

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH MITCHELL A. COLLINS

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT and DEDE YOW

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for the

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Location: CIE/CETL House at Kennesaw State University

TS: Mitchell, why don't you just begin by telling us when you were born and where you were born and where you grew up?

MC: I was born in 1959 in Cumming, Georgia. I've lived the majority of my life within that community with the exception of two years when I taught at Appalachian State University in Boone, North Carolina. So that's really the only two years I've lived outside of Cumming.

TS: Do you still live in Cumming?

MC: I still live up there. I live on a farm where my children are the fifth generation to live there.

DY: That's wonderful. Are you going to be able to hold onto it?

MC: We're going to try to. Right now property taxes are real tough.

TS: I remember driving up through Cumming on the way to the mountains years ago, and that area has certainly changed big time in your lifetime.

MC: Yes, it has.

DY: Is it a working farm, Mitch?

MC: Not really right now. It was my wife's father's farm and his dad and his dad's dad's farm. Right now we have a Morgan horse and an apple orchard. That's about it right now that we do with it.

TS: You've got a long commute.

MC: Well, when I first started here, the commute was about thirty-five minutes; I could jump on [Interstate] 575. Now it's about an hour on high traffic days. It can be pretty tough getting through the Woodstock area.

TS: Yes, but it could be worse, I guess.

MC: It could be worse.

TS: And probably will be in the future. Well, why don't you talk about where you went to college and graduate school?

MC: I started out at Gainesville Junior College in Gainesville, Georgia, to begin with and did my first two years there. From there I went to North Georgia College [and State University] in Dahlonega and earned my bachelor's degree. I also went back there and earned my master's degree. I knew I wanted to teach in a university setting at some point, and so from there I went to the University of Georgia and earned my doctorate.

TS: What year did you get your doctorate?

MC: 1985.

TS: Let's see, you must have started college in the late '70s?

MC: I started actually in '76. At that time you only had to have so many credits for high school, and so I really finished up at the end of my junior year with the exception of one credit that I needed. During my first quarter of college I went to high school in the day and college at night. So I started at sixteen.

DY: That's like our JETS [Joint Enrollment for Twelfth Grade Students] program.

TS: What year did you graduate from North Georgia?

MC: I graduated from there in 1980.

TS: You would have been there about when Janisse Ray was there. Have you ever heard of Janisse Ray?

MC: No, I have not.

TS: I think she would have been there about that time. She was born in '62. We're using a book by her entitled *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*. She actually grew up in south Georgia, but she went to North Georgia for college and would have been there about 1980, I imagine.

MC: By the time I got there, I was finished with all my gen ed [classes], so most of my coursework was in the major. I didn't know many folks outside the major.

TS: How did you decide that you were interested in physical education?

MC: Well, it started at Gainesville College. There was a physical education teacher there named Jim Kirkland, and I thought, "He has a very interesting job; that would be fun to do." That's what first led me into looking into education. My mom's a teacher, too, so there's probably a good chance I would have gone into some level of education. When I went to North Georgia, I had a professor there who taught the 3000 and 4000 level courses, and I decided instead of teaching activity courses, it would be fun to teach those. So that's really what led me into this field.

DY: So were those your mentors?

MC: They would be my mentors.

DY: Kirkland is one?

MC: Kirkland, and he is retired now. The other is a John Raber at North Georgia College, and he has retired.

TS: What specifically did Raber teach?

MC: He taught exercise physiology, the kinesiology course, and several other courses. I had him through my undergraduate studies as well as my graduate studies.

TS: And that's really what you've done all your research in, or a good part of it, exercise physiology?

MC: Well, yes. He had a big impact on me in that in my first quarter there, I took a course called exercise physiology. At that time one of the requirements in that course was that you had to implement some kind of exercise program.

DY: For yourself?

MC: For myself, as part of that course. So I got involved in resistance training exercise as part of that. I never really had done that before. I ended up getting involved in competitive power lifting; I did that for a few years. That's really what led to my research area.

TS: So you were actually in competitions?

MC: In competition. All of my students sort of laugh every time I tell that because when you think of a weightlifter, you think of someone who is extremely large.

TS: You don't really look like an Arnold Schwarzenegger.

MC: Oh, no. But you have weight classes, and I competed in the 52 kg class. So I would cut down to that weight class to compete.

DY: And 52 kg would be what?

MC: That's 114 ½ pounds. It's sort of ironic because my involvement in that is probably one of the things that brought me here to Kennesaw. In 1981 the state championship in power lifting was on this campus. So I always think that it's so ironic that I ended up back here. The one thing I really remember: I asked some individuals about Kennesaw, and I left being told that it was an all-female school. I didn't know any different until several years later.

TS: Who told you that?

MC: I don't remember at the time, but they said it was a women's school.

DY: Oh, my goodness.

TS: Where did they do the competition?

MC: In the gymnasium.

TS: So I guess you had just finished your undergraduate at that time, and you were in graduate school at North Georgia. Then you go from there to the University of Georgia to wind up?

MC: That's correct. Between that period I had two years of public school teaching experience. As I worked on my master's degree, which was a nighttime program, I taught in a middle school. I taught eighth grade physical science for a year and coached football.

TS: Where was that?

MC: It was Otwell Middle School in Cumming, Georgia. It's named after a family. So I did that for one year. I had planned after that one year to go on to doctoral school, but I had a cousin who was going to go with me to grad school, and he needed one more year to finish up his degree. So I decided to teach one more year, and I taught elementary PE [physical education] one year.

DY: Did you? How interesting.

MC: I loved it. If I went back to public school, that's where I would go. It was pretty exhausting because I had sixty kids every thirty minutes all day long. I had no paraprofessionals so I was all by myself doing that; but it was very, very fun.

DY: I bet it was rewarding, too.

MC: It was.

TS: So then you go to the University of Georgia, and you got through there pretty fast, didn't you?

MC: Yes, I went through in three years. I was very fortunate; I had saved money to go to school there, but once I arrived, I had an opportunity to have a research assistantship in a lab. That's probably what really shaped the research that I've done. So I spent three years working in a lab setting. It was very, very enjoyable.

DY: What did you do?

MC: Basically, I helped teach undergraduate and graduate labs and then helped with the research studies that students were doing as part of their theses and

- dissertations. [I also helped with] some independent research for some of the faculty members.
- TS: And then you stayed there an extra year for postdoctoral research?
- MC: Yes, I did. I'd been involved in a lot of different projects, so I had quite a few publications from working with other individuals. There were a lot of jobs out that year, and I applied for I bet forty positions all across the United States in areas that I don't know whether I would have wanted to live or not. I wanted a job, but I ended up with no interviews at all. That surprised me, and I worried that maybe I had made a mistake going into the field. We had a research project going on, looking at muscle hypertrophy in men and women. We were just getting started on this project.
- TS: Muscle what?
- MC: Hypertrophy—the enlargement of muscle size. I was asked by my major professor if I would stay one more year in a post-doc position, both doing testing for the athletic association and working on that research project. So I stayed one additional year to do that.
- TS: What was your dissertation?
- MC: It's a mouthful. It's *Plasma Volume, Metabolic, and Cardiorespiratory Responses to Various Intensities of Weight Lifting*. Basically, I had individuals do a workout session at four different intensities, and I drew blood to look at shifts in fluid. I also looked at energy expenditure, respiratory rate, heart rate, lactic acid, and several other variables, looking at how each changes with different intensities.
- TS: What did you find?
- MC: Well, basically I found that all those variables responded to exercise intensity. The higher the intensity, the greater the response. We all know when people go in the weight room and they lift weights, the muscles feel pumped up. I did one of the first studies that actually quantified the amount of fluid that was moving from the vascular system into the muscles.
- TS: So they're pumped up because there's more blood in there?
- MC: It's a shift of fluid; that's right. So basically the plasma is leaving the blood stream and actually entering the muscle cell itself.
- DY: So when people take steroids, what they're doing is hyping that process up a great deal?
- MC: Actually, it's a whole different phenomenon. It's really not related to that because I'm just looking at the acute response—the change right after you lift.

- After you get pumped up, then the fluid moves back to the vascular system, and you go back to normal size.
- TS: Is there a value in knowing that?
- MC: There is. Any time you are making measurements of a substance that is trapped in the blood, if the quantity of that substance doesn't change at all and the fluid leaves the vascular system, the concentration goes up. It's a way to separate what's an actual physical change versus just a hemoconcentration of that. So that was sort of the intent behind the study.
- TS: Okay. So you finish there and you had your post-doc. And that's when you went to Appalachian State, wasn't it?
- MC: That's correct. That was in 1986. I went there, taught a couple of years, and worked in the undergraduate program as well as the graduate program. I served as the director of the exercise physiology lab there.
- TS: That probably was pretty much a growing institution at that time at Appalachian State? Or was it?
- MC: Well, it somewhat plateaued. I think we had about 10,000 students at the time. The exercise science program there was still somewhat in its infancy; it was growing.
- TS: Did you like it there?
- MC: I loved it there. I tell them the only thing that was wrong with it was that it wasn't in Cumming; I wanted to come back home. But I had great colleagues, I had a lab, I had research assistants who worked under me. It was very productive during those two years.
- DY: And it's beautiful.
- MC: Oh, it is beautiful.
- TS: Very mountainous, isn't it?
- MC: Yes. I had to get accustomed to the snow. I'd never seen so much snow before, but I really loved it there.
- TS: But you were really looking to come back to the metropolitan area, and I guess we had a job at this "girls'" college that you'd heard about.
- MC: There's sort of another little piece to the puzzle. During my second year at Appalachian State, I had met the woman who became my wife.
- TS: At Appalachian State?

MC: Actually, I had come back to Cumming over the summer because I didn't teach in the summer, and I met her during the summer. She worked for Post Properties. She had a degree from the University of Georgia in horticulture, and she did the flowers for Post.

TS: Post was big on flowers.

MC: Yes, very big.

DY: They always look so beautiful.

MC: Yes. So we ended up with a situation; either she was going to quit her job and move to Boone, or I was going to quit my job and move here. It was sort of ironic; I was making photocopies one day and turned and looked behind me, and on the board was a job at Kennesaw College. So I applied for the position.

DY: And that was what? Assistant professor of health and physical education?

MC: Assistant professor, yes.

TS: And your wife is Wanda. I see that she got her associate [degree] at Brevard College so she went up to the mountains of North Carolina for awhile.

DY: Now that is really beautiful.

MC: Oh, yes, she loves it up there.

TS: And then she got her horticulture degree at UGA [University of Georgia]. So you see a job advertised at Kennesaw; who was on the search committee?

MC: I'm not sure who all the people were. It was probably about everyone in the department at the time, which would have been Fred [Frederick K.] Whitt, Beverly [F.] Mitchell, and [C.] Grady Palmer. I don't remember if there was anyone else on there at that time or not.

TS: Was Fred the department chair?

MC: He was the department chair, Fred was. It's sort of strange in that I applied, and I think the position closed out in November. Not long after that I got a letter saying there were not enough applicants, and they decided to extend the search. So obviously, my thought was, "Well, I must not have been good enough for the position." I thought I really didn't have a chance at it. But they did extend [the search], and then as it came back around in January or February when it closed out again, I had a colleague from Appalachian State who called me into his office and wanted to talk to me. He said, "I heard you applied for a job down at Kennesaw." At the time, I didn't realize it, but Fred had gone to school at Appalachian State. So he had made contact with someone up there to find out a



little bit more about me, and that person had given me a good recommendation. So I ended up with the position.

DY: All of it sounds very serendipitous, doesn't it?

MC: Oh, yes, most definitely.

DY: I like that.

TS: By '88 we just put the state in our name, I guess.

MC: It came in a little bit after I came because we were Kennesaw College for a little while.

TS: I guess we were what, five thousand students then? Or six thousand?

MC: Somewhere in there; I think that's right.

TS: I don't think we'd reached ten thousand yet at that point.

MC: No.

TS: So a small phys ed department at Kennesaw, and let's see, what college were you in at that time?

MC: That would be the School of Education because we did not have colleges yet.

TS: Right; exactly.

MC: Bob [Robert L.] Driscoll was the dean at the time. He was a very good dean.

TS: One of the things that we've been asking everybody is their assessment of what the intellectual climate was like at Kennesaw when they came here. How would you describe it in 1988 when you arrived?

MC: Are you referring to the level of the students or in terms of colleagues?

TS: Well, really both, but maybe start with your colleagues and expectations for faculty members and that sort of thing.

MC: Compared to Appalachian State, it was quite a bit different. When I was at Appalachian State, there were several of us there who were exercise physiologists who were working together. When I came to Kennesaw, the department was very small, and I became somewhat of a one-person show. I did not have individuals to really collaborate with on research projects. Fortunately, I had collected a lot of data before I ever arrived, and so I had the opportunity to spend time writing up a lot of that. But over the years, that has changed quite a bit as we have continued to grow and have added a lot of colleagues here. I would say the same about the level of the students. When I first came, we had many students who were

nontraditional; they were older, and they had so many commitments that they didn't really have time to get that involved in different research projects. But that has really changed in that we have a lot of younger students who have more free time, and we've been able to engage them in quite a few different projects.

DY: When did you see that change happening, Mitch?

MC: It's just been gradual over the years. I wouldn't say there was one particular point where it shifted; it's just been a slow process.

TS: When you came here in '88, did you sense that research was discouraged or on the back burner compared to service? How would you describe what the expectations were for a new faculty member back then?

MC: I never felt like it [research] was discouraged. I always felt like it wasn't something that I had to do; but if you did it in terms of promotion, tenure, and annual review, it was looked highly favorably on. I know I used to talk to Fred a number of times about the number of service commitments that we all had to do, but if you elected to do scholarship also, it always seemed like it was above and beyond.

DY: Your other commitments.

MC: But Fred's point back to me was, "Well, that's true. But when it comes to promotion and tenure and annual review, you look that much stronger because you did both of those."

TS: Were there supports for it?

MC: There was definitely support. I was very fortunate when I first came to interview. I had compiled a list of equipment that I wanted to start a lab here with the thought that I would get a very minimal amount of money. But Fred came here one year earlier, and he had already been talking to Dr. [Edwin A.] Rugg, who was the VP [vice president of academic affairs] at the time, about the need for a lab. I think [Fred] had basically convinced him to support this. So when I brought my wish list in, I was very fortunate that they bought everything on the list, which is just unheard of.

DY: That's wonderful. That must have been very encouraging.

MC: Oh, it was very encouraging because, at the time, once we purchased that initial equipment, we probably had the third best lab in the state of Georgia behind UGA and Georgia State.

TS: Did we have that wing to the gym when you arrived?

MC: No. That was built after I came.

- TS: That's what I thought. So you all were really cramped for office space when you got here.
- MC: Yes. For the first six weeks or so, my office was in my truck in the parking lot. I was also set up in an equipment room temporarily. But then they brought in the trailers; I was located [in the Office Annex] where Public Safety is now. So I ended up with two offices; the front office was my office, and the one in back was where we stored lab equipment. Then when they ended up doing that construction, they put a trailer behind the gymnasium, and that's where the lab became housed.
- TS: Say a little bit more about the students. You're talking about them being nontraditional at the time as far as being pressed for time for doing research. How would they compare to, say, Appalachian State students in '88 in other ways?
- MC: It makes it a little bit difficult to compare in that at Appalachian State, a good bit of my time was working with graduate students. So I have to keep graduate versus undergraduate separate. We had some very good students here at Kennesaw when I first came, just like we had up there, but I think one of the big differences was obviously the age difference and what they were wanting to do with a degree. Most of our students at Appalachian State had a little more of a grad school mentality with what they were wanting to do; and here, at the time, we only had one major in the department: physical education with a teaching and non-teaching focus. So for my first few years here, we had very few students coming through that non-teaching focus. It was just so new for students. I think that's a difference, too, because at Appalachian State we had an exercise science major at the undergraduate level that was totally separate from physical education.
- TS: How many majors do we have now?
- MC: Right now within exercise and health science, there are about 250.
- TS: Students?
- MC: Majors in that.
- TS: How many different degrees do we have?
- MC: We have three in the department: sport management, health and physical education, and then exercise and health science, which is the largest right now in the department.
- TS: Exercise and health science?
- MC: Yes.
- DY: Have you still got the teaching/non-teaching track in any of those majors?

- MC: We don't have to have that anymore because the teaching major is separate.
- DY: Okay. And I would think certainly the climate—the national climate and just this raising of the consciousness that people have about their own physical health—has really, really affected your area.
- MC: Most definitely. It certainly has.
- DY: Do you see the kinds of students coming to be different, or are they coming for different things? What do you sense? Two hundred fifty majors is great.
- MC: It is great. One of the things that I'm probably seeing a little bit more than I did when the program first started out here is the number of students who are coming into our program who already have experience working within the field. That has been great for the program, versus the students who really didn't have a clue what they were getting into, sort of feeling their way. We have a number of students now who are quite successful already, but they need this degree to help them go further in the profession.
- DY: Are you all looking at any graduate degrees?
- MC: We are in the process of putting together a graduate program, and, hopefully, it will start in fall of '07.
- DY: That's wonderful!
- TS: What kind of places are they working in now? Like Cagles Gym?
- MC: Well, everywhere from Cagles Gym to cardiac rehab settings and physical therapy settings. We have a number who are involved in pharmaceutical sales and medical sales. I have students who work in university settings. Our very first graduate of the exercise science program here is on the faculty at Georgia Tech right now. She finished up with a Ph.D. in statistics and has been there several years.
- DY: Make the connection for me with pharmaceutical sales.
- MC: Well, in pharmaceutical sales, a lot of them get involved in some of the cardiovascular medications. It's a pretty nice connection back to exercise and health science in that we do a lot of studies related to the heart and the health of the heart. There are differing opinions on the kind of person that they look for in pharmaceutical sales, whether it should be someone with a real strong sales background or someone with a better understanding of the physiology of the body and health. So it varies company to company, the kind of person they look for.
- TS: You received the Distinguished Scholarship Award a couple of years ago.
- DY: In 2003, wasn't it?

- TS: Why don't you talk a little bit about the scholarship that you've been able to do at Kennesaw?
- MC: Obviously, most of the scholarship that I have done over my career has been related to resistance training.
- DY: Would you give us a working definition of resistance training?
- MC: Sure. It's weight-training exercise where you lift a load over a period of time, and you look at how the body adapts to the lifting of that load.
- TS: The resistance is the weight and gravity and so on.
- MC: That's right. Some of the studies that I have done since I've been here are related to it. One of the first ones was with this student that I mentioned who is at Tech now. We did a study looking at weight training and aerobic exercise—running exercise—and had an interest in if an individual is going to do both of those in a single exercise session, did it matter whether or not you went running first or you did the weight training first? When we did the review of literature, it really had never been done before. So we designed the study where we would have a group that would weight train and then run, and then the other group would run and then weight train, trying to see how it affected cardiovascular endurance and muscular strength. In the study, we were one of the first to document that it really did not have an affect in untrained individuals whether you run first or whether you weight train first. There was no advantage or disadvantage of one over the other, which was actually different than I hypothesized that we would see.
- DY: What did you think you would see?
- MC: I really thought you would be better off to do the weight training first if you were looking at muscular strength, but I thought if you were looking at cardiovascular endurance that it wouldn't make any difference which one you did. As it turned out, it did not make any difference on muscular strength either. I think if we repeated the study with elite caliber athletes, it may become important; but for recreational fitness individuals, it really doesn't matter.
- DY: Were you doing men and women?
- MC: Men and women.
- DY: Because in just the little bit of reading that I've done, it's very important for women, particularly after I think it's age 35, to do weight-bearing exercise.
- MC: Right. For bone health. We presented this at a national conference; it got picked up by a number of publications, and [we had] a few write-ups in some of the popular fitness magazines over that study. And then we published it in a journal called *Journal of Sports Sciences*.

DY: Which is an elite journal in your field.

MC: Yes, an international journal.

DY: How nice.

MC: Then in 1997 I was involved in a faculty development program at Georgia Tech. I went to Georgia Tech for six months to work down there, and while I was there, I got involved in a number of body composition studies, looking at how to evaluate body fatness. They had purchased a new device there called a BOD POD. It's a big, egg-looking device that assesses body fat using a technology called air displacement plethysmography.

TS: Just say it one more time.

MC: Plethysmography—air pressure is what it's based on. So basically, you put an individual in this egg, and you compress the air that is in there. Based on the change in volume of that air and the pressure change, you can determine the volume of the individual. From the person's volume, you can estimate the percent fat of the individual. So we did a series of about three studies. One was a real quick and clean one where we evaluated the entire football team at Georgia Tech, then published this in a journal called *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*. We did a second study where we took a bunch of students from the University of Georgia, because we were also working with them on this and . . .

DY: Non-athletes?

MC: It was non-athletes. We were looking within this particular project at body composition using something called a four-compartment model. This is where you evaluate body composition using several different techniques, and you combine the results together into a single model based on dividing the body into four parts. So we measured body water in these individuals by having them drink heavy water. We did something called dual energy x-ray absorptiometry—that measures mineral content. We did underwater weighing to get the density of the body, and we used that to evaluate the BOD POD and how well it was working to assess body fatness. Then for a third project that we did, we had an interest in African-Americans that were extremely muscular. So we recruited some body builders from the Atlanta area and did similar things with them, and we published several papers in *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise* and then a paper in the *Journal of Applied Physiology*.

DY: So racial and ethnic differences are certainly to be figured in as well as gender, obviously.

MC: Yes. Actually the racial part really had no impact; it was the muscularity that was the important part. There had been some suggestions over the years that if you evaluate the body fatness of an African-American, you should use a different equation than you would in a white; so we challenged that argument. We think

- that's a faulty argument; we think the same equation will work with both. So, we published a paper defending our stand on that, that race had no impact on it. Sort of the theory behind it was that within African-Americans, the thought was that they would have a higher bone density, and that that higher bone density would require a different equation. But as it turns out, bone or mineral content within the body is such a small part of our body that if there is a racial difference, it probably is not that important.
- TS: Is there some scientific basis for thinking there's a difference in bone density on the basis of race?
- MC: There is a little bit of data to suggest a higher bone density from African-Americans, and when you start looking at instances of osteoporosis, it is much less [prevalent] in the African-American community than it is in the Caucasian community.
- TS: How did they decide who's African-American in terms of science?
- MC: That becomes a challenge. Typically, what we ended up doing to label someone as African-American, we would ask them the race of their mom and their father; and if they classified both mom and father as being African-American, that's how we would label them. If one was and one was not, then that would end up being a mixed race, which was excluded from the project. But it's becoming a challenge.
- TS: I guess sociologically, even if a person had a black mother and a white father, or vice versa, we still call the child African-American.
- MC: Typically, yes; that's true.
- TS: But for your purposes, you wouldn't?
- MC: We would not; that's correct.
- TS: That sounds a little more plausible to do it that way.
- MC: Right.
- DY: So when you say "we" published, I'm assuming you were working with colleagues at Georgia Tech during this, Mitch?
- MC: Georgia Tech, University of Georgia, and University of Illinois. And then another colleague who is at the University of Rhode Island now.
- TS: Did you find out anything interesting about the Georgia Tech football team?
- MC: Nothing in particular. What we found was about what we would have expected within that group. One thing that did somewhat come out of it, with the football players being a little big larger in size than the typical individual, we did find that

body size plays a role in the accuracy of the BOD POD. We published a paper just a year ago looking at the effect of body size. The larger individual takes up a larger space in that pod; therefore, that pod typically is a little bit more accurate when you have a bigger person in there compared to a smaller person.

DY: Have we got a BOD POD at Kennesaw?

MC: No, we do not. Those things are really expensive; they're about \$30,000. So we have a DEXA, which is a much more accurate device for assessing body fatness than a BOD POD and even an underwater weighing system. So no immediate plans to buy a BOD POD. I think there are only two in the state of Georgia.

TS: Has the opening of the new [KSU] Convocation Center had an impact on facilities that you have in physical ed? Has it freed up space for you?

MC: It has some. We've been able to sort of expand our laboratory space a little bit; we're doing that. And we were able to get a little bit of equipment money to add some new pieces of equipment in that facility.

TS: And then we have that new Student Fitness Center, I guess it's called, that's just opened up connected to the gym.

MC: Right. That's really independent of us, so there's no direct bearing.

TS: And it hasn't affected your space then, the way they built the building?

MC: It really did not because we cannot utilize that space as part of our academic program. Some of the gymnasium that we had before we still use, but not the weight area.

TS: Right. And no research projects you have envisioned with the student center?

MC: Not particularly right now within there. We have some other projects that are underway, but not related to that.

TS: Are you still doing papers with students like the one that you mentioned that you started out with, the woman that's at Georgia Tech now?

MC: We have some that we have done, but nothing right now in the works. The last project that I got involved with really didn't involve students at all. I was involved in a collaboration with Emory University and their school of medicine. It's another weight-training project looking at the effects of creatine in resistance training among individuals suffering from Parkinson's disease.

TS: What is creatine?

MC: Creatine is a supplement that is commonly taken by athletes that enhances anaerobic performance or short bursts of explosive performance.



TS: This is something sold over the counter?

MC: Oh, yes; you can walk into any health food store.

DY: GNC or anything.

MC: Yes. Even a lot of high school athletes are taking creatine, and the side effects from using the creatine, such as cramping, so far have been very minimal. But we still don't know the long-term effects of creatine on the body

DY: I know when you get a blood profile, you have BUN [blood urea nitrogen] in creatine; what is that?

MC: Is it creatine, or is it creatinine?

DY: It's creatinine.

MC: Which is a byproduct of the body; it's a measure of kidney function.

DY: Does this substance impact the kidney at all?

MC: Well, we really don't know. Any time you take something into the body, the kidney plays a role in processing it and removing it. No real long-term studies that we know [of have been done] yet. It's going to take a period of time before we start to see these effects, so it goes back to your question about steroids. When you back up to the 1960s when steroids first started to become popular, most people thought they didn't cause any harm at all to the body. It wasn't until we got in the '70s and the '80s that we started seeing the problems.

DY: The long-term effects.

TS: I ran on the track team at the University of Tennessee, and most of us runners didn't pay much attention to any of that, I don't think, back in the '60s. But when we'd go on a trip and one of the shot putters would open up his suitcase, there would be about five million different kinds of pills inside. I guess they were mainly vitamins that they were taking; I don't know. But certainly, I guess, among people that were into weight training and so on, they were using those back in the '60s.

MC: Well, there's really been no human studies done looking at creatine and Parkinson's disease; it's all been animal work. We know that one of the factors that can contribute to Parkinson's disease is bioenergetic dysfunction in the brain. Basically, there's interference in the ability of the brain to make ATP, or energy; and cells begin to die. As cells begin to die, the brain loses its ability to produce dopamine, a neurotransmitter, that leads to Parkinson's. The thought was [that] if you have an individual who has been diagnosed with Parkinson's and they start taking creatine, maybe this would boost their ability to produce energy and would slow down the progression of this disease. Like I said, there have been some

benefits in animal models and in some other neurological diseases such as Huntington's disease. We were the first to try to test this in humans. We're in the process of trying to publish some of the data; we've presented some of it. We found some very positive benefits on functional performance. We're in the process now of analyzing some of the specific Parkinson's measures. I've looked at some of those, and there appear to be trends there. But we did not have a large data set, so we were hoping that this pilot study would maybe lead to some additional funding in the future.

DY: Are you getting funding from outside agencies to do this?

MC: Not me directly. It's Emory that really received the funding. They were an institution that received a large sum of money to look at complementary alternative medicine as it relates to neurodegenerative diseases. And this was one seed project that was funded out of that money.

TS: Are you actually doing your research down at Emory?

MC: Actually, it was done here at the Kennesaw campus. We did all of the training in the Faculty and Staff Fitness Center.

TS: It seems like I remember that when you all were doing that over there.

MC: Well, sort of the logic behind it was, it's hard to get people to drive all the way to Emory; and so we partnered up this way thinking they could recruit out of this northwest area and be able to get individuals to come there to train. This was a training study.

DY: Was it successful?

MC: It was successful.

TS: And did that involve students here?

MC: Not students, but one of our former students, one of our graduates. We hired her to serve as our trainer for the project, so she supervised all the training.

TS: Great. What do you see in terms of future research projects? Where do you want to go with all of this?

MC: Probably one of the main areas that we're trying to get into is bone density. Just in this past year, the university purchased a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometer, which is a device that measures bone density as well as . . .

TS: We did?

MC: Yes, the university did. And we got some sponsorship from GE Medical Systems. They underwrote some of the costs of that.

TS: Say that name again?

MC: It's a dual-energy x-ray absorptiometer. We call it DXA. So we're trying to get several projects underway now to utilize this piece of equipment. Angela [B.] Lanier from the department is looking at intramuscular fat and the risk of type 2 diabetes, so that's one project we're trying to get off the ground. She's right now starting some pilot testing with that. And then I'm working on another project trying to get some data collection started and looking at the risk of type 2 diabetes among Latinos within the Cobb County school system. So I'm trying to partner with Cobb County Schools on a project.

DY: Is this the first time you've partnered with the public schools?

MC: Actually not. Back in 1990 I did a study looking at the incidence of steroid use among high school students, so I had done some work with the Cobb County and Gwinnett County school systems as part of that.

TS: What did you find?

MC: I found that the rate of use among males was about 5 percent at that time, which was pretty consistent with the studies across the US.

TS: Wow. That's pretty high. It sounds like it's high to me.

MC: Yes, it seems high to me; but in the literature, that's about the percent that's out there. The kids, they just don't realize the side effects.

TS: These are all athletes that are doing this?

MC: It's a mixture. Some of them, obviously, were football players and athletes; others were just kids that were trying to get muscular.

DY: I wonder if there's a regional [correlation]; you know, areas that produce these football teams. I think about south Georgia in particular.

MC: Well, steroids are quite expensive, so typically you see it more in people that have a little money.

TS: How do they get a hold of them?

MC: Well, that's interesting. I had a student that was in a speech class here, and she did a speech on steroids. And she got the idea, "Why don't I see if I can buy some?" She immediately walked in one day to a local gym and bought some that day. So it's a matter of, like any drug, knowing the right person. If you have the money, you can get them.

DY: Right. Because these are illegal substances, aren't they?

MC: Yes, they are illegal.

DY: But readily available.

TS: And you said you did that back in the early '90s?

MC: In 1990.

TS: Wow, fifteen years ago.

MC: But I think that all that is out now on the side effects of steroids. I really wouldn't expect that percentage to be up. Particularly now with creatine so common and a lot more economical, kids are taking that as opposed to steroids; but there's still steroid use out there.

TS: It'd be interesting to see. It would be nice if they paid attention and changed their behavior as a result. I'm not sure that it's happened on a lot of other things that are harmful for them.

DY: Not with the media dictating body image to our culture as it does.

TS: We were asking about using students on these projects. How has your scholarship affected your teaching over the years at Kennesaw?

MC: I think it's affected my teaching quite a bit in that a lot of the research that I have been fortunate enough to get involved with has been what I consider cutting edge. Some of the results tend to contradict some of the things that are found within the textbook. So I think what has been important about it is maybe not so much what I found in my research, but to get students to understand the importance of being a lifelong learner. You don't just pick up a book and assume that's going to be fact for the rest of your life. I really try to get the students to look at what's in a book critically and to realize that our knowledge base changes over the years. That has really been one of the more important pieces in class.

DY: I'm sure that's something we all share that's interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary, that you tend to get students to look at any text and question always. But how wonderful for students that you walk into the classroom and say, "Well, I've done research that corroborates or contradicts this."

MC: Right. And I think it really gets their attention when not only you say that, but they look at the book and in the book it says Collins, et al. They say, "Oh, that's you." It really sticks in their minds.

DY: They're fortunate to have the teacher who had something to do with their textbook.

MC: Well, thank you very much.

- TS: There was a time here before you came that the phys ed department was spending most of their time teaching these activities courses; I guess badminton and what-have-you. Then we went toward—is it still called HPED 1000?
- MC: It's HPS for Health, Physical Education, and Sport Science, but yes, "Fitness for Living."
- TS: HPS 1000?
- MC: Right.
- TS: So everybody takes that nowadays, and that's a four-hour basically lecture class, isn't it?
- MC: Three hours; three semester hours. It's a combination lecture class/lab class with a small activity component. We expose them to a little bit of activity within the class, but really the intent is not to work out in the class but to get them to go do it on their own because that's what's important.
- TS: Do you still teach that?
- MC: I have not taught that in several years. What I most recently have taught has been the exercise physiology course, the exercise testing and evaluation course; and I teach the seminar in exercise and health science, which is sort of a senior capstone course, and I supervise interns. Those have primarily been the ones I've taught. But most of these courses within the exercise and health science program I've taught at some time or another, anywhere from research methods to nutrition to biomechanics.
- TS: So you have to find places for the interns to be located?
- MC: Right. Currently, I'm the coordinator of the field experiences for exercise and health science, and so I do all the placements for the interns.
- TS: Is there a requirement for the degree to do an internship?
- MC: Yes and no. Most of the students go through a track within the program that leads to a field experience at the end; it's a twelve-hour experience. But we also offer a pre-professional route which is geared more for students that know they're going on to professional school—grad school—and those students may or may not do an internship.
- TS: That's kind of the same with the history degree. We encourage them to do an internship if they want to do something that's history-related but are not going on to a professional school. So where all do you place them?
- MC: They're all over the place. We've had students as far south as the Cayman Islands to as far north as the North Rim of Alaska at BP Exploration. We had one student

several years ago that worked at the Wellness Center in the White House. They're in corporate sites, hospital-based sites, commercial fitness centers, university settings; it's a wide variety.

TS: Are you finding these places for them, or are they finding their own places?

MC: It's a combination; it's a shared responsibility. Some students are very self-motivated to the point that they come to me with a site, and I'm involved, obviously, with the approval of the site. Others don't really have an idea where to go. So we sit down and talk about what their interests are, what they want to do; and I point them in some directions and make some contacts for them.

TS: I saw *Doonesbury* yesterday, I guess, which was criticizing George W. for working out two hours a day. Personally, I think that's reassuring in a president that they're working out.

DY: In anybody, for mental and physical health.

TS: I know he runs a lot. It would be real interesting to know what goes on at the White House in their fitness center.

DY: Mitch, you spent a few months in Brazil. Were you establishing contact there for internships, or what were you doing there?

MC: It was a combination of things. We developed a collaborative relationship with the Federal University at Santa Catarina in Florianopolis, Brazil. The way this got started, Bernie [Bernard D.] Goldfine and a guy by the name of Markus Nahas from Brazil, they went to school together at USC out in California. So they were talking one day about [how] we should develop an exchange program where we exchange students and faculty. Back in 2001 they sent a doctoral student up here who spent six weeks at Kennesaw. A little bit after that they sent an undergraduate student up who spent some time with us here also. It got to the point that this exchange was one-directional; they were sending, and we were not sending. So they had been encouraging me to come down there and spend some time doing some research and a little bit of teaching. Finally, I sat down with my wife and said, "Hey, we need to make a decision. We're either going to go or we're not going to go because they are really wanting me to go." It was something I'd never thought of before because I never had traveled that much outside of the country and never had been to Brazil. Finally, we decided that we would just try this. I met with my chair at the time and Dean [Richard L.] Sowell, and we sort of worked out the logistics of how we might pull this off. I went down in 2003 and was there from the end of February into May.

DY: Did your children go with you?

MC: Actually, they came down for one month in the middle. We were able to basically do a little bit of home schooling and catch their spring break in there. So they spent thirty days down there.

- DY: What a good experience for all of you!
- MC: They loved it. My children keep saying they would like to go back at some point. It was an experience that I was a little bit apprehensive about, I think, at the time, but I loved it. I've had the opportunity to go back since then to another part of Brazil. I love the people; love the country and the food. We could learn a lot from them.
- TS: So you were able to escape some of our winter weather for a Southern Hemisphere temperature.
- MC: Oh, it was extremely hot when I first got there. Everybody sort of laughed at me when I came back to the department. I've always been one to sort of dress up when I'm on campus. But down there it was so hot and so humid, you couldn't wear dress pants and shirt; you were soaking wet. While I was there, I was in shorts and t-shirts and flip-flops teaching class. So I came back here in the summer and sort of brought Brazil back and taught classes in shorts. No one had ever seen me from the department, teaching class in shorts. But it's just a whole different atmosphere.
- TS: No air conditioning on that campus?
- MC: Very little. You had some air conditioning in your office, but in classrooms there was none. One of the things that I had to adjust to was what they call "Brazilian time," meaning there is no time. If someone would say we're going to do something at five o'clock, what that meant was, do not plan on doing it until five o'clock or after. It could be as late as nine before you did whatever that activity was. And that was real hard to adjust to.
- TS: How did that affect students showing up for class on time?
- MC: They're accustomed to Brazilian time. They understand that you show up when you can get there, and the professor will be there when he gets there. I was at a conference in December a year ago in Recife in the north end, and I was getting ready to present at this conference. And they said, "Well, we need to go have lunch first." So we went to have lunch. I'm watching the clock, and it's getting time for me to present and I'm like, "Y'all realize it's ten minutes before the presentation is supposed to begin." They said, "Oh, don't worry about it; six of the eight presenters are here at the table. You'll present when you get back." I did three presentations at this conference, and I was from thirty to forty-five minutes late for every one of them. But they're accustomed to that. I don't know how they function that way.
- TS: How do you get any work done?
- MC: I don't know. That's Brazilian time. They do not get stressed out over stuff like that. Lunch is a big thing there; everybody gets together to go have lunch. You

- don't sit in your office and eat lunch while you're working. It's a big social event.
- DY: That would be something to learn from.
- TS: How did you deal with the language?
- MC: It's Portuguese. Well, I worked and worked on Portuguese before I went down and found out that even though I worked on it, I was still way behind. So I learned simple greetings; it got to the point where I could read some signage, and eventually I could read a lot of stuff that was written as long as it was in my field of study. But the pronunciation—carrying on a conversation—I never did master.
- TS: What about teaching classes?
- MC: I had a translator. Most of the individuals that are there earned their doctoral degrees in the U.S., so many of the faculty could speak English very well. I had some adjusting in teaching because you speak a little bit and let them translate and then a little bit more and then translate. I tend to speak pretty quickly, so I really had to learn how to slow down.
- TS: Couldn't get too much covered in a class, I guess?
- MC: No, no. We could not. But there was a big difference in their students compared to our students here. One day they came up to me and said, "Why don't you talk to our students about weight training and steroids?" I said, "Sure. When are you going to do that?" This was like on a Friday and they said, "We'll do it Tuesday." I said, "How will you get the word out to the students?" They said, "Oh, they'll come." All of a sudden they planned this thing with Collins coming to talk on this, and I had a hundred students there. I don't think that would happen on this campus.
- DY: Well, unless they're like our students and stay on cell phones or text message each other.
- MC: But they did it just instantly. It's amazing. They had a real thirst for information, and with someone coming from another country, they wanted to hear what I had to say. They would often flag me in the hall and want to talk to me about different things.
- TS: Do you think you'll go back down there again?
- MC: Well, Bernie and I had talked about going back this November to a conference that was down there; but they're expecting a child, so it didn't hit at the best of times. But I will go back at some point.
- TS: Great. This most recent award that you got this year, the Distinguished Professor Award, is kind of an overall award, I guess, that includes teaching and service and



- scholarship. One of the requirements is that you have a national or international reputation, so I guess working with Brazil helped in that regard.
- MC: I think that probably played a role in it. I know when I was first nominated for the award a year ago, the first time they offered the award, I was really amazed that my dean would select me for that. I could name other individuals within the college that I thought had a much better chance of winning an award like that. But I was quite humbled to be selected.
- TS: Of course, your research has been published in national publications, too.
- MC: Yes.
- TS: Are you involved with any of the national organizations?
- MC: I'm involved in a few of them. The American College of Sports Medicine, I'm a Fellow within that organization. I've been involved in everything from being a reviewer on their journals to programs to presenting and publishing in a wide variety of things. Also, several years ago they had a "Healthy People 2000" program where they were promoting health and well-being as part of the national health goals of the government; I was involved at committee level in trying to do that. Another organization is the National Strength and Conditioning Association. I've had a similar type involvement with them where I reviewed for their journal and published in their journal and presented at their conferences and have been on several of their committees. Those are the two main ones, and then I've been involved regionally and statewide with several other organizations.
- TS: You mentioned Dean Sowell a few minutes ago. That maybe brings up something that I ought to ask you about. You started out [as] part of the School of Education, and now you're in the College of Health and . . .
- CM: It's actually the WellStar College of Health and Human Services.
- TS: So that really is a merging of physical education, nursing, and human services. How has that worked out?
- MC: It seems like it has worked pretty well in that all the departments in there have a health-related focus to some level; so there was a natural connection right there. If I was going to identify an aspect that didn't fit quite as cleanly, it probably would be our sport management program because it's more of a business-related program. They do some health-related things, but they still collaborate with the Coles College of Business and do some things with them.
- TS: So it has a strong health component but also professional training, too. I mean, if you're in the nursing program, you're training to get a job as a nurse. Your field is different though, with what you're in, and it's not necessarily training to go into a particular job; it may be training to go to graduate school.

- MC: That's right. I tell students that in many ways, it's somewhat [like] earning a degree in psychology. I mean, you don't just go out and look for a job called "psychology" once you finish, but there are many things you can do with that degree. So ours is somewhat the same way. They go into things that are a little more clear-cut, like being a personal trainer or an aerobics instructor to working in research settings or in medical type settings. So it's really all over the place.
- TS: Do you all do career counseling for them?
- MC: We do. We do it as part of our introductory course that all of our students take as they're coming into the program. Once they get to the seminar course, we do some additional things there, and then also through the internship experience.
- TS: In your college how have you handled the growing emphasis on research that I think has characterized the whole institution in the last decade or so? I know in the Coles College of Business they have these three tracks that people can get into now. Have you all done anything like that?
- MC: We have developed a new workload policy where we have basically three tracks. One is more of a teaching focus; it really is geared more for instructor level although it's not exclusively at that level.
- DY: What's the load there?
- MC: Twelve to fifteen credit hours of teaching so it's a variable rate. Then there is more of what they call a balanced track, which is what we historically have here. And then within that balance you can select a service focus or scholarship focus, and I think that's running like nine to twelve teaching hours within it. And then there's the scholarship focus, and it is running like six to nine teaching hours.
- TS: Is that what you're in?
- MC: That's what I'm in right now although some of my duties are changing a little bit. We're in the process of seeking accreditation for the exercise and health science program, so I'm about to assume some major service responsibilities as part of that.
- TS: When you say seeking accreditation, from whom?
- MC: The American College of Sports Medicine. They're the ones who have implemented it and so it's through an organization called CAAHEP [Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs]. It is the organization that does athletic training so they're the ones that are sort of overseeing this process. It's very new; it's only been out about a year now, and so we're trying to get things in place for self-study. That will hopefully take place in the spring along with a site visit next fall.
- TS: What will be the advantage of getting accredited by them?

- MC: The main thing is basically recognition of the program and that the program meets certain national guidelines for individuals going into the allied health field.
- TS: So you'll probably go the balanced track when you do that?
- MC: I will end up probably bouncing back and forth until we get through that process.
- TS: We were asking you earlier about the intellectual climate when you started here; what do you think we are as an institution now? Are we heading toward Research I or Research II? Where we are now, and where are we going?
- MC: Probably the biggest place that I see us moving [to] is more of a regional university status. I know that word gets thrown around quite a bit, and I think some of that movement may be dictated by whoever our next president is and the direction that president leads us in. But I think a lot of the growth that we have seen here has sort of naturally moved us in that direction, and as we hire academic deans, that plays a big role. I think Dean Sowell has played a big role within our college, promoting scholarship and research, but one thing that I will mention about him is how supportive he has been on moving this scholarship agenda. Not only is he one who says we need to get involved in more scholarship, he's put up seed money and helped us develop this new workload model to get us to that point.
- DY: We heard the same thing from [L.] Annette Bairan.
- MC: Another thing that he has said several different times, and I hope that everyone is hearing it within the college, is that he doesn't expect everything to move into that. We have some people who are great teachers, and that's what they want to focus on. That's well and fine; they will carry maybe a little bit more of the teaching workload within the college. But then if you have someone else who has grant potential and scholarship interests, then maybe they can give up some of that teaching part of the workload. But both of them would be equally rewarded with promotion, tenure, merit pay, and all those kind of things.
- TS: So when you talk about a regional university model, are you defining it as a model where we do more research than we used to but it's more applied research? Or just exactly how do you define a regional university?
- MC: Well, I always struggle with that term "applied research" because I think all research is applied. But going back into that regional [definition], I guess what I would see would be that our primary service area would be more of a region than necessarily the whole state of Georgia or internationally. And along with that, it would probably be a place that would offer a lot of graduate-level programs and maybe a limited number of doctoral-level programs.
- TS: And so our region would be northwest Georgia?

MC: Probably northwest, maybe even north central and a little bit of northeastern, depending on where North Georgia College and State University positions itself.

TS: Some people bat around the term “metropolitan university.” Of course, you’ve got to be in a metropolitan area to be a metropolitan university, but we are. I guess it’s really a question of whether our service area is stretching all the way through north Georgia, or is our service area metropolitan Atlanta, which nowadays is twenty counties or so? How do you see that? Or is there a difference? Both of them have a large service-to-the-community component, don’t they?

MC: See, I guess I would envision us being a little bit of both. I mean, we can’t get away from Atlanta until there’s a lot of service to the metropolitan area. I know we have a lot of students that drive up from Henry County—or even over in Gwinnett County—to come to school here, so we definitely serve in that area. Metro Atlanta is moving further and further out. I mean, where I live, I never thought of myself as being part of Atlanta, but it’s amazing.

TS: It’s gone out there. [Georgia] 400 opened up that area.

MC: It most definitely has. If people are trying to find out where I live, [I say], “Hop on 400, and take a left at the first traffic light.” And they say, “A traffic light on 400?” But there is a traffic light on 400.

TS: Wow. Well, what has kept you at Kennesaw for the last seventeen years?

MC: It’s probably been a combination of things. I think it’s very important for me to bring up our children on that family farm. Although there are other institutions that are around, I have always liked the thought here at Kennesaw, the valuing of teaching, because I think that’s very, very important. I really admire Dr. [Betty L.] Siegel and her focus on teaching. I have never really felt since I have been here that I had to shortchange teaching to do something else that meets any other agenda of the university. Even though we’ve gotten to the point where maybe there is a stronger scholarship focus, it has been worked out to where maybe you can back off on the overall teaching load to accommodate that scholarship without shortchanging the teaching. So that has been one thing. I think another piece is the support I got in terms of starting a lab here and the colleagues that I have within the metro Atlanta area that I’ve been able to collaborate with. That has enabled me to do a lot of scholarship that maybe I could not have done here doing it all by myself.

TS: What are you proudest of [as far as] what you’ve accomplished here?

MC: Probably the most important thing is the students that I’m aware of who have gone on from here to do other things. I always tell students as they’re walking out the door not to forget us: “Drop me an e-mail or whatever down the road as you go on to do other things.” I think about one student that is sort of a success story, but at the same time it’s a little bit of a sad story. I won’t mention her name in

here. But a student wanted to be a physical therapist—this was one of my earlier students—so I help her get placed in a PT [physical therapy] setting at Scottish Rite. She did physical therapy with children there as part of her internship, and then she applied for PT school. She got rejected the first time, tried again, finally made it into PT school. She became a physical therapist here in the metro Atlanta area, but, unfortunately, she developed cancer and died this past summer. I was so proud of her, and I know I talked about her a lot in my classes. If you really want something bad enough and you keep trying, eventually you can make it. She did that; she's one. I have a number of students that have earned Ph.D.s. and a number of students that have entered professional schools such as dentistry and one is a physician's assistant. From Appalachian State, I have a student that I directed her thesis, and she's now a medical doctor. That always makes you feel good that maybe you had some impact on their life.

TS: Have your teaching techniques changed over time? Are you using more technology now than you used to?

MC: I have always enjoyed technology so in the department I was always one of the first ones to jump in and try the different types of technology—everything from WebCT to developing a personal Web page and putting things on there to putting PowerPoint slides out on the Web so that they can pull that information. One of the things I've always tried to do with my PowerPoint slides—I mean, you can project a slide up there that has a lot of content, but, in my mind, if you just suddenly project a slide, it really is no different than a transparency. So my thought has always been: Don't put too much on the PowerPoint slide. If you can do slides that are a little bit more animated, or they build content, that is much better than just flashing everything up there. So that is one thing that I have tried to do. For some of the chemistry and things, I draw figures that slowly piece the figure together up there. So that's probably some of the ways that I have changed.

TS: If we have a graduate program by next fall, how is that going to change your job description?

MC: Well, I'm really not sure because we haven't delineated who will be teaching the graduate program and who will still be servicing the undergraduates. So I guess I don't necessarily know at this point. We have added several new faculty members over the last couple of years, and we're searching for some this year. So I guess it just depends on who has an interest in what. One thing with the graduate program—typical graduate programs are taught at night, and I have a tremendous number of community commitments at night. So it would have to be a matter of trying to work that [in] with a teaching schedule.

TS: Are the community commitments professional commitments or things with your kids?

MC: It's a combination of things. It's everything from church commitments to kids in Boy Scouts. I'm a den leader for a Cub Scout group. [There's] ball and band; it's just a wide variety of things.

TS: I'm teaching a graduate course on Saturday mornings this year. I preferred that to doing it in the evening. That might be another option although you're probably tied up on Saturday mornings, too, with all your kids' activities.

MC: Well, we have a lot of camping trips with Boy Scouts, so I have a lot of responsibility with that.

DY: You have an Eagle Scout.

MC: I have an Eagle Scout.

DY: Congratulations.

MC: Thank you.

TS: I believe your children are fifteen, twelve and nine?

MC: Actually, they are sixteen, thirteen and one's about to turn ten and so excited he's going to be [in the] double digits.

TS: So sixteen, thirteen and almost ten.

DY: So your sixteen-year-old is a junior this year?

MC: He's a junior.

TS: And that is Nicolas, and he's the Eagle Scout.

MC: He's an Eagle Scout, and he plays the trumpet in the marching band at North Forsyth High School.

TS: And then Christopher is thirteen.

MC: Thirteen. He is a Star Scout. He's about to test out for Life Scout, which is one step before Eagle.

TS: And Patrick is about to turn ten.

MC: About to turn ten.

TS: And if he's not [in] Cub Scouts, is he . . . ?

MC: He's still in Cub Scouts. He is in what they call Webelos.

TS: So I can see why you wouldn't want to be around too much in the evening if you can help it.

MC: When ball kicks in, he's got all of that, too. This is the first season he has not played a sport since he was four years of age. So he has really kept us going. He decided to take off fall and play basketball this winter.

TS: That's a big change from when I was growing up because we didn't have organized sports until you got to be age ten.

MC: Right. I don't think I did either.

TS: Well, what have we left out?

DY: This has been so interesting. I don't know; I think you hit the questions that I was thinking about, certainly in terms of the future. As you say, that's sort of open, with wonderful growth going on in your area.

MC: It has really changed from being a department of about four of us to the size that it is now.

TS: How many are in your department?

MC: Oh, I'd have to sit and count up; I bet we're close to twenty.

DY: I know you came here in '88. I came in '82, and I don't know if this is true for you, but I think I taught many of the courses that are taught in the English department. I mean, we've developed other courses, too, but it's as if we [who came in the 80s] were generalists when we came in.

MC: Yes.

DY: As you said, Fitness for Living you haven't taught in a few years; you can't when you're working on these other things. But I think that that's where we learned to teach, and I treasure those times of teaching.

TS: So we may have had some advantages that the newer faculty don't have?

DY: In a way.

MC: It's different teaching a non-major, certainly different. And I know it was particularly a challenge when I first came because I was in my twenties, and I had a lot of students who were older than I was. That's a different dynamic, too.

DY: I love our nontraditional students. I'm always glad to see one when I walk in that class.

TS: Do you see any difference in the new faculty we're hiring now and the older faculty of your group?

MC: Most definitely. Probably one of the things that really stood out to me in the last few hires that we had was that everyone within our department historically comes from a physical education background; that's what my background was. But now we're hiring individuals who are coming from a pure exercise science background who have never had any experience in physical education. So that's been a difference that I have noticed. I had a colleague the other day who had taken a position in a physical education department, and they mentioned him supervising student teachers. He made the comment, "You realize I have never had any physical education training?" He came from a science background. So it has changed.

DY: Specialization. It's hit all of us.

MC: Right.

DY: I like being a Renaissance woman myself.

MC: I enjoy that, too.

DY: But I don't have anything to add. I really appreciate you coming, Mitch.

TS: Is there anything that we've left out that you think we should add?

MC: I can't think of anything.

TS: Okay. I appreciate you coming.

MC: Thank you very much.



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