

Oral History Session: November 16, 2017

Participants:

Dr. Paul Adams

Dr. Christopher Breiseth

Dr. Francis “Mike” Michelini

Dr. Jim Rodechko

Dr. Bob Heaman

Archivist/Recorder: Elizabeth Sullivan

Transcribed by Mollie Rance

Christopher Breiseth: Okay, it's November 16, 2017. We're high above the Susquehanna in Cohen, and today we're particularly delighted that Paul Adams is going to be here and share his perspective. Dr. Michelini is here. Elizabeth Sullivan is keeping track of all of this. Jim Rodechko and Bob Heaman continue our—it's not a [inaudible] troika—I guess more of a quartet. The Wilkes Quartet.

Jim Rodechko: The four horsemen!

CB: By the way, because I do a lot up in Maine, I've discovered that the DaPonte String Quartet is up there. The people up there know it, and they know it by that name. It all started here at Wilkes. Paul, what we've been doing is, in a fairly unstructured way, have been moving chronologically through a lot of the talk about Dr. Farley, and we've actually had [Clayton] Karambelas here for one session, and Mike [Dr. Michelini] of course spans the crucial part of the Farley years. So Mike has said a lot about the Farley years, and about the transition organizationally to his presidency, and to the division structure that was being implemented when the flood hit. We've spent a lot of time on the [Agnes] flood, which doesn't mean we don't want to spend more. And we've gone through his presidency, and at the last meeting we had Tom Kelly. So he worked for Dr. Farley, and Dr. Michelini, and of course for Dr. Capin. So he was a bridge figure of some importance. We didn't get to Bob Capin in time, unfortunately. Because like you, he was a student here. So he had perspective from a student's view of the institution, as well as becoming a faculty member and administrator. So it seems to me the unique perspective—perspectives—that you bring, as you did start as a student, and while you have left a couple of times for very short periods, your life has been at Wilkes. And you have served 4 Presidents, and I mean this in the most affectionate way possible: you've survived. Which, organizationally, in colleges and universities is noteworthy. And I think what will be revealed in your comments is a generous temperament of someone who looks first to say, “How do we deal with this? How do we solve it?” And in that way, in some ways very much you were a product of the George Ralston era. One of the things we said about George is that he, understanding Dr. Farley's take-charge attitude, is that he learned to shield his enterprise from Dr. Farley's intervention. And I was still fighting that with you guys when I got here, for most of the time that I was here, which I think was to the benefit of the students. So starting out, reflecting on Wilkes as a student, how you perceived it, and then after you've talked about that, I'd like you to reflect back on the administrative history of those days, particularly with Dr. Mike here to hear it and respond to it. Reflecting back as someone who's been the longest-term administrator in the history of the college and university. And I must tell you that yesterday I was going through the Sordoni Exhibit, when who should approach me with gusto, just short of an embrace, was Walter Placek. And when I told him what we were doing, his first reaction—I said,

you know, Paul, except for George Ralston, is the longest tenured member of the staff at Wilkes. And he said, "I came in '57. If you count my part-time teaching, I was here longer."

Jim Rodechko: Walter said that?

CB: Walter said that. So when I make the claim that you're here long term, it is remarkable.

Paul Adams: Well, I would tell you there's a staff person who's been here longer than me, and that's Joy Rinehimer. Joy was Gene Hammer's secretary when I started here as a student.

CB: Right.

PA: And Bob always reminds me that the longest serving person is Ben Fiester, who started here in 1956, I think.

CB: '56, but Ben has not been doing anything with the university [in regard to] teaching.

PA: No, he teaches now.

CB: He still does? Then he is, and we've said we wanted to talk to him.

Bob Heaman: Ben Fiester framed all of that. And he's still here.

CB: And he was part of an administrative structure that Mike put together, so we should talk to him. But having said all of that, talk to us about your student days, as you understood Wilkes as an institution and its value to you in terms of your education, what you've thought about that for students.

PA: Well, clearly, if you go back and look at my experience at Wilkes I probably represent I think what Wilkes tries to do for young people. I was not a very motivated high school student. I was, in fact, not very intellectually curious then, and probably the first few years that I was at Wilkes. I had only ever really applied to two places: Wilkes, and the community college in Binghamton, which is Broome Community College. And I had always just wanted to play football at Wilkes, because I had [for] a bit of my life, early on I spent in Forty Fort when Wilkes had its long winning streak. So I became enchanted with Wilkes football, and used to clip all the articles. I'd keep a scrapbook, and somehow that translated to me wanting to go to college, and play football. And I was able to come down here, and there were a number of student athletes here who had come from my high school, notably Harry Hoover. You guys probably remember Harry. Harry had played here, and was an assistant coach, so he was very helpful in getting me here. So really the only reason I came here was to participate in Athletics, and you know, did so for four years.

CB: What year did you begin here?

PA: 1973. Yes, I came here the year after the flood. And notably, as a football player, the year after Bobby McBride died. And people always made note that that was really the change in Rollie Schmidt at that point, that that had had such a traumatic effect on him that Rollie was really never the same, which is you

know, very understandable having had him die at the last football game of the year. But you know, I came here as an undeclared student, to play football, and back in those days, I'm not sure there was a lot of rhyme and reason as to how they—we didn't have a terribly sophisticated administrative operation, I don't think, in Student Affairs. At that point, the housing operation managed to place me, an undeclared freshman football player from Binghamton with a roommate who was a senior Electrical Engineering major from Greece. So you probably couldn't have had more distinct experiences than we had. However, without that pairing, I probably—perhaps I would have met my wife and married her, but I made a connection with his girlfriend, and she roomed with Jean, and that's how I ended up knowing Jean, so that was my actual good fortune in the end. But you know, when I think about how I progressed through Wilkes the thing that was probably most influential for me that's led me to where I am now is that [during] my junior year I became a Resident Assistant. And so that started me in being exposed. And I was a Resident Assistant at Pickering Hall, and Gore Hall, and had a fairly good experience with that, I think, to the point where I graduated and went back home, and taught elementary school for 2 years. I taught 6th grade. But it was at a time in the country, I think, when teaching positions were few and far between. And while I had jobs, full-time jobs, they were always just one year-appointments at a time, and that got a little tiresome. And after two years, the Directing of Housing that was here then, Joe Marchetti, was leaving. Of course, your relative [Michellini], Joe Marchetti.

CB: Yeah.

PA: And I think at that point they were very much looking for someone to come and run the residence halls. And Joe talked to me about whether I'd ever be interested in that. I came down, and one day just spent a few minutes with the Dean, and he offered me the job. I didn't really know George. I mean, I knew George, but I didn't know him really well. I never filled out a resume, never made an application. He just kind of hired me on the spot.

CB: Which linked you to the Farley era.

PA: [laughs] Yeah, exactly. But it's something that would never ever, ever happen today because, you know, perhaps it speaks to the way George operated, or perhaps the way college operated back then, but I had no business being the Director of Housing. I had a Bachelor's degree; I knew Wilkes. I knew a little bit about the residence halls, but I certainly had no Student Development training, or anything like that. I kind of just learned by the seat of my pants in a lot of different ways. But you know, at 24, I was running the residence halls here. And that was an opportunity I never could have had in any other setting but my alma mater. And so that was 1979 when I came back, and Mr. Capin was the President. And of course I worked directly for George, and reported directly to him. And at that point, we were a very, very small Student Affairs staff. Student Affairs today is about 80 people at Wilkes. Back then, it was George as the Dean; Jane as the Associate Dean; Arthur Hoover as an Associate Dean; myself; Jean, my wife was the Associate Director of Housing; and then Rachel Lohman, and Bill Burke, and that was it when I started. So you know, you're talking 7 people, maybe.

CB: And a secretary.

PA: Well, Peggy, yeah. And Jane had a secretary, Toni Hallis. Well, I'm not sure if Toni was there at the very beginning. But yeah, there were a couple of secretaries. But Student Affairs was a pretty austere organization, which is kind of reflective of George. But we did everything. Now, today, it's—

CB: That reflected the administrative structure of the institution. I mean, we spent a lot of time talking about the emergence of the Dean of the Faculty position. I mean, even when I came it was the President, the Dean of Faculty, and Department chairs, that was it. So you captured a dimension of the early Wilkes for the first 30 years.

FM: What I wrote down because it triggered things: it seemed to me the environment welcomed students into responsibility. When I think of the Biology Department and its students, they were doing research as juniors and seniors when it was unheard of to do research other than at the graduate level. To make the student [in charge of] student housing, or even the responsibility of a dorm proctor, that's an element we've really never [had].

CB: That's [a] good [point]. And Cathy DeAngelis was the health [staff]. As a student, she was the health service system.

FM: And it was almost against your will. It's not a conscious thing. It's just the way it was. They didn't interview a national [group].

PA: No. You probably could speak to this. I mean, one of the things, one of the transitions, I think, that went on between the time that I guess I graduated, and the time I came back to work here was the transition from having a Dean of Men and a Dean of Women to having a Dean of Students, and an Associate Dean of Students. So there was that recognition of not that gendered division. And that I think George was always viewed as the person in charge. Jane reported to him. But he had the title Dean of Men, and she had Dean of Women. And then that transition. Because of course Linda Hobrock was the Assistant Dean of Women, and Ed Balchukaitis I remember being the Assistant Dean of Men. And I think Joel Kane maybe, is the name I remember.

FM: Joel Rome.

PA: Joel Rome. Joel Kane I played football with. Yeah. Joel Rome. You're right. So I mean, I think that was an important transition from the time that I left as a student to when I came back in that 2-year period.

CB: Give us a word portrait of George Ralston.

PA: Well, of course, I mean it's hard to take away Dr. Farley's influence on Wilkes, but when I think about the nature of Wilkes, I often wonder whether anybody had a more indelible imprint on its culture and character than George. Because George was all about individual attention, and seeing potential and goodness in everyone. And I'd like to think that that's carried through to today. That while the campus has changed dramatically, physically, that what transcends the generations is that care for the individual that I would directly attribute to him. And for me, among all of the things he's done, that was his lasting and greatest gift to Wilkes.

CB: Granting that, which I think is a beautiful and telling point, say a little about his *modus operandi* as you experienced it.

PA: [Laughter] Well, George as an administrator, just as Dr. Farley—I mean, I didn't know Dr. Farley, but I've heard stories—would never survive today in this administrative environment. I think what you characterized earlier about George insulating his operation from the rest of the college is very apt. You know, we were very loosely coupled from the rest. I mean, George just didn't affiliate well with the Andy Shaws of the world, or whoever else it was. I always understood—I'm not sure George got along really well with John Chwalek. I don't know if that's really the case, but you might know that. I don't know. Which was why Career Services always reported to External Affairs, and not George.

FM: George was a bachelor. One of the guys going to Columbia every weekend, getting Master's degree work. But when he became a husband, and a father, I would say if there was any withdrawal from relationships, it was not a withdrawal individually as much as it was [that] his focus became total dedication to his wife and children.

PA: He always—I'm trying to think of how he always said this—it was the way he ordered his life: he always said it was God, Wilkes, and his family. That's what he always told me. Well, I mean, I think it was a little tongue-in-cheek but that's what he always told me.

FM: No, I think that's apt. I don't mean to interject, but this triggers some other thought. I think increasingly, my picture of Dr. Farley as an administrator since we began these discussions has changed significantly, substantially. In realizing that many of the people that he had working around him knew when not to tell him something. Would you agree? And I think George was a perfect example. John Whitby was a perfect example. He would not answer a question about the Admissions class for September if Dr. Farley asked point blank. And John Chwalek, the same thing. They were performance-oriented, and said "You'll know when the freshman class gets here whether I did my job." Or "You'll know when these students get jobs, whether I did my job. How I do my job, if it's playing golf with Shaughnessy in Connecticut for a weekend, that's none of your business."

CB: Last time you suggested that that characteristic was among guys who had been in the war.

FM: That's right.

CB: Who had a sense of their own agency. And so it'd be interesting—and there's no one around to answer this anymore—whether Dr. Farley in the period of '36 – '42 or '43 –were the people around him that way? I would guess that could well have been a post-war evolution, and that was not unusual on the campuses. I mean, this was not unique.

FM: And it permitted him to be more of an idealist.

CB: Which is what the college presidents were in those days. I mean, if you look at the new book by James Conan, you're looking at people who were looked on as public intellectuals.

FM: When you read his book, it is written in that vein, in that context.

CB: And clearly, Dr. Farley was in that league. Harold Taylor; Sarah Lawrence. I mean, Robert Gordon Sprout at the University of California, these are all people that had something to say about where the world was going, and of course they'd gone through war. They'd gone through the atomic bomb, in the book you just lent me.

FM: And he defended his faculty when they took positions that did not meet the public wishes. Like Hal Thatcher writing about one world government. He was threatened by a lot of people, in a lot of organizations: religious, and military veterans' organizations because he felt the responsibility to engage in discourse, and defend any faculty member who would do that.

CB: Back on George. So we've got his entity fairly insulated. So this is quite a storm. Insulated from the top guy. Say something about his quarterdeck. You, and Jane, and Art. What kind of guidance did he give you? And did you have the autonomy within his organization. This starts getting into stuff I experienced.

PA: Well, clearly I was learning as I was doing. And so I would need to consult—I mean I was making sure I wasn't going too far off the rails. You know, all of the discipline tended to go through George. I mean, certainly we did a little bit in the Housing Office, which is what it was known as back then. But clearly that small group that I described of Student Affairs people was also the chief deliberating group for all of discipline. And you know, at that point, Jim and Bob will remember that George, Arthur, and Jane were kind of the be-all in everything. They were kind of the academic advising people. They were doing everything for academic standards. They were doing all of the discipline. And if anybody needed counseling, I suppose they were the counselors, because there was no counseling operation back then. So you know, everybody was a generalist, with a real focus on the students. I think one of the greatest things that they had done, and you know we tried to preserve this into the '90s, but eventually it got very difficult as the responsibilities have grown and grown in Student Affairs. But you know, it was their mission to meet every incoming first-year student, and bring them to the office, and have a 20-minute interview with them. So that when you went back and read every student's individual folder, hopefully in most of them you found a page of notes that this young person, and where they came from, and what their interests were, and perhaps a few words of analysis about their demeanor, and their character. And to me that was that individual caring approach that they had that in a lot of ways is—you know, you try and find it other ways, but that made them the go-to people for students on campus, because that was one of the first primary connections a young person made at the college.

JR: I remember those sheets. We got them with the student folders. They were very helpful.

CB: Thinking of George in the way you're talking about him, contrasts in an interesting way with George as a football coach. And one of the things I've learned from alumni of that earlier period, one, is that he took a chance on people. He even, I think, paid some of their fees out of his own pocket, including for foreign students. He had an encompassing concern for the individuals that came within his orbit. But the other alumni story, which I heard more than once, was his telling a guy who was knocked down on the

football field to “get up, you’re embarrassing us out there!” And on three occasions—a person in the audience says, “That was me!” So it clearly happened more than once! And it appears to be a very different personality that did that. And again, he had the University of North Carolina tradition which even then was a great football tradition. There was a sense of being a coach. But interestingly, that word “coach,” while the very early guys who knew him used that—that was never a phrase that was associated with him. It was always “Dean Ralston.” So I think you got the Dean, and you got the Coach. And they played different roles. I’m not suggesting schizophrenia, but George was an extraordinarily private person in my experience of him. He could be open about anything, but not who he was. Although he would come up with his down home adages, and I had the embarrassment, which I’m going to duplicate again. Maybe I did this already, but at his retirement, [REDACTED], we had a wonderful farewell event for him with lots of good stories. And I had the temerity as the University President to recall his wisdom: “Fear God, and keep your bowels open!” [Laughter] To me that just captured George! But tell us a couple of good George Ralston stories.

PA: Well, I mean, I can think of those adages, you know. “Tell the truth, and shame the devil!” That was always one of them. “Paul, open the sweeper, and let’s have the dirt!” What else did he say to me? Excuse me, Elizabeth, but he’d say, “I don’t give a gnat’s nut!” That was one he used all the time. I’m trying to think of some of the other ones.

JR: “Judas Priest!”

PA: “Judas Priest!” was always one of them, yeah. But who could find a person who was more believing in giving people second chances than George? On the other hand, George didn’t like to suffer fools, either. I mean, he’d be quick to criticize people, too. I remember sitting in an athletic contest with him. You never wanted to sit next to him because he’d be hitting you in the leg, or hitting you in the arm the whole time, complaining and moaning about whichever person missed a play, or whatever play a coach called that was inappropriate. I mean, and he’d always—he’d never sit on the home bleachers, if you remember. He always sat on the visitors bleachers at the end, toward the fieldhouse. That was his place to be. You know, there are lots of stories I remember. George was famous for having us make a decision about a student. Having the young person come in, and plead, and George would change his mind, and undo everything that we had done. [Laughter.] You know, I can remember one in particular. There was a young man who was going into Koshen Hall. He was an ROTC student. And he was caught going in the window, and coming out, and stealing.

JR: I don’t remember that.

PA: [REDACTED] was his name. And we had thrown him out of college for it. Well, George decided that he’d let him back in. Those kinds of things.

CB: And I met alumni, who were in that category, who said “That was the big decision of my life. George saved me.” Some of them became active alumni in giving. How was he as a mentor, in a conscious sense, of those of you on the staff?

PA: Well, obviously, his influences over me were tremendous, because I would never claim to carry his virtue, but I'd like to think that his perspectives have carried with me, and that some of what I do on a daily basis is a reflection of his guidance. But you know, I think he's very subtle about things. I mean, I thought that he certainly led by example in a tremendous way. I mean, he was at everything; he was in the office early, home late.

CB: Giving blood by the quart.

PA: Yeah, exactly, I mean he modeled the life to which we should all aspire. I mean, a more religious man you won't find. His faith was ever so important to him. Yet, I think that's one of the fascinating pieces about Wilkes for all of you to figure out is its whole independence from a religious nature. Because you had people of great faith leading its institution, yet they guarded a denominational independence with a passion. And George did that in an extraordinary way.

Bob Heaman: One part of George that I think gets missed is, especially going back to what you just said, he'd come into his office very early in the morning. But reading the *NY Times*.

CB: Or the local paper.

BH: Yeah. Or the *New York Times*. So that was part of him.

PA: Yeah, George would always read the paper. If he got to the office at quarter of 8, or 8 or whatever, he'd sit there with the paper until like 8:30. And if you needed to come in and see him, he'd quickly put that paper down, because he didn't really want you to see him reading the paper.

BH: Or which paper he was reading! [Laughter]

PA: Yeah! But I'll always remember, you'd pick up the phone, I still remember his extension was x251. And you'd call him, and he'd say, "Hellooooo?" [Laughter]

BH: That's right!

PA: "Hi Dean, it's Paul!"

FM: I think the first thing I remember of George Ralston was that he had a baby blue Buick convertible. This was before he got married. Anyone who had a convertible, I just was drawn to somehow! That was part of my childhood. [Laughter]. As an aspiration. Al Groh had a DeSoto, a gold DeSoto special edition convertible that his father [had]. His father worked for the DeSoto dealer, I guess.

CB: Which was a Kirby dealership, was it not? I think it was owned by old Al Kirby. That is our Allen's father. Over on Northampton and Kingston. Yeah.

PA: Yeah, I think that you would appreciate this. There was nobody more revered than George, but at the same time, nobody could exasperate you more than George, too.

FM: [Laughter]

PA: Because he'd go off on his own decision making.

CB: Well, my experience was that I found it very difficult to get involved with student discipline where there were larger issues for the college to consider, whether it was drugs, rape, or other things. I just felt that I at least wanted to be in on those discussions. And George's system pretty effectively kept me out.

PA: You know, it was—

CB: I'm not saying it was wrong. I'm just saying this is the way it was.

PA: But culturally, when you go back, you know it was from the student life point of view, you know the alcohol just flowed tremendously back then. You know when I was in school here in the late '70s, or if you go through most of the '80s, I mean you could have kegs of beer in your room, and parties every night of the week, and you know, it was one of the reasons why there was so much vandalism around the campus. I mean, it's so very different today than [it was.]

CB: Do you remember that, at least in my time, which came in the mid-eighties, do remember the event that changed that?

PA: Well, there was the George Siege episode at Pickering. That one?

CB: When we turned Conyngham Hall into the Student Center, and we had the Rathskeller at the bottom, and we thought we'd have a great party with a keg.

PA: We put ten kegs in that basement.

CB: And we'd done a lot of renovating of that building to make it accommodate Student Services. And they trashed that room itself. And that's when I said no more keg parties on campus.

PA: Well, there was also the one night down there that the LCB came, too. I remember Arthur Hoover was down there when that happened.

CB: I was probably protected from that. I don't remember that. That's the kind of thing I would find out only inadvertently afterwards.

JR: Well, things have changed so much. Remember the picnics out at Farley Farm? We'd all be giving the kids beer.

PA: We still do give them beer at the senior picnic, but we stopped going out there because you can't put the young people on the road. The liability is just [too much].

CB: Say something about—

BH: Well, the Christmas parties. There was always lots of beer and booze. And booze. Until you came. And then the Christmas parties had no more beer, or booze, or anything.

CB: Really? Is that my reputation?

BH: Well, yeah. [Laughter].

CB: As a healthy drinker, I was—?

BH: Yeah, yeah. You shaped this place up.

CB: Well, it's time for apologies! [Laughter]. Say something about both Arthur and Jane as part of that team, and how they grew with the institution under his leadership. Because, they both went through the Flood, which was before your time but. Just before your time.

PA: Well, Jane came in 1969 I guess as the Dean of Women. Arthur, of course, started here in 1955, right after he graduated, and had had a series of different roles and just before I came back to work here, Arthur had been in Alumni relations. And I guess Ed Balchukaitis had left, and I think Arthur went to George, and said, "I'd really like to come back to Student Affairs from whence I came, and I guess that's what happened. And so you know, George, and Jane, and Arthur were the significant presence, along with Tom Kelly, on the 2nd floor of Weckesser. Each of them, you know, each in their own way had their own followings of young people. You know, George probably didn't have young people coming to see him in a counseling way as much as Jane and Arthur would. Arthur was kind of like an uncle to a lot of people. He'd be very approachable. You could go and confess your sins to Arthur, and he'd keep them to himself, or find a way to get you out of trouble. Not unlike what George would do, but.

CB: Exactly.

PA: Whenever I think back to those days, and I contrast that [with today], I remember just sitting in those meetings with him all the time, and George would be smoking his pipe. Arthur and Jane would both be smoking. Every room would just be a chimney, and you'd leave smelling like smoke all the time. [Laughter.] You'd never have that happen today. But I can still see it. Everybody had their own seat in George's office. George always sat at his desk. That big Cole, steel desk. And then Arthur sat to his—[someone demonstrates]. Oh yeah! Yeah! Doing his pushups on the chair! And Arthur would sit to his right, always in the chair right there, and then Jane would sit at the corner of the couch to his left, and then we all took up the rest of the chairs in the room, I remember. Everybody had their place, though. And George would sit there with his pipe, and wouldn't necessarily—he might be smoking, or not. And he's tapping [the pipe] out, cleaning it out, putting more tobacco in. [Laughter].

FM: He had a lot of delaying tactics while he would think.

PA: Yeah, he would.

CB: Let me ask Dr. Mike, for your entire period at Wilkes, what's your sense of Student Affairs? What would you add to what Paul has shared, about that as a key part of the operation?

FM: Other than dealing with student government, I think which I did do, but other than that I deferred that to the deans. We had talked earlier about how the evolution of faculty roles had emerged, and you know, outreach to the community by the Hugo Maileys and the Sam Rosenburgs, and the Al Grohs gave substance to the impact of the college faculty as intellectuals, as competent people who were community-focused. And you can't diminish that. The flip side of that is they were all individuals who

had a mind of their own. And administratively, you were not the boss of anybody. I never considered anybody who worked for me as being an employee. I worked with them as a professional. I tried to do my job, but there was almost an intuitive understanding that you're going to do yours. And with students, other than the Student Government leadership [crises], where they wanted to do a faculty evaluation. I think there were two instances where I directly got involved, successfully both times. One was when they had an incipient couple hundred students advancing on Weckesser Hall. Dr. Farley wasn't around. I was Dean. And dealing with them, which I think as we talked we gathered that Dr. Farley was kind of—that generation of the '60s was unnerving to his generation. And Dan Kopen had breakthroughs with Dr. Farley that amazed the rest of us in the administration. That Dan was almost the first student member of any organization that had the balls to directly deal with Dr. Farley, and to take issue with him, as though it were his right. I mean, even a faculty member wouldn't do that with Dr. Farley. You'd have arguments to buttress your case, but you would not have confrontational discussions the way the students of the '60s were posing confrontational issues. And I have to say, you know I was President for 18 months, then came the flood, and I was President for another 3 years. But that was certainly an atypical presidency, and I constantly realize how little of an administrator I was, versus just being kind of a psychological leader in face of an institution that was in crisis. Sometimes I have to convince myself that I was useful in a way. But as a traditional, I look at what I knew as a Biology professor, and what little I knew about the structure. I read your experiences at Deep Springs, and I think, my God, you had a graduate course in administration while you were still being a young faculty member.

CB: Which he picked up on, the search committee.

FM: So I'm kind of an atypical fit. I think I was the right man, in the right place, at the right time, period. But I can't equate myself administratively. I did things structurally more instinctively, and because there was no alternative, rather than a thought out administrative strategy. That was not my bed [to make]. So I find it difficult sometimes to try to—

CB: Let me impress you both on one issue that you've just brought up that Paul has not talked about, and that is Student Government. How did that evolve at Wilkes?

FM: I think it was—to me the whole student activism was externally fomented by the newness of television coverage of Columbia University that had protests regularly scheduled, for 11:00 in New York time—that's when they knew the cameras would be there—and to me that was all external to Wilkes.

CB: But not just the kind of tempestuous nature of the '60s. What role did students have in running their own affairs?

FM: They had an ever expanding budget, and decisions for extracurricular activities. We had the Smothers Brothers here in the old gymnasium, when they were just starting out. It was a great thing. Student leadership in the *Beacon*, and in activities was much more in the traditional [vein of] you were a member of the theater group, and Al Groh kind of directed you. If you were a member of the music group, then Bill Gasbarro had to [lead]. And so we were not like the big universities in the sense that there were organized external groups that were imposing their changing social views and structure on Wilkes, the way they were on the more prestigious universities. And they did change things. There used to be all-male colleges, and all-female colleges, and that was all changing. So Wilkes just kind of evolved in a much

more orderly systematic way. I think that we did not have any abrupt confrontations that were not amenable to one-to-one exchange because we were small enough, and respectful enough—that Farley influence of “respect anybody’s opinion, but feel free to differ with them.” So I don’t think there was a structural change. There was always respect for student-led organizations. I mean, their voices would be heard.

CB: And when did Student Government begin? Does anyone here know?

FM: There always was a student government here, as far as I know.

PA: I would think it goes way back. You know, one of the things you remember about the structure of student governance was that it reflected the different student cohorts. Because you had the overarching student government, but then you had the IDC, which was the inter-dormitory council, you had Commuter Council, also. That to me is, you know when I think about all the years, and all the ways this place has changed, the one thing that I remember from back then was the division between commuters and residence hall students. There was so much more of a division, I don’t know if you can call it a chasm, but the residence hall students, who a lot came from Long Island; New Jersey; other parts of Pennsylvania. You know, the pejorative term for all the locals was “Heyna.”

FM: [inaudible]

PA: Yeah, yeah. So I think there was much more of a cultural divide between the two groups that’s non-existent today.

FM: What are the relative percentages of faculty, or commuters that are allowed to just rent a room somewhere?

PA: There are about 2400 students undergraduate, at Wilkes today. So there are about 1100 that will live on campus. About 700, 800 that will live in the neighborhoods around the campus, and then the rest of the balance are commuters. The commuter population is so much less than it ever was back in the ‘60s and the ‘70s. I mean, it would have been flipped, those numbers.

CB: One of the reasons that I fought for a well—what do you call it when you withdraw smoke? We set up the lounge in Stark to allow smokers, which now is terribly irresponsible, in retrospect, which was for the commuters. They literally had no place, when they were on campus, to just relax. We didn’t have the Student Union at that point.

PA: We used to have the Commons. The Commons was the great place for commuters.

CB: But that was gone.

PA: Well, by then, yeah. This building just never had the character to take its place.

JR: That Commons was a very important meeting place.

BH: For faculty and students.

PA: Well you talk about this one—I mean, they sold cigarettes on campus in vending machines all over the place.

CB: Well, I think I've told this story, but it's relevant in terms of what Paul just said. When I arrived in '84, the emergence of AIDS as a real problem was just barely surfacing. I mean, it had been around for several years. But the magnitude of it for college campuses was great. And Jane—I remember Jane Lampe with acute sensitivity on this issue, and I assume she was one who got that wonderful—

PA: Richard Keeling.

CB: Keeling. And we gave any honorary doctorate. And we had some extraordinary programs for students that they came to in large numbers, at night. And as a result of that, we had an AIDS Awareness week I think my second year here. With a quilt, and it was a week-long activity. Anyway, it was in those first 2 years that I wanted to have condoms in the new vending machines. And so with my Deep Springs background, I realized there had to be some community buy-in to this. There was a lot of protest. So I said, "Let's have a committee." So we had a committee with faculty, staff, and students, and we put Suzanne Druffner on, who was a nursing faculty, and a former nun. I thought that would provide some balance. The committee went back, and they were unanimous that they didn't want cigarettes in the machines. I said, "I didn't ask about cigarettes, I asked about condoms." [Laughter]. As soon as I got here, and maybe before I was here, we were selling condoms in the bookstore, under the counter. If you asked, we had them. I made sure that when I first got here, I just felt that in terms of hygiene, and health—and the freshmen study out of UCLA, what's it called?

PA: The Astin Survey.

CB: The Astin Survey. It showed that 60% of our male students, and almost 50% our female students, when I first got here, acknowledged that they were sexually active, or had been sexually active. And this is in an area that was 80% Catholic. Coming out of my background, these were stunning statistics, and we had to deal with it. And Jane was wonderful in dealing with those issues. If there was no acute sensitivity, you really can't do it. This was a Catholic area. So, two parts of this: one is that we conceded that the condoms would be sold in machines in the restrooms, so that they were there for men and women under some privacy. The other thing is that the AIDS Awareness Week, which we did, I think, for about 3 years in a row—I remember the table for the organizations that were selling their cause, they weren't called a chastity or celibacy, but there was a group that was for celibacy before marriage, and they were next to the, I think they were calling themselves the Queer Group. And I thought, you know, we've established the notion of diversity and acceptance of different points of view. And we had faculty from Bishop Hoban who brought their students after school to our AIDS Awareness programs, which I thought was heroic in the extreme. We did not have, to my knowledge, we did not have one parental protest letter or phone call on AIDS, or on condoms. I mean, Penn State would take on Jim Ryan, who was about as forward looking as you could be with his Penn State leaders. God knows it wasn't going to be King's.

JR: But the King's students came down here and bought our condoms. That was one of the complaints.

FM: I think I've told you the story about when I became Academic Dean in 1963. I get back from Washington, and Dr. Farley called me in, and he said, "Mike, I'm going to let you handle this." And he

hands me a note, or told me a parent had called in, and was very, very unhappy with the Biology professor, Dr. Charles Reif, who was my boss, because of the salacious, and totally obnoxious descriptions in Biology 100. Chuck Reif? He's saying salacious things? Well, I went to see Chuck—Dr. Reif. Why would a parent write a letter like this to Dr. Farley? I handed him the letter; he reads it, and he looks up, and he says, "Oh! That was the lecture where I reviewed the county ordinances about sex." Orgasms, or this or that and the other. He said, "Yeah, I went through the criminal code! I figured if this is the only Biology course they're going to have, they better know what's legal, and what isn't!" And I guess the daughter went home, and told her mother what Dr. Reif was talking about. "Oh, that's the criminal code!"

JR: Let me ask you a question. Dr. Farley, as I understood it, would not allow cigarette machines on campus. But I recall there were complaints from kids about it. Was that because he was afraid of a health issue? Or was it for some moral reason that for example, women shouldn't smoke?

CB: I've got an answer for that from Deep Springs, from the same era. It was very much a disciplined living thing. I don't think we were focused on health, the health of cigarettes, back in the '30s and '40s.

FM: No. Back in the '60s, there was much more focus and research on alcohol. Yale had the Institute for Alcoholism, and I used to give papers and talks to Kiwanis, or the Lions Club, or Legions, about what we were learning about the metabolism of alcohol. Cigarettes did not become anathema until after I left Wilkes, really. Because when I became the State Executive, I remember the State executive from South Carolina was a chain smoker from the get-go. And I remember, guys understood that to keep his job, he had to be a smoker, which I thought, "what?" Yeah, because of all the tobacco money in South Carolina. So Lacy McClain was the guy, and he died an early death.

CB: And they were remarkable. George with the pipe! I mean, it was a routine part, particularly of History teachers, they had pipes. And the tapping. That was part of thinking out loud! So no, I don't think there was any opprobrium on smoking from a health point of view. It was more discipline. Discipline on drinking, and cigarettes—tobacco. It was something you shouldn't do until you're of age. Same was true of coffee. I don't know if there was a law, but [the thinking was] it was going to stunt your growth. So those kinds of attitudes, I think, permeated. Let me switch the topic a bit. And that is, particularly, for the two of you: fraternities and sororities. What was the difference for Wilkes that Dr. Farley committed us to not go into fraternities and sororities? And link that with the religion thing—that we would not in any way be sectarian. You have a different institutional base on which to answer that, but you have totally within the Wilkes tradition. What has been the impact on that, on these kinds of qualities that you talked about in Student Life?

FM: I think if there was a simple, direct answer, it would be, anything that divided students into a category, or invited students to become part of a category, was none of the college's business. We don't give a damn whether you're Polish or an Irishman, an Italian, or black or white. We had African students, too. You were here to be educated, to learn as best you could. Fraternities? There's no constructive role for fraternities on the Wilkes campus. A Christian endeavor? Who gives a shit whether you're Jewish, or belonged to a Rabbi at Temple Israel, or to Temple Ohav Zadek, or whether you're Presbyterian? It's irrelevant to our mission, which is to give you the best education we can. So it was a fundamental principle. It has nothing to do with Wilkes' focus on education.

BH: Well, a lot of Catholic kids came to Wilkes. It was a non-Catholic school.

FM: Yes! They got tired of going through the Catholic school system. And the priests understood it, too! The hierarchy didn't. Dr. Farley had more friends among the priests, especially from Scranton. They had a common understanding of, "That's not my role." There's a role for religion. That's not my role. Wilkes doesn't exist to have a Christian endeavor, or to have, as worthy as they may be, "You take care of that part of their lives. I want to turn out a good Biology student, who's going to be a doctor. Period. Or a good educator, who's not going to be indoctrinating anybody. They're going to be teaching them how to learn." And I really was—I think it might have been you that acknowledged the organized religious group on campus.

CB: I was going to ask about that. At the end of my first year, we did a strategic plan for much of that year, which included looking at the core curriculum. And I, tentatively, to exercise some presidential leadership, which I found in the curricular areas not to be wanted by the faculty, I thought we should do something with comparative religion. And I thought to be an educated person, you needed to know about the various religions. Well, this hit faculty members who had been students here, and were Catholic. And they stood up, and made Bob's point in a faculty meeting, or in a curriculum meeting. And I was impressed. I said this tradition here is so precious here. When we got to the involving—what did we originally call the religious life group that the senior [inaudible] group fund? It was kind of Campus Ministry, but we didn't call it that. And it was under Student Affairs, and the Catholic Church paid the salary of the person.

PA: Tony Vento.

CB: Tony Vento, and there was wonderful young woman, heavyset.

PA: Mary Hession.

CB: Mary Hession who was fantastic. That took some courage, because the Jewish members of the Board, the trustees, were curious, if not troubled. They liked me a lot, so they wouldn't want to confront me on something like that. But it was taking on that tradition. I just felt that, you know, okay, that's how we start it. But we're increasingly diverse as a community. You've got to know what's going on in the world. People have needs, need counseling that we need to be responsive to. Particularly kids who were religious. What do they do at Wilkes? So I think that got off to a pretty healthy start.

PA: And it has up to today. I mean I think we're even evolved moreso. We have a Hindu organization, a Jewish student organization, we have a Catholic organization. We don't have a Neumann or Halal, but we have groups that are affiliated around the Islamic Student Association. You need to do it today, because spiritual development is an important part of a young person's experience.

CB: How do you deal with the impact of not going with fraternities and sororities?

PA: Well, I think, so this is where I think Dr. Farley's legacy continues today. Because every 5 years, I go through this [question], "Why can't we have a Greek system here?" And you know, it always goes back to that founding principle of Dr. Farley's which is that Greek systems imply exclusivity. And there would be no organization on this campus to which everyone was welcome. And when you had a fraternity or

sorority, there was selection, and ostracizing. I always understood that that was the founding principle of Wilkes: that every organization had to be open to every member. And so we continue to pull that one out until today. And that's, to me, one of the wonderful things [about Wilkes].

FM: On the other hand, we used to have a core curriculum where you used to be able to say, "The Marks of an Educated Man." There are some core things. And I think one of the big things lacking in our educational culture is the religious element, and its impact on all of our societies, all of our cultures, all of our international relations. Unless you understand the fundamentals of the Muslim beliefs and practices, you're never going to be able to intelligently accommodate in our multicultural environment, and that's what we're seeing today. Nobody knows what a Muslim is. Nobody knows what a Catholic is. They think they're anti-abortion. Period. That's their only identification. Well, that's ridiculous.

CB: But it was not captured in "The Marks of an Educated Man," was it? I don't think there was anything about religion.

FM: No, but—

CB: "The Marks of an Educated Man" was still a very important perspective when I came here.

PA: Wasn't it that there used to be a Department of Philosophy and Religion?

JR: Yes.

PA: Because I remember, I had Roy Williams, who was a Methodist minister my senior year, for American Religious Thoughts. I mean, it's not that it wasn't taught. There was Old Testament courses.

JB: Rabbi Katz, and Rabbi Barras (Temple Israel) both taught Jewish Philosophy.

CB: But it wasn't part of the core curriculum. So every student would not take those things.

FM and PA: No, you're right.

JR: But it was, wasn't it? Philosophy and Religion was a required course.

PA: Philosophy, yes. You could take it as a distribution requirement.

JR: Oh, I see. Yes, yes. That's true.

PA: Not everybody had to have Religion. Although Western Civ certainly covered religion, right?

JR: Yeah, the Judeo-Christian tradition, and Islam

CB: Jim, what questions do you have of Paul, thinking particularly about the student life organization here, and the student experience?

JR: Well, I have a grandson here now. [Laughter.]

PA: Is he alright?

JR: I think he's doing alright. Yeah, I think so.

PA: He's over in the [University] Towers, isn't he?

JR: Yeah. He loves that, yeah. I think most students are very satisfied by the living accommodations at Wilkes. I think they're pretty impressive.

PA: Yeah, that's one of the—you know, when you talk about periods of time with Bob Capin, that's one of the things I remember, is when Bob was here that we went to coed housing. And it Evans—well, what was then Founder's Hall—that broke the ice. And I'll never forget that he was adverse to it. He didn't want any part of coed housing. And we were proposing that—I guess, he finally acquiesced but what I was always so surprised about was that I thought he would want us to have it by floor. And the only way he would accept it, is if the men were on one wing, and women were on the other which put them all on the same floor. I didn't quite ever get that. I wasn't going to argue, but that's what I remember.

CB: That's why you've lasted this long.

PA: Yeah! [Laughter] But that was where it started [Evans], that building right down there. And then, that was the end of the old visitation, because they used to have visitation hours, and men and women had to be out of the other gender's room by 2 am. Of course, it was even earlier back in the House Mother days.

CB: I was going to say, that was a very generous [time].

JR: Well, there were curfews on the women. I remember that from my own experience. That was the way you controlled the men. [Laughter].

PA: It would have been during your presidency when the house mothers went out, and the RAs came in, right? The resident assistants.

FM: Yep. With Jane Lampe, we really began to identify the uniqueness of the women's groups. And I remember Jane Lampe called me into her office one day, and she puts this Mason jar on the thing, and I said, "What's that?" "Well, that's marijuana." I said, "Where'd that come from?" "Well, somebody found it on the steps of my door, and brought it into my office. " I didn't even know what it looked like! [Laughter.]

PA: I'll show you how my day started today. Some things don't change. This is how my day started at the University Towers, with two big bags of marijuana. Remember that drug bust over there this morning?

JR: Who would be involved in that? Were the police?

PA: Well, it started with the young man who lives in that room. He was under the influence pretty significantly of the substance over in the Student Center. Real early this morning. So the police came, and

found that he was carrying a weapon. He was carrying a gun. So that was how I started. Some things don't change, Dr. Mike.

FM: All I can say is, I was a Depression baby, and I lived through Prohibition. And my father must have been a whale of a swinger during the Roaring '20s. Because I see pictures of a top hat and tails, and a gold-topped cane, and I thought "Man, Pop! You were really [something]." He lived through the Roaring '20s. And I also remember the Depression years, too. But—see, I lost my train of thought. I was going to respond to something.

CB: Well, we'll come back. But say more about alcohol and drugs over the years. Because there's clearly a key burden for any Student Affairs staff, and I certainly, when I think about Student Affairs during my 17 years, those issues with our friend Jerry Brown, and others are right up at the front, in terms of stress points.

PA: Sure. Well, you know I guess it probably started in the early '80s, there was that famous court case, *Bradshaw v. Rawlings*. I don't know why I remember that. It was at Delaware Valley. And where the first colleges were being held accountable for liability of how they supplied alcohol, or approved it. And you know, it was at that point things started to constrict a little bit. And you know, we would continuously pull the reins in. And that's what's happened over all the years. I mean, early on, when I was supervising the residence halls, or when I was a student, nobody batted an eyelash if an 18-year-old was drinking on this campus. You know, today, we're writing kids up all the time if they're underage.

FM: That was my train of thought. I was trying to create the context for saying I lived through Prohibition. And you know, the stupidest thing to me, is ever thinking you can outlaw human behavior. The other thing I was always taught: Never pass a law that you can't enforce. It just creates disrespect for any law. And we've breached both of those fundamentals that I've kind of grown up in believing. And with drugs, they should have legalized marijuana, let them sell it, tax the hell out of it, and move on! Instead, we've created a sub-culture of abuse that has horrible consequences.

CB: You still would have the practical problems in Paul's office, as to how do the JAs—or RAs, I guess we call them—how do the RAs deal with that as a peer leadership thing? What will you tolerate from a point of discipline? It's just part of dealing with people at that age, as they're coming-of age.

FM: So vulnerable.

CB: Yeah.

PA: What you just said reminded me of another "Georgeism." He used to always say to me, "Paul, rules guide us, they don't bind us."

CB: Now, you've got some time constraints, so I would invite you to—because unfortunately, we're not going to be able to ask Bob Capin, these questions, too—to comment on the Capin era, and involve him as your boss, and those years that immediately succeeded Dr. Mike.



[REDACTED]

CB: Well, we tried the etiquette dinners. Remember? We gave students the most difficult food to eat possible: wedge lettuce, [inaudible]

PA: Cherry tomatoes.

CB: Game hens; cherry tomatoes. And then for dessert, we had meringue and ice cream in chocolate sauce. So you had to cut it. The meringue would pop out, clear across the table. So we did some of the similar things.

PA: The other thing I remember about him—one of the things that I think that angered George was one senior—you know, forever, until today, the President's Dinner Dance for Senior Week was held on Thursday night, always at the Woodlands. And I remember one year, it had to be '82, '83, it would be easy to figure out, the Jewish holiday of Sukkah fell on the Thursday night of the dinner dance. And at the very last minute—like the week before—Bob made George change it to that Monday night, because he would have no part of that, being on a Jewish holiday. I remember that as a defining moment for them, I remember.

CB: We have not talked about Wilkes' relationship with the community, which has been a theme for many of our sessions, but I want to share with you before you leave, probably my most dramatic intervention in a disciplinary issue, which was a community issue. And that was the night that a bunch of high school students from Pittston came through Pickering, slashing people as they went, sending, I think 3 or 4 kids to the hospital. And I think we happened to be eating on campus that night, Jane and I, and so I got involved in it right away. And as the events [transpired], it became very clear who was involved with that because he apparently was going with a girl who was with one of these kids from Pittston High School, and you all identified the people involved at Wilkes, and I had them in. And I brought the rest of you there, and I said, "Look, we've got responsibility for the public safety of this campus. This was an intolerable intrusion on the safety of this campus. You've got to help us identify where this came from so we can deal with it." These kids were just scared out of their wits, and didn't say a word. I mean, they wouldn't even respond to me. So I went to Ray Musto. This was the President going out into the community. And I had gotten to know Ray very well, all in favorable context. I also knew him after. He fell from grace, and I went to his funeral. I cared a lot about him. And I laid this case out, up in his Pittston office. He said, "Chris, I think I'd just let it blow over. Don't do anything." So that was Raphael Musto's guidance. He understood the case completely, and said don't get yourself involved any more than that. So that was one of my disciplinary things with no positive consequences, except I didn't make the thing worse, which was good. What other thoughts—I mean, it's not that you're not going to be asked to one of these things again, but what other thoughts, as you think of the history of this place as you've experienced it would you like to share?

PA: Well one of the things, I think, that carried on through the years, that I guess I had a direct impact of ending was the whole culture of hazing. You know, that went back into the '50s and the '60s.

JR: Yeah, with the beanies.

PA: Yeah, you know, that went probably into even your presidency at the very beginning. Because I remember, as the first doctoral paper I wrote at Penn was about hazing. That would have to be like '83, I think. And it went from the beanies and those kinds of things in the '70s and '80s to a lot of residence hall hazing, and parading young women through Pickering Hall, and grading their appearance, stuff that would never fly today. I mean, it was just so sexist and abusive in a lot of ways. And harmful, with a lot of alcohol; people forced to do things that they should never have done. You know, thankfully, we got rid of that culture eventually, and it went away, but that was a big part of the beginning of the school year from you know, the middle of the '70s through the early '80s. It wasn't easily dispensed with because it was something people look forward to. It was always the case that those who were least hazed were the ones that were most abusive of the others, which is probably human nature. So that's one thing that to me is characteristic of the time when I developed here, as a student or as a young administrator.

JR: What about clothing restrictions?

PA: I don't ever remember any.

JR: Didn't Dr. Farley require suit jackets?

PA: That would be before me.

CB: Which was not an unusual requirement. I mean, Deep Springs required that. At Sunday dinner, you had a coat and tie on, out on a cattle ranch.

JR: And of course, Charlie Reif—

CB: Charlie Reif would have liked it.

FM: In the post-war, you had your Army pants dyed a different color, and you wore whatever you had. There was no [code]. Certainly, in this community, you could not have expected a dress code of any kind. Is that what you're talking about? I don't always hear the sidebar conversations, but if you were talking about a dress code of any kind, I never was conscious of any. I think if you were attending an event or something, if you were a student leader, I'd look back and [inaudible].

CB: How about skirts? Were those ever an issue? Because they were on many campuses.

PA: No, I mean, I was here in the late '70s as a student, and miniskirts and all that were pretty—

JR: Well, Chuck wouldn't allow women to wear slacks.

BH: That's right.

JR: There were some notable results of that. My neighbor, Will Groban, was furious, because his daughter, Chuck ripped up her final exam because she wore slacks.

CB: Yeah, I think there were some hard-nosed attitudes in the Farley era that—on our dear friend, Chuck—and I was probably as fond of him as anyone—that would not have fared well in the present sensitivity to sexual harassment, in terms of language and shocking people. I mean, I've heard enough stories to write an essay on that because the students, many of them adored him in regard to their success as doctors. And the courses they took with Chuck, in some cases, he so profoundly offended them with their girlfriends that part of their hatred for Wilkes was associated with him. Those are every campus's conflict. But he was such an unusual mixture of being of the very best, and having made incredible contributions to first generation students to succeed in the best medical schools in the country. At the same time, he was a pretty conflicted guy of his era. And the attitude toward women was—he was not a physically aggressive person; it was all intellectual, but he knew how to embarrass kids in class. That's why when you brought up that example that was not an unusual one. Just the way he talked about anatomy. I mean, I've heard loads of stories about that. I mean, he was not alone in that era. In the present day those things would not be accepted, even from an SNL comedian.

FM: You know, one of the things about getting old is that you appreciate more of the cycles that society goes through. And I mentioned the Roaring '20s. Well, you can imagine what the culture was at that time. Primarily male-dominated, and then with the Depression years still with the society very structured with the haves and the have-nots. With the immigrants who manned the steel mills, and the coal mines, and the offices in New York. And then through the '60s, that was probably the most dramatic combination of visible physical and mental changes in culture. The '60s. We identify it with—what was the upper New York state farm event?

JR: Woodstock.

FM: Woodstock, yeah. I watched some pictures of that last week, and they were rainy and muddy, and a mess, and everybody was having a hell of a good time! [Laughter.] But you don't realize what a complete, and total disruption of the culture of the '20s and '30s and '40s with what happened in the '60s. And even the '70s then, were kind of a transition. Remember? I remember Ann Marie and I went to Hawaii for vacation or something, and I was a member of the Westmoreland Club Board. I was the Treasurer. And we were just coming back from Hawaii, and the Westmoreland Club was having its annual black tie dinner. And I can only say I must have been affected by the ambience of the '70s. I have pictures of myself in the Westmoreland Club. I had a green and white variegated Hawaiian jacket, with all these black ties [around]. [Laughter.] Where did I ever get the nerve to do that?!

CB: You never told me that story. That explains a lot!

FM: I'm looking at the pictures, and I'm thinking, what the hell were you thinking? [Laughter.] And I'm serious when I say, when I could transition and accept being so out of the stream with the peers in Wilkes-Barre, where did I get the motivation, or the guts—no, the stupidity!—to do that? I don't know.

JR: You know, in the early '70s, you might remember this, Jack Myers and I went shopping, and I brought aboard a purple jacket, and Jack said, "You don't want that." [Laughter.] I had a purple jacket, a purple shirt, and a purple tie! Black pants. He saw me, and he said, "Holy shit!" I'll never forget that! [Laughter.] I don't think I wore that shirt again.

FM: Back in 1972, when Nixon was here after the flood, I look at some of those pictures! My God, there I was with the polyester suit, with the flaps on the jackets, and the wide lapel. How could you ever wear something like that?! [Laughter.]

PA: We all did.

CB: The '70s were like that.

FM: But the college did not exist in independence of the culture. And the culture was changing so rapidly in attitudes and things.

CB: Let me ask quickly—because I know [Paul's] got a 2:00, just—Wilkes in the community

PA: Hmm. Well. Town and Gown, I think, has had its ups and downs. For me, in the role that I've played as a senior Student Affairs officer, probably the worst of it was during the McGroarty administration. You know, the last 12-15 years, I mean through Tom Leighton and Tony George, I think things have been really pretty good, but those were tough years with McGroarty. And it's taken us time to control the apartment [living]. You know, Wilkes has never been a bar culture; Wilkes has never had a Greek culture, so when you take the alcohol out of the residence halls, you force it into the off-campus environment, and so we've had a lot of cultural clashes over the years in the neighborhood, because of student behavior interfering with the life of the permanent residents. That's gotten better over the years, but there were some very difficult moments I've had, you know, with all the partying going on off-campus. That's been very difficult from time to time. I certainly remember all my run-ins with Steve Corbett. Yeah, those were

among the most difficult things that we faced. But I mean, you know, clearly Wilkes continues to be a cultural cornerstone of this community; of this region, I think, in the ways that it gives back to the scientific community, the Arts community, the political community; the literary community, or the athletic community. I think we touch all of those aspects of life in this region, and I'd like to think it hasn't diminished. You know, certainly the university's reach I think gets broader and broader as the world gets smaller and smaller. Perhaps students don't traverse the community as much as they go out beyond the community. And so perhaps that changes things a little bit. But you know, still, where would Wilkes-Barre be without King's and Wilkes? I mean, it would be a very different place.

CB: In that last regard, comment on the evolution of diversity as now defined in America.

PA: Well, there are so many different aspects to diversity today. Wilkes is unique in one aspect, in that when you look at higher education, there are far more women in higher education today as students than there are men. The proportion is about 58 to 42, 56 to 44 percent, where Wilkes, even today is about 51 to 49 percent male over female, so that to me has always kind of set us apart a little bit. I certainly attribute some of that to having a football team a little bit. But also the Engineering, I think, in what has been a male-dominated field, perhaps that's also influenced it a bit. So perhaps there's more balance coming to that. I think you can see it becoming more and more 50/50 in the last couple of years. So I mean, that's one aspect of diversity, and how it's changed. You know, clearly in the last 10 years, the African-American population may have grown just slightly, but where we've seen the most growth is in the Hispanic population. It's probably more than doubled over the course of the last 5 years. And that's likely to be a lot of the future of Wilkes. It's going to be dependent on Latino students as more and more come to this region, and are aspiring to higher education, we need to be better and better prepared to deal with that. Clearly our international population has grown dramatically, primarily from the Middle East. Right now, if you look at the population of Wilkes, probably you would define about 25% of it as being non-white. But that includes typical racial breakdowns, but also all the international students, also. So that does give us some diversity. I think Wilkes is the cultural leader in Northeastern Pennsylvania when it comes to LGBTQ issues. Clearly, this is the most welcoming campus in terms of gender orientation. I think that's probably the case. We've been awarded for that, and I'd like to think that young people feel welcome in that way. I mean, we still have, certainly, issues, of not everybody feeling totally comfortable being open in this community, but I'd like to think that we do better at that than King's or Scranton.

FM: Which is preparing them for the real world.

PA: That's exactly right, yeah.

CB: I remember when the Gay—before we were saying the LGBT group—was forming, and the leader was a History student. He wanted to go into Library Science. I think he has. He stayed somewhat in touch. They were weighing whether to call themselves the Queer Group, and so I said, "Let's talk about that and what are the plusses and minuses." This is a gritty conversation. One-to-one with a college president. It was not "whether," it was just "What would be the most effective way, in terms of how you feel about yourselves?" And I'm sure that's gone through a variety of naming since then.

PA: Yeah, yeah. They have all different [names]. I think for a while it was the "Gay Student Alliance."

CB: I think that's how it started, as the Gay Student Alliance.

FM: I think that that is kind of peripheral to the religious identification as a responsibility of a college to provide. And I think in terms of sexuality, the culture is changing, but I think as a campus, they should not have an LGBT group. It's consistent with the founding philosophy that you're not here to form or be part of a group, you're here to learn.

CB: But I would guess that the LGBT group here would welcome non-LGBT people.

FM: Sure, to educate people.

CB: It would fit Dr. Farley's original [philosophy].

FM: As a biologist, I'd draw a bell curve, and say "Hey, some are going to be here, some are going to be here. So what?"

CB: But because one is dealing with those issues typically and most precisely in the years that you're in college, I think it's responsible for a college to provide opportunities to express that and organize.

FM: But you also provide an opportunity to freeze yourself into a block that you made biologically. As a biologist, you say there's transitions all through life. And I'd hate to see teenagers caught up in having to feel as though they've got to identify as either/or, or transgender.

CB: But you know, that's exactly what I said in a letter to my brother when he wrote that he was gay. I gave him your response, which he acknowledged later hurt him a great deal. I was not accepting him for who he was. So I think, just taking that to the macro level, I think an institution has to be prepared to be accepting, while not pushing people. Whether it's on religious issues—I mean, one of the things that people with a campus ministry—was that there would start becoming pressures from the Catholic Church for students to come to Mass. Or Jewish students. So I think you've got to let it be there, but not prescribe it. That's how I would balance it.

PA: What I would say is whether you're a student of color, or whether you're a member of the LGBTQ population, when you come into this community, you feel yourself on the margins. And it's very important for a young person on the margins to feel that there are others who are like [them]. And so that's what they seek in these special affiliations, or affinity groups, I think, is that comfort. And you hope that there is a greater community that embraces all of that, and allows everybody to be part of the broader community, but allows them to have that unique identity with people who really understand me.

CB: I think that's a wonderful final statement.

FM: Yeah! I was going to say, you're a perfect example of the evolution of adaptation to a changing society, and changing cultural acceptances. Because you know, every previous generation had to deal with that whether they were a Polack or a [...], or a Black Irishman, or whatever. There was change, and we have all benefitted from the change, and you've articulated a concept of acceptance and change, [to which] I say, "How can I argue?" I'm glad you have to deal with it and not me! [Laughter]. Or Dr. Farley, may he rest in peace!

CB: The next time we have you, it will be a direct questioning of the changing styles, strengths and weaknesses, of [the different administrations].