

This was in Jackson, Michigan. She was just asking me my reactions and what I expected and how it turned out and everything. But I was also in graduate school. I liked the teaching and I

taught on and off over a lot of years, but I really, really felt that I had the ability to get these advanced degrees. I guess when I went away to school, like all girls in my generation, I knew I was a good student and I was bright enough, but we weren't quite as confident as the young women are today or aware of the possibilities you could have.

**I think that's it.**

Yeah. I mean, of course, we're all immature and we've lived in the narrow world.

**But some of us didn't know what the possibilities were.**

No. No one told us.

**That's right.**

My dad, the only thing -- I mean he was great. He said, "You know, I want you all to be independent and have skills so that in case something happens you can always support yourself," assuming we'd marry, you know. And that was okay. But he had a sister who never married. She was a teacher, and so she was real encouraging. She said, "You're bright; you can do whatever you want to do." But as I went along in college, I found I could do what I wanted to do.

**So then after finishing college, you taught for how long?**

Oh, Lord. I taught on and off for quite awhile. But all this time I was in school. And that was my main concern. I finally decided I wanted to be a history professor. And I got right through. I had a committee and I had my dissertation. I took time and went and did quite a bit of research around. I went to the Library of Congress and worked there. I had a special letter for my chair. You had to have one. Today, I guess, you still do. It was fun. It was very strange in this little -- they gave you a little cubicle and they delivered books to you, which I thought was real neat. I got a lot of the information. Then I was traveling around to different cities -- New York, Detroit -- to get information. The topic was the Parish House Movement. It was post-Civil War social history. Then I needed to get a job.

So I got a job teaching history at the University of Wisconsin at Osh Kosh campus. That's one of the branches. I met my husband-to-be there. He was teaching in the college of Ed. So I was working. The dissertation was almost finished, and then I had a series of very unfortunate things happen to my committee. I won't go into that. It's kind of painful. I lost a couple of them, especially Dr. Glick. He was young yet. It was real traumatic. Just one year followed after

another, no excuses, but I was ABD. So here I was with this goofy thing.

But I was back to trying to find jobs in history. And, of course, there weren't any. There aren't any now, in a way. So it hasn't changed. There are not too many jobs. So I thought, well, I always liked the library. I like libraries. My mother was a school librarian, which I thought would be fun. So I decided to go to library school since I was near Madison. And that's what I did. But I also had my daughter and I was working with --

**So tell me about your work during the summer of 1967. Tell me about that period in your life, the 60s. And how were you affected by the 60s?**

Again, I think it's a growth thing, that awareness thing. I don't know. Maybe it goes back to when I first went to school in '61, the fall of '61, to college. I got real involved with student governments, student support groups, all kinds of things. I just liked that kind of thing. I had done that in high school and I liked it in college, only we did more stuff, more interesting things and dorm governance and so on.

I guess we were all aware at the time of things that were going on in the Civil Rights Movement, the beginnings, and we read about them, but we didn't really participate. I don't think I knew a black person until I was in college. My dorm had two black girls. They were roommates. But we all knew each other. I lived in a very small dorm. I didn't live in one of the new mega dorms. I don't know. You get to know people. And I think I had an open heart. I mean I may be naive, but I liked people, and that got me interested. They were friends.

Then I graduated, and then I was working, and then I was in grad school. There was this group that I heard about through the -- and I don't recall a lot of the details, I'll be honest -- a group of activists. They were interested in an educational project at Rust College, which is in Holly Springs, Mississippi, one of the oldest traditionally black schools in the country founded by the Methodist Church. So, you know, I was looking around and reading. And I went over and said, "Well, I'm a grad student and I'm doing some work and I'm teaching." Well, I went to their meetings. We met off campus in a house.

The AF of L-CIO -- I remember that -- one of the local chapters was willing to haul materials and books and all our junk down to Holly Springs in a truck from Lansing. It was a big automobile town. They made all the Oldsmobiles there in those days. So there was a labor union

and there was us, who were willing to -- most of us were grad students or teaching people. "Would you like to go down there?" And I thought, gee, that sounds great. I really wanted to do something.

**How did your family feel about this decision?**

Well, my dad had died. He drowned in '66. So my mom was very nervous, to be honest. She said, "I know you want to do good things." She understood my enthusiasm and my interest and that kind of thing, but she said, "How about a trip to Europe this summer?" And, you know, it's like she knew I liked to travel. And so she -- and I'm like, "I think I'll go to Mississippi." So I said, "I know" -- she was worried more than anything else.

**Of course. My mother was worried.**

And she, because we had had that incident with the Civil Rights workers in Mississippi, said, "Could it be in any other state?" And I said, "No, this is where the job is." I said, "This is not -- we're not registering voters," although we did. I'll tell you we got involved.

But, anyway, we had meetings and training. We had some -- I don't know who they were now. You know, my mind -- of course, we had some black members of the group, Northerner black kids. But we had some people come in that were Southern blacks. I'm thinking is there a difference? Well, of course, it turns out, in a way, of course, there is.

**Well, the whole culture...**

Yeah. And, of course, I had not a clue. But they talked a lot slower.

So, anyway, we got a couple of cars and packed up our duds and we had a couple of fundraisers and off we went. The first night out, we stayed in Kentucky at one of the seminaries near Louisville, free. There were some ministerial students that were interested in what we were doing. In fact, I'm sure a couple of members of the group were later pastors. But I can't -- but that would have been pretty true.

So on we went. The second day we got down there. Here's this pretty nice campus, pretty campus, old buildings, and there was a new boy's dormitory where the men got to stay. It was air-conditioned. I think the central hall probably was the president's office. I stayed, of course, in the female dorm with the women. It was not air-conditioned. A good thing it was a hot summer in Michigan. I lost weight down there. I was small enough, anyway.

Anyway, the students arrived. What it was is we had incoming freshmen from all over the South who had chosen to come to Rust for their freshman year. They had needed skills enhancement, I guess, writing and just background skills. And they were bright enough. So two of my roommates -- these are my roommates in this picture, Corretta and Dorretta. Anyway, they were my roommates and they were young girls. I wasn't that much older, but, you know, they were from Mississippi, both of them. That was fine. And they were my roommates.

We were there seven weeks that summer. And what we did is we taught skills classes. I taught how to use atlases and how to use the library. I had worked in a library. We did little writing exercises. I know it's very casual. Another girl and myself -- she was an undergraduate from Michigan State. So we had these kids.

The first thing the first day, they're shaking their heads, and I'm saying, "Okay, what's the problem?" They said, "We can't understand you." I said, "Oh, I'm sorry." And I said -- I could hardly understand them, but I didn't say that. It's like this is a speech pattern. "You speak so fast." I said, "Oh." You know, Southerners don't speak fast, white or black. So we slowed down. It was pretty funny. They were laughing. We had fun. We were all young.

**That's great.**

There was so much hope, so much of a possibility of things we could do. It really was. And whether this is naive, whether this is -- I don't know at the time. I didn't realize. We didn't have all of this stuff about the guilt and the reparations and everything. We were just kids trying to do some good stuff.

**Yes. Did you get to meet any of the Civil Rights workers, or did you participate in any of the marches?**

We had some experiences, but only passing through I would say. We did a lot of things. There was a swimming pool in the town for the black people, black students, and there was a white one. Of course, we swam with the black kids in the black pool. We also taught them to swim. That was sort of fun because hardly any of them knew how to swim. So that was our recreation. That was attached to one of the big black churches, a Baptist Church, where we attended services. And that was an experience in itself. It was fun. I really liked that. But the swimming pool was neat.

Well, no one had told me not to bring a two-piece suit. So I'm waddling around. I was really

small then. Not a bikini, just a two-piece dark suit. And that was the first thing. They could have cared less, but we had people from the town go by and jeer at us. We also had people -- the cops stopped us. We had nothing in our purses except our ID, no aspirin. They had already told us that because they would arrest you because we were disturbing the city, even in a peaceful way.

**So swimming in the black pool was enough to disturb the city?**

Uh-huh. That and going to the movies and sitting in the balcony with our black students. So we did everything. We were walking in their footsteps, of course, in a way. We learned a lot. I learned a lot about people. In the stores they knew who we were. They did not wait on us. I'm trying to think what else. Whenever we went out to eat we went to the black establishments. We often bought food at the roadside stands. It was a lot easier. We had a visit from the Klan.

**Tell me about that.**

I think it was just meant to scare us, harass us. Needless to say, I was terrified. I'm going to be honest with you. We had open windows -- I mean screened windows in the women's dorm. The boys' windows were closed because of the air-conditioning. And they came one night. There was a circular kind of a driveway around the campus. I don't know if it's still that way or not. I suspect it's not too different. It has not changed a whole lot. But, yeah, they were screaming and yelling. I don't know if they were shooting off real bullets or what, but I was on the floor. I had my face in the sand that was on the floor. Of course, my roommates were beyond terrified, screaming. I'm thinking to myself, I'm lying here on this hot Mississippi night with clogged-up showers and there are awful people outside trying to intimidate me.

**Have you ever thought about writing short stories or writing your memoirs?**

Not really. It was something that I'm glad I did. It made me very happy. It made me proud. I mean being scared is -- you know, so what? They meant to intimidate us.

**Of course.**

But that was it. It was more harassment just on a day-to-day basis.

**And I think most of the KKK, most of it, was harassment.**

Oh, sure.

**But we don't hear about it. We heard about those incidents that proved to be beyond that.**

**But, yeah, I think there was a lot of that.**



And we weren't doing anything. Ours was really an educational mission. We gave advice to them, yeah, do -- but, see, they lived in different towns. They were not citizens of Holly Springs. So they weren't going to register to vote in Holly Springs. So we did. We went down to Old Miss on a field trip, and it was very welcoming. That was a very -- yeah, I know. And we had these -- but there was some awareness I think in the South with white Southerners. Now, this is just -- it's not an epiphany, it's just a feeling I had; that there were a lot of white Southerners who, because they had grown up with blacks in one way or another, knew how to relate to them better than I did. I had no experience with them.

**And we are talking about 1967?**

Yes.

**And we're talking about a period where the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act has already passed.**

Yes.

**And we still have that kind of behavior.**

Right. And we still had hope that we could do things together. Whether I and the group that I was with was acting out of guilt for being white, I don't know. That came so much later, this psychological stuff. We just were having a good time. And we did have a good time. We played tennis. We went swimming. We ate -- first time I had catfish. I had never had catfish. It was fried and I'm like what is this? You people are --

**But isn't it delicious?**

Oh, it is. Bottom feeders.

**That's right.**

I'm like, oh, God. It was okay. But it was so hot there, and we were out in the sun. I mean you know, you're in your 20s. And I lost -- my clothes were hanging on me when I went home. I wish it was that way now.

**So what did your parents and sisters -- your mother and your sisters think about that experience when you got back to tell them about some of the details? I'm sure you didn't tell them some of the things while you were there.**

No, I really didn't. I had friends. My current boyfriend was working in Lansing. You know,

they'd write letters or once in a while they'd call. We'd prearrange it. They were real -- of course, they were kids, too -- they were enthused. I didn't tell them much of anything except what we were doing in the classrooms and playing tennis and taking walks and whatever we -- you know, little field trips and so on.

And just listening to people, I learned. I think I'm a good listener. I've had that ability I think even as a young person. I learned a lot about what a different world they had grown up in. And, yet, different world, but they all also had very good families, nice, supportive families and grandmothers and wonderful people like I had. So that made us sisters and brothers, I guess. And they were bright. I didn't doubt that. But they had so many possibilities.

The only thing that bothered me was I thought they'd get an education and stay in the South. There's not a chance in -- you know. They're going north, especially this one boy that was so smart. He was kind of a scientist. He wanted to be a chemist. He said, "Yeah, I'm going north." He said, "It's better."

**Well, the opportunities would have been so limited for his chosen career in the South that he would not have been able to do anything until years later. But now we're beginning to see a reverse migration.**

We are. It's good, I think.

Of course, he's old now. So he's probably 60 now, 59. So, yeah, I hope he had a good life. A smart kid. But, you know, there was that summer and that possibility. It was great.

**Being in Mississippi, did you hear anything about Freedom Summer?**

Yes, we did. We did see -- I'm sure this is who it was and I'm thinking back; I hope I'm not confusing it with later speeches I went to and so on -- the Reverend Ralph Abernathy. I never saw Dr. King. I never had that privilege. But he was there, and I saw him later, too, when he was a lot older. I never saw anybody beyond him that was big. I mean there were local people, I'm sure, that were locally active in this Civil Rights Movement. But later on I saw these people as older, middle-aged. But that was different. They were all young then.

My family was not unsupportive, but they were worried.

**Well, of course.**

My uncle who lived in Detroit -- of course, later that summer you had the riots in Detroit. And

guess where I was later in the summer? Baby-sitting for my new nephew. I was in Detroit, in Royal Oak, and there was marshal law. So I had a summer of real interesting -- we couldn't get across Detroit to Grosse Ile, which is an island in the Detroit River where he lived. It's like, "You've got to watch out. They're going to come and burn the house." And my uncle is very conservative. I said, "No, they're not." I said, "You'd be angry, too, with these things." He said, "Well, you are really a leftist." I said, "I guess I am." They knew I was certainly a...

But my grandfather was a very liberal Democrat. My mother was, too. So it sort of is not surprising. I grew up with Franklin Roosevelt's face right in my face on the living room, so maybe that influenced me. Who knows? My parents were pretty open-minded. I mean they never said bad things. The only thing that I think that was just -- you know, you have to listen to people and get acquainted with them.

**That's great advice.**

It is good advice.

**Most of us don't get that advice as we're growing up.**

No. They were good that way. Mother said, "Just be careful." But it was great growing up, I'll tell you. It's a personal thing. You grow and you gain confidence and you gain confidence in your belief system and it grows. I guess that's hard to say. And, of course, I was still very immature and very young. But I learned a lot about myself and that was good.

**That's great. And thank you for that information.**

Yeah, too much.

**No, no, no, no.**

Blah, blah, blah, blah. But it was a great summer.

**Oh, that's great. Now, tell me about when you got married.**

Well, I got married in 1970 to Lawrence Master. He's from Louisville, a very wonderful family. He came out of a Jewish background. His brother, the one I mentioned before, Frank, is a practicing Jew here in town. His younger brother Barry is an attorney, Yale graduate, again, the idealist, went to work for Legal Aid. He lives in North Carolina now and has always worked with children and the working poor. He never made a lot of money, but he's got a life he's very proud of. He's a Quaker and his wife's a Quaker. He and his wife, who is an ex-Catholic, became

Quakers, very fine people. So he and I, of course, were always in tune politically, as is my husband. He's very much involved. That's a whole other story. He's always worked with minorities.

But, anyway, we got married and we moved around quite a bit. And, finally, as I said, we came here and he went to work for the district. In 1981, February, I came to UNLV to work.

**How did that happen? Now, you came in 1980. So what did you do for that year?**

I worked at the public library for a couple of months. I worked for Temple Beth Shalom Preschool. I was a preschool teacher, which was -- heck, it was fun. My sister-in-law was with the temple, so she kind of pushed me in the door. I had enough experience with teaching but mostly with big kids. But they said, "Eh, you'll be fine." Oh, I had fun with the three-year-olds.

And then I put an application in here at UNLV. Hal called me one day and --

**And who is Hal?**

Hal was the director. I said, "Oh, sure, I'll come on over." It was terribly casual. I met Mr. Curley, Elmer Curley. He was the head of reference then. I'm trying to think who else was here that I talked to. Well, Marta Sorokin was here, of course, and Ida Bowser. I'm trying to -- and I guess those were the first three people I met that day.

**What is Hal's last name?**

He was the first director.

**Okay. Good. I have it in my notes.**

Yes. He interviewed me, but he said, "Well, you know what? We're hiring somebody. We want somebody that can teach these education classes," a library little skills classes. I said, "Okay." It was for the certificate for school librarians. I said, "Well, I can do that." He said, "Well, we like your background. You've been a teacher. We need a school librarian." I said, "Okay."

Well, it turns out that someone else didn't want to teach them. That's how I got hired and got in the door. But once my foot was in the door, I was here to stay. And, of course, here I am.

**So how long has it been now? How many years really --**

**(End side 1, tape 1.)**

**Hal's last name?**

Erickson.

**Okay. Hal Erickson. So now you're teaching the classes.**

U'm-hm, because somebody else didn't want to teach them. And I really, really liked it.

**So tell me who you are teaching.**

I was teaching teachers who wanted to become school librarians. They were sick of the classroom. I really got to know a lot of people. I made a lot of connections with the district. Of course, in those days the district was small, plus my husband was in the district. So that was good. They've since become good librarians and some are principals.

**So are you still in touch with any of these people?**

Some of them. Most are retired, of course. They were my age or older. Those were good. Billie Mae Paulson taught cataloging. I taught all the other little skills classes, reference. Mr. Curley also taught reference. I also taught library management and this kind of stuff, literature.

**Do we still do those classes?**

No. They have morphed into the North Texas State program, actually. I think for a while Steve, Dr. Fitt, taught some of these. It sort of morphed into that as we got more sophisticated. I think a lot of the school librarians now have their regular library degrees, which is good. But I made a lot of nice friends from that. I used to go to out to their schools and look at the libraries and teach classes there. I really had a lot of fun.

**So you taught some classes on site?**

Yeah. You know, one or two sessions for the 15 weeks. We would just do that to see the libraries and visit. Students liked to see where they were going to be when they became librarians. I made a lot of nice friends and just great people in the district.

Of course, I made a lot of friends and a lot of acquaintances through my brother-in-law. Being a doctor, he kind of mixed with all kinds of people in those days. Some of them were the more notorious people in Las Vegas. He would say, "Guess who that is? That's So-and-so. He's connected." Well, that meant he was a made man. I didn't think much of it, but in those days you kind of went to these big parties where you met just a variety of people.

**What kind of parties? Who gave those?**

Well, attorneys, doctors, his friends. That was the neighborhood where Siegfried and Roy lived around the corner.

**So where did you first live when you first arrived?**

I lived in what's called Charleston Heights on Harmony. It's near Western High School and Garside Junior High School. It was an old Mormon neighborhood. In fact, in those days most of the people there were Mormons. Our house was owned by a former school district person. He was retiring up to Utah, to the St. George area. We got the house from him. He didn't want to sell to anybody that wasn't going to be an educator. Although we were not Mormon, it didn't matter as long as you had that background. They seemed to respect it. Well, they do respect education, of course, even to this day.

**Tell me about your first impressions of the city. You're coming from the East and you're accustomed to things a little different. So how did Las Vegas strike you in 1980?**

It was nice. The air was clear. I'll tell you the first -- I came in January. It was 70 degrees that day. I'm like I can live with this. You know, I was more positive than I thought I'd be. And I saw these boats when I came over the dam and everything. I said to my daughter, "Wow, why do they have boats here? It's the desert." She said, "Mom, we just went by Lake Mead." I said, "Oh, yeah, I forgot," because there were no trees around now. And I said, "Yeah, that's true." Big boats in everybody's driveway. I really liked it.

My brother-in-law says, "The first thing you've got to do is get your driver's license because that's your ID here." I said, "Okay." So I got that in a week.

I thought it was nice. I thought it was pleasant. The air was beautiful. I will say that my brother-in-law and sister-in-law, who is now deceased, took us everywhere. We made these little trips with them -- they had two children and we had our daughter Mary Ann -- up to Utah, out and down to California. So we saw a lot. I liked it a lot. I loved the mountains. I was outdoors all the time. I liked to ride my bike. I could walk. We had our dog and he liked it pretty well. He said, "Well, you know, it's nice now, but it's going to get real hot." I said, "Well, I'm just going to stay outside then and I'm going to stand out in it until I get used to it." It made an easy transition. It was hot, but it was dry. I loved it.

I mean I missed my school that I came from, and I missed my family. But I went back. When I was flying back here the first time in that fall of '80, I thought, gee, this is home now. I saw that old brown dirt at McCarran, which was very small then, and I said, "This is great." I was happy to

be here.

**Wonderful. And what did you think of UNLV? I mean you've seen campuses that are old with ivy growing up the sides of the buildings.**

Well, I liked it because it was a chance to be back to the university. I knew it was young. I knew it didn't have a great reputation at that time. But I really liked the people. And in those days you knew everybody on campus, every secretary even.

**So tell me some of those early people that you remember.**

Well, you know, Hal Erickson was a good director. He really was a nice man. He was also from Michigan. So he took me on because I was from Michigan. He did a lot for the library. He had this nice manner. We used to joke that he would kind of pussyfoot around the old ladies for donations and stuff. But let me tell you something. He got us the basis for our current donation base and for all these wonderful endowments that we have. Of course, we've gotten lots of nice things since and lots of money and recognition, but he was a great director. I really enjoyed him. Do you remember the first president or the president who was --

**Yes. I worked mostly with Bob Maxson. He came in '82.**

Pat Goodall, who's still as we speak on the campus, was the first president I served under. He's a very fine man. Since then and over the last 25 years, of course, I've been very active on the campus, as you know, in governance. I've worked with Pat on some big committees, and I just finished working with him on the Presidential Advisory Selection Committee that chose David Ashley. Pat was a good guy. He had also come from Michigan, University of Michigan campus near Detroit.

And then Bob Maxson came. Bob was a different kettle of fish. Bob was what we needed at the time. He was friendly, outgoing, very Southern, but very entrepreneurial. He saw this place as a place where he could do some things. He took advantage of every opportunity to get money and buildings and whatever he could for the university. It was not a planned process I don't suppose, not like they do today. The foundation was not as active or maybe it wasn't even in existence. I guess they probably were formed at that time. But Bob was -- you'd sit him down in any room and he worked that room. I learned to work a room with him.

When I was chair of the senate the first time, '89-90, of course, I worked with him. I could call

him up directly. "Hi, Bob. It's Nancy." Can't do that now. But it was fun. I mean he was always available. I would discuss things with him and go to the Board of Regents meetings -- oh, that was a wild time. But I admired him. I liked him. I'm sure he made mistakes. He's gotten a lot of criticism. But, boy, that was a growth period. That was an exciting time to be at UNLV.

We were changing. We were becoming a school, a credible place to be and we were getting new faculty. Of course, in the 90s we got even more great faculty, didn't we?

**Tell me about being chair of the senate. How did you get involved in the faculty senate?**

Well, I was working the desk a lot when I first came, the reference desk. I was hired as a reference librarian. Karin Crosby-Brown, one of the reference librarians at the time, was very active on the senate. She was our rep to the senate from the library. We've always been faculty. So she was involved in the period when the regents were giving the campus a hard time. That's when they thought we were, you know, not working hard enough. I guess they still think that.

But, apparently, that's when they saw somebody mowing their lawn. This is the tale they tell. It was during the week and this man was mowing the lawn. "Why wasn't he on campus? Why wasn't he working every minute?" Well, he probably was working very hard. I don't recall who the person was. So they were calling for psychological tests for some of the faculties, kind of weird stuff. Maybe that was Lilly Fong. Who knows? I don't know. I don't want to get people you know too...

But Karin was very outspoken, not always popular in the library. I guess a lot of people didn't like her. I guess I can say that. But she was always away and doing stuff. So I worked her desk for hours. Well, Alice Brown, who was the documents librarian at the time, thought that was awful. I said, "Oh, I don't care. I'm learning." So then she said, "Would you read this stuff we've written?" Some of it was really kind of radical. I said, "Yeah, I guess." She said, "If you find any typos in it..."

So I'm reading this stuff over. I said, "Gee, this sounds pretty exciting." I agreed with what they were writing, so I got involved. And I wasn't on, you know. Al Morey was chair of the senate at that particular time of that incident. She said, "Well, you know, we've got to protest. Faculty have rights." I said, "You're darn tooting." So I was sucked into it.

When she finished her term on the senate, she said, "Would you like to be on the senate?" I



said, "Yeah, I'll run." It was just one of those things. I always like to take advantage of opportunity and take a risk. I thought that would be fun. So I ran. They elected me. Probably no one else wanted it. Go face that stupid, boring meeting. Off I went to the senate, and the rest is history for the next 20-something years.

**What were some of the highlights of being on the senate if you look back over those years?**

Well, a lot of it was pretty cut-and-dry, pretty nitpicky, deciding changes in the handbook, the bylaws, whatever, the committee system. The committee advised the senate, and then we sent that to the president. What I do remember is that there were good chairs and that the president, President Maxson, or provost John Unrue, a very fine man -- he's one of the treasures of this campus -- would come and sit through those meetings with us all the time. I guess that impressed me a lot. But remember we were a lot smaller and there weren't so many things to do. But I admired that.

When I was chair -- there was a great deal of civility between the senate and the administration when they were there. We would always leave a time to ask, "Would you like to say something, Bob?" And he might say, "Yes, I'd like to say something." Yeah, sometimes it wasn't that important, but it was always a positive thing. I remember that. Or maybe that's naive. When I was chair, I always allowed that. I thought that was great that he would come. A lot of people say, "Eh, he's just" -- they were sneering at it and I didn't think that was -- I thought it was good. But, again, it was a different era.

But then I got on the executive committee, which is the committee of the senate that sets the agenda and deals with problems that the faculty might face, assigning the grievance committees and that kind of thing. I enjoyed that and I served under several good chairs. One of the chairs -- he's not here anymore -- Bill Marchant used to be in the college of Ed. He was one of the chairs I served under.

Then Cheryl Bowles became the chair. One day I was on campus walking around. We liked to schmooze a lot on campus unlike the e-mail of today. I saw Bill coming. I thought, oh, you know, that's great. And they said, "We've been looking for you." I said, "Oh?" They said, "We were over at the library." So I said, "Well, what's going on?" I knew it had to be senate business. "Well, would you consider running for vice chair of senate?" And I said, "You want me to be vice

chair?" because that meant being chair of the senate. A librarian? I'm thinking to myself. I said, "Sure, I'll do it." All of a sudden, I said, "I can do this; I can do this." I love doing this. So...

**What does that mean for the library for people from the library to be that active in the senate?**

I was probably the most active. Bob Ball actually opened up the library to service. He's a very outspoken, very smart man, since retired of course, still living as we speak. But I was interested. And I would say -- and I don't mean this to be braggadocio -- but I think Bob and I opened up the library -- and we were faculty and on the committees, but not that active -- to the real possibilities. They could see that we were very smart people -- and we are -- and very good committee members, very responsible, dutiful. Those words are kind of dull. But we did our work.

So I said, "Sure." And they said, "Well, you need to speak with your director or your dean," Mary Dale Deacon, wife of Jim Deacon, who was in biology. I said, "Okay." I thought, boy, she'd be glad I'm female and, you know, she'd think that that was good. Well, I didn't get as positive a reaction from Mary Dale as I thought, being candid now. She said, "Do you think you can do this?" Her husband had been chair of the senate at one point years before. I thought to myself, sure, I can do it. She said, "It's very hard." I don't know if she was questioning my ability, my intellectual capacity or my -- I mean, anybody can run a meeting. But that was a little disappointing. I said, "Yes, I can." I may have read more into it than I wanted to, but anyway, I said, "Sure."

**Do you think maybe she could have always thought that this is going to take too much time from your job?**

Uh-huh. But, on the other hand, all chairs from whatever departments they're from get half-time off. And I'm a faculty member. We were faculty but still considered support staff. So there's some changing going on here in attitudes.

I said, "Yes, I can do it." So when you're vice chair you do some of the nitty-gritty stuff and you learn a lot. I learned a lot. Cheryl Bowles, who's now in the school of nursing I guess, as we speak, long-time campus member, good friend -- I learned a lot. And I said, "Yep, I can do this." That became my life on this campus; whatever I could do for this faculty governance.

To be really candid with you, I don't know that that sat very well with my supervisors and other

deans as they came. I didn't know if they liked that or not. But my attitude was that the university, the welfare of it, comes before the welfare of the individual college. We are a college in that sense. Not that I neglected my duties here. I did not. There might have been something there, and I'm not going to elaborate on that. But...

**Well, I have a question. Sometimes on a lot of campuses across the country, library faculty is sometimes not respected in the same way as teaching faculty.**

That's very right.

**Do you see that here on this campus, or did you see it when you were --**

To a certain extent. I think they thought we were very nice people who provided service, very nice people. They wanted to know us very bright people. We always came through. We've always had wonderful staff here, always. And I'm talking about classified on up through the professional staff. Yeah, maybe, it was a little bit of condescension.

But over the years we have become more active. And I say Bob and I started to open that up. I will give us that credit. We did. And then after, many fine people followed, of course. Yeah, now I think they see us more on par with themselves. Our instruction department certainly under Diane's leadership has helped a lot. Just all the people here as we've grown in the outreach and the service has helped a lot. I think they see us as an equal, a different kind of equal, and they respect us. They always had respect for us, but now I think there's even a little more.

The new faculties in the 90s, who come from really good schools and better backgrounds, depend on us to a certain extent, I think. And they're great people. I like these young people, relatively young. As I get older, they get younger. Yes, I think so.

**What was it like working with the Board of Regents?**

It was interesting. They're all individuals with individual quirks and personalities. By then I had sort of figured out the Nevada political system, and it's very strange and different than Michigan or Wisconsin or Ohio and those places. They weren't as sophisticated maybe as some of the other regents that I had known in passing when I was a student government leader at Michigan State because we knew the board there. They would come and talk to us. But that was a young person's reaction to it. Individuals were great. I liked them a lot.

I remember the first or second regents meeting. I know it was in Reno on the campus there. A

young woman from Reno was the chair that year, Deborah -- I cannot recall her last name. She was in communications. She and I were always fomenting things when there was something we didn't like. Dorothy Gallagher, who is still a regent, got us in the bathroom. She said, "Now, you cannot do this. You cannot put this thing forward." You know, we'd write little things and we'd talk and they'd ask us. I mean we didn't have any power, but they wanted to hear from us. She sort of tried to intimidate us, and I had no way of getting to Bob. He was at the other end. I saw John Unrue, so I said, "Dorothy trapped us in the bathroom." He just laughed. And he said, "Just go ahead with your thing." So I made Deborah do it instead of me. I'll never forget that.

But later on -- of course, I just saw Dorothy this past year with the presidential search for Dr. Ashley, and she's still sharp as a tack. But I recalled that, and she was just laughing about it.

They were good. They had a definitely western view. It was narrow. I think they wanted to be supportive of education, but I don't think the state at that time was willing to commit a lot of money to it. That's just my point of view. There's much more to it than that, much more I don't know about. It's a very narrow view. Yeah, I was a little put off by it because I came from where I came from, a Big Ten.

**And sometimes people don't know what it takes to make a good --**

That's right, and they were new at this. Some of them are still here. Dr. Jill Derby, I got to know her, a very fine, wonderful regent.

**So any other presidents of the university that you remember whose administrations were memorable?**

Oh, yes. Dr. Harter, of course, the most memorable, Carol.

**Of course, yes.**

The reason I decided to be chair a second time was because of Carol. I was not on her search committee, but I was very enthused about her. I thought this is going to be good. There's a female. I'm thinking all the time, "We've got to have a woman." And she really did face a lot of -- when she came in there were so many people that just didn't like her. They didn't even know her.

**Just because she was a woman.**

Because she was a female, and she had an assertive personality. Carol can be tough. She'd have

to be a tough cookie. She had a good background, Ohio University and Geneseo campus of the New York system, which is actually a pretty good school now. It probably was when she was president. But, oh, yeah, I'll never forget that.

**So what changes did you see in that eleven-year period?**

Well, she was much more organized than Bob. She had a plan or she wanted us to have a plan. And, of course, we started with these master plans and strategic planning.

**White papers and...**

White papers. I was on all those committees in the beginning. I had my run-ins with Carol. The first time something came up in senate the fall of her first year here, something we were protesting -- again, we were a recommending body, a protesting body -- and something we didn't like. So we sent her a memo like we did with my name on it as chair. But we all did it together. She knew it was coming, of course. She was coming to the meetings at first. Later she did not. She sent her provost.

She called me in my office. I knew what it was going to be about. She said, "Now, Nancy." You know, she's very, you know...and we're about the same age, a couple years older. She said, "You've got to be a leader here." And I said, "Carol, I am a leader, I'm the chair of the senate." And I thought, you know, I'm usually not this way. She does intimidate you to a certain point. She said, "Well, you can't possibly agree with this thing you sent forward." And I said, "Well, I do. We all worked on this together. And we're going to vote on it." Of course, she immediately sent it back with I-disagree-and-I'm-not-going-to-support-it kind of thing. I don't even recall what it was. But she told me to be a leader, and I said, "I am a leader."

But I probably -- again, this old habit of listening and letting her have her say. And that was fine. I mean Bob had always been able to do that at the meetings. I knew some of the senate didn't like that, but I don't really care. I thought she's going to be heard. We're heard; she can be heard.

So we had our times. But I was ever her loyal supporter in the sense of when she had something good to do or to say or something good happened. I always sent her E-mails. So we had this kind of relationship over the years. I served on so many committees and boards and beyond. We had good communication at the regents meetings and so on and pretty much for the

good of UNLV.

You know, there's a North-South division and it was a real thing. I think provost Unrue under Bob Maxson kind of filled me in on that. And it existed.

**So explain to me or explain to anyone who's listening to this tape in years to come what you mean by that "North-South division."**

Reno was there on top of Carson City. They simply had access to the legislature, even though they only met every other year, for money. And we were growing very rapidly. I know they were jealous and a little challenged by us. Joe Crowley was up there. He was a great president, of course, a living legend in Nevada, still living as we speak.

**And UNR was much older.**

Older, the land-grant school, although I always felt we were a legacy of the land grant. I'm really a land-grant person. They just got more money and better salaries and so on. It made us mad down here. The only way we knew how to react, I mean we'd fuss when we'd meet. "Oh, they're getting more money and we're just always cheated." And, of course, John Unrue had that attitude and we all felt that way. It was based on fact. So we would always fuss about it. It was one of those things. You learned to outgrow it a little and you had to get along with people up there.

And I will say, although I disagree heartily with the present chancellor's actions and the way he does things, his idea that we have got to be a team and work with Reno and work with Nevada State as we speak in 2000, is true. I don't agree with other things, actually. I've had my run-ins with him, the letter and also -- well, that's...

But, anyway, yeah, I think Carol and I and the other chairs from the South certainly were a team as far as that goes. She really had a tough go of it. Anything for the good of this school, I would support her in a broad way. We had our differences, but I think she was a great president. **I think it's great when women begin to work together. I sometimes see businessmen have disagreements in a meeting and then they go play golf together or they go and take their wives to have dinner together or they go drink together. But I'm glad that women business people are finally becoming the same way; that we can disagree and then we can go on and be friends.**

Yeah. Oh, and one of the biggest things I think Carol did was to bring in Juanita Fain, who had

been her friend and colleague at Ohio University. But that was a start of women being in very high positions on this campus, Dr. Penny Amy and others just to name a few. She appointed women and women were leaders. They were in the senate. They were chairs. They were deans. There have been many since, of course, that you could name. It was good. It was impressive. It was always people of quality. Rebecca Mills, lots of them, even some of the older ones that have since retired. And outstanding female faculty, we have got them in legions now. And it's very exciting, very.

**Now, tell me about the buildings on the campus. What did the campus look like when you started, and what does it look like today?**

It looks like a real campus today. When I started it looked -- it was a little shaky. The library was just the round building, and they were building the rectangle building. That is now the law school. I think the first summer or second summer that I was here, the rectangle building was finished. We moved some of the books from the round building over to that new building. That was a most exciting summer. We had more fun. Chester Davis worked in circulation, since retired. I believe he's still living in Florida. He organized this moving. Oh, my Lord. They'd go by with these trucks, and we would, of course, be at the reference desk there on the second level just laughing. Oh, it was just craziness. It was a fun summer. It was fun because we were a real library now and we were moving into this great new building. We had a lovely open house and a lovely celebration, which we've had since in league for many nice things. So it was great.

Then all around us, all these buildings were going up. Part of them come from donations. Like I said, Bob Maxson took money where he could get it. If we got an engineering building before we got a new library, that's the way it was. He took advantage of it. It took us awhile to get a library. We got dorms with bond issues and so on. It was a struggle. But every time you'd turn around, there were fewer parking spaces for us. That's the biggest thing. Yeah, pretty neat.

**Now, for a very brief period we had a president named Kenny Guinn.**

Yes, we did.

**Do you remember anything about that brief period that he was on campus? What stands out?**

The fact that he did not really cooperate with the senate. I would remember that, wouldn't I? I

mean Kenny came in with a big reputation. He'd been superintendent of the public schools here. He was head of the gas company and so on. He's governor now as we speak. He did that for -- what? -- a dollar or something while we found our new president.

When we met with him, he was not real warm with the leadership of the senate. I was on the executive committee then. That was not a real good year. He just kind of ignored anything that we sent to him. I don't know if he really did or not. But my recollection was that it was not a pleasant year for us.

We wanted John Unrue to be the interim president. We had held a meeting in Ham Hall lobby. And the regents were there, and we were giving the regents -- I was one of those telling them -- a little spiel on John, "Why can't he be the interim?" Well, of course, we might as well have never had the meeting because they were already decided they wanted Dr. Guinn. So that was a disappointment. And Guinn knew that. He knew we wanted Unrue.

**Oh, so maybe that's one of the reasons that --**

Yeah, he probably wasn't real happy to see any of us.

**And following Guinn is when we had -- who was the president following Guinn?**

Carol Harter came.

**After Guinn?**

Yeah.

**Okay. And you've also been involved in the selection of the most recent president.**

Yes.

**So you have always had your hand in the policy making here on campus.**

In an indirect sort of way, in just a servant role. Frankly, I'm of a generation of people who were taught to serve in any way they could, which is maybe just kind of a dinosaur attitude now. I don't know.

**No. I think it's wonderful.**

Yeah, this was a pretty challenging search committee. And then when the regents committee -- I mean we were advisory and we knew that, of course. We were made up of faculty and townspeople. But we thought for sure they'd at least listen to us. And when they selected -- and, by the way, he was a fine man, the superintendent of West Point -- we were a little upset. But we



were pretty lucky that Dr. Ashley --

**(End side 2, tape 1.)**

**When Dr. Harter's era ended, it wasn't as pleasant as it could have been.**

No.

**And the chancellor played a role in this. You were on a committee that had a meeting with the chancellor. What was that like?**

When Carol suddenly retired, in quotes, or stepped down before her contract ran out, it was a little surprising. I had heard rumors. I'm not really in the inner circle like I was most of the time. But it was a little disconcerting. She was doing so very well and had been. So a bunch of ex-chairs, the more loudmouths among us -- and I'm not a loudmouth, but these are people who have always had their fingers in things -- decided that we didn't like the way this was handled.

As you recall previous to this, the regents had given up their power to fire, which was real stupid as far as we were concerned.

So this being the stage, we wrote this letter never thinking the very conservative R-J would publish it. And, of course, they're going to because it's controversial. So we sent this letter protesting this whole thing. It was a serious letter. It was scolding the chancellor, I suppose, although on the same editorial page or letter page, there was one from one of the professors here and his was very strong. So we sent it in. And, of course, it was published.

Then the E-mails started to flow, and I got a phone call from the chancellor. I mean I wasn't at home, but he called me at 8:00 a.m. on a Sunday morning wanting to get together. So when all of us had the same experience, we got together and set up a meeting with him. Of course, everybody's saying -- I mean I don't know how many E-mails from faculty and my colleagues saying, "Watch out; he's tricky." I thought what can he do? There are five or six of us in the room.

So we went to meet on West Flamingo at the system headquarters down here. He waltzes in with this guy. And I'm thinking what is this, his bodyguard? Turns out this guy is his attorney. I thought he was a bodyguard. He didn't introduce us to the guy. But, finally, one of the other fellows said, "Well, who is this?" And he said, "This is my attorney."

So it was just that he wanted to know what we wanted, why we were so upset that Carol was

gone. "We didn't fire her. She stepped down." Well, come on. Carol's a leader. Carol relished being president of this university. She was doing a great job in the middle of the capital campaign, which she had contributed major leadership to. She steps down? "Well, she's going to be in charge of it still, and she's going to have the Black Mountain think tank."

And I'm thinking, yeah, right. I said, "Well, you know, she's one of the premier female presidents in this country." And there are many now. And she's been with NCA and so on. "Well, this is my job."

And he wanted to know what we wanted. What do you mean what do we want? We want a voice in this. "Well, your job is to run the daily concerns of the faculty or ascertain what they are, and mine is to run the system." He said, "The regents can't do it. They need somebody like me to shepherd them. They have other jobs," which, in a way, is a good point. Well, sure.

**He's like a paid executive director. So I understand that.**

Yes, he is. And that's true. And he's smart. He's rich. We told him we resented his interference in the school district search, and we kind of resented this, and we wanted to work with him. And he said, "Well, we've got to work together as a system on this medical school and problems."

Well, we agreed with that. And I do.

He made all this money by -- he's an ambulance-chasing attorney. He made all his money that way. I know that from talking with the people that were here in the early days, including my brother-in-law. But he's very --

**And he invested the money well into communication.**

Well, he's a multimillionaire. He's a powerful man and he gets what he wants. But I don't think he understands how education operates on the day-to-day, which he kind of admitted. I will give him that. "Oh, you guys run the place. That's your job. I'm not going to reach down and tell the chemistry department how to operate," or whatever examples he used. Okay, well, we know that. That's an obvious thing.

But we just let him know that we felt that this process and the fact that the regents no longer had the ability to contribute to the firing of executives of the colleges were stupid. So...

It was interesting. And it really was kind of a "fait accompli" because he had already done what he wanted to do.

**And it wasn't going to change.**

It was frustrating, frankly.

**Tell me about how your job here in the library -- you told us about the beginning -- how did it change over time?**

It changed because of all the electronic developments. At first it was slow. I'll never forget when OCLC first started.

**Would you tell me what that means?**

I think when we first started having CD Rom and CD Rom screens and so on, that was nice. There was more material available. I remember the faculty all through the years, and still, complaining about using microfilm and microfiche and the readers. Of course, those have improved.

The card catalog disappeared and it went on line. That was pretty exciting. It's a lot easier to use. You know, some of the older people were complaining.

I really liked the new things. I knew I had to change. Change is change is change. Everything changes. It made my job easier. There were frustrations, technical things and glitches. We all had those. But then we got our own personal PCs. At first we shared one back in the reference area, but that was all right. We got E-mail and Lotus Notes and all kinds of things.

Then, of course, the electronic databases and digitizing everything in the world, which the new faculty, the students who live in this new age with text messaging and phones and laptops and wireless -- and this is as we speak now -- it made the library world pretty exciting. Also, though, it's made us scramble around and redefine who we are and what we do because somebody could set up a little broker information kiosk in the mall and do some of the same things we do. Of course, they couldn't afford all the connections, the databases. But in reality, they still could do that.

So we had to go with the flow and learn to use these things. I think that's improved our instruction level. We've reached out to the faculty. We're in their faces all the time getting them to use the library, letting them know what we have. That's liaison, and that started before Patty came, Patty Ianucci, our new dean. She's really speeded it up, so to speak.

**Okay. Stepped it up a level.**

Yeah. And that's her big thing -- outreach.

**Explain to me how you -- which college on campus do you deal with?**

Now I deal with all of education except curriculum instruction, which Jen Fabbi has, and I have the history department. Up until last year I had history and political science. I had social work before that. It changes as we get new faculty, so now I handle history and most of education.

**So tell me -- you're going to work with the history department. Give me an example to explain what the liaison work is that you do.**

Okay. In August or in September early, we have a new faculty orientation and we meet the new people. So you send them a welcome letter. We get the names from the campus. Then the library hosts them for a little thing and we meet them. We drag them around and give them a little tour and offer our services. Then you send them -- I do -- I send them a letter or an E-mail -- now I e-mail mostly -- of welcome and what's available and who I am and where I am and you-can-contact-me kind of thing. And most of them do. They're pretty interested.

This last year we had the new faculty fund and that gave each new faculty about a thousand dollars to spend on things to beef up their part of the collection. That was neat, and that gives you more.

I also send an electronic newsletter, which I call "Lied Leads," L-e-a-d-s, and just new things they might want to know about, a review, a new database or whatever.

**So how often do you send "Lied Leads"?**

It's kind of gone down to once a semester, which I guess is acceptable.

We also try to go to a faculty meeting. Now, I don't go to the first one because that's too hard and the chairs don't like that. So we go and tell them what's available and that we're here. Please, if you want us to teach a class...

One thing that has developed and I think this is sort of interesting, in the way we teach or approach them is I've had more one-on-one sessions or two-on-one sessions with undergrad and grad students since the electronic age has started. Why? I'm not sure. The students study differently now. They study in groups and they use the laptops and so on. But my off-the-reference-desk -- that's what we call those kind of sessions -- are like, you know, a lot. And they often grow out of just -- I don't know -- knowing people, having the instructor contact

you, or teaching a class. So that's been different.

That's the kind of thing we do. We also solicit suggestions for databases they want to buy. Everything we've bought in the last couple of years have been wonderful sets of primary documents. I had an e-mail from -- I think it's Elizabeth White in history saying she is teaching differently and her students are writing and learning differently because of these collections, which is quite a powerful statement I think. She's a fairly young faculty member, so she can give different kinds of assignments. And, of course, the instruction department I'm sure teaches differently.

I do teach, but I also have a lot of contact with people. I also proctor for most students that are taking classes at Reno from here. So that gets me some interesting contacts, as well. That's just strictly voluntary service.

**Now, tell me about the community outreach also that you do outside of UNLV.**

Over the years, I've done lots of different things. I got involved with a weekend assistance program. It's called WEAP, W-E-A-P. We provided food and necessities, personal necessities, for people when the other social agencies were closed. That's a Methodist Church and Lutheran Church thing. My young pastor and I were involved in that. In about '89, we set that up. I was one of the founders.

I've been involved with Habitat for Humanity and worked with Jimmy Carter on a house. Probably one of the highlights of my life. I always admired the guy. Not the greatest president, probably.

**But the greatest ex-president ever.**

Yeah. An unbelievable man. And he's a good carpenter like Jesus was. Interesting. I'm sure that's his connection. And his wife is, too. She's very good. I have worked with them on and off through my church.

Mostly now, Habitat's gotten quite technical. They have a lot of people who can do the technical things, which I can't do. So we clean up lots. We provide food. So you do what you can.

I've just been involved recently with a school district sanction project, children-in-poverty mentoring project, which got me back working with the little kids, the K through five, mostly

at-risk schools. I came in the back door, to be honest, through my church. But, of course, we can't advertise that because of church-and-state separation. But it is a project with the district. So I figured because of my connection with education and I still know an awful lot of people in the district...

I went to work at C.P. Squires Elementary a couple of years ago. This is an award-winning school. Marcie McDonald is the principal. It's 95 percent Hispanic and some black youngsters. It's a big school. They've been called at-risk, but you don't feel that way when you step through the doors. There is a very positive energy there. The teachers are -- a lot of them are young and a lot of them old and they're excellent. There is just this energy there and this passion to teaching devoted to these kids whose families are pretty devoted to them as Hispanic families tend to be. They carefully pick them up and come when they're needed.

But this has been a chance to outreach, a chance to apply my background in education and my experience with all kinds of teaching -- and it's kind of universal, even with children -- and to indirectly mentor this young teacher that I was assigned to.

**That's wonderful.**

That was just happenstance, serendipitous. And to tell you the truth, this has been among the best things I've ever done in my life. It's a happy experience. These children -- of course, most little children are -- are such sweet children. I don't know if that's the background or what. But they come up to you and hug you. When you come into the room, they get out of their seats, which I guess they're not supposed to do, and hug you and they're glad to see you. But the teacher is glad to see you, too. That was a happy thing. I've had a chance to do a lot of enrichment with them, bringing in my own materials and personally buying books for their room and stuff, which I wanted to do. So that kind of thing.

I don't know how -- to be frank again -- how well received that is by my supervisors or by the library or if they didn't care what I do. But, to me, that's my outreach. And, actually, that's something that this current dean is big on. I don't know if that's the format she wants it to take, but that's the format as a senior person I'm taking. And I feel -- as a faculty member, like other faculty reach out, out of their departments and go on their own -- I'm here, I serve, I'm a good librarian and this is the way I reach out. It makes UNLV hopefully look good and it makes the library look

good.

**I think so, too. And I think the new dean is happy with this.**

I think she is. I just haven't ever talked with Patty about it. She's so, so busy.

**Well, when I told her that I was interviewing you, she just happened to come to Special Collections this morning. I told her I was interviewing you today. And she said, "Oh, yes, she has wonderful community outreach." So I think she likes that.**

And I'm sure she does. She is a really enthusiastic, great dean. We are truly lucky to have her. And a great librarian, I mean the modern librarian.

**Yes. UNLV receives over half of its funding from donations. And a lot of other universities around the country -- same place now. Do you think this is a good way to run a business of higher education?**

I don't know how good it is, but I think it's reality. As an undergraduate the State of Michigan paid for most of my tuition, in a sense, probably 50 percent in those days. Now the states pay maybe 30, 27 percent of the student's tuition. So, yeah, we need other sources.

I don't like the big business model. But I think it's been overly maligned for higher Ed. It is a business. And even Carol Harter said, "Well, you know, I'm a scholar and an educator." And that's true. She said, "But here I've been a fundraiser." That's what it is, and she's good at that, as well.

But, yes, I think we have to do it. Everybody's after that, those donations, from a very small pie. Other units in the community want the money. We've gotten our share. It's been good. And, of course, the federal grants and that kind of thing -- oh, definitely, this is the way of the future. We've got to get out there and hustle, unfortunately.

**What do you see as the role that sports have played on this campus over the time that you've been here?**

Pretty exciting. I might add when I was chair the first time, Mr. Tarkanian was coach and he is a great coach. He drives you crazy sometimes. Part of being a chair -- you don't get it now -- but the perks were absolutely tremendous basketball tickets. I had better seats than my brother-in-law, who had great seats because he gave a bunch of dough to the university. And I love that. Of course, I love sports. It was good for us. When we won the NCAA championship in 1990, it was

very exciting. I was chair that year. That was so exciting.

But already there are rumblings about the problems with Tarkanian and Maxson. And, in a sense, he brought Maxson down and all things attendant to that, many of which will probably never be known. But it gave us a head-up. It gave us a start.

I'll tell you, I think many urban universities that are very good schools today -- the University of Louisville, the University of Memphis, places like that -- like we are, serving urban communities, have started with great athletics and they still have them.

I think it's been positive despite all the problems and challenges. I think part of the reason that Carol was so successful was because of her commitment, her ins at the NCAA. Plus, she's a big sports fan. It's improved a lot. We've had wonderful ADs and good coaches. I think it's an important part of the campus, and I support it because I love athletics. And I love women's athletics. That's been even more important to me; to see the women do well.

**How do you feel about satellite campuses? We have a campus now over on --**  
Shadow Lane.

**-- Shadow Lane, and we're talking about another campus that will be an outgrowth of the community college in this university and the state college, as well. What do you think about satellite campuses?**

I think they're inevitable and they already exist. I think the one at Shadow Lane, the medical campus, is great. It's very attractive. It serves us well. We've run out of space here. We are land-locked. As we grow, they're a necessity. And I think if we're going to keep an edge on some of these proprietary schools that have come in like NOVA and Regis and all of those -- and they get a lot of students and they serve a good purpose -- we're going to have to these. They're convenient. They're innovative. They serve a growing urban and suburban population.

**This is wonderful. I just have a couple of other questions.**

Sure.

**In a city like Las Vegas, what is the importance of having a research-one university, having a good university?**

We're well on our way to that goal thanks to Carol and Bob and all of our presidents and our faculty. If we want to be something more than the number one tourist destination -- and I think we



are, and I think that's a wonderful thing that we are -- we're going to have to have the schooling and the educational infrastructure that will attract people here. We're beginning to get it, I think. It's going to be a battle.

Given society's attitude towards education and the lack of parental support, we're darn lucky that our schools aren't in worse shape. And that makes the university -- the burden on them very heavy. We have to make up sometimes for what the schools lack. It's not always their fault, of course. It's very important to have it as long as we don't lose sight of teaching and teaching our undergraduates well.

Research, teaching and service are the three components of any great university. One should not dominate. They should be in tandem. I hope that's the way it will be. I really do.

I have great hopes for the university. When I'm ready to go, I think there are good people to hand it over to. But I'm not quite ready to go yet.

**Good.**

Not quite.

**We have a Millennium Scholarship here in Nevada. What else should we be doing to improve the quality of education for our undergraduates?**

Oh, boy, that's kind of a hard one. You get into a lot of societal things that we have no control over. They bring those problems from the schools with them. For the most part, the schools in this country historically have done a pretty good job of educating the masses, so to speak. And I know we've done a lot of remedial work.

Maybe we need to work closer with the community colleges and Nevada State and develop a plan that will -- and work with the schools, of course -- I don't know what it will be; I wish I was that smart -- to improve the preparatory education our students are getting, some kind of partnerships. I don't know. There are lots of things going on. This is well into the future, long after I'm dead and gone. But that will help our students do well here.

But any opportunity we have as working in a team and cooperating and not name calling and not blaming each other and we're not "Tumbleweed Tech" to them and they're not a crummy school district to us. Stop that. Again, as much as I disagree with the present chancellor on many things, his idea of this cooperation and teaming, reaching down is fine. I think that's a great goal.

And I do applaud him for that. How we're going to do it? Better minds than mine, although I want to be a small part of it.

**Good. Tell me about what you see as a couple of the primary changes that you've seen on this campus during your time here?**

Well, growth, the physical growth, of course.

**And the city.**

And the city itself, just massive, too big. It's difficult to drive around here. I remember driving from Charleston Heights over there and down across to the public library on West Flamingo. It's still there. Fifteen minutes.

**And now?**

And now it's probably 45. I don't know. Terrible traffic. Also, the fragility of the environment has been violated. That bothers me a lot. The water, the air, so on. I guess it bothers any thinking person. It was not carefully planned. But that's kind of hindsight, I guess.

**And I don't know if that growth could have been planned.**

No, I don't think so, either. It's just an exciting place to live.

The university's growth has been better planned. We've done okay. And I think the growth is okay. And we're going to have to grow, but a thought-out growth, a planned growth, not overly planned. Strategic planning has its limits. We need to be open to invasion and suggestions from people to make this a better place.

But we've grown. Our libraries have grown, our public libraries, certainly our social lives and our arts have grown here. That's the great thing. And the arts on this campus are always the center, fabulous, these wonderful people. That's very exciting to me.

**The last question that I have for you -- and I'm going to ask for your comments also -- what do you see as the future of UNLV?**

I see it growing perhaps incrementally in the next few years on satellite campuses and in any other facilities or in any other way. I see Nevada State taking a bigger role, which is good. I see us becoming maybe the flagship for really good students and maybe the students that have more challenges going to the community college and Nevada State. It's probably already a reality, which is not a bad thing.

I hope we can remain flexible and open and be that premier university serving urban population in a very challenging area, in a high-growth area, and have opportunities for all learners, young and old. I think we've done a pretty job of doing that, and we're even going to do a better job.

Our faculty is just world class. That's our greatest strength. And the old faculty are great, too, of course. I'm one of them. So I'm not going to put us down. We've done a good job.

**Yes, you have.**

Still putting up with some of the stuff.

**So any comments? Did I miss anything that you think is really important about your time here, about the accomplishments, your own personal accomplishments? Anything that you would like to share?**

I've just enjoyed it a lot, watching it grow. I mean other than my family, I suspect that UNLV has been the great love of my life. I'm glad I was here.

**That's wonderful. I thank you so much.**

**(End side 1, tape 2.)**