

The Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

An Honor Thesis (499)

by

Hannah Gunnell

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Michael Doyle

**Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana**

April 29, 2019

Expected Date of Graduation

May 2020

Abstract

The Ball State University Honors College is a liberal arts institution in a public university. As the first Honors Program in the state of Indiana, the Honors College is the birthplace of creativity, innovation and profound thought. Despite the significance of the Honors College, there is no current written history of the Ball State University Honors College on its sixtieth anniversary. This project aims to contribute to the history of the Ball State University Honors College by using long-form, oral history interviews to create primary sources of the Honors College. We used oral history interviews as the medium to do this because the oral history interview better showcases the subject's emotions, putting the humanity back in history. My portion of the project included the interview of three faculty members, Dr. Joseph Trimmer, Dr. John Emert, and Dr. Donald Gilman, which will be added to the other thirty-one administrators, staff, faculty and alumni. All the interviews will be permanently archived from the Ball State University Libraries Digital Media Repository, where the videos will be streamable and the transcripts accessible. By interviewing these faculty, I discovered how the Honors College offered opportunities that impacted the university as a whole.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Michael Doyle for personally inviting me to partake in this project. His recognition of my potential allowed me to advance my research and interviewing abilities, which not only aided in this project, but also aided me in my journalism career.

Table of Contents

Process Analysis Statement

Joseph Trimmer

Release Form

Pre-Interview Notes

Biographical Information Form

CV Sheet

Subject Research Documentation

Timeline for Oral History Interview

Topics List for Oral History Interview

Printed Transcript of Oral History Interview

Post-Interview Thank You Note

John Emert

Release Form

Pre-Interview Notes

Biographical Information Form

Subject Research Documentation

Timeline for Oral History Interview

Topics List for Oral History Interview

Printed Transcript of Oral History Interview

Post-Interview Thank You Note

Donald Gilman Jr.

Release Form

Table of Contents (Continued)

Pre-Interview Notes

Biographical Information Form

Resume

Subject Research Documentation

Timeline for Oral History Interview

Topics List for Oral History Interview

Post-Interview Thank You Note

Video Production Team

Video Production Team notes

Process Analysis Statement

The Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project was an immersive learning course that interviewed thirty-four Honors College faculty, staff, administrators and alumni to compile new primary sources and compose a history of the Ball State Honors College from its creation as an Honors Program in 1959. This team consisted of ten students, graduate student Nathan Rivers (Project Assistant Director), and Dr. Michael Doyle (Project Director). The first half of the semester, the team and I researched Ball State University's history and the history surrounding the birth of Honors Programs in the United States by reading multiple books to develop our subject-area knowledge, which prepared us for our interviews. During the second half of the semester, our team divided up individual work, and this course turned into a immersive learning project. I researched three of the thirty-four subjects, who I then interviewed on-camera and transcribed. Dr. Doyle recruited project advisors Warren Vander Hill (former Honors Program Director), Bruce Geelhoed (unofficial Ball State historian), John Emert (current Dean of the Honors College) and Barb Stedman (Honors College Advisor), and together they decided who the interviewees would be. Additionally, I created timelines of the basic events that occurred over my interviewees' lives. I was also one of three members of the Video Production Team, which consisted of shooting video, searching for B-roll, and writing for an almost twenty-minute documentary that focuses on the creation of the Honors College.

To begin research for the project, I read *Ball State University: An Interpretive History* by Anthony O. Edmonds and E. Bruce Geelhoed¹. Edmonds and Geelhoed wrote Ball State's history from its founding as Eastern Indiana Normal University in the 1880s until around the year 2000, when the book was published. I learned that Eastern Indiana Normal University came about as a direct result of Muncie industrializing after the gas boom, and that this University as

¹ Anthony O. Edmonds and E. Bruce Geelhoed, *Ball State University: An Interpretive History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

well as three others failed before the Ball Brothers purchased and donated the land that became the Eastern Division of Indiana State Normal School (EDISNS) in 1918, which would later become Ball State University. I learned how EDISNS was renamed Ball Teachers College by the Indiana General Assembly, and eventually renamed Ball State Teachers College in 1922, and became independent from Indiana State Normal School. I learned how the institution became accredited; when Ball State became a university; and most importantly for this project, when the Honors College was created.

The next two books I read for research were *Breaking the Academic Lock Step: The Development of Honors Work in American Colleges and Universities* by Frank Aydelotte², and *An Adventure in Education* by the Swarthmore College Faculty³. Aydelotte was the president of Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pennsylvania, and he was the man responsible for the creation of an Honors Program in the United States. He did this by comparing Oxford curricula to his college's curricula, and developed a program designed to let the brightest students flourish. This program was an interdisciplinary program which allowed students to take seminars in two or three disciplines of their choice, take written and oral exams, and produce a thesis.

The Oral History Project team and I took a field trip to Swarthmore College February 9-11, 2019 to study the Honors Program creation under the guidance of Honors Program Director, Dr. Grace Ledbetter. While we were there, we received a tour of the campus, examined Aydelotte's papers in their library, and attended a seminar, in which we compared how Swarthmore's Honors Program changed since Aydelotte created it with Dr. Ledbetter, two current students, an alumna and a history professor. They also hosted us for lunch, where we compared Swarthmore's current Honors Program to Ball State's current Honors College

² Frank Aydelotte, *Breaking the Academic Lock Step: The Development of Honors Work in American Colleges and Universities* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944).

³ The Swarthmore College Faculty, *An Adventure in Education* (Literary Licensing LLC, 2012)

curricula. I found that Swarthmore's Honors Program is for juniors and seniors, and completely replaces their curriculum, whereas Ball State's Honors College courses last the entirety of a student's undergraduate career and only some of the courses can replace core curricula. The two current students presented us their seminar project from the previous semester, titled, "The Honors Program Reimagined," in which they created a course that would allow students from multiple disciplines to work collaboratively with a professor on a project. This was really interesting because that's exactly what our Honors College Oral History Project, and other immersive learning courses, provide here at Ball State. I think it's interesting that such a prestigious school would lack a program that a public university like Ball State offers. The trip lasted two days and was paid for by the Ball State Honors College.

The next book I read was *1707 West Riverside: A History of the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball House and Its People, 1935-Present* by Alyssa R. Bennett and E. Bruce Geelhoed⁴. It focused on the building that is now the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Honors House. I learned that the Honors House was donated to us on behalf of Virginia B. Ball. This book became important to the Video Production Team, because the house itself and what it represents became a major theme of the documentary we produced.

The final book we read didn't have to do with Ball State so much as it was an instruction manual for how to conduct Oral Histories. I found that the information provided in *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* by Donald A. Ritchie⁵ differed little from what I have been trained to do as a journalism-news major. In fact, the reason I decided to partake in this project is because it helped me expand my research and interviewing skills, which I can now use to aid my journalism career. I also discovered through this project that I really enjoy documentary-focused

⁴ Alyssa R. Bennett and E. Bruce Geelhoed, *1707 West Riverside: A History of the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball House and Its People, 1935-present* (Muncie, Ind.: Ball State University, 2017).

⁵ Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History: A Practical Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

journalism and long-form interviews, as opposed to news-journalism and shorter interviews, which is what I was doing before.

After finishing reading these books and taking a field trip to Swarthmore College, I and the other nine students part of the team chose our interviewees. We did this in three separate rounds, where Dr. Doyle and Nathan Rivers explained to us who the interviewees were and the time slots their interviews were scheduled, and then we got to choose who we wanted to interview. In the first round, I chose Dr. John Emert, the current Dean of the Honors College. My teammates thought it was strange I would choose such a high-pressure interviewee, but I've interviewed deans of other colleges for stories published with The Ball State Daily News, so I was not nervous at all. Dr. Emert was supposed to be my first interviewee, but due to a scheduling conflict on his end, the interview was rescheduled. The second interviewee, Dr. Joseph Trimmer, Professor Emeritus of English, was chosen for me because I was interviewing for an internship when the second round occurred. He ended up being the person I interviewed first. The final interviewee I chose was Dr. Donald Gilman Jr., Professor Emeritus of French. All of our interviewees were assigned before Spring Break.

We then had a workshop on February 14, 2019 with Sarah Allison and Mindy Shull from Ball State Libraries to learn how to use the Digital Media Repository to conduct research on our interviewees. We met at Bracken Library Archives, where they gave us a powerpoint presentation instructing us on the specifics of how to utilize the University Libraries website to maximize the number of sources we could use for our research.

Our midterm was a series of essays in which we synthesized all the information we acquired so far. This process allowed me to fully showcase what I had learned so far this semester about the Ball State Honors College, Honors Education in America, and Swarthmore College. One of my essays characterized the Ball State Honors College curricula as showing

more continuity than change in its sixty-year existence because the humanities sequence and the thesis are still the foundation of the Honors College, just as they were sixty years ago. My second essay compared Swarthmore's honors program to the Ball State Honors College, in which I discussed everything previously mentioned.

After Spring Break, we had two practice interviews in which we got to apply all we had learned from Ritchie's book. We split this process into two days: five of us interviewed on the first day and the other five of us interviewed on the second day. I interviewed Marquice Gee, a current student, on the second day. Our practice interviews lasted ten minutes each, and we picked up the interview where the person before us left off. I asked Gee about her experience living in the Honors Residence Hall, DeHority, and her experience with being a Resident Assistant. My classmates complimented me on my interviewing skills, which are well-developed because of my journalism background. Because my skills were more adept than some of my classmates, I found them asking me for help and I gave a lot of advice. From these exchanges I discovered I enjoy coaching as much as I enjoy the practice.

When the practice interviews were finished, our team was set loose to begin research for our interviewees. Ritchie's book recommended ten hours of research for every hour of interview, and since our interviews were not supposed to be more than two hours long, I was recommended to do twenty hours of research per interviewee, which would have been sixty hours total. I realized quickly that I was not going to have enough time to meet this sixty hours before my interviews were scheduled, and I should have started research during Spring Break. I logged the hours of research I did so I could spend an equal amount of time researching for each interviewee, however this was not required of me for the Oral History Project. Additionally, Nathan Rivers and Dr. Doyle collected biographical information forms and CV sheets or resumes from all the interviewees for this project, so for each interviewee I started by looking at

those sheets and organizing a timeline. I researched my interviewees in the order I interviewed them, and there was overlap between when I researched and when the interviews were scheduled.

I researched Dr. Joseph Trimmer first. I had never researched somebody's life from start to finish, nor had I ever used the Digital Media Repository (DMR), so I had to figure out how to narrow down the search results. After putting information from his biographical sheet and CV sheet into a notes document, I decided to start by looking through the BSU Student Newspaper archive in the DMR, where I found a ton of information. I chose this archive because I write for The Ball State Daily News, so this newspaper was familiar. I also thought it would be a good place to start, because the Daily News covers a variety of topics and events, so I knew I would probably be able to get information about what courses he taught, what student organizations he contributed to, how he worked in the Honors College, and his opinions on various university-related events. I organized the articles in a timeline starting with the oldest information and moving to the newest. Dr. Trimmer began teaching English at Ball State in 1968, so I had almost fifty years of The Ball State Daily News articles to look through. I actually found an article about the Virginia Ball Center (which Dr. Trimmer designed and directed) written by somebody I worked with at the Daily News, so I was able to ask her for the interview she did with Dr. Trimmer for the article and use that hour-long interview recording for my research. The Virginia Ball Center became a central focus of our interview because it was the birthplace of immersive learning, which is now a stepple of Ball State University's curricula. I was able to create a twenty-six page notes document in 10 hours and 45 minutes over three days. I actually ran into an issue searching for him because he goes by Joe, so when I searched "Joe Trimmer," I found different articles from searching "Joseph Trimmer," but when I realized this, I was able to find more information. It was difficult to figure out how to organize my notes at first, but once I

decided to do it chronologically, I had a solid working outline of his career at Ball State. I also had a plan to research my other two interviewees. I decided not to look through other DMR archives for information about Dr. Trimmer because I felt I needed to move on to the other interviewees.

I began research on Dr. Emert next. I started looking through Daily News archives in the DMR, and through reading the articles I discovered he was a math professor, a musician, Chair of the Mathematics Department and President of University Senate. When I finished looking at Daily News articles, I looked through University Senate Minutes, but the minutes were vague about what specifically was discussed at the meetings, so all I really found were committees he served on, and that he was secretary before he was president. He served on the Honors Subcommittee, but I couldn't find anything about what that did on that committee, so I made note of that and asked him during the interview. Dr. Doyle provided me with an essay about Dr. Emert that a student wrote for his HONR 199 course. I learned a lot about Emert's childhood, which became valuable during my interview. When I finished looking through the Senate Minutes, I had only spent five hours researching over two days, so I decided to look through the other DMR archives to spend an equal amount of time researching Dr. Emert as I did with Dr. Trimmer. I looked through Board of Trustees Minutes, Colleges and Curricula, Commencement Ceremonies, Communique, Odyssey, Newspapers, and a Muncie Matinee Musicale program. I found that Dr. Emert sometimes played piano and organ for Ball State concerts and the First Baptist Church in Muncie, which was when I learned what specific instruments he played. When I finished, I came up with twenty-six pages of notes after 10 hours and 10 minutes total over four days. I decided on the last day to incorporate the Honors College Timeline that one of my fellow teammates created into the notes I made for Dr. Emert and for Dr. Trimmer, this way I would

have that on-hand for the interviews in the context of their lives. I would do the same for Dr. Gilman as well.

I then took a day to relax a bit, because I was spending on average three to four hours a day researching, on top of everything I was doing for the other six classes I was taking, so I was exhausted. I did spend an hour refining the notes I had for Dr. Trimmer, because his interview was the next morning. Dr. Doyle provided me with a column Dr. Trimmer published in the Star Press, so I read it and added it to my notes. The article was about Trimmer's involvement with the Indiana Humanities, an Indianapolis-based organization that gives grants and organizes programs for central Indiana. I never asked him about it in the interview.

The interview with Dr. Trimmer took place at 10 a.m. on March 22, 2019 in room BB 201, the Oral History Studio. I wasn't nervous because I am comfortable with my interviewing skills, but I was anxious to see how the interview would go. We were supposed to make a pre-interview phone call contact with our interviewees, set up via email, but Dr. Trimmer never responded to my email so I wasn't able to discuss with him beforehand the interview process. Dr. Trimmer was an easy interview, for the most part. As a journalist, I usually run into the problem of interviewees not wanting to discuss topics with me in detail, however I had the opposite problem with Dr. Trimmer. He talked quite a bit, which was fantastic because it allowed me to acquire lots of information, but it also made it hard for me to pace the interview, because I like to wait for someone to finish their thought before I move to the next question, and Dr. Trimmer had a lot of thoughts to finish. There were topics I wanted to discuss with him that I wasn't able to because I ran out of time.

Later that day, I began researching information about Dr. Donald Gilman. Dr. Gilman's CV sheet was significantly longer than Dr. Trimmer's (and Dr. Emert didn't have one) so it took me about 45 minutes just to incorporate all on his CV sheet into a notes document. Then I

began adding Daily News articles, and discovered there was a Marion County Sheriff who had the same name, so some of the articles I found were completely irrelevant and ended up wasting my research time. There also were not nearly as many articles that featured or quoted Dr. Gilman as my other two interviewees. I looked through University Senate Minutes next, where I found he served on the Honors Subcommittee, but when I asked him about this during the interview he denied being involved with University Senate. I also looked through Board of Trustees minutes, but found nothing other than his promotions and when he received grants, which were already listed on his CV sheet. Then I looked through course catalogues to see what Honors courses he taught, but all I found were French courses. Then I looked through the Campus Update newsletters, but I also found very little about his involvement with the Honors College. I found a lot about his involvement with the French Department, the Medieval Association of the Midwest, and the London Centre, but after digging through everything in the DMR (I did look through every file his name came up in), I was only able to compile twenty-three pages of notes after 8 hours and 15 minutes total for Dr. Gilman. I think part of the reason it didn't take me as long to search through the DMR is because this was the third time I had searched through the website and I was familiar with it at that point. It wasn't taking me as long to find and understand the information I needed, which shows physical proof that this project improved my researching skills.

Before I finished my research on Dr. Gilman, I made pre-interview phone calls with him and Dr. Emert. I called Dr. Emert first, because I was going to interview him first. From that phone call, I learned that Dr. Emert is a friendly person and likes to joke, so that phone call alleviated the few anxieties I had about interviewing him. At the time, I already had my interview with Dr. Trimmer (the one I didn't pace well) so I was anxious because I wanted my next one to be better, and I was unsure specifically how to do that. The phone call with Dr. Emert helped me

feel more confident going into the interview. My phone call with Dr. Gilman, however, destroyed that confidence. When Dr. Gilman asked me what kinds of questions I would be asking, I hadn't written out a topics list yet because I hadn't finished the research, so I told him I would be asking him questions about his life and career at Ball State. I made the mistake of using the phrase "personal life," which he very clearly disapproved of, because I believe what I meant and what he inferred were not the same thing. I meant his childhood and life before he came to Ball State, and I believe what he interpreted were personal values, which he did not seem fond of sharing.

My interview with Dr. Emert came first, on March 26, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Oral History Studio. This interview went very well. Dr. Emert also talked a lot, but he talked faster than Dr. Trimmer, so I was able to cover everything I wanted to within two hours. Dr. Emert gave us a really good sound bite about moving from Carmichael Hall to the Honors House: he said that he started in the Honors College a year before it was set to move out of Carmichael, so he worked out of boxes for a while. He then said he was the first to move into the Honors House, where he worked at a card table and folding chair in his unfurnished office. Although completely unrelated to the Honors College, I really enjoyed the story of how he met his wife and asked her to marry him. It was really sweet and showed aspects of his personality that made this interview my favorite of the three. Dr. Emert kept using this motif, "the puzzle," which I was able to refer back to when asking questions throughout the rest of the interview.

My interview with Dr. Gilman was the next morning, March 27, 2019 at 10 a.m. in the Oral History Studio. I was very nervous because of our phone call, and I mentioned that to Dr. Doyle, but he said it would be okay, and he was right. Dr. Gilman was very direct and didn't stray too far from the question I asked. I was unable to identify a motif to refer back to, like I could with Dr. Emert, but I had brought a long enough questions list that I was able to keep firing

off questions. I had to pry a bit more to get Dr. Gilman to open up. A big focus of Dr. Gilman's interview was the study abroad programs he directed and conducted, many of which were through the Honors College, which was not made clear during my research. In fact, quite a few topics came up in regards to the Honors College that I hadn't found in my research. In retrospect, I was least prepared for this interview, but it still went well.

After the interviews, we had another workshop with Sarah Allison and Mindy Shull at Bracken Library Archives to learn how to transcribe our interviews. They gave us a template to use for transcribing. Dr. Doyle also gave us the Baylor University Institute for Oral History *Style Guide: A Quick Reference for Editing Oral Memoires*⁶ we could use to help with transcribing. Because I decided to turn the work for this project in as my thesis, I was required to transcribe two of the interviews, whereas my classmates who didn't turn this in as their thesis only did one. Dr. Doyle hired Jennifer Duquaine, a staff member at University Archives, to transcribe the remaining interviews. All transcripts will be made available with the videos of the Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project interviews on the Digital Media Repository. I transcribed Dr. Trimmer's interview because it was the longest of the three (which was a requirement for the project) and Dr. Emert's interview because it was my favorite. Dr. Doyle said that he was able to hire people from Bracken to transcribe the remaining interviews. I had transcribed parts of smaller interviews I did for the Daily News to get quotes for stories, but I had never transcribed full interviews before. The process was pretty much the same for the project as it is for writing stories: omit verbal pauses, include interruptions, only include two crutch words per page, spell out numbers, etc. I didn't log how long it took me to transcribe the interviews, but I'm estimating that it took me about five hours to type Dr. Trimmer's interview and six to type Dr. Emert's. I know I was able to finish Dr. Trimmer's transcription faster because he

⁶ Baylor University Institute for Oral History *Style Guide: A Quick Reference for Editing Oral Memoires* (Baylor University, 2018)

talked slower. I was able to type about as quickly as he spoke, so I didn't have to pause the video very often. Dr. Trimmer also paused when he was trying to think of what to say, so if I got behind typing, I could catch up when he paused. Dr. Emert spoke much quicker, and he had a tendency to use longer sentences that needed more complex punctuation, so I had to pause the video more often to keep up with him. Even though his interview was about ten minutes shorter than Dr. Trimmer's, it actually took me almost an hour longer to finish his transcription. I found the transcribing process really interesting because I realized that people don't typically talk with correct grammar, which became frustrating when typing because I wanted to fix the errors and couldn't.

When the transcriptions were finished, I took the main points from the notes I made for each interviewee and turned those into basic timelines covering their lives, as the project required. This actually confused me because I thought the research notes were supposed to be in a timeline format, so essentially it looks like I have two timelines in my portfolio, but they are labelled and cited differently.

The day after the last interview, April 5, some of our team members showcased our project at the Mid East Honors Association conference, which Ball State hosted. They displayed posters of our team, gave a fifteen-minute slideshow presentation about what we had accomplished so far, answered questions from the audience, and showed a six-minute documentary film made by Robbie Mehling, from the Office of Immersive Learning.

Next, I met with Dr. Doyle and the other two members of the Video Production Team, Jocelyn Hall (Producer, Director and Editor of the Documentary) and Noah Nobbe (Assistant Producer). During this meeting, we discussed the themes for the documentary based off what the interviewees said, decided on the title based off what multiple interviewees said, and I wrote the introduction to the documentary. Instead of writing a story and filling in the gaps with the

interviewees, we took what they said and shaped each section of the documentary together. From this day, we had three weeks to produce a twenty minute documentary. Each interviewer had an interview supervisor, either Dr. Doyle or Nathan Rivers, and the interview supervisor would take minute-by-minute notes in regards to the topics of the interview. These notes included timecodes, which became extremely helpful for the Video Production Team because we did not have transcripts to use. We relied heavily on these notes for finding sound bites we could use to piece the documentary together. After five drafts and several meetings, we produced a twenty-minute documentary titled, "Incubator of Innovation."

We had a wrap party on the last day of class, where we showed the video. I really enjoyed seeing my classmates smile at the work that we all put together. Their reactions told me that I did a good job, and that was the reward for all the hard work I put in, even more so than the actual documentary.

What was unique about this project is it was as much a product and an example of the Honors College as what the interviewees discussed, and I wrote the introduction to reflect that. I wrote it like a journalist, using narrative style. It focused on how the ten of us sat at a table in the beginning of the semester, and how we are a representation of the hundreds of Honors students who came before us. Jocelyn liked it so much that she used the first draft of my introduction. She paired my words so well with the B-roll and video that everyone on our team loved it.

That moment epitomized my experience in the Honors College, because it allowed me to utilize my journalism training as part of this project in a way that made me feel validated and accepted. This is exactly what we learned from doing this project: The Honors College is about people, different people with different backgrounds and trainings, facilitated to collaborate and create a project that would not exist had Warren Vander Hill not brought liberal arts education to

Ball State. The Honors College is a liberal arts education in a public university, which I not only reflected in this project, but truly came to understand.



FEB 27 2019

**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Intellectual Property Consent Form
Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project**

We, Joe Trimmer (interviewee) and

_____ (interviewer), understand the purpose of this interview, to record and preserve historical information by digital audio/video (or other technical means), and consent to the transcribing, typing, printing, and publication of said interview. We also consent to the digitization of this material, as well as any supplementary photographs or documents, for access via the Internet.

We understand that the interview and supplementary items may be distributed to the public for educational purposes, including formats such as print, public programming, and the Internet. We agree to freely share the interview and supplementary items under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>). This means that we jointly retain the copyright, but that the public may freely copy, modify, and share these items for noncommercial purposes under the same terms, if they include the original source information.

We further understand that this interview may be kept and maintained by Ball State University Archives and Special Collections, for the use of students and scholars for as long as Archives and Special Collections believes the material to be of scholarly or historical value.

Interviewee

Print Name: Joe Trimmer (Signed): Joe Trimmer
Date: 2/22/19

Interviewer

Print Name: _____ (Signed): _____
Date: _____

**Project Director Michael Wm. Doyle, Associate Professor of History, Ball State University
Burkhardt Building 213, 2000 W. University Avenue, Muncie, IN 47306-0480**

(Signed): _____

Date: _____

Pre-Interview Contact Notes: Joe Trimmer

Pre-Interview Time: 2:10-2:35 P.M., February 20, 2019

Pre-Interviewer: Nathan Rivers

- Joe Trimmer briefly talked about his life before Ball State, mentioning that his dad was a clergyman at a church in West Lafayette. His father also worked with the church's youth group, where he became friends with Craig Williamson (who we spoke with in our visit to Swarthmore).
- Joe arrived at Ball State in 1968, where he was hired by the English Department. He indicated that when he first moved to Muncie, he lived catty-corner to Warren Vander Hill, the director of the honors program. Warren proceeded to ask Joe to teach as part of the humanities sequence in Honors, which he agreed to for more interesting courses to teach.
- Joe indicated that the initial plan for honors was a mess due to the quarter system; professors and students were intended to remain together for all three courses of the humanities sequence, but often they would never be seen by the professor again after one course. He indicated this became even worse when the semester system was implemented.
- Trimmer implemented a way to ensure students stayed to complete honors thesis. He created a \$1,000 prize for outstanding honors work to give students incentive to stay. He later expanded this to include creative projects alongside traditional thesis.
- In the late 90s, he founded the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry, which has done numerous collaborations with the Honors College. This included working with Dean Reubel, Jo Ann and Tony Edmonds, and Beth Dalton to revamp the honors curriculum. He served as the director of this program for 15 years before retiring.
- Joe still teaches one class a year to "stave off boredom." He returns every fall to teach Honors 199

Joe Trimmer
Professor Emeritus of English
Ball State University
Muncie, IN 47306
M:jtrimmer@bsu.edu
P-765-748-2993

EDUCATION

1963---Colgate University, BA (English)
1966---Purdue University, MA (English)
1968---Purdue University, PhD (American Literature)
Dissertation: *A Portrait of the Artist in Motion: A Study of the Artist-Surrogates
In the Novels of William Faulkner*

EMPLOYMENT

1968-2014: Assistant, Associate, Full Professor of English, Ball State University
1985-2000: Instructor, Martha's Vineyard Summer Workshops on Teaching and Writing,
Northeastern University
1972-1984: Director of the Writing Program, Ball State University
1984-1988: Director of Doctoral Programs (Composition), Ball State University
1979-1982: Director, American Studies Curriculum Project, National Endowment for the Humanities
1979-1981: Director of Research, Middletown Film Project, (NEH) Public Broadcasting Network
1994-1995: Scholar in Residence: Indiana Council for the Humanities
2000-2014: **Founding Director, Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry, Ball State University**

PUBLICATIONS

Books (13, new editions in 4 books*)

1971---*Black American Literature: Notes on the Problem of Definition*. (Muncie: BSU Monograph Series).
1972---*A Casebook on Invisible Man*. (New York: T.Y. Crowell).
1976---*American Oblique: Writing About the American Experience*. (Boston: Houghton).
1978---*The National Book Award for Fiction: An Index to the First Twenty-five Years*. (Boston: G.K. Hall).
1982---*Middletown Teaching Notes*. (New York: Learning Designs).
1992---*Understanding Others: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Studies and the
Teaching of Literature*. (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English).
1996---*Writing Arguments*. (Boston: Houghton).
1997---*Narration as Knowledge: Tales of the Teaching Life*. (Portsmouth: Heinemann).
2002---*eFictions, 5th Edition*. * (Fort Worth: Harcourt).
2004---*Writing With a Purpose, 14th Edition*. * (Boston: Houghton).
2007---*The Sundance Introduction to Literature*. (Boston: Wadsworth).
2017---*The River Reader, 12th Edition*. * (Boston: Cengage)
2019---*A Guide to MLA Documentation, 10th Edition** (Boston: Cengage)

Articles and Chapters in Books (50, half-dozen drawn from full resume)

2006---"Teaching and Learning Outside and Inside the Box," *Peer Review*, 8 (Spring): 20-22
2000---"Writing About X: The Arts." *Coming of Age: The Advanced Composition Curriculum*.
Ed. Linda Shamoon. (Portsmouth: Heinemann). 132/CD/ROM.
1999---"Real World Writing Assignments," *Journal of Advanced Composition*, 19 (Winter): 35-49.
1998---"Postcards: Inside and Out." *ARTiculating: Teaching Writing in a Visual World*

- Ed. Pamela Childress. (Portsmouth: Heinemann): 22-33.
 1997---"Teaching Others: A Cautionary Tale." *Rethinking American Literature*. Ed Lil Brannon and Brenda Greene. (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English).
 1975---"V.K. Ratliff: A Portrait of the Artist in Motion" *Modern Fiction Studies* 20.4, 451-67.

SELECTED SPECIAL PROJECTS

- 2016-- Executive Board, Council on Undergraduate Research**
 2009---Counselor, Arts and Humanities Division, Council on Undergraduate Research
 2006---Guest Editor, Special Issue on "The Creativity Imperative." *Peer Review*, 8 (Summer).
 1996---Producer, *Hopewell Weekly*, 40 episodes featuring "New Work by Indiana's Best Writers,"
 Muncie: Indiana Public Radio.
 1985---Consultant, *Writers Writing*, Learning Designs. (New York: WNET) [3-part series for PBS].
 1979-82---Director of Research, *Middletown*, 6-part series. (NEH). Winner of 10 Emmys and 1st Place in Sundance Film Festival

PRESENTATIONS

I have given over 200 presentations and invited lectures on literature, literacy and culture at conferences and universities throughout America. I have also given lectures and facilitated workshops on "undergraduate research" in England, Netherlands, Denmark, Portugal, Argentina, China, and Australia. **From 2000 to 2014, I gave lectures and presentations on the innovative activities of the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry in America and abroad.**

FELLOWSHIPS and AWARDS (selected)

- 1978---Lilly Fellowship, "Senses of Place."
 1980---Outstanding Researcher Award, Ball State University.
 1989---Westminster College, Oxford University.
 2000---Outstanding Faculty, Ball State University.
2014---Immersive Learning Legacy Award, Ball State University
2014---Sagamores of the Wabash, State of Indiana
2015---Volunteer of the Year, Council on Undergraduate Research
2016---Distinguished Alumni Award, Purdue University

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (selected)

- *I gave a series of 4 Public Programs (1972) Humanities Center for Public Programs (Madison, WI)
 - *I developed a project, *Middletown Man* (1973) published by the Indiana Committee for the Humanities
 - *I received a grant (\$212,000), (1979), *American Studies in the Secondary Schools*, Education Division
 - *I worked on a grant (\$2,000,000), (1980), *Middletown*, Media Division
 - *I gave a series of 6 Public Programs (1985), Indiana Committee on the Humanities
 - *I published "*Heaven and Earth: The Making of a Cross-Cultural Autobiography*," *culturefront*, 3.2, 33-36, 79. 1994. [NY Council on the Humanities]
- *I was elected Vice-President of the Indiana Committee for the Humanities (1985-95).
 *I served as Scholar in Residence for the Indiana Council for the Humanities (1994-95).
***I was elected to the Board of Directors of Indiana Humanities (2014--)**
***I serve as an advocate on the National Humanities Alliance (2014---)**
***I have attended the annual meetings of the Federation of State Humanities Councils (2014---); Humanities on the Hill (2014--); 50th Anniversary of NEH at U of Virginia.**

Hannah Gunnell

April 24, 2019

HONR 390-9 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

**Subject Research Documentation for Oral History Interview with Joseph Trimmer
on March 22, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana**

8/4/41

- Trimmer was born. (bio form)

1959

- Trimmer graduated from Linton High School (now Schenectady High School) in Schenectady, New York. (bio form)

1960

- Joined Lambda Chi Alpha (Greek Fraternity no longer in existence) at Colgate University (bio form).

1963

- Received Bachelors of Arts from Colgate University, New York (bio form).

1964

- Joined modern language association (bio form) (<https://www.mla.org/About-Us>).

1966

- Received Masters of Arts from Purdue University (bio form).
- Married Carol Trimmer (bio form).

1968

- Received Doctorate degree from Purdue University (bio form).
- Hired at Ball State University as an Assistant English Professor (bio form).
- A house at 203 N College Ave is designated as the Honors house and began to be used starting in the Winter of 1969 (Honors College Timeline).
- 1945-1968: John Emens was president, John Pruis became president in '68 (Honors College Timeline).

1969

- Had son, Bob Trimmer (bio form).
- Started submitting works to "Forum" literary journal (he only contributed to 13 of the journals published between '69 and '80
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/frm/search/searchterm/joseph%20trimmer>).

2/17/1969

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/14218/rec/7> Daily News article about special programs for Black history week, specific program stressing the importance of the negro in the society. Trimmer gave a lecture.

5/15/1969

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/14788/rec/45> another Daily News article about Trimmer's black lit course.

9/12/1969

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/15180/rec/47> Daily News article. Trimmer participated in “Great Expectations,” a dialogue-type freshman convocation.

10/2/1969

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/15372/rec/8> Daily News article about literary magazine “Expositor,” of which Trimmer was a co-editor with Daryl Adrian. Students would study the works of past students as a way to improve writing abilities (page 4).
- Also an article about him teaching a course on Black literature, in which he will study black identity and whether the “black” or the “literature” is more important (page 6).

11/6/1969

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/15709/rec/80> article about Trimmer publishing an article in The Steinbeck Newsletter. Trimmer’s article is a review of “The Social Novel at the End of an Era” by Warren French.

1970

- Daily News Roll Call:
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/19366/rec/37> lists Trimmer’s picture, position (like a yearbook).
- Dr. Warren Vander Hill becomes the Director of the Honors Program (Honors College Timeline).

1/12/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/20501/rec/31> Another Daily News article about Trimmer's Black American Literature class.

3/12/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/20136/rec/41> Daily News article about Robert Frost's daughter Lesley Frost coming to speak at BSU. She spoke first in a series of English lectures. Trimmer also spoke at one of these lecture series, supposedly April 29.

4/22/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/19762/rec/43> Daily News article about closed circuit television program "Black Renaissance in the Twentieth Century: A Focus on Harlem," which Trimmer was in charge of along with Dwight Hoover. It aired on this date in PM 103 (Archives believes this location is a typo and most likely occurred at Carmichael Hall).

9/30/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/18676/rec/58> Follow up Daily News article about Carmichael project, saying students like it. Trimmer was not quoted but featured in a photo with a student. The caption discusses the close association between professors and students as result of the Carmichael project.

11/10/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/18269/rec/52> Daily News article of events, listing same film information as the film (see below).

11/11/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/18256/rec/48> Daily News article of events, listing Trimmer as the introductory speaker prior to the showing of an honors film, *The Virginian*. It was the third film on display in the honors film series.

11/12/1970

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/18090/rec/16> Article about Carmichael Residential Instruction Project Plans, and how Trimmer plans to “team teach” an English class with Thomas Koontz.
 - The Carmichael Project was the first living-learning community, according to a course catalog from 1980.
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCoursCat/id/6566/rec/6>

1971

- Published *Black American Literature: Notes on the Problem of Definition* (Muncie, BSU monograph series) (CV sheet).
 - <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSMngrph/id/14> (digital version of publication).

10/12/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21099/rec/85> Daily News article about “The Maltese Falcon.” See below.

10/13/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21112/rec/4> Daily News article about the Honors program film festival. "The Maltese Falcon" was the name of the film. Trimmer gave introductory comment.

10/14/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21125/rec/6> Reprint of Daily News article about "The Maltese Falcon" (see above).

10/21/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21194/rec/20> Daily News article about Trimmer and Warren Vander Hill to attend the annual meeting of the National Collegiate Honors Council in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

10/22/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21207/rec/21> Daily News article about the Trimmer attending the National Collegiate Honors Council meeting in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

11/10/71

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21393/rec/67> Daily News article about how "Expositor" was received by publishers.

1972

- Published *A Casebook on Invisible Man* (New York. T.Y. Crowell) (CV sheet).

3/9/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/22104/rec/51> Daily News article about English lectures, “The Parameters of English: Phase III.” Trimmer was the chair of the lecture series committee.

3/21/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/22800/rec/26> Daily News article about how students apparently bought academic papers to turn in and its plagiarism. Trimmer condemns plagiarizing and the company that sells the research papers.

3/30/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/22439/rec/35> Daily News article about “My favorite book” lectures, in which profs would lecture on their favorite books. Trimmer is quoted several times, but it is unclear whether or not he is in charge of the program.

4/19/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/30217/rec/65> Daily News article about “General Studies Program,” which was originally a bill passed by the Student Senate. Trimmer was on the subcommittee that would decide whether or not to pass this student senate bill.

5/16/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/30486/rec/30> Daily News article listing Trimmer as one of 66 profs who received promotions (bio form indicates he was promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor).

11/6/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/24100/rec/73> Daily News article listing Trimmer's name in a political campaign ad for Phil Sharp. Apparently, he helped pay for the ad.

11/7/72

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/23804/rec/3> Daily News article about about Trimmer's book *A Casebook on Ralph Ellison's Invisible Man*. Nothing more was mentioned other than that he wrote it and Crowell published it.

4/10/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/24891/rec/76> Daily News article about Carmichael Project's symposium "Silhouettes on the Shade: Images from the '50s reexamined." Trimmer presented a paper at this symposium.

4/12/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/24917/rec/77> More in-depth Daily News article about Trimmer's lecture (see above). Trimmer focused on the cult-hero James Dean (or at least the article did).

6/19/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/25262/rec/74> Daily News article saying Trimmer received a Creative Teaching Grant for a project involving the use of films in English classes. He was one of 16 profs that received a grant.

10/23/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/26017/rec/71> Daily News article about Weekend Seminars. Trimmer quoted as one of five profs attending weekend seminars.

12/10/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/26340/rec/56> Daily News article about Trimmer speaking at the Lambda Iota Tau (The English Honor Society) meeting.

12/11/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/26357/rec/60> Repeat Daily News article listed above.

12/12/73

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/26370/rec/63> Repeat Daily News article listed above.

1974

- A separate area for honors housing is established in Botsford-Swinford (Honors College Timeline).

- Dr. VanderHill introduces the ID 199 (HONR 199) course. This course originally dealt with American character but later focused on family in modern life (Honors College Timeline).

3/12/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/27523/rec/61> Daily News article about “Steinbeck Quarterly” publication featuring Trimmer’s and other faculty’s articles.

3/27/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/28068/rec/15> Daily News article that briefly mentions Trimmer as chair of the American Studies Association (ASA). The article itself was about another BSU prof to speak at the Indiana-Ohio meeting of the ASA.

4/16/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/27777/rec/24> Daily News article about Trimmer presenting a topic at a public forum, “Middletown Man: The Human side of Life in Muncie, Indiana.” Trimmer’s presentation was titled “The Quest for Community in America.” It was one of four topics presented at the forum.

4/22/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/27801/rec/32> Daily News article discussing a project/study done at Carmichael Hall over the weekend. The

study coincided with the “middletown studies” done in the late ‘20s. Article took angle of focusing on “community.” Trimmer was quoted defining community.

5/2/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/30881/rec/38> Daily News article about Lambda Iota Tau hosting a picnic at Trimmer’s house.

5/3/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/27884/rec/54> Daily News reprint of above.

10/31/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/31077/rec/82> Daily News article about creation of a writing clinic. Trimmer is quoted in support of the program.

12/3/74

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/27029/rec/28> Daily News article about second annual Weekend Seminar. Trimmer introduced theme.

1/9/75

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/28573/rec/33> Daily News article about Trimmer teaching a non-credit course that studies fiction and pulitzer novels.

6/12/75

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/29319/rec/25> Daily News article about Trimmer and ten other profs receiving research grants for the summer of '75. It did not specify what Trimmer would research.

10/3/75

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/29720/rec/29> article about bicentennial speaker's bureau, which Trimmer gave a lecture/speech.
 - This was a bicentennial celebration in which certain speakers discussed the topic "Certain Unalienable Rights." Found in another DN article, <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/29833/rec/2>

11/7/75

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/29916/rec/79> Daily News article mentioning Trimmer as one of fifteen english profs who attended the Midwest Modern Language Association in Chicago.

1976

- Published *American Oblique: Writing about the American Experience* (Boston: Houghton) (CV sheet).
- The First Whiting Scholarships are offered in the fall of this year (Honors College Timeline).

1977

- Honors science classes are offered in the fall of this year (Honors College Timeline).

5/11/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/33443/rec/13> Daily News article quotes Trimmer about low SAT scores. He said he felt the lack of writing in public schools and increase in television was a big contributor.

6/28/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/33578/rec/39> DN article. Trimmer spoke at a career seminar on how academics relates to work. The article did not quote him, just mentioned what he was doing. He did this with Rod Davis, Stephen Justham, and Marilyn Kay Stickle, who were all profs at the time.

9/13/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/33835/rec/18> DN article. Trimmer recommends a movie for a film history instructional program. The movie was titled "America At the Movies"

12/16/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/34541/rec/84> The DN published a work from Expositor, and cited Trimmer as the co-editor.

1978

- Published *The National Book Award for Fiction: An Index to the First 25 years* (Boston: G.K. Hall) (CV sheet).
- '78-'79 Burkhardt was president (Honors College Timeline).

1/25/78

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/34735/rec/42> DN article. Trimmer quoted for information about postponing a lecture. He was not the speaker.

4/24/78

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/35288/rec/78> DN article. Trimmer was one of 69 professors who received promotion (This contradicts what is on his bio form. The bio form indicates promotion to Professor in 1976).

1979

- The Honors Program becomes the Honors College and becomes first honors college at a public school in the state of Indiana (Honors College Timeline).
- Jerry Anderson was president ('79-'81) (Honors College Timeline).

1/29/79

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/36881/rec/9> DN article. Trimmer assisted in scriptwriting for a movie furthering the middletown studies. The filmmaker, Dwight Hoover, received a \$25,000 grant for this film.

10/30/79

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/38558/rec/36> DN article. The middletown film mentioned above received \$8,195 grant from PBS.

1980

- Honors College offices are moved to the Whiting Business Building (Honors College Timeline).

1/30/80

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/39429/rec/64> DN article about Trimmer speaking on “Place Maps” (archives presentation video: <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/CAPLectures/id/164/rec/1>)

7/24/80

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/40356/rec/14> DN article about the American Studies workshop. Trimmer directed the program.

1981

- Robert Bell becomes president (Honors College Timeline).

3/24/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/43078/rec/19> DN article. Trimmer gave opinion on why he feels students need writing.

4/13/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/43237/rec/53> DN article. BSU received grants from National Endowment for the Humanities and the International Communications Agency to fund 15 new curriculum units. Trimmer defined curriculum units as chapters in a three volume set of studies compiled by selected authors.

8/6/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/43784/rec/5> Trimmer was mugged while in DC with colleagues. He said this affected his outlook on people.

9/25/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/44013/rec/55> DN article.

Trimmer delivered “The Great Gatsby” lecture as a homecoming event.

9/29/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/44041/rec/66> Another DN article about “The Great Gatsby” lecture.

9/30/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/44050/rec/68> Repeat DN article about “The Great Gatsby” lecture.

1982

- Published *Middletown Teaching Notes* (New York: Learning Designs) (CV sheet)
- Whitinger scholarships decrease to 10 but now cover full fees and tuition along with half of the room and board costs (Honors College Timeline).
- Dr. VanderHill creates the Undergraduate Fellows program (Honors College Timeline).

5/12/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/45804/rec/22> DN article about how the “Middletown” films Trimmer worked on was accurate in its portrayal of Shakey’s Pizza.

9/6/83

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/50222/rec/81> DN article.

Trimmer released a statement of disclosure including how Ball State receives royalties from companies that publish BSU-based research. It was approved by the Board of Trustees.

1984

- John Worthen became president (until 2000) (Honors College Timeline).

1986

- Dr. Arno Wittig becomes the Director of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).
- Dr. Arno Wittig becomes the Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

1987

- The Whitinger Scholarship covers all tuition and room and board (Honors College Timeline).
- The Honors College offices are moved to the Burkhardt Building (Honors College Timeline).

1989

- HONR 189 Global Studies is added to the curriculum (Honors College Timeline).

1992

- Published *Understanding Others: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Studies and the Teaching of Literature* (Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English) (CV sheet).

1996

- Published *Writing Arguments* (Boston: Houghton) (CV sheet).
- Dr. Bruce Meyer becomes dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).
- The Honors College offices are moved to Carmichael Hall (Honors College Timeline).

1997

- Published *Narration as Knowledge: Tales of the Teaching Life* (Portsmouth: Heinemann) (CV sheet).

9/19/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/87961/rec/12> DN article about the “Middletown” film studies being made available in Bracken Library. Trimmer was mentioned as one who worked on the films, but was not quoted in the article.

10/22/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/88150/rec/50> DN article quotes Carol Trimmer, who was a part of the College of Media.

1998

- Dr. Arno Wittig serves as interim Dean after Bruce Meyer passed away unexpectedly (Honors College Timeline).

11/16/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/105256/rec/16> First Daily News article about Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry-- it's an interdisciplinary unit, where students/faculty can mix ideas across subjects. It started with four faculty members and fifteen students. They are expected to produce some kind of exhibit or project at the end of the semester.

2000

- Joined American Association of Colleges and Universities (bio form).
- Dr. James Reubel becomes Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).
- Blaine Brownell became president (Honors College Timeline).

4/26/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/86231/rec/2> DN article. Trimmer selected Ann Patterson to help restructure the English Department's world literature course.

9/15/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/86614/rec/49> DN article about "Indiana Outdoors" course, a Virginia Ball Center immersive learning

course where fifteen TCOM students travelled around Indiana to collect unknown/unpopular historical information.

10/25/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/86935/rec/34> DN article about the Virginia Ball Center implementing a study abroad program, specifically mentioning New York and Paris.

8/29/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/107683/rec/40> Trimmer was one of six profs honored with rewards. Trimmer was presented a plaque for the outstanding faculty award.

9/24/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/107878/rec/32> Article about call-in radio shows discussing 9/11. Quotes his wife, Carol Trimmer, as the Indiana Public Radio Outreach Coordinator. (Joe is not quoted.)

2002

- Published *eFictions, 5th edition* (Fort Worth, Harcourt) (CV sheet)

7/18/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/108864/rec/44> DN article. Trimmer gave commencement speech titled “college stories.”

10/28/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/83708/rec/2> DN article.

Trimmer nominated Tony Edmonds for a national award, the AGLS Award at the Association for General Studies conference. Edmonds was one of two profs to be recognized nationally.

12/02/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/83692/rec/16> DN article

about Virginia Ball's death, and a large donation made to the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry. Trimmer quoted saying the center couldn't exist if it wasn't for her.

2004

- Joined Council on Undergraduate Research (bio form).
- Published *Writing with a Purpose, 14th edition* (Boston, Houghton) (CV sheet).
- Jo Ann Gora became president (until 2014) (Honors College Timeline).

2/9/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/81605/rec/38> DN article about Minnetrista, chocolate, and Carol Trimmer. Joe is not mentioned.

12/7/2005

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/80240/rec/17> DN article about VBC proposing creation of a charter school.

5/25/2006

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/78169/rec/11> DN article about VBC offering one less seminar next year than in previous years.

9/7/2006

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/78476/rec/27> DN article that focuses on introduction of three new immersive learning projects. Trimmer quoted saying that the Virginia Ball Center donated money to these projects. These projects (“institutions”) are all tech based.

2007

- Published *The Sundance Introduction to Literature* (Boston, Wadsworth) (CV sheet).

2/12/2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/76053/rec/11> Feature article about Chocolate Baking contest and a six year old who won. Quotes Carol Trimmer.

5/14/2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/76556/rec/6> DN article about porn scandal. See below.

5/17/2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/76564/rec/7> article about Christopher Gregory who lied to Trimmer and shot film of “Vampire Diaries:

Muncie Edition” (which was a porn film) on campus at VBC. He supposedly got permission to film at VBC from Trimmer by lying to him. See below.

7/19/2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/76702/rec/70> DN article about a student who lied to Trimmer to get permission to film at VBC, and created a horror pornographic film, which was blocked from being aired on campus. Trimmer is mentioned, but not quoted.

2/20/2008

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/75450/rec/10> DN article about the porn film (see above) not selling well at DVD stores.

2009

- Dehority Complex becomes the residence hall for incoming freshmen Honors College students (Honors College Timeline).
- Edmund F and Virginia Ball House is renovated and later become the home of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

12/1/2011

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/73334/rec/19> DN article about “Double vision art show” painting immersive learning course put on by Virginia Ball Center.

3/29/2012

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/71556/rec/5> DN article. Trimmer introduced Thesis Prize, a cash prize intended to encourage honors kids to actually finish their thesis.

2013

- Ball State Honors College is able to hire its own faculty for the first time in the college's history (Honors College Timeline).

3/11/2013

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/70180/rec/72> DN article about Virginia Ball Center announcing 2014's four immersive projects. Trimmer quoted on what the projects are, how they're designed, and focuses on collab.

8/15/2013

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/70602/rec/18> DN article discusses how University decided to make Immersive Learning Projects a university-wide goal for BSU. That year, they offered more immersive learning courses than ever before. Trimmer quoted on growth of immersive learning, thanks to VBC.

8/20/2013

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/70646/rec/20> DN article about immersive learning. See above. Headline reads "Faculty to focus on immersive learning."

10/28/2013

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/70942/rec/69> DN article about immersive learning being the peak of former president Jo Ann Gora's 10-year presidency. Trimmer quoted praising Gora.

2014

- Indiana Humanities -- elected board of director (CV sheet). He's participated in several humanities groups since the early '70s.
- Paul Ferguson became president (until 2016) (Honors College Timeline).

3/19/2014

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/69636/rec/1> DN article about Trimmer retiring. Specifies how the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry was started.

2016

- Terry King became president (until 2017) (Honors College Timeline).

9/7/18

- <http://enterprise.ballstatedaily.com/ImmersiveLearning.html> DN enterprise article about immersive learning's beginnings. This article is not digitized in the digital media repository.¹

2017

- Published *The River Reader, 12th edition*. (Boston, Cengage) (CV sheet).
- Dr. John Emert becomes Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

¹ I am friends with the reporter who wrote this article, and she sent me a copy of her audio recording of her interview with Joe Trimmer for this story.

- Geoffrey Mearns became president (2017-present) (Honors College Timeline).

2019

- Published “A Guide to MLA Documentation, 10th edition.” (Boston, Cengage)
(CV sheet).

3/17/19

- Contributed column to Muncie Star Press (provided by Dr. Michael Doyle). The article talks about Indiana Humanities two-year initiative titled [“INseparable”](#).

Hannah Gunnell

April 24, 2019

HONR 390-9 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Timeline for Oral History Interview with Joseph Trimmer on March 22, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

August 4, 1941: Joseph Trimmer was born in Schenectady, New York.¹

1959: Trimmer graduated from Linton High School in Schenectady, New York.²

1963: Trimmer received B.A. in English from Colgate University, New York.³

1964: Trimmer joined the Modern Language Association.⁴

1966: Trimmer received M.A. in English from Purdue University.⁵

1966: Trimmer married Carol Trimmer.⁶

1968: Trimmer received Ph.D. in English from Purdue University.⁷

1968: Trimmer was hired as an assistant professor of English at Ball State University.⁸

1969: Trimmer had his son, Bob.⁹

¹ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

² Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

³ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁴ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁵ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁶ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁷ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁸ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

⁹ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

1970: Trimmer worked with Dwight Hoover on a closed-circuit television course titled “Black Renaissance in the Twentieth Century: A Focus on Harlem.”¹⁰

1970: Trimmer began teaching English courses as a part of the Carmichael Project.¹¹

1971: Trimmer published *Black American Literature: Notes on the Problem of Definition* (Muncie, BSU monograph series).¹²

1971: Trimmer attended the National Collegiate Honors Council meeting with Warren Vander Hill in Ann Arbor, Michigan.¹³

1972: Trimmer published *A Casebook on Invisible Man* (New York. T.Y. Crowell)¹⁴

1972: Trimmer was promoted to Associate Professor of English.¹⁵

1974: Trimmer chaired the American Studies Association.¹⁶

1976: Trimmer published *American Oblique: Writing about the American Experience*.¹⁷

1978: *The National Book Award for Fiction: An Index to the First 25 years*.¹⁸

1978: Trimmer was promoted to Professor of English.¹⁹

1979: Trimmer began work on the “Middletown Studies” films.²⁰

1992: Trimmer published *Understanding Others: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Studies*

¹⁰ The Ball State Daily News article, “Black Studies program today.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/19762/rec/43> April 22, 1970.

¹¹ The Ball State Daily News article, “Carmichael plans revealed.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/18090/rec/16> November 12, 1970.

¹² Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

¹³ The Ball State Daily News article, “Events.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/21207/rec/21> October 22, 1971.

¹⁴ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

¹⁵ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

¹⁶ The Ball State Daily News article, “Thompson to speak at A.S.A. meeting.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/28068/rec/15> March 27, 1974.

¹⁷ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

¹⁸ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

¹⁹ The Ball State Daily News article, “Board of Trustees approves promotion of faculty members.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/35288/rec/78> March 24, 1978.

²⁰ The Ball State Daily News article, “Middletown to star in film.”
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/36881/rec/9> January 29, 1979.

*and the Teaching of Literature.*²¹

1997: Trimmer published *Narration as Knowledge: Tales of the Teaching Life.*²²

1999: Trimmer proposes and becomes director of the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry.²³

2002: Trimmer published *eFictions, 5th edition.*²⁴

2004: Trimmer published *Writing with a Purpose, 14th edition.*²⁵

2007: Trimmer published *The Sundance Introduction to Literature.*²⁶

2012: Trimmer introduced the Thesis Prize.²⁷

2014: Trimmer retired.²⁸

²¹ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

²² Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

²³ The Ball State Daily News article, "Gift supports interdisciplinary seminar."
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/105256/rec/16> November 16, 1999.

²⁴ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

²⁵ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

²⁶ Joe Trimmer CV sheet. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

²⁷ The Ball State Daily News article, "Honors College offers thesis prize."
<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/71556/rec/5> March 29, 2012.

²⁸ Joe Trimmer biographical information form. Provided by Joe Trimmer prior to interview.

Hannah Gunnell

April 24, 2019

HONR 390-9 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Topics for Oral History Interview with John emert on March 26, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

Introductory Statement: “Good Morning. This is Hannah Gunnell with the Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project. I am here today on Friday, March 22, 2019 on Ball State University’s campus in Muncie, Indiana, to talk with Dr. Joe Trimmer about his experience here at Ball State University. I would like to start by asking you when and where you were born.”

1. Family life growing up-- specifically where he was born, because that’s not on bio form
2. Colgate-- Lambda Alpha Chi (B.A. 1963)
3. Purdue-- more specifically why leave New York for Indiana (MA ‘66, PhD ‘68)
4. Marriage to Carol Trimmer (‘68, ask for date) -- her maiden name and career at IPR
5. Starting at BSU -- did he start teaching honors courses in addition to English courses?
6. Having a son-- ask son’s birthdate (follow up on grandkids?)
7. Black History Literature Course (1969)

8. Forum/Expositor literary journals
9. Carmichael Project (1970)
10. 1971 meeting of National Collegiate Honors council with Warren Vander Hill
11. Modern Language Association (1964) (bio form)
12. 1972 "My favorite book" lectures
13. '72 "General Studies Program"
14. Promotions
15. Carmichael Symposium "Silhouettes on the Shade: Images from the 1950s reimagined"
16. Lambda Iota Tau 1973 (English Honorary Group)
17. "Steinbeck Quarterly" publication
18. American Studies Association 1974
19. Dr. VanderHill introduces the ID 199 (HONR 199) course-- still teaches it
(pre-interview notes)
20. Non-credit course studying Pulitzer Prize novels 1975
21. The Middletown Film Series
22. "Place Maps" architecture lecture
23. Curriculum Units (chapters in a three volume set of studies compiled by selected authors) '81
24. Mugged in DC, '81-- affected outlook on people "everyone out to get him"
25. Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry-- '99 (first DN article)
26. VBC "Indiana Outdoors" immersive course

27. 2003 Trimmer nominated Tony Edmonds for a national award, the AGLS Award at the Association for General Studies conference (DN)
28. "Vampire Diaries" and Christopher Gregory (2004)
29. Thesis Prize 2012
30. Retirement (2014)
31. Indiana Humanities-- Board of Trustees (2014) and Muncie Star Article (2019) (INseparable)
32. Publications, including 2019 "A Guide to MLA Documentation, 10th edition."
33. What next?
34. "Anything I should've asked that I didn't"

Closing Statement: "On behalf of the Ball State Honors College Oral History Project, I would like to thank you for taking the time to sit down with us and share your story today."

Archives and Special Collections

University Libraries



Ball State University
Bracken Library, Room 210
Muncie, IN 47304

Phone: 765-285-5078
FAX: 765-285-8149
Email: libarchives@bsu.edu

Ball State University Oral Histories

Archival Identification:

Digital Identification:

Interviewer(s): Hannah Gunnell

Interviewee(s): Dr. Joseph (Joe) Trimmer

Date of interview: March 22, 2019

Gunnell: Good morning. My name is Hannah Gunnell and I am with the Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project. I am here today on Friday, March 22, 2019 on Ball State University's campus in Muncie, Indiana to talk with Dr. Joe Trimmer about his experience here at Ball State University. I would like to start by asking you when and where you were born.

Trimmer: I was born in New York state, actually a town called Grotten, which is near Ethica, which is where Cornell is. I was born in 1941. Was there another part to that question or is that it?

Gunnell: What day were you born?

Trimmer: August 4, 1941. I'm a Leo.

Gunnell: Can you tell me about your family life growing up?

Trimmer: My father was a clergyman, otherwise known as a minister.

[1:00]

He had worked in Grotten when he got out of seminary, which was Colgate-Rochester divinity school. And then he moved — I was still very young — he moved to Syracuse, New York to be director of an educational program for the Baptist church in New York state. And he ran a lot of conferences for students across the state, primarily in Keuka, New York at Keuka College, which is kind of interesting because the Ball Family,

[2:00]

I now find out the George and Francis Ball Foundation gives quite a bit of money every year to Keuka College. I guess — I'm not sure who in the Ball Family went

there, but someone did. And John Pruis, who was president — I'll get back to where you want me to be [points at Gunnell] — John Pruis who was president of the university — he came to the university in 1968 when I did, but then when he retired he worked for the George and Francis Ball Foundation so every year he would go to Keuka college for a visit and he stayed in something called the Trimmer Inn, which was a bed and breakfast owned by the provost of Keuka College. I found out all of this when my wife and I

[3:00]

took a tour of the Finger lakes a couple years ago and went by Keuka college just to find out what was going on, and we drive into the campus and what — the Ball Building is the administration building. A very interesting story. Do you know — [gestures to Dr. Michael Doyle, supervisor of interview, mouths “what’s his name”].

Gunnell: Dr. Doyle?

Trimmer: Mike?

Doyle: I'm sorry, yes?

Trimmer: What's the name of that group — that church group at the far west of New York state?

Doyle: From the 19th century?

Trimmer: Yes. [silence] They ran um — They ran —

[4:00]

Doyle: You're not talking about [inaudible] no, no, the Chautauqua?

Trimmer: Yes, yes

Doyle: Right, because they do Chautauquas at Keuka College.

Trimmer: Well, the uncle who funded the Ball Brothers to come out here, the uncle wanted to set up a Chautauqua at Keuka College, so anyway, my father was involved in all of that. Then he moved to Schenectady, New York, which is the interesting town — it's not so much an interesting town now, but when I lived there it was the headquarters for the General Electric executive training program, and it also was the headquarters for American Locomotive, and the people who worked in American Locomotive were primarily Italian.

[5:00]

So that meant that either the kid— either the families worked at American Locomotive or they had restaurants, which was an important part of my high school life. So, how much — how far — how deep in detail do you want me to go on all this?

Gunnell: As deep as you would like to.

Trimmer: So anyway, we moved to Schenectady, my father was the minister of the church there, a downtown church. It got very large when he got there. And he was sort of the person who ran the building fund and created a whole new wing for the church. And

[6:00]

so I went to a school, elementary school called House School and there are many stories there. You know, they asked me what my father did for a living, and I said, “he doesn’t do anything. He’s a minister.” Because that meant he didn’t do what every other family did — That is, every other father would get up and go to work on Monday, and come back on Friday night, and then would mow the lawn on Saturday, and you know, play golf or whatever. My father did the reverse.

[7:00]

I mean, he did things during the week: made calls on people in his church who were in the hospital, things like that, but his big job of course was the Sunday service. And Saturday was a time which was absolute quiet in my house. My father was writing his sermon. So that was not a pleasant arrangement, because I wanted to watch football or baseball or something on television, so I had to go elsewhere. Anyway, so I grew up in Schenectady, went to high school there, played football.

[8:00]

And interestingly enough, when I moved here — I’m skipping ahead, I’ll go back — when I moved here, Warren VanderHill was moving in as well and he was moving caddy corner from our house. We were renting houses in the same neighborhood. He came over, maybe first or second day, we were both in town and we discovered we had things in common. That his father was a minister — mine was. He went to a small, liberal arts college — I did. I played sports — I played football, he played basketball. But we had discovered we had enormous things in common right away, so that lead to our connection

[9:00]

with the Honors College eventually, with the way he and I sort of talked an awful lot about the Honors College right from the beginning. So, back to high school, I

was in AP English, AP History, was a very — it was a very good high school. The classes were in many ways like an Honors class at Ball State. They were — we read books, talked about books, were in small discussion groups, wrote a lot of papers.

[10:00]

So, I mean, high school was also about girls, and Rock and Roll, and football, and so that was part of the scene as well. So then, skip ahead to college? Is that alright?

Gunnell: Okay.

Trimmer: Okay. I went to Colgate University, which is a small liberal arts college about ninety miles or so away from Schenectady. Schenectady, by the way, is where Kurt Vonnegut worked when he came back from the war. He worked in the public relations office.

[11:00]

I've been at the dinner table with him three or four times. And I have two questions which I always ask him. First of all, I ask him "is there a book with pictures of the houses and buildings that your grandfather and great-grandfather designed and built?" — They were both architects. And he says "yes." And then I say, "Have you been back to Schenectady, lately?" He says, "No." So that's sort of the conversations I have with Kurt Vonnegut. He also says that when he did go to Schenectady that it had sort of deteriorated.

[12:00]

The town did. A lot of the towns in upstate New York did that. Richard Russo — Do you know that name?

Gunnell: I'm not familiar.

Trimmer: A novelist. You should read him. He's very funny. "Straight Man," one of the best academic novels that is about going to — being a college professor. And he grew up in a town called Gloversville, and his mother worked in Schenectady. He and I discovered that one time. We were in Maine, and we went to a book store, and he was sitting at a table, signing books — he had a new book out, but no one was there, so I just sat down, and we talked for — about like this [gestures to Gunnell], for an hour or to. So, Colgate.

[13:00]

There were a lot of reasons that I went to Colgate. I looked at Dartmouth, and I

looked at — it's hard to explain to people in the Midwest where there are Big Ten schools and state schools — When I went to school in New York, there were no state schools. There are now. There were state Teachers Colleges. But everybody went— would go— was planning to go to a liberal arts college. At least the kids in my class. The oddest one might be they went to the university of Rochester, but most of them went to Dartmouth or Rutgers

[14:00]

or Yale or Harvard, or schools like that. The ones who went to college. We had about eighty percent of our class go to college. So, to Colgate. Colgate was an interesting school in that — at least the way I perceived it — it was not like Dartmouth or Williams or some of the other schools that I interviewed at, in that it seemed — it had everything that those schools had, that it was a prestigious school, and very rigorous in terms of standards and so forth, but it also had a lot of interesting interdisciplinary projects.

[15:00]

There were projects every January. There was the London Center — you went to the London school of economics if you were interested in that. There was a project in Washington. Anyway there were — or you could stay at the university and write a paper. The semester — fall semester ended around Christmas, then there was this January term, and then spring semester, but the January term was about a month.

[16:00]

Either you went on one of these projects overseas or someplace in the states. I know some kids went on an Alaskan expl— they were in geology I think. They went up to look at the Tundra and so forth. I went to Europe with a singing group, one year, and then the other years I stayed at the school and wrote papers, but my freshman year, the guy who was the director of the men's choir

[17:00]

and also who taught music history was the guy that took us to Europe. He's a very, very smart guy. The thing that was interesting about Colgate was that it had a core curriculum, so that you didn't have a history requirement. You didn't have an English requirement. The big class was something called P and R, philosophy and religion, which was also, strangely enough a course in which you did a lot of writing

[18:00]

so it served as a writing course. But then you determined your concentration, not

your major — we called it a concentration — your sophomore year. Then you got into more standard stuff. I thought I was going to be a psychiatrist, because I — well, not a psychiatrist. Well I guess I was thinking I was going to be a guidance counselor in high school when I graduated so I was taking psych courses. They were awful.

Gunnell: Oh.

Trimmer: So I changed my mind, and since I had had such a good experience in the P and R course that I took, I said “okay, I’ll take — I’ll major — I’ll switch and I’ll be a philosophy major.”

[19:00]

Well, you had to take a course in logic. That was a requirement of the philosophy major and that was almost like math. We did all these diagrams of [mimics writing diagrams] — I’m not quite sure how to explain it. Anyway, that didn’t work out, so then I switched to literature as my major. And so, then I discovered the teacher who really changed my life. Wonderful, wonderful teacher. Interestingly enough, when

[20:00]

my wife and I got married and went on a honeymoon trip to New York state, and to New England. And we stopped at Colgate, and we were down in the village, and we discovered that the professor there, that I was so fond of. He said, “I remember you,” and I said, “uh-huh,” and he said “you were gonna be a — you were pre-med, right?” and he hadn’t got a clue who I was. So anyway. Am I getting too — [moves hand in a wavering motion] is your notes suggesting I am wandering too much?

[21:00]

Gunnell: It’s completely okay. I would like to ask you though — this professor who you said changed your life?

Trimmer: Yeah?

Gunnell: What was this person’s name?

Trimmer: His name was Jonathan Kistler. K-I-S-T-L-E-R.

Gunnell: And what years did you attend Colgate?

Trimmer: 1959 to 1963.

Gunnell: I have in my notes that you were a member of Lambda Chi Alpha?

Trimmer: Everybody was in a fraternity, because there were no dorms after your sophomore — after your freshman year. There were no living facilities, so you had to join a fraternity almost. Now, things have changed at Colgate. I went back and gave the keynote address

[22:00]

at our fiftieth anniversary of my class, for example. They have added all kinds of buildings. In 1970 — I graduated in '63 — in 1972, I think, Colgate went co-ed, so it's a completely different school now. When I was there, to give you a sense of how trapped we were, we were in a small town, upstate New York. We were allowed three cuts [absences from class]. After that, it was an automatic F if you didn't come to class.

[23:00]

You were not allowed to have a car until you were a junior. There was no bus service in or out of the little town. So mainly what you did was try to find somebody who was going somewhere, and you'd hitch a ride with them. Or you would actually hitchhike, because hitchhiking was okay then. I got some interesting rides. I got an interesting ride with Count Basie, on one of the major New York throughways. Do you know Count Basie? No? A Fairly interesting musician — Jazz musician. So, the big thing was to try to get a ride out of town. Now my mother was convinced

[24:00]

that by going to Colgate, an all men's school, I would pay more attention to studies than to girls, and Rock and Roll, and other things like that, that were — seemed to be my primary interest in high school. She was wrong. The only thing that — until my junior or senior year — the only thing that I was interested in doing at Colgate was trying to find a ride out of Colgate. This is not an unusual story. This is the story that anybody in my class would tell you.

[25:00]

You know, we need to go somewhere, and where we would be to the same sex schools like Vassar, Skidmore: where it was all women. And so it was an interesting experience in gender relationships. Going back now, to that school, and I've gone back and done consulting work for that school four or five times, particularly for their writing program, and as I said on our fiftieth anniversary of our class, I sort of was in charge of putting together the program

[26:00]

and I did a keynote talk. So, I did a lot of studying of the difference between when

I went to that school and the way it was now. For example, the SAT scores of the women — much higher than the men. A lot of things like that. I also began to realize that there was anti-Semitism in our school. That is, in those fraternities that I mentioned, they — many of them had what's called a white Christian gentleman's clause.

[27:00]

So Jews were not admitted. This was not unusual in the Ivy schools. Harvard and Yale had a great difficulty balancing out the fact that the smartest kids that were applying every year were Jews. And the — And I didn't realize this until I did all this work, looking at the class for our fiftieth anniversary. I didn't — The other thing I didn't realize, was that there was — or I didn't realize the significance of — was that there was only two members of our class — there were three hundred in my class — there were only two African American

[28:00]

guys and they were both recruited because they played basketball. One of them went on to be editor of the New York Times Book Review. And he wrote a book about his experiences as the only black man — because one of them left — the only black man in his — at Colgate. He comes back now to teach courses in African American studies. I have a lot of conversations with — the thing about Colgate is that there's a great deal of interaction still with the people who are in the —

[29:00]

when I go back for reunions, there's a great deal of familiarity still among the guys who are in that group. Where do we go now? [gestures to Gunnell]

Gunnell: With the interest of time, I would like to talk about your graduate experience. How did you get from Colgate to Purdue?

Trimmer: Yes, okay. I spent most of my time trying — my father moved. The year I graduated from high school my father moved. He had two offers of colleges. One was at Wellesley College, which was a women's college. Still is, one of the best women's colleges in the country. And the other one was at Purdue.

[30:00]

You could see which one I wanted him to take. He took the one at Purdue. I helped him move out there — here, I should say. But I also swore the minute I got out here that I would never come back. So, I spent all my vacations in Boston at my roommate's house. I spent all my summers in the Cape as a waiter. Finally, between my junior and senior year my mother insisted that I come back, which I

did. And they got me a job working in I guess you would call it facilities here, so I was moving furniture in and out of buildings and doing all kinds of

[31:00]

hard labor. Which knocked the preppy nonsense out of me pretty quickly. But I decided that I would take a class — we would — we ended our workday at three o'clock, and so I took a class in American Literature and the woman who taught it turned out to be my dissertation director, eventually. I went back after that junior year very excited about the teachers that I — the teacher I had at Purdue. And I went in to meet with my advisor, and

[32:00]

you have to realize that this is the first year of Kennedy's election to presidency. And the thing that a lot of the guys — the guys that came out of my college had interesting experiences. Either they went to Wall Street right away which was a common job. A lot of their fathers had worked on the stock exchange. So that was one route that most people took. Another route was graduate school. And the third route was officer's candidate school. And most of the guys

[33:00]

that took that third route — officer's candidate school, did not realize what they had decided to do because the year that I graduated — I think that's the correct year — Kennedy sent the first group of soldiers to Vietnam, so choosing officer's candidate school meant that all these guys were in the war. And so on the wall in Washington, you know, I can find friends, fraternity brothers who were killed in the war. Anyways, I go back to my advisor and I say, "I'm going to go to graduate school," and he says

[34:00]

"What do you think you want to study?" and I said, "American literature, I think." And he said, "Where do you think you want to go?" and I said, "Where do you think I should go?" and he said, "Well, Yale has got a good program." The magazine that the American literature division, the Modern Language Association — that was published at Duke, so he said that would — he was mentioning all these schools. He said, "Where did you think you would want to go?" and I said "Well, I was thinking about Purdue," and he nearly fell out of his chair. He said "You know, that's a cow college. You're ruining your career by going there." I said "Yes, but they have this wonderful teacher and also they have very good stipends for graduate students." They were just getting started — And so he sort of gave up on me

[35:00]

He said, “Well, go ahead and do what you’re going to do.” And that’s what I did. I just came up to Purdue and went through my Masters fairly quickly. And they were beginning, just beginning, to get approval for a Ph.D. program in English, and so I am the first person to receive a Ph.D. in English from Purdue. That’s sort of a little historical folktale.

Gunnell: May I ask a quick question?

Trimmer: Yeah?

Gunnell: This influential teacher that you had at Purdue, what was her name?

Trimmer: Olga Vickery. She has the best book on [William] Falkner still, but she tragically died of a brain tumor.

[36:00]

She left Colg— Purdue to go to one of the California schools. I’m not sure if it was Berkeley, but it was one of those schools. The thing that was interesting about the faculty at Purdue in the English department when I went there was that they were all young. They were all writing papers and books, and they would have us to their house and we would talk and then they would read their papers to us and say “What do you think? I’m going to a conference this week, and this is the paper I’m going to read. What do you — how do you think it will go over.” And da-da-da-da.

[37:00]

So it was a very collegial relationship between faculty and students. And they would go out for beers with us, and you know, when we got our paychecks, we would all go out together. But young faculty and there wasn’t that much difference in age between us and them. And so they got very eager for us to write papers and to publish. And I did, which created a problem when I came here, to Ball State. Now, how did I get to Ball State? — I’m getting to the Honors Program sometime — God.

[38:00]

The — I looked at, and was invited to be on the faculty at the University of Virginia, University of Washington, University of Colorado, some small liberal arts colleges — Kalamazoo. And then there was a conference at Purdue, and a faculty member from Ball State was there.

[39:00]

And he was looking for young faculty, and his salary was higher than any of the other — the University of Virginia offered me six thousand dollars a year to teach there. That was a good salary. This was before inflation. Washington, same thing — sixty-five hundred. Ball State offered me ninety-five hundred dollars to teach here. So, the thing that was difficult was that, when I came here I had published more — because of this collegial atmosphere at Purdue — I had published more articles and I had done two

[40:00]

books — I'd done, in other words, I had done more than most of the faculty that I was joining. And that was — they didn't perceive that as an advantage — the faculty — not the faculty that had hired me, they thought that was fine, but the faculty that I came to work with saw that as — it meant that I could conceivably teach any of the courses that they had taught for years, so they didn't want me around. But, Warren and I — VanderHill and I —

[41:00]

got very interested in trying to make changes to the curriculum and to the school. And the Honors College was our way of thinking about new ways to teach and new curriculum. Now, the way the Honors College worked then, you have to understand, we were on the quarter system. So, the three main courses that are still in the Honors curriculum — 201, 202, 203 — required still — were the result of our being on the quarter system. I've told every Dean of the Honors College since

[42:00]

we moved to the semester system that they ought to change the curriculum or, figure out some way to move — the way in which the whole thing was designed into two semesters rather than into three quarters. So anyway, the Honors College became the place where, since I couldn't teach the courses that I wanted to teach because the faculty — the older faculty — had those down, I found out that I could do a lot of things by way of the Honors College.

[43:00]

Creative courses, seminars, do you want to stop for a sec?

Gunnell: Do you need a break?

Trimmer: I'm just trying to figure out where we are in terms of time.

Gunnell: Oh, okay.

Pause in recording

[43:25]

Trimmer: Being a young faculty member, who in fact got a letter from John Pruis at the end of my first year here saying sorry to hear that you are not making satisfactory progress toward tenure. This was a letter essentially saying that I was in trouble because I was trying to teach the courses

[44:00]

that I thought I was hired to teach, and two women were sort of [makes a claw gesture and bites down] and never wanted to teach anything else, and saw me as a challenge. Both — one of them taught the graduate courses in American lit and the other taught the undergraduate — they didn't want me anywhere near those courses. So the Honors College was a way to find creative space to work. And Warren and I talked an awful lot about curriculum. He taught history, but since he was an administrator — part time administrator and part time teacher —

[45:00]

he didn't teach as much as I did. I don't think he ever taught the humanities sequence, for example. But he did teach seminars and was interested in teachers that were creative and talented and so when he would go to different departments, he would ask who would be eligible to teach in the Honors Program. Now, some faculty chairs saw this as a way to get rid of difficult people like me, but also difficult people not like me — just plain difficult. And Warren didn't want that.

[46:00]

He wanted good teachers, talented, creative, innovative teachers, and so he would take faculty out to lunch, to try to convince them that they should teach in the Honors Program and that was difficult because the three course sequence of the humanities had, like for me, there was only maybe a third of the last course that had anything to do with what I had studied and taught in graduate school — modern American literature. So I had to read and learn how to teach the *Odyssey*, the *Inferno* — I mean, I had some of those courses at Colgate as an undergraduate,

[47:00]

but I had never taught those things. And then there was a whole section in 202 that I didn't know too much about. And so that was a problem and it became much more of a problem, and explains a lot of who is in the Honors College faculty at the moment. For example, Honors College deans have tried to convince a lot of young teachers to come and teach in the Honors College, and they — now this is 1990, we are talking about now — the teachers then were so interested in

research and doing work in their own field,

[48:00]

that they saw agreeing to teach in the Honors College as a very, very dangerous side step. That is, that they would be — have to learn about — a bunch of — a whole curriculum of courses and books that they knew nothing about, that would not allow them then the opportune— the chance to teach and do research. The same thing happened to me, but I said, “Well, this is a good way to get some interesting work done.” So, the Honors College, when I came here was not a college, it was a program. And Warren — and he was here for a while before,

[49:00]

but then came back. And all of us reported to Dean Vic Lawhead — Victor Lawhead — Vic Lawhead created the Honors College in the 1950s. He had a lot of problems getting it installed in the university, because the Teachers College saw it as a kind of elitist program. They fought that out. So, anyway, Vic’s title was Dean of Undergraduate Programs. He had the Honors College reported to him, three or four other programs. There was a program for —

[50:00]

I’m not sure how to say it. It was for students who are not well prepared. Anyway, there were three or four different programs, undergraduate programs that reported to Vic. Warren reported to Vic, and I would go with Warren to meetings about ideas. We created a lecture series, we created a film series,

[51:00]

and we wound up finding a lot of young teachers who we could talk into teaching in the Honors Program. The Honors Program had an office in a little house down south of the Student Center. And then, Vic Lawhead got this idea of a living-learning program out at Carmichael. And the guy who was in charge of that, he took me to lunch and it was the year after that letter that I got from John Pruis about my danger of — toward tenure.

[52:00]

So I figured that going out to Carmichael, and working in the living-learning program, and trying to figure out some way to connect the living-learning program to the Honors College would be a good way for me to avoid the dangers of the senior faculty in the English department [chuckles]. So we wound up doing an awful lot of really exciting things out there. Have you been told about the Carmichael Project? So you know the basic premise of it then. [touches microphone]

[53:00]

I got in trouble again when I decided that I thought it would be great to have a special sequence of — there was a guy out there who was — we had all these young people out there at Carmichael who were interested in doing almost anything. That seemed exciting from an educational point of view. So my idea was that I would — there would — two American literature survey courses, three British literature survey courses, and one sort of research-critical writing course.

[54:00]

So I asked the guy that was the advisor out there. I said “Could you select, from the incoming freshman class, the very best potential English majors, in terms of SAT scores and everything like that. And we will put them together in groups of twenty-five, and they will take all of those courses together.” They will take six courses: the three Brit literature course, the two American lit and the critical writing course. It was — And then we ask certain teachers from the main campus who were specialists in those areas

[55:00]

to come out to Carmichael to teach. Now, again, the faculty in my department suddenly said that I was sapping all — or sucking may be the better word — all the best students out of the courses that they wanted to teach. Their regular — and I was doing a disservice again to the university and to their teaching, because they wouldn’t get a chance to teach these very talented students. Some of them were so talented that they decided to leave Ball State and went to places like Radcliff, and Smith, and other schools

[56:00]

on the East Coast. I was out there for — at Carmichael for two or three, maybe four years. I was able to get two books done out there. And I think four or five articles. And then the chairman of the English department, a new chair, came out to see me and wanted to know whether or not I wanted to be director of the writing program — the Freshman writing program. In other words, come home and

[57:00]

stop doing the stuff you’re doing at Carmichael and be a — go to the dark side. Be an administrator. You seem to be able to organize things. And so, I took that job. I went down to — and I was director of the freshman writing program for seven years.

Gunnell: What year did you become director? And also, who offered you the job?

[58:00]

Trimmer: The guy who offered me the job was a guy named Dick Renner, who is long since passed away. And what was the other part to that question? How long? Years?

Gunnell: What year did you take over?

Trimmer: I think '72. I'd have to have my VITA [autobiography] in front of me, but I think '72 to '80 — oh I know. I was doing a lot of other things other than just doing the director of the writing program. I was also working on the “Middletown” films, writing another book, and doing a — Tony Edmonds and I were doing a American Studies workshop with an NEH grant — A National Endowment for the Humanities grant.

[59:00]

And then that morphed into a grant with European teachers and American teachers working in Washington D.C. And the reason I now know the date for that whole experience was because that was when I had my heart attack [chuckles].

Gunnell: Would you like to talk about that?

Trimmer: Well, it just — there are several, not causes but possible reasons for having a heart attack. One is family history, one is cholesterol — there's seven actually. Family history, cholesterol, blood pressure, smoking,

[1:00:00]

obesity. Anyway, the last one is stress. And so when we started talking about why did I have a heart attack, that list — working on the “Middletown” films, and I was — I don't know what Warren told you about his work on the “Middletown” films, but mine was pretty intense. I was the primary researcher for the films. And so, the primary researcher for the films [counts on fingers], writing a book, director of the writing program, doing this NEH project in Washington — in Ball State initially, and then Washington.

[1:01:00]

These were summer research — summer institutes for teachers. You add all those things up — it's no wonder, if stress is an issue, that I had a heart attack. So, when I returned to the department, to teaching, they had just decided to start a Ph.D. program in composition and rhetoric. And they just had five or six students, or something like that. But the chairman of the department said, “Now that you're back, and you've been asked to slow down a little bit, why don't you become

[1:02:00]

the chair for our Ph.D. program?” So, you see this slide from teaching into administration, which was not something that I had planned at all. I don’t know where my scholarly life went — I mean, it still was there, and I was still writing, but I kept getting these offers to do administrative work, and it seemed to be interesting [at the sound of the tornado sirens, he points to the window]. That’s eleven o’clock. I know where we are, okay. So, I can skip right to Virginia Ball, if that’s okay.

Gunnell: Actually, I wanted to ask you more about the “Middletown” film series. Can you tell me more about that?

Trimmer: Okay, sure.

[1:03:00]

I — Dwight Hoover, who was a member of the history department at the time had been to some conference and they had learned that the National Endowment for the Humanities was starting a grant program for film, more specifically they were starting a program for local television stations to do programming — local programming that had a high humanities content to it. And the advantage that we had, here at Ball State, was that we had probably the smallest

[1:04:00]

television station in the country. We had no local programming. In fact, we still don’t, except for telesale or the occasional basketball game. But there was nothing that was really the kind of programming that you’d get out of Boston or New York. In fact if you look at the programming that’s on PBS, eighty percent of it comes from BB— from the BBC. It’s filmed — they’ve taken from England. So we formed a small group of faculty, mainly Warren, Dwight and me

[1:05:00]

to come up with an idea for local programming. I’m not sure whose idea it was — I am absolutely positive it was mine, but I’m sure Dwight thought it was his, and Warren thought it was his. But I said, “The best — look we’ve got a great idea for local programming. We’ve got these studies that have been done of Middletown. Why don’t we just do a series on Middletown?” Now, the problem there became Dwight Hoover,

[1:06:00]

who was a historian, wanted to see this as a historical study, in the films. I wrote an initial grant proposal for the project, using the chapters in “The Middletown

Studies” as a film. The way I saw it was we needed to do found drama, if that makes any sense, so that to do a story about family, we would do a story about a wedding. The family forming a ritual and all the people

[1:07:00]

that had ideas about what a family should be and advice about getting married and all of that. Similarly, there was one on community service, and there was an election coming up for mayor. I thought that would be an obvious film. And then I thought the best thing to do would — to see if we could really pull all this off — was to see if there was any audience for it. So I suggested that we go to see somebody at some of the bigger PBS stations. We went to Chicago, and then I suggested that we would go to Boston. And so we went to Boston, and the

[1:08:00]

program director there said, “This is a wonderful idea, but you guys don’t know anything about film. Interestingly enough, there’s a guy that I know that is doing a book about communities and you ought to work with him. Or you ought to talk with him to see if he’s interested in working with you.” And that was how we got connected to Peter Davis. In fact, he had come to Muncie and had gone in to see Warren while he was here, so Warren said, “Oh, God, yeah I know him.” So we made that connection and so as we got started, Warren was still

[1:09:00]

Dean of the — he was working on a project which would eventually convert the Honors Program into the Honors College, which would then make him no longer director of the Honors Program, but Dean of the Honors College. And there were a lot of political side-stories to that whole enterprise. But anyway, he was busy with — and I don’t know this exact date, but somewhere in this he became associate provost. And then Dwight never did understand

[1:10:00]

the whole film project. But Peter and I hit it off right away, and so my understanding of film and my understanding of cinema vérité, and my understanding of storyline and everything seemed to work and — for example, on the wedding film. Where would you go if you were — here you were in town, and you’re on one side of town, and you don’t know anything about the town at all, more or less, and so you’ve got to find a couple

[1:11:00]

that’s getting married that won’t mind being in a film. Well, how do you do that? — What would you do? Where would you look?

Gunnell: I actually have a journalism background,

Trimmer: yes?

Gunnell: so, I would ask most of my colleagues at the Daily News, and one of my colleagues at the Muncie Star, to see what they know, and if they would have any sources that would know.

Trimmer: I tried that. Wasn't very successful. Because you'd find people that were getting married, but you'd interview them — and the point of that film was the whole notion of forming a family. So, you would meet a young couple and you'd say, "Well, you know you're getting married,

[1:12:00]

you're forming a family. I can see here that you've got a lot of important decisions you're making. What are some of the things that you're really trying to work out as you work as a couple together for the first time." — "Well, we don't know whether to have the green mints or the pink mints at the reception." So it wasn't working. So, I found the secret to that question — how to find a bride and groom, was to go to the bridal shop on Saturday morning, which is when the girls come to try on their dresses.

[1:13:00]

And that wasn't always successful either. Like there was one girl that came in and tried on a dress and she said, "that's fine." Her mother said, "Don't you want to try on other dresses?" and she said, "No, this is fine." I have a feeling that's sort of how she picked her husband — the first one that asked her, that would be fine. So anyway, we finally found a couple that went to one of these bridal shows, and they had been — each of them had been married before. So, in a way they were perfect, because they had gone through all the trials and tribulations of making a family and it hadn't worked out. And now they were trying again, so they had all kinds of reflections that were useful on film.

[1:14:00]

Anyway, each of the shows that we did had that — like the one that was the most — that got the most interest around here was a show about a pizza parlor. And it was sort of like a — it was sort of like a "Death of a Salesman" story, because from a filming point of view, front stage was where the customers ate their pizza, and the owner of the pizza parlor would come out and play the banjo and entertain. Second stage

[1:15:00]

was where the pizzas was actu— were actually made. And then backstage was where our character, our main character, was on the phone trying to get another loan to try to save the business. So, we had — the advantage of it was that the filming was all in one spot. You didn't have to — Now, by contrast the film about the mayor's race, we were all over town. Trying to find out where certain meetings were going on that were complicating the mayor's race. We didn't know about — that is, we thought we were covering the mayor's race, but we didn't know that the democrat

[1:16:00]

who we were following was being sabotaged by other members of the Democratic Party. There were all kinds of things that we couldn't find out until afterwards. So anyway, the point is that I learned an awful lot about this town by being the researcher for the films. The Chevrolet plant had a bar across the street. I learned what a shift bar was. You know what a shift bar is? It's when the shift changes, they go to the bar. So the shift for the Chevrolet plant — one shift ended at three o'clock [makes flicking motion with his hand]. So we were over there

[1:17:00]

shooting people's opinions of the mayor's race in the shift bar. I see this guy bringing out a huge container of Bourbon. I said "Ah, so you're going home?" and he said, "No, I'm going to work." I said, "You're the guy that built my car, looks like." So anyway, I learned an awful lot about all kinds, all portions of the community. The one about education, which was the one we shot at Southside, called "Seventeen," which caused a lot of controversy in town.

[1:18:00]

Interestingly enough, the reason it did is because we decided that, from our initial footage, that the most boring students in the high school were the Honors students. So we decided to shoot our film about high school with the parking lot kids. And so there was all kinds of interesting stuff that — interracial dating, pot smoking, disobedience to teachers, all kinds of things we got on film. And the schoolboard went nuts. I could talk about the films forever, but the point is that I learned an awful lot about the town and how to research a town, and then how to shape a story

[1:19:00]

out of that research. Okay?

Gunnell: Yep. In the interest of time, we need to move on to the next topic. So earlier you made a comment — you said that there were a lot of side stories behind Warren

VanderHill's efforts to create the Honors College from the Honors Program and I was wondering if you could explain what some of these side stories are, or some of the issues he had in this process.

Trimmer: Well one of them was whether or not — The first one I can remember was the issue of housing: whether the housing office would allow us to have a separate, that is the Honors College, to have a separate dormitory for Honors students. Again, the Teachers College felt that that was creating this exclusive side story — a side living arrangement. Sort of like the

[1:20:00]

football dorm at University of Alabama, or something like that, you know. So there were problems with the dorms. There were problems with just the creating a college. And then there were problems with once you had a college, could you have a faculty that was separate from the faculty — in the history department for example — Could you have a historian on the honors faculty who was not in the history department, and could the honors college grant those people tenure because they weren't part of the regular college. The science — College of Science and Humanities for example.

[1:21:00]

Is that enough to give you a sense of —

Gunnell: Were you personally affected by any of these difficulties that he experienced?

Trimmer: No this was Warren's bit. The whole creation of the Honors College was Warren's achievement, really. It also helped him become a very creative provost, when he got that job. He was very eager to get involved in academic events and programs. We had something called UniverCity, which we ran for three or four years — we I mean, the college ran — the university ran. It was something Warren decides

[1:22:00]

“Why don't we do an institute over fall semester in which we invite speakers from all over the globe, essentially, and we could have plays, we could have this and that. We could have it out in the — where the — behind where the library is now. It was quite an — quite an event. Warren was very, very active and creative in thinking about ways the university could do things that were exciting. The current provost I'm not sure, but the provosts since Warren, have —

[1:23:00]

well Bev Pitts was very important person who followed Warren. Warren really

did do an awful lot. [pause] So, okay let's get back to, what? To the Honors College?

Gunnell: Did you aid in the creation of the Honors College or any Honors College courses at all?

Trimmer: No, by that time I was moving toward the Virginia Ball Center.

Gunnell: Let's talk about that a little bit.

Trimmer: Okay. We were in another Capital Fund Drive, and they determined that whereas

[1:24:00]

Ed Ball had given money to the Telecommunications Department — I can think of the building — the Ed Ball Building which is between Letterman [building] and AJ [Arts and Journalism Building].

Gunnell: The Ball Communications Building?

Trimmer: Yes. That's Ed Ball. Okay, so whereas he had given money to the university, Virginia had not. Both of them in their second marriages. Their first spouses both died. One tragic — both tragically. So, they were living in the Honors House. The whole story of why they lived there and not over on Minnestrista is an

[1:25:00]

— it takes two hours to explain, so we won't go into that. Anyway, there they were in that house, and they were just — the university was just starting to build the music tech building, right? The Sursa Hall and all of that? And they thought, "well, Virginia Ball had majored in music when she was in college, and taught music as a high school teacher." In fact, she was the band director. [laughs] And so, they thought they could get money from her and name that music tech building after her. So John Worthen and Warren went to meet with her and she said,

[1:26:00]

"I'm going to give you money, but I don't want another building. You're going to have to do work harder than that." Now Virginia Ball and I had both been on the Humanities — the Indiana Humanities Board of Directors together. I had worked for her niece, who published an art magazine in Indianapolis, no longer in existence. Warren knew all of these connections that I had with Virginia, and he said to me, he said, "Virginia wants some kind of — wants her money to go directly to students in some kind of creative

[1:27:00]

project. Can you dream up something?” So I thought this was a writing assignment. I wrote it all out, the Virginia Ball Center. I didn’t have any place to put the center. I just created it on paper. And so, Warren and — I sent it to John Worthen — he was president before he was an arena. He read it and he said, “This is kind of complicated. Would you come with Warren and me when we make our pitch to Ed and Virginia.” Ed was still alive then.

[1:28:00]

I said, “Well I’ll go, but when you guys start talking about money, I’d rather not be involved in that.” I have since gotten over that by the way, because I’ve had to write numerous grants for the Virginia Ball Center. Anyway, we go, we make the pitch, I tell them all about the center and my ideas for the center. Then I leave. This was on a Thursday, I think. Then I get a call on Monday from Worthen, he says, “Virginia will fund it on one condition.” I said, “What’s that?” He said, “You’ve got to run it.” Oh jeez, so there goes my — the life that I had planned up to that point. I had just finished building a huge study in the back of my house.

[1:29:00]

Two stories, with sliding ladder, with bookshelves. This is going to be the place where I was going to do — now that I was out of all these different things I was gonna do all my writing. I had my schedule all fixed so I would be writing from seven in the morning until two in the afternoon. Then I would go in and teach a couple of classes at night and that would be it. I had contracts pending with three or four different publishers, and I saw the offer to be the director of the Virginia Ball Center as yet again going to the dark side. You know, becoming an administrator.

[1:30:00]

And, oh — in the conversation we had with Ed and Virginia, Virginia says, “And where will my center be?” And out of the blue, John says, “Well, we were thinking about the Kitselman house. It hasn’t been used very — for very much.” Underutilized facility was the way it was characterized. And so, at the beginning there was a lot of concern about the fact that it was so far off campus. Students couldn’t — wouldn’t want to go off campus. Also, at that time there was concern about internet — whether or not we could get internet service working out there. To show you where we work

[1:31:00]

in terms of the whole internet revolution, we spent a lot of our initial money in that first year buying laptops for students because we figured they wouldn’t have

them. By the second year, we discovered they all had them, and we didn't need to have all those other laptops. I'm not sure what we did with them, I think we gave them to some charity. So then, like the Honors College, the Virginia Ball Center created difficulties for faculty members, because they would have to give up a whole semester.

[1:32:00]

The way the Virginia Ball Center worked, was that we would buy out a faculty member from his or her department so that their total semester would be — they would have an office out at the Kitselman house, they would teach nothing else, they would just run the seminar they proposed. [pause] That presented problems for a lot of young faculty members who again, were concerned about whether or not they were getting their publications out. As it turns out if they were smart — some of them were —

[1:33:00]

If they were smart, they would use the seminar experience as a way to write about that experience and to make the connections that I had created with them, like the American Association of Colleges and University, and Higher Education was really interested in what I had designed. I didn't know this. I went to the first meeting of the Higher Education Conference and I saw a book on the bookshelf that looked interesting. I started reading and I discovered "Oh my god, this thing that I thought was so new and creative has been going on ever since John Dewey."

[1:34:00]

You know, his ideas for education. So that there were schools like Evergreen and Hampshire in Wash— in New Hampshire — In Massachusetts. All these small liberal arts colleges doing a lot of the things that I wanted people to do at the Virginia Ball Center. So, for the first four or five years of the center's existence, I had a conference that I went to, and it was in different parts of the country every year. I would select four or five colleges that were very interesting,

[1:35:00]

like when we went to California, Pitzer and Santa Cruz, Redlands. These were four or five colleges that I worked ahead. I called the Public Relations person at each one of these schools. I said "I would like to spend three or four days on your campus. I'd like to meet with students. I'd like to go to classes. I'd like to meet with young faculty. I'd like to meet with old faculty." I'd like to — I had a whole list of things I wanted to know about how this creative experience that they were doing — how that worked out. Evergreen for example, one of the most innovative schools.

[1:36:00]

Then the question was, “Well, what discipline are you in?” They were in whatever idea they had that semester. I said, “Well how do you make progress in your profession if you’re changing your idea of what you want to do every semester?” They said, “Well, it’s just Evergreen. We’re fine.” So, I did a lot of that. As a result, I not only learned about what they were doing, they learned about what we were doing. And slowly the reputation of what was going on at the Virginia Ball Center grew nationally. As the students at the center created films, museum exhibits,

[1:37:00]

books, all of them winning awards and — that’s another thing that I did. I pushed really hard for the faculty members to think ahead to the end of the semesters. I want you to do something with whatever it is you and your students have created. Students had won like ten Emmy’s, for films. They had won a whole bunch of different awards — national awards. As a result, also, I got invited to do a lot of speaking at colleges.

[1:38:00]

And not only here, but internationally: Australia, China, Germany, The Netherlands. We had one seminar at the Virginia Ball Center where we had seven students from Ball State and seven students from Denmark. And they came here for half the semester and worked on their half of the project, and then the American students went to Denmark for the second half of the semester. A lot of interesting stories there. We did something similar in Argentina with some architecture students. Every semester there was something new happening. And, as a result,

[1:39:00]

each seminar had to do a public showcase, presenting what they had done. A great example is someone did a film on negro baseball in Indiana. They streamed the film down at Cornerstone. There used to be a guy that sold hot dogs down by where Brother’s [Bar and Grill] is now. Sold hot dogs late at night when the booze was running low. But what better thing to serve at a screening of a film about baseball than to have that guy there serving hot dogs and popcorn

[1:40:00]

and root beer and — Now Virginia was alive for the first four years of this project and we would have what we called our Driveway Talks, that is, I would take her to one of these showcases and then I would bring her home, and we would sit in

the driveway and talk about what was happening at the center, whether it was being well-known. What she didn't see was we did a national showcase at the Indiana State Museum at the same time that there was an international conference going on at W — you know that hotel near the state museum. But she died a month or two before that happened.

[1:41:00]

We had four or five hundred people there, including a lot of people there from [Eli] Lilly, and from state legislature and everything. That's — as a result of that a lot of things spun off back here on campus with the Lilly money that had been given to us. The center — you could say the center thrived, but interestingly enough the best people to teach at the center were not faculty — tenure line faculty, the ones that were working on their little research, because they couldn't see

[1:42:00}

giving up control and authority to the class. That was their whole idea: that the students were going to run the class and they were going to organize the work. So the Virginia Ball Center seminar had to be collaborative, interdisciplinary, project driven, it had to have a community partner of some kind — we did one on sexual abuse on campus which was very, very

[1:43:00]

interesting. We were lucky enough to find two people who were willing to talk at length about their experience. You know, one girl had gone to Florida when she was 19. Didn't have a — she had a false I.D. They — some guy roofed her, and he didn't know where her hotel was, he had just picked her up at a party. Anyway, the whole story about what happened to her and what she should've done instead of what she did do

[1:44:00]

and the fact that this whole project started because a faculty member discovered through a friend who was a nurse that there was a — that rape kits were just — they were just sitting there, not doing anything, you know. So that people couldn't really — and didn't know the laws well enough. And we found out from that that most sororities — girls on campus — sororities have a program on — I don't know what the technical

[1:45:00]

word is. You know what?

Gunnell: Sexual assault?

Trimmer: No, not sexual assault. There's just a word that covers — not restraint, but it's how to protect yourself.

Gunnell: Self-defense?

Trimmer: [nods] yeah, but that's not the word. There's a code word that's used in student affairs. And so we went down to — if you go down to Indianapolis and you drive around [Interstate] 465, there's a place called the Pyramids

Gunnell: I'm familiar with it.

Trimmer: A lot of the sorority and fraternity headquarters are located in that general area, and so we had a big screening of that film down there. So if you went out to the Virginia Ball Center,

[1:46:00]

you saw — you would see pictures hanging on the walls of each year's projects. Not only what the project had completed during seminar, but what kind of attention it had gotten. The one that's probably most interesting now is there's an organization which I'm on the board of directors of called the Council of Undergraduate Research. It has a headquarters in Washington. I was at a conference where I heard someone from The Chronicle of Higher Education —

[1:47:00]

said they were going to do a special issue on undergraduate research. And of course, I saw what we were doing at the Virginia Ball Center as undergraduate research. [pause] I've lost the thread of where this was going. Anyway. Shoot, I lost it. Stop it for a minute.

Gunnell: We actually have about ten minutes remaining.

Trimmer: Okay.

Gunnell: So, I have —

Trimmer: How many questions?

Gunnell: Well really, just this one. To kind of bring our interview to a close, how did the structure of the Virginia Ball Center seminar courses — how did that impact the Honors College?

[1:48:00]

Did it impact the Honors College?

Trimmer: It impacted the Honors College and it impacted the university. I knew when Virginia Ball was appointed president of the university, she had been teaching at — not teaching — she had been provost at the University of Massachusetts in Boston. And I had friends on the faculty there, and I called and asked them what she was like and they gave me a pretty good characterization. But they also apparently also talked to her about what I was doing at the Virginia Ball Center. So, like the first or second week, she was

[1:49:00]

here at the university. She came out to see me at the Center, in my office. And I had a coffee table in front of my couch, and on it were all kinds of DVD cases, and books, and things that were sort of prizes from, or products from, the various seminars, and she got fascinated by that. It wasn't too much longer that she started talking about a new plan for the university

[1:50:00]

that focused on something called “immersive learning.” And immersive learning, if you looked at the — her criteria for immersive learning, the criteria were straight off of the Virginia Ball Center's criteria. And then since then, the university's new strategic plan and its total commitment to immersive learning came from the Virginia Ball Center. In fact that's — in the advertisements, it often says about the Virginia Ball Center — the birthplace of immersive learning. One of the first seminars at the Virginia Ball Center was done by Tony Edmonds, Joanne Edmonds,

[1:51:00]

his wife, and Jim Ruebel, the Dean of the Honors College. And so, they got very interested in what the process and project — or the structure of the curriculum at the — or the structure of space and time and everything that could be done at the Virginia Ball Center, how that might be used at the Honors College. There is still, to this day, a series of courses that are almost like a Virginia Ball Center seminar. And, oh — a lot of the best faculty members that we had, that teach — that came out to teach at the Virginia Ball Center,

[1:52:00]

were adjunct faculty members — that is faculty members who were not on a tenure line, who were not obsessed with tenure and with publications, and were creative about doing all kinds of interesting things with students. As it turns out, those faculty members have published as much or more than many of their tenure

line faculty. For example, the woman who did the film on negro baseball got a VITA that's incredibly long. Got books, articles, asked to come to all kinds of conferences. There's a baseball conference [chuckles]

[1:53:00]

There's also a journal that's published at the University of Iowa called "Nine" which is nine innings in baseball. There's a weird world in academic life. But yeah, the fact that the center existed and Jo Ann Gora embraced the whole thing meant a lot to the Honors College and to the University at large.

Gunnell: Alright well as we bring this interview to a close, is there anything you're working on now or anything that you're working on in the future?

Trimmer: At the moment I'm working on a lot with this organization called the Council on Undergraduate Research.

[1:54:00]

It was formed initially by chemists who were teaching at PUI's — Princebly [Primarily] Undergraduate Institutions. And they were concerned that they weren't getting enough funding from NIH [National Institute of Health] and NSF [National Science Foundation]. They were all — all the funding was going to the big R1 research schools, so they formed this organization to try to be much more proactive in working with various granting organizations like Mellon and Carnegie and others, to get money for undergraduate

[1:55:00]

research. Well, I come in — oh, this is the story I wanted to tell you. I found out about this article that was going to be done in the Chronicle of Higher Education about the undergraduate research, which was becoming more of an important thing in higher education because it was listed as part of the high-impact practices, which is a — which came out as a major study about what students felt as if — what piece of their education had the highest impact on them, and undergraduate research was

[1:56:00]

named number one. It came out of mainly the sciences, and so they were starting a division in the Council on Undergraduate Research on research in the arts and the humanities, so Joe jumps in again, and we had numerous meetings with the director of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts, asking them why in their grant applications they would not give money to undergraduates to do — to pay them to do

[1:57:00]

research with the faculty members. But you know, I said, you know, you're

giving out grants but you don't mention undergraduate research, and it's listed here in this study as one of the top high-impact practices. So we had all these meetings with the administrations of NEH and NEA. Now NEH lists undergraduate research as a possible grant thing. And I'm also interested in the international level on this. There is now, every other year, a world congress for students

[1:58:00]

to show their undergraduate research. The first year it was in — shoot — one of the small countries that were part of Arabia. This year it's in Germany. I created a fund for student travel to go to the conference to present research. So I'm interested in international — undergraduate research has become an international movement. Germany, England, Australia —

[1:59:00]

all of these places have very, very active undergraduate research programs in the university systems, so that's what I'm working on now.

Gunnell: Alright, well we are out of time. But before the camera turns off, is there anything that I didn't ask you that I should've asked you.

Trimmer: Probably, but I'm sort of talked out. I think the Honors College is really a — you know, the way it's pitched — I'm sure Warren pitches it this way — is you know we have a liberal arts college — a small liberal arts college. Ball State has all the advantages of a research institution.

[2:00:00]

A large — and certainly, with the new health building it's going to be more so. It has all the advantages of that, it has all the advantages of you know athletes — football, basketball — it has all the advantages that Emens — the things that a large university like IU would have, it has all that, but it also has a small, liberal arts college embedded in it. The people who have gone to — the students who are graduates — my wife and I have a scholarship for undergraduates of the Honors Program

[2:01:00]

and we also give an award every year for the outstanding thesis. Two — one for the standard thesis and one for the creative thesis, so we continue to be involved in the Honors College that way. We don't select the people who win these awards, we just take them to lunch and keep track of what they are doing. But no, I can't think of anything. I've talked about — shot-gunned all over the place. I'm sure if I had sat down and written something it would've been much more cogent

[2:02:00]

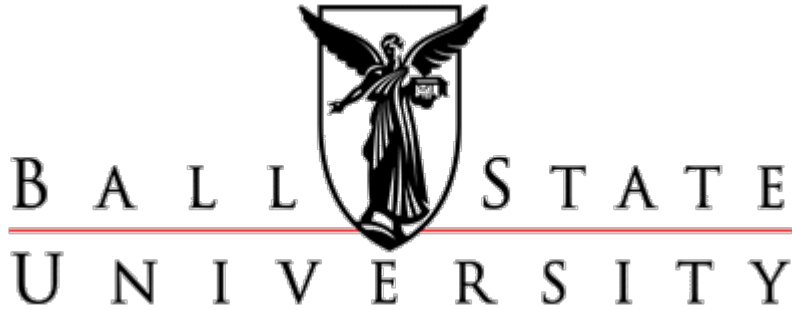
and logical.

Gunnell: Well, that's okay. We prefer this more candid approach. Unplanned. On behalf of the Ball State University Honors College Oral History project, I would like to thank you for taking the time to sit down and speak with me today.

Trimmer: Thank you.

[2:02:23]

End of interview



Department of History
Burkhardt Building 213
Muncie, IN 47306-0480

25 March 2019

Dr. Joe Trimmer
Department of English, RB 264
Muncie, IN 47306

Dear Joe,

On behalf of Dr. Doyle's Oral History Workshop Colloquium, I would like to thank you for devoting two hours of your time this past Friday to our Ball State Honors College Oral History Project. With your candor and eloquence, you shared your experiences in the Honors College and how that contributed to the formation of the Virginia Ball Center for Creative Inquiry. The interview you participated in will be an valuable historical source for those who wish to learn more about the Honors College's past, especially including our many alumni from over the past sixty years. Additionally, I would like to thank you for your discussion about your work with the *Middletown* films. This information will be quite valuable to the documentary because it contributes to the "town and gown" relations between Muncie and Ball State.

I really enjoyed learning about your life before and during your time as a Ball State professor. I found your story about beginning your graduate study at Purdue University inspiring, because it showed how you made life-changing decisions based off the way certain people impacted your life. These decisions display your human experience as a whole, an aspect of life that only adds to our oral history project by highlighting the emotions you endured.

I am delighted to add your interview to our Project collection site on the DMR.

Best regards,

Hannah Gunnell
The Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project Team



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Intellectual Property Consent Form
Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project**

We, _____ John Emert _____ (interviewee) and

_____ (interviewer), understand the purpose of this interview, to record and preserve historical information by digital audio/video (or other technical means), and consent to the transcribing, typing, printing, and publication of said interview. We also consent to the digitization of this material, as well as any supplementary photographs or documents, for access via the Internet.

We understand that the interview and supplementary items may be distributed to the public for educational purposes, including formats such as print, public programming, and the Internet. We agree to freely share the interview and supplementary items under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>). This means that we jointly retain the copyright, but that the public may freely copy, modify, and share these items for noncommercial purposes under the same terms, if they include the original source information.

We further understand that this interview may be kept and maintained by Ball State University Archives and Special Collections, for the use of students and scholars for as long as Archives and Special Collections believes the material to be of scholarly or historical value.

Interviewee

Print Name: _____ John Emert _____ (Signed): John Emert

Date: _____ 23 January 2019 _____

Interviewer

Print Name: _____ (Signed): _____

Date: _____

**Project Director Michael Wm. Doyle, Associate Professor of History, Ball State University
Burkhardt Building 213, 2000 W. University Avenue, Muncie, IN 47306-0480**

(Signed): _____

Date: _____

Pre-Interview Contact Notes: John Emert

Pre-Interview Time: 4:00-4:14 P.M., January 22, 2019

Pre-Interviewer: Nathan Rivers

- Dean Emert attended college at the University of Tennessee. He double majored in mathematics and music performance. He stayed at Tennessee to earn his Master's and Doctorate, both in mathematics. He finished his doctorate in 1989
- While at Tennessee, he was involved with the UT Singers, which he indicated was founded by the same person that started the Ball State Singers. He was in this group from his sophomore year of undergrad to his first year of his Masters. He did about 2 shows a week and noted that they were often part of alumni fundraisers.
- After leaving Tennessee, he came straight to Ball State, where he took a position in 1989 as a professor. He became involved with the Honors College in his second year, when he began teaching colloquiums about once a year. This continued for roughly 19 years. For one or two years, he also ran a summer colloquium for high school students about to head to college to give them a taste of what college schooling was like before they properly began.
- In 2008, the associate dean of the Honors College retired, leading Emert to apply for the position after seeing it advertised in the local newspaper. He believes he was the only internal candidate for the position in a national search. He was hired and retained the position through 2017.
- In 2017, following the sudden passing of Dean James Reubel, Emert became acting Dean before the position was made permanent on July 1 of the same year.

Hannah Gunnell

April 23, 2019

HONR 390-09 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

**Subject Research Documentation for Oral History Interview with John Emert on
March 26, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana**

4/25/61

- Born in Knoxville Tennessee (bio form)
- Born at Fort Sanders Regional Hospital (HONR 199 paper)

Childhood (unknown dates)

- Emert's mother was a part time house-maid and his father was a mail-carrier. He had no siblings. (HONR 199 paper)¹
- Emert watched the evening news with his parents, listening to the death toll in Vietnam. (HONR 199 paper).

1978

- Graduated from Doyle High School, in Knoxville Tennessee (bio form)

June 1982

- Received B.A. in Mathematics and Music from the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville (bio form) (involved in UT Singers, which was founded by the same

¹ This was a student paper provided to me by Dr. Michael Doyle. It was a paper completing an HONR 199 assignment in regards to interviewing a person who lived during the 1960's, which was the focus of the course. To protect the student's privacy, I was not informed who wrote this paper, but I have a copy of it.

person who founded Ball State Singers. Also involved in Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia
(pre-interview contact notes))

December 1986

- Received M.A. in Mathematics from the University of Tennessee (bio form)

August 1989

- Received Ph.D. in Mathematics from the University of Tennessee (bio form)

1989

- Began employment as Assistant Professor of Mathematical Sciences at Ball State University (bio form)
- HONR 189 Global Studies is added to the curriculum (Honors College Timeline)

1990

- Began teaching Honors Colloquium Classes (pre interview notes)

1992

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/WBSTProGdes/id/4812/rec/41> Starting in 1992 until 2010, Emert contributed to the WBST radio station in some way. The radio station published “Waves” which appears to be a pamphlet, in which it thanks contributors. There were 5 of these documents on the DMR.

1/15/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/94970/rec/8> Daily News Article. introduction of “Cardinal Quest,” a weekly problem solving contest featured in the DN, of which Emert was one of three judges. These problems were printed until 1994.

1/19/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/94989/rec/9> Daily News Article. calendar blurb about Emert presenting a colloq titled “Computer Algebra Systems.”

1/20/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/94998/rec/10> Daily News Article. repeat of above

1/21/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/95036/rec/11> Daily News Article. repeat of above

1/25/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/95073/rec/12> Daily News Article. first Cardinal Quest problem. (This happened up thru 1994)

4/26/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/95719/rec/18> Daily News Article. blurb about a Cardinal Quest problem not appearing because final paper before summer vacation.

10/05/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/96325/rec/67> Daily News Article. Brief on Emert lecture “Solids with Gluing Diagrams: The Construction.”

10/12/93

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/96374/rec/70> Daily News Article. Brief on Emert lecture part 2 “Solids with Gluing Diagrams: The Analysis.”

1/27/94

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/97379/rec/23> Daily News Article. Blurb about Colloq presentation Emert gave on this day. Title is “Voronoi Diagrams and their Applications to Computational Geometry.”

4/01/94

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/21073/rec/29> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert promoted from Assistant Prof to Associate Prof.

4/25/94

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/97962/rec/36> Daily News Article. Cardinal Quest (last cardinal quest article)

6/15/95

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/100010/rec/80> Daily News Article. New “Classroom Assessment Techniques” program allows faculty to obtain instant feedback from students. Emert recommended and led the program.

8/18/95

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/99901/rec/37> Daily News Article. Emert recommended program of student feedback to profs.

9/07/95

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/10856/rec/27> University Senate Minutes, lists Emert as Undergraduate Education Committee member

10/19/95

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/10897/rec/28> University Senate Minutes, lists Emert as Undergraduate Education Committee member

1996

- Dr. Bruce Meyer becomes dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline)
- The Honors College offices are moved to Carmichael Hall (Honors College Timeline)

1/25/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/101051/rec/38> Daily News Article. Blurb about Emert's planned colloq, "Inconsistencies of 'Wild-Card' poker."

2/8/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/101147/rec/39> Daily News Article. blurb about many profs who were nominated for the 1995 Excellence in Teaching Award. Emert was one of them.

4/25/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11035/rec/48> University Senate Minutes, Emert appointed to Creative Teaching Committee, to serve for three years

4/26/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/18103/rec/28> Board of Trustees minutes. Emert received tenure.

7/19/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/18632/rec/34> Board of Trustees minutes. Emert listed as director of something I can't figure out. Whatever this group is, they requested some money to go to the Annual Spring Topology/Southeast Dynamic Systems conference, hosted by the National Science Foundation. They were awarded \$17,000.

9/5/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11076/rec/58> University Senate Minutes, Emert member of Creative Teaching Committee and Undergraduate Education Committee

10/10/96

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11146/rec/11> University Senate Minutes Emert member of Creative Teaching Committee and Undergraduate Education Committee.

9/4/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11268/rec/27> University Senate Minutes, lists Emert as member of Creative Teaching Committee and Undergraduate Education Committee.

10/09/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11311/rec/34> University Senate Minutes, lists Emert as member of Creative Teaching Committee and Undergraduate Education Committee.

11/13/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11350/rec/37> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as secretary of Creative Teaching Committee.

1998

- Dr. Arno Wittig serves as interim Dean after Bruce Meyer passed away unexpectedly (Honors College Timeline)

1/29/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11356/rec/44> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed substituting for Mir Ali.

3/26/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUStntLfCo/id/16221/rec/36> From “Communique,” a newsletter put out by the Office of Disability Services: Emert received a Most Accessible Teacher award, which is given to a prof by a student. Debra Rigney gave the award to Emert.

4/23/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11448/rec/52> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as Honors subcommittee.

9/03/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11493/rec/59> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as member of Creative Teaching Committee, Undergraduate Education Committee, and Honors subcommittee.

10/08/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11534/rec/14> University Senate Minutes. Lists Emert as member of Creative Teaching Committee, Undergraduate Education Committee, and Honors Subcommittee.

11/12/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11558/rec/15> University Senate Minutes. Emert subbed for Mir Ali.

12/10/98

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/105025/rec/40> Daily News Article. column about a student's experience here. She specially thanks Emert, "who taught me that I could pass math."

1999

- Promoted to Full Time Professor of Mathematical Sciences (bio form)

1/28/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11677/rec/29> University Senate Minutes. Emert substituted for Mir Ali (founder of the undergraduate/graduate statistics programs at BSU).

2/5/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/15508/rec/40> Emert, Jay Bagga and Mike McGrew accepted a \$150 award on behalf of the Computer Science Dept. This award went to support the Midwest Graph Theory Conference Proposal, in which the money would be used to provide a forum for participants to learn of new research.

3/25/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11706/rec/32> University Senate Minutes. Emert substituted again for Mir Ali.

4/22/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11744/rec/40> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as secretary for Slate of Officers. Emert again listed as a University Senate member, representing the Mathematical Sciences Dept.

4/29/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11767/rec/42> University Senate Minutes. Emert subbed again for Mir Ali.

5/7/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/15569/rec/27> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert promoted from Associate Professor to Professor.

5/17/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/106120/rec/41> Daily News Article about profs receiving promotions. Emert was one of them.

9/09/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11778/rec/49> University Senate Minutes. Emert was in running for secretary but did not receive majority vote. Emert listed as member of University Senate, Undergraduate Education Committee, Honors Subcommittee, and he was nominated for Secretary for the fall 1999-2000 election.

10/07/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11824/rec/55> University Senate Minutes. John Lorch subbed for Emert. Emert listed as faculty member of University senate, member of Undergraduate Education Committee, and Honors Subcommittee.

10/9/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/MusCnrtEvnt/id/18917/rec/50> Emert played Organ in a “Doctor of Arts Conducting Recital.” Michael Davis conducted it, and the Ball State Concert Choir and Chamber Choir were featured in the performance.

12/09/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11863/rec/56> University Senate Minutes. John Lorch subbed for Emert.

2000

- Dr. James Reubel becomes Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline)

4/26/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/MunMtMscl/id/2238/rec/22> Emert played piano at the Muncie Matinee Musicale, as reported by the Muncie Matinee Musicale yearbook.

4/27/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11977/rec/42> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as secretary and member of University Senate.

9/7/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11995/rec/43> University Senate Minutes. Held elections, and Emert was elected secretary by acclamation. Listed as general member of senate, chairperson of the Undergraduate Education Committee, and a nominee for secretary for the fall senate election of 2000-2001.

9/8/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/86570/rec/50> Daily News Article. Article about postponing an overload bill. Briefly mentions Emert being voted for University Senate Secretary (he didn't have any opponents).

10/5/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12041/rec/60> University Senate Minutes. Emert signed/submitted notes. Emert listed as secretary of University Senate. Emert listed as secretary of Agenda Committee. Emert listed as chairperson of Undergraduate Education Committee.

11/09/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12076/rec/6> University Senate Minutes. Emert signed off and submitted the minutes.

11/16/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/87099/rec/54> Daily News Article. blurb about Emert's colloq "Formal Mathematics: How to Tie a Tie."

1/25/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12121/rec/7> University Senate Minutes. Emert signed off and submitted the minutes.

2/02/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/84813/rec/52> Daily News Article. Article about University Strategic Plan. Emert quoted defining "Diversity" and what it entails, as that was a main point of the plan.

4/26/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12155/rec/63> University Senate Minutes. Emert signed and submitted the notes. Emert was nominated and elected to serve as Chairperson. Listed him as a member of University Senate.

4/27/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/107359/rec/79> Daily News Article. Article about Emert being elected chairperson.

April 28, 2001

- Married Elizabeth Joan Jared (bio form)

5/4/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/13516/rec/22> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert introduced as next University Senate Chair for Fall 2001.

7/20/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/13915/rec/30> Emert and David Thomas accepted a \$3,500 award from Purdue University on behalf of the Math Dept. The funds went toward the Geometry In Space Project.

10/4/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12188/rec/4> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as chairperson of University Senate. Listed as chairperson of Agenda Committee.
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12180/rec/45> University Senate Agenda (same date as above) listed a report Emert gave in regards to issues in senate system/ governance system policy formulation flowchart.

11/01/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/108090/rec/76> Daily News Article. SGA proposes bill that decided that Police will check for minors at Tailgating events. Bill would be discussed with Emert, but Emert not quoted.

11/08/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/108136/rec/64> Daily News Article. Article about SGA bill to eliminate Saturday finals. Bill was delayed so University Senate senators could have discussion with Emert.
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12216/rec/50> University Senate Minutes. Emert called meeting at 4:01 p.m. Emert reported that the Graduate Faculty Policy, which was already approved, was called into question. Emert signed the notes.

11/09/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/108145/rec/63> Daily News Article. Article about University Senate Amendment that would require senator's votes be published in student media was overturned by one vote. Emert was the final vote (or at least article made it sound that way).

12/6/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12225/rec/9> University Senate Minutes. Listed Emert as present at the meeting. Emert listed as chairperson of Senate. Minutes said Emert met with administrators and legal council regarding the Warning Letters issue.

12/7/2001

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/108348/rec/78> Daily News Article. Article about University Senate Bill in relation to sexual relationships

between student and instructor. Bill was delayed. Emert quoted, saying he was unsure of when the bill would be passed.

1/18/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109596/rec/42> Daily News Article. Article about discussion forum of the Faculty Senate Model, one of two alternatives to University Senate, of which Emert was chair. Apparently the Faculty Senate Model did not fare well in discussion.

1/24/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12239/rec/10> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as chairperson and gave report on Policy of Consensual Sexual Relationships (see article below)
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12237/rec/53> University Senate Agenda. Emert mentioned bringing up Issues in Senate System.

1/25/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109669/rec/43> Daily News Article. Article about University Senate Bill which would limit full-time faculty's outside external activities to one day a week (such as teaching at another university), and the total income for this external activity no more than \$10,000. Emert chose senators for a committee to discuss this topic.

2/27/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109437/rec/44> Daily News Article. Article about a Indiana House bill putting not-voting faculty on the Board of Trustees. Emert is one of these members, representing University Senate.

2/28/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12276/rec/11> University Senate Minutes. Emert called meeting at 4:01 p.m. Emert inquired about scheduling of Fall Break and Homecoming (see article below). Emert signed minutes.
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12274/rec/54> University Senate Agenda. Emert reported Issues in Senate System.

3/1/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109986/rec/45> Daily News Article. Article about changing Fall Break dates because it may overlap with Homecoming. Emert would ask a senate committee to consider changing dates.

3/28/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12293/rec/55> University Senate Agenda. Emert reported Issues in Senate System and Restructuring of the College of Business Departments.

3/29/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/110059/rec/46> Daily News Follow-up article about how University Senate changed fall break dates so not to interfere with the Homecoming Game's attendance.

4/7/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/FrstBptstCh/id/6245/rec/20> Newsletter from First Baptist Church, announcing a concert event to celebrate the life of Ruth Ann Miller. Emert played an organ/piano duet.

4/11/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109706/rec/47> Daily News Article. Article about furthering discussion of changing faculty governance. Emert called for a special meeting to discuss the topic.
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12330/rec/57> University Senate Minutes. Emert called this special meeting at 4:01 p.m.

4/25/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12338/rec/51> University Senate Minutes. Emert called meeting at 4:00 p.m. Mentioned discussion with Indiana Commission for Higher Education and University Governance Leaders, with whom discussed community colleges and state budgets.
- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12335/rec/56> University Senate Agenda. Emert discussed Issues in the Senate System.

5/3/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/14759/rec/23> Board of Trustees Minutes. Provost Vander Hill recognized Emert for his outstanding service as University Senate Chair.

9/19/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12420/rec/50> University Senate Minutes. Emert's name listed next to two dates (4/9/02 and 5/12/02), but no context provided of what this means.

9/26/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/15352/rec/45> Board of Trustees minutes. Emert promoted Assistant Chairperson of the Department of Mathematical Sciences.

10/17/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12430/rec/8> University Senate Minutes. Emert substituted for Christine Shea.

10/18/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/109034/rec/48> Daily News Article. article about delaying changes in University Senate

11/14/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12477/rec/52> University Senate Minutes. Emert's name listed next to date 4/12/2002 but no context of what this means.

4/23/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/84295/rec/61> Daily News Article. The university received a grant from the National Science Foundation which was used for a summer math and science program geared toward minority students. Emert oversaw program, but was unavailable for comment in article.

4/24/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12579/rec/58> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present, appointed to the University Core Curriculum Subcommittee, and listed as member of the senate.

7/18/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/11074/rec/10> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert received a \$45,455 award to promote the Indiana-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation to all potential participants.

9/18/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12633/rec/59> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present, member of the University Senate, and member of the University Core Curriculum Subcommittee.

11/6/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12680/rec/12> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

12/4/2003

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12696/rec/60> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

1/22/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12711/rec/13> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

1/29/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/110365/rec/49> Daily News Article. article about Emert being added to presidential search committee.

1/30/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/9457/rec/44> Board of Trustees minutes. Emert accepted award on behalf of math dept. For the Indiana-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation.

2/2/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/81557/rec/58> Daily News Article. article about faculty complaining that they couldn't choose their University Senate Reps. Emert mentioned as being chosen without consultation from faculty.

2/26/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12735/rec/14> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

3/11/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12745/rec/61> University Senate Minutes. Dale Hahn subbed for Emert.

4/1/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12751/rec/15> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

4/29/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12779/rec/62> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present and member of the University Senate.

6/30/2004

- Had son, Jacob Jared Emert (bio form)

9/9/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12816/rec/63> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present. He inquired about the counting procedure on the passing of the recent constitutional amendment and how abstentions were counted (they weren't). He was also listed as a member of the honors subcommittee.

11/11/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12862/rec/16> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

12/2/2004

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12881/rec/17> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

2005-2008

- Chair of Mathematical Sciences Department (bio form)

7/22/2005

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/6705/rec/21> Board of Trustees Minutes state Emert became Chair of Math Department effective July 1, 2005.

2/24/2005

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12909/rec/18> University Senate Minutes. Emert listed as present.

3/31/2005

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12930/rec/19> University Senate Minutes. Ralph Bremigan subbed for Emert.

2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUStntLfCo/id/16342/rec/38> From "Communique": Emert recognized for ensuring access to students. He assisted in finding a good prof for a blind student.

2/16/2007

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/7295/rec/47> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert accepted an award of \$30,703 on behalf of the math dept. To be used for the St. Paul Travelers Predictive Modeling Initiative. The money came

from St. Paul Travelers and was to be used to support an experienced grad student in statistics.

7/18/2008

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/5224/rec/12> Board of Trustees Minutes. Listed Emert's salary change as he moved from Mathematics Dept. Chair to Associate Dean of the Honors College. Effective July 1, 2008.

8/26/2008

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/75036/rec/1> Daily News Article. Article about Emert returning for fall semester as Associate Dean of the Honors College. Discussed how being a mathematician would bring different outlook to the Honors College.

2008-2016

- Associate Dean of the Honors College (bio form)

2009

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/Odyssey/id/5686/rec/46> starting in 2009, Emert acts as a faculty advisor for the Honors College Literary Journal, "Odyssey."
- Dehority Complex becomes the residence hall for incoming freshmen Honors College students (Honors College Timeline)
- Edmund F and Virginia Ball House is renovated and later become the home of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline)

2011

- Was director of the Ball State University Worchester Center (bio form)

3/17/2011

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/72470/rec/60> Daily News Article. Honors Course “Redefining Ireland.” Emert led a class of students to Ireland where they studied Irish culture and history.

2013

- Ball State Honors College is able to hire its own faculty for the first time in the college’s history (Honors College Timeline)

7/19/2013

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/67195/rec/11> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert accepted a \$100,000 award on behalf of the Honors College. It came from the Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation

12/12/2014

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/70908/rec/41> Board of Trustees Minutes. Another mention of the University Diversity Committee.

7/17/2015

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/75666/rec/26> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert accepted another \$100,000 award on behalf of the Honors College, which also came from Edmund F. and Virginia B. Ball Foundation.

12/18/2015

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/76157/rec/33> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert mentioned as a member of the Ball State University Diversity Committee, a committee mandated by the State of Indiana.

10/26/2015

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/96806/rec/57> Daily News Article. Article about charity United Way of Delaware County. Mentioned Emert as involved with the campaign since 1989.

9/23/2016

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/103174/rec/59> Daily News Article. Article about customizing majors through the Integrated Studies and Medallion Scholars programs. Students who wished to partake in these programs had to schedule a meeting with Emert to get it approved.

10/14/2016

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/103228/rec/51> Daily News Article. Obit for former Dean of the Honors College, James Ruebel. Ruebel was on sick leave, so Emert was acting Dean. Emert had to send the email to his colleagues.

10/21/2016

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/MusCnrtEvnt/id/27041/rec/25> Music School held A Benefit for the Douglas Amman Choral Scholarship. Emert played organ

alongside Karen Howells (piano) and Mike Tabor (percussion). They played the song "Risen Today!" by Arr. Dan Forrest

12/16/2016

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/78141/rec/35> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert appointed acting Dean of the Honors College, effective April 1, 2016. He received a monthly stipend of \$1,176.

2/03/17

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/79204/rec/5> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert on the Ball State University Diversity Committee.

7/21/17

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/79822/rec/48> Board of Trustees Minutes. Emert named Dean of Honors College, effective July 1, 2017.

Hannah Gunnell

April 23, 2019

HONR 390-09 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Timeline for Oral History Interview with John Emert on March 26, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

April 25, 196: Emert was born in Knoxville, Tennessee.¹

1978: Emert graduated from Doyle High School in Knoxville, Tennessee.²

June 1982: Emert received a B.A. in Mathematics and Music from the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville.³

December 1986: Emert received a M.A. in mathematics from University of Tennessee.⁴

August 1989: Emert received a Ph.D. in mathematics from University of Tennessee.⁵

1989: Emert began employment as an assistant professor of mathematics at Ball State University.⁶

1990: Emert began teaching Honors Colloquia courses.⁷

January 15, 1993: Emert began judging Cardinal Quest problems printed weekly in the Ball State Daily News.⁸

¹ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

² John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

³ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

⁴ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

⁵ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

⁶ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

⁷ John Emert pre-interview notes, taken by Nathan Rivers

⁸ "Cardinal Quest" published in the Ball State Daily News. January 15, 1993.

1994: Emert was promoted from to associate professor of mathematics.⁹

1995: Emert joins University Senate and served on the Creative Teaching Committee, and Undergraduate Education Committee.¹⁰

1996: Emert received tenure.¹¹

1998: Emert participates on Honors Subcommittee.¹²

1999: Emert was promoted to Professor of Mathematics.¹³

2000: Emert becomes secretary for University Senate.¹⁴

2001: Emert serves as chairperson for University Senate.¹⁵

April 28, 2001: Emert marries Elizabeth Joan Jared.¹⁶

January 2004: Emert serves on search committee to find new university president.¹⁷

June 30, 2004: Emert's son was born.¹⁸

2005: Emert became Chair of the Mathematical Sciences Department.¹⁹

2008: Emert became Associate Dean of the Honors College.²⁰

⁹ Board of Trustees Minutes, April 1, 1994.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/21073/rec/29>

¹⁰ University Senate Minutes, September 7, 1995.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/10856/rec/27>

¹¹ Board of Trustees Minutes, April 26, 1996.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/18103/rec/28>

¹² University Senate Minutes, April 23, 1998.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11448/rec/52>

¹³ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

¹⁴ University Senate Minutes, September 7, 2000.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/11995/rec/43>

¹⁵ University Senate Minutes, April 26, 2001.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/12155/rec/63>

¹⁶ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

¹⁷ The Ball State Daily News article, "Professor Will Join Committee."

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/110365/rec/49> January 29, 2004.

¹⁸ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

¹⁹ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

²⁰ John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

2016: Emert becomes Acting Dean of the Honors College in place of Jim Ruebel.²¹

2017: Emert is hired as Dean of the Honors College.²²

²¹ Honors College Timeline

²² John Emert biographical information form. Provided by John Emert prior to interview.

Hannah Gunnell

April 23, 2019

HONR 390-09 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Topics for Oral History Interview with John Emert on March 26, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

Introductory Statement: “Good Evening. My name is Hannah Gunnell, and I am with the Ball State Honors College Oral History Project. I am here today on Tuesday, March 26, 2019 on Ball State University’s campus in Muncie, Indiana, to talk with Dr. John Emert about his experience here at Ball State University. I would like to start by asking you when and where you were born.”

1. Family Life/Growing up. Parents’ names/professions. Watching evening news, listening to Vietnam Death Toll.
2. Doyle High School and University of Tennessee in Knoxville, TN. Did he participate in an honors program?
3. Musical Career (organ/piano)
 - a. Playing at Muncie organizations, BSU concerts
4. Getting to BSU straight out of college (1989). Why BSU?
5. Told Nathan that he taught colloqs second year here. Did teach other courses? Why colloqs? Fav colloqs?
6. WBST radio station. “Waves” thanks him for contributing.

7. Cardinal Quest '93-'94.
8. Promotions: Assistant to Associate in '94, Associate to Prof in '99, Assistant Chair of Math Dept. in '02, Chair of Math Dept. '05,
9. Classroom Assessment Techniques
10. University Senate (1995)
 - a. Undergraduate Education Committee
 - b. Creative Teaching Committee (1996)
 - c. Honors Subcommittee (1998)
 - d. Elected secretary (2000)
 - e. Elected chair (2001)
 - f. University Core Curriculum Subcommittee (2003)
11. 1995 Excellence in Teaching awards
12. Midwest Graph Theory Conference Proposal ('99)
13. 2001 Strategic Plan, implementing Diversity
14. Marriage to Elizabeth Joan Jared (2001)
15. "Issues in the Senate System" as mentioned in multiple Senate Minutes (2001)
16. Faculty Senate Model (2002) (didn't fare well)
17. 2002 overlap of fall break and homecoming
18. Indiana-Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Students -- received award for program in 2003 and 2004
19. Son, Jacob Jared Emert, 2004
20. "Communique" 2007-- ensuring access to disabled students

21. 2008 becoming Associate Dean of Honors College-- mathematical look (DN);
Carmichael to Honor House
22. "Odyssey" Faculty Advisor (2009 - now)
23. Director of University Worcester Center (2011)
24. 2011 "Redefining Ireland"
25. University Diversity Committee (2013)
26. United Way of Delaware County Charity (donated to since '89)
27. Custom majors through Integrated Studies and Medallion Scholars program
(2016)
28. Serving as Dean of the Honors College (2017)
29. What next?
30. What did I not ask you?

Closing Statement: "On behalf of the Ball State Honors College Oral History Project, I would like to thank you for taking the time to sit down with us and share your story today."

Archives and Special Collections

University Libraries



Ball State University
Bracken Library, Room 210
Muncie, IN 47304

Phone: 765-285-5078
FAX: 765-285-8149
Email: libarchives@bsu.edu

Ball State University Oral Histories

Archival Identification:

Digital Identification:

Interviewer(s): Hannah Gunnell

Interviewee(s): John Emert

Date of interview: March 26, 2019

Gunnell: Good evening. My name is Hannah Gunnell and I am with the Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project. I am here today on Tuesday, March 26, 2019, on Ball State University's campus in Muncie, Indiana, to talk with Dr. John Emert about his experience here at Ball State University. I would like to start by asking you when and where you were born.

Emert: I was born in Knoxville, Tennessee, April 25, 1961.

Gunnell: And can you tell me a little bit about your childhood?

Emert: Sure. I was — I am the only child. My parents had me at the time, late in life. As it turns out, my wife and I had our child late in life too. It was a little than some of my classmates growing up. Sometimes my parents got — they thought they were my grandparents instead of my parents. I grew up on a small cul-de-sac, about an acre of property. My backyard overlooked

[1:00]

a large farm that had been abandoned. It was a good childhood. I was loved. I enjoyed wandering in the backyard in the summer time. For a few summers, I picked blackberries and sold them on the streets of Knoxville.

Gunnell: What were your parents' names?

Emert: Dorothea and Howard. Although, my dad rarely went by Howard. He went by Pete, or the — his close friends called him boots. I was never sure exactly where boots came from, but if someone called and asked for boots, I knew it was a close friend.

Gunnell: What were your parents' careers?

Emert: My dad was a rural mail carrier, for his entire — for principally his entire career. He met my mom on the route. My mom grew up on a farm, she was the oldest of four or five.

[2:00]

She was actually the first person — she was part of the first class from the county to go to the public high school in town, in Sevierville. She was part of the first graduating class that included county students, and she was valedictorian. She had a scholarship to go to college. She had an aunt that she could've stayed with to go to college. Her dad wouldn't let her off the farm, so she did the only reasonable thing: she eloped with the mailman. [chuckles] It's because of my dad's career that the family was formed and that I am here.

Gunnell: Did your mom eventually go to college?

Emert: She did not. She worked several different ways along the way. She worked in a grocery store, before she was married.

[3:00]

She worked at an insurance office. She would've loved to have been a math teacher. She was very good at it. At the time, they told us — they told our parents, "Don't teach your kids English before they go to school, because we have a special way of teaching English." And she dutifully obeyed, so she taught me math instead. So, I have memories of being in the ironing room, had a little blackboard, and she would teach me — teach me math while she was ironing. So, the first day of school — you have to remember, there was no kindergarten at the time — so it was the first day of first grade, I'm going to this little county school that has about twenty students of each grade age. I'm walking down the hall, I find the first grade classroom, all by myself, and I have this memory of sometime during that day going up to the teacher's desk and saying,

[4:00]

"I know my addition and subtraction, and I know about multiplication. When will we start division?" [laughs] So I was a bit of a [inaudible] from day one. But she grew that love of learning for me, and I think that showed in all that she did. She worked in the insurance office. She picked beans in the summers to make money. She picked blackberries, and I helped her, so we could buy a piano. She cleaned houses. She worked in yards — she would do yardwork for folks. She helped a friend at a shoe store for a couple years. She was dedicated to making the marriage work because she couldn't go back, and so my mom and dad were committed, and they were the better for it.

[5:00]

Gunnell: What was the name of this county school you attended for first grade?

Emert: White School. The building still exists. It's no longer a school. It's now private property. This tiny little first through eighth grade school. I attended through sixth grade, and then in seventh grade there was a new middle school that was built to bring all the little county schools together. It had all the new innovations, including open classrooms. So here was the phenomenon: twelve classrooms all trying to operate independently with no walls, and all opening to a common library. I understand the PTA has now bricked up the walls for this purpose.

Gunnell: So you mentioned that your mom worked quite a few jobs and you were saving up to buy a piano.

[6:00]

Emert: Mm-hmm

Gunnell: Could you tell me more about that story?

Emert: Yes. My dad's mom was a church organist and she taught piano. She lived in another town. I would see them occasionally, but it wasn't that convenient. Music came naturally to me. I have a memory when I — I had a little toy organ when I was little, maybe two or three, and I distinctly remember coming home from church and playing the hymns by ear on the toy organ. So, I wanted to take piano lessons. My mom's hairdresser — how was this? My mom's hairdresser's daughter took piano lessons from a teacher, a tiny little college five miles down the road, known then as Johnson Bible College,

[7:00]

it's now Johnson University. And so a teacher was identified, who's name I don't recall right now. That's alright. And so, my dad wasn't sure if it was good to — if it was worthwhile to invest. Money was tight. They — they had consulted and the teacher had said, "Once he gets to second grade, then he can take lessons. Then that's the time to start." The local furniture store sold pianos on ninety day same as cash, so you had ninety days to try it out and maybe return it to, so it was like a contract. I dutifully had taken notes, and my mom did too. She saw the potential there.

[8:00]

So I already told you about my first day of school, apparently I started a conversation on that first day of school, and the upshot was, I got tested, and after Christmas, I was moved to second grade. I still went back to first grade for reading, because remember, didn't have any reading ahead of time. But by the end of that first year, I had completed what I needed to for first grade and second

grade. And again, I remember noting to my mom and dad that, “Well, I’m in second grade now.” So I started piano lessons that January. And it was — it was a sacrifice. The money from the blackberries did go toward paying off the piano. I’m glad now that I helped to do that.

Gunnell: How much did that piano cost?

Emert: I have no idea.

Gunnell: Do you know how long it took to save for it?

Emert: [shakes head] Hm-mm. My mom and dad were really good savers. We rarely

[9:00]

Bought anything on credit that we couldn’t have paid for. That was the way we did things. So I know that they had found a way to manage, but we still needed to have that extra income to make up for the cost of piano. My sense was is it took a couple summers of picking blackberries in addition to some frugality to make it all come out.

Gunnell: Did you — when you attended high school, did you ever play piano for choirs or —

Emert: Oh yeah.

Gunnell: Would you like to talk about that?

Emert: Sure. So I kept playing piano through grade school. I actually played a solo on a couple of the Christmas programs at the elementary school. I got to middle school. I was in the choir and the choir director was very encouraging, and encouraged me to play piano for the occasional piece, which was great.

[10:00]

I kept it up in high school. The first two years I played for the choir — sang also, but played for the choir. And then my junior year of high school, the musical returned. The high school that I went to had done musicals for several years, they had a very strong choral program, but for whatever reason, they had suspended the musicals my first two years of high school. So my third year of high school, the musicals was going to return. We were doing “The Sound of Music.” There were two pianists that would’ve been in line to play for the musical. It was me and Amy Benson. And Amy wanted to be on-stage, and I was happy to be in the pit. So Amy went on stage, and we were going to use an orchestra for the actual show, but we needed a rehearsal pianist to play for all the rehearsals. And so they handed me a full score, and said, “Just play as much as you can.” And so I did.

[11:00]

And that was one of those moving of the — moving the rudder experiences. Because suddenly I knew half the school, because they were involved in the musical somehow. And they knew me. It wasn't that large of a school, it was about thirteen-hundred, fourteen-hundred [students]. And I hadn't been bashful my first two years, but I had my circle, my friends. And suddenly, when I started working with the musicals, my — I blossomed. I blossomed socially, and I found this was something I really enjoyed. I enjoyed the social part of it, and I absolutely loved the music part of it too. And after a few — after a few days, I figured out which instruments were transposing and which were not, so I could play the full score. I had a lovely time.

[12:00]

That was one of those moments where taking an opportunity opened the doors so nicely. So, I continued piano lessons through then. I wanted to take organ lessons. I had always had an interest in that. And it was — it must've been about the same time, that I picked up organ lessons. For a while I did piano lessons and organ lessons, and then I shifted to organ only. That opened up more doors too.

Gunnell: How so?

Emert: I was fifteen and a half, I had played on occasion at the church that we were going to. Enjoyed it, but thought, you know, I could do more. So there was a community newspaper that had buck ads. For a dollar you could put a three-line ad in the paper. I thought, "I'm going to put an ad in the paper."

[13:00]

So I put an ad in the paper, advertising church organist for hire, and actually got two or three churches who called me. And one of them worked out for me nicely. Shallow Baptist Church, which was out in the country in Sevier County. They were actually in need of a pianist and an organist. I couldn't even drive yet, so my mom drove me until I turned sixteen, and I played there for — let's see, how long did I play there? I played there for two and a half years, and then that opened the door for doing some work at a local summer camp. And so I wound up — when the dust settled, I was co-director, so the number two flunky for a small residential camp that's near Gatlinburg, that at the time was way out in the middle of nowhere.

[14:00]

I had never gone to camp — I was allergic to everything. You know growing outside. It wasn't even on my radar, then suddenly here I am offering some leadership in a summer camp. And it was a great experience. It taught me the

patience of Job [biblical character]. It taught me to realize in a real personal way how fortunate I was. It was about sixty kids each week. The first year I — I worked there for four summers — The first summer that I worked there I remember noting that of the staff, less than half had indoor plumbing. A substantial number of kids were at camp because they wanted a hot meal. There were some who were paying their way,

[15:00]

but if we had an empty bed coming up on a week, we would always find a way to fill it, and we would find a way to pay the bills. And that was a great experience for me. Especially growing up as an only child, in a neighborhood that didn't have other kids. It brought out another piece of me that I think makes me who I am today, because I realized the potential there is in people and in how sometimes it's just a matter of looking beyond the surface and realizing what can really be done if we put the right people in the right place with the right tools.

Gunnell: You mentioned something I would like to go back to. You said that you were allergic to everything growing up?

Emert: Yeah.

Gunnell: Could you explain that a little bit?

[16:00]

Emert: Well, poison ivy, poison oak, dogs, cats, horses, probably grass, I'm not sure. So even though I liked being outside I was always congested. I never had a pet. I still enjoyed being outside. Just made it work.

Gunnell: Do you still have these allergies?

Emert: Oh yeah. They morph a little bit. So, I still know when I am within range of a long-haired cat. I'm still sensitive to some things, but you just make do.

Gunnell: Do you ever have issues with that here on campus?

Emert: No, no, thanks to Allegra. [laughs]

Gunnell: I also found something interesting in my research found something interesting that I want to touch on.

Emert: Sure.

Gunnell: So I was reading a paper that a student did over your experience in the 1960s,

[17:00]

and they said in this paper that you used to watch the news with your parents in the evening and you were listening to the Vietnam War death toll. Can you explain that to me a little bit?

Emert: Oh yeah. Walter Cronkite [CBS news reporter], every night, there would be a time where the number of Americans who died, the number of South Vietnamese who died, the number of North Vietnamese who died, and the number of Soviets who died are reported. It was reported sort of like the stock market report, but it was always reported. And it was real, and I remember sitting on the sofa — this was a family thing. I always sat down to watch the news.

[18:00]

I remember thinking, “What are we really doing here? Where is the endgame? Where is the logic here?” And now I think back on those days and I still have those feelings. This was a — from my perspective this was a chess game that we might not have even been trying to win. My mom had a boyfriend in high school who didn’t come back from that war. Not Vietnam, but the war at that time.
[pause]

[19:00]

And was necessary, but there needs to be some logic. There needs to be a purpose. And it wasn’t clear to me growing up what that purpose really was.

Gunnell: Okay. In the interest of time we need to move on.

Emert: Move along [laughs]

Gunnell: I see that you attended the University of Tennessee. I’m not really sure how to phrase this question, but you grew up with mathematics and music, and decided to pursue that in college, so I guess why did you decide to pursue that?

Emert: In high school I wasn’t really sure what I wanted to do. I took the military aptitude test. I had some friends who were going that route. I thought about engineering, I thought about accounting, I thought about many things.

[20:00]

I believe I changed my mind enough during the summer that UT finally sent me a blank form that just said, “Tell us what you’re going to major in when you get here.” And when I got there, I chose music. My plan was to major in music and minor in math. I’d really enjoyed my organ lessons. I enjoyed the challenge of those high school productions. I knew the organ teacher at UT, and I liked what

he could bring out in me. So, my decision was major in music, minor in math. Even thought about a minor in physics for one term and realized there were people who were much more gifted in physics than I, but I still enjoyed my physics year. I fell in love with the music.

[21:00]

I really did. I fell in love with the puzzles, with the under — with the finding a rhythm and understanding in the mix. I enjoyed the challenge. I enjoyed the challenge of music theory. I picked up some extra courses because I was in college, and I was fortunate that Tennessee did not charge an overload fee. We were on quarters, so it's a little different, but I routinely took twenty-two, maybe twenty-three hours in a term because there were things I wanted to do. I was in college because it was a privilege. It was an opportunity. So, I took extra courses in music. I took some extra music composition courses that did me well. I actually worked as a contract composer for a few years for a publishing house. I took some extra music history and musicology courses because they were interesting.

[22:00]

At the same time, I took some extra math courses because I enjoyed that too. Really, really got to know my math teachers quite well. And for a school as large as Tennessee, that initial effort to get to know my teacher paid off so well. I helped one of my math teachers buy a piano. My calc one teacher was a practicing trumpeter. Another one of my math teachers was a Julliard-trained pianist. And there were others. And so what I found in the math department was people who saw me for more than a student — they saw me as a person. And the same was true in music, and so the two complimented each other quite nicely. I kept taking math courses because I enjoyed them. So I wound up with a double major, in four years, with some extra courses too. Actually, when the dust settled, I think I had six or nine credits of graduate math courses

[23:00]

because well, my friends were taking it so I should too. And I was starting to see some of the challenge. For the last three years of undergraduate and what turned out to be my first year of grad school, I also played for a travelling musical group much akin to University Singers here. It was started by Don Neuen, the same guy who started the Singers here. He went to Tennessee. His last two years at Tennessee were my first two years at Tennessee, and so I got to work underneath him with UT Singers. I absolutely loved it, absolutely loved it. And frankly it was a nice bonus that it came with a full scholarship too, which gave me the time to love it, also. That in itself opened up so many extra doors. But then it was graduation, and I had every intention of being a musician, applied for a few jobs, had a couple of — got a couple of full time leads. Nothing was quite perfect though, it just wasn't right for me. And

[24:00]

as fortune would have it, the math department had managed to fail too many grad students that year, and they needed warm bodies to teach calculus. So, they made me the offer I couldn't refuse. They said, "We'll give you an assistantship for two years. Get your Masters degree." And then they made an extra offer, which never happens, should never have happened. They said I could share the first year with music, so my first year I did the UT Singers again and taught calculus as a grad student, and I loved it. And what I discovered was that same excitement, that same giddiness that comes from being in the pit or being in a performance group — I could get that same excitement, I could have that same challenge to communicate with others in front of a classroom. And, as fate would have it, I would up doing all three of my degrees at Tennessee then.

[25:00]

So I did my Masters in mathematics, by the time I was done with my Masters I had passed the prelims to the doctoral program. I actually thought about going somewhere else, but instead I changed areas. And it was a perfect decision. It was exactly what I needed to be doing. So that's the long version of how the music even propelled me through my math.

Gunnell: Well it kind of shows how you started teaching as well, correct?

Emert: Absolutely.

Gunnell: So when did you decide that you wanted to teach full time?

Emert: That was during grad school. And again, mathematics — the math and sciences department again saw me for more as a student, so they put me in places. They gave me places that I could grow and test myself. One year, they assigned me to rewrite the curriculum for one of the — one of the services courses. And so, I discovered that

[26:00]

I enjoyed crafting — of anticipating how different people might view a topic. Of sort of being in the background and being ready for the student who sees it one way or the student sees it another way. For at least a year or two I was teaching large lectures and I — so I would run a class of a hundred fifty or two-hundred. Now I would have undergraduates who would do break-out sessions. So they gave me the opportunities to discover if I enjoyed it or not, and I did. One week — Tennessee switched from quarters to semesters while I was a grad student, and amongst the anomalies that showed up in that change, there was a need for a one credit, once a week linear algebra course for engineers who didn't have time to

take linear algebra.

[27:00]

So it was a just teach on the moose — just get it done. They asked me to do it — actually, they told me to do it. So I thought, “How do I do this course? This is very different than just standing up there and demonstrating. I have to find a different approach to this.” And so that was the first time that I realized, I’ve got to do some pretty serious planning, because I can’t take the risk that I make a typo when I’m doing it live. So that was the first course, probably the only course, that I completely scripted the entire course. So, when I walked in, I handed the students a copy of my notes, and we marched through the notes every day, because it was about telling the story, not demonstrating it. It sort of took me to a different place. But I enjoyed it. I always enjoyed it. Even when it was difficult, I enjoyed it. One year they gave me the task — it was the same part of the conversion — because we had moved to semesters, there was a chance that,

[28:00]

my engineering majors again, if they got stuck in the first semester, they would be a whole semester behind, not just a quarter behind, and there were some tracking issues. So they decided they needed to offer an invitation-only kind of remedial experience. So it was a privilege to be invited to my room. I showed up, the selected ones showed up — if they didn’t show up, their space was given to someone else. And my job was to survey the crowd of about twenty, and in that hour group them into small groups, so that by the end of that hour each of them had had their own problems solved for whatever their issue was, no matter what it was. So, it was the classroom with blackboards on all four sides, small group learning,

[29:00]

me sort of floating from group to group. I enjoyed that. It was another piece of the puzzle that taught me that this was something that I — this was a challenge I really enjoyed.

Gunnell: Did you ever teach music courses?

Emert: Not as a grad student. I taught a little bit of piano — private piano to friends but nothing major.

Gunnell: So how did you get from University of Tennessee to Ball State?

Emert: So, here’s the history lesson. I graduated in 1989. I was interviewing in January that year, just before the Reagan Recession, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification, Tiananmen Square. I was the last class that came out where the

schools were literally chasing the applicants down the hallways at the conference.

[30:00]

I said no to interviews. Don't ever say no to interviews. You're not supposed to do this. But I did. I said no to an offer not having another offer in hand. You shouldn't do that either. But I had — I found myself with a phenomenal opportunity. My top schools, my top choices, all made me offers within a day of each other. Ball State was one of those. I chose Ball State because of all the schools I interviewed, I saw in this place the potential for growth. I saw the potential for growth in the school, and I also saw the potential for growth for me being at this school. And I tell you it's been realized even more than I could possibly have imagined at the time.

[31:00]

I had no, no idea I would be here thirty years later. I do remember during part of the — you know the new employee process, being handed my options for retirement benefits and thinking, “Oh my goodness, what in the world should I do now?” Wasn't even on the radar, and yet this is the place that I've grown. It's the place where I've met my wife. It's the place where we are raising our child. This is home. And the university is so much more than it was thirty years ago, also.

Gunnell: I have like three questions in my head and I can't decide which one I want to ask first. Okay, let's start with you mentioned that you saw the potential for growth. How have you grown?

Emert: I had lots of good

[32:00]

experiences as a grad student. I had lots of good experiences as a musician in Knoxville. But I was still green. It took — it takes — it took me a couple years to let go of being a grad student. Of not feeling like I had to get the next job done immediately — of letting go. That was the first point of growth. Growing to realize as all pre-tenure folk should learn, that one needs to move beyond your graduate work. The advice that I give to others and that I gave to myself was cast broadly and celebrate the fish that you catch.

[33:00]

I have a filing cabinet in the basement of the Honors House filled with research projects that will never get done. Many of them are flawed and failed and couldn't possibly get done. But I was fortunate, because as I casted, I found projects that spoke to me, that spoke to others. I discovered early on that I thrived on collaboration. I thrived on finding applications of, again, connecting to other

areas. One of my early projects — Claus Ernst and I worked for at least five, six years on it. Our major professors in grad school knew each other, so we were introduced at a conference. And we worked

[34:00]

off and on, mostly on, trying to generalize a particular result in mathematics that was applicable to DNA replication. Had to do with some knotting, some knotting theory and several times we thought we were on to something, we pushed the rubric and then we were able to find the flaw, so we'd back up and try it again. And we finally figured it out. And our original goal was to try to move from the simple case that everyone understood, which was the N equals two case to an N equals three case. But when we finally figured it out, we realized that we had — we had the tool that could move us not only from two to three, but from two to any number. So, our persistence paid off. It's another piece of the puzzle

[35:00]

of how to understand and characterize DNA replication. I don't understand the science of it, but I have a little piece of how to describe it, how to characterize it, how to describe it geometrically. And that's what Claus and I worked on. I had several of those kinds of experiences. That's one wake where I've moved on. I was fortunate that I was given some leadership assignments early on. I was the first — the first undergraduate coordinator for the math department. So this was the point of confluence for the math ed, the math, the actual science, the statistics, the applied math, where all those, at that time, fairly disparate programs sort of all merged into one. And looking back on it, part of my job then was to try to find ways to encourage those different parts of the department to talk to one another to realize

[36:00]

how their work could coordinate. So one of the things I did during that time, as a leadership role, was to guide us to the point where we had — where we could identify eight courses that would run once every two years, that could serve one or more of those subareas. And by building a schedule, by making a commitment to this routine, we could all benefit. Because that way we knew that that course that a small population would need would come up in the rotation. And it took some conversation — it took some crafting. But that was part of how it grew. I learned how to be a leader, to guide, while still encouraging conversation, encouraging all the players to be part of the puzzle.

Gunnell: You keep using the motif “piece of the puzzle,”

[37:00]

the “puzzle,” so my next question is, how did the Honors College play into that puzzle?

Emert: The first colloquium that I taught, I believe I taught my second year I was here — I don’t recall how I learned about the Honors College; I think it was through a student who told me about it. But I discovered the — I discovered the Honors College and the colloquia and realized that no one in mathematics was participating. So I remember meeting with Arno Wittig and Joanne Edmonds, and making my proposal, and they took the risk. So, my first colloquium used Douglas Hofstadter’s book “Gödel Escher Bach,” which is really a book about artificial intelligence,

[38:00]

but on another level, it looks at common themes — common threads between the music of JS Bach, the art of MC Escher, and the work of Gödel, who is a logician who proved — twentieth century logician who proved things like there’s a space between things that are true and things that are false. There are things that are true but can’t be proven to be true. There are things that are false but can’t be proven to be false — There’s a grey area in there. And I took it at that level. I liked the book. As it turned out, I read that book when I was working at summer camp the summer before I started UT. And I always enjoyed it. I found it to be challenging. I found it to be the kind of book that you get something more out of it every time you read it. I also knew that Douglas Hofstadter was at IU. And it didn’t happen the first time but the second time I taught it, made arrangements for him to be part of the class also. That was my first Honors colloq.

[39:00]

And that was a piece of the puzzle. That was my chance to branch out a little bit again. And, as you might anticipate, the program attracted a few mathematicians, a few philosophy majors, a few art majors, and the random crowd also. It was a great — it was a great conversation. I enjoyed it very much. Offered it a second time. Somewhere in the mix I did a summer course also. There was an early start program that the Honors College ran at the time that would bring high school students in, and so I offered a variation — not that course, but I think it had something to do with geometry and puzzles, and I remember utilizing the art museum for that. My whole point was to open up the eyes to the way that mathematics is part of a bigger puzzle. That it’s a piece —

[40:00]

That it’s not, it’s not an island, but its part of a rich tapestry that all fits together.

Gunnell: How many times did you teach this course total?

Emert: Oh my goodness.

Gunnell: Or, what years did you teach it from? If that's easier.

Emert: I think I taught it twice. I moved on. I've taught quite a few colloqs, and I rarely repeat them because I have so many I want to do. And my — and I think I probably did it twice, maybe three times, I'm not sure.

Gunnell: Have you ever taught more than one at a time? Like different colloqs at a time?

Emert: No, no I haven't.

Gunnell: Why not?

Emert: Mm, might have been in part because when I was in mathematics, I could change up my mix so I could do one Honors class. I'm not sure I ever asked to do. I'm not sure. I'm not sure at the time I would've been able to balance it along with everything else I wanted to do.

[41:00]

The year I taught the colloq for the first time, I was teaching that and a graduate course, and so it was an interesting mix, even as it was.

Gunnell: Did you ever teach any music courses here?

Emert: [shakes head] mm-nm

Gunnell: Why not?

Emert: Umm, I don't have a graduate degree in music. I have been on some music doctoral committees though, and that's been fun. The way the doctoral committee structure is laid out here, there needs to be someone from outside the area to serve on the committee, and since I'm not affiliated formally with the school of music, I can serve that role. But I can still contribute to the conversation. There was one unfortunate committee where when the — when the student was doing the oral defense, [sighs]. I knew the answers, and that student did not,

[42:00]

and she had been studying and preparing for it and I was thinking, "oh, oh you poor unfortunate — don't you know Copen when you see it?" but I was kind and I kept my mouth shut. But I had been involved in music in ways like that.

Gunnell: Have you ever introduced any music courses — even though you couldn't teach them, have you ever introduced any music courses into the Honors College?

Emert: I have encouraged others, which is sort of part of my role now, is to help — especially when I was Associate Dean and a little bit even now — of growing those new opportunities. So, Galit's [Gertsenzon] course is a good example: music of the holocaust. My goal there — my goal there was to help her find a way to move the course out of the classroom and she took my idea and ran with it

[43:00]

and grew it into something that's really quite lovely. So, I have those opportunities. I've had a little bit of collaboration with a couple of music faculty, composition folks but nothing has come out of it yet. But it might, you never know.

Gunnell: I would like to transition into talking about your experience with University Senate.

Emert: Oh my goodness [laughs]

Gunnell: If that's okay?

Emert: You're going for all of the dark dim past.

Gunnell: Is that not a topic you're okay talking about?

Emert: No it's perfectly fine talking about it. I was chair of senate for a year.

Gunnell: Okay, so I saw, if my research is correct, I saw that you joined in 1995.

Emert: That's correct.

Gunnell: Why did you join? How did that come about?

Emert: I believe at the time I was elected by my department. I was either elected by my college or by my department. I was willing to step forward —

[44:00]

I had been involved in the undergraduate education committee, and I had chaired — I had been a member of that committee and chaired that committee for a couple of years. This is the committee that's undergraduate programs, and undergraduate program changes. I think it's fair to say I put my name forward for university senate because there was work to be done and I was willing take it on. We needed senators who were willing to think deeply, not merely rubber-stamp. And so, it wasn't that I was running against anyone, but I was willing to take my turn. And so that's why — that's why I put my name forward when the opportunity arose. So, I was a member for a few years, I think I was secretary one

of the years, and then I became

[45:00]

president of the senate for a year. And as part of that, I — because of that election, I was on the search committee for president that brought president Gora to campus in the end.

Gunnell: Can you talk about that experience a little bit?

Emert: It was a great opportunity. I'm proud of the work that we did. It helped me to — it helped affirm what I probably already knew, that administration is — that administration is a hard job. I had actually worked with President Worthen on a project. We presented jointly at a national meeting, he and I.

[46:00]

So, I had, through John Worthen, I had a little glimpse of what that office entailed. Through the search process to find the president that wound up being President Gora — it educated me a bit to how complex this job really is and how important this job really is. And we were a good committee, we worked hard, we listened to one another, we struggled with hard decisions. And while we were the search committee, we were not the selection committee. I have to say I am very pleased with the results the Board of Trustees made based on our work.

Gunnell: I also discovered that you were on the Honors subcommittee?

Emert: Yes I was.

[47:00]

Gunnell: What did that look like? What did you do as part of that committee?

Emert: We were, in theory, an advisory committee to the Dean of the Honors College. In truth, we didn't do much. I remember one year we met and elected the president, and then we met the next year.

Gunnell: Oh, wow.

Emert: Yeah.

Gunnell: Why do you think you weren't utilized as much as you could have been?

Emert: I don't know. I don't know. That was a — that was in a senate structure that had many more committees. It was a structure that recruited quite broadly to fill the ranks, as opposed to the current structure, which purposes a single person in three,

or four, or five committees.

[48:00]

This was the antithesis. This was bringing in as many players as possible. Part of the challenge might have been that we were bringing in people who were either naïve to what the committee should be doing, or simply seeking a line on the VITA. So, I don't think the blame goes anywhere in particular. It was probably part of a larger system that was overpopulated with committees.

Gunnell: Is this committee still in existence? Do you know?

Emert: No. [shakes head] No I think we dissolved ourselves one year [chuckles].

Gunnell: Really? Do you know what year that was?

Emert: I have no idea.

Gunnell: Alright. At this point in the timeline, I have that you married your wife in 2001.

Emert: Yes.

Gunnell: Would you like to talk about that a little bit?

Emert: It was lovely.

[49:00]

She noticed me. At the time, I was playing for one of the services at our church she was attending. She was a faculty member. I was playing on Sundays. I was oblivious. And then one Sunday the pastor that day made some off the wall comment that I was a mathematician, and she picked up on it. She called a friend of hers, who was in math, and said, "Tell me about this Emert guy." And my colleague in math apparently put in a good word for me. So she emailed me, and said, "Saw you at church. Would you like to go out to dinner?" What she didn't realize was I was in D.C. for a conference, and I didn't get the email. So she had emailed — no reply.

[50:00]

So she went back to my colleague in math and said, "Why isn't he answering?" So my colleague in math said, "He's in D.C. Try again." So she tried again, and by then I had found it, so I replied and proposed that we have a date at a restaurant in the village, which no longer exists, and for good reason — pretty bad. And so, you got to remember I was oblivious, so I did the only reasonable thing — I showed up really early with a table, with my back to the wall, so that

she could find me, because I couldn't have picked her out of a crowd! [laughs]
And there was no crowd either, because that restaurant needed to die. So she came early but I came earlier, so it started out fine. We ordered the special,

[51:00]

then we proceeded to wait I think forty-five minutes. About time thirty, they brought these strange looking green drinks for us that — no, no thank you. Something edible came at mark forty-five, which we sort of ate, and then I had tickets for “Guys and Dolls” at University Theater. We were going to miss most of the first half, but we walked over anyway. My seats were on the while, so I knew where they were. We sneaked in. Ten minutes later the lights came up, and several people said, “Hi, John! Hi, Elizabeth.” So we were found out within ten minutes of joining. As Elizabeth puts it, she had no clue what was going on in the musical, but we had a lovely evening.

[52:00]

And then we went for coffee somewhere afterward, and then I said the right thing. I said, “What are we doing tomorrow?” That was Friday night. I had picked up that she had a research interest in Amish Literature Culture. And I knew about Berne. And so, Saturday morning I took her to Berne, which is an Amish community near Portland. They still speak high German. And our date continued. It's been wonderful. We got married three days after my fortieth birthday. And I don't think my student was trying to be funny when my actuarial student major pointed out that I was beating the odds, because a single guy aged forty — the chances of that person ever getting married is pretty low.

[53:00]

But I did. This was complicated by the fact that I proposed to her two or three months after she had accepted a job at Indiana State. So, she told me that she'd accepted at the Scramble Light in March. She was back in town, end of June for a conference. She was at the alumni center. I was to pick her up, we were to go out and have supper, and then she was going to go back to the evening session at the conference. Well I picked her up and said, “We need to go back to the house first.” And once I sat down at the piano and sang to her a song that I had written to propose. She wasn't hungry anymore. [laughs]

[54:00]

So, went and told the neighbor, and then we went and told my friend in math, who had put us together. And then she went back to work [laughs]. As she tells the story, a couple of them said, “How was supper?” “We didn't eat, but I got this!” [looks at his ring finger]. Nine months later we were married, and then three years later, on my wife's fortieth birthday, we discovered she was pregnant, and that's

where Jacob came from. So we lived apart for four years. Elizabeth made the decision, as we knew that Jacob was going to be born, to give up her chair-ship at Indiana State. And that was a lovely gift.

[55:00]

We had talked about other options. There was one school that was already convinced I was going to go there and be chair, they just forgot to tell me. They thought they had solved the problem for us, but as it turned out, Elizabeth decided to be a full time mom, and its been wonderful. So we did it all in the wrong order, but it's worked out for us.

Gunnell: Is she still a full-time mom?

Emert: She sure is. She volunteers. She occasionally subs at Muncie Schools. She occasionally helps out at camp adventure, which is a outdoor training camp that the city schools run. And she's occasionally been on the board. She does the occasional grant writing. But she would characterize herself as a full-time mom. That's a wonderful gift

[56:00]

for Jacob and for me.

Gunnell: What is your son like?

Emert: [chuckles] He looks a lot like me. He has a heart. He has a heart of compassion. He enjoys music, plays trumpet, took several years of piano. He's a wicked good tennis player, but he doesn't play with a vengeance, he plays with determination. He was the only freshman on the varsity team this year, and he earned it. But he decided he wanted to join the unified track team at Muncie Central. And as I understand it, this is a team that is half special-needs children, and half friends of special needs children.

[57:00]

And Jacob loves it. He is right in there with everybody else.

Gunnell: Is he also a mathematician?

Emert: Oh yeah. He was asking good questions early on also. He is taking Algebra two as a freshman and asking good questions. And occasionally I will say, "Not now" [laughs]. Let's wait on that question just a little bit. He also enjoys science. Patty Lang, chemist, my Associate Dean for a couple years, really brought out some of the scientific magic for him. He enjoys his science classes, but I could see him being a forensic chemist. It's all about the puzzle again.

[58:00]

It's about taking the ill-posed problem and twisting it around and making something fun of it. And he's got that bug, too, in his own way.

Gunnell: Did you also teach him math before English?

Emert: [laughs] No, we did both because Elizabeth is a reading specialist.

Gunnell: Okay.

Emert: So, he had books read to him before he was born. And in the car, we would play the pattern games some. But it wasn't intentional. It was because it was part of who he was, part of who we are.

Gunnell: Do you ever show him old cardinal quest problems? That were in the Daily News?

Emert: [laughs] No, I do not. That was Jay Bagga and I. That was fun.

[59:00]

That was another one of those attempts to allow mathematics to not be so isolated. In a sense, that's a variation of what I aim to do as Honors College Dean too. To let us not be the best kept secret on campus, in our community, in our peer group of other honors programs and colleges. The Cardinal Quest was a fun little project. I remember Jay and I seeing this call for environmental awareness initiatives. And I thought, "There are lots of cool, cool questions here." And we devised the first few immediately, my goodness

[1:00:00]

did that persist for a whole year?

Gunnell: That was from '93 to '94 I believe.

Emert: Yeah, maybe two years.

Gunnell: Let me see. '93, '94, yeah.

Emert: We had to convince the newspaper that this was reasonable, too. That wasn't hard, so we essentially got a byline in the paper. And some weeks we got lots of submissions — I don't believe we ever had a week where we got no submissions. But it — it fueled conversation. It was a cool way to look at questions that were timely, seen through the lense of mathematics.

Gunnell: Why did it stop?

Emert: We moved on. I think we all moved on. We moved on as a campus. It was a lovely initiative. I'm not sure we asked for funding for a re-op. In some sense we had completed our task, of moving on.

[1:01:00]

Gunnell: So you've touched on this a little bit, so I'm going to ask you upfront. What is your goal as Dean of the Honors College?

Emert: My goal is to empower all students who seek to be active in their learning, in their growth. My goal is to provide them the resources to lay it out in the buffet, so that the students can make the most of themselves. There's a lot of good that's happening. When I first stepped in as interim — I guess it's been four years now — I saw some additional potential that could be had. We could be reaching more students

[1:02:00]

who were undergraduate fellowships. That was a change I made in the first month or so. What I saw — what I still see in our student population are students who have such potential and the ones who are willing to take a risk, to push themselves a little bit, I want to be with them. I want them to be equipped to take those risks. I want them to experience the occasional tripping. I want them to know that not every problem has an immediate and obvious solution. I want them to be equipped to be

[1:03:00]

able to get through those rough times and push themselves. I want them to have the experiences akin to what I had, where an opportunity can open doors. Putting that buck ad in the paper led me to working at a summer camp for four years, which led me to working with a community choir in Gatlinburg for the right department for six and a half years. A friendship connecting me with Don Neuen, which opened up the Singers, which opened up my work as a music composer,

[1:04:00]

And opened up an opportunity that led to being a full-time pianist for six months at the World's Fair in '82. If we only meet standard, if we only do what the rubric tells us to do, if we only do what it takes to get the degree, or to pass the course, or to get that next step, we'll miss much. And for some people, moving to that next step is what they need to do, they need to take it cautiously, but not everyone. And for the people who

[1:05:00]

look beyond their major, for the people who see themselves as more than their major, or more than their hometown, or more than what their uncle thinks they ought to do as a profession — those are the people that I can impact. Because they are the one who are already chopping at the — a little bit. They're the ones who struggle to decide what the next step is, and I get it. I was there too. At the end of the day [coughs] at the end of the day those are the people who are going to push us forward as a society.

[1:06:00]

Those are the people who are going to look for the novel approaches. Those are going to be the people who will make the discoveries in the artifacts, who are going to find the novel approaches to health care. [coughs] They're the ones that are going to ask all the off the wall questions that will make the difference. They are the ones who are going to be with Jacob, this next generation, and my goal is to make sure that we can all equip those people who want to take the risk. That's my goal in the Honors College.

Gunnell: Are there any specific students where you really felt that you hit this goal?

[1:07:00]

Emert: Oh yeah.

Gunnell: Can you give me an example?

Emert: There are a couple obvious ones of recent. I'll name them, but I want to think about another one too. Hannah Flor is my first Ruebel Innovation Scholarship recipient. She is already doing great things. She's working on a project looking at novel treatment for newborns who are suffering from opioid withdrawal. In the words of her professor, who is her mentor for this project, she is doing work that no one else is doing. Regardless of her findings, she is making a difference. I think of Johnathan Isbul, who is a graduate student now, nutrition. If I'm not mistaken,

[1:08:00]

first generation college student. Small town. As a freshman, he was pretty laser focused on get the nutrition degree, moving along. But then he discovered that an honors fellowship could help him get something more, so as a sophomore, he went after research on the health benefits a certain ethnic spices and foods. It was a nice mixing of his comfort, of nutrition, with something that pushed him a little bit, because he was looking at foods that were probably not on his table growing up.

[1:09:00]

But he did more than look at the foods. He looked at the people. He did some interviews, he went into some homes, he had discovered there was a passion there, so he did a second fellowship. And then he did a third. On different topics. He realized how much more there was out there. It's sort of like caving, you know? He discovered how rich that environment could possibly be if we kept pushing a little more. And he was a finalist for a Fulbright last year, for a big astronomy Fulbright in Italy, and he's in the running again this year, and I hope to goodness he gets it. Several of our undergraduate fellowship recipients have received Fulbrights and similar

[1:10:00]

Opportunities, in part because they hit the ground running. And I know that opening that door for a fellowship, opening that door for that humanities course that didn't seem to have anything to do with the major — because it didn't — opening that door to a global studies course opened up the eyes, and helped the students realize there was so much more. There was so much more than the routine. There was so much more than merely jumping through the hoops. And for Johnathan, for Hannah, for many, many students, it's been real nice now.

[1:11:00]

We've always done that, through the whole sixty years, we've got the success stories. We got the folks who grew in part because of what they got through the Honors College. I think the key to our further growth though, is to help our current students realize that potential and that value and that impact as early as possible. And that's part of my goal, is to shorten that timeline a bit, so we don't ask ten years, twenty years from now, "What's that impact?" but we can see — we can see short term impact, also.

Gunnell: I need to backtrack a little bit. How did you get from being Chair of the Math Department to Associate Dean of the Honors College?

Emert: Well, you see, Elizabeth and I were sitting

[1:12:00]

reading the paper one Sunday, and I knew that Joanne Edmonds was going to be retiring sometime soon — she was Associate Dean for years and years and years — but I didn't know when. So it came as a bit of a surprise when I opened up the Star Press on Sunday, and I said, "Look Elizabeth. There's an ad in the paper!" And so that's how I found out about it. There was also a national ad. As I know now, there was a national search. Elizabeth and I thought this is something I

should apply for. And I was midterm as chair, as it turned out I left after three years of a five year term, but it was one of those opportunities that would come up so rarely that I thought, “This is something I should apply for.”

[1:13:00]

Maybe it’s the right next step. So, I applied. I remember the interview with Dean Ruebel. I felt good about it. Apparently, he felt good about it too, and so the offer was made, and I accepted. I’m very happy that I read the paper that day. I remember when I was finishing up my doctorate, the church that I was organist at in Knoxville was going through a staff restructuring. They offered me a full-time job. And I could have paired that with the music composition work I was doing for the publisher and added a couple of extra things, and it could’ve been a good job. But as I said to that church, “Thank you very much, but I just finished my doctorate in math. I’d like to give it a whirl.

[1:14:00]

Get back with me in twenty years.” Well I was off by a year. Because after nineteen years, I left math and started a new career.

Gunnell: How did — How do you think this fit into the puzzle?

Emert: Oh, it brought me full-circle. The Honors College gives me the ability to interact with many different disciplines. It allows me to grow as a person, not as a mathematician, but as a person. And I absolutely love the aspects of my job that empower students, and that’s much of what I do. When I meet with a student that’s struggling to find that senior thesis topic — those are rich moments, because it gives me a chance

[1:15:00]

to chat with a student about what’s important to them, and why they chose the majors they did, and why they didn’t choose that other major, and why they’re still involved, you know, in the art museum even though they are an accounting major. And why they’re on the square-dancing team if they’re a German major. And experience helps, but those are rich conversations, because if I do my job well, then by the end of that half hour or so, I’ve led the student to find themselves. To find that element that gets them a little giddy. And I can do it — I’m equipped because I’ve done that myself. I see myself as more than a mathematician, or a musician: I’m a person. And that’s a key to our success

[1:16:00]

as a college, is to see each other as people, to respect the whole person, including yourself. To be willing to be honest, to realize that there is more than the next

step. There is a big picture there. And it's been good for me. It gives me a chance to interact with the arts folks, with the humanities folks, with the social scientists — with all folks.

Gunnell: I found a Daily News article that suggested that when you became Associate Dean of the Honors College you were bringing a mathematical look to the Honors College.

Emert: Oh my goodness, I was a radical. [laughs]

Gunnell: Would you explain a little bit?

Emert: I was a radical when I offered the first colloquium as a mathematician. Honors College had historically grown out of history in English.

[1:17:00]

In fact, the humanities sequence were originally English classes, when they were first designed fifty years ago, or sixty years ago. At least on the surface, the fact that we are hiring a mathematician to join this liberal arts, humanities crowd was rather radical. I'm glad Jim took the risk. And I think he figured it out too — that I'm not a mathematician, I'm John. And it's as important — it's as important for me to look beyond the major as it is for my colleagues in math to look beyond their silos.

[1:18:00]

And for all of our faculty to look beyond our silos. I think that's part of why partnering with people outside of math, working on applications in my research, was important, because it's an important part of who I am. And I did some research inside — purely inside the discipline, too. What I really enjoyed — what I really got excited about — were those projects that stretched me. So while I am confident that there was some angst, a little bit of unknown when the mathematician has entered the Honors College. I think it's worked out pretty well, for me and the Honors College both.

Gunnell: I had a question and then forgot what it was.

[1:19:00]

You became Associate Dean of the Honors College in 2008, correct?

Emert: Mm-hmm.

Gunnell: So, can you talk a little bit about the transition from the Carmichael to the Honors House?

Emert: [laughs] Oh yes. I came July 1. My boxes were all stacked in my office because, of course, we're going to be moving in a few months — why unpack the boxes? So, I had my critical need boxes that I did unpack. But I essentially worked out of boxes, because we were going to move in February, so why unpack just to pack again? And then February became April, and April became May, and May became June, and we were just drifting and drifting and drifting and drifting. And then it was the first of August. And I remember the week because it was the State Fair.

[1:20:00]

And it was a Friday, and I had had enough. And so, I did the only reasonable thing — I unplugged my phone. I unplugged my computer, which was a laptop. I turned in my key, and I announced to the staff that I was moving to the Honors House. And so, I took my box, and I took my laptop, and I took my phone, and I walked to the Honors House, and I sat down in my office, which had no furniture, no internet — I think we had electricity running. I aimed my laptop at Emens Auditorium to get the signal and announced that we were now open for business. [snickers]. I had no furniture, so I had a card — I had a fold up table and a folding chair, but I was done with living in boxes. I was ready to move in. And the rest of the staff followed me within the week or so.

[1:21:00]

Carmichael was a lovely year. We had a garden level office. My first apartment, or my apartment when I first moved to Muncie was also garden level. You know what that means — basement. Windows at the top of the wall. Dank. A little damp sometimes. Half the campus had no clue where cardinal — where Carmichael was; the other half didn't want to venture that far. And then we found ourselves in the Edmond and Virginia Ball Honors House. What a gift, what a gift. We moved to the center of campus, both literally and figuratively. And that move was an important step to our recognition, to our involvement,

[1:22:00]

as an active part of the campus community. And I was ready to move [laughs].

Gunnell: Are you still in the same office you were in when you moved?

Emert: No, I actually — I'm now back in the rear office. The front office is the associate dean office, and the rear office is the dean's office. When Dean Ruebel became ill, there was a period of about ten months where Dean Ruebel would be back in a week or so. And so Coralee [Young] and I tried our best to take care of the crisis moments, because Jim will be back in a week. And he made a valiant effort, but he didn't. So, for those first ten months, I'm in my office. Between Coralee

[1:23:00]

and I, we were trying to do the job of three people. And then it came early August, and I remember Bob Morris calling me into the provost's office — he was acting provost — and saying, "It's time to call you the acting dean." And I said yes. And I knew what my first job was. Within ten minutes I was on the phone with Patty Lang, who was on vacation in Florida, and I told her I had been named acting dean, and I told her I was calling her because I needed an associate dean, and she didn't have to say yes immediately. She could wait until she got back, and then she could say yes. And she laughed, and she said yes. Patty and I had worked — we had never actually worked together on a project, but we had tag teamed several times.

[1:24:00]

She followed me as the local represent — as the local leader for the Louis-Stokes initiative, in the years before. We had both been chairs. We probably had been on a committee or two together, but I'm not sure. But I knew her real well. So, between the day I called her, and the day she showed up, which was about August 18, I needed to get out of the office. And so, we pushed Jim's stuff — actually sort of cleared his desk a little bit. I just moved onto the desktop. His stuff was still on the shelves, my stuff was still in Patty's office, but we made the move. And then two years later, when I'm named dean, that's when we — or I guess it was a year later I'm named dean because Patty was my associate dean for two years.

[1:25:00]

She was my associate dean for my first year as dean. We had a search, and by the end of that year, the associate dean's office was cleared out, so that Amy Livingstone could join us. And I was moved in for real. So, it was a lot of needed it now kind of elements, on top of everything else that was going on.

Gunnell: What was that like, emotionally, having to clear some of —

Emert: It was hard.

Gunnell: Yeah.

Emert: It was hard. Some of that stuff we passed on to Connie. We invited her to go through some of the other stuff. Jim made a real difference. He propelled us well through his years.

[1:26:00]

I was not on the search committee that hired Jim. I was on the search committee

that hired Bruce Meyer, so I had a little glimpse of what was being sought then. But I knew, I'd seen the Honors College pre-Jim, and his work to transform us to be a national model was extraordinary. And my goal is to take it from where he left it and keep us moving forward.

Gunnell: What year did you become Dean?

Emert: July 1, 2017.

Gunnell: How did Jim impact you personally?

Emert: He gave me room to grow.

[1:27:00]

He was a sounding board for me — I was a sounding board for him. We were a good tag-team. We saw things differently, but frankly, I think that's what you want in a colleague. You want someone who complements you. And Jim saw that potential in me, he brought it out. He introduced me to what was going on at the national level with NCHC. He encouraged me to be active in the national work. That's a good thing. I'm a certified

[1:28:00]

program reviewer for NCHC, in part of that is because Jim encouraged me to go after that. Did my first program review a couple months ago. He encouraged me to go after further training in development and fundraising. And I finished my certificate in fundraising management at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy last year. So not only was he a good colleague and a good sounding board — he challenged me to continue to grow.

Gunnell: We have about a half hour remaining, so for the sake of time, we are going to move on to another topic. I believe it was 2013 when the Ball State Honors College was able to hire its own faculty for the first time.

Emert: Yes.

[1:29:00]

Gunnell: Can you talk about the process of how that came to be?

Emert: Well, there were two lines in history that had been filled with the understanding that they would be lines that the Honors College would be able to utilize to teach —two contract lines. One hire was made fifteen years ago, the other about ten years ago. I believe that for both of those the Honors College was involved in the hiring process. Both of those occurred just as I was coming in though, so I don't

believe I was involved in hiring Jason [Powell], and Tim Berg would've been the first hire from fifteen years ago. The conversion of the lines to report to the Honors College was something that was important. It was important

[1:30:00]

because it's an attribute of a well-developed — of a fully developed Honors College from the national standards. But there's a reason why it's on that short list of things that a fully-developed Honors College should do. We need — as a college, it's important that we have a core that we can rely on, that we can vet, that we can utilize as a sounding board, as a faculty. We need the practical protection that if our handshake agreement with a department fades away, as will happen every once in a while, we can't — we cannot be up a creek. We've got classes, we need

[1:31:00]

to be able to teach them. So, there's that practical piece, but there's also the care and maintenance of courses piece too. And a department has courses that thrive because it has faculty that nurture them. So, we needed faculty to nurture our courses. It was a political challenge, but at the end of the day we were successful. I was not — I was not privy to all the details. I knew enough to know that it had been a challenge, but I knew that Jim was fighting hard for it. In the end of the day, we received four lines. We received the two lines in history. There was a line from English where the faculty member had been teaching full-time in honors,

[1:32:00]

and it was almost a de facto line. There was a fourth line that did reside in modern languages and classics, but it was a decentralized line. So the person that the line — that was holding the line was actually not teaching in honors but there was a bit of barter that was happening. Fast forward a few years and that line became free and moved to honors. But Jim chose not to fill it. And I know a couple reasons why Jim made that decision, but when I stepped in as interim, that was another piece that I felt like needed to be addressed. We were in a precarious situation. We had lost some more affiliates — what I call affiliate faculty — people who were in other units but teaching for us.

[1:33:00]

We were at a risk of not being able to support our own courses, and so one of the moves that I made was the decision to fill that fourth line. We had a national search, and the person that wound up being selected was Beth Dalton. That was a critical move. From that point to present, we are now in a position where there's a fifth person who is half-time. I was able to lobby for that position a year ago. Obed Frausto is the person who holds that position. I was able — also successful

in realigning the Voran Professorship so that it was fully within the Honors College. When I went back to look at the original documents that established the position,

[1:34:00]

It seemed clear to me that this was intended to be a faculty position in honors at the time. There were no faculty in honors, but now there were. It's a tenured position, so the tenure lies within another academic unit because I don't have tenure in the Honors College to offer, but I do have a line. So the Voran Faculty member, who is Alex Kaufman, is now in Honors. Thanks to the beneficence of the Ball Brothers Foundation, I now have two half-time Honors Faculty Fellows, and those are fixed-term, half-time appointments in the Honors College. Amongst other things, it's a way to continually energize the faculty and the student offerings, too. So, here's where we are, in a faculty meeting last week,

[1:35:00]

we've got a faculty who can get work done now. So I've got faculty who are working on — I have two faculty who are working on a diversity plan for the college, and they are bringing in students to assist them, but the faculty are taking the ownership. We have faculty who have the infrastructure to successfully seek promotion, and they have. We have faculty who can take on significant service projects, like helping to take the charge for the MEHA conference that we're hosting in two weeks. These are things that faculty do. I have faculty who can offer resistance and offer alternative perspectives when I propose an initiative. I need that sounding board. I need that resistance. That's how you — that's how you grow to quality,

[1:36:00]

by vetting, and by testing, and by challenging. That's what makes for a successful unit. And as I look around the table today, what a privilege it is to have colleagues that are innovative, who are visionary, who are willing to take on challenges, who are willing to dream, who are willing to imagine we can be a powerful and impactful element on campus. That we can invite national speakers to make an impact on this campus, like Teju Cole, like Linda Barry, and like others that we'll be bringing in the future. That I've got faculty who are

[1:37:00]

Positioned and equipped and enabled to make a difference in the community through the Beneficence projects. To make a difference in the library through the infinite museum. To make a difference in the classroom. And I think the mix of core and affiliate is important. I don't want to lose my affiliates because they give us fresh voices, and frankly they've invested years and years in us, just like I did

through those first few years. And I definitely don't want to dismiss them, because they're an important piece of the puzzle. But my core faculty are a critical piece of the puzzle too, and I need them. I need their sounding board,

[1:38:00]

and I need their ideas. So, moving to having faculty empowered us to be able to keep moving. And frankly, that's why it is one of the critical pieces of a well-developed college.

Gunnell: How many faculty have you hired?

Emert: I have hired — I have hired Jackson Bartlett as a full-time contract. I hired Obed Frausto as a half-timer. I hired Beth Dalton. I hired Alex Kaufman. I hired Amy Livingstone. And selected the two — the first two fellows. And I'm pleased to say I promoted my three senior faculty also.

Gunnell: How do you determine who to hire?

[1:39:00]

Emert: It's tricky. Because it's a non-tenure line position, aside from the Voran Professorship. It's a non-tenure line position, so it's not for the person whose sole purpose is to climb the tenure line — the tenure ladder. It needs to be a person who will thrive in an interdisciplinary culture. It needs to be someone who values interactions with students. Someone who is willing to take a risk, someone who's innovative, someone who can provide us a different voice.

[1:40:00]

I think those qualities describe every single one of my hires.

Gunnell: So, we have about twenty minutes remaining. And I am going to transition into talking about your fundraising efforts for the Honors College. Can we talk about that a little bit?

Emert: Sure. In the same way that we've been a best-kept secret, we've not done a good job of growing our advancement and development. And I don't fault my predecessors there. There was plenty of work to be done, but we're at a point now where we've got to move beyond

[1:41:00]

the very valuable, and impactful large gifts, and grow the base. The gifts of Ed and Virginia Ball Foundation, the very generous gifts of the George and Francis Ball Foundation, the Ball Brothers, and several other individuals — Steve

Anderson, an anonymous donor in honor of Dean Meyer, some other significant gifts are very important. And they are making a difference. Where I think our next steps are, are reaching to our graduates.

[1:42:00]

Because we have sixty years of graduates now. And we have people who have developed into leaders and impactful people, in part, I believe, because of what we offer at Ball State. And we hear the stories, and they are valuable stories. They are stories that can challenge our students to follow along, and the gifts of attention, the treasures of good memories, are very important. But in this day and age, frankly we need the

[1:43:00]

financial resources. We can't expect that the Honors College will be supported because it's always been that way. We can't expect that the Whitingers will continue because it's always been that way. And frankly, some things that have always been that way shouldn't be. The folklore that honors colleges are for the privileged, the folklore that we're the place for the valedictorians and the upper middle class, for those who score really well on the standardized exams — we're missing a lot of people.

[1:44:00]

And my goal is to not miss those people. And for some, it's going to take looking at those people not as numbers. And we're already changing the way that we look at our apps. But for some, it's providing that resource for making it possible for a first-generation college student to realize that potential. And that's where we need the gifts. And that's where we need the resources. We need — we must channel the treasures to make it possible for first-generation college students, for people of less means than you and I, to be able to take that risk.

[1:45:00]

It's the right thing to do, and it's the critical thing to do because that's what our future generation needs. And to get there, I certainly need the important gifts from the foundations, and the important gifts of my major donors, but I need the little gifts too, because that ten dollar gift from the recent graduate, that ten dollar gift from someone who is on their first job of paying it back, those small gifts from parents of graduates and I'm getting them — and those are important. And they're important not just for now, but they're important for twenty years from now.

[1:46:00]

Because if I do my job well, then those people will be empowered and they'll

realize the potential of their gifts, so that twenty years from now we'll still be on the radar. They will see the product of their investment, and they'll want to invest more. And that's important. It's important to not look at tomorrow, but to look at twenty years from now, forty years from now. I think about my mom. My mom had a potential, and it was realized through me. She made the investment, and she made the sacrifice, and she dug holes and planted trees, and she cleaned houses,

[1:47:00]

picked berries, so that I could take a chance. And what we've got to do is be ready for that next generation to be able to take a chance too. So that's why — that's my philanthropy, and that's my gratitude. That's why advancement is my job.

Gunnell: How is the Honors College developing to offer that chance to these students?

Emert: First steps are recognizing and acknowledging our alums and our friends. This fall we had I believe our first alumni reunion. We did it as part of the hundred year celebration. We had a small but happy crowd. But you know what, we also had a lot of regrets.

[1:48:00]

And those were just as valuable, because those were people who wished they could be there. I'm establishing a couple of advisory committees: one for alumni and the second for alumni who are involved in leadership of honors programs and colleges right now. I see the second one as being more advisory on best practices. I see the first as being a way to grow that communication both ways. News and notes now goes out twice a year to our alumni and friends. That's an easy one. We're inviting alumni back to campus. We're doing it in bits and drabs, but we're doing it. So we have an alum who is coming to campus next month.

[1:49:00]

They had a couple who are on campus last month. You make something happen by starting, and that's what we're doing. We're starting.

Gunnell: We have about ten minutes remaining.

Emert: Mm-hmm.

Gunnell: So, before I bring this interview to a close, I would like to ask you: Was there anything related to your experience with the Honors College that we didn't cover that you would like to talk about?

Emert: Well, I'll share a story. My goal when I teach a class is to challenge the students. And it started to develop when I was teaching math classes. My style changes a

little bit with every class I teach.

[1:50:00]

But one thing has become a constant for me. I walk in the first day, and I hand out the schedule — I hand out the syllabus, and I do not read the syllabus. I read the disabled student development section of the syllabus, because I've had — I have had little vision or no vision students in my class, so I feel like I should do that, so I read that paragraph. And then I look the students in the eye and I say, "I will never lie to you for more than two days at a time." And I get a laugh, because I want a laugh. And then I explain. Because my goal is to not lead you down the yellow brick road. My goal is to let you taste the curb every once in a while. To discover what a brick wall feels like. This is important in math, because in math, sometimes you need to know when a process is wrong.

[1:51:00]

And when you hit that conundrum, or you hit that point where "I don't know what to do, something is wrong here." If we never practice those skills, they're sort of like a squirrel — we don't know how to back up. And I want — I want to have those kinds of conversations in class. I also want the students to always be wary. I want to always challenge. I want to always question. Because number one, that keeps them engaged, but number two, it keeps me vulnerable. And I do actually lie every once in a while. There was one time a few years ago where I had pulled this reference, this was a journal article that was so buggy it was just stinky bad. And it was a published article,

[1:52:00]

but shall we say it was not in a top-tier journal. And it actually opened the door for another discussion, so that's why I wanted to use the article. So, it's near the end of the hour, and I sort of unveil this article, and I've got it up on the screen, and I'm laying it out. I'm talking about the results of the article and I'm doing it stone-cold, you know, no hint. And I'm just starting, and I — and you got to remember, this is a juicy one. I want to — I want to get full-impact out of this little article. And I'm just starting, I'm maybe five minutes into it and one of my journalism majors, sitting right here to my right, says, "Is this real?" Now I'm thinking, now wait a moment, I want to get more value out of this article. So I did the only reasonable thing.

[1:53:00]

I looked her in the eye, and I said, "What's the problem? Do you see a problem here?" And she backed down. Now I did see her later that day, and I whispered to her, "You should challenge me tomorrow." And so I let her know that she really was in the right. And she did, and it was wonderful. But those are — those are

good skills to have. And I want to grow those skills in my students also. I want my students to know that it's okay to challenge. It's okay to question. In fact, it's critical. And it's critical to go after those wrong answers. It's critical to take the risk, because sometimes that's where the beauty is. Sometimes that's where the magic is, by challenging the norm. By challenging the anticipated. By challenging

[1:54:00]

the expected. And it happens in math, it happens in all disciplines. But sadly, it happens too rarely in a college class, because we stand up and we dispense information. And my goal is to try not to dispense information quite so well [laughs]. I want to also provide the opportunities to grow in those ways too. And so that's a standard piece of my puzzle. And depending on my class, sometimes I get to practice it more often than others. This is especially effective in colloquia, because there you've already got typically a good conversation going, you already got a diverse set of perspectives flowing. And not only do I want the students to only challenge me,

[1:55:00]

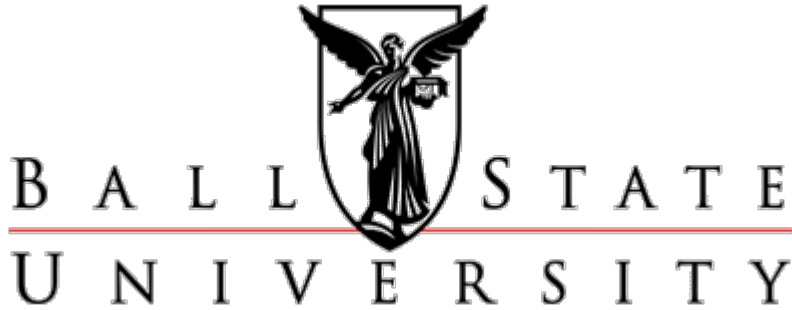
I want them to challenge each other. And so, I need to play along with that too, and I will. But that's a piece of my puzzle.

Gunnell: We are out of time. So, on behalf of the Ball State Honors College Oral History Project, I would like to thank you for taking the time to sit down with us and share your story today.

Emert: Thank you for the opportunity. And thank you for taking your time to invest in this project too.

[1:55:28]

End of interview



Department of History
Burkhardt Building 213
Muncie, IN 47306-0480

27 March 2019

Dr. John Emert
Ball Honors House, BA 104
Muncie, IN 47306

Dear Dr. Emert,

On behalf of Dr. Doyle's Oral History Workshop Colloquium, I would like to thank you for devoting two hours of your time Tuesday evening to our Ball State Honors College Oral History Project. With your candor and passion, you shared your experiences in the Honors College that positively impacted your academics and current career as Dean of the Honors College. The interview you participated in will be a valuable historical source for those who wish to learn more about the Honors College's past, especially including our many alumni from over the past sixty years.

Additionally, I am also grateful for your support of our Oral History Project. Without you, this would not be possible.

I really enjoyed learning about your childhood, and how the decisions your parents made to teach you math (before English) and music became fundamental in shaping the person you are today. While you explained that all these aspects of your life came together to fit into your puzzle, our interview fit into my puzzle by showing me that Honors College faculty really do care about the work that I put into the program and inspired me to continue working hard.

I'll be delighted to add your practice interview to our project collection site on the DMR.

Best regards,

Hannah Gunnell

The Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project Team

JAN 29 2019



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**Intellectual Property Consent Form
Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project**

We, DONALD GILMAN (interviewee) and

_____ (interviewer), understand the purpose of this interview, to record and preserve historical information by digital audio/video (or other technical means), and consent to the transcribing, typing, printing, and publication of said interview. We also consent to the digitization of this material, as well as any supplementary photographs or documents, for access via the Internet.

We understand that the interview and supplementary items may be distributed to the public for educational purposes, including formats such as print, public programming, and the Internet. We agree to freely share the interview and supplementary items under the terms of a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>). This means that we jointly retain the copyright, but that the public may freely copy, modify, and share these items for noncommercial purposes under the same terms, if they include the original source information.

We further understand that this interview may be kept and maintained by Ball State University Archives and Special Collections, for the use of students and scholars for as long as Archives and Special Collections believes the material to be of scholarly or historical value.

Interviewee

Print Name: DONALD GILMAN (Signed): Donald Gilman

Date: 1/23/2019

Interviewer

Print Name: _____ (Signed): _____

Date: _____

**Project Director Michael Wm. Doyle, Associate Professor of History, Ball State University
Burkhardt Building 213, 2000 W. University Avenue, Muncie, IN 47306-0480**

(Signed): _____

Date: _____

Pre-Interview Contact Notes: Dr. Donald Gilman

Time of Interview: 4:35-4:58 P.M., January 16, 2019

Pre-Interviewer: Nathan Rivers

- Dr. Gilman did both his AB and Ph.D. in French at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. He listed off groups he was part of and awards he won, including being in Phi Beta Kappa, graduating with Honors in French, the Dante Prize of America, the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, and a Fellowship to Travel to France
- Dr. Gilman came to Ball State while still working on his dissertation. While attending an annual world languages conference in Detroit, an announcement was made that Ball State was hiring a contract position. He applied there and got the job. He wanted to work at Ball State due to the emphasis on teaching while still allowing time for research, while also enjoying the community atmosphere. He noted that it took 3 more years to complete his dissertation, and that it could have taken only one, but that teaching duties at UNC took up at least 12 hours a week.
- He also applied to UC Berkley, but didn't actually want to go there due to his lack of an "AD" degree and the feeling that he would be a "third-class citizen" on that campus.
- Shortly after Gilman arrived, a new tenure position opened up due to increase enrollment that allowed him to join the full faculty. He was promoted to tenure after 5 years, and a few more after became a full professor. He noted he enjoyed teaching the most.
- He became involved with the Honors program at the encouragement of the Languages Chair, who himself had been part of it. The chair "tested" him by having him teach Dante to some of his honors classes. He soon after was invited to the "Honors Sequence" (look into what this was?). He described his part in the program as "running the gamut," as he taught courses, colloquiums, involved himself in the study abroad program, and more.
- He now resides in Washington DC, where he continues research regularly at the Library of Congress and the Folger Research Library.
- Dr. Gilman is very talkative and has many anecdotes, so part of the challenge will be covering every topic desired within a 2-hour interview.

JAN 29 2019

DONALD GILMAN

EDUCATION

- Ph.D. 1976 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill French / Comparative Literature
Dissertation: *The Development of Ronsard's Concept of Poetic Inspiration*.
Supervisor: G. Mallery Masters
- A.M. 1970 Harvard University French / Romance Languages
- A.B. 1967 University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill French

Additional Study: Université de Paris IV—Sorbonne
Université de Lyon II
Université de Caen

EMPLOYMENT

- 2016 to present: Professor Emeritus of French, Ball State University
- 1987-2016: Professor of French, Ball State University
- Autumn 2012: Dorothy Ford Wiley Visiting Professor of Renaissance Culture
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.
- 2005-2006; 1997-98: Visiting Professor, Université de Nancy II
- 1979-87: Associate Professor of French, Ball State University
- 1974-79: Assistant Professor of French, Ball State University
- 1971-72, 1973-74: Teaching Assistant in French, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
- 1968-71: Instructor in French, Christopher Newport University

During my tenure at Ball State University, I regularly taught the Honors Humanities sequence of courses (Honors 201, 202, and 203), as well as various colloquia ("The City of Paris" and "Rome and Beyond"). I also directed approximately 30 honors theses.

I also served as Director of Ball State's London Centre (Autumn Semester 1999) and was professor in residence at the London Center (Winter Qtr. 1987-88).

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Sixteenth-Century French Literature
Renaissance Literature in France, Italy, and England
History of Literary Criticism, from Plato to French Structuralism and Post-Structuralism

Evidence of research (1972 to present): (1) publication of two books; (2) a third book in press at Classiques Garnier, Paris; (3) publication of 55 articles and reviews in national and international periodicals; (4) one article submitted and under review; (5) presentation of over 100 papers at regional, national, and international conferences; (6) chairing and/or organizing of approximately 65 sessions at regional, national, and international conferences.

Awards, Grants, and Fellowships:

University Funding:

(Non-competitive University travel grants are omitted.)

Center for International Programs, "Université de Nancy II—Ball State University Visions Retrospectives et / and Prospectives." 2000-2001 (\$2,500); 2001-2002. (\$4,500)

Summer Research Grant, "The Preparation of a Critical Edition of Pontus de Tyard's *Discours du temps*." Summer 1996. (approximately \$14,000)

Preparation of course (with R. Rarick and A. Slack), "City of Paris." Internationalization Endowment and the Class of 1932. Spring 1996 (grant for \$10,000); Director of Study Abroad Program, "City of Paris." (\$2,000).

Alumni Association Travel Grant. 1992-93. (\$1,000)

Special Assigned Leave, Spring 2012; 1992-92; 1984-85.

Participant, "Workshop, Institute for Leadership in Canadian Studies." Campobello Island, N.B. August 1990. (University provided \$750.00 for registration and expenses.)

Participant, Workshop in Writing Across the Curriculum. Spring Qtr., 1990.

Faculty Mentor for Undergraduate Fellows, Honors College. 1998-99; 1994-95; 1987-89. (five students, \$750 for each student or \$3,750)

Participant, Computer Literacy Program. Autumn Qtr. 1986; Autumn Qtr. 1987.

Creative Teaching Grant: "The Preparation of Self Instructional, Oral-Aural Materials to Achieve a Balanced Development of Self- Expression and Grammatical Skills in French Conversation." Autumn Qtr. 1979. (grant of \$350, plus assigned time)

Summer Research Grant: "The Preparation of a Critical Edition of Louis Le Caron's *Dialogues* (1556)." Summer 1979. (grant of approximately \$4,500)

External Funding:

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Honorarium for lecture, travel, and housing (approximately \$1,250.00), November 2012.

Embassy of France (with Erdogan Kumcu). Subvention of expenses for a two-day colloquium on the expansion of exchanges between Ball State and the Université de Nancy II. (\$2,242.16).

Université de Nancy II. Honoraria for two guest speakers to participate in a symposium on Native American cultures. (2,000 FFr.; approximately \$550).

Ball-Foster Corporation. "Training Session in French Language and Culture." Spring 1996. (approx. \$5,000)

Macalaster College. Travel grant for presentation of paper. December 1992. (approx. \$1,500)

Government of Québec. "Acquisition of Library Materials in Québec Studies." 1991-92. (\$500, with \$500 matching grant with Ball State University)

Canadian Embassy. "Acquisition of Library Materials in Canadiana." 1991-92. (\$2,500, with \$2,500 matching grant with Ball State University)

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (C.N.R.S.). Travel grant for presentation of paper at Université de Savoie, Chambéry. November 1991. (approx. \$600)

Learned Societies of Canada. Travel grant for presentation of paper at Queen's University, Kingston. May 1991. (approx. \$180)

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Fellow, Institute on Petrarch and Petrarchism. Yale University, New Haven. June 19-July 28, 1989. (\$3,000)

University of Toronto. Travel grant for presentation of paper at the Triennial International Conference on Neo-Latin Studies. August 7-14, 1988. (\$200)

The Newberry Library, Chicago. Research Fellow. October 15-December 31, 1984. (subvention for housing)

The Newberry Library, Chicago. Resident Fellow. "The Sixteenth-Century Rhetorical Concept of *Energeia*." 1983-84. (\$600, plus subvention for housing)

Central Michigan University. Travel grants and honoraria for presentation of papers. April 19-20, 1983, and February 3-4, 1981. (\$750)

University of British Columbia, Vancouver. Travel grant for presentation of paper. November 22, 1981. (\$450)

National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Fellow, Summer Seminar,

Sixteenth-Century French Literature. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, June 15-August 8, 1980. (\$2,500)

Academic Honors and Recognitions:

Teaching:

“Outstanding Teacher,” Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Ball State University, September 2013.

“Faculty Appreciation Recognition,” Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, Ball State University, April 2009.

“Teacher of the Month (April 2009),” Pi Beta Phi Sorority, Ball State University, April 2009.

Honorary Faculty Member, Alpha Lambda Delta Freshman Honorary Society, Ball State University, 2002.

Excellence in Teaching Award (one of ten in the University selected by study body poll);
Finalist for University Teaching Professorship, 1997, 1992.

Outstanding Faculty Member, Phi Mu Sorority, Ball State University, 1997.

Outstanding University Faculty Advisor, Ball State University, 1993-94.

Outstanding Teacher, Mortar Board, Ball State University, 1990-91, 1979-80.

Outstanding Teacher, Delta Delta Delta Sorority, Ball State University, 1990-91.

Outstanding Teacher, Davidson Residence Hall, Ball State University, 1991-92, 1990-91.

Excellence in Teaching Award (one of thirty in the University selected by student body poll),
1991.

Recognition in Teaching, Student Education Association, Teachers College, Ball State University, 1991.

Research:

Dorothy Ford Wiley Professor of Renaissance Culture, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, November 2012.

Research Associate, Northrop Frye Centre, and Research Fellow. Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies. University of Toronto. 1999.

Research Fellow and Resident Fellow, The Newberry Library. Chicago. 1983-84.

Outstanding Young Faculty Member. Ball State University. 1974.

Honorary Member, Alpha Mu Gamma. Ball State University. 1974.

Charles Hall Grandgent Prize. Dante Society of America. 1974. (Pape, "Classical Convention and Dante's Concept of Poetic Inspiration, housed in Widener Library, Harvard University)

Georges Lurcy Traveling Fellow. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. 1972-73.

Woodrow Wilson Fellow. 1967-68.

Phi Beta Kappa. 1966.

Phi Eta Sigma. 1964.

Listings:

Who's Who in America, 2012-15.

Who's Who in Education, 2007.

Who's Who among American Teachers, 2007.

Répertoire de l'histoire des sciences et des techniques en France, 2005.

International Directory of Medievalists, 2004.

Directory of American Scholars, 2002, 1999, 1979.

Who's Who in the Midwest, 1993 to date.

Scholars of Early Modern Studies, 1992 to date.

Répertoire international des seiziémistes, 1978 to date.

Indiana Directory of Humanists, 1978 to date.

External Service:

Editorial Board, *L'Erudit français-espagnol*, 2011 to present.

Advisory Council, Renaissance Society of America, representing the Society for Thomas More Scholarship, 2015-16.

Invited reviewer, U.S. Department of Education, 2014.

Invited reviewer, Fulbright Commission, 2014.

Advisory Board, *Yearbook of Thomas More Scholarship*, 2008-2014.

Medieval Association of the Midwest (MAM), 1977-2012:

- President, 1996-97.
- Membership Committee, 1997.
- Vice-President, 1995-96.
- Member, Executive Council, 1996-99; 1983-86.
- Coordinator, MAM-Sponsored Sessions at the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo; and Midwest Modern Language Association (MMLA), 1980-83.
- Founding Editor, *Nuntia: Newsletter of the Medieval Association of the Midwest*, 1978-82.
- Ex-officio Member, Executive Council, 1995-97; 1977-83.
- Member, Organizational Steering Committee, 1976-77.

Juror, Prix Marcel Duhamel, Paris. November 1999.

Northeast Modern Language Association (NEMLA), Sixteenth-Century French Literature Session, 1988-90:

- Chairman, 1989-90.
- Secretary, 1988-89.

Midwest Modern Language Association (MMLA), Medieval Studies Section, 1995-96; 1984-87:

- Member, Advisory and Nominating Committee, 1995-98; 1984-87.
- Chairman, 1996-97; 1985-86.
- Secretary, 1995-96; 1984-85.
- Chair, program, 1995.

Juror, Carl J. Meyer Prize, Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference, 1996.

Advisory Council, Central States Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1977-78.

Consultant and Reviewer:

Reviewer of the following journals and presses, 1981-2014:

Routledge
Yale University Press
Pearson-Education (three times)
Philological Quarterly
Explorations in Renaissance Culture
McGraw-Hill (four times)
Prentice-Hall (four times)
D.C. Heath
Macmillan (twice)
Proceeding of the Medieval Association of the Midwest
Publications of the Modern Language Association
Renaissance Quarterly
Peter Lang

Consultant, Promotion and Tenure Committees, 2009-1979.

Portland State University, 2009.
University of Pittsburgh, Bradford, 2007.
Texas Tech University.
Indiana University, Bloomington.
University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
Arizona State University, Tempe.

Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities, 2006 and 2002.

Reviewer. National Endowment for the Humanities. 2000, 1999, 1990.

Reviewer. Indiana Department of Education, Secondary School French Textbooks (levels I
II, III). 1989.

Editorial Board. *Ball State University "Forum."* 1987-89.

Hannah Gunnell

April 22, 2017

HONR 390-09 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Subject Research Documentation for Oral History Interview with Donald Gilman

Jr. on March 27, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

2/24/1945

- Gilman was born in Newport News, Virginia (bio form).
- Newport News, VA is on the east coast, not far from the ocean (google maps).

1963

- Gilman graduated from Newport News High School in June (bio form).

1964

- Phi Eta Sigma at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. 1964. (CV sheet).
 - This was the honorary scholastic society for college freshman (University of North Carolina [libraries](#) website).

1966

- Phi Beta Kappa at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (CV sheet).
 - This group recognized exceptional academic achievement in the arts and sciences (Phi Beta Kappa [website](#)).

1967

- Received BA from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. Majored in French (CV sheet).
- Woodrow Wilson Fellow. 1967-68 (CV sheet).

1968

- French instructor at [Christopher Newport University](#) (CV sheet).

1970

- Received MA from Harvard University. Specialized in French/Romance Languages (CV sheet).

1971

- Teaching Assistant in French at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (CV sheet).

1972

- Georges Lurcy Traveling Fellow. University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1972-73 (CV sheet).

1974

- Hired at BSU, assistant prof of French (CV sheet).
- John Pruis was president of the University (Honors College Timeline).
- Outstanding Young Faculty Member. Ball State University. 1974. (CV sheet).
- Honorary Member, Alpha Mu Gamma. Ball State University. 1974. (CV sheet).

- Charles Hall Grandgent Prize. Dante Society of America. 1974. (Pape, “Classical Convention and Dante's Concept of Poetic Inspiration, housed in Widener Library, Harvard University) (CV sheet).
- A separate area for honors housing is established in Bostford-Swinford (Honors College Timeline).
- Dr. VanderHill introduces the ID 199 (HONR 199) course. This course originally dealt with American character but later focused on family in modern life (Honors College Timeline).

2/13/75

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/28864/rec/24> Daily News (DN) Article about summer study abroad programs (except they weren't called that). Gilman directed the French group.

1976

- Received PhD from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. Specialized in French/Comparative Literature (CV sheet).
- The First Whiting Scholarships are offered in the fall of this year (Honors College Timeline).

11/04/76

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/32470/rec/25> DN Article about study abroad program for French students at Laval University in Canada. Interested students directed to Gilman.

1977

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/4937/rec/1> University Senate Documentation. Gilman listed on Professional Policies Council.
- Honors science classes are offered in the fall of this year (Honors College Timeline).

1/19/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/32741/rec/26> DN Article about another study abroad program. Gilman in charge of the French program.

4/6/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/33180/rec/27> DN Article about a series of French films shown at the student center, starting with the film “King of Hearts.” Gilman quoted saying the films have a lot to offer.

5/6/77

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/33412/rec/28> DN Article correction about French summer abroad trip to Laval University dates.

1978

- Richard Burkhardt became president of the University (Honors College Timeline).

6/29/78

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/40223/rec/12> Board of Trustees minutes. Gilman assigned Administrative Assistant to chairperson for academic year '79.

1979

- BSU, associate prof of French (CV sheet).
- Jerry Anderson was president of the University (Honors College Timeline).
- Creative Teaching Grant: "The Preparation of Self Instructional, Oral-Aural Materials to Achieve a Balanced Development of Self- Expression and Grammatical Skills in French Conversation." Autumn Qtr. 1979. (grant of \$350, plus assigned time) (CV sheet).
- Summer Research Grant: "The Preparation of a Critical Edition of Louis Le Caron's Dialogues (1556)." Summer 1979. (grant of approximately \$4,500) (CV sheet).
- Outstanding Teacher, Mortar Board, Ball State University, 1979-80. (CV sheet).
- The Honors Program becomes the Honors College and becomes first honors college at a public school in the state of Indiana. (Honors College Timeline).

4/19/79

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/39751/rec/32> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman receives tenure.

4/23/79

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/37412/rec/32> DN Article about a faculty forum held to discuss research funds. Gilman quoted saying that if more funding goes to research, the enrollment rate will increase.

4/25/79

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/37432/rec/33> DN Article listing Gilman's promotion to Associate Professor.

1980

- Honors College offices are moved to the Whiting Business Building (Honors College Timeline).

1/30/80

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/39421/rec/35> DN Article explaining that nominations for Outstanding Faculty were due, and listed Gilman as one of the previous year's recipients.

11/10/80

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/20/rec/46> Campus Update newsletter. Gilman served on committee for the advancement of early studies.

1981

- Robert Bell became president of the University (Honors College Timeline).

1/19/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/47/rec/47> Campus Update Newsletter. Gilman was visiting lecturer at Central Michigan University. He presented "A Lover's Complaint: The Extension of Self to World Order," on Feb. 3, '81.

4/27/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/102/rec/49> Campus Update. Gilman chaired a section and critiqued a paper at the conference of the michigan academy of science, arts and humanities, at University of Michigan on March 20.

10/2/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/44087/rec/36> DN Article about French Club. Gilman mentioned as example of French profs who attend the meetings to give presentations.

10/16/81

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/44243/rec/37> DN Article about the Committee for the Advancement of Early Studies, which conducted a meeting that Gilman was a panel member for.

1982

- Whitinger scholarships decrease to 10 but now cover full fees and tuition along with half of the room and board costs (Honors College Timeline).
- Botsford-Swinford becomes a dorm only for honors students (Honors College Timeline).
- Dr. VanderHill creates the Undergraduate Fellows program (Honors College Timeline).

1/4/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/258/rec/50> Campus Update. Gilman served on panel for National Endowment for the Humanities.

2/22/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/307/rec/45> Campus Update newsletter. Gilman a member of the liberal arts subcommittee.

5/13/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/6934/rec/4> see below.

9/9/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/6974/rec/3> University Senate Minutes. Gilman listed on International Programs Subcommittee.

9/30/82

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/46350/rec/38> DN Blurb about Gilman speaking at the French Club — le cercle francais— meeting.

1983

- Research: Research Fellow and Resident Fellow, The Newberry Library. Chicago. 1983-84 (CV sheet).

8/8/83

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/736/rec/57> Campus Update. Gilman elected to the executive council of the Medieval Association of the Midwest.

10/6/83

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/50599/rec/55> DN blurb about Gilman speaking at French Club.

1984

- John Worthen was president of the University (Honors College Timeline).
- Special Assigned Leave 1984-85 (CV sheet).

1/3/84

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/859/rec/59> Campus Update. Received \$600 from the Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois, for a research project. (also elected secretary of the Medieval Association of the Midwest)

2/24/84

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/36594/rec/5> Board of Trustees minutes about his leave. He left with half pay for the academic year.

8/6/84

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/1027/rec/61> Campus Update. Gilman named research associate at the Newberry Library in Chicago.

1986

- Participant, Computer Literacy Program. Autumn Qtr. 1986 (CV sheet)
- Dr. Arno Wittig becomes the Director, Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

5/23/86

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/31742/rec/7> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman appointed Coordinator of French.

9/11/86

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/8570/rec/5> University Senate Minutes. Listed on Honors Subcommittee.

10/9/86

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/8608/rec/6> University Senate Minutes. Listed on Honors Subcommittee.

1987

- BSU prof of French (CV sheet).
- Editorial Board. Ball State University "Forum." 1987-89. (CV Sheet).
- Faculty Mentor for Undergraduate Fellows, Honors College 1987-89. (five students, \$750 for each student or \$3,750) (CV sheet).
- Participant, Computer Literacy Program. Autumn Qtr. (CV sheet).
- The Whitinger Scholarship covers all tuition and room and board (Honors College Timeline).
- The Honors College offices are moved to the Burkhardt Building (Honors College Timeline).

1/21/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/60743/rec/39> DN blurb about Gilman serving for the London Centre.

5/1/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/32426/rec/31> Board minutes. Gilman promoted from associate professor to professor.

6/8/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/1926/rec/68> Campus Update. Gilman promoted to professor.

7/6/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/1938/rec/69> Campus Update. Gilman gave presentation “Waits and Minstrels in Medieval Drama: A Round Table” at the 22nd International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University.

9/17/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/8813/rec/7> University Senate Minutes. Listed on Honors Subcommittee.

9/25/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/62088/rec/40> DN article about London Centre moving to Regent’s College. Listed Gilman as faculty member, didn’t quote him.

10/15/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUSenAgMin/id/8881/rec/8> More senate minutes about honors subcommittee.

11/30/87

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2084/rec/70> Campus Update. Gave presentation “Ronsard as Poet-Philosopher in the *Sonets pour Helene*” at Sixteenth Century Studies Conference at Arizona University.

5/16/88

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2282/rec/72> Campus Update. Gave presentation “Dialogues and Dialects in Sixteenth Century French Literature” at Central Renaissance Conference in Terre Haute.

7/5/88

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2304/rec/73> Campus Update. Gilman gave presentation “The Poet as Seer-Maker in the late 15th and 16th Century France” at the 23rd International Congress on Medieval Studies.

1989

- Reviewer. Indiana Department of Education, Secondary School French Textbooks (levels I II, III) (CV Sheet).
- HONR 189 Global Studies is added to the curriculum (Honors College Timeline).

1/23/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/67109/rec/41> DN blurb listing Gilman as person to call for info about French Language Exchange academic year programs.

3/13/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2444/rec/77> Campus Update. Gilman honored as one of many profs who taught at BSU for 15 years.

4/17/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2468/rec/78> Campus Update. Gilman mentioned as liaison between Canada Year task force and Ball State. The task force was looking for a way to implement Canadian Studies into the curriculum.

4/24/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2474/rec/79> Campus Update. Gilman received award of \$2,750 from Institute on Petrarch and Petrarchism, Yale University.

5/22/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2489/rec/80> Campus Update. Gilman mentioned as organizer and chair of “Renaissance Rhetoric and Literary Strategies” at the 24th International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

8/18/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/29351/rec/2> Board of Trustees minutes. Gilman reappointed coordinator of French for the academic year '89-'90, received stipend of \$240.
- Gilman accepted \$2,750 award from National Endowment for the Humanities on behalf of the Foreign language dept.

11/16/89

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/68848/rec/42> DN article mentioning deadlines for French Language Exchanges programs. Lists Gilman as person to contact.

1990

- Participant, "Workshop, Institute for Leadership in Canadian Studies." Campobello Island, N.B. August 1990 (University provided \$750.00 for registration and expenses.) (CV sheet).
- Participant, Workshop in Writing Across the Curriculum. Spring Qtr., 1990. (CV sheet).
- Outstanding Teacher, Mortar Board, Ball State University, 1990-91 (CV sheet).
- Outstanding Teacher, Delta Delta Delta Sorority, Ball State University, 1990-91 (CV sheet).
- Outstanding Teacher, Davidson Residence Hall, Ball State University 1990-91 (CV sheet).
- Reviewer. National Endowment for the Humanities. 1990 (CV Sheet).

4/23/90

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2672/rec/83> Campus Update. Gilman gave two presentations at Modern Language Association in Toronto, Canada.

9/10/90

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2736/rec/84> Campus Update. Gilman served as panelist for editions and translations program, National Endowment for the Humanities.

10/8/90

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2760/rec/86> Campus Update. Story about a scholarship to be awarded at a banquet. The money will go to help a scholar present a paper at the 21st annual conference of the Committee for the Advancement of Early Studies. Gilman participated in this conference.

1991

- Outstanding Teacher, Davidson Residence Hall, Ball State University, 1991-92, 1990-91 (CV sheet).
- Excellence in Teaching Award (one of thirty in the University selected by student body poll), 1991 (CV sheet).
- Recognition in Teaching, Student Education Association, Teachers College, Ball State University, 1991 (CV sheet).

1/18/91

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/90673/rec/43> DN Article about International Student Exchange Program allowing students to study abroad. Gilman quoted saying benefits of studying abroad.

6/24/91

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2906/rec/88> Campus Update. Gilman gave presentation “Sixteenth Century Dialogue: Scholastic Traditions and Humanist Theorizations” at Queens University in Canada.

9/9/91

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2940/rec/91> Campus Update. Gilman gave presentation, “From Dialects to Poetics: Johann Sturm’s Concept of Dialogue,” at University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

9/20/91

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/25580/rec/13> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman accepted a grant from the Canadian Embassy, which went toward Canadian Embassy Courses and Canadian Studies.

1992

- Received Alumni Association Travel Grant, 1992-93 (\$1,000) (CV sheet).
- Special Assigned Leave, 1992-92 (CV sheet).
- Excellence in Teaching Award (one of ten in the University selected by study body poll).

1/24/92

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/22133/rec/45> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman accepted grant from Quebec government for the Quebec

Government Office of Chicago Library Acquisitions. Also received another award for faculty to travel to France and give presentation.

2/3/92

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/3031/rec/95> Campus Update.

Gilman nominated for University Teaching Professorship.

- Finalist for University Teaching Professorship (CV sheet).

2/28/92

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/93342/rec/45> DN article listing Gilman's nomination for an outstanding teacher award.

4/20/92

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/74069/rec/27> Board of Trustees minutes. Gilman took a special assigned leave from '92-'93. He received half pay for the academic year.

1993

- Outstanding University Faculty Advisor, Ball State University, 1993-94. (CV sheet).

1994

- Faculty Mentor for Undergraduate Fellows, Honors College 1994-95 (five students, \$750 for each student or \$3,750) (CV sheet).

8/22/94

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/3528/rec/96> Campus Update. Gilman received outstanding faculty academic advisor service award.

10/31/94

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/7287/rec/97> Campus Update. Gilman gave presentation "Canadian Studies at Ball State University: A Case Study." Gave separate presentation "Quebec: A Distinct Society in Canada" with Charles Jones, Michelle Anderson and Craig MacDonald.

1996

- Received Preparation of course (with R. Rarick and A. Slack), "City of Paris." Internationalization Endowment and the Class of 1932. Spring 1996 (grant for \$10,000); Director of Study Abroad Program, "City of Paris" (\$2,000) (CV sheet).
- Dr. Bruce Meyer becomes dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).
- The Honors College offices are moved to Carmichael Hall (Honors College Timeline).
- Received Summer Research Grant, "The Preparation of a Critical Edition of Pontus de Tyard's Discours du temps." Summer 1996. (approximately \$14,000) (CV sheet).

1997

- Visiting prof at Université de Nancy II (until '98) (again from 2005-'06) (CV sheet).

- Excellence in Teaching Award (one of ten in the University selected by study body poll); Finalist for University Teaching Professorship, 1997 (CV sheet).
- Outstanding Faculty Member, Phi Mu Sorority, Ball State University, 1997. (CV sheet).

7/25/97

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/19272/rec/25> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman took a leave of absence with pay for the '97-'98 year.

1998

- Faculty Mentor for Undergraduate Fellows, Honors College 1998-99 (five students, \$750 for each student or \$3,750) (CV sheet).
- Dr. Arno Wittig serves as interim Dean after Bruce Meyer passed away unexpectedly (Honors College Timeline).

1999

- Director of Ball State's London Centre (Fall '99) (CV sheet).
- Research: Research Associate, Northrop Frye Centre, and Research Fellow. Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, University of Toronto. 1999. (CV sheet).
- Reviewer. National Endowment for the Humanities (CV Sheet).

4/30/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/106129/rec/47> DN Article about 34 students and Gilman going to London, England by means of the London Centre.

8/30/99

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/4519/rec/100> Campus Update. Gilman recognized for best translation in crime fiction from English to French.

2000

- Blaine Brownell was president of university (Honors College Timeline).
- Received grant for Center for International Programs, "Université de Nancy II–Ball State University Visions Retrospectives et / and Prospectives." 2000-2001 (\$2,500) (CV sheet).
- Reviewer. National Endowment for the Humanities (CV sheet).
- Dr. James Reubel becomes Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

3/27/2000

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/85998/rec/53> DN Article about student trip to London via London Centre (see above DN article). A second article was printed on this page about how the Center for International Programs acts as a campus diplomat; it quoted Gilman in regards to the types of trips a student can take and the benefits of studying cultures.

2001

- Received grant for Center for International Programs, "Université de Nancy II–Ball State University Visions Retrospectives et / and Prospectives." 2001-2002 (\$4,500) (CV sheet).

2002

- Honorary Faculty Member, Alpha Lambda Delta Freshman Honorary Society, Ball State University (CV sheet).
- Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities (CV Sheet).

3/18/2002

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/4934/rec/102> Campus Update. Gilman served as chairperson for student panel (University of Nancy II and Ball State University Alumni Panel). Also gave presentation “Sharing Cultural Differences,” at student center.

2004

- Beverly Pitts briefly served as university president before Jo Ann Gora took over (Honors College Timeline).

7/22/2005

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/6708/rec/28> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman left with pay for the Faculty Exchange program with University of Nancy II in France for the 2005-'06 year.

2006

- Panelist, National Endowment for the Humanities, 2006 (CV Sheet).

2009

- “Faculty Appreciation Recognition,” Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, Ball State University, April 2009 (CV sheet).

- “Teacher of the Month (April 2009),” Pi Beta Phi Sorority, Ball State University, April 2009.
- Dehority Complex becomes the residence hall for incoming freshmen Honors College students (Honors College Timeline).
- Edmund F and Virginia Ball House is renovated and later become the home of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).

5/6/2011

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/1448/rec/35> Board of Trustees Minutes. Gilman on leave with pay for spring semester 2012 (see below).

2012

- Dorothy Ford Wiley Visiting Professor of Renaissance Culture at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill (CV sheet).
- Special Assigned Leave Spring 2012 (CV sheet).
- Research: Dorothy Ford Wiley Professor of Renaissance Culture, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, November 2012 (CV sheet).

2013

- Teaching: “Outstanding Teacher,” Sigma Phi Epsilon Fraternity, Ball State University, September 2013 (CV sheet).
- Ball State Honors College is able to hire its own faculty for the first time in the college’s history (Honors College Timeline).

2014

- Paul Ferguson served as president of university (Honors College Timeline).

1/8/2015

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/81299/rec/51> DN Article about the Paris terrorist attack. Gilman quoted saying France is not as violent as America.

12/18/2015

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/76148/rec/39> Board of Trustees minutes. Gilman's retirement listed effective July 21, 2016.

2016

- Retired, received title Professor Emeritus of French at BSU (CV sheet).
- Terry King was president of university (Honors College Timeline).

4/27/2016

- <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/99037/rec/49> DN Article about Gilman's retirement.

2017

- Dr. John Emert becomes Dean of the Honors College (Honors College Timeline).
Geoffrey Mearns became president of university (Honors College Timeline).

Hannah Gunnell

April 22, 2017

HONR 390-09 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Timeline for Oral History Interview with Donald Gilman Jr. on March 27, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

Feb. 24, 1945: Gilman was born in Newport News, Virginia¹

June 1963: Gilman graduated from Newport News High School²

1964-1967: Gilman attended University of North Carolina Chapel Hill. He received a B.A. in French.³

1968: Gilman was a French instructor at Christopher Newport University.⁴

1970: Gilman received his M.A. from Harvard University. He specialized in French/Romance Languages.⁵

1971: Gilman was a teaching assistant in French at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.⁶

1974: Gilman was hired as an assistant professor of French at Ball State University.⁷

1975: Gilman directed study abroad programs in French.⁸

¹ Donald Gilman Jr., biographical information form. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

² Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

³ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

⁴ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

⁵ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

⁶ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

⁷ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

⁸ The Ball State Daily News article, "Program Stresses Language Study" (<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/28864/rec/24>) February 13, 1975.

1976: Gilman received his Ph.D. in French/Comparative Literature from University of North Carolina Chapel Hill⁹

1979: Gilman promoted to Associate Professor of French¹⁰

April 19, 1979: Gilman received tenure¹¹

1982: Gilman serves on a panel for the National Endowment for the Humanities¹²

August 8, 1983: Gilman elected to executive council of the Medieval Association of the Midwest¹³

1986: Gilman appointed Coordinator of French¹⁴

1987: Gilman promoted to Professor of French.¹⁵

1987: Gilman participated on editorial board of "Forum" literary journal¹⁶

1987-1989: Gilman served as Faculty Mentor for Undergraduate Fellows¹⁷

1987: Gilman served for London Centre¹⁸

1989: Gilman served as liaison between Canada Year Task Force and Ball State¹⁹

1997: Gilman served as visiting professor at University of Nancy II in France²⁰

⁹ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

¹⁰ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

¹¹ Ball State University Board of Trustees Minutes, April 19, 1979.

(<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/39751/rec/32>)

¹² "Campus Update" newsletter. January 4, 1982

(<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/258/rec/50>)

¹³ "Campus Update" newsletter. August 8, 1983

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/736/rec/57>

¹⁴ Ball State University Board of Trustees minutes. May 23, 1986

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/31742/rec/7>

¹⁵ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

¹⁶ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

¹⁷ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

¹⁸ "London Centre picks 1987-88 faculty" article published in the Ball State Daily News, January 21, 1987

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/60743/rec/39>

¹⁹ "Campus Update" newsletter. April 17, 1989.

<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUCmpUp/id/2468/rec/78>

²⁰ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

1999: Gilman and students went to London by means of the London Centre²¹

2005: Gilman participated in Faculty exchange program with University of Nancy II²²

July 21, 2016: Gilman retired.²³

²¹ “Thirty-four students to study abroad” article published by the Ball State Daily News. April 30, 1999 (<https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUDlyNws/id/106129/rec/47>)

²² Ball State University Board of Trustees Minutes. July 22, 2005. <https://dmr.bsu.edu/digital/collection/BSUBoT/id/6708/rec/28>

²³ Donald Gilman Jr., CV sheet. Provided by Donald Gilman prior to interview.

Hannah Gunnell

April 23, 2019

HONR 390-9 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Topics for Oral History Interview with Donald Gilman Jr. on March 27, 2019, Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana

Introductory Statement: “Good Morning. My name is Hannah Gunnell, and I am with the Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project. I am here today on Wednesday, March 27, 2019 on Ball State University’s campus in Muncie, Indiana, to talk with Dr. Donald Gilman about his experience here at Ball State University. I would like to start by asking you when and where you were born.”

1. Childhood. Newport News VA (on east coast).
2. Education: Newport News High School, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, M.A. from Harvard, Ph.D. from North Carolina Chapel Hill ('76, after starting teaching at BSU)
3. Teaching Career: Teaching Assistant in French at University of North Carolina Chapel Hill ('71), Assistant Professor of French at Ball State ('74)
4. When did you start teaching the honors sequences and colloquia?
5. How did the honors college impact teaching French courses?
6. Study abroad programs
 - a. Laval University in Canada ('76)

- b. International Student Exchange Program (1991)
 - c. Director of Study Abroad Program, "City of Paris." (1996)
7. Teaching grants
- a. Creative Teaching Grant: "The Preparation of Self Instructional, Oral-Aural Materials to Achieve a Balanced Development of Self- Expression and Grammatical Skills in French Conversation." Autumn Qtr. 1979. (grant of \$350, plus assigned time) (CV sheet)
 - b. Summer Research Grant: "The Preparation of a Critical Edition of Louis Le Caron's Dialogues (1556)." Summer 1979. (grant of approximately \$4,500) (CV sheet)
 - c. Received \$600 from the Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois, for a research project (1984)
 - d. Gilman received award of \$2,750 from Institute on Petrarch and Petrarchism, Yale University.
 - e. Gilman accepted \$2,750 award from National Endowment for the Humanities on behalf of the Foreign language dept. ('89)
 - f. Received Alumni Association Travel Grant, 1992-93. (\$1,000) (CV sheet)
 - g. Received grant for Center for International Programs, "Université de Nancy II–Ball State University Visions Retrospectives et / and Prospectives." 2001-2002. (\$4,500)
8. Committee for Advancement of Early Studies
9. Visiting lectures/presentations

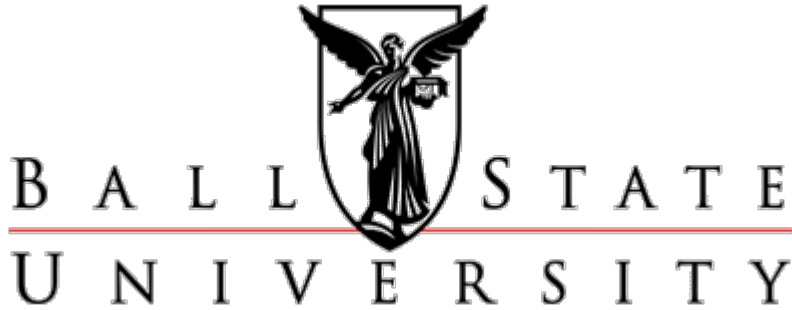
- a. Gilman was visiting lecturer at Central Michigan University. He presented "A Lover's Complaint: The Extension of Self to World Order," on Feb. 3, '81.
- b. Gilman chaired a section and critiqued a paper at the conference of the michigan academy of science, arts and humanities, at University of Michigan on March 20.
- c. presentation "Waits and Minstrels in Medieval Drama: A Round Table" at the 22nd International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University (1987)
- d. "Dialogues and Dialects in Sixteenth Century French Literature" at Central Renaissance Conference in Terre Haute. (1988)
- e. "The Poet as Seer-Maker in the late 15th and 16th Century France" at the 23rd International Congress on Medieval Studies. (1988)
- f. Gilman gave two presentations at Modern Language Association in Toronto, Canada (1990)
- g. "Sixteenth Century Dialogue: Scholastic Traditions and Humanist Theorizations" at Queens University in Canada. (1991)
- h. "From Dialects to Poetics: Johann Sturm's Concept of Dialogue," at University of Copenhagen, Denmark. (1991)
- i. Visiting prof at Université de Nancy II (until '98) (again from 2005-'06)

10. National Endowment for the Humanities

11. liberal arts subcommittee

12. International Programs Subcommittee
13. Medieval Association of the Midwest-- served 1977 to 2012
14. appointed Coordinator of French (board of trustees minutes)
15. Honors Subcommittee
16. Editorial Board. Ball State University "Forum." 1987-89.
17. London Centre 1987
18. Gilman mentioned as liaison between Canada Year task force and Ball State.
(1989)
19. Special Assigned Leaves (1992-93. 1997-98, 2012)
20. University of Nancy II
21. Retired. Professor Emeritus of French at BSU.

Closing Statement: "On behalf of the Ball State Honors College Oral History Project, I would like to thank you for taking the time to sit down with us and share your story today."



Department of History
Burkhardt Building 213
Muncie, IN 47306-0480

27 March 2019

Dr. Donald Gilman
4000 Cathedral Ave, N.W. Apt. 551 B
Washington, D.C., 20016-5204

Dear Dr. Gilman,

On behalf of Dr. Doyle's Oral History Workshop Colloquium, I would like to thank you for devoting two hours of your time on Wednesday to our Ball State Honors College Oral History Project. With your candor and eloquence, you shared your experiences in the Honors College that positively impacted your French research and teachings. The interview you participated in will be a valuable historical source for those who wish to learn more about the Honors College's past, especially including our many alumni from over the past sixty years.

Additionally, I am also grateful that you decided to contribute to our project despite expressing some hesitations. I, too, was very nervous for our interview, but I had a wonderful experience learning about your career, and I am thankful that you also had a good experience.

I really enjoyed learning about your viewpoints on individuality, because this theme gave our interview a deeper meaning. I also really enjoyed the perspective you gave on the differences in teaching French students versus American students. This is an aspect that will be essential to our project because no other interviewee could provide this information.

We'll be delighted to add your practice interview to our project collection site on the DMR.

Best regards,

Hannah Gunnell
The Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project Team

Hannah Gunnell

April 24, 2019

HONR 390-9 Oral History Workshop

Ball State University Honors College Oral History Project

Dr. Michael Doyle

Production Team notes for Ball State University Honors College Oral History

Project Documentary

Video production team (Hannah Gunnell, Noah Nobbe and Jocelyn Hall)

Roles:

- Jocelyn will shoot all of the B-roll footage because she is the only one of us who has her own camera equipment.
- Noah and Hannah will write the script for the documentary after the interviews are complete.
- We were thinking that we should start with the Philadelphia trip and introducing the foundation of honors education, then organizing the rest of the documentary by common themes found among interviewees.
- All three of us will take part in editing the documentary together through the Adobe Premier program.
- We asked the digital corps to run the cameras during the interviews and to pull still photos from the TCOM archives. We also decided that we would call a digital corps person if we needed help with the editing process, but we are not planning on relying on them.

Documentary Introduction:¹

“Ten students and a professor sit around a long table at one of the first buildings built on Ball State University’s campus on the first day of the Spring 2019 semester. They come from all different parts of the Midwest, they have all different majors, and they had no idea that this course they walked into would become a representation of the last sixty years of the Honors College. Their immersive learning course, titled “The Honors College Oral History Project,” was a direct result of a number of faculty who took risks fostering unconventional and unorthodox ideas by implementing new programs that are now a stepple of Ball State’s education. Without the support from these Honors College faculty, not only would this classroom would be empty, but the hundreds of students who graduated from the Honors College would not have these stories to tell. It’s 11 a.m. on a cold Tuesday morning in January, the bells from Shafer Tower are ringing, and this group of incredible people are about to make history, as many Honors students before them did.”

First documentary draft critique

- Interviewees didn’t have lower thirds yet.
- Changed subtitles.
- The audio was not at a level volume for each interviewee.
- Changed around some of the interviewees.
- Errors in credits (this ended up being fixed last).

¹ I wrote this part. We ended up using it as is, so I didn’t have to revise it.

- Dr. Doyle suggested we go through the interviews to find more about the birth of the Honors College and where liberal arts came from. He also asked we find more stuff about the Whitinger Scholars and the impact of the Honors College on the whole university.

Draft 3 critique²

- Renamed subtitles.
- We had to find more about the birth of the Honors College from Dr. Joseph Trimmer's interview.
- We had to find places to cut footage because we had to shorten the documentary from nearly 20 minutes to 15.
- We had to search for more B-roll.

Draft 4 critique

- We had to find more B-roll.³

Draft 5 critique

- We had to find more B-roll.
- The credits were still missing information, but Nathan Rivers took care of that for us.

² I did not physically write down my critiques from Draft 2.

³ When we ran out of photos, I searched for The Ball State Daily News articles to use as B-roll.