

UNCG CENTENNIAL ORAL HISTORY PROJECT COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Elizabeth Uzzell Griffin

INTERVIEWER: Missy Foy

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[Begin Side A]

MF: And so, I guess if you—first if you could start with a little bit of background information and then if we could continue with some of the stuff we were talking about.

EG: Well, I thought that it would be interesting for you to know that I was in the first graduating class in art—when they had an art department.

MF: Right. That was in 1938?

EG: No, I graduated in 1938. This came in—it would be the fall, let's see, of '30—I graduated from high school in '34. So it would be the fall—my freshman year they did not have one. They got it in my sophomore year.

MF: Oh, okay.

EG: In the sophomore year. So the first year they said I that I should take home ec[onomics] because it had the most art classes in it. And I had a class in anatomy, art appreciation, and we had to take a small sort of sketch and by miracle of the age then we could have it magnified up on the wall, so I could have a back-drop for a dance or something. And see, that was something because the murals then—you used to have to get up and try to find out where you were. But with the projectors we could get them on the walls, so that was—I was introduced to that. So I was home ec major, and I didn't know that home ec you had to take bacteriology and all that kind of good stuff—chemistry. Everything in the lab blew up or discolored me because then you had to memorize the formula before you went into the labs. They tell me now you take it with you. I guess they learned after a few explosions. And I had cooking.

And my cooking professor, whose name escapes me now—I didn't think it ever would—was one of the most encouraging people that I had—first introduced to in college. She was very encouraging. Because it was discouraging for me that everybody in my cooking and sewing classes were taking cooking and sewing because they wanted to teach it. And so here comes this misfit, myself, that I didn't know whether you sewed from the left to the right or the right to the left. And I made excellent grades on my design of the clothes, choice of fabric and all like that, but when you turned it inside out was when I got my bad grade. And I never would have gotten out of that. And the same way with cooking. You had

to memorize the recipe before you went in there. And you didn't do simple things. You did things that are difficult, like make a cream sauce. Now that's saying something. A mousse or a soufflé, that wouldn't fall. So my first year I really and truly couldn't wait to get through it. I don't think I would have ever finished college.

MF: Didn't they have something called the Bride's Cooking course? Because I remember somebody telling me something about that.

EG: Probably so. All of us were hoping to become brides. And we did have a few in there. I was in there hoping to learn how to cook. And so I wasn't as much of a misfit in the cooking as I was in the sewing. And they were perfectly serious about that. And I had to make a dress and wear it. And I wore it to the Duke/Pitt [Duke University, Durham, North Carolina vs. University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania] game. And I'm a [University of North] Carolina [at Chapel Hill] fan, and I do live in Durham. And, as I say, I wore it to the Duke/Pitt game when, I think, Pitt knocked them out of their chances to go on to the Rose Bowl or something. But you always identify clothes with occasion.

MF: Oh, sure.

EG: And you knew that we wore hats?

MF: Yes.

EG: High heel shoes. [unclear] And we had big sisters and little sisters. Do you have that now?

MF: The sororities have that, but not the regular—

EG: We didn't have sororities. We had literary societies. But you wanted me to tell you more about my art?

MF: Sure. Yes. I know—I've heard a lot of people talk about Gregory Ivy [first head of the art department].

EG: Oh, yes. He had a wonderful sense of humor.

MF: I just saw a picture of him yesterday and that was the first time I'd seen a picture, and he was nice looking too.

EG: He was. Did you ever see where Red Skelton? Red Skelton. Mr. Skelton?

MF: No.

EG: He was Bob, I believe, Bob Skelton [Robert Skelton, art department faculty]. Well, he was straight from Manhattan—Yankeeland or somewhere, very sophisticated. And we'd never seen that kind before. So it was very exciting to have two real enthusiastic men that really did encourage you. It made me feel for the first time I'd found my niche. I couldn't

imagine—sort of like, having a job that you enjoy so much that it didn't make any difference if they paid you. You'd think, "Golly, I'm having the most fun and I'm getting paid."

MF: Oh, yes.

EG: Well, I felt like that about—it was the first time in education that I was taking something that I was interested in. And we had a very, very well-rounded, comprehensive, art curriculum. I think today everything is so specialized. Everything is so specialized. And what they did was introduce us to every facet of art we can imagine. And then we were expected to know—to find what field we were in, and what our interests were and pursue them in graduate school a little later on. But we had glass etching, unusual things like that.

MF: Yes.

EG: Let's see—of course, you'd expect to have pottery. And you would expect maybe to make objects out of clay, but you also learned to make the molds, plaster of Paris that you can—after you make one you can make the molds. We had woodcarving. The only thing I have left is that head up there on the second shelf on the right.

MF: Yes, I see it.

EG: I did have one of a nude figure, but naturally that was one of the first ones to disappear through the years. We did—we designed—everything in this world has to be designed. Everything. So art is most important. And a lot of people think art is just painting pictures. But everything has to be designed. And we designed wallpaper. We designed cheerleading costumes. Of course, we had—we learned to design clothes, the history of fashion. When they say, "They say that they're wearing so-and-so now." Well, who is they? So we had to go back to: Who is they? Who dictates fashion? Then we had—we could design—we designed wallpaper. The first class ring was designed by Rosemary Snyder [Class of 1938], who is no longer living. She was from Reading, Pennsylvania. [Ed. note: Westlawn, Pennsylvania] I might have a picture of her. Anyway, she designed the ring. Would you believe that I couldn't afford one, and I still don't have one. And I still—I would love to have one. But it was—

MF: One of those black [unclear].

EG: Yes. And see, it was a contest and I didn't win that one. When I say contest, did I tell you there were only seven of us in the class?

MF: In the first art class?

EG: Yes.

MF: Yes.

EG: Only seven. All right, we had one in there, I believe only one, that could get a likeness. In

other words, when we did figure drawing or portraits or things like that, I always tended to draw people like I wanted them to look. I was really into fashion. So I had a hard time when we'd have a model that was a male with a pot belly in a sleeveless tee shirt and tattoos on his arm and a day's growth of beard, you know?

MF: Yes.

EG: But you get somebody good looking in a swim suit or something like that or a good-looking dress—I really liked that. But we only had one girl out of the seven that could get a likeness. We had to do a self-portrait. And I just drew myself the way I wanted to look. And there's no way that I looked as good as I drew myself. But she had that innate ability. And see, Gregory Ivy had a way about him that made a feeling that whatever you did was all right for you. That you didn't have to do like everybody else did. You never saw what everybody else was doing. We did our thing. And so he said that—in his estimation that that's a God-given talent, that you can draw somebody. Oh, I could get the lines right, but they would not come alive.

MF: Yes.

EG: But you didn't get that sparkle in their eye and all like that. So he was one of the greatest influences in my life and my lifestyle for giving me that extra self-confidence. I had a very positive mother and was into good self-esteem, and "You can do it." —that kind of thing. I was always easily bored. And art, to me, was totally fascinating because no two days alike. No two anything's alike. And I loved that. We also were introduced to silk screen process, all kinds of things that now they probably just zero in on one thing and do it very well or something. But we really had this well-rounded course that we could teach it or do it or pursue it. So he was very, very encouraging.

And I couldn't imagine going out on a pretty spring day like today, and the first watercolor I did was of pansies. [unclear] And I thought, "I'm not believing that I'm out here with this beautiful weather, painting this, and I'm going to get credit for it." And so I went back in and he liked it. And that just thrilled me to pieces. So after a while he kind of caught on to the fact that I had to please, that I was a pleaser. And he wanted me to please myself. So he made it one of his little projects to try to make me mad or make me more emotional because artists are supposed to be very emotional. And I found my emotion in color and stuff like that. But I'm not very easily upset. And he finally—there was just seven of us—he finally had needled us or critiqued us until finally, and it took him a long time to get to me, but I did learn that you had to take—to be critiqued—and you had to know rejection. And that's a very, very good lesson to learn in life, that you are going to be rejected. Not everybody's going to like something.

MF: That's true.

EG: I could tell, through the years, keeping my drawing how I had improved and how I hadn't. But he was a great influence. And I was interested in fashion design and clothes and things like that because that was one place that I could put together colors that had never been put together before.

MF: Yes.

EG: And nobody said, "You just don't do that." You know? And so I was always encouraged at home, at my own home, to be a trend-setter. And I didn't have to do what everybody else did. So I more or less had done my thing. But it was so nice and reaffirming to meet someone other than a member of my own family or, like, my mother and daddy to say, "Yes, it's great to be yourself." Because you don't really begin to enjoy life until you can do that.

MF: I guess at Woman's College [of the University of North Carolina] also it was kind of unique in that the women who attended school there were able to do even more because—some people have told me they didn't have to compete with men. And that a lot of people feel like that helped them a whole lot. And then other people would tell me, "Well, it didn't really matter." But—

EG: I definitely do—see, if you're normal, I think men would be a distraction.

MF: Yes.

EG: And we sure were normal. And so we really could zero in on what we were learning and the experiences there. And one thing I'm sure that has been brought out is the self-government; you know, student government started there. And a lot of the schools and universities don't know that. My sons that go to school at Chapel Hill and—one went there and UNCW [University of North Carolina at Wilmington] and all these places—they say, "You mean student government started there?" That was what we were told. You can research that. But student government started at—there. So we were very, very aware of the fact we were in a "A Number One" good school. And we were getting a "A Number One" good education. So we had the idea—and I was brought up this way too—that you work when you work, and you play when you play. And I played just as hard as I worked. And some people don't know how to play. They only can work; they can't play. And particularly now there's no sense of humor. Life's no fun. Everything's so dull, such a bo—. And that's just pitiful, but—

MF: Yes, unfortunately some people are the other way.

EG: Yes, right. Right, absolutely.

MF: They know how to play, but don't know how to work.

EG: Yes, that's true. That's true. But we—I was well aware that we were a number one school, supposedly number two maybe behind Smith [College, Northampton, Massachusetts] or Vassar [College, Poughkeepsie, New York]. We were right up there with them.

MF: Do you want this last?

EG: No, please do. I've already my share. I've got some more we can work on. I've got a real sure

enough brandy that somebody brought my husband today. But anyway that the fact the student government—we had—you've heard of Miss [Louise] Alexander [faculty, Greensboro's first female attorney]?

MF: Yes.

EG: Well, she was just quite a character. Then we didn't call it women's lib—I could just go on forever about women's lib. One thing—being Southern, which is an additive, not geographical, but by the grace of God I'm Southern—we've always been liberated. In other words, you have to live in the world with men and you learn how to live with them. And the Southern women are tough. All the men had to go off to war, and here they were left at home, by themselves to—with all these—if they happened to have servants. They had the whole thing to take care of. And they're just tough. And we're taught by our mothers and our grandmothers and all how to get along with males. And really the—that little society, that little bond that women have in the South, is just as true and still maybe now there's a lot of people elsewhere think that's a bunch of—. That's not. I mean we have friends in all elements or sections of society or whatever—that a woman is a woman and a friend. I mean we're sisters because we had the same things. And as long as the female can present a good image for her husband and laugh at his jokes, it's a trade-off, like anything is in life, and uphold his reputation and be a warm, loving companion. Then she's free to do whatever she wants to do. And they take great delight in the fact that this one can paint; this one can write; then she doesn't have to go out to make the living. He made the living, and she tried to make the living worthwhile. And so we can't understand that friction between the—

MF: [phone rings] Do you want me to pause here?

EG: No. My husband can get it. [unclear] He's recuperating. But you get more with honey than you do with vinegar. And it's called the velvet handle approach. You put up with a lot. And there is this bond, and we had that bond at WC. They're your sisters. And then, see, you're so glad to see the males when they come on the weekends. And they would come by carloads from all the schools all around. And we weren't allowed to go around campus with our hair rolled up and all that kind of jazz.

MF: With what you're saying about the bond between the women and the bond between the women at WC, there—

EG: Is there any of that now? Or is it—?

MF: Well—

EG: What about—wouldn't you be distracted if you were going to class and there was somebody else—some other female making a play for a young guy because you know how women know women.

MF: Oh, sure. Sure. Oh, that happens.

EG: You couldn't think about your history lesson; you couldn't think about whatever. I don't know.

MF: Oh, well. It's not hard to distract—

EG: Somewhere in life, either in high school or in college, I think it would be very, very beneficial for the two to be separated for educational purposes. Of course, that's nothing new. The Moravians [Protestant religion] did it. And lots of other people.

MF: With what you're talking about with this bond between Southern women, I guess, there was a considerable population of girls from New Jersey and New York at WC. And I know a lot of people that I've talked to have said that when they first entered WC they were intimidated by some of these girls. And they'll allude to the fact that well, they had twelve grades, and we had eleven—but I think there's something more than how many grades they had in school.

EG: Why do you think they fought the war? Because they know more than anybody else. They're smarter, you know. I mean, you're just dumb. And, you know, we don't do that.

MF: There's an attitude.

EG: Oh, attitude. Everyone has value and contributes to the whole and for the common good.

MF: Yes. I've always felt when people say they were intimidated by some of the girls from New Jersey and New York that there was more than just the fact that they had more years of education.

EG: Right.

MF: And—but few people will go far enough to say—

EG: I know. Of course, you shouldn't. You're a lady. And see, you can't help how other people act. And you can't help how they're brought up. But I used to [unclear]. Of course, they just—they see that as wimpishness. But you just look at—I know we used to have a friend from Oklahoma who married a girl from Alabama he met during World War II. He was way up there, third or fourth vice president of big old IBM [International Business Machines]. And when he died, we went to his funeral; he dropped dead when he was fifty, and all the vice presidents were sitting around as pall bearers, and my husband, because they were good friends, and every one of them were from the South because they not only have as much sense business-wise, but they can present themselves in a way that you can accept it. They're not always on the defense. Everything you say they take it as an affront or something. But I hope there is a spirit there of something—something to be proud of. And I hope it's not just a suitcase college. My boys went to these suitcase colleges where they couldn't wait for Friday to leave.

MF: Well, I think that happens pretty much everywhere. I think at any college. But I think what

happens is rather than everybody—a lot of people—I think have this idea that when Friday comes everybody leaves. But see, I think what happens is they don't—they just go wherever their friends are. And so there are still lots of students around campus. But it's just not the students who attend that school.

EG: Yeah, right.

MF: So everybody goes somewhere else. Part of that also—probably, I think, perhaps some of that impression comes from the fact that there are no Saturday classes now. People don't have to wait for Saturday class to finish.

EG: How about that. Now, do you have cuts? Can you cut class now?

MF: Well, I guess, it's usually a professor's prerogative whether or not to implement that. There is a university regulation about three cuts.

EG: You don't have lights off? You know, we had lights off.

MF: I've heard that. Yes. Were the lights like overhead, or did you just have to turn your lights off?

EG: All the lights off. And they had an inspector. So if you wanted to stay up late and study, you had to—we had lights in our closets. And so, of course [fades—unclear]. I knew people that were. And they would put towels or something, so the light wouldn't come because they had bed check. They'd open the door and [snaps finger]. And you never knew when it was coming or whatever. And we had—of course, we had student government. I was on the Judicial Board.

MF: Oh, were you?

EG: Yes. Do they have that now? A judicial board?

MF: Yes, as a matter of fact they do.

EG: And, let me tell you, it was like something out of the movies. We had these chairs around like this. The girl, the offender, is sitting in this chair with a light on her, and the rest of them—. Well it used to—I don't know how in the world I got on the Judicial Board. I never have known why I got on anything. But, anyway, it used to tear me up to have a friend of mine up there. And I'd have to—I just couldn't stand to look at her either. And all she'd done, she'd just been late. I mean, we had such rules you wouldn't believe. Also we had lists of guys that were blackballed that couldn't come to the dormitory and date.

MF: Oh really? How did they get on the list?

EG: I never knew, but they did. Maybe the officers—because you see we had—see, you could be shipped for drinking. Nobody had to see you. You could have a bottle in your room

[unclear]. There were always these stories about how—that's the way one girl get another one in trouble, plant one in her room. [unclear]

MF: Oh, okay, I see.

EG: But there was none of that—all of our highs were natural highs then. And the people we knew that drank—but, see we're talking about the '30s and early '40s. And the people that we knew that drank then were out of it when they were in high school. So it started in high school. They didn't live past thirty or forty no ways. They were just alcoholics and died. But most everybody started their drinking in college. But, boy, you better believe it wasn't at WC. It might have been off campus but you'd be gone in a heartbeat. And let's see, I told you about judicial. I was campused one time. Let's see, I forgot to sign out. They had this thing you had to sign out, and you had to sign in. And I think I forgot to sign out for a weekend. But even though my mother called and said I was at home, I still had to go to [unclear], was campused for two weeks—made me so mad. Saved us some money. Oh, also, we had study halls if you didn't make—. Do you all have study halls if you weren't making a C average?

MF: Athletes have study hall.

EG: Oh, okay.

MF: So, anybody who didn't have a C average or above had to—?

EG: Had to be in study hall. And we had dorm meetings. Do you ever have dorm meetings?

MF: I think in the freshman dorms they still have mandatory dorm meetings. But—

EG: Can you choose your roommate?

MF: Yes. Not guaranteed any.

EG: How about freshman year?

MF: Yes. I think the way it works at most colleges now—when you're accepted to a college they'll send you a form to fill out—that you and if there's a particular person you want for a roommate, you fill out the form. But you're not guaranteed anything. I know that it's real common during the first couple of weeks of the semester you see a lot of people switching around.

EG: Well see, we weren't allowed to go home or change roommates or do anything until Christmas because you talking homesick. And if you went home, you'd never come back. And so I didn't go home and never come back. But after you got home that first Christmas, and you knew all of your high school buddies, and all—you see, then we grew up. We danced. There was very little regular—no TV [television]. And so we had—and there was no money. I think it was three hundred dollars. I think tuition was something like three

hundred dollars.

MF: Yeah. That's still the aftermath of the Great Depression [severe worldwide economic depression in the decade preceding World War II].

EG: So anyway, it doesn't cost anything to dance. And it didn't cost anything to play cards. We played cards. Rather at my house we had dance and cards because I'm Episcopalian, and I didn't know were supposed to be [unclear]. I was always taught life should be celebrated, and that's the way I celebrated]. But also, each person was expected to contribute to the party. If you invited everybody—all your friends in, maybe you could sing, or maybe somebody else could play the piano, or simple things like (let me see if my husband—he could do hambones.) [She proceeds to perform an act by slapping her hands to her legs.] Anyway, he can make it with a rhythm, and he can do double. But you'd have all kinds—everybody had something to contribute—some party trick or joke or maybe you were a good story teller. You see, in the South everybody tells stories and jokes because you have all these crazy relatives. In a lot of other sections of the country, they put them away. And we brag about our crazy cousins. We've got more cousins than you can shake a stick at them. So we're into storytelling. "Tell them about the time uncle [unclear] says—." And let's see, the singing—lots of harmonizing and singing. Of course, we were into [unclear] and stuff like that. Into beauty pageants. Into beauty.

MF: Did they have anything associated with that at Woman's College? I know that they—

EG: The May queens.

MF: Okay, yes, that's right. They had the May queens. And I guess the marshals were kind of—

EG: Oh yes, the marshals were special. And those that carried the daisy chain. [unclear] And let's see, we had gym; that was required at all times. But we weren't into competitive sports. We didn't really want to compete against somebody else.

MF: Yes, it was just within the school, wasn't it?

EG: Yes.

MF: Do you know why that was?

EG: Well then, see, girls just didn't do that. You played sports for fun. You played tennis just so you'd be where the guys are; play with them. You didn't want to beat anybody particularly.

MF: Do you remember a course called Body Mechanics?

EG: No. Now, we did have some sort of a dance troops or dance teams. What did they call it, not interpretive dance? No, I guess it was.

MF: Modern dance?

EG: Modern dance, yes. I've got my annual up there, but Grace [?] said—I started to get it down when you came to the door—"Well, she knows all that stuff."—to refresh my memory. We talked about student government. Very important because Miss Alexander—we were imbued with the fact that we would be leaders. You got good education. And when we got back to our community we would be leaders in the community, meaning power behind the throne, like helping in the political process, getting your candidate elected and vote. There was absolutely no excuse not to vote. And, let's see—

MF: I suppose Miss [Harriet] Elliott [history and political science faculty, dean of women] pressed for that.

EG: And also something about not bad-mouthing the ABC [Alcoholic Beverage Control] Stores because taxes went towards the teachers' education. But we had certain rule philosophies like that. It was like, "To more that is given, more is expected." And I know our senior year, loved him—Chancellor W. C. Jackson was our—was he called a chancellor?

MF: Yes. Most people just referred to him as Dr. Jackson.

EG: Right. What I learned from him—his parting remarks were: "If these four years have made you understand your fellow man more, [unclear] able to express yourself more and to understand, so you can be understood and you can understand them, then it's been well worth it." And that's true. It really was. We just had great pride.

Gosh, we had a wonderful music department, business department. Do you realize when you finished school—. Grace had a four-year business—. I had a one-year course. It was great. But they had a four-year business course that when you finished, you could open up a business. You could be—we had two or three that were secretary to the CEOs [chief executive officers] in Manhattan [New York City], or whatever. You really had something to work with there. And I was going into fashion—designing clothes. I still have some designs that I made and sent home to my mother. She'd sew them up and send them to me made—several outfits. But then, of course, Cupid got me then.

MF: Oh, yes.

EG: And that took care of it. I went south instead of north towards Atlanta [Georgia]. But I think we had an excellent, excellent education. And the opinions then were that WC was much harder than Carolina or Wake Forest [College, Winston-Salem, North Carolina], Davidson [College, Davidson, North Carolina] or anything. It was the hardest school—and we didn't say that because we hadn't been to those other schools. But in academic circles, it was supposed to be tough.

MF: Yes, it was one of the best women's schools in the nation. But see then, when it turned coed it seemed to lose some of that reputation. And do you have any thoughts on how that possibly—?

EG: Yes. I mean, I think there's a definite place for a women's school because you don't have

those distractions. You really can learn. Somewhere along the line you've got to—if everybody's growing up so fast these days, maybe you need it in high school. Maybe you wouldn't have so many early pregnancies.

MF: Yes.

EG: But there's somewhere they've got to be separated so you can concentrate on your books. Now I wa— being an Episcopalian, I was all lined up and supposed to go to St. Mary's [College, Raleigh, North Carolina]. So my senior year in high school I went over to Raleigh to spend the weekend. I was driving, and I had a friend with me. And I drove up in front of St. Mary's, turned off the ignition and the back door [unclear]. The back door seat—the back seat door of the back seat opened, and I turned around and this girl was crawling into the back seat. And I said—she said, "Would you take me downtown?" And I said, "Well, certainly." And so I took her downtown to the drug store. And I said, "Can't you just go downtown? Do you have to just get in people's cars?" I mean, we're two females; we're not talking about on the campus. And I said, "I'm supposed to go to school there." So, on the way down, we said, "Why can't you just go?" "Oh, no, women aren't allowed to go off campus. And you have to sign out, and you have to sign in. And you have to wear a hat. And you have to wear gloves." And we said, "Oh, you're going to meet your boyfriend?" It was something important like that. And she said, "No, I'm just getting shampoo for some of the girls," or something similar. And I said, "You mean to tell me that you can't do that." "No." And she started telling me [unclear].

MF: Oh, no.

EG: So, anyway I got back to—

MF: Then you felt lucky.

EG: And this girl that was with me, we went into the lobby area, and we could not go up to see the person that we were going to spend the weekend with.

MF: They wouldn't let you?

EG: No. We had to have permission. We had to sit there and wait for her to come down and get us. And anyway I was getting more claustrophobic and uneasy as the time came. And they said, "Who would you like to see?" And so—I've forgotten her name now, and I gave her name, and they said, "Is she expecting you?" And I said, "Yes, she is." I said, "You know, this is prospective weekend or something and we came to spend the weekend so—to visit the school," or something like that. So anyway, they said, "Well, just have a seat and we'll have her come down." So, when my friend came down [unclear]. So, I said, [unclear] "But if we have to ask permission to walk up those steps to your room, to see your room and see the school and all that," I said, "I just don't think I could hack a weekend." I'd surely do something that wasn't just right. And so, anyway, we thanked her for her invitation. We thanked them and told a big fat lie and that we had planned to spend the weekend but we found out that we couldn't, and we just wanted to tell her personally. So they struck our

name off, and we went home. And my mother said, "Oh, I know you'll like it. Oh no, it's such a nice place. And they're such nice girls. And there are not many of them. WC is such a big school." And I said, "Well, they say that they are going to have an art major at WC at the end of the year." So I inquired to make sure that they really were because they had been talking about it for a while. So that's how I got to go there. And I really did appreciate the fact that—because when those girls—supposedly, when they got to Chapel Hill or they got anywhere else, they were just wild as bucks because it's the least thing—I'm not used to that because I had always had a lot of personal freedom though. Mother always trusted me. And I never was [unclear]. I imagine this was the first time they had to make a decision for themselves.

MF: Yes. Well, it's still like that sometimes now. Some of the girls that come to school and they'll—. It's the first time they've been away.

EG: I'm sure. Well, go to the first game over at Chapel Hill sometimes if we're in the mood, just for the fun of it. Now we don't, since we're right-headed. We intimidate the heck out of them. Don't intimidate them, but they already feel bad enough. They don't want to feel worse. But we would walk through campus on the weekend of the first football game and see them. They look like—they're not even dry behind the ears. And they're all just so drunk. And it's so sick. You know how hot it is in September, but they feel like they've just got to drink because that's what you do—

MF: Yes, that's kind of yucky to be out in the hot sun and—. Because those first football games are pretty hot.

EG: Well, do they have any sort of—what sort of feelings do they have? Or do they have pride in the school or pride in their education?

MF: I think it depends on the student.

EG: Do you still feel like you're getting a good education?

MF: I do.

EG: Now, what is your major? Come again. You told me before.

MF: I'm getting my master's in history.

EG: In history. Oh Lord, in history. [unclear]

MF: Yeah, but sometimes it's kind of hard.

EG: You don't have to memorize facts and things like that?

MF: No, but it is pretty helpful to know.

EG: Well, one thing I truly, truly, truly believe [unclear] and why people act and do the things that they do. And it's so interesting to me that—talking about people who read journals, you see, they weren't taught the same thing I was. All that's deleted from the history books. You ask one out of—I bet you ask one out of four or five, they don't even know who occupied who during the [American] Civil War [fought over the secession of the Confederate States 1861-65].

MF: There are very few kids right now that can tell you about the Civil War.

EG: And they think it was about slavery, but it wasn't. It was about dominance in congress—getting those out of power. Of course, it was wrong, and in time it would come about, but it was necessary then. And nobody gives you credit for the fact that we were the ones who taught them how to read and write, taught them about God, that their own souls—[unclear] fighting each other all the time [unclear].

[End Side A—Begin Side B]

Note: The interviewer has the microphone close to her where everything she says is clear. Unfortunately, the interviewee is doing the majority of the talking, and the microphone is apparently at a distance.

MF: All the industry.

EG: All the industry. And the first—let's see, the National [unclear] Southwestern [unclear] the first one to print Bibles in the South [unclear], so somebody—one of the printing presses up north stole some plates and started fresh violence. We knew that because her son, one of the sons was so violent. Did you read that one year at the college?

MF: That's a hard job.

EG: You're telling me. They sent him somewhere up in Ohio, and he'd get out and walk and thumb.

MF: Yes. That's not a job I would want.

EG: No, not now. And that was a good ten years ago. And I know that I wouldn't dream of it now. But then I thought, "Golly, if you've got that much guts and fortitude—" And he is a good salesman. But there's so many things that never hit the history books.

MF: Oh, sure. Well, a lot of times people think history is just, "Well, that's fact," but there's interpretation involved.

EG: That's true.

MF: And it changes.

EG: And it's according to who is writing it.

MF: Well, it changes the way that people look at events and interpret them—changes over time. So there's history of history.

EG: That's right, particularly when you have everybody that tries to discredit it if it's American or any values that we have or any standards. Maybe we're getting over that.

MF: I think that's beginning to change now.

EG: I think so too.

MF: Well, sort of a blame the American system for what's going on. I think that's beginning to change. For instance, the idea that saying the Cold War [sustained state of military tension between the powers of the Western world and the communist world, 1947-91] was the fault of the US [United States]. Things like that are beginning to hit a sort of revisionist stage. I don't think—

EG: I think [unclear] really do a lot of good in that it gives us an opportunity to show that we can use our technology for good and that our soldiers can help, not just kill [unclear]. So, it's going to [unclear].

MF: Yeah. Sometimes it's hard to find.

EG: Yes. I know it. Can you think of anything else that I might have—that you want to know about? Everybody will have a different perspective.

MF: I guess one last thing that I'd like to hit on is some of the stuff going on with the Alumni Association right now. I don't know how much you know about—or how active you are with it.

EG: Well, let's see, I had been past president of—when we had a Durham Academy [private high school, Durham, North Carolina] Alumni Association, I was past president. And then we would entertain cards, and we played bridge and raised money for a scholarship for a girl from Durham to go to—it was called WC then—and she majored in music. And the mother was a widow and was a seamstress and really couldn't afford to send her. So she majored in music, and she taught music. And that was very fulfilling to us. I believe in all kinds of scholarships of different kinds.

MF: Oh, sure, sure.

EG: [unclear]

MF: If I had the money I would have set up a scholarship.

EG: Isn't the truth?

MF: But, of course, you always think that if you set up a scholarship, you're going to set one up for somebody like you.

EG: No, I wouldn't say that.

MF: Well, I mean, somebody with the same interests.

EG: Oh, yes, I definitely would. In your case, it would be history.

MF: And in yours, it would be art. That's what I'm saying.

EG: I think whatever is going on with the alumni at UNCG [The University of North Carolina of Greensboro]—. From what I pick up because my husband went to a couple of schools, public schools, and my son at different schools—what I pick up is, it's not unique to WC. There's this thing about who's in charge? Who has charge of the reins? The alumni have given money, and they feel like that they should have input of what happens to it.

And then you have these professional fundraisers; they do that for a living. And I've cut out an article by this Mathers [?] woman, somewhere in there, that talked about how it really is dirty pool or something to try to get money out of your friends for your personal causes—that if you want to save the animals or save the world or whatever you want to do, you do it, but don't try to milk money out of me. Well, now we all—everybody—I'm not going to put you in that stage yet because you haven't finished. But when you finish school you'll hear from every alumni—let's see, we have one that went to Guilford [College, Greensboro, North Carolina], two or three at Wingate [University, Wingate, North Carolina], two or three at Chapel Hill and about two or three at UNCW, and one, let's see, Mary Baldwin [College, Staunton, Virginia] or the University of Virginia [Charlottesville, Virginia] or something. And we hear from all of them wanting money. And then you hear from [unclear], and then you hear from your church, and we hear from everybody.

The thing—uniquely about UNCG, it does have an Alumni House, and I think, of course, Carolina had one of a sort, that VIPs [very important persons] could stay, but I think they—I believe [Frank] Kenan [UNC Class of 1935] gave some money—I think they're having a house now—or there should be a place on campus that alumni could feel comfortable to come back to. Like in Chapel Hill at the Carolina Inn, [unclear]. But with WC, when you go back, where do you go? So the Alumni House is the focus for that. And you will meet people not only that finished there, but people who care about the school, its future, its present, and all like that. And frankly, I don't know how they can do without the alumni. But it's a tug-of-war of who's going to control the money. I mean, being crass about it. And what is going to be the administration, and "We're going to do it our way whether the alumni like it or not." Well, how—I mean, it's just that old attitude of—I think the number one prime example would be Duke University. I know some of the fundraising folks out there, and they make no bones about it. That's got a lot to do whether you get in a school somewhere.

MF: They say it doesn't matter when you apply to UNCG.

EG: It shouldn't because the school belongs to the state in essence.

MF: But I've seen on—maybe it was an application from Duke—but I think it was an application from Duke—that they do ask if you have any relatives that attended school there. I may be wrong, but I know there was a private school application that I saw that does ask that question. I keep thinking it's Duke, but I wouldn't swear to that.

EG: Well, of course, UNC Chapel Hill does that because when mine got in—but that didn't make any difference. The Chapel Hill people—and I guess same thing goes [unclear]. Before the Civil War, after the Civil War—there wasn't much education after the Civil War; that took a while. But that didn't seem to have anything to do with it. It was just from a historical standpoint that they were interested in it. But then when you get people—see, like at Duke, they can't get anybody to root for the team because, hell, they're all from New Jersey, Los Angeles—they recruit all these people.

And I'm writing a book on Chapel Hill during the 1920s, and I was interested to read the philosophy of the people—the first concept came after World War I [major war centered in Europe that involved all the world's great powers, 1914-18] that this is a state university. North Carolina has always been big on public education and a forerunner. And that Chapel Hill—that the University of North Carolina belonged to the state. And that it is to serve the state, to educate its youth. And therefore, people in these small towns—the highlight of their life was to come to Chapel Hill for band concerts, [unclear] all kinds of activities. And not to mention the athletic events. But they had debate societies. [unclear] fight each other verbally.

MF: You don't need a society to do that now.

EG: And that was a new concept—that education should be for everybody and not just people who can “afford it.” So, it's always been the best deal.

MF: It's called educational equity.

EG: So I think that WC was that way too.

MF: Yes, I believe that was part of the whole idea when it was built.

EG: And also the teachers. And it's like [Charles Duncan] McIver [founding president of the institution] said, “When you educate a female, you educate a family.” [Ed. note: Dr. McIver actually said, “Educate a man and you educate an individual; educate a woman and you educate a family.”] It's very, very important that women be educated. And who's [unclear] in 1991. And I truly believe that we're going to have to have more education in mothering because, I tell you, we [unclear]. And one thing that blows my mind when I had to go through the '60s with my kids and read all that stuff, I couldn't imagine when I was twenty years old [unclear]. I can't imagine thinking that I had more sense than anybody else. I mean, it never occurred to me that I had so much sense that I could run Duke University.

And where in the world did they get the idea that they know more than anybody else?

MF: I don't know.

EG: Really. I think one thing is, see, at WC we had self-government. Ya'll still have student government, don't you?

MF: Student government has very little power now.

EG: Really? You're kidding. Who does?

MF: The faculty senate. And in student government there's a new constitution this year being written for the university. And student government's being written out more and more.

EG: Boy, have things changed.

MF: You see, I know this because I was in graduate school student council this year.

EG: How do you feel about it?

MF: Well—

EG: Is that true on other campuses? Because my son's—

MF: I'm not sure, but I think that it's going to continue on that trend for a while because there's a lot of student apathy.

EG: What do you attribute the apathy to?

MF: At UNCG, it's probably got a lot to do with the large commuting student population. They don't feel attached to the school. And they don't care. It's just a place to go to get an education and that's it.

EG: Well, I know Margaret [?], the one that's [unclear].

MF: I don't know about—

EG: Said something about they had residence colleges now, like smaller, I think—

MF: They have the Residential College at UNCG also, where students live in a dorm where they have professors come to the dorm to teach classes. They go outside the dorm for classes as well. But it's a much more—

EG: For instance, do all the art majors live together rather than [unclear]?

MF: Residential College is usually mostly art and music majors and so forth. And they become a

very close-knit, sort of like the things I hear about Woman's College forty or fifty years ago.

EG: [unclear]

MF: Well, I want to give you the chance if there's anything I've forgotten. I know you'll think of all those things tonight and go, "Oh, I should have said that."

EG: I know. I hope I've said some [unclear]. I am proud of the school and proud of the academic achievements. And I'm like you—I think it's in a state of transition just like we are everywhere—power play for all these things. And I think that the pendulum will swing back to the basic educational values. So I feel good about it. [unclear] Because I tell you, I have met graduates from there, like yourself, [unclear] and they are really outstanding. They really are. [unclear] So something good's going on.

MF: Yes.

EG: [unclear]—those in the last ten years or so.

MF: I'm not sure.

EG: You can speak to that. But how did these people have this power [unclear]?

MF: I'm not sure.

EG: I have something that I'm proud of that you might not know—that the mother—the mother of one of the children or young child, who won the talent contest music nationally was a professor at UNCG. And I heard her sing at the National Convention Center just a couple of weeks ago. [unclear] written up in the alumni magazine. "I'm sure you have some kind of something there." I said, "Well, the alumni needs to know the faculty there." Her name, let's see if I can get it right, is Carla [LeFevre] Milholin [associate professor of music]. M-I-L-H-O-L-I-N. So I hope that she will get some recognition because she is very talented. But I think it's like in everything else. You need more PR [public relations] communications between—so that the faculty knows its students and that the alumni knows the faculty. And you get that through publications. And, of course, [unclear] and nobody reads them. But you get some writers that they can't—[unclear] if you can't make it interesting nobody's going to read it.

MF: Right. I thank you for your time.

EG: Well, I thank you.

[End of Interview]