

Kevin M. McCarthy
UF-313

Kevin M. McCarthy, professor of English and Florida Studies at the University of Florida, talks about his current projects and his personal and academic background on page 1, followed by his experiences studying abroad on pages 1-2. He explains his field of, and interest in, Florida Studies on pages 2-3. He details how he is attracted to particular topics and his process of writing on pages 3-4, with particulars on page 7-8. His research methods are treated on pages 8-10.

On pages 5-7, Professor McCarthy introduces his two recent books on sports, which he subsequently discusses at great length. The first, a co-authored book on the University of Florida-Florida State University football rivalry, is covered on pages 10-19. Some noteworthy discussions center on the importance of college football in Florida (page 12) and college athletes and their academic studies (page 17).

From page 19 through 37, Professor McCarthy talks about his other recent book *Baseball in Florida*. Particular topics of this conversation center on baseball in small Florida towns (19), baseball and race relations (page 21; 26; 27), the relationship between baseball and Florida (page 22), women's baseball (page 25), Buck O'Neil (page 29), and Babe Ruth (page 35-7)

The rest of the interview relates Professor McCarthy's writing habits, publishing process, and his "crusade" to instill Americans with a deeper appreciation for Florida culture and overturn the frequent stereotypes associated with this state.

C: Today is Monday, November 8, 1999. I am speaking with Dr. Kevin M. McCarthy in his office at 4-0360 Turlington Hall at the University of Florida. Dr. McCarthy is a full professor of English and Florida Studies at the University of Florida and is the author or co-author of sixteen books and the editor of six books. He has written two sports books, Baseball In Florida and The Gators and the Seminoles: Honor, Guts, and Glories. You are working on three new books. What are they and when are they to be published?

M: The first one is Babe Ruth in Florida, the story of his spring-training for about fifteen years with the Yankees and the Braves in Florida, the second one is the story of aviation in Florida, and the third one is the story of Christmas and how it has been celebrated over the centuries in Florida.

C: Do you have any titles yet, and do you have any publishing dates?

M: The aviation one will be published in 2001. The Christmas book will be published in the fall of 2000. The Babe Ruth book, I have not finished yet [so] I do not know.

C: Where and when were you born?

M: I was born on October 15, 1940, in Dumont, New Jersey. I spent ten years in north Jersey, in Dumont, and then, in 1950, my family and I and my brother moved down to south Jersey to live for ten years in Collingswood, New Jersey. I have a twin brother who is an aeronautical-engineer who has worked for NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] for thirty years.

C: Where did you go to undergrad and where did you go to graduate school, and what did you study?

M: I graduated from LaSalle College in Philadelphia in 1963 with a B.A. in English. Then I spent two years in the Peace Corps in Turkey teaching English as a foreign language to Turkish students from June of 1963 to July of 1965. Then I entered the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in September of 1965, earned a master's degree in American literature in the summer of 1966, switched to the field of linguistics and earned a Ph.D. in that field in January of 1970 from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

C: In your biography, it says you lived in Turkey, Lebanon and Greece. When did you end up in Florida?

M: In the summer of 1968 while I was in graduate school, I went to Cairo, Egypt, to study Arabic for a summer. Then, after I finished studying at the University of North Carolina in the summer of 1969, I came down to the University of Florida in August of 1969 and began teaching here. In 1971, I went to Beirut, Lebanon, to be a Fulbright lecturer in linguistics and English literature at the Lebanese

National University for one year, returned to UF in the summer of 1972, and went back to the Middle East in 1982 to be a Fulbright lecturer in English as a second language at King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for two years, the summer of 1982 to the summer of 1984. Then I taught in Greece in the summer of 1992, the summer of 1998, and I will teach in the summer of 2000 in Greece. I teach a course on the maritime history of Greece there.

C: Did you choose Florida yourself, or did you take a job here?

M: I took a job here. The two job offers I had, actually in the same night-- I was offered in Minnesota and then offered a job in Florida. So it was an easy choice just from the weather point of view.

C: Going through school, you had some different majors.

M: When I was an undergraduate, I liked to read and write, so I chose English as a major. When I was a graduate student, after returning from Turkey, I continued on in English and then took one course in the study of language, or linguistics, and was so inspired by that course that I switched fields and earned a Ph.D. in linguistics. When I came down here to the University of Florida, there was not a lot of need for the teaching of Turkish or advanced linguistics, so, though I continued to teach linguistics at the graduate and undergraduate level, about ten years ago, I began to write in the field of Florida Studies.

C: And what is Florida Studies?

M: Florida Studies refers to the literature, history, culture, [and] lifestyle of the state going back to the beginning in the sixteenth century up to the present-time. I realized there was not much done in the field, especially in terms of literature, so I decided to specialize in Florida literature, at first, and then moved on from that to subjects in Florida history, all as an offshoot of my studies in Florida literature.

C: Your bio says you are a professor of Florida Studies. As you said, there was not a lot written about it. Did you create the professor role?

M: I did not create the area. I just became the only person teaching Florida literature in the English department here. Then I began to see that there was a need for studying and writing about the area. It actually began in 1976. My family was away and I had a vacation here for several weeks, so I bought a pup-tent and camped my way around the state of Florida. When I would go into a town, I would ask anybody who I would see what the literature was of that town, who the authors were who lived there, what works of literature were written about the place or in the place, even if set elsewhere, what movies were made there or set there and if someone wanted to read about the history of the town or county, what works would they read? In doing so, I accumulated a lot of information

simply for my own use. I then began to go around the state to talk to anybody who would listen for free about the subject of Florida Studies. From that, I began to see and write about Florida issues.

C: What attracts you to the topics of your books?

M: Two of the books I wrote were about grammar, one called Grammar in Usage in 1980. The other one was called Grammar and Paragraphs in 1986. The first one I wrote because a publisher happened to come on campus and came into my class. I was teaching a class of over 300 students in English grammar, and he thought there was a real need for a book because I was actually mimeographing hundreds and hundreds of pages and handing them out to the students. That was just a lot of work, and he saw a need for that. He was the one who said I should write a book about grammar, and I did. It went on to sell 10,000 copies or so. The second book, Grammar and Paragraphs in 1986, for that, I was contacted by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich in Orlando, and they asked me to write a book on remedial-English, which became one of the biggest projects of its kind in the teaching of remedial-English to students. The book that I produced cost \$10,000 if you want to buy it. What it is, is a book plus about forty-two carousels full of slides that a student would use. It would take about a year to go through this course, and that student would learn the basics of English and become much more proficient in English. This was a system adopted by, for example, the state of Tennessee to teach its remedial-students the basics of English. Then, a third book I wrote was about Saudi Arabia. While I was in Saudi Arabia, I saw a note asking if anybody knew anything about foreign countries to make a proposal to write a book by Dillon Press out of Minneapolis. So I proposed a book on Saudi Arabia and they said yes, and they produced it in 1986. It was revised in 1996. Other than that, the books I have written are basically about Florida. I began in 1986. I was the acting chairman of the Department of English here at UF, and I was contacted by a group of people over in Trenton, Florida, and they asked me to write a history of their county. I had never done a history or anything about Florida other than articles. So I went over to Trenton and met with the people and saw that there was a real need for this book and interviewed lots of people over there, got lots of photographs, and actually had the prison over there near Trenton produce the book, because they could do it cheaply. This was a book called the History of Gilchrist County that was initially done to raise money for the Women's Club over there. So I earned almost no money from that book, but I wanted the experience of writing it. That got me involved in writing about Florida. Then I produced a book in 1989 called Florida Stories, which was a collection of seventeen stories by pretty well-known authors like Ernest Hemingway and Zora Neale Hurston and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. That was published by the University of Florida Press in 1989. Then, a follow-up to that is in 1996, called More Florida Stories, same publisher, dealing with more authors and more stories about Florida. Because the first book did so well, the press wanted to do a second one. Then, in 1990, I made a collection of Nine Florida Stories by Marjory

Stoneman Douglas. When she was ninety-nine years old, I contacted this lady and produced a collection of her stories that she had written back in the 1930s and 1940s, which were pretty inaccessible, because they were in the *Saturday Evening Post*. Most people did not have access to that magazine on microfilm. When she was 100 years old, the book was published. Then, in 1998, I did a second volume called A River in Flood and Other Florida Stories by Marjorie Stoneman Douglas, again produced like the first one by the University Press of Florida, though she died right before it came out. She died at the age of, about, 105. It came out in 1998. The two other books, I edited a collected series; one was called The Book Lover's Guide to Florida. It was produced by Pineapple Press in 1992. That is my favorite book because that is almost a mile-by-mile literary survey of Florida. I had eight other writers work with me on that and, together, we produced a book that deals with 2,000 authors of Florida and 5,000 works of literature. That took about three years to do because it was so hard to deal with so many different other authors. Then I had another ten authors write what I called inter-chapters. In the book, there was an inter-chapter on Key West as a literary haven, a book on Florida and poetry, a book on mystery stories set in Florida. So that is a book that I am really proud of. The last edited book I did was called Alligator Tales, again produced by Pineapple Press in 1998. It is a collection of stories about alligators, some of them from Native Americans, some of them from modern-day newspapers. I worked with John Moran, the prize-winning photographer from the *Gainesville Sun*. He has a lot of color photographs of alligators. That was a fun book to do because alligators are probably the most popular tourist animal in the state of Florida. When people come here, they want to know and see and get as close as possible to alligators. That may lead to a book I am going to do in about two years called Fish Tales, fish stories about and in the state of Florida. So I primarily deal with two presses, the University Press of Florida and Pineapple Press. The first one is academic. The second is more of a commercial press. So the book I do at any given time, I will send to one or the other of the publishers, depending on what the subject matter is.

C: Did you give them a proposal, or did you just start work on the book and then shop it out? How do you usually do it?

M: At this point in my career, what I do is make a proposal. Basically in the beginning, because I write non-fiction books, I would make a proposal. For example, I made a proposal to do a book on Florida lighthouses, and the University Press of Florida said that is a great idea. I found a man named William Trotter, who had a lighthouse museum in Jacksonville Beach, Florida. After about five minutes of meeting him, I said to him, I would like to work with you on putting together a book about Florida lighthouses, because he paints pictures of Florida lighthouses, and he said fine. So, since that time, we have done about six books together. I give him the subject and I will give him the chapter I am writing about a lighthouse or a shipwreck or a pirate, and he will paint a picture, sometimes of

100 years ago, what the scene looked like back then. That led to Florida Lighthouses, produced by the University Press in 1990. After that, in 1992, we did Thirty Florida Shipwrecks, published by Pineapple Press. Then, we did a book called Twenty Florida Pirates, produced by Pineapple in 1994. Then, we branched out and did a book called Lighthouses of Ireland, produced by Pineapple in 1997. Then, in 1998, Pineapple produced our Georgia's Lighthouses and Historic Coastal Sites. And, now, he is working with me on the book about aviation in Florida, which should come out in 2001 or 2002, and our next project, I hope, will be Lighthouses of Scotland.

C: Introduce your two sports books.

M: I got involved in sports because I did a book called African Americans in Florida in 1993 with Professor Maxine Jones at FSU and, in there, I dealt with some Florida sports athletes like Bob Hayes, who was a famous African American in sports. Then I did a second book by myself which is called Black Florida. Technically, it is called The Hippocrene USA Guide to Black Florida, published out of New York in 1995 by the Hippocrene Press. There, I also noted that there were some African American athletes. I taught a course several springs ago, and I have done it for about three years, Baseball in Florida, and I am teaching now for the second time a course on the history of football and writing about football. As the twenty-fifth anniversary of the rivalry between the Gators and the Seminoles was approaching in 1993, I realized that there was no book on the rivalry between the two sports teams. I contacted a man named James P. Jones, a former chairman of history at Florida State University. He had written two books on the Seminoles in Tallahassee and the history of their football team. I asked him who his publisher was and what the prospects of that publisher publishing a book about the Gators and the Seminoles, and he asked me who my co-author was in Tallahassee. I said I did not have one, that I was going to do it myself, and he told me that I would not sell any copies in Tallahassee because they could not believe anybody in Gainesville would be objective. So, I asked him if he would co-author it with me. To make a long story short, he agreed. The difficulty was, what do we call it? As an English professor, I wanted to do it alphabetically; I wanted to say the Gators and the Seminoles. As a historian, he said, no, because in recent history in the early 1990s, the Seminoles had been dominant. He wanted to call it the Seminoles and the Gators. So, we flipped a coin. The winner got to choose the title, [and] the loser got to have his name first. So, we flipped a coin and I won, and it became The Gators and the Seminoles: Honor, Guts and Glory by James P. Jones and Kevin M. McCarthy. We got Coaches Bobby Bowden and Steve Spurrier [from FSU and UF, respectively] to write forewords to the book, Bowden from a coach's point of view [and] Spurrier from an athlete's and a coach's [point of view], what it was like on both sides. Then we had one of the players in the late 1960s, John Reaves, write a comment about what it was like to be a quarterback in the late 1960s and early 1970s for the Gators. He went on to become a coach here at Florida and also, later on, at

South Carolina, as well as other places. We got a second person from the FSU point of view, T.K. Weatherell, who was at the time (I think he was) Speaker of the House in Tallahassee. He wrote what it was like to be a Seminole in the mid-1960s playing [in] that rivalry. We had a short history of the Gators and the Seminoles up until 1958. Then we featured each year from 1958 through 1992, a summary of the scores, a listing of the lettermen of each school, a bibliography. There probably will be a follow-up to this book in a few years because there was such interest. The book was published by Maupin Press of Gainesville. They happened to be neighbors of mine, and I went to them and said, would you be interested in publishing this book? They saw the need for it and produced it. They produced about 3,000 copies, and they sold over 2,000 copies in just a matter of a few weeks, because it came out in the fall of 1993 as the rivalry was heating up toward early November. That was a lot of fun to do. I did not mention this before, [but] I am finishing another book. I will finish it in January of 2000. It is going to be a photo history of the University of Florida Gator football team back to the beginning. It has about 200 photographs with commentary captions of each photograph. The reason I got so interested in football was, I found out that the first unofficial coach of the Gator football team was the chairman of the English department when the University was up in Lake City. His name was James Farr. He became a coach before the Gators really became an established team down in Gainesville. That got me very interested in football, so the book I did and the book I am doing now and the course I teach has gotten me very involved in football. I played football in college but not as an intercollegiate player; I just played in intramurals. I enjoy the game a lot. I enjoy watching it.

C: Your other book is Baseball in Florida.

M: The Baseball in Florida book was an outgrowth of the course I taught for several springs here. In 1996, I produced this book published by Pineapple Press, and it deals with such topics as early baseball in Florida, youth baseball, college baseball, women in baseball, the fact that the All-American Girls' Professional Baseball League trained in South Florida in the 1940s when the major leagues were hurting for attendance. Another chapter is on African Americans in baseball and all the African Americans who came from this state, ending with Buck O'Neil, probably the most famous African American in the Negro Leagues [and] who was featured in Ken Burn's History of Baseball on PBS [Public Broadcasting System TV network]. Then I have a chapter on the minor leagues, spring-training, the major leagues, and other baseball leagues and players in the state of Florida, for example, the group of seventy-five-plus years of softball players down in St. Petersburg, the Kids in Kubs softball team. I have always liked baseball. I have gone to spring-training games, I have gone to local games, and I have accumulated a lot of photographs from different archives around the state dealing with baseball. When I dealt with spring-training and the major leagues, I realized how important Babe Ruth was to the state, so I am writing a manuscript about the influence of Babe Ruth in Florida, and of Florida on Babe Ruth, developing

from a young immature ball-player into the best ball-player of the time, perhaps of all time.

C: Other than living here, what drives you to Florida as a setting?

M: We have, of course, about 15,000,000 people in the state of Florida, but more importantly, we have over 40,000,000 people a year visit Florida. I wanted to write books that would be of interest to them, to sell a lot of copies, of course, but also to make the state better-known. When most people think of Florida, they think of such things as Disney World and Sea World and beaches, spring break, and they do not think of it in cultural terms. Therefore, the first books I did dealt with the cultural-literary part of Florida, and that led to the history I have done, and that has led to the sports books I have done. I also got involved in writing a column, a sports column. In 1994, there was an attempt by the local newspaper to produce a sports magazine called *Sports 2*. So I wrote to them in the early spring of 1994 and said to them that I would like to write for free a column on sports in Florida, not from a normal point of view, but from a language point of view because I teach linguistics, which is basically the study of language. So I produced, and they published, thirteen columns before the newspaper folded in the fall of 1994, and what I emphasized was nicknames in sports [and] things like the eephus pitch. Do you know what an eephus pitch is? It is a lob-ball. Where does it come from? Who did it? Where did it get its name? My idea was to deal with baseball in the spring, football in the fall, and basketball in the winter, and I would have done that if the newspaper had continued on. I may now use these thirteen by-lined articles to write to a syndicate that is interested in producing syndicated-columns on sports. Now that I have some clips about this, I would like to go national. For example, what influence does cricket have on sports in America, and what expressions from cricket do we have in baseball? Nicknames of the Yankees—why were they called the Highlanders? All the different kinds of nicknames of different athletes in different sports. Where does the work balk come from? It goes back to Old English, a little-known fact about that. I have a lot of interesting anecdotes from the language point of view. There have been so many books written about sports, especially baseball. I understand there is something like a baseball book produced every four days in America, so I wanted to have a different perspective, a different angle, when I did this column, and I have gotten so involved in sports that I would like to follow this up and try to do it at a national level.

C: So, the eephus pitch, where did that word come from?

M: The eephus pitch is a high-arching lob that can go as high as twenty-five feet. It was most famous by a pitcher named Rip Sewell. The origin of the name is unknown. We do not where it comes from, but he was the one who, I guess, came up with the name. There are lot of interesting things, like why do we have K for strikeout? And why, for example, is Dwight Gooden called Dr. K? Why would

he not be called Dr. G for his last name or Dr. S for strikeout? Well, the reason we have K is because S was already taken in the first abbreviation for scorekeeping. S was taken, I think, for sacrifice. So, the man who came up with the idea of using letters for different parts of the baseball game realized that K was the last important sound of strike, so he came up with the idea of using K for strike or strikeout. There are a lot of little things like that, that people use and see and know but do not know the origin of it. It is fun.

C: So sports books are not like a storyline; they are more of a survey?

M: Yes. Both of them are basically surveys because I deal with the history of sports, and I try to be as complete as possible. When I finish a book, whether it is on football or baseball, I will have an expert read the book over to make sure that I have done it accurately. Baseball, in particular, is full of statistics and figures, more so than other sports and, therefore, I went back to the beginning of baseball and tried to find early records of baseball. I have become very big on reading very old newspapers in Florida. You can see that large machine in my office is a microfilm reader. I have, probably, the best private collection of Florida newspapers on microfilm of anybody in the country. I have collected these over the years. These go back to about 1783 and up to the present. I have made a survey of Florida newspapers. When I read these old newspapers on microfilm, I began to see, for example, the influence of baseball in the nineteenth-century, how important baseball was for little towns in Florida. For example, one town like Palatka would challenge a bigger town like Jacksonville to a baseball game on Memorial Day or Labor Day and would take great pride in beating the bigger town, because each town could only put nine players at a time on the field. Of course, sometimes the town would bring in ringers, semi-professionals, disguised as local residents to beat the bigger, more important town. But, the amount of pride that a local town would have in its baseball team really made me realize how important baseball was, and especially to Florida, because Florida, though the first settled, 1564, was really the last colonized on the east coast. Therefore, [Florida] has always been the Johnny-come-lately in a lot of areas, but in sports, it could excel because we have good weather all year round [and] we have a flat terrain, and, therefore, baseball is a natural. It is easy to produce a baseball field. It is very cheap to produce a baseball field, a flat ground with four bases. Therefore, teams began to establish baseball teams in the nineteenth century and have gone on to produce some really good ballplayers out of the high schools and colleges of the state.

C: Would you say your newspaper research, and the small stories included in those newspapers, make you choose little profiles of persons or towns in your books?

M: Right. I divide all the books I do into smaller segments, whether it is shipwrecks or pirates or football or baseball, and try to put in one synopsis, one chapter, the most important events, facts, of that. Rather than writing a whole book on one

pirate, I chose to do a book on twenty pirates, because I think the reading public is more interested in reading about a lot of different parts all on the same subject, pirates or shipwrecks or lighthouses.

C: Is it your personal preference as well?

M: Yes, mine too. Every day, I read several different newspapers. I am a newspaper junkie, addict, and I read newspapers on the Internet. Therefore, I think today, people like to read smaller excerpts rather than 300 or 400 pages on one minute topic.

C: What kind of research, specifically [for] the baseball book and the football book, have you done, and has this evolved with the Internet? Did it change your research process?

M: What I did with the baseball book was to begin with the old nineteenth-century newspapers, and then that would lead me to local histories of towns [and] counties in Florida. Then, I would also go to different libraries around the state, different archives that I knew were good in baseball history. I would interview people I knew were involved in baseball, especially modern baseball. Then, I went up to the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown and spent some time up there in their archives dealing with sources that are not available elsewhere, old copies of baseball journals [and] magazines. They have a very good clipping-service where somebody has gone through hundreds, if not thousands, of journals and newspapers and cut out articles dealing with particular topics. So, I could go to, for example, spring-training, and they had lots of folders on that and I could easily use their photocopy-services up there. Doing the book on Babe Ruth, I contacted them and had someone there go into their Babe Ruth file instead of my going up there a second time, and they photocopied for me any relevant article about Babe Ruth in Florida. Baseball is a little bit easier to write on because there is so much more written about baseball, especially the history of baseball, so that we have baseball biographies of all the major players. And, now, the Negro Leagues are beginning to be documented more. People have collected paraphernalia, documents, records of baseball, I think, far better than other sports. I do not know why they do that rather than other sports, but they do. So, baseball is really a fun topic to research because there is so much out there. What I do is, I approach it from a different point of view. There was never a history of baseball of this state, but there were histories of major league teams and of spring-training and of the Women's Baseball League and of the Negro Leagues. So I would go through these books and cull out the important points dealing with Florida baseball. Football, because I was only dealing with the history of the Gators and the Seminoles since 1958, what my co-author and I did was, we went back to newspapers, and that was relatively easy to do because we have such good newspaper records of football. Football is such an important sport in this state, in this town, at this university, that that

was relatively easy to research. In doing the history of the Gator football team back to the beginning, it is a little bit more difficult because the earlier records were really inexact. For example, with Georgia, we are still not sure how many football games the Gators and the Bulldogs have played. The Bulldogs say that there is one more game that we do not recognize. Who is right? I do not know. So football is a little bit different. Football is a little easier in another sense because there are so many old-timers who have followed the Gators over the years and know the team well. I have been able to talk to some of them, and they are very interested in talking about Gator football.

C: Specifically, Honor, Guts and Glory is only going back to...?

M: 1958. We have a summary of the Gators back to the beginning of their history and the Seminoles back to the beginning of their history, but the emphasis is on each of the games since 1958 through 1992.

C: You say you usually do not use the Internet?

M: I have not done it yet, no. I have not really had to. Now, the Internet, really only in the last two years, has become very big. The books I am doing now, especially with aviation, I am using the Internet more and more. On the Internet, you have to be careful because anybody can put anything on the Internet and, therefore, to use the Internet, you really have to be careful. You have to be able to double-check it. So, with aviation, the work I am doing there, I can write to the individual companies through the Internet, through e-mail, and that is easy. But I am very cautious about using the Internet for research.

C: How long did you spend on Honor, Guts and Glory?

M: Normally, it takes me one year from start to finish. When I start the book, I make a proposal to a publishing company, and then they say yes or no. If they say yes, I begin to research it, and a year later, the publisher has a manuscript in hand. That means I have done the research, I have written the book, I had experts check it, I have copy-editors copyedit it, and it is ready to go to press.

C: And that includes Baseball in Florida, too?

M: Yes.

C: Let's start on Honor, Guts and Glory. We may have covered all of this, but I just want to make sure. When was this published and by whom?

M: It was published in 1993 by Maupin Press in Gainesville. I had begun it in 1992 when I realized that the twenty-fifth anniversary of the rivalry was approaching in 1993.

C: Okay, and we said that James P. Jones was a history professor at FSU, and you said that old players and coaches talked, Bowden and Reaves and Spurrier and Weatherell.

M: Yes. They were very willing to write something about what the game rivalry meant to each of them. Then I had Norm Carlson, who has been the long-time sports information director at UF, read over the manuscript, and he made helpful hints.

C: In your book, you have a little bit of a history. When did this rivalry begin?

M: Interestingly, there had been a football team, believe it or not, at the school in Tallahassee that became Florida State University. It was in 1902, and [the Gator football team] played the men's school there. That school eventually became the Florida State School for Women and, eventually, Florida State University. But, the very first victory the Gators had was against that men's school from Tallahassee. We won six-to-nothing. You might say that is not really Florida State University, but it is the school that became Florida State University.

C: Does Florida State recognize it as a loss?

M: I doubt it. I do not think so. Then, in 1903, the following year, Florida State College in Tallahassee beat the Gators twelve-to-nothing, after which the Florida coach quit and resumed his law practice in Jacksonville. He could not stand to lose to the school in Tallahassee. Eventually, that school became all women, but then when it became co-ed, I think in 1947 after the war, when men began to come back to the different schools and UF became co-ed and FSU became co-ed, the Florida State students began to have a football team beginning in 1947, and they struggled at first. Then, in the early 1950s, a movement [began] at Florida State to play the Gators down at Gainesville, but the University of Florida was very reluctant to play the FSU Seminoles, because we had nothing to win and everything to lose. If we beat the Seminoles, people would say, well, you are a much bigger school and, therefore, you are expected to beat them. If we lost to the Seminoles, it would be a disgrace because we were so much bigger and they were so much newer and smaller. So, for a number of years, the UF administration hesitated to sign a contract to play FSU in football. Finally, in the 1956-1957 [school year], there was a rumor that the legislature in Tallahassee was going to get involved in this and was going to force the two schools to play. Finally, the two presidents got together and said, we better play football or we are going to have this legislated for us. So, in 1958, the two teams met in Gainesville. The first six games that were played were all played in Gainesville because the contract said that the game would not be played in Tallahassee until FSU expanded Doak Campbell Stadium and made it a lot larger. So, for six years, the Gators could use the excuse, well, that stadium up in Tallahassee is too small

and, therefore, we are not going to play them up there. Finally, in 1963-1964 [school year], FSU expanded its stadium up there and forced us to have a home-and-away schedule with FSU. So, since 1964, when the game was played in Tallahassee, we have gone back and forth, so that in 1999, the game will be played in Gainesville and the next year in Tallahassee and back and forth.

C: Why is college football particularly so important in Florida?

M: I think it is important in Florida because the state of Florida has produced so many good football players who have for years gone out-of-state to other powerhouses like Notre Dame and Michigan and Southern Cal[ifornia] and so on. Only in the last fifteen years or so have the three major schools, UF, FSU and Miami, begun to successfully keep those athletes in the state of Florida, so that if schools could use only players from their own states, Florida, Texas and California, I think, would be the three big states that would successfully compete on the gridiron. Also, I think football is important because it has brought in so much money from the alumni. I think if one were to go back and see what type of contributions poured into Miami, FSU and UF after the individual teams won the national championship, I suspect that the amount of money was quite significant in the following years. I have no trouble with the support of football at this school. I know a lot of the faculty probably do not like the emphasis on football, but to me, that not only brings a high degree of spirit along the alumni and students, but it also brings in a lot of money from television, from bowl games, from ticket sales, into the University of Florida. That money does not all go to the Athletic Association. That association has very generously funded a huge buying of computers for the libraries, has funded summer-school at UF, and has probably helped pay my salary, so I have no trouble with all of the emphasis on football in this state [and] in this town.

C: What do you think in regards to the players coming here for just the scholarships and all the money they produce?

M: There is an argument that those players should be paid something, and I think they should be paid something. I think college athletes should be paid as if they had an ordinary job. They are not allowed to have jobs because they are so busy practicing, especially football in the fall, and they bring in so much money to the schools that they should take some; they should be able to have some benefit from that financially. I know they get scholarships and they get books paid and tuition [paid], but I really believe that college athletes eventually will be paid something, really a decent wage, for what they do on the football field. They practice so much. They are under such tremendous time-constraints because of how they fit in their football schedule and their studies and their social life. It is really remarkable what they do. Now I know that they can come to a school like UF and have national TV-exposure week after week, which is going to help them greatly if they are good in making the jump to the pros, and I know that the

school, therefore, does provide them with a lot of benefits for their future careers, but there really is a two-way street there and I think we should eventually pay them.

C: Is there more to say about getting the football rivalry started, [which] involved J. Wayne Reitz, the governor of Florida, the legislature?

M: Yes. There probably would have been a law passed by the legislature the way, I think, up in Kentucky there is a law passed by the legislature to have UK and Louisville play, at least in basketball. I think that would have happened here and, finally, the two presidents saw the writing on the wall and agreed to have the game, reluctantly on the part of UF at first, but in the end, it has benefitted both schools. A more interesting question these days is, should the game be played earlier in the season? And the answer is probably yes. As we saw this past weekend, when a team like Penn State, second in the country, loses at the end of the season, that loss has far greater repercussions than a loss in the early part of the season, as happened with the Gators, so that when the FSU team comes here in another few weeks to play the last regular season game, one of the teams is going to lose and drop drastically in the polls. Right now, FSU is number one, and the Gators are number four or number five. That number is going to fall for one of the two, whoever loses. If the rivalry had the game played earlier in the season, for example, the first or second game, the loss to one of the teams would not be as serious as it would be at the end of the season. And there is a second reason, I think. At the end of the season, if Florida has won its SEC division, it is looking forward more, probably (in my opinion), to the SEC Championship game than it is to the rivalry with FSU, because we have to win the championship game this year in Atlanta in order to then go on to, maybe, play in the national championship. Therefore, I think that in the past few years when Florida has won its division in the SEC, it has perhaps held out some of its top players when we play FSU in order for them not to get hurt when we play the SEC championship game. If we play the FSU game at the beginning of the season, we would not have that problem. Both teams would go full-force, and there would not be, perhaps, the injury-factor as there often is at the end of the regular season.

C: Over the whole series, who comes out on top? Who has dominated this series?

M: Interestingly, it really goes by decade. From 1958 to, basically, 1966, the Gators were dominant. Then, in the late 1960s and early 1970s, up to 1976, the Gators again were dominant. But then, in 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, the Seminoles won. Then, in the 1980s, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, the Gators won. Then, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, the Seminoles won. So it is interesting that one team has dominated, almost in huge blocks of years. In the 1990s, when Spurrier arrived on the scene, it became a much more evenly-fought battle. Again, in the late 1980s, the Seminoles began to dominate. In the 1990s, they have gone back

and forth. No one team dominated. It has been a very equal match, so that in 1996, when the Gators lost once and it happened to be the Seminoles, we went on to play the Seminoles in the Sugar Bowl for the national championship. It just showed that the two best teams were probably FSU and Florida. So the two teams are very equal now. Both have produced Heisman Trophy winners, Charlie Ward [for FSU] and Danny Wuerffel [for UF]. I think it is a very equal rivalry at the moment. To me, a lot depends on where the game is played. I think the home-field advantage is one touchdown for that home-field team.

C: What is the significance of the 1964 game, which was the first time Bobby Bowden was involved and the first time Spurrier was involved?

M: Spurrier as a player? Well, in 1964, that was the first time that FSU won. In 1961, there was a three-three tie. 1964 was the first time the game was played in Tallahassee, and they won sixteen-to-seven, clearly a big score. I mean, they won decisively, so that really put FSU on the big-time football map. They proved that they could play with the Gators, and they went on to really do well.

C: Was that Spurrier's first game or so? It might have been.

M: 1964 was Steve Spurrier's first game as a quarterback against FSU, and he did well. He really almost led his team back, but he was sacked and had two interceptions and the Seminoles went on to win the game, perhaps because the game was played up in Tallahassee. Again, to me, the home-field advantage is really important. That was the first game up in Tallahassee, and that may have helped them a lot. As I said, if you take one touchdown away from that, you are down to a nine-to-seven game. That is a close game.

C: The 1966 game is called the most infamous game.

M: Especially in terms of the Seminoles. If you ask most Gator fans who Lane Fenner was, they probably do not know who he was, but he has meant a great deal in Tallahassee to the Seminoles. What happened was, there was a very controversial play that dealt with Lane Fenner toward the end of the game. Fenner was a receiver for the Seminoles, and toward the end of the game, he was sprinting down the right-sideline and got into the end-zone. The ball was thrown in Fenner's direction. Fenner and two Gator players leapt for the ball. Fenner came down with it. The referee, Doug Moseley, started to raise his hands for a touchdown, which would have won the game for FSU but a split-second later reversed himself and said, no touchdown, pass incomplete. This game was played up in Tallahassee, and this was before the days of instant -replay, when there was no replay allowed and no big screen to show it, but the people in the stands could not believe that it was an incomplete pass. The clock eventually ran out and UF won the game, but for the next week or month in Tallahassee, there were large blown-up photographs of Fenner clearly catching the ball and in

bounds. I remember talking to one of the Gator players who was guarding Fenner and he said, there was no question that Fenner was out of bounds before he had control of the ball. Well, Fenner and the Tallahassee Seminole fans said, crazy, that is wrong; he clearly had the ball. The picture I have in the book seems to indicate that Fenner is in bounds and has the ball, but he bobbles it. I have no opinion on whether he caught the ball or not. I do not know. I was not there. The Gator fans, I think, dodged a bullet, because I suspect if you had instant-replay today, you would have the touchdown counted and, therefore, FSU would have won it. That game still means a lot to Tallahassee fans. It does not mean much to Gator fans. They have forgotten all about who Lane Fenner was.

C: How many players did you speak to in total?

M: I talked to, maybe, a dozen players from the different years, different decades, some of them in my class. I always, of course, would get the Gator point of view, and my co-author got the Seminole point of view, and we tried to coordinate it. We would always read each other's chapter so that nobody, except him and me, knows who wrote which chapter, because we tried to be as objective as we could and not favor the school we belong to. We have been pretty objective, and no one has ever criticized us for being favorable to one school or the other.

C: So, you are saying that you wrote, separately, these chapters.

M: I wrote half the chapters and he wrote half the chapters, but nobody knows which half I wrote. It was not necessarily the games that the Gators won. It was just that we divvied them up in certain ways. Only he and I know who wrote which chapter, but it did not matter because then we would give each other the chapters we wrote and we would correct, critique, add, [and] delete what the other person had written. So, it was a really joint effort, which is not always easy to do. When you jointly co-author something, it is oftentimes very difficult because one person will normally say, well, I did most of the work; I deserve most of the credit. That is not true in this book. We really did half the work, each of us. It was a pleasure to work with him. We want to work together again because it was such a pleasurable experience. That is not true in a lot of other cases that people co-author books in.

C: In your experience?

M: No. I have had luck because the people I have worked with, I have chosen carefully. Some people, I cannot work with, but others that I have picked, I can really work well with.

C: That is interesting. Have you ever started a book and had to walk away from it?

M: No, because I would realize before I started that this is not the person I want to work with, that I am going to do something else and let him go on to do his own,

the book by himself, for example.

C: Have you gotten responses from people about this book?

M: When this book came out in the fall of 1993, I went around to a lot of Gator booster groups and spoke about Florida football from the Gator point of view and ended up selling a lot of these books myself. It was an unusual experience because normally when I make an academic presentation, it is to a group of academics. For example, in the last month, I have made three major presentations around the state of Florida about a book I wrote about Native Americans of Florida. There, the reception is very different because they look on my writing from an academic-objective point of view, but when I talked before these groups, they were, I guess, always pro-Gators. If I ever mentioned anything favorable about the Seminoles, they would politely boo me and hiss, and I was shocked. So I have had to be careful. I knew what they wanted and, therefore, I would emphasize the Gators and de-emphasize the Seminoles in the rivalry.

C: Do you think one of the reasons you were able to write this book is because you did not grow up here?

M: Sure. I can be objective.

C: Are you a Gator fan?

M: Yes, I am a Gator fan. I enjoy watching the Gators more than any other college team because I like the Fun-n'-Gun offense [Spurrier's high-yardage pass-heavy offensive strategy], but more importantly, I know the students. Some of them have been in my classes, and I know them on a personal basis. When I taught the writing about football class in the fall of 1998, I had Jesse Palmer in my class, and he was the starting quarterback before he got hurt. It was fun to talk to him on the Tuesday after the game, in class, about what it was like to play in front of 100,000 fans in Knoxville, Tennessee. Why did you change the play? What is it like to receive a call from Spurrier on the sideline? How do you determine what play to call or to change the line of scrimmage? Therefore, I know the players. I have known a lot of players over the years, and it is more fun to watch players I have come to know a team I do not have any relationship with.

C: How do you feel these players fit into the academic community and the university community and being in school?

M: I think it is very hard, as I said before, in how they juggle time. Athletes of any sport on this campus, on any campus, how they can practice several hours a day during the season, take three or four courses that season, and have a life outside football and the classroom is really remarkable.

C: Do you find they have proper respect for the classroom?

M: Yes. If they do not, they are not allowed to continue on the team. For example, the athletic coaches here are so closely in touch with teachers. They notify us several times a semester and ask us how a specific players are doing. We have to respond, yes, so-and-so is doing well; no, so-and-so is not attending class; have them come to class. There is a tight rein on the athletics, and academics is stressed more and more.

C: Is there a different kind of reaction to the classroom for athletes--are more compelled?

M: I do not know. I do not think they would come to class as much if they were not required to come, because students in general oftentimes will sleep in. I teach early classes, early in the morning, and they might sleep in. They might have a party the night before. But the athletes come. I remember on year having the basketball team. I had a class of, maybe, 500 students, and I had the whole basketball team there. They would all come, all sit together, all take notes together, and they had their own proctor who kept track of who came to class. If they did not come to class, they better be there the next time. I did not have to keep track of which basketball players came because they were always there, in general. That was impressive, and when other students saw how often these students came, it had to impress the other students. One of the best students I had in the summer of one year was Danny Wuerffel, the quarterback. He came to class every day and was well-prepared, and it was a pleasure to have him in the class. He went on to win the Heisman Trophy that following year, and it was fun to see him do so well because he was such a really outstanding person, apart from a great football player.

C: Back to the coaches, how about [when] Bowden really came in? That was FSU started to really change things. And what did Spurrier mean to this team?

M: Bowden brought a high level of coaching ability to the team. Before then, the Seminoles, like the Gators before Spurrier, struggled and had a lot of coaches who really were not very successful. Bowden, with his good coaching methods and strict discipline, really did a good job in turning around FSU's program. [He] has really helped the rivalry a great deal.

C: Who are some of the players who have come out of these schools?

M: Two of the ones in the late 1960s are John Reaves and Carlos Alvarez. I remember I was at the 1969 game against Houston when, the third play of the game when the Gators had the ball, John Reaves threw a long pass to Carlos Alvarez, who caught the ball and scored a touchdown. That was the beginning of

one of the most successful seasons ever for the offense on this team. It showed how wide-open football was going to be in the Ray Graves era. Ray Graves was the head coach at that time. It was exciting to watch the Super Sophs (Sophomores), as they were called, go on to set lots of records that year.

C: Who is Ray Graves? How long did he coach for?

M: Ray Graves coached in the 1960s, 1960 to 1969, and had a record of seventy-three-one-and-four. He was replaced by Doug Dickey in the 1970s, Charlie Pell, for about three and a half years, Galen Hall, Gary Darnell, and then Steve Spurrier in 1990. [Spurrier] has been the coach of the 1990s.

C: How about giving me some names of famous players who have come out of these two schools?

M: Some of the players who have gone on to play in the NFL, for example, more recently, you have Reidel Anthony, who plays for the Tampa Bay Bucs; Shane Matthews, Chicago Bears; Ike Hilliard, New York Giants; Jacquez Green, Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

C: Looking at the pictures in the Gators and Seminoles book, before the mid-1970s there are few to no African American faces. That seems to change in the mid-1970s and kind of an even-split after then. Is that something that happened in the culture of the schools, or is there a reason for that?

M: In the early 1970s, there was a movement nation-wide to have more African American players. Even in the South, the Deep South, African American players were making their mark more and more. I think one of our first African American players was Willie Jackson. [His father] Willie Lee Jackson, Sr. played for the Gators and may have been the first African American [to do so]. Then, Willie Jackson Jr. became an end in the 1970s. In the 1970s, more opportunities arose for African Americans at UF and other schools, and they have really gone on to do well. That has led to NFL careers for a lot of them. In the 1950s and 1960s, you would have a hard time finding African Americans on any team.

C: Was this policy, at least at UF, in the 1950s and the 1960s?

M: It is hard to say. If you asked any administrator, they would probably say no. Up until 1954, the schools were segregated in the South, and when the Supreme Court overturned that and made integration the law of the land, it slowly began to permeate through high schools and colleges so that in the late 1950s and in the 1960s, more and more African Americans applied to and entered colleges around the nation, especially in the South.

C: When they did start to integrate the football teams, was it a problem?

- M: No. This school has a good tradition of good relations between the races. I have never heard of any problems between the races. It just never came up. People were given opportunities based on their abilities. Willie Jackson, Sr. was the first African American to play here, and from that, it just opened up the opportunities.
- C: Baseball in Florida was published by Pineapple Press in 1996. You said to research this book, you went to a lot of small-town archives. Were you surprised what you could find out about baseball?
- M: I would go to the small-town libraries and especially to their clipping files. A lot of towns have a good clipping-file where some librarian has faithfully over the years cut out articles from newspapers dealing with different subjects, and they would organize these by subject. The libraries that did that often had a good clipping file, and it really made my work a lot easier. I was interested in local personages who did well in baseball at any level and how well the team did at a regional and national level from that town.
- C: Were you surprised by any of the towns you went to?
- M: What surprised me, for example, was a town like Palatka on the St. Johns [River] that had a baseball school, the Ray Doan Baseball School, in the 1930s, and one of its instructors was Babe Ruth. After he basically retired from the Yankees and the Dodgers, he went around and became a hitting instructor for schools like this. I interviewed a man who lived next to Babe Ruth in Palatka. As a child, this fellow used to see Babe Ruth go off to the baseball field each day and teach the local youngsters how to play baseball, and he had a baseball signed by Babe Ruth. The number of schools in Florida surprised me. For example, there was an umpire school down in West Palm Beach where Joe DiMaggio would be an instructor after he retired from baseball. There are still baseball schools in Florida that are really well-known. Because the weather is so nice, baseball can be played all year round. Youngsters from, for example, the cold North can come down here to play baseball at some of these schools and go on to colleges with scholarships after learning better how to play baseball here.
- C: When you go look at these things, would the clippings be in folders? Or would you have them on microfilm?
- M: Basically folders. Some of the folders had really old articles about, for example, baseball. Maybe no one had ever looked at these articles before, but they were all in a folder about baseball in that town. Basically newspapers.
- C: You must have found some of this stuff was falling apart.
- M: Oh sure. It was seldom if ever preserved well, but it had such valuable information from the local level, in the local newspaper, that no other newspaper

would have picked up.

C: So you would just go and handle them and put them back.

M: Right. Again, I have used an awful lot of microfilm around the state for old records, old newspapers. The most difficult part was trying to find records of African Americans in Florida, as elsewhere, because records were not kept. I know that African American teams were at some of the big hotels on the East Coast. For example, Henry Flagler, the man who built the railroad down to Key West, built some really big hotels in St. Augustine and Palm Beach and Miami. To entertain the guests, he would often have the bellhops and custodial workers in the different hotels, who were African American, play baseball in the afternoon for the enjoyment of the white patrons of the hotels. No records were kept of these games. They were not important games at the time. So it has been hard to get records of African American players and teams. There was a player in Palatka, a young man who went on to become one of the best baseball players in the Negro Leagues. His name was John Henry, and his nickname was Pop Lloyd. Well, he went on to be inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame, but most people do not realize he grew up in Florida, in Jacksonville and Palatka, and went on to play for some African American teams in the Negro League. He never had a chance to play in the white leagues, but I remember once he played against Ty Cobb in Havana and played better than Ty Cobb did. Cobb would not shake his hand; Cobb was such a racist. I remember getting quotes about John Henry Lloyd. When asked if he were born too soon, he once said, I do not consider that I was born at the wrong time; I felt it was the right time, for I had a chance to prove the ability of our race in this sport, and because many of us did our very best to uphold the traditions of the game and of the world of sport, we have given the Negro a greater opportunity now to be accepted into the major leagues with other Americans.

C: So Flagler's team and Pop Lloyd are not well-documented.

M: No.

C: Do you find this information from interviews or through clips?

M: Yes, to some degree. I had a lot of that up at the Hall of Fame in Cooperstown. Another little-known fact about African Americans is the fact that Jackie Robinson integrated Major League Baseball's modern color-line not in Brooklyn but in Daytona Beach. The first time he put on a uniform, he was actually with the Dodger's farm team, the Montreal Royals, which was in Daytona Beach. To honor that fact, Daytona Beach now has a plaque in Daytona Beach and has renamed the baseball field there where the Daytona Cubs play the Jackie Robinson Ballpark. There is a statue of Jackie Robinson outside the ballpark with two youngsters, one black, one white, to indicate that is where Jackie Robinson

had his debut.

C: But it was not actually an easy integration.

M: Oh, it was terrible. [The towns of] Sanford, DeLand and Jacksonville wanted to throw him out of the game, tried to arrest him. I remember in one of those towns, he was forced out of the game because the local police chief did not want him to play, so that in Sanford, the chief of police walked onto the field when Robinson was playing and demanded that the manager remove Robinson and another African American. The manager had to do it, or the game would have been stopped. In Jacksonville, the game was not allowed to begin because Robinson was going to play. The local authorities would not allow the game to be played. That is disgraceful.

C: Did Dodgertown have something to do with that? Did they try to integrate it first in Daytona? Is that where they ran into trouble?

M: Yes, and I think that Branch Rickey [Brooklyn Dodgers leader] established Dodgertown in Vero Beach in 1948 in order to integrate his team from the harassment that the black players were getting, so that Dodgertown is a place which still exists where the players could be basically by themselves in a part of Vero Beach away from everybody else. They would play baseball in their private ballfield and would not have the trouble of segregation that they had to deal with outside in outside towns.

C: There are a lot of photographs in this book. Where did you find them?

M: If you look at any of the books I do, I really emphasize photographs, because I know that when people pick up a book in a bookstore or library, they are going to first look at the photographs. I took some of the photographs myself. I got some of the photographs from the Baseball Hall of Fame. I also have discovered what photo archives are available around the state. For example, Tallahassee has a good one, the Florida State Archives, for the whole state. Tampa has a very good one. Lakeland has a good one. I sometimes wrote to individual teams and said, can you send me a photograph? I wrote to **Bill Wright**, for example, who was the first African American who was the president of the National League, and he sent me a photograph for use in this book. Photographs are often hard to get, hard to get permission to use, but they really do make a book much more readable and accessible.

C: Why has baseball been so important in Florida, and why has Florida been so important to baseball?

M: Baseball has been important to Florida because it has enabled a lot of youngsters to go on to the major-leagues. In the back of this book, I have a list of

several dozen Florida players who have gone on to careers in the major-leagues. Florida has been important for baseball not only for providing a lot of players, but an awful lot of places in Florida have provided sites for spring-training. Other than Arizona, Florida has been the dominant place for spring-training, so that even today, something like eighteen to twenty of the major-league teams have spring training in Florida. That brings in, each year, about, I think I saw, \$300,000,000 a year. That is a lot of money for six weeks to bring into Florida. That is not only the teams playing here, having hotels, food, but the thousands of visitors who come to Florida for spring-training [and] the TV rights to spring-training games. It is only a short season, five or six weeks, but that is a lot of money brought into the state. Therefore the different cities that have had spring-training sites, like Lakeland and Vero Beach and Sarasota and Fort Lauderdale, have begun to compete with each to see which city can lure the major-league teams. That is one of the negative parts of spring-training, that a place like Homestead, Florida, will build a large state-of-the-art facility to attract a major-league team, and then something like a hurricane comes along and damages the city and the team says, we do not want to go there anymore; we have decided to go elsewhere. Well, who is going to pay for that stadium for the next fifty, sixty-plus years? The locals citizens have to pay for that stadium. So it is nice if a city can attract a team for a long time, like St. Petersburg and the Yankees or Fort Myers and the Red Sox or Fort Myers and the Twins. But it is really hard, financially, on these towns to build these huge stadia and have the teams only stay a few years.

C: So when and where did baseball start in Florida? Florida has some claim to Abner Doubleday.

M: Right. If you believe that Abner Doubleday began baseball—which is not true, by the way, it is a hoax—then he might have invented it in Miami because he was stationed at Fort Dallas on the Miami River during the Third Seminole War, 1855-1858, so then Miami could have laid claim to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. Cooperstown claims that Doubleday began baseball, but he really did not. Baseball in the nineteenth century was attractive to Florida because...you have to remember that this state, as I said before, was the first settled but last colonized, really. Because Florida was founded and settled by the Spanish, it was Catholic and non-English. So when Florida became a state in 1845, Floridians wanted to prove that they were as American as the people in the thirteen colonies to the north of here, thought that baseball was the true American pastime and, therefore, adopted baseball very readily as an Americanization process. So, baseball, as a social phenomenon, is important. I think it helped Florida become much more Americanized than it might have become with the Spanish/Catholic influence. We had the good weather. We had the flat terrain. We had ideal conditions for promoting baseball. Again, it did not cost much to have teams. You did not need the equipment you needed in football. Therefore, baseball became very popular in this state.

C: Where do we see our first baseball teams and the first baseball leagues?

M: Normally in the northeast. Florida developed very slowly to the south. Small towns in the north, for example, Sanford, Tallahassee, Palatka, Jacksonville and Gainesville began baseball in a serious way in the 1870s, 1880s. Then, from time to time, professional teams would tour Florida before the regular season began and allowed Floridians to see a higher-quality of game. Finally, in the late 1880s, one team chose to come down to Florida to have spring training. That really made major-leaguers aware of Florida and Florida aware of attracting more and more major-league teams.

C: When was the first spring-training site?

M: In 1888, when the Washington Capitals of the National League arrived in Jacksonville to train for three weeks. They had struggled, and did struggle even after that, to do well in the National League and were trying to have a new location for spring-training. They came down to Jacksonville and had a terribly hard time finding a place to stay because baseball at that time had a very low reputation, rightly so. The players were often tobacco-chewing, cigar-smoking, illiterate players who caroused a lot and were not upstanding citizens that we may think of today. So they had a terrible time finding a hotel. Finally, they found a hotel, but the hotel player insisted that the ballplayers not eat in the same dining room with the other guests, not mingle with the other guests, and not even mention their profession to the guests. He wanted them to be isolated and to not promote baseball at all.

C: How do you narrow down your information and decide what to write about, what was important and what to leave out?

M: Almost always, I end up at a different place from where I thought I was going to end up. When I began this project, I just thought I would write about the history of baseball at the major-league level in Florida, but then I began to realize that the history of it back in the nineteenth century was important from a sociological point of view, as I said, to show the towns that, yes, we are pretty good in relationship to a bigger town like Jacksonville. Then, when I discovered that women trained in Florida for professional baseball in the 1940s, that surprised me [and] the fact that the Negro Leagues had some really important players in Florida and played in Florida against white teams and other Negro League teams. Then the minor-leagues surprised me, too, the fact that they were so strong. And then, of course, the major-leagues. So it evolved into a number of clearly delineated chapters. I have nine chapters in here with about five appendices. The division was pretty easy to do after I began to look into the subject.

C: When you talk about a specific minor league or a specific player, how do you choose one person?

M: I tried to be as inclusive as possible and, therefore, I have the list of all the major league players. That took a lot of work. I went through the Baseball Encyclopedia, several thousand pages long, line-by-line, trying to determine who was from Florida, who played in Florida, who went to school here and so on. That was a lot of work. Even high school. I remember one review of the book said, yes, it is a great book if you want to know which high-school teams were champions or runner-up in different years. That is only one small appendix, and I was disappointed that the reviewer picked on that to emphasize in his criticism of the book. To me, that is a useful part if anybody is interested in high school baseball to look at the appendix and find out which teams won and which year. I thought what a more important contribution of this book was, was the whole overview of a major sport in a state not associated with baseball other than spring-training. It surprised me and surprises the reader to find out what a long history this sport has in this state. Let me give you one interesting anecdote. National Public Radio [has] a two-hour broadcast every day (used to be seven days a week) that reaches millions of listeners every day of the week. I was called one morning at, I think it was, five-thirty in the morning by Bob Edwards, the host of National Public Radio. Now, I knew he was going to call because the day before, his staff said, we are going to call you tomorrow morning. So he called me at five-thirty, and for five minutes, he asked me questions about something that happened in a little tiny town in Florida about ninety years ago. It was the town of Webster, Florida. What happened was, at the beginning of this century, baseball was banned in that town. A local law was passed banning baseball. In the 1990s, somebody was going through all the old laws of Webster, Florida, in Webster, and found that law banning baseball and wondered why it was banned. Well, nobody was alive in the 1990s who was active back in the early part of this century and could remember why the baseball sport was banned. So, the town was going to un-ban it, was going to allow baseball to be played in 1998, I think. So, he called me up and said, why was it banned? I gave my opinion, which is as good as anybody else's, because we do not know. My opinion was that baseball had such a bad reputation at the early part of this century that Webster probably did not want anything to do with this unsavory sport. That tells a lot about Florida, about baseball, about laws being passed banning a sport, than we might otherwise have known about. This one small anecdote that I happened to come upon that is of interest to historians as well as sports-people.

C: What do you think that tells about Florida? Do you think it tells a bigger sociology?

M: Maybe. It does relate to the fact that baseball had a bad reputation, that laws could be passed about this, that somebody probably was, maybe, making a joke and said, let's ban baseball. Well, it became a law. It is fun to speculate because, again, nobody is alive, but it is fun to speculate why a major sport would be

banned in a state that promotes baseball now. Maybe other towns have the same type of old, anachronistic law.

C: Women's baseball in Florida--you said they used to train here?

M: Right. What happened in the early 1940s, as more and more men from the Major Leagues were being drafted into the armed services, Philip Wrigley, who owned the Chicago Cubs, wanted to keep baseball in front of the public eye, so he started the All American Girls Professional Baseball League, AAGPBL, in the early 1940s to keep people going to the ballpark. At first, it was just going to be a fun thing; let's watch women play baseball. But a number of teams in the Midwest, especially Wisconsin, Illinois, and maybe Indiana, really got into this and established these teams and played successfully in front of large groups of people. They needed a place to train. It was too cold for baseball in January, February and March in the Midwest, so they decided to come to Florida. It also helped that the president of the league, Max Carey, who was a Hall of Famer, lived in South Florida, near Miami Beach. He invited them down. So, these women came down to play baseball in training in South Florida, also to recruit potential players from women who were probably usually good at softball. The baseball league wanted to recruit the women softball players to make the switch to baseball, which they did. So they played down here a number of springs, and they brought good publicity to places like Opa-Locka, for example, and Fort Lauderdale and Miami Beach. And they played baseball. Though the league eventually died, it succeeded in what it attempted to do, keep baseball in front of the public eye. It also allowed a lot of women and a lot of young girls to become interested in a sport that they might not have become interested in, because they had a chance to play at a professional level. The young girls got to see role models playing sports at a professional level. The women earned a nice salary while they played and showed that they were good ballplayers. It was a win-win situation. When the men came back after World War II ended, the league slowly disbanded, as the men took up the former major-league positions. But do not forget, in the 1990s, the Silver Bullets are around. The Colorado Silver Bullets is a professional baseball team of women. There are some women's teams in Florida still and there are some women playing college baseball, so women have a place in baseball, not only to play but also to be spectators and know more about the sport.

C: You said the league just disbanded when the male players came back from the war. They had all-right attendance, you said, during the [war]?

M: It helped attendance a lot in the mid-1940s. Toward the end of the 1940s, when the men were playing, the league began to die. Finally, in 1954, it died out, simply because televised-baseball took over. The women's league was no longer a new thing, and it could not attract attendees.

C: Was this "A League of Their Own," that same league they were showing in the [movie]?

M: Yes.

C: About African Americans in baseball: March 17, 1946, was Jackie Robinson's first professional baseball appearance, and that was in Florida. I do not know when society in Florida became desegregated, but how did the players deal with [this] from the time baseball was desegregated to the time society was desegregated?

M: You can argue that baseball, in integrating itself with the Dodgers in the mid- to late-1940s, led to the integration of our society, and I think that is partly true, that, in this sense, sports helped integrate our society as a whole, so that when people could see the different races playing together without any problem on the baseball field, or gridiron, maybe some people thought, maybe we can do it in our ordinary lives. I think that may have helped. I remember, for example, with the St. Louis Cardinals, they had a real big problem with desegregation in terms of spring-training. When the St. Louis Cardinals used to, as late as the early 1960s, be segregated in different motels, ballplayers like **Bob Gibson** and **Bill White** said, this is not right; we need to integrate our teams; we need to live in the same motels with the white ballplayers on our team. I think the Cardinals were leaders in the integration of baseball in spring-training. Remember that Florida is part of the Deep South and, therefore, reluctant in the 1940s and 1950s to integrate all its facilities. I think baseball helped, by having professional teams come here, by having Jackie Robinson integrate the Dodgers in the late 1940s. I think both of those helped integration in Florida itself. Florida was very slow to change, and baseball helped.

C: Where were the Cardinals? Where were they based for spring training?

M: In St. Petersburg.

C: And there were a couple of teams there?

M: Yes, there have always been a couple of teams there. St. Petersburg, to me, would be the capital of baseball in Florida, because of its spring-training, because of its minor-league experience, and because they held there every year what was called the Governor's Dinner, where the governor of Florida would meet with representatives of spring-training teams once a year, celebrating baseball and its contribution to the state's income [and] image.

C: In integrating baseball, a lot of towns would not let Jackie Robinson play.

M: Right.

C: Was there a lot of conflict over the years? Did the baseball team and the players face a lot of harassment?

M: Yes. The baseball players faced a lot of harassment from the different teams. I remember, for example, Monte Irvin, when he played baseball, he was so upset at the discrimination he saw in spring training. For example, the African Americans in St. Petersburg had to stay in a run-down boardinghouse with one toilet, whereas white players had individual hotel rooms, individual toilets, and could order dinner from a full menu cart. The African Americans had to eat whatever was shoved in front of them. That is really awful, the experiences they had in this state.

C: Who is Monte Irvin?

M: He was a major-league baseball player. Another one was Roy Campanella [from] the Dodgers. He experienced segregation once he left Dodgertown out of Vero Beach. What a lot of them had to do was, when the team would go into another town to play a spring-training game, the African Americans would be taken to the African American part of the town and be housed in individual boardinghouses or individual homes whose owners would be paid by the team. But the African Americans then would be totally segregated from not only their white teammates but the white people of that particular town.

C: How many years, would you say, Florida was behind the rest of the nation?

M: Florida has been behind the rest of the nation in this case, probably fifteen to twenty years.

C: Did any teams leave because of these problems?

M: I do not think so, because they were all owned by white owners and the white owners were having good financial benefits from being in these towns and did not want to pack up and leave. It was too expensive, and where were they going to go? They had to train in the South, for weather purposes. Where else could they go in the South where they would have integration? I mean, it was a long time coming.

C: I notice a lot of these spring-training sites are in the middle of the state.

M: That is for convenience' sake. They are basically Tampa down to Lakeland over to Vero Beach, Melbourne, but that is simply in order to take advantage of the closeness of the teams. The teams, today even, play almost every day during the four or five weeks they are here. If they have to travel long distances, if they have to go from North Florida to Miami, that is going to take a whole day to get there, especially by bus before they used to fly. Therefore, they would play basically

along I-4 and down along I-75 down to Fort Myers. You do not get teams in North Florida, and you do not get teams down in the Everglades and Miami anymore, or the Keys.

C: Why did you choose this picture, which says Colored Section, that shows African Americans, watching a baseball game?

M: This is a double-spread picture on pages eighty and eighty-one in this book Baseball in Florida that I wrote. As you say, it is a picture of African Americans watching a game, probably in the mid-1950s in St. Petersburg. It is a picture of all African Americans, young and old, men and women, all dressed as if they are going to church, which is unusual. Nowadays, we dress so casually in Florida to attend baseball games. You do not see any shorts. Men have ties and jackets, and women have dresses and stockings. Some of the men have formal hats on. What, to me, was unusual was that it was a segregated situation as late as the 1950s, probably into the early 1960s, but they were often watching African Americans playing major-league baseball. It is ironic that the African Americans in the stands were segregated, whereas the African Americans on the ballfield were integrated. This seemed to be a strange situation.

C: And how long would segregation in the stands continue?

M: I think that went all through the 1950s and into the early 1960s.

C: Then, you mentioned Henry Flagler, the developer with the hotel teams. Those were all-black teams and, in some way, they were professional teams.

M: Right. He began this idea up on Long Island where he had a hotel. The Cuban Giants used to play up there on Long Island. He got this idea of entertaining his [white] guests by having a baseball game between African Americans. The guests liked it. The ballplayers had a chance to get a job, play baseball, be paid for what they enjoyed doing, playing baseball, and a lot of people got to see these African American teams.

C: Who are the Cuban Giants?

M: The Cuban Giants were a team of African Americans who were named Giants because Giants was one of the most popular names among African American teams, emulating the New York Giants baseball team, but they could never play the New York Giants.

C: How big was this league, or was it just at his hotels?

M: It was at his hotels. It was not so much a league as the hotels would have individual teams. They would not go from hotel to hotel. They would simply stay

there and play each other for the benefit of the white guests.

C: We have talked about John Henry “Pop” Lloyd and John Buck O’Neil.

M: Buck O’Neil is probably the best known native-born Floridian. He was a man who was born in the little tiny town of Carrabelle, near Tallahassee, in 1911. He grew up in Sarasota, wanted to play baseball. He also wanted to go to school in Sarasota, but because he was going to school in the 1920s [when] Sarasota High School was segregated, he was not able to go there, so he had to go to black school in Jacksonville. It is interesting, years later, I think in 1995, he returned to Sarasota and had a clubhouse and four baseball fields named after him, called the Buck O’Neil Baseball Complex, where the Baltimore Orioles leaguers train. He was asked, how do you feel about this? Gosh, you could not play at this field if you were a youngster back in the 1920s. He said, do not feel sorry for old Buck; I had a great life; I was right on time. But, he said, I was most disappointed in not being able to go to Sarasota High School and the University of Florida. He said, I always wondered if I could have become an engineer, but there were no opportunities for me back in those days to go on to engineering school, to go on to the big white university in Gainesville, so I had to go to black segregated schools along the way. I went into baseball, had a good career in baseball, but I always wondered if I could have gone on to become an engineer if the times had been ripe and right for that. He never would know. But this was a man who became well-known by baseball fans when Ken Burns [documentary filmmaker] made his baseball special. He was the black man who was interviewed extensively in that baseball special, and he went to become president, where I think he still is, of the Negro League’s museum in Kansas City, where he played baseball for the Monarchs.

C: The segregated schools, were they lower-quality schools?

M: I think so, yes. They were lower-quality schools, and very, very few of the graduates went on to college. There were so few opportunities available for African Americans in the early part of this century, and they had to go into things like menial jobs [or] sports, where they earned much less money.

C: Were the Negro Leagues strong in Florida?

M: No, they were not strong in Florida. A lot of players from Florida played in the Negro Leagues, but, normally, they played elsewhere, especially in the Midwest. From Kansas City north to Chicago, the Negro League was very strong up there, and toward Pennsylvania and New Jersey, over toward Newark. I do not think they played much at all in the Deep South.

C: Why not?

M: For segregation purposes. They were not allowed to play white teams, and people did not want to pay money to go out to see African Americans play baseball. So they struggled.

C: What is the SALLY League?

M: The SALLY League is where Hank Aaron played. It is the South Atlantic League. Hank Aaron, when he played for the SALLY League, broke the color-barrier. This was in 1953. He and two other black players played in Jacksonville for the South Atlantic League, and he became the player of the year in 1953 and helped desegregate Jacksonville baseball, for example.

C: He did not have a very good experience here. He said, we stayed at a very nice home in the Negro section, but playing in the SALLY League was quite a bad experience for me.

M: Right. But, interestingly, a writer for the *Jacksonville Journal* newspaper wrote after Aaron's career, I sincerely believe Aaron may have started Jacksonville down the road to racial understanding. Because Aaron was such a decent man and a great ballplayer and did not fuss or fight against what was happening and just showed people that he could play with whites as well as they could and not have fights among the ballplayers.

C: What about Satchel Paige in Florida?

M: Satchel Paige, the ageless wonder, played baseball too early, really, to play in the major-leagues. He did play for Cleveland in 1948 when he was forty-two years old, but he really never did have much of a chance to play. However, after he retired, he went on to play for a team down in Miami called the Miami Marlins. The manager had an easy chair put out in the outfield for Satchel Paige to sit in because Paige was so old. Paige was really upset at that. He wanted to play ball. He was finally allowed to pitch and did so well that he became a pitcher for that team.

C: Who are the Ethiopian Clowns?

M: The Ethiopian Clowns were one of the baseball teams in the Negro Leagues. They got the name Ethiopian because that was associated with Africa. Clowns, they got [that] name because they were supposedly putting on a show for the white spectators. Both names were misnomers. They should not have been called either one. But it was an example of a team in the Negro Leagues.

C: Obviously Cuba is practically off the coast of Florida.

M: I think the fact that Cuba is so close to Florida has had a lot of advantages. Cuba is one of the best places in Latin America for baseball, and if we ever have

relationships restored with Cuba, I think there will be a lot of baseball played with Cuba. Interestingly, because we are so close to Cuba and have attracted so many refugees, including those in life rafts. Cubans have defected [to] Florida, have been recruited to defect and have been signed to nice contracts by agents in Florida, and went on to play for teams like the Marlins. Because the Marlins have such a strong Hispanic presence, both on the field and in the stands, as well as the Spanish broadcast, the Cuban ballplayers have felt at home in Miami on the Florida Marlins baseball team. So, a big advantage of Florida's geography has been the proximity to Cuba. I remember reading years ago, one of the ballplayers who became a major-leaguer arrived in a raft, escaping from Cuba, leaving his family behind, and was signed up to become a major-league ballplayer.

C: What is the Florida State League?

M: The Florida State League is a minor league that has operated in Florida for decades. It has enabled a lot of teams from smaller towns to have ball teams. Gainesville was an example of that. It was founded in the 1920s. It had teams in the beginning [like] Bartow, Bradenton, Lakeland, Orlando, Sanford, Tampa. It was organized through the years, **up years, down years**. Then teams like Daytona Beach and DeLand and Gainesville and Palatka, Sanford and St. Augustine have had teams that play each other, and it gives potential big leaguers a chance to play baseball at a semi-professional level. For example, Stan Musial played in Daytona Beach in 1940, and other players have played in the Florida State League and got their first chance before breaking into the majors.

C: Moving to pro baseball: what is the Thunderdome?

M: It is now called the Tropicana Dome. It is where the Devil Rays play.

C: It kind of has a history to it.

M: What is interesting about that is, when the Tropicana Dome was first built, St. Petersburg was trying to attract a major-league team, and people down there in St. Petersburg thought, if you built a dome, they will come (a take-off on "Field of Dreams" [baseball-themed movie]). They built this enormously expensive dome stadium and nobody would come down to St. Petersburg to relocate. A number of teams like the San Francisco Giants said they were going to come, and St. Petersburg got all excited, but then the San Francisco team used that acceptance by St. Petersburg as a way to get San Francisco to have better concessions out in the Bay Area. Finally Florida got a team when Wayne Huizenga got the Florida Marlins. People in the Tampa Bay area thought that Huizenga kept out a major-league team from Tampa Bay so as not to compete with his Florida Marlins. Even the name, it is not the Miami Marlins; it is the

Florida Marlins, as if the whole state is part of the Marlins' domain. People think that he may have kept out another major league team. Finally, Tampa Bay got its team, I think much later than it would have, because the two cities could not cooperate, if St. Petersburg and Tampa had both agreed to cooperate and to go together and get a team, but instead they both tried to get a team, and Major League Baseball said, there is not enough interest down there for two teams; get together, and come forward for one team. There is also a theory that Senator Connie Mack, who is related to the original Connie Mack, was going to have an investigation into baseball's monopoly over the complete control over players that baseball has. Major League Baseball said, we better give Florida something or Senator Mack is going to have these hearings. I believe that because Senator Mack was going to have hearings into baseball and its monopoly that Major League Baseball said, okay, we will give you a team, to keep him quiet, and it worked. He kept quiet.

C: Who is Rube Waddell at Rollins College?

M: Rube Waddell was a ringer. College baseball has always been strong in this state, and teams like Stetson and Rollins have always been good baseball teams at their level. But, back in the early part of this century, I know that Rollins, for example, was playing Stetson in some really tightly-fought games. Rollins recruited Rube Waddell, who went on to become not only a great major-league pitcher but a Hall of Famer. His catchers were both hired by Rollins, who pretended they were registered students at Rollins. They were not students at Rollins. They were professional baseball players, but in order to have them play for Rollins, Rollins said, well, they are students. That is how serious baseball was back in the early part of this century, where colleges would recruit professional baseball players in the off-season to play for the local college.

C: What are the big college teams in this state? What are the big rivalries?

M: The big rivalries, consistently, if you look at the World Series of college baseball, it is Miami and/or Florida State and/or Florida. All three teams, especially Miami and Florida State, have consistently gone to the World Series and have been up in the top five, year after year.

C: Rube Waddell comes up again with the **Brunette Girls**. Do you know who the Brunette Girls are, in **Coffeepot Bayou**?

M: Oh, that is over in St. Petersburg. That is probably dealing with Babe Ruth and the alligators. The first day in 1925 that the Yankees were having spring-training in St. Petersburg, the city had rushed to put together a major-league training field and had not put fences around the ballfield, which was right on this lake, this pond. Babe Ruth went out to play left field and, after a few minutes, rushed back into the dugout. His manager said, Ruth, what is the problem? And Ruth said, I

am not going out there to play; there are alligators out there. And there were. The alligators had heard the noise, the ballplayers, and had come out of the lake up onto the ballfield to see Ruth and these other ballplayers playing ball.

C: Who is **John J. McGraw**?

M: John J. McGraw was the manager of the New York Giants. He tried to recruit Babe Ruth at one point and was thwarted and, therefore, was always very testy toward Babe Ruth the rest of his career. He never liked Ruth that much and used to harass Ruth a lot. At one point, McGraw said that when the manager for the Red Sox was debating whether Ruth would play as pitcher or an outfielder, if he played as an outfielder, he would play every day; if he played as a pitcher, he would play, maybe, every fourth day. So, McGraw said, if Ruth plays baseball every day, then the bum will hit into 100 double plays before the season is over. From then on, whenever Ruth's team would be playing McGraw's team at spring training, if Ruth hit a long ball off one of McGraw's pitchers, as Ruth rounded the bases, he would yell over to McGraw, how is that for a double-play ball, Mac?

C: And what was his connection to early baseball?

M: That is very interesting. McGraw was a Hall of Famer who set twenty-four records as a manager, thirteen of which have never been broken. He got his start in Florida. In 1891, he was seventeen years old, and he arrived in Gainesville to play shortstop for a team. His contract stipulated that he would be fed and housed, given money for shaving and washing, and provided with one cigar a week. When his team went to Jacksonville to play the Cleveland Spiders, he did so well there that he received offers to play baseball for different teams. Later, he became the manager for the New York Giants, and he returned to Gainesville in 1918 to hold spring-training at the campus of the University of Florida. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1937.

C: How many teams had their spring-training at the University of Florida?

M: Just the New York Giants.

C: How many years?

M: One. The Giants trained here in 1919. The Phillies trained here in 1921. [McGraw] was here while there was an election for mayor, and he was so popular in Gainesville that he got some votes to be mayor of Gainesville. As a joke, but he got some votes.

C: What is Red Barber's connection to baseball and connection to Florida?

M: Red Barber is a man who grew up in Sanford, Florida. He played for a high school baseball team called the Celery-Feds, because where he grew up was a

good place for growing celery.

C: What is Feds?

M: Maybe Federal. He came to the University of Florida and began working at the school radio station and went on to become a broadcaster for the Cincinnati Reds, the Brooklyn Dodgers, and the New York Yankees. Then, he spent his final years in Tallahassee, where every Friday for twelve years, he was featured on National Public Radio for a weekly commentary about baseball and life, a very popular series. After he died, Bob Edwards wrote a book called Fridays With Red, showing how important he was to baseball in life, but how baseball fits his own part of life. Interestingly, the microphone that Red Barber used at the University of Florida is in a special exhibit at the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, where Barber is a member of the Broadcaster's Wing.

C: Another name that comes up a lot is **Dick Houser**.

M: Now, Dick Houser was a really nice man. He grew up in Miami. He was born in Miami in 1936, grew up in West Palm Beach, and became a two-time All American shortstop at Florida State University. He played in the minors and the majors. For eight years, he played in the majors. He coached at Florida State University in 1979. He became the manager of the New York Yankees and Kansas City Royals, and he won the world championships with the Royals in 1985. He died two years later of cancer. He is the man who is honored in something called the Dick Houser Memorial Award that goes to the nation's outstanding college baseball player each year.

C: Who is Sidd Finch?

M: Sidd Finch is a hoax. He never existed. What happened was, in 1985, in *Sports Illustrated*, there was an issue that came out on April 1, and that date (April Fool's Day) should have given away what was about to happen. People did not realize it at first. A story came out in *Sports Illustrated* on April 1, 1985, called "The Curious Case of Sidd Finch," and it was by **George Clifton**, the writer/athlete. He claimed that the New York Mets had just recruited to St. Petersburg, where they were having spring training, a young man named Sidd Finch, who could throw a fastball 168 miles an hour. Finch was a young man who had gone east to Tibet where he got a lot of inspiration from the monks in the mountains of Tibet, the Himalayas. He never wore shoes, was really an odd ball, and showed up at training camp. So many people believed the story that a lot of Met fans bought season tickets, even though in the subsequent issue—there was a magazine April 8 and April 15—the story was told to be a hoax. The editor said, this is just a hoax, folks. People still believed that he existed, perhaps wanting to believe it, especially Mets fans who had struggled for so long, wanting to believe

that the Mets had found this guy in the Himalayan Mountains. So, today, the name Sidd Finch still comes up from time to time around April 1.

C: Did people show up in Florida, do you know?

M: They did show up, yes, but he was never available for the press. We even know that some other managers were recruited into the hoax. The guy just never showed up and, finally, he quit. He said, I do not like professional baseball, and he quit and left, and he was never seen again. But, there was a picture of him in the magazine. What happened was, I think, a friend of the photographer, a young man from Illinois, was recruited to pose barefooted with a baseball for the magazine. I think he is a high school teacher in Illinois. He told later on who he was, and a whole book was written on this by George Clifton. So many people wanted to believe in this phenomenon. It is one of the great baseball stories in Florida.

C: Who did you interview for this book and how many interviews did you do?

M: Probably a dozen interviews of people around the state, some by phone, coaches of baseball teams around the state, and I wrote to people, but the big sources was the archive at the Cooperstown Hall of Fame and the archives around the state and the photo archive in Tallahassee.

C: When you were writing and researching this book, were there any things you found out that surprised you?

M: I was surprised at the Negro presence, the African American presence in the hotel teams, the fact that John Henry "Pop" Lloyd and Buck O'Neil came from Florida and went on to the Hall of Fame; the fact that the women played in South Florida during the 1940s when they were taking their lead; the fact that so many towns have competed really nastily with each other to lure big teams, big name teams, for spring-training, and how much that has cost the towns; how much Florida has gained, financially, from baseball, \$300,000,000 a year; and how many players, dozens of players (whom I have listed in the book), who came from Florida and went on to the major-leagues. That surprised me.

C: You are writing now a book on Babe Ruth. Why Babe Ruth? He is also in Baseball in Florida.

M: When I did the book Baseball in Florida, I had a couple of anecdotes about Babe Ruth, and I thought I would look into it in more detail. So, I have gone back and looked at the fifteen-plus springs when Ruth played for either the Boston Red Sox or the New York Yankees or the Boston Braves or the Brooklyn Dodgers and trained in Florida and how much he grew up here. When he began here in 1918 [or] 1919, Florida was young, in terms of statehood, Ruth was young, and, in a

sense, they both grew up together, during Prohibition, how that affected him in Florida. Even after he retired, he continued to come back to Florida to see some spring-training, to take advantage of the golf—he loved golf—and fishing in Florida, whether in St. Petersburg or Miami. So I looked at all of these old newspapers from 1918 on and found out where he lived in Florida, how he cavorted, how he got out of one marriage, got into another marriage, how marriage affected him in Florida, how he influenced the image of baseball in Florida among youngsters, how some of them were influenced dramatically by him, not only in Florida but elsewhere, who came to Florida. For example, he had a contest one year where he invited one boy from each of the fifty states to come to Florida to be his guests. Actually, there were fifty guests...there were not fifty states then, but there were fifty boys invited to Florida to be his guests for three or four days at his expense. He had to pay for a lot of it because it was found out to be against the law for an oil company, I think Shell Oil Company, to sponsor such contests. So he ended up paying a lot of it himself. He had all these boys come down to St. Petersburg by train. In some cases, they had never been out-of-state before. They spent three or four days with him, followed him around the golf links, watched him play baseball, played baseball with him, sat around the hotel talking baseball with him. When they returned home, he sent each one of them a crate of oranges, much of it at his own expense. None of the boys ever went on to become major-league baseball players, but their memories were so vivid. I talked to one guy who is now, I think, in his sixties up in Maryland who was one of the boys and how much of an impact that had on his life and how much admiration he and the other boys and all the boys of the nation, basically, had for Ruth. He loved children and was so popular with children.

C: Is this book going to be on Babe Ruth in Florida?

M: Yes. I am not sure. I may expand it to be Babe Ruth in spring-training. That would include Arkansas and Louisiana. He also played there.

C: Is it going to be a **tabloid**-type, or is it going to be a story?

M: It is going to be year-by-year, about twenty years, of how much he changed in spring training, how he did his spring training, and how that presaged what he did in the regular season. Was spring-training a good indication of what he would do in the regular season? How he was experimented with as pitcher, outfielder, infielder, and how he learned to be a better ballplayer in spring-training, how he learned to be a baserunner, how he learned how to slide the bases, how he learned how to pitch with the ballplayers in spring-training.

C: You said he was here during Prohibition. Were there any kind of problems?

M: Oh sure. He had access to liquor. He got it.

C: How did he get it?

M: Easily, because he had money and there were lots of bootleggers around. The enforcement of the Prohibition Amendment was not very strong because so many people violated it. One time, he was with the Yankees, who were training in Jacksonville, and he went down to Miami to play a ball game with the Yankees. A lot of locals in Miami wanted to make the Yankees feel at home, so they got a lot of liquor, especially rum from the Bahamas, which was close by, and some of the Yankees got really quite drunk. On the way back, the team stopped off in Palm Beach to play a local team, an exhibition game, and Ruth passed out. Apparently, he ran into a tree because he was so drunk. The Yankee owner said he would never take his team back to Miami again, especially during Prohibition, because they could not handle liquor well. So I have a lot of stories like that about the influence of spring-training on Ruth and vice versa.

C: Did they ever return?

M: No.

C: When is that book coming out?

M: I do not know. I gave it to the University Press of Florida, and they did not like it because they thought it was too localized. So I am going to change it and maybe include all of spring-training.

C: How do these books sell? What is your big seller?

M: Sports books do not sell that well, so publishers are reluctant to do sports books. As I said, baseball books come out every four days.

C: Why do they come out every four days if they do not do that well?

M: I am not sure why. There are a lot of people, especially in baseball, who like to read about baseball. I think baseball does better than any other sport in terms of books that sell well. My theory is that fans go to games and do not read books.

C: Who reads books?

M: People who do not have access to games, for example.

C: So, if you say they do not sell well, why would you want to [write them]?

M: I enjoy doing it. I have written a lot of the Babe Ruth. What I normally do is write to a publisher first and say, would this interest you? If they say no, I do not do it. I asked a couple of publishers about Babe Ruth and they said, no, we are not interested. But I am doing it anyway because I think the story should be told.

Now, if it does not work as a book, I will piecemeal it out as articles to different magazines, like *Jacksonville* magazine and the Yankee's magazine about the New York Yankees. I think I have enough articles in there to make it worthwhile as articles rather than as a full-fledged book.

C: How many proposals do you do a year? How many do you get accepted?

M: I probably do only about five or six proposals a year because I get a lot of them accepted. Right now, I am writing two, three books at the same time, and if I have a deadline, I try to keep to the deadline. So I have several other proposals out there now, and if they are accepted, I am going to be in trouble because I do not think I can get all the books done.

C: Was it your early grammar books, do you think, that got you the introduction to the publishers? How did you first get introduced to the publishers?

M: I began writing academic articles, and I have written dozens of academic articles that are read by very few people. I did an article on Turkish references in Finnegan's Wake. Well, maybe one person has read that, maybe two, in the history of that article. The academic articles I have done have not ever, ever generated any argument or discussion, so I decided I wanted to write for the mass market. So I have sold about 80,000 copies of my books.

C: Which ones do sell?

M: They all usually sell between 3,000 and 5,000 copies a piece, over their lifetime. Now, the Florida lighthouse one sold 10,000 copies, and that has done the best. None of my books ever, I am convinced, will be a bestseller in one year. I will never sell 100,000 copies of one book in one year, but over the lifetime of the books, they probably will not, usually, go out of print. The subjects I do, pirates and shipwrecks and lighthouses, African Americans, they do not usually go out of print. I just did a book on Native Americans. I think these books will be, in the next ten years, in print, which is longer than most books.

C: Why do you think you will never sell 100,000 copies of one book?

M: Because I do not do fiction, and I think fiction is a big seller. The books I write are often impulse-buys, where someone looks [at it and thinks], oh, I like that book, and I am going to buy it. But non-fiction books seldom will sell 100,000 copies in one year.

C: How do you get publisher to read the manuscript? They must get a lot of proposals.

M: They get a lot. You normally have to have an agent, which I do not have. Most of

my books are about Florida and, therefore, I know who will publish books about Florida, publishers in the state of Florida. The first book I had published was the grammar book and, there, a publisher came to me and said, I see all the people in your course; they will all buy a book; let's publish it. That was 1980. I have written books that are sitting in my file cabinet that will never be published. I wrote them and the publishers [said], no, we do not like that idea.

C: How does that feel?

M: Terrible. In one case, I had a contract to write a book on composition, wrote it, and the editor lost the job and another editor came in and said, I do not like that book, so we are not going to publish it. I had no recourse, even though I had a contract that said they would publish it, because it was the other editor who signed the contract.

C: Did you ever get forwarded?

M: I got one \$8,000 advance. I did not expect it. It just came in the mail. They sent me one and I said, I do not want an advance; I do not want the pressure to do this. And they ignored me and sent me the check for \$8,000. I bought my daughter a car with the money. I do not like advances. I love to write. I am going this Saturday to give a talk to 125 women about how to market your book. Marketing is the secret to getting books sold. You have to market well.

C: Why do you not ever open up your topics to a national topic?

M: That is a good question. I have begun a little bit with Georgia and Ireland and maybe Scotland. There is so much for me to do in this state, and we have such a potential market here, 15,000,000 residents [and] 40,000,000-plus visitors a year. That is a lot of people. I want to hit those people.

C: Do you write to write, or do you write to be read?

M: Both. I really love to write. I get up every morning at 5:15. My wife and I get up very early, and we cannot wait to get to our computers, our jobs. We love it, love to write. She is a writer. She is a professor of classics. She writes the learned books. She writes books about Homer and classical theater. I do not do that. I used to be interested in that, but I am no longer interested in it. I want to be read by a lot of people. I go to writers' conferences to learn and to speak, and I go out to conferences of librarians, museum people, teachers, to promote my books. I just came back from a conference of social-studies teachers, and I talked about Native Americans of Florida, the book I wrote. I want all fourth and eighth graders to buy this book in Florida. That is a lot of books.

C: Could you make a living writing this type of book, other than being a professor?

M: No, I do not think so. If you write fiction, you may be able to do it, if you get [to] the big-time. I suspect 95 percent of writers do not make a full-time living from writing. But I do not write for the money. Otherwise, I would be writing fiction. I am on a crusade, believe it or not, to try to write as many books as I can about Florida, to get the knowledge out there and to make it readable for everybody.

C: Can't you do that in a fiction setting?

M: Some people can, but I do not have the talent to write the fiction. I have never done it. I do not read much fiction. I am interested in non-fiction.

C: Who do you read?

M: That is a good question. I read non-fiction.

C: Do you read according to writers or to topics?

M: Whatever interests me. I read a book called The Madman and the Professor, about a mad guy in an insane asylum who helped write the Oxford English Dictionary. That interested me. I read books about maritime subjects. I love maritime subjects. I like histories, all kinds of histories. It does not have to be in Florida; it could be any history. I really am interested in the Middle East. It has nothing to do with Florida. I love to read about archeology. It may never have anything [to do with] my writing, but I like that kind of stuff. I get ideas about style, subjects. I read books about Texas. Why? Because Texas is similar to Florida, in terms of weather, history, people. In books about Texas, I got the idea for the Gators and the Seminoles book, because I read a book about the [Texas A&M] Aggies and the [University of Texas Long]Horns. And I said, gee, there is a book about a football rivalry; I could write a book about our football rivalry. That is where I got the idea from. So, I look at books that do well in Texas and I think, wow, maybe I could do that here.

C: How many hours a week do you spend writing?

M: A lot. I try to spend several hours every day, especially in the morning when I am not teaching. Four hours a day, maybe, sometimes six hours a day, researching and writing, every day, seven days a week. I love to do it. My wife says, gee, you spend a lot of time. I say, I could be out at bars. I could be seeing porno movies. But I want to write and I want to research, and research more.

C: Have you ever thought that maybe you should stop, pick a topic, and stay there?

M: No. I would get bored with it.

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C: You have to mix up book topics.

M: Yes. I work with people who have spent their whole careers on one subject. I cannot do that. I admire them for doing that, but I cannot do that.

C: What has attracted you to lighthouses?

M: I grew up on an island on New Jersey, and there was a lighthouse on one end of it. My brother and I used to sail up around to see the lighthouse. When I came down here, I saw some lighthouses built by the same man who built the one up in New Jersey, General George Meade. I got into lighthouses and I thought, there is no book on lighthouses in Florida. So, I wrote to a publisher and said, there is no book on this subject; why don't we do a book? He said, good idea; do it. So I did it, and that got me started on Florida subjects.

C: All right. Sounds good. Thank you very much for your help.

M: My pleasure.

[End of interview.]