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Donald R. Harkness oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, August 5, 1985

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Hewitt: I am speaking with this afternoon with Dr. Harkness, Professor of American Studies, as part of the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. Let me just begin by asking you about your first contact with the University of South Florida.

Harkness: The first news hit the papers that there was going to be a University of South Florida. I was at the University of Florida and kind of restless. I heard that South Florida was coming here and then heard that John Allen was going to be the president. I then heard that Russell Cooper was coming down from Minnesota. I had known him from Minnesota. He was to be one of the deans. I heard about Sid French coming over whom I also knew. I thought I would like to go there. That was about 1956 or 1957 when I first started thinking about it.

Hewitt: When were you first contacted to actually take a position here?

Harkness: Early 1960. I came down for a visit. There wasn't any talk about a job or anything like that, but I had visit with Russell Cooper and Sid French. Then I got a job offer toward the end of the spring. Since it represented a raise and a promotion from what I had at Gainesville, I felt kind of struck. I was very pleased to take it. I liked the idea of general education and the whole idea of the College of Basic Studies, which I had been in for years myself. I had been at Minnesota for four years and at Gainesville for ten.

Hewitt: So you have had alot of experience. Could you explain a little bit about what the vision of education was initially at USF?
Harkness: Part of it was in the slogan "Accent on Learning." The idea was that there was to be primary emphasis on teaching, classroom work, new ideas, new techniques for working with students and all of that. There wasn't that much emphasis on traditional ideas of graduate programs and this sort of thing. Everybody was supposed to be involved with general education and with the College of Basic Studies.

Hewitt: Did you have an appointment in two different colleges?

Harkness: My appointment was in Basic Studies. Actually my appointment was just in Basic Studies.

Hewitt: What were you actually hired to teach in Basic Studies?

Harkness: Functional English, as we called it in those days, and Human Behavior which was Psychology.

Hewitt: Was that team-teaching?

Harkness: Yes. We had a few team-teaching programs. Actually we had one that went to the second year. Dr. Parrish was put in charge of arranging it. We had two sets of faculty members, two teams of four, from four of the major basic studies areas. One was English, American Idea, Behavioral Science, and Biological Science. The other was the same three and then Physical Science instead. I was in one of those groups. One of the interesting things about that program was that it gave . . . Our first black student who came in the second year, came in and he got in that team program. It was very good for him because it gave him a group. They were close. Those kids were in four classes together. So they were all with . . . I can't think of his name.
He was with a group of fellow students, and I think it helped him. He went on to do very well. He graduated and got a doctorate in psychology. He was an army captain the last I heard of him. Now he is teaching some place.

Hewitt: Was there an emphasis in those early days on recruiting minority students or minority faculty?

Harkness: Not like there is now. We wanted to get somebody. Of course North Florida had still not really opened up. We wanted to start out with an integrated student body in the beginning with black students, but we couldn't find any. There were no applicants that met the entrance requirements. Ernie Boger came along the second year. He had a 495 on the test scores based on Florida A&M. We did separate scores for black students and white students in those days. Do you know what I mean by scores? They are the twelfth grade tests. The five scores, they would add them for percentiles. 495 in a black list would have been 599 and about a 432 on the overall list. He was very sharp. He was the person I called on in class when nobody else would answer the question. I wouldn't have called on him except when everybody else ran out. He did very well.

Hewitt: You taught a course called American Idea? Could you explain what that course was?

Harkness: Yes. It was a social science/general education course. It has nothing to do with American Studies, except that some of us who came into American Studies came out of it in a way. You have gotten the general picture of the Basic Studies courses. This course was primarily intended to be a sophomore course. It had two semesters. We started out with semesters. One was on the United States. The second semester was about America and the world. It
was the brainchild of Robert Warner who is somebody else you should get a hold of if you can. He had developed this course and it was one of the two sophomore level courses we had. Generally speaking, English, behavioral science, both biological and natural science, and mathematics were all freshman-level courses. The Humanities and the American Idea were to be sophomore level. People didn't follow that very closely. We didn't enforce it. If we had bright freshman, we would let them in. This was a social science course. It survives now in the International Studies area. The second semester is really what survived. That is about all. As far as I know there is nothing left of the other Basic Studies courses except the Humanities which survived intact as a department in the College of Arts and Letters. That was rather unusual, but interesting.

Hewitt: During the period when general education was emphasized and when USF was much smaller, how would you characterize the relationships between faculty and administration, and faculty and students?

Harkness: We knew them better. We knew most of the students, and we knew most of the other faculty from the different colleges and so on. On the whole there were problems with the administration always. I think they were a little milder than they became later on . . . Many people, for example, aren't happy with President Allen for many respects. Many of them didn't realize everything that he put up with because they saw the things he didn't put up with. There were a few of them I heard remark after we've had a few years of his successor that said that they were looking back on the good old days when they had John Allen. He was pretty arbitrary in many respects. We had our differences, but we were good friends. I would say I liked John Allen
better. I was not particularly obstreperous like some of my friends. I got along pretty well with most people.

Hewitt: Do you think that the faculty were more accessible to students in those early days?

Harkness: No. I think the faculty were accessible to students all the time except the students don't take the trouble to find them. One thing that I have found was students would say that they can't get to see the faculty, and that is because they wouldn't even try. I get very upset with students that say that they can't get to see them. I agree, there are some faculty members who can't be found by students, but most of them are available. There is a telephone, directories, and there are very few of us who have unlisted numbers, so that when you hear the students say that they can't see their teachers I think this is a complaint which is generally pretty groundless.

Hewitt: So from the very beginning faculty were accessible.

Harkness: Yes. I think we were accessible then, and I think that we still are.

Hewitt: You were here during the Johns Committee investigation. Could you tell me your memories of that?

Harkness: The Johns Committee came here in the Spring of '61. I had known the Johns Committee from Gainesville back in '57 and '58. So when they hit here, I was not too surprised. We heard that people were interviewing students down at the Holiday Inn. In those days it was something with an exotic seas name. This was the old pattern that they had at Gainesville. The University police were picking students and others up and taking them over to the
motel and having them interviewed by Senator Johns' committee and his attorney Mark Hawes. I won't say anything about him because one shouldn't speak ill of the dead. He died last year. This pattern was developing and several of us who had been at Gainesville recognized it. I remember the day that I finished my term as president of the AAUP and John Hicks, who was the president of Humanities at the time, took it over. John and I went over to see President Allen, and we had just had a very, very hot meeting where the vote carried to invite the Johns Committee to come on campus and do their investigating and have the procedures taped and available for anybody. So we went over and we caught President Allen and told him that the AAUP was strongly for his inviting them over there, and he did. We had them going out on campus. That was a very interesting time because people were testifying all the time. We also had at the same time the Grebstein case developing. Have you heard about that?

Hewitt: No.

Harkness: Really? They are all mixed up together. It is really interesting. Grebstein was a faculty member in freshman English who was teaching a course on short story writing and used a book by Norman Podhoretz, who had a bad word in his article. I forget just what the bad word was, but it was one that was heard a lot of a few years later. One of his students had this book lying on the table at home and her father picked it up, opened it up, saw that and called the Board of Control, as it was in those days, and said that this was terrible. So they summoned John Allen, Sheldon Grebstein, and Russell Cooper to come to the Board and said that this man shouldn't be teaching this kind of thing and therefore he was suspended. Well, we had a time over that. We immediately went down to the attorney, Ed Cutler, who
had done some work for us earlier. He was a member of Carlton, Fields, and Ward. Now it is Carlton, Fields, Ward, Smith, and Cutler. The Smith is Reese Smith. It is a pretty well-known firm. At that time he was not yet a partner, but he was a member of the firm. We retained him for the AAUP and for this whole Johns Committee business. In fact we had already retained him because of the Johns Committee, we just added him when Sheldon got this thing. I remember the fee that we paid was $250. For that we had the law firm on retainer for one year. I remember one time some of our people said, "What are we getting for our $250?" So we talked to Ed and he said, "Well, I just talked to one of your colleagues whom the Johns Committee was after, and I spent three hours with him. My normal rate is $50 an hour." I said to forget it. Out of the money we put up for that nobody realized, and I kept the secret, but $100 of the $250 came from John Allen, strictly unmarked. He just gave it to me and said don't tell anybody. Anyway, we had this firm and so we were fighting them. We had hearings. It ended up with an elaborate procedure of hearings on the Grebstein case and whether people should publish things like this. It ended up with Grebstein being exonerated, offered to be taken off suspension. He had been suspended with pay, so he had a ball. Offered a promotion and a raise, however, he got a better deal up in New York State and he went up there and has since become a dean. I wrote him once and asked him, "How could you do it?" It came out fairly well. That is one of the things that came along with the Johns Committee. They were after communists, and they were after homosexuals. First they started out in Gainesville after communists. There was a great professor at Gainesville named Bill Carlton in Social Science, who was one of the outstanding lecturers in the country. In fact, he along with Franklin D. Roosevelt, as one of the ten best speakers in the country in vital speeches
one year. Since Bill was a bachelor and lived with his mother, people first thought he was a communist. They couldn't get him on that and then they thought he was a "fairy." They couldn't get him on that either, in fact, Senator Johns never heard of such things. He was shocked. They didn't check FSU. There was no investigation at FSU.

Hewitt: Why did FSU get out of it?

Harkness: They didn't want him to find out about the kind of homosexuality that might occur at FSU. That was a girl's school in those days. They came down here looking for the same things. Again, they had no luck. They went after various people and in some cases, we had one who was cleared of charges of homosexuality. He said that he was the only certified stud in the state.

Hewitt: What do you think were the long term effects of these investigations?

Harkness: I don't know. I think they probably made people a little nervous. This sort of thing that happens isn't unique. Private universities have their own kind of problems. I had a brother-in-law who was at Harvard and he had been at Toledo, he had been at Cal Tech, and he had been at Southern California. They were all private schools. He could not believe the stories that I told him. He literally couldn't. He said "That can't happen!"

Hewitt: Do you think that it had an effect on the community's attitudes toward USF?

Harkness: I think some people in the community thought that where there is smoke, there is fire, and there must be something wrong out here. A lot people took it for granted that we were a bunch of communists out here and so on. But on the other hand, some strong elements in the community gave us a lot of
support. One for example is P. Orlonzo, who was principal at King High at the time and later went on to become president of NEA. He was a strong supporter of our school at that time. We had certain issues that were fought out. One thing that happened around this time was that we had arranged that a man named Fleming come down from Vanderbilt. He was going to be a guest professor for a semester. D.F. Fleming, that was his name. Some people went after that. The president of Vanderbilt was politically opposed to him. He was liberal. He was not a communist. In fact he was certified non-communist by a congressional committee once. He was coming down and there was going to be a... There had been an editorial in the Zephyrhills newspaper which was a very well known right-wing paper in the area. Some of us got together and called Fleming and read him the editorial. He thought there was grounds for a defamation-of-character suit. Fleming was going to do it when he came down here. We were really feeling good because here was a chance to get back at those so and so. Only what happened is that Fleming's appointment was rescinded by the president. People got to President Allen, and he cancelled the appointment. The president said that he wasn't a good man. Well, that was fought out. That got us censored by the AAUP. We finally got it cleared up about three years later, when Charlie Arnade was president at the time. He got it straightened out and got Fleming down here to give a series of lectures for a week or two. That satisfied everybody, and we got off the censure list.

Hewitt: What kind of role did the AAUP play at USF in those early years? There obviously wasn't a union then.

Harkness: No, there wasn't a union then, and I never wanted a union. In fact, I don't belong any more because of the direction in which they have gone. Well, we
tried to influence this kind of thing. It was not as important as they would like to think it was, but it did have some voice. When I said something as local president and a state president, people did listen. They might not have paid any attention, but they did listen. We got some attention state wide from the Board of Control, or the Board of Regents, trying to keep the idea of academic freedom and let people say what they want to say. When I have interviewed the Board, the Johns Committee, I asked for the interview because I had heard he was asking questions about the AAUP, and I knew more about it than anybody else at the time. So I went in and Mr. Hawe interviewed me and among other things he asked whether I thought communists should be allowed to speak, and I said yes. I thought they should be allowed to speak and there should also be opportunity for them to be answered by somebody else. Well, on the floor of the House when he gave his report he said, "This here Professor Harkness said that communists should be allowed to speak at a university." He didn't go on to say my qualifications. However, I got mentioned. One of my colleagues spent two hours with the committee, and I spent twenty minutes. I got mentioned in the floor of the House, and he didn't so he was kind of upset.

Hewitt: I guess it was the mid-to late '60s that the College of Basic Studies began to be pulled apart . . .

Harkness: Yes. You could see it coming because the emphasis turned more and more toward graduate programs and doctoral programs and that kind of thing. The Basic College just didn't have the clout and the influence to keep even. What happened is that it fell behind. The faculty members were supposed to get the same kind of treatment as anybody else. By the late '60s the average faculty member in the Basic College was probably about three or four
thousand dollars below their counterparts in the other colleges. Some people moved out, and finally when Mackey came down he finished it up. The dean of the Basic College did not fight to protect it, and general education just ended here, and it has never come back in spite of what they call general education. We don't have anything like it. American Studies, Humanities, and International Studies were about the closest thing to general education departments you have got now. People were just getting an education instead of specializing which is . . . Specialization is all . . . You know.

Hewitt: Was American Studies founded during that break up?

Harkness: Not really. I can pinpoint that fairly well. Some of us who came down here with American Studies degrees . . . I was one and Professor Robertson who you should talk to also. Have you? Good. We came out of Minnesota in their program, and then we had others who were very much . . . Jack Moore, for example, was very much interested in American Studies. Jim Parrish, in English, he would have had an American Studies degree if they had been available. Ed Stanton in Humanities and two or three others. I wrote the original memo to about half a dozen of these people and suggested that we get together and start an American Studies program. We got together and talked about it. Then I left and went on a leave for a year to work with the College Board. When I got back we had it started. I thought we would develop it in the College of Basic Studies, but it turned out, fortunately, that Irving Deere, who was then the Director of Language and Literature, became Dean of Arts and Letters. Irving was a Minnesota man himself and he knew about American Studies and he just said that he would like to have it in the College of Language and Literature. So we got it there, and it is a
lucky thing that we didn't stay in Basic Studies. We didn't have any support there. But it started out as a one-person program. Dr. Stanton set it up and was running it. After a couple years, Professor Robertson joined him. Stanton didn't want to become chairman anymore. He didn't like that kind of thing. So Robertson became chairman, and I understand they picked up another man. Then when the Basic Studies program faded and folded up, a number of us in American Idea and Humanities were given the opportunity to move to something else. I remember calling Charlie Arnade from Missouri where I was traveling for the summer. He asked me if I wanted to go into American Studies, and I said that I would. We got Professor Conway out of Humanities also, so we suddenly found ourselves with a full-time faculty of five. We still have a full-time faculty of five which makes us one of the larger American Studies department in the country in terms of full-time faculty. This came along at the same time as the break-up, and the break-up helped it in the sense that it made some people available to strengthen it. In '72, several of us came in.

Hewitt: What were the forces that you think were the most important in terms of breaking up the Basic Studies program and that kind of general education emphasis?

Harkness: Well, I think primarily that not enough people wanted to do that kind of teaching. They wanted to get into their specialties and teach their specialties. Also the fact that there was no reward available in terms of salary and promotion and that kind of thing. It is just about impossible for people in the College of Basic Studies to get anywhere close to what other people are making. And the feeling that what is important is not all these general ideas, but the specific ideas that you can work on, in a
particular thesis, dissertation ideas that you have followed up and you want your students to do, that kind of thing, whether it is history or chemistry or whatever. The generalists are still rare. The idea is that they know less and less about more and more. I think that had a great deal to do with the break-up. There was a loss of enthusiasm. We were really gung ho in the first year or so.

Hewitt: You mentioned the accent on learning and obviously that is still our official motto. When did the change start to occur in which there was more and more emphasis on publication and research and less and less emphasis on teaching?

Harkness: I suppose it started probably after we had been here two or three years, in '63 or '64, and it just continued. That is measurable. Publications you can measure. Somebody has written a book, well, there it is. Nobody may ever read it, but it sits there. So he gets merit.

Hewitt: Were there forces that you think really pushed the school towards that kind of publication with research emphasis?

Harkness: It is the same thing everywhere. All universities have that idea. They talk about learning and how important teaching is and everything, but when it comes down to the issues it is publication. It may not be perish, but it is getting closer and closer. We did pretty well for a long time at our institution. We held off, and people could get promoted in spite of the fact that they didn't publish. There are several of us in this college who are full professors, but we would never make it now. Not the way things are going now. I see what these young folks have to go through to get promoted from assistant to associate. My gosh! It's a terrible grind! You know
what Ruth Banes went through. She got it. But everything that she had to
go through. She better had got it.

Hewitt: Alot of people have mentioned that the shift from John Allen to Cecil Mackey
was a major shift in terms of styles and emphasis. Yet it does seem like
many of the changes in terms of the shift towards publication and research
and the dismantling of the Basic College actually began under Allen.

Harkness: They were developing then. They wouldn't have happened if he stayed, at
least they wouldn't have happened as quickly. Mackey made it possible—the
publication and that sort of thing probably. He was committed to general
education, but he was getting awfully tired. He was ready to retire. What
actually led to his retirement encompasses many stories. I don't know what
is true. He was forced to a degree, possibly, because he was not supportive
of a medical school and, you know, medical schools are magic. So they got
somebody who was for a medical school. Most of our developments have come
in the science area, which is fine.

Hewitt: Do you think that the shift from Allen to Mackey really changed or shaped
somehow the progress of a program like American Studies that was so oriented
toward language, literature, and humanities?

Harkness: I don't think it made that much difference because we weren't important
enough. Mackey wanted to teach a course when he first came here. So we
invited him to teach a course in American Studies, and he did. He taught a
course on the Corporation in American Life and he did fairly well. He got
pretty good ratings from his students. As far as I know, it is the only
course he ever taught here. I don't think it had alot to do with
our... I mean we would always be a kind of an outsider. A program like
this always is, and it struggles along. If you can get enough students, it justifies itself.

Hewitt: Well, it has lasted for quite a while now.

Harkness: Yes. So far it has hung in pretty well.

Hewitt: Let me ask you a couple questions about the quality of life on campus. I have heard from a number of people that originally there was no desire to have intercollegiate athletics.

Harkness: This is true. I noted that on the part of most of us. John Allen specifically said that he was not going to have intercollegiate football and that earned him the undying enmity of Tom McEwen and the Tampa Tribune. The Tampa Tribune to this day, I don't say it is all because of Tom McEwen's attitude to John Allen, but they have never given the University of South Florida the kind of publicity and treatment that say the St. Pete Times has. If somebody gets in trouble, we are plastered on the front page.

Hewitt: If there wasn't intercollegiate sports, which I guess is what most big state universities use to identify themselves in some ways, how did USF, either faculty, students, or administrators, try to create an identity on a campus that didn't have intercollegiate athletics and was mainly a commuter campus?

Harkness: It wasn't easy. I never worried about it myself. There were many attempts. For one thing, we had a College Bowl team one time that held the lead in the college... We just missed retiring the trophy. We lost out after four weeks at the top, and we lost out on something that the guy knew and everybody else knew but he couldn't think of it. They have this idea that you
have to have athletics. We now have athletics of various types, and we have the problems that come with them. We are seeing more and more of that.

Hewitt: Do you think that there was a change in terms of student life as the University put up housing and became partially a residential unit?

Harkness: Oh yes. This brought the whole dormitory business in. The students would get together and have demonstrations and so on and so forth, and they had alot of fun. We were a commuter school and there wasn't too much... There was school spirit and there was alot of... The University Center was a place where you would get together. You would go in there for a cup of coffee in the morning and sit around with the students. That lasted about a year or two. Now there are various coffee shops around the campus. Not many faculty go to them to my knowledge. I don't. I think that there is less... I don't know what the students do, frankly, because it is so big now. I don't know if they get together and what they feel about it. I get acquainted with students in various connections, and some reports state that there are certain student activities that contribute a great deal toward the spirit. I think, for example, this Ambassadors business is one that is very good. I have known a number of the students who have been ambassadors and they are a kind that you think hardly exist anymore. In many respects, it is a nice way to be.

Hewitt: Do you remember much about student demonstrations at USF in the late '60s or early '70s? Was this campus active?

Harkness: It wasn't nearly as active as most universities. For one thing, it was fairly restrained. The police were restrained. There were a number of faculty who were strongly sympathetic to and would agree with the students,
but still kept them from going too far. We had a demonstration the first year. They wanted to wear bermuda shorts. So they demonstrated wearing bermuda shorts. Can you imagine? I guess they made the point. In the '60s we had the hassle over the dormitories being coed and all that business. That is what I called visitation. When I went to school we had visitation, but we just kept our mouth shut about it.

Hewitt: Do you think there has been a big change in terms of the appearance of the University and the appearance of students over the years? Are they much more casual now?

Harkness: They are coming back from that now. They are not nearly as casual as they were during the '70s and so on. I think the dress is a little more formal. Behavior is a little more formal. They are still pretty casual because they always wear jeans. We would always be able to tell when somebody graduated and went to law school when they suddenly show up in a coat and tie. You never see them in anything but jeans before. Around here I think they are getting more formal, and their language has certainly improved considerably. Even when they write their graffiti. It is somewhat more restrained than they used to be. They were always trying to get a rise out of us in the '60s and the '70s. Writing things on the blackboard, saying something, and then it kind of stopped when we just ignored it.

Hewitt: I have heard about demonstrations of students over things like bermuda shorts and dress codes and housing codes and that sort of thing. Was there actually any activism around anti-war or issues like that?

Harkness: They would have demonstrations on that. They went marching up to St. Leo's one day when Melvin Laird, the Secretary of Defense, was speaking up there.
They went up to demonstrate there. One of our faculty kept it under control by saying, "Demonstrate, but don't cross the police line because there is no sense in getting yourself arrested." It's not like these token arrestings that they do now in the demonstrations. We had a few. One night they objected to the library hours. They wanted the library to stay open till three o'clock in the morning or something like that. And the fact that there wasn't any money to hire people didn't... So they had a sit-down in the lobby of the library. I went over there to keep them company. At three o'clock, they finally left when the vice president said, "Anybody who is here in fifteen minutes would be arrested." Then they left. USF students have not been as active as many. They have the reputation as being at least like Berkeley or Columbia and some of those. As far as I know, they have never held anybody hostage, and I don't think they ever invaded the president's office or any others.

Hewitt: You mentioned that things were getting more formal again like the early years. You mentioned once that there was at least some rhetoric about getting back to general education.

Harkness: There is always rhetoric. Five years ago or so.

Hewitt: Do you think that in a school this young that there is actually a chance of moving back towards some of the original vision, or has it grown so big that can't be recaptured?

Harkness: I'm afraid it's too big. I don't think it will go back to that. People talk about it, but nothing ever happens.
Hewitt: One of the programs that you were involved in establishing was the Bachelor of Independent Studies Program which was a fairly innovative kind of program.

Harkness: It is still going very strong.

Hewitt: Could you tell me a little bit about that?

Harkness: I was on the original committee that was working on it. After they got going and established it, I didn't have too much to do with it. It is still going. People come on weekends and the summer for a certain number of sessions. There are two-week sessions for three summers, and they can get a degree. Several people have already completed the program. Kevin Karny, who I think may have retired by now, has been running it for a long time.

Hewitt: Was the emphasis for having a program where students would get their degree basically from independent studies?

Harkness: This was to get the older students. This has been part of our goal right from the beginning—to bring in members of the community who are older and didn't have the opportunity to go to college and to come here. The state supports it. We have the senior citizens program where you can take courses free if you are over 55 on a space—available basis. We also have a program for mature students that Lee Levingood runs. Really from the start we encouraged this kind of thing with older students that came in. We had some the very first year. I remember a number of students I had who were 55 or 60. Some of them were older than I was. They were always so afraid that they couldn't compete with all these young bright people. Usually they could compete very well and do considerably better. In fact, I usually have a few older students still. That is something that we were always concerned
about. In the metropolitan area this is the only urban university in the state still. The others that are close, like Central Florida, is near Orlando but is a ways. North Florida is pretty close to Jacksonville, but still a little bit away. Florida International is quite a bit away from Miami. We are the most urban of any University and we are right close to the city and especially the branch campuses of St. Pete and Sarasota. So there has been a great deal of emphasis on older students. With the gerontology programs formally established . . . and it has been one of our strong points and maybe the area that South Florida will really stand out in the world generally.

Hewitt: Did the evening courses start here? Were there evening courses right from the beginning?

Harkness: Right from the very beginning. We had one man from the College of Business that was in charge of the night sections, and he was over here every night at six o'clock. He would put his hours in then. I don't think they have ever had anything quite like that since, which makes it a little rough on night students. Taking care of things like ID cards and that sort of stuff, they had a lot of problems with that. My daughter has been a night student many times so I hear about it all the time. The night classes are aimed at the community primarily. We have had those, and we have had other kinds of things. We have the Weekend College that aims at this sort of thing. I would say from the very beginning that this has been one of our aims to provide educational services to the larger community and the non-traditional students. I think that is the term they like to use now.

Hewitt: Because we are such an urban university, and that is certainly something unusual in the state of Florida, were there ways in which USF tried to
establish some sort of out-reach with the community in addition to bringing in community people to the University?

Harkness: Yes. I'm not too aware of it, but there are. Many of the continuing education programs go out. I think each college has done this sort of thing. We have on occasion had classes . . . I taught a class one time down in Westinghouse. Several years ago we were trying to establish . . . at businesses they would encourage us to bring a class down or teach a class at their place of work. It got a little frustrating because somebody would be there one week, and the next week he would be on a trip to New York or something like that. There was been that attempt too. We have gone downtown and taught. We have kept in contact with the community. The alumni worked alot on that sort of thing, too, with community contact, especially the Tampa/Hillsborough alumni group. They have set up alot of programs. They have not only around homecoming time, but other times of the year. They have dinners and breakfast even. I remember getting up at some ungodly hour for a breakfast downtown sponsored by the alumni association. They do alot of those things. The school you see in Florida, you have got University of Florida and all of their alumni all over the place. So we have been the new kid on the block. We are not the new kid anymore with all the others that have been added, but still we are newer than Florida and Florida State. Of course, Florida State has its own "johnny come lately" problems because it was strictly a girl's school until about 1948. Then it started doing all the things that boys do like playing football. The state legislature ordered the University of Florida to play football with them. It took a legislative act for Florida to play football with Florida State. They wish they hadn't now.
Hewitt: Were there other programs like the BIS program or night classes or programs for non-traditional students that you felt that were really innovative here that either still continue or somewhere along the line have been dismantled?

Harkness: That is the unique thing about us. Probably no other new university was hit with a legislative investigating committee in its first year.

Hewitt: That makes us unique, I don't know if it is positive, but it certainly is unique.

Harkness: I would tell my students that they weren't getting much teaching. I would turn them loose or ask some student to take over the class or something like that or say that I have to go this meeting or that meeting. One time I said that if you miss alot of classes, you learn an awful lot about Florida politics. It was interesting during those days. I remember one student in my American Idea class asked me if I was a communist. I said that I didn't think so. He said that one of his friends was in my Human Behavior class and said that I was a communist. I had a pretty good idea of who that was.

Hewitt: Do you think that the students had a good sense of what the Johns Committee was and what kind of implication they had for the University?

Harkness: I think at the time they did. I think at the time they understood it pretty well. The memories of that I don't know. Let me tell you about one thing that happened. Have you heard about the girls' football team? Let me tell you about this because it has some interesting ramifications. I heard this story completely turned around in later years. Back in the fall of '60 we
weren't going to have football, sororities, or fraternities. They were going to have service clubs. One of the service clubs was called Delphi. My daughter happened to belong to that one so I knew about it. The girls in the service club decided that they were going to play football, not touch, but tackle football. Some of the boys who were frustrated, non-scholarship winners from other states, got hold of their uniforms from their high schools, and they started a girls' football going. This shook us up a little. We didn't want to say, "No, you can't do it." My wife at the time was in the Student Affairs office, and we were discussing it with some of the teachers and wondering what we could do about it. Then fortunately after practice one day the young coach said, "Three times around the field and hit the showers." They ran three times around the field, and one of the girls stepped in a gopher hole and broke her leg. So that ended that.

While it was going on, there was a great story. It happened that one of our older students... She was a sorority sister of Judy's in Adelphi, and she was several years older than the average student. She is now a full professor of psychology out in Arizona. But she was working as a lab assistant in the Behavioral Science lab. They were doing an experiment. They had made a human Skinner box where the subject would take a measured amount of whiskey and then perform a routine of button pushing and so on. Then after an interval, he would take another measured amount and perform it and see what happens. Andrea was running this experiment, and she was in charge. The student was in the Skinner box and he was perfectly sober. So she said to just follow the procedure and take the drink every half hour. Then she went out to football practice. She changed in the lab, left her clothes there and put on jeans and a t-shirt. Then she went out to football practice. When she came back into the room, she found one of our faculty members sound
asleep on a lab stool. He was a great big fellow. The student in the Skinner box had been there quite a while, and the box was really rocking back and forth. He was in great shape. Her cloths were laying all over the place. She was a mess after football practice. At that moment the door opened and in came President Allen, Dean Battle of the College of Education, and a couple of other people from the Board of Regents or the Chamber of Commerce or something. They saw this scene and Dean Battle immediately took it in, took the others aside and said, "There is obviously an experiment going on here and we don't want to disturb them." He escorted them out before they could say a word. I think that is one of the greatest stories in our history. That ought to be on record. It was told to me by one of my later colleagues who was not here at that time, but had heard it. He came several years later. He is in theater and very dramatic. He told the story, and he had the basics except it wasn't football, it was tennis, and it was different people. So it is just the way these stories change. That is the interesting thing about anything. You can't trust people's memories.

Hewitt: I am glad we got this one down on tape.

Harkness: Now this is right. I remember very well because I heard it from Andy over at the office.

Hewitt: When USF was smaller, were there more practical jokes, pranks, or stories that went around campus that everybody knew?

Harkness: I suppose. I can't think of any since we have started growing. I still remember some that happen in the early days. I remember the time some of the students in Human Behavior went to Professor Hardy, who was a rat
psychologist and had white rats in his lab, and they asked Dr. Hardy if they could borrow a rat because they wanted to try something. Kids were really innovative that first year. They had all sorts of wild ideas. They wanted to borrow a rat for some experiment. So they took it around campus and released it at various places to get reactions. They released it in an elevator over at the Student Center. They released it at the Travel Desk in the University Administration building. The person at the Travel Desk asked who their teacher was and then called President Allen's office. The word came down and there were no more white rats loaned out. Margaret Fisher could tell you all about those things.

Hewitt: When you think back over the last twenty-five years, what would you say have been the most important developments at USF, either positive or negative ones?

Harkness: I think the most important negative one is the fact that general education has completely faded out of the picture. Positive, I suppose, is the fact that we are becoming a very significant institution in the biological and medical science area. I hate to admit it because I am not happy about the medical school and that stuff. Nevertheless, I think we are becoming very significant there, and everything else is sort hanging on, including Natural Science. They don't do much better than we do anymore. But that is just the way it goes. Professional education, science, and business to a degree. I think our business school has done pretty well. They have made some good developments. Their Small Business Program, for example, seems to be very good. Here, we have the Weekend College operating out of this college and that is something that seems to be hanging in and doing fairly well. There are certain things that are planned, but as yet I don't know how far they
are going to get. There is this Greek Studies Center. It's suppose to develop that. I think an important change, good or bad I wouldn't say, is the athletic one. If we actually provide an athletic program where we educate people in the process, I think there is a hope, I have had a number of baseball students, basketball students, and others in classes and I found them to be pretty good. I never had Charlie Bradley in class, but I taught the class that he was in. I took over for Professor Robertson. He was ill a couple of times, so I have seen Charlie in class. I think he has done quite well. Of course, he has done very well athletically. And I have had some of the others in class, and they have done alright. I have had a few that were down right brilliant. I had a girl that was a pitcher for the softball team, and she was sharp as could be. She was a straight "A" student. Girl athletes tend to do a little better than the men which is an interesting feature. Of course, many of them are in sports... Tennis and golf tends to provide more intellectual people than basketball and football, certainly football the least I would say which we still don't have and probably never will. I think what happened to Central Florida will take care of any feeling about having it here. Jack Brown handled that very cleverly when he said, "OK, put your money where your mouth is; show me a hundred thousand dollars guaranteed money." They never did get it.

Hewitt: Do you think that USF's place in the whole university system has changed since those early days with the development of other newer universities?

Harkness: Oh yes. It had moved up. We are accepted now as one of the three flagship universities. This made FSU and Gainesville very unhappy. We are number two in size now. We beat FSU at the moment. I think we are definitely up there with the... The attempt to keep a second level, which was made a
few years ago, failed. Fortunately, we had a few strong supporters even
though they weren't always alumni. Terrel Sessums, for example, although he
is a University of Florida graduate, nevertheless he is from Tampa and he
has been a pretty good friend. Of course we have had people like Betty
Castor working for us. Then we get alumni like Lee Moffit. Though I think
Lee did more for the medical school than he did for the university as a
whole. Nevertheless, that cancer center might really be something. It is
certainly impressive.

Hewitt: Do you think that over the course of the twenty-five years that you have
been here, there has been a change in terms of the faculty's ability to
affect university policy or the development of new programs?

Harkness: That is two questions. Overall university policy, I think we have a little
less influence, maybe quite a bit less. At the beginning we had
some... Well, there were so few administrators. You knew everybody. If
you had a question you called Dr. Allen. Most of us called him Dr. Allen.
Everybody else was on a first name term. I didn't start calling him John
until he retired. But you call, or vice versa when there was only one, and
talk about things. Now it is not easy to have much influence. As far as
programs and developing things, I think faculty still has influence there
except it takes so much more in terms of money and time and all the support
to develop something new. But if you get an idea and find the support some
way, it can be done. I think faculty has always been involved in developing
programs rather more than administrators. They are busy administering the
ones that they have got.

Hewitt: If you could see some changes implemented in the course of the next twenty-
five years, what do you think would be the most important things?
Harkness: I think the most important thing is figuring out some way to genuinely evaluate and reward teaching. I remember David Smith when he was dean. We were having a big hassle over one of our faculty members who he would not give tenure to. Everybody agreed that he was a fine teacher, but he didn't have his degree. He said, "If you can show me how to count teaching in terms of figures, I will go along with it." You just can't do that. It is very frustrating. They have all these evaluation sheets to report, and they don't mean a thing. Even if they do, nobody pays attention to them. I remember one time I did a check on the evaluation we had earlier, and it turned out that the University faculty generally was, something like 90% of the faculty, was above average, which isn't possible.

Hewitt: Are there any other aspects of life at USF that you have experienced in your twenty-five years here that you would like people to remember when they look back at the history of USF?

Harkness: That's an interesting question. I think probably the early spirit or the communal spirit that we had in the beginning when everybody knew everybody, faculty, staff, and students. When there weren't a lot of differences. Lines started being drawn very early. For example, we started AAUP here. You had to have seven AAUP members to start a chapter, and I got seven together who belonged elsewhere and I think four of them were my friends. They were very important in helping us get the chapter going. Several of them served as officers of one sort or another during the early years. Then one time about three or fours years into it, one of my friends in the biological sciences and someone I had a great deal of respect for, said at an AAUP meeting, "Why is it that we have librarians at the AAUP?" I jumped
down his throat. I said that if we couldn't have librarians, we wouldn't have AAUP. That was his attitude. Now I think the union is trying to bring that together. The librarians are moving back into things. Everybody was working together. There was the faculty, students, staff, and secretaries. They all worked together. That is something that can't last, but it was nice while it lasted. You felt a common spirit. There would be parties. If we had parties, everybody would come. The English department's party would include probably a few students and certainly all the secretarial staff and all the teachers from the teaching associates up to the very few full professors. We didn't have very many in the early days. And there was no particular stylistism about it. There still isn't. We are basically a democratic place still. Someways almost too much so.

Hewitt: Well, let's hope some of the communal spirit hangs on.