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Thomas A. Rich oral history interview by Nancy Hewitt, 1985

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Hewitt: I am speaking this afternoon with Dr. Tom Rich, Chairman of the Department of Gerontology and Director of the Center for Applied Gerontology. Dr. Rich, could you tell us first of all what was your initial contact with the University of South Florida and what convinced you to come here to work?

Rich: I knew the question was coming so I've been thinking. Like I suspect many people, I came for a job interview. That was my first contact. I remember it was looking a bit like a moon base. It was hot, it was July and I didn't have an air conditioned car. I drove down from Gainesville, and the thing I really remember most was they had not yet put in the grass between the Administration Building and the University Center. It looked like a desert with shifting sand. Not even weeds, just sand all over the place. Really, you felt like you were in some other place in Florida with that view. Also it was a formal place, this University. The Dean of Students called upstairs to apologize to the president because I was to be introduced to him, but I didn't have a coat and tie on. He wanted to clear it before we went upstairs. In July, with a car without air conditioning, you didn't wear a coat and tie! As I go through things, the sand, the coat and tie, I remember that very clearly. That's why I rarely wear one now.

Hewitt: What was the first position you were appointed to at USF?

Rich: It was called some strange thing, Clinical Counselor and Assistant Professor of Behavioral Science.

Hewitt: And what did that mean?
Rich: It meant I taught two sections for a quarter time, which was an interesting load, and did counseling with students with problems on campus. I'm a Clinical Psychologist.

Hewitt: Was there an actual counseling center established?

Rich: That was the counseling center. It had reading program, a vocational counseling, personal counseling, mental health kinds of things, and a speech and hearing clinic. I think that covered it. After I had been here for about six or eight months, I was appointed director of that center. I stayed with that until 1965. The difference at that time was that we were so small, that you saw most of the faculty over at the University Center having lunch. Or you went to the only restaurant on Fowler. That was the University Restaurant. It was the only place to eat. So you got to know everyone. In fact I met an anthropologist having some problems with his research in Guatemala and started fifteen years of research that we've been doing in Guatemala just from drinking coffee at the University Center. It doesn't happen that way anymore. You knew everyone and you got into projects.

Hewitt: You mentioned the formality when you first came to interview and yet obviously, you also recognized the advantages of familiarity when this place was much smaller. What would you say was the sense of relationship between faculty and administrators at that time? Was there a clear distinction between those two ranks?

Rich: I think the distinction was there, but you... Not so much as today because you saw just about everyone everyday. You didn't think of the administrators as someone over in the Administration Building, because that
is where most of us worked. Even my office was in the Administration Building. There weren't that many offices on campus. So I think the biggest change in that is you simply don't have as much contact with some of the administration because of the size and numbers. Of course, this end of the campus didn't exist. We were back in the woods. There were no buildings over here.

Hewitt: What would you say were the relations between faculty, administrators, and students in those days? Since many of these students were first generation college students, was there a real sense of rank in terms of relationships between faculty and students, or did the smallness also create a more familiar, accessible atmosphere?

Rich: I thought there was a lot of student interest and concern . . . Remember, the administrators and the faculty, at that point, had been recruited essentially from a general education standpoint. Their primary concern was about education of freshman and sophomores, for most of them. Now that all moved. As soon as we got departments, the concern was about the major. As soon as we got masters program, the concern was about master students, and so on. But in those early years the incoming student was the center of attention, and programs were designed to be helpful and useful with the best instructors and resources. We were going into undergraduate education. I think it was a very good setting. We have lost some of that because we're stretched in other ways now. And the faculty was doing it. They retired or moved departments and obviously did other things.

Hewitt: In the early years of USF, most people taught in the College of Basic Studies. What was your experience with the College Basic Studies and did you also have a "second academic home" in addition to Basic Studies?
Rich: When I moved from the Developmental Center to be Chairmen of the Behavioral Sciences, that was my only appointment for awhile. Then several of us working together developed the first Institute on Aging. So we had both of those units going. The Behavioral Science program was a large program. We had about 30 faculty in it. We were experimenting with teaching. We had done some research on what the freshman and sophomores said they liked to get from a class. So I had set up a three-way teaching system which I thought was kind of fun. One was for students who didn't like professors at all, like the independent study. One was for students who liked how they structured lectures and one was for the middle pattern that we had been using, which was one large lecture per week and two hours of small discussions. We were using that after we designed it. Every semester two-thirds of the students signed up for the one lecture and the small discussion and the rest were split evenly. We had classes of about 200 that had lectures, behavioral objectives, frequent tests, no interaction, no discussion and there were about 200 in that class. The other 200 came to a large auditorium and the instructor would come for an hour per week and just talk about the various chapters assigned, concepts, and made that kind of presentation. We gave them a common final and there was very little difference in performance on the common final. I think the students did self-select the way that they wanted to learn because they had common material. We could do fun things like that. Even then the Behavioral Science course... We got tired of teaching the same multi-disciplinary three sections when we were on the course. So we designed a way for individual faculty... They would say what their special interest was, and we would have a special topics course as general education. So we had a pattern: that was, the first
course was more loaded towards the biological and physiological basis of behavior. The second course was social basis and psychology. The third course was something in depth and actually that is how we got the first aging course into the University - gerontology course, juvenile delinquency, mental retardation, and communicology. Many of the people who were teaching those specialties went on and developed or became parts of the departments around those topics.

Hewitt: That's interesting. I haven't heard about that before.

Rich: Well, Frank Spain once came over to me and said, "Tom, you've started a whole college here with one course!" And I said, "Yes." And he said, "Hmmm." We let it go at that. As the registrar, he was concerned. He was into all these topics. But it was good education.

Hewitt: Could you tell us a little about the development of the program on Aging? Is it one of those that started out of this department?

Rich: Yes. I had worked as a research assistant in a laboratory on aging when I was doing my doctoral work. I had a continuing interest and did my doctoral dissertation in the area. Then other things came along as they do when you are getting jobs and I decided, well, I'm here in Tampa and we need an aging program because we are in Florida and the population is here. Al Laudin, physician, who was with NICHD or NIMH, was doing a project in St. Pete. We talked about how to start something in aging. We both had degrees in Public Health, which also slanted this because our masters is like a "masters of the public health setting." So we got faculty together and went through the usual process of talking and developing and developed a masters degree curriculum in about 1966. The Administration on Aging provided funds for us
and we started the program. We were the first one in the country to start a degree program in aging. At first we were the Institute on Aging and for a long time we were the Aging Studies Program. I guess we have been a department for the last 5 or 6 years. Sue Saxon has been on this faculty since its beginning, and she was in Behavioral Sciences before. Wally Magnum came a little later than that. He has been in this department for the past ten or twelve years.

Hewitt: So you're one of the oldest . . .

Rich: We've had about 400 graduates. They are all over the country. We have three degree programs and the same staff when we had one degree program. One of the problems with growth!

Hewitt: You're back to your old system by having one course and teaching . . .

Rich: But I didn't mean to this time!

Hewitt: Now, did you develop the Aging Program before you became Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences?

Rich: Yes, I was still the Chair of the Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Hewitt: When did Social and Behavioral Sciences break off as a separate college?

Rich: Somewhere in the late 60s. Bruce Cameron was the Director of the Social Science Division and the Associate Dean of Liberal Arts. It was all together, the four colleges, that are now broken out. When he resigned, I replaced him for a year as Associate Dean of Liberal Arts. Russell Cooper was the Dean of Liberal Arts at that time. And then, Cecil Mackey came in and decided to divide the Liberal Arts College into four colleges; and to take
the parts of the Basic College that would fit and place them in these
colleges as in Education; and to take the research institutes, I think we
called most of them at the time, and put them in the right places. That was
a complex job and I guess we finished that in 1970. Then if you wanted to
apply for the dean of the new college, because there were four of us who
were Associate Deans, you had to go through that routine. I did, I'm not
sure why, but I did. I stayed as Dean until 1973.

Hewitt: So the very first years when this was actually a separate college . . .

Rich: That is why I got . . . It took a lot of persuading. I don't think that
Mackey liked it at first. They wanted to name this a traditional College of
Social Sciences. I worked pretty hard to get the Behavioral in, Social and
Behavioral, and I felt that we were unique having Gerontology, Criminal
Justice, Communicology, and Rehabilitation Counseling. So it was more than
the usual College of Social Sciences. So we had to sell him on that title
and get a little different twist. It's worked out as far as we can tell.

Hewitt: Do you know how History got into the Social Sciences as opposed to being in
Arts and Letters?

Rich: No. History was kind of always there as far back as my memory goes. There
was more of a question as to why Economics didn't have more of a Social
Science base. I don't know what their rationale was. I could guess that
Russell Cooper thought it might have been a humanizing influence on the rest
of us because he was really broadly educated in a Liberal Arts tradition. I
never saw any conflict with it though. There used to be an occasional
discussion about whether it should be in some other college, but nothing
ever happened.
Hewitt: I just wondered because it doesn't seem as social scientific-based as most of the departments in the college. I mean, I'm glad it's here . . .

Rich: Well it's probably a swing department . . . in some of the . . . even in our system, Psychology for example, is I think . . . at FSU is in a Biological Sciences area. So there are always extremes whether you move from one step . . . But the question has been raised. I just never heard it asked before. There are times I thought it should be in another college!

Hewitt: Were all of the programs that are now in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences part of it from the very beginning or were there additions later on? I guess I'm wondering if Afro-American and Women's Studies, were those programs at the time?

Rich: No, I think they were added right about that same time . . . No, I think Afro-American Studies was a part of the Social Science Division. Women's Studies was not. I thing AFA was, somewhere in '69 or '70, I'm not quite sure about the date on that.

Hewitt: Yes, I think Women's Studies must have been somewhere around mid-70s or so.

Rich: We really haven't had any other departments . . . Well, Social Work was in the planning stages. There was no Department of Social Work. For some time they had one person housed in Sociology who was doing the planning, but . . .

Hewitt: I think in what is now my office . . . Because people still come by and ask me Social Work questions.
Rich: When I was dean I was going to Tallahassee and . . . Tallahassee was very good about blocks, as to why we couldn't have a Social Work program. FSU was in the driver's seat. They finally set up a state-wide study of Social Work, and I was the chair of the state-wide Curriculum Committee for Social Work. We had to go through all of that for about two years, maybe three. And they finally gave us approval to start the Social Work program here. We had an urban area like this, the demand was great, and the need was clear; but FSU kept wanting to put a satellite down in St. Pete and take care of all the problems out here. We've had big brother problems with our two big universities up there from time to time in the beginning.

Hewitt: You originally came from the University of Florida. Were you at all involved in trying to negotiate compromises between Florida and USF or FSU and USF?

Rich: No. We had to build our own programs here and get around their problems.

Hewitt: Let me ask you some questions about the sort of quality of life at USF. One of the things that certainly is usually connected with large universities, especially large state universities, is intercollegiate athletics. But my understanding is that in the early stages, there were really no plans for intercollegiate athletics at USF. Did you have any involvement on either side of that issue? Were you keeping them out or bringing them in?

Rich: No, I just had faculty opinions like everyone. The president and quite a few of the faculty really didn't think we should be into football. The local community responded pretty strongly to that. Carried an article every once in awhile about "Why don't you get into football and do your thing?"
and then the Bucs came and wiped out that question. One of these days we are going to have a basketball team, so you never know.

Hewitt: In the first couple of years I understand that the only housing for students on campus was is in what is now the University Center, or I guess what is now the Infirmary. There were apparently 45 beds originally there where students could stay. Did you notice any change when USF went from being almost a totally commuter campus to a partially residential campus?

Rich: No, I think Alpha and a couple of the other buildings were open when I came here in '61, but not over about 2. We have always been, and still are, commuter, and we had great ideas about how to make it more comfortable for the commuting student, which I don't think we ever did. Like we let the University Center, which is about the only open place, really has gone down hill in the last few years if you have been there lately. I understand there are plans to change that now. We've always had that kind of two personality split. Many of the faculty and administrators who have been here have thought as though they were in Gainseville or FSU with all resident students and surrounded by billions of pine trees and cows. We've had a hard time becoming an urban university. In a program like ours we improve our . . . or we can enhance the things we offer via the use of adjuncts. That's a problem when you have a rural university outlook and alot of people here still don't understand it that better education not less because you bring in practitioners with good skills. We'd tried for years. For example, this guy was to keep a larger loose part of OPS money to make sure we could hire those people. And every time someone got a freeze going or they needed money, we lost that because lines are easier to keep. I'm not sure even today that we understand that we are as urban as we are. We're a
different state. Of course FSU is urban and there have been more urban schools . . . If you go to Orlando you're not sure if that's so urban in some ways. They put it out as far as they could get in the woods. So, we are still . . . I think the mentality, state wide, has been pretty much looking at the model as being in the little town without the demand we have. Forgot what our program . . . In the budgeting somewhere up the line, the state employees from the big institutions around the state are not counted because they don't pay tuition. We can have a full class, but when it gets sorted out and sent all the way through the system, it may show three people were in there because the rest of them were on state employee papers.

Hewitt: How do you think that the rural outlook developed from the mission as seen in the catalogue? This University was developed around a metropolitan area, and that when, I suppose the president or whoever came up with the idea, that when this University started, they wanted to start an urban university. This was suppose to be unique about South Florida.

Rich: But still remember the regents of that time, the legislators have been trained to see the way they do it in Gainseville and Tallahasse and we still have rules and regulations that make it easier to live with their kind of student population and their kinds of demands compared to us. True, the people that came here wanted to make this an urban university and we are an urban university, but it is a continuing struggle. So we need different formulas to live by. We have different community service needs. Our teaching needs are different. For example, most of our programs are at night. A lot of differences you can document. But we had to invent the urban university at almost every step and explain it to people because the powerbase still in the university is not here. It is still north of us.
It's true. On the other hand, there are other things besides attitudes. Remember, we were out here . . . We didn't put the first urban university in this state downtown, did they? We put it out on a little single black top road that was hard to get to. When I say the University Restaurant, one tiny motel, and maybe a gas station and that was it. The community wasn't sure that we were urban at all and they weren't use to having universities. They had the University of Tampa and that was a whole different thing. But we were as you mentioned earlier, we were getting the kids from families where they were the first person from the family in college. It was all new. I think Tampa has grown and we've grown. We are alot closer to that ideal in some ways, but it has been a translation all . . .

Hewitt: Do you think that they may have developed a more urban outlook if they had put it in say, in St. Petersburg, who was really striving for that urban look?

Rich: No, I think we've gotten there, but I think it would have been the same kind of selling job.

Hewitt: It was basically coming from north Florida in that area, rather than from this area?

Rich: If something comes up, it's hard to think of an example, but all along something will come up that really makes it easier to operate in that kind of fully residential university as opposed to here. It has to be worked around this complicated bureaucracy we have. And we should all look like the other major universities. I remember the first grant, talking about how complicated and how backwards we were, the first grant contract that Peter Right and I got to researching in Guatamala, we had to have actual Cabinet
approval. The Cabinet for the State of Florida had to approve them paying us our salaries which were being paid from a grant or course and travel out of the country for over thirty days to do the research because they never heard of this town. They apparently... I mean, we had a long way to go. That wasn't something that was created by this campus; I mean, that is our State system, that's part of what I'm talking about. We never found a way that was legal to pay our informants in the field where we were doing research. We paid them out of our per diem. That was legal. We could take our own money and pay them. I remember someone in the system saying that we would have to get signed little receipts and when we pointed out that we were studying literacy, and the population was 75% illiterate, we'd come back with a thousand x's, we could make them here! But anyway, we paid with per diem.

Hewitt: In the last year or so there have been a number of articles in the Tampa Tribune and the St. Pete Times about the difficulties that USF has had in terms of minority recruitment, and yet several people have mentioned to me that in the very earliest years at USF, there was a real effort to be the first Florida university that was fully integrated. Did you have any involvement with either minority recruitments or issues about race relations in those early years?

Rich: Well, the Upward Bound Project we saw as one way to get more black students on campus, and it did bring in large numbers now, without ever really impacting on college enrollment. I'm not sure, but actually Upward Bound, I think, exceeded its own expectations in that initially they had no thought of bringing these kids into colleges, as students. They were simply giving them a lift somewhere in their learning. But then I think there are studies
that show that many of these kids did go to college and many were from minority groups.

Hewitt: Would you explain a little bit about how you got Upward Bound started at USF?

Rich: Clarence Webb, who was the Chair of Communicology, and Ed Martin, who was the Dean of the Basic College, and I decided in reading the specs on it that it would be a good program to have because we had nothing like that. It was a good community bridge. I think Bill Taft was the Director of Sponsored Research at that time, so we decided to write a proposal, and it was kind of fun putting it together because it was kind of like taking the general education model and things we were doing in the counseling center and putting it at a lower level to help some kids with a summer experience to become more functional, to use their own abilities. That part was interesting. Then we found out we were competing with a downtown group who were thinking about applying for it also, and that was interesting too. We did apply and I think we got $200,000 the first year to try it out and run a large number of kids on campus. Then we turned it over to other people for direction. As far as I know it is still funded on a yearly basis. I think Dick Pride has been the director for a long time now.

Hewitt: Did you have many contacts with people in the community?

Rich: Over the years I have been President of the Suicide Prevention Center, and on the Commission on Crime that the Governor set up and served on most of the boards of places around and did some consulting with others. I did alot of interaction with the community in almost anyway you can name.
Hewitt: Again in the early mission there was a suggestion that faculty and administration at USF should have regular contact with the community as a way to build bridges between the community and the University. Since you have had a lot of that contact personally, do you think that the overall relationship at the University to the community has changed over the years? Does the University as a whole still promote the same kind of community contact that it supposedly did in the early years?

Rich: Well, I think it has matured in many ways. We were out there trying to make relationships. Now we go back to the same agencies and businesses and we are talking to our graduates who know what we are, where we are, and we place interns and we do cooperative research projects. There is a great deal of interaction with the community I think, particularly from this College, I don't know about the others. It far exceeds what we were doing in those early years and maybe with less effort. But there is a lot of interaction, but it is not documented very easily, but it is there. I think from my point of view it has been very successful.

Hewitt: A lot of people have mentioned that, especially from the late '60s to the early '70s, that there was a real shift in emphasis from the original "Accent on Learning" mission of the University towards greater emphasis on research, publication, and professional education as opposed to applied or community service activities. It sounds like you've done some of everything. Do you feel like the emphasis changed over the years and if so, do you think that it was inevitable or something that we had a choice in and we sort of shifted directions dramatically?

Rich: I don't think it has been a dramatic shift, but every year I think it has become slightly more difficult for tenure and promotion without the
scholarly documentation. I think teaching was given more real credit in the early years as opposed to "you publish a lot and obviously you must be a good teacher too" attitude that we seem to have now, unless you're a really bad teacher in which case you can be identified. I know in the beginning that we had large assignments. For an assistant professor or an associate professor now to take on internships or provisions and to do heavy teaching loads is disaster because those things won't get them retention around here. They might have in the early '60s. But nationally I think this is what we are hearing of. The trend is more and more how many books and articles. The numbers game again. It's not cynical, it just seems to be the way it is. I'm sure it's the same way in History. I think the bad part about it is that there really is no payoff except personal, professional, but not from the institution, for advising students as well as doing directive study kind of things, master's and doctoral thesis committees, all the things that makes the University human. It's hard to document. It is something that makes you worth while to retain. Now, if you could solve that one, it would be a good one. And I think too we are headed, for me and my position, in the wrong direction, and we are constantly told to teach larger classes. We can transmit social sciences to thousands if they could hear our voice, but that's not true in other places. Of course, I don't believe that because I don't think a student has learned anything unless you've had them in a room where they talk to you about what they're learning and argue about it with themselves, you and others. That's what the learning process is for me. It's not transmitting information to them. I don't even like the approach because I always tell my students you don't even know what you're thinking unless you've said it out loud and talk about it, because it doesn't come out the way you think it is when you sit there with it in your head. If you
get 500 people in a classroom, or 100, that's a kind of education, but it's not the kind we had valued. Even though we had 500 and the best lecturer available in the Behavioral Sciences once a week, you still had two hours with no more than 30 people in a room where you could talk about the material and discuss it. That kind of pairing I could live with large classes. And even now we don't have a general education program, we have a grab bag of intro's of this course and that course and the student collects somehow 60 hours and moves on to their major. We could be doing a better job there. We've missed that because the emphasis has been on higher level education, doctoral programs, research, scholarly stuff, and not enough concern paid to our teaching.

Hewitt: Not only has there clearly been changes in the emphasis on teaching, but I think obviously with the growth of the University over the last 25 years, the sort of personal, familiar atmosphere on campus has changed rather dramatically. At some point, I guess in the early '70s, the faculty created a union on campus and some people have seen that as a reflection that the old informal mediation between faculty and administrators was gone and a new more controversial or conflict-filled orientation prevailed. Were you involved at all in the development of the union and do you think it reflected that kind of shift in atmosphere on campus?

Rich: First, I was not involved and I'm still not involved. Second, I think it was one way of faculty expressing their lack of power, and the faculty really doesn't have any power. Our University Senate... Well we had a couple of presidents along the way who didn't like senates to begin with and that was always a struggle; but from my perspective, the senate has never been a representative body with any strength. I'm not sure just why, but
even today I have the same feeling about it. Of course I have about the same feeling, that the union hasn't made it either. I think there is a sense of powerlessness among the faculty that contributes sometimes to the moral problems too. But we don't have a solution for it. We are very large, we've become over-administered from my point of view, and we've got levels and levels . . . For years we got along around here where deans ran the colleges, and we didn't even have to ask a lawyer if you were going out to lunch. Enormous changes in those areas. In fact, we had one president who would look at the legal side of the issue before he would make an administrative decision and that's deadly. Maybe they can come parallel, but they have to come. And sometimes administrative decisions don't touch base with all the legal necessities. I think the faculty are in a strange place. We've become more and more removed from anything to do with the direction the University goes in. There are committees set up and things, but I don't know anyone who feels like they have much input.

Hewitt: Do you think the students have changed very much over the 25 years in terms of either the kinds of students that we attract or students' attitudes towards education at USF?

Rich: Probably not very much from the view of a department like this because we've always had working students. We've almost always had people who are 2nd and 3rd career people. We have a bimodel distribution of some young students who just finished their B.A. and they had some background on aging. They come into our department, but we have alot of 35-70 year olds and there are housewives who decide that's not their career identity, air controllers, priests, nun, a service retiree, you name it. They decide they want to do something in the human services, they want to work with older people and
they have all kinds of background experience. So that is the kind of group we have been working with all this time. I haven't seen much difference in that really. Maybe a little more emphasis in the last few years on not "what can I learn," but "what's the minimum number of credits I need to get out." But I think that has always been around one way or another. Sometimes it seems more pronounced than others. There again is the difference from the other institutions. We have an urban institution which has really a different student body. I haven't taught anything except a night course in a long time because I like the fact that I've got people from many ages who are there, who are working in aging and doing things and they are all ages. I think my class last spring was probably 21-75 years in age, and several different agencies were represented by people with alot of experience and we learn together. And that's fun teaching.

Hewitt: Did you give evening courses from the very beginning here or were those developed gradually?

Rich: From the beginning, although I think maybe the first year or so, we had full-time stipends to pay all the students when we were really developing early. So they came from their jobs, we paid them stipends, they took full-time loads and then they went back all over the countryside. They weren't just from here. We still have alot of students from out-of-state. They tend to be our full-time students who come here; our part-time ones are the ones who work around here. But I think the night patterns, well, they were pretty much all the time.

Hewitt: Are there any other aspects of your experience at USF that you'd like to talk about for this oral history project that we haven't touched on?
Rich: That's a pretty broad question. We really haven't talked about the future and I don't know what the other institutions around the state are doing, but we seem to have fallen into a pattern, here at least, of putting a high proportion of our new resources into new programming and we keep leaving the old University behind. I think every department that I know of feels understaffed. I think the loads are changing and how long can we continue to support new and worthwhile schools, departments, and all kinds of things without resources? The student demand, I'm told, is forcing resources to go to Business and Engineering and all the bricks and mortar at least, are going to medicine. I think what that leaves is a core that we called the University, and that is primarily what we would also call the Liberal Arts, getting lots of pats on the back and lip service and even a committee working on General Education I hear. But I don't see us making much progress in improving the quality of education from that area. I think that is a concern. We used to say that general education would recycle in ten years. Well it has been fifteen, but we somehow need to recycle something that brings a sharper focus to the general education that the student gets because I have always been proud of that compared to other institutions. I think we, in the past, have done a good job in making our Liberal Art schools less number-oriented and more quality-oriented with legislative funding formulas that don't make sense to us sometimes. In fact I would hope that the new chancellor and the regents might start running the university system and get the legislature to pass bills which would be the way they do it in some states I'm told. So I get a little concerned about the future of the institution because we're getting stretched thinner and thinner, but not better and better. Size and growth may look good on the
report, but quality does too. Somebody will say "How do you measure quality?" Well, by the way we go about doing things. I don't think our quality is going to hold up much longer unless we back up and say, "How can we do a better job even if we teach fewer students for awhile," rather than, "How can we can keep the numbers up. So we're always leaping through "windows of opportunities" and into "corridors of enrollment," if I may use two of the phrases that keep being thrown down the bureaucratic channels of the system. You keep encountering the windows of opportunity. Everyday we have come upon a window of opportunity. The corridors of enrollment means that if we can keep that magic number coming that our funding problems are more or less out. Those shouldn't be the guidelines for a good university. It should be what we are doing. But don't ask me how to change that.

Hewitt: What would you say over the course of your career here have been the most productive developments and the least productive developments at USF?

Rich: Well I think some of the programs that we have created have been vital to the state of Florida and this area for an urban university. I think starting the whole medical school enterprise. This was the place, perhaps, where I think the first medical school should have been built, so that has been a major change for the University. I think the expansion of the other campus settings has great potential. We haven't lived up to them yet. That we can begin to reach out and be the educational institution for the west coast of Florida. But again, I see them as not making the progress that they should be making. I don't know where the resources are going, but they're not getting it. I'm not really sure what else to say because we have gone over the same ground in several different ways.
Hewitt: Let me ask you a question, which my graduate assistant reminded me about, which was were you involved with the Johns' Committee, which I completely forgot to mention in this interview.

Rich: I don't think anyone had a very influential role. They were to go to Tallahassee meetings and listen to their descriptions of the problems. It was a witch hunt. It was modeled after the best and worst of McCarthy. It was the same kind of thing. We weren't sure what they were desperately seeking, but it seemed to be either communists or homosexuals or both. The implication being if you're one, you are probably the other. I don't know what triggered that great hunt. They got a lot of state support for awhile. I remember two humorous things about it. You try and remember the humorous things about it. One was that I went to a meeting in Tallahassee where the members of the Johns' Committee had some of the Junior League folks and presidents of PTAs, all female. This is not a sexist story. They were a nice class. So the committee was showing them a film on homosexuality so they would know what the evil looks like. And most of them were turning green and would say, "Is that what we've been talking about?" They were supporting the good intent of the committee. They really didn't even know. That was the kind of mixed-up times we were in. The other funny one which I heard later was the file report of the Johns' Committee was printed by a Miami firm. I saw one once, and it had a purple cover. A judge in the state shortly thereafter, not because of the cover, ruled that their committee report was pornographic and banned its sale. No one that I know ever made any real sense out of that committee. It was certainly a time of great frustration in the University. As I recall, one faculty member, and I think his problem was more alcohol than something else, finally left because of what ever they did. It was a great waste of tax payers' money and a great
frustration to many people in the university because we were trying to establish the appropriate freedoms that you're supposed to have in a university and live by them. And here were these people trampling around for records, which they didn't get. I thought the University did a very good job in handling it. But everyone was under threat, all the time. I don't think we have had anything quite like it.