

NTS 3

Interviewee: William Boe

Interviewer: Sarah Ainsworth

Date: March 24, 2004

A: This is Sarah Ainsworth interviewing William Boe about his experiences as a nontraditional student on March 24, 2004, in the oral history office. First off, tell me when and where you were born please.

B: I was born in Pahokee, Florida, on the east shore of Lake Okeechobee, which is on the west side of Palm Beach County. It's a very small farming community. My father was a farmer and a city commissioner, and my mother was a public school teacher.

A: When was that that you were born?

B: [I was born on] October 2, 1946.

A: Thank you. How about your early schooling? Tell me, did you stay in the same area, or did you move around any?

B: I went to school at Pahokee Elementary School starting in 1952, and in about the third or fourth grade we started wearing shoes. [We were] mostly barefooted kids, farm kids. This was a segregated school in that period of time. I went to Pahokee Junior-Senior High School. It was combined seventh through twelfth. We had from grades seven through twelve, consolidated, about 450 students. I graduated in 1964. My graduating class probably had I think sixty-three or [sixty-]four students; the largest that we'd had. We were the victory babies, the post World War II children, and we had, from Pahokee standards, a large class. We had people on our high school faculty that taught us the seventh grade, and then the ninth grade and twelfth grade; basically we had a consolidated faculty for both the junior and senior high school. My seventh grade English teacher was a person by the name of Robert Maxson, who'd gone to Arkansas A&M University. [He was] about twenty-four years old, a very handsome young man, a young divorcee that the girls were all infatuated with. He later married one of his former students, after she got out of high school of course, and she persuaded him to get advanced degrees. [To make] a long story short, he became president of Victoria College in Texas, [and] later president of the University of Nevada Las Vegas. He was the person that had to fire the basketball coach [Jerry Tarkanian] who was corrupt that had his kids gambling that had just won the national championship in basketball. [He was a] very interesting person. Our band master was Robert O. Lampi, who was a very short person, very intimidating. He demanded excellence from his kids. I wasn't in band, I was afraid to be in band, didn't have any musical talents. He taught people to read and write music, and one of the people he taught to read and write music was Mel Tillis, who went on

to perform the inaugural balls for Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, has multiple Grammys. When Mel Tillis gives his concerts, he always dedicates them to his high school bandmaster Robert O. Lampi. The [Robert] O. Lampi [Memorial] Award in public schools is for your band that has all superior in state competitions. Point being, even though we're a very small school out in the boonies, impoverished, we had faculty members that gave everything they had for us and distinguished themselves extensively. We had good people working with us.

A: Can you tell me a little bit more about what your parents did for a living and what kind of education they received?

B: My father was the son of a Danish immigrant. My grandfather came through Ellis Island in 1904, and my father was the only member of the family that was born in the United States; he was born in California. His name was Hugo Boe; that is a Danish name. This whole family of Boe's are all from Helanes, Denmark, which is a little peninsula in the Baltic Sea. I've been there twice and found some relatives over there. He got through the sixth grade in Flatonia, Texas. My grandfather, who was Rasmus Eric Boe, was a socialist and very active in the American Socialist Party. In 1916, he took the train from Flatonia, Texas, to San Antonio, to hear Eugene Debs [throughout his lifetime was the nation's most widely known and eloquent exponent of a socialist alternative to American capitalism; ran for president in every election but one from 1900-1920 on the American Socialist ticket] campaign. My mother's side of the family; she was from Illinois, born in Mississippi, and they were basically mid-western farmers and morticians. I had a great-grandfather on my mother's side of the family that fought in the Union Army. My family on my father's side were all in the Danish military back in the 1880s-1890s. But again, my father was a farmer, [and] he died in a farm related accident when I was 16 in school; he was overexposed to melathion sprays. Back then we sprayed sprays on white fly, the red spider, everything you can think of. They just went along on a tractor and sprayed on the trees; they didn't have face masks. He got very dizzy and went to a doctor, [and] they gave him a shot to stabilize the poisons he'd ingested. Instead of relaxing the rest of the day, he tried to drive back to the field, [and] he had a reaction either to the shot, or the shot didn't work. [To make] a long story short, he went into a canal and drowned by a sugar cane field. My mother ended up being a single mother raising two farm boys, and we both ended up getting through college all right.

A: What did your mom do?

B: She was a fourth grade school teacher at Pahokee Elementary School.

A: That's the same one you went to.

- B: Yes, I did. She wasn't my teacher, but yes, that's correct.
- A: Did your mom have any influence on what you decided to do after high school, and what did you decide to do?
- B: She was adamant that I should go to college. My brother went to the University of Florida, he went through pre-med, [and then] went to Emory University to their dental program. We did not have a dental program at the University of Florida then. I went to the University of Florida for a year and a half. [I] entered here in fall 1964, and I did not adapt well to the cultural climate of the school. So I transferred to the University of Georgia, which was a very conservative Southern school. It also had one male for each female. Florida, when I went here, you're going here at the wrong period of time, had ten males per coed in 1964. For our dates, we'd go to FSU, and our high school girls that were cute would line us up with their friends over at FSU. At Florida, unless you were in a fraternity or had a lot of influence and a little extra money, your chances of dating were not that good. But Georgia's one on one, everybody's friendly, and I went to the University of Georgia for the entire year 1966. It was very intensely focused on the Vietnam War. They had an event called affirmation Vietnam in Atlanta Stadium where [the] universities in Georgia had a pep rally for the troops in Vietnam, and a group of us from the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity went over there. We had Barry Sadler singing the *The Ballad of the Green Berets*, and believe it or not, there were 45,000 students standing singing the *The Ballad of the Green Berets* along with Staff Sergeant Sadler. Dean Rusk gave a speech, Anita Bryant sang *God Bless America*, and we came out of there and we went to see our recruiters, and I enlisted in the Army Infantry.
- A: Before we get into that, can you tell me a little bit more [about Florida]. You said there's this cultural climate at the University of Florida that you didn't feel comfortable with.
- B: I was a freshman here in 1964 and I had a Barry Goldwater [champion of conservatism, five-term U.S. Senator and Republican presidential candidate in 1964] bumper sticker on my notebooks, and it was frowned upon by my American Institution teachers. They used to make casual remarks about students that were so disoriented they'd support Mr. Goldwater. I was a square peg in a round hole to some extent here. I did join the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity at the University of Florida, which along with Kappa Alpha were the citadels of conservatism among the student body. Also I had gone up to visit a friend of mine at the University of Georgia and he'd taken me out for a very good social evening, and I decided that I may as well be among people who think like I think and where there's plenty of girls to date, and it was a very good life up there. [It was] very different. Down here everybody drank Miller High Life Beer, that was the beverage of choice at the University of Florida; [at the] University of Georgia

it was Pabst Blue Ribbon. There were a lot of differences. I had some great teachers here though; however, I will say that in my year and a half I went to Florida, over half of them were grad students. I didn't have that many full professors, and the grad students were a mixed bag; some were good and some were really horrible. At the University of Georgia, almost all of [my teachers] were full professors. But I felt pretty comfortable up there.

A: Now I'd like to know a little bit about your experiences in Vietnam.

B: Jumping ahead, I'll tell you a little bit about Vietnam. I did go in the Army for three years. While I was in the Army at Fort Hood, Texas. When I returned from Vietnam, I got a semester of credits from Mary Harden Baylor College. [I] transferred my credits when I was discharged from the Army to Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos, and went there for three years and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in education, major in journalism, minor in history, and also went to Stephen F. Austin State University for a summer session to pick up some science classes to have the second part of science classes I'd taken from the University of Georgia. Basically I went to five universities in three states to splice together a degree. That's sort of the story about how I ended up graduating. But going back to the Army, I enlisted in the Army Infantry and trained at Fort Benning, Georgia, then I went to Fort Polk, Louisiana's infamous Tigerland training center, which was the birthplace for combat infantryman for Vietnam. The Colin Farrell film, the first movie he was ever in, directed by Joel Schumacher, is called *Tigerland*. I actually got retained to provide some insights to redesign some of their sets. For so doing, and not being a contracted worker, they allowed me to be in some of the scenes in the movie. I [also] got to be an advisor for several days to Colin Farrell [about] what the real Tigerland was actually like, and thoroughly enjoyed interacting with the group in Tigerland. I ended up taking about fifty students from the University of Florida to be extras in the final scenes of the movie. I recruited them primarily from the military science department over there and we had a convoy and we had a lot of fun.

[In] Vietnam I was in the infantry. I went from Tigerland to Fort Lewis, Washington. I trained there for six weeks as a replacement packet to the 25th infantry division. I was placed on the *USNS Upshur*, which was a troop ship, and we left from Port of Tacoma, Washington, crossed the Pacific [Ocean], landed in Okinawa for one day to drink beer, give blood to the marines, and let them refurbish the ship, then we landed at Qui Nhon, Vietnam. I went up to Duc Pho. We were reassigned to the 4th infantry division, they'd been annihilated while we were at sea. The last thing we did before we got off the ship is the 4th infantry division's attorneys came on board to help us write our wills to make sure everybody had a will; that was very optimistic to be filling out your will before you

even got off the boat. [I] went to Duc Pho [and] trained for a couple weeks, went up to Chu Lai [and] trained with [the] 196 light infantry brigade for two weeks, then we went on search and destroy operations. I was an assistant gunner on a machine gun team. [During the] third week in the field the machine gunner was killed by friendly fire, [and] three days later I was wounded by a land mine. A lieutenant by the name of Frederick Downs, who was in my company, which was Delta Company First Battalion Fourteenth Infantry, had joined us. In September 1967 he observed me being wounded, and [in] the first part of January, Fred Downs had his arm blown off on a mine. He wrote a book called The Killing Zone, and became one of the first best-selling narratives by a veteran of the war. Nobody was writing about Vietnam beyond historical perspectives of what unit did what. He wrote, basically, an autobiography, and it was a best seller. In that book he does describe observing me being wounded. He doesn't refer to by name, he didn't know who I was, but it's a very interesting book. I recovered from that wound, went back to the field, became a machine gunner. As a machine gunner during the Tet Offensive [a series of battles in the Vietnam war that began on January 31, 1968 and proved to be a turning point in the war when the North Vietnamese Army launched a surprise attack on during the Tet holiday] of 1968 when we were in Que Son Valley southwest of Da Nang, it was a very brutal month. We made contact on a daily basis. We had eight boys killed, and I believe, about forty wounded in the month of February of 1968. I got through the Tet Offensive, [and] I became a squad leader. We went to the Cambodian-Laotian border area, were stuck on a fire base, which was supposed to be firing harassment and interdiction rounds on the Ho Chi Minh trail, and the North Vietnamese decided that we were too much of an interference and they'd eliminate our hill. The hill was called Landing Zone Brillo Pad, and they put us under about a three week siege where we were getting 300, 400, or 500 rounds of rocket and mortar fire daily. During the month of May, 1968 over on Brillo Pad we had I believe it was a total of seventeen killed out of two companies in the artillery [and infantry], and we were credited for killing about 100 North Vietnamese in the wiring around the hill. We did keep the hill open, it stayed open, but that was considered, during that period of time, the hottest real estate in Vietnam. So I was in one of the, for a brief period of time, most intense places in the war. There is several pieces of writing coming out on this hill now. One of my lieutenants in Vietnam who recently died, his name was Terry Bender, [has] posthumously had a book, published called, Orphan's War, that's coming out now. The battle for that hill's in it and some other ventures. I got off LZ Brillo Pad and went to another hill called LZ Bingo. We went to set up an ambush near the Ho Chi Minh trail and we got ambushed. I had a grenade thrown on me that time and was wounded. We had, I think it was twenty-four boys in the platoon, we had, I think it was, seventeen killed or wounded. We were surrounded for a couple hours and we finally had gunships come in to put rocket fire on the North Vietnamese and peel them off of us and we were able to get back to the fire base we'd left. My wounds were not bad, but bad enough that they didn't send me

back to the field. In my last several weeks in Vietnam, after I got out of the hospital, I was a security gunner on convoys trucks that were going from Pleiku to Kontum City and then back to Pleiku. So that was my tour of duty.

A: After you got back, what did you do?

B: A wonderful thing happened because I had attended the University of Florida and University of Georgia and had been taking journalism, I got sent to Fort Hood, Texas. Now I had enlisted, so I was in for three years. Had a lot of draftees in. If you get drafted, you're only in for two years. If you enlist, you get to pick what you get to do. I picked the infantry, which most people do not do, but I did. I got to Fort Hood, Texas; I had a year and a half of duty left. I was assigned to the First Armored Division, the people that caught Saddam Hussein in Iraq recently. I got assigned to an infantry unit and I had not unpacked my duffel bag and a phone call came in and said, Sergeant Boe, you need to go back to in-processing; you're being reassigned. I had no idea what was happening. They said, you're going to be assigned to the 501st Administration Company, PIO Division. I said, I don't even know what PIO is. They said, that is a Public Information Office. They said, we have a general here by the name of John K. Boles, Junior, who's tired of the newspaper writing about drugged out Vietnam veterans terrorizing the town of Killeen, Texas, and he wants a Vietnam veteran who's got Purple Hearts and has a writing background that can present a more favorable face to Vietnam returnees. It's got to be a) someone that can write [and] b) someone that's been there. Your job is to go write about these guys and make them look like human beings rather than trash.

In a year and a half I wrote stories for the Army about [what] I call the "human side of soldiering." I went out and found some of the good things they did, as well as the bad, and I wrote some very innovative stories. I got, probably while I was in the Army, I'm guessing around 150 bylines that were published by military media, and of course they also go to the civilian press. They got in the *Army Times*. I imagine I've had stories in newspapers probably in at least twenty states as a result of that year and a half of writing in there, [and] it was fun. I got to meet some interesting people. Everybody in my office had a college degree but me, and most of them were from the state of Texas, and that's how I found out about Southwest Texas State University. One of our writers, who was a Spec 4, had a journalism degree from there and he took me down to San Marcos one weekend. It was about 14,000 students, and I went to a football game. I noticed groups of ten, fifteen, [and] twenty, very attractive Texas girls coming to the games. I said, what's going on? They said, well first of all you've got four girls per male here, and most of these guys go home to spend their weekends on the farm, and these girls just hang out with themselves. I said, hey, this is a pretty good situation here, so I transferred my credits to Southwest Texas State. I had to take a couple of freshman classes, including Texas History and American History, and [I] met

an incoming freshman who later became my wife. [She was] a real cute little red headed girl from Houston. I ended up dating her and we got married there.

A: Was journalism something that you've always been interested in? Was that your first major, or when you were at the University of Florida for the first time, was that your major?

B: That was my major at the University of Florida. We had what we called the university college system here: One UC, Two UC. You had a group of classes that you had to take: American Institutions was C11 and C12, English was C31 and 32. There was a whole battery [of classes], actually half of them were [taught by] the poor professors that got the short straw, and you had a lot of grad students teaching them. Our exams were all at night; they weren't during the day. It was very intensive. A third of your grade came from class participation, a third from in-class exams, and one-third were standardized exams given at night pulled by the different professors that taught the class. I only got to take I think two journalism classes here, but one of them was a writing class, and it was excellent. The journalism school was inside the stadium where the football offices are now; that was the journalism school inside the stadium. We had a guy that had been with the *Detroit Free Press* who was one of my teachers, and I thought I was a pretty good writer, and I was getting D's. Before we left that class, we knew how to write. He was good, he beat us into shape, and it was one of the best writing classes I've ever had. I think had I stayed at the University of Florida, I would have really had some excellent instruction in journalism. I liked to write when I was in high school. My primary source of income now is writing. I write public relations plans for the industrial sector, and I also write them for the Army. I've written about eighteen documents that are now public record with the Army. Some of them are pretty thick; a couple of them are a couple 100 pages long. Unfortunately, I didn't get paid for that, the people I worked for got paid for that, but now I get paid for them. So I continue to write. And I write recreationally. I write a lot about Vietnam. I write, not blood and guts, [but] I try to write stories that salvage something decent out of the war. We had a young man by the name of Cheek Crosslin, he's from Midwest City, Oklahoma. He was a machine gunner on our machine gun team. When I got assigned, he took me under his wing [and] taught me different things [like] how to put out claymore mines [and] how to prepare your food so it's better tasting than if it were just standard C rations. [He was a] very nice guy, but he was like a lot of people in Vietnam, he'd been drafted and he didn't want to be there. On his helmet liner he had a series of little calendars, September, October, and the days on there. When the day was over he'd take a little X and mark that day off. In the evening he'd say, thank God the day's over, this day totally sucks, says, I'll be so glad to get out of this God awful place, I'm one day closer to being home. On September 19, 1967, we're going down the side of a hill and we got mortared, turned out it was our own people mortaring us, and Cheek and I both jumped in a small gully and he was killed

instantly. He was laying on my legs, [and] I didn't even know he'd been hit. [He was the] first person I saw killed over there, and [there was] nothing we could do for him. Three of us put his body in a poncho and dragged [it] up [to the] top of a hill for a helicopter to take him out. We're pretty much in a state of shock, normally you are when somebody you're talking to like I'm talking to you is dead a minute later. I remember after the chopper took him off, we looked down and his helmet was laying in the mud, and there was that set of calendars with all the days marked off. He looked at each day as being a day he was glad it was over, and I made up my mind right there that no matter where you are or what you're doing, each day's got to be worth something. So I kept a journal while I was in Vietnam. I took notes and I've written a lot of stories about Vietnam that I've tried to [make into] motivational lessons rather than just [express] anger. I was certainly angry when I found out that we'd been mortared by our own people. The first friend I had had been killed by our own side. But I wrote a story, it's called, "A Message on a Helmet," and I'm going to leave you a copy of it. It was published by the Florida Jaycees in 1985, and it's probably been republished by half a dozen different people for motivational purposes.

We had a boy in our unit by the name of Billy Buetje from Rock Island, Illinois. His parents had a small mustard factory, and they sent us mustard over there. It was really very spicy. We'd trade it with the Vietnamese for beer and trinkets, and we put it on our C rations. This boy was a comic; he could make you laugh. He even looked like Seinfeld, he had black curly hair; a nice looking boy. He was killed in action, our youngest member, and after he died his family continued to send us mustard over there. I went and did public relations work, taught school, did a variety of things, ended up being sent by a company here in Gainesville to write a communications plan for a military facility in Iowa. I was able to track down his family and go visit them and spend a couple days with them. They send me mustard now every Christmas. I wrote a story about that. I wrote about Christmas in Vietnam, how we were on a fire base and everybody was irritated and feeling sorry for themselves, and on Christmas Eve a helicopter came in on a fire base in the middle of nowhere. The captain says, you guys got to get up there and get ammunition. We went up there and there was a guy in a Santa Claus suit and he had these big red mail bags stuffed full of ice cold beer, and he led us in Christmas songs out in the middle of nowhere. We had these little goody bags, sort of like little drawstring bags that had been put together by the Delta Zeta Sorority at the University of Wisconsin. It had little letters and good stuff in it. So we had a good Christmas Eve and I wrote a story about that. It's been published by the Army and then published by the *Gainesville Sun*, and it's been republished by several magazines and other people. So I write about it.

A: How did your time in the military influence your perception when you got back to college and more into the civilian life?

B: I was totally committed that I needed to get the rest of my education and to apply. I went to Southwest Texas State because I'd seen the campus while I was in the Army, it had the major I wanted, which was journalism. It had a very good reputation for being a teacher's college; it was one of the best in the state of Texas, it may well still be the best in the state of Texas. I went ahead and picked up twenty-four additional credits so I could get a lifetime teaching certificate in the state of Texas. I was very motivated. Again, I was the only person in my office at Fort Hood, and again it was a journalism office, that did not have a college degree. I was in there because they wanted a Vietnam veteran that had a college background, but I wasn't a graduate. It was the right thing to do. It was also very affordable. The state of Texas gave me in-state tuition because I'd been stationed in Texas for a year and a half, and I was on the G.I. Bill. I was classified as 10 percent disabled because of shrapnel in my foot and hip, [so] I got a little bit of money for that. [I] got a part-time job. I was a stringer writing for two papers, which they'd buy a story at a time [for] \$10 usually, not much. I was living in a duplex apartment owned by the dean of the college of business which cost me and my roommate \$75 a month, so life was affordable.

A: How did you balance your multiple roles that you took on at that time?

B: I was a high energy person. I enjoyed writing and I found things to write about, and a lot of my assignments that I had, I simply sold to people that I got grades on. I wrote an article for the *University Star*, which is the campus newspaper, I know your tape may not be able to hold this, but a young lady by the name of Peggy Meek, from Lubbock, Texas, a very attractive red-haired girl about six foot tall. We decided we were going to go to La Grange, Texas, and write an expose on how the people in that town felt being associated with open prostitution. They had a whore house which was nicknamed the Chicken Ranch [that] nobody talked about. So we went to La Grange, Texas, and we wrote this huge story about the Chicken Ranch and it became a sensation, I guess you'd have to say. We took pictures of it, [and] nobody takes pictures of this place. We had to go through the woods with a zoom lens [and] take pictures of the cars in the parking lots. The governor of Texas had couriers come to San Marcos to get copies of the story. The *San Antonio Light* wrote a series of columns about it. Peggy sent the story back to Lubbock, Texas, her local paper ran it, and it was picked up by the AP wire and it became a statewide story. A television journalist from Houston decided to go to this town and provide a television view on it, and the sheriff pushed him down the middle of the street and told him to get out of town. Now this series of events is going to lead to the governor intervening and closing it down, which leads to the Broadway play, "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas." So we started the series of events that resulted in that incident. I love to write. We ended up getting pretty big exposure out of that particular story.

A: Did you notice any changes in the students since the first time you were in

- college between the time you went into the military and then went back?
- B: Well, when I went in the Army, enlisted January 13, 1967, Vietnam was being discussed, but the public had not become disgusted with it. They hadn't lost their support of the war. [In] 1968, we had the Tet Offensive, which was the turning point in the war, where the all out offensive by the North Vietnamese to overthrow the South occurred and it wasn't successful. The reaction to the Tet Offensive, though, was to de-escalate the war. At that point in time we [the soldiers] realized that we weren't trying to fight to win over there; we weren't really sure what it was about anymore. After all, we thought we'd have massive retaliation [in response to Tet], [but] that did not occur. So when I returned to college in 1970, you have the anti-war movement [and] you have people demonstrating. [There were] not that many [demonstrating] in San Marcos, most of them went to the University of Texas and demonstrated in Austin, but the comfort of going to school wasn't there. It was a very intense environment. On my campus, Vietnam veterans were treated very well. I drove down to the University of Texas one weekend [while I was in the army] and my car was spit on a half dozen times driving across the campus because I had a Fort Hood sticker on there. I went to Texas A&M's campus to watch Texas A&M play Texas Tech, and I'm sitting in the stands. Back then all these Texas A&M people were in ROTC and they called it The Corps. I had short hair and these guys are watching me sit down, [but] these guys stood up for the whole game in these uniforms. I mean, it was almost an all men's school. A guy asked me, he says first of all, why aren't you in your corps uniform, and why aren't you standing? I said, first of all, I don't go here, I'm just from Fort Hood and I came to watch the game. At that point in time, these students all embraced us as some type of great heros because we were veterans from Vietnam. They took us out and fed us, took us to parties, [and] treated us very well. So it depended on where you were. [On] my campus people were very friendly to us, Texas A&M glorified you, and University of Texas spit on you. It was a very different environment, but again, it was determined on where you were. There really was a dramatic shift even while I was stationed at Fort Hood that I could see that most campuses were very sensitive to the war and had become very skeptical on the necessity to be in the war.
- A: How had you changed since you returned from your first time in college?
- B: I went to college because it's something you had to do to get a diploma to get hired. The infamous statement, if you don't have a college degree, you can't get a good job. I took multiple classes to be re-certified in Florida. If you're going to teach, and I was teaching for a period of time both journalism and history in public schools and in prisons, you have to take the classes; but I always took more classes than I needed to take. My wife actually got irritated with me because she said you ought to go ahead and get a master's degree, but I was always afraid to take the math part of the GRE. So I just kept taking these

classes. Just like Dr. Pleasants class; I took it as much for recreation, for enjoyment, as I did for the credits I needed to be re-certified to teach history. There's this awareness that there's this reservoir of information that I want to have access to which I do not have. So I take a lot of these classes to make me a better teacher, to make me better prepared to better explore the different things that I have. I'm substituting at Eastside right now, and I've sat in on an American history class being taught by a student going through the University of Florida here, and it was really very poorly taught. I want to make sure the students have the best possible person in there with as much information as possible. So for recreational reading, I read a history book, about three to four a month. [It's] not just military history, but it can be about the Great Depression, it can be European history, but I rotate it. I just got through reading a history of the Eighth Georgia Regiment in the Civil War, and now I'm reading one about a survivor of the Bataan Death March. I've got a series of them stacked up. It's a hunger to get what I know I need, but even more so something I want. I realized at the age of fifty-seven [that] there's a period of time behind me that I didn't use very well as far as improving my knowledge. It's catch up time.

A: When was this period of time that you think that you didn't use?

B: Well, there's a lot of times when I've took my five credits every five years when I should have been taking twenty credits every five years because there's just so much more I needed to know that would have made me more knowledgeable of the area which I'm supposed to be an expert in. I didn't have to take this class last summer on America In Vietnam, but it's a class I've always wanted to take. I said, this is going to be a very interesting class, and it was. I enjoyed it. There's another thing, and this is emotional I guess, I really believe it helps you stay young to be around younger people. If I was around everybody my own age, I'd really feel older than I really am. I like to think I'm in fairly good physical shape. I'm a regular blood donor. I exercise, walk, [and] do a variety of things, but a lot of my classmates are dying, they're overweight, they're not in the best of shape—a lot of it is self-inflicted. There's vitality being around people that still have some energy, and I thoroughly enjoyed this class. I had a group of students that after class would meet with me to discuss Vietnam. They knew a) I'd been there, [and] b) that I have probably read at least fifty books on Vietnam. I was a resource to some of the students in there, and I enjoyed being a resource to the students in there.

A: This is the most recent course you've taken?

B: I took it this past summer.

A: What's the name of it?

B: America In Vietnam with Dr. McMahon. This is funny, Sarah, I was subbing the other day at Eastside in one of the classes, and Eastside had me speak to their class called Theory of Knowledge on my experiences in Vietnam, and they also had Scott Camil, who's an anti-war activist, speak, and the students contrast how I responded to the war and how he responded to it. I became a writer writing some of these stories I've given you, and he became a militant. These students are stunned that both of us were in the same war during basically the same time, and I came back waving the flag [while] he came back, to some extent, wanting to take it down. Ironically, Camil and I have become pretty good friends, we just interpret the war in a different way. But Dr. McMahon's son was in one of the classes I was teaching out at Eastside the other day, and he had heard me speak in this Theory of Knowledge class. He asked me, have you ever taken a class at UF? I said, yes, I have. I realized that it's his dad that I took the class from. I said, your dad was a real professional [and] it was an excellent class. [I said], you can participate in an activity and not know everything you need to know [about it], [and] he gave me a broader perspective of that experience that I was actively involved in. It was a good class.

A: You just answered my question, but maybe you'll have more to elaborate on it. I was going to ask you what it was like being in a class where you had actually experienced the history of it live in the making?

B: Well, [for] Dr. Pleasants, since I was getting the master's level equivalent of this class, I wrote a term paper on Vietnam using, I think, three sources. This was the beauty here: a) I was a veteran, but I also used as one of my books, *The Killing Zone*, by Frederick Downs. So I'm using a book that includes me being in the book as one of my sources on writing this paper for him. It does, I think, give you more pleasure to not only be writing about it, but having had the opportunity to participate in what you're writing about. You're a primary source, and that's a lot of fun.

[End of side A1]

A: Tell me a little bit about what you did after you got your degree in journalism, because I know you've done a lot of things since then. Give me a little biography.

B: I was writing for the newspapers in San Marcos, Texas, and one of them was a weekly paper that was owned by the local radical. People weren't reading his paper because they said you have too many liberal writers, [they said] you need to have a conservative writer. So he recruited me and says, I want you to write for my paper. I wrote for him, and I wrote for the *Hays County Citizen*. One of my last assignments before I came back to Florida to live was I covered Lyndon Johnson's funeral as a photographer and as a writer, which was a very interesting experience.

I came home, I guess it was for Christmas, one of my high school classmates was the principal at Glades Correctional Institution, the second oldest prison still operational in the state of Florida. He asked what I was making. I said, I'm working sixty hours a week and making almost \$100 a week. He says, and you've got a teaching certificate? I said, yes, I do. He says, how would you like to come back home to Florida and be a teacher at Glades Correctional Institution in Belle Glade. I said, I don't know if I really want to go live back in the Glades again. He says, well I'm going to pay you a lot of money and you'll get some experiences. [He said], I'm going to pay you \$6,800 a year. I said, wow, that's big money. So I went to Glades Correctional Institution and I taught American history. We had a secondary social studies department, and I was it. I taught all the inmates who did not have a high school diploma basically high school American history, government, and geography, and I did very well at it. I got teacher of the year for GCI in 1974. I was recommended as their nominee for educational correction educator for that year, [but] I didn't get that, I came in second. [I] did very well. My wife was from Houston and she was teaching at Glades-Day School in Belle Glade, and she was going through cultural confrontation about living in the Glades of South Florida after being from Houston. She got accepted to an advanced degree program at the University of Florida, so we moved back to Gainesville. I became the original Title I teacher at Union Correctional Institution teaching prisoners. Probably our most vicious prison in Florida [is] UCI [with] 2,600 inmates. My students were twenty years of age or younger, did not have a high school diploma, and my specialty was to help them get that diploma. I went to a conference in Houston where I was a speaker on the challenges of dealing with young prisoners in a maximum security unit, and the head of the state prison for women was there. He was creating a Title I program, but it was out of federal compliance. It was in disarray and he asked if I'd go to Lowell and establish a Title I program at what was then the only state prison for women in the state. So I went down there and I created a program for young ladies twenty years of age or younger serving hard time that did not have a high school diploma. It became a model Title I program. I was recruited from there to Ocala Vanguard High School. They had a teacher quit in the middle of the year that was teaching journalism and history. I was certified in both areas, so I taught at Ocala Vanguard for five years. [I] worked in the summers for a company here in Gainesville called Environmental Science and Engineering where I was using some of my journalism skills to come up with a unified visual marketing program for this national company where people had now had the wonderful invention of Apple computers and they were all designing in their different offices their own literature, and it looked like twenty different companies rather than one. So after succeeding pretty well in unifying their literature, they created a job for me with a very reasonable salary, and I went to work for ESE for nine years in public relations and marketing. Then I was

recruited by a smaller visual communications company and worked for them for nine years, and then the owner of that company died of a heart attack at the age of forty-four, and the company dissolved. For the last five years I've worked for myself. I've taught class over here when they let me teach it, I substitute, and I've had this really good blend of doing public relations projects that are sometimes very controversial. And I love controversy, it's pretty good. For example, I've written the community outreach plans for the two of the eight sites in the United States where we have military munitions that contain nerve gas that have got to be destroyed on site by incinerators. You think about the volatility if we're going to put an industrial incinerator in Gainesville to destroy ammunition that contains nerve gas; that's a tough one. On one of my two sites the incinerator is now built and is about to become operational, and the other one, I don't know if it ever will be operational. That's a good challenge doing that kind of stuff. I do my writing for whoever will hire me to do it, and right now I also teach in the public schools. Ideally I'd like to get a point in time where I could teach [history] full-time again in public schools.

A: So you've taken classes throughout your life for re-certification and self-satisfaction?

B: [I've taken them for] re-certification, and probably even more so for self-satisfaction because my number of hours exceeds far beyond what I needed for re-certification.

A: What do you need for re-certification?

B: [I only need] five credits every five years.

A: Oh, that's it. You've seen the evolution of the college system, in a way, being in it for so long. What changes have you seen up to the current point from when you first started out that are most striking?

B: The University of Florida, in 1964, had, I'm guessing, about 17,000 students. We had overwhelmingly a male population. [The] campus climate was probably moderate to somewhat liberal. As far as facilities go, again, the journalism school was inside the stadium in the walls in there. My classes over near the Plaza of the Americas for C31 English [were in]; renovated World War II barracks. The Flavelts for married students were World War II renovated buildings that had been brought in to serve those needs. The University of Florida has had a dramatic change: [there's] about 50,000 students, [and] you actually have more women than men here now, a little bit more. They're better looking; I'll be honest on that. The political climate is probably moderate. There's actually probably about as many Republican kids as Democratic kids here. It's a broader blend. We have certainly more international students here than we used to. I think the

journalism school has matured. I didn't take that many history classes when I was here, so I can't make comparisons there, but I think the first history classes I took here for re-certification were in the 1970s, and I've never had a bad class here; they've really been good. I think the quality of instruction has improved here. I think it's become more intense in some specialty areas. The AG school, in some areas, has probably diminished, particularly in AG production. Shands, for example, has become an empire in itself; it used to just be a fairly small hospital over there. I think the diversity of the campus has increased both student body wise and programs, and I think some of the programs have risen beyond just being good to being among the best in the country in what they do.

A: Earlier in our interview you mentioned how younger people make you stay vital and young. I wanted to know a little bit about your experiences with the classes you take that have younger students in them and fitting in, and if that's different being a non-traditional older student.

B: Well first of all, I started the University of Florida when I was seventeen, [and] I didn't have a lot of self-confidence. I was a good student in school, but I certainly wasn't an excellent student in school. When you're an older person, you have some advantages over some of the students in class, particularly if you're taking a history class over the last half of the last century that you actually lived. There is some satisfaction of being seen as a resource for the people around you as someone that can help them. For example, I've got a series of tapes on the Vietnam War that were produced by ABC News that have been a source for the Veterans of Foreign Wars as educational tools for the different VFW chapters to provide the public schools. There was a student sitting next to me from Columbia, and she really didn't understand the events of the war. I said, I've got a series of tapes that will break it down piecemeal, so I'd bring her a tape in each class and she'd bring it back. [Then] her friends found out I had these tapes, and I ended up providing the class a lot of resources that they used to their advantage. It makes you feel good.

My son is a person I've enjoyed a lot. I've been brought in as a speaker at Buchholz High School. I speak a lot on the history of the Vietnam War in a personal perspective. Eastside's IB program uses me as a speaker. I've been a guest speaker in every high school in Alachua County including Oak Hall. They bring me in as a resource, and I thoroughly enjoy it. I was advisor to the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity here for twelve years. I went on an outing with my boys that they invited me on that was raided by federal agents. I'm not kidding you. I went on a dove hunt, it was supposed to be a dove hunt in Dixie County. The boys were supposed to cook meals for all these politicians out there. The federal agents came in and said it was a baited field. I had a group of boys in an adjoining field [and] they all got citations. They weren't even in the field that the grain was supposedly placed in to encourage the bird to come in. One of my

boys lost his ROTC Army commission as a result of that. One of them lost another scholarship as a result of it. I investigated the law and it said that if a field is considered baited--that's where you put grain to try to bring birds in to feed that normally wouldn't come--if any type of grain has been placed in a field over a ten day period of time whether you know or didn't know it was there, it's considered baited. Theoretically these federal agents knew there had been some grain placed somewhere in a mile square field. We didn't know it was there, and we went hunting there and they came and gave these boys citations. As a result of that, I used some of the skills I have in public relations and did a series of interviews, wrote a series of stories, and was able to get a congressional investigation on the circumstances that caused these boys to lose their scholarships. I ended up going to Washington D.C. to testify to the House Resources Committee, [and] a few other people went up there. [I] testified a second time a year later and I was brought in by Congressman Sexton in New Jersey specifically to talk about how the lives of the students I worked with at the University of Florida had been adversely impacted by hunting in an adjacent field. They weren't even at the alleged crime scene, but they just said, all they've got to do is be near it and they're equally guilty. My presentation was effective enough that the law was rewritten. I got a lot of satisfaction out of that. So my interaction with people fairly young has a lot to do with Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity over here too, that has gotten me intensely involved with some situations.

A: That's leading up to my next question, which is if you'd still socialize with people in your classes and study with them if you take classes with younger students.

B: Yes I do, and I'll be taking another class, probably, maybe this summer, depending on how the summer goes. We'll see. It has a lot to do with my contracts and what I'm lined up to do in the fall. If somebody wants to hire me to teach full-time in the fall, then I may or may not take the class, but right now I'd like to take another one.

A: Have you ever had any challenges with the routine of studying while you're doing all your other work, or if you get out of the habit if you say take a break from school for awhile?

B: I've had public relations plans. I wrote one for the Army Corps of Engineers in Grosse Ile, Michigan, and I had to take my books with me up there. Between doing my interviews and studying and researching this community relations plan I was going to write for the Army, I did my homework, did my studying, and was able to time my trip up there for research for this document. I think I came back Sunday and I was in class on Monday. So it was pretty tight. Then you have this tight line where you have to write the document and you're supposed to have it turned in within three weeks. You're talking about a fifty page document, and there's an outline you have to meet that the government requires it to fit and fit

very tightly. You're also trying to read your work preparing for class. So yes, it can be very competitive to make your schedule match that.

A: So you have trouble fitting in with your schedule, but you never experience any times where it was just more difficult to study than maybe when you were younger?

B: Actually I over studied when I went to the University of Florida; I probably did. I would go to the main library, I'd eat supper at the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity house, we'd go over to Broward basement and have coffee, which was only a dime a cup then, [and] that'd be about a social period of about thirty minutes—I mean everybody in that fraternity did that. Some of them would go to the AG library [and] some would go to Norman Hall; I went to the main library and I didn't leave there till they closed it down. When I went to the University of Georgia, I did the same thing after supper, I went to the library. I do think, and I do mean this seriously, we were better and more disciplined time managers when I went here than now. For example, I've got a lot of boys over here at the Alpha Gamma Rho fraternity house during the period of time I was their advisor that flunked out because they started drinking beer at noon. They would party, sure, in Gainesville when I was here. Saturday night you had a party. Everybody pretty much got pasted Saturday night, recovered Sunday morning, and they studied Sunday afternoon and Sunday night. You had that Saturday night party. Now people go to downtown Gainesville. First of all, they don't get there till midnight, they limp home at two, [and then] sleep till noon. I've got boys over there that have got horrendously bad grades [because] they simply lack the self-discipline to study as efficiently as we did in the 1960s. I think we were much more efficient with the use of our time. Based on my observations of these boys that live over there now [and] based on the group that I lived with then, we were better students. The reason, part of it, was we had the military draft. We had a 2S college deferment, and if you didn't maintain your grades and graduate in a certain period of time, you could be drafted. They have no draft to motivate them, to some extent, to make good use of their time. There are a lot of differences. I know the drinking socially and [for] recreational is probably tenfold now than what it used to be here.

A: How do you think your age and experience in life has made it more easy to be a student?

B: I have a lot more self-discipline, and I learned that in the Army. When you go out on an ambush patrol in Vietnam and you've got to be still for six to eight hours along the trail, I mean, you don't even scratch when you itch, [you learn discipline]. The person who's the most concealed and the most quiet has the best ambush [and] has the best opportunity of ambushing the opponent. The idea of using your time is just a lot better. I also have more self-confidence than I used to. There were some events during the Tet Offensive which were very

intense that I got through very well, and I when I came back to go to college, all these people are talking about how rough things are. I said, there's nothing I'm going to do here in college that can kill me; I might not pass the test, but it's not going to kill me, and I wasn't intimidated anymore. It used to be really intimidating to go to Peabody Hall at night and take the Prog [Progress] test; [you] had a grad assistant in there and you had to sign your honor pledge [that said] I will not give or share information during the exam. We had Honor Court and [we knew] a certain number of people were going to flunk out. It was very intense here, very competitive. When I returned as a veteran, I was not intimidated by the environment [or] by the professors; I knew I was going to do all right. They couldn't kill me [and] they couldn't send me to Vietnam; this is going to be easy. [Maybe] not easy, but certainly doable.

A: What kind of outside support did you receive after you came back from Vietnam and started going to school again?

B: Well, I was on the GI Bill, which means as long as you're a full-time student you got—this doesn't sound like much—but like \$350 a month. Now, out-of-state tuition per semester at Southwest Texas State was, I think, \$280-300 a semester. I was living in an apartment that sharing the expenses cost me probably \$40 a month, [and] gas was twenty-five cents a gallon in Texas then, so it was alright.

A: What about social support?

B: I dated a lot, I had support of friends, I got on the student senate, [and] I was involved in a variety of groups. I was in a leadership role in the campus newspaper that I was a writer in. We had a very good faculty that was very supportive. We had Dr. Frank Buckley, who was the chairman of the department of journalism, and he suggested a few stories to me to write. He said, now Bill, if you write this story and you write it with this slant, I'm going to tell you, I'm going to get it published in a national magazine. I said, okay, I'll write it. He got it published in *Editors and Publishers* magazine in New York City, and it was the first story I ever had published in a national magazine. I never would have thought to write the story that he suggested to me and to take the slant that he had. He edited about four words and he said, now I'm going to get it published. He says, this is good enough [that] I can get it into a magazine for you, and it was great. So yeah, we had good social support.

A: Earlier you mentioned you have a son . . .

B: I have a son and a daughter.

A: And I was wondering what it's like balancing family and going to school at the same time? With the classes that you take, does that present any challenges?

B: Well, they're now out of high school, but it was challenging for a period of time. I had my projects that I was writing, I took the classes, and then I tried to provide support to my son. Now most of the classes I've been taking I've been taking during the summer, although I'm certainly not restricted; I could take them probably anytime. But he graduated from Buchholz High School last year and he's a freshman at the University of South Florida this year on full scholarship, so that's good. He's literally paying his way right now. My daughter will graduate from Greenville College in Illinois in May. So her six-year adventure will hopefully come to a conclusion here.

A: Six-year adventure? What do you mean by that?

B: I mean she's been going to college six years changing majors, and if you change majors that many times, Sarah, your academic life is expanded.

A: That must be a foreign concept to you since you just did journalism.

B: I did journalism, but you've got to remember I changed schools and also had an interruption from the Army. One of the things at Southwest Texas State, I probably could have gotten out of there a year early, but I was taking more classes than I needed and I went to summer school when I didn't have [to]. [I was] taking primarily history classes. I've got a pretty big resume of credits.

A: What years did it span from when you started your degree till you graduated?

B: I started the University of Florida [in] fall 1964, went here a year and a half, went to the University of Georgia the entire year of 1966, was in the Army all of 1967, 1968, and 1969, started back to college in January 1970, and went for the next three years. I went to Stephen F. Austin State University in the summer.

A: How do you think classes are different now than they used to be [either in] the way they're taught or other aspects?

B: Keep in mind when I went here we had a lot of grad students teaching, and I have nothing [to compare that to] because I'm taking upper level classes with full professors. I think the professors here are more professional, more intense, more thorough, and have greater expectations in the students than were expected of us [before]. Back then they didn't care if you passed or failed. For example, Dr. McMahon's class for America In Vietnam, he had probably twenty people signed up for the class that there wasn't room for. Then some of the students that were able to get into the class some of the days wouldn't show up. He approached a couple of them and says, look, we have twenty people that wanted to be in this class, you need to come to class because you have the space that they would

have had, and you need to make better use of it. I know he had very intense expectations. His tests were very thorough, and if a student wanted to make a good grade in there, they had to work very hard for it. The writing is more thorough. The technology associated with writing is more thorough; I think more is expected of you now. The contrast of that, based on some of my adventures with the Alpha Gamma Rho boys, we've got a group of people that haven't figured it out yet that you really can't go downtown to Gainesville at eleven o'clock, stay there 'till two, and then finally limp over to class at noon the next day and think you're going to make good grades. I've had a lot of boys fail out of the University of Florida over there, and I really don't understand it how they haven't figured it out that you really do have to exert the effort to get the grade. I know the journalism school, the class I taught over there, I had a tremendous amount of work they had to do, [and] most of them did it. I had a disproportionate number of A's—about 2/3rds of the class made A's—but almost a third of them made F's, which was really strange because a) they had to have the class to graduate, and b) it was very doable. They always had an excuse not to do it, and that sort of reminds me of some of the young men I worked with that still always had an excuse of why they didn't do it. It's tougher now,. They expect more from you, and I think your teachers are better than the ones I had while I was here.

A: You seem to emphasize that the maturity is particularly important for students. How did you reach your level of maturity that you've obviously have had for awhile now?

B: When I came to the University of Florida I had a lot of self-discipline—again, I studied very, very hard—but I don't think my high school background helped prepare me as much as some of the kids that went to schools that had more intensely taught classes and perhaps more variety of classes. I didn't fail out; I enlisted. Keep in mind it wasn't a matter of bad grades that I went in the Army, it's because I went to the University of Georgia and I went to Affirmation Vietnam and we sang "Ballad of the Green Beret" with Staff Sergeant Barry Sadler. We all decided we needed to go enforce the Truman Doctrine into Vietnam, and with much enthusiasm we did exactly that. So I don't think I was ever a bad student, but I returned a better student because I had more self-discipline and more self-confidence. During the Tet Offensive we were in some situations that were just really, really bad, and I always felt like if I could get through that I could get through this class, and I did.

A: What was your family's reaction when you decided to enlist?

B: My mother was devastated. Keep in mind my father was deceased, and I was in the infantry, and 1967 and 1968 were the two most intense years of the war as far as fatalities. She had a hard time dealing with it.

A: Do you have any siblings?

B: I have an older brother that went to Florida [and] then to Emory Dental School. While he was in dental school he got in the Navy Reserve and he ended up being sent to Vietnam as a Marine dentist; however, he was assigned to the First Marine Division, and we had Vietnamization under Nixon and his unit was withdrawn from Vietnam. He ended up going to the Philippine Islands and having a ball. He was in Vietnam only six weeks when the Marines pulled out. He was a very successful dentist in Atlanta and he's now retired to Destin, [Florida], as a day trader. If he doesn't do something different than being a day trader, he may well be going back to work again. Don't be a day trader.

A: Tell me something of the special challenges that maybe you faced as a returning student and taking classes that most traditional students might not face.

B: The biggest challenge I faced when I started back at Southwest Texas State University [was that] I really did feel out of place. I was twenty-three [and] I was already balding. I lost a lot of my hair in Vietnam—that was one of the things almost all of us lost. I think it had to do with a tight helmet. We have helmet liners inside of our helmets and you had to have a tight helmet band so when you're running, jumping, crawling, [or] whatever, the thing didn't fall off your head. I think it effected your circulation. So I felt ill at ease. I had all these very attractive young girls—keep in mind I hadn't been dating for three years—[and] suddenly you're in a class and have all these very attractive girls who are a lot younger than you. Here you are an older guy that's losing his hair who's back in college and hasn't been in the classroom except going at night to Mary Harden Baylor at Fort Hood. I got a semester of credits at night while I was in the Army through a local college. But I did feel uncomfortable. I didn't date because I was afraid to ask people out. Everybody was eighteen [and] nineteen, [and] I was twenty-three. After a semester I started feeling a little bit more at ease. I had great grades, I made all A's, but I did feel ill at ease—very much ill at ease. These kids had all gone to school together too. I was from Florida, going to school in Texas, a veteran, [and] all these students are talking among themselves [and] had been to the same high schools in Houston, and in Austin, and various places. I felt out of place, and I had to overcome that. I overcame that by working on the college newspaper. We had a very attractive blonde by the name of Joann Armke who decided that she liked an older Army guy, and she started flirting with me and making me feel more self-confident. I ended up dating Joann for awhile, and then life did get better. The girls took the initiative, I didn't, which I look back and find quite interesting; not that I'm complaining, it was good! I really was a reluctant person socially. A lot of them went home for the weekends. They were from towns fifty [or] forty miles away, and I was from Pahokee, Florida, I didn't have any place to go.

- A: What about your experiences taking courses later in life for satisfaction or fulfilling requirements?
- B: Well, that's totally different because, again, there's a generation between me and the students in the classroom around me. I get the satisfaction [of], hey, I'm getting information that I really want to use while I'm still alive and can apply it either for self-satisfaction or in a classroom if I return as a teacher. I do not feel uncomfortable being in a class with people that young. Actually, they're pretty receptive to you. The people that sat around me, I kept seeing them try to look over my shoulder and see what I was writing down in there. I mean, I got along with them fine. They'd want to go have coffee after class and I'd say, let's talk about this, I think you know what's going on here. I enjoyed that.
- A: What do you think the university can do to better meet needs of non-traditional students, if they're not already doing that?
- B: That's a tough question because I don't think it's the university's responsibility to meet the needs of each student. I think they've got to meet the needs of the curriculum. I think the teachers I've interacted with are sensitive to the fact they have older people in the classroom,. They try to ask questions, and I found this to be a case, that they're confident you probably can provide some input on. For example, they were talking about the strategies in [the] Vietnam Tet Offensive, and they say, Mr. Boe, I believe you were there, is there any insights you want to share? That draws you into the class, and I do think we have teachers that do try to draw you into the class. Now if you're in an auditorium class with 300 students, that's not going to happen; it's not going to happen for any of the other 299 in there either. You just have to swim with the pack in there.
- A: Is there anything else that you think I should have asked you that I haven't already?
- B: I don't think the learning experience ever ends. The state of Florida has become sort of restrictive on what circumstances they want you to take classes. They want it to be degree oriented [and] they really don't want you in there for recreational purposes because you're taking up space. I do think somewhere along the line they need to acknowledge the fact there are people that put value in learning for the sake of learning, whether a degree is attached to it or not. Now I benefit because, again, I hope to be re-certified, but I benefit even greater because I'm getting information that I want that I intend to use, but even more so, that I take pleasure in getting. When you have a professor like Dr. Pleasants or Dr. McMahon, which have got years, twenty or thirty years of professional research in a very channeled area, they certainly can give you more than you can get just reading the book from the bookstore. I learned a lot more about Vietnam in the summer classes that I took than I probably got while I was over there. I was surviving over there—I wasn't learning about the war—I was surviving

the war; there's a big difference. I hope the time never comes when I feel I've already learned everything I need to learn, and I hope the time doesn't come when the state of Florida decides "you're in the way, and you cost too much being there, so therefore we're cutting you off on your access to the classroom." I hope that doesn't happen.

A: Well that concludes our interview, so thank you very much.

B: I enjoyed it Sarah. Hopefully it's useful to you in some form.

A: It definitely is, and I enjoyed it too.

[End of the interview.]