7-24-1985

James Parrish oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, July 24, 1985

James Parrish (Interviewee)

Nancy A. Hewitt (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

http://scholarcommons.usf.edu/usfhistinfo_oh/34

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, 2007, 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.
Hewitt: I am speaking this afternoon to Dr. James Parrish, Professor of American Literature at USF, as part of the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. First of all could you tell me what your first contact was with the University of South Florida and what made you interested in being part of the faculty here?

Parrish: Well, first of all I had taught at Florida State. I'd been a graduate student and taught at Florida State from 1948 to 1951. And so I always had an interest in coming back to Florida. Then around 1957, when I was working for the Air Force, I heard about the University of South Florida and asked my major professor whether I should stay where I was or whether I should return to academia. On his advice, I went to Western Illinois, in McComb, where I stayed three years. While I was there, even after I had been there only four or five months, in January of 1958, I wrote Dr. Allen a letter and had a form response I'm sure. Then just a year or so later, in Chicago, I talked to Dean Russell Cooper, the first Dean of Arts and Letters. That's not the right name, first Dean of Liberal Arts. Actually they broke Liberal Arts up into four colleges. In '71 we had a College of Liberal Arts.

Hewitt: Was that College of Liberal Arts the same College of Basic Studies? Were those here at the same time?

Parrish: At the same time, right. Until 1971 and then they were put together. I really think I've got it all straight.

Hewitt: Now when did you actually arrive at USF?
Parrish: I went on the payroll on August 11, 1960. This was three weeks before the rest of the faculty came in for a general orientation. There were 15 of us that were chosen to be advisors for the first freshman class. So we've always described ourselves as the real charter faculty, because we got it 3 weeks before anybody else. We spent those three weeks advising freshman about their schedules and each freshmen had 45 minutes of individual attention. It was very individual, that is, if we came across a student who seemed to have a strong background in math from high school, we took him to Dr. Yates, the first Chairman of Math to see whether he could go directly to calculus. The same way with foreign languages. We took them to the first Chairman of Foreign Languages and had him see whether he could go in to the second year of Spanish or French.

Hewitt: How did you get oriented in terms of advising students since the school never had any classes? Was it difficult for you to advise them?

Parrish: No, the original founders, I think more specifically Louis Mayhew and Russell Cooper, had prepared a brochure describing things about the University and also the first catalogue was out. The most difficult thing for me about advising, I think, was working out a schedule because we had only three buildings and very few classrooms and another reason to which I'll get into in a minute. The classes were scheduled in retrospect to what seems to be the need with the times. It seemed like an odd basis, that is the student might have a mass lecture about 9 o'clock on Monday, he might have a discussion group on Wednesday, and then what was called a laboratory session from 4-6 on Friday afternoons. So, in other words, in freshman English at least, the classes did not meet on the same hours everyday. As my remarks imply, they had three different categories. This was in freshman English.
The same pattern was more or less followed for the first few years for all the basic studies courses. Students in freshman English met four hours a week and got three hours credit. That is, the lab only got half credit. That is where they did exercises in class.

Hewitt: When the school actually opened, what were your responsibilities in terms of teaching? Were you divided between the colleges or . . . ?

Parrish: Well, that requires a little explanation. For the first three years everyone in the Liberal Arts (used broadly), had a joint assignment in the College of Basic Studies, now the College of Liberal Arts. Some faculty, which never made much sense to me, began to object to this saying they were working for two deans and things like that. And so at the end of '63, the faculty members were really given a choice of which college they wanted to go into. In the English Department I believe there were four people who went to Liberal Arts and all the rest, maybe 10 or 11 by then, stayed in the College of Basic Studies. Eventually, this did not work out too well for the people who stayed in the College of Basic Studies because for reasons a little complicated to get into, Basic Studies' salaries by the late '60s lagged behind those in Liberal Arts. That is, two people with roughly the same qualifications might have a two thousand dollar difference in salaries. This was not really straightened out until the two colleges were put together in 1971. So that is probably enough of that.

Hewitt: Could you tell me a little about the actual teaching experience in Basic Studies? I've heard there was emphasis on interdisciplinary education, team learning, as well as team teaching. Could you explain what some of that . . . ?
Parrish: Well actually, team teaching and team learning are the same thing. The first year we were here, they tried to set up something called team teaching in which a selective group of students took all their classes together. But this wasn't managed properly because of the lack of personnel or whatever. And so it never really got off the ground. But late in the spring of '61, Dean French, the Dean of the College of Basic Studies, asked me if I would take charge of this program so I could make something of it. After a suggestion by Frank Spain, whom incidentally you must talk to, he suggested that the name of the program should be changed to team learning which put the emphasis more on the student than on the teacher. We had four groups. Two were residential whom lived in dormitories, this was in '61, and we had two made up of commuters. Three of the subjects they took were always the same, that is they all took mathematics, they all took freshman English, and they all took behavioral science. Two groups took biological science and two took physical science. In the summer of '62 I became Chairman of Freshman English and later English total. Jerry Robinson, in Biology, took it over and went at it for two years. It took a great deal of time of the faculty as we met every week and discussed the students who were having problems, and it finally just became too burdensome on the faculty. Jerry ran some studies that indicated that while the students liked it, it gave them instant friends and it gave them a sense of identity right away, that there was no discernable difference in the achievements of the people in the program who worked. There was some evidence that the superior students did better in that and the inferior students didn't do as well. So it was very inconclusive. Anyway, the students liked it and at least one of the groups had a big get together party by the time they graduated. So it was an
interesting experiment. I think that the interdisciplinary aspect of all the courses, with the possible exception of math and foreign languages, was really impressive, at least it was to me. In English, we assigned 16 books over the year and these were roughly, as I recall, divided into eight different kinds of subjects or questions. One question related to science, man's relation to the natural world, so we read a book about biology and physical science. Another one related, at least two units, related to man and society. Another unit related to art. Another unit related to . . . Well, I'd have to backtrack . . . some of them overlapped, I know the two on social science had . . . It was kind of difficult to separate the ones which ask the question "how do you examine a society," and the one "how does man relate to society." In other words, in the first one we read the Organization Man. The second one we read The Grapes of Wrath. I can't quite do it. Let's see, we had one on art and we had a unit on poetry which is straight literature.

Hewitt: In terms of the original mission of USF, the motto was "Accent on Learning." That was the name of the first catalogue. That is still the motto of the University and you hear it all the time, but what was the real meaning of that in those early years?

Parrish: Well, let's see. I suppose that it meant that we had, at least at the time, a primary emphasis on good teaching. The primary emphasis was on students. There was little pressure on research. This more or less obtained throughout the history of the College of Basic Studies. That is one reason, for example, the salaries lagged behind. So, essentially that was their orientation. I remember at the end of the first year, this sounds incredible in retrospect, but we had many of the freshmen write on a topic called "Is USF
a Community of Scholars?" We read them and tabulated them. We happened to
write this in freshman English. I read about four or five hundred of them
it seems, just a sample of their attitudes. So, there was just a tremendous
excitement. I mentioned to you earlier, sorry to get back to it, the mass
lectures. These obtained, and everything I think at first, maybe not in
foreign languages, in the beginning while we had only the two, two-hundred
seat auditoriums in the chemistry buildings to give lectures in. This meant
the same mass lectures had to be given about 6 or 8 times. But we did some
innovative things. For example, I can remember when we talked about the
Lord of the Flies. We had a panel consisting of a professor of political
science. We had a man from the English department who was a Baptist preach-
er. We had another man from English who had a strong orientation for social
science and I. We all had a very lively discussion in a panel discussion.
Of course we showed movies from time to time. In general, there was a great
deal of cooperation among disciplines. In other words, we got somebody from
science who maybe would come and talk about the creation of the universe
which was a little murky. Incidentally, he was good.

Hewitt: One of the other things I heard about, which was another way of trying to
initiate interdisciplinary activities, was the "All University Book." Were
you involved with the selection of the . . . ?

Parrish: Yes, I was on the committee. I think I was on the committee the year it
died. I don't think there is any cause and effect there. But, it was a
rather exciting project. We read books that had a general appeal like
Animal Farm. We did get in trouble with a collection of short stories by
J.D. Salinger because one of them has fairly explicit language in it. So
when the Johns Committee descended on us, in the fall of '62, this was a
society... This was an example, you know, that the University and perhaps any department in particular, was already headed towards pornography, communism, atheism, etc. But the "All University Book," again, was exciting. We had mass lectures on it. At least general lectures on them. Sometimes panel discussions. I can remember Animal Farm very well. I remember the Salinger stories and it seems to me that maybe The Ugly American was one.

Hewitt: Somebody mentioned Theodore White's Making of the President. That was one of them that they thought...

Parrish: No, I don't know. I think it was Kennedy's Profiles in Courage. That sounds more like it to me. I think that was it. It had a series of photographs, "Man" in the title, but I can't put it through. Now What is Man, that's a plain book. It was something like that. I think Profiles of Courage was one of the first ones. Because he was elected president when the place opened. He was elected in November 1960. So he was very hot then.

Hewitt: Now you mentioned the Johns Committee. Can you tell us a little about what you remember from that period? People seem to have very vivid memories of the Johns Committee.

Parrish: I have a long transcript from the Tribune. But from my point of view, it was a rather terrifying time because you know when we came here, you know, there was a very exciting atmosphere, and perhaps in a small way, we chose books that would shake students up. So some of the students just weren't ready for this. The second year, for example, instead of using Creation of the Universe we used a book called the Happy Universe which has a chapter or so that practically suggested that there is absolutely nothing associated to
the biblical story of creation, this sort of thing. And so, all of a sudden, in the fall of '62, various people from the department, the Chairman of Freshman English and some English teachers, but not I, were called up to explain why they had used and taught from the books. I remember a man named Cy Cox testified at great length. We had heard in the summer of '62 that something was brewing. But, I don't think that anybody really knew about it except McCall. It was a bad time. There is kind of spin off of this. We had a very distinguished professor who was teaching literary criticism. This was his first year here in the fall of '62. Well the Johns Committee business was just over. If I could guess when it ended I would have to say it was the 2nd semester. He was teaching a course called Literary Criticism. So to illustrate this, he used an essay, a thing by Podhoretz, which attacked the beatnicks. More specifically, a novel called the _Subterraneans_ by Jack Kerouac. In this attack by Podhoretz, it sights a couple of examples out of the book, for example, a black girl having an orgasm. He gave a handout on this, and one student brought it home to her father and so everything started all over again. Dr. Grebstein was suspended during this time until he could be investigated and defend himself, the English Department, and everybody else. They brought in experts from other colleges and everything pointed out that this was the perfectly legitimate thing to do. Eventually Grebstein was reinstated and in fact, Dr. Allen really wanted him to stay. He was going to give him the maximum raise possible, but not have to be passed by the Board of Control, as it was called then. The problems to us, as I recall, that we could probably promote him the next year because he was a distinguished scholar as far as people went around here. He always had a book out and articles and everything. But he thought, he was always worried that people would always remember him unpleasantly. Well today he
is president of one of the state universities in New York. So that is what got away because Dr. Allen justifiably . . . It is very easy when you are an associate professor to not have any responsibilities in life. You know to be fair with Dr. Allen I think he really had a choice between suspending Grebstein and being fired by the Board of Control because they were angry by then. They had had all this Johns Committee stuff and all this, you know some stuff that was a little bit iffy. In other words, we did have a couple of assistant professors who were a little bit far out. That's not quite right. But who really loved to stir students up.

Hewitt: Let me ask you a more positive question about student life at USF during that time. Now we are called Sunshine U. and you see kids lounging around in short-shorts and punk outfits now and all kinds of attire. What were the students like in those early years?

Parrish: Well, they were like us. They were very eager. They were very conservative in their dress. I recall the figure that said the biggest percentage of them came from families from which no member had ever gone to college before. They were just as square as they could be. The students were dressed like the young ladies and gentlemen. This is what Dr. Allen wanted. When they started wearing shorts, they wanted to wear shorts in '61 and '62, the then-Dean of students told them they could not do this. So they hanged him in effigy! This is heresy. Mrs. Allen went back to Florida from whence they came, University of Florida, and commented on how much better our students looked than those in Florida, who were already moving towards a full level sloppiness. So the students all came to class wearing shoes, blouses and skirts, neck ties because this was a golden opportunity for them, and this was the only chance they would have to go to college because
they couldn't afford to go to Gainseville or Florida State. While the
students really did work hard, the standards of admission were not as high
the first year as they were the second year. They basically came to class,
they did their work on time, and they were just excited to be out here.

Hewitt: What would you say were the relationships between faculty and students on
the campus when the campus was so much smaller and the students were much
more . . . ?

Parrish: I would say it was much warmer than it is now.

Hewitt: Were there any semi-official events, either sporting events or that kind of
thing, that would bring students and faculty together or was it just their
own choice to . . . ?

Parrish: No, there were no sporting events. In fact, a physical education professor
who was here started, I think the first year, to try and organize a pick-up
basketball team. He got shot down immediately. Dr. Allen just didn't want
anything like major or collegiate athletics. That's why we had such a small
gym until the Sun Dome was built. It would seat only 1500 people. Dr.
Allen thought that the only athletics you should have are intramurals and
maybe the mildest of sports. He had seen the corruption of the Florida
athletics program and he just didn't want to try it.

Hewitt: That's interesting. It is interesting that you could have school spirit
that could be very strong since everyone was pulling together to get this
new school off the ground and not have it revolve around sports teams.

Parrish: Let me modify that. I don't think we have ever had school spirit in the
sense of enormous loyalty. It is one thing to say that the students are
dedicated, but there never has been, that I have noticed, school spirit in the sense that you have it like at Florida or Auburn or Georgia, schools that seem to be primarily residential. I'm not sure you could ever do it, even if we had a basketball team that could live with Kentucky, we might. I think students, in a way, have the same attitudes they have now. I don't guarantee this, but this was just like coming out to a job - coming out, going to class, and perhaps going back to a job. Most students, I think, have always worked. When I was talking about the weird schedule that we had in the beginning, one of the reasons for this was to set up schedules that made it inconvenient for students just to come up here and go back. In other words, there was a definite effort on the part of the planning administrators to have students stay out on the campus. That's why, for example, we have a free hour for student activities and clubs. That has been cut down to one day a week as you probably know. We always had at least three hours and we may have had five at one time, but I'm not sure about that. Phyllis (Marshall) would probably remember. Anyway I am inclined to think by the very nature of the school, it's like Wayne State or Long Island. Wayne State was sort of a model for us I think. A big metropolitan university. I don't think many of them probably developed a great sense of student camaraderie. I think 12% or 15% of the students participation in student organizational elections; in other words, nobody cares. I hate to say it, but it is true. It's factual. You know that. You've been here a few years. How long have you been here?

Hewitt: Four years.

Parrish: So anyway, in other words, the student was dedicated, eager, and glad to be out here. But I wouldn't say that they had an enormous loyalty for the
place. Somewhere in the middle. But not like Auburn which just raised a hundred and one billion dollars from its alumni and businesses.

Hewitt: Now you were both an administrator and a faculty member at various times in your career. What were the relations like between faculty and administration in those early days?

Parrish: For the first two years I would say just great. Many of the faculty felt that Dr. Allen was overly cautious, tainted, and weak in letting the Johns Committee maybe even talk to the faculty at all, and certainly in collapsing to the pressure to the Board of Control and the townspeople you see. In other words the townspeople brought the Johns Committee in. We're responsible for that. So, I think we lost a great deal. I think the worst fault of the Johns Committee was not the fact that a couple people had to resign because of homosexual incidences. But it destroyed almost forever the rapport the administration and faculty had the first two years. In other words, we just assumed that we were all on the same side, but there was a feeling that perhaps Dr. Allen was a little too solemn in his relationship with the Board of Control. That's easy to say. This was his baby, so I don't know what I would have done. It is easy to make judgments. It's easy to make judgements you know. If I had been there I would have told the Board of Control to go to hell. But I don't know whether I would or not. The fact is I thought he should have. It was all over such trivial things. It was a short story. A book about perhaps accepting the scientific view of creation.

Hewitt: Now you mentioned the community involvement in bringing the Johns Committee in. When USF administrators and founders first stated the USF mission, one of the important things is that it would be an urban university and then
there was obviously an attempt to develop close community relations. What was your sense of college-community relations in those early years from your perspective as a faculty member and administrator?

Parrish: I'll back track a little bit. Apparently when the University was established, there was a great deal of local support for it. There was "Dollars for Books," they had drives, people contributed money for books, and the town seemed to be excited by it. But I think there are some people who would disagree with this. I don't think Tampa, which was far more conservative then and far more red neck in a way than it is now, was ready for a liberal university. This did set out to be a liberal university. It was trying to set itself up on, saying the model of Michigan, Minnesota or Wisconsin. Two or three of our key administrators came from Minnesota and that was one of the schools we tended to use as a model. I think they simply couldn't cope with a little explicitness in books. Imagine damage being done by the "Grapes of Wrath." Well, in one of the meetings in '62, the College of Liberal Arts and Basic Studies met together and attempted to pass a resolution condemning Dr. Allen for his behavior. Well, it never did pass. But in that conversation somebody said just the same thing I did. Well, one of the few natives on the faculty, Bob Whitaker, got up and said, "Well, that is not a fair description of Tampa; there is more culture here than you give us credit for," something like that. I think there were many people here and, if I could think of any, I could pull through the name of the person who really blew the whistle on us and got the Johns Committee in here. I've also been told, I don't guarantee this, that Mayor Julian Lane was ultimately responsible for getting them in here. He was responding to pressure from people in Palma Ceia, the rich part of town. They just weren't ready for it. You know, a place that would read liberal books.
Hewitt: Now you mentioned that Basic Studies was obviously an innovative notion and was certainly one of the places where different kinds of books were used as innovative teaching techniques. Obviously Basic Studies is no longer around and at some point was dismantled.

Parrish: I will tell you what happened. To begin with, all the courses were taught by everyone regardless of his rank, experience, or whatever. As we grew older, say by the third year, the particular people in science and to a lesser degree in social science, began to want to develop a more specialized program. They wanted to emphasize research. That is, to begin with, we didn’t in other words. In the College of Liberal Arts, we had four divisions. There was no chairman of freshman English until 1963. This is going back to some extent, I think, to Russell Cooper’s history. But anyway, in 1963 there was no Chairman or anything, and in fact in 1963 they were called programs. The larger departments became the Chemistry program, the English program, the Physics program, and so forth. I can’t remember when the "labeled" departments were first used, probably about 1965. The Basic Studies consisted of eight courses, six of which were truly interdisciplinary. In other words, freshman English as I told you, read books from at least five or six different areas, from other areas of the Basic College. Of course the two sciences come together. The only course that were absolutely required was freshman English. The students had to take five out of the other seven. In other words, there were two science courses, a math course, a foreign language course, and then behavioral science, which was a mix of anthropology and history. Then there was American Idea, which combined economics and American history and culture. Finally there was humanities which consisted of music, art, and literature.
So in a sense, you see, at least six of the courses were really interdisciplinary. The science courses, in other words, biological science, included both botany and zoology, but centering on concepts rather than taking frogs apart. And physical science included some geology, astronomy, chemistry and physics. They really did attempt to show interrelationships. humanities, for instance, was centered on the notion that the baroque finally had the same manifestations in art, architecture, and literature. In other words, you get the ornate style of say Thomas Brown or somebody the same time your getting baroque elsewhere, and music too. It was rather interesting.

Hewitt: You mentioned that probably by '65 or so some of the larger programs started turning into more formal departments. When that happened, did people in those departments want to move away from the Basic Studies concept and into a more traditional disciplinary field?

Parrish: Yes, absolutely, in general across the whole University. In English, we had a rather special situation and it was hard for me I guess. My wife thought I was crazy to do it. I was chairman of freshman English in the College of Basic Studies and in charge of upper level English in the College of Liberal Arts. So I really had two budgets. I made the schedules, you see, so that the people in English who were assigned to Basic Studies had the same kind of course assignments as someone in the College of Liberal Arts. But this was not true across the University. In general, the people in the social sciences wanted to get all their specialized disciplines. This was true with the people in the physical sciences, too. So often the people who stayed on in Basic Studies, some of them didn't have Ph.D.s, it didn't make any difference, but basically the people in Basic Studies became second
class citizens because of money. Also because of the kinds of courses they taught. People in Functional Mathematics, it was called in those days, they might never teach an upper level course. The people who were in behavioral science might never get to teach a course in advanced anthropology or something. So finally, under these kinds of pressures, and I was on the committee that recommended this about the time that Dr. Mackey came, there was just a general settlement to put the two colleges together and that is the way it has been ever since. Have you talked to Jim Ray? Well Jim is working on a plan to put back a curriculum in Basic Studies, something like the old Basic Studies. I don't know what he is going to do. Anyway, to get away from the smorgasbord of the general requirements we have now.

Hewitt: Now is the . . . Basic Studies was dismantled and USF took on a more traditional university structure. Was there a change in the mission of the University, even though the motto was still "Accent on Learning?" Were there other shifts that went along with those structural changes?

Parrish: Well, yes, it had to do with the arrival of Cecil Mackey, who tried in the five or six years that he was here . . . For the first time in the beginning of 1971, his first summer here, it became important for people to publish. In other words that became, whether people admitted it or not, the criteria for the classroom and for big raises. I don't think the structural changes had that much to do with it, it probably had some. It was a fact that I think Mackey came in here with a mandate to shake the place up. When 25-30 people lost their jobs, or something like that, it was a big turmoil then, but somebody else could tell you more about that. I'm not too rational on some of that. In 1971 the central administration began really to look at publications. In the early years, if somebody published something it was
pretty special. That's an old statement I guess. We taught four, three-hour classes till '67. In English it was '65 before we got people's loads down to two in literature and two of freshman English. In 1971, it was really a change in the top administration. A new President and a new Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Hewitt: Now that occurred, and obviously I heard there was a lot of turmoil and people were shifting around. Were those faculty who stayed at that point, many of whom are still here, what were the concerns in terms of making the transition from one kind of university to the other for faculty that stayed on?

Parrish: I think some of them still are still angry about the shift. That is they feel that they, well this is primarily '65 say, this is primarily a teaching university. You will not be expected to publish. Then all of a sudden the ground rules changed six years later. Well, they haven't published yet, but then they suffered financially, drastically, for it. Some of the faculty resented this. I don't think the English faculty has ever been very happy since 1971. I gave up the chairmanship in 1973. One of the most ruthless firings was Irving Deere, who was the Associate Dean in the old college of Liberal Arts. He wasn't fired, but he was not promoted to full-time dean. As I mentioned earlier the College of Liberal Arts was split into four colleges. They no longer had divisions and they no longer had a College of Liberal Arts. And Irving had been for five years the Associate Dean of what was then called Language and Literature. And Mackey had all the administrators make presentations and he didn't like those that Dean Battle made in education and so one of Mackey's hatchet men, Jim Clark, came in and said that he had two hours to get out of his office. He planned the building and
He planned his office. This is so cruel, you know. The faculty was outraged by this. Riggs came over and tried to pacify us. I felt sorry for him.

Hewitt: How did the departments like English change over the next decade, up to the early '80s? How did they manage to finally come together and stabilize and build a program in that kind of turmoil?

Parrish: Well, the truth is that the program had been built before that. In other words, we got the Ph.D. program approved in March of 1971, in Mackey's first meeting with the Board of Control. I went over to the meeting in St. Pete. The English Department had troubles of their own in the beginning of 1976/77 when a new dean tried to fire Jack Clark, who was my successor. We got torn up over that. That superseded the Mackey mess. Then Mack left about the same time. But the first two years after Mack came, the English Department, I was still chair then, was as united as it has ever been. United against Mackey and the new administration. The Basic College people were happy because, all I can say is it was the only good thing Mackey ever did. It was not quite fair. He did equalize the salaries of the Basic College people with those of Liberal Arts. We had to do it for the women, and so Mackey said well, let's just do it for the Basic College men as well. So that was one of the great things that he did. So all of a sudden, the people who had been $1,500-$2,000 behind got caught up with people with roughly the same kind of experience, length of degrees, and so forth. So the first two years, this department at least was as united as could be. I really can't speak for the people in social science and physical sciences, I really don't know.
Hewitt: One of the things that we were wondering ... so many people worked together early on with this kind of interdisciplinary perspective ...

Parrish: This really doesn't affect Fine Arts you see. Fine Arts wasn't involved in Basic College. Humanities was a separate course. It was one of the eight courses I mentioned. It did not have anything to do with Basic College. The College of Fine Arts has always, in a sense, been performance oriented. I think that is fair. I don't mean academically oriented. That's primarily a place to produce musicians, painters, actors, and so forth.

Hewitt: So they were always a separate part of it from the Basic College?

Parrish: They were of course one of the four original colleges, so they would not have been affected at all. That is why I mentioned them. I don't think anything changed for them. Well, the only thing that changed for one year is that they eliminated the Department of Humanities and for one year the most competent musician in Humanities, or two of them I guess, went to the College of Fine Arts. One of them stayed and one of them came back. It was reconstituted a year later, you see. I know that is very detailed, but anyway ...

Hewitt: It sounds like there were a lot of major shifts in that period of the early '70s. Now were there other major changes that occurred after that or once the shake-up of the '70s had occurred and people began to settle down, have we been pretty much on the same ... ?

Parrish: I think so. No, the only one that I can think of is the proliferation of top administration, I mean the vice president of personnel or something like that, it is almost incredible to me. I think most of the shifting around since 1971 has really been over at the administration building. I think
there have been others, I don't know what they are, and I have been pretty close to the administration off and on since 1973.

Hewitt: How do you think that the relationship between faculty and administration overall has changed in the last ten to fifteen years?

Parrish: I think it became adversarial when Mackey was here. As I told you earlier, it deteriorated after 1962. That is we had 27, most of them good people, leave at the end of 1963. In the spring of 1963, 27 faculty left out of dissatisfaction, Johns Committee, Allen's behavior, or a combination of the two. But then I think people sort of got away from that. Allen retired in 1970 and Harris Dean, whom everyone liked. Have you got him on your list? You'll enjoy talking to him. He came in the. I always kid him about. I tell him "you're not really charter faculty, you didn't come till January of 1961." Everybody thought he was great. And he was. Then we got somebody in here who is not really an academic. He had been Assistant Director of Transportation on the Johnson Administration. He wasn't academic at all. He taught two years, maybe, at the Air Force Academy or something. A very cold man, really.

Hewitt: Now when you look back and you've obviously been involved in an enormous number of changes, programs, faculty, and administrative positions in the University. When you look back over your 25 years here, what are the best things that you look back on and what are the things that are the most disillusioning in terms of what you had great expectations for that didn't work out?

Parrish: I think the most exciting thing really as I said earlier was the first two years. I think the first two years here. Everybody really had loved what I
had done. That sounds corny but it's almost true. In other words, people cooperated. No one would say no to anything. I don't remember anybody ever turning you down on anything I asked. I suppose in total, that I would rate, from my personal point of view, the whole 25 years rather highly. Of course, I had some personal frustrations deriving from the fact that I had to report to two different deans. In general I would say that it has been a good experience because I did watch the place grow. In other words, in 1960, we were supposed to have 10,000 students by 1970. But we had that about three or four years before that. So the numbers are not all that important. I never dreamed we would have a Ph.D. program by 1971. I thought maybe by 1975 or 80. But we have so many place-bound people because they have full-time jobs teaching. So I guess my view from the personal point of view is the fact that I was able to get two masters programs going and a Ph.D. program going in the first nine years of my tenure as chairman. I guess on the positive side we did an incredible job in general of recruiting faculty. Dr. ________, the first chairman of Freshman English and later Division Director, had a great knack for recognizing talent and I try to do the best I can in this regard myself. Of course, not everybody works out as you know. Most people did. Up until at least '76 or '77, we had a great deal of cohesiveness in the English Department. So I view that positively. I suppose that as I had implied by what I said before, that the Johns Committee had a very negative impact for two or three years anyway. Maybe longer, but certainly for two or three years. I can't help feeling that Mackey was a borderline disaster. He has been so at the other two places he has been to since he left here, especially the last one. I don't know quite that much about Texas Tech., but Michigan State he has had incredible problems. So in a sense, I think that is the worst thing that
has ever happened. He was just the wrong person at the wrong time. The wrong person at any time.

Hewitt: Let's hope over the next twenty-five years we don't run into another . . .

Parrish: Anyway, I'd say that those were the two most negative things, the only two negative things. I think Mackey had a basically destructive influence, certainly on the faculty-administrative relations. If it hadn't been for Mackey, I don't think we would have ever had a union. He was just so contemptuous of the faculty that in '74, we voted in the union.

Hewitt: Well, I really appreciate you taking your time to talk with us about the first twenty-five years at USF, and I hope you're around to see the next twenty-five years.

Parrish: I won't see the second twenty-five years. I'm on the half-time retirement thing, and I teach one course in the fall and two in the spring next year and I suppose I'll keep that up for a few more years.