



Macalester College Archives, DeWitt Wallace Library
Oral History Project

Interview with: **Kay Crawford**
Class of 1969, staff member 1984-2013

Date: **Monday, June 24th, 2013**

Place: Kay Crawford's home, Eagan, Minnesota
Interviewer: Alana Horton, Class of 2014

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Interview with Kay Crawford

Alana Horton, Interviewer

**June 24th, 2013
Kay Crawford's home
Eagan, Minnesota**

AH: My name is Alana Horton, part of the Macalester Class of 2014, conducting interviews for the Macalester Oral History Project. Today is Monday, June 24th, 2013 and I'm interviewing Kay Crawford, Class of '69 in her house in Eagan, Minnesota. And if you could just start off by you saying your name, when you came to Macalester, and where you're from?

KC: I came to Mac as a student in 1965 from Rochester, Minnesota, graduated in '69, and then returned in 1984 as a very, very part time staff member. And except for a couple years, I've been there ever since. Such a long time.

[00:51]

AH: Wow. So, where did you go to high school? In Rochester?

KC: John Marshall.

AH: And how did you decide to come to Macalester of all places?

KC: It was Presbyterian, and that was a big deal to my parents. Our youth group from church had toured the campus and they (my parents) said we really would like you to go there. I was the

first one in our family to go to college. It was nothing like what happens today, i.e. applying to a dozen schools, getting waitlisted, and depositing at different schools. Nothing like that.

[01:47]

AH: So, what did you know about this school before going to it? Just that it was a Presbyterian school?

KC: Pretty much.

AH: And when did you first come to Macalester and see campus?

KC: Probably as a high school junior. I don't even remember why we came, but it was the youth group led by a young minister, I assume. It was the first college campus I'd seen outside of the U of Minnesota. That's just the way it was.

[02:22]

AH: Do you remember your first impressions of the campus?

KC: I was in Doty Hall, which at that point was two years old. Janet Wallace was about two or three years old. Everything looked really fresh, new. It was good. So, did I know anything more? No. It was considered a very good school, I felt lucky to get in because I knew some of my friends did not get in. However, there were many of us from Rochester that year starting as first years, or freshmen, as we called it.

[03:16]

AH: So, did you live in Doty for your entire student time?

KC: The first three years and then a couple of friends and I moved over to Summit House which was on the corner of Summit Avenue and Snelling. I think part of it burned down, then they made part of it the International Center. I'm not exactly sure how all of that goes but I lived there my senior year.

AH: Great, and did you go home to Rochester often?

KC: Maybe every month, six weeks, it wasn't too often. Some of my best friends lived in Chicago, Milwaukee, so I liked going down to Rochester to get a home cooked meal and be with my family.

[04:09]

AH: So, given that you were spending most of your time on campus, what was the social life like?

KC: I don't know if it's that different now. It was fun, we had a good time. We had mixers in Cochran Lounge, in the old student union building. My friends and I seemed to go to a lot of parties at St. Thomas. (laughter) Don't ask me why. They had a lot of parties back then and

that's where we frequently went. The period from the early '70s through at least the next decade was much different, but when I started it was just an average social campus.

[05:23]

AH: Right, and was there still a curfew when you were there?

KC: Oh gosh, yes. Oh my gosh. It was ten o'clock Monday through Thursday, eleven o'clock on Fridays. I think we got midnight on Saturdays and ten o'clock on Sundays. You had so many midnights you could use. We had these little key punch cards, which you turned in to the housemother and signed yourself out. We also had 10 grace minutes to use throughout the semester. Yes, we could not be late for even one minute!

AH: Did you know anyone who tried to get around the curfew?

KC: Oh yes. All the time. We never were caught. We'd have people sign in and out for us. It was just way too much for this elderly housemother who tried to keep track of all of us girls.

AH: That's different.

KC: Yes.

[06:29]

AH: Now, what kinds of extracurricular activities were you involved in?

KC: I want to say going to parties was my primary activity. Let's see, what did I do? I was on the dorm council. It was like a governing body. I did that for a couple of years. They didn't have sports for women, athletics. I was not involved in student government other than being on the dorm council.

AH: Do you think you would have been involved in sports had they been available?

KC: Probably not. I didn't grow up with sports. There weren't any. The only thing John Marshall offered was a marching team, the Rockettes. They would march at the games.

[7:53]

AH: Now, your time as a Macalester student intersected in, with a particularly turbulent time in US history. I mean, I am thinking about US troops in Vietnam, Martin Luther King, Jr. getting assassinated. How do you remember the campus reacting to those shifts?

KC: My husband came to Mac in 1968 and his experience from '68-'72 was totally opposite from what I experienced starting in '65. Mac became very radical. There were sit-ins, lock-outs, my husband—we were not married at the time—was pretty upset about it because classes were canceled. He was really at Mac to learn, and he felt like he was being denied an education. There were lots of protests. In fact, we did not have a speaker at graduation, we did not wear caps or gowns. Many wore black armbands protesting against the war. We had a psychedelic rock show instead of a speaker. Let me tell you how fond my parents were of all this. Music by

the Beatles, something about why don't you do this in the road? That song. And there was an overhead projector with paint mused around between two transparencies. You had to be there!

[09:50]

AH: There was an experimental film. I remember, I was talking to your class president, actually, at reunion, about this.

KC: And who was that?

AH: John Nagy.

KC: Oh yes, John Nagy.

AH: Yeah, he's still feeling a little sore about not being able to speak.

KC: That is so funny because I've talked to others who feel that way, but at the time I thought I was the only one and I thought my parents were the only ones who were upset about it. As it turns out, a lot of parents were really upset. The program was organized by a few very vocal people. Somehow they just pushed this unique program through. So, yes, I feel screwed that I didn't get to wear a cap and gown. There's a lot of pomp that we missed; we could have had it outside, the weather was good. But of course it had to be in the field house because we had this light show.

[11:09]

AH: Now, during all this time, did you perceive a big split between, sort of, student political sentiment and how faculty was responding to everything?

KC: No. Faculty, in many ways, kind of led the charge. We had a very liberal faculty, very vocal. It's hard to say because I didn't do any of the protests, but it did seem like no one, in my memory at least, no one from the administration or the faculty tried to subdue it. I remember it being supported. Now, that could be a false memory, I don't know. Mac got a lot of really bad press, and it took them decades to get rid of that image. Fortunately, the college has hired some really good media people, PR people, who have found ways to talk about what Mac does really well. But yes, it was difficult.

AH: Right, and if I recall, a lot of that bad press was about drug use in particular.

KC: Oh yes, that too.

AH: Did you have an impression of how much that was actually happening on campus at the time?

KC: No, because none of my friends used. I must say that my husband lived in an off-campus house and there was a lot of drug use there. That was in 1971. You'd hear stories. I don't know. So my friends and I, in that way, were very good.

[13:32]

AH: Now, your husband would have been there for EEO, right? You graduated right before that was implemented.

KC: Right.

AH: How diverse did you perceive Macalester to be, then, in your days as a student?

KC: It wasn't. There were lots of international students, but that was it. Michael Davis, who is a judge, and graduated from Mac with me, I think, in 1969, is black. I don't really remember anyone else. Some basketball players, that was it. I don't remember any black women. There were just international students. It was still primarily a Midwestern school. Mac was just starting to branch out and recruiting students from the coasts. So it was pretty homogenous.

[14:49]

AH: Now, so you graduated in 1969 and you say you came back to Macalester in 1984.

KC: That's right.

AH: What happened during that time in between?

KC: I had two kids. I did work a little bit right after graduation because Barry had not finished school yet. But they were not serious jobs. I just worked to pay our rent. And then I had two

children in 1974 and '78. I was home for a good ten years raising them, and was an active volunteer. That's another thing I did as a student. I did do volunteer work. A lot of it was associated with my major but I guess I wouldn't have had to continue. I worked over at the Neighborhood House, which at that point was mostly Native Americans. I was involved in a lot of volunteer activities, stayed home until our youngest went into first grade. Then I started at Mac in the Anthropology Department for 16 hours per week. I didn't even apply for any other jobs because I wanted to be home after school when the kids came home, it was close to my house, and I didn't want any pressures. My husband was a CPA, he frequently traveled, and was under the 8-ball all the time. It was my job to keep—I mean, it sounds very sexist now, but it was my job to keep the house and kids going. And he concentrated on his career, so—

[16:55]

AH: I'm sorry, I forgot to ask. What was your major?

KC: Sociology.

AH: Sociology.

KC: And why did I pick that? Because I started in psych and they told me I'd have to take statistics, which scared me, so I just said, okay, I'm not going to do that. I will major in sociology, because they didn't require statistics. I think they do now, but not then.

AH: And your husband majored in?

KC: Econ.

[17:24]

AH: Econ. And did you meet at Macalester?

KC: Oh yes. We met on a Macalester-rented bus to go to a basketball game in Winona.

AH: Wow!

KC: I know! I heard him talking about John Marshall, I turned around, he was with his friends, I was with mine and that's how we met. Turns out we both went to John Marshall, but because there's three years difference, I never knew him. But he knew my brother.

[18:10]

AH: Great. So you started at Macalester. What was the hiring process like?

KC: I talked to Dave McCurdy, who is now retired, and Jack Weatherford, who left not so long ago, and two other profs who were new to the college but have since gone other places: Anne Sutherland and Anna Meigs. We sat in this dumpy lounge that anthro had on the top floor of Carnegie and just talked.

[19:10]

AH: So, what kind of work did you do in that first position with anthropology?

KC: I worked a lot with the student employees and oh, this really dates me, the faculty sometimes would give me exams to mimeograph—

AH: —Yeah [laughter]—

KC: —to run off. Econ, which was next door, had a mimeograph machine. I'd get full of ink. Anthro didn't give me much responsibility because I was gone more than I was there. But it was fine, it got me out of the house, it got me a start back in the working world, and I was close to home for the kids.

[20:09]

AH: So, what did you do from there?

KC: Then, I left and worked at First Bank for two years. I decided I wanted to go back into the for-profit sector. I liked it a lot. But it was difficult because we only had one car and I really didn't want to take the bus. Then a friend, who's actually still at Macalester (she's going to retire one of these days!) called to tell me about an opening in psychology. She said, I know you don't want full time, but it is full time during the academic year. You know what a good reputation they have. They're really good people. And she said, "Why don't you apply?" Jack Rossmann was chair of psych and he was my freshman advisor as well. They offered me the job, I took it, and I absolutely loved it. It's a fabulous department, the students are good. It was very, very

fun. I worked in a fun atmosphere. I was there when Jaine Strauss and Eric Wiertelak were first hired. That was fun. We did a lot of social things with students and the faculty. And I know they do even more now.

[22:11]

AH: Now, was your title Department Coordinator back then?

KC: No, it was probably secretary or something, I don't remember. But no, I know it wasn't Department Coordinator because I was on the committee who changed that title. Because we really weren't secretaries, except maybe in the broad sense of the word. But we worked with the faculty and with the students, but it wasn't like, take dictation.

AH: Who was the friend who told you about the position?

KC: Linda Schindler. She's in CDC—Career Development. She's still there, she's the recruiting coordinator. So yes, I owe that to her. And she's the one who found an unpaid internship, believe it or not, that my daughter took at the Mall of America. It was in events and she is now the senior director of events and marketing at the mall.

AH: Really!

KC: Yes.

AH: That—I feel like that does not happen anymore.

KC: Yes. She was a French major who was going to teach French, and then her senior year she said, “No, I don't think I want to teach.” Oh great, so what are you going to do? I don't know. So she lived at home, and Linda somehow had heard about this internship and she suggested that Jennifer apply and just see what it's like. She was president of her sorority, was very social and had leadership skills. So she got the job, she's been promoted, and she's been there fifteen years.

AH: Wow.

KC: Yes. She really is a success story.

AH: So, given that you said sorority, I'm guessing she did not go to Macalester.

KC: No. Neither of my kids went to Mac. Neither wanted anything to do with it. I'm not going to say they were conservative, they were much more traditional. They didn't fit the Mac profile. I think they would fit better today because the student body has really changed.

AH: What do you—would you say that Mac profile was?

KC: When my kids were college-bound? Let's see, when did they go to college? In the '90s. It was still very politically correct. Very, very politically correct. And they weren't interested in

that sort of atmosphere. Plus, I was working there, Barry and I had both been students there, it was close to our house, and that was not college as far as they were concerned.

[26:11]

AH: Now, as the psychology department coordinator, do you have any favorite stories from that position?

KC: Yes. Some of them cannot be told. We had some hysterical faculty—they didn't know they were hysterical, but they were. They were just eccentric, very eccentric. So yes, but we had a good time.

AH: And how long were you in that department?

KC: I was there four years. I wanted to try something in administration now that there was a new president (Mike McPherson). Bob Gavin had been President for most of the time I worked on campus and he was problematic. I think most faculty and staff who were here at that time would say the same thing. He raised the standards a great deal, and worked with the scientists. He was a chemist. There are just so many stories about him. Like a woman was offered a tenure track job by the search committee, she accepted, he called her at home that night and said, I'm not sure I want to hire you. This woman told me that herself. There was another case where a faculty member went up for promotion, Bob denied it because he said, you're not old enough. I think you really should spend more time at the college before you get promoted. That was the only reason. He said you'll get promoted next year, don't worry about it. Once again, I heard

this from the horse's mouth. Ultimately Gavin left; it was a traumatic time. The faculty had given him a vote of no support. Simultaneously, I was on the search committee for a new provost. The search committee wanted to hire a certain person. Bob offered him the job but refused to give him tenure. The Board of Trustees heard about this and the Board finally discharged him, after the faculty vote of no confidence. So Bob left and Mike McPherson was the new President, and I thought, I'm going to try administration. I really liked working in the Academic Dean's Office. I did what Brenda Piatz does now, worked a lot with the faculty, it was a great job. However, it was a rotating position among faculty who took two-year stints being Associate Provost. That doesn't work real well.

AH: No continuity.

KC: No, none. Then they decided to bring in a staff person and we just didn't hit it off. So I left that job and worked for the Lilly Grant for two or three years. I started at the beginning of this grant. I knew it was going to end, and I wanted to stay at Mac and not wait until the grant ended to find another job on campus. The math job came up, I applied and got that. And they are fabulous faculty. They are just great.

[31:34]

AH: So, what kind of work did you do with the Lilly grant? I know that you're in *Nature and Revelation* as—[laughter]

KC: I worked on getting the projects started, like Lives of Commitment, is that what they still call it?

AH: Oh yes.

KC: Okay. We started that, we started doing oral histories of older faculty.

AH: —Who were the oral histories with?

KC: Older faculty, as they retired. We interviewed a number of people who have since died. I feel really good that we talked with them. I did that, I trained students how to interview. The worst part of that job was they had us in the basement of Kagin. The fire alarms went off one day and here comes Robbie and a fireman who said, “Oh my god, we didn't know anybody worked down here.” Oh, thanks. [laughter]

AH: And that was the pre-renovation Kagin?

KC: Yes. That in itself was depressing. I didn't see the light of day the entire time I worked there. But good things were going on in my life because I finally decided to go to grad school to get a Masters in counseling. The grant administrators allowed me to work four days a week, I went to grad school and finished forty-four credits. Then I had some health issues and felt like I had to drop out. So I haven't finished a Masters, but I feel good about trying. I was a very non-

traditional student, I was already in my fifties, but it was a rewarding experience. That made up for the being in the basement of Kagin!

AH: Right.

KC: Yes. It was Lucy Forster-Smith, Jeanne Kilde, who's no longer at the college, and me. It was a pretty lonely existence down there. No traffic, no interaction with people. Oh yes, it was pretty sad. But I'm thrilled to see Eily Marlow in charge of it now and Lives of Commitment continuing. We also started up the seminary program, when seniors could apply to visit seminaries and the Lilly grant would pay for their travel. It was an interesting time. I don't regret doing it. It was a very different job for me.

[35:47]

AH: And, how did it compare? I mean, the Lilly grant is—what exactly is the purpose of the Lilly grant?

KC: Oh, let's see if I can—

AH: To support religious life on campus in various ways?

KC: Yes, yes, yes.

AH: How did you see a difference working on it then, than your experience of religion on campus as a student?

KC: Actually when I was a student, the college was quite religious. We had to attend either a convocation or a chapel service so many times each semester. We had to hand in a card at the door to track attendance. Religion was forced on us. We also had a required religion course we had to take. Then, in my senior year, they got rid of all those requirements, so everything went by the wayside. Also, you had to know how to swim to graduate by either passing a swim test or taking swim lessons.

AH: I had no idea!

KC: Yes, yes, so at least that's what they had for the girls. I don't know, I guess I never asked any guys. You had to take six semesters of phy ed. But they offered dance as a physical education course, so I took ballroom dancing. There were many requirements. Back to the Lilly Grant—even though it was intended to promote Christian religion on campus, we did send a student to a Jewish seminary. The Lives of Commitment project was very successful, and it was so much fun to see it grow. Each year we would have more students wanting to participate in it. It was a really good program. It was an interesting grant. I'm surprised that they have continued it, but I don't know how the grant reads like now.

[39:44]

AH: And then you moved to Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science.

KC: I did, statistics! [laughter] Yes, oh my gosh, and Victor [Addona] kept saying, “Now don't shy away from it, I'll tutor you through it.” Because you know, once again, I was reluctant to take it in grad school. I still had stats to take when I quit. But, yes, the math department is just the best. They are wonderful faculty and wonderful people. They are good citizens and don't make trouble for the administration. There are some faculty who are thorns, but math is not like that. Not that they lay down and just go along with something they disagree with, but they are more polite and civil on how their voices are heard. That's what I'd say.

AH: And how long were you with the department?

KC: I stayed longest there. I think it was eight or nine years.

AH: Wow.

KC: Yes, I just really liked it. That was the time when we brought in, let's see, who all: Andrew Beveridge, Chad [Topaz], Victor, Alicia [Johnson], Shilad [Sen], I think that was it. But that's a lot of tenure track faculty. It's a great department, and their enrollments are just going through the ceiling. Students are finding that the job market really requires certain quantitative skills—so they have to take math whether they want to or not! The computer science department was really on top during the '90s, I think, and then the dot com bubble burst. There were just have a handful of majors, but now it's really growing again.

[42:26]

AH: And what other changes over time have you seen in the department?

KC: Wow, changes. I have been through so many different administrations, including when I was a student and even as a new alum. There was Arthur Fleming, who pretty much bankrupted the school. I wasn't on campus then, but that was a problematic time. And then John Davis came in and smoothed everything over. He's such a gracious gentleman. But the administration they have now, Brian Rosenberg and Kathy Murray, are fabulous. I rarely hear anything negative about them. They are fair, they listen, they are smart. Yes, I have a lot of respect for both of them. I would say that has created a more unified faculty for the most part, and consequently, I think, when the faculty feel good about each other and about the college, the student body tends to as well. I must admit I was surprised at the sit-in for Wells Fargo. That's what happened in my era. Linda Schindler and I were chairs of the Student Employment Committee at some point in the 1990s. We wanted to give them a dime an hour raise and the treasurer at the time said no, they wouldn't allow us to raise their wages, which hadn't been raised in like two, three years. There were a lot of protests at that time. And I know that one of the faculty tried to get the student employees to unionize with, I think, grad students at the University. That didn't work. Finally, they got a small raise. We called so many schools in the area to see how we ranked as far as student employment wages and Mac was right up there. Carleton and St. Olaf student workers were paid less but they are not considered comparable since they are in a small town, not a metropolitan area. St. Thomas students were paid a little bit more. That was an interesting time.

[46:09]

AH: Do you remember the sit-ins that happened in 2003 or 2002 about the sweatshop labor?

KC: Oh, no, no I forgot about those.

AH: I just find it interesting because I feel the more I research this school, the more I realize there's sit-ins about every ten years.

KC: I was actually on the second floor of Weyerhaeuser and I do remember students sitting there trying to keep us from getting into our offices. But clearly I didn't even know what it was about so it must not have made a big impression.

[47:14]

AH: So, I know that you were chair of the Staff Advisory Council, what kind of work did you do with that committee?

KC: I got to wear a cap and gown! That's the answer, my big claim to fame. When Mike McPherson was inaugurated, I was chair of SAC. I spoke from the podium and was part of the platform party, so I got to wear a cap and gown. SAC, what did we do? We tried to represent staff. I think there was more unhappy staff at that time. I think staff for the most part felt unsupported, that the college was not interested in how staff felt. Now, whether that's true, I don't know. The surveys did indicate that was the sentiment among staff. SAC, at least at that time, had pretty limited power, let's put it that way. You know, we tried to improve things and

keep things going, but it was tough. Maybe they're still having trouble. I have no idea, but I think, whether they're paying lip service to it or not, Brian and Kathy really have been better to the staff.

[47:28]

AH: And you mentioned previously that you worked on getting the title changed, was that through SAC or some other—?

KC: It may have started there, yes. I also sat on the committee to write the first maternity leave policy.

AH: There wasn't one?

KC: No. The committee was made up of names from the past. Susan Toth, Emily Rosenberg, Anne Sutherland. It was all women, and we drew up a policy even giving men, the fathers, a little time off as well. We spent months researching it with other industries, submitted it to Gavin and he said no, I don't like this. So yes, you can see why Bob was not well respected. Regarding changing the job title: there was quite a groundswell of department coordinators who wanted more recognition and they wanted the college to understand that we weren't just secretaries; we did far more than people thought, and in a wide range of areas. We went round and around. Suggestions included office manager, department supervisor. And the HR person at that time just kept saying no, no, we can't use manager because that would mean the college would have to change its payroll policies. We finally came up with department coordinators. It's

a great job, it's hard to explain what a coordinator does because she does everything. As my husband used to say, you do everything but teach, and that's pretty much it. In math I supervised thirty-five students. It can be a big job. It requires lots of diplomacy and friendliness, to both faculty and students. I loved that job, it's rewarding, I felt satisfied for the most part, yes, and it was fun to watch the students come in as first years and graduate. You guys grow up!

AH: Yeah.

KC: Yes.

[52:56]

AH: Um, what other committees were you on?

KC: A couple different search committees, probably the most important one was for the provost at that time. Actually that was a failed search because we couldn't find someone who was willing to work with Bob. And that's when, I believe it was Dan Hornbach, said okay, I'll do it. Bob wasn't long for the presidency anyway. And the Student Employment committee, which I worked on several times. And, like I said, the maternity policy committee.

AH: Did that finally get approved?

KC: Well, yes, at some point. But I wasn't a part of that so I don't know what they did. I just know that we sat around this table in Old Main forever working. We'd give each other

assignments, okay you check out Honeywell, trying to come up with something, write it up. I was on a committee with some former deans of students, but I cannot remember. I was on the search that hired Laurie Hamre. Until I got to the math department, I tried to be really involved on campus, but then I kind of felt satisfied just with—just doing the math job. I didn't feel the need to branch out. I was on the development committee, I remember, with the Board of Trustees. That was interesting, I can't say that I ever opened my mouth, but I learned a lot. Oh, I was co-chair of Touch the Future, a—

AH: Previous fundraising campaign?

KC: Yes.

AH: That was McPherson?

KC: Yes. With Mark Dickinson, David Lanegran, and Karen Warren. I think it was one of the College's first attempts to raise big bucks. And, I think we were pretty successful. It's not my cup of tea, that's for sure. But I did it.

[56:05]

AH: Great. What of the work that you've done as a part of the Macalester staff do you think you're the most proud of?

KC: Probably trying to bring alums to campus to talk to current students about what you can do with a psych major or what you can do with a math major. I actually proposed it, and the faculty in psych said, go for it, which was kind of unusual, at least in my experience, for the faculty to give a staff member total responsibility for something. I contacted some alum psych majors who had interesting jobs and brought them to campus. It was over the dinner hour, I remember holding it in Lampert. Now the college is bringing more alumni to campus. It's a good way to illustrate just what students can do with a major. Plus, we have some very successful alumni. It's fun to bring back grads who have worked for Microsoft, Apple, Google, Thompson Reuters, and other interesting places.

AH: Great.

KC: So I think that would be it. Again, that was one of the things that I carried through from start to finish.

[58:02]

AH: Now, to talk about some changes over time. Thinking back to your student days and just recently leaving the college, how have you seen the Macalester student body change?

KC: You're becoming more traditional. There was a time when it was cool to not wash your hair, just be as grubby and unkempt looking as you could be. You would see odd, odd, odd outfits. And that really doesn't happen much anymore. When I was a student, believe it or not, we wore skirts and dresses to class. That was definitely different. But by my senior year, I wore

jeans, not blue denim, but a color we called “wheat jeans.” The college went from being fairly traditional, I don't know that I'd say conservative, but a traditional campus, to rather far out. Like I said, the college had horrible press. And any time there was a picture in the newspaper, it was of somebody just unbelievably weird. I swear cameramen came to campus to find just the oddest person they could. And that wasn't too hard usually. Grungy. I've noticed for a good ten years, that the students coming in now are more serious, they're more goal-oriented, oh my god, you guys are smart. And, you want an education. It seemed for quite a while that students were less interested in education and more interested in making a point. To stand for something. And not that that doesn't happen now, but there is a stronger focus on learning, developing critical thinking skills.

[1:01:10]

AH: And do you think there's a, sort of, political—change in political interest that goes along with this?

KC: Oh yes. The college will never be conservative, even though I think it was somewhat in the '50s, but I wasn't there. That's just what I've been told. Political change. I don't think it's as liberal as it used to be. I think our faculty have not changed in that respect. I think we still have very liberal faculty. But I do think we're getting students from more conservative backgrounds, and whether they stay conservative after being at Mac, I don't know. And it seems like there are fewer students on financial aid. The college can say all they want, all I know is that I spent hours trying to hire no-need students for math preceptors because it's difficult to tell a faculty person that they can't hire someone because the student doesn't have aid. I always had to make a case,

justifying why I wanted to hire this person. And it really can't be coincidental that the only acceptable preceptors had no aid—I'm saying that kind of backwards—but anyway, it just didn't make a lot of sense. I do sense there is less financial need among today's students.

[1:04:02]

AH: And you were at Macalester when need-blind went away?

KC: Yes.

AH: Do you remember that controversy? Because it was also proposed by a math professor if I'm correct, it was Danny Kaplan's proposal?

KC: Yes. I talked to Danny about this a lot. In order to become fiscally responsible, the College could not continue need-blind. The college says it wants diversity. Well, economic diversity is something that the college really didn't have. For the most part, our students came from impoverished to middle class backgrounds. There were a lot of issues around that, and I know alums especially just hated eliminating the need-blind policy. I don't know how that's going now. It's an unusual thing for Macalester to even consider. But I think they saw that if we were going to compete, we had to change that policy. Colleges were adding grad schools and other attempts to expand to get additional revenue. That's how I understood it. St. Thomas added, god only knows what all, and Hamline added the law school, well, St. Thomas did too. We discussed whether or not Mac should (or could) continue to be a four-year liberal arts institution. The trustees alone, students, faculty, everyone said no, let's keep it the way it is.

Well, if you're going to do that, it requires a lot of money. Especially in the sciences. Oh my gosh, the equipment and essential things to stay on the cutting edge takes a lot of money. And that seems to be an area that more and more students are considering. When parents and students visit, they want to see what kind of equipment we have, what kind of labs we have. Since working in Anthropology, I haven't really been in humanities or even the social sciences to see what their costs might be. You just can't "make do" and continue to get top students.

[1:08:36]

AH: How do you perceive that the school has changed in diversity?

KC: Oh, it's much more diverse. There are more international students than before. There is one thing I wish could change. In math, there were many Asian female majors. They seem to be friends mostly with other Asian females. And from what I understand that's not uncommon among the other international students who stick together. Perhaps one reason for this is that international students are brought to campus two weeks early. Naturally they form bonds before the other students arrive. It bothered me to see how the international students chose to isolate themselves from the rest of campus. Their Facebook pages would be in Chinese. I'm not sure that they assimilated as well as they could have. Maybe Mac makes it too difficult. I don't know. But there didn't seem to be as much participating in the college as a whole. I don't know how many pictures I got of, say, all Asian females in [the] Class of 2013. They just hung together for the most part. That's probably a lot easier and more comfortable than assimilating. I don't have an answer.

[1:11:03]

AH: Great. Well, I think we're going to move into just some general reflections.

KC: Okay.

AH: What have you most enjoyed about being part of the staff at Macalester?

KC: Working with students. You guys just never fail to amaze. You're smart, you're interesting, you come up with creative ideas. It never gets old working in academics because the students are so different and interesting.

AH: And what are your major critiques of Macalester?

KC: I'm really satisfied with the school right now, I can say that. I do not think staff has always been supported the way they should have. Some people got some really bad deals. I saw the kind of agreements that would be made with faculty, and oh my gosh, staff didn't get anything like that. Okay, we're not PhDs, we don't have tenure, but we are vital to the running of the campus. There's still some of that. I guess that would be my biggest critique.

AH: And what do you believe are Macalester's greatest strengths?

KC: Smart, smart, smart students. I think most alumni say that we could never get into Mac as it stands today, and I think that's probably true! The academic programs are great, the residential life activities have improved a great deal.

AH: That's great. Do you have a favorite memory from your student days?

KC: Let's see. We had fire drills in the middle of the night.

AH: Ooh! [laughter]

KC: Students had to leave, and some didn't come back. How are they going to find us? That was fun. It was such a challenge to outsmart the house—dorm mothers. They did not trust us. So, naturally, we were not to be trusted! There was such a difference between the policies for males and females. Males had no rules! They had no curfews, no restrictions, nothing. And women had many restrictions. There was a lot of goofiness. Barry always says that his days at Mac were so overshadowed with conflict and war and yelling. And I was there in a very, kind of sweet time. We had dances, like I said, girls dressed up. Barry does not feel like he had a traditional experience at all. But I think most students who were there in the early '70s probably would say similar things.

[1:16:02]

AH: Now, do you have a favorite memory from your days on staff?

KC: Lots of them. Many center around graduation. Students are so nice. I've been included in students' graduation parties and dinners with their parents and families. That is very rewarding. I think many department coordinators enjoy that acknowledgement of having made a difference in a student's four years. I must admit, speaking at Mike McPherson's inauguration was a real big thrill. Adrienne Christiansen was a huge help to me. We would first try to think of what I was going to say, then how I was going to say it. It was very fun. I think it was a positive experience for all of us who were on that search committee for the provost. Andy Overman was chair, and I remember him calling me on a Sunday afternoon saying, we did our job. I said what? He said, you will hear tomorrow that Bob is resigning. That was not our intent, but because of the way Bob handled it, the Trustees finally figured him out and saw that the faculty vote of no confidence really meant something. This vote wasn't just a bunch of disgruntled academics. I think that's how Bob tried to ignore their vote.

[1:18:24]

AH: Now, having left Macalester, what have you been doing in your retirement?

KC: We have a home in Arizona, so we spend the winter there. We came back too soon. We returned in April and it was still snowing here. That was not so fun. It's just been so nice to sit with a book. I've started doing yoga; I'm doing some different volunteer work. I enjoy not having to look at the clock. That is really nice. For the most part, I can do whatever I want, whenever I want.

AH: Well, what are you most looking forward to in the future?

KC: I guess just more of the same. The Carefree Library puts on the most fabulous programs and classes. They are interesting and well done.

AH: Great. And, is there anything else you'd like to add to the record before we close?

KC: No, I feel a deep allegiance to the school. There have been some frustrating times, but overall I'm glad I went to Mac, I'm glad I worked at Mac, and, yes, it's been a very positive experience.

AH: Great, well thank you so much.

KC: You're welcome, thank you. Good questions.

End of interview [1:20:57]