RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH RUDOLPH M. BELL

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and
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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins our second session with Rudolph M. Bell on August 26, 2010 in New Brunswick, New Jersey with Paul Clemens and Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Thank you again, Professor Bell, for coming in. To start the interview, I would like to go back and discuss some of the material we covered in the previous session. You had talked about going on a march in the South with professors from Rutgers.

Rudolph M. Bell: Warren Susman and Joe Huthmacher.

SH: When you were there, were you followed? Were there any repercussions when you got back, either from the FBI or anyone else?

RB: Not that I knew of actively.

SH: Actively. [laughter]

RB: Well, I had an FBI student with a briefcase and a tie, very recognizable, in a course on the history of the Mafia that I taught. I think he was here because he thought he might learn something about the Mafia.

SH: Really?

RB: Yes. [laughter]

SH: So, you knew he was involved with the FBI.

RB: Yes. He didn't identify himself as such until the end of the course.

SH: Was he a full-time student here at Rutgers?

RB: That was a mini-course, and I don't remember what his school was on the roster.

SH: Did anyone else talk about having this student in their classes?

RB: I don't think I mentioned it to anyone else.

SH: Okay. [laughter]

RB: I don't recall it was a matter of discussion. [laughter] I just thought it was very funny; that's it.

SH: That is very interesting. Before we began recording, talking about Rutgers in the 1970s, I explained that there was a picture on the website. The picture is of the takeover of Old Queens, which we talked about before. There is one picture of the black power fist raised, and it says, "Strike" across that. Were the students calling for a strike here at Rutgers?

RB: I think the picture refers to a protest that did involve African American students and was about access and what Rutgers College, at that point, was or wasn't doing, and I think that's the protest that you're referring to. [Editor's Note: The year 1969 witnessed a surge of student activism protesting the lack of diversity at Rutgers University. Notable demonstrations included the Black Organization of Students takeover of Conklin Hall at Rutgers-Newark, the dining hall protests at Brower Commons, Cooper and Neilson at Rutgers-New Brunswick, the occupation of the student center at Rutgers-Camden, and a large rally in front of Dana Library at Rutgers-Newark and subsequent storming of Vice President Malcolm Talbot's office. In response to the seventy-two hour Conklin Hall occupation, President Mason Gross negotiated with students and agreed to institute programs to increase recruitment of African American and minority students.]

SH: Okay.

RB: That was the one where McCormick, Richard P., was actively involved in discussion with students. I think Lloyd Gardner and Warren Susman were also involved. [Editor's Note: Throughout the interview, Rudolph Bell refers to Richard P. McCormick, who spent his career at Rutgers as professor of history, University Historian and Dean of Rutgers College, as McCormick senior or McCormick, the elder, and his son, Richard L. McCormick, who served at one time as a history professor and later as President of Rutgers University (2003-2012), as McCormick junior or McCormick, the younger.]

SH: What was the outcome? What were the students demanding?

RB: They were demanding that there be more African American students. They were at the beginning of the issue of how you accommodated people. Did you have segregated dorms, integrated dorms? How could you facilitate living on campus, which added to cost for many of these kids? So, I think that was the essence of the protest, that there's so few African American students, which was true.

SH: In the photograph, there are all white students there.

RB: There were African American students who were centrally involved and a lot of support from white students, which is why that's who you might have seen at the window. White people like to get their pictures taken. [laughter]

SH: Was this just the beginning of African American students at Rutgers?

RB: Well, the problem had been, the creation of Livingston College had created a pseudo-ghettoization, as if somehow Livingston College was going to be responsible for admitting African American students, because it had lower standards, so that would allow more to get in, and then a realization, "Wait a minute. This cannot be what we're trying to accomplish here." There were very few students. In a class of a hundred, I might have one or two African American students, the numbers at that level. Now, I don't think there was anything special about my classes then. I taught a very straightforward U.S. survey thing, so I don't think it was a particular population that would or wouldn't have [taken the class]. [Editor's Note: Under the

leadership of Dean Ernest Lynton, Livingston College in Piscataway opened in 1969 as Rutgers-New Brunswick's first coeducational residential college.]

SH: Would these students have been enrolled at Rutgers College?

RB: Yes, but they could have come, well, no, they could have come across campus, but there wasn't that much cross-campus [registration]. It was allowed, but it was an effort.

Paul Clemens: Did you know an African American graduate student named Gene Robinson? [Editor's Note: Paul Clemens has served as a history professor at Rutgers since 1974.]

RB: Yes.

PC: What can you tell us about him?

RB: I didn't have Gene Robinson. He was after I was teaching American history in the graduate program, so I didn't know him as a student, but the name, absolutely, I know.

PC: He shows up in a lot of the protests of the time. Of the three African American graduate students who were here, he is the one who was in the paper all the time. Clem Price …

RB: Clem, never, no, no. [laughter] [Editor's Note: In 1969, Dr. Clement A. Price (1945-2014) began teaching history at Rutgers-Newark, and in 2002, he became a Board of Governors Distinguished Service Professor.]

PC: There was Spencer Crew.

RB: No, those were the two I had in my PDR [Problems and Directed Readings].

PC: Right. Gene is in almost every editorial you see, but nobody seems to know much about him.

RB: No, I don't think he finished.

PC: I do not think so. Unfortunately, I am almost positive he is dead now. Clem mentioned that of the three of them, one of them had died.

SH: Yes, because we know Spencer Crew.

RB: Well, Herb Foster is who Clem may have been referring to.

PC: That could be, too, yes.

RB: Because Herb Foster died a few years ago.

PC: That is right, yes, yes.

RB: That's who I think probably Clem is referring to.

PC: Yes.

RB: Because Herb came to class. [laughter]

SH: As a faculty, were you talking about how to diversify the Rutgers College campus and student body?

RB: I don't think it was a department issue. I think it was discussed within the Rutgers College faculty, which was far more active and vibrant than the Faculty of Arts and Sciences is now. I think there must have been, and I can't recall it, I probably was not on it, an affirmative action committee of some kind, and some efforts were made, but they were limited in positive results.

SH: Okay. Were you aware of anyone trying to recruit faculty or graduate students?

RB: I do not recall particular efforts to recruit graduate students, although the very fact that Clem Price and Spencer Crew were here means that we were doing something in that regard, or they would have chosen to be elsewhere. Faculty, there was a hire or two, at Livingston College. Again, always the risk of ghettoization, but there were two, neither of whom made it to tenure. Ralph Carter [Livingston] and Moses Musoke [Douglass] were the early ones. Douglass, there was a recruit in Caribbean history. The name escapes me for the moment, but he went off to Washington to run that slick African American magazine [*American Visions*].

PC: Gary [A.] Puckrein.

RB: Gary Puckrein, that's the name.

PC: Very strange guy. [laughter]

RB: [At Rutgers College] there were no African American faculty. There's one finalist, [William] Jordan …

PC: Yes.

RB: That was something, in medieval history, but we managed to blow that one off, but other than that, there were no, even finalists, much less get the job until, I guess, Deborah [Gray] White.

SH: Okay.

RB: That's mid-'80s [1984], so that's a big chunk afterwards.

SH: That is a big jump then.

PC: Can I …

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: Go on from there, if you would, please.

PC: Moses Musoke was at Douglass College, actually. Let us go on. I sent over to you in Croatia an email, in which I said I found a picture of you sitting on a platform with three other professors, involved in some sort of public hearing of undergraduates who had been in some sort of disruptive behavior. What really struck me about that was just how public what today would be considered a matter of privacy. Student records today are privileged and hidden. Here, you were on the front page of the *Targum*. [laughter] Because it is so different, I wondered what you remember about that. What can you tell us about that?

RB: Well, the college judicial board was one of the first, if not the first college committee that I served on. As I think I mentioned to you in the email when you responded, I didn't realize at the time, but it was actually packed with shills from the administration who had faculty status. So, that left them room to put on a risky assistant professor and a couple of other more standard sorts of people. [laughter]

The entire judicial process, which was administered during my time by Howard Crosby, was extraordinary for what I would have called its medieval, Catholic insistence that confession is good for the soul. What the kids had to try to realize is that if you said you were sorry for whatever it is that you did, Howard Crosby would let you off with mild warning, but if you resisted and pleaded not guilty or anything like that, then you got the full weight of the punishment. [Editor's Note: Howard J. Crosby, RC '41, spent his entire career as a Rutgers administrator, including nineteen years as Dean of Men and Dean of Students.]

So, these kids wanted publicity. I think they were also in a New Brunswick court case. So, me with my lawyerish mind but complete lack of training was arguing that this was double jeopardy, that you can't [have two trials]. Whatever the public court did, which was nothing, I think it gave them a little fine or something, that you couldn't then turn around and put them again on trial, as I would have called it, at Rutgers and give them this huge penalty of kicking them out of school. I did get one of the other five [faculty members], there were five faculty on it, to agree with me, but we lost three to two [laughter], and so they were presumably expelled, but, in fact, they were let back.

PC: Do you remember what they had done?

RB: I think that was the case where they spit at an administrator, because I remember arguing that that was perfectly all right and that football quarterbacks always wore masks in order to prevent being spat upon by linemen and that this did seem well within the range of free speech. [laughter]

PC: When you announced your verdict, could anybody be there to hear it?

RB: I don't think that's true.

PC: I just wondered how the *Targum* got the picture.

RB: Well, the picture was during the hearing.

PC: Yes.

RB: Everybody could testify. I don't remember when the verdict was delivered, but I do know that we didn't deliberate, among the five of us, in public.

PC: Okay.

RB: That, I'm sure of, because I remember vociferously making my case and not into a microphone but into a round-table kind of thing.

PC: Okay.

RB: Because I remember Richard Widener was one of the two administration shills, and he would not give in. I was so glad when he went to Arizona [State]. [laughter]

SH: [laughter] Regarding the anti-war demonstrations on campus and the protests against ROTC being on campus, how did that evolve and what was that discussion like?

RB: Well, that was a very lengthy discussion and one in which the engineers, who already had some military contracts, were very concerned that they would lose their military contracts directly or indirectly if we kicked ROTC off campus. Then, a radical group, which included Seymour Zenchelsky in chemistry, Susman, Weinstein, myself, there were others, said, "Well, let's just kick off the faculty anyone who doesn't have a Ph.D." Well, it turned out a lot of people in the art department didn't have a Ph.D. [laughter] So, we said, "Okay, that won't work." [laughter] "How are we going to deny faculty status to these people?" So, then we came up with some scheme about the highest degree pertinent to their profession, but we couldn't figure out what that meant for a military person, because it could mean no degree, as it turns out.

Ultimately, the compromise was that the credit-bearing courses in ROTC would be taught by regular departments. So, the history department took over the military history, and that's why we hired Richard Kohn and we got a free line for doing that, which was an assumption that'll help shut up these lefties in the history department. Political science got the military leadership professorship, and they hired, well, eventually, it's now Manus Midlarsky who has that. It did get us Richard Kohn, which I guess was very nice. Then, all of the business about marching and strutting around, that carried no academic credit. Only the head of each program was allowed faculty status, and all the other officers were stripped of faculty status. So, that was the compromise, and it was worked out by Arnold Grobman, who was the Dean at Rutgers College and who did a very good job of slithering between the Board of Governors and the faculty on the other side with this compromise. I thought it was well done. [Editor's Note: During the Vietnam War, anti-war protesters focused much attention on abolishing Reserve Officer Training

Corps (ROTC) from Rutgers campus. Prior to the Vietnam era, ROTC had been mandatory for students for two years. In 1970, the faculty voted to keep ROTC, but credits were no longer given for ROTC classes. During the 1980s, the university reinstated credits for ROTC classes. Presently, students can take ROTC for the first two years without committing to military service. Students then can sign contracts in their junior year to commission as second lieutenants upon graduation and enter military service.]

PC: Is the head of ROTC still a member of our faculty?

RB: I don't know. I haven't followed.

PC: It never occurred to me that they were. [laughter] That is wild.

SH: Has this continued to this day?

RB: Well, the whole faculty has fallen apart. Nobody, as Paul said, nobody would know who's on their faculty or not. They'd make all the administrators show up at the meetings in order to get a few people there. At that time, the military all came to every meeting in their uniforms and sat there and took all this hail storm [laughter] of …

SH: Oh, really?

RB: … Hostility from much of the faculty.

SH: Before you began to protest ROTC, had they attended the meetings?

RB: By the time I came, the protest was on. It was '68.

SH: Oh, it was already a …

RB: Yes. There'd been the big blow up in '65 with the teach-in, and then things were a little quieter, but '67-'68 were hot years. [Editor's Note: In response to student activism, Rutgers hosted three teach-ins in 1965 to provide open forums for debate, the most notable of which occurred on April 23, 1965 when history professor Eugene Genovese's statements about the Vietnam War sparked a firestorm of controversy about academic freedom and proper conduct in academia.]

SH: Were there demonstrations at the ROTC building?

RB: We did some.

SH: What kind of press did you encourage or discourage coming to Rutgers?

RB: News press coverage?

SH: Yes.

RB: The news coverage for the anti-war group was not good, and we didn't have enough sense to cultivate much in the way of positive news publicity. We were perfectly comfortable, at that time, Rutgers was widely called the Berkeley of the east, so that was its reputation, and we just fit right into it.

SH: What about students and faculty and drug use? How was that handled? Was it a problem?

RB: I think drug use increased after the mid-'70s. I think there was actually less drug use. There was certainly much less enforcement. Mason Gross had reached, and it was really a left over from two hundred years, an accommodation that this [campus] was private. This weren't city cops, state cops, and Rutgers would do its own policing of dorms. [There was a] very tiny police force. They didn't carry guns. I remember the controversy about whether the police could carry guns, but they had no weapons. Maybe they had a night stick but no firearms. I think what went on in the dorms is what went on in the dorms, but I found, at least in my classes, much better attendance and very few students that seemed spaced out for any reason. I'll just leave it at that [laughter] than became the case later on. I think students were committed to going to college, and the ones that I was involved with more closely on demonstrations were committed in that regard, and I didn't find that drug use was so great.

PC: If I could add a footnote on that. My impression is the same as Rudy's. Before I came here, the Ledge [Student Activities Center] was known in the papers as the drug hub of the college circuit on the East Coast, but I did not find any problems in the classroom. That was in the mid to late 1970s, when I got here, but it did increase later. I did actually have students come to class who were clearly under the influence of drugs. They were not just drunk. They were doing something really wrong.

SH: Can you talk about this controversy with the police and carrying guns? Are we talking about the Rutgers police force?

RB: Yes, but that's later. I think that's not until the '80s. They decide that they need a professional police force, and professional police carry guns. So, there's a faculty group that says, "No, no, we've done very well, the British have done well for centuries, and we don't need to carry guns," and we lose. Bloustein has decided that the [police] are going to carry guns, and they do.

PC: At some point, they became essentially the same thing as the police who run up and down the Turnpike.

SH: Really?

PC: Yes, they are state police officers.

RB: They're a different union, but they qualify so they can make traffic arrests and all these other things that they do.

PC: Did those happen together?

RB: Yes, I think they're related.

PC: I remember the gun issue quite well. I wrote a couple letters about it, but I cannot remember the fit between the two.

SH: Just out of curiosity, if the Rutgers police are considered state policemen with a different union, what is their jurisdiction, any of the streets of New Brunswick?

RB: They actually do have jurisdiction off the campus. That's what's so remarkable, but the New Brunswick police also have jurisdiction to come on campus. They don't do it, and I'm sure that somehow between the vice president for safety at Rutgers and his counterpart in New Brunswick, they've decided that they don't have New Brunswick police raid the dorms, but in theory, they can.

SH: Okay. Let us talk about how the history department evolves and changes after reorganization and what roles you took on in the history department.

RB: We were somewhere in the '70s, I think, last time, and the evolution in the '70s, the keys to me are that Livingston overcomes its failure to understand what identity it might be and particularly with the presence of John Gillis, [who] hires people who much more frequently obtain tenure and are indistinguishable from other faculty at other Rutgers units. I think there's a notable increase in the quality of faculty being appointed at Douglass. Suzanne Lebsock would stand out in my mind, in that regard.

Rutgers College has a series of difficulties. I think they relate to the departure first of David Shannon and then of Peter Stearns as New Brunswick chair, and then Tilden Edelstein becomes the New Brunswick chair. In my judgment, his concerns with hiring good faculty work best, I'll put it that way, at Livingston and Douglass and University College, Judy Walkowitz is there, but don't work so well at Rutgers College, where there's a really destructive, internal dispute with Tilden Edelstein on one side and Susman, Weinstein, Bell and others on the other side. It results in a couple of hires that are very contentious and fail. Tom Forstenzer in modern European history and Robert Padgug in ancient Greek history are the most notable, but there are other failures that don't make as much noise, Alana Miller. We left her off last time as an assistant professor who didn't make it in Middle Eastern history. We made some good ones. Paul was appointed during that point, [laughter], Jim Reed contentiously [and] Richard L. McCormick. So, there's hiring going on, but there're also, the difficulty over the Carol Gruber case, and then there's [Barbara Tucker] in economic history. It's just that fairly high didn't-make-it-to-tenure group. If it's fifty-fifty, that's about right, or if it's sixty-forty, and it isn't a matter of maintaining truly rigorous standards for promotion. It's a matter of not being able to put together search committees and a nurturing process of assistant professors that's consistently getting us first-rate people.

So, I think the '70s, in contrast with the ['60s], if I would characterize the '60s, it would be hiring a string of people so good that half of them left to major universities and went on to

distinguished careers. I would describe the '70s as a period when half of them left, because they got fired or just not rehired or whatever. So, there're some good ones, but fifty-fifty is not good enough. If you're going to be a successful department, I think you probably should be right eighty percent of the time or so.

SH: Was the history department trying to expand its scope?

RB: There was a little expansion of scope, but that didn't correlate with the first-rate people and the not-first-rate people. For us, pre-modern Russia was not a major, new field. We had lost Dick Hellie in the '60s to Chicago. That was a name I forgot last time, too, to mention, so that wasn't a new field for us. I think there was just destructive, internal fighting. The most obvious was actually over a case at Douglass in medieval history, the one where we didn't hire Jordan or Barbara [Hanawalt] …

PC: Hanawalt?.

RB: Barbara Hanawalt. I would say that there was a failure of development and that the competition among the colleges was part of it, but the disputes between the New Brunswick history chair Edelstein and the Rutgers College powers-that-then-were, Charanis had retired, McCormick was off as dean at Rutgers College, Huthmacher had left for Delaware, so there wasn't really a middle left, and so it was not hugely successful.

PC: Why did Huthmacher leave?

RB: Huthmacher left because he got a better offer at Delaware, and his mentor, McCormick, because, of course, McCormick's brother-in-law was at Delaware …

PC: Yes.

RB: … Told him to go. I think in the end, McCormick, the elder, rightly judged that Huthmacher wasn't so great as a historian.

PC: Okay. I just wondered. Delaware is not a particularly prestigious university.

RB: He had a named chair.

PC: Okay.

RB: In those days, we didn't just automatically match things. I remember Tilden [Edelstein] had an offer from Connecticut, and I was an associate professor by then. So, they have a meeting, what to do, and I said, "Let's shake his hand and congratulate him." [laughter] Whatever.

SH: When Mason Gross retired and Edward Bloustein was hired, were you part of that search?

RB: Only secondarily. Lloyd Gardner was so enamored of the tall fellow from Wisconsin, six-foot-three, and he complained that the car they sent for him wasn't big enough. [laughter] So, Lloyd was for the appointment of somebody who didn't make it. Other than that, I think there was a fairly open mind about Bloustein. There had been much love and respect for Mason Gross. He had been ill for a while. This wasn't a sudden thing. So, I think that there was an open mind about Bloustein. [Editor's Note: Mason W. Gross preceded Edward J. Bloustein as President of Rutgers University, holding the post from 1959 until 1971. Bloustein served as president from 1971 until his death in 1989.]

SH: You talked about Richard P. McCormick as the Dean of Rutgers College, and then Edelstein.

RB: Edelstein.

SH: Who comes in after Edelstein?

RB: No, we're getting two things mixed up. McCormick goes off …

SH: Sorry.

RB: No, it's no problem. McCormick goes from the department to be acting dean of Rutgers College …

SH: Right.

RB: … Because they can't find [anyone else]. Reg Bishop is not good enough, dynamic enough, and they can't find anybody to do it, so he agrees to be the yeoman and be the acting dean but clearly temporary until they hire [someone]. They end up hiring John Yolton. When he comes back to the department, he does at least come back to the department, but he comes back as a senior statesperson, not actively involved in things. The department has got a federated New Brunswick chair. The first is David Shannon in 1968, and then after two years, he goes to Virginia. Peter Stearns, who's internal, becomes New Brunswick chair, but then Peter Stearns leaves in a scandalous cloud for Carnegie Mellon in '75. The powers-that-be at Douglass and Livingston successfully promote Tilden [Edelstein] as the least objectionable of those Rutgers College people to chair the department, and he's eternally grateful for them. His allies are Mo Lee and Gerry Grob. They do successfully do some good things, as I said, at Livingston and Douglass in my judgment. Other people would have different judgments obviously. This destructive in-fighting at Rutgers … [Editor's Note: G. Reginald Bishop, a long-time Rutgers professor and administrator, served as Acting Dean of Rutgers College in 1974. Richard P. McCormick held the post of Dean of Rutgers College from 1974 to 1977, followed by John Yolton, who served as dean from 1978 to 1986. In 1967, with the adoption of the Federated College Plan, a New Brunswick chairman was appointed in each discipline to coordinate the activities of the departments at each of the undergraduate institutions. This bureaucratic structure lasted until 1981, when the faculties at each of the colleges merged into the Faculty of Arts and Sciences and each discipline consolidated into a single department, presided over by a chairperson.]

SH: It just sounds like there were so many different …

RB: Well, but they can be clarified down to Tilden Edelstein as an administrative, compromise choice looking out for the welfare of all of the provinces versus this core, which has been there since '62, Rutgers College, and that's where the friction point is. So, there're really only two factions and not …

SH: Oh, okay.

RB: … Hard to figure out.

PC: Just a …

RB: One uses four-letter words and the other one doesn't. Other than that, [laughter] they're not that different. [laughter]

PC: The separate colleges had to have some sort of common core until they came together in the 1980s, so this was actually a very short term phenomena, up until Shannon, each college, there were only two, and they were both their own separate worlds for this interim period of about a decade that we lived with this dual world.

RB: Thirteen long, tough years, Paul.

PC: Yes.

RB: It's short to you maybe. [laughter] [Editor's Note: Clemens and Bell are referring to the federated period from 1967 until 1981, when the faculties of the federated undergraduate colleges at Rutgers-New Brunswick, Rutgers College, Douglass College, University College, Cook College and Livingston College (began in 1969), merged into a single entity, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS).]

PC: Yes.

SH: When people went forward as far as tenure, was it just within that separate entity?

RB: First, in the college, then to the college dean, and independent of that, to the New Brunswick federated department.

SH: At some point, it does come between all of the …

RB: Every case from 1968, both hiring and promotion came before a federated chair, assisted by a committee undemocratically consisting of two from each college, so that it could be stacked. [laughter]

PC: As Rudy mentioned last time, then it would also go to something called the section.

RB: The section was …

PC: … Which involved Newark and Camden, so it was just …

SH: That is …

PC: … This monstrous system …

SH: … What I was trying to figure out. How did you ever …

RB: Well, it was done by the end of December, [laughter] about like it is now.

SH: Was every faculty member asked to be involved in some sort of committee?

RB: I think it was pretty routine that all faculty members did something or other. Some, as now, were much more active than others …

SH: You hinted at some sort of mentoring for new faculty. Has that evolved?

RB: Well, that became much, much stronger from the mid or late ‘80s onward. In the ‘70s, it was totally informal, self-defined and not necessarily a good thing. I don’t recall that somebody like Michael Adas ever had a mentor in the department, and he came only two years after I did. I don’t think if you sat and interviewed him, which you should, I don’t think he would even be, he’d be aware but only very vaguely that there’s this McCormick, that there’s this Susman, Gardner, and even the little split in there, the Weinstein, he just didn’t have anything to do with that. So, I think maybe the pressure was a little greater for some of the Americanists, but I don’t think, Paul, somebody like you felt deeply drawn into all that stuff.

PC: No.

RB: They might have known it existed, but it was not so destructive as to interfere with people’s everyday lives. I had a mentor in that McCormick senior truly looked after this wet-behind-the-ears kid to …

SH: This is what I was going to say …

RB: … Stop making so many mistakes and maybe if there had been such naive people hired in the ‘70s, but we didn’t …

SH: [laughter] Can you discuss your time on the Fulbright and how that changed your academic focus?

RB: Well, the end result of the opportunity of a year in Italy is that I, combined with a disillusionment with American politics, which had already set in from the Martin Luther King assassination and Robert Kennedy, which I mentioned last time, and an intellectual flirtation

with the consistency of the Italian Communist Party, I just find myself being drawn into things other than where I did my dissertation, what I was hired for. As I think I mentioned last time, I begin with, "I'll study immigrants," and then that moves to emigrants, and so that's what I work on.

In '72, the summer of '72, I did very extensive archival work on the parish registers of the villages where my wife was born, because the priest let me have the registers, which he never had any use for, and I'd take them to the beach. So, I'd just take them away from the church and bring them to the beach, and I'd sit there and copy things out by hand. There's no computers or even Xerox machines at that point, I don't think. That became the basis of an article that Peter Stearns published in the *Journal of Social History* in 1974, which is what makes Peter Stearns say, "Oh, I want to keep this guy, this quantitative stuff, this is good," and now he's shifted to stuff that he, Stearns, is interested in, not politics. I think there was also a sense, and it was absolutely true, that what might have been a career as a one-booker or something, suddenly this guy's on fire. He's going to do a lot more, so there's gas in the tank.

Then, I spend '72-'73, that's the year I did get tenure, shifting to Italian, modern, demographic, rural history, and fortunately, my wife's doctor comes from some village outside of Salerno, and so he gets me permission to use civic registers, because the parish registers are not good for Italy after 1861. Then, I had a student, Sal DeFazio, who turns out his uncle is some kind of politician, he tells me. It turns out that he's actually a representative of the most right-wing fascist party in Italy, but that's all right. He comes from a village in Sicily. He writes back that I must be one of the most powerful professors in the United States, because anybody who could get his idiot nephew into law school, [laughter] he's going to himself, of course, host me. So, we spent a month there. He paid [for the] hotel, there wasn't any hotel in the village, thirty miles away, hired some widow to do cooking for us every day, very nice. Then, [Remigio] Pane, deceased, in the Italian department, his nephew is a lawyer in another little, remote village in Calabria, Rogliano, and so I get permission to work in the registers there. Then, I had a fourth village, which is my sister-in-law's family, so I had four villages in the summer of 1974. From like May 15 until September 1, I worked like crazy, and my wife, transcribing all of these registers. It's a shift, but it's not that radical. I knew about demography and life spans and birth rates from my work at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, and I knew how to do the programming for it. It was a shift away from politics but still using quantitative methods that I was familiar with, as well as underwriting. It was the same thing, that for underwriting is also for this. So, I had a massive amount of material in the day before there were photographs or scanners or things like this, so it was all hand-copied. Our daughter was with us, but we got somebody to take her to school for a month in May and June. So, I had all of this material, which I worked on from late '74 until '76, when I was on junior year abroad, and that was the basis of the research that let me write the stuff up in '76-'77.

Junior year abroad was absolutely what made my career such as it is possible. I've done it five times, and to be in Italy and near the sources and, thank you, with the rent paid and the airfare and the schooling for the kids. The students can be a nuisance, but they never woke up until one or two o'clock in the afternoon, so my best part of the day is done. If I can get from eight am to one or two, I'm set. So, it was just a way to make enormous progress with an amount of, it wasn't leave time, because the job really is hard work, but it was the kind of time that would

have been impossible in New Brunswick, just could not have done. That became the *Fate and Honor* book, so that was finished in '77, and I submitted it to Chicago. [Editor's Note: Rudolph M. Bell wrote *Fate and Honor, Family and Village: Demographic and Cultural Change in Rural Italy* since 1800 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).] Chicago had a brand new editor, Doug Mitchell, and he was blown away. He never saw such a good quantitative book. He hated quantitative studies. He was actually a historical sociologist and he liked theory, not quantitative, but he thought that I really knew those peasants and I loved them, which was true. The important thing in the book is not the quantitative. It's there. It's right, but it's not what drives the book, and he saw that. So, he sent it out. I now know that Louise Tilly was one of the reviewers, and the others were Peter and Jane Schneider, who have a much more skeptical view of peasant culture than I do. Mine was very positive, and it was against Edward Banfield and a whole group of people who were doing things, but it drew me away, so I was no longer studying Italian immigrants in the United States. That was one chapter, but most of it was about anthropological values, fatalism, and that it made sense to be fatalistic if sixty percent of your children died and so forth. So, that was just a big shift, and it was on the basis of that book, that I was promoted in the '70s.

I do respect Tilden Edelstein for not holding our personal disagreements against me [laughter] to that degree. Mo Lee did. He said, well, since I had shifted fields, I should be demoted and then re-promoted to associate professor and that was good enough, but that's all right. I forgive him, too. [laughter] Tilden didn't block it, and he could have. I was still teaching some American history but decreasingly so. I guess until we hired Tom Slaughter, that was the final, "Okay, now I can give this away. I'm really not doing this anyway, and we got this hot shot kid coming in to do it, so he can have all that space. That's no problem to me."

I was working simultaneously with Weinstein on the *Saints and Society*, because, I think I mentioned that even when I was teaching quantitative methods at the graduate level, I had a number of faculty who took the course and he was one of them. So, we were working collaboratively, again, heavy quantitative, including factor analysis, that I don't think Weinstein ever understood, but that's all right. He did understand grading saints. He liked that part of the explanation, that you could be an A as a miracle worker or only a C or whatever. [laughter] Some saints are very nasty to people, and he loved grading them low on kindness or charitableness, whatever. Anyway, it really worked. It was actually pretty effective, but it took a long time. So, the *Fate and Honor* book had already come out before he and I got to serious writing. Then, he decided he had had it with Rutgers and applied for a position as chair at the University of Arizona and with letters on what a nice guy he was from people like me. [laughter] I had to sell him to be chair of the department, go get more order in that place. [laughter] As David Shannon said, "Boy, what a coup for Rutgers. In one year, they kept James Bailey and got rid of Don Weinstein." Bailey was a center basketball player. [laughter] [Editor's Note: Rudolph M. Bell and Donald Weinstein wrote *Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom*, 1000-1700 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).]

So, I went out in the spring of Weinstein's first year, '79, to Arizona with eighty percent leave, but Arizona made up the rest, and I taught quantitative methods there. Again, a couple faculty members took the class, but that was the only class I taught. Then, we mostly wrote, and we would spend four hours every morning. He cleared away, he was department chair, five days a

week, four hours in the morning for writing. That was still hand-written and staples and cut my fingers with those damn staples. Then, I would re-write in the afternoon and try to make sense of what we had done in the morning and then prepare what to write the next morning. So, we sat, literally, as close as you and I are, with a typewriter typing away. So, we didn't get done. So, "All right, we'll have to spend the summer." So, we went to Mexico for the summer. I think we spent three or four weeks in Lake Chapala and then another three or four weeks in Patzcuaro, again, writing in the morning but leaving the rest of the day free and got that done. So, by that time, the *Fate and Honor* book was already out with Chicago, and I wanted to submit the Saints and Society to Chicago, but Don wanted to try Princeton, because he had lots of buddies at Princeton. He obviously didn't hit a buddy, because they decided they didn't want the [laughter] book, so it went to Chicago, and Chicago liked it well enough. So, I think that came out in '82 or something.

So, that further disoriented how anyone would think of what do I do, but for me, it was a very positive experience. I think mostly historians don't cooperate remotely enough, and that the advantages of working alone are not as great as they're cracked up to be. I liked working with colleagues, and so I did the book with Weinstein. Then right thereafter, even though it didn't become public for awhile, I was working with Martha Howell on a Medieval and Early Modern Data Bank. Then, most recently, I worked with somebody at the University of Vermont on a book. So, I like co-authoring and then multi-projecting kinds of things.

PC: The other part of this that is interesting is many of the professional contacts you made in your first five or ten years as a historian are what shaped the rest of your career. So, you have had this unusual career, in that you have completely shifted fields.

RB: I burned the contacts every time, yes.

PC: Has that affected you?

RB: Sure. Maybe that's why I'm not a named chair professor, or maybe that's why I don't have a job at Harvard. What do I know? It is absolutely the case that the contacts that are made and kept and nurtured matter enormously for many historians, and that I have very, very few of those. It is not possible even for, bless me, with my lack of modesty, a fairly energetic person to keep up in all fields.

PC: Right.

RB: I just can't do it. So, other than general journals, like the American Historical Review, I don't get journals, because I don't know what field I'm in, and that shifting from American history, okay, that's bad enough, to modern European history, okay, then shifting back to medieval, then shifting away completely from quantitative, so I don't join quantitative history associations, such as they may still exist, and into psychology, and then away from that and into the history of the book. I've never stayed in a field more than a few years, and it's been very fortunate, Paul, to be at Rutgers and to have tenure and able to do what I want. Other than saying, "Well, wouldn't you like to be the named chair of X or Y or to have a job at Harvard?" other than that, there isn't anything that I could want that I don't have.

PC: Okay.

SH: Quantitative history, was that a new history?

RB: The 1960s was the development of quantitative methods as something of any consequence. Before that, historians had literally counted anything past ten, they had to take off their socks. [laughter]

SH: I just wanted to know a little bit more about quantitative methods.

RB: You get to the '60s, and the big impact was people like Lee Benson at Penn, which, of course, was McCormick's school, so he was always vaguely impressed and influenced by that. His [McCormick's] [*The*] *Second American Party System* has a little bit of counting but not anything of any consequence. Many people thought that the development of social history and organized political history that didn't do individual human biography, that quantitative methods would be the way things were going to go, and it took twenty years for that to turn out to, largely, not be so. It was very heavy in the Annales school. They were very interested in counting. The whole Laslett, the English family reconstruction, it wasn't exactly quantitative history, but it was very similar.

SH: You were on the cutting edge of that field.

RB: I was very early in the field with an expertise that many of the people in the field did not have, but my own realization that it wasn't going to yield all the results that people hoped was probably as much a part of a kind of individual psyche as anything else, this drifting around. I can't say that it was disillusionment with quantitative history, but I always go for fields that people are antsy about. I went from that into psycho history sort of, so that's no more popular than quantitative history, [laughter] maybe less.

SH: You talked about the climate here at Rutgers being conducive to you using your energy to focus on changing fields. You did not stay locked in one field. Was that the same for everyone?

RB: I doubt that many historians make that radical a kind of shift. The late Traian Stoianovich used to say that everybody writes the same book over and over again. I don't necessarily think that's true, and certainly, in my case, it's not true with regard to field and to language, but basically, I built on the same languages. I have not suddenly gone to Chinese history or something. Language does define what you can do, and becoming really proficient in Italian and reinvigorating Latin was just opportunistic. Lots of people go to learn a little bit more of some language or other to do something, but historians don't generally move to that degree. As I say, I don't think Rutgers was unique in allowing that, but it was sufficiently chaotic and byzantine in its structure that it could accommodate somebody doing that.

SH: To come up …

PC: You never had somebody, a senior member of the department, come up to you and say, "We hired you to do American history, and why are you fooling around in Italian?"

RB: Well, I told you Mo Lee publically recommended that I be demoted so as to be re-promoted to associate professor [laughter] for having changed fields. I've had lots of discussion with McCormick, had, when he was alive, with McCormick senior because one of the things we laugh about, or I poke him about, is that all of his most successful students got the hell out of American politics as fast as they could and went and studied baseball and things like that, whereas I did something more useful than baseball study. [laughter] Even if you didn't read the stuff or like it, it was clearly a bigger impact than that.

SH: Because of this change of interest for you, except for Mo Lee, were you encouraged to develop courses to teach?

RB: I was never encouraged …

SH: Discouraged?

RB: I didn't feel actively discouraged. I always, I think, taught a fair share of students in a fair load of things, so I didn't say, "I need two years off to retool, and I won't be in the classroom, thank you." So, I was always doing something, and where accommodations were needed, so we had hired Vicki deGrazia in Italian history, I drifted into Italian history, but I didn't suddenly go say, "Now, I want to teach Italian history." "No, no, you go right ahead and do it." Similarly, we had hired Martha Howell in Ren-Ref [Renaissance-Reformation]. I didn't suddenly decide, "No, I want to teach the Renaissance." I've done the same now. People like Samantha Kelly, I can teach anything she can teach, but I don't go mess around with her fields. There's plenty to do. It's just not a problem, so I would describe it more as being able to do what I wanted, that it be a useful contribution, that the notion that somebody had to cover X or Y just didn't exist, or if it did, it then became clear, and as I said, so they'd decide, "Okay, we'll hire Tom Slaughter," which was clearly straight and early U.S. national.

SH: Are there graduate students that came to you because of this wide spectrum ...

RB: Never. It's the opposite. I try to stay with the relatively small number of graduate students that have worked with me, but they don't work fast enough and I change fields before they finish. [laughter] I've got these trailers in American history. I keep up with them. They're all very nice people, and I'm very proud to say that I've had very few graduate students who didn't finish, and the ones who have finished, every one of them published a book and all but one got tenure, so that's not bad.

SH: That is great. [laughter]

RB: It's only half a dozen or so, and most of them are in American history, because of this lag time, so Jack Reynolds and Margo Conk …

PC: Those are the two I remember off the top of my head, and Alan Kaufman.

RB: Alan Kaufman, he was a refugee from Tilden [Edelstein]. That was the one I, Tilden turned me into the RU police for using the lights to talk to him at night, because I wasn't allowed …

PC: Literally, what happened was Alan was sort of exiled from the program …

RB: For flunking exams, or I don't know.

PC: [laughter] Rudy went on teaching. Tilden starts this argument about unethical or illegal use of department resources by having the light on in his office to …

SH: I thought you were making a joke.

RB: No.

PC: No.

RB: This is literally true.

PC: This was Tilden's weak spot. He was sort of anal. [laughter] There is no other way to put it. It was just bizarre.

SH: This is over and beyond micromanaging. [laughter]

RB: Ted Crackel stayed with me for forever. There's another one, and then two or three or four in European history, but, again, very widely spread and as much because, Anthony Dibattista was a refuge from Robert Gottfried …

PC: Right.

RB: So, I worked with him.

PC: He still teaches in New Jersey and teaches for us, too.

RB: And Lisa Silverman. She's the one that didn't get tenure but a very talented person.

PC: She published her book.

RB: Oh, yes.

PC: Yes.

RB: Her book is with Chicago. [Editor's Note: Lisa Silverman is the author of *Tortured Subjects: Pain, Truth, and the Body in Early Modern France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).]

PC: Yes, yes.

RB: It's a good book. She just bagged it and became a kiddies librarian in Portland, Oregon somewhere.

SH: When did you first take on responsibilities in the department as either vice chair or chair?

RB: Well, I used the term vice chair, but I now recall that when I was first the undergraduate advisor, that wasn't vice chair of anything. That was just undergraduate advisor. The vice chairs didn't really begin until federation in 1981 [the formation of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences]. Before that, there was a chair of each department, and there was a graduate officer for the New Brunswick chair but not an undergraduate anything. When the department was federated, I was the junior year abroad director from '81 to '83, so I wasn't there. Then, in '84, I ran for department chair, starting, as I usually do, with the top spot instead of the bottom [laughter] against John Gillis. McCormick, the younger, was my campaign manager for that campaign [laughter], and I lost, but not by a lot. People were very nervous, because I was clearly the candidate of the old Rutgers College guard.

SH: Oh, really?

RB: Oh, absolutely, and very visibly so.

SH: The rabble is now the old guard. [laughter]

RB: Yes, in that sense. So, then I didn't do anything again until, so in '87, McCormick ran essentially unopposed for chair, but then by late that year, he went upstairs, no, I guess it was the following year [in 1989], yes, it was in his second year, that he became dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, although it was then the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. So, I think he just appointed me to finish out his term as chair, and then I ran immediately against [Seymour] Becker and won overwhelmingly, but I had become a more mature and calm person with all the things that happened. People didn't think that a sleepy fellow like Sy Becker was a very good choice [laughter] for the department. At least I would stir things up [laughter], keep things moving, which I did.

SH: How did you stir things up?

RB: Well, I was absolutely committed on the faculty front, which is probably the most important, to getting rid of as many or all of our part-time lectures and our staff people and replacing them with full-time faculty. That's what we were going to do, no matter what …

SH: This was in 1987.

RB: '88.

SH: 1988.

RB: Indeed, in the five years that I was chair, we hired fifteen people and promoted twenty-two others, so that for thirty-seven people in the department, their personnel situation was directly related to me, but only in part. On a report, an external review of the department in 1985, I felt that the future was absolutely to move to areas outside of the U.S. and Europe, and that was what we did. I thought we had to make an absolute commitment to African American, which we did, and instead of just having the two colleagues, who were fine, in Deborah [Gray White] and David Levering Lewis that we had to start cultivating from the bottom and that we had to recruit at the not-yet-Ph.D. or just-freshly-minted Ph.D. level and do so aggressively. We now pretty much have lost the ability to do that, but that momentum did continue for another decade. The year I became chair was the same year that we lost Martha Howell to Columbia and Judy Walkowitz to [Johns] Hopkins and Carla Hesse to Berkeley, and so I put down in the annual report that one of our accomplishments was that we had lost people to such illustrious places. It showed how good we were.

SH: They were all women.

RB: Yes. We also lost Robert Gottfried, which was fine, but anyway. So, I had four appointments, and I went in to the dean, who was Dick [Richard L. McCormick], and said, "I want all four replaced, and I want them all replaced now." He was good for that. We mostly recruited at the junior level. Bonnie Smith was an exception. We felt, because we had lost three women, we needed somebody senior in women's history, any field. It wouldn't have mattered if it had been American or European. There had been a blockage in the '80s about any hiring in the history department, because [Provost] Ken Wheeler had decided that Rutgers was afraid to hire really quality people, and until we hired a distinguished Europeanist, he wasn't going to let us hire anyone. That was what McCormick, when he was chair, was under, that restriction, and so he appointed me to chair a search committee, which did end up hiring Karl Morrison, who certainly was distinguished by any standard. There could be other issues, but distinction was not one of them. So, that broke that logjam. Then, both by the dean, who by this time was McCormick, and by the higher administration, we were free to do significant hiring, and we did. Every year we just did a bunch of searches and some worked out better, but the success rate, compared to the '70s, was far higher. We were hiring better people, more carefully, with very little fighting. There were a few. We had a *ribaltone*, internal revolution, on one of the cases but got them all done. [laughter]

SH: You talked about the dissension in the history department and how destructive it was in the 1970s, but it seemed as if you were able to …

RB: That was gone, that was gone. I would say that the credit for that, Grob did it by having nothing to fight about. He mostly just hired no one, the hires that were made the first year he was chair had all been made immediately before. Philip Pauly and Ziva Galili, Tom Slaughter, they were all immediately prior. Grob ran, that was so funny, Grob running against Gardner, with Gardner pasted as the anti-woman candidate. So, here's Gardner, who's trying to explain to his wife why he's the anti-women candidate. [laughter] So, Grob became chair, and then his view was that history was bunk. He didn't think there should be many historians, and so he didn't want any resources. He didn't want to hire anybody. Then, '84, they got away with Gillis, who was always willing to settle for crumbs, so they would just let him bring in his

friends as speakers, but they didn't hire anybody. [laughter] Very serious. So, in the '70s, you had mixed results, fifty-fifty, roughly, but lots of hiring. Then, in the '80s, if you count the '81, the Ziva [hiring], as part of the '70s group, then in the '80s, you had no hiring with the significant exceptions of Deborah Gray White and David Levering Lewis. I think the only other hire was Steve Reinert, and that was a very ambiguous situation. Then, suddenly McCormick opens the floodgates by hiring [Karl] Morrison, but he doesn't stay around long enough to do much else. By the time I become chair, people want, they realize, "Wait, this department is getting old and it's not, it's reputation is good, but it's got to renovate," and none of the old controversies are there. Weinstein's been gone six years. The only person who remembers him is me. [laughter] Susman is dead in '85, so that's a non-issue. McCormick has a big fight with the staff, because McCormick thinks the staff should actually work, and the Livingston people come in and file a report that they shouldn't have to work. He ignores the report and then steps right on up to be dean. There's a sense that we're going to do things around here, and that really carries through. Certainly, after me Ziva would change the whole graduate program to essentially guaranteed five-year fellowships, which was five years ahead of when other schools did it, but in my judgment was and still is exactly the right thing to do. We wouldn't be recruiting anybody now if we had our old system. We did manage to stay away from the use of part-time lecturers. We cashed all of those kind of resources in. The department was stripped down to just faculty. For better or worse, that became the structure of the department. I think it whittled away. I think now they are, for various reasons, using more part-time lecturers and more of non-pure faculty resources. I think that the commitment to the programs and to teaching is less than it was twenty years ago, 2010 back to 1990.

SH: When the administration had to change because of the death of Bloustein, were you involved in the search for the new president?

RB: No, I was not. I knew what was going on because people like Pedro Caban were on the committee, friends of mine, and I knew the fights about Kate Stimpson and I knew the settlement on Fran Lawrence as a last-minute compromise candidate. I knew the nastiness, like Mike Bongiovanni, the chair of the Board of Governors, saying that he wasn't going to hire any atheists and no Jews, and so Fran Lawrence was certainly neither. [laughter] The union was buffaloed into thinking he'd be better than Bloustein, which was not true. So, I was not heavily involved in that. I did have discussions with Dick McCormick about his feeling that once that appointment was made, time to look elsewhere for employment, which he recognized very early on. [Editor's Note: President of Rutgers University Edward J. Bloustein died suddenly of a heart attack in December 1989. Francis L. Lawrence succeeded Bloustein, presiding over the university from 1990 until 2003. Richard L. McCormick, having served in the history faculty and as an administrator from 1976 until 1992, left Rutgers for posts as provost and vice chancellor at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and president at the University of Washington, before returning to Rutgers in 2002, when he was appointed president.]

SH: What did McCormick senior think?

RB: He was very reserved. I was then having lunch with him two or three times a week, so I saw him very regularly, and he, as was just as true in the '60s, you didn't get much out of him.

He'd let you spout forth, and he wouldn't disagree, but he wasn't on any bandwagon to … do anything.

SH: This lunch cadre was just an amazing table to see, as an outsider [laughter] to see all of you sitting around that table. [laughter]

RB: It was a weird group. It got older and included fewer and fewer, fewer people. [laughter] It was exactly the same table that I used to sit at with Susman and Gardner in 1969.

SH: Yes.

RB: Same location even within the …

SH: Faculty dining room …

RB: Yes.

SH: Just for the record. When did you get involved with the AAUP [American Association of University Professors]?

PC: Let us wait …

SH: Sorry.

PC: Before we get to that, Rudy, you were also undergraduate chair, right?

RB: No.

PC: You were never undergraduate chair.

RB: I was undergraduate whatever-it-is advisor in the '70s.

PC: Okay. I know what I am thinking of. As chair, you did the undergraduate schedules though, or something.

RB: Yes, absolutely I did ...

PC: Yes, right.

RB: Because you will recall that I had Harold Poor run against John Lenaghan for that job, and Harold, even if he had been healthy, would never have been capable of creating a rational schedule. I was using, I guess then it was, Lotus and publishing the schedule, so everybody knew exactly when everybody was teaching. I liked that kind of sunshine, which nobody else has liked since, but I thought it was wonderful to show exactly who's not doing what. [laughter] Number of days, time of day, number of students.

PC: I guess that is why I thought of you as the undergraduate chair, because you were a hands-on chair …

RB: I had no choice, but to run that. Keep in mind that I had Ginny, who had wonderful spirit but incompetent to shuffle any paperwork, and Harold Poor was in the hospital, so I just did it all. [laughter] I fired the assistant to the chair and left that position blank and hired graduate students instead to give them jobs. Beth Greech and then, what was her name? The other one didn't finish, Dina something-or-other.

PC: I do not know. I know Beth quite well.

SH: I do, too. What about academic advising? Was this something that had always been done in the Rutgers history department?

RB: The advising system that you now know, which everybody's an adviser, is something that I instituted. Before that, five or six people got that as their committee assignment and did the advising.

SH: Did you do anything with the committees? Did you increase them or decrease them?

RB: My main institution on the undergraduate level was the senior honors seminar for people who were doing individual senior honors projects, and I taught that one myself, too. Eventually, I got Ziva to do it. [laughter] That was the main institution on the undergraduate [level]. We also totally revamped the numbering system. So, it was when I was chair that we shifted to the 506, 8, 10, 12, which was a consequence that we had run out of numbers, so it was a practical necessity. It was also part of that recognition of the importance of these other areas. So, even though we let U.S. keep the 512 number, we added 508 for Africa, Asia, Latin American and changed the requirements so that you had to have courses in that area.

SH: What are the things that you are most proud of? This sounds like this would be something that you are proud of.

RB: Well, I would say number one was the hiring of a very substantial number of faculty, many of whom worked out reasonably well. Some of them aren't doing as much now as I would have hoped, but that's all right. I can't have everything. The promotion of many faculty. Only two got denied out of the twenty-two that I promoted, and that's because there was a pin-head on the promotion review committee who was jealous, so they turned down Jackson Lears and Bonnie Smith, no less. I think it [laughter] shows that I was right. [laughter]

SH: You were justified … [laughter]

RB: [laughter] I got some other not-so-strong cases through. [laughter] So, I would say personnel was where I accomplished a lot. Whatever the department is now is very heavily what it became during the early '90s. I don't think that significant new directions, maybe in South Asia, but other than that, I don't think significant new directions have been achieved, and there's been some erosion, particularly in African American history. It's been very, very hard to

maintain. I think that shifting the graduate program to a small, elite, fully-funded [program], although that now is in danger, it got too small, so these things, what works in 1990 doesn't necessarily work today. We had eighteen or twenty admits, fully funded then, and now you go down to thirteen. It seems like there's just this handful, but it isn't. It creates critical mass problems. The people that we hired in the expanded fields are now better, so they want to have graduate programs in these expanded fields. At the undergraduate level, I would say that, to put it positively, I'm proudest of the senior honors program, which I think is a very strong program and has remained so, and which the current chair is very dedicated to, and others have not neglected, they just haven't been as dedicated to it. I think that the rest of our undergraduate program is a ramshackle mess and that we don't really know what we're doing and why, and if there were anything I would look for in a future department chair, I don't think [James] Masschaele has the energy to take it on now, it would be to thoroughly revamp what we're doing at the undergraduate level in the wake of the new, supposed SAS [School of Arts and Sciences] core curriculum stuff and so forth. I think it's time to fundamentally reconsider and rededicate. The faculty's not interested enough in undergraduate teaching. It would be, to me, the major challenge that I would look for. That, and reversing our personnel losses, or not, and deciding we should be forty faculty, not fifty. You could do that. I know lots of distinguished departments that only have forty people, but you've got to know what you're doing. The solution's not necessarily more, but somehow we've got to do better.

SH: How have you tread that water? As we hear, there is little money available, and there is this constant give and take between the state and the administration. How has that affected the programs you have?

RB: Well, by sheer aggressiveness, during the time I was chair, we still did all right, and I would simply yell and scream more than others, and at one point I threatened fully to withdraw the history department and become an Institute for Historical Studies and run our own faculty and take our own budget away from them. Well, we would have been no smaller than the School of Social Work or the Graduate School of Education. It's perfectly possible. We were cashing in things like part-time lecturer money, which because of the stupid nickel-and-dime way that FAS [Faculty of Arts and Sciences] accounted, they loved getting that money, even though it was soft, throw-away money, and they would give us back real money that lasted forever, so our relative budget was growing. I used to do things like rent our faculty to Princeton to go teach and keep the money for the department to run things. So, the crisis did absolutely get worse. Ziva was very good at managing departmental resources as well, so it really didn't hit us hard, I think, until this past decade. As things have centralized and the ways in which we were able to shield ourselves from some of the problems, we don't have the possibility, as the sciences do, of external grants and support, and I think the reality is that humanities generally are in great trouble. When I look at the number of people that we lost this year, the English department has been in decline for three or four years, I don't think the language departments are doing very much, it is a very troubling time for the humanities. Probably, we have to figure out how to be smaller and yet better, and that's not easy to do.

PC: I think we can move to the AAUP, if you want to.

SH: Okay. Before that, as you moved from Rutgers College to the federated system to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences in 1981 and then to the School of Arts and Sciences …

RB: SAS.

SH: … SAS in 2007, is this intertwined with the AAUP, or is this something that we should talk about separately?

RB: They're not related, to me …

SH: You talked about the centralization, where we are now.

RB: Yes, that's not, to me, related to the AAUP …

SH: Okay. Let us talk first about centralization and then the AAUP.

RB: Whatever you want.

PC: One sort of brief question. A person with your career profile, when you stopped being chair, I wondered if the opportunity had been there, like it was for Dick [McCormick], if you would have gone on to do some administrative work. Are you sorry you did not go down that path?

RB: The brutal truth is that if the phone had rung or a letter had come, I would have probably said, "Oh, I'll give this a try," but instead, in the absence of any such phone call, I very much wanted to see for myself whether I would like going back to the classroom, scholarship first and then classroom second. So, I had two years of junior year abroad. I had a year in Florence with only eight students, and then I had a year in England. That was when I did the heavy research for the how-to-do-it book, which was, again, totally new material, nothing to do with psycho history, nothing to do with quantitative history, very different. Again, it was on the edge of a field that then developed. There was no history of the book field in 1993, so I was kind of co-inventing with a lot of other people, independent of them, I knew none of them, in that field, and I found that yes, I still loved doing research.

When I came back, I went back to heavy teaching. I went back to teaching with [Donald] Roden in the love and death class ["Patterns in Civilization: Love" and "Patterns in Civilization: Death"], with all of the deficiencies of teaching two hundred students with no TAs, and I found that I liked that a lot. So, whatever thoughts I might have had about administering anything, A, the opportunities were not there, and, B, I liked what I was doing. So, I don't begrudge or pine for anything that I don't have, and I was just very glad that I turned out to like [teaching]. Karl Morrison was the one who said, "Rudy, you'll have great difficulty doing it. You're waiting for that phone to ring, and I see you and you're typing on that computer and talking to somebody and talking on the phone at the same. There's a juice in that that you're going to have great difficulty when there's nothing ringing to tell you to do anything," [laughter] which, I think, of course, was very true in Karl's career, where he had been, nobody knows it, but he was a hot-shot administrator at the University of Chicago, department chair, when he was thirty years old

or something. Then, there's this long period, when he shifts out of studying those coins, about as boring as you can get, and into doing this mimetic tradition and I Am You and these very theoretical, intellectual books, but there's a twenty-year hiatus that people don't know so carefully …

PC: I did not know about that, yes.

RB: So, he and I had very interesting discussions about what happens.

PC: One other thing I want to take you back on, and if you ever interview me, I am willing to talk about it, legally or illegally, I do not know which. Are you willing to tell us anything about the [Robert] Gottfried case for the record? Are you allowed to?

RB: Well, I think they're probably constraints that would prevent me. You'd have to ask me more specific questions. I know a lot about it. I was on the committee that did the investigation. I have seen the penis drawings and the slips for manuscripts that were never actually called for, so I know the full record. Karl and I served on the last and Traian [Stoianovich].

PC: Karl is what brought this to mind, because I remember that he and Mo Lee and you were the ones who were principally involved.

RB: Well, no, Mo was like the prosecutor, but he wasn't the [judge]. Karl and I and Traian were the judges.

PC: Okay.

RB: Okay. Mo's vindictiveness was because he had been double-crossed, having supported this person as so outstanding for a number of years and being in the field. Grob was another supporter, but he didn't know anything and everybody knew that. [laughter] I had written a memo when Gottfried was up for promotion, pointing out that he was a fraud and that his numbers couldn't possibly [be accurate]. He had SPSS files where he had doctored them and used white out to change the numbers. All you had to do was know how to cross-add and you could see that it's not possible to get these results, which I knew and I sent a memo to Grob, and he suppressed it.

PC: Yes.

RB: Anyway …

PC: Let me ask you a very specific question, because you have been involved with the AAUP and you know a lot about procedure and all that. Looking back, independently of your own personal feelings about Gottfried, which are the same as mine, was his case handled differently than it would be today?

RB: He could have made his case be handled differently even then. He could have gone to the AAUP and followed that kind of process, but in his arrogance, he chose not to, so he chose to be

judged by his academic peers outside of the normal process for de-tenuring, and he was not de-tenured. He resigned.

PC: He resigned, yes.

RB: Okay. So, it was his choice. The initial recommendation, which actually was Peter Golden's, because Mo Lee was never on a committee to judge anything, and then was remanded from this university thing to this particular committee that Stoianovich and Morrison and I were on. It simply issued findings about the lack of research substantiation, and then he, Gottfried, negotiated with Susan Cole [then Vice President for University Administration and Personnel] a settlement, which the department was strongly opposed to, and with Traian, I thought he'd climb up the walls, trying to figure out how much money could be involved in counting the spaces, whether there were six digits. He thought there were eight. I said, "No, they put the pennies in there, too, since you got zero, zero, you eliminate those two digits." We're not dealing with millions here, okay. [laughter] The department voted against it, and Susan Cole said, "I don't care what the department thinks. I have decided to do this, and that's that." [laughter] She said, "It would be the same if I put up a regulation, 'No smoking in this building.' You can't have a vote to say, 'Yes, it's all right.'" She was a tough cookie, anyway.

PC: So, in a sense, it was not a union issue ...

RB: He chose not to …

PC: He chose …

RB: Of course, it could be …

PC: Could have been.

RB: It could easily have been.

PC: Yes.

RB: He could have gone directly to the union to say, "I am being persecuted by my former colleagues, and there's this, that." He could have done it right under the academic freedom clause. He's free to write whatever he wants.

PC: What is your sense if he had done that? The union would have obviously supported him. They have to, in a sense, and would he have won his case, do you think? Give me a sense of how this process works.

RB: I think that he would have ultimately opted for a settlement anyway, and it would not have been as generous, because the union was run by a bunch of cheapskates with low salaries who wouldn't have held out for as much money as he was able to get Susan Cole and that his reputation was so damaged by what was, there were public reviews, that he did as well as could have been expected.

SH: Does something like this happen often?

RB: Well, unfortunately, the history department had some tradition with that, because they had another guy [Norman ?] in the '60s, but he just invented footnotes. He also invented that he was a Major League Baseball player, so you got to watch out for people who say they played Major League ball.

PC: Did Gardner tell us the story about him?

RB: Gardner probably did. He's the one that knows it best.

PC: Yes, I do not know the story. Warren told me about it, Warren Susman, some guy who would take faculty members, including Warren, to baseball games and describe his own baseball career. He is the one who made up the footnotes in the Library of Congress or something …

RB: Yes.

PC: And got caught because …

RB: There were no such notes.

PC: Yes. They sent the book to be reviewed. I think it was Rutgers Press. Was the book reviewed by a guy working at the Library of Congress? He looked at the footnotes and said, "I know these archives, and I don't remember those." So, he checked, and sure enough, [laughter] it was not there.

RB: He invented great letters, exactly things that, whatever, Grover Cleveland should have written.

SH: Really?

PC: Yes. The book was published, recalled, and it actually came out. There probably are copies still …

RB: Yes, they're rare, but …

PC: Yes, probably still copies around.

SH: Can you put the name on the record?

PC: I cannot. I do not remember. It was before my time.

SH: Oh, okay.

RB: His first name was Norman, and I can't remember the last name.

SH: Unbelievable. Let us talk about your involvement with the AAUP.

RB: Well, I ran for president on a rebellion ticket in 1993 and lost, and that was at the invitation of Jim Young, who had been provost at Newark and put together a team with Lisa Klein and Bob Boikess and somebody else. We ran a very vigorous campaign. I think we ended up with like forty-three percent of the vote or something. [There was the] highest turnout ever, more new members than they had ever had. It was basically a protest against what I felt was the union's drift into an industrial, not-appropriate-for-the-professoriate, model and to the degree that I had thought about these matters, which was, in fact, not a lot. I thought, and still do, that the faculty would be best served by a union on the model of professional sports and actors guilds, theater, where superstars like Derek Jeter can make many, many millions and nobody says, "Well, the contract says you only get a three-percent raise," but where minor leaguers and ex-people are protected and where there are protections after a period of time, which I thought was vaguely equivalent to our tenure and where there is great solidarity across the profession.

I do think that academia is going in the direction of discipline solidarity rather than institutional unity and that therefore a union of historians or the subdivision called historians of the national union of professors would be the right direction to go. Although that's not going to happen, to the degree that I could have influenced the union away from what I consider to be a model more appropriate to high school or elementary school teachers and towards the kind of professional model, that was something that interested me enough to run for president of the union, even though I had no idea why I would want to do that. I was stepping down as department chair, and I was already assigned to two years to junior year abroad director. I don't know how I would have done [it], but I didn't worry about that, at the time, not because I thought I would lose.

I thought I had a chance to win, and the union had more mobilization ability than I realized, or I would have won. Forty-three percent is not a great result, but not five percent. So, that was that, and so I lost and that was the end of that. That was the team of notables that I had running with me for the executive council, so it had Barry Qualls on it and Kate Stimpson was on the team. Most of them won. I didn't [laughter], but this team of notables all got on the executive committee. Frankly, without me to stir them up, they weren't able to do anything and stopped showing up at meetings after a month. Somee of them became administrators. None of them served again. Anyway, that was the end of that.

Then, they got me, in 1999, to be chair of the membership committee, but I agreed to do that only if they wouldn't make me do anything but sign my name, because this was a prestigious name that they thought would help them get more members, particularly when they were trying to recruit [tenured faculty]. There was a diminishing number of tenured faculty who were union members, particularly faculty that were rapidly promoted, and they thought, "Well, if we get Rudy Bell to be chair of the membership committee," but I didn't have to do any work. So, I was the chair of the membership committee. Then, in 2002, early in 2002, the executive administrator, Anh Tuan Trong and Ken Carlson and a couple of others came to me to ask would I run for president. "Why?" "Well, because you're a friend of McCormick's, and he will become the new president two months earlier and so you'll have influence with him in the next contract." "Oh, that's interesting." So, I said, "Well, there's another thing that I'm even more

interested in in the next contract, and that is getting the faculty to support the unification with the medical school, the Vagelos [report]," which I thought was critically important, and my great disappointment indeed of this decade is that McCormick backed away from that, too chicken. So, I said, "Here, if I'm the president of the union, I'll be able the steer the union into supporting the Vagelos," which they're all deathly afraid of, because redundancy. They're going to lose their jobs, blah, blah, blah. "I can supposedly have some influence with McCormick about this contract." Okay, so that's a good enough reason to run for president and virtually stirring, he wasn't in the grave yet, but Wells Keddie ultimately went along with it, because they couldn't find anybody to run against me that would win. So, they thought, "Well, it's better for us to be his supporters and we'll pack various committees, so that he won't be able to do any of the things that he wants to do, except talk to McCormick and get us a better contract." [laughter] [Editor's Note: P. Roy Vagelos, a pharmaceutical executive and former member of the Rutgers Board of Governors and Board of Trustees, chaired the state committee that recommended the incorporation of Rutgers University, the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and the New Jersey Institute of Technology into a state university system.]

I'm a pretty tough fighter, [laughter] and I fired their committees, except for Boikess. I couldn't get rid of him. I fired Trong, the executive director who had asked me in the first place to run for president, so I could run the place myself, which is what I did. The same thing as when I was department chair, I just hired temporary graduate students and people that could get me the things that I needed done, contract costing and stuff like that, that I didn't know much about how to do. The one thing I didn't realize was that Boikess, as chair of the negotiating team, couldn't be fired. The by-laws said the chair of the negotiating team stayed until the contract was signed, so I had to undermine him, which I'll get to. So, I spoke to Dick in October of the first full year when he was president, and I could see that he was already resisting the merging with the medical school. We had a very nice breakfast, very open discussion …

PC: The medical school means Robert Wood Johnson Medical School …

RB: Yes.

PC: Okay.

RB: UMDNJ [University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey].

PC: Oh, UMDNJ.

RB: Yes, that's what we're talking [about]. That's what the Vagelos report was about.

PC: Okay. I do not remember the report. That is …

RB: Okay.

PC: I wanted to check.

RB: No, the report was the great opportunity to get back what Rutgers had lost in the mid-'60s when that stupid Hughes took away the medical school, because he was mad about Genovese and stuff …

PC: Yes, that I know.

RB: … And Mason Gross, and this was a chance to get it back. They had the report, and McGreevey is on the way to imploding over his sexual life. So, the Vagelos report is still there, and so I'm able, as president of the union, to remove one of the biggest stumbling blocks to getting this done, which is that the union's going to support unification. I don't believe that much in democracy. If that's what I think, that's what's going to happen. So, I come to Dick with, "I can bring you the support of the union on this. I want some protections, don't want people fired," various, I am for union things like seniority, but, "I can bring you this. I'm ready." We are not the biggest union but the most important in terms of visibility. [Editor's Note: James McGreevey served as governor of New Jersey from 2002 until 2004, when he resigned after admitting that he was gay and had engaged in an extramarital affair with a man.]

Then, I suddenly see that Dick does not favor this. [Philip] Furmanski [Vice President for Academic Affairs from 2003 until 2011] does, but Dick does not. I went, "What's the problem here?" Well, he didn't think it would be funded adequately. I said, "You're going to get even less funding if you don't do it. No matter what, you're guaranteeing poor funding. Your only chance of getting big bucks is to do this." Instead, he assigns these people to come up with this phony-baloney report that it's going to cost a billion dollars to do the merger, which is a total lie. He could have done it on nearly nothing. Okay, I could have showed him how to do it, but Vagelos also knew how to do it. So, Vagelos quits when he realizes the game is up, and McCormick twists the Board of Trustees to claim that they would be losing their power over the damn golf course or whatever, if they give into this, because [of] the new structure. Okay, so the new structure probably would have meant a different job for McCormick, probably chancellor of the combined university with a job in Trenton, not the kind of thing he'd like. You can't just put yourself [first].

So, I thought it was a giant opportunity that was missed, and I still believe that it guaranteed the decade of non-funding that we are now in. I thought that all the complaints of the humanities about, "We'll be overlooked. Everything will go to the sciences." It's exactly what happened, but with less than half the money. [laughter] The humanities still got screwed, and the big efforts at science projects, which Furmanski tries within his limits to do, have, in fact, happened, but with only tiny portions of the money. All the business about the medical school crisis, because it was so corrupt in Newark, that didn't matter. Within that first year, 2002-'3, McCormick backs away and doesn't support unification under anything like the Vagelos report. McGreevey self-implodes, and McCormick is no dope when it comes to political infighting and he successfully maneuvers his Board of Trustees and Board of Governors to oppose, so that's when Vagelos quits in the spring. [Editor's Note: In 2006, UMDNJ became bogged down by controversy when revelations came out about several scandals, including corruption, kickbacks and fraud involving tens of millions of dollars.]

PC: How do you spell his name?

RB: V-A-G-E-L-O-S. There's no N. Otherwise, he'd be an evangelical. [laughter] So, he quits, and fine. He quits. He gets one vote, his own, and he's off the board. It doesn't happen, and then all the phony excuses, like, "Oh, look at all these scandals at the medical school," which is true. They [UMDNJ] were ripping off millions of dollars in phony Medicare payments and so forth, but they stay a separate entity. There cannot possibly be this inefficient funding of both. As president of the union, I've lost what was my most important issue, which was to be able to do that, because I get undermined by the president, who's taken a different position, and, whether you call it personal interest and he just wanted to be president of Rutgers and sit in Old Queens and not in Trenton, or you call it short-sightedness, I don't agree with that decision. Okay, fine. So, now we've got this damn contract, and it turns out that Boikess has decided he's going to spend the rest of his life negotiating a contract, instead of settling a contract. He doesn't know how to settle a contract. It's clear that he wants to fight forever, and he's got some personal hostility to McCormick that I still don't fully understand. So, he wants to get him, and he's going to go after what-was-her-face, the vice president that got canned, Karen Kavanaugh, that's the name.

So, this now is 2003-4, and I have bothered to look at the stupid union by-laws, which say I can't fire Boikess. I've realized that he is never going to settle the contract, and he's just interested in permanent disruption. So, I say, "Okay, I'm going to figure out how to settle this contract," and so I initiate discussions with Karen Kavanaugh one-on-one. We get pretty far, and I explained I would never take less than what the state colleges got, but we could package it differently, but that's the amount. "Okay, let's figure this out." So, we haggle about whether it's thirty-three million or forty-three million, but we come to the right number.

Then, I underestimate Boikess' ability to undermine things, so I try to bring him into it. [We] talked to Furmanski, who's a scientist, instead of Kavanaugh, who he hates and is trying to smear. This is the same time that Dick is managing to bump into the back fender of some car … and also the whole business comes out with the girlfriend. The union wants to push all of that on the president. "We're not going to do that. No, no ads. No, no, no this and no that." I bring Boikess into negotiate four-on-four to get this done with Furmanski there, and that's when I realize, "This is never going to happen." So, now, I've got to undermine him. [Editor's Note: In 2003, Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick admitted to having an extramarital affair with a member of the University of Washington administration while he presided over UW. Also that year, accusations arose of McCormick being under the influence of alcohol when he was involved in a minor car accident.]

Meanwhile, Kavanaugh is not as smart as she thinks she is. She decides that I'm playing good cop, bad cop and double-dealing, using Boikess as the bad cop, so me offering, "This is the way we can settle," and then he negating it, which is simply that she doesn't understand me. She doesn't understand Boikess. She doesn't understand anything that's going on. Dick finally realizes what's going on in May of that year, and so Dick and I meet over at the athletic center, which is the only place he feels safe, in the Hale Center [laughter] and discuss, "What are we going to do?" So, I said, "Well, we meet the same deal as the state," and we worked it all out and it's forty-three million and this is done, this way or that way, doesn't matter much to me. So, then we try to figure out, "How are we going to get this approved?" So, I said, "Okay, I'm

willing to go to the membership against my own executive board and against my negotiating team. I'll have a revolt and I'll win. I'll get the members to approve the contract, but let's first try to get the executive team on board." So, we had, in May, these three days of meetings, and by this time, there's the five distinguished faculty that have come on board.

The whole thing, this is really very funny, McCormick and I have this list of the eighteen steps that we need to do to get to the end, so I'm going to say fifty-two million and he's going to say thirty-one, and then I'm going to say forty-five and he's going to say thirty-six. [laughter] We have this script written out on how we're going to get to the right number, and graduate students are wonderful. When we are exactly at the script where it's done, they want another 750,000. [laughter] So, I look at Dick. He looks at me, "What the hell's going on here?" [laughter] He's fairly sure that I didn't purposefully do it but not a hundred percent certain. So, I said, "All right, Dick. I'll put in half if you put in half. I'll take 375,000 away from the faculty if you'll come up with the other." He's got to have a caucus, so they go have a caucus. They come back and say, "Okay, but that's the last one ever." So, there's a mediator involved.

The mediator has a very formal role to do. So, the mediator knows that McCormick and I have agreed on a settlement but that Boikess hasn't and that he has to get Boikess to agree to the settlement that McCormick and I have already agreed on. In the end, that never happens, and so Boikess recommends to the executive council against the contract, but I get a majority to recommend for it. So, it goes out to the membership and they approve it, like nine hundred to eighty, just obvious. That's very nice, but that permanently makes Boikess feel that I am a lying, duplicitous person, which is true, [laughter] well, in terms of him. I said, "I had to, because I couldn't fire you, or I would have and then it wouldn't have been duplicitous at least, and let's change the by-laws." [laughter] So, at the point, now, we're going to change the by-laws, so I'm not chair of the negotiating team, but I can be fired. [laughter] We do this. We finally get all the contracts signed, and I decided, "Oh, there's no more worlds to conquer. I'm quitting this job." [laughter] "I don't want to be president of the AAUP anymore." I stop after two years of that and go back fully to teaching and research, which is where I'm at now. … I did agree to chair the next contract for Adrienne Eaton, because that was how I got Lisa Klein and then Adrienne to agree to serve as president. I said, "Well, I'll do the negotiating team once more," which I did, and we reached the only settlement that they've ever reached on time and what turns out to be such a good contract that the administration broke it twice already. [laughter] It must be a good contract. [laughter]

SH: With the budget cuts from the state and all, that is amazing.

RB: Yes, but it was prescient in terms of what we could get. It did have the big break-through by the faculty development fund. That got national attention, and that's very important. They're not going to live up to it, but the idea that you would hire a hundred additional faculty, that's one of the accomplishments of my professional life.

SH: [laughter] Go ahead.

PC: I have this vague memory, probably dating at a time when we did one of these university-wide re-accreditation things, of somebody in the administration making a public statement that no great university was compatible with having a true faculty union.

RB: It's been made often. [laughter]

PC: My question is in regards to your sense of how things have gone between the union and the administration now, compared to the good or bad old days of Wells Keddie. Has there been some improvement in the climate of negotiation and the degree of trust and guarded respect?

RB: I like to believe that the situation is much better and that the loggerhead, one-be-useless-to-the-other of the mid-'70s through the 1990s has changed substantially. I, as is inevitable since my position is on the union side, regret that the administration is not doing yet more to cooperate, and the unilateral announcement of a [salary] freeze [for faculty and staff] is yet the latest example of non-cooperation, as was the tone of the memo that was sent out in mid-July. There's always room to improve, and I think the reality is that Rutgers will stay unionized, and so the question isn't whether you can have a great university and a unionized faculty. It's how to do it, and the sooner people would attend themselves to that, the better.

PC: Yes. You think that that is an accepted position now in the administration, that that second question of how to do it, as opposed to …

RB: I think it's not their highest priority, but I don't think the administration is interested in de-crediting the union. I think it's just an acceptance that they're going to always have a fifty percent rate of membership, which is the threshold they need to have representative fee-payers.

PC: Two other questions. One of the things that has happened in the recent past is that our union has changed. It has gone from being the AAUP to AFT. Tell us about that.

RB: Well, again, with my lack of due modesty, I was instrumental in deciding that we should go for the AFT [American Federation of Teachers] affiliation, which, on the surface, would seem to be exactly the opposite of my view that we should be a professional union, but that's because I have the high goal of getting the AFT and its higher education group to be more like a professional union and less like its high school division, and that is, in fact, happening. The AAUP-AFT are working cooperatively to jointly organize, particularly on the West Coast, major universities in the Northwest, and I think that on balance that would be a good thing. I do believe that it should work as things work with actors guilds and football and baseball, professional sports unions. [Editor's Note: In 1970, the Rutgers Council of AAUP Chapters became the exclusive labor representative of the faculty (and graduate student employees in 1972). In 2005, the Rutgers AAUP began a joint affiliation with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT).]

PC: Has it made the way the union functions at Rutgers different?

RB: We're more efficient and better organized. We have better access to resources like contract costing. We have the beginning, well, we were instrumental in finally getting the organization of

the staff, which had failed three times previously, and it was just enough, it was. That was the critical difference, the AAUP-AFT affiliation that got the union of Rutgers administrators successfully approved. I and others did work hard on membership recruiting for that. I joke, union officials have a very limited sense of humor, but anyway, I tell them that the prime reason we can't go on strike is not just because people won't but because nobody would notice that we were on strike, whereas if the staff went on strike, they'd notice. The toilets'd stop flushing, and all the important things would [not] happen … [laughter]

PC: The other question I had has to do with an entirely different area that we touched on with Gottfried, union responsibility. You talked about contract negotiations. In terms of cases of academic freedom, what role, in your knowledge, has this union played?

RB: Well, the last eight years in which I've been actively involved we have actually filed far fewer grievances. We had, in the last contract, which is a major breakthrough, we have an alternate to the grievance process, which is that you can re-appeal directly to the PRC [Promotion Review Committee] that your promotion was denied and you think they made a mistake. We've had nearly every case that appealed at all has done that, so we've actually, in some ways, you could answer your question by saying that I have undermined, to the degree that I could, the ability of the union to file grievances, but I think we've increased the defense of academic freedom, because we do so only in serious cases, not for lunatics. My academic freedom to say, "I don't think you should be promoted" is just as important to me as your academic freedom to say you should be. So, the idea that the union must defend everyone, not true. I'm part of everyone, and so we have taken a changed stance on that.

The really big issues, Paul, in academic freedom are not academic-freedom-for-tenure people. It's the impossibility of achieving academic freedom for PTLs [part-time lecturers], graduate students, even in some cases, not in our department, assistant professors. The traditional AAUP since 1940 has never been able to address that question, and the AFT is really no better on it. It's the core of the problem to me, the idea of 1950s Moses Finley getting fired for being a communist or Gene Genovese in the '60s, those are just not the current issues. The current issues have to do with corporatization of the university in which your lack of academic freedom is not because you can't be pro-Cuba if you feel like being, but because the nature of what you do is restricted in ways that simply were not true in my career. [Editor's Note: During the McCarthy era and Vietnam era, several famous academic freedom cases occurred at Rutgers University. In 1952, Rutgers history professor Moses I. Finley invoked his Fifth Amendment right and refused to testify before a congressional subcommittee regarding alleged ties to the Communist Party. Succumbing to conservative pressures of the era, Rutgers University President Lewis Webster Jones and the Board of Trustees invoked policies contrary to academic freedom and forced the dismissal of Finley. In contrast, when history professor Eugene D. Genovese made seemingly pro-Communist, inflammatory statements regarding the War in Vietnam in 1965, Rutgers University President Mason Gross defended Genovese on the grounds of academic freedom and resisted public pressure to dismiss Genovese.]

PC: Does the union get involved in things like copyright and patent issues that have been very crucial in the sciences?

RB: We are not as involved as we should be. We lost a big patent case about eight years ago, and that, too, has been the failure, in my judgment, the failure of the union to focus on professional issues, which are not only copyright but in our field distance learning. "What do I do about my course that can now be replicated on the Internet?" kinds of questions. We are not in the vanguard even nationally among unions on those questions, and we have not put our resources, which are considerable, there's a staff of ten people at the union, into developing those kinds of questions. I'd like to see them do more, but I'm not willing to do it myself, so somebody else [is] going to have to do [it]. The union is one of the things I want to get out of professionally, not out of the union, but out of heavy involvement.

SH: Do you see anyone stepping in?

RB: Well, the current president Adrienne Eaton is a professor of labor studies, and so there's a confluence between what she studies and what she is doing, which can be restrictive in some ways. She has a much greater obligation to state-wide union solidarity than I ever would have Wells Keddie was in the same position of being professor of labor studies and a union leader, but she's far more professional, I think, professional in an academic sense, than he may have been. I don't think she'll continue for very, very long in it. There is, in general, a leadership crisis in the union, and it's almost unavoidable. I don't see how you can get faculty to routinely devote the very substantial amounts of time that union work takes. The reality is that if you're the president of the plumber's union, you can't wait to get away from twisting those damn pipes, whereas I and others can't wait to get back to studying what I study. So, I don't see how it's fixable. You probably need a model, in which they're working towards now, of an executive director that … understands faculty and takes on the role heavily.

PC: In other words, a paid professional who will come in and run the union ...

RB: Yes.

PC: … And responsible to a board of faculty …

RB: Yes, and just an advisory board, rather than a hands-on, do-it board.

PC: I want to switch gears.

SH: I have one more union question. What about the other state universities? Are you working with them?

RB: We try to coordinate closely with them. Their needs are somewhat different, but the AFT affiliation does create solidarity for us. They have much less of a leadership crisis than we do, because they have faculty, a larger number of faculty, who don't have as many research distracting interests from union activities. [laughter]

PC: Are all the other state universities unionized?

RB: Yes, and all the county. They're not all AFT.

PC: Princeton is not.

RB: No, Princeton's not a state university.

PC: No, I know …

RB: It's not a public …

PC: It is not …

RB: No.

PC: How about some of the other private schools in the state?

RB: It's not only the state ones that are unionized. Rider has an AAUP, but you see it negotiates contracts, Rider does.

SH: I think Kean as well.

RB: I think Kean also.

SH: Yes. Do you deal only with your own administration, or do you deal with Trenton?

RB: The union tries heavily to be involved in the political process, and we have very good allies. We did with [Governor Jon] Corzine, who even came to our Labor Day picnic. [laughter] He lost. [laughter] Good relationships with the legislature, and we try to maintain those cooperatively but basically independent of the administration and its efforts. [Editor's Note: From 2006 to 2010, Jon Corzine served as governor of New Jersey, before losing to Chris Christie in the 2009 election.]

SH: You talked about the West Coast. Is this something that you and others are involved in at a regional or national level?

RB: Lisa Klein and Adrienne Eaton both like to go to national meetings and they go talk at rallies at various universities. I went to Vermont to talk to their AAUP once, but that's the only one. I'm not interested enough in that.

SH: That is the end of my union follow-up.

PC: I wanted to shift gears completely. You teach with Don Roden this love and death course, which, as I recall, you also taught with Traian. [Editor's Note: Rudolph Bell and Donald Roden co-teach the two classes "Patterns in Civilization: Love" and "Patterns in Civilization: Death."]

RB: Absolutely, I did.

PC: It is a fascinating course. Can you tell us a little bit more about the course itself, where the idea came from and how it has worked out over the years?

RB: Well, the course started out with four people, Susman was the fourth, in addition to the three you've mentioned, and it was …

SH: So, there were four …

RB: Four.

SH: … Of you teaching at one time.

RB: Yes. It was meant to be a radical alternative to "Development of US," "Development of Europe," and that there should not be "Development" of everything else as a third alternative and that instead, you could teach by taking subjects which seemingly were ahistorical, which were biologically determined or permanent parts of human existence, and look at their history. So, we wanted to do love, death, work and play, and we never got to work and play, but we do love and death. They are unabashedly great books but always great books, not just out of the western tradition. So, only because we never found an Africanist who wanted to do it, was interested in it, and because Don is such a good fellow, we do Japan rather than China. Steve Reinert did it once, and we did Islamic texts. There are great Islamic texts on love and death, no problem at all. It was initially supposed to be four sections of twenty-five students each, each one taught by a professor, sit out under Willie the Silent there and the yum yum tree [laughter] and think, but that never happened. [Editor's Note: The bronze statue of William the Silent, Prince of Orange, resides on Voorhees Mall, where it has stood since 1928 as a reminder of Rutgers' Dutch origins.]

The first time we ever taught it, Susman and Stoianovich had a big fight, and Susman refused to ever teach again jointly. So, that was the end of the U.S. component. You don't mess with Susman. It was in 1983 maybe. We used to meet at Susman's house for lunch to plan the course. Then, Traian stayed in it until he retired really, and especially when I was department chair, I didn't have time to do more than occasionally guest lecture, so Traian and Roden ran it. Then, since 1993, well, 95, when I came back, I've always taught it with Don Roden. We look at great books, Tale of Genji [by Murasaki Shikibu] or Dante's La Vita Nuova, whatever, and the students read them. I guess they're a little baffled, and since we don't have any TAs, we use a very active discussion board on Sakai. The class has gone back to very traditional blue book exams, because we can't keep track of plagiarism otherwise. So, the students write journals in which they respond, and we keep them short and simple enough that there isn't so much a problem of plagiarism. Then, we do very tough [exams]. You get a quote, and you've got to be able to identify who said it and in what setting, which is hard to do, write an essay. Roden and I do all the grading ourselves. The students seem to prefer that. The stuff is esoteric enough that our TAs might not be very, occasionally, they've given us a TA, and they really don't know how to grade it. So, it's just easier to do it ourselves. So, I very much enjoy teaching. Don's strengths compliment my weaknesses or however you want to say it, so he's the king of the soft C and, "Give him another chance," and I go off to Croatia in the middle of May and let him [laughter] handle the dredge. I do all of the setting up the Sakai and all that stuff.

PC: Was this an outgrowth of the mini-courses?

RB: No, mini-courses were separate. Mini-courses were a Susman [idea], they came out of the Susman report in 1969 to Arnold Grobman, the Rutgers College dean, and had a different purpose, which got itself lost by the mid-'70s. So, this was independent and different and was a response to early concerns with multi-culturalism and particularly with the abolition of the requirement of U.S. and European history and its substitution with this weird system that we have now of four courses in three areas kind of thing.

PC: Tell us about your mini-courses. You taught the Mafia in history and …

RB: I taught Mafia in history. I taught partisan movements in Eastern Europe, concentrated on Yugoslavia.

PC: What was your Mafia course like?

RB: I used Anton Blok, The Mafia of a Sicilian Village, which was probably too difficult for the students, but then I used Francis Ianni, A Family Business. I never liked those whiny books, like Richard Gambino, Blood of My Blood, so I didn't use those. You can only do so much in a Mafia class. The Mafia class had three hundred students or something. It was huge.

SH: I heard it was extremely popular.

RB: I'd take an attitude that Mafia's largely an invention of the FBI and J. Edgar Hoover [director of the FBI] in order to cover up for doing other things they really want, like beating up on black people and Communists and so forth and that the formation's perfectly reasonable. So, my emphasis was, "Why did it disappear under fascism?" which at least provokes students to think, "Why is that? Mussolini was so good at knocking off Mafia and nobody else was able to do this. A bunch of semiliterate Sicilians managed to do all of this," big charts. So, I would show government charts of all of this stuff. That was largely a historical and cultural invention.

PC: This was a pass/fail course.

RB: Yes, they were pass/fail.

PC: I remember my own experience. Did it work?

RB: I liked doing it, and I think that within the context of 120 credits, it was a very good way for students to learn. I kept it so serious that I didn't even bother to show films like the Godfather, but now I would. [laughter] I don't see any reason not to do that. I still include Mafia for a couple of classes in my "History of Italy's Peoples," because I think it is a defining aspect of how people understand Italian history and culture. People know very little about its actual origins in Sicily and why it developed, so that was fun. Partisan movements, that was combined with research that I was doing, and I used mostly World War II manuals on how to fight against guerrillas and control what they were doing. I was very interested in conflicts in Italy between

partisans and their opposition to civilian people, so that was, obviously, had very many fewer students. I can't remember whether it was thirty or forty, but that kind of number, not three hundred. So, I liked doing that [and] could have expanded it into a semester course at some point, but I became more interested in peaceful people, relatively peaceful, like saints, [laughter] so I stopped doing [that].

PC: My memories, other than my own classes, are all of Jim Reed's, with his 450 students over in some big lecture hall over on Busch campus. He did …

RB: "Sex and Sports."

PC: "Sex and Sports," yes. [laughter]

RB: But without the context of an undergraduate curriculum in which such things made sense, they became silly.

PC: Yes, I think that is fair to say.

SH: You referred to the fragmenting of the department. How would you like to see that changed or tightened?

RB: I wouldn't describe the department as fragmented. I'd call it a little bit disoriented and a little bit disengaged, and I think that's a problem. Maybe the New Jersey legislature making everybody reside in New Jersey's going to help. [laughter] I don't know. The sense of engagement just isn't there, and that may be a permanent shift because of the wider and more general change in orientation to discipline, rather than university. We've always lost very good people to very good places. That was true in the '60s. It's true now. That's, in itself, not the end of the world, but I think the sense of engagement and shared work is tough to achieve. We run faculty brown bags, and there's some turnout, but eighty percent don't and I would say have never been there. Our graduate students are largely absentee. Part of that's the function of computer; you do all your work elsewhere. You don't have to go to the library. You don't have to be in Van Dyck. There's no advantage to any of those things, except for a few people like me that still live in walking distance, and they used to come into work to work. [laughter] It just doesn't happen.

SH: How much attention is paid to the *US News and World Report* rating of colleges?

RB: Well, that kind of rating is so difficult to ascertain exactly what's being rated, that I think people are concerned with the ups and downs. "Did you gain ten places or lose ten places?" To mishmash together Princeton versus Rutgers, I don't know what the point is. I don't know where that's going. I'm not very trustful even of the better ones like the ratings of graduate programs. "We're at twenty-fifth or twenty-fourth and we've been a twenty-fifth or twenty-fourth for twenty years," they just don't reflect the actualities. When we come right down to it, Sandra, the history department has two current outstanding graduate trainers of students, and that's Bonnie Smith and Jackson Lears. They are more important each than all the rest, some work in African American, some, and that's tough work to do, so they ought to get double credit for everything

they do. That's about it. That's not a lot for the amount of resources that we put into it. I also worry that our impact on undergraduates is not what it ought to be. I don't mind that I go to a football game, and a student can't remember my name, even though I remember the student's name and it was a class of two hundred. [laughter] I'll let that go. It's okay. [laughter]

I have other thoughts. I just don't feel that we're having the kind of impact on the students that we once did, and it's not a matter of nostalgia for the good days of this or that. The situation's changed. I think classes matter less to students. I think faculty matter less to them and that they've withdrawn from us and we've withdrawn from them, so that both are happening. It is unfortunate, because I don't that's true at all institutions. I think other institutions, even state ones, have done better than Rutgers at maintaining.

SH: Do you think the corporate atmosphere has impacted that or the fact that there are not the smaller colleges to identify with?

RB: I don't think you'd have to solve it with smaller colleges, but I think that the twenty-year erosion of funding and the stealing of funds from undergraduate activities that might be connected to academic work. I think we have an enormous problem in students working, not because they can't do the class, but they can't do anything around the class and [work], as well as the disengagement of the faculty. I believe that is less of a problem. I've taught within the last ten years at the University of Colorado, I thought the students were more involved. They were smoking dope and burning up couches, but they lived in Boulder [laughter] and you could find them and you'd see them around, and it was not unreasonable to have a greater [involvement]. I think Wisconsin does better than we do at the undergraduate level. I think Delaware does better, from what I hear from students. This is just vibes. I have a granddaughter who's applying to colleges and friends, as they get older, and did apply. So, the honors program's doing better. If there's any example of what works, it would be the honors program and the kids that like that. So, what are they? They're in a similar dorm. They have an advisor that they can actually talk to. They have access to some small classes, and they're more interested in studies themselves. How would you do that with the other seven thousand students that are admitted?

PC: Okay.

SH: The question was as you begin to look at retirement, what are you planning …

RB: I am not planning to retire, because I love what I'm doing, especially the teaching but also the research. I'm on one project now that is proving stubborn and recalcitrant, but I may be able to figure it out, Sicilian widows, but I'm doing several other projects that interest me greatly. I don't have any plan to retire, so long as my health allows me to do so. The only thing that would've induced me to retire or do some kind of phased retirement, which I think I would have liked better, is to be able to spend more time in Europe. I do like living in Europe better than I like living in New Jersey, but I'm so pulled by [family obligations]. Currently, still my mother-in-law in her mid-nineties, my wife has to help with her and five grandchildren, who turn out to be needful [laughter] in various ways that I can't even get time now. I'm not teaching this semester. In theory, I could be anywhere, and I'm here in New Brunswick and I have meetings

every week for the next six weeks. I can't even take a week just to go look at fall leaves or something. I'm planning a super-busy teaching schedule in the spring. My doctor says, "It's not good for your health a person like you, to retire." So, I can't imagine not doing what I'm doing, and in that sense, I don't have any plan to retire.

SH: I thank you for taking time to talk with us, and we reserve the right to come back and …

RB: Sure.

SH: Thank you.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SH: What was your involvement in the establishment of the Rutgers Oral History Archives?

RB: As chair, I was an opportunist, and whether it was Ann Gordon who came in and said, "I've got a project and money and no place to put it," and, "Could I have a home?" [I said], "All right, I'll put you in the basement somewhere." When John [Whiteclay] Chambers [II] and Tom Kindre, I can't remember exactly the arrangement of things, but John did ask me, it was the year that we had Ambrose, Steve Ambrose, here. [I said], "Oh, sure. Oral history of Rutgers'd be great." So, we needled Tom Kindre a little about having had his group waste money on some stupid fireplace mantle from the Class of 1942, and, "It'd be much better to do this oral history thing." I sprung for lunch over at the faculty club with Rutgers money, so we wouldn't have to nickel and dime the guy right from the outset. It seemed to me to be a great idea. If he's got the energy to do it and he wants to raise up some money to get it going, that seems fine with me. John Chambers took a much more direct and involved interest, but I was always very supportive about it. It just seemed to me that when people want to do things that are of interest in a historical setting, the history department ought to be supporting it. So, I would say it was that and it seemed to me to be very fine academically and very reasonable to get this oral history. Kurt Piehler was involved early on. He was another one doing … [Editor's Note: G. Kurt Piehler served as the first director of the Rutgers Oral History Archives of World War II from 1994 to 1998.]

SH: He was a post-doctoral candidate.

RB: … Oral history stuff. I think even before that, I knew Kurt. So, it just seemed, why not? Every reason to do it, and none not to do it. I'm a can-do person. I don't ask [laughter] why we don't want to do this.

SH: Was there any thought that the alumni behind this would also be able to continue funding it?

RB: Well, the assumption was that the more funding we could get from the alumni directed towards the history department, whether for this project or more generally, the better. I know I also had lunch with this sort of military-looking guy that wanted to do some ancient Greek

something-or-other or another one. I even tried to nickel and dime Mary Blanchard, but she got upset. [laughter]

PC: She has given money to RCHA [Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis].

RB: Yes, but not enough. [laughter]

SH: That is enough. [laughter] I will conclude with thanking you for that. There have been discussions about who was in that initial cadre of those who began to investigate if this was a possibility. There was money that came from the Rutgers College dean. I think it was Jim Reed.

RB: Yes.

PC: It would have been Jim Reed.

RB: Yes, you could always grab a few dollars from Jim.

SH: [laughter] Did you have any interaction with Stephen Ambrose?

RB: Yes.

SH: Because he was at the RCHA.

RB: Yes, but I was very heavily involved. I brought Ambrose over to the Board of Governors to give a talk, say what wonderful things the RCHA was doing. No, we featured him heavily and exploited him as much as we could. [laughter] [Editor's Note: In 1993-1994, the RCHA hosted senior fellow Stephen Ambrose, famous historian and professor at the University of New Orleans.]

SH: Were there other guest lecturers over the years? When did the RCHA begin?

RB: The RCHA begins in 1989 [1988] with Gillis. As chair of the department, I was always very actively involved in it, went regularly, ran its budget, wouldn't let Gillis do that. [laughter] Vicki [de Grazia] didn't want to. [laughter] That was beneath her dignity to deal with things like that. [laughter] It was a source for funneling money and speakers, especially since we were stripping the history department of that kind of stuff.

SH: The other affiliate departments of the history department are the IEEE History Center.

RB: [Yes]. There's another one I engineered, thank you. [laughter] [Editor's Note: The IEEE History Center studies, promotes and preserves the history of information and technology.]

SH: We talked about Ann Gordon.

RB: Ann Gordon, Stanton/Anthony.

SH: Stanton/Anthony Papers. Then, there is the Thomas Edison Papers Project. [Editor's Note: Edited by Ann D. Gordon, the Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony Papers Project seeks to locate and publish the papers of these two influential American figures.]

RB: Now, that's before my time. Thomas Edison Papers were put in place in the late '70s. [Editor's Note: Since 1978, the Thomas A. Edison Papers Project has endeavored to turn the five million pages of documents that make up the collection into an educational resource.]

PC: That would have been when we hired Reese Jenkins.

RB: Yes.

PC: Who hired Reese Jenkins?

RB: So, Reese Jenkins is 1978, and that was a provostial thing from the outset. Tilden [Edelstein] was very significant in that. It was not any particular department, even though it sat in, no, it didn't, because by the time the Edison Papers actually exist, that's when Grob wants to hide from the students, so he runs to the third floor and puts the Edison Papers where obviously the history department should be, if you ever wanted to meet a student, which is right on the first floor.

PC: I have absolutely no memory of that.

RB: Well, you don't because there was no place in Bishop House, and initially the Edison Papers were nowhere and Reese was by himself. By the time they actually got started, that's when Grob is in charge of things.

PC: You are right, because I do remember them being on the first floor.

RB: Yes.

PC: I do not remember Reese being hired.

RB: Oh, no. I remember the issues over the hiring of Reese, and McCormick, the elder, with his normal judiciousness saying that this seemed like a good enough appointment.

SH: When did the history department move from Bishop House to Van Dyck?

RB: In 1981.

SH: 1981.

RB: '81-'82.

PC: There was something, it's not a transition, it was at least some break, because I remember we moved downtown.

RB: No, that's 1989.

PC: That is later.

RB: That's when I'm chair. That's when they decided the building was a wreck.

PC: There was asbestos in it.

RB: Yes.

PC: They had to get the asbestos out.

SH: Out of what building?

PC: Out of Van Dyck.

RB: Out of Van Dyck.

PC: We moved downtown to what is now Mason Gross [School of the Arts].

SH: Okay.

RB: Yes, that's the first full year that I was chair.

SH: That is important to document.

PC: I just remember vaguely that we were down there, and it was a hassle for a year.

RB: It driveled into the second year.

PC: Right, because Harold [Poor?] was undergraduate chair at that time. I probably was graduate chair. I don't remember, but Harold was definitely, no, Ginny [Yans] was …

RB: No.

PC: Or was I?

RB: I think you stayed on for a year and then we recycled to Ginny.

PC: Yes, but definitely Harold was. I remember working with him. He was in bad shape at that point, so everybody pitched in to help out.

SH: What about the Center for Jewish Studies [the Allen and Joan Bildner Center for the Study of Jewish Life]?

RB: That's later. That's late '90s. That's Ziva [Galili]. Maybe she's no longer department chair, but then she's working in the graduate school. They started a little earlier, so first they have to destroy the Jewish Studies Department in order to create the Jewish Life Center, which they do. So, they get rid of the old birds who are teaching Hebrew.

SH: Within the history department?

RB: No, no, no. They're in Hebraic studies, which is a little dumpy building right opposite the library. So, they get rid of them in a power ploy and with the promise they can raise lots of money. They get Yael Zerubavel to become the first director, and they do raise a lot of money. The get big bucks from Bildner and roll on from there.

SH: Were there any other history efforts that wound up in, say, Women's Studies at Douglass?

RB: I don't think so, Sandra.

SH: Okay. Were there any that got away that you wish you had not lost?

RB: Well, I think that the movement of Gerry Grob to the health institute and the failure to have any history in that health institute until Keith Wailoo came and now went was unfortunate, but it reflected Grob's lack of interest in history, so that I don't know that much could have been done about that. I don't know that there were major opportunities that we turned down. Gary Puckrein would have been interested in more entrepreneurial work with the history department as a base, but it isn't clear that he was going to do anything serious. I thought that the Black Atlantic Project [at the Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis] could have been made more stable and permanent, but the key players, first Brent Edwards and then Herman Bennett, just took off, so that didn't happen.

SH: What about things like Caribbean studies or Hispanic studies?

RB: Well, that was a problem. Pedro Caban was interested primarily in Pedro Caban, and then Luis Martinez-Fernandez didn't get much done. So, the cooperations there were not as good as they could have been, and that department is still fairly weak. I think that's true of Latino studies generally at Rutgers. We're not as strong as we should be.

SH: Are they affiliated with the history department?

RB: Many of their people are. The chair of the department is now up for promotion and our department does, so he's got a quarter line or something. So, there's an affiliation, but there isn't a building in the way--Jewish studies would be a more successful example. We have a real piece of Nancy Sinkoff. We have a real piece of Paola Tartakoff.

PC: Yael [Zerubavel].

RB: Yael.

PC: Maybe Gary [Rendsburg]. I am not sure. I think Gary may be a line in our history department …

RB: Maybe as a quarter.

PC: Yes. So, we are as connected to them as anybody, except maybe Women's and Gender Studies.

RB: Jews have a history, but they also do other things. We're very dominant in …

SH: Are there other joint lines?

RB: Sure, in Women's Studies.

SH: Are there any that you were pivotal in bringing into existence?

RB: Well, we worked closely in developing these fifteen new hires. Women's Studies was very important. We never got anywhere with Africana Studies, because Deborah [Gray White] didn't want to be any part of them. So, we managed to sink that, and they've now moved into language, which is interesting, but there's no historical [study]. [There is] Kim Butler in Brazil, but that's about it. We're failed, not that we necessarily should've, but we failed to develop much of a political science-history connection that would be an obvious one, where you might have more interconnection.

SH: The joint majors are with poli-sci and …

RB: The biggest numbers are poli-sci. There's a tiny one in French, a tiny one in classics.

SH: Again, my thanks.

RB: You're very welcome, Sandra.

SH: As I say, we reserve the right to come back.

RB: Okay.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

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