

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW WITH BEVERLY F. MITCHELL

CONDUCTED BY THOMAS A. SCOTT and DEDE YOW

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Monday, 17 October 2005
Location: CIE/CETL House at Kennesaw State University

TS: Beverly, we always ask everybody just to say a little bit about when and where they were born and about growing up, including your education and so on. So I just wonder if you'd tell us a little about where you're from and when you were born and so on.

BM: Well, you know, I was told one time by an older woman that a lady never reveals her age.

TS: Oh, I know. It's an awful question to ask!

DY: We don't have to have years.

BM: Okay. Well, I was born at the end of World War II. I was the first year of the baby boomers; so that'll give people a chance to use their critical thinking. [laughter] I was born in DeLand, Florida, home of Stetson University. My parents had moved to DeLand from Kentucky the year before and had been married, I guess, six years by the time I was born. I was followed by a sister and a brother, and we all three grew up in DeLand. My mother, although she would like to have me at home, said, "Wouldn't you like to go away to school?" And I just thought that was a gift, and so I did. I left DeLand, attended and graduated from Wesleyan College in Macon. I have never regretted that experience.

TS: Did you go through public schools in DeLand before you went to college?

BM: Every one of the classrooms was a public school classroom, and I can remember all of my teachers and a lot of great and wonderful experiences.

TS: Did any of them have an influence on what you were going to become?

BM: A couple did. Mrs. Haines in the sixth grade; she's now deceased. She, as I thought over the years, was the kind of teacher that you never knew was teaching. But we learned so much in that classroom. The year that I was in her classroom she started a TOT Club, Teachers of Tomorrow. This was at a time when it was rather revolutionary, I think, to have students from older classes come to younger classrooms and actually help the teacher help the students. So it was kind of like an early tutoring experience for the younger ones. Our meetings for the TOT Club happened after school, one day a month. We had a president of the club, and we had a little devotional, back when you could have devotionals in the public schools. I was always the one who was asked to sing a song. I never knew why I was the one asked to sing. [chuckle]

DY: Oh, how funny. Do you remember any of the songs you sang?

BM: Oh, I'm sure they were camp songs. Those were the only ones I knew. Either those or hymns from church.

TS: But you actually were one of those that got to tutor the younger kids?

BM: Yes, it was wonderful.

TS: What could be better training for a teacher?

BM: Well, it was. I never really thought about Mrs. Haines until someone asked me about the influences in my life. This wasn't too long ago, and I thought of Mrs. Haines. There were other times when I thought, you know, teaching would be a good profession, but I never really thought of myself as a teacher. It just kind of happened. My mother was a Latin teacher, but she didn't care for teaching. In the end, she had to teach because my parents were divorced right after I graduated from high school. But she kept saying that she thought that I had the potential to become a good teacher, so I guess I listened to her words and her prodding. Although I could have been a musician.

DY: Oh, really?

BM: Yes. I was *told* that I would take piano lessons. I protested but I took them, all the way from fourth grade to my senior year. Then something happened, and I suddenly had this fond affection for music that I thought I would pursue in college. At the same time I was playing the piano, I was also taking lessons from a percussionist John Heney, who was in John Philip Sousa's band. John J. Heney. He was a disciplinarian and had come to Florida from California, having spent many years with John Philip Sousa's band. He just opened up another window into music for me. I was never that good at playing the snare drum, but the xylophone and the timpani and the bells, of course, were just wonderful opportunities for me. I really wanted to pursue that in college, but the scholarship didn't happen.

TS: Why Wesleyan?

BM: Do you really want to know the truth?

TS: Yes. [chuckle]

BM: At the time I was a senior in high school, Florida had instituted a senior exam to establish a minimum for entrance into public colleges and universities in the state. I didn't make the minimum, so I couldn't go to Florida State where I had hoped to go on a percussion scholarship. One day in a physical education class after I had received the disappointing news, a woman from Wesleyan College, unknown to me, was talking about this wonderful women's college in Macon, Georgia. I had no idea where Macon, Georgia, was! She showed us pictures of the campus, and

the one picture that I remember seeing was a picture of the dining hall. Everyone sitting family style, and my immediate thought was, “This looks like summer camp.” [laughter] “What a wonderful place to go!” They accepted me. I went and never regretted it—*never*. It was an opportunity for me to develop whatever skills apparently I was lacking in high school that didn’t enable me to pass the standardized test for entrance into the public colleges and universities.

TS: I can’t believe that you couldn’t pass that test.

BM: Well, we all know about standardized tests, and we know a lot more now than we did. As a result, I’m quite sensitive to people who don’t do well on tests. So perhaps that was a lesson learned for me.

DY: How did you get into physical education? How did you get there?

BM: Well, my mother, again, said, “What area do you think you’d be interested in?” “I don’t know; music maybe.” Well, they didn’t have percussion, and I didn’t want to pursue piano. I took organ lessons, but I really didn’t want to be an organ major. I didn’t want to be a music major unless I could be a percussion major. I really felt drawn to physical education because of the teachers.

TS: Teachers in college or in high school?

BM: In college. Yes. What an experience that was. I think so often now that I may be having an influence on someone and never know the extent of that influence, positive or negative. It could have gone the other direction. But it really was the faculty that steered me in that direction. I got a minor in biology, so I kept my science interests. That’s how I got into physical education.

TS: Were you an athlete in school?

BM: Well, not exactly. I was a golfer. My mother was a golfer, and so I guess at an early age I learned to play. But I was never really interested in that. She often would say, “If I just had your swing and your ability with my motivation . . .” [laughter] I never pursued anything, but I’ve always been active. I’ve just had a wonderful lifetime of activity. I enjoy it, but I’m not an expert at any one thing.

TS: So it was the science of physical education that attracted you?

BM: Yes, it was. And that’s what I pursued at the master’s level. My graduate assistantship at Michigan State [University] was in exercise physiology. I remember counting centimeters as I used an instrument to measure the size of the thyroid gland in a mouse. So that was my experience at the master’s level. Then for my doctoral study, I studied motor learning and motor development. The cognition of motor learning and motor development—child growth and development.

TS: What did you discover in your dissertation?

BM: Well, it was a spin off of [Jean] Piaget's theory of maturation called Neo-Piaget. It proposed that children up to a certain age could process information only in a limited sense. The people who are really responsible for this new theory suggested certain bits of information that could be processed depending on what the age of the child was. So I sort of directed that into the learning of motor skills. I discovered that there was a correlation; but quite honestly, the theory is so complex, I'm not sure that it will ever have any real application or if people will be interested in pursuing it. But that was back in the dark ages. I'm talking about in the mid-seventies.

DY: You went back to Florida State for your Ph.D.

BM: Yes. I gave them a second chance!

TS: But there's a little bit of a gap between your master's and your doctorate. Did you get out and teach for awhile?

BM: Actually, I remember a phone call that I had with my parents from Michigan State in the dormitory. I said, "I'm about to graduate, and I don't have a job. What am I going to do?" My mother at the time was a teacher, and she was able to find a position for me in the same school where she taught. So I went back home to teach. That next year, I was involved in bus driver training, so that my girls could have the same experiences that the boys did in the junior high school. I decided that if that was the only thing keeping the girls from having a place to go for physical activity, then I would become their driver. So in the middle of this bus driving school, I got a telephone call from Wesleyan from a former professor who asked if I would be interested in a position. It was a gift. I said, "Of course, yes." I abandoned my bus driving school, went for the interview, and got the job. I was there five years and then just had a sense that I really wanted to study further. I got a leave of absence for two years, and then I went back to Wesleyan. So I think you know the rest of it.

TS: You went back to . . .

BM: To Wesleyan.

TS: But took a leave from them?

BM: Actually, I was here a year. Did you know that?

TS: At Kennesaw?

BM: Yes. 1979-80.

DY: No! Were you?

BM: Yes. There was a position open that was written around my qualifications.

TS: Written around your qualifications because they wanted you to come here?

BM: Well, written around the qualifications that I felt I had through my academic training: motor learning, motor development, exercise physiology. I came here, but it wasn't the job that had been advertised. So I managed for the year and then was offered a sizable increase in responsibilities back at Wesleyan. You know, greater responsibility, and I went back to Wesleyan. After two or three years, I realized I wanted to go in a little bit different direction, so I resigned my position, took out an educational loan, and went to Athens to the University of Georgia. For a year, I studied anything I wanted to and had a ball.

DY: How wonderful!

BM: So I studied educational research and advanced measurement. I learned a lot about computer technology during that year. I've forgotten a lot, but a lot of things have changed, too.

DY: So is this 1984?

BM: Yes, 1984-85. And then a position became available here. It was a different position from the last one, and I've been here ever since. Since 1985.

TS: I guess I kind of got lost on the chronology about you doing the doctorate at Florida State. You went from Wesleyan to Florida State?

BM: For two years. And then I went back to Wesleyan.

TS: Back to Wesleyan and then to Kennesaw.

BM: Correct.

TS: And then back to Wesleyan and then to Georgia.

BM: Back to Wesleyan, then to Georgia, and here to Kennesaw, which is where I will stay until I guess I decide to move on to bigger and better things, like retirement!

DY: What made you come back to Kennesaw?

BM: For the position. I only had enough money to study for a year when I was at Georgia. I had the equivalent of a master's degree when I finished. I took full loads every quarter at that time. Because of this new direction I wanted to take, I just started looking for positions; and there was one available here.

TS: Before we get too far away from it, one of the things we really want to talk to everybody about is mentors that influenced you along the way and mentoring later on as well. Of course, you mentioned Mrs. Haines in your public school. It sounds like there were some people at Wesleyan that had a huge impact on you. I just wonder if you could name some of them and talk a little bit about them. Or

- maybe in your graduate training as well at Florida State or Michigan State: Are there any people that stand out in particular that had a big impact on you?
- BM: Well, I could name people from just about everyplace I've been, starting with Wesleyan. Ann Leighton was a professor at Wesleyan. She was also an alumna of Wesleyan, but she just had a way of nurturing students and really helping students see that they could achieve whatever it was that they wanted to achieve. Joyce [Reddick] Schafer was another one. At Florida State, the experience was a high-stress one. I remember my major advisor—my major professor who continues to support me in a lot of ways; very academic—but we both learned from each other.
- TS: Who was that?
- BM: His name is Jerry Thomas. He's now at Iowa State University in Ames. He's been a dean, and he's been a department chair. He's held a number of different positions. He just kept saying, "It's not good enough. It can be better." I liked that challenge because if it's not where it needs to be, then I'll do whatever it takes to get it there.
- DY: I had one like that on my dissertation committee, too. He was a fabulous stylist. I am so grateful for that experience.
- BM: Oh, yes. And John Heney, speaking of stylists and the discipline aspect, was like I assume the military is. I've never been in the military, but he was so disciplined. Some people couldn't tolerate that style. Not that I like the regimented style, but he had high standards, and he held us to those standards. He did not compromise. They weren't out of line, but they were high. You had to work at it, and you had to work *for* it. So yes, I've just had people all along the way who have inspired me in different ways. Some have inspired me emotionally; some have inspired me intellectually, others personally.
- DY: It sounds like you were very fortunate.
- BM: Oh, yes.
- TS: It sounds like that may describe your own teaching philosophy, too, of caring for your students and nurturing them while maintaining high standards.
- BM: Yes. There are days when I think, "Perhaps I'll just lower my standards."
[laughter]
- DY: We all have those days, Beverly.
- TS: Then you won't have to do so much nurturing.
- BM: It would be a little bit easier. Yes. But they are realistic. I'm not one to get the positive feedback immediately. It's sort of delayed feedback. A year, two years,

three years later I'll see my former students, and they'll say, "You know, I didn't want to do it at the time, but what a difference it's made." Just the pushing and the nudging; not compromising but also being fair. I'll share with you something that has just come about in recent years for me in the classroom. I think it's been because of my experience with the Parker Palmer retreats on the teacher formation groups. He talks about a safe classroom, and on the first day of every class, we talk a little bit about what it means to have a safe classroom. I let students know on day one that I will be as honest with them as I can and I expect that in return, even if it's admitting you didn't do the homework or you didn't do what you were supposed to do. That's okay because this is a safe place to be. What we'll work on is perhaps why you didn't get to it or what you can do to make it better the next time. That's a different approach for me as I've watched myself over the years.

DY: One of the questions that we also enjoy asking, Beverly, is why did you stay at Kennesaw? Did you find that being at Kennesaw you were encouraged and nurtured through peers and colleagues in your teaching? Did you find that the case?

BM: Yes. I'll tell you, as I've thought about it over the years—in fact, I've written this, and it was a letter to Dr. Siegel not too long ago that I wrote in response to something that she had done for the faculty. Maybe it was one of those awards, like the Betty L. Siegel Award.

DY: Oh, you won the Betty Siegel Award. Right.

BM: Yes. And I just couldn't believe it. But I drew the connection between Kennesaw and Wesleyan, a public university and a private single-gender college. I said, "I don't know if under different leadership at Kennesaw I could make the statement that there are many similarities, but I see those. You have been able to add that personal touch, that real affection for inspiring people, and for putting teaching where it really should be and giving a voice to it."

DY: It's the heart of the institution.

BM: Yes. So what inspired me to stay on? I think it was that. Also, I was given good advice when I came here by a good friend Toby [Eleanor T.] Hopper, who said, "There will just be many opportunities for you to get involved with the college." It was a college then. And she said, "You ought to take advantage of it." And that's my nature anyway, to try to get to know as many people as I can, but also to be involved in as many aspects of the university as possible. I did and it has just come back to me in so many good ways. I miss that in my current position [as assistant dean of the Bagwell College of Education].

DY: Do you feel that you're sort of over—you're kind of what?

BM: Well, I'm isolated.

DY: Yes. Is that because of the administrative aspect of it?

BM: I think it is. There are rules about participation on committees. I'm first a faculty member, and I don't see myself as an administrator. I'm just in a position where I'm doing different work now. The title really means so little to me, but I just have a different line of work. I really miss the committees that I used to be on, the Undergraduate Policies and Curriculum Committee, the Graduate Policies, the Senate, the Faculty Council. I think I have either been on every committee possible or have chaired every committee possible.

DY: That's what it looked like to me.

BM: Except for the Library Committee.

DY: That's one I missed, too, and I bet that's fun.

BM: I'm sure it is!

DY: Do that Beverley.

BM: Well, I would, but we'll have to change the rules.

TS: Well, Toby Hopper was a good one. She came here to teach physical education, and I guess by the time you're talking about, she was a pretty high-ranking administrator.

BM: Wasn't she an academic dean or associate dean or assistant dean?

DY: She was the dean of student development, was she not?

TS: I think she may have done both.

BM: In the mid-seventies she worked under Gene [Eugene R.] Huck, and then she became dean of student development for a couple of years [in the mid-1980s].

DY: Then didn't she retire shortly after that?

BM: It's been a long time, maybe twelve, fifteen years since she retired.

DY: So in a way, she was modeling for you.

BM: Well, I think so. We had similar interests, and Toby can't tell a story without everybody laughing. She's one of the funniest people to be around.

DY: Very warm. Talk about making you feel safe and comfortable around her.

BM: Yes, very much. So yes, people like Toby and certainly Dr. Siegel through the years have really contributed to my decision to make this my place.

TS: You were here briefly pre-Betty Siegel, and then you came back afterwards. So you do have a basis for comparison.

BM: Oh, yes. It was an interesting year. I got to know Bob [Robert L.] Driscoll very well, and [C.] Grady Palmer, but I don't remember too many . . .

TS: Was Grady the department chair?

BM: No. [I.] David Harris was department chair in '79-'80. Grady Palmer was a faculty member. And let me think; Judy [Judith Ann] Mitchell, Diane [L.] Willey, and who's the children's . . . There's a children's book section in the library named after him.

TS: John [S.] DiFazio.

BM: John DiFazio. He was a wonderful man. I served on a lot of committees with him.

DY: I taught his son. His son was an English major.

TS: There was a photo in the paper just last week of, I think his name was Peter DiFazio. He was teaching at Sprayberry High School.

DY: That's he. He was an English education major.

TS: But yes, John was a great guy. Then he died of cancer very quickly.

BM: Yes, very quickly.

TS: Pancreatic cancer, I believe it was.

BM: Was it? It was a good year, but I wasn't teaching the courses for which I was really qualified. It wasn't the challenge I expected, but I grew in other ways.

DY: So when you came back, Beverly, were there departments then? Let's see, you came back . . .

TS: There would have been by the time she came back.

BM: There were departments.

DY: Oh, yes, because there were departments in, wasn't it '83 or '84?

TS: In '83.

DY: It was '83 when we moved from divisions. Did we move from divisions to schools or to colleges?

TS: We moved to schools first because we couldn't have colleges until we became a university.

BM: So when I came back, there was the Department of Health and Physical Education. Grady was chair prior to my coming, but during his tenure there was a major formed. So then they offered the major, and that was one of the problems when I first came here in '79. There was supposed to be a major and there wasn't, so they didn't have the courses.

TS: Both Dr. [Horace W.] Sturgis and Gene Huck were very tight on adding additional majors, so we started with almost nothing when we became a four-year school.

BM: I remember an interview I had with Dr. Sturgis [in applying for a faculty position]. That was when faculty interviewed with everybody [in the top administration]. So I sat in his office. He was a large man, just overwhelming, and he looked at me and said, "Now, you do know that we don't have intercollegiate athletics here. Are you in agreement with that?" Well, what am I supposed to say?

TS: "Yes, sir." [laughter]

BM: I said, "Well, it really won't bother me one way or the other because that's really not my area of interest." I won't ever forget that because he was adamant about not having intercollegiate athletics.

TS: That's true. And that's one of the things Betty Siegel promised when she came here.

BM: Well, she certainly has done it!

DY: Delivered on it, too.

BM: She has.

DY: In fact, there was an article in the *AJC [Atlanta Journal-Constitution]* on Sunday, I think, and I don't agree necessarily that the school has grown because of intercollegiate athletics.

TS: Not ours.

DY: And the fact that we've become a residential campus, but that was what . . . The writer of the article was very positive, very upbeat, quoted Betty about the energy that's here on the campus. We have so many traditional aged students now, but those certainly contributed to the growth.

TS: Especially the residence halls. That's when the composition changed in terms of more younger students.

DY: But we're also recruiting, and I think we're getting students who are intellectually very sound. We have a pool to draw from; we're a choice now.

BM: Yes.

TS: Well, one of the things we've really asked everybody is to reflect a little bit on what the intellectual life was like on the campus when you came here. Of course, you've got two dates that you came here, but did you see a change? Maybe this would be a good way to ask it: Did you see a change in the intellectual life between '79 and then '85? Were we different in '85 than we had been before—the students, the faculty, and expectations? Or were we still the same, do you think?

BM: Tom, I really wasn't too involved in the college as Kennesaw College in '79-'80 as much as I became involved right after I came back. So it's kind of hard to know what that comparison was.

TS: Well, how would you describe the intellectual life then and maybe contrast it to today?

DY: That gives you a period of twenty years to think about. In your own area, the growth has been incredible.

BM: Well, it has, and the major itself has changed so. The major in physical education was teacher education solely, and now there are four majors, teacher education being one. I would say, comparing the mid- to late '80s with where we are now, the students that I had in the '80s seemed to be less distracted by jobs and families . . .

DY: And cell phones.

BM: Yes. They seemed to be very focused. Many came from families who never had a college education, but they seemed to be more motivated. I don't know how else to express that except to say that the ones I encounter now are distracted by other things—cars, families, work—and they want to graduate quickly. The students that I remember from the '80s were on the six- and seven-year plan.

DY: Because they were working and going to school.

BM: I think they were working, but also many of them had transferred in. Many of their credits did not transfer from other colleges and universities, and I think that has been corrected now within the university system. More credits now are transferable. But it was a smaller group of students, of course, and there were more opportunities for them to feel as though they were family. Many of them keep up with each other to this day.

DY: That's wonderful.

BM: It is. But the intellectual life of the faculty, I think, has changed somewhat also. I was thinking about this the other day. We've seen change here at Kennesaw for the obvious reasons—the change in the community. The communities are growing by leaps and bounds. Well, so will our university just because of that factor. The state of the economy will also have an effect on change at Kennesaw. Then there is change that is just going to take place naturally. The expectations of faculty now are so different than they were when we came. Of course, Tom, you go way back to ...

TS: Sixty-eight.

BM: Oh, gosh! [laughter]

DY: [I came in] '82, Beverly; I'm just a couple of years ahead of you.

BM: Well, Tom really has a perspective on change.

TS: Doing all these interviews has clarified it a lot though, I think, to hear other people talk about the change.

BM: What I have seen change, with respect to the faculty and the differences in expectations among faculty is that the idea of doing something to help others, which is the way I view service, has taken a different direction.

DY: Interesting, Beverly.

BM: And I think what's contributed to that is the increased expectation for scholarship, which is rather solitary. When you write scholarly papers or make scholarly presentations or you obtain a wonderful grant, you're focused. Your work is not necessarily in the presence of others, nor is it making a contribution directly to a particular group. Eventually it will, but for the most part, it's rather solitary. The people that I speak with who are real scholars don't have time to be of service. I worry about that a little bit. It would seem to me that part of my responsibility as a member of the faculty and in the position I hold is to make a contribution to the university in ways other than scholarship, which really would benefit me more than benefiting others. So I've seen a change and a redirection in the way people spend their time. I don't know whether you've seen that.

TS: Certainly.

DY: Yes, as Tom said, what we've heard people talking about in these interviews is what you're saying. You sense a difference in the focus that people have. When do you feel like this started? When did you see it?

BM: I'd say in the mid-nineties, the mid- to late '90s and more so now. And I guess the latest experience I've had is with the preparations for our NCATE accreditation last year. So much work had to be done, but few people are available to contribute their time because a grant requires this and such. You

- know, grants are wonderful. They buy time, but they buy our best teachers. So our best teachers now are out of the classroom, and we substitute with adjuncts. It's not that adjuncts are not qualified, but we hired those full-time people based on their qualifications as good teachers.
- DY: Do you see this as a shift in the university?
- BM: Yes.
- DY Let me ask it this way, Beverly: Do you think we hire people assuming that they're going to come in and they're going to teach and they're also going to [pursue] either scholarship or service? Or a little bit of both?
- BM: Yes, both.
- DY: Now do you find that we have potential faculty interviewing here because they see Kennesaw as a place that they can come and pursue their scholarship?
- BM: I do. I do think that they are looking at this institution as a way to present their scholarly efforts, an opportunity for them to make a contribution to their discipline. Yes, they're going to have to teach, but there's a lot of buy-out, reassigned time because of an effort to write a book or publish an article. I do think when people interview for positions that they are told up front that scholarship is one of the tracks, but it's also implied as a track which will get you promoted and tenured. Not that service will not, but service has sort of become the third player.
- TS: I think you're right. It's not just those who are applying that are thinking that way, but I think the search committees are thinking that way, too. If somebody comes in and says, "I'm planning on publishing three books in the next five years," and somebody else comes in and says, "I want to serve on 500 committees in the next five years," I don't think there's any doubt which person is going to get the job.
- BM: Right. But I'll just say this: When I think about what the service interest has done for me over the years, what may have started as a volunteer effort to help an association has really become an opportunity to learn and eventually to become invested in something that *is* scholarly. The best example I can provide is my NCATE interest.
- DY: Yes. I wanted to hear you talk about that. That's really interesting how you are phrasing that, how that progression is for you.
- TS: NCATE, for those that don't know, is the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education.
- BM: It was begun in the early '50s. In fact, it just celebrated its fiftieth year, last year I think it was. I began my work with one of the specialized professional

associations, which was one of many associations invited by NCATE, I'll say in 1984, to establish standards for their own discipline—for content standards and pedagogical standards. I became involved in that in the late '80s as a reviewer of portfolios that programs at various colleges and universities would prepare to show how their students—their pre-service teachers—met the standards. So I was a reviewer for about two years, and I would have anywhere from two to four portfolios about four or five inches thick to review each semester. It would take an entire weekend to review materials, pour over the evidence, make a decision, write a report, and submit it. I was one of probably three or four reviewers for each of those institutions each semester. I never knew how I did on those reviews; I didn't get any feedback about whether I was actually reviewing with the kind of detail that they wanted me to review. Then one day I got a telephone call from the coordinator who said, "I would like for you to become the folio coordinator for the whole process." I was stunned and said, "Well, I don't think I'm qualified to do your job." So he reassured me and said, "Oh, yes, you are. Your reports are just on the mark. We appreciate all the work you've done." I said in response, "Well, thank you, but this is a very big job, because it's a national position." I had just been doing my little work for two years. So with his help, I began the process of overseeing this review process for our specialty organization within NCATE. I got better at it, learned a lot, and directed the process until 1998. The standards were standards that were in place for undergraduate programs, for teachers beginning their first year of teaching. In 1998 I was asked to do the same thing for advanced standards for teachers who are already certified, but these are advanced level standards and content. I am still doing that. Meanwhile, in, I guess it was 2001, I had the opportunity to be nominated to become an NCATE Board of Examiners member. This is where you're trained to review colleges and universities at the unit level, meaning the unit or the College of Ed that oversees all the programs at that college or university. So that's the position I'm in now as a BOE member. Dr. Wan, also, is a BOE member.

TS: Dr. Yiping Wan, the dean of the College of Ed?

BM: The dean of the College of Ed.

DY: BOE is the Board of Examiners?

BM: Yes. So I do that at least twice a year. I'm on the equivalent committee in the State of Georgia through our Professional Standards Commission. I do the same type of review with them.

TS: That means visit a campus that's up for accreditation?

BM: Correct. And I continue to oversee the process for the approval of programs in physical education at the master's level for all colleges and universities across the country. I train reviewers; I train institutions on how to develop their materials,

- how to create meaningful assessments that serve as evidence to show that their candidates master the standards.
- TS: You've been holding those workshops for some time now, haven't you?
- BM: A long time. I think they go back to '93 or '94, something like that.
- TS: Where do you go to hold the workshops?
- BM: I usually go to our national conventions, which are in major cities, and then sometimes at our district conventions. In the last several years I've been going to colleges and universities as they invite me, just to have a day or two of conversation with the faculty. So it's just been a terrific experience.
- DY: I can imagine! Your perspective just must be so broadened by this national experience. And you see what's going on all over the country.
- BM: Well, it's been rewarding. Some days I don't think I have enough time to do anything the next day, but it's something that I want to continue.
- TS: Has Kennesaw given you support for doing this?
- BM: Absolutely.
- TS: Like released time?
- BM: Well, not released time as much as saying we trust that you are going away to do good things. [laughter]
- TS: Not going to play?
- BM: As long as it doesn't cost much. So it's not been through the reassigned time as much as it's been through allowing me to take the time to visit these universities. It's all volunteer work, and I hardly miss any classes—if I have classes scheduled for those days. So it's been a trust-trust relationship there. But in terms of any monetary reward, it's nothing. I've never expected and never wanted it. I don't expect anything from the university except just acknowledging that this work is important, and that it is helping other institutions in teacher education.
- DY: Again, this work must be so broadening for you and so intellectually invigorating. You said that you could see how your service parlayed to scholarship; is this the scholarship of service? The scholarship of teaching? How do you see it, Beverly?
- BM: Well, I like to think it's just the service that has a role in my scholarship. Certainly, teaching—the presentations that I have made at major conferences have really come from my teaching. But they're also tied in with this work that I do with NCATE because my teaching is the teaching of our pre-service teachers. So

what I glean from what I've learned from doing this review work is carried over right into the classroom, and what I do in the classroom is carried over right into my scholarship. And then what I learn in my scholarship, I take back into the classroom, and then that has a connection back to my review work. That's why I don't want to give this up. [This is] probably the first time in my life that there has been so much connection. Everything is interrelated. We learn that academically; we learn that intellectually. When we're younger, we're told that that will happen, but until you have the experience of it, it's not meaningful. So I don't consider myself having peaked. I hope not because the point at which that happens, then I might as well just leave and do something else. So I'm hoping that all of what I'm doing will be of some benefit to someone else. It has been a wonderful learning experience, and I just don't want it to come to an end!

TS: Let me ask you, if I could, about that year where Kennesaw was on probation from NCATE because of the education program. And you were already out working with NCATE by the time that came along. Did you see it coming at Kennesaw that year? Can you say anything about what happened? Not only what went wrong, but what we did to correct it?

BM: I'll have to say that probably the reason for us being put on probation is because we didn't express well what it was we were doing. It was a communication problem. We knew we had good programs; we knew we had a good unit, an effective unit and effective services for our students. We knew that the faculty who were teaching were qualified, but we had a little air of sophistication where perhaps we didn't express it.

TS: We thought everybody else should be able to see it without us saying it?

BM: Yes. So it was a wake-up call. What it did, though, was help us identify what our real strength was. Our real strength then is our real strength now: It is, in fact, our conceptual framework—collaboration. You all know from your experience here that there is so much collaboration. It really formed the basis for all programs initially when they began as majors back in the early '80s. What happened during that year, once we identified what our strength was, was hard work, but things fell into place. We realized that we needed to do a more effective job in expressing who we are and how we met the standards. It was also a year that we all held our breath. We worked many, many hours, and everyday way past quitting time and on holidays. But we came back stronger, and it was evident. There aren't too many of us in teacher education who were here at that time, about fifteen or sixteen of us now out of about 120 or 130 people. But we remember it so well that we don't ever want it to happen again. We've had two reviews since then, and they've both been positive and next to perfect.

DY: Didn't we, as a result of that probation, make some immediate and very fine hires?

BM: Yes, we did.

- DY: I know Sarah [R.] Robbins came in right around that time.
- BM: Yes. I don't remember all those details, but Sarah certainly comes to mind. There were opportunities that we had that we took advantage of once we got the re-accreditation letter. The probationary experience probably had to happen in order for us to be where we are now. As I said, it was a wake-up call. It was so stark, but we needed to have that because we were just sitting back saying, "Well, we know all of our students passed these tests. We know they get good jobs. We get feedback from principals and superintendents that our students are well-prepared." But we didn't have the evidence to show it.
- DY: Another question that we ask—and this is going to be fun to see what you have to say because I think you may have already said it—[but it] is: What do you consider your most significant professional accomplishments since you've been at Kennesaw?
- BM: Accomplishments or involvements?
- DY: Well, since you think and work so collaboratively, I can see how you would want to use the term involvement. Let's say collaboration and involvement. I mean, you've won numerous rewards; you won the Distinguished Service Award. So what do you feel like was the most meaningful to you of your work that has distinguished you in the way that it has?
- BM: I'm always surprised when someone says "You're distinguished" or "You're deserving of this award." I have difficulty with that because I'm just doing what I think —
- DY: Doing your work, right!
- BM: Needs to be done!
- DY: Well, maybe I should say: What have you enjoyed the most?
- BM: Well, I really have enjoyed all of my teaching except in areas where I'm really not qualified. But I'm not teaching those courses any more! The committees that I've served on . . . I will say that there have been times in the past when I would have preferred to have chaired the committee than just being a member. I like to see the work outlined and planned [so we can] jump in, do the work, and get it finished.
- TS: Absolutely.
- DY: I'm thinking of a committee that you and I were on together that I bet we both would have preferred to have chaired.
- BM: That's right.

DY: Oh, yes.

BM: I guess my work with NCATE has had the broadest influence. It's allowed me to be effective on campus, within my own profession, and then broadly to institutions regardless of what the discipline is. But I will tell you this that's related to my teaching, and it probably had more of an impact on the way that I teach now than any other experience. Actually, there are two of them, but let me speak to the one that occurred first. I had the opportunity to go to Alverno College in Milwaukee, and I took their week-long Assessment for Learning workshop. It transformed the way I teach. It's about assessment *for* learning versus assessment *of* learning. That was, I believe, in 1995 or '96; it transformed every course I taught from that point on. And then, of course, the opportunity to attend the Parker Palmer teacher formation retreats, four retreats a year.

TS: Was this after he started coming here to speak?

BM: Well, I've got to think about this first. I was invited by a national association to be a lecturer for a national conference, and it took a year to develop that presentation. The title of it was *Leading from Within*. I used some of Parker Palmer's concepts and ideas. I had just by accident picked up his book, *The Courage to Teach*, at a conference. It was just out and I thought, "You know, there might be some good things in here." Well, I read it from cover to cover.

DY: It's a wonderful book.

BM: It is. And I "chewed on" some ideas, but I was also thinking about some other things. So I think it was after I gave that presentation—it was the next year; I'm thinking it was 2002—that Dr. Siegel invited Parker for Convocation. It was after that that Dr. Siegel gathered a group of us to visit him in Madison, Wisconsin, and we spent four days with him and his wife in their home getting absorbed into—

DY: I didn't realize you were a part of that. That just sounded so wonderful.

BM: Well, it was. It was a transformation for me.

TS: Who all from Kennesaw went?

BM: I'm not real good at names. Chris [Christine B.] Ziegler—

DY: Chris is in psychology.

BM: Right. Kim [Kimberly S.] Loomis. There were twelve of us.

TS: Oh, twelve? Well, don't worry about names.

BM: Okay, well, I can write those in later if you want me to. Oh, Richard [C.] Benjamin also. One of the gals on the trip was also with the Georgia Teacher Center, Jennifer [R.] Reno. She came back and talked to the director, and

somehow we worked it out so that there could be a teacher formation group that was a blend of Kennesaw faculty—higher ed—and K-12 teachers. That was the first time it had ever been done, and this was Dr. Siegel’s idea to bring us together. So for two years there were twenty-four or twenty-five of us who met in north Georgia. For a whole weekend we would be together. We had a retreat each season, as the themes were based on the seasons. If you have ever read any of his work, you understand that much of his contribution centers around the seasons and what lessons you derive from the seasons. Oh, Army Lester was another. So we were challenged to bring back to our own classrooms ways that we could help our students listen and nurture, and be nurtured by the inner teacher. So that has just been another experience for me.

DY: I remember looking at that and wanting to go, wanting to apply and go. There was some reason why I didn’t and couldn’t, but I was so envious of you all who went!

BM: Well, it was a sacrifice.

DY: I’m sure it was!

BM: Well, it was. That was four times a year, four weekends that you had to commit 100 percent attendance. That was quite something. But to have gone and been in Parker Palmer’s presence for a weekend and guided through this thought process was quite an extraordinary event.

DY: Especially when you see that coming back into your classroom, when you can bring that tangibly back into the work that you do.

BM: Right. I’ll have to say that Dr. Siegel has been quite an inspiration. I’m not sure there have been very many college presidents who take the time to acknowledge the work that people do and the contributions that they make. She’s done some extraordinary things, but I guess the things I admire her most for have to do with her ability to sustain those over the years even when it would have been easy to let them go away. So the recognition that comes to people—some may disagree and say that it doesn’t have an impact, but I think we’ll truly miss her.

DY: Oh, I think we will, too.

TS: You won the Betty Siegel Award, and that’s given by the Alumni Association. Could you talk a little bit about that and why you think that came about. What, particularly, were they honoring you for with that award?

BM: I do not know why I was awarded that award. I was so surprised when it happened. I got a call from Phil Barco [director of Alumni Affairs] saying he was hoping that I could come to the alumni brunch and that a couple of students really wanted me to be there. “Okay, I’ll go.” It was one of the coldest days of the year, but it was a great day. I’m just sitting there thinking, “Well, who are the students, and where are they? I don’t see any of my students here.” [laughter] Linda [M.]

Noble then begins talking about an individual, and, of course, they don't tell you who it is until the very end. Then when they said "physical education" and "NCATE," I thought, "Oh, my gosh!" I wrote Phil and I wrote Dr. Siegel each a letter. That was the gist of my letter—that I didn't know how this selection came about and for what reason, but how grateful I was and, of course, how surprised I was.

DY: This was honoring your work with the alumni?

BM: No, I don't think it had anything to do with the alumni. I think the Betty Siegel Award is an opportunity to honor someone who is about service. I'm not sure it has a direct connection with the alumni group, but it's certainly presented by the alumni group.

TS: Well, you've won some national service awards as well as campus awards; one from the National Academic Advising Association [NACADA], for instance. We really haven't talked that much about what you've done in terms of advisement perhaps. Could you talk a little bit about this award and how it came about?

BM: Well, returning to 1985, there was a session that Nancy [S.] King and, I believe, Bowman [O.] Davis, [Jr.,] had for faculty. They were beginning what came to be CAPS [Counseling, Advising, and Program Services] because they wanted to have advisement for the undeclared student.

DY: You went to that, too.

BM: So I went to that session and found myself then volunteering four to eight hours a week to advise undeclared students. At the end of the year, they asked who would like to continue, and I said, "Oh, I can continue with that." Then in the fall when I came back, Nancy said, "You've just been selected to receive this national merit award." And I said, "For what, Nancy?" "Well, for advisement." I said, "What advisement except for my CAPS advisement?" And she said, "Well, that's what it is, and we want you to go with us to Chicago and receive this award." So that's what that award was about. It was the first year, I think, that Kennesaw had become a member of NACADA, and I was just so fortunate to be chosen as Kennesaw's first person.

DY: That's quite a contribution to give your time. It's just sort of like you have to stop what you're doing and become a player.

BM: That was so very rewarding.

DY: That's very rewarding. I mean, that's mentoring in the truest sense, I think, that kind of advisement.

BM: Dede, I appreciate your saying that. I remember when I was here in '79 and '80 that the advisement was at best sporadic. I wrote a letter, I think it was to Gene Huck, describing the experiences that I had had at Wesleyan. We had peer

advisement, and we had freshman advisement; and we kept our advisees until they changed their major. We would meet with them once a month as a group, but then we would see every one of them [individually] each semester. So I wrote him about that and said, “I just think so much more could be done with student advisement.” I got a letter back saying, “Well, thank you very much.” The “thank you very much” was on the same letter I had sent him!

DY: Wrong audience, huh?

BM: I guess so. So when I came back, I sensed that there was a different approach altogether, and look what Nancy’s done over the years. She and Chuck [Charles L.] Goodrum, [Jr.,] were instrumental from the start. She just stayed with it and poured all kinds of resources into it. Of course, at that time there was no monetary resource; probably still isn’t. But I did that for three or four years, and it was a great way to spend my so-called free time. You knew that you were doing something for the student because there was very little guidance [otherwise]—nothing like we have now. And CAPS was not really as fully developed as it is now. So they were dependent on faculty to give them accurate information and to be an ear.

DY: We know now the [Georgia] Board of Regents has mandated retention efforts from each institution—that each institution put energy, time, and money into efforts of retention. We, of course, know one of the ways you retain students is that you have a very strong advisement system and mentoring system.

BM: Does that mean that faculty are the mentors and advisors? Or is it a group of CAPS advisors?

DY: I think that that is discipline-specific. I think in those disciplines that are not advising as they should, that’s going to be something, I would hope, that will be addressed.

BM: I think that’s key to have faculty advise their students or even the undeclared ones.

DY: And students will find their way to faculty members if there’s not a formal system, but they shouldn’t have to do that. But they will find their way. There are members in my department, I among them, who have just students that you know are going to come and talk and drop in several times a semester, whether they’re in your class or not. That’s the way it’s done. But I’m a very big proponent of mentoring faculty-to-student and faculty-to-faculty. I think peer mentoring is very important, too, for junior faculty.

TS: I wonder if we could just talk about a few of these other awards and the organizations. Here’s a NASPE Joy of Effort Award. Who is NASPE, first of all?

DY: I love that name! Joy of Effort!

TS: I guess physical education is the last part of that.

BM: Well, it is. [National Association for Sport and Physical Education] All of those awards are really just, I think, around service, around the volunteer work. You know from your professional associations that you're not paid to be president or an elected officer. You give your time and whatever expertise you have that can make a contribution. The NASPE award was a national award given by one of the associations within our umbrella alliance discipline. That came as quite a surprise because there were people who had received the award in the past who are extremely renowned, and I'm just another unknown person.

TS: Well, apparently not *too* unknown.

BM: Well, I'm sure that it had much to do with my work with NCATE, because it was through the NASPE organization that we developed our standards for the preparation of teachers.

TS: Then GAHPERD.

BM: That's the Georgia Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance. I was president of that organization back fifteen years ago and received their honor award.

TS: In the Southern district.

BM: Exactly.

TS: Were you president of that?

BM: I wasn't president; I ran for president twice and have served that association in a lot of other ways. I have been an officer in the association, but, again, it's the efforts made to further health and physical education among institutions and faculty.

TS: In your own discipline, I guess, the Distinguished Service Award from the National Association for Kinesiology and Physical Education in Higher Education.

BM: Yes, that was the association that allowed me to give that lecture in 2001, *Leading from Within*. That association has been rather special to me. Again, it was for the work that I have done with those people and for the membership.

TS: Yes. Well, we've hardly even talked about all the committees that you've been on on campus, but maybe it's sufficient to say that you've been on a ton of them.

BM: Almost all of them, either as chair or a member.

TS: Right. Something that I wanted to ask you about: Your Department of Physical Education a few years back went into the new College of Health and Human Services. Yet now you're the assistant dean in the Bagwell College of Education, which is a different college from what your department would be in, right?

BM: Yes.

TS: Can you explain that or maybe even talk about the rationale? I mean, we've done the interview with Judy [Julia L.] Perkins, for instance. Or how you perceived the movement of your area into that new college? It sounds like maybe you really felt more at home with the College of Education?

BM: Well, yes and no. You may have the dates straight. I don't remember the exact dates, but when Dr. [Edwin A.] Rugg and Dr. Perkins had identified the School of Nursing, they realized—I think this is what happened—that it couldn't just be a single department and call it a School of Nursing. There had to be other departments. So they, I think, reviewed the various potential departments that could be a part of that school. They realized physical education was in the College of Ed, but maybe it also had some linkage conceptually to a School of Nursing or Health and Human Services. So the department at that time was pulled out of the College of Education, or School of Education—I can't remember whether it was school or college at the time. It was put under the School of Nursing, and then the name was changed to its present name of Health and Human Services, so it wouldn't just be a nursing department.

TS: I'll have to check back, but I think education would have been a college by that time.

BM: It probably was, and nursing was a school at that time. Well, remember developmental studies? Developmental studies, physical education and C&I were all in the College of Ed. Developmental Studies was moved and became Learning Support and was put under the dean of undergraduate studies. Physical education was moved out of the College of Ed and put with Health and Human Services, so the title Health and Human Services is supposed to capture the essence of the departments that are now under that umbrella college. That's how that came to be. How I came to be the assistant dean in the College of Ed was just a quirk. Deborah [S.] Wallace had resigned as dean of the College of Ed, and Jane [H.] McHaney was stepping in as interim dean. When the announcement came out, it came out over e-mail. I responded immediately and said, "Jane, if there's anything I can do to help you, let me know."

TS: Critical mistake!

BM: A couple of days later she wrote back and said, "Well, in fact, there is." We were six months away from an NCATE visit, and all we could think about was, "We're doomed again." This was 1999. What happened was I was asked to divide my time, 50 percent under College of Ed and 50 percent under the College of Health

- and Human Services. I would be the NCATE co-coordinator for the visit, which she was able to get delayed for an additional six months. That meant that instead of having to be ready in six months, we had one year. So for that year, 1999-2000, that's what I did. Jane McHaney later resigned following the NCATE visit.
- TS: She went somewhere else, didn't she?
- BM: University of Central Arkansas. Ann [D.] Smith moved into her position, and I moved into Ann's position as assistant dean. Interim. She was interim. We did that for a year, and then Yiping Wan came as the permanent dean. So I stayed where I was, and Ann stayed where she was. I understand it, but apparently it plays havoc with PeopleSoft and the faculty records when they try to track where I am in this university. I teach in a department that is not in the same college where my major employment is. But it all started because of a situation where I simply volunteered to help in any way I could!
- TS: Well, I'm getting near the end of my questions, I think. Do you have anything that we haven't talked about that you think we ought to have on the record?
- BM: I think between you and Dede, you have thoroughly taxed my brain! I've never talked so much in any one time nor talked so much about myself. This has been a good experience; much better than I thought it would be. [chuckle]
- TS: I'm very much in favor of a focus on service as a big part of our job. I've gone the scholarship route, too, and thoroughly enjoy it, but I've always thought that the natural progression was that you should teach well before you do anything else. Then service is the next step, and then scholarship is the kind of icing on the cake, I suppose. I think oftentimes people get it reversed. They come out of graduate school, and the only thing they can really do is scholarship. They focus on that when they ought to be putting more time into their classes.
- BM: Well, I think for folks like you and me, we see it naturally connected; it's not disconnected. We don't just teach or do service or scholarship, but out of teaching comes that real desire to do the service. If it's more than just busy work, if it's truly making a contribution and you're utilizing your expertise, the scholarship naturally flows from that. That's the way I have viewed it all these years, and it's served me well. I mean, I enjoy it!
- TS: I think we've been extremely lucky. I know I have. It's almost like I've grown up academically as the college has grown up. When I started here, all we did was teach and try to finish our doctorates. Then service was the next component, and scholarship has kind of been at the end. I would hate very much to be starting my career at Kennesaw right now.
- BM: I would be scared.
- TS: I just don't think I would fit in starting here.

BM: I wouldn't either. I think I would probably still be at Wesleyan. And it's not that Kennesaw doesn't honor the service, it's just that scholarship has become more important. In some respects in some colleges, it is *much* more important than service.

TS: I think about what you were saying: You're just so busy all the time that the job, if you do the job right, is extremely demanding. In fact, it's almost impossible. I don't have to prepare much for classes anymore, but I certainly did in my younger days. I think the younger faculty, particularly, have to cut corners somewhere to do everything. I'm afraid service is the corner that is going to get cut.

BM: It is. I worry a little bit about the things that aren't getting done at the university level.

TS Well, thank you very much for a great interview.

BM Thank you.

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