

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH ELLIOTT M. HILL

CONDUCTED BY BRENDA EUBANKS AND KRISTIN DALTON

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Interview with Elliott M. Hill
Conducted by Brenda Eubanks and Kristin Dalton
Edited and indexed by Thomas A. Scott
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In 1969, shortly after earning a PhD from Emory University, Dr. Hill joined the faculty of Kennesaw Junior College. He retired from KSU in 2006 after a thirty-seven year career. This interview was conducted by two KSU public history students as part of a KSU 50th anniversary class project.

BE: Dr. Hill, let's spend a couple of minutes talking about your childhood and your background. Tell us about what it was like growing up.

EH: Okay. I was born in central Alabama. The town no longer exists. It was called Alpine. It was about thirteen or so miles from Talladega, Alabama, which is famous now for the big racetrack. It was all country. I lived there for three years and then was transported to Griffin, Georgia, and grew up there. I attended the grammar schools and high schools in Griffin. I graduated from Griffin High School in 1951 and then didn't have quite enough money to go to college. So I worked for a year in a cotton mill in Griffin. I went to school an extra year at Griffin High School, and then I went to West Georgia College, which was then a junior college. Actually, it already had a third year for teacher education with a very small student body, 250 students, something like that. From there I went to University of North Carolina for my undergraduate degree in English [1956].

Then I went into the Navy for three years and then to the University of Kentucky for my master's degree [1961]. I taught for five years in West Virginia in two colleges, Glenville State College and then West Virginia Wesleyan College, a Methodist college where my wife at the time was a librarian. I forgot to mention being married in the midst of that in 1957, while I was in the Navy. Then we moved to Atlanta. She got a job at the Atlanta Public Library, and I went to Emory and finished my degree there in 1969. I got a position at Kennesaw, and I stayed at Kennesaw for thirty-six years, thirty-seven years, something like that.

BE: What was it about English that attracted you to the degree?

EH: What attracted me was my realization that I really was not going to be the next world's greatest poet. I started out by thinking of that and then journalism. I really don't know why English, but that's where I ended up. Journalism might have been better actually than English. It was an outgrowth of attempting to write poetry and short stories. I tried that for a while too, and I had a small box full of rejection slips from the magazines. So did William Faulkner we're told—a big stack of rejection slips as he was starting to learn how to write. He kept at it, and I didn't. That's one difference.

BE: How did you hear about Kennesaw?

EH: I'm not sure! It was a very small school then. The job market then was not quite as bad as it is now, but it was bad already for humanities graduates. I actually applied all over the country, and I didn't get much response. Somehow, I found that there was an opening at Kennesaw—then, of course, a junior college—and I applied. Also, I applied to Emory at Oxford and was offered a position there. But in those days I was feeling hungry. Oxford didn't offer as much money as Kennesaw did, so I came to Kennesaw. How I found out I really don't remember, how I knew about it, except that I was looking at every possibility, and Kennesaw was a possibility.

BE: What was the application process like and the interview process?

EH: Well, I suppose the same as it is now. You fill in sheets of paper of degrees and so forth as we do now. I had to interview with the [Division of Humanities] head, Dr. [John C.] Greider, and then with the dean [of the College Derrell C. Roberts] and the president. Horace [W.] Sturgis was president. It was rather like this, in fact, just sitting down and they asked, "Why would you like to come here, and what can you do for us?"—that sort of thing. It was much different then. I've forgotten how many instructors there were in the English department then, but it couldn't have been many more than a dozen. The entire faculty then met in one of the smaller rooms in what is now the Pilcher Building, which was then the library. One room, about this size room [large enough to hold about fifty people], the entire college faculty met once a month for faculty meetings. It was a much less structured, much more informal kind of place then.

BE: What classes did you teach?

EH: As a junior college, our offerings went no further than what is now the sophomore literature. We had what was then called 101 and 102 and then the various numbers of the world literature class, 201 and so forth, and everybody taught everything. There was a little bit of an art department. There was a French instructor, but just one. That was the foreign language. So, yes, everybody taught everything. It was only much later that it became much more structured. Now, it's almost unbelievable that the senior faculty only teaches senior classes; and most, if not all, of the freshman and sophomore classes are taught by part-time adjunct professors, which wasn't true then. To that extent I think that it's deteriorated. Economic necessity and all of that, but the part-time people simply don't have the same identification with the department or the same allegiance to [the university]. If they have to teach at three or four places and go from place to place, they don't have the same identification with the institution that we had. To that extent, anyway, the students lose out. That doesn't mean that the adjunct or the part-time people are not highly qualified. They are, but they just don't have the identification with the students or with the institution that we had in those days.

BE: We've heard that from a lot of the founding professors here. Was that the case when you were here that it was all full-time faculty, and that was a very important aspect of it?

EH: Yes, yes. I don't know when the first part-time people came in. It would have been well into the 1980s, I should think. I don't know that. You can check that from the college catalog. [Editor's note: The 1969-1970 catalog lists one part-time faculty member—in mathematics; the 1970-1971 catalog lists two—in mathematics and in nursing. In

contrast, the 1982-83 catalog lists twenty-seven part-time faculty members, especially in business, music, education, foreign languages, and mathematics.]

BE: What was your impression of the students in the early days of Kennesaw?

EH: It was then entirely a commuter college. It was set up as a junior college, but Dr. Sturgis and, I suppose, the original faculty members never thought of it as a junior college. They thought of it as a junior college in transition, even from the beginning. It was called Harvard in the Pines. A very high percentage of the students were in their thirties. Everybody taught all the courses, daytime, nighttime; we alternated day and night. The night students in particular were older than the day students. They would come in from jobs at Lockheed or as travel agents or whatever, because they, on the one hand, had to have the college degrees—courses anyway—to get promoted in their jobs, and because in many instances the institutions, Delta Airlines or other places, were paying tuition for them. But that meant that they had the double inducement of a possible promotion and the inducement of somebody paying tuition for them, but also the requirement that they keep their grades up. So the students were more interested in what they were doing. They were a livelier crowd in those early days, and it was in some ways a lot more interesting than it later was. The average age, I think, was somewhere around twenty-eight at that time.

BE: You mentioned the college was always looked at as a college in transition. Was the community putting pressure on the school to become a four-year college or do you remember if they were happy with the two year?

EH: I think they were happy with the two year, actually. The pressure came through the early professors who were already somewhat established in the area. Atlanta, from Emory, from Marietta, old aristocracy kind of people, did some politicking through Rotary clubs, through other civic organizations like that. So it built up a kind of ground roots enthusiasm for that conversion even in the beginning. But it took a long, long time for that to happen [due to] politics on the one hand and cost on the other. Finally, when the college was converted to a four-year college, it was done so on the basis that it wouldn't cost the state any more money. I've forgotten how many junior colleges were established in the [Junior College Act of 1958], all established as commuter colleges and many of them in rural areas where it just remained rural. [Editor's note: sixteen junior colleges were created or annexed into the University System of Georgia between 1958 and 1976]. They haven't grown very much.

Southern Tech [created in 1948] was one of those, which was devised as an applied technology institution from Georgia Tech. Georgia Tech was the engineering school, and Southern Tech was the technology end of it. Kennesaw was set up at that time as a kind of small liberal arts extension. There was no school close by here. Georgia State was way downtown. West Georgia was sixty miles away. So there was that local impetus to make it into a very good school as a liberal arts kind of school, which changed over the years so that Kennesaw has now become what is called a comprehensive university. In part that was brought about by the Board of Regents, which insisted that every institution have its own niche, its own individual purpose. I don't know how much that was driven by the Board of Regents, and how much it was driven from local. By that time Horace Sturgis had retired and Betty [L.] Siegel was in. But it was decided that Kennesaw would

become the applied institution. Of the ones that were finally created as state colleges and ultimately as universities, Georgia College—it started out Georgia State College for Women and then became Georgia College and then became Georgia College & State University—was designated as the liberal arts institution. Kennesaw became the education, the business, the applied technology institution, and it has grown in that way. I have read that the [Coles College of Business] here is now bigger than the business college at Georgia State.

BE: Really?

EH: It's very close in size—three thousand or more students in just that one part of the institution. So that's the direction it has gone. This gets to be a little bit tricky—with the attempt [in 2011] at bringing in the [KSU] provost from Kent State University [where he is a senior associate provost] who published a couple of articles ten or fifteen years ago in which he mentioned Karl Marx about four or five times. [The decision to hire someone with those allegedly radical views] was enough to raise up a really enormous public protest against him in Marietta. The city of Marietta now thinks that the university has gone out of its proper niche. It ought to be a local institution, serving locals, and the current president [Daniel S. Papp] wants to make it at least a nationally recognized institution, maybe worldwide.

BE: So they see that as a bad thing?

EH: The locals, yes. They're very conservative. There is a very conservative streak in Marietta. I read in the *Marietta Daily Journal*—I read it online; I don't buy it! I read some of the protests on it today, and it's just exactly that. It's just too much “socialist” for them. To a certain extent, they haven't really recovered from the Civil War. You understand what I mean by that? If you have [history professor emeritus S. Frederick] Fred Roach in, he will give you a lecture on why the South should have won the Civil War. He's still playing that game. The institution now has really become an urban university with all the motels and restaurants all around, which was then very much a rural setting. What was set up as a rural institution has now become really urban and much more cosmopolitan in its orientation.

Whether that's better or not depends on whether you like it be a small liberal arts college or whether you'd like it to be a big and multi- service comprehensive university offering degrees and doctorates in nursing as well as various kinds of business—which will lead me to one other thing. The Board of Regents, having designated these various institutions in their various niches or functions, decreed that there can't be any duplication of degrees in a certain limited area. So while, say, Georgia College in Milledgeville could offer a master's degree in English. Kennesaw couldn't. So Kennesaw devised a master's degree called Professional Writing; so you see the applied application of it. There's now a doctorate in [International] Conflict Management. It used to be called sociology or some function of sociology, but Conflict Management is allowed. They are now creating a department [of Interdisciplinary Studies] that is some composite degree in sociology, economics, political science, something like that, which again the people in Marietta are opposed to because we don't need that sort of thing, these are not our kind of people kind of thing. I imagine it will be approved because there's nothing else like it in the state, and they have to come up with these unique

programs in order to get them approved by the Board of Regents, which has to approve all the programs.

BE: Do you think some of those protests come because Kennesaw has always been so community oriented and the community is afraid that's being taken away from them?

EH: Yes, I would think so. When the college was founded, Dr. Sturgis was the [associate] registrar at Georgia Tech. He was a registrar and an administrator. He had never had anything to do with the founding of a college. He had to come up with a name for the new institution. He first proposed it to be called Marietta Junior College, but that was thought to be a little bit too limiting because they knew that most of the student body wouldn't come from Marietta, particularly, but from Cobb County and from the regions north with West Georgia to the west and Georgia State to the south. There was nothing north. [Kennesaw] would draw student even as far as Dalton and has done so actually. They later thought maybe to call it Kennesaw Mountain Junior College, and it ultimately became just Kennesaw Junior College. It was named for the mountain, not the town. But even in those days the mailing address for the college was Marietta because even though it's near Kennesaw, the Kennesaw post office couldn't handle the amount of mail that was coming in. For years it operated out of a post office box in Marietta, Post Office Box 441 Marietta. The Marietta main post office would send a truck out twice a day to deliver mail and pick up mail and take back to Marietta. The change to a Kennesaw address was made maybe ten years ago, I suppose, but very recently. So yes, there's always been that kind of attraction and repulsion with Marietta.

BE: I understand that too a lot of the funding came from the Cobb County area rather than from the Marietta area, so that was a lot of the argument in the initial naming of the college.

EH: I don't know that. It will always have to be, I supposed. There was certainly a large amount of old Marietta money involved, but a lot of the money must have come from the beginning of industries actually in the Cobb County area. The land on which the college was built was I think donated, 150 acres, I don't know who owned it, but it was donated to the state.

BE: It was Nina and John Frey.

EH: Oh, good for you! I didn't know that. Okay. But having donated the property to the state and to the Board of Regents, the Board of Regents then took over the responsibility through state appropriations for building the college. The land now belongs to the state, and all the buildings on it belong to the state as well. Yes, to that extent that it was community driven, the donation of the land, the development of the land, and the expenses for the institution beyond the amount paid in tuition becomes a state obligation.

[Editor's note: On April 22, 1964 local voters approved a bond referendum that provided \$2.35 million (\$1.925 million from the Cobb County School Board and \$0.425 from the City of Marietta) for the purchase and development of the junior college campus. On July 24, 1964, Marietta and the county school board used \$100,000 of the bond revenues to purchase the original 152-acre campus. One week later, on July 31, school board attorney Harold Willingham mailed the warranty deed and a check for \$2.0 million to the

Board of Regents for the construction of the campus. The county used the remaining funds for grading and utilities. Thanks to an additional construction grant of almost \$1.0 million from the U.S. Department of Education, the KJC campus was built without any state funds—the first college in the university system that could make that claim. The Frey family had owned the campus site until a few years earlier, but in 1964 the land was purchased from the Pinetree Corporation of Atlanta].

KD: What was your experience working with Dr. Sturgis?

EH: Oh, my, my, my! When I came in in 1969, I was one of the few people who already had an earned doctorate. Dr. Sturgis had one; Dr. Greider had one in the [Humanities Division], and [Virginia C. Hinton and] I were the only other persons in the English [discipline]. Because of that, rather than any innate ability, I was called upon to work with the first self-study. You've heard about that, I'm sure, as well. The college was founded in [1963], but the first classes weren't held until [the fall of 1966]. The first classes were held [at Southern Tech, with administrative offices] in an [elementary] school, in Banberry Elementary School, before the buildings here were finished.

The Southern Association [of Colleges and Schools] required a self-study five years after the opening of the college, so in 1971 we had to do a self-study for accreditation for all of the programs. I was chairman of the faculty committee. There were half a dozen different committees that had to do finances and so forth. I had a committee, and we had to write a report—an evaluation of the current conditions and anticipations of what the college would look like ten years from then and so forth. I got to meet Dr. Sturgis on a fairly regular basis while working on that self-study project. He was very conservative, but I never found him to be as vindictive as some other people found him to be. I didn't see him that often, but I was told that he had a drawer in which he kept notes to himself of people who had offended him one way or another.

Near the end of the self-study process, I had to go talk to him. I suppose this is natural, as I look back at it, natural that a young faculty that has never done this sort of thing is likely to be idealistic. They would like things to be a lot more egalitarian, and a lot more than has to be with any sort of administrative structure. He was an administrator, and so there were some criticisms of his administration, as there were criticisms of all the [division] heads for that matter. This faculty committee—I wrote the report of the committee, but I included all of the comments of the people on this committee. Some of them wanted things to be changed a lot more than they were, and others thought things were pretty good just as they are. What I remember is that on one occasion I had to go to his office, and he pointed out to me something that was in the self-study report. He said, "Do you really believe; do you really think that's true?" I wanted to say, "That's what the committee *thought*." I wrote down what the committee *thought*."

I never had any trouble with him, but—this is also true—he was president from [1965 to 1980] when Betty [L.] Siegel came in. A normal life expectancy of a college president is five years. Then Betty Siegel came in as the second [president], and she was here from [1981 to 2006], another more than twenty years. So there's time in that for presidents to become pretty much set in their ways, and for people to be ready for somebody else to come in and do something different. I was never close to him. Even though it was a

small faculty, I would meet him once a month in faculty meetings—he would meet us once a month in the faculty meetings—and as part of this self-study.

Then later I was called on, and I actually ended up being the chairman of the Statutes Committee in those early days. Again, something required—the Board of Regents requires every institution to have a set of operating statutes. That was contentious. I had to go talk to him on a pretty regular basis about that. Again, as an administrator, he tended toward being autocratic. The faculty, as also idealistic, tended to want things “our way.” There’s a format for statutes for the various institutions. Even in institutions, which have a college senate, as now exists—it didn’t exist then—ultimately the responsibility for the operation of the college is delegated by the Board of Regents to the president. The president can allow or not allow whatever amount of input that he or she wants from the faculty, being ultimately responsible himself, or herself, to the Board of Regents. So there was that even in the beginning.

I met him fairly regularly on that basis as well. I told Dr. Scott, I had once upon a time—I had kept over the years—all of the minutes and so forth of those meetings of the self-study committees and the Statutes Committee and offered them to the archives when I finally had to clear out my office five years ago. They didn’t want them, so they’re all gone now. The only thing you’d find about those early negotiations and so forth you’d find in *Sentinel* newspapers back then or from what people happened to remember. There’s nothing in paper any longer from those earliest days, which to historians I know is tough!

KD: Do you think the transition from Dr. Sturgis to Dr. Siegel was a welcomed one among the faculty?

EH: Yes. She came in sounding very much modern as opposed to what sounded by that time, for him, very old fashioned. But yes. I had nothing to do with that. In fact, I was off in Italy the summer that she came in. That was [1981]. Well, actually, [M. Thomson] Tom Salter, an art professor, had some connections still with the University of Georgia Art Department. They were then running a studies abroad program. They let a group of us—Tom was one, and a friend of Tom, and another art professor—sign up as students to spend the summer in Cortona, Italy, and we went there. The condition was that we’d sign up for courses, and we would do the work of the courses the same as the students would, but we wouldn’t get any credit for it.

There were nearly two hundred people that summer. It was a big program. Because the signup lines, done through the College of Continuing Education at the university—were so long for graduate courses, I guess, we signed up for undergraduate courses. The idea was we could do pretty much what we wanted. We’d go on the tours and do pretty much what we want to. So I wasn’t here when she came in and was not on any of the committees that selected her. Fred Roach was [the chair of the search committee]. He’s now retired. He was a history professor. But I had no connection with it by that time. But yes, she was well received. She was sort of a breath of fresh air when she came.

KD: What were some of the major changes that you noticed between the two?

EH: The two presidents? Oh, well, just as I said, I think that Dr. Sturgis was seen as being very old-fashioned, sort of distant by that time, and Dr. Siegel was seen as the bright shining new face. She would do things like have public bonfires and burn—oh, what was it they burned?

KD: Was it the sign?

EH: I guess it was the sign. She said, “Don’t call us junior anymore,” that sort of thing. She promoted actively the increase in size [of the college], the incorporation of new departments, and all that, which Dr. Sturgis thought we had enough departments already and had as many students as we ever needed. She wanted the size, and that trend continues, as you know. But again, I didn’t have any contact with her except to a certain extent socially. I was at one time president of the American Association of University Professors, AAUP, on campus. In that capacity I would meet her from time to time. In that capacity I was given a hard hat, which I still have, for the groundbreaking for what is now the Burruss Building. That was a long, long time ago. That was in the 1980s.

Back to something I said earlier, the scheme by which the various colleges convinced the Board of Regents that they could become either four-year colleges or ultimately universities without spending any more money was one that the Board of Regents held them accountable for. They didn’t want to give any more money. Even now, the per student appropriation for Kennesaw is, I think, the lowest in the state because they insisted in those days we could do it without any extra money, while other institutions were bending that as quickly as they could to get more and more money for themselves. So it was very difficult to get new buildings.

One of the things that Dr. Siegel was able to do was to convince the regents that, if we were going to have more students, we had to have more buildings. If you have more classrooms and so forth, that calls for more money. During her tenure, the number of buildings really expanded exponentially from what it was to begin with. To begin with, there were [eight] little buildings. They’re still there, right in the center of the campus now. All the others were added one by one and at great public insistence from the institution and partly from Marietta and from the county as well, insisting that if we’re going to have more students, we’ve got to have some place to accommodate them. You’ve got to have classrooms for them and ultimately provide professors to teach in those classrooms, and ultimately parking lots and then, after that, parking decks. You know how that goes. But yes, that’s the big difference—the greater buildings and the greater number of departments to fit into those buildings, and the greater number of ancillary services.

I don’t know how many there are now, in fact, but there is a great master plan of all the departments and how they are identified and how they are associated with each other. Some people think there are too many of those, too many sub-functions that get in the way of the basic obligation, which is that of education. But they seem to be necessary—such things as daycare centers and continuing health and that sort of thing. That’s all part of her inspiration over the years. Now we’re going into sports—football, I’m told. That’s another extension of the same sort of growth into more and more peripheral areas beyond basic education.

- KD: You mentioned earlier that Kennesaw has always had a pretty close relationship with the community. What sorts of activities or functions did Kennesaw hold that were meant to benefit the community. I'm thinking of like the [Cobb County] Symposiums or things like that.
- EH: It worked two ways, both them coming to us and us going out to them. Very often, high schools or sometimes civic organizations—I'm talking about English particularly here—would call upon English instructors to be judges in poetry contests or writing contests. Sometimes the administration would send instructors out into other places as well. I taught a class one quarter—we were on the quarter system then—in Cartersville. The night classes then were two nights a week. I would go up to Cartersville two nights a week. It was a composition class, I think. There have been several of those into Smyrna and into other regions around, which we don't have to do any more because the college in Rome [Georgia Highlands College] now has set up a satellite center in Cartersville. But we did go up in the early days. It was back and forth with judging these contests and fairs of various kinds. We would go and do silly things and judge at, I've forgotten now, but we did those things.
- BE: This goes back a ways but I was curious, do you remember how they initially started dividing departments?
- EH: Oh, yes. To begin with there were no departments. There were divisions. There would have been a humanities division, a science division, social science, that may have been all. So in humanities were [English, the arts, philosophy, and] the foreign languages—French and Spanish were the foreign languages. In sciences nursing was part of the science division [along with mathematics and the natural sciences], and education was part of the [Social Sciences Division] to being with [along with history, business, and the social sciences]. As it got to be bigger—in 1969 the student body was [less than] two thousand students [1,577 in fall 1969]. It opened with 1014 students [three] years earlier. By 1976, when my wife [Dr. Gail B. Walker] had joined the faculty, it was up to [3,271] students [in fall 1976]. So just the increase in numbers eventually necessitated the breaking apart into departments. That happened [in 1983]. Dr. [George H.] Beggs became [dean of the School of Arts and Behavioral Sciences]. He was originally head of the Social Sciences Division. Dr. Greider became head of [the] English [Department]. [The School of] Education [had already] split off [from the Social Sciences Division with Robert L. Driscoll the first chair of the Education Division and, in 1983, the first dean of the new School of Education]. It was driven simply by the increase in enrollment and increase in the number of faculty and somehow the idea that one administrator can only be responsible for a certain number of faculty members. [The other original school was the School of Business where the first permanent dean was Harry J. Lasher].
- KD: Was it a difficult transition?
- EH: From the faculty perspective, no. Everybody did everything, you see, and when a department was created we kept doing the same thing. It was just a matter of who wrote our reports and so forth. In the early days there was only one dean [of the College], but then we got to be bigger, and they had to have assistant deans. Then eventually each school had its own dean. It was just a proliferation of administrative responsibilities driven by the increased number of faculty in each of the administrative units. But the

question, I don't know, of course, what would have been the tensions between the various department heads. They had their own meetings, you know, and we weren't there then, except by rumors and so forth.

BE: Has the campus grown in the direction you would have liked it to have grown?

EH: I would have preferred it to remain more liberal arts oriented, but at the same time I recognize that it's not economically viable. It was difficult then for people with liberal arts degrees to get jobs after they graduated. It's much, much more difficult now than it was then. So people have to be educated, trained, into a variety of different directions. It's a different institution. In its own way it's a better one than it was then, but it's not so conventionally structured. As it became bigger, it either had to have separate and essentially autonomous interior units—the same as the various colleges at Oxford University in England [where] each of the colleges is separate from the others there. So we would have to have a separate business college, a separate humanities college, and each its own internal governance. Or have one overall structure with the president in charge of everything. That's what they've chosen to do. All American institutions follow that line.

So each department then has to try to achieve its own identity. The business college at Kennesaw is now recognized as maybe the best in Georgia and one of the best in the country. But it still is a sub-function of the whole university, you see. That part of it has achieved national reputation. At one time the sciences were like that. At one time, a recommendation from the professor of chemistry would have been enough to get anybody into a medical or dental school in Georgia. Not true anymore. The reason is that Kennesaw didn't—may be coming into it now, but for many years, maybe twenty years of that time—have enough lab facilities, science facilities, to provide people with undergraduate kinds of experiences they needed to have in order to succeed in medical schools. I think they have now—this new nursing building [Prillaman Hall], for instance.

I don't know what's being taught in the sciences any more. A good friend of mine, a biology professor, had to go down to Georgia Tech to do his research because there were no facilities on the campus that would allow him to do the kinds of cell-laser research that he was doing. He had to go there to do it. I think they can do it now here. So each unit has had to compete then for its own finances and its own recognition in those ways. I think now the science departments are quite good. For many years [Patricia H. (Patti) Reggio] had a National [Institutes of Health] grant studying cannabinoids (the compounds in marijuana), and has now gone on to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, taking that grant with her. As the institution has become more and more, in spite of all, a research institution—it start out as a teaching institution, but as it expanded and in different areas, it's different.

BE: Do you think it's a weakness that . . . ?

EH: Well, as I say, from my perspective, I would have liked for it to have remained more of a liberal arts kind of institution because that's my own background, you see—straight English and American literature, not, one might say, feminist studies, not gay studies, just conventional. As the discipline has branched out into all those other areas, it's more inclusive than it used to be. Each person then has to make his or her own contribution

inside that new area. Well, while I wasn't looking, the whole teaching of English literature changed. And like Dr. Sturgis, I guess I got old-fashioned myself, and the world has gone on beyond me. So it's different. Some people would say better and certainly more comprehensive than it used to be, but at the same time there's always a risk that in becoming more comprehensive it becomes less intensive in particular areas. This was in the 1980s also. The man who became vice president [of academic affairs, Edwin A. Rugg] was one who wanted to go into—well, maybe, he was forced into it, maybe it was his idea—wanted to go into this more comprehensive area. He was instrumental, actually the driving force, I suspect, in the reconfiguration of the English major. We had—what's your major?

BE: I'm a history major.

KD: English and history.

EH: English and history, okay. There was a time when we taught courses in all of English and American literature and just that before there was such thing as colonial literature and before there were such things as women's studies and feminist studies or gay studies. But Ed Rugg then, in trying to develop this more comprehensive area, said that we couldn't offer all those courses; they were too restrictive. So to offer courses in such a form that a student could expect to graduate in four years, with two years of an upper level [type], they had to cut out a lot of courses. There were originally courses for English literature, Anglo-Saxon or old English, a course in Chaucer, course in the early drama, courses in the 16th and 17th century—separate courses—Shakespeare, Milton, 18th century. All those were collapsed. I was originally teaching a course in the early drama, medieval to renaissance drama, 16th and 17th century non-dramatic poetry, Shakespeare, and 17th century. There was a separate professor who taught Milton. In that collapse the only course left was Shakespeare.

KD: Yes, that's the only one we have today still.

EH: You see? They were allowed to be taught on demand. For a while the same catalog number was used for half a dozen different courses and simply differentiated according to the one that was allowed to be taught that particular year. Well, on the one hand, you see, that takes away the exposure to all of the early courses. Is there now a course in Chaucer, for instance?

KD: Shakespeare is the only single author that is given.

EH: Okay, so it became necessary then to try to compress what had been a course in Chaucer and in early drama into the sophomore English literature course. It can't be done. That's what I mean. In an attempt at getting the breadth of teaching a great deal of depth has had to be sacrificed, I think, or diminished, as you like. But the effect of it was that I lost three-fourths of the courses I'd been teaching. As it has happened, as people have retired who taught those courses, they simply weren't offered again. The one who taught Milton retired, and Milton has never been offered, and that was fifteen, twenty years ago. Chaucer was taught a lot longer than that, but that eventually disappeared as well into some sort of early literature where Chaucer is mentioned for three weeks or something like that. The same for 18th and 19th century: I don't know what they did with 18th

century, but 19th century still is alternately taught as romantic and Victorian literature. My wife was a Victorian, and so she lost all of hers, you see. That was the only course that was allowed in that era, and that was only taught every couple of years. People had to scratch around to find different kinds of courses they could create as part of this umbrella kind of scheme that they came up with one number corresponding to several different kinds of courses.

History didn't go in for that to quite the same extent that English did. The history department managed to hang on to many of its courses, so they have many more courses offered in history now than are offered in English. They too have had to expand into other areas, corresponding with colonial and so forth into Russian history and African and other. As Ed Rugg used to say, we live in a global village was his expression for it. We tried to incorporate all the world in all the courses. The effect is, as I'm saying, it diminishes the intensity in all of those courses as it gives a greater breadth to all the courses.

BE: In wrapping up, what was your fondest memory of working at Kennesaw?

EH: Ha Ha! Okay, let me mention the *Sentinel*. I picked up one as I came in. For several years in the middle of my years I was faculty advisor to the *Sentinel*. I didn't know anything about journalism. They had to have a faculty advisor, and I was willing to do it. For part of that time I was faculty advisor to the yearbook [the *Montage*], which you don't even have a yearbook any more.

BE: No.

EH: Okay. It was difficult to do. It was difficult then and very expensive. It was on its way toward collapse even when I was advisor for it. There was one year when there really would have been no *Montage* if I hadn't taken the photographs for it, everything except the mug shots for all the students. All the photographs in it I took. At that time there was a darkroom. It was in the student center. The darkroom was taken out and was turned into an administrative office of some sort, but for years it was a darkroom, black and white darkroom, and I did all the photographic work in there. My favorite memories are of those years when I was working more closely with students and advising their various functions or listening to them going off to their meetings here and there.

Also, in the mid-80s, actually among the courses I took in Italy in the student studies abroad summer was drama, and I actually acted in the play that the drama department put on in Italy that summer. It was what was called a "Spaghetti Western." Most of the audience was Italian, and so there had to be enough Italian in the play that they could follow what was going on, but there had to be enough English that the people who were doing the acting could learn their lines. It was a strange thing called *The Death and Life of Sneaky Fitch—la morte e la vita di Sneaky "Feetch"*. I was third cowboy. They put me down because I had faculty status as assistant director. I knew nothing about directing a play.

When I came back a group of Sprayberry [High School] students wanted to do plays on the [Kennesaw] campus and we did. We did a Woody Allen thing—what it was called? Anyway, we did it in the student center. We would rehearse, and then come in and set up

a stage in the student center, and put on a play on the weekend, and take down the stage at the end of the weekend. That is also very interesting. I didn't know much about it. I depended upon the students. I was technically an advisor to all this, but I enjoyed that, working with the students in all of those capacities. They hired the Marietta Civic Center a weekend and did *Sleuth* on the main stage in Marietta, and you know, a professional sort of thing. They did a good thing.

I don't know what's happened to those people now. One of them went off to Hollywood, and I heard later that he had managed to get into some sort of production in films in Hollywood. This was thirty years ago now. Grandfather by now for all I know. I have had no contact with them since then, but it's an episode of meeting as a small group of students in a fairly intense circumstance for a period of weeks while they did the thing that was most interesting to them, and which vicariously I enjoyed from working with them. I guess the classes, the courses, came off in regular order. I shouldn't admit this, but there are only a half dozen or so students of all those years that I really remember. I counted it all up one time. In thirty-seven years I had more than eight thousand students.

BE: Wow.

EH: It added up. But of that very few that I remember. But I am also I guess glad to say that some of them remember me. My wife is a musician. She plays Celtic harp and has now got a business license, so she can count off income taxes. We had to go to the business license office in Cobb County for her business license, and it happened that the agent at the business office remembered me. He took a class from me in the 1980s. I met somebody at the ceremony for the retirement [of KSU faculty and staff] where Dr. Scott was retired a couple of weeks ago. [KSU] invited a group—well, Fred Roach's wife, Carole, and a friend of ours, Elizabeth Whitten, and my wife Gail, who all play Celtic harps—to come and be the background music for that, and they did. One of the people who was there came up and reminded me that he had a class with me in the 1970s. Every once in a while, not so much now as it was true up to five years ago, we'd meet a lot of waiters who remember us from having the classes we taught. Unfortunately, except for a few that I've kept up with one way or another over the years, I don't remember most of them. One is an Episcopal priest. She was from the 1980s. Another is a woman who is now teaching part-time in the English Department here. Those that I've kept up with I know, and they've been very, very influential, interesting. But it was the student activities that I remember most.

KD: Well, thank you so much.

EH: Thank you all. You bring me out again!

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