

9-20-2004

Jim Magill oral history interview by Andrew Huse, September 20, 2004

Jim Magill (Interviewee)

Andrew T. Huse (Interviewer)

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/usfhistinfo_oh



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#), and the [Other Education Commons](#)

Scholar Commons Citation

Magill, Jim (Interviewee) and Huse, Andrew T. (Interviewer), "Jim Magill oral history interview by Andrew Huse, September 20, 2004" (2004). *Digital Collection - USF Historical Archives Oral Histories*. Paper 137.
http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/usfhistinfo_oh/137

This Oral History is brought to you for free and open access by the Digital Collection - Historical University Archives at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Digital Collection - USF Historical Archives Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

This Oral History is copyrighted by the University of South Florida Libraries Oral History Program on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the University of South Florida.

**Copyright, 2008, University of South Florida.
All rights, reserved.**

This oral history may be used for research, instruction, and private study under the provisions of the Fair Use. Fair Use is a provision of the United States Copyright Law (United States Code, Title 17, section 107), which allows limited use of copyrighted materials under certain conditions. Fair Use limits the amount of material that may be used.

For all other permissions and requests, contact the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA LIBRARIES ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM at the University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler Avenue, LIB 122, Tampa, FL 33620.

USF Florida Studies Center
Oral History Program
USF 50th History Anniversary Project

Narrator: Jim Magill
Current Position: Works in legislative affairs
in the Florida state government.
Date of Interview: Sept. 20, 2004
Editor: Mary E. Yeary
Date of Edit: October 21, 2004

Interviewer: Andrew Huse
Location of Interview: Tampa
Campus Library
Abstractor: Jared G. Toney
Date of Abstract: Oct. 20, 2004
Final Editor: Jared G. Toney

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION

Mr. Magill came to USF in 1985 as an undergraduate transfer student.

College selection; Transfer to USF

Though Mr. Magill grew up in South Florida, he chose initially to go to college at the University of Cincinnati. He cites snow and inclement weather as a primary reason for “wanting to get out” of the Midwest and move back to Florida. As a result, he began applying for various Florida state universities, finally settling upon USF, where he joined the local chapter of the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.

Kidnap the President Day

“Kidnap the President” was part of a weeklong charity event where members of the fraternities and sororities would, after kidnapping one another, attempt to kidnap the presidents of each Greek organization on campus. The “kidnapped” presidents would be transported to a secure location where they were “wined and dined” until adequate ransom (canned food) was provided. On one occasion in 1986, when U.S. President Ronald Reagan was scheduled to visit the South Florida campus, the Secret Service investigated the fraternities to ensure that their activities did not raise suspicion or disrupt the President’s visit. “It all worked out fine,” he remembers.

Academics

Magill originally planned to be a business major, but made the transition to political science after taking Dr. Anne Kelly’s Florida Politics and Government class with several of his fraternity brothers. He believes his initial interest in politics came largely from his family, growing up in an environment where such matters were frequently discussed. He graduated in December of 1986 with his degree in political science and then moved to Tallahassee where he began working for Governor Bob Martinez.

Living arrangements

While attending classes at USF, Magill lived off-campus at the Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity house. “It was the sight of many a good party – certainly a lot of study sessions!”

Recreation and leisure

Because there was no football team at the university, the basketball team was the center of campus athletics. He recalls participating with his fraternity brothers in the homecoming parade his first year at USF by decorating a flatbed truck with potted palm trees from the fraternity house and banners hung along the sides (and “a keg or two”). The following year they put a bit more effort into the event, constructing a paper-mache bull later destroyed in the rain. “It was a lot of fun.” Magill also remembers spending a good amount of time at the University Center and a restaurant inside called the Empty Keg.

Alumni Association

Currently, Magill serves on the board of directors at the USF Alumni Association. “[I] have a good time with that ... it’s been exciting to see the place grow.” He served as president of the Association from 2002-2003, which he recalls was, “a great experience.”

Campus growth

“I’m just amazed to see how the campus has grown. It provided a great social life [and] a great academic life while I was here in the mid-eighties ... It’s evolved into ... very much a home that people can identify with.”

Martinez campaign for governor

As an undergraduate political science student at USF, Magill got involved with Bob Martinez’s gubernatorial campaign, where he was able to work first for credit hours and later for a modest wage. Within days of his college graduation, Martinez won his campaign and Magill was hired to work on his staff in Tallahassee. “It’s been a lot of fun – eighteen years now.” Since then, Magill has also worked closely with current Governor Jeb Bush on his election campaigns. He now works as a lobbyist for a law firm in Tallahassee.

Teaching at USF

Mr. Magill is also involved in co-teaching a class on politics with Judge Gross here at USF, a project which they began four years ago. They frequently invite various speakers to the weekly class meetings including state legislators, publishers, and USF graduates. The first night of each semester, they will bring in five students from the previous semester to speak about their experiences in the class.

His advice for current students is simply to get involved and stay involved with the university and local community in whatever capacity they find most compelling and rewarding.

End of Interview