

**"SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY IN THE SIXTIES"**

**INTERVIEWEE: DR. THEODORE WALWIK**

**INTERVIEWER: DR. JOSEPH RIGGS**

**01 APRIL 1991**

R: This is Joe Riggs interviewing Dr. Ted Walwik, chairperson of the Communications Department at Slippery Rock University since 1971. This is a part of the oral history program at the University that is presently in motion in 1991. Dr. Walwik came here 20 years ago so he's not an old residenter but he's worn a lot of different hats at the University and across the state and internationally as well, and we'd like to talk about most of those things. So, what's changed in the last 20 years?

W: Well, in many ways, everything has changed. The place is bigger. Bigger in the sense of many more students and many more faculty than we had in 1971. Not many physical changes in terms of facilities. I guess, the only really new building that's come on board in the last 20 years has been the new academic building, the music building. That's one of the problems and one of the facts about the place now is we're very crowded. But in many ways, Slippery Rock looks like it did 20 years ago but programmatically, in terms of personnel, in terms of institutional style, it's changed a great deal.

R: The most common of all questions, why did you come here?

W: Well, because a friend suggested the job to me as a good

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- W: opportunity and when I looked at it I thought he was right. What we had at that time was a fairly small department. It was very traditional. And a desire on the part of the University administration, college administration in those days, to change directions and to see some renewal in the department and a willingness to give a new department chair pretty much carte blanche. I was interested in making a change, period. I was interested in becoming a department chairman. I was s interested in becoming a department chairman someplace where I could have some impact and all of those things seemed to be present in this situation, so I took the job. Simple as that.
- R: And one of the things you did early was to kind of design a new staff?
- W: Yes. One of the things that was made possible was that before I came there were a number of people on the staff, I really don't remember how many we had at the time, eight or nine, I think, and about half of those people were temporaries and were on terminal contracts of one sort. That's what we called them in those days. Those terminal contracts were extended. I came in January and most of those people were going to leave us if we didn't renew them in some way in the summer. I was given a fair amount of freedom to recruit faculty. So we had a number of vacant positions and in that first hiring, I hired you, Joe Riggs, as a full professor. We brought Tim Walters as

an associate professor. Actually, at the same time I came on board, we hired Mary, then Martsolf, and later Mary Garfield,

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W: who came at that point. Roy Stewart came about that same time. So very quickly, within a semester, I had been able to do a substantial amount of hiring in a variety of levels in the department in a variety of positions and we very quickly had a very different department that was en rapport with me and open to some of the ideas that I had and so forth. So we moved and changed very, very quickly. The theater was still a part of the program then, part of the department. That part of the department did not change by and large. It was not part of this. It was the speech side of the department that changed very dramatically. Soon after that, I think a year later, we anticipated the shifting direction of our whole discipline and changed our name to Department of Communication. In those days, that was a fairly rare thing. We were pioneers in that respect. Within six or seven years then lots of department changed to some version of communication as their department terminology. But we were one of the first to abandon the old speech and theater rubric, and that represented a change of direction as well as name. We were consciously moving in those days in the direction of more emphasis on mass communication rather than the older, more limited focus on public speaking and speech development. We didn't throw all that away. We've

continued to teach a public speaking course required of all students and that's still true today. But we began to evolve the department rather dramatically into some new directions. With that change came a lot of new students. A lot of new

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W: majors. When I first came here, January, 1971, the department had, if my memory's right, 33 or 34 majors. Thirty of those were in teacher education and were seeking a secondary teaching license in speech and theater. Only two or three were B.A. majors. Within a few years, the teacher education program had by and large almost disappeared. Today we have six teacher education students across the four year program and about 300 majors. Most of that growth came early. We grew very rapidly for a while. We added staff. We added programs. We added courses. We changed the curriculum. Ultimately, we divided and the theater program became a separate program and a separate department. But the change was very rapid. The growth was rapid. Changes in faculty were substantial. We added faculty. I think we're a strong faculty for the most part. Most of them have stayed with us through the years. Now the department is changing, I think another time, another whole revolution is taking place right now. That's another story in a sense.

R: Into communication technology and information sciences?

W: Yes. That's a large part of it. I think the key was the

decision by the University, some four or five years ago now, to create a new college and to group us with the business programs and with the computer science program in what's now the College of Information Science and Business Administration. I think that was more than a simple reorganization. I think it pointed us in a rather different direction that

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W: we're still trying to sort out and to realize the impact of that. But I think it does suggest that we're more focused in terms of alliance with the business programs or at least with what we might call more broadly applied communication areas. Things like public relations, communication training and development. Then more recently, we've been caught up in and I think are also still trying to find just exactly what our right role is in the whole communication technology revolution that's swept the world really in the last ten years. But we are much more technologically oriented than we once were. Our students need to be plugged into computer technology particularly but more than that, telecommunication technologies. The various kinds of information, dissemination systems both on the hardware and the software side and we're trying to move ourselves and our programs in those directions right now.

R: Does that mean a lessening of performance orientation?

W: No, I don't think so. In a curious way, it may even enhance it

in some areas. First of all, it hasn't changed our commitment to what might be describe as service programs for the rest of the University. We still teach the required public speaking course. We still do a lot of service work with courses like small group communication which meet some of the practical speech performance, or oral performance needs of the large number of students, both our own majors and others. It, perhaps, refocuses upon performance in some ways. For example,

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W: one of the courses that we're just now putting into the curriculum is a course that we've chosen to call Professional Presentation, but which is a course aimed at, designed for, the business person, the business student and which is designed to help them use contemporary technologies, computer presentation methods, for example, to develop the kinds of presentations the contemporary business person has to be able to make. So It's another kind of performance. It, perhaps, is not as focused upon oral performance as we were 20 or 25 years ago in our discipline, but performance nevertheless in the sense that we are still teaching people to develop messages and to select the most appropriate, the most effective way of offering what those audience needs and interests are and making the effective presentation. Whether it's an oral mode or some visual mode or some written mode is not fundamentally important. What we are trying to do is equip students to do

all those things and to pick and choose, to package their presentations for the most effective way to meet whatever need they're trying to deal with. Then I'd add, quickly, I'm really leaving out another whole dimension in that we are rather heavily committed to electronic media particularly in television or video, perhaps is a better way to put it, and that's performance and message presentation and message development everywhere from script preparation to actually shooting visuals and so forth and editing all of that and putting it together. Again we integrate a great deal with

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W: computer technology. We just ordered a rather remarkable new computer system which will enable our students in the video areas to enhance their productions in a very spectacular way, really.

R: Could you say something about the internship program and kind of the yield that the department has gotten from that.

W: Yes. We've been offering an internship program for a number of years now.

R: Twelve or fifteen?

W: Yes, twelve or fifteen anyway. We've always been very purposeful about that. We early on made a commitment, I think, to the notion that an internship was not simply to be some credit for some kind of a summer job, someplace. That what we wanted out of the internship was a real learning experience

for the student and we had to find internship placements for students. That is, one of our conditions was that there had to be meaningful professional involvement. That they weren't to be just gofers or errand boys or something of that sort. They had to be somehow meaningfully involved in the business of the communication industry, however that was defined, in the particular agency where they were working. That there had to be another ingredient that we insisted upon, someone in the work situation at the work site, an employee of that agency who was willing to assume responsibility not only for being their supervisor but for being their mentor. It was very important to us that that be seen as a learning experience.

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W: That we made a commitment and at the same time that we would do on site visits for every intern, and with very few exceptions over the years honored that commitment and it has taken us far and wide to see our students at work. We also made a commitment that the internship experience was more than just the work site experience. That part of the internship experience involve preparing for the internship and we've treated it as a job search experience from the beginning and we make sure that the potential interns are able to draft a competent letter of application, prepare an appropriate professional resume, make application for the position if appropriate, interview and then get hired in a sense for their



internship. During the internship, there is also a process of both self-assessment and assessment by the on site supervisor and by our own faculty in terms of how the student is doing. An end of the experience paper which requires them to reflect upon it. So it is a total package that's worked very well. Its yield has been obvious in several ways. One is that it is a window that we have to the professional world that we connect to, that we are preparing our students for. With the notion that our faculty are involved in supervising a student means that they are also in touch with working professionals and that has been useful feedback for our program to see how our students are doing in the work setting. To see what they are prepared to do. To see what they are not prepared to do. What we might do a better job of and so forth. That's how we've

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W: adjusted our program over the years based on those perceptions. Students are attracted to our program because of the internship opportunities. It's a plus in the admissions process and it's been productive in the sense that students, I think, position themselves better for employment. but even those that that's not the result, and we don't expect that to be the result necessarily, when that happens that's kind of a bonus. But those for whom that's not the result are better positioned for the job search. They have a network of professional contacts and relationships. They have some kind

of credible professional recommendations and work experience and they're certainly better positioned to become involved as communication professionals. It's been a good program for us.

R: One of the things that was noticeable was the kind of institutions that used our students as interns. Hospitals, newspapers, T.V. stations, insurance companies.

W: Wide variety of places, yes. We've been open to placement in all sorts of settings. Some of them, I think, would surprise the outsider. Hospitals that you mentioned is one of them. One doesn't immediately think of hospitals as a place for a communication student, but the fact is that almost any hospital of size and quality now has some kind of community relations or public relations office or shop. Many of them have internal media systems that they teach by, that they use for internal communications. So there are a number of possibilities for example for interns in those settings. We've

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W: gone far and wide. We've had people intern in very traditional media settings, newspapers, television stations and places like that. And some very unusual kinds of settings. We had an intern at Sea World in Florida, for example. Some big department stores and those kinds of places. It varies greatly and speaks to the wide variety of opportunities for students in our field

R: Internationally, are we into that? I know you were working

on that two or three years ago.

W: I was involved in establishing an internship program abroad in Great Britain for the College of Information Science and Business Administration. Frankly, that program has not benefitted our department as much as it has some other departments. We have had some of our majors participate. Placements in public relations agencies and particularly in newspapers and even more particularly in the electronic media in Britain have been difficult to come by. The radio and television field of Britain is very different than it is here. The opportunities are much, much more limited. So we've found it much more difficult to find placements for our students in those fields.

Whereas in some of the other business areas we've had a little bit more success. But we have a very successful international internship program in terms of the college and I was one who initiated that. It is basically focused in Great Britain and it does include some opportunities for communication students and can include more. There certainly aren't any exclusions.

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W: The limitations have been more practical and pragmatic than theoretical. Phil Kennedy is now continuing to supervise that program and it continues to be a success.

R: We have some international connections now?

W: We sure do. We're very excited about the one that's just now

developing. We've established a relationship with Queen Margaret College in Edinburgh. We are in the process of exchanging both faculty and students. We will have students from Queen Margaret at Slippery Rock next year and there will be some Slippery Rock students at Queen Margaret. The faculty exchange is proceeding on a more limited basis. I've made two visits to Queen Margaret. One as the initial contact. The second time I went for the purpose of extending that relationship and I delivered a lecture. Then we sent Dr. Richard Arthur to spend a week at Queen Margaret last year on a kind of what I called ambassadorial visit and the head of the communication studies and information systems program there, Jim Herring, came to us for a week. this fall we are going to exchange faculty for two week periods. The exchange of faculty this time will be a little more active and meaningful. At the first round it was just pretty much get acquainted and be there to learn something about the institutions. This time we expect to be more contributing and to be more involved in the teaching process. Dr. Tim Walters is going from here to Edinburgh to Queen Margaret next October and we'll be receiving someone from Queen Margaret probably in September

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W: for about a two week period and we'll integrate that person into our teaching program. They will do some special things and they will also meet with some of our regular classes. So

we are moving right along with that. It's a very personally cordial relationship. Queen Margaret is a very pleasant and apparently high quality institution where our students can have a good experiences. Edinburgh is certainly a place that is attractive to our faculty and students as a place to learn and study and travel. So we have high hopes for the Queen Margaret connection.

R: In television, radio and telecommunications, all this stuff you are involved in, what kind of future does there appear to be there through our T.V. center?

W: I the future is very bright and almost unlimited in its potential. Both for the department and the institution, and the two come together in some sense. I'm involved on both levels. I'm involved as part of the institution's planning group. In telecommunications I now even have a title. I'm the Director of Academic Telecommunication. The duties aren't very well defined yet but the title's nice. Institutionally, I think, we are moving very rapidly toward being much, much better equipped in terms of telecommunications capabilities. We have installed a new telephone system which is much more than a telephone system. It really is a basic telecommunication system. It has the fundamental kind of wiring and core computer operating capability that will enable us to do a

W: great deal more with it than just make phone calls. We can do

that. We've already seen some limited impact in things like the voice mail system and so forth. It's already beginning to change the culture of the institution a bit. We're moving ahead rather smartly with two other parts of the whole project. We expect this spring or early summer to begin to advertise for bids for a video distribution system where we'll in effect become a campus cable system with the capability of receiving transmissions from satellites and redistributing them on the campus for entertainment purposes, the typical kind of regular entertainment program that you would get in your home to be distributed to all the residence halls rooms. But in addition to that, what I broadly define as academic programming as well, satellite transmissions and teleconferences. We expect to participate in SCOLA which is a program that will bring us foreign news broadcasts on a twenty-four hour basis and to be able to distribute those to every student, everywhere on the campus. We would expect to be able to generate internal programming, to be able to do everything from make announcements to show campus sporting and arts events and so forth on our own system. That video system is well along in the planning phase and we should certainly within the next several months see some hard progress toward that with the notion of bringing it online. Our tentative target date is now December of 1991. In addition to that, we are planning for connectivity for the campus in

W: terms of making our rather considerable number of personal computers interconnected in various kinds of schemes to do that. But we expect to have access to the computer network for every residence hall room and for essentially every faculty office, etcetera, so that we can connect with each other and connect with the outside world, share resources, share data banks, all the kinds of things that can be done now with rather remarkable networking capabilities of computers. We've always talked about personal computers and I kind of like a phrase I heard at some meeting that we are now entering the age of the interpersonal computer. The notion is that those machines are not going to be simply sitting by themselves on somebody's desk but that they're going to be connected each to the other and they are going to enable us to connect with each other in the next room or literally across the world. We're very close to being able to do that at Slippery Rock. We have most of the technology in place and we're sorting through some choices and trying to make some good decisions about how we're going to and which of several available technological schemes we're going to employ and what kind of services we are going to make available. It's rather a remarkable development. That's institutionally. Departmentally there is a considerable role in that we need to be involved in understanding how those systems work and how to help people use them and all of the

old traditional problems of the communications scholar in terms of connecting people with each other now need to be

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W: asked again or faced again in the context of electronic systems and at some points the answers will be very much the same, simply recast in some new terminology. And at other times, I think we are going to have to look at some new ways to do things and some new ways to think about things. It's really made all of the old traditional stuff be put all out on the table again and it's very exciting to me. It implies a faculty, I think, that's willing to tackle some new and untried things. It implies a much stronger research commitment we have now because we're in an area where the answers aren't known by and large. We have to look for some of the answers. That's scary for some folks. It's scary to me in some ways. But I'm very excited about it. I hope I can transmit some of the enthusiasm.

R: I guess this makes new demands on the staff. I know that over the last several years that a lot of things have become a little more difficult, tenure, promotion, sabbaticals and that sort of thing.

W: Sure it has. I think you can almost date it. You can date it from the day that we stopped being a Slippery Rock State College and became Slippery Rock University as part of the State System of Higher Education. The name university and the



attachment to a system, while at first was probably fairly superficial, I think has almost every year resulted in something of what I sometimes describe as a quickened pace. I think we are changing the nature of the institution. I think

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- W: the academic demands both for faculty and students are becoming stronger. I think the integrity of the institution academically is being strengthened bit by bit. I think that's true in terms of demands on faculty. The rules are changing. I'm one who thinks by and large that's a good thing, but any time you change the rules particularly with some people who are in place and who find the rules changing about them and the culture of the institution changing, that's maybe a better way to put it, makes some people very uncomfortable. We've got to find a way to accommodate those people and not to fail to respect their contributions and their continuing contributions. At the same time, not to freeze the institution at some point in time. I think the faculty is stronger right now than it has been any time in my tenure here. I think the productivity of the faculty is stronger. I expect that to continue. I expect, as a matter of fact, that change to accelerate, if anything, in the next several years.
- R: Does that mean a kind of a new sharing in the decision-making process particularly where some radical changes are going to take place which will have an impact on folks who have been

here a long time?

W: If we recall the beginnings of the union, collective bargaining both expanded and contracted at the same time as the faculty role in the institution. I think collective bargaining which was a very good thing by and large in our system, insured faculty involvement in some kinds of decisions, in

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W: some of the nuts and bolts of the operating institution. What happened at other places in the system as well, is that when we began to look at a succession of contracts we tended to contract the faculty role to be involved in only those things which are contractual, and some of the more traditional faculty involvements in academic decision-making I think have slipped by. Right now here I've been in conversation with a number of people including our Provost, and I think constructive conversation incidentally, that suggests that one of the things we lack is an academic policy mechanism. We have ways to solve grievances. We have ways to deal with curriculum and one thing or another, but questions of academic policy, there's not an orderly way to deal with that that involves the faculty. Faculty is not involved very much in some of the decision-making where it could be. Part of the problem is that the faculty has backed away. Has simply not asserted itself, and has left a vacuum that the administration of the University has filled because it had to be filled. I'm not being

particularly critical of them. Somebody's got to do the work, and I think faculty needs to be much more assertive about its role in some things. I think that's possible, but with the participation and positioning comes a measure of responsibility, and I think it's that responsibility that faculty have been a little reluctant to shoulder.

R: When Lawrence Park came here as our interim president, he wasn't going to be an acting president, but an interim

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R: president, he chose you to be the head of the research and planning.

W: That's right.

R: In those two years, was that the beginning in some ways of our outreach in continuing education program? I know now we're all over the place. We're in Franklin and New Castle and North Hills.

W: Let's talk a little bit about the interim administration first and then we can kind of get to that because then you get to put it in that context.

Larry Park came here from Mansfield. We had a real brouhaha about the president of the institution. Albert Watrel, who was the president, was fired by the Governor, and was replaced by Jim Roberts, who was the academic vice-president, and who became acting president for a year. There were a great many people on the campus who were very concerned about Dr. Roberts

as a potential president. I was one of them. There was vigorous opposition to his presidency. The campus was deeply divided. The Board of Trustees became involved, not just in the selection process, but beyond that in a sense in terms of the direction of the institution. It was, I think, not very appreciative of the role of the faculty, and there were a number of us who were in a confrontational stance, vis-a-vis the board. Very, very difficult times. At the eleventh hour, literally, the Governor finally concluded that Dr. Roberts would not continue as president and Dr. Park was appointed

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W: as interim president. And as you quickly say, Larry made a distinction between acting president and interim president. His distinction was that he was not acting in anyone's behalf. He was the president. It was just that he was the president for a limited time. When he came he said that he expected to be here two years and no more, and he honored that commitment. His task was to set the University right and to help heal some of the divisions and try to get us in position to make an appropriate search for a president and to hire a president which we ultimately did. Dr. Park's first day on the campus as president was the day of the opening of the school faculty meeting. It was a very, as we said, last minute kind of decision at the Governor's office, and the system in those days was directly responsible to the governor. This was before

the State System of Higher Education was in place. So he came very late, and he formed almost immediately an interim administration. He needed to surround himself with some people to do the work, and there were several of us, some people on the campus, some were brought from outside the campus to be a part of that interim administration. He asked me to serve as, I think, the original title was Director of Research and Planning. The next year the title became Dean of Extended Services. And I always laughed and said that meant Dean of Etcetera because I had a sort of a hodgepodge of responsibilities in addition to the institutional research, and I really didn't do very much of that. We did manage to mount a rather

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W: vigorous planning process, and as you correctly suggest, I was also involved with some extension programs, continuing education and those kinds of things. I don't know that I'd say that that was the start of it. The University has made numerous false starts at off-campus education over the years, and we still are doing that, I think. The fact is, in my judgement, we've never really decided to make a major commitment in that area, but we've responded to various presumed needs. We've been rather undependable, that is, we'll move into a community, do some things for a while, and then for one reason or another we disappear again. that's

pretty much the story of our involvement in Lawrence County, for example. We had various sites, locations, for off-campus instruction, and even now it's not clear just how much institutional commitment, and how much real resource there is to that kind of education. It's a difficult question. We, on the one hand, have a responsibility as a state university to meet the needs of a wide variety of persons. We have a responsibility, I think, to take our programs to the people when we can. On the other hand, we are in a serious resource deficiency situation.

The institution is seriously underfunded, and the fact is when we choose to teach a student off-campus, we do so by and large at the expense of not doing something for somebody on the campus. When your work load is very heavy on the campus, I'm talking about faculty and resource demands, it's a little difficult to work up enthusiasm for going elsewhere and doing

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W: something. We certainly don't need to build enrollment. That's not the purpose. The purpose is try to broaden the impact of the University, I think, as well as to deliver various kinds of services. It's not a very focused and very clear, well-defined picture even to this day.

R: So we're not moving into a big vacuum in north Pittsburgh and trying to do something that isn't being done there already?

W: I don't really think so. There is an enormous operation, the

Community College of Allegheny County, which has multiple campuses and certainly which meets the basic higher education needs of Allegheny County. It's a little hard for us to argue that that county is unserved, maybe underserved in some sense or another. As a matter of fact, we're not really into Allegheny County at all at the moment. We did have a site down in Allegheny County in North Hills. We've terminated that. We are now focusing our efforts in Cranberry Township which is part of our county, and which is part of our natural catchment, if there is such a thing, for a university like this, but which is also served by the community college which has its own problems in terms of outreach and funding. It's difficult for me as somebody who observes this, who teaches in that program, I'm teaching in Cranberry right now, and who because of the history we've mentioned of having had some administrative responsibilities some years ago for this area, it's reasonably sensitive to the issues involved. It's not clear to me exactly what it is we're accomplishing, and why

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W: it is we're doing some of the things we're doing. I'm not trying to be critical. It's more just a matter of really not seeing very clearly where the University is going in this particular area.

R: For many years our nontraditional students have had great difficulty with their degree programs. Are we getting that

sorted out better now?

W: Yes, I think so. Better at any rate. You're always going to have some difficulties, and I guess that's kind of endemic. There's not much of a way to avoid some of those difficulties ultimately, but we are doing a better job, I think, of serving them. We're certainly more sensitive to their needs than we used to be.

R: Part of that may be the numbers. It seems to me a fairly large number of people. Maybe they've all become day students.

W: More or less. We're in the ballpark of about twenty percent of our own students are age 25 or over. Some of them come to us with very special needs in terms of schedules and all that sort of thing. We refer to them as nontraditional students, but many of them are going to school in very traditional patterns. They're coming to school pretty much like any other undergraduate, and those people don't have much of a problem, I suspect. They may have some socialization problems and some of those kinds of things, but in terms of times and that kind of thing there is some frustration that the University has organized like everybody here is a 19 year old sophomore and

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W: living on campus. That's when the offices are open and that's when the services are available and so forth. But I think we really are trying within the limits again of some very real financial constraints to extend office hours, to make some



services available to accommodate those students in a variety of ways. There's continued pressure by the deans on the department chairs to have some reasonable rotation of programs at night, and in odd hours or nontraditional kinds of scheduling at least. We probably could do better at that than we are doing, but we're clearly, I think, spending more time and energy at that than we used to.

R: Perhaps we could go back to the Watrel administration, and the things that led up to losing him and his firing. A lot of that is very fuzzy in the minds of most of the people that we interview. Perhaps you could shed some clarity to it all.

W: Well, it's fuzzy, I think, because there was a lot of fuzz. It wasn't real clear even to those who were involved and weren't involved at that time. Al Watrel was not a terribly strong president. I think we can say that without doing the man any injustice. I don't think he deserved the fate that came to him. It may well be that the University needed to change presidents, but in the particularly brutal and peremptory way that it took place, I think it was inappropriate. It's difficult to talk about this without resorting to a certain amount of hearsay. But it is clear I think that the events of those days kind of bear this out in the end result, if not in

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W: all the particulars. It is clear that President Watrel and then Vice-president Roberts had been on a collision course

for some time. As a matter of fact, and I do know this to be the case, that Watrel had been frustrated by Roberts. He had felt that he was in some ways undermining his administration, his authority. They didn't work well together, etcetera. That was an opinion shared by a number of people. There were faculty, a significant group of faculty, who had encouraged Watrel to change vice-presidents. It was clear, I think, and I was part of that group, to many of us that the University was not going to function well with that particular pair in those leadership teams. One had to go, and our preference for a variety of reasons was that Roberts would go. So we had encouraged Dr. Watrel to make a change. He decided to do that, and communicated his desire to made that change to Dr. Roberts early one morning. I don't remember the dates. Dr. Roberts was offered, my understanding, I, of course, was not privy to this conversation, the opportunity to take a sabbatical, to return to a professorship and to have his place at the University secured, but not as an administrator, not as Vice-president of Academic Affairs. Dr. Roberts asked for time to think about that. He left Watrel's office, presumably went directly to a phone and called his contacts in the Department of Education, and we were still a part of the Pennsylvania Department of Education in those days, and within a matter of a couple of hours the phone call had come from the governor relieving

W: President Watrel of his responsibilities. And within another very short time representatives of the State Police were here to collect the keys to the institution. The firing of the President took place that quickly. That Al Watrel was not a strong president is, I don't think, open to much argument. Whether or not that was the way to relieve a president of his duties, and whether that was in the best interest of the institution, I think is open to substantial argument. That, in a sense is when the fight began, because it was clear that Dr. Roberts was interested in becoming president. He was made the acting president. In the opinion of many of us, used much of and abused many of the powers of his office that year to position himself politically for the run for the presidency. There were an equally strong number of faculty who opposed that. There was a lot of fear. There was a lot of intimidation. There was lot of fear of intimidation. Sometimes the realities and the perceptions of those kinds of things get mixed up, but if you perceive threatening environments, the environments are threatening. It was not a good year. It was not a healthy year. It was a year that was as difficult as any that I ever hope to spend in higher education. There was considerable turmoil with the Board of Trustees who, I think, had been pretty much co-opted initially by Dr. Roberts and were surprised to discover opposition. Their role in this

whole thing was not particularly glorious or distinguished.

On the other hand, and this is a gratuitous comment, the

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W: Board of Trustees at these institutions have never been particularly distinguished groups, nor very sensitive, by and large, to the way universities operates. They are political appointees. Their function is very limited. That was particularly true during the Watrel/Roberts/Park/early Reinhard era.

So I don't know. Does that shed any light?

R: The year Dr. Roberts was president, a search committee was not mounted that year?

W: Oh, no, there was a search committee. Certainly there was a search committee.

R: You said Park came at the eleventh hour, so they did not do a search.

W: No, I think it's because they rejected, now you're asking me to remember something I'm not sure of precisely, but I think Dr. Roberts was the choice of the trustees and the Governor was persuaded finally not to select him. See, in those days, the trustees made a nomination essentially to the governor and the governor chose, the governor's office made the appointment through of course the secretary of education.

R: So we did not have a cross campus search committee?

W: Oh, there was a search committee. No, there was a search

committee which made recommendations to the trustees, and the trustees nominated, I think that's right. Something of the sort.

R: And we selected two faculty members.

W: The trustees nominated Dr. Roberts. I don't remember who all

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W: was on that search committee. Ray Wallace was one. I know that. He was in our department, and we were party to a rather strange bit of intimidation ourselves with the thing of the State Police caper. Bob Lowry, I think, maybe even chaired that committee or at least was a part of it. There wa a search committee. The trustees chose to go pretty much their own way, as I remember it.

R: What was the State Police story?

W: Well, Dr. Roberts went to the Board of Trustees one day and announced in a public meeting and I think for the benefit of the press is my own opinion, because there had been no conversation with me certainly, that there was some question about the handling of funds in the theater program. I was identified at the time, and I think correctly so, as one of those persons who most vigorously opposed his bid for the presidency. Ray Wallace who was the acting director of theater at the time, Mr. Carless who was director of theater was on leave. Ray was a member of the search committee, and was reported and I'm not privy to the deliberation of the

search committee, but was reported to be one who was raising questions within the search committee about Dr. Roberts' suitability as president. At any rate, there was the announcement to the Board of Trustees one day that the State Police had been asked to investigate the dealings in the theater. And, of course, there was a big splash in the newspaper and so forth of that suspicion of something amiss here.

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W: It turns out that the question that was raised was about the handling of box office receipts. In those days, we gave free admission to all students and to all faculty, and free tickets to the students who were in the play to distribute to their family and so forth. So there were very few people who bought tickets and as a result there were very small box office receipts in the first place. I don't remember now just how much. A couple hundred dollars at most in the year. Not very much money at all. What was happening was that Dr. Wallace was using some bad judgement, and I think he would admit that, and not the best business practice, but there certainly was no skullduggery or thievery about. Instead of drawing money in the routine way for petty purposes, that is the purchase of very small items at the local hardware store or something of that sort as he needed them, he was using the box receipts as kind of a petty cash fund. The more appropriate business process would have been to deposit all the receipts, and then

have drawn a petty cash fund, and he didn't do that, but it really had the same effect, and there were very, very few dollars involved at any rate. The State Police conducted an investigation and found nothing and they made a report to the prosecutor's office that there were no grounds for any kind of follow-up. Frankly, I think they didn't understand why they were drawn into this. Nothing was said about that, and I finally discovered that the prosecutor had a report, and I went to John Wise of the Butler Eagle and asked that he look

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- W: into this matter and follow up in the paper with the story saying at least the investigation had been concluded with no real legal consequences. He agreed to do that, and he, in fact, asked for the information from the prosecutor's office. He got it, and did print some smaller story to be sure, but some follow-through that that was all over. The point is that I think there was some question about whether or not the concern of Dr. Roberts was genuine or whether this was an attempt to embarrass people he saw as his opponents. The answer, of course, will never be known for sure, but those of us who were involved suspect the attempt was one to intimidate.
- R: And then during the Park years we sort of go all straightened away.
- W: Larry Park when he came to us was near retirement. That's one

of the reasons he was sent here. He was a very experienced president in our system, and he had an interest in troubled presidencies. He'd done a sabbatical leave working with the Association of State College and Universities, I think, studying troubled presidencies. He was kind of interested in having his own little laboratory to see how he could work all that out. So he took this assignment, I think much to the benefit of the institution. Occasionally I meet somebody who is familiar with those years and they say, oh nothing much happened during the Park years, and I think they miss the point. That when Larry came here the campus was in turmoil,

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W: deeply divided. Within two years he was able to leave a campus that had, not without some difficulty but nevertheless successfully, mounted a presidential search, and a president had been appointed who was not a part of any of the earlier political factions. The very fact that there was almost a feeling that nothing was happening is a tribute, because what was not happening is that we were not shooting each other any more, figuratively speaking. We were turning to more productive things. One of the reasons why he asked me to head up a planning effort, generated a rather massive planning effort, he explained to me that part of his reason for doing that in addition to the fact that the University needed to do some planning was that we needed to get people



thinking constructively about the future instead of worrying about all the past travail, and I think we succeeded by and large with that effort. He brought a steady hand, an experienced hand, to the administration of the college, and I think did a rather remarkable job of sorting some things out and moving on. After a year, he found it necessary to replace Dr. Roberts, his Vice-president for Academic Affairs, and that's when now President Bob Aebersold was appointed as then Acting Vice or Interim Vice-president for Academic Affairs, and that's when and how he began his career in the senior administration of this institution. The Department of Education made it very difficult for Dr. Park in that they had left Dr. Roberts in place as Vice-president for Academic Affairs. I

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W: think most in retrospect would have said it would have been better had they moved Dr. Roberts elsewhere somehow. Nobody was interested in firing him, but if he could have been given another position at Clarion or some place, that would have freed up Dr. Park to move the institution perhaps a little more briskly than he did. As I say he found it appropriate to make that change himself a year later, and reassigned Dr. Roberts to his present post as a professor in the education program, which incidentally was exactly what Al Watrel had proposed to do some two or three years earlier.

R: The kind of unproven charges against Dr. Watrel about

malfeasance of office and abusive spending, was there ever very much to that?

W: Well, not really. Al, I think, did do some things that were not appropriate, and they very often represented his enthusiasms and some bad judgement. There certainly wasn't any suggestion I don't think even at the time, that he was doing anything that was resulting in gain for himself, that he was lining his pockets in any way. The most celebrated matter of the time was the building of what we now kind of gloriously call the Stadium Lodge, but it's well known that Watrel was a very big enthusiast for the sports program, particularly for the football program. The new stadium lacked a very good press facility, and so they built that building, ostensibly as a press box. It certainly is a grand press box. The real problem was that they didn't ask anybody for permission to do it, and

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W: this University, if nothing else, is part of a great state bureaucracy. Instead of getting a particular appropriation for that and the usual kinds of approvals from the Department of General Services and the Fine Arts Commission and all the people who have to approve something that's going on campus, essentially they diverted monies and resources from other projects in order to build that building. There was something of an outcry. A guy named Sam Weinshank who was then the president of the middle school had some key role in

calling attention to the Department of Education. He wrote a letter objecting to this. At the time, there were those who have said that Jim Roberts had put Weinshank up to that. I don't know if that is true or not, but there was a certain amount of kind of curious citizen concern about that not very significant but very conspicuous building. It was that kind of thing that went on that got Watrel in trouble, I guess. Although I really think most of the concerns about his administration had been rather carefully cultivated over the years, and the Secretary of Education and the Governor at the time were waiting for a reason to let him go, and they were ready to jump into the breach when the call came about Roberts' termination as vice-president. That became the issue, and then there was some backing and filling later in terms of explaining why this took place.

R: At about that time, at the University we formed a state-wide union, the Association of Pennsylvania State College and

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R: University Faculty [APSCUF] under Marty Morand and Ramelle Macoy, who had been professional AFL-CIO people previous to that.

W: Exactly. Macoy came later. APSCUF had existed for years. It was an organization that was already in place. Then it was sort of co-opted by people who were interested in the union movement as the kind of founding organization. It was the

organization which became the kind of petitioning group in a sense as I understand it. All that took place really before I came on board. Just about the time we were ready to vote for unionization, but APSCUF was an old organization that kind of was taken over in a sense. Not illegitimately, I don't mean to imply that. It was the kind of organizational base from which those who were interested in unionization operated. What had happened, the window of opportunity was that the state had passed a law which permitted public employees to engage in collective bargaining. Heretofore, that had not been legal here in Pennsylvania. That opened the door for state college faculty as well as others. There was considerable movement at the time, and Marty Morand was an organizer for the NEA. He had worked earlier for the ILGWU and his roots in the labor movement were genuine and deep, and he was the organizer assigned to Pennsylvania in the interest of the NEA. There was a choice to be made, first about which of these pages would represent us. My memory on that, I wasn't really involved, is not specific enough to tell that story with much

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W: clarity, but Morand's role was as an organizer for the NEA. And then when we did not to have collective bargaining and APSCUF would be our representative, Morand was hired by APSCUF as its executive director. Marty Morand, I think, is the single most positive force in the story of higher

education, collective bargaining, in Pennsylvania. Marty is a very, very, bright man. Brilliant. An intellectual by any standard who had played rough and tumble union politics and organizing and so forth. I mean it had been a legitimate firing line and he certainly had a command of the pragmatics, and he had a dream. His dream was that with university faculty or college faculty it might be possible to create a sort of new model of collective bargaining and that he saw this as a kind of great experiment, and he was very enamored of a kind of Maslow's hierarchy of needs sort of analysis that would say that the first concerns of working people were for security and so forth. And his notion was that if in college faculty we could get a contract which met most of those basic economic and terms of employment kinds of concerns up front, then it might be possible with this well-educated and very enlightened group to work out a model of bargaining that would be a beacon of the future perhaps for all of collective bargaining, for all of the labor movement. The first round of negotiations, I think, heard that theme expressed explicitly. As a matter of fact, and you were a part of this, Joe, when the first contract was signed it seemed that we got a raise every

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W: twenty minutes.

R: Three in one year.

W: That's not literally true, but we got our annual increments.

We got negotiated increases. We got mid-year negotiated increases. And our salaries escalated rapidly, and very, very quickly we went from being one of the certainly modestly and perhaps poorly paid state college faculties in the country to being just about the best paid state college system in the country. Marty was disillusioned ultimately because he discovered that underneath all of the educational enlightenment, that faculty members were just as grubby in some ways in their approach to economic and terms of employment issues as were the people in the garment workers union. We never realized the kind of age of enlightenment or post-modern, post-industrial kind of collective bargaining model that Marty envisioned. Having said that, Morand is brilliant. He's now a professor of labor studies at IUP. Brilliant man who I think inspired a lot of us at the time to try to see a greater good and a higher kind of standard for education not just for the professors as workers. Marty was more than a little bit crazy in the best sense of that word. He was a guy who just sparkled with ideas, and like very, very creative intellects, not all of his ideas could be appreciated by others all the time. But the fact was, he was a very high energy person. High energy physically. High energy intellectually who pointed the way. He was ahead of his time, and that was his undoing probably,

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W: ultimately, in APSCUF. He ultimately was forced out of his

executive directorship by a group of, in my humble opinion, much more limited and meaner-minded people than he was, but who were determined to exert some kind of control, and have done so, I think, to the limitation of APSCUF every since.

R: And, of course, one of the things that he was a part of in the early contract was the trust fund which you later became head of?

W: Yes. The trust fund was, it was called the Educational Services Trust, and it was a peculiar kind of device, but it was kind of a particular evidence of some of Morand's brilliance. It came out during the Nixon administration when there was a wage cap. There was a limit in terms of how much salaries could go up. It was national. It didn't have anything to do with us except that it affected us. And Marty managed to negotiate a contract which said that if when the judgements were made by the people at the federal level about wages, if there were some of the negotiated increases which could not be paid to the faculty individually that they would be paid to the faculty collectively and they would be put in a trust fund to be managed by a set of trustees representing both the system, the Pennsylvania Department of Education in those days, and the union. I was one of the trustees initially. I was chair of the Board of Trustees of the Educational Services Trust, and then there was the need for some full time attention, and the trustees asked me to serve as the

W: executive director of the Educational Services Trust which I did for some months and stepped out of my position as a trustee to do that. We committed from the Educational Services Trust, I've forgotten exactly, not quite a half a million dollars in the trust fund. A significant sum but not enough to create an eternal charity or something of that sort. This was in the mid-1970's so a half a million dollars was a fair piece of change. It also was coincident with attempted retrenchment in the system and with the great shift in faculty opportunities. This was the period when suddenly faculty mobility became very difficult, and we devoted the trust fund by and large to faculty development, and we did some really kind of neat things. One is we created some matching money scheme and I went around and met with the presidents of all the institutions except for President Wade Wilson of Cheyney who refused to meet with me, but everybody else met with me. I went to Cheyney. It's just that Wilson wouldn't meet with me. I offered to the institutions a sum of money for professional development of the faculty on the condition that the institutions match the money. The presidents at the time were not particularly pleased by that, but they did it, and the condition that we established was that they could have the money if they did two things. One is if they matched it and second if they



created a joint management-faculty committee to promote professional development of the faculty and to spend that

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W: money. We did establish therefore some kind of professional development committee on virtually every campus in the system except for Cheyney, I think, and that I thought was, in its own right, a substantial step forward. We also sponsored a number of professional developmental activities for various groups in the system. One that I'm most fond of remembering because it was my pet project, was the thing we called the leadership academy which was a training experience for department chairpersons. We had two of those. One at Indiana and the second at Bloomsburg in 1977 and 1978, I think. They were very, very successful events, I think. As I said, I was in charge of them so that's a jaundiced or prejudiced assessment, but I think most of the people who took part in them found them to be very successful. We also got involved, maybe the most interesting thing we did is some retraining schemes where we gave support to some faculty members whose jobs were threatened by retrenchment, but who with some relatively small amount of further academic work or training or whatever could evolve into some other position. There were a number of these. One that was most interesting was there was a math professor at Edinboro who was about to be retrenched. They had one more math professor at least than they thought

they needed. They were short o faculty in computer science. We identified a mathematician who was not the person who was going to be retrenched, but who had some interest in developing his computer skills. We supported him doing some

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W: work at Virginia Tech so that he could come back to the Edinboro faculty as a computer scientist not as a mathematician, and had the effect of saving the job of the guy who was on the bubble in mathematics. We had two historians at Bloomsburg we worked with. One did some work in speech communication, and Bloomsburg had more historians than they thought they could employ, and he did some work in speech particularly in film and came back to Bloomsburg still on the faculty there, taught in the speech communication area at least part of the time. I'm not just sure what he's doing now, but at any rate we retrained him. Then another guy even a little wilder had been an undergraduate chemistry major but had had some lung problems which prevented him from pursuing graduate work in chemistry, had to a Ph.D. in history, now was over his lung difficulties or whatever his problems, was being retrenched in history, and we supported some retraining for him so he could come back and do some work with the chemistry people. There were some very creative solutions i thought to some problems. We were pioneers, and we did some good. We also invited proposals that

came from far and wide both to the trust fund itself, and to the campus committees for very specific kinds of professional development projects. Now we have a large professional development program in place in the system, and it's carrying on. I don't know if it even understands that its roots are in what we were doing there 15 years ago, but some of the things that

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W: are going on now in the professional development program in the State System of Higher Education are very, very much, I think, rooted in what we were doing in 1976 and 1977 back in those days.

R: Was the trust fund involved when Steave Glinsky was laid off for a while?

W: No.

R: That was in the retrenchment fracas?

W: No. Glinsky was terminated. I guess tenure although I'm not sure. Was fired in effect, and then there was a hearing process, a review process, that dragged on for some time. He finally was made whole, and he was restored to his job with back pay, etcetera. I don't remember all the details of that.

R: Yes, exactly.

W: It didn't have anything to do with us. I mean by us the trust fund. APSCUF, of course, was involved in defending him and

asserting his rights, but it didn't have anything to do with the trust fund. I wasn't involved in any direct way in that except that I went to the party when he got rehired.

R: I missed it. Lowenbrau party?

W: Yes, among other things.

R: One of the other things I know you've been involved in was the community recreation facility. That isn't exactly what I want to talk about but since you have been involved in so many things like that, what are the complications of the town-gown

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R: thing? It seems to me we've always had some kind of problems particularly about student behavior and about who's going to do something about it.

W: Yes. That's about as good a way to put it as anything, I suppose. On some levels there's pretty good cooperation between town and gown, between the community and the University, and the recreation program you mentioned is one of those.

In other ways, the relationship has always been strained. I suppose the relationship is inherently strained and that the University is much too big for this town. That is, there are four thousand residents of Slippery Rock more or less, and a total of nearly eight thousand students, and the relationship is disproportionate. It makes residents of the community, particularly residents of the community who are not associated

with the University, nervous. The University has a further problem of not having nearly enough housing for its students. So the townspeople on the one hand, some community people, make a great deal of money renting housing to students, but they and others are then inconvenienced by students who are one, numerous, and two, often noisy, and not infrequently inconsiderate as young people are wont to be. I'm not excusing it. It's difficult to imagine a college town without some of these behaviors, but there's that kind of friction that's much like the kind of friction you get when you have too many people in the same family. They love each other but they get on each other's nerves. The community and the students get on

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W: each other's nerves. That's exacerbated, I suspect, by some very, what shall we say, less than enlightened community leadership at times. The University leadership has not always been as responsive as it might be. I think Bob Aebersold to his credit makes considerable effort to be sensitive to community needs, but he has a constituency here at the University and a responsibility as well and the two sometimes collide. The role of the police and the attitude of the police toward students varies and it has varied over time. The Slippery Rock police force is probably not the most professionally enlightened police force in the world. By definition it's small, it's poorly paid, it's I think at times pressured, and

it comes in direct contact with students most often I would think probably over alcohol laws. Alcohol is a serious problem with the University. The students drink too much. The town is dry. That leads students to develop various subterfuges. Parties in apartments and so forth. There are many, many, many, too many people for a very small apartment. There's just a clash of wills very often over all of that. Some of it's necessary. Some of it probably has been handled badly. On balance, I don't think the town responds too badly to the students, and on balance the students don't do too badly toward the town, but the fact is there's too many students and too small a town and not enough services available. The community doesn't offer to students many of the kinds of things that they might need. A lot of strains, and it's a

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W: wonder that we get along as well as we do is my guess. And then the problem is exacerbated further by the fact that the peculiarity of Pennsylvania government is that the township-borough line goes right through the campus. So some of our students live in the town or in the borough of Slippery Rock. Some live outside the borough of Slippery Rock and are relating therefore to two different sets of police jurisdictions which also cause a separate set of problems. Then you lay on top of that the campus police force. It's confused, and it's confusing, and it's strained.

R: Another interviewee talked about a minority of our students are really badly behaved, and probably can't be anything but that, and that when you have outrageous behavior that those people need to be removed from the campus expeditiously, and should not have been here in the first place because they are not seriously intending to do much with education.

W: Well, the last point is easier to make than it is to enforce, because I don't know how you tell from a set of admissions documents who behaves well and who doesn't. As a matter of fact, we're even with various kinds of privacy legislation and so forth precluded from knowing about some past problems or behaviors of some of our students. We don't know some of these things until they come. We don't have any way to know. It's not dereliction on the part of the University. It's the way the society operates at the moment. As to whether or not they should remain here, my guess is that I would come down on the

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W: side of saying, yes, we ought to excuse these people. I think the truth is that we do. One of the problems and I don't know how you balance this really, is that I think people don't always know what the University does do in this regard. You're trying and I think you're constrained to respect the privacy and so forth of some individuals. The University takes a disciplinary action. it's not appropriate for it to take a billboard in the center of town and say we just threw Joe

Riggs out of school even if we did. So we very often do things and we don't get the credit for them, but I've seen this institution move very quickly, I'm just not so knowledgeable about some of the routine examples of bad behavior, but when it come to some of the more egregious kinds of things. The best example I know is the racially oriented incident we had a year ago where there was a cross burning of sorts. The University recognized the potential danger, the inflammatory nature of that insensitivity, identified those people and they were gone within a matter of days. It moved extremely quickly in that instance. Now not every incident I suspect warrants that kind of hastened behavior, intense behavior, action by the University, but I think the University does maybe in ways that most people don't, can't, know, do this. We do dismiss students for behavior and we do spend a lot of time, and our job here is not to dismiss students. Our job is to help students in a lot of ways. And we do spend a lot of time and energy and money and resource of various sorts

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W: upon various kinds of support programs. We have an active alcohol and drug related program. You know it's easy to say that you find a kid in some kind of alcohol trouble and you just bounce him, but maybe our responsibility is to help him and not to throw him out. Is throwing him out going to help him? At some point it stops being our problem, I think, but



it's not as simple as it sounds. The University, it seems to me, struggles with that ambiguity. One of the things we're supposed to teach people to do is tolerate ambiguity so maybe we're learning our own lesson.

R: We've been fairly well known for the rockiness of some of our administrations. Were the Reinhard years good for us?

W: Yes. I think Herb Reinhard came at the right time and left at the right time. He did some very good things for us. We needed a strong dose of a kind of a cheerleader. Somebody who would help us to feel good about ourselves, and I think Herb, particularly in his early years, did that. He brought in kind of a fresh face, a new sense of competence, and he clearly reached out to some new constituencies. Identified some new sources of support. Enthusiasm for the University. He talked about us very positively. He helped us to talk about us very positively, and I think in that sense was very good. I think there were other ways in which Herb Reinhard had a difficult presidency. I don't think he related real well to his own administrative staff. I think when he came on board, some of this is very personal, but I felt like a number of us suffered

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W: from his penchant for sweeping out all of the old Park stuff whether it had value or not. He simply wanted to separate from the past, and there's an argument to be made for that, to be sure. He killed the planning process. He got rid of several

other things that I thought probably should have survived, but on balance I think he did reasonably well. I don't think he had at the end of the day much understanding of the academic process or of academics and I think that was about to get him in trouble, and that's what I mean when I say I think he left at the right time. I think he came, he had maybe a maximum positive impact in terms of the things he could do well, and about the time it was necessary for him to turn to some other things where he wasn't going to do so well, he left. So the mark of a good president I think is not long getting the job but knowing when to leave, and I think Herb knew when to leave and God bless him. He wasn't my favorite guy. He wasn't the kind of person I wanted to spend the weekend with, but I think he was good for the institution, and set us in some different directions. And in the history writ large of this place I think there's got to be a plus put down beside his administration.

R: What about the athletic program? It doesn't come under fire for violations of NCAA regulations, but we're considered a jock school.

W: Yes, well, I think that's a little overdone. Maybe more than a little. It's one of those kinds of things that you can never

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W: get rid of. Part of it relates back to that heritage of being a teacher's college with a special mission in the training of

physical education teachers. And in that sense we were a jock school, and in a very fine way. I don't think the University needs to make an apology about that for a moment. That's still deep in the culture of the place. I don't think there's any doubt about that. First of all I think a very high percentage of our students here participate in athletics either on an intercollegiate or intermural basis. I don't know what that number is, but I suspect it is higher than it is most places this size. There's still some sense of that old physical education image that pervades the place, and I don't know that it's bad. Just a fact. In terms of the intercollegiate athletic program, I'm kind of a fan. I think it's been a good program over the years. By and large it's been a very sane program. Any program has its moments or some individual does some injudicious thing, but I don't even remember some of those kinds of incidences. I was involved once as, if you remember, the president of the Quarterback Club. Which if you know me is kind of an unlikely role for me, but I did it at the time because I was an admirer of our football staff. Bob DiSpirito and his people I thought represented the kind of athletic program that a university ought to have. They were darn good at what they did, and they didn't have to apologize for their performance on the field, and at the same time I thought they surrounded their athletes with both demands and

W: networks of support that were appropriate. In all my years here, I've never had a coach, I'll take that back. I've had only one instance where I thought an athletic coach made an inappropriate gesture to me in terms of students, and curiously enough that was a graduate assistant who was the cheerleader coach.

R: That's funny.

W: Yes, and I think that was kind of a glitch. The football people, the basketball people, so forth I always had a lot of respect for. It was the system of the coaches themselves to bring academic pressure to bear on a student because that was the way to get a youngster's attention, and the coaches were delighted to cooperate. I could go through the years and think of specific coaches and specific athletes and know, I think, it's been a very constructive environment. Another good thing about our athletic program, I think, has been the role of women's athletics. We're making this tape right after watching the women's NCAA tenth anniversary championships yesterday in basketball. I remember when I first came here and now Dean Griffiths was the women's basketball coach, and this was before women's athletics went big time, but it was an important part of the Slippery Rock program, and they had very quality teams in those days. Now we can't afford to compete at that level anymore, but we were in those days among the most competitive in the old Association of Women's Intercollegiate

Athletics, whatever it was called. It was a high quality

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W: program, and always has been as near as I can tell. So I feel good about our athletic program by and large. They, like everybody else in this institution, are underfunded, and you kind of wish that sometimes some of those men and women would get the kind of support they need and deserve, but that's true for most everybody.

R: Does job security for the coaches have something to do with all of this?

W: Well, I suppose that it does. Although one of the big changes in athletics that I think that the jury is still out on, is our ability now to hire people who are only coaches and not faculty members.