

P: This is Sam Proctor interviewing Irving E. Kallman for the University of Florida Oral History Program. Irving Kallman owns and operates the Florida Book Store, Inc., in Gainesville. Today is July 22, 1970. The interview is taking place in the Graduate Research Library. Mr. Kallman, would you give us your full name and date of birth and place of birth?

K: My name is Irving Eugene Kallman, and I was born in Tarrytown, New York, January 10, 1916.

P: You are married?

K: I am married and have a wife whose name is Eleanor Clayton Kallman, whom I married in 1936 a few weeks after graduating from the University of Florida.

P: [You have] two children, I believe.

K: Yes. One was born in 1942, and the other [was born] in 1947.

P: All right. Let me first ask you this. You were raised in Tarrytown. Did you go to the schools there?

K: Yes, I went through elementary school and high school in New York State. Then I enrolled at the University of Florida in 1933.

P: May I ask you what prompted you to come to the University of Florida?

K: Well, during the Depression there was very little potential for a future. After graduating from high school I knocked around at odd jobs; I waited tables and things of this kind. However, my best memory of what I wanted to do was to work in a chemistry laboratory, because I had been an excellent student of chemistry in high school and was inspired by a great teacher. So I became interested in agriculture, because during the Depression one could not envision any future in the technological aspects or the employment aspects, and I thought that I would like to work in chemistry. Since the University of Florida had a College of Agriculture, and since it was in a rural area of the country--and as far away from the large metropolitan centers, which I had learned to dislike--and also because the catalog stated that tuition was fifty dollars a semester, I believe, [I enrolled at the University of Florida].

P: So it was pretty much a hit-or-miss kind of thing that brought you to Gainesville, in a way.

K: Well, no. Some background might be of interest. As a high school student I was participating and hoping to go to a university, but I knew that financially it was impossible except through getting a scholarship. The only achievement that I had had was as a high school athlete. Before the Depression I was hoping to get a scholarship at the University of Pennsylvania. In 1932, after I graduated, there was no such thing as a scholarship for athletics, or at least

they were greatly curtailed. So I did choose a university that had the agriculture and also that had a reputation for having a good track team, which the University of Florida did in 1932.

P: You came in the fall of 1933?

K: No, in January of 1933.

P: And you arrived in Gainesville as a green freshman. Where did you live?

K: Oh, I lived on 124 NW 6th Street, in the house of the Trompers, as I remember it. That house was famous for those people who could not afford any better lodgings, and I found a room there for four dollars a month. Also living in that house was a person by the name of Irving Ashkenazy--poet, scholar, boxing star. He may have been some influence on my changing later from agriculture to literature.

P: That is a name that escapes me. I do not remember that name. Tell me about him.

K: Ashkenazy was a 6'4", 240-pound poor boy from Tallahassee who worked his way through the University of Florida first on the football team. Because he was greatly myopic, and certain other reasons I cannot recall now (but somebody should), he left the football team. In order to make his twenty-five dollars a month to keep life and limb together, he boxed; he was on the boxing team, too. Incidentally, [former UF] President Steve O'Connell would lend a lot of information about Ashkenazy, as they were classmates.

Anyway, Ashkenazy at the time was writing and publishing poetry, and I believe he was the editor of the *Florida Review*, because he accepted a poem that I had written, inspired by the proximity at the time of living in the same boarding house. Oh, he had a fabulous story. He became one of the early young university poets that had a narrative poem done on radio by one of the chains back in 1934 or 1935, something like that. But that would be left for someone else to tell.

Anyway, Ashkenazy was a fabulous person, and I accompanied him throughout the state on several occasions when he fought the four-round boxing matches that were so prevalent back then. Gainesville had a little boxing ring, and Tampa had one. [It was] almost the same environment as what you could conceive of as a cockfight these days. I think the emolument was about twenty-five dollars if you won and fifteen dollars if you lost, or maybe it was fifty and twenty-five. I do not recall exactly. But the batterings that Ashkenazy took to earn that paltry sum in those days was rather hard to me. Yet he graduated in June of 1933, so I had known him only those few months.

P: Where is he now?

K: Well, I do not have the faintest idea. From graduation I think he went to work for the J. Alfred Thompson Advertising Agency. Then he went out to California, and I have not heard from him since.

P: He had a major influence, though, on you as a freshman?

K: No, not a major influence, but a minor one.

P: You said he was one of the forces that influenced you to change from agriculture to [literature].

K: Yes, but he was a minor influence because of the short duration [that I knew him]. Yet it was an influence.

P: What was student life like at the Trompers?

K: Well, this would have some bearing on the future. It was a two-story house, and old wooden shack house opposite Buchholz [High School], what had been Gainesville High School, I guess, on University Avenue. Downstairs living in one of the rooms, and having a second room for his means of going through school, was a man by the name of Ray Brannan. In this room he strung tennis rackets for students, as well as for the team, probably, because he was on the tennis team. This is the famous Ray Brannan. This is where I met the Ray Brannan who had a more powerful influence on me, because it was he and I who later began the Book and Racket Shop that later became just the [Florida] Book Store.

P: Ray was a student?

K: Ray was a student at the time. He was on the tennis team, and perhaps he was captain of the tennis team, either at this time or later.

P: Where did you eat?

K: Well, actually eating was a problem of hit-or-miss, because to eat three meals a day was a great luxury in those days. I actually had no breakfast, and I would generally get a pint of milk and a donut for lunch. Then for dinner we would eat at what was then the Orange and Blue, which is today the Waffle Shop. The old Orange and Blue had a number of different owners. I remember at that time there were two brothers (whose names I do not recall at this moment) who served a fabulous meal for twenty-five cents. Now, sometimes I would eat a lunch, especially if there was track practice that spring. Then I would have milk in the evening in order to sustain life. Well, it was that spring that I was on the freshman track team and met the coach, [Alfred] Nash Higgins. Do you know that name?

P: Yes.

K: Nash Higgins was then the track coach and, I believe, head of the physical education program at the University. Lyman Haskell was dean of the College of Physical Education, I think. Lyman Haskell--another fabulous name. Do you know Haskell?

P: No. Tell me about Haskell.

K: Well, Lyman Haskell was an elderly, New England, aristocratic man with great presence and great charisma. As head of physical education, he was a rather [inaudible] figure. Anyway, Nash Higgins was coach of the track team. I did very well that spring, as the records can testify.

P: Who was Nash Higgins?

K: Nash Higgins was a very successful track coach who had given the University a national reputation in track. He was a very pleasant, quiet person.

At that time I had only a few hundred dollars that I had accumulated before I had come to the University, and I knew at the time that I would have to have some means of support for subsequent years. I depended on track to do it, so I ran my heart out in order to stay in the following years. Coach Higgins promised for the fall of 1933 a job in the athletic department, at the swimming pool, handing out trunks to students for twenty-five cents an hour. Oh, I had applied for a job at the cafeteria waiting tables at the time, but the regulations were that you had to have a *C* average for two semesters. Of course, as a freshman I was not eligible because I had not been there for two semesters, so that was out until such time. But many a student worked his way through the University here at that time by waiting tables at the cafeteria, with no pay, I believe, but just for meals.

P: Or washing dishes.

K: Well, yes, but actually as a busboy. But that was a great source of income for a large number [of students]. And [the job was] enviable, very enviable. Since I was not eligible for that, the only prospect I had was the promise of Coach Higgins that in the fall I would be given this athletic scholarship, the privilege to work for twenty-five cents an hour at the gym. Well, this did not materialize, because in the fall of 1933 Nash Higgins left to take a job in Tampa as recreation director. So I was left . . .

P: High and dry.

K: High and dry. I had enough money to register and about seventy-five dollars for that semester. All I had was about a hundred books that I had accumulated. From the time I was twelve I was given books or purchased them.

Along about November my money was getting low. [I had] no job and no prospect of getting one, so I began to think that I had better sell my books in order to make my meals. I did have two books; I do not remember what sequence they had, but there were two books that I had, one of which was the complete works of Shakespeare, which I purchased for a dollar a couple of years earlier, and a *Roget's Thesaurus*, which I had purchased for a dollar. I had brought them with my other books, anticipating that they might be of some use. I sold both of those, and very readily, for a dollar.

Well, as it got to November, things began to get tight. I had twenty-five or thirty dollars left. Because I had become acquainted with Ray Brannan downstairs, and I guess because we had done some preliminary talking about it, we decided to rent a little store that Jim Lodge had from the Guy property right across the street from the science building. What was it called then?

P: It was called Science Hall. It is now Flynt [Hall].

K: Anyway, on November 11, 1933, we opened the door, Ray Brannan on one side selling tennis rackets and stringing them, and I on the other with my 100 books, trying to sell those.

P: Now, would you locate that building for us today?

K: Well, it is now the site of the Baptist [Student] Union. It was the site of Jim Lodge's first store. The property was owned by the Rolf family, of the agriculture station.

P: I had thought there was a house on that property, as I remember it, that was moved before the Baptist Student Union was located there.

K: No. The house that you may be thinking of was located next to this, the Guy house, which was taken down and is now the site of the present bookstore.

P: So the original bookstore was on the corner.

K: No. The corner was vacant. But it was twenty feet from the now-present bookstore.

P: I recall a small, little shoe shop.

K: That was on the other side, Louie's Shoe Shop. That was in part of the building that was the Baptist Student Union of 1933 and 1934. It was run by John Paul Jones, a student pastor.

P: Now, later on you moved to west of the next block? Let me ask you this before we get to the move, because that is the original bookstore. You were getting no support from home. You were completely self-sustaining and independent?

K: Well, let me backtrack a bit. When I first found out upon returning that there was no work to be had through the athletic office at the gymnasium with Nash Higgins, and knowing that I would have to sell my books, and feeling that this was probably the last resort, I began to ask questions as to why there was no other source of books in Gainesville then except for the University Bookstore, which was located in the basement of Language Hall.

P: It had moved to Language Hall by then?

K: It was in Language Hall when I came.

P: It had been at one time in Science Hall.

K: I do not remember that.

P: That was before your arrival.

K: Yes, [it was in] the basement of Language Hall.

P: Language Hall is now Anderson Hall.

K: Yes. One of the striking features, as I remember, for instance, [came to me] in my first semester when I had taken chemistry, of course. In order to pursue it I had to buy a book, Smith Kendall's *Principles of Chemistry*. The price of the book was \$4.65 at the bookstore. Well, \$4.65 represented a week's food, and I could not afford it in September of 1933. So I sent to Barnes and Noble for a chemistry outline for seventy-five cents, which book I used during my first semester of chemistry under Professor Thronson. [Silas M. Thronson was a graduate assistant in chemistry. Ed.] I passed the course because of my competency at the high school level, I believe--without the text. Now, that made an impression on me, because there were other students who could not afford books, and there were no used books at the time.

With this prevailing poverty among a large number of students, the fact that there were no used books available to anyone because of the lack of trading [intrigued me]. I raised the question during that time, from September to November, as why there were not, and why there was no other source of books. Among the people to whom I went asking for advice and counsel was Dean [Walter] Matherly, dean of the College of Business Administration. Dean Matherly was very courteous and cooperative, and he spoke to me on several occasions, giving me his valuable time. He said, in essence, that he did not know why there was not

one. There had been one of sorts earlier uptown that had been run by some of the Pfeiffer people, but that had fallen apart during the Depression. I vividly remember asking him what he thought of the prospect of a bookstore, and he told me that it would take anywhere from five to ten years to build up a book business, to which I replied that I had not planned anything like that because I was using this merely as a means to go to the University and graduate. Privately I thought that this man did not know what he was talking about when he said that. [I felt] it could be done in three or four. As the years went by, he not only proved correct, but he was optimistic.

P: I thought you were going to say that he was somewhat conservative in his estimate.

K: No, he was optimistic. It actually took even longer than he had said. Frequently over the years I have thought of that, and I thought, If I had believed Dean Matherly at the time, I never would have started.

P: Tell me of your impressions of Gainesville, Irving, when you arrived in 1933, and of your impressions of the campus, the physical look of the place. First of all, let me just backtrack and ask, how did you get to Gainesville?

K: Well, I got to Gainesville in a twenty-five-dollar Chrysler roadster that I bought in Philadelphia. I toodled down with it. I later sold it for about thirty-five dollars when my money was getting very low, somewhere in the 1930s.

P: So you drove to Gainesville.

K: Yes.

P: Do you recall your picture of Gainesville as you arrived?

K: Well, for some reason which I cannot recall now, except possibly it was the last 75 miles of a 700-mile trip on which I had all sorts of complications and problems, I vividly remember mostly coming from Jacksonville to Gainesville. Anyway, I do remember vividly stopping at the Black Cat, the corner restaurant of great fame. This was the center of student activity off campus run by Pee Wee Keisel, of whom I knew nothing at the time.

P: Where was the Black Cat?

K: The Black Cat was on the corner of 13th Street and University Avenue. No student at the time would not know all about the Black Cat. But what I remember specifically was sitting at the counter and ordering a sandwich and a cup of coffee and looking around more with an eye to its surroundings in terms of my hoping that someday I could get a job there, or ask for a job there, since I had more experience waiting tables than anything else. A vivid recollection I

will never forget is that after the sandwich and coffee, I left a five-cent tip on the counter, and when I got up and was about to pay my check, the young student who had waited on me called to say said, "Hey, you forgot a nickel here on the counter." I picked it up and thought, Well, this is a different environment. This is one that does not leave tips. I learned later that students did not work on tips and did not even expect tips. That is a little vignette that later on I had some interest in. It was only years later that Gainesville had become a place where tips were left.

P: Was Gainesville pretty much a village?

K: No. Actually it reminded me of some of the small towns in New York State that I had been familiar with, [like] Tarrytown and Poughkeepsie. I had been through upper New York State to Utica and Ithaca and other places in which there were towns about this size. What was interesting was the tree-lined areas, [especially] the streets, and the large number of trees that existed. Of course, the pleasant climate was a factor. But no, I had no particular recollection, except of a small town that I found glad to come to and stay in.

P: What about the campus?

K: Well, the campus was small, tight, and extremely pleasant. I was struck by the fact that most students said hello to each other. It was a small campus; there were 1,800 students at the time. And it was serious business for me, so I buckled down immediately, since there were compulsory courses and [it was] a completely new environment as far as I was concerned. I enrolled in agriculture.

P: Did you establish any early rapport with any particular professors?

K: Well, the story of my first semester was chemistry with Thronson; English, which I had to have, under [Dr. William] Ed Moore, who is still here on the campus; animal husbandry under Dr. [Claude H.] Willoughby, who is now deceased; poultry husbandry under [Wilbur L.] "Major" Floyd, now deceased; and agricultural engineering under Frazier Rogers, now deceased.

In about April or May of 1933 there was a sign on the bulletin board that there would be a lecture by H. H. Caldwell at the Farr Literary Society--Caldwell was a professor of English--on *The Locomotive God*, by William Ellery Leonard, who is also the author of *Two Lives*[: *A Poem*]. [James Farr was vice-president of UF and head professor of English. Ed.] Because of the leisure [time] that I had, and some interest in literary things, I went to hear this lecture. That was the most profound turning point in my entire life.

P: This is Henry Caldwell?

K: Henry Holland Caldwell. He was the most fabulous, the most fantastic, the most profoundly influential individual in my life. That evening that lecture changed my life completely. This was an Englishman, an extremely competent scholar with a lecturing ability and delivery that was so magnetic as to hold one spellbound. He spoke on William Ellery Leonard's *The Locomotive God*, which I had not heard of. That made little difference. In future years, when I changed to a major in English because of Caldwell, I was very conscious constantly that one did not listen to what Caldwell said, although they were always great pearls of wisdom, but to the manner in which he lectured.

P: He was still here when I arrived, so I knew him.

K: It was soon after that that I changed from an agriculture student to an arts and science major so that in future years I would be able to sit under him, Caldwell, which I did. I took thirty-six or forty hours of English when I had to, but always under Caldwell.

P: So you were an English major, as it turned out.

K: Yes. What happened was that I had to get up at 7: 00 a.m. and attend to my eggs at the incubator for Major Floyd, and I was not very good at that. And most of my chicks died. I was good in animal husbandry because I had had some experience with cattle, with animals. But in ag. engineering under [Frazier] Rogers I was not doing very well because he had pitched it on a level presupposing a lot of experience with plows, tractors, and things of this kind. I was doing well in English and I was doing well in chemistry and I was doing well in French. (You had to have a language [other than English].)

After hearing Caldwell that night I changed to arts and sciences.

P: So he was the major influence in your college career, and certainly in terms of this switch as far as your major was concerned.

K: Oh, yes, definitely.

P: Anybody else?

K: Oh, yes. The second semester, beginning in September, I had to take college algebra, and there teaching . . . Well, I had inquired, actually, and for some reason--it may have been the inspiration of Caldwell . . . Since I had entered the University without using it as an end in itself, I was going to drift from course to course and maybe get a job at the chemistry laboratory mixing chemicals. I had no particular aim at the University. So I thought, after the inspiration of Caldwell, that I would look for instructors, teachers, rather than courses within the framework of the requirements for the A.B. degree. I inquired, somehow, who the man was in mathematics, and they recommended Joseph H. Kusner, so in the fall I took a

course with him. At that time the instructors were listed in the schedule, so I took Kusner's course in college algebra.

That was the second great and major influence. I guess in later years it turned out that it was as great or even greater an influence than Caldwell--for other reasons. Kusner taught a mathematics course that he lived and breathed and had a vitality, about which later on I have always said that there is no such thing as a dull subject--it depends on the instructor.

Now, I had taken mathematics only because it was required for the A.B. I was not particularly adept at it as I was at some of the other. But Kusner was a great inspiration because he taught mathematics from the point of view of thinking and philosophical thought. As a result, I followed him for a while, and we became great friends. He was the second person who helped me in some financial assistance, and between Kusner and Caldwell as instructors, and then meeting Charles Farris and Paul Chalker and Archie Carr and Lyman Bellamy, they formed a coterie of people.

P: These were fellow undergraduates?

K: Yes, these are undergraduates. These two men became a very, very strong influences on anything I did and the way that I did it.

P: Did you work in campus?

K: Never.

P: You did not get the job in the athletic department?

K: No. With Nash Higgins having left, there were no jobs. It was fall, and there were no prospects until spring, and when spring came I was too busy.

P: With your bookstore.

K: And going to school full time.

P: Were you involved in any extracurriculars?

K: Only in the athletic way, yes, with Dr. Haskell.

P: Did you stay on the track team?

K: No. I just finished one year. I was not particularly interested. By that time the intellectuality of Caldwell and of Kusner made that really unnecessary. I just passed it; I was through.

P: What about social life--fraternity life and that sort of thing?

K: Well, of course, fraternity life was impossible because of no money. And I was not much of a social person. What happened was that in the small bookstore, because of the smallness of the University, the few people who were book-minded, intellectualized, became habituated, and it became a center for bull sessions.

P: Both faculty and students?

K: Caldwell and Kusner came by frequently to talk with the students. Then later on [Charles] Francis Byers [assistant professor of biology] and, of course, some of the graduate students like Archie Carr and [John D.] Kilby and Bellamy and Glendy Sadler [joined our little group]. So it became a kind of coterie that attracted. My social life consisted of studying, because in my second semester I was taking second-semester English and French. Then I knew that in order to get the A.B. degree I had to take Latin, so I started Latin under Wilbert Alva Little, a fabulous name in the history of this University. He taught Latin. I had French and Latin.

P: Who did you have French with?

K: Well, my first semester of French was with a graduate student by the name of Euston. My second semester of French was with Dr. [Ernest G.] Atkin, who also had a rather deep influence on me as the years went by. Atkin was a fascinating instructor and a personable and interesting sort of individual who had been around the world and had facility for languages. [He was] highly cultured. New England, I think, was his home. So that became an intellectualized aspect.

Now, Joe Kusner, with his brilliant, analytical, logical, scientific mind, came around very frequently, and the students whom he met there liked him, and he liked them. He liked the challenge of what he later called "developing the beauty and brilliance of seeing young minds develop." In the beginning we met maybe three or four days or evenings, but later on it became fairly constant so that anytime one might drop in there would be some kind of bull session. That gave me the opportunity to study only from about 10: 00 at night until 2: 00 or 3: 00 in the morning.

P: You kept the store open in the evenings?

K: Yes, after classes. Classes were generally from 8: 00 to 12: 00. Of course, we took four or five courses. Then I would have it open from 12: 00 to about 6: 00 or 7: 00 or 8: 00. Then I would study or something. Sometimes bull sessions would go on to 9: 00 or 10: 00. So my

studying was confined mostly from about 8: 00 or 9: 00 at night to about 1: 00 or 2: 00 in the morning.

P: Presumably you got rid of the 100 books that were your original stock.

K: Well, that is another story. What happened was that the three books that I spoke of, *Roget's Thesaurus* and the Shakespeare and the chemistry outline, were of great use to me, and I thought they would be to others. I then tried to make some connections with publishers to purchase them. Well, the deep Depression made it very difficult, but somebody--I do not remember who; maybe it was Charles Farris or someone else--suggested to me that I talk to the head of the book department in Cohen Brothers in Jacksonville, John Meek. So one day I went to Jacksonville and told Mr. Meek what my situation was and asked him, because Cohen Brothers had charge accounts at the time, if he would open a charge account and give me a discount on some of his books. Well, we discussed that with the credit manager, and he actually influenced the credit manager to extend to me a credit, not to exceed twenty-five dollars. It is to John Meek that I owe the pillar of foundation of where I am now, because if it had not been for him I do not think that I could have gotten where I am now. It was from him that I was able to get the three books that I mentioned.

As anticipated, they did sell well, since they were not available [anywhere else in Gainesville], especially the chemistry outline which helped students, especially those who could not afford the text. Anyway, I frequently saw John Meek later. He is now deceased. I had outstripped him, had passed him by. The twenty-five dollars was insufficient.

Of interest to you would be that I had then gone to H. & W. B. Drew, who also had a large book department. In fact, these Jacksonville friends, Paul Chalker and Charles Grass, had purchased a lot of books at H. & W. B. Drew because they were getting rid of that fabulous collection they had before the Depression came. I think they were in bankruptcy at the time. But they were unloading, and I purchased books as I could from Drew. It was then that I went to their credit manager, in 1933 or maybe early 1934. Was his name Tibbits? It could have been. There was a traumatic experience in which I asked him for a twenty-five-dollar credit account, and I was turned down and refused. He told me that the chances of my being able to survive as far as he was concerned were negligible or nil. This was very interesting.

P: You would get turned down by one Jacksonville firm and get pushed by another.

K: Well, yes. Of course, Drew was in a serious situation.

P: What was the rent on your little building?

K: Twenty-five dollars a month: I paid ten and Ray paid fifteen.

P: His business thrived also?

K: Yes, his business thrived. But it fell apart when he became a motorcycle fan and insisted upon bringing the motorcycles into the building, which made it kind of a garage. I said that was not appropriate. They smelled like garbage. Ray, of course, in his later years was very, very sloppy in his personal habits.

P: This was indicated even as early as that?

K: In fact, Ray suffered from psychological problems even then which were manifested in ungovernable and unmanageable temper. When I would raise questions about the suitability of certain things, why, he would lose his temper. About the third or fourth time [this happened] I told him that it was no deal, and I left to go to the Francisco place.

P: Tell me about the Francisco place. That was the second [location].

K: That was across the street from Buckman Hall, and I guess it had been empty for a long, long time.

P: You do not know what it was originally utilized for, do you?

K: I think it was a cafeteria.

P: That was the Francisco Cafeteria?

K: Well, the cafeteria was in the big building next door. But the Francisco's, I do not remember.

P: Who were the Franciscos?

K: The Franciscos were a couple who lived in the house across University Avenue. I believe they were requested by [University of Florida president] Dr. [John J.] Tigert, or maybe even earlier than that, by [UF president Albert A.] Murphree, to open a cafeteria for students in the great big that is now Dave's. Maybe some students will remember the cafeteria, along about 1912, 1915, or 1920. I do not remember [the year it opened]. The Depression had hit then, so that these two buildings were empty barns. The big one was a barn-like affair, and the small one was a wooden shack that had been rented for some things. That was twenty-five dollars a month back in 1934, and it was there that things got started.

P: Where did your money come from for fixtures?

K: There were no fixtures. There was a man by the name of Wilton Marks who sat next to me in the French course, and through our conversation I found out that he was handy with tools.

Wilton Marks spent two or three years of his undergraduate time working there, mostly building shelves as time went on. We later became close friends; we still are. His children have come to the University, one of whom worked there [at the bookstore].

P: Separate generations.

K: Yes.

P: Now, you had to expand beyond the credit from the Cohen Brothers, obviously.

K: Well, it was Cohen Brothers who provided for a long time. I just do not remember very well now.

P: You bought books from [inaudible].

K: Oh, yes, from Grosset & Dunlap. Yes, but of course then it was a matter of being able to buy back used books from the students so there were used books available.

P: Was this your major emphasis to begin with, buying secondhand textbooks?

K: No. The major emphasis was on what I thought were these prime reference necessities for students. And they were very successful. Buying books back from students was very small [part of the operation] because it required cash. This is where we started. It was 1934--maybe the middle, in June, perhaps--when I needed \$50 to buy books from the students, and I did not have it. That was as visionary as \$100,000 or \$0.5 million today. But \$50 was fantastic.

Because of the friendship and interest displayed by Dr. Kusner, I gathered enough courage to ask him for a loan of \$50. Of course, he did not have it. No one had \$50 at that time. But he said that he would endorse a note for me at the bank at which he did business. I did business at First National Bank, and so did he. We got an appointment one day, and we went to see the president, Mr. Graham. Dr. Kusner introduced me, and I said that I had an account there. He asked Mr. Graham if he would authorize a note to me for \$50, which Dr. Kusner would co-endorse. President Graham, on interrogating me as to what I was doing, what the purposes and objectives were, told Dr. Kusner that he would not allow Dr. Kusner to jeopardize his credit on a \$50 endorsement note for my project which had, to Mr. Graham, no chance of survival or success. Well, Dr. Kusner was quite upset by this.

Somewhere along the way I had met Professor [Stephen P.] Sashoff of electrical engineering. Professor Sashoff lived just a few streets down, and he became interested in the bookstore. He was a book purchaser, a book man. I do not remember the circumstances, but I told him what had transpired at the First National Bank, so he said, "You come with me." I

accompanied him to the Pfeiffer State Bank one morning, and he introduced me to Mr. Pfeiffer, Gus Pfeiffer. "Mr. Pfeiffer, how about letting this young man have fifty dollars? I will endorse the note." Well, I do not remember now if there was much discussion, but Mr. Pfeiffer said okay. This was a personal bank, not a chain bank. It turned out that this was the kind of reputation that Mr. Pfeiffer had. He believed in people, not institutions. So Mr. Pfeiffer okayed a note to me for fifty dollars, co-signed by Professor Sashoff.

Now, that was the beginning of my success. I immediately transferred my account from First National to the Pfeiffer bank. I bought fifty dollars worth of books, sold them, and returned the money immediately to the bank. The next time [I needed a loan] for fifty dollars--I do not remember if it was with Professor Sashoff's signature again--[it came very readily]. Before long it was \$100--without Professor Sashoff's signature. I guess he had achieved some confidence in me. That was the beginning of credit and success. With that money I could buy twenty-five Shakespeares from Grosset & Dunlap at one dollar and twenty-five *Roget's Thesauruses* and ten chemistry outlines. That was a success.

P: You did not have any static from the campus bookstore?

K: Oh, well, no, not to begin with, but later on, when I became large enough to make an impact, [they gave me] lots of opposition. But that was much later on. I was too small [at first]. It came because the University College and the American institutions contracted with a publisher for about 1,000 copies of a book in order to get it at all. And I also suspect that it was at a special price. Anyway, I interfered with the sale of this by purchasing some of these books from the students and reselling them and also from locating copies from elsewhere, from other bookstores.

Always--even to this day--departments have been inclined to overestimate the number of books [they need for a class], and then when they change, the bookstore has them left on hand. So it is a built-in problem. They were stuck with about 400 to 500 copies of [Lloyd V.] Ballard's *Social Institutions*, representing perhaps a \$2,000 or \$2,500 loss, which was quite considerable. Well, the bookstore, I guess, blamed it on competition, and Klein Graham [UF business manager] sent out a memorandum to various deans urging them to ask their faculties not to give off-campus bookstores information about books [required for class].

P: There was only one. [laughter]

K: Yes. This was a very serious note. Several of the deans ignored it, and a lot of faculty gave information voluntarily, or on request, thinking that it was perfectly ethical, honorable, and that there was nothing improper about it. The only dean that sent the memorandum down to the individual faculty members--the most important dean of all--was Dean Towns R. Leigh of the College of Arts and Sciences. This was in 1936. I would say even to this day, thirty-four years later, that there still may be vestiges [of faculty not providing information to their

students about where to purchase course materials off campus] as a result of that memorandum by Dean Leigh. There were vestiges as far ahead as 1955 or even 1960, and there still may be. Of course, most of those people are no longer here. It gave a sense of dishonor to some of the arts and sciences faculty members the whole time they were there after having received that memorandum when they were asked [not] to tell us what book they were going to use. In fact, I guess it was until 1962 or 1963 or 1964 or 1965 that some departments would only give it verbally.

Now, one of the interesting persons involved in this was Dr. Elmer Hinckley, head of the psychology department. Being in the arts and sciences college, he thought that this was an unfair and discriminating memorandum from the dean. He was cooperative in many ways. I had met him several times, had spoken to him, and he knew what we were doing. But I believe it was only when he was close to retirement or after retirement that Dr. Hinckley told someone who knew me, "Considering the opposition that that man has had over the years from the University, he has done a fantastically successful job." I had not realized that Dr. Hinckley either remembered that or even considered it. That came in about 1955, as I remember. From that it occurred to me that I was not absolutely alone in knowing what was happening here. [I came to realize] that other people were conscious of it, that they also had felt that that was a rather oppressive way to conduct things.

P: Irving, you said earlier that the bookstore became sort of the headquarters for an intellectually oriented coterie. Tell me about that.

K: Well, the institution of the bull session in the 1930s at the University was extensive and intensive. I remember vividly, say in the spring of 1933 and the fall of 1934, that on any evening, especially on weekends--there were 2,000 students, most of whom were concentrated in Buckman and Thomas halls, which were close by--one could pass through the halls on any of the floors, and a bull session would be going on in an overwhelming percentage of the rooms. The doors were always open because of the weather, and one could go in and sit down and join in without any formalities. If the conversation were of great interest, one could stay and participate. If the conversation, or bull session, were of little or no interest, one could go on to the next one. So in the evening one could encompass any number of subjects in any number of dormitory rooms.

I remember feeling not only vastly impressed by this, but I found participation fascinating. The give and take of the conversation I found was extremely educational. Juniors and seniors and freshmen and sophomores mixed indiscriminately. No subject was sacrosanct. I remember there were very few subjects of *disinterest*. [It was] always the usual: religion, the role of ROTC at the University, fraternity life as against nonfraternity life, women and sex (a high priority of conversation because UF was not coeducational at the time), exploits over the weekend in which there was a great exodus of men students going home for the weekend,

science versus religion, heredity versus environment, and the whole galaxy. So the institution of the bull session was extremely well established.

Now, the bookstore was the only source of books other than the library for undergraduates. At the time I had a rental library of some choice books that I thought would be of interest that brought in a few pennies a week. Among them were what had exploded the 1930s, such as [Baron Richard von] Krafft-Ebing's works on abnormal psychology and books by other names on abnormal sexual psychology. I also had some other books that were probably esoteric. Then the *Florida Review* people drifted by, including J. Willard Oliver, who later became a professor of philosophy, and Bill Blois, who later became a professor of English somewhere. But they were actually the second generation.

The first generation was composed of Charles Farris and Paul Chalker and these other persons I mentioned from the biology department, which was across the street. It was headed by a man by the name of J. Speed Rogers, a man of great personal attraction and magnetism to students. He was a very strict disciplinarian intellectually. This is the reason why the biology department was one of the very superior departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. It was J. Speed Rogers, Dr. Theodore Hubbell, Dr. [Harley B.] Sherman, and Dr. Byers who were able to attract and maintain what later would be excellent students. For instance, Archie Carr, John Kilby, Louis Brenner, who are all on the faculty now, were students of Rogers. Anyway, he would also come by [the bookstore for our bull sessions]. In any case, the place did attract.

P: You had a mixture of arts and sciences.

K: Yes. The place did attract a few faculty people, a few of the biology students, few of the mathematics students, Dr. Kusner, Charles Farris, and Paul Chalker, who hoped to be a writer. We all dabbled in poetry, and we all dabbled in a little bit of writing. So there was a mixture of people in which the give-and-take in conversation was, to my mind, sufficiently stimulating to where I now attribute much of the education that I have to those conversations more than I do to my academic studies. My academic studies I later confined to things that were not suitable for conversation, like for what one had to have a book for and so on. For instance, Latin. I later majored in languages, and I had two years of Latin. I majored in French, so I had four years of French, and I had taken two years of German and Greek. So several times I was carrying Latin, French, German, and Greek.

P: You took Greek humanities?

K: Oh, yes. That was a fantastic experience. It was taught by James Nesbitt Anderson, one of the great nineteenth-century scholars. He taught a course that there does not seem to have an equivalent today, so he had to retire.

P: Who taught German?

K: [Oliver H.] Hauptmann was head of the department. I had Hauptmann for two years. I remember Hauptmann, but I do not remember who the others were.

Anyway, the discussions of the coterie were confined to science and mathematics and thinking rather than the art of conversation, the art of expressing oneself. Of the art of controlling ideas, one could not get intercourse. As a result, I picked either instructors or courses that I could learn by myself from a book. I had no objective. It was the Depression, you see. I thought perhaps that the languages might be a means toward getting a job in the State Department.

P: There was still no thinking on your part that the bookstore was going to be a permanent thing?

K: No, no. It was a means to an end, because I was undecided. I had no idea what I was going to do. But the languages I thought might get me a job.

P: But why did the bookstore coterie become somewhat suspect in view of the tradition of the bull session on the campus?

K: Do you mean "suspect" as to . . .

P: Anything unusual, queer, homosexual. Not just that, but being a little bit unusual.

K: Well, I have never been able to fully explain that, except that it is well known--and not necessarily documented--by students and faculty at this time that this was a place that was non-coed--for men only--and that any time if two or more men meet together frequently in which there is enthusiasm of interests, especially if they were of a high I.Q. or intellectual nature, hence possibly considered to be less masculine, there is always a suspicion of homosexuality.

P: The fluidity of the campus bull session would dispel that.

K: Yes, the fluidity and informality of the bull session, where people hardly knew each other but could make acquaintances.

P: There was a cohesive good.

K: That is right. But more in the general public bull sessions, as I described in the dormitories, there was generally a mixture of what are now called straights and squares. But in this group it was mostly a discussion of writing or poetry or art or literature or abstract science. Now, there was a sufficient number of masculine people--fraternity people and athletic people and

ROTC people and engineering people and law people--and the applied crowd, from which there was a very strict demarcation.

This was at the time referred to as a cow college, and those people who were attracted to this coterie were people who heretofore had been alienated from this group. Now, I had learned that there were many a person who came to this University as a freshman from this state artistically inclined, impressionably inclined--actors and would-be poets or would-be writers--that found so little community of interest in Gainesville and at the University that they took off elsewhere or dropped out of the University. Over the years I had been told by various people--a large number--that the lack of the arts and the lack of an intellectual environment had eliminated a large number of students. So this little group, which never amounted to more than twenty people, did attract from this group, the square group, the outside group, the applied group, the so-called cow college group. These were people from [the likes of] law, engineering, and business administration who saw in this from their own eyes the possibility of homosexuality.

Now, there was at the time some prevalent homosexual problems. I remember in probably 1938 or 1939 there lived above the bookstore that was then located on the corner of 17th Street and University Avenue a law student by the name of Julius Parker, who later became a law partner of Claude Pepper and, I believe, Governor [Millard] Caldwell. Is that the correct partnership?

P: Yes.

K: Julius Parker lived upstairs with his family. He was a more-advanced-in-age student. He was assigned by the dean of students, Dean [Benjamin A.] Tolbert, to look into and investigate the problem of homosexuality on the campus, and one of the sources of the possible growth of homosexuality was the books that were available on abnormal psychology at the bookstore. So Julius Parker lived upstairs, and he knew me and the bookstore and what we were doing. He told me about the investigation, and he wanted me to answer some questions, which I did. There were some students who were disciplined by or were expelled, were asked to leave, the University at the time. But never had there been any connection between any students involved in this coterie. Actually, it was an extremely square group, one might say.

I maintain that the intellectual difference between Group A, which did the accusing, and Group B, which had this mutual interest, caused many of these suspicions and so on. Even at the time I was about to say that a single bachelor man on the faculty past the age of thirty was always suspect. I do not know now. I knew a great many of them. If one was seen constantly in the presence of the same man--eating together, for instance--maybe five or six times, there would always be a presumption of homosexuality.

P: True or otherwise.

K: That is right; [there is] always a presumption. And I suspect even to this day that two bachelor women faculty living together are suspect. But that is part of the culture, I guess.

P: Did this coterie, which had an obvious interest in literature and the arts, develop in any major way as far as any particular individuals were concerned? Did they go on to do something in literature and arts? Some went on to teach, of course. Did the coterie produce any writers?

K: Well, it produced writers while they were on campus. They were always involved in the *Florida Review*, in the literary magazine, etc.

P: It is interesting to note that a cow college, which Florida certainly was in the 1930s, did sustain a very good literary review, the *Florida Review*, and the Florida Players was a well-supported group on the campus at the time. No University had an artists series, as I remember it, at the time.

K: That is true. In fact, there was not a tremendous lack of intellectuality that was attributed to it, in my opinion. I still hold that this pastime, this pursuit of intellectuality, is a very laborious one on the part of the students who have some artistic or some poetic inclinations, that generally he lacks the personality ability to seek it out. Generally, these people are shy and retreat into their own little worlds rather than seek it out. So I contributed a bookstore as a public place in which one could be and find oneself embroiled in a conversation which one likes, you see. One could get it from any one of the professors. Joe Kusner's office was always open, and Joe Kusner inspired thousands of students over the years in which he was here. Caldwell was not that reachable, but students could get to him. One could talk to Archie Robertson, to James Venton Fowler, to the great German professor Dr. Krogh, to [Ernest G.] Atkin. Even Joseph Brunet could be talked to.

P: Or even to Dr. Leigh.

K: Yes. It was only in later years that I ever took any history. Or Dr. Hinckley, for instance.

P: Do not forget [Hassel O.] Enwall. We had some great personalities, and in many ways we have not matched them in the 1950s and 1960s.

K: Well, I do not know about the matching. I suspect maybe they have been matched, but there is an obstacle now that did not exist then. I do not know, but I somehow cannot help but believe that it is the individual desire and amount of intensity of seeking it out that determines whether he will or not and that the alienation between the faculty and students is not on the part of the faculty but on the inability of the student to pursue it in a manner that achieves this success.

P: But the individual, unusual faculty personality, I do not think, is as present. I do not see today the flamboyant Bill Carleton, for instance.

K: That is right. I am very hesitant to say there has been a change, qualitatively, on the part of the number of people, both students and faculty. Now, the quantitative problem of the large number of faculty and of the large number of students may be kind of an obstacle. Then there is probably some kind of profound cultural things that prevent a student. Maybe a faculty man is much busier now than he was before, with so many things to do. There are people here that I know of that are the equivalent to those back in the 1930s and early 1940s. But they probably have to see so many students and have to do so many administrative chores and so on that they just do not have the time to become involved.

P: They do not have the time to be flamboyant.

K: That is right. For instance, even in my own case, I always ran a place where talking to students was a primary interest, and I still do. But I find that if they were the same percentage now as it was then, why, it would be impossible. I have passed them by in terms of the generations. They have passed me by in terms of the generation gap, but always that was the place where one could discuss books. And there was a time of leisure back then that may not exist now. I do not know whether that is the primary cause or whether it is the secondary cause, or whether I am any way right in saying that this must come from the students.

I had a history professor by the name of [Wallace B.] "Jack" Goebel. The A.B. degree required six hours of history, so I took a course under Jack Goebel in medieval history. Now, I do not remember why [I took that particular course] except he would come by the bookstore. He was interested in books, and I had the books that interested him. Later on I was a constant visitor in his home. He married into an old Gainesville family, the McKinstrys, and they lived in that fabulous, great, maybe antebellum home that is now behind J. C. Penney's.

P: It has just gone down.

K: And many, many an evening I and a couple of other students would sit in that high-ceiling living room with the fireplace burning, and we felt that we were back in an antebellum environment. We would talk with Jack Goldwin and Mrs. Miriam McKinstry Goldwin on the way that the world was going and why students were not as good now as they were then, or something like that, you see.

P: What about that second generation of the coterie, the Ed Coffees and Bill McGuires? That was about 1937, 1938, and 1939.

K: That is right. They were constant visitors at the bookstore. That is where they could meet and sit and talk poetry or plan something. They would convene about 11: 00 or 11: 30 after a class, and maybe five or six would be there. At 12: 00 they would go next door or go down the block for lunch. Then they would come back. So it was also kind of a meeting place. [They would do] the same thing about 5: 00 or 6: 00 for dinner. Ma Ramsey's boardinghouse was across the street, and people would eat there. So it was a nice place to stop. They were frequent, and I became very friendly with them. They gave a tone and a sense of the arts and sciences to the University. Today they would have been the editors of the magazines or some of those kinds of things.

P: Where is Ed Coffee?

K: Well, Ed Coffee is a lawyer in Jacksonville. Ed Coffee, for instance, is an extremely socially minded liberal. That is the way it goes. He represents labor unions in Jacksonville.

P: What about Bill McGuire?

K: I understand Bill McGuire works for the Ballinger Publishing Company. Then there was Jim Crown later on, in the 1940s. Well, I guess that is after World War II, when the political science group became the large number. Jim Crown and Ed Penty and Earl Faircloth and Bob Snaken. These men were inspired by [Manning] Dauer and by [William] Carleton who formed a sort of coterie. They slightly took to the law students, but not much. So it was strong up until the end of World War II, but from that time it subsided.

P: Irving, just for the record, when you indicated that your bookstore moved the third time, did it leave the [Francisco place]?

K: Yes, it left the Francisco place and went into the Smysor Building.

P: Now, that is where Jim Marsh had his men's [clothing] store?

K: Next door, yes. Now, the Kitten Restaurant had been in that building for several years. Pee Wee Keisel, who ran the Black Cat, was so successful--remember in 1933 the 18th Amendment was repealed by Franklin Delano Roosevelt--that he opened a place next to the Black Cat called Puss in Boots, which was a beer-and-pool parlor. That was very successful. Then later on . . .

P: It later became the Hammonds cafeteria.

K: Yes. Then Pee Wee Keisel opened the College Inn with Mysell back in 1934, and then he opened the Kitten. Anyway, Pee Wee Keisel sold out his interests and left town, and the Kitten was under new management--mostly students. When it failed it left that larger

building available. The bookstore had grown in size, and this was an older building of the Francisco's. They were getting to the age of retirement and wanted to sell it, so the move was almost mandatory. There was available space, so we moved into that building.

P: [This was move] number three.

K: Yes. This is 1940.

P: And then you moved to your present location.

K: Well, that is another long story.

P: We will not go into that right now. But I wanted to say that the only place that we have left unmentioned was the Owl. Was that the place that is next to what is now the University City Bank?

K: Oh, yes, that was the Owl. Yes. That was set back off the street.

P: The building is still there.

K: That was an entire block of nothing but beautiful, tall pines. And across the street a very fancy rooming house was built called Lorrey's Court.

P: It later became the TEP house.

K: That is right; it later became the TEP fraternity house.

P: Yes, in 1935.

K: Really? I used to visit a friend in Lorrey's Court as an undergraduate. He was a classmate. His name was Lee; his mother was the famous Ruth Webb Lee who used to collect antiques and books. Lee was one of the rich boys, and he lived in Lorrey's Court. I think the rent there was twenty-five dollars a month. Beautiful. Lorrey's Court was very fancy. Across the street was a beautiful empty lot. Somebody built the Owl. Next to the [inaudible] building there was a series of [inaudible], which nobody has been able to understand.

P: Right up to the present.

K: It is now the place that has the sign for dry cleaning, I think.

P: Yes.

K: Well, the history of business enterprise on University Avenue, from the time I started up till now, has been one of in and out. The only other successful business that has stayed was the College Inn.

P: And it is just . . .

K: And now it is gone. The College Inn began in about 1936, I believe. Other than that, the history has been one of go in, go out.

P: This is the second session of the oral history interview with Mr. Irving Kallman. We are taping in the Oral History office in the Graduate Research Library. Today is July 29. This morning we are going to go back in time to the early 1930s, about 1933, just about the time, I guess, that Mr. Kallman arrived on the Gainesville scene.

K: I believe that Willard Oliver was editor of the *Florida Review* in the fall of 1933. I believe he also had something to do with the fall literary society. At the time there was some local publicity and some local interest in Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, who had earlier that year published a book called *South Moon Under*, the setting of which, of course, was a few miles from the University. This was big literary news. I was a freshman at the time and hence not on the inside of this. But I was privy to some of the things that were going on.

Sometime during the fall a group of students [got together that was] composed of Willard Oliver, I think Billy Blois, and probably some other members of the *Florida Review* and of the Speculative Society, which was a small group of people that would meet once a week to discuss things of a literary, cultural nature.

P: Where did they meet?

K: At the old Theta Kappa Nu house on University Avenue.

P: Now, was that the house down across from the Orange and Blue?

K: No. The Theta Kappa Nu house, I believe, is on the north side of West University Avenue. I believe that it is in the vicinity of that insurance company there.

P: McKinney-Green?

K: Yes, opposite Lorrey's Court.

P: McKinney-Green is bricked up in the front of it.

K: That is the [old] Theta Kappa Nu house.

P: Right next to the Standard Oil station, between it and the Georgia Seagle Hall.

K: Yes. Now, I think the Speculative Society used to meet there on Monday nights, I think.

P: This was a student group?

K: This was a student group. I was introduced to it in the previous semester by Ashkenazy, who was editor of the *Review* and had attended several of the meetings. In any case, I remember that Oliver and Blois and some other students had gone over to Cross Creek and asked Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings if she would come and lecture to the students. I believe she refused the first time. No, I take it back. I believe she was asked if she would speak at the University, and she refused, saying that she was interested in privacy and maintaining it, that she was not interested in this kind of publicity. I believe a second attempt was made several weeks later, and she again refused. The third time Mrs. Rawlings agreed to speak, but only to students. This was the condition, that she would speak only to students. As I remember, it was quite distinctly emphasized.

This transpired during the fall semester, from September 1933 to 1934. Along about December some bulletins appeared and some posters appeared on the campus stating that Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings would speak at the newly opened P. K. Yonge Laboratory School auditorium, which was under construction and was to be completed some time in January, and that it was being sponsored by the University of Florida chapter of Phi Beta Kappa.

P: Well, we did not have a Phi Beta Kappa then, so it had to be Phi Kappa Phi or something like that.

K: Now, wait a minute. This was the University chapter, not an organized chapter [with national affiliation]. It consisted members of the faculty who taught at the University of Florida who were members of Phi Beta Kappa.

P: Oh, I see.

K: At the time, though, parenthetically, our friends Manning J. Dauer and William McCrae were very influential in persuading the deans and the individuals concerned to institute a chapter of Phi Beta Kappa at the University.

P: Which came in 1937.

K: And it is my belief, and I quote Dr. Dauer, that it was McCrae's and Dauer's influence, their working at it insistently, that really brought it here.

Anyhow, this [announcement of Mrs. Rawlings's speech] appeared, sponsored by Phi Beta Kappa. As things went on, the individuals who were to attend the lecture were to be there only by invitation. I was a freshman, so I was completely without an invitation. So on the night of her appearance, having a feeling that I wanted very much to hear Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, I appeared at the entrance hall to the auditorium of P. K. Yonge hoping that I could crash the gate or somehow stand outside and listen. The entrance to the auditorium has a little bit of an anteroom, something like eight feet across and eight feet deep, and there were two doors that opened towards the rear of the auditorium. You then turn right to go to the dias in the front. There was someone at the door checking the invitations--whom I do not remember--dressed in formal wear, with tie and tuxedo.

About ten minutes after I got there and ten minutes before the thing was to start, coming up the hallway could be seen Dean [Rudolph] Weaver [head, School of Architecture and Allied Arts] in a tuxedo with a woman on his arm, ostensibly Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Of course, Dean Weaver was always an impressive, august, white-haired, gentlemanly figure. The picture is quite implanted in my memory of those two coming up. They both turned into the little anteroom, this little cubby hole, before getting to the door, and Mrs. Rawlings, on looking into the hall and seeing some of the people sitting there, stopped suddenly. She then inched forward a few steps and peered into the auditorium, trying not to be seen herself, turned to Dean Weaver, and said: "My God! I did not come here to talk to a bunch of stuffed shirts. I came to talk to students!" She said this loudly enough for some of the people who were sitting in the rear to turn. Dean Weaver took her rather heavily by the arm and escorted her in. They walked down to the front, and that was the end of that small episode. When Mrs. Rawlings was introduced, she went up to the platform.

P: Are you, in the meantime, still standing outside?

K: Yes, but I had been able to get in after everyone was seated; then I could move in. She got up on the platform and said, in effect, the following: "I really came here thinking that I was going to talk to a number of students interested in literature, so I had a talk prepared. In view of the circumstances, I will read from some of my short stories and from *South Moon Under*, with some comments." It turned out, as far as I was concerned, to be extremely boring, and I came away a little bit disappointed at what had transpired. End of story.

P: But you knew Mrs. Rawlings well after this, didn't you? Were you on a personal friendship basis with her?

K: No, I never got to meet her.

P: I thought with her many visits to Gainesville . . .

K: No. She really very, very seldom appeared on or near the campus in those early days. It was only after World War II, I believe, that she became friendly with Archie Robertson, who invited her to speak to his Shakespeare class one summer, for instance, and I went to listen to her there.

P: She and Miss Terry . . . Do you remember her? She ran the little bookstore. She and Miss Terry were friends, I think.

K: Yes, she liked Miss Terry very much and actually, I guess, bought books there. Miss Terry was a very pleasant, likeable person.

P: Yes. I knew Miss Terry.

K: It was years later when I purchased some of the books from Miss Terry's estate that I saw some autographed copies of *Jacob's Ladder* and several of *South Moon Under*.

P: There are two or three autographed copies of Mrs. Rawlings's writing that I have that came from Miss Terry.

K: Yes, and it is my feeling at this time that autographed signatures of Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings are fairly rare, fairly scarce.

P: As often as she autographed, I thought there would be a great abundance of them.

K: I did not think she autographed very much as some of them. She was a bit antisocial in that way, as you know. Anyway, that was to me a very impressive experience.

P: Did you get to know Robert Frost during his visits here?

K: No.

P: I did not know him, either, except just to hear him at the [University of Florida Memorial] Auditorium. How about [Samuel] Untermyer, when he came?

K: Yes. There were some episodes with Untermyer. When he first came to lecture the first time he was invited by Dr. Cliff Lyons, head of the English department. Dr. Lyons and I were fairly close friends. Dr. Lyons thought that we ran over there a kind of institution which reflected both Gainesville and the University, and especially the English department. Lyons, being at a rung of the ladder that he thought was rather in the middle and was going up, used all facilities to enhance his prestige. So he would bring in his visiting guests in a way that would show off the fine bookstore that I had. (It was a bookstore, and nothing else.)

Well, one day he brought in this gentleman and introduced me, and it turned out to be Samuel Untermyer. Lyons told him that here was a bookstore of which he, Lyons, was quite proud. With that, Untermyer looked around and said, "You mean a bookstore with nothing but books? No Kotex? No feminine hygiene products?" [laughter] With that Dr. Lyons was quite embarrassed and flushed, because he was rather a staid, conservative, dignified individual to whom this kind of language was a little bit surprising.

P: Do you think we have talked about the personalities of the 1930s now who were associated with the literary coterie that centered itself around your bookstore? What happened, by the way, to the Speculative Society?

K: Well, I think the Speculative Society moved into the *Florida Review* group. Actually, the *Florida Review* dates only to about 1931 or 1932. I do not remember myself. But as I remember it, Ashkenazy, with his excellent flair for writing, was the editor. It was an organization in which he was the prime mover. I just found out--and this needs to be looked into--that in previous issues that were published long before I came, many, many a verse and short story had a name, a signature, to them that were merely pseudonyms for Ashkenazy. When I asked him, "What gives?" he said, "I cannot put my name on everything."

P: He was not only editing the magazine but he was writing everything for the magazine.

K: Yes, that is right.

P: He was its chief contributor.

K: Yes, which is a reflection on what I said earlier of the lack of this kind of cultural and literary talent [today]. Generally, I would not say that, with as much disinterest as there was at the time in things of this kind. But then I repeat that I do know of several instances where people who had a bent toward literary creation came as freshmen and left for a short while (perhaps after the first year) and went elsewhere or just dropped out of the University.

P: Irving, did you stay here during the war years and operate the bookstore?

K: No.

P: Did the bookstore operate during the war years?

K: Oh, yes.

P: What happened to you?

K: Well, the only thing of interest here would be that I got drafted in January of 1942. My wife continued the operation of the bookstore while I was away.

P: How long was that?

K: Four years. See, when the OCS [Officers Candidate School] administrative school was set up, it brought a lot of GIs; there was a lot of activity. However, there were very few books to be bought from publishers, and there were very few students for whom to buy them. So most of the time she ran it on a basis of constantly depleting the inventory. But the only thing of real interest here would be that 99 percent of the students, I believe, were military. After classes were dismissed for the afternoon they were permitted to go wherever they wanted to.

After a while there were some complaints about the treatment of the GIs at the College Inn and from the small contingent of people selling milk down on the next block. What my correspondence intimated to me was that there was a little exploitation of the soldiers. So the University declared University Avenue off limits.

P: I had not heard that.

K: Which, of course, included us. Mrs. Kallman, knowing that this was unjust and unfair to her, called Dick Johnson, the registrar, who was really in a way the chief administrator of the school. And I think it was Dick who called the military leadership on campus and had that lifted. She also had a visit from our friend and one of our avid fans, Washington Alexander Clark, commonly known as "Washy" Clark [assistant professor of English]. He was a fantastically interesting figure at the University. He is now deceased, of course. Washy Clark went to Mrs. Kallman and said, "If you need any help on something like this, you call on me, and I can get half this faculty and a bunch of other people to cut out this foolishness."

Anyway, the off limits was taken off us; ours was the only place where the soldiers could come across [University Avenue to visit]. They came from all parts of the country, and many of them had been in all parts of the world, and they found a lot of interest there. They just bought books. There was very little money to buy anything else at the time. Soldiers, being spenders, you see, just practically bought the whole place out.

At this time I was in north Africa. When I read this letter from her of this episode that Dick Johnson and Washy Clark had come to her [aid], I got quite a lump in my throat, which I sense at this moment, that these people were interested. Anyway, it was a feeling of confidence that she at least could be taken care of if she had any difficulties.

P: Tell me about Dick Johnson. I know that he was a longtime, lifetime friend of yours.

K: Yes. Well, I guess Dick Johnson and Stan Wimberly and I used to sit at the feet of Joe Kusner in his office in the evenings, night after night, month after month, year after year, back in the 1930s. Joe Kusner would come back to his office in the basement of Peabody Hall, where I guess this second coterie, let us say, may have formed. There, Stan Wimberly, as a student, later an assistant dean, and Dick Johnson [and I used to meet]. Dick Johnson was a person of real astute common sense. [He had a] bright, clear-thinking, pragmatic mind. [He was] a genuine kind of individual without any pose, straight talking, and completely ingenuous. He liked what he heard; he liked the give-and-take of argument and discussion that almost always ensued, with Joe Kusner as the leading protagonist. Joe Kusner had that ability to challenge any statement that anyone made and turn it into absurdity or poke fun at the incompetent or insufficient reasoning and so on. So that was really a very stimulating kind of relationship.

Dick Johnson was educated and got his degree in pharmacy. I think his parents had been running a pharmacy shop somewhere. But what was most interesting about Dick is that he knew and respected classical and scientifically sound education, although he never had the opportunity to indulge in it. He also was a person who respected the so-called arts and liked to participate if it was not the incense-burning and candle-burning type variety. Well, somehow he and I hit it off very well. As years went by his office became the night or evening center for people to gather for a bull session.

P: This is his old office in Language Hall.

K: That is right, his old office in Language Hall. This was before the war, now. He was one of the most straight-forward people who would speak his mind forcedly and with a great deal of incisiveness, and very frequently with magnificently cutting humor. He later was a presiding officer of various committees, because Dr. [John J.] Tigert saw his accomplishments. In fact, Johnson at the time of the period of the war was also in great demand by the military for the setting up of schools throughout the Southeast, I understand. In fact, he travelled rather extensively. I was away at the time and got this only afterwards. He travelled extensively, setting up schools, or at least the administrative nature of schools, throughout the Southeast. Is this right? Were you here at the time?

P: No. I was in the military, too.

K: Okay. I guess he was one of the extraordinary, unusual people in academic life that was always a bridge to the pragmatic, outside, practical people. Many of the alumni association people who left here wanted to see Dick Johnson when they came back. This was the man with whom they could speak. He was a down-to-earth, grass-roots, outspoken, straight-speaking individual.

P: You mentioned Stan Wimberly. He was also part of this little faction, I guess.

K: Yes. He was an undergraduate at the time, a psychology major, and we got to be close friends from then. However, it was only about a year. I guess this was about 1939 to 1940 or 1941. Of course, I left in 1942, and then Joe Kusner left. Many of the faculty left. Stan Wimberly stayed and really became an assistant to Johnson; he worked in the registrar's office. I remember when I came back on furlough about a year later Wimberly was working in Dick's office. In fact, one of the interesting things was that when not only I but several others phoned over there [the registrar's office], we received an answer, "Dick Johnson. Oh, no, this was Stan Wimberly." He had gotten to speak almost like Dick Johnson. This was the powerful personality influence that Dick Johnson had. Knowing Dick Johnson, I do not believe that anyone was not in some way affected and influenced by his very strong personality.

P: What kind of a person was and is Stan Wimberly? You refuse to answer that question? That is an indictment in itself.

P: No. Stan Wimberly had a very clear and incisive mind. However, I have always been slightly allergic to psychology, psychologists, and psychology majors. It was Dick and I, I think, in collaboration--we never knew who started it--that formulated the opinion that we never have known a psychology major, student or faculty, who was not a little bit wondering about himself, and that he was going into psychology not so much to teach as to find out what was wrong with him. [laughter] Stan Wimberly, being a clinical and measuring psychologist--his doctorate dissertation was, I believe, on white mice and measuring their reactions and responses, which was kind of mathematical rather than theoretical psychology--was not so much in that category as our experience showed many, many others were. But Stan still was a psychologist and saw life and everything and every aspect of it in terms of a psychology explanation. And it was boring at times.

P: Was Manning Dauer also a member of this . . . shall I call it a faction?

K: No. Later, after World War II, when the administrative building, now Tigert Hall, was built, Dauer and John Goggin, the archaeologist [and professor of sociology and anthropology] . . . Johnson was a stamp collector, and he would have some people from his philatelic club, of which John Goggin was a member, meet in his office. They would meet there some evenings, Dauer and Goggin and sometimes some other people, after which they would go out for beer to close out the evening. But mostly it was give-and-take on the nature of education, on the nature of objectives, and that kind of thing.

Johnson was always interested in learning every aspect of the University, from any point of view. He was always interested in what I was doing, because he thought I was doing a job that was an important peripheral aspect of the University. In fact, I can say with candor that the assistance and cooperation he gave me, that he lent me, gave me a great deal of success in

the handling of books in a competent manner to students. Traditionally, throughout the country the complaints about bookstores and their inefficiency and inability to handle books on a competent level is widespread and deep and profound. Somehow the challenge that was set to me by these people to whom I had to be [accountable was to be] of a high competence myself in order to maintain at least their respect, besides my own self-respect.

Johnson understood this, and during his time in the registrar's office he gave me great cooperation. For instance, back in the late 1930s and after World War II he would permit me to have a list of the freshman students who were enrolled and were coming in, and I would send each one a letter. This was not very widespread throughout the country, I understand. It was only later on, in the last ten or fifteen years, that this has become something that is being done in other universities. I would send the freshmen a letter, and the letter that I wrote would be one that later on, in discussing this with freshmen, turned out to be of extreme interest to me.

About six or seven years after the letters had become a yearly institution, a senior student at the University wrote a letter to the *Alligator* in which he complained about the alienation and disinterest on a personal basis of the University in students' lives. In the letter he said something to the effect that "I remember as a freshman the only personal correspondence or contact I ever had from the University was a letter from the Florida Book Store."

Now, what would happen is that I would write to them, telling them that they were embarking on a four-year experience, of which they could not anticipate what it would be like, that they were due for four years of change and profound enlightenment of a kind that would set them back on their heels, that we, the bookstore, served a function to help them on an intellectual basis, guiding them towards the books that they would need, etc. I also told them that this was a kind of place where many students found a second home or university, that we would cash their checks, sew on a button, and if they had any problem or question that they needed to have answered that we might not be able to answer it, but we know who would.

P: Do you still adhere to this policy of sewing on buttons and cashing checks?

K: Yes. Well, "sewing on buttons" was kind of Madison Avenue shop talk to inject a bit of humor. Anyway, it was a very successful letter in terms of response. We would be open on the day before orientation, which was generally a Sunday--in fact, always a Sunday. They would be accompanied by their parents, and we invited them in to welcome them and their parents. Well, it was a great success. This was the only communication that they ever got from the University, except, I guess, for the statement that they had arrived. They and their parents would come, and we would serve iced tea or lemonade in a punch bowl. It was really a great experience for all concerned.

Now, Johnson and some other members of the faculty would see this, and they thought it was a great institution. It served us as being a very successful business venture.

P: Irving, Bill Carleton was never apart of this little group, was he?

K: No.

P: Notwithstanding his close friendship with Manning Dauer.

K: No. Bill Carleton was never a person that I knew who spent extracurricular time with students, say, on evenings. I do not know why. He just was not the kind of person who spent his time as these [other] men did. I suspect that there is a personality factor among faculty people here at the University, which is the only university I know (it could be a generalization), that they receive a lot of satisfaction in talking with students at greater length than their lectures and office hours permits them to. Joe Kusner used to say that the greatest delight in teaching was "to watch the phenomenon of young minds unfolding." So while Bill Carleton was sought after greatly by a large number of students for his magnificent charisma and intellectual stimulation, I do not know that he had this kind of group outside the usual office hours.

P: Who else belonged to the group?

K: For a while George Wolf used to come up to the office. George Wolf was a student of Dauer's in political science. He got his master's here and got his Ph.D. at the University of North Carolina. Then he came back here to teach. George Wolf was a great admirer of Dick Johnson, and I suspect he was quite influenced by Johnson. We found out when Dick Johnson died and there was to be a replacement considered for the registrar's office that George Wolf was one of the aspiring replacements, which was of great interest to some of us who had never suspected that at any such time he was interested in this. But we who knew Dick Johnson were of the opinion that there never could be anyone who could fill that position in the manner that Johnson did. We thought--at least I thought--that this was a little bit of a manifestation of self-conceit that George Wolf might have thought that he could have done this. Well, subsequently Richard Whitehead, the assistant registrar, was appointed. I do not know if it was cause and effect, but George Wolf then left the University for a job elsewhere. Of course, he is back now.

This was an interesting episode for me, because it would have been of interest to know that George Wolf's constant presence with Dick Johnson might have given him the feeling [that he could do it]. Did he have an ulterior motive--to be the registrar eventually--for his being present there at the meetings, or was he there for the same reasons that we were--for the give-and-take and personal chitchat?

P: He was there. Anybody else?

K: I cannot remember at the moment.

P: Let me ask you this. You returned from the military in 1946 and moved, of course, right back into [the store].

K: Well, during my overseas stint I would write home constantly and ask my wife to give up that place, that I was not interested in going back to that anymore. I had other ideas. I told her to sell the damn thing. Goodness gracious. I did not want that any longer.

P: After all, you had set it up only on a temporary basis with an inventory of 100 books.

K: That is right. Anyway, during the occupation of Germany we were in a great private home in the Ruhr that belonged to one of the well-educated executives of the Ruhr mining area. He had a fabulous library in which there were books in all languages. The man no doubt was a linguist. Among the books was a bound volume of some magazine that was published in Germany, a monthly. It consisted of articles in German that were then translated into two or three other languages. It was a magazine composed of short stories and poetry and articles and was intended for people to learn languages. You could read the German and then the English translation and then the French translation in that issue. The next one was in German, Portuguese, and Spanish. Then next one was in German, Russian, Polish, and Hungarian. And so on. I was stunned and impressed by this volume.

This was after the war, and it occurred to me that in view of the circumstances of World War II the United States would have a worldwide influence, so we would suddenly become a country in which languages would be very important. So I dreamed at that time of publishing in the United States an equivalent of this--stories in English with translations in various languages. In view of [the fact that] so many Americans were studying these languages, [I felt certain that] this would be a great success. My experience in languages would [come in very handy].

These four years changed my whole attitude; I was greatly changed from my experience. What I was doing here seemed trivial and irrelevant. After you have seen Paris . . . First you have seen the Mississippi manure area and then the Louisiana manure area and then the desert training area and then the north African desert and then Italy and then France and then Germany.

P: Gainesville did look like cow country.

K: Not only Gainesville, but my own evaluation of myself in relation to the whole thing [was different from when I entered the service].

P: Obviously, Mrs. Kallman did not agree with you in terms of selling out the business.

K: Not only did she not, but when I came back I went into [some publishing]. From that day to this I defer to her as having had the brains and the instinct so much greater than my own that I still say I am only the facade of any success.

P: You do a bit of publishing on the side?

K: Well, yes, but these are soldier fantasies, you see.

P: The business was thriving, then, after four years?

K: Oh, no, the business was not thriving. After the [OCS] administrative school checked out, there were only 400 students, and the inventory had gotten down to a pittance, so there was hardly anything to sell. The only benefit that derived from the situation was that for the first time in the history of the business she was able to bank more money than she owed. It is the first time that it ever was in the black. She had accumulated \$1,000 after paying expenses, which were rather considerable, when a piece of property on University Avenue [became available].

We were at the mercy of the landlord, living from month to month, which is no way for an established business to run. There was very strict zoning on University Avenue, so we were at the landlord's mercy. In 1944, when this house down the street came up for sale, the present location of the bookstore, she got up early that morning and went down to the real estate [office] and put a \$1,000 binder on it, the first \$1,000 she had ever had. At about 3: 00 in the afternoon she received a call from the real estate person, asking her if she would retrieve her binder of \$1,000 and accept another \$1,000 to break it. Thinking immediately that the person who was making this offer was our landlord, who was buying up everything he could, she of course said no. But she said, "Give me a couple days to decide," which was granted. During those two days she went around to various people whom she knew, among them Dick Johnson. This was in December of 1943, and anyone can remember that was almost the most miserable and depressing year in American history. That was the year of defeat, the year of building up . . .

P: It was a terrible year.

K: It was a terrible year. This was December 1943. So she went to various people to seek their advice. This was a move which she felt was the right thing, but she did not have a sense of security that it was a good move. She went to Dick Johnson, whom she knew, of course, very well. He was a close confidant. I was away at the time; in fact, in December I was aboard ship en route from Hampton Roads [Virginia] to Casablanca, and she did not even know. She knew that we had been alerted for overseas. Dick Johnson said that if it were he, he would not make this investment. I cannot remember at this time who else she went to, but

they all shook their heads and said the future was very, very bleak and dim. In making a decision for herself, she overrode those. [laughter] Well, in retrospect, we do now know . . .

P: It was a wise decision.

K: Not only was it wise, but it was the difference between . . .

P: Life and death, really, I guess.

K: Well, the difference between fabulous failure and fabulous success, between deep failure and profound success.

P: So when you came back, you were a property owner.

K: Anyway, in later years she said that from what she knew of soldiering and so on Gainesville probably would be a good place to come back to. Of course, she was 100 percent right.

The next episode is a very shabby one. When I came back in February of 1946 . . . [Let me back up a bit.] I landed in [Camp] Blanding [near Starke, FL] on Christmas Eve 1945, and I got thirty days of leave, so I had to report back for discharge in January. In January 1946 there were a few hundred students here, mostly GIs who had been discharged earlier. They were under the GI Bill, which was one of the great mistakes ever made in terms of government-academic arrangements.

The Veterans GI Bill gave universities throughout the country the privilege of collecting from the government the tuition of a GI and receiving from the government a payment for the books of the soldier. This University, under George Baughman, who was the business manager at the time, saw fit to monopolize this book selling, and we, as far as I was concerned, had our throats slit by this procedure. We were cut off entirely. The only books that we could sell to GIs were those that the official store on campus were unable to provide. At that time, the February semester of 1946, I do not remember how many students there were here--there may have been 2,000 or 3,000 or 4,000--but 90 percent of them were GIs, so we were, in effect, bleeding at the throat.

The injustice of this was so great that for the first time I sought outside influence and wrote a large series of letters to the Veterans Administration and to Congressmen showing not only the immorality [of the practice] but the injustice to the GIs themselves. But between the government's being so difficult to move and George Baughman's being so predatory in this matter, it was a fight we never won. Time has slightly healed the hostility I had had towards the immorality of universities, but I have since then felt that inroads of government and private business into universities have created in universities some of the poorer and shadier

and unethical practices that business has been practicing in this country for many, many years.

P: Has time healed your feelings toward George Baughman?

K: Oh, no. I have had many a confrontation with George Baughman, whom I considered to be a great detriment to the University of Florida. That [opinion] was shared by several other people. In fact, if it not be known, and this comes from Dick Johnson--it would be difficult to prove now; maybe J. Wayne Reitz can substantiate this--George Baughman was a man who was on the scene when J. Hillis Miller came to be president. George Baughman was very successful in becoming a king's eckry to J. Hillis Miller. It was my opinion that, according to Dr. Miller, George Baughman could do no wrong. It was George Baughman who was involved in the scandal of the excessive gas rates for the Flavet Villages and used funds to build a home, of which the legislature took a dim view and then passed the law about subsidiary funds. It was George Baughman who tried to remove the University from any outside influence and monopolize almost every facet of a student's life.

It was George Baughman who, when we, the bookstore, published a printed catalog of the textbooks [we offered] with their prices and sought to distribute them to the students, which we had done for years and years, arrested two students who were giving these catalogs out during registration. We had received permission from both Vice-President Harley Chandler and Registrar Johnson over the years. It had become an institution. He arrested the two men on the complaint, I suspect, of the [campus] bookstore [that] this was unfair competition. When the two men were arrested by campus police, I went to confront Mr. Baughman in his office for an explanation of this act. He stated to me that this was a ruling of the Board of Control. When I asked him to produce [evidence of] this [rule], he said he did not have to. I stated that I would be giving out catalogs later that afternoon, and he would have to arrest me or release the students. I accused him of not being able to produce the regulation, of which I had no cognizance, that this was a lie. I then called my attorney, Bill Long, who then called George Baughman. Baughman promised to release the two men and said that there would be no need for me to be arrested. He said that he would release the two students, but that objected to Mr. Kallman's my going to his office and pounding on his desk. [laughter] From then on the students were not . . .

P: Molested.

K: Yes, by the campus police. Well, the story I was about to say was that when Dr. Miller died and there was a scramble for the "throne," the highest candidate at the time was Dr. John Allen, who was vice-president to Dr. Miller. As I understand it, there was a lot of court maneuvering. There was a group that was for John Allen, led by George Baughman, and there was a group opposed to John Allen, in favor of J. Wayne Reitz. The agriculture people in the state and at the University and some other objected to George Baughman's

manipulation of and his power with the president, and it was believed that Dr. Allen would retain George Baughman and that the University would not progress as this faction hoped it would. Well, they won by John Allen's *not* getting the presidency but J. Wayne Reitz. John Allen was acting head at the time. The story is told that as provost of agriculture in previous years, J. Wayne Reitz had been exposed to some of George Baughman's high-handed financial and courtly maneuverings, and Dr. Reitz held a very dim view of George Baughman's support, competence, personality, etc. The day after J. Wayne Reitz was proclaimed president, George Baughman resigned.

P: To go to NYU.

K: Yes, to go to New York University. Do you know this story? Is it true what I say?

P: Well, I am the interviewer.

K: All right.

P: Let us go on. The bookstore continued to operate.

K: Well, this is what I am talking about. It did--with Dick Johnson's help. This was in the form of a letter.

Now, later on, in taking problems to him, I told him of a situation where no one could ever anticipate the number of students in a class, that an estimate was liable to be mistaken anywhere from 100 percent, in the case of the class not materializing, to 300 or 400 percent incorrect, in the case where forty students were anticipated and there could be a hundred due to some of the many complexities of the University. But we could avoid any greater delay by my being able to get at the moment after complete registration a computer printout of the enrollment. If I were to get a copy of that and check it out against the anticipated enrollment--this generally happened on the Sunday or Monday before classes--I could immediately initiate procedures to have these books that same week and thus eliminate a delay of several weeks or indefinite delays. Without this information one works blindly. One never knows what the situation is.

P: Did Dick agree?

K: Dick agreed, and I received that. As a result, the handling of textbooks on this campus, which as far as I know was done in the most competent manner than any other . . .

P: Why was Dick willing to do this? Why did he not do this for the University bookstore?

K: They did not ask for it and were disinterested. They could not be bothered to this day, because this is hard work, difficult work. While financially remunerating in a sense, it is also dominated by the need to perform a service for which you exist.

P: Irving, tell me, what encouraged you to do the little bit of publishing that you have done over the years?

K: Well, back in 1936 when the University College was formed, Dr. [Leonard W.] Gaddum was to bring out a book for physical sciences. A year or two before that Dr. [Charles F.] Byers had a laboratory manual in biology which he asked me to publish for the students, which I did for him. Dr. Byers, who sat on the same committee in physical sciences with Dr. Gaddum, told Dr. Gaddum, so physical sciences asked me to publish their syllabus, which I did in 1937, *Our Physical Environment*. That was the first book I published. So this dates back pretty far.

In 1937 and 1938 J. Speed Rogers, head of the biology department, was one of the early conceivers of the University of Florida Press; in 1937 and 1938 and 1939 there was some beginning talk of forming a press. Dr. Rogers asked me if I would be interested in [such a project]. Oh, there were some publications of the biology department, like Archie Carr's *Contribution to the Herpetology of Florida*--the biology department published that. Then there was *Crayfishes of Florida* by Horton Hobbs and Byers's [*A Contribution to the Knowledge of Florida*] *Odonata* and so on. He asked me if I would be interested in this, and I said yes. We talked constantly about the formation of a press.

As time went on, Dr. Rogers, who I do not think was head of the committee but who was one of the prime movers, somehow had envisioned [me as the administrator] and asked me if I would be interested in being the director, or at least taking this over. Well, of course, this came to nothing. I published some of the other manuals constantly and kept publishing the physical science book in various editions.

P: You contracted out the printing here in Gainesville?

K: Oh, yes. Well, generally it was offset, and there was no offset at the time. It was an attempt to make inexpensive paperback editions, which at the time were almost unheard of. They were typed manuscripts, and then we sent them off to be offset. Then in 1942 . . .

P: The war years had come.

K: Yes. When I saw this magazine in Germany, [I thought that] this is what I wanted to do. All during the years in the army I had this constant fantasy of reprinting [something like that]. Actually it started earlier, when I started collecting Floridiana in 1934 and 1935. Books on Florida were so rare and were needed by many students, so making Florida reprints was

something I wanted to do most of all. When I got back [from overseas, from the army,] we were going to give that up [the bookstore], and I was going to start publishing Florida reprints. So this is the answer to your question.

But the exigencies of 1946, with the lack of money and the lack of everything and the hostility and the setting back in terms of the veterans thing [forced me to change my plans]. However, the University began to grow to 12,000 people, and in spite of all the handicaps, we became [quite successful]. Actually, the bookstore could not provide these books to the veterans in sufficient quantities, because they just were not available. It took a lot of work. There were some crumbs to be picked up, and because of their lack of experience at getting books from various parts of the country we were able to keep extremely busy.

Well, it grew to 12,000, I think, in 1947, which was four times the number when I had left in 1941--there were 3,600 students in the fall of 1941. A jump from 3,600 to 12,000 meant that we were an extremely busy place. Actually, from that day to this, from 12,000 to 20,000, there has always been so much to do that publishing became secondary to providing basic requirements of a growing university.

P: You did get to the point, actually, where you contracted with people to write things for publication, did you? That is, people did not bring you completed manuscripts as it was with the syllabi of the 1930s. [Junius E.] Dovell [assistant professor of history and social science], for instance. Did you contract with him?

K: Oh, yes, that is right. I forgot about him. Yes, Dovell and Bryant did the political . . .

P: The question I am asking is, have students changed from the 1930s to today?

K: Well, the most obvious change, as far as I was concerned, in students was that up until 1940 and 1941 I had the appearance of a student myself; I did not look as old as I actually was--I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight, twenty-nine. I had the confidence of the students. They came to me, and we would talk and so on. After World War II came the GIs, of whom we saw very little, and there was not much interest in books other than the school books.

By 1956 and 1957 there was a change in the nature of students, and I had much less contact with them because they had much less contact with me. The University was moving from small numbers, in which you knew many of the students and could spend time talking with them. So there was a vast change. Every year the University was growing by 1,500 or 2,000 people, and that made a tremendous strain on preparation for them. So there was not much contact.

Today there is very little. There is a little contact with some of the students who are able to read outside the regular course structure or who might seek something that they cannot find on

their own bookstore or in the library. They may be working on term papers and are told by other students that they can get some help and assistance here. Otherwise, there is very little talking to them. So one of the great changes has been much less contact with students on a personal basis than hitherto. Other than that, what I would have to say are merely observations of the generation gap and hippies and things like that.

P: Did a new literary group ever grow up in the 1950s or 1960s to replace this coterie of the 1930s?

K: Not to my knowledge. I would frequently ask students about the institution of the bull session, and I find that this has been almost completely eliminated.

Of course, one of the great changes in 1947, 1948, and 1949 from prewar years that one must always remember was that radical change from being all-male to coeducation. This made for an entirely different campus. I do not know what effect this had on students and the institution of the bull session, for instance. There was probably more social life substituted for the bull session. This is merely speculation.

P: As a knowledgeable observer, Irving, why have we not been able to develop a really good literary magazine here on the campus since World War II?

K: No leadership in the English department.

P: You feel that this is where the greatest fault lies?

K: Yes. No leadership. Well, come to think of it, I meant to recommend that you think about Professor Mounts, Charles Eugene Mounts--Gene Mounts, as he was called. Gene Mounts was a member of the Speculative Society, too, in those early days.

P: I remember.

K: And Gene Mounts many times tried to inaugurate a Florida Poetry Club, which he did. He was a prime mover in many literary movements. But I do not believe he had either sufficient leadership in it or a sufficient following. I believe that there was during the 1930s a leadership or maybe a coincidence of students who were interested that made a fine literary review. But the post-World War II GIs were not so inclined. We who went through the non-coed situation felt that there was a lack that could be attributed to the fact that there were no women, who traditionally pursue the humanities and the cultural endeavors of a university curriculum. Subsequent years have proved that not to be entirely true, but then we must project that against the change from the semester system to the trimester system, a real blow to extracurricular activities, such as writing or thinking outside of the classroom. And the quarter system killed it dead.

But to me leadership in the faculty [has been mostly responsible for the lack of a quality literary magazine]. I do not believe a university is composed of faculties or students--it is composed of individuals. The faculty is composed of leaders and followers, the same as any other. There have been just too few who are able to inspire or set students on fire sufficiently.

P: And the University suffers as a result of not having this kind of an outlet?

K: Dramatically.

P: The function of your bookstore has also obviously changed. In the 1930s it was not only a bookstore but a place where this kind of group could gather and find sustenance. Now it is completely a commercial operation, right?

K: Overwhelmingly, yes. Unfortunately.

P: There is no place for the browser or the conversationalist.

K: Oh, yes, but he has to be very aggressive at it, the same as he would be in the faculty. But he finds that there is no leisure for him to discover. Bookstores are not something that he has learned about in his preuniversity days, because there are no bookstores anymore. He knows how to buy a tape recorder, he knows all about hi-fis, he knows all about automobiles, he even knows how to buy clothes exceptionally well. But books are a great mystery.

P: He knows how to ask for a particular paperback by title or author.

K: Only if he has been told about it. But he finds it very, very difficult to verbalize: "I am writing a paper on the dynamic symmetry of the Greek plays. Do you have something that can help me?" We find that to be very scarce or rare. He does not know that it is a function of the bookstore. If he does, he will have learned it from someone else or it will have been dragged out of him by questioning. He finds it difficult to know the sources of intellectual material.

P: At the very moment in American history when the presses are just pouring out volume after volume of everything--good, bad, and otherwise. Are you deluged with book titles?

K: Well, yes, but I am of the opinion that this period in American history is really an intellectual renaissance when it comes to books and their availability to everyone, the so-called masses; the diversity of them; the magnificence of them; the competence of them. It is so fantastic as to elude the ordinary individual. In fact, the ordinary individual tends not to grasp it because it is too overwhelming. I get this constantly. "How do you . . .?" "How can you . . .?" It has to be a mystery, so profound, so deep, so extensive.

P: Are the University of Florida students reading?

K: No.

P: Are they buying [reading material] other than textbooks?

K: Well, yes, but very little other than the prescribed or what they are told to read. I am unhappy with their lack of sophistication when they choose other than the prescribed books. They are, in large numbers, buying and wanting the sentimentalized quasiphilosophic, such as the Indian and East Asian spiritualism of [Kahlil] Gibran's *The Prophet* or Rod McKuen's rather shallow poetry, or they are interested in astrology or Zen or what I call running away from the hard, tough, intellectualized things that we once read, like Bertrand Russell or Aldous Huxley or the challenging social George Bernard Shaw or the French novelists that were of a high order of literary merit at the time. However, there still are a few, but very few, [students interested in this type of material] proportionate to the number of students there are.

Now, I attribute a lot of this to the quarter system. There is no time to absorb these things. I also attribute it to the quarter system in the classroom in the fact that the faculty cannot and do not move outside the usual course material. Except in very rare instances does a faculty member point out to students the bibliography or the material that are available in a given course for their own accumulation or their own private reading. I think this is a great failure in teaching, because it is my belief that students, by their very definition, are looking for inspiration and guidance as to what the materials are in a given area, and they look up to a professor in the front of the class for this kind of guidance.

As I see them, they are completely ignorant of the very, very important basic classical themes that they should have been told about in the classroom. I cannot tell them with any great degree of expertise because my motivation and my objectives to them might be different from the instructor's. I have a material one. It is only if I recommend them something and they get it verified do they have confidence in me. This is a long time, but there is insufficient leadership of this kind on the classroom. I think that not only students but people throughout the country do now know what book or books they ought to have or ought to read and are looking for someone to tell them. Hence the success of that awful institution of the book clubs.

P: Irving, what about the University of Florida faculty? Are they utilizing your services and the services of your bookstore? I know they go in to buy books and they recommend that their students buy books, but do they use the bookstore?

K: In an appallingly small, fantastically appallingly small [way].

P: Very few come in?

K: No, not very few come in. Many come in, but not for the purposes for which a good bookstore exists.

P: They do not take the book off the shelf and leaf through it?

K: Well, actually, we now serve the faculty in that a function of theirs is to be able to see [a book] before they adopt it, to see its full contents and be able to look at it. Oh, yes, there are places to sit down and look while they are thinking of adopting this [collection of] short stories and what is available and so on. Yes, they use our bibliographic materials and [other sources that list] the availability of the books considerably. But this is only in the University College and in the College of Arts and Sciences. This does not exist to any degree in any other college. Let us start with law, engineering, agriculture, or even in chemistry or physics. None; almost none. Almost zero. So this would be in the humanities, English, history, sociology, and so on.

P: Where are the Kusners and the Speed Rogerses today?

K: Well, I guess the same place as where a great bookseller might be--overwhelmed by the mass culture, so to speak, by the quarter system and by the paperwork and by the administration.

P: He does not have time to sit in the office at night and talk.

K: That is right.

P: Or to come to your bookstore and talk.

K: That is right. Now, I guess doing a week's work as a faculty member at a university these days requires a weekend away for rehabilitation and reconstitution, so these days a man tears off on Friday afternoon to his lake place, you see, and he is not available [for conversation with students]. Then he may have the pressures of a family. Back in the earlier days there was not this urgency and need to take off for a weekend after a week's hard work. I used to work--of course, I still do--seven days [a week], twenty-four hours a day. I live and breathe books. I never consider this work. This is my hobby. Yet if I did not have a piece of land to scratch into and get my fingers dirty some of the time I probably would have ulcers or an early heart attack. So there may be these factors that I cannot evaluate.

P: Irving, as a University Avenue observer, a man who has had a chance to look at the University for many years from across the street, are you optimistic about the future?

K: No, I am very pessimistic. I was optimistic until a few years ago. I have seen the great tragedy of thirty years of excellent men coming here to the University and, after a short while, leaving

because of the many internal aspects. We have had here at the University a large number of great teachers, but they all have left; many of them have left and have achieved well elsewhere. Now, there are many reasons, the primary one of which is, of course, the intolerable situation of a state . . . What do you call it?

P: Land grant college.

K: Land grant college run by a provincial, backwoods legislature. That has been one of the great primary causes. In recent years salaries have also been a great distressing thing. Promises were never realized, and expectations on the part of the young men and middle-aged men were never realized. But mostly it is broken promises. Of course, many of the men who were here right after World War II were replaced by younger men at a higher salary who were given a higher rank, which caused a breakdown of morale with departments, and that made many, many run. So I had always been of the opinion that for the great teacher these were not the considerations, but they are now the considerations because of oppressive things--and the high mobility of jobs, I guess.

P: Are you optimistic about the students as you look at them?

K: No, I am very pessimistic about the students. I believe their sense of morality and integrity is great. I have great sympathy for this young crowd of rebels and protestors. I rebelled and protested in the same way years and years ago, so that is nothing really new.

I disagree violently with the so-called single textbook course, of somebody's cut-and-paste job, of a ten-dollar anthology for a course. I disagreed violently with this always. I have always felt that students were shortchanged by a droning, moaning course that was tied to one book or two books. They are beginning to find that out. They are protesting against it in other universities.

I have always felt that there was an alienation between students and faculty in the students' ability to drag from faculty, whom they respect and admire, the knowledge that the faculty man has for challenge and discussion. Probably one of the last vestiges of that meeting is in a local bar, where a faculty man might sit down and have a beer and the students would come. But there is no other place. There is now a faculty club. Imagine faculty talking only to faculty!

I will tell you some experiences. It has been twenty years now since I have attended lectures on campus and have found something like this. When there is a visiting historian to give a lecture of a general nature, [the participation by faculty and students is often quite small. For example,] Ralph Barton Perry was here a few years ago. He gave a lecture in the law auditorium sponsored by the history department. There were twenty-two graduate students in history, fourteen faculty members in history, twelve [undergraduate] students, and me there. Rembert Patrick gave a lecture one night, a brilliant lecture, that was sponsored by the

history department. I cannot remember the name of it, but he talked about the plantation or the New South rich having derived from the Old South poor. Do you remember that? There were twelve faculty, fourteen students in the graduate school, and me.

P: That is the same number.

K: Well, there were also two people from town. The English department sponsored a lecture, [and it was the same thing]. There has been, to me, no cross-pollination, no crossing of departments at important lectures here. I have derided that, I have poked fun at that, I have tried to propagandize. I just do not understand why there is this great lack. For years and years the music department would give a recital; Claude Murphree used to give organ recitals in the auditorium, and there would be twelve, eighteen, twenty people there. However, when the Minneapolis Symphony came, they would fill the auditorium. When Hubert Humphrey came, or our friend from Oregon who was defeated, Senator Wayne Morris, they packed it solid.

Well, your question was about the faculty. This has been a very, very obvious observation on my part, that there has been very little cross-sectioning. Now, the Faculty Club was formed for the faculty to talk to each other, and I guess this was, in a sense, to make this change, to cross-pollinate ideas. But this left the students [out of the process]. I do not know if the Rathskeller attracts faculty people to where they can discuss issues with the students. I do know that one can go to a bar and, generally, sit down with a faculty man.

P: But in general, then, I gather, as we bring this to a close, that you are pessimistic about the future of the University, the role of the faculty, and the function of the students.

K: Well, the quarter system is the greatest obstacle to intellectualization of a university community. It seems to me that it is also a very frustrating institution to a faculty man. He is in a constant state of anxiety and fret at the inability to get across what he thinks he ought to get across. In such a short time there is an inability on the part of the student to absorb what the man wants to get across. So I think perhaps this results in a kind of piecemeal, fragmented education, as though these were stills of a projector in which a student has a memory of Biology 101, and the picture goes off; Florida History 206, and bang! it is gone again. There is nothing in depth.

The political aspect of the state, I understand, has kept many, many a good man from coming here. The low salaries are, of course, a great detriment. For instance, I know of one case where a brilliant graduate student was sought after by several land grant [colleges]. He went to Nebraska instead of coming here. He was a Johns Hopkins graduate.

Anyway, yes, I am very pessimistic, unless the political and legislative [processes change]. Well, there is Tom Slade, for instance. Then there was Haydon Burns when he blasted the

communist influence and so on. So I am very pessimistic. There has not been or does not seem to be the ability today to attract a head for the English department, which I follow closely. What other departments are lacking that you know of? But I am the one being interviewed. [laughter]