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Phyllis S. Hamm oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, July 11, 1985

Phyllis S. Hamm (Interviewee)

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This afternoon we are interviewing Phyllis Hamm, Manager of Employee Benefits, for the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. Phyllis, could you tell us when you first came to USF and what was your first contact with the University of South Florida.

I came to work at USF in 1967, and I had a strange beginning here. I was asked to apply for the position by a professor who knew there was a vacancy. I didn't want to come, and it was very interesting the way they persuaded me. I received phone calls, they came to my house, and knocked on the door. I told them I was too busy with my work, and I could not take the test that they give during the week because I had a full time job and I really wasn't interested, and they said that they would give me the test on a Saturday. I was astounded, but really Saturday was even worse because I've worked all week and I wasn't looking for a job. Then they said that they would give me the test on a Sunday. I was flabbergasted. I was thinking to myself that if somebody is that interested in me maybe I should check it out. That is basically how I got started over here. They advised me to contact the dean of the College of Basic Studies where the vacancy was, and I was hired by him eventually as a Staff Assistant.

The College of Basic Studies was the original Liberal Arts wing of the curriculum?

No, not really. It was the lower division because we had a separate College of Liberal Arts. The College of Basic Studies had the freshman and sophomore level courses, and then when the people went on they went to the higher level, the College of Liberal Arts.
Hewitt: What kind of work did you actually do as a Staff Assistant in the College of Basic Studies? What were your responsibilities?

Hamm: Well, I served as a personal secretary to the dean. He also taught a seminar so I helped coordinate materials for that seminar. I managed the dean's office which included the office of student advising and basically office management and secretarial type work is what I did. I coordinated all the personnel information and budget information that came to the College to our department. We had, I think, eight departments, and I kept in touch with the chairman of the departments and their secretaries and disseminated information that came from all over the University.

Hewitt: Sounds like a multifaceted job.

Hamm: There were a lot of various duties, and I liked it very much.

Hewitt: Now when you first arrived here, given the unusual approach to hiring you, what could you tell overall about the sort of relations between staff and administrators or staff and faculty? Were there closer relations than now between the people that you worked for and the higher administration and faculty?

Hamm: Well, I think overall on the campus at that time there were closer relationships and more trusting relationships. I've had the experience with working in both the academic part of the University and the administrative part. But I didn't get into the administrative part, or the strictly administrative, not in the college part, which is kind of confusing. So when I got into the administrative part things were beginning to change all over the
University mainly because of Dr. Allen leaving and being replaced by Dr. Mackey.

Hewitt: When did you actually shift over to doing straight administrative work as opposed to working in one of the academic colleges?

Hamm: That was in the latter part of '71 when Mackey abolished the College of Basic Studies.

Hewitt: So your job was basically done away with at that point?

Hamm: Yes. To me that was the beginning of the end of everything that was really good.

Hewitt: A lot of people have talked very highly about Dr. Allen and the sort of atmosphere of the University under Dr. Allen. Looking back on it what was so positive? Why was it that everyone remembers those years as sort of the best years at USF?

Hamm: Well, they weren't perfect years for sure because there were things that Dr. Allen did that people didn't like. It's really difficult to say except that it appears that Dr. Mackey came in to eliminate a number of people, for whatever reason, and it seems as though it was political rather than actually professional reasons. Mackey was not the kind of person you could really talk to. That was the feeling that the people got. He just didn't want to be bothered with people's problems. Everything happened so fast that year when he came. Several top administrators and deans were replaced. I think people felt that they were replaced before they were even given a chance to show what they could do, and that always leaves people with a feeling of distrust for the administration which I think you never can recover from.
Hewitt: So when the College of Basic Studies was dismantled, then where did you go in terms of your job?

Hamm: Well, I stayed with the dean who was given a position as Director of Academic Services. For several months we were tying up loose ends because you just can't close the doors and just start new. So we had to integrate things into the other departments that were left, and I did a lot of things like I did in personnel and records, that kind of thing. Before this happened I had become involved in the present Status of Women Committee. This was in the '70s while we were still in Basic Studies and before Mackey came. We were a new committee at that time and had done a very thorough investigation of sex discrimination complaints on the campus. By the time we were through, which was in 1971, Mackey had come to the University and so we presented our findings to him as the new president. Out of the reports came a very obvious recognition for special assistance for women to deal with the complaints of discrimination. I got appointed to that position. The committee itself had recommended one position for all women and Dr. Mackey thought that it would be better to have a special position for faculty women and another position for career service, administrative, and professional women. So I was assigned to the career service and the administrative and professional women's office.

Hewitt: How did the Status of Women Committee come into being? Was that something that the administration requested, or was it something that women on campus tried to start from the grassroots?

Hamm: Actually at that time, in the early '70s and the latter part of the '60s, we had an Equal Opportunity Committee, and if I recall correctly, the Equal
Opportunity Committee which previously just handled complaints for blacks or black issues, had announced or somehow word got out that they were going to have a discussion about sex discrimination and develop some policies with respect to that. I believe it was Judith Ochshorn who had heard about it and somehow got invited to the meeting. I don't remember all the details, but it turned out that there were nothing but white males who were going to decide what was best for women on this campus. I remember that Judy had hit the ceiling and tried to get them to put everything on hold until she got a number of women together. I was one of them. We realized that that was certainly not a solution--having the white males at the University tell us how to deal with our problems. Through all of her connections we were able to get established as a committee and with an official charge to investigate the sex discrimination problems. I really don't know what would have happened if . . . Certainly I think it would have had a different . . . I mean the history of this University, equal opportunity and affirmative action would have been alot different. I think that in those years we made alot of progress, and I'm afraid that now we are just going the other way. I think we would have never made the accomplishments we would have made if it hadn't been for Judy Ochshorn going and finding out what they were doing.

Hewitt: Do you remember who else served on that first Status of Women Committee?

Hamm: Oh yes. We had Gladys Catchten, Maxine McKay, Ellen Kimmel, Silvia Fiore, Juanita Williams, and myself. There were a couple of students. That was the very original committee then. Some additional career service were appointed later.
Hewitt: And when you became - your title was, you were an assistant to the presi-
dent?

Hamm: To the vice president. Mackey decided that the position should report to
the vice president though the special assistant for faculty reported to Dr.
Riggs, who was the vice president for Academic Affairs. And I started out
reporting to Bert Hartley, who was vice president for the administration.

Hewitt: And are you still a part of the Status of Women Committee or did the Status
of Women Committee continue?

Hamm: Yes. When I was put in that position, I became the next official member.

Hewitt: Since there hadn't been any position like this before, what kind of issues
were raised in that initial Status of Women Committee report? What kind of
issues came up initially that you dealt with in this new position?

Hamm: There were just a multitude of things. We had complaints that women who
became pregnant were fired as soon as their supervisor knew of the pregnan-
cy. Some women were not not allowed to smoke at their desk even though the
men sitting next to them were allowed. Women, for the most part, could not
wear slacks to the University. They had to wear dresses as they were told
by their supervisors. It is funny in a way, but it is so ludicrous and
really an embarrassment to think that a University would permit that. We
did have one department that reported putting a thermometer outside the back
door to see if the temperature was low enough to permit a person to wear
slacks. If it was cold enough they would agree to it. If it wasn't, women
just couldn't wear them.
Hewitt: Were the complaints coming from both faculty and staff?

Hamm: Oh, definitely. Many of the faculty women, of course, complained about inequity because it is so easy to do a counterpart study for a faculty person as opposed to career service because of the variety of the job. You can make very good comparisons in respect to a faculty person's education, the number years at teaching, the background, the course they're doing, and you can look at a salary for a woman at that time and totally. Even today we are still dragging behind. It was just so obvious that a woman with equal qualifications, background, and experience was paid thousands of dollars a year less than their male counterparts. That was mainly, I think, what faculty women complained about. Career Service, and some AEP just, they were just voluminous, just having to do with promotions. Faculty women had problems with promotions too and also in the courses that they were assigned to teach, when they were given the lower level courses that no one else wanted. I think a lot of them had trouble getting travel expenses and educational development, that kind of thing was difficult. Career Service had the problem with no smoking at the desk, getting fired if you were pregnant, wearing slacks, and there was some sexual harassment type complaints. One of the worst things that was reported in my mind, one of the worst things, was the report by a custodial woman who cleaned the men's restrooms. We were told by these women that the men would actually come in the restrooms and use them while the women were cleaning them, as though they were not there. One of the worst places that was reported was the Administration Building where we had the high level administrators, from whom you would expect the best conduct, and ironically they said that they never could recall any of the students in the dorms doing that to them, but the Administration Building was a horror. They would open the door and prop
it up and it would be obvious that they were in there cleaning. These men would come in and use the facilities as though they were not there. We felt that it was just terrible. We were able to get chains for them to put on the door and signs saying that it was closed and that helped.

Hewitt: How did you start to gather information on these kinds of issues? Did the committee, or when you became the assistant to the vice president, did you go out and publicize that there was such a position and such a committee now?

Hamm: Yes we did. We had volumes of information. I had a stack that was about two feet high of reports of complaints. What we did when the committee was first organized was that we asked for money to duplicate materials and we held meetings. We held them mostly at lunch time so that the Career Service staff could attend. We talked to the women about the law, we gave examples of what was discriminatory, and we invited them to come to the committee members to tell us about their problems. They really sought us out. We had more complaints then we knew what to do with.

Hewitt: So you really didn't actually have to go out searching. Once people knew that there was such a position . . .

Hamm: Once they knew that the committee was in existence, I thought we would never hear the end. It was bad because you go along thinking that nothing is happening and it's because everyone seems to be keeping it to themselves. The biggest problem I saw then and I see now is alot of people think that it is only happening to them. They don't relate it to sex or race discrimination. They think it is something that they are doing.
Hewitt: Once you became the assistant to the vice president to deal with women's issues and women's affairs, what kind of response did you get from the administration? Once you got all this information and had complaints, were there procedures that you could follow to try and resolve some of these problems?

Hamm: We had grievance procedures, and I was to assist the women through the procedures. Most of the time when a person was willing to complain and go through the grueling experience of facing the person they were accusing of discrimination, we were able to reverse some bad decisions, get promotions for people who weren't going to get them, some pay raises where people had complained of having equivalent evaluations and getting less money because they were female or because they were black. We found that black women had a multitude of problems because they were not only being treated differently because they were women, but because they were black. I feel very strongly that the restroom situation was a combination of race and sex discrimination. But we were able to make some changes. Immediately the administrators were told they could not fire pregnant women, they could not permit men to smoke and not women to smoke, and this business of the jeans or the slacks was just out. It was publicized that the University had no dress code and you could not tell the whole group much less, one sex, what to wear. Alot of things in that respect were addressed and taken care of.

Hewitt: It sounds like alot of things that certainly young women faculty now take for granted in terms of dress and pregnancy leave you couldn't have taken for granted 25 years ago.

Hamm: I can remember just five years ago in the personnel department. A young girl got pregnant and somehow it came up, I didn't bring it up but somebody
else did, that pregnant women could lose their jobs. She was astounded. It never occurred to her and she started saying, "Well, I wouldn't have said I was pregnant if I had known." I said not to worry about it because it was illegal now, and this University does not do that. And she says "Do you mean at one time they would?" She just couldn't conceive of it because over the years people have stopped doing that, thank goodness. To her it was like "who would ever do such a thing!" Believe me, it was done.

Hewitt: How long did you hold that position of Assistant to the Vice President?

Hamm: Three years.

Hewitt: Did you feel like three years was long enough to get these kinds of changes off the ground, or were you the one that wanted to move on to something else, or is this a position that shifted to another department or office?

Hamm: I was moved out of the department against my will. The situation as I have always assessed it, many other people have, was that too many people were winning their grievances, women and minorities. Because when I started the job, I wanted to handle sex discrimination complaints. About nine months later, they asked me to handle the complaints of the minorities as well.

Hewitt: Oh, I see, you were doing both after the first nine months?

Hamm: I assumed because I got the responsibility for handling additional groups of people that I was doing a good job. As I said, when I was able to address the complaint to the grievance procedure, most of the women and minorities got what they wanted out of the grievance, in other words they got their promotion, their raise, or they got a reprimand removed or that kind of thing. Basically, I feel that because they were winning, they did not want
me in the position any longer because when an employee wins a grievance, it makes the administration look bad because they have permitted some act that was illegal or improper. And the other thing, because my office was new, the office got a lot of publicity because it was something new, and I don't think any of the other universities, maybe one other university, might have had someone doing that kind of work. Therefore, people wanted to talk about it. I was interviewed by newspapers, and people who came to me with complaints would talk to the newspapers. Their would be big headlines on what was going on in the Equal Opportunity area at USF and unfortunately the administration did not look good in many instances. I was given a 90-minute notice one Friday afternoon that was effective at 8 o'clock on Monday at which time I would be working in personnel.

Hewitt: Did they, then, put someone else in that position to deal with women and sex discrimination and minority discrimination?

Hamm: Well, they had the audacity to ask me to do two jobs for nine months until they replaced me. I was not good enough to do the job, however, they asked me to continue doing it until they could replace me. So I had the full-time responsibility of a manager's position here in personnel and I also had the full-time responsibility of the EO specialist job. And even though I was told that I could work two days ... And on top of everything else, I was asked to work in both buildings. I would work two days in the administration building and two days over here and in the middle of the week I was wherever I felt the strongest pull. It was a very difficult nine months and I can truly say that I really believe they thought that I couldn't take it and I would leave. I think that is what they wanted to do to me.
Hewitt: And then after nine months they finally did replace the EO position?

Hamm: Yes, they found someone.

Hewitt: Now I know when I came to campus in 1981 that your disagreement with the administration hadn't been settled yet. There were still articles in the newspaper. Apparently changing your position didn't end the publicity for the University. Would you mind talking about what happened in the interim, after you left the EO office and they replaced you, in terms of your trying to respond to this and trying to get the administration to either return you to the position or . . .

Hamm: I placed them on notice that I was filing complaints with the Equal Opportunity Commission, and that I would pursue it with a law suit if I didn't get any satisfaction from them; because I truly felt that they wanted me to leave the University, and they just wanted to get rid of me. When I was placed in the job over here, this was the worst possible place they could put me in because, in the minds of people who complain to me and eventually in my mind, because of the complaints I received, and the personnel office was responsible for a lot of discrimination. So in my job of special assistant for women and minorities, I was in a position constantly of having to criticize actions taken by personnel and by the personnel administrators. So they were putting me in a place where I was very much disliked.

Hewitt: Sounds like they were not making it easy to make the transition.

Hamm: Well, I really believe that they wanted me to leave because the first evaluation I got was an above satisfactory evaluation and then a year later, they gave me a conditional evaluation. So when I was here a shorter time I supposedly knew more then I did after I was here longer, right? I really
felt that that was an action taken because I hadn't given in yet and most people, and I have handled grievances for a very long time, I know that most people when they get an evaluation like that, they would rather walk off than have people know about it, but I felt about it very strongly. They had a situation here when you get a bad evaluation or a conditional, every 60 days they have to rate you again. Well I got three poor ratings in a row, and I filed a grievance and since the evaluation was based on what they call poor performance, I was very fortunate in that very little work that I do, even now, goes to a supervisor. I do work for individuals, and I handled hundreds of faculty and staff matters, and when those people found out that I had gotten a bad evaluation then, oh my gosh, it had gotten in the Oracle and everything else. And they started writing letters of commendation and it was a big mess. I found out that my letters of commendation weren't even put in my files, and they wanted to ignore all the good things that were said about me. Even to this day if I receive a compliment from somebody they will say that that is a friend of yours. If they compliment my work, it happens to be a friend. All of that led to them getting very angry, at mostly faculty, and it went to Reece Smith who was then the interim president of the University after Mackey had left. About 50 people went to his office and complained, and he talked to them. Without my having to even pursue the normal grievance procedures, we entered into a settlement agreement whereby those evaluations were removed and replaced with "above satisfactory" and I received a retroactive raise. But that still didn't settle the issue of my being moved out of that office, and I felt even then that I had even a stronger complaint because what I was saying was that they were trying to get rid of me and surely those evaluations, which they couldn't even hold up, then had to be removed and that was a matter of fact that they
did do that. Unfortunately when . . . my law suit was filed in 1977. In 1980 there was a case in another district where an Equal Opportunity specialist had received poor ratings and had actually filed a hand written complaint for an employee and sent it to the EO Commission, or just some outside agency. This person was fired and it went to trial, and the court ruled that the Equal Opportunity Office or specialist, or whatever you want to call it or whatever title they used, is actually part of management, and therefore has no right to do anything that would embarrass management. The University pounced on that as their defense against my complaint, and I had the misfortune of getting, even though my case was filed in '77 and it didn't go to court until '82, the local judges kept it in the corner somewhere, and then they didn't even want to hear it. And they turned it over to a visiting judge who was 79 years old. He wasn't interested in anything I had to say. He was very rude to me and my attorney. He made me feel as though I was the defendant and not the plaintiff. He was finding fault with me instead of trying to find out what my complaint was. He wouldn't listen to my witnesses. He wouldn't accept exhibits I had. He absolutely would say . . . You know, I would call a witness to justify my concern about a certain issue, and he would say that he didn't want to hear that. I did not get a chance to really present my case and I lost. And as soon as I lost, the administration here filed a motion to try to get me to pay for their attorney's fees which went over $100,000 dollars. They lied in that motion for attorney's fees. They said things about me that were absolutely not true, and they were very vicious about the whole matter. In the interim, I had been in personnel since '75. I had applied for several promotions and was never given a promotion. When they moved me to this job from the EO office, they downgraded the position three pay grades, and I felt that was
an insult to me. I felt that they would have never done it to anyone else except it was one more way to discourage me. So based on not getting promotions, I filed another law suit, even though I had bills of $20,000+ hanging over me and the motion for attorney's fees on top of it. I always felt the motion for attorney's fees was just something to scare me, threaten me, punish me, and to stop me from complaining. All it served to do was make me more adamant about trying to get a fair hearing on the situation. I finally went to court again in '84. I got a different judge this time. However, basically his ruling was that I was found not to be protected under Title 7 because I was considered part of management in the first case, I had no retaliation claim in this case; and so I lost that case. The only good thing that came out of it . . . Well, in the mean time, before I went to trial in the second case, the University attorneys were talking to me and my attorney about settlement. They offered such insulting amounts in terms, but I might have even taken some of their offers had they not proceeded every offer of settlement with a threat about the motion for attorney's fees, about pursuing that. They had the audacity to send it back to the court and ask them to look at it, you know, when they had not looked at it. In other words, they were trying to push it. They kept using that as a threat over my head. Naturally it was threatening, it was upsetting, but I felt so strongly that I was not going to be intimidated by a bunch of people I had no respect for. I just said whatever will be will be. But I will not settle this as long as they keep threatening me. Fortunately, the judge in the second case wrote in his opinion that he believed I was sincere in my complaint which then stopped them from filing another motion for attorney's fees. They still were pursuing the first one. Finally Judge Hodges re-viewed the information, and he said that in no time did my case become
frivolous or was I being facetious and he denied the motion without a hearing. If I had been called to a hearing I was told that it would cost me at least $10,000 dollars, just to defend myself against having to pay out more money. So what can I say.

Hewitt: A remarkable story, unfortunately.

Hamm: It's a sad commentary for equal rights and look what Congress has done for you. We have all these laws.

Hewitt: But whether you can use them effectively is another question. What do you think has been the effect on the EO office of the problems that you raised, in the issues that you raised, and these court rulings that clearly placed the EO officer as a member of the management staff?

Hamm: I think when you place the EO officer as part of the management staff and you realize that many of the complaints are going to be against the management staff, that you have completely defeated the purpose of having a person as management investigate these complaints. If the person can't be neutral, if they must be seen as part of the management team, first of all, the complainants are not going to feel comfortable complaining. They are not going to have the trust that would be there otherwise. If they know that the person that they're complaining to, that the manner in which they find for or against the administration is going to affect that person's livelihood and their jobs. People are just not going to go and complain in the same way that they would. It also puts the EO officer in a very bad position because if the person has a conscience they would not keep the job, they would not take the job, they would not stay in it once they found out that they could not really help the person. So it is very difficult to see
what good those positions do today since the Boards have taken the position, since the University uses that as their defense, and you can only say that they take the position too that the EO office is part of management. There is just nothing there for an employee to place their trust in.

Hewitt: Do you think that associations like the Status of Women Committee which is still in existence, since groups like that are basically made up of faculty and career service and students, is that a kind of alternate route that is still available for employees, at least in the area of sex discrimination, to take complaints?

Hamm: Well, they really don't investigate complaints. They're not set up, they don't have the authority to go into a department and look at a person's files or to interview supervisors or to really get into an investigation type of matter. The original committee was a self-starting committee, and these people were really sincere about finding out about discrimination and doing something about it. When Cecil Mackey reappointed the committee most of the people who were really known feminists were not reappointed. People who replaced them, in many cases, have been people who were not knowledgeable about equal opportunity and sex discrimination and the laws. That includes the Equal Opportunity Committee on a number of occasions when I had been asked to go and speak about something, or for some reason had to see those committees, I found out that the vast majority, in several cases, the whole committee had not even read Title 7 of the Civil Rights Act of '64. Never mind what it was about. They didn't have the expertise and I think almost of them didn't have the interest. So it's really not a good avenue for someone to pursue.
Hewitt: Do you see any alternatives or sort of alternative channels that have been developed over the years since you left the EO office that would allow employees to pursue the kinds of complaints that you were handling when you were there? Or are there basically not good channels now for employees who feel they have been discriminated against?

Hamm: Well based on what I hear at meetings ... I served on the Sexual Harassment Panel this past Women's Week ... I think people feel really lost as far any avenues to get grievances addressed. Certainly the people who know about my case are not able or even willing, not that I was able to spend 30 thousand dollars, but most people aren't willing to make that kind of sacrifice. They would rather just either go to work somewhere else or ignore the problem. I think what we have know is alot of people who are trying their best to ignore problems because of the economy, because of the national administration's views towards sex discrimination. They see too many people being beat down, and they are trying to ignore it. To me that is one of the worst things you can do with any kind of problem, is to pretend it isn't there because it just gets bigger and makes people feel worse about it, and at some point it explodes.

Hewitt: Did the union exist when you were first involved as the EO specialist? Did the union exist, and did it have procedures for dealing with these things or develop them after that?

Hamm: There was no union here until the law permitted it in '74. Probably the law became passed in '74 and became effective in '75. January of '75 was when I moved over here. One of the problems the administration had with me was that I was elected president of the first career service union here. That led to more problems because I was in a position then to continue helping
women and minorities. The union, unfortunately after a couple of years . . . Of course the law was new and I'm not kidding you when I tell you that I had people on this campus ask me what a union was. They really did not know when those of us who were recruiting and trying to get meetings set up. We would say that we were going to have a union meeting, we would like you to come. "What is a union?" We were just flabbergasted. That's our base line. We were dealing with people who didn't even know what a union was. And of course you know the whole south and particularly in this area of Tampa and Florida, it's just not union country; and people didn't know what it was and those who knew, well many of them thought it was a bad thing to do. We really started with grassroots. But, having a big job and educating people, but fortunately we were able to get enough cards to petition to PERC and ask for representation. However, the Public Employees Relations Commission, which decides who can be in a union and what can be the unit, what the unit can consist of as far as employees and class titles, they would not permit us to have a University union by itself, or University people, even state wide. Because we had gathered cards at the nine Universities and had enough to petition as a unit and ask for representation for an election, they would not grant that. They said that we were state employees and had to be in with the other state employees, which meant another 90,000 people. They permitted the faculty, though, to organize as a group of State University System employees, but they would not permit us to do it. So naturally when they did that, that just practically disintegrated everything. When they made those decisions then I was ruled out of the bargaining unit because of working in personnel which I understand, and I have no problem with that because generally that is the way it is. But until they make a ruling, I agreed to organize and do what ever it is you
want to do, which I knew that and took advantage of that. So now the union slowly but surely was coming around. But I have not been involved in it since '77.

Hewitt: Given all the trials, both literally and figuratively, that you have gone through at USF over the course of your years here, are there positive things you can think about your experience here, or things you feel have changed for the better at USF since your first years here?

Hamm: Let me say that my bad experiences have been with just a few people. Unfortunately these are people who supervise me and people I had to work very closely with. The vast majority of people at the University I love dearly. I love the University. I love the students, I love most of the faculty and the staff. There is just a handful of administrators that I have very violent disagreements with. Basically it is just a lack of respect for their kinds of commitments and principles. I really like the University. I have served on a lot of committees. I know a lot of people and fortunately my work is a service type work where I work with the individuals, so I am able to see many staff and faculty people everyday and work with them directly in my job, so I love that. I think the University is a great place. I think education is wonderful, and of course this is the first educational institution that I have ever worked for. I had worked for private industry before and I knew a lot of nice people there too. I never was as interested in the business we were engaged in as I am in education. I just think that education is such a worthwhile thing. The whole process here is just unfortunate that I disagreed with some very high officials, and that this is a very political place and if you offend people who are presidents and vice presidents then you are going to be black listed, you are
going suffer alot of reprisal because they want to make an example of you. They want to show other people you will not "buck" us. This is what will happen. It is unfortunate. I could have just turned my head and gone the other way, and I think it would have all been forgotten and forgiven. But I maintained that they... that I, was treated unfairly, illegally, badly by people who are professing one thing with respect to following the law and actually practicing something else.

Hewitt: Although I am sure that there is some deterent effect on other employees, faculty, staff, whoever, who followed your case and realized the extent, the frustration, the ultimate lack of resolution or lack of positive resolution to it, but it sounds as though you also have been part of alot of publicity that has made people at USF more aware that these are issues and that there are avenues, however difficult those avenues may be. And certainly it sounds like some of the things that those of us who are female employees on this campus now take for granted we couldn't have taken for granted 10 or 15 years ago. So it does seem like there are alot of real positive changes, even though some of us may not realize where they came from. Sometimes we think, well, of course, you can wear pants or smoke at your desk or get pregnant or whatever. It sounds to me as though alot of those things really take alot of effort; and now that we are in a lull, maybe we will have another spurt of activity soon. Is there anything else in terms of your career at the University that you would like to talk about on tape? Any other of your activities or committees or aspects of the university life that you think someone should know happened here 20 years ago?

Hamm: Well, 20 years is a long time! Things have changed an awful lot and alot of the change is because we are bigger, you have more people involved, you have
more problems. I think the University has a lot of positive things and we're getting more . . . the medical facilities on campus, the Cancer Hospital, and the Shriners, it seems like everybody wants to come here. So I think we must have a positive image despite a lot of our problems, and I just think we are all . . . The problem with discrimination, I think is probably our worst blight. That is a real problem although there are many other aspects that are very positive here, and I think that is the problem that needs to be addressed instead of trying to turn the other way and pretend it doesn't exist because I think now we that we are becoming so large and that we are getting a lot of outside interest in the University, if we have some very ugly discrimination cases come to light by people who had more money than I had and can really pursue them, then I think it would be very damaging to the University. I would hope that some high level administrator is going to be willing to recognize this and do something about it. Certainly the national atmosphere is not good, but this is an educational institution which should be leading the country and not following it. I have high hopes and know that there are some very good feminists, people around who really believe in equal opportunity and just not to give somebody an award for it, or to have a luncheon and pass out plaques, but somebody who . . . there are people here who really want to practice it. I think that has to become a sincere goal of this administration. If nothing else but to really advert disaster eventually. There are a lot of unhappy people in that area. That's just bound to be bad in the long run for us, although it looks now that people who discriminate are in the driver's seat. I think that it is a very temporary thing.

Hewitt: Thank you very much.