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Walter Cone oral history interview by Yael V. Greenberg, July 30, 2003

Walter L. Cone (Interviewee)
Yael V. Greenberg (Interviewer)
G: Today is Wednesday, July 30, 2003. My name is Yael Greenberg, Oral History program assistant for the USF Florida Studies Center. We continue a series of interviews here in our studio in the Tampa campus library with USF faculty, students, staff, and alumni in order to commemorate fifty years of the university history. Today we will be interviewing Mr. Walter Cone, who came to USF in September 1966 as a student in the department of history. Currently Mr. Cone is a library technical assistant for the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute Research Library. Good afternoon Mr. Cone.

C: Good afternoon.

G: Let’s begin by you taking us to the year you arrived in Tampa, and what circumstances brought you to the University of South Florida.

C: I was attending a community college, St. John’s River Community College, and I was transferring. At the time the alternatives for the state universities were Florida, Florida State, FAMU, FAU, and here. I was looking for a college that was a little bit smaller than the two major universities and I started exploring here. That spring, “Knocky” Parker, who was a professor in the English department, came to do a presentation on the
university. Knocky Parker did this thing in silent film and jazz music and he played the piano and accompanied it, and he did a presentation. I had a chance to talk to him afterwards and that’s when I decided to transfer to USF. I was a transfer student.

G: What kinds of things did you hear about the University of South Florida in those early days prior to you applying to USF as a transfer student?

C: I think what attracted me most was first, it was a new campus, [and] second, it was a smaller campus. Compared to now it was a small school, and I felt that there’d be more chance to work with professors and get to know people [rather] than being just a number in a large classroom, as most undergraduates are at the other universities and also here now.

G: Can you tell me about the first time you saw the University of South Florida campus? What did USF look like in September 1966?

C: Actually I came here in July. I was at the community college that summer taking courses and I got a call from my father that I had been accepted here. Because I was under twenty-one at that time I couldn’t move on campus because they didn’t have enough room on campus. They had lost a couple of dorms over a new area due to a tornado that summer, so I had to get permission to live off campus. So my dad called and said hey, I might come by and pick you up, do you want to drive down? We got down about eleven o’clock that night and the only hotel we found was this one thing out in the woods.

We came in that next day and went in the dean of men’s office and my dad signed the papers, and the dean of men then took us on a tour of the campus. Fletcher Avenue was two lanes at the time. There was one restaurant in the area, I think it was University
Restaurant on Fletcher Avenue. The mall wasn’t there. There was another restaurant
called Merita’s, and that was on Fletcher. It was a small campus. It was just basically
the core that we have now. [The] gym complex was in the process of being built. The
only building on the east side was what was then the business building, which now I
think is a social services building. It was just small. This whole complex that we have
on the west side of campus did not even exist. There was nothing past the fine arts
building, just field and trees. I remember my first experience coming into campus being
very, very nervous - scared basically. Most students who come in transfer students. I
went into my history classes. I made the mistake of taking five history courses in one
semester. [I] do not recommend taking that many. My first day of class I walked in, I
wish I could remember the professor’s name, I’ll go look it up, [but] he taught European
History at the time and I think in 1972. I walked in and he walked in the class, and he
was a chain smoker, and [he] stood there just staring at us for a couple of minutes. Then
he said in a gruff voice, not [a] loud voice, the Geneva Convention requires you give your
name, rank, and serial number. You, and he went around [the classroom], you, name,
year, [and] major. He went around the room and I got about halfway and I was in the
middle of the room and I was the only history major in the class. He got to me and I said,
Cone, junior, history. The room was already dead quiet and it got quieter. [He] stood up,
looked at me, walked up down the aisle, stood over me chain smoking just looking at me
and just said, you will regret it, and turned around and walked back up to the front of the
room. I was shaken. That was the only class I had that day and I was shaken. The next
day I walk in to another history class and he walks in again. [He] goes through the same
routine, looks around the room, sees me sitting there, [and] looks at me and says, Mr.
Cone, are you a history major by any chance? I was shaken. When we got to our first exams we did it on a few books. I remember I turned my exam in and I was walking out the door he looked at me and he said, Mr. Cone, I’d like to see you after class. I said, oh god, what did I do wrong? I did something wrong. So I just metered on up to his office just waiting for him to come in. He walked in and said, do you like Walter O’Wolk? I said, Walter’s fine. He said, come on in Walter, let’s talk about your exam. I took three courses with him and I learned so much about history and how to think about history. It wasn’t really until after I graduated and I was teaching history in high school that I began to realize it. I had the opportunity to come over, to drive over, and I came over looking for him. That summer I so regretted not being able to talk to him about that and why.

There were so many different people that I had classes with. Dr. Hoffman, who’s in the humanities program, I took two courses with him in Asian Humanities. What’s interesting is that when I came back from the MLA program, the master of liberal arts program, I was at the humanities department and he came walking down the hallway. He looked over and said, don’t I know you from somewhere? This was at least twenty-five years later. I told him, I was one of your students back in the 1960s. He said, okay, I thought I recognized you. It was amazing that he remembered me all those years.

Campus was much smaller. I moved eventually into the dorms, and at the time I moved in the new hall was a men’s dorm. Basically they hadn’t finished building it. There was no sidewalks out there, so it was just sand everywhere. [There] was no grass, it was sand. You’d walk out there and there was sand everywhere. You walked into the dorm and they hadn’t got the carpets in and they had these tack boards along the wall and across the doorway. At least once a night you’d hear somebody let out a stream of cuss words. We
all knew what happened, they got stuck on the tack board. Eventually they put in carpeting and I think within a week there was a water fight in the dorm. The administration chose to let it set for a couple of days just so we’d have to deal with the stink, and after that there was never a water fight. I think the other thing I remember most was John Allen and his wife. They had a new student reception. I remember my parents came down and dropped me off at this reception for the new students and their parents. The school was small enough do have this held, I don’t even know if it’s there, [but] there used to be a second floor ballroom in the Marshall Center, of course we called it University Center at that time. They would also have a reception for graduating students. At graduation we had a baccalaureate right outside the Marshall Center, and then afterwards they would have a reception for all the graduating students and their families. Sometimes having the intimacy of the ballroom [made it special]. I was mixed [in my courses because] I was a history and political science [major]. This was during the Vietnam War, and it was interesting because I was getting perspectives of duty from two different viewpoints. From the history department I was getting basically one perspective, and from the political science department I was getting another perspective. I’m not going to say what the perspectives were now, it was just interesting you’d hear this and you started thinking about these things. I tried taking mostly this history and political science. My senior year they [said] you need to take other courses, so I went over to the philosophy department and the humanities department. I took literature. I even took one 400-level astronomy course that was just a general introduction. The professor, who was head of the department of astronomy. They don’t have an astronomy department. They closed it up and moved it to Gainesville. This is one of these courses
that taught every semester, and some semesters it was a really difficult course, other semesters it was relatively easy. I had it when it was relatively easy. He was a great lecturer, but one thing he never brought up in his class was [astrology]. If you mentioned astrology, forget it. That was it. There was some personal experiences that I remember about the school being small. My last semester here my mother had a serious illness and she was rushed to the hospital and had surgery. I let the RA know that I was going to be gone. About two days after I got to Jacksonville I get a letter from the dean of men excusing me from all my classes and all my professors knew. That’s how small the university was. You felt that personally. The other aspect is in the college of arts and sciences. We were all required to take a course called Senior Seminar. It was taught by administrators. I had the provost in for my class and it was so nice having a chance to actually meet administrators and get to take a class with them. The interesting part was that we all felt they were really enjoying the chance to be with students. They [felt they] had lost that contact being in that role, and they loved teaching this class. It gave them a chance to meet with the graduating seniors. The classes were composed in such a way that we represented all different departments, all different positions, perspectives, and academic areas. It was a learning experience that was totally different than before.

G: I want to go back because you said a lot of interesting things. What do you remember about John and Grace Allen?

C: Not a lot, I just remember that when I first was introduced to them that first night, there was a warmth from both of them. It wasn’t like, okay, you’re coming in here, hell. It actually was a genuine feeling that you were someone they could care about. It wasn’t something that was just coming across, that was the way they were. They cared about the
students, both of them. And when you graduated at that reception, I remember when I introduced my parents to them, it was the same type of warmth.

G: You mentioned several professors in the history department, humanities department, and the astronomy department that really stand out in your mind. In general, do you think because this was a small institution and because professors were sort of given a lot of fluidity [that] that made for a unique education?

C: Yes, I think it’s one of the things that attracted me when Parker was talking about the experience here. I remember there was one professor who had a reputation for giving magnificent lectures. He always had one of the larger lecture halls because he’d always have people coming in from other classes just because the word would get around campus that he was going to talk about a certain subject. I forget now what department he was in, but his lectures were just fabulous and you’d walk in and just listen. There was that openness that you had. I felt that to a large degree in my master’s program in liberal arts. It feels like we’ve lost that since we’ve gotten a little larger.

G: I’m interested to know about some of your fellow peers that went to university with you. Why were students attending the University of South Florida, particularly in those early days of USF? Was it like you, that something sparked an interest, you saw a lecture or you saw Knocky Parker? Was it because USF was so small? Why do you think that some of your fellow peers attended the university?

C: It is a mystery. A large percentage of the students that attended obviously, as is today, were locals living at home and commuter students. We had about 3,000 students living on campus at that time, [and] maybe not even that many. Many of the on-campus students were from out of state, and a large percentage were from Philadelphia and New
York and New Jersey. There was a large concentration of people from up there. I think partly it was [because it was] Tampa and it was Florida [and] they wanted to come to Florida. It was also because it was a smaller college and because it was a new college. It’s interesting that I was part of the class that made a decision not to have football. It’s partly because I think we didn’t want to be the traditional college football team that everybody is going to watch. That’s changed to a large degree since then.

G: Did you participate in any student organizations?

C: [I was] not that active in the campus organizations. I was active an Episcopalian my senior year and I was active in the Episcopal Student Center, but beyond that no, I wasn’t that involved. There really wasn’t a lot [of student organizations]. We had just started the fraternities and we lived in some of the dorms. I was a GDI. Somebody started shouting what their fraternity [was] and there’d be a group of us saying GDI’s.

G: You mentioned the Vietnam War. Do you remember any student demonstrations that took place?

C: [There were] not that many. It was more quiet. I think because of having so many students coming as commuters, there wasn’t that cohesiveness that you’d find at a school that had a lot of people. There was some protesting in the sense of some signs posted and that, but there wasn’t a lot, not here. Remember, I graduated in 1968, and the majority of the protesting really started after 1968. It was in the early 1970s that you saw this.

G: In 1968, you graduated with a BA in history from the University of South Florida.

C: Yes.

G: When did you return to the University of South Florida?

C: I first came back to USF in 1975 to work at what was the Florida Mental Health Institute,
which at that time was under HRS, Health and Rehabilitative Services. I came in to work with one of the group of research projects. For the first year and a half I was a day shift supervisor working with chronic mental patients. I was moved to research staff. It was supposed to be a temporary six-month appointment, but I did five and a half years working in research.

G: Why did you come back to USF and back to Tampa? What interested you about the Florida Mental Health Institute?

C: When I left here I decided I wanted to be a teacher, but needed my teaching certification. You’ve got to be accepted to a special program at Florida State University for liberal arts majors. I spent the summer of 1968 doing my internship and my introductory education courses in Jacksonville, and then I taught junior high school for a year. I left that and went back to Florida State to finish my teaching certification in this upper Florida State campus for two semesters. My parents had moved to Brevard County. I moved there and taught at Satellite High School. I left Satellite and went to being a child abuse investigator for the state of Florida. After surviving that experience my parents had moved over here and my dad said, why don’t you come over and just join us for a while. I came over and worked for my dad for a year. I started working at a private hospital for two years with severely disturbed children in adolescence, and when that program phased out I originally was supposed to come out to the institute in a child behavioral training specialist program that they had here, which they closed out after the first initial group. I came out here trying to get in the institute for some time, and they had an opening in this position and I came out to work with adults. It was a total learning experience for me. That’s how I ended up back at the university.
G: I’m not sure that you know this, but how did the Florida Mental Health Institute come into fruition?

C: It basically started out, and I don’t remember the name [of the group, but] there was a group at Chattahoochee State Hospital that felt that the state needed some type of institute for developing new treatment programs. Originally it was designed that there was going to be one here and one in the Miami area. Eventually, because of funding, it just was here. The initial staffing on this was W.T. Edwards, which was a tuberculosis hospital, but they phased it out. They brought a number of the nursing staff over as part of the institute staff. The institute was originally housed out at W.T. Edwards. It was interesting that the nursing staff was moved around to the different psychiatric facilities in the area. I came in to work on the night shift the first time and I walked in and [thought] it was going to be all strangers. [Instead] I walked in and knew everybody there because they’d all worked with me because I had been at a private hospital. So basically the institute was initially started as a research facility developing treatment programs for the Department of Mental Health.

G: In terms of location, I know you had mentioned that FMHI first started at the W.T. Edwards Tuberculosis Hospital.

C: Basically it was temporary housing while they were building the facilities here. They had just the initial team that was supporting them, [and then] once they moved here they started hiring people.

G: When did FMHI move to the university property?

C: [It was] August of 1974.

G: So by the time you had arrived . . .
C: [By the time I had arrived] it had been here a year.

G: In terms of support, both financial and non-financial, what was the university’s feeling [or] position in those early days of FMHI? Were they supportive? I’m curious to find out the affiliation between FMHI and the university.

C: We didn’t really have any; we were just housed on the campus on the northwest corner. The university was here and we were separate, and there wasn’t a lot of interaction. It wasn’t until we were moved under the university that we’ve even started being integrated into the University of South Florida. We had some support aspects of doing some work with some students from here. Also I think we had more relationship with HCC, at least that was my impression because we would bring in a lot of HCC students [to come] in to train with us.

G: In the 1980s, when the university became interested in the Florida Mental Health Institute, [what was there reason for] all of a sudden becoming interested? Also, were they giving funding with that interest?

C: I’m not sure about the funding aspect of it. This is to a large degree conjecture on my part, [but] more and more as we were HRS they started de-emphasizing the research aspect of it and we became more and more [of a] service facility, just another state hospital. I think the university wasn’t happy with that, first of all, and I think there was some state legislators that also saw this occurring and said this is not what we intended with the development of this program; we did not intend it to be another state hospital. It was also, to be honest with you, a lot of mixed feelings involved in that there was a lot of animosity towards them turning this into a state hospital. If you look at our facilities, even the way we designed the facilities, it’s intentionally designed so that it couldn’t
become another hospital. There was a lot of resentment on that. At one point we had close to 200 beds between the children aging and adult programs.

G: By here you mean on the physical location on campus?

C: Yes, right. One of the first projects they started was an adolescent treatment program. Then they brought in the adult or children’s hospitalization project, program, and the state came in and said you’ve got to admit sixty-four patients from the state hospital and they gave them two weeks to do it. This is why I got hired because they brought me in at the last minute to cover, which worked out fine for me. We were using secretaries, sociologists, and psychologists that were working clinical because we didn’t have a staff. We admitted sixty-three patients from Arcadia in two weeks. None of the staff was trained [and] nobody knew what was going on. It was, to say the least, I won’t say chaos, but they did the best they could under the circumstances.

G: You talked about some of the intention of FMHI not to look or feel like a state hospital. In terms of design of the building, what unique features of the building are there?

C: This is just from memory from what I understand. For example, the elevators weren’t really designed so that you could bring in hospital type equipment in and out of the doorways. Units weren’t designed in the sense of being hospital rooms. That was part of the intention so that it’d be difficult to convert it over to a straight hospital. There was some intention at first. There was this aspect of nurses versus treatment rehabilitation people. The nursing director wanted the old nursing model where the nurse is in charge of everything. What we were trying to establish was a new treatment rehabilitation model. There was some conflicts between those two and it opened up who is the first here some.
G: Has that mission of FMHI changed over the years?

C: Yes, [we’ve changed] to the point now that we’re not clinical now. We’re almost exclusively growing towards research policy and procedures. We have anthropologists, economists, statisticians, psychologists, social workers, and sociologists all working within the institute. So we’re looking at mental health as a broad perspective and not towards the clinical aspect. What clinical work we do is in the sense of working with other people. It’s so good. There’s been major changes in that. A lot of this came out of the de la Parte commission and very deep criticism of the institute by the state legislature on us doing clinical work. Partly it is the result why we are named the Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute is because de la Parte mentioned it and de la Parte was involved in it.

G: This change in mission and in focus seems to me to have occurred before USF became a Research I institution.

C: When did we become a Research I institution?

G: Officially it became a Research I institution very recently. It was probably in the last two or three years.

C: This change started taking place in the mid and late 1980s. I think we closed down the last of our clinical programs in the mid 1990s. The de la Parte commission, I think, was in the late 1980s.

G: Who was Louis de la Parte?

C: He was a state senator who has been instrumental in the institute coming about. He was a state senator at the time the funding came through, and was also involved in the commission that the state legislature required to evaluate our programs and what we were
doing. We also, as a result of de la Parte in that commission, we had written into law what the institute was responsible for. Up till that moment we did not, and that reaffirmed what we were responsible for and what type of work we were doing. De la Parte was an individual who really brought about a lot of this.

G: Over the years you’ve been a unit treatment and rehab shift supervisor, a statistician, a data manager and instructor, and in the late 1980s you became a library technical assistant for the Florida Mental Health Institute. Can you talk a little bit about how and why you got into that aspect of the Florida Mental Health Institute?

C: [Do you want to know] why I became an LTA or the different steps I took?

G: Both are fine.

C: I came in as a UTR supervisor. When we finished the eighteen months, the original project almost had eighteen months of clinical, we were to do evaluation. I was transferred to work for Betty Donahue, who was our project director, and this research assistant. It was supposed to be a temporary six-month assignment. As a result of that experience I had to go study statistics courses at USF and began working as a statistician at the institute for a number of years. I became an LTA [because] I wanted to go back and get my master’s degree. Being on research staff your hours aren’t always your own. One of the advantages of working in the library was that it was eight to five Monday through Friday. When you’re in research staff and you’ve got a project to be done, you can be working weekends, evenings, and everything else. I figured that’s probably going to occur about the time my paper’s due. I had a chance to move to the library and I moved to the library and started my master’s program.

G: Why is a library necessary at the Florida Mental Health Institute?
I’m smiling and laughing because we’ve gone through some struggles in this particular issue. [We needed a library] primarily because we provided a unique type of data collection that the university doesn’t have. We’re also not just the library for USF and FMHI, [we have in our mandate that] we also provide services to the mental health professions throughout the state of Florida. Also with the institute now, because we’re not just in Florida, [but] we have people all over the country, we’ve expanded and brought out our work that we did. We provide a unique collection that’s not found in a lot of places. One of my duties [is that] I’m responsible for excess services. We literally lend material all over the world because we have a collection that’s not found in a lot of places, and we keep working on building that collection.

You came in the late 1960s as a student and then in the mid 1990s you returned and you took more classes towards your MLA. I’m very interested from your perspective to know what some of the major differences and changes that you saw in the classes at the university were.

Now part of this problem is when I went in the graduate program. We generally had smaller classes, so we didn’t have the large aspect of it. Amy Sparks is the department chair and she kept it to the point that there was a certain intimacy in the department. That’s one of the reasons I went in the MLA program because of that intimacy if you like being not just a number. So in that sense it was different than what I’d say you’d find in the university as a whole. It became very, very large and sometimes students just became numbers. I worked with a large number of graduate students both in psychology, social work, education, and fields over the years, and you can see that aspect as you’re dealing with them. Like I said, one of the reasons why I went in to the MLA program was
because there was intimacy. Amy Sparks seemed to set an atmosphere that is more relaxed. To show you what the relaxation was like, we had a little room in there just for graduates, but actually everybody used it. The day I defended my thesis it was unique because everybody could tell I was defending because I was wearing a tie and coat. Nobody in my department wore tie and coats. They were running late because one of the members of the committee was on another defense and that was running late, so I was pacing the hallways nervously, as is usual. One of the retired faculty came by and saw me pacing the hallway and she said, you must be one of the defenders. I had never had a class with her. She said, why don’t we go in the lounge. She closed the door and sat down and said, tell me about your thesis. What she managed to do was get me out pacing the hallway and two, she got me to settle down and relax. So by the time I went in to defend I was ready and practical. That, I think, really represents what the department’s like.

G: Where do you see FMHI in ten years?

C: Oh boy! I pretty much see us continuing on the avenue that we’ve been going on. I don’t see any major changes in what we’re doing. I know one of the things that’s been in discussion, and we’re waiting on this, we currently have a graduate certificate evaluation, and I can see us eventually offering a doctorate program. So that’s one area I can see us going, and I think that’s what they’d like to do. I can see us being more integrated academically within the university by offering more classes. Right now you see all of our faculty, to a large degree, are teaching both within the university itself and we have a number of classes there. We also have social workers with us and then you’ve got the college of public health. We are doing a lot more work with students from all the
different departments and the classes in these departments being held within the facility. So I would see that as being in continuation of doing that. The other aspect of it is that the institute has become more and more [grant funded], [which is] one of the things that the de la Parte Commission wanted us to do. [A great] percentage of our funding is getting to be more and more grant oriented. As a result I think you’re going to see a lot more rotation of faculty coming in and out because of that grant funding.

G: I just have a few more questions. In your thirty plus years affiliated and working with the university, what are you most proud of?

C: There is a lot of different things that I’m proud of. One [is] the number of students that I’ve worked with over the years, particularly since I’ve been in the library. I love working with the students. It’s the beat that keeps me going. And being in with the students [is] one of the most important things I’ve done. From the early stages in the institute one of the things I’m proudest about is that when we ended up doing the final evaluation on the adult hospitalization project, I ended up writing about seventy percent of the statistical analysis. It went out unauthored, it’s because I had a big head, but I think that was something I was proud of the work I did on that. I’ve made a number of contributions in different papers and publications over those years. [For my] personal academic achievement I think [I’m most proud of] my master’s thesis that I wrote on Mamie Hopkins and Vincent Van Gogh. I think proud of that. I think that I’ve made a contribution to the students, and I think that’s the most important thing I’ve done. That was the advantage of going to the library versus being a statistician, because there I’d just stare at computer screens and numbers all day.

G: My final question is something that I’ve asked all of my interviewees. If you could leave
a statement on camera, either to past colleagues, students, and staff or to future colleagues, students, and staff, what would you want to say about the University of South Florida and its influence on your life?

C: Obviously I’ve spent half of my life at this university so it’s had a major influence on me. It’s the people, the professors here, that makes the difference. How they approach you and deal [with you]. Like for example, my first story about the professor and I wish for the life of me I could remember his name, I know it was Robert something, but I can’t think of his last name right now. He scared me when I came in, but then when he called me up to his office to sit and talk with him about my first exam and sat there and berated it and went over it with me, that said to me that was more important. Also I had come back earlier than 1975. I came back in 1973 to take some political science courses that summer. My father died the week of final exams, and I remember this one professor that was teaching the American Presidency [talked with me]. I was taking American Presidency during the Watergate finds. [It was a] fascinating experience to do both at the same time. I came in to talk to him because I wasn’t in shape to finish it, it was a take home exam and I wasn’t in shape to do it, and I remember the secretary looked at me and said he’s upstairs. There was a snack bar on the fourth floor of the social science building. I walked in and he saw me walking in. I was in a class of thirty, I didn’t even think he knew who I was, [but] he saw me walking in [and] he motioned for me to come over. He knew something was wrong, went up and got me a cup of coffee, and sat there with me for an hour and a half to let me talk about what had happened. When I think about that as a model as a teacher I find that’s what I try to do to my students. [I want to be] that same model, that I’m there to help them learn how to think but also to be there as
a person to listen. It’s just not the academic, there’s a light there. I think if I had anything to say to the future [it’s that] you cannot lose that. I sometimes think that as we get bigger and bigger, and as the administrators get further and further away from the students, you lose that. I really would love to see all the provosts and all the deans teach at least one seminar a year with undergraduates so that they remind themselves why we’re here.

G: Walter, thank you very much.

C: No problem, it’s my pleasure.

[cut tape but come back in]

C: When I was working on the clinical units and all that early projects, we had a female client. She had gotten down on Fletcher Avenue and tried jumping into traffic. We had to take her down and hold her down and the sheriff’s deputy had to assist us. We had to get a form signed for he could assist us, so I had to run back to the institute [and] fill out the form while they’re still holding her down. Of course it was lunch time and I couldn’t find any psychologist or psychiatrist around. I finally ran down to the director’s office, whose name was Dr. Gordon, and I ran to his secretary and I said, I need this signed. [I was] thinking, oh god, I’m going to interrupt him and I’m going to get it. He came over, took one look at the form, and said don’t ever hesitate to interrupt me for something like this. [Then he] signed it and I went back. I think what impressed me with Gordon was he had a reputation, which wasn’t always very positive, but it was a suicide and it was devastating to the staff. I had been immediately involved in the suicide [because] I was the second person to get to it and start doing CPR. The next morning after the suicide we came into the change of shift meeting. [He] talked to the unit director [and] said, could I use your office? He went in, sat in her office for the day shift, evening shift, and was
there for the night shift staff with the understanding that if any of us wanted to come in and sit down and talk to him about anything, he was there. He stayed there. Again it goes back to that personal involvement that’s so important. I did not want us to lose this.

G: Walter, thank you again.

C: You’re welcome.

*End of Interview*