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Walter C. Felty

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ORAL HISTORY

MUH-34

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DATE October 17, 1986      Walter C. Felty  
(Signature - Interviewee)

844 Madison Avenue  
(Address)  
Huntington, WV 25704

DATE Oct 17, 1986      Annette Chapman  
(Signature - Witness)

Walter C. Felty  
MUH-34

**INTERVIEW WITH WALTER FELTY BY: ANNETTE CHAPMAN**

**AC:** This is Annette Chapman, October 17<sup>th</sup>, with Walter Felty, discussing student life at Marshall. Could you state your full name?

**WF:** Walter, middle initial C., Felty, F-e-l-t-y.

**AC:** Okay. Where were you born?

**WF:** In Louisa, Kentucky.

**AC:** Uh, what were your parents names?

**WF:** Walter Felty and Mary Adkins.

**AC:** What was-, what were their occupations?

**WF:** My father worked for a gas trans-, natural gas transmission company laying gas lines. My mother was a housewife.

**AC:** Did you come to Marshall immediately following your high school graduation?

**WF:** No, I graduated from high school in January 1940, and there was still a very sever depression in this country, which you young people today know very little about. There weren't very many jobs. And I went to work at a national youth facility in South Charleston. In other words, it was a national youth administration that put young people to work if there wasn't any work. And then after that, I started working for the Singer Sewing Machine Company, and then I went to work for S.S. Kresge, Company, and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War broke out and I went into the Army. And then I got out of the Army in January, 1946, and immediately enrolled at Marshall that semester.

**AC:** Mmm-hmm. Did you serve overseas?

**WF:** Yes, I served overseas in the European Theater. I was a platoon sergeant in combat infantry

platoon.

AC: When you came to Marshall, did you come...well, you may have had to come by GI benefits?

WF: Yes, that's exactly why I came. I gave serious thought to re-enlisting in the military at the end of the war, because I was promoted to battalion sergeant major. But I wanted to go to college and the GI Bill at that time was really a golden opportunity. I just couldn't forsake that, so.... I came back here and enrolled in Marshall in pre-law work in the college of-, what was called then Arts and Sciences. And I worked part-time for a private investigative agency downtown, and got an AB degree from Marshall in 1949, and a masters degree in 1950.

AC: And your masters was in...?

WF: My undergraduate degree was in social studies and speech. My masters degree was in history.

AC: When you came back, I don't know if you're familiar with Dr. Moffat's "History of Marshall," .....

WF: Oh, I'm quite familiar.

AC: Okay. He says that there were a lot of people who came here through the GI-, on the GI Bill, a lot of students. Did you notice that?

WF: Yes, there was a tremendous number of veterans who enrolled in that period right after the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. In fact, the GI Bill was one of the finest educational laws ever passed, I think, for the future of this country. And there were dozens of Marshall faculty. When I say dozens, over the years perhaps even hundreds who got their initial college work by going to school under the GI Bill. And the ones who did that at Marshall is now retired along with me. But that waw

very common back then. Now, we had classes, part-time faculty had to be hired. And back then, we had very few buildings on this campus. And just as fast as a class got out of one classroom, the others were waiting in the hall to rush in. There's no, no empty classroom time at all. And they had to hire enormous numbers of part-time faculty to teach. It was, we had a composition...of the student body that I guess will never be similar to that again, at any time. Because most of the veterans who came back then were married. And many of them, like me, had part-time or full-time jobs. And they weren't going to college just to be going to college or because Maw and Paw wanted them to. But because they saw this as a way toward upward mobility, economically and every other way. And most of them are pretty serious about college work. And it brought quite a change to the whole college atmosphere.

AC: Do you want to elaborate on that? Did it make other students more serious or....?

WF: Well, things like...when I first started in Marshall, there was a freshman orientation program where students who came to Marshall during the first few days went through rather rigorous what almost amounted to hazing. And they had to wear freshman beanies and things of that sort. And the veterans just said, "Well, to heck with that." They just absolutely refused to do that. After years and years of the military, they weren't going to be told that they had to wear little green beanies [inaudible]...in class or doing anything else. And so, a lot of the traditional freshman orientation aspects simply went to the board very quickly. Many of the veterans were very critical of poor teaching in the classroom. If they felt a professor didn't know what he was doing or what he was talking about, they simply told him so. They didn't mince any words about it at all. I think there was a lot more seriousness, in terms of studying at that time, than you have today. Most veterans weren't much interested in fraternities, for example. There was a very

strong independent student's association at that time. Because many of them were kind of rebelling against the authority they had had for three or four or five years in the military. It was an interesting period in Marshall's history, and I'm glad I was part of it back then. But it was quite different from what you have now. We didn't have the traditional 18 year old. We had them, of course. But the majority of your students were older students and were veterans.

AC: This independent student organization, is that a counter to the Greek offering?

WF: Yes. In fact, the ISA, Independent Student Association I worked with, [inaudible]... they had a newsletter called The Declaration of Independents, I-n-d-e-p-e-n-d-e-n-t-s.

And uh, at least twice during the time I was here as a student, they elected a student body president. And they felt that they could represent the students better than Greek organizations could. Because back then, there was a tendency on the part of a fraternity as to still, well, it was the old fraternity idea of hazing and of clannishness and clicks and everything of that sort. And the veterans, most of them, didn't like that.

AC: Weren't fraternities a relatively new phenomenon at this time?

WF: There weren't as many as we have now. But no, they have been around for some time, historically. I don't know how many. I lived just a half block just below Marshall here on 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue when I was a kid going to school and everything, played on the campus and everything. I'm very familiar with the general area up here. But I don't know what happened during the period from '41 to '46, because I was away most of the time.

AC: You were saying that this Independent Student Association could represent the students better they felt. So was the organization's emphasis basically campus politics, campus concerns, or were they interested in national or city or state?

WF: They did, I think, the same sort of things that you have with people running for office in student government do today. They were going to change the whole world. So they, there were people running for office, both on the Greek slate, as well as on the independent slate with a promise that they would do all sorts of things, over which they had no control whatsoever. And couldn't do anything about it. And they still do that today, you know, they're going to make massive changes in how books are sold and how classes are arranged and everything else. Of course, those things don't materialize because students have no control over those things. Back at that time, there wasn't the amount of student representation on faculty committees that students have today. That developed later on under a new faculty constitution, and I was one of the people that helped to create that constitution, giving students representation on standing faculty committees. Of course, we didn't have the Student Center back then. We had the old Shawkey Student Union. Student Government had a, on the second floor over there in the back, they had offices. But we, we did have a much better turn out in elections back then. I'd been amused over the years with all the electioneering that goes on and 10% of the student body goes out and votes. And back then, you know, about half of the student body vote. I mean, it was not at all unusual to have 45, 50% of the students turn out and vote. Today you'll have maybe 8 or 9 or 10% turn out to vote. And then somebody's elected by a slight majority of that, or even a plurality. So, it's difficult to argue that the student governments today really represent the entire student body. It was much more likely back then, I think. But of course, back at that time, we didn't have television, at least up until the '50s. And we didn't have all the other entertainments and varieties that students have today. It was much more interesting clubs and organizations and associations back then. I was, once I started teaching at Marshall, I was an advisor for a number

of years for the Future Teachers of America on our campus. And we'd have a hundred students come to the meetings regularly. And uh, I was advisor [inaudible]...in the Men's Leadership Group. And all your student organizations were very active and had good attendance and had good membership and everything. Today, of course, there's so dog-gone many things to do that it's very difficult to get students interested in an organization to begin with. And even more difficult to get 'em to participate actively. But as I say, back then, you didn't have all the other diversions that students have today.

**AC:** Were there activities aimed towards these people with families? The veterans coming back?

**WF:** Not as much apparently as they wanted. In fact, a few years after the war, there was a veterans housing complex right here on campus. It was called Green Village. It was right over in the area now where Harris Hall is. And then out on the southern end of town, there was an area called Donald Court, where I think those houses were probably built from stuff provided by the federal government after the war. And those were veterans housing for married students and so forth. Because we did, of course, have a lot of married students back then. Many of the veterans, I was among them, was married at that time. And many with children. And...but it's a little different complexion than the student body that came later on. Then of course, as they went through and the time you get up into the '60s, you go back to a younger student body again. You would have never had the student rioting and all the clamoring and screaming that went on in the '60s, no matter what the situation had been during the period of veteran enrollments. They wouldn't have gone for that kind of stuff at all, no way. But by the time you got up in the '60s you had the typical, what you think of as a typical student body, kids right out, fresh out of high school, come here at the age of 18, three, four years later they graduate. Then they're interested



in socializing and that sort of thing. And so they could very easily get agitated about almost anything. And then, when you get up into the late '70s, and again, you start having older people coming back to the campus. And so, college, the compositions of student body enrollments on college campuses do change over a period of time. But today we're kind of into, I guess, a trend that says it's learning from the womb to the tomb, that you just never stop learning. And so we have nursery schools for kids and then, pre-kindergarten and then kindergarten, and then as soon as they get out of high school they go to college. And then they're supposed to get a masters degree and we hope a doctorate and then come back in the summer when you're a senior citizen and study on campus, and just never stop going to school.

**AC:** In the veterans housing you were speaking of earlier, what was that community like? Was there anything, any clubs or any facilities for the children? Or....?

**WF:** Well, I don't really know too much about it, because I didn't live in either of those facilities. But I know you, you come to campus one day here, for example, and you look over and you'd see a clothes line hanging over between the tree and one of the houses, little houses over there, with washing hung on it. The Donald Court area was constantly getting flooded. It was in a low-lying area. And with the way you went out somewhere around Wilson or Euclid Court, went out a road there into the hills, and it was, it was flooded at regular intervals. These were all, the houses kind of looked like they'd been built out of oh, former barracks, military barracks. And in fact, we have a similar type building right here where the communications building and Smith Hall is, it was called the Engineering Building. It looked like a great big old military barracks. It was built right after the war, because we, we didn't have classroom space. I mean, you're talking about a time when most of the buildings you take for granted on campus

now didn't exist. We hadn't added the additions to the library, Harris Hall didn't exist, the Science Hall didn't exist until 1950. We didn't have all the dorms or Twin Towers and I don't know what all these dorms are called now, Prichard Hall, we didn't have it. We had Laidley and uh, Hodges Hall. And then at the end of Old Main over here, was College Hall. All that east end of Old Main was the women's dormitory at that time. And almost all of Old Main was crammed with classrooms and the basement to the third floor, just almost all those places were classrooms. Because back then we didn't have all the administrators that we have now. We had the Dean of Men and the Dean of Women—that was it. I mean, that took care of Student Affairs. And we had a college secretary, Vida Lee Smith, who when she finally retired, they hired about six people to replace her. And she handled what, she handled all the PR stuff and the news releases and everything else. And a typical dean, we didn't have as many colleges, of course. We had no Community College, we had no medical school, there was no College of Liberal Arts, it was Arts and Sciences, so there was no College of Science. Wasn't no College of Business. I mean, the College of Education was called Teachers College. You really had two basic colleges, Teachers College and the College of Arts and Sciences. The Graduate School had just started in 1948, or somewhere right around there. And it was still very small. So we're talking about a little campus that was crammed with students, and constantly trying to get new faculty. There was a faculty shortage back then in almost every area. It was a different period of time, different needs and different problems.

**AC:** Uhm...you've already spoke some about the attitude being different with veterans in the classroom. Were the standards different from the professors?

**WF:** Yes, much different, much more stringent. I couldn't give you the exact dates or anything.

But for example, when you enrolled in a class, you had about a week or ten days in which to drop the course. And if you didn't, you'd had it. That was it, you were stuck. There was no business of getting out-, signing up for 30 hours of work and then dropping the ones you didn't like, no harm done, and stay in there until the middle of the semester. And if you still wasn't getting by, just take a W and get out. They didn't do that back at that time. You signed up for a limited number of hours and that was very strictly enforced. And you had a short period of time in which to drop the course and if you didn't, you stayed in it and took whatever grade you had. You didn't repeat a course and remove the grade, for example. If you got an F back then, it was an F forever and ever and ever. You didn't take it over and get it changed to a C, by taking it a second time. You couldn't take work for credit, new credit. Which you can do now, I think 18 hours or whatever it is, you can take that. You couldn't do that back then. Every course you took, you took the credit. And if you flunked it, you flunked it. I mean, that's the way it went. I graduated with a 4-year degree with a straight A average. And that wasn't easy back then. I can see how you could do that today, because you can pick and choose your courses and drop the tough ones and take 'em over and everything else. You couldn't do that back then. We had some data a few years ago, when I was chairman of the Commencement and Honorary Degrees committee, that showed over, I think, the last decade or so, the number of people graduating cum laude, had doubled, the percentage had doubled. Not the number, but the percentage. The number graduated magna cum laude had trippled and the number graduating summa cum laude had quadrupled. Well, you can see why, you know. I can't imagine how any student today could flunk a course. If you have any sense at all, you know, you drop it in the W period. And if not that, then you go in and talk to the faculty, then they'll give you a WP. And if you don't get that,

then you go talk them into giving you an incomplete so you have another year in which to do the work. But students, it's a lot easier for students today. And I think part of the reason students don't apply themselves as vigorously and as dedicatedly to their work, is that they do have these outs. So if you do flunk a course, big deal, take it over. Take it over and get a better grade the second time through. And uh, with the pressure for student credit hours, many departments don't care. If you take the course one time, they get three hours of credit in the department. And if you take it over again, they get another three. And student credit hours is the name of the game today, warm bodies.

**AC:** Did they have that kind of pressure...were you aware of it?

**WF:** There was no problem back then. In fact, back at that time, our big concern was finding enough seats in the class for all the students. Because see, we didn't have enough classroom. And so we had to have larger class sessions-, sections. And uh, at registration time, we used to have class cards. And when a student registered for the class, he was given a class card and he brought that to the faculty member the day of class and turned it in. That's how you knew. And I the early days, we actually had students sign a form indicating who was in the class. And so, if you had 40 seats in a classroom, you sometimes end up with 50 students in the class. They were always worrying about that to be sure that we didn't have more students in there than we had seats. Today, of course, we even have some departments out advertising to get students in their programs. You didn't have to do that back then. What you worried about then was taking care of the mob that you had. It was a whole different thing back then. So, I guess in those days you didn't have to cater to students in any way. You didn't worry about it. You laid out the work to be done, and if they didn't like it, they dropped the course, instantly, right away. They didn't

wait too long. And so, you could demand high levels of performance. And you could demand quality from those you admitted, because you had 'em pounding doors down to get in. Today you have some departments that are concerned that if you are too tough on your students, they'll just drop out and go to some other area. And if too many of them drop out, then the program could be closed. So what happens over a period of time, is you have a graduate, subtle luring, I think, and I think it can be shown, of the quality level of the standards that we have. It's almost inevitable that that will occur. But we didn't have that problem back then.

AC: It doesn't sound like it. (WF: No, we didn't at all) Was there, like today, just from my impressions, a lot of students are very interested in business and very concerned about their career. Of course, other students, as well, are interested in this. Was there any particular areas that were really drawing students, that you noticed when you were here?

WF: Engineering, very definitely. We had very poor engineering facilities back then. But the engineering staff did a tremendous job of trying to get students trained in that area, the sciences, the areas of the sciences. Many students wanted to become doctors or.... And see, back then, we didn't have four medical schools in West Virginia. We didn't have any medical schools. Students who wanted to go to medical school, took pre-medical work here at Marshall or somewhere else. And then if they were state residents, the state paid, they went to Richmond in Virginia, to the medical school, and the state paid the difference between what they would have paid there and what an out-of-state student had to pay. So it cost the state little or nothing. Today it costs us 40 or 50 million dollars a year to man four medical schools, and almost bankrupts the higher education budget. And then eventually, 3/4 of them will go out of state somewhere else. But a lot of us wanted to be lawyers at that time. And I went to the University

of Kentucky for two semesters 'til I decided I didn't really want to be a lawyer, and came back and enrolled in education. But I'm saying professional areas, like engineering and law and medicine, that interested a lot of 'em. And the areas of the sciences. And the, immediately following the war, of course, there was a-, within about five or six years there was tremendous growth in the public school enrollments. The baby boom from the war. And by 1950, the public schools were in serious difficulties trying to find teachers. And so, there was a tremendous enrollment in the College of Education around the country at that time to become teachers.

**AC:** Did the students want to, well, did you notice any trend of people wanting to stay or to leave the state? Dr. Moffat speaks of a lot of teachers going to Florida.

**WF:** That is very true. At that time, Florida was experiencing a tremendous growth, along with other areas of the country. And the pay scale for public school teachers at that time, was quite low. And we've caught up since that time, and it's, it's not, well, proportionately it's not as bad as it used to be, at all. But I talked at one time, I was at a conference with Joe Hill, who at that time, was the superintendent of Dade County, the county where Miami is. And I was joking with him about the number of West Virginia teachers he had. And he said, "Walter, you don't know the half of it." He said, "I have entire schools in my county down there where everyone in the school, from the principal down to the last teacher, is from West Virginia." And he said, "By God, I'll tell you something. They're the best damn teachers in the world." Because they were. They were competent people who decided, "To heck with it, I don't have to stay in West Virginia and work for starvation wages." So they took their families and moved to Florida. And he said that he'd take all the West Virginia teachers we'd send him, no problem at all. And that was true. We had a tremendous outpouring of teachers. We would turn out a thousand teachers

and five hundred of them would immediately go to somewhere else, and the other five hundred would take jobs here and in the next year or two, half of those would leave. So there was a constant demand for teachers in West Virginia.

**AC:** You have any reflections on the sports that were going on?

**WF:** Well, if there's...let me say to begin with, Annette, that uh...I think the purpose of higher education is higher education. And I don't see most of what we call sports as being a very legitimate part of higher education. I distinguish between physical education and sports. Physical education is the sort of thing that students take for academic credit or intra murals or things of that sort, which help them learn to play tennis or learn to play golf or swim or something they can do for the rest of their lives. I have never had much interest in going to Alabama and recruiting a dozen people to come up here to play on a football team, when the main goal is to win football games so you can get money from the Alumni so you can recruit more students to win more football games. Too often over the years since I have been here, and I started teaching in 1950 and I taught here for 34 years, too often the athletic tail has wagged the academic dog. That's exactly what has happened. And from time to time, we have had very, very serious problems with football, more than anything else. I've always had a lot of respect for the kids on the swim team and the kids on the wrestling team and the kids on the track team. And much less for those in basketball and much, much less for those in football. But the general tendency over the years has been to provide all kinds of favorite treatment for people, particularly in football and basketball, where they have their own dorms and their own athletic table where they eat, and they can eat all the food they want to, and where they're given money under the table and where they're allowed to work at jobs where they don't work, but

nevertheless they get paid. And some of the atrocities that has gone on in the name of sports has really been horrifying. And well, we got kicked out of the mid-America conference because of the uh, blunders and other things that we had done in the field of intercollegiate athletics. And several years back, the faculty set up a faculty committee on which I served, whose purpose was to investigate football and make recommendations whether we ought to get rid of it or not. And we made recommendations to hand on to it for the time being, but to make a lot of reforms in the program. One of the best things that happened to the football program here was when Dr. Clagg became acting president for a year, and found that the athletic department was almost a billion dollars in debt. And he, by the time he left, he cleared that up almost completely. And he, he brought in a business manager and they put everything on computers and things have been improved a great deal. I think there is still far too much emphasis upon intercollegiate sports in higher education. And all you have to do is read the news and keep up with it to see how many institutions have been put on probation and how many of the kids-, of the athletes are on drugs, and some of them are dying from it and how many of them are shaving points and everything else. It's, it's a sad situation. And coaches are forced to permit that sort of thing because they have to have a winning season to keep their jobs. And it gets to be a very brutalizing thing. And it's not good for the student athletes, it's not good for the staff, and it certainly isn't good for the morale and the quality of higher education. I'm strongly in favor of even more stringent regulations, in terms of intercollegiate sports than we now have. And we have all, we've tightened those up quite a bit over the last few years. I would tighten them up even more.

AC: This faculty committee that you're, that you were on about football, did it...did it carry weight? Or was it able to influence the administration any?



**WF:** It was uh...well, without going into a lot of detail, there were a number of things that happened at that time that caused this to occur. One was lack of adequate funds for fac.....

**END OF SIDE 1**

**BEGIN SIDE 2**

**WF:** .....and simultaneously back during that period, insufficient salaries for the faculty, particularly during the summer, and revelations had been seeping out about certain things that had been going on. And the growing belief ...well, some merchants, for example, had told some of us that they were no longer selling anything to the athletic department on credit. Because the Athletic Department owed them money going back a year or longer. And at that time, the Athletic Department owed food services and it owed the dormitory people oh, thousands, hundreds thousands of dollars, that they hadn't paid. And so....

**AC:** What year are we speaking of?

**WF:** Well, I'd have to go back and look. But it was maybe five years ago or something like that. But the suspicion developed among the faculty that there was something very seriously wrong in the athletic department, particularly with football. And of course, if you know anything about athletics, particularly football, they never have enough. No matter what you give 'em, they want more. If you refurbish Fairfield Stadium, they want a new stadium. If they get a new stadium, they want a bigger stadium. And any time you have a losing season, it is simply because we didn't have a good stadium. Or we didn't have enough money. It's never because the coach is poor or the horses don't run well. It's always something outside that. So there's a seven member committee set up. In fact, Dr. Plumley in our department, I was department chairman at that time, and Dr. Plumley was a faculty member in our department—she's the chairman now—also

served on it. Our department had two members on that committee. There was seven of us. And when the discussion started, we were really three to three deadlocked on the issue of just simply to recommend getting rid of football. And we finally compromised with a long list of recommendations of reform that we presented. And what we really got in reply was, "Well, we're already really doing this. You just don't know about it." Or, "Yeah, we'd like to do this, but we just can't afford it," or, "God, if we did this, we wouldn't be competitive with...Davidson College, for example, poor little private arts school. I would say about half the things we recommended probably have taken place since that time. And about half the remaining ones to some extent. But what happens over a period of time is corruption gradually sets in. It, it's inevitable. The system grinds you down to its level. And no matter how hard you try, there's a tendency to start shirking a little here, and stepping over the lines just a tiny bit over here, and before you know it.... The greatest thief in the world started out stealing something small to begin with. He didn't steal a [inaudible]...or diamond to begin with. The greatest liar in the world started out telling some little fib. And so uh, athletic programs given to difficulties start out a little bit at a time, and then more and more and more. And finally, you get to a point where you're, you're locked in. You just, you just have to get.... And the better you do, the more you win [inaudible].... The winning team has a better job and an easier job of recruiting. And the better your recruiting is, the better your team will be. And it becomes a vicious circle...that winning becomes it. I mean, it's the [inaudible].... I mean, you want support, you want school spirit, you want all sorts of things, and so you gotta "Go man, go!" Get out there.... And it's easy to step over the line.

AC: Okay. Back to student life. Weren't students aware, real aware of state and national and

world issues, or....at the time? Was there a lot of concern about that on campus?

**WF:** I would...I'd like to say yes. But I think a lot of what we think of as student concern is kind of a veneer, it's a pseudo-concern. Students, I think in college, unless they're majoring in international relations, or they're at Georgetown University planning to become a member of the state department staff or something, the typical student is concerned with if they're single, who am I gonna date tonight, or can I get the darn car running for this weekend, or "My God, when does spring break get here?" or will I have enough money to go on a vacation this summer.

Students tend to be, and I'm not [inaudible]...students because the same thing is true with adults, or I mean, people who are non-students. They're much more concerned with their own personal problems and their own personal needs and their own personal goals. Now, you will always have students who feel that if blacks are mistreated in South Africa, that if you go out on campus with some signs and march around, that somehow that'll help the blacks in South Africa. And it will help even more if you take a bus and go down to Washington, D.C. and march around the White House. That that's bound to help the blacks and whites in Africa. If it doesn't, it shows how liberal I am and how well-meaning I am. But we've always had students that do that sort of thing. And most of the time it virtually has no effect on anybody, really. They're political and economic factors that either doom or make certain things will occur. And the great bulk of time what students on a college campus do or don't do really has very little effect. They like to think it will have, you know. It's....

**AC:** In the late '40s you say it's always...what were the issues that the....

**WF:** There really weren't a lot of issues. The Cold War had started during that period. And with Truman, during that time. And Truman ran and was re-elected in '48. Then we got in to the

McCarthy period, where McCarthy did his witch hunting and found colonies of communists under every bed and everywhere else. And most students at that time, we very concerned about that. Because...not the communist movement, but the...what they saw as a abridgement of freedom. Faculty were concerned about academic freedom, and the students were concerned about being told what they ought to be reading or anything else. But remember, a lot of your students at that time, had had their lives interrupted by years of military service, and they were in a hurry to get through college and get a job and take care of their family and get their careers moving along. I was reading some, something the other day, I don't remember the exact statistics on it, about they asked students back in the '60s, for example, what they-, the things they felt were important. And the vast majority of them said, improving society and social things. And oh maybe 30% of them said earn good money. And then they ask students today the same question, it's almost reversed. So you're back again to a relatively conservative trend in society [inaudible]...on college campuses. And our society does go through periods of time when liberalism seems to be the leading cutting edge and conservatism takes over. But you find more and more...most of the students back then were a lot like students today, in terms of the fact that they were relatively conservative, they were relatively concerned with their immediate affairs, and less concerned with what happens to someone.... [inaudible]....gone over and many of us had gotten wounded and sacrificed years of our lives. And we're all paying taxes for the Marshall Plan to help revitalize Europe and get them on their feet again. We feel, "Hell, we've done enough. Damn, let us get on with our lives now. We've already sacrificed enough." So we didn't really feel that we need to worry too much about all the rest of the world. And there were plenty of jobs available. It was a time of relative prosperity. We didn't have heavy inflation.

Talking about the cost of living going up one percent a year or something like that. It's hard for you all to recognize today. We haven't gotten into 15% inflation rates and interest rates at 15%.

**AC:** I think that's about all I had prepared. Is there anything that you feel should be brought up, that you would like to add about student life during your years here?

**WF:** Well, students today, okay. First of all, another difference that we had back then...I started to say we didn't have as many foreign students. But they're called International Students now, I realize it's, their not foreign students, International Students. I've never quite understood what that term means. But back then, most of the students from Marshall here were from West Virginia. And you, you didn't have very many students from Nigeria or Tawain or all over the world such as we have today. So that is a difference that we had at that time. We didn't have the female enrollment back then that we have now. I would guess that half or more of our students now are females. And I would suppose—I don't know the statistics—but I would guess back then in the '40s and early '50s that maybe 25% of them perhaps, were female. But women still hadn't realized that they, to get along in society and really be equal, they needed to have the same education that men have. So you have a difference in the complexion of the student body today, in terms of gender. You have a great many more women today.

**AC:** Were women treated differently in classes?

**WF:** No...I don't...I keep trying to think.... I don't remember anyone complaining about sexual harassment back then, for example. We have a sexual harassment policy today. The university has a sexual harassment policy, and apparently it's become so important that you have to have regulations on it. But we had no such thing back then. And I don't ever remember women complaining about it in any way. You opened the door for a woman and she thanked you,

instead of smiling at you and saying, "What's the matter? Do you think I'm too stupid or helpless to open my own door?" You know. The women's rights movement to that extent, hadn't come along yet. And I'm not downgrading the women's rights movement. Don't misunderstand me. But I guess things were just a little friendlier and easier between the sexes back then. Men weren't frightened of women, they didn't feel threatened by them. Male egos weren't being damaged in any way, if that does happen.

AC: Were the, most of the societies co-ed or were there...a lot of separate...?

WF: No, they were separate. Omicron Delta Kappa, for example, was strictly a men's leadership honorary. There was a women's leadership honorary called FATIS. And no one considered it particularly horrendous that you had a men's honorary. It seemed as natural to the men as going to a men's toilet. There isn't no difference in that. And of course, today, the men's have been eliminated and the women now join [inaudible]...Kappa.

AC: Were these comparable sides in ambition or....

WF: I'm not too familiar with the membership numerically of clubs and organizations right now, because I've been retired for a couple of years. But I've been working on the catalogues here part time. But I don't really have close contacts with student organizations today. But uh, I would, there...the student organizations back in those days, there were more of them, and they had more members and they were much more active. I would make that generalization. You seldom had to worry about plenty of people showing up at a meeting or if you had a picnic or a party, there would be plenty of them there. It didn't have all of the other potentials for recreation that we have today. We didn't have the interstate system, see, so you could hop in your car and rush down to Myrtle Beach in eight hours driving time. Didn't have that sort of thing. You went

to Myrtle Beach, it was a torturous drive over the mountains over two-lane roads and everything else and it took you 12, 14 more hours. And students didn't have, students didn't have as much money then, either. So they tend to do a lot of things that didn't cost a lot of money. And uh, although basically I'm not sure that students have changed all that much. [laughing] I think, I think your basic student is not a whole lot different. The behavior is somewhat different. But that's conditioned by a society in which we live, and by the problems that we face at that particular time in history, that the essential college student may not have changed that dramatically, if you really analyze it.

AC: Is there anything else you'd like to add? I think I interrupted you when you were making your additions?

WF: Well, I, I guess one of the things I've enjoyed the most in the years I taught here was the contacts with students. The students think of college as a place where you go into a classroom and you learn from the professor. But I think students also learn from other students a great deal. And I know that professors learn a lot from students. And I certainly did. And I'm very grateful for that. I don't know what else.

AC: Okay, thank you.

**END OF INTERVIEW**