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NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH GERALD POMPER

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins the second interview session with Professor Gerald Pomper on November 26, 2018, in Highland Park, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you again, Dr. Pomper, for sitting down with me.

Gerald Pomper: I'm very happy to do it.

SI: Last time we met, we went into the early history of Livingston. We talked about some of the innovations that were done there, in terms of faculty-student relations, and you were building up the Political Science Department there. That got us into the early 1970s. From what I understand, Ernest Lynton, the Founding Dean, left soon thereafter.

[Editor's Note: In 1965, the Curriculum Planning Committee, under the guidance of Founding Dean Dr. Ernest A. Lynton, undertook the task of designing Livingston College as an innovative, experimental institution dedicated to the teaching of the social sciences. By 1969, after demonstrations by African-American students at Rutgers protesting racial inequalities, Livingston planners expanded the college's mission to emphasize diversity and began to recruit and enroll minority students. The Towers dormitories on the Livingston Campus are named in Dr. Lynton's honor.]

GP: Right, and he went to the University of Massachusetts, became Executive Director or Dean or something, President--I'm not even sure of his title. [Editor's Note: Dr. Lynton served as the Vice President of Academic Affairs at the University of Massachusetts at Boston.]

SI: Then, the next Dean to come in was Mesthene. [Editor's Note: Dr. Emmanuel George Mesthene, a Professor of Philosophy, served as Dean of Livingston College from 1974 to 1977.]

GP: Mesthene, Emmanuel Mesthene, who was a scholar in classics. He was very controversial, because he was much more directive, much less adept politically, and things were getting tougher. The economy was not in great shape; the state economy, even less so. So, we had fewer funds, which, of course, always caused problems.

We had more people, therefore, more contention, and questions about promotions. We were still in a separate system, where each college nominated people for promotion, but, then, they had to go through University levels. We weren't always successful with that. So, things were tougher.

SI: I want to look at those years between the reorganization in 1981 and this early 1970s period. First, in the Political Science Department, what did that translate into? Did you have to change your vision for the Department's future at all?

GP: Well, when Livingston started, these were separate departments, and there were duplications in appointments. Each of our four colleges, or five, wanted to hire an African politics specialist and there simply wasn't the clientele for that, but, for a time, we had contending [hiring initiatives]. In fact, Livingston had two African politics specialists, and we had a considerable African-American population. We thought that would appeal to those students. In fact, it didn't. So, we had a lot of African-American scholars in various fields, but in terms of African politics, [there] just wasn't the interest in it.

There wasn't even the interest in African-American studies as a major, even among our black students. They, like the white students, were interested in career advancement and not particularly ideology. The faculty were more interested in the ideologies. So, there were a number of political conflicts within the faculty, issues like--well, one funny issue was, we had a free elective system, where students could create their own majors. Some of us pointed out that you could graduate from Livingston, theoretically, by taking forty courses in Marxism. [laughter] Well, Marxism is an important tradition, but it didn't deserve to be all of a student's curriculum. It never was, but it was an example of the distortions.

Then, there were the problems of students not being able to take courses in other colleges. There were "trade barriers," and that seemed silly. So, there was a movement from the University level to try and get more cooperation. We created sort of "free-trade zones," where you could take courses at other colleges, but there were barriers, and this was moving the entire system toward some sort of consolidation, rather than separate colleges.

One important step in that was the creation of a position called "New Brunswick Chairman" of each department, which was originally just a coordinating position. As time went on, there's more authority given to the New Brunswick Chairman, for example, at least the opportunity to comment, if not veto, on promotions in any of the departments. I became the New Brunswick Chairman in, I guess, 1973. So, I was at the center of that controversy.

SI: How do you, just from your perspective as--I think that was called the "Super Chair?"

GP: Right, yes.

SI: How do you deal with all the competing needs?

GP: Well, you have fights and you get votes, eventually, and you recruit allies. In the case of Political Science, there was a great deal of agreement between the Livingston Department's direction, which was more progressive and younger people, and the Douglass Department's, which was a small, but very good, group of younger faculty. Two of the people who were there have just celebrated their fifty years' anniversary at Rutgers. So, there was that kind of alliance, and, as against that, there was most of the people at Rutgers College, not all, and the one person who was at University College.

There was some pretty tense deliberations on different things, from curriculum at the graduate level to promotions, and you fought it out. You won votes and you made appeals, if necessary, to the central administration. We won most of those cases, but it was contentious and, eventually, time took its toll on the older people. Then, the University reorganization in 1980-'81 consolidated the departments, in part, and that went even further with the McCormick resolutions in 1996 [2006], yes.

[Editor's Note: In an effort to transform Rutgers into a leading public research institution, in 1981, the University merged the faculties of the independent colleges into a single centralized unit, the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS). Despite the reorganization and the increasing

power of the central administration, Rutgers College, Douglass College, University College, Livingston College and Cook College continued to exist until 2006, when the liberal arts colleges merged into the School of Arts and Sciences and Cook College became the School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. Dr. Richard L. McCormick served as Rutgers University President from 2002 to 2012.]

I had been chairman of a committee appointed by the New Brunswick Provost, Joe Potenza, that was going to look at undergraduate education throughout New Brunswick. We came out with a report for greater consolidation. That was supported by the Provost, but, on the day we issued our report, the President, Fran Lawrence, by this time President, abolished the office of Provost. [laughter] So, we had some support for that, '92 or '93. Then, when Dick McCormick, the younger, became President, he adopted many of those recommendations in his own plan, and then, in the mid-'90s [2000s], created the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Joseph A. Potenza, Professor *Emeritus* of Chemistry, first came to Rutgers in 1968. He served as Provost of the New Brunswick Campus when the office was abolished in 1996. Dr. Francis Lawrence served as the President of Rutgers from 1990 to 2002.]

So, there are no separate departments now. There were people located in different places, but they were physically moved together. That had happened in the '80s. We moved to Hickman Hall, and then, the authority moved there as well. So, by the late '90s, there was *a* Political Science Department, just as there was a single department for the other disciplines throughout New Brunswick.

SI: When the first reorganization, under President Bloustein and Alec Pond, was being talked about and taking shape, was that something that was initially resisted at Livingston?

[Editor's Note: Dr. Edward J. Bloustein served as Rutgers University President from 1971 until his death in 1989. Dr. T. Alexander Pond served as Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer from 1982 until Dr. Bloustein's death in 1989, when he took over as Acting President. In 1990, he was appointed University Professor in the Physics Department.]

GP: Resisted by many people at Livingston, not all. Most of the Political Science Department was for it. I was Super Chair for most of that time, and I was personally in favor of it. Then, there was a question about, "Where would we be physically located?" I made a deal with the then Provost, Ken Wheeler, that we would support the reorganization, but we wanted to be located on the Douglass Campus. So, he made the deal and said, "Okay." We would move to Hickman Hall. [Editor's Note: Dr. Kenneth Wheeler became the first New Brunswick Provost in 1972 and served until 1987.]

SI: Why did you do that?

GP: Well, it's a much more comfortable place. It was near the Eagleton Institute, where we had relations, and there were faculty at Eagleton. So, it was intellectually sensible. It was a much more convenient place. Livingston then was a bare kind of place in terms of physical accommodations. You wouldn't recognize it today, with a Starbucks and a movie theater, and so

on. [Editor's Note: The Eagleton Institute of Politics was established at Rutgers in 1956 with an endowment from Florence Eagleton.]

SI: Sure. [laughter]

GP: It's become a prime location, but, then, it was a pretty barren place. The best thing it had was parking spaces, [laughter] but, other than that, it didn't have much accommodation. The architecture was pretty bad. The construction was defective, in part because construction workers hated all the left wingers there. There were things like concrete poured down electrical conduits, so [that] they wouldn't work, and problems of that sort.

SI: Wow.

GP: Early in the years of Livingston, soon after we opened, two or three years after we opened, some developer came by and spoke to Ernest and other people. He wanted to develop a strip mall. So, there would be commercial outlets, maybe coffee shops, maybe a movie theater.

Some of us thought, "That's a terrific idea," because there was very little for the students to do, other than dormitory kind of stuff and dormitory food, but our left wingers were very much against it, because this was a sign of incipient capitalism. [laughter] They didn't want that, so, the plan never went anywhere, until many years later.

I remember coming to the Livingston Campus, well, about three or four years ago, and I just couldn't recognize it. I couldn't even find the dorms, and then, there's all this, the Business School expansion. The architecture there isn't great, but the food is a lot better.

SI: I know, at some point, the idea was at least kicked around of putting a fraternity row over on the Livingston Campus. Was that during your time there?

GP: Well, there were all kinds of ideas. At one time, it was going to be a social science campus. They would move the Economics Department there, keep the Political Science Department there, the Sociology Department would all be moved there, etc. Nobody wanted that, especially the Economics Department, had this nice home on the Rutgers, College Avenue, Campus. Eventually, it got sorted out, but they were all over the place.

SI: One thing I am always interested in is how the actual bureaucracy worked in different periods. First, when you were a Super Chair, was there also a chair in the department at Livingston that you worked with?

GP: Yes.

SI: Were you both?

GP: Yes, for a while.

SI: All right.

GP: And, in each of the other college departments.

SI: Okay. There were basically five chairs, including the Super Chair.

GP: Right.

SI: Okay. If you wanted to get something, like a line, something like that, were you working mostly with the Dean's Office or the Provost?

GP: Well, at first, it went through the individual deans. The lines were allocated to the colleges and the college dean then would allocate them to individual departments. Then, it was a matter of defining the line. That was a process in which the "Super Chief" had some powers, but not controlling, until the '81 reorganizations, where we had a chairman, and then, we moved, physically, like everybody else did. So, that became more centralized, but there were still colleges and there was still a college department for a while, until the consolidation was finished. Then, in '96 [2006], there was no longer colleges with any budgetary responsibility, and then, it went just through the Dean of Arts and Sciences.

SI: There was Mesthene, and then, I think there was somebody …

GP: There was Bob Jenkins.

SI: Okay.

GP: Frank Jennifer was there very briefly. Then, Bob Jenkins, who had been an Associate Dean at Livingston, became the Dean for a long time. Since then, I guess--what's her name?--Kathy Scott, would've been a dean in the old days, I don't know what she's called now. She's sort of a coordinator for Livingston, but she doesn't have budget authority. The lines come through the Dean of Arts and Sciences. [Editor's Note: Dr. W. Robert Jenkins, Professor of Biology, served as Dean of Livingston College from 1977 to 1990.]

SI: Up until the time of the reorganization, how would you characterize your relationship with the Deans you worked with?

GP: Well, I worked very well with all the deans at Livingston and [the] first Dean of Arts and Sciences, a psychologist, was very good. 1981, when this consolidation was taking place, I was informally asked if I would be the Dean of Arts and Sciences. I had been offered a visiting position at Oxford University, Nuffield College, just for a year. So, it was a choice, "Did I want to go to Oxford," which I did, "or, did I want to become a dean?" [Editor's Note: Dr. David Mechanic, Professor of Sociology, served as the first Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences until 1984.]

I decided I wanted to go to Oxford, and I told them. Dick McCormick, Sr., was pushing this, that I should become the Dean. I said, "Well, if you can keep it for a year, I'll come back to it." Well, they couldn't do that. They wanted to get going. So, I passed that up, and I never regretted

it. I had a wonderful year at Oxford, met people, spent the year in England and had a terrific time, kids came, either for short term, or my youngest son came with us, went to school at Cherwell, a high school in Oxford. It was terrific for me. So, I don't regret that. It was a very fruitful year and very pleasant, but it essentially ended my administrative rise, [laughter] and didn't want to come back to it and came back to just being a faculty member.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Richard P. McCormick, RC '38, GSNB '40, (father of Rutgers President Richard L. McCormick) enjoyed a distinguished career at Rutgers as a Professor of History, University Historian, Dean of Rutgers College (1974-77) and a scholar of New Jersey history, Rutgers history and US political history.]

Half my line was moved to Eagleton. I established my own office there, and the rest of my time at Rutgers, that was where I was located physically. Hickman Hall was just across the lawn and I was an active member of the Political Science Department, but half my line, half my salary, was then coming from Eagleton.

SI: Before we leave Livingston, I always hear stories about the Faculty Chamber there. It was a very lively organization. Are there any memories of any debates there, or just of how things worked?

GP: Oh, so many--I mean, we can go on for hours. [laughter] There was a proposal to name the college Martin Luther King College, after the assassination, and other black leaders, and Paul Robeson was a name that came up. People said, "Well, distinguished Rutgers alumnus." I think he was the second black student, or known black student, at Rutgers. So, there was a proposal to do that. [Editor's Note: Paul Robeson, Rutgers Class of 1919 valedictorian and All-American football player, earned prominence through his work as an actor, singer and civil rights leader.]

Martin Luther King's name came up and, obviously, this was symbolic, and so on. I had my doubts that this was a good idea, that Livingston welcomed black students--the first college to really actively recruit black students--but, by the mid-'70s, all the colleges were active. There were University programs, and I had something to do with that, too. I didn't see the usefulness of naming one college as "the black college."

I remember calling--surprised I could get through--to Coretta Scott King and said, "Do you know anything about Livingston College?" I was thinking. She said, "Oh, I know all about it." Well, she didn't know anything about it, but she endorsed the idea, but it didn't go through, yes. [Editor's Note: Civil Rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee. His widow, Coretta Scott King, continued on as civil rights activist for decades afterwards.]

We did do things--like, I was on the University Senate for a while as Chairman of the Admissions Committee. We came up with a proposal to automatically admit to Rutgers the top five percent of kids in any public high school in the state. I thought this was a way to get around, or to deal with, the problem of inequitable schools, you know what I mean? Newark schools, Camden schools were not the equivalent of Highland Park or Metuchen or Short Hills, and so on.

I said, "Well, these kids aren't responsible for the bad environment they live in. So, let's say, if you succeed in *your* environment, you should be able to go to the State University."

So, we had this plan to automatically admit either top five or ten percent, regardless of what you do on the SAT scores or something like that. I thought it was a great idea, yes. It was turned down by the Admissions Office, in part, I thought, because they didn't want to lose their control. They could now make decisions on every kid who was applying; if you said, "Automatically, the first five percent or top ten percent," they wouldn't have any work to do, other than to record the thing and send out a letter. So, they vetoed it, and there were things about, "Well, you don't know how well they're doing," and so forth, and so on.

So, that didn't get anywhere, but there have been other efforts, certainly, toward recruiting black students. I think the University has been sincerely pursuing that, and it's shown up. Soon, there were more non-white students at other colleges than Livingston, and Livingston pioneered in that. In so many things, Livingston pioneered and other people then imitated, but the end result was a good one. We got more non-white students, better represented the state population.

SI: One of the things you talked about in the first interview as being really attractive, personally, at Livingston was the innovation in teaching, the different styles there. Do you feel like that tradition continued over your time at Livingston, then, into the Faculty of Arts and Sciences era?

GP: Yes, I think so. I think there's been a very healthy influence, both in the expansion of disciplines--I think we mentioned that last time. There was no Anthropology Department, there was no Computer Science Department, there was no Women's Studies Department, and so on. Livingston started all those, and then, other people imitated them. Computer Science Department, of course, became internationally famous, Anthropology, from our first appointments, was internationally famous, Comparative Literature, Chinese, Women's Studies.

One of the things that was great about Livingston was the faculty--not just individually smart, but it was a truly diverse faculty. People got to like and work with each other across ethnic lines, and they became friendships without surrendering the ethnicity. You talk to a person, he wasn't ashamed of being an African-American, or so on, but there was an understanding and friendship, really, across these lines, that we wanted for the students. I don't think the students ever got as integrated as the faculty, but the faculty was, in important senses, and, certainly, in terms of gender, a large women's component.

That hadn't been true of Rutgers College or Rutgers University or any other schools in the country. The Political Science Department hired its first woman in the mid-'60s. The woman came into a meeting and, sort of, it shifted, "Oh, there's a woman here now." That sort of consciousness, or unconsciousness, has passed on the faculty level, and I think Livingston had something to do with it.

The faculty meetings were always interesting and controversial. I think I said last time that, for a while, I was on both the Rutgers College faculty and the Livingston faculty. Sometimes, in one day, I would go from one faculty meeting at one school to the other. It was like being in a different world. I would say exactly the same things; at Livingston, "Oh, there's a conservative

voice." Then, I'd go to Rutgers College meetings, they said, "Oh, there's a radical liberal voice." I'd be saying exactly the same thing. [laughter]

SI: Tell me a little bit about your teaching. What courses did you teach? Are there any interesting experiences that stand out?

GP: Well, for the most part, I teach in American politics, but there was always the opportunity to do different kinds of things. One thing, the first couple years, I taught a joint course on ethnic politics, ethnic groups in America. There were four of us who did that. There was a Protestant, white Protestant guy who had grown up in New Jersey, there was a black sociologist who was also from the area, and then, there was me, and another Jewish guy, a teaching assistant. Then, for a time, there was a guy from Philadelphia in History, Seth Scheiner. [Editor's Note: Dr. Seth M. Scheiner, Professor *Emeritus* of History, served on the Rutgers faculty from 1968 to 1998 and, previously, taught at Temple University from 1962 to 1968.]

So, there were four of us teaching this, and we taught and we focused on four groups--Puerto Ricans, Italian-Americans, Jews, and African-Americans. We mixed it up, so [that] each section, each of the four of us was doing the major lectures on a different group from our own. So, the white Protestant guy would be lecturing on Jews, which he didn't know much about; I was lecturing on Puerto Ricans, so, I knew very little about them; and the black guy was talking about Italians and he was leading that section. It was a wonderful kind of experience, because we were learning things from each other and about other groups. The obvious thing to do would be, "Well, the Jew will talk about Jews," and so on, but we purposely didn't want to do that, and that was, in itself, a lesson to the students. "You don't have to be Jewish to understand Jews," etc., "and to empathize with them."

I remember, the first time we gave the course, we said, "Well, what are we doing for the last class?" I can't remember who it was, but somebody said, "Why don't we sing a song?" So, it came to the end of the class and we sang, [*God Bless America*], "America, land that I love…" [laughter] The students were absolutely blown [away] by that, and two or three of us had pretty good voices--them, not me. That was a fun experience, but it sort of exemplified what we were trying to do in the class.

Then, in '71, I got a Fulbright to Israel. I spent the year there, and one of the things I did in Israel was, I taught a course on political utopias, which has always been a kind of interest of mine. So, we did Plato and Huxley, and so on, Marx--I don't think we did *Walden Two* [a 1948 utopian novel by B. F. Skinner]--*1984* [by George Orwell (1949)] and the utopias, dystopias, and so on. Then, when I came back to Livingston, I thought, "Why don't I do the same course and see how it goes?" I taught it as a seminar there.

I remember--one of the things that's sad about it is--I had one black student in that class, and you know how seminars go, each week, a different student reports on a different subject, and so on. So, I had one student who I asked him to report on Zionism. When I was in Israel, I said, "Israel was founded as a utopian society. Somebody's got to report on Israel." So, I had an Israeli student, obviously, do that.

When I came back, I asked Henry James, was the black student, a wonderful name, I said, "Why don't you report on Israel?" Well, this centered disharmony between him and Israel, and he was sort of perplexed by it, but he had the fundamental insight that not many people get. When he finally reported, he said, "You know, Israel is the national liberation movement of the Jewish people." "Exactly right, that's a great insight." So, he got something out of it, too.

SI: When you were in Israel, which university were you at?

GP: Tel Aviv.

SI: Okay; any other memories of that year there?

GP: Oh, yes. When I taught the utopia course, the scholars who first came to Israel after the resettlement, and then, independence period were mostly in political theory. So, I was looking wherever I could for Hebrew sources that they could read, but that I could--I didn't read Hebrew or understand Hebrew--but, also, where there were translations available.

It turned out that it was especially in utopian writings and theoretical writings that the Israeli scholars had translated stuff and put stuff together. So, when it came to discussing Israel, they could read the people in Hebrew and I could read it in English, and they're people I'd never heard of--A. D. Gordon. I mean, you probably haven't heard of him, but this is sort of the patron saint of the *kibbutz* movement and the "return to the land," and so on. Well, I only learned that when I was in Israel, but I could learn it in English and they could read it. [Editor's Note: Aaron David Gordon was a Zionist leader and intellectual who lived from 1856 to 1922.]

I do remember, I had a wiseacre student; Israelis tend to be cynical. So, I had three kids--all three kids were kids then--with us. So, this guy, his name is Moshe something, and he obviously had not worked very hard on his report. He was going to talk about these idealistic Zionists. His report is going very badly, and so, I have to save this report. So, I ask him a question, and I say, "Well, tell me, you, of course, have grown up in an Israel that has come after these utopian writings. How do you think Israel today compares to the vision of these utopians?" I thought it was a good question.

He said, "Ah, no similarity. There's no idealism. There's no utopianism. There are no goals, and so forth. It's all materialistic." It's sort of half true, but only half true. So, I have to challenge this, and I say, "Well, I don't know. My kids go to school here." They went to the regular Israeli schools, learned Hebrew there. I said, "My kids go, and I just hear all this idealism and service to the state," and so forth, and so on. *Tzahal*, which is the national armed forces, service [Israel Defense Forces (IDF)], everybody's required to go into the military, except for extreme religious devotees. Even women are drafted, or can serve.

I said, "So, I hear idealism and these goals, at least, all the time." He says, "Well, that's not idealism--that's just necessity." [laughter] I thought it was just a wonderful comment, that he couldn't see what was around him in his own society, as is true [elsewhere]. That's why we read Tocqueville. Tocqueville saw America better than the Americans saw it. So, I remember that,

and good students and fun in it. [Editor's Note: French political scientist and diplomat Alexis de Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America* in 1835 after visiting the United States.]

It's a marvelous country to be in. So much of our history, Christian or Jewish and, now, Muslim, is rooted there. So, it's just so exciting. I'd go to Jerusalem. We were in Tel Aviv, of course, but you could travel very easily. The whole country's the size of New Jersey. You could go to Jerusalem and you walk the *Via Dolorosa* and the very stones are the stones Jesus walked on on the way to crucifixion. It's just mind boggling to think of. So, it was a terrific year, yes. My wife and I loved to travel. Before she died, we had been to fifty countries, on every continent but Antarctica. [Editor's Note: The *Via Dolorosa* is the route from the Antonia Fortress to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the site of Jesus' crucifixion.]

SI: I also want to ask a little bit about your research, because I think we just talked about your dissertation, then, left your research life in the first interview. You have become known for your writings on elections and Presidential politics. Was that mostly where your work was geared in the 1960s and early 1970s?

GP: Yes, my first book was on Presidential nominations. I wrote that shortly after, or started it shortly after, I came to Rutgers. That got published and that got me tenure. Then, I've been doing books on different aspects of American politics, almost entirely. A couple of comparative things--I did something on Israeli politics, an article, obvious where that came from.

Then, in '76, at the suggestion of a teaching assistant at Livingston, who became a close personal friend, he said, "Why don't you do a book on the election?" This is the 1976 election. I had a friend who was a publisher and formed his own publishing company. He said, "What about a book just on the election? We can make it come out right after the election. People will buy it for classes," and so on.

I put together a group and we wrote a book called *The Election of 1976*, which was successful. Then, for every four years until 2000, I would do another book on that election, again, with a group of people. I have copies here if you want to look at them. That's basically what I did. It got more theoretical after a while, and went beyond that--books on parties, books on voting behavior in general, not just on a specific election--and some got noticed. [Editor's Note: *The Election of 1976: Reports and Interpretations* (1977), covered the Presidential contest between the victorious Democratic candidate, Jimmy Carter, and incumbent Republican Gerald Ford.]

But, the book I liked doing the most was a book that was published in 2004, I guess--no, yes, just about 2002, 2004--called *Ordinary Heroes in American Democracy*. This was a semi-popular book, although it was published by Yale, in which the argument was that the real heroes in life are not the people who jump into the river and rescue the child, but the people who, doing their ordinary job, end up with a heroic result. [Editor's Note: The book was published in 2004.]

I started with Peter Rodino, who was Chairman of the Impeachment Committee of the Judiciary Committee that impeached Richard Nixon, and had a couple of wonderful interviews with him, got sort of close to him. He was my example--he was a very ordinary Congressman. He did immigration bills, and so on, but nothing outstanding until there was Nixon and Watergate, and

so on. He was outraged by that. He started an inquiry into the impeachment of Nixon, and managed it so well, he got a third of the Republicans on his committee to endorse the impeachment of Nixon. We talked about how he did that.

Then, the House was ready to formally impeach Nixon, when it became obvious, with the release of the tapes, and so on, that he was going to be convicted, and he resigned. So, people call it an impeachment, but it isn't technically, but it would've been a successful one, because, by then, Nixon had lost the support of even Barry Goldwater and the Republican leadership in the Senate. So, he would've been convicted, and that's why he resigned.

[Editor's Note: Peter Rodino, U. S. Representative from New Jersey's 10th District from 1949 to 1989, served as Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee from 1973 to 1989. President Richard Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974, due to his involvement in the Watergate Scandal.]

So, then, I started with Rodino, but, then, it evolved. I ended up doing a chapter on each institution in American government. So, I had a chapter on the Senate and the person who led the campaign against Joe McCarthy, a Republican, and a justice, illustrating the Judiciary, a Texas judge, a Democrat named Justice, by the way, I believe, Justice. I went down and interviewed him. He wrote the decision which said--still good law--which said you could not bar the children of illegal immigrants from the public schools. Even though they were illegal immigrants, they were children and they were entitled to the protections of the Fourteenth Amendment. Supreme Court upheld that, still good law, and it's still very relevant to the DREAMers and their children.

[Editor's Note: In his book, Dr. Pomper profiles Republican Senator Arthur V. Watkins of Utah, who led the effort to censure Senator Joe McCarthy in 1954. In the 1970 *United States v. Texas* case, Chief Justice William Wayne Justice of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas ordered the desegregation of Texas' public schools. The DREAM Act, introduced in 2001, gave undocumented minors (termed DREAMers) the opportunity to apply for residency and, later, permanent residency in the United States.]

Then, I did something on the bureaucracy. A woman named Frances Kelsey--you might've heard of her--she was in the Food and Drug Administration, typical bureaucrat, fairly obscure. Then, there were some drug trials of a drug called thalidomide, and she didn't like some of the reports she was getting about its effect. She banned it, or got the FDA to ban its importation and use in the United States.

Thalidomide was shown to cause birth defects or distortions of fetuses, and children were being born all over the world, ten thousand or so, without limbs, with arms attached to legs, and so on, horrible stuff. None of that happened in the United States, except for a couple of cases of women who had gone to England to get an abortion. There was no *Roe v. Wade* yet, but she saved agony and lives, and so on. She got the Presidential Medal of Freedom from Kennedy. So, that was my bureaucratic hero, was a woman who was just doing her job.

[Editor's Note: Thalidomide, a painkiller, was being prescribed to pregnant women in other countries; however, Dr. Frances Kelsey, a pharmacologist and reviewer for the FDA, advocated

against it, requesting further studies. Therefore, it was never prescribed in the United States. Dr. Kelsey was awarded the President's Award for Distinguished Federal Civilian Service by President Kennedy.]

So, then, it continued, and I did something on political parties--[newspaper publisher] Thurlow Weed, who was the person who had a lot to do with the nomination of Lincoln to the Presidency--and ended up with social movements--John Lewis and his role in the Civil Rights Movement--got to interview him. That was a great honor and very illuminating. [Editor's Note: John Lewis, U.S. Representative for Georgia's 5th District since 1987, was a Civil Rights activist and leader in the 1960s.]

So, that was my favorite book. It didn't go very far and it didn't have great sales or anything, but it did have a second paperback edition after 9/11. I added a chapter on that--used to have a poster, the Post Office had a postal stamp honoring the heroes of 9/11, the firemen, and so on. I talked about the heroes, and these were my modern examples, because the heroes of 9/11 were the firemen and the cops and the rescue workers. So, that was my illustration of true heroism and exploration of it, yes.

Meanwhile, I did the other things and the books. My last book on a Presidential election was the Election of 2000, which was an interesting election. [laughter] Then, I've done chapters in other people's books in the subsequent elections, in '04, '08, '12, and '16. I just reached an agreement to do one, and I do a chapter. [Editor's Note: The Election of 2000, between Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Al Gore, became known for its prolonged ballot recounts in Florida.]

There's always been a competing series. My book was called *The Election of X*, and somebody else imitated soon after. He would call it *The Elections of X*, [laughter] more successful commercially than the new books that I've contributed to. So, I've just reached an agreement with him. I'm going to do a chapter in this guy's book for 2020, and what I'm going to do is not just the Election of 2020 specifically. I'm going to make it a fifty or sixty-year retrospective on what's happened to American Presidential elections during the time I've been writing on them, and so, that'll be 2020. Hopefully, I'll be alive. I'll be eighty-five. I sort of see that as the final significant scholarly work I'm going to do. I'm looking forward to it. I've got to get there first.

SI: How has the analysis changed over time? It seems like the amount of data has increased, obviously, different sources. What have been the biggest changes in research in your field?

GP: Well, it's become highly mathematical. I had no quantitative training in graduate school. I went to Princeton, which was really a backward program in those days. I didn't know that. I was admitted to a number of graduate programs, including Yale. My advisor--I was at undergraduate at Columbia--and they have a common date of notification. So, I remember getting six admissions [letters]. I applied to six schools--I got admitted to all of them. I had three roommates. They opened my letters, woke me up, handing me the letters, and so on.

So, it was this cornucopia. I was getting Yale and Princeton and Oregon--I don't think I applied to Harvard--but a number of really good schools. So, I didn't know what to do, and Princeton offered me the most money. So, I spoke to my mentor at Columbia, and he said, "Well, where

do you want to go?" I said, "I don't know, but Princeton is offering me the most money." He says, "Well, maybe you should go there."

I've always been annoyed, at least, that he didn't tell me to go to Yale, because I didn't know anything about these programs, but Yale was becoming *the* leading school in political science for a while, and he should've told me. He should've said, "Even if it costs you more money, you should go to Yale. That's where the action is." They had a good program in qualitative analysis at Princeton, very pretty. I had a nice time there, got married. That was exciting, but I should've gone to Yale.

So, I didn't know anything about quantitative analysis, other than what a percentage means. I went to the University of Michigan, which is a leading school in quantitative analysis and voting studies, had summer programs for faculty. In 1968, I went out there for the summer, learned some stuff, and then, learned some more stuff, and then, had some good graduate students to work with. So, I became better at it. I could do causal analysis and regressions, and so forth, but, now, it's gone to extreme forms of mathematical modeling.

I understand the reasoning of calculus, but I haven't done calculus in a long time. [laughter] Programs will do it for you, but you have to interpret it. So, that's been the major change in the discipline, in terms of method, and more theoretical, but less real. I mean, not too many political scientists engage in politics. They study it and study it well, but it becomes sort of unrealistic and removed from what's happening.

I was on my local school board here for nine years, and wrote a couple of pieces in *Political Science*, newsletter kinds of magazines. I called it--the first one was at the beginning of my term on the school board--it was called *Campaigning for a Local School Board*, and the other one was at the end of it, which was *Serving on a Local School Board*. [Editor's Note: *PS: Political Science and Politics* published Dr. Pomper's articles, "Practicing Political Science on a Local School Board," in its April 1984 issue and, "Reviewing Political Science on a Local School Board," in its June 1991 issue.]

It was valuable experience, because I said, "It's just like national politics, except everything's shrunk to a tiny, little world." I went out and campaigned for the black vote. Now, Presidential candidates campaign for twenty million votes, I campaigned for fifty, [laughter] but it was the same process, just in this little ball. It taught me something about how applicable what we wrote about in textbooks was, and a lot of it was, but not all of it. So, I said, "Nobody should teach American politics unless they're also doing something political."

So, I've tried to do some of that. My partner and I were busy campaigning this year in Congress, not in this Congressional district, which is non-competitive--it's a solid Democratic area--but the next district over, which is highly competitive and had a Republican incumbent. We are anti-Trump people and wanted to defeat the Republican Congressman and get a Democratic Congressman. We succeeded. In fact, there's a *New York Times* article about this guy today, Tom Malinowski. He served in the Obama Administration; now, he's back as a Congressman. I think he's going to make his mark.

[Editor's Note: Tom Malinowski served as the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy from 2014 to 2017. In 2018, he was elected to the House of Representatives in New Jersey's 7th District and assumed office on January 3, 2019.]

This was like what we said in the textbook, and I could tell people, "Don't make phone calls--knock on doors. The research shows knocking on doors makes a difference and phone calls don't. Don't waste your time." So, there's an interaction and you see real voters and what's going on. I could guess that, what was going to happen in our district, that we were going to flip it, and we did, moved the vote. It was a five percent Republican district. This time, we won by two percent, so, there's a seven percent shift in the vote. It was through the door knocking.

SI: Wow.

GP: And Trump was helping, too. [laughter]

SI: Have you run for any other local offices?

GP: Just the school board, yes, and that was a real [challenge]. I got elected, and then, reelected twice, and resigned to go on a sabbatical to Australia. That was a good experience, too. I mean, Australia was a good experience, but the school board was a good experience, although, like most things in life, you've got a lot of boring moments.

SI: When was that, roughly, when you were on the school board?

GP: I was elected in '84, I guess.

SI: Okay.

GP: '83 or '84. I resigned at the end of 1990 to go to Australia.

SI: What were the major issues that you recall?

GP: Oh. [laughter] Budgets, of course, and some policies. This all seems like chickenshit stuff, but you're talking about real money, I mean, talking about a budget of fifteen million dollars. Now, it's not the national budget, but it's not my household budget, either. [laughter] All that budget, most of it, is raised from your neighbors and friends in real estate taxes in New Jersey. So, this is not just abstraction, [like] the budget exercise I used to have my students do, "Try and balance the federal budget," which is sort of mythical. What does it mean to spend four billion dollars on postage stamps? This is real money. It came out of people's own wallets.

One year, we had a very tough budget, and it looked like we're going to have a big increase in the local tax rate. One of my colleagues, also a professor, not Political Science, said, "Well, if people have to get a bank loan to pay their taxes, so be it. The schools are more important," and I was ready to choke him. How do you expect [people to do that]? In those days, you had to have a popular vote to adopt the school budget, and that's changed now. I mean, how do you expect people to vote for a budget when you're telling them that they need a financing loan in

order to pay their taxes? You can't say that. [laughter] He didn't say it again. Yes, so, that's not great, deep political science, but I knew that this is not a smart thing to say. [laughter]

So, there were issues like that. You have to be very careful about conflicts of interest. Members of the school board typically have kids in school, and so, you certainly can't use your position to help your kid. So, there was a controversial teacher, a French teacher, controversial in the sense that people had doubts about her competence, not politically controversial. You have to vote to give people tenure and, [for] most teachers in most districts, it's automatic. After two years, if they haven't raped somebody, they're going to get tenure.

There was one teacher, the French teacher, who my kids had. I heard he didn't think she was very good, but I wasn't going to vote for her on the basis of my kid, or against her, and so, she got tenure. Then, when he had graduated, she sent me stuff. She said, "I thought you might want to see this." These were notes that he had sent to her about why he couldn't come to class. It was typical adolescent stuff. "My dog is sick. I've got to work on the newspaper," and so on.

She said she hadn't penalized him because of my position on the school board, and so on. I really blew up at her, "This is disgraceful. You should've told me this. You should've treated him--or you didn't have to tell me it--you should've treated him like any other student. What would you do with somebody else who was neglecting their school work, and so on, and give you phony or fanciful [excuses]?" So, I really was pissed off at her, but I couldn't bring that up, either. That's the kind of thing that can happen.

Then, there are [other] issues. We would have the kindergarten teachers talk about changing the curriculum. School board's not supposed to make school decisions. It's supposed to supervise the superintendent who makes school decisions, and the principals, and so forth. It's a very delicate position, but I remember, one time, we said, "Well, we're going to look at the pre-school, pre-primary grades, curriculum and kindergarten program," and so on. So, they did.

The kindergarten teachers got together and they presented a report. They said, "Well, our goal is to have the kids enter knowing six letters of the alphabet, and we'll teach them the rest." I couldn't understand that. "How are they supposed to learn six letters of the alphabet? Isn't that your job?" [laughter] "No, well, parents do that." "Well, suppose they don't? Not all parents are so on [the ball]; they're not all university personnel." So, it's things like that that come up.

What happened, in many ways, the state regulation's too tight, until, while I was on the school board, principals got tenure, not just teachers. So, you had a bad principal, theoretically, in charge of a school and you can't get rid of them, and they're doing a bad job.

Computers were starting to be used in the school. We had a principal in our elementary school, he said, "Computers are marvelous. You know, I went to the doctor the other day. I gave him my health insurance card and all they did was put it into the computer and it recorded all the information." I said, "Larry, this is what you know about computers?" [laughter] This is like George Bush, who learned about swiping his card to pay at a grocery store. I couldn't get rid of him, or the board couldn't get rid of him, because he had tenure. Meanwhile, he's having an affair with a teacher, but that was still another story. [laughter]

SI: Let us go to this period when you were now at Eagleton, splitting your time between there and Hickman Hall with the Department. Were you able to continue in the same style of teaching you described, these innovative classes, multiple disciplines being taught? Was that encouraged or discouraged in the new consolidated era?

GP: Well, look, the great thing about being an academic is, you can do anything you want, [laughter] I mean, short of immoral stuff.

Eagleton has a program called Eagleton Undergraduate Associates. They pick twenty, twenty-five undergraduates who apply for this and they have a three-semester program that I helped develop. First--and I taught the first of these three courses--there was my course, there was an internship that was supervised by somebody else, and then, there was a third course, which was sort of more practical and prepared them for courses, or helped prepare for courses, for work in government agencies, legislature, and so on.

We always had great students. People applied for it, get seventy, seventy-five applications and take twenty-five, and we selected them both on academic records. This was for the second semester of their junior year and their full senior year. This would be one of their courses, the Eagleton course. Then, at the end, they get a certificate and a little ceremony and a luncheon, and so on. They were always wonderful students, because they had done something in politics, usually. They were smart kids, and we could make it diverse.

When I started, it was all Jewish and Italian kids. Then, by the end of the program--I taught this for twenty years--I just absolutely loved the course. It was always a new group of students. They were almost always delightful. I changed it every year, and I called it "The Practice of Politics." Every week, we dealt with a different political scene or decision, and so on, changed those every year, depending on what was going on, but I always started with the Constitutional Convention, my favorite time period in American life. [Editor's Note: The Constitutional Convention occurred from May to September of 1787 in Philadelphia. After the states ratified the new Constitution, it took effect in 1789.]

If it was an election year, we'd do an election. For a number of years, I found an exercise in which citizen groups were asked to make budget choices and see if they could balance the federal budget, or at least reduce the federal deficit. So, I did that. I did constitutional revision. It always varied with what was going on and was in the news, but, each week, it was a different political decision to be made, dropping the atomic bomb, responding to 9/11, but this started in '93 or so. Then, every year, if I wasn't on leave, I would do this, and it was a delightful experience. This went on to 2014, and did this every year.

When my wife died in 2013, I did the course in 2014, but I was sort of losing heart. I had been officially retired since 2001, so, I was just doing this for fun and a small payment. I decided I just didn't want to do this anymore. I did a couple of honors seminars in the School of Arts and Sciences, and then, in 2016 is the last time I taught undergraduates. I'm getting slow and it's getting a little boring. So, since 2016, I haven't taught undergraduates, but I have been teaching

in the seniors, senior citizens, program [the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers] and enjoy that a lot.

That [the undergraduate course] was the main innovative thing I did at Eagleton. Even though it was the same course number, it was always a different course. As it happened, in the Spring of 2011--or, no, Fall of 2011--things just worked out that it was an absolutely marvelous class, probably the best I've ever had, and things were just happening.

It was the year of the Arab Spring and that was going on. There was a presidential election coming up. It was the beginning, first term, of the Obama Administration. There was the Tea Party that was forming, a new kind of social movement. There was a Supreme Court case that was a great case in which a fanatical right-wing group was disrupting the funeral services of military veterans, saying that these guys had died as a punishment for United States permission, tolerance, of homosexuality. This was against God's will, so, God was retaliating by killing these kids, and this came to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court said the speech is offensive, but it's permissible. It's a great case to analyze.

[Editor's Note: In December 2010, government protests began in Tunisia, then, spread throughout nations in the Middle East in early 2011, leading to the ousting of some oppressive governments. The conservative Tea Party movement started in 2009. Throughout the 2000s, the Westboro Church in Topeka, Kansas, held protests against homosexuality near military funerals.]

So, there were all these things happening, all at once, about politics. I had this marvelous group of kids. I had a Jordanian student, or a kid whose family came from Jordan. He was Muslim and bright as can be, possibly the best student I've ever had, and he was a left-winger. Then, I had a kid who was the leader of the Conservative Club, or organization, on campus, and a bunch of others, men and women, and so on, just a terrific combination. They just melded.

I always broke the group up into smaller groups. I always had them do an exercise at the end of the year in which either they took--depending on what was going on, sometimes, I gave them a novel, sometimes a play, sometimes a history book--they had to present an oral report to the class entirely on their own. They dressed up, they dramatized it, and so on. It was the highlight of the course, the last week. So, I had this group and it was just a great experience. I was interviewed--you could even see it, it's on the Eagleton site--after I stopped giving the course. I did an interview. I was asked about the course and what I had been doing at Eagleton. I told them about this course.

What made it memorable, aside from what happened there, was my wife died in June of 2013. These kids had all graduated, and four of them called me up and said, "Sorry to hear about your wife. Could we take you to dinner?" So, I said, "No, I'd like you to just come over to my house, summer night, and just sit on my porch and I'll tell you about my wife," and so on, had a marvelous night. I get emotional thinking about it. We drank, we got some pizza, and we talked. It was one of the best periods of solace for her loss.

So, these kids were terrific. After the class, after they had graduated, they came back and they talked, and I see them once in a while, I'll talk to them. One of them, just after four years, finally

decided she wanted to go to law school, brilliant girl, woman. She finally decided she's going to Columbia Law School. She got money at other schools, and so on. So, I keep in touch with them as well. So, that's the best memory I have of Eagleton.

We tried to develop a specialty connection with the Political Science Department. They'd have a particular master's program that would be sort of half practice, half theory; didn't work out. They really needed somebody to ride herd on it, and Eagleton directly asked me if I would run this program. I said, "No, I'm not running anything anymore. I'll cooperate, I'll give advice, and so on, I'll participate, but, no, I'm not going to administer anything." So, it hasn't gone anywhere. Most programs, if you want something to work, you find some busy person to run it.

SI: You have also done a lot of public-facing work. You, I think, were a commentator for CBS for a little while.

GP: Yes.

SI: Yes. What about that aspect of the field?

GP: Well, that is fun, and, for a while, I was doing op-eds for *The Star-Ledger*. Then, they cut out paying people to do op-ed pieces. I said, "Well, you pay everybody else, why can't you pay me?" [They] said, "Well, we don't have a budget." I said, "Well, I don't have the time." Then, I was doing the same thing for *The Bergen Record*, lower league. They were paying me less, but, then, they decided they couldn't pay anyone; I mean, forget it. So, I've sort of missed that.

I created a blog in which I was--I guess it's still in existence, theoretically, nothing disappears from the net--but, unless you work at it, I was sending this to twelve people who are on the mailing list. [laughter] So, I could write letters to people and do [the same thing] if I have anything to say about politics. If radio stations call me up, I respond like that. I give, especially during an election year--my brother used to call it my "busy season"--you get invitations to library talks, and so on. I do that, synagogues and stuff, and that's fun, meeting people and talking about it.

CBS, one of my students, doctoral students, also became a friend, she wrote a dissertation for me on Catholic voting. She herself was Catholic, is Catholic. Then, she got into public opinion work and she was working for CBS News. She became Director of the CBS News Poll. A couple of times, she wrote one of the chapters in my election book. Then, in 2008, she was going to retire soon--when your own students retire, you know you're getting old [laughter]--she was going to retire and move with her husband to Hawaii.

She said she'd wanted to do this for a long time, but she'd gotten me a gig with CBS Radio for the election. So, they want me to be on their program at the conventions, and they'll pay me for it. So, I did that, went to each convention, and this was her gift, I guess, to me and did election night, too, and that was good. It was behind the scenes, and I didn't really do much, but everybody wants air time on these staffs. Once every hour or so, every half-hour, "Well, Professor Pomper, what do you think of?" blah. I'd get sixty seconds to make some comment, and they could make the same comments.

It was fun being behind the scenes and seeing the polls as they come in. They don't broadcast the exit polls until starting at eight o'clock, so, you can see them in advance, but they have all these security precautions, so [that] you don't release them before eight o'clock. So, I've done that and, if they asked me again, I'd do it, but I'm retired. There are other people they can get, and my student is no longer running the CBS Poll. [laughter]

SI: Is there anything else that you would like to talk about that we have not discussed, this time or last time?

GP: I think we have covered a lot of it. I mean, you can ask me questions, you know what I mean, all kinds of. You talked earlier about Livingston, the Faculty Chamber, and so on. There were big debates there about different things, and, many of them, you don't even remember why it was this important. [laughter]

SI: Yes, it was always interesting to see how they wanted to comment on politics far afield from Livingston College, as well as dealing with issues focused on the college.

GP: Yes. Did we talk about Kent State? [Editor's Note: On May 4, 1970, four students at Kent State University were killed by members of the Ohio National Guard during a war protest.]

SI: No.

GP: Well, Kent State was 1970, and you know all the events there. Everybody was outraged, and the Livingston College Faculty Chamber decided that they would initiate a peace treaty with North Vietnam, [laughter] I mean, because the United States was behaving so badly.

Irving Horowitz was a Distinguished Professor of Sociology, he's dead now, but a very contentious guy, a left winger in his youth and increasingly conservative as time went on. I remember him being so outraged. He says, "You know there's something called the Logan Act," dates to the eighteenth century, soon after the new government was established, "which prohibits private citizens from negotiating with foreign governments. Anybody who does [is] subject to," it's still in effect, "is subject to arrest and trial," and somebody says, "They're going to arrest the entire faculty who voted for this." [laughter] [Editor's Note: The Logan Act, passed in 1799, prohibits foreign negotiations by anybody except for the federal government.]

So, it wasn't important enough for the government to interfere with, I mean, but it was so funny that, here, Livingston College was going to declare a peace treaty with North Vietnam. Highland Park, which is also a liberal hangout and a pleasant town, but they've declared Highland Park a nuclear-free zone. [laughter] So, there's a prohibition against manufacturing nuclear weapons in Highland Park. Every time I think of it, I have to laugh. How could you, in any case? but that was part of the style then.

SI: You also had sabbaticals and temporary appointments to places around the world. Are there any of those you want to talk about?

GP: Well, I spent a year at Tel Aviv. It was the first one. Then, I spent the year at Oxford, a decade later, and then, four months at Australia National University. So, those were great opportunities for me to get deeper in the culture, when you're actually buying food or bicycling through the streets, or, in the case of Australia, sometimes, we would rent a car there. Sometimes, you take a train or a plane; it's a continent, after all. In four months, we got to see a lot of the country and made friends in all of those places.

A year or two ago, my oldest son, I have three boys, my oldest son and his wife have three boys, too, and they spent seven years in England. He's a banker now, and he worked for Goldman Sachs in London. So, two of his kids, the older two, were born there and got to be preschoolers. The youngest was born after they came back to the US, and he visited once, in England, but never seen it.

So, two summers ago, I asked the youngest kid, I said, "You didn't really have the chance to see England. How about going on vacation with me? We'll spend a week in London." He jumped at the opportunity. So, I showed him some of my haunts, and that was interesting. I went back to Oxford. The people I had known there had all retired or died, but I could still show him the place, and so on. So, that was fun to see it and enjoyed Oxford a lot.

It's a marvelous place. The last night I was in Oxford, my wife and I entered the bell tower in this [campus], as there is in most of them. We went up to the bell tower and looked down over the scene. You ever been in Oxford?

SI: No.

GP: Well, the stone in that area has this glow to it, especially at sunset. During the summer, the sun is up until eight, nine, ten. It's not quite Scandinavia, but very long days. We went up to the top of the bell tower and watched the sun set over the western hills. This was just a tear-filled moment, just a beautiful scene. So, I remember that, and the way of life, tea at eleven o'clock and coffee at four and dinners, and so forth.

So, I'm grateful to Rutgers for providing me the opportunities and the time, and the students and the place has changed enormously. I think, certainly, it's become a more distinguished academic place than it was when I came here. I think it's also lost something in undergraduate education with the consolidation, but, on the whole, it's a wonderful university. It's certainly been good to me and I had a number of offers to go elsewhere, didn't. That's not just because of love of New Jersey. [laughter]

SI: Yes, that is one of the things former Livingston faculty talk about, is the, I guess, de-personalization, from the student's perspective, once the consolidations happened.

GP: Yes.

SI: That there were deeper ties before. I know that one of the ways they tried to reinforce that was the Fellowship Program afterwards. You would hold a fellowship at one of these colleges after the 1981 reorganization. Were you a Livingston fellow?

GP: I didn't even know there was such a thing.

SI: Okay. [laughter]

GP: Was this for faculty?

SI: Yes, you would get a faculty fellowship at one of the colleges.

GP: I guess I was a faculty fellow, but I could certainly sympathize with people there. Dean, if she is dean, Kathy Scott was a member of my committee that did this undergraduate education revision. So, I could always talk to her, and I got an award as an honorary alumnus of Livingston College.

Still, I'm active in a charitable organization called CASA, for Court Appointed Special Advocates, that deals with kids who are in out-of-home placement because of parental abuse and neglect. That was founded by a student from Livingston. It's become a statewide organization and we help thousands of kids throughout the state who are in this situation.

So, I have ties to Livingston, but it's more memory. I mean, there is no Livingston College as such. The names have changed. Livingston has been a good thing for Rutgers University, but a lot of its--and I've said this before--a lot of its initiatives have been adopted and sort of been the stimulus to a lot of this [change]. I mean, obviously, a university of this size would have a computer science department by now, but we would've had it a bit later. They would've been recruiting women faculty, but later. So, Livingston sped that up, and it's to the benefit of the place.

SI: Is there anything you can think of that was not brought up from Livingston that was missing at Rutgers in later years?

GP: Well, I think--I haven't been to faculty meetings in a long time--I don't think they have the spirit that we had, [laughter] but that may be because we were young and active. Also, [there were] things we did wrong.

I was just writing something like this for the Political Science Department. A guy who's himself retiring, has been here fifty years, wanted to give people, younger people, the sense of what it was like earlier. The disputes and the controversies, a lot of it was being young and the politics of the time. Politics is--in some sense, the conservatives are right--that the university background, the university scene, is so basically liberal. I mean, you would find it hard to find Trump people on the University faculty, so, you can't have the same arguments.

I remember, I was in a national group called the Committee on Party Renewal, and we were trying to revive political parties. Hence, we had a bipartisan group, including some members of Congress that were trying to improve campaign finance, but we had Republicans and not all that many, but, if we needed a Republican on a committee, you could always call John Bibby at the University of Wisconsin. He was a Republican and, yes, he would serve as the token

Republican. [Editor's Note: Dr. John Franklin Bibby served as Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for thirty-four years.] It would be very hard to find Republicans, and certainly Trump Republicans; I can't think of a single one I know, personally, on the University faculty, this or any other. There must be some, but, short of the Evangelical colleges, and so on, it would be very tough to find.

That's a loss. It leads to things like targeting warnings and censorship of students and of speakers. You can't have right-wingers, and so forth, and I think you should. I forget the context, but there was some Nazi thing happening, from some reading of something, and the faculty meeting, at which somebody said, "We should ban the works of Hitler from the campus."

I'm a long-time member of the ACLU, and I said, "You can't ban it. It's more important that the students read Hitler and the hate message that's in there. They've got to understand why this is hateful and what's wrong with it," and so on. That was the majority position. So, they did not vote for it, but I'm not sure that would be true today with all the sensitivity. If you said anti-lesbian things or anti-gay things, people would want to ban it. I mean, you can't have hate messages defined. It's not my understanding of free speech. So, I think that's disturbing and, ultimately, worrisome in terms of the health of the democracy.

I've never been as worried about the future of the United States--not in the atomic bomb sense, though even that's a possibility--but in terms of the vitality of our political life. I just gave this course to seniors on the Congressional elections and the build-up to the Presidential election. Well, we spent a week or two on the threat of fascism, and I never thought I would need to talk about that in an academic course. I think we do. So, that worries me.

My parents were immigrants and they were early refugees, before Nazism, but they knew they wanted to get away from the anti-Semitic environment of Poland, and so on. So, they left after the First World War, before there was an actual threat of genocide, but it was because they left that I'm here and they survived to die in old age. So, I've always been a fervent patriot, even though I'm on the left, sort of, and thought, "This is a safe, decent society, with inequities and racial problems, and so on, but these things can get solved in the American environment." Now, I still like to be optimistic, but less so than I was ten years ago. That's it.

SI: All right, thank you very much for all your time. I appreciate it.

GP: Shaun, I appreciate it.

----------END OF TRANSCRIPT----------

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