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Tom Preece Oral History Interview

Tom Preece
Raymond College

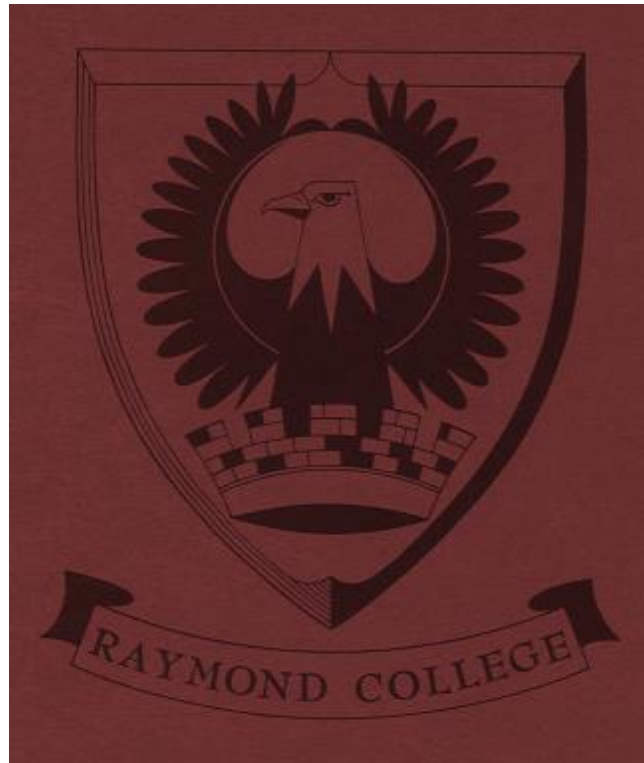
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RAYMOND COLLEGE PROJECT ORAL HISTORIES
UNIVERSITY OF THE PACIFIC ARCHIVES



Tom Preece (1964-1967)
Raymond College Student

July 12th and 19th, 2023

By Lorenzo Spaccarelli

Transcription by Lorenzo Spaccarelli University of the Pacific,
Department of Special Collections, Library

Tom Preece Interview

Transcribed by: Lorenzo Spaccarelli

Part 1 (Part 2 begins on page 35)

Lorenzo Spaccarelli: Okay, hello, my name is Lorenzo Spaccarelli and today I am going to be interviewing Tom Preece. Today is July 12, 2023. I am conducting this interview from London. For the record, can you please state your name and tell us where you are Zooming in from?

Tom Preece: Thomas Alan Preece speaking from Lacey, Washington.

Spaccarelli: Perfect. Okay, so, to begin, what years did you attend Raymond College?

Preece: I entered in the fall of 1964 and graduated with a third class in the spring of 1967.

Spaccarelli: Okay, so first off, to really start getting into this, what was behind your choice in attending Raymond College?

Preece: This is going to take more than you would expect, I think. I was, to most appearances, an indifferent student in high school. My grade average was 2.73. I was also considered by a great many faculty, and more specifically my father, who was the superintendent of the high school district where I was attending, to be performing well below my potential. I really understand that now in retrospect. There's not much question, although I've never been formally diagnosed- I probably suffered pretty awfully from attention deficit disorder. It's affected my learning methodology. I've never been one who could memorize lists or dates or even formulas. What I learn and remember consistently, and my memory is prodigious when it comes to long-term stuff, ask practically anybody, is the principles of things and the structure of things. The other two pieces of data in there are what it would mean, what it meant in my family to go on to school. You may have variations of this through a lot of these interviews, particularly from the early years, because so many of us came from working class backgrounds. Now, mine doesn't look like that, except my father preserved those emphasis, that set of survival skills, that approach to the world from the accident of his own education. The only reason he ended up going to college was he played football at a high level in high school in the, I think, in the late 20s, early 30s. At the football banquet celebrating the fact that he was named on both of the city newspapers to be on the All-Star team, his coach said, by the way, if you want to play more football, I can get you into, with a scholarship, to Oregon Normal School. He has always considered a great stroke of luck. He remained throughout his life a very heavy-duty sports fan. I'm editing stuff that doesn't pertain to this interview. But for him, education became survival. He was the first member of his family to go to school. He became dedicated to the profession of teaching. He saw and understood how both the academic disciplines that young people learn, as well as the sports disciplines, were a way out of trouble for a lot of people. Now, I'm talking about somebody who grew up in the Depression. And survival and heavy-duty survival was very much a huge part of his attitude towards me throughout my life was his great fear

that something would go wrong and his precious kid would be messed up. So here I am with this background, this sense of desperation that education is all. And dad has planned for this. Neither my sister or I ever had a scholarship or had a student loan because literally he dedicated his life to making sure that he was going to be able to pay the freight when the time came. Family was everything, survival was everything. So it was going to happen. He got so frustrated with me at one point in time in high school, he said, you know, if you don't straighten up and fly right, I'm not going to send you to college. And I said to him, because I've been inculcated with everything he taught me, it's not up to you. If you don't send me, I'll join the army, get GI Bill, and I'll go anyway. When I said that, and I didn't know it at the time, because I had not yet worked for VA, there was no GI Bill that would have applied to me at that moment in time. But he was very pleased with the attitude. So as I began to go through my senior year and file applications and explore schools, a little bit more biography. My father was a registered dedicated member of the Democratic Party. My mother was a registered dedicated member of the Republican Party. In mom's case, it meant the old style republicanism. She felt that she was entitled to privilege as a result of the way she was raised as a very young child. In fact, she worked every bit as hard as my dad did, because her father died when she was quite young. And she survived through to high school based on the charity of her aunt. And she and her mother basically built a ladder way of them getting the further education. Her mother taught high school and managed to get mom into a teacher school. My mother was one of the first teachers in schools on the western slope of the Colorado Rockies.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: Yeah. And all of her money, she was boarded up by the district for free, was a very pioneer kind of arrangement. All of the money she earned, together with the money her mother earned, went together to put my uncle Frank, to the Colorado School of Mines. There's a further whole dedication to doing this, ultimately ended- mom ended up with a master's degree. My father ended up with a doctorate. Like I said, education was big in the family. But where were they going to send this kid who couldn't seem to manage academic disciplines very well? Mom thought that on the strength of some legacy stuff, because her good friend Ruby Fry's oldest daughter was the first female graduate of Stanford School of Engineering. Some other mom thought she could leverage that connection to getting me into Stanford. I'm so glad she didn't do it. I was intimidated by Cal. I certainly could have gone to junior college, I could probably have gone to Chico State without any difficulty. But junior college would have been a trap. I grew up in Yreka, California in, in Siskiyou County, which is still so dedicatedly rural and pioneer, that it's the sort of the foundational stone of what's called the state of Jefferson. You know, just leave us alone to do our thing and outside government interference, blah, blah, blah. But there were no jobs there. If you weren't going to be a lumberjack or you didn't own a farm, there wasn't a future. And it was really necessary to get out of Siskiyou County to have that. That kind of closed off the local junior live at home college thing off to me. So, Pop with his ear to the ground, heard about Raymond. I don't remember how, one of the big outreaches that was going on and one of the things I know I want to talk about in this interview, was the then strong connection between the Methodist Church and UOP, which historically, as you know, that's how we got to be the first charter university in the, but it was also the source of a tremendous amount of recruitment to Raymond. I don't remember

that this happened in my MYF (Methodist Youth Fellowship). But in my friend, the late Jinx McCombs, MYF, they heard the pitch from someone at University Pacific in their MYF group, not anything to do with the academics. There were a lot of people who signed up, particularly those without, from the rural output. Wendi Maxwell talks about the fact that when her mom and dad came to UOP, what seduced her mother was the chapel and the stained glass windows. And somehow or another, that instantly meant that this was something very out of reach for her mother, something like Oxford. So that may have been how dad heard of it. He had a job to do buying some lockers for the boys' gym. And there's an outlet in Sacramento- I actually used to pass it frequently going shopping when I go there, when I lived there the last 10 years- That could do him a deal. And he decided we could combine that trip with a visit to Raymond. I don't know what he knew that I didn't. The huge advantage for me of Raymond, even versus all of UOP, was I was a small town boy walking into a small academic environment. I did not yet know the school's philosophy, but the sense of freedom, the escape from the constraints of Siskiyou County was really clear. The class I monitored was a class by Gene Wise. I don't remember the topic terribly well, but Wise taught very largely about the American civic experiment. And it deeply appealed to the pioneer kid in me coming out. What I couldn't know then was how much the curriculum was going to apply to fit me personally very well. I'll get to that later.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: We, of course, stayed for lunch, and it was very impressive to be able to sit down at a table with a professor in a social environment. Clearly one of the innovations that Warren Bryan Martin had insisted on and a huge part of why the college worked as well as it did. That wasn't still the trigger that really sold me. You might want to look up Karl Van Meter's intellectual accomplishments. He lives in France. At the time he was, I don't know how tall Karl is, I'm going to guess it's 6'5", a Donnus-like beautiful body, very attractive to a great many women. And after lunch I stepped down to the Raymond Quad and Karl swooped into the quad from the space between Farley and Wemyss House on the first skateboard I had ever seen, carrying a woman on his shoulder with her arms outstretched and her legs out behind him. And I said, I'm coming here.

Spaccarelli: (Chuckles) That's fantastic.

Preece: It helped shape the rest of the year for me. We went down and bought the lockers and they shipped them to Dad. I went home knowing where I was going and knowing because of Dad's preparation that we could afford it, which was a big deal in those days because the cost of UOP relative to other institutions was on the upper side... Maybe I've answered your question or do I freeform it from here?

Spaccarelli: No, I think you've more or less covered it. Let me think if I have anything I really want to follow up on. Yeah, no, I think that's good. I think that's good. We can move on to your first impressions then if that sounds good.

Preece: Sure.

Spaccarelli: Beyond the first impressions of the visit.

Preece: Yes, I know.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah. So first impressions when you got there to actually start.

Preece: The most vivid thing were- two things. That was the intimacy of the campus, the intimacy with faculty. It helped me personally that my faculty advisor was Neil Lark. Why you might ask? Well, Neil was relatively young compared to a great many of the faculty. He had studied...

Spaccarelli: Wait, can I interrupt you for a second?

Preece: Sure.

Spaccarelli: Weren't most of the faculty though, pretty young, like most of them are pretty fresh out of grad school?

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: Okay. Okay.

Preece: But Neil was from Siskiyou County.

Spaccarelli: Oh. Got it. Got it. Okay, continue. Sorry.

Preece: And to this day, he will tell me about fishing on the Sacramento River, Upper Sacramento River. I mean, it's a real, it was a real connection for me. The other big one, and I know you're going to hear this one over and over again, was Mike Wagner.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: And the introduction to the modern world, so-called, or the introduction of Mike Wagner if you prefer. Diane talks about the fact that Mike told her as she was taking notes, don't take notes, just listen. Well, I probably needed to take notes, but I didn't take any anyway. The biggest effect of that was really pretty profound. It was actually religion. The existence of God ended up being a topic of conversation in the classroom. And Mike was, I don't know who would say it, he would probably have said he was an atheist. I think he was much more seriously an agnostic. I had been taught all the religious chapter and verse of what I was supposed to believe. But I'd also had an experience in high school that I think is very telling and probably set me up to hear Mike's message pretty straightforwardly. I had been in some adolescent throes, running and walking around town, which is what I did when I got too anxious as a high schooler. And some way or another, I ended up standing next

to the church, the old Methodist church, which is now part of Girdner's Funeral Parlor, and becoming convinced that if I went into the church, which I knew was open, that I would personally meet God. And I became terrified and realized that I didn't want to meet him. And I think it's the foundation of something that is very much a part of what Mike believed. The challenge isn't to know the truth. The challenge is to seek it and to live despite your doubts. And Mike was able to translate that into the God you kids are talking about doesn't fit in a logical universe that I can use to help us find truth.

Spaccarelli: Got it.

Preece: And I think that's what- the beginning when I formally thought of myself as an agnostic. Now, it didn't hurt that I was pretty alienated from some vicious people in my home church. That kind of launched it. The other huge experience, I have a very synthesizing mind. And the whole idea, which got very quickly conveyed, was that this was a course in interdisciplinary studies. The faculty really believed, and the most eloquent statement I know about this is Neil's interview elsewhere in the archive, not in the Raymond Archive, about how the faculty designed the curriculum and thought about it. The interrelationships of all the disciplines to each other was really important. For Gene Wise's class, again, I don't remember the name of it.

Spaccarelli: American Studies?

Preece: Probably, yeah.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: I read Eric Fromm's *Escape from Freedom*, which I still refer to in intellectual dialogue from time to time. And then we had this, the modern world is being called by World Civ I and World Civ II. But what they were after was- standing assignment for the core curriculum, choose a third world country, analyze who it is, analyze what its prospects are. Bob Sullens, again, the small town, lived on my floor, the first floor of Wemyss House, and he had studied Kenya. And he became the source of a lot of recommendations about it. This is only my second semester at Raymond when I did this, and I still look back and I'm thinking, you were damned audacious, Tom. I found *Facing Mount Kenya*, which I can't remember if it's the Jomo Kenyatta's biography or autobiography, but it made very clear he would basically been selected by the British or his father had been selected by the British as what you might call a chief. And therefore, they sponsored the education of his son. If I remember correctly, he went to the London School of Economics. And for a native boy in Kenya, in that early time, I became convinced, even from watching- the Kikuyu and the Mau Mau were almost synonymous with each other. That whole revolution, which with a very religious oriented, fierce bent was something I felt I recognized from the stuff I'd read in Fromm. So my paper on the third world about Kenyatta was about the stressful transition from being a tribal society into being something resembling at least, and for the most part, Kenya's one of this, a modern democracy. Now they still fall apart over tribalism. They've been so pretty spectacularly in the last 10, 15 years. But there's a sense of order, a dedication to that order. You may quibble about who's in charge, but it's a very, very long ways from, my cows are on my land and your

cows should not be here, which was the state of Kenya before the British began to settle it. The paper I wrote on that was 52 pages long. Bear in mind, thank God my father had insisted I take typing in summer school. I had this horrific old Olympia with a very heavy touch. And in fact, I still kill computer keyboards regularly because I smash down on the keys. I did a draft on that. I may have handwritten a good deal of it. Diane, whom you've already interviewed, who is now my wife, who was then just my girlfriend prior to our breaking up the first time, typed the whole thing. And George Blum, who I think you knew was also instrumental in her life, became instrumental in mine. That was the first and only superior I got at Raymond College. And it happened in my first year.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: And I learned so much from that whole exercise. The whole idea that we should try to use all these original texts as much as possible, that you were empowered yourself not to receive the given knowledge, but to discover it. I think that's made the most profound difference in all of my life. When we get to the question about consequences, for me, that'll be a long tale. But boy, is it telling.

Spaccarelli: Looking forward to it.

Preece: The other thing that happened, it was not a great surprise in retrospect. I think the first of the literature classes I had was by Sy Kahn. The second was by Cliff Hand. And I absolutely fell in love with the structure of fiction. This is no longer first impressions, really the effect on me. I knew probably by the end of my second year that I wanted to write. And I also knew that I didn't have the means to support myself while making the attempt.

Spaccarelli: Fair.

Preece: Yeah.

Spaccarelli: Okay. Goodness. Sorry. Do you have any more to say? Sorry, keep going.

Preece: Which question are we on? Do you want to follow up?

Spaccarelli: I do have a number of follow-ups. So I think Neil Lark recovered. I keep trying to understand the core of this Mike Wagner philosophy thing, because I hear every single time I talk to somebody, basically every single person I talk to tells me about how they came into Mike Wagner's class and came out of it like a different person. It just changed their worldview substantially to hear him and understand his philosophy. And so, I mean, I understand sort of what you're saying here about religion. So I guess...

Preece: That was only a small part of Mike.

Spaccarelli: No, no, no. Sure, sure, sure. But my understanding as well is he was very Keynesian economist, that kind of thing.

Preece: That was more of his academic discipline, yes.

Spaccarelli: Yes, yes. But my understanding as well is that, but the religious aspect is the thing that transformed so many people. They came in with some sort of Methodist perspective a lot or just some sort of religious, small town religious perspective and came out of it without or came out of it at least questioning that. So what do you mean that he challenged perspectives? Because I think that that's an interesting idea. You're saying that he didn't think that relying on religion was a helpful way to move humanity forward? Is that what you're saying?

Preece: No, I think the point was, and the point of Raymond really was that we needed to be part of an intellectual stuff. And I don't know if anybody else has said this to you. I'm going to do one of my synthetic things here. The guy who founded Amazon, Jeff Bezos, frequently talked about looking for disruptive technologies that blow up the way that the marketplace, the way it is. I think Mike's class was designed to do exactly the same thing in the field of an intellectual stuff. There was a huge core dump of basic data, Western history, who the Greeks were, what was the Renaissance? What was it about? How everything was connected to everything else. And that, by the way, is often the way the religious question came up. Well, of course it is. God made it so. No, we made it so. It was an instruction in humanism. Now, if you don't mind, I'm going to veer into some of the things I've learned over time, because I've given some study to UOP and Raymond in particular.

Spaccarelli: Please.

Preece: One of the questions in my head has always been, and of course, both of them are dead, so we can't go back and interview them. How is it that Robert Burns and Warren Bryan Martin came together? Why was Warren Bryan Martin, who was an outsider at UOP, selected to be the first provost? When I was intending on interviewing Gene Rice, it was probably going to be the forefront of what I was going to be asking him, which is not true oral history. Gene and Warren Bryan Martin were both on the faculty of a church in the Nazarene School in Southern California, which has since relocated, but it's still down there. And according to Jerry Gaff, Warren Bryan Martin had lost his faith, meaning his spiritual faith. And he had replaced it with a faith in humanism and education. Now, the other half of this story has to do with what a hustler Robert Burns was. You heard President Callahan talk about the fact that Raymond was not designed with an endowment or a means to have a legacy. And that's so clearly the case. Even if you read the hagiographic commissioned history of UOP, you'll see that Burns did not have a doctorate. He was the protege of his predecessor and knew the predecessor's engagement with the idea that somehow or another as the first charter college, they should not be able to let a second charter college like University of Southern California get so far ahead of them. I wonder sometimes if the mistake wasn't moving from Santa Clara to Stockton. Although I think that move, in terms of our democracy and in terms of educating citizens, was still a brilliant one.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: In any case, he was always on the make for finding new ways to sell UOP. And there's no doubt in my mind, it says in that UOP history that his actual model for the cluster colleges was not Oxford, which is what he advertised, but rather the, uh...

Spaccarelli: The Claremont schools.

Preece: Yes, thank you. You've been here, good. But what he got in Warren Bryan Martin was someone who did believe the Oxford model and was not dealing with some of the contradictions that it took some time for Oxford to ring out. As my late friend Jinx used to say, Warren Bryan Martin thought that the school would be a temple of learning, but certainly without sex. I was 17 when I showed up there. How important do you think sex was to me at that point? Pretty high on my list. (Chuckles) He was not prepared for what that was going to mean. He prepared the structure of Raymond in all the other ways to reflect, I think, that religious fervor for embracing that style of education. Now, one of the things that I knew I will be lacing through all this interview was how extraordinarily paternalistic the institutions of UOP were at the time. And Warren was signed on to that. He persuaded every Raymond student that we were the members of an elite. And his delivery of that message was delivered with all the fervency of any Baptist preacher on the face of the planet. He could sell that vision because he genuinely believed it really very hard. Clearly, the first class really bought that. I think most of our outstanding, really wonderful academic careers very frequently came out of the first. It continued. I think my friend Peter Morales is another outstanding success story in that regard. But the degree to which they tacitly acknowledged that they thought of this as your training to go to graduate school wherever you were going to go. That assumed a couple of things that weren't too realistic. One, that people in the school would have a vocation for further academic studies. It's real clear to me that I did not. I ended up, both before and after Vietnam, in the English department at UOP. And I learned a great deal there. I have tremendous respect and affection for a whole lot of the faculty. But it became very clear to me that I was not there because I wanted to teach English or because I wanted to write about it. I was there to discover the novel and how it was put together and how I might write one. And in fact, taking a degree wasn't going to get me any closer to that. That left people, and Diane may have mentioned this too... Harrie Alley at the reunion talked about the demonstration of hanging the women's underwear between the two groups of women's dorms. And that was, no doubt about it, an early feminist objection; that was saying, we're locked in these dormitories from nine o'clock every night and paternalistically controlled. That may not be the right hours. Seniors got to go stay out a bit later. The idea that you would lock your women in a building, ludicrous. And I think actually dangerous. I may tell you about feedback later. That's a whole gag thing, but I did not think of it at the time, but a gag we pulled off posed a serious danger in the event of fire to the women in those locked dorms. And that's paternalism. The reason I recommended that you look into, I've lost his name, the guy from Willamette University that I sent you in the email.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Jack London. Is that it? No. Doug. I don't remember. Was it Doug?

Preece: It's not Doug. His nickname around the campus was Herbie and that's not it either.

Spaccarelli: Oh, I'm not remembering, but it's fine. I'll look it up.

Preece: Yeah. He was a guy who was brought in with some serious connections in the academic and artistic world. And he's the only student who was ever admitted- in the early years, at least, when we were considered a residential college- to the second year class without having been in the first one. And I believe that was an expression of the perceived hierarchy of the academy. His mother was an artist. His father had done all this architectural studies of haciendas in Mexico, practically at that point, archaeologically, with stunning photographs, apparently. And they were renowned folks. And he's now a renowned folk. But I think he does that on the strength of his own mind, not on anything else. It's just another symbol of the way the institution was bound into the sense of hierarchy. And all of them really were. I'm going to skip ahead here deliberately to something that you bring up somewhat later, which is, were there controversies during your time? Because it illustrates this terribly well. Much of the funding of Raymond came from the Raymond family.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: And we had students who were from the Raymond family. I don't know if that's paternalism or what. It may have also been idealism. Certainly, those students seem to be very, very dedicated to it. And I'm going to slip up here and forget the names because I can't remember at the moment. The older sister was quite serious. And I won't catalog all of her accomplishments. Her brother was less so. A clique emerged at Raymond sort of contrary to the academic thing. Roughly, I called it, the GTO crowd because one of them brought a grand touring Oldsmobile to college with him. And they were all car guys. And they all thought of themselves as kind of tough dudes who knew what was what and where they were going. Meanwhile, one of the wars that was going on at Raymond for some time was the alcohol was forbidden. And yet, the students were still going to get it. This time, I'm leaving off names deliberately because I know who they are.

Spaccarelli: Not alcohol. That'd be incriminating evidence.

Preece: Yes. Well, the initial spoof was pretty simple. They hung the bottles from a cord attached to the gutter on the third floor of Ritter House. And when an inspection was coming, swung it up onto the roof. Not findable in the room. But it was visible to the outside world. So they decided to get more creative. The closet spaces that we had, had a tilted floor supposedly for you to put your shoes. I don't know anybody who does that. But that's the way it was arranged. And these guys figured out how to remove that. So that the backside under the tilt became the secret stash location. All still present in my freshman year. And my first exposure to marijuana and psychedelics. Marijuana, interestingly enough, was not the front page news in 1964. But the psychedelics were. One of the students, a gentleman named Dieter Schubach, dropped acid. And in retrospect, knowing what I know now, one suspects he was always going to be leaning this way. But the result was a full blown case of schizophrenia that hospitalized him. And he left the campus. It scared me forever against LSD, psilocybin, all the rest of the stuff. There's just no way I'm going to let go of the precious molecules in here that I still have control of. I bring you that because the guys who hid the booze evolved eventually, by my senior year, into... They

certainly weren't making a living at it, but they were selling probably at their cost marijuana to their fellow students. The GTO crowd, who frankly probably never got what Mike Wagner was slinging, decided that something had to be done. Morality was not being taken care of. So they went to the chief administrator of this room and they bought a bag from him, probably a ki, which was probably pretty cheap in those days. And then they went to Ed Peckham's office. They dropped it on his desk and said, what are you going to do about this? Peckham violated the paternalistic clause of the college, that we have these precious middle-class students that we're going to sucker and take care of and graduate in the middle class. He picked up the phone and he called the Stockton College and graduated in the middle class. He picked up the phone and he called the Stockton cops. And that guy did jail time at Vacaville.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. I have heard this story.

Preece: I'm not surprised.

Spaccarelli: I think Finnegan talked about it.

Preece: It would be hard not to talk about it. It was so disruptive to what would have been otherwise a very pleasant community of people generally on the same paths. Those paths weren't always straight. There's another later set of guys that I've- seem to have disappeared from the planet. I spent a lot of time searching for them, but I believe it was their plan to do a big drug deal with the mafia and get rich. And I think they lost the deal. I think they died.

Spaccarelli: Uh-oh.

Preece: So, the interesting piece of that controversy was the way that the UOP's administration, including Warren Bryan Martin, reacted to what Peckham had done. They got him out of there as quickly as they could. I should point out some other stuff about Peckham, and I'm sure you will hear this from other people as well. Remember the naive kind of kid that I was when I walked into this place. And remember it was the environment in which we were encouraged to be intimate with the faculty and staff, and have lunch with them, et cetera, et cetera. Ed developed a network of spies against other students by chatting people like me up and saying, well, what do you hear? Isn't Greg Finnegan having a lot of trouble with X right now? And you'd think you were just having friendly gossip. And you'd say what you could to support your fellow students and to reassure the dean that this was not a big issue. No question, he used that absolutely to screw folks.

Spaccarelli: Wow. I didn't know this. Interesting. I knew he wasn't popular, but continue, continue.

Preece: I mentioned Karl Van Meter earlier. Karl was an outstanding Raymond student, had all the academic career credentials. I think his next graduate class- place was the Sorbonne in Paris.

Spaccarelli: Oh, wow.

Preece: And he asked Peckham to write a letter of recommendation for him. Now, pretty obviously from my original narrative, Karl was one of these people who was very exuberant, was hard to restrain, and from the dean of student life, perhaps not one of his favorite people. Karl was shocked when some of the people he had applied to didn't even want to talk to him, and he looked into it and discovered that literally in the letter that he had agreed to write, Peckham had done a negative-positive review that basically submarined Karl's academic career. And as I said, you could look up Karl's accomplishments too.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: He knew who he didn't like. And this is the other controversy, which I was personally pretty involved in. We evolved a student court. The idea, of course, from their point of view was that the students should be engaged in disciplinary actions so that they would buy into the whole Raymond thing.

Spaccarelli: Right, right.

Preece: John Cupples, another luminary of the first class. By the time I was a senior, was a, we called him the chief justice of the Raymond court. I was told that I was called to jury duty in the case of one Jim Stockford, who I was very disappointed not to see at the reunion of the first three classes, although I thoroughly understand the reasons why. Jim was a senior, first class.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: He was also someone equally exuberant. I suspect not as academically shiny as Karl was. But very publicly, he violated the in loco parentis idea of the locked women's dorms one day. I don't remember the impetus, but it happened in broad daylight. And he didn't go into the women's dorms, but he launched himself from the quad to the balcony railing of Farley house, climbed on top of the railing, scaled to the roof of the thing in order to kiss the girl in the window who was in the locked dorm. I don't know that that was the big offense. I'm not actually remembering anymore. That may have been the big offense. But Peckham insisted that he be referred to the chief justice for academic discipline. This is a guy as a senior. He's done his three years. I don't remember if comprehensive examinations, which we all took in those days, had been administered yet or not. But we were given to understand that we were deciding his fate. We understood that what he had done was a violation of the rules as they were published. And therefore, by the likes of the administration, something had to be done. What we proposed was simply that apart from classes and his comprehensives, he be confined to his dorm room for the duration of his academic experience, which was literally only a matter of weeks. That wasn't satisfactory to the institutions of UOP. And they threw him out of school. He later completed a degree at University of California. I remember the first time I noticed his name in the Whole Earth Catalog. Jim authored articles in the Whole Earth Catalog about the powers of these new fangled things called personal computers. You may have heard of- maybe I'm going to have trouble remembering this.

One of the early bulletin boards, which became a wonderful monster, amongst other things, they invented fantasy football. He was based in Marin. I don't know that Jim had anything to do with coding the platform or even if they used an unusual platform. But he built the servers that created and tended them.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: And he's, he's been involved in a number of things. As someone that I still think of as an accomplished Raymond student. And yet that institution at that time-

Spaccarelli: Failed him.

Preece: Couldn't, couldn't, couldn't deal with... And there was so much of life at Raymond that was exactly like that. I said earlier that, that, that my mind literally does not learn facts and dates and formulas. What I did learn to do and I'm still proud of doing and Raymond had everything to do with perfecting this is I can write my ass off. And have for most of my life. The Raymond education was really very, the greatest weight was not on exams. Though exams did get administered. The greatest weight were on term papers. What you could put together and what you could describe. And of course you had the whole experience of, the seminar experience to help guide you through that. What happened was Martin, after he left UOP, went on to a think tank at Cal, which also recruited a couple of Raymond students, and ultimately Jerry Gaff. And they were, they- Martin's objective finally was to write some recommendations for the state college system about how they might structure things. It's less clear to me how much they did that. You- one might say that- you'd be wrong to say so- it might look like UCSC was a part of that that exploration, but in fact, UCSC was started before Martin left Raymond. Based on many of the same principles. In any case, as a part of that study, he got consent to test Raymond seniors. He got the graduate record exam people to devise an examination to comprehensively evaluate, were we learning anything? I should say literally, I don't know what my scores were. What I know were all the relatively astonished faculty who complimented me on my accomplishments. And I have a kind of illustration, it's the one question where I'm sure that I got when very other few other people were. And it's because the way my mind works, it remembers principles, it does not remember facts. And it was literally said, we're going to design an atom. And they described the atom, and they described the electron shells, and they described the distance of the electron shells. And then they said, what frequency will- what electromagnetic frequency will this atom radiate if it is excited? And the answer is literally the distance between the radius of the electron shell that's been excited. And I reported that. Neil Lark was very pleased. And I doubt, since it was deep in science, and pretty specific weird numbers that you're getting down into quantum mechanics here. The people who process the other way were not necessarily going to get it... The other controversy, always. Well, two things. Go ahead.

Spaccarelli: Sorry. If we- can we save those controversies for when we get there?

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: Perfect. Because I think we started this with a question on Mike Wagner, and we have successfully gone every other place.

Preece: I talked about Mike too, though, I think.

Spaccarelli: No, you did, you did, you did.

Preece: Okay.

Spaccarelli: That was, it was definitely helpful. It's just, again, it's just trying to understand his philosophy and how it was so transformative, and I think you got that.

Preece: So, it might be said also about Mike, and this isn't something always- people always say about him. Just like Warren Brian Martin was, he was a preacher of his agnosticism, and he was a preacher in the classroom. He believed in the thorough argumentation. He was confrontational. He, he... He's one of those minds and I think there are a lot of Raymond ones like this, that hear a stipulation, and immediately think of all the alternatives, and he'd throw them right back at you. If you, if you held something up to be quote true.

Spaccarelli: Got it.

Preece: Where were we? I'm staring at my outline now.

Spaccarelli: Okay, yeah yeah yeah so- what do I want to follow up with? Oh, yeah, Warren Bryan Martin, I didn't realize that he wasn't like, I thought he was actively preaching Methodist religious stuff. As he was teaching, as he was preaching his stuff about education and humanism, like I thought it was, it was integrated but no, it was just humanism.

Preece: He certainly, there was a religious fervor in it. You can hear in some very old people like me today. Steve Meyer comes immediately to mind. Steve is still drunk the Kool Aid, he still thinks that that Warren Bryan Martin's sermon, sermons about the Raymond experiment and where we were going were the best part of Raymond college. And certainly were one of the real high points because he really, he could, he really knew how to pitch it. But there was some attitude of balance. He'd lost his faith. He knew that Mike was not, certainly not a heavy duty Christian.

Spaccarelli: Probably obvious after five minutes of talking to that, to the guy if you wanted to figure that one out. From what I understand.

Preece: There were, there were efforts made to try and counterbalance this. John, John Williams who, who came to Raymond in my senior year. John says he was recruited to restore some of the religious balance in the school. He'd gone to a theological seminary. He had, he ended up teaching English, I don't

remember the full extent of his academic background, he was a vivid fervent Faulkner scholar, even in the last year he's been holding a seminar with old Raymond students on, on Faulkner.

Spaccarelli: I heard about that. I think it was Nancy Chappell, Nancy Chappell Roberts who was telling me about that but sorry, continue.

Preece: Yeah, yes, she would. John says he was brought there because they expected him to be on the right side of God. And very quickly he was learning not to be. He's a self-proclaimed atheist today.

Spaccarelli: Well, maybe Gene Rice. Maybe Gene Rice, I think he maintained his faith, right?

Preece: I'm sorry?

Spaccarelli: Gene Rice, I think maybe he was the counterbalance.

Preece: It wouldn't surprise me at all that he was, although he and, and Martin were lifelong friends, which is why I expected I might be able to get some of Martin's biography out of him. And the religious component did have, I think, another really strong effect. I've talked about the- Mike's fervor. The other part that, that's kind of invisible and I suspect may have penetrated a lot of UOP generally. Our faculty were kind people. They were nice to you. You were, you were not their product. You were someone that they were engaged with. And when we get to the core curriculum, I will have a lot more to say about that.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. But that's so valuable.

Preece: Oh, I had an experience at UOP graduate school that illustrated the, the opposite end. A Dr. Osborne was the official Milton scholar in English department. And Milton was a course that you're required to take. Remember the Raymond background, synthesize various things, stick to original texts. I wrote what I still consider to be a brilliant paper for Dr. Osborne. The problem was he couldn't, wasn't equipped to understand it. The title of the paper was Satan's fall in Milton's paradise lost and the second law of thermodynamics.

Spaccarelli: (Laughing) Oh, this is a good, this is a great title. I want to read this paper.

Preece: It's pretty simple. Satan is illustrating entropy the entire fall, great gouts of energy are being flung off as he departs from the total order of God and descends into the chaos of hell. (Chuckles)

Spaccarelli: Oh, goodness. Oh, you know, you know how God and the supernatural really makes sense with entropy, they fit together well.

Preece: They're designed to contradict it.

Spaccarelli: (Chuckles) Sorry, continue.

Preece: You asked memorable events, one that I could-

Spaccarelli: Let me ask, if you don't mind if I can say my question so that we can put that in the record.

Preece: Oh, sure.

Spaccarelli: Yes. So, first impressions. I think that's everything. That's fantastic. Oh, no, I wanted to ask one other thing. Do you remember anything about first impressions of your freshman camp?

Preece: Vividly.

Spaccarelli: Okay, okay, tell me what you remember.

Preece: This involves Peter Morales, whom I hope you get to talk to.

Spaccarelli: I have, he's brilliant.

Preece: Yes. Did Peter give you his high school background at all?

Spaccarelli: I'm trying to- I think he was from Texas. He was, he was pretty sheltered is what I remember him saying, and he hadn't really been outside the state and when he went to, I think he then told me about going to California on a bus. And then being surprised- oh he told me about mountains, and how he was not prepared for mountains being cold.

Preece: And I was a...

Spaccarelli: This is what I remember.

Preece: Experienced backpacker, and I remember him shivering himself to death under the army blanket that he thought would deal with the temperatures at Tahoe. It did not. There was also the strange hookups that happened. I don't know that she'd thank me, but there's a- one of my fellow students was then named Polly Marwedel. And she did come to the reunion. And Polly hooked up with a guy named Roger Olson and stayed hooked with him until after she graduated. Polly was kind of renowned amongst the girls because she was a live, actual, honest to God debutante. And she's become a city planner.

Spaccarelli: There you go.

Preece: The, the, the seeing that stuff. There's even more. Bryan Shaner taught me a trick that I used in Vietnam. How do you persuade yourself to sleep when you can't sleep? And his answer was for him, and this, he said this had to do with blood circulation, I think it may have had more to do with suggestion,

but it worked for him at Tahoe, and it worked for me was to roll the towel up, put it behind your neck and let your head fall back around the towel. I was impressed with a lot of my fellow students, and excited. I was having the kinds of conversations with them that I could not have in high school, where football and what you did on daddy's farm yesterday and fishing etc. All big topics in my house too. But for a whole lot of those people, they were the only topics. And I had the good fortune to be hanging out with a group of self-identified high school intellectuals. One of whom became recruited by my father and me. A later Raymond student. That would be Mark Wardrobe, died of AIDS several years ago. And it may be that some of my high school isolation was a product, I never made any connection to this at all when I was in high school, to the fact that Mark was, to many members of my high school, identifiably gay or at least weird. He was in fact gay. But there was no question in Siskiyou County in those years, you had to be in the closet. There were no closets around anybody at my freshman camp. This is a hi, how you doing, who are you, what do you care about, all that stuff. I felt like I died and got to heaven.

Spaccarelli: Goodness. Okay. That's great, because that's the kind of, yeah, I'm so- so you found a sense of community there immediately?

Preece: Instantly, instantly. Yes.

Spaccarelli: Perfect, perfect. Okay, perfect. Now moving on to the memorable events. Here we go. Finally getting there.

Preece: Some of those memorables are the controversies but I'll give you one high table that's-

Spaccarelli: One second, one second though before we get into this... Okay, so where were we? Memorable events, yeah. Were there any memorable events that stood out to you during your time at Raymond? And high tables are a good example but any other events are okay too.

Preece: Well, by the time I was leaving, of course the Vietnam War was pretty big. It's interesting to me. My friend Billy Bargeman, for many years my roommate at Raymond and Pete Windrem posted a petition protesting the Vietnam War at Raymond. I don't remember where they, Bill said they put it. But what's interesting is that at the point that they did that, which I would guess was probably 1965, probably.

Spaccarelli: Must have been, because that's when he graduated, Peter Windrem.

Preece: Yeah, of course. Peter had been involved in all kinds of social stuff, he'd gone to Mississippi with some other Raymond people and all that stuff. Nobody else at the school touched the petition at all in 1965, which I think is an example of how invisible the issue was at that point for most of us. I did not know that I was obligated to register for the draft until somebody told me. I turned 18 in January of 1965. So, I dutifully went down to the draft board and did what I needed to. I don't remember the specifics of how I did it but the idea that you could be criminally sought after for not doing that would never have occurred to any of us. And I know how often it's ignored today, because in, my long

employment with VA. It became the policy of our personnel department, not to hire anyone who had not registered for the draft. And many people who thought they were going to get it in during the academic accomplishment stuff did not become VA employees, because they hadn't done it. At that point in time, it was still primary sin. And then of course it became a whole terror. I need to ask you this, it will happen in some other ways too. If you want me to confine myself to 1967 and before, I can. But much of the experience I think of as Raymond happened to me after that, most notably in 1968.

Spaccarelli: Can we get there later in the interview, or?

Preece: Yes we can.

Spaccarelli: Okay, because I think that that works into the way- how it impacted you going forward, after Raymond question.

Preece: Yeah. I'm particularly fond of my memory of a high table that was presented, probably because of connections to Sy Kahn by the then San Francisco novelist, Herbert Gold. And remember this was, this was already the would-be writer here. He built his talk around what he asserted was the troubadour's promise at the offices of kings and queens in medieval Europe, which goes like this. My lords and ladies. Let me tell you a fine tale of love and death. Now, I think, Mr Gold's fans might have been a little bit surprised that he would use that definition as that, as the origin of storytelling. I have become someone who believes more in the popular forms than in the literary ones. Dickens did not start writing for the entertainment of academics, Dickens started writing to make a buck, selling it to newspapers. It made very deep impressions on me. I'm not sure I want to say more than that. But memorable events are inextricably bound up with some of the controversies already talked about, the drug bust certainly being a big one.

Spaccarelli: Yes.

Preece: And the trial of Jim.

Spaccarelli: Yes. No, I definitely, yes. Greg went in depth on the drug bust, and certainly I think the individual involved in, the drug busted-individual. Also, I think, mentioned it a little bit. So...

Preece: Well, he's not likely to talk to you about it, Lorenzo. Yeah, he dismisses it out of hand because in a way, a very real way, I'm sure it was a big barrier to his vocation, which I will not name without revealing him.

Spaccarelli: Right, no, no, no, no. Maybe we'll talk about it after the recording. Let's go with that. Anyways, this. Okay, so yeah, let's move on to controversies. Are there any other controversies that you remember during your time at Raymond, and these could be you know...

Preece: Well, the, the, very clearly, the, the hours for women became one. And I can no longer separate out whether that happened by the time I graduated or happened in the next years. That I went back immediately to graduate school at UOP makes it a pretty blurry separation. But Kolker instituted open dorms. And it changed everything about that part of the Raymond social experience. I do not think at all to its detriment, probably to its big improvement. The idea that that ladies were also supposed to be sacred flowers preserved for marriage by this artificial barrier was preposterous in the face of even 50s morality.

Spaccarelli: Right, seriously. But Kolker opened those dorms after sustained pressure, right, like it was, students were like, had been advocating for this for a long time right?

Preece: Oh, no- no question.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: It wouldn't surprise me that if you talked to Harrie Alley about this, she'll have very, very specific things to say.

Spaccarelli: I'm looking forward to talking to her. I'm looking forward to talking to her.

Preece: Her name comes up a lot.

Spaccarelli: Yes, yes.

Preece: I will confess to having had a pretty heavy duty crush on Harrie as a freshman.

Spaccarelli: Actually, speaking of, after we're done with the interview proper if you have her phone number, by chance that might be helpful. Just wondering.

Preece: I'll bet you I could find it.

Spaccarelli: Okay, anyways, continue. We were talking about controversies and the women's dorms and Harrie.

Preece: Yeah. Harrie got busted for being out after hours. I don't know the full story or all of it. But she basically turned herself in, pretty deliberately. And there was all the, the conspiratorial, you know, I'll let you in at x hour if you show up and that- all that stuff went on like crazy. A story that's particular to me and Diane, that illustrates the kind of stupidity. Diane and I broke up after our freshman year. For my part, that seemed at the time a very good thing. And she would say this herself in many, many ways. The model for womanhood in her life was marriage and babies. And her mother had had four of them, and was very proud of having done that. And, interestingly enough, has continued to chide Diane for her vocational choices against her housework even though she was not fortunate enough to have babies.

The model is pretty strong. And I knew one of the reasons that breaking up was okay with me was I was in no way prepared to be married. I was, I was sitting on, still discovering a vocation, something to do. By this time I knew the draft was coming. And it was beginning to heat up and was coming for people. '66 is the first big bite of the draftee population that happened. So, that said, and she may have covered this with you already. But during the breaks of her freshman year, she met her first husband, John. And he asked her to marry him. She said yes. I'm not going to give you the intimate details of her logic and reasoning and emotional feelings for all that. But when the time came for her to leave the protection of the quad and go get on an airplane- the cheapest airplane her father could buy, I believe it was Icelandic Airlines- to go, she became, on her last night at Raymond, somewhat hysterical. And I'm sitting here forgetting the name of the, of the, the resident, the dorm resident, who I was deeply affectionate for. Paula is her first name. It's about midnight or thereabouts. And the community phone in Ritter house on the second floor where I live went bong. And somebody came and pounded on my door and said Preece. Paula wants to talk to you. And I got on the phone and said yeah? And she said, Preece, get over here and hold your hysteric girlfriend's hand and walk her around Knoles Field or something. It's midnight. It's after hours. This is the dorm where she's supposed to be enforcing all those rules. And Diane and I walked around for an hour while I told her, everything will be fine. You love him. You're going to get there. You have chosen him, he has chosen you. Fear not. And Dr. Blum has figured out how to get to your Raymond diploma anyway. Yay. Everything's set, go for it. And she calmed down. The story is not so much about me as it is about Paula and Paula's sensibility in that in loco parentis framework that had been imposed on us.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Yeah, no, but that makes sense. It's, you know, it just wasn't healthy.

Preece: No, it wasn't. The other kind of piece of that story from a UOP perspective...

Spaccarelli: Wait, wait, wait, what do you mean, say that again. I was saying that in loco parentis is very, very, very unhealthy.

Preece: Yeah, well, the, but it accentuated the other piece of campus life. I doubt seriously that the fraternities and sororities who might now be on campus, have the fervor or excitement in anticipation that they did in those years at UOP. Getting into, I'm going to forget the names but I think it was Tri Delta, which is a sorority, or I think it was Alpha Sig which one of the big name ones. There were all the tortures of the-

Spaccarelli: Hazing.

Preece: ...of the initiative stuff. There were also the banks of former papers, test scores, etc so you could review what your professor had asked on his final exam in this topic, years before. There was the whole idea that you were there to have a good time more, perhaps more than they were there to do other things. We sometimes referred to it, to UOP, generally or that- basically College of Pacific, as a finishing school for the middle class women of the Central Valley. That also became very much in later years after this particular period of time, something that blew up across the whole campus. I may bring up another

event that kind of illustrates this. I mentioned FEPEC before. FEPEC stands for Farley entrance Price entrance committee. It was founded by me and Jim Ratcliffe on a, on a lark that we should be able to do some pranks on the girls and have our own fun. I think I came up with the idea of the masks. We use iron-on tape to close bags of [Dacron?] and cut eyeholes, so that we would be disguised when we did this. Jim, at the time, was quite a character. And he had learned how to use the slip knife method to break into the utility basements of the quads. In the utility basins, probably in preparation for some future thing, were a bundle of probably 100 pairs of wires, color-coded. And Jim had discovered over time, and having broken into every one of the basements, that pairs actually created connections between the dorms. And for a while, I don't know if he sold or simply gave it to two young women that he intended to impress. He had a nice stereo system, and using the wires coming from his own room, he cross-connected those two leads, and then he cross-connected those leads to the ladies that he was trying to impress, and they got to listen to Jim DJ's rock-and-roll on their intercom speakers, which are now disconnected, of course, from the intercom. He lived in a single room that he totally architecturally modified. Jim was probably in full out rebellion from, from strictures of his own. His dad was one of the first periodontists. And he had an extensive practice, was very well off, Marin County, upper crust at the time. And, like any other of the people who came out through the depression, he thought Jim wasn't doing enough to amount to for himself. So, he insisted that Jim should take a job, and he found a job for Jim cutting trees, somewhere in the Midwest. And it weren't Christmas trees, it was land clearing of some kind. And of course, backbreaking work which I'm sure his father didn't mind at all. [He] decided he'd rather quit that and sell Collier's encyclopedias door to door instead. And all kinds of lovely war stories about that experience it was bound to determine at that point in time, not to be molded into something. He's also probably one of the best salesman to come out of UOP, was later involved with both Eugene Rice and Jerry Gaff in subsequent studies, is one of their co-published names in some of the things they did together. Jerry intimated to me that he had felt somewhat alienated from Jim, but oddly enough, these interviews reinvigorated the relationship, because Jim had given money to the project and got very excited when he discovered his old buddy Tom was doing an interview with one of his mentors. That's getting away from FEPEC. So, what we set out to do was to penetrate the girls' dorms at night. I can't remember the exact entrance method, it may have involved somebody shimmying up and through an open window or something. Spring and fall can be quite brutal for heat if you didn't have air conditioning, in those days we did not.

Spaccarelli: Unfortunate.

Preece: And we then proceeded, with paired loops of wires, to tie the door knobs of each dorm room to the door opposite it so that it could not be open. That's what I meant earlier when I said fire danger.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: Stupid prank. We pulled it off. Well, surprise, surprise. The women came back to that. Shortly thereafter, most of us discovered that when we opened our doors, our hands turned black because they had painted them with some photosensitive material. And it blackened our hands. Oh, and there was

sugar all over the bathroom floors, and the plug at the bottom of the u-joint of all the sinks had been stolen.

Spaccarelli: Fantastic.

Preece: This was largely, I understand, an arrangement made by a young woman named Cheri Quincy, who, who had a good sense of humor and enjoyed the hijinks quite as much as we did.

Spaccarelli: Clearly.

Preece: I believe this was coming on to my senior year. There were a number of other Raymond luminaries involved, Bryan Shaner, I've lost his, his roommate's name, went on to be a doctor. It may come back to me eventually but they were all involved in feedback, they were full participants etc. Bryan was famous for having created a blowgun that could blow darts all the way from Ritter house to the Raymond steps. Paper darts of course.

Spaccarelli: Nice.

Preece: Someone of us had already built a water balloon slingshot with surgical tubing that launched water balloons and hit the steps. We found the u-joints, Corey and Lewandowski and I were sitting staring at the Raymond fountain when Corey realized that the bag of u-joints were in the middle of the dish. (Chuckles) Covered by the water. So all, always made right with the world. And this is an illustration of the differences and similarities, I suppose. One of the fraternities decided, perhaps in concert with one of the big boy's dorms, to conduct a school-wide "panty raid". So they were coming, tromping throughout campus, demanding that girls fling them their underthings. I don't- never understood what equation was supposed to be. It couldn't have been that the young ladies were surrendering anything other than their underthings but nevermind. They had proceeded through the College of Pacific. Then they went through Callison. I don't believe they ever got to Covell. They came to Raymond. And Cheri and I had the place prepared. Mary Cupples, younger sister of John, was on the roof of Farley house with sufficient 155 ammunition in the form of water balloons to absolutely destroy anything that was downstairs. The, the surgical water balloon blaster was employed. Women and men in both dorms are all sitting, preparing for the assault. And Dale James who I'm still in touch with, who was the senior resident at Ritter house, caught the guys turning the corner. They were trying to go through the space between the kitchens at the Great Hall and, and, and Callison and all that and the end, at the end of Ritter house. And he said, fellas, have a look at this. And he pointed out all the quote armaments unquote that we had arranged.

Spaccarelli: (Chuckles)

Preece: And said, you guys really want to go through that? They never got to Covell, they turned around and left.

Spaccarelli: (Laughs) Goodness.

Preece: Yes, that's a memorable event.

Spaccarelli: That would be, that would be, that would be, goodness. What else, anything else? Any other controversies?

Preece: Like I said, I think they're best preserved for a subsequent, if we go into '68 and on. They certainly weren't a big part of my undergraduate years.

Spaccarelli: Got it, got it. And then I forgot, I wanted to ask a quick follow up. Somebody mentioned fire hoses for one of those panty raids. Do you remember those?

Preece: Yes, it may be that the fire hoses were pulled out and set to deploy to prevent- that may have been part of the armament.

Spaccarelli: Nice, nice. That's fantastic.

Preece: We were ready.

Spaccarelli: Clearly. Brains against brawn.

Preece: This emphasizes the real sense of division between the clusters and the rest of the college. You've probably, I'm sure you're going to hear stories of this over and over and over again. But Jinx famously made band [frolic] day by appearing on, on stage as Gypsy Rose Lee.

Spaccarelli: No, it was, it was between that story and the goldfish story at the reunion.

Preece: That- Band things became one of the things we did.

Spaccarelli: Band Frolic.

Preece: My own part in that was- I was the yo-yo expert at Raymond College. And they put me on stage at band day to be, to do a six foot around the world successfully. I bring you that because even the, the panty raid story is, it emphasizes our sense of separateness, and our sense of ourselves as a separate community. And interestingly enough, one of the crossovers was also about the separateness. I don't know how many times Pete Windrem was president of the UOP student body.

Spaccarelli: I think only one year.

Preece: But you've heard the story of why that happened. We voted him back. We all voted for Pete. The rest of the university was divided up amongst various other candidates. They couldn't overcome us voting for Pete.

Spaccarelli: There you go, that would do it.

Preece: Yeah, that maybe that gets... What else?

Spaccarelli: I think that is a good portion of that. I think we're good there. So yeah. So next is your thoughts on the educational style of the Raymond teaching philosophy, besides what we already discussed.

Preece: Well, it's difficult to make sure that we know what that philosophy was and is.

Spaccarelli: What- didn't Dr. Martin talk about it constantly?

Preece: Well, he talked about his vision of it. I don't think he talked about the realization of it. And this is bound up in what became the controversy of the core curriculum.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: Dave Wellenbrock will defend the core curriculum to the death. He's real clear- in fact, so clear that we were better than the subsequent arrangements that he alienated very loudly in the earliest version of the Raymond Phoenix online listserv, almost all the younger generation of Raymond students. They didn't want to hear from him that we were all better than they were. And they should not...

Spaccarelli: I wonder why.

Preece: It was, it was bullshit. I recommended that you interview Paula Shiel, and she's a perfect illustration of why. Diane and I went to luncheon in Stockton with Wendi Maxwell and Gene Bigler and Paula was there and a couple of other people. And Diane didn't know Paula at Raymond at all. I only knew Paula at Raymond because I'd hung around so long in the various ways that I did. Paula is an extraordinarily accomplished person. She teaches at Delta right now. She's founded The Write Place in downtown Stockton, which is a center for encouraging self expression of writers of all stripes in San Joaquin County. She's a force of nature as far as I'm concerned, and has always been. She was also a product of the post-core curriculum, as was my friend Doug Loudon. So Diane who did not know Paul at all, at this luncheon says, well, so what did you get out of Raymond, Paula? Paula said, this is as close to quoting as I can get, 'I learned that I can do any damn thing I wanted to if I worked at it hard enough and applied myself.'

Spaccarelli: There you go.

Preece: Yes. And that was always the lesson that all versions of the curriculum taught us.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: If you, if you do get to Doug, and you get him to tell you the history of his career in an ecology reporting firm. Doug was not an ecologist, but he became their administration and taught himself, knowing he could, accounting, computer networking, a whole host of skills alien to him. As he put it, they hired me because I was a smart guy and I had my stuff together. And that's, that's the Raymond product.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: My thesis, Dave will defend the core curriculum to its death, because it was so well suited to his particular style of learning. And I'll probably say some things now that he may or may not confirm when you talk to him.

Spaccarelli: I've already talked to him.

Preece: Okay, did he talk about his habit of taking notes on everything he reads?

Spaccarelli: Yes.

Preece: Did he tell you how soon it started?

Spaccarelli: Not that I remember.

Preece: He was doing that in high school.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: His parents had identified him as their leading intellectualite. They were very successful in the local community, he could have made himself a success in the local community and they said nope, you're going to school. And as you probably heard, he ended up in law school because it was his, his dad's bribe for perhaps giving him a loan to start a bar.

Spaccarelli: That's right, that's right and then that didn't end up happening, supposedly. His bar, his bar realization.

Preece: Well, his partner was still in Asia. I often wonder what's really happened to Rusty but nevermind. The, the, that particular style of learning in taking dubious notes, even today. I've met with Dave a couple of times. He, he, he vividly reconnected with me after reading my novel. Said first rate job, made a point of showing me when I was his house that he put it with his special collectible books,

all this stuff. And he was exactly the kind of scholar that the core curriculum was designed to enhance. I was not. As I've already illustrated, I didn't get the grand- grand grades. But I learned the stuff I needed to learn. And the essence of that was the relationship to the faculty.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: I consider Cliff Hand a dear friend, not just my professor. I always get a kick out of the fact that when John Williams talks about his Raymond students, one of the first things he says is, well I came to Raymond the year Tom Preece was a senior. It reflects our mutual stature in the pantheon of Raymond students. In that environment, particularly with the seminar driven stuff and my verbal facility. I don't know if Greg talked about this or not, but he's talked about it with me several times. And I'll bet you can, you can get a lot of just comparing Greg's interview with mine. Greg has always had the encyclopedic mind.

Spaccarelli: That was clear.

Preece: Can collect facts, can reproduce them at will. He is the kind of person who could do very well at Raymond. I hope he told you how it is that he happened to survive Raymond.

Spaccarelli: I think he talked a lot about how he struggled with something like it's- he's clearly the most- you know, a brilliant individual but he struggled with some language stuff, he struggled with calculus, I think he said he struggled with several things. So, but I- what was the specific thing you were referring to?

Preece: Well there, there came a time when, when he had, I think it was actually three unsatisfactories.

Spaccarelli: He said he set the record for most unsatisfactories to successfully graduate.

Preece: Yes, yes. And the faculty came up with a proposal that clearly Greg was not, you know, he wasn't doing the interdisciplinary thing, he wasn't absorbing all the various facets of things. So, he should not continue as a Raymond student. I strongly suspect that Mike had a lot to do with the language of the letter they sent him. And this is legend. I'm not sure you can get Greg to confirm it anymore or not, but it was legend at the time. The letter said, since you have failed to meet several, several elements of the current core curriculum successfully, we feel obligated to ask you to leave Raymond College. Greg wrote a reply that basically said, I'm honored that you considered this carefully. I appreciate the feelings that have prompted your concern. But I refuse to comply with your request, I will finish my degree.

Spaccarelli: (Chuckles) No, I remember, I don't think he told me this but somebody told me this and I thought it was amazing. And I see him doing that too. You know, I...

Preece: Yes. And it's, it's the whole gist of the, you will talk to me in Raymond terms, I'll talk back to you in Raymond terms, this is the logic of the situation you've given me. That is a request, not a demand. I will not treat it as a demand.

Spaccarelli: No thanks, I'll pass. (Laughs)

Preece: The thing that, that, that succeeded the core curriculum, basically, and this is not uncommon in other universities now. You pick an advisor, the advisor helps you shape a curriculum to get where you want to go. Now some of the get where you want to go at Raymond might have been preposterous in their face. I hated when any of my military or or engineering friends poo poo basket weaving as an objective. I suspect you could take, make quite a good degree program out of basket weaving if you should choose to do it. I don't have the time to learn all the esoteria of how the Indians do this, the anthropol- nevermind, I get carried away.

Spaccarelli: You could be Greg Finnegan. (Mutual laughs) Sorry, continue.

Preece: Yeah. The reason the Raymond education experience remained consistent, after the core curriculum went away. It was all about faculty dedication.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And the ethos that they had evolved amongst themselves about how and what they were going to do this and how they were going to do it. I won't tell you a confession, and he's not likely to tell you. But one of the Raymond faculty, when Cliff Hand had moved on to be Dean at the university, knew that in the reorganization that eliminated Raymond, one of his peers was going to lose their job. And I don't know this but I think it was Burke, who taught French, and the people who had him always considered him a wonderful dramatic educational experience.

Spaccarelli: No, I remember, I remember stories of him taking students to his house and drinking wine and talking.

Preece: I did not take French so I did not- my language mentor was Frau Sayles. I may have received the only satisfactory minus minus minus in Raymond history from her.

Spaccarelli: Okay, okay, okay.

Preece: But the, the... Because of the dedication. Those advisors took it seriously. And they genuinely helped steer the students where they were going. Now I already told you about Doug's accomplishments. His advisor was the philosophy professor, Bob Orpinela, who he saw on his first Raymond interview and said, I don't understand a word he said but I guess I'm going to learn how. And Bob- with Bob's advice, Doug's degree ended up being one that was agile and adaptable in the real

world, just as mine was. And I don't doubt for a second that if Dave Wellenbrock had dropped into the reorganized non-core curriculum, he would have invented his own.

Spaccarelli: Right. Would have been just as successful.

Preece: Exactly.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, no I believe that. It was what you put into it and what you constructed.

Preece: And the open invitation, and even the later classes believe this. I can get kind of carried away on this because I see the conflict between all the various elites that I can see myself as growing to. Believe me, as a graduate of Raymond College I still consider myself to be a unique citizen, and a member of an elite core people who did brilliant and effective things in the world. I will include myself in that remark. Not everybody gets the sense of responsibility from your own life. I haven't mentioned this and it bears telling. I did have one unsatisfactory at Raymond, and it was one of the best educational lessons I had had in my entire life. Biology, John Tucker. We were all supposed to go to the campus bookstore and buy a fetal pig for dissection. Well, the word didn't get to me until we were out of fetal pigs. My other partner in crime here was Jim Ratcliffe, same thing. So, we propose to learn the biology from the text and from observing the dissections of others. Tucker did use tests, effectively. One of the texts, the basis of my Milton paper, was the second law of thermodynamics time zero and evolution, given to me by John Tucker. Nonetheless, Jim and I were both flunking the test. So he proposed that he give us another comprehensive examination on the subject matter. Of course we crammed for it. My term letter read something like you did an astounding job of improvement, but it was too little, too late. The lesson I took from that, Lorenzo, was, I had a responsibility for my own education.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: It's the whole Raymond thing of, you know, you're here to get what you're supposed to get. And by golly, I should have been able to find a fetal pig somewhere in the Bay Area, if I had flagged up the transportation, the ways to get there, done some phone work. No question. Jim and I can both have fetal pigs. And we did a much better job of learning that. And I have personally thanked John for that lesson, several times now.

Spaccarelli: Nice. Goodness.

Preece: The educational style, I think we've covered that. I like to emphasize the seminar stuff though.

Spaccarelli: Oh, of course, seminars. Yes.

Preece: I assume that you read my however-well-intentioned and not necessarily good interview with Jerry Gaff.

Spaccarelli: Yes.

Preece: I deliberately took him to that stuff about teaching non Western Civ, because I knew what I would get. I was surprised to learn that he and Wise had both gone through the same institution, where you were not just getting the doctorate in your course of study but you were getting the doctorate in how to teach at the university level.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And there's no question that that promoted- was the perfect environment for me to learn. Greg has talked about one of the last classes I had. I think it was called problematic rebel. John Williams taught it, Moby Dick was a part of the curriculum and there was some Faulkner and I don't remember what all. Greg said he had trouble with languages, well he was studious enough, we can- you can see his intellectual style, you know he's going to be. And John on his living room floor would start talking about the text and ask us questions, field us questions. And John had already learned the trick that eventually all of my English professors would learn, which is, ask Tom the last question, not the first one. And Greg, he said, he'd think he had a perfectly comprehensive feel of the sentence and John would turn the question to me and I said, Well, this sentence suggests that the intent of this paragraph is to so and so. And Greg would say to himself, why couldn't I see that?

Spaccarelli: Yeah, no, no, no. Greg specifically mentioned that at the interview, he was like, I thought I understood it, and then Tom would start talking, and I would realize there's six more layers of the onion that I haven't yet got to. That's what he said, I'm pretty sure.

Preece: That's the language he's used with me. I will not even hesitate with this. I have great respect for who Greg has become. He has every reason to be rightly prideful of his whole career. Now tempted to jump ahead here. I didn't get drafted until 1969. By that time the campus was thoroughly, thoroughly anti-war.

Spaccarelli: Right, right. Both in Raymond, and outside of Raymond?

Preece: Oh, absolutely. The universities were going through the roof. A big part of the topic of the novel I'm writing now. Needless to say, when I came back from Raymond, full of some trepidation about how I would be received. I knew that my particular friends all- all saw me as a victim of the draft. But I treated the experience the way a Raymond student would. I basically said, Okay, I'm stuck here. Let's see how much I can learn and get out of this. I'm a kind of rare bird. One, I didn't serve all of two years, I served only a little bit more than 18 months. I was drafted to be made infantry fodder, I could give- tell you this longer story to do that but I won't. I volunteered to become, to be trained as an infantry sergeant. I'm probably one of only a handful of people who with that meager background, left the military as a staff sergeant E-6. And I left as the platoon sergeant of my platoon.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: And I absolutely abhorred the war and didn't think we should be in it, and all that's still true. So walking back to campus afterwards for the first time, I was terrified of what my reception might be. I'm with my first wife, Iris. We're passing the old library crossing the street, and a block away, we see Mike Wagner walking towards us. I'm sure you've heard the legends of the people who spit on vets when they came home and all the rest of that. This was my moment to be, perhaps, be spat upon. We got to Mike, Mike stuck out his hand, shook mine said, welcome home soldier. Mike had spent his career in World War Two managing logistics for D-Day in Great Britain.

Spaccarelli: Wow. Did you all know that when you had the class with him?

Preece: It wasn't, wasn't a point of emphasis, I, it may have been, it seems to me like it was common knowledge eventually, but not not something was on the table. And he was certainly not preaching in support of the war. That wasn't part of his academic ambition. I don't remember that in my time at Raymond, any positions on the war per se, got taken by any of the faculty of either institution. They certainly had their opinions. I got out early, because the English department, apparently with some controversy, decided from my mud stained application that they had to do anything possible to get Tom out of Vietnam. Which is why they wrote a very clear letter, careful letter that didn't quite say they admitted me for the degree program. That got me out of Vietnam six months early.

Spaccarelli: Got it. Okay. Sorry, but was there more to your story with Mike? I didn't mean to interrupt you on that.

Preece: No, no really that that's that that's it. It's always completed it.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: So, education, individuals who were memorable and why.

Spaccarelli: Yes yes yes yes. It's- beyond the ones we've already talked about, or you can just say, Hey, I've already talked about most of the ones I want to discuss.

Preece: (Laughs)

Spaccarelli: We don't have to go- because I get the feeling that if I asked you for individuals, you could go on for like another three hours.

Preece: I probably would know them, as I said, I'm virtually have at least a shaking acquaintance with everyone.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, so, so, so if you want to just name a couple of the names that you think were particularly stand-out to you, especially, I mean, like maybe students not so much. Maybe mostly faculty, administrators?

Preece: Cliff Hand was really big for me. At a certain point, it was actually the summer of 1966. I came to him and said, I think I want to study English literature, I know I'm not necessarily getting the background for it here. What would you recommend? And he specifically in me at San Francisco State. And a set of courses at San Francisco State. I believe one of those classes was in Chaucer. Maybe there were only two, I'm not remembering the three. The, the third one, big intellectual impact on me, had this recommendation and he knew I would get this guy, was a gentleman named Dr Gajdusek. I hesitate to try and spell it. But he taught formal structural criticism. And I had been learning that all along, it's part of the reason why Greg was so impressed was, I had that class before the class in which he was so astounded. That it's not what you say, or even necessarily how you say it. But how the story is structured. That's where the essence of the meaning is. And I'm, I don't know that Cliff knew already, he likely did, that I was not going to- would not stay the course for a doctorate in English. But quite possibly he already knew what lesson I really wanted to learn and did learn in that class. John was- Williams was another big one. John sort of taught me that you could turn these tools to anything. And I, in the course of my life and turn them to a great many things. I was once upon a time tasked to write a lie by the director of facility I worked for. And I did exactly what he told me, and refuted everything in his intention at the same time, by structuring it properly.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: (Coughs) Sorry.

Spaccarelli: No worries.

Preece: I think I have to mention Jinx if you say people who were memorable. Jinx, so she started with the first class, graduated with mine, and she may have told you, the reason was Dinah, and her consequent marriage to Fred Sanders. One way or another, Jinx has been in and out of my life ever since. I'm not going to read you chapter and verse there, violate some personal ideas of integrity here if I didn't do some of it. At one point in time, Jinx, Diane Platt, Paul Frobose, I guess Fred was in- invoked by default as her husband. Who else... I think Winnie might have been in on that, as a group. And the idea was that now that we were graduating from Raymond, we should form a commune.

Spaccarelli: Nice.

Preece: And I hadn't graduated from Raymond yet when this conversation occurred. Jinx and Fred had a house on country club for- sort of run-down little place in the back of a big lot. And it became a hanging out place for that little clique of people. I should include my first wife Iris in that. And Jinx's brother, whose name I'm forgetting- Larry, Larry McCombs. Well I listened to the idea and I kind of participated in some of the touchy feely parts of it for a while. But one day I sat down and said, Well, who's going to

cook? Who's going to take out the garbage? Bear in mind the respondent who said this- said this back became a career parole officer and therapist, was essential to a whole lot of contra costa county for a long time. Maybe this proves why she was never a manager. She said, what? Each of us will do what he does best. And it'll all come together, it will all get done. And I said very loudly, bullshit. I might be really good at taking out the garbage, but that doesn't mean I want to do it.

Spaccarelli: There you go.

Preece: Years later, one of my first wife's high school friends ended up running a school in Martinez, a private school. It started as something spun off from a church. It had kind of gotten de-religious. They charged tuition for it. And it was kind of failing as a business. Olivia was teaching there. And basically, who had it said, well here take it as yours if you want to continue running it. And she did so for several years before she closed the school. She recruits me... Now though, I need to back up one, one step. At one of the earlier Raymond reunions, I think at Neil Lark's house. I met the, by now, 10 year old or 11 year old Dinah McCombs or Dinah Sanders I guess she is because she was Fred's daughter.

Spaccarelli: In your mind she's Dinah McCombs because of Jinx, Jinx stands out.

Preece: But we had both just finished reading TH White's the Mistress Masham's Repose. And I had a fine intellectual discussion with a 10 year old about that book. And it's probably beyond the reading range of most 10 year olds. And we identified the eccentricity of it, the eccentricity of White himself as kind of the foundation of this, and I said well of course, you probably get that from your mother too, and Dinah acknowledged that that was true. Then flash forward another eight years. I'm post-Vietnam, Olivia is making an exercise in her civics portion of her eighth grade class, which she included the seventh grade in as well.

Spaccarelli: Olivia?

Preece: Olivia is my friend, my first wife's good high school buddy. Olivia Johnson who ran the school.

Spaccarelli: Got it. Sorry. Yes, sorry.

Preece: So, Olivia has successfully invited a World War Two vet, a Korean vet, and now me, a Vietnam vet to talk to these kids. At this point I still got more than a few lingering aftereffects from the war, I found, I could not sit in a chair and talk to them. I sat on the floor. What I also knew was, and I knew this because Olivia and Iris were close, and because Iris and I and Jinx had been close. I knew that one of the students in the room was Dinah. To this day I have no idea if she knows who I am. If she acknowledges any kind of relationship between us or not, but I sat on the floor. I cried a little. And I told the truth as I knew it about combat in Vietnam. Afterwards, Olivia asked the students to write thank you letters and they were really interesting in their content. Almost universally the girls wrote something the effect of, I can't believe you killed anyone, Mr. Preece, you are such a nice man. And a good many of the boys said,

Well, of course you did your duty and you stuck to it and it may have been terrible but you excelled at it. Most of the guys who wrote those letters joined the service after they got out of high school.

Spaccarelli: Sounds about right.

Preece: In the classroom, as I was about to leave, Dinah said to Olivia, why can't my class have more things like this? This was really great. I was almost about to make a remark when Olivia said, Well, you did get this class didn't you? (Chuckles) Still, still forward many, many years. I retired in 2007. Diane and I had spent a long time trying to decide where we would retire. We were living in the Bay Area. Quite by accident we did, we did all right with the Bay Area real estate market. We literally sold the month the meltdown started, walked away with most of the deposit.

Spaccarelli: Nice.

Preece: At- an accident, we were already on the hook for buying the house at sea ranch on the assumption we could make this sale. I might be penniless today if the timing had not worked... But in the course of the search, we concluded a number of things, I knew I wanted to live on a hill. Diane knew she wanted to be near the ocean. I knew I would like to have a view. I also knew that I would prefer to live someplace more rural than city. I guess it goes all the way back to my childhood, I'm real comfortable where there are farms. Not necessarily so comfortable where there are big crowds. And we had assessed a large part of the West Coast, looking for the characteristics, we made a list of them. And Jinx and Paul became central to that activity. They hosted us over and over and over again at their house. While we explored various real estate options in Mendocino and Sonoma County. Eventually, we bought a lot with the intention of building. I won't go into all the reasons that didn't work, but it didn't. The only time I had to pay minimum, minimum, alternate minimum tax because I made enough money selling the lot that I got that. Then after we were there... I'm missing a foundational story. My marriage to Diane... The fact that I could do this exploration. All comes down to two members of that commune sitting around the table in Gualala, California. I'm sure Jinx told you this, well, who would we like to invite to dinner?

Spaccarelli: Not that I remember.

Preece: Oh, well, they started listing people of their acquaintance and they finally ended up inviting the first three years of Raymond College to a reunion at Gualala.

Spaccarelli: Oh, that's right. Jinx put together one of the first large scale reunions for many, many years. Right?

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: There have been previous pretty good sized ones, usually centered on the Stockton crowd, people who were still in Stockton and surrounding stuff. Jinx was long out of that by this time. And she got not just the faculty, but, you know, not just the students, but the faculty as well. Mike showed up for this. Jerry Gaff came for this. Gene Rice came for this.

Spaccarelli: That just shows Jinx is who she- who she was.

Preece: Yes, exactly. Talk about memorable. I personally got involved. It wasn't a listserv. What was happening was that people were adding to the email list, the addresses of some other Raymond person they knew and encouraging everybody else to go look for. And Bryan Shaner, former member of FEPEC. He found my email address somewhere and wrote and said basically is this the Tom Preece I knew at Raymond College? And I said enthusiastically yes. And then I noticed that Diane's name was on this long list of email addresses. Now by this time I've been single for a couple of years. And I still remember as having, in my opinion, may even still be true, the best legs any woman ever rightfully had. I wrote an email, a private email note, basically saying, how are you? This is where my life's at, including the fact that I've been recently divorced. I didn't hear from her for a week. What I didn't know was that she had gone out to support her mother-in-law from her first marriage. I don't remember what the occasion was that pulled it out. Rita may have been ill, but she wasn't anywhere near to a computer, which in those days was required to get an email. So, she didn't get my thing. The response came back something like, divorced? I too have been [?]. My husband of 20 years died, I think it was at that point, three years ago or two years ago. And that prompted us to start a conversation, which got to the point that we would watch West Wing separately, and then get on the phone and talk about all the parts of the episode. We agreed to meet. We met at Ikeda's. What she says is that she moved to hug me like you would any old friend. I put her head on my shoulder here. So you can see it here.

Spaccarelli: There you go. It's your shoulder.

Preece: She said, I knew I was toast. I knew that shoulder. Unique for both Diane and I because I was six foot three and she was five foot 11, at least in our college years. We always walked well together, because we could match each other stride for stride. And it's never been true with any other woman in my life. And that's what- very easy familiarity. I'm trying to think back, I can't remember if we had yet become lovers before the reunion. My guess is that we had not. But we were clearly already a hot item. And we agreed that we weren't going to make us the topic of what happened at the reunion.

Spaccarelli: I think I remember somebody mentioning that you- that you were though.

Preece: Could be, could be. It may have gotten obvious as the reunion went on that we were headed that way. One of the things that happened that reunion was, was also back to Vietnam stuff and its echoes. We had this dinner at the Gualala Art Center, which Diane did not attend, she'd gotten the venue wrong. She and Edna were in a motel, well to the north of us. And one of the objects of dinner was to have each person stand up and tell the group where they've been, what they've been doing. I haven't said a bunch in this interview to talk about it, but I came home from Vietnam and my godsend

was being offered a job with the VA, where I applied all my Raymond learning stuff to good effect. And where I got to directly work on the, the psychological, emotional and physical wounds to me and others. Of course, that was the story I was going to have to tell in front of this group. Y'all probably remember that I got drafted and sent to Vietnam, what you probably don't know is that it defined my life and career, and it gave me true vocation. And after that speech, later that night, Jerry Gaff came up to me and said, You know what, Tom, you might be one of the few people who can tell this crowd that. And that's Jerry and that's Jinx.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, no I get the feeling that, everybody I've talked to has said that Jinx was one of the most unique and special people that ever attended Raymond.

Preece: It's true. Raised by Mennonite parents, in the Methodist Church in Wasco California. One of the things they're not likely to bring up. Oh, I should have brought it up before. When I got to Raymond College there were three people that read science fiction. Greg Finnegan, Tom Preece, and Jinx McCombs.

Spaccarelli: That's a good group of people.

Preece: Jinx had a fan sign, published on a mimeograph machine when she was 16 years old, and in Wasco. And I have another friend who had a fan sign in the same era, and they didn't know each other.

Spaccarelli: Okay, so we have reached the end of the individuals question. This is question 11. We have been doing this for two and a half hours now. So, I, this is great. I think this is fantastic. Do you, I'm sort of inclined myself to trying to- end it here and come back to it another day for the rest of it. Does that sound okay with you because there's a good number of remaining questions...

Preece: Sure. And for that matter, I've talked some about it already but I think the evolution of the university is something I want to talk about in some more detail.

Spaccarelli: Sounds perfect. No, that's, that's fantastic. And I mean, and clearly it wasn't just- you didn't just see the Raymond snapshot. You saw more of it going forward, which is helpful.

Preece: I did. Yes.

Spaccarelli: Okay, but yes, let's talk about that then so for now I'm going to stop the recording if that's okay with you.

Preece: Good.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Part 2

Spaccarelli: Perfect. Okay. This is the continued recording of the interview with Tom Preece taking place July 19th, 2023. So we're going to just jump right into it and start with our first question here and that is what were- what issues were you involved in that stood out in your mind as important to the growth and development of Raymond?

Preece: There was, I think, a- I've said this before, last week I believe- a paternalistic ideology that haunted the university generally. At Raymond we were being taught to question everything and we- that included questioning that. It did not happen during my student tenure there but I got to watch the full scope of a lot of really dramatic transitions that I think in the end affected not just Raymond but the whole campus. The in loco parentis view that men and women should have separate dormitories and that they should be, women should be clocked in and out as- in protection of their virginity as it were. That there might be rules and ethics that we were deemed not to question when we're being trained to question everything. It kind of, it once goes with facts and goes against it. One of the things I've thought about in reflection about this interview was one of the great values to liberal arts education is understanding, at least in Western civilization and perhaps broader than that now, what the source of values are. Now I've seen studies that suggest that at the time that I took that liberal arts course, in terms of projected careers over the next several years, that was exactly the right thing to do. And of course it was the right thing to do because there was an extraordinary explosion of change. We were already well into it when we did that but you needed to be adaptable, you needed to be fast on your feet, you needed to make decisions about what mattered and why it mattered all the time. I think after that we got into a period in which students became much much much more focused on give me work credentials, give me tasking issues, tell me how I can accomplish something. One of the lessons from much much later in my career was how hard it was to get people that I was supposed to be leading to take responsibility for what they were supposed to do and had everything to do with a great desire to have someone tell them what it was. In my particular case, my biggest job was directing a lot of pretty early computer nerds and almost to a person, all of them had gotten there as a way of evading conflict, as a way of knowing something nobody else knew that they were terribly terribly good at, so they didn't

have to address how that fit into the rest of the world. And we would get a project and I would sit down and say to them well, how are we gonna do this guys and they would say to me, well why aren't you telling us. Well I was actually less technically savvy than many of them. My gift was not about that, my gift was about articulation and leadership. And usually I would start in by saying okay let's try this and we would plunge into something and almost always because they all wanted to avoid conflict and they wanted to make it easier on themselves, they would then invent the right procedure for me. But I had to spell out to them a gesture, any gesture, to get them to begin to make the value-loaded thing about what to do. It seems to me we are right now there's a widespread belief, certainly expressed politically, that there are the whole host of population who want to be told what to do rather than to take responsibility for, for making their choices. I think, quite contrary to very popular opinion, it's now again the era of the liberal arts education. We are facing even more dynamic, thrusting things. One of the things I look at is there's just a whole raft-load of people in technology who've been laid off because they've been computer coders. And AI has- it hasn't obsolesced their jobs but it's made it so much simpler that a whole lot of them are no longer necessary.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And that has not been anticipated generally by the culture. We need people who don't need to anticipate, who can respond actively. I love it, one of my shrinks said years ago. Being responsible means being able to respond. You don't necessarily know what's coming but you have to learn to choose it. And because it was such a hotbed of change and revolution throughout my time there, either as a student or later, you were forced constantly to be making value choices. And some people made the wrong ones. I mentioned the two guys last week that I think probably got offed by the mafia because they went too crazy. But that's still a value choice. It's the wrong one. But it's still a value choice and we need desperately to train people to think in terms of what those choices are. And I don't particularly think religion is the solution for that if we are supposed to be living in a society where no religion is to dominate over any other one. They make different value choices. That doesn't resolve the political issue of what we do day to day.

Spaccarelli: Right, yeah.

Preece: One of my proudest moments as a supervisor was explaining to a young guy, he'd grown up in a black ghetto in Los Angeles. He went to college in order to play football. He played guard I believe. He was fairly good at it. And he began to study computer programming. And he went to the VA work-study program. He went to work for the Los Angeles office and eventually they hired him because he'd had a smattering of training about football when none of them had. It didn't change his value system at all. He still thought that rising in America meant rising in status. We gave him a credit card specifically for use during VA travel. And he signed an agreement that he actually kept a copy of because he was so pleased to get it. It said he understood that that was its sole purpose and that any other use was forbidden. And then one weekend locally, when he was not on travel, he took a cash advance against that credit card. Surprise, surprise I got a phone call from the folks in finance who saw him do it. And I had to write a statement to explain to him that if you were in government, particularly if you were a civil servant, the

most important thing in the world was not to ever claim any privileges that exceeded that of any other citizen. And part of the reason that letter means so much to me is Ted totally got it. His understanding of how we worked and why we worked were transformed by, what amounted to an act of discipline.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: That's correct discipline. That's the challenge that I think we're all facing and I think that Raymond education trained me magnificently to do.

Spaccarelli: Okay, fantastic. But that- that's all, that's all great. I do want to ask if there were more issues that stood out in your mind during Raymond that you think were important to your development slash the institution's development.

Preece: Well the really big one I think we may have already alluded to, I'll repeat it. There was the gentleman who larkishly got- ended up being busted for drugs that Dean Peckham turned in. And it put in stark relief the question of the difference between institutional and community loyalty. Arguably Peckham had shown institutional loyalty by calling the cops. The rest of the institution clearly didn't believe him about that because that's why he was on a fast track to get out of there. But internally what happened to students was a whole discussion how right or wrong it was for this guy to, you know, end up going to jail.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And you saw all kinds of cleavage lines in that discussion. I remember a giant meeting, the whole college stuffed into the common room. Of course there were never more than about 300 of us so that that wasn't beyond belief. You know, raging debate about whether it was righteous or wrong or whatever. And my response was very much like, I can't think of his name, Rodney something, the guy in the black guy in LA who ended up being beaten by the LA cops. And it was basically why can't we all just get along? To me the community was much much more important than any set of institutional rules. And that's still true for me today. And I think that question kept coming up in different forms over and over and over again. We've alluded to the core curriculum before. You know there were people in my class, Dave Wellenbrock is the primary one, who thought the core curriculum was the greatest thing since sugar was invented. That wasn't true for me and it wasn't true for a lot of subsequent Raymond graduates who thrived also. But it's confusing methodology with value. When, when value is the important thing and I think that it's why- the way I vote and I have voted I've been registered in three different political parties. I voted both Republican and Democrat. It's not about partisan stuff. It's always about what's the right thing to do for our community. And we're bound to disagree about that.

Spaccarelli: Right, right. Yeah, yeah, no, that's- that that makes perfect sense. What else was I gonna ask about with issues? So I was, I was just gonna say. Were you there for any pregnancies and were there discussions about those?

Preece: Both Toni and Jinx have already been pregnant and had already delivered kids when I showed up.

Spaccarelli: Got it.

Preece: The other effect that was going on there, which at the time seemed terribly radical was, I think I may have mentioned this before, birth control was pretty new. And to get it, generally you had to be, to be married or pretend you were married or have a doctor was willing to wink at that issue. Or your mom might take you in- and I know this was the escape route for some young women- and say that you had terrible, terrible pains during your period and perhaps the regularity of the birth control would resolve those. I'm actually using that as a kid for one of the characters in the novel I'm writing right now. Forward-thinking women who understood that sexual activity would be a natural part of adolescence and post-adolescence were wise enough to arrange that for their daughters. But Raymond became the source of finding out how you could get contraception because Jinx had found a doctor. That doctor's name and practice and how to handle it.

Spaccarelli: A little bit late maybe.

Preece: Well yeah, but she didn't want to have another one.

Spaccarelli: There you go.

Preece: That kid by the way is pretty damn spectacular in her own right.

Spaccarelli: I feel like- did you write something about that kid? What was her name?

Preece: Dinah is the name of the child.

Spaccarelli: Dinah. Did you send something to me? Somebody wrote me a small essay about how they went and talked to Dinah in her school. (editor's note: This was my (Lorenzo's) misrecollection. The story of Preece's visit to Dinah's school was already told in the last session and properly recorded. But because I misreclected it, the story will now be told again.)

Preece: That was me.

Spaccarelli: That was you?

Preece: I don't remember writing it but that happened to me.

Spaccarelli: Cool, got it. Okay, it was you. Do you want to tell that story again for the interview audience?

Preece: Oh sure, sure. It's got several parts. Part of it is, needless to say, because I was so close to Jinx and Fred and that whole crowd, Dinah was very important to me. But as you moved on in life, it felt like an imposition- to me at least- to invade that young person's space and say, oh I treasure you, I adore you because I know your mom so well. It seems to me that's kind of the uncle you did not expect that you don't necessarily know how to deal with. So there was a chunk of time, during one of the early Raymond reunions preceding Jinx's thing at Gualala, we ended up at Neil Lark's house. And Dinah was there, accompanied by Jinx, and it happened that she and I had both just finished reading T.H. White's *The Mistress Masham's Repose*. And we had a quite adult, as far as I was concerned, discussion about structure, meaning, all the rest of that. I was a trained literary civic and I was talking to this nine-year-old. She was standing up to it. And then the forward flash, my first wife's best girlfriend from high school is a woman named Olivia Johnston. And Olivia kind of inherited the ownership of a private school in Martinez, California. Which Dinah was already attending, probably in Jinx and Paul's and perhaps even Fred's preference, to what the public schools were at that time in Martinez. It had originally started out as a church-oriented school. It had very much become not that. Olivia certainly took it very seriously. It was having a great struggle about maintaining staff and credentialing and all the rest of it, with inability to pay even a reasonable salary to people. She was kind of making it by living on the school grounds at that point. But she did this class for their civics course in which she explored what it meant to be a veteran. And she brought in a veteran of World War II and then a veteran of the Korean War and me. And I was still, at that point, still working through PTSD and ridding myself of it. When I realized what I was facing, looking at all these 11, 12, and 13-year-old faces, that I was somehow going to represent what Vietnam had meant to me and to other people who were there, when I was fully not understanding it myself, it was quite overwhelming. I found I literally could not sit in a chair. I sat on the ground and talked to them. And yeah, I'll give you the color of the rest of it. Dinah's part of this is fairly small, but maybe it's illustrated by the rest of it. I cried in that session. I told him chapter and verse of exactly how painful combat was and how awful it was to be forced to kill someone to protect the guy next to you. And how especially awful it was when you couldn't discern why the hell you were there. And I had a leadership role. I had qualified as a staff sergeant through this fancy thing. I ended up being the platoon sergeant of that platoon. I know, well, I'm actually kind of proud of this, literally no one in my platoon was killed when I was in it.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: That has something to do with the war. It also had a lot to do with me and those of us who were in it. And I got to say that to this group of people. One of the interesting things were the set of reactions. Dinah's was really straightforward. She said to Olivia, gee, how come we don't do cool stuff like this in our class? She was in seventh grade at that point. And I was restraining myself because I knew this kid. But Olivia said it for me. She said, well, you got to be here for this class now today, didn't you?

Spaccarelli: Well said.

Preece: The kids afterwards, she made them write thank you letters. And I've always found that the spectrum of choices really wonderful and revealing. Over and over and over again, the young women

wrote, gee, I can't believe you killed anybody. You seem like such a nice guy. And over and over and over again, guys said, well, you could have avoided the draft, but you chose not to. And you stood up for god and country and by damn, I think you did good. And there were a whole lot of those guys who joined the military almost immediately after they got out of high school. It's always been, it's even a wonder to me today, I'm moved, frankly, to try and write a novel based on the experience surrounding Jinx's death. And I feel morally that I need Paul's permission to do that. But more than that, I need Dinah's. As Paul said, as Dinah tidied up so many things in their mutual lives, she's got to be hurting too. It was her mother, but it was her mother who chose death with dignity, with great courage and beauty, I think. And that's why it needs to be memorialized, but I'm not going to do it if it violates anything in Dinah's sense of what should be done.

Spaccarelli: No, no, no, I respect that. But yeah, no, but even if it's not something you write for anyone but yourself, that might be helpful.

Preece: Oh yeah, I can always write it for me. Sometimes that's all I'm writing for. Because believe me, the meager sales of my first novel amounts to nothing.

Spaccarelli: Okay, so moving on from that, let me try to think where else we were going here. Institutional change. So what, Berndt Kolker, that transition, Martin to Berndt.

Preece: We may be veering a bit beyond my personal tenure at Raymond, but yeah, you're absolutely correct.

Spaccarelli: Okay. Wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, clarifying. Kolker wasn't there by the time you left?

Preece: I literally can't remember. I think that Martin- no, that's not true. That's not true. Kolker was there my senior year. I know that because Martin left and was involved in a study at UCC, where they gave me that test I told you about last time.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: So yeah, he was there. One of the things he brought with him were a big raft of students who had known him, not remembering the exact shape of his personal life, except that it was in Texas. I think this is going to sound very odd, and I do not mean it prejudicially at all. Remember, we talked about the way that the Methodist origins of the university and the paternalism were kind of tied hand in hand. I think Berndt was able, in part, to achieve what he achieved because he was Jewish. He had all the traditions of Jewish pragmatism, how you survive in an otherwise prejudiced state, throughout generations, bring to bear on the problems that emerged at Raymond. And of course, he was genuinely a leader of the faculty. He was genuinely an intellectual. He understood what academic dialogue should be like, and he was able to, I think, with still other voices right there behind him, guide change. We mentioned last time the fact of how young so many of the Raymond faculty were.

Spaccarelli: Right, right, right.

Preece: And that meant that for many of them, they were undergoing the same cultural revolution that we were. There's a former professor at Callison who actually I talked to, just a couple of years ago. He and his wife both came at the same time, and his wife ended up being an adjunct professor at Raymond. I was charged at one point in time with trying to dig up all the old faculty to make our reunions accessible to them. And I managed to track her down and telephone her and told her why we would like to record her name and address, etc. And welcome her back to the Raymond community, etc., etc. And she was lividly furious. As far as she was concerned, the experience of Raymond College- University had destroyed her marriage. And it was because her husband had plunged full force into drugs, sex and rock and roll. Apparently had affairs outside the home that broke them up. And I can hardly blame her for that, if that transition was managed. He was not altogether unusual. There was an older Raymond faculty person who ended up divorcing his wife and marrying one of the students. And the capstone, I'm speaking legend here again, this is what I hear by hearsay, I certainly wasn't there for the conversation. But apparently, the first wife literally brought the second wife into the home and introduced her to all the routines that the children were accustomed to, and how she had run the household, so that this younger child would be able to adapt more quickly to serving her ex-husband.

Spaccarelli: Woah, okay.

Preece: It's an example of how tough it was to change the paradigm of the way we live. And we really did that, Lorenzo, the clearest way I can see it is the very open and widely held acceptance of young people living together without being married. That was absolutely- you were a sinner if you did that in the 50s. And that ceased to be true. The idea that, why would they marry you if you gave it away for free, became much more of the case, you're giving it away anyway. So why shouldn't you understand whether or not you really can manage a social life together or not, before you commit to having children together? The sexual revolution was really a big, big part of this. And Berndt was extraordinarily equipped, I think, to be a pragmatist, to think pragmatically and really guide the liberalization of the housing rules and other things. Now, the place that the students then took it, which despaired my friend David, and I think despaired some of the university as well, was the free form contract oriented... What is it you want to study kid? You and your advisor will work out what it is and do it. If you have talented people who have some idea of what their desires are, that's a great way to go. It would have been a terrible way for me to go at the time, because I grew up in a paternalistic society. I didn't need the rottenness of it, but I needed the structure in order to begin to get anywhere.

Spaccarelli: Right, right. It makes perfect sense. It helps you figure out where you're going.

Preece: Yes. And if you were middle class enough to be able to afford the university, and in my parents' case, that's literally what they did. I didn't have a single student loan. My dad devoted himself to making sure he could pay his children's way through college. And it's a middle class luxury. Look at the huge gaps that are in our culture right now, because it's understood that it's a ticket to a better life. But we found our own ways to provide it.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Yeah. But anyways, Raymond.

Preece: Raymond. Let's push the Raymond thing still further. And this is a kind of the institutional reaction. I believe this is subsequent to my tenure. I think I was the dorm daddy in Williams House when this happened. I was in graduate school in the English department. There was a really-

Spaccarelli: Clarifying. Dorm daddy, is that RA?

Preece: Yes, it is RA.

Spaccarelli: Okay. Okay. Just clarifying.

Preece: Slang of the time. I don't know.

Spaccarelli: Not a term I have ever heard, actually.

Preece: I use it wisely. There was a cohort of really quite wonderful young students who came in under the revised Berndt Kolker contract idea of things. And I actually got... As one of the founding members of the Raymond Phoenix organization, I got in trouble because I was willing to talk about this on our oh so private listserv. And I was considered to be telling tales out of school and perhaps challenging someone's personal biography, that people go through all kinds of sexual adaptations growing up, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. This young woman, I can use her first name, I think, freely, was Martha. She preferred to be called Sam. And she was quite clear to a great many of us, including I'm sure some partners of hers, that she was a lesbian lady and a wonderful student and one of those people who glowed with affection, concern, and caring for everybody. Well, at some point in her Raymond career, and I do not remember whether she graduated with us or not, she outed herself to her parents. Again, legend. Her parents were big time alumni, big time contributors. They picked up the phone and they called McCaffrey, who was then the president of the university.

Spaccarelli: So wait, wait, this is after your time at Raymond.

Preece: I was not a student at Raymond. I was the RA.

Spaccarelli: Right, right. Got it. Sorry. Just making sure.

Preece: And they charged McCaffrey with trying to rein in, condemn, otherwise... They basically accused Raymond College of making their daughter a lesbian. In fact, it's probably closer to the fact that we were happily accepting of their daughter as a lesbian instead of saying it was taboo. And I won't pretend I know what decisions McCaffrey may have made about that. But as you know, Raymond didn't last. And I agree with President Callahan that it wasn't designed to last. Burns was a hustler. He didn't know how to do long term institution. He was trying to make the next buck. And it must have been a great burden for

McCaffrey to see that the contribution base from which you could get sustenance objected to who and what we were. And that objection, you know, maybe you remember Harrie's story about the ladies' underthings strung on the line between the two doors.

Spaccarelli: Exactly. Yeah.

Preece: And the horror that the president had that a contributor saw that. That was the beginning of institutional changes that had to happen. The culture was not going to let them not happen. And we were very much a part of it.

Spaccarelli: No, I'm sure. I mean, this... OK. So I have two patterns of thought here. And first is, I want to ask you. You know, seeing McCaffrey relating to it as well, my understanding was, in part, he was just uncomfortable with the idea of Raymond in a lot of ways. Do you- he just, he just never really thought that, you know, this, this college with a bunch of hippie- really smart hippies, you know, at the edge of campus challenging things was, was valuable to the university. How much would you agree with that characterization?

Preece: I really don't have a clue. I mean, the McCaffrey wasn't, didn't have the kind of personality, if you will. What I would say, I think... It's my understanding that the the trustees did- did not understand it. It might have been a great sales job by Burns, but they were far and away from, from, from... Understanding what value that could have. And when you remember that to the largest part, the trustees were distinguished alumni who had graduated from a football university.

Spaccarelli: Right, right, right.

Preece: With sororities, with, with all the pictures of good emotional health, the mythology of the wonderful, untroubled university, where you get your passport to the future stamped.

Spaccarelli: Right, right, right. And I'm sure they were all white and I'm sure they were all pretty wealthy, you know, probably mostly men.

Preece: By that time, I believe they were bringing women in and they were even bringing in fairly youngish people, but only people who sort of match their stripes. This is- I can't be factual there. That's just an impression. But there's no question that if you stood the average Raymond student next to someone who'd been attending the board of trustees meeting, we didn't look like that. We didn't look a thing like that.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: There were some kind of really famous send-ups that were internally performed to the college throughout all of this. I mentioned FEPEC last time, but let me give you an example of a more imaginative prank. And it was aimed straight at the idea of the formality of High Table. You know, you

can see from Martin's vision of us as the sort of new Oxford, where this would come from. I imagine that something similar at Oxford, the faculty would have come dressed in their gowns and they weren't taking it that way. But the faculty was seated at this table at the head of the dinner. And all of us were supposed to dress up for High Table. That was a tradition that was immediately slashed and burned. People came in as bizarre costumes as they could imagine to fit their imagined forms of how they might best send up the idea of formal dress. On one occasion, and this was when I was a freshman, so it's fairly early in Raymond history, it would have been quite probably the fall of '64. A movement was started to prank High Table itself. So to that purpose, the water glasses that were preloaded at the table were filled with vodka.

Spaccarelli: With vodka? I was thinking you were going to mention the goldfish story. This was different.

Preece: I don't remember the goldfish story. I heard it, but it's not in my memory. But Wes Baden and I actually did this because we were both ham radio operators and knew something about electronics and wiring. But we set up a remote wire behind the Raymond Phoenix, which was a giant brass sculpture that was affixed to the back wall there. And we put a speaker behind it. And I don't remember what the source was, but from outside the hall at the moment of climax in this, which was when three motorcycle guys rode into the back of the great hall, the speaker played the Beach Boys singing, Be True to Your School. There were probably other weirdnesses associated with all that. That brings up another wild night and says volumes about a distinguished university community member. I'm blowing his name and I can't. The food service director, Paul...

Spaccarelli: Fairbrook.

Preece: Yes. To all extents and purposes, Paul was always on the side of good nutrition, good economy, good efficiency, and all the standard stuff. And as you may well know, he's something of a luminary in the food world because he established standards for how you did a whole lot of stuff. Being the author of the Small Business Administration's initial pamphlet on how to start a restaurant.

Spaccarelli: Oh, wow.

Preece: Yeah. This was a guy who interrogated Germans. (Laughs) And it has been subsequently discovered- the secret he was told always to kept- to have been one of a great number of American German-speaking heroes who were recruited to interrogate... And you know that story already. I don't need to go through it. But Paul got a request from us to sponsor what we called a Tom Jones dinner. And he probably understood, at least I think he understood from the get-go, how it would turn out. But he agreed to do it. And I don't believe it was a high table celebration. But the whole idea was that we would come in and behave the way in the movie Tom Jones, Tom and his lady love do erotically eating food at each other. And it turned into a giant food fight.

Spaccarelli: (Laughs)

Preece: Many, many years later, I could still see things in the rafters of the Great Hall that I knew had been stuck, flung there. And that this man who was so proud to have become an American and felt he'd earned it, was willing to go along with our gag and let students be that kind of riotous students. The flip side of that, that moves me and this I take directly from having gone to Professor George Blum's funeral. Blum was special to me because he gave me my only Raymond College superior evaluation. Blum was special to Diane because he made it possible for her to graduate while going off to Germany to marry John, her first husband. He was very special to both of us. When he died, we made a point of, at that point, we were in the sea ranch and we winded our way down there to get to the Unitarian Church, which still has no air conditioning, I'm here to report. It was summer. And Paul stood up and honored his friend George and talked about the tradition they had established between the two of them that every week on a given day- it seems to me it was Friday, but I don't know that- they would have lunch together at which they would only speak German to each other. And one of Paul's hobbies has been translating some of the great German poetry into English. And he selected a couple of the poems that he had translated to read out loud in honor of George. That's a complete human being. And maybe our Tom Jones dinner is just but one testament to that.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Yeah, no, but yeah, powerful, powerful professor and a powerful dining service provider. I am aware of some of what Paul Fairbrook did. He did...

Preece: He was a hero.

Spaccarelli: He was a hero. He was a hero. He's a great, he provided great food. And like what I remember, I think I've read portions of his oral history. He did some remarkable antics, if I remember correctly. So that's very fun.

Preece: Yes. He did.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: He was perfectly willing to poke holes in institutional verities.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And not being a designated teacher, it's kind of remarkable because I think he taught us all a great deal. I worked for him. Diane worked for him. She did the food line. I was one of the table servers. And we all adored his Chinese cook who was in the kitchen.

Spaccarelli: Okay, perfect. And then I want to go back a step and talk about what you were talking about, follow up on what you were talking about earlier, regarding Burns and blowing through some of that money donated by the Raymonds. This I've been trying to figure out. So I know Callahan said, this is what's interesting. I know Callahan said at the reunion, oh yeah, Burns just blew through it and he wasn't paying attention. And to some, it's- in some ways that fits with what President Burns did, to the

best of my knowledge, but also, there's a lot of schools that he set up that have lasted a very long time, are still here today. So I was a little bit confused as to the claim, even then. Then I went and read John Williams oral history from about 10 years ago. I don't know if you've read it, where he basically says that, yeah, he talked to President Atchley and Atchley had no idea where the money was. Atchley went and tried to track down the money and he couldn't.

Preece: Well, doesn't that say it all? Doesn't it say it all that you couldn't track the money?

Spaccarelli: True, true.

Preece: That, that, that that bespeaks the whole paternalism of the organization. You know, we're in charge. We're not accountable to anybody else. And, and even when money is given that's supposed to have purse strings on it, you would think it would therefore should have to be traced. You know, my ex wife became quite expert... She founded the battered women's shelter in, in, in Fremont. It was the second battered women's shelter in, in the Bay Area. If you get a chance to interview her, she's from the class of '69, I think. Iris Nicholson, I'm not sure whether she's taken her second husband's last name or not, for a while it was Preece. But, you know, when you do something like that, you specifically set up your accounting, so that you can demonstrate to the funder where every nickel went.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And if John (Atchley) couldn't find it, they weren't doing that. That's the we're in charge and you're not mentality that I suspect haunted a good deal more than University of the Pacific. The whole-the current stuff about whether- what affirmative action means and whether or not you can practice it. It's got such an obvious replacement. If you want diversity, let it be economic diversity.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: You're gonna end up with the diversity in campus and it will have nothing to do with race. And I'm amazed nobody's saying that loud.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Well, that's, that's a whole nother discussion. Raymond. But yeah, no. Yeah. So I was just wondering if you have any more info, but you don't...

Preece: No, I- it's the other kind of weakness and perhaps it comes out of the same kind of environment I'm talking about.

Spaccarelli: Certainly, certainly.

Preece: You've heard me say this over and over again. I don't know this, but it was a rumor. It was the gossip.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: Well, that's how you knew things in those days. That's the only way you could know things. Because nobody was saying, here's what our program here is. Here's why we're making the decision we're making. This wasn't, wasn't in the cards.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah. No, I was just wondering if you had any more, because I could imagine, knowing what I know of Callahan, that he could have pulled that out of pocket and not necessarily been 100 percent certain. So, you know, I was just wondering if you knew any better, but that's fine. We can move on. OK, let's, let's keep going here. That was one question. Let's move on to the next one here. What was the conversation around civil rights, feminism, community activism and the war in Vietnam? And how did Raymond as a school support those conversations? Oh, and I want to clarify about feminism, from what I've heard about a lot of other students, the word feminism wasn't like something that was used, but the ideas were sort of there.

Preece: Oh yeah.

Spaccarelli: So I'm not just saying it was it used, the word feminism used. I'm saying the ideas.

Preece: Yeah. Simone de Beauvoir was a- almost a required reading for Raymond woman. The idea that... Really, the existential idea that that women are responsible for their own choices was implicit in what we were doing.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And it's one of the really lovely things for me is and you, you met some of them the other day, Lorenzo, so, the very accomplished women came out of that whole program.

Spaccarelli: Oh, certainly.

Preece: Interestingly enough, some of that was inspired by Mike Wagner's wife. She was a professor of economics at College of Pacific. And she became a direct mentor to at least a couple of people. Ursula Swent, who I don't think was at the reunion with us was very close to Pat.

Spaccarelli: She was. I've interviewed Ursula. She was at the reunion and I have since interviewed her.

Preece: OK. Yes. Good.

Spaccarelli: Yes. Yes.

Preece: I have a concrete example again of Pat Wagner's influence that might seem a bit unusual and it's the whole revolutionary times of this, but it's again a little bit beyond my tenure at Raymond. I had

actually been to Vietnam and come back and I was back in the graduate school again. Pat decided- now a little more history here. Are you aware of the Glide Church? In San Francisco.

Spaccarelli: I am not.

Preece: OK. Glide was originally a Methodist church in San Francisco, but they recruited as their minister- I'm going to blow his name here- Cecil's his first name, became famous and infamous at the same time. Under his leadership, it became the church where homosexuals and prostitutes were welcomed to come. And as a part of the several projects that Glide sponsored. They sponsored the creation of something that became known as the Glide Fuck Films.

Spaccarelli: OK. OK.

Preece: Pat decided to make attendance and viewing of these films a requirement of whatever class she was teaching. And wisely, she arranged for it to be shown where it might be welcomed, in the Raymond Great Hall. But she required all of her students to attend this. Now, some of it was simply celebrations of physical act of love. The preface to this, which the filmmaker said was, what's different and wrong about pornography is it only expresses the physical lust and doesn't express the joy and love that one hopes accompanies this experience.

Spaccarelli: Right. Right.

Preece: So, so the the first few films were young couples making love and being quite joyous about it. And pointedly, they kept the cameras on while they were playfully celebrating the pleasure they had just given each other. It was very, very nice. Very, very not pornographic in the slightest. Where the turn came was when later in the presentation, it was about two boys making love to each other.

Spaccarelli: Ah.

Preece: With the same, with the same venue. All the football players stood up and left in mass at that point of the movie. The climax of it, which was really, I think, in retrospect, damn special was a quadriplegic man who only apparently had sensual feelings around his anus. And it was he doing his best to make love to a woman who is making love to him with the same celebration afterwards. Now, you can't tell me that Pat's presenting that isn't anything but genuinely revolutionary. It certainly was revolutionary for Clyde Cecil Williams is the name of the pastor who is, who is... You can read, there's an extensive amount of stuff in him on, on the... There's a great book about the 70s in San Francisco, that he's featured prominently in. That was one of the mentors of Raymond women. So, yeah, of course, there was a feminist outing.

Spaccarelli: Of course, of course. How- so but generally day to day, she's teaching over at the college, right?

Preece: That's correct.

Spaccarelli: So, I mean, she wasn't there in lunches or something like Mike was.

Preece: She probably was from time to time.

Spaccarelli: OK.

Preece: And certainly there were- this doesn't get widely talked about, but there were Raymond students who went over to COP to take classes if it was important to them. Notably, the folks like Sid Wright, who were- knew they wanted to be doctors. You know, you weren't going to get enough of the sciences out of the Raymond core curriculum to really sustain that vision.

Spaccarelli: Right. Right.

Preece: There are a number of people. Harrie Alley's one of them. John Oram, who's much later is another. John Oram, later in which sense, Tom? He was a freshman after I was a freshman, but he celebrated his 80th birthday yesterday.

Spaccarelli: OK.

Preece: You talked about Vietnam. During my tenure at Raymond, we have three Vietnam vets who came to school. One of them had a complete crack up. I, I, I don't remember enough of it to know that I would use a diagnosis of PTSD, but he, he, he melted down totally. And the Raymond environment clearly didn't help him in that at all. I kind of wondered even how he got there.

Spaccarelli: Just to clarify. So you're saying the stress of the Raymond curriculum, you think aggravated that PTSD or?

Preece: Well, I also think that he, he was enough out there that unlike myself, he was not somebody that Raymond's student body was willing to welcome in. He might've been one of the baby killers after all. He was, and you know, he and Pete Hopkins both begin as outsiders. Pete had been an air traffic controller in the Marine Corps. And I can't quite pull up the name of the base that, that he operated out of. I have tremendous respect for Pete. He was older than, than his other freshmen and he acted it. He, he had learned maturity in a hard school already and he kept that. He was capable of hijinks. I don't know if you're going to keep this or not. I remember fondling the bottom of a bag of milk because he put it into a dispenser and looking up slyly at the guys and saying, it kind of feels the same, don't you think?

Spaccarelli: Yeah, maybe I won't keep that in. We'll see.

Preece: But he was one of the last Raymond students that I found. And so far as I know, he's never attended anything, but he was really glad to hear from me when I got in touch with him and he's

enjoyed a successful life and career in Southern California. And if Vietnam cursed him, it didn't curse him in any bad way. And, and the other thing to say about Vietnam, which you specifically asked about, I think I may have mentioned this before. I believe it was in 1966 that Bill Bargeman, who was, no, have to back up. It had to be '65 because Pete Windrem- no, that doesn't work either because Bill wasn't there yet.

Spaccarelli: Are you talking about the plaque on the wall?

Preece: Yes, yes. Asking for signatures that nobody signed. And I think it shows how far off the radar it was. I know that it was pretty invisible to me. By 1967, it had become really visible. Interestingly enough, and this goes also, I think, to the social service parts of- commitments of Raymond. The big question for me was always, I know I'm exempt because I'm in college right now, but why should I be put above any other would-be draftee? I could come back to college. The whole business of deferment, it's back to this defense of the status quo in the middle class and class structure and all of it. And that was a pretty big piece for me. I was certainly anti-draft through a whole lot of that. Bill recruited me to teach a draft seminar at one point. I think this was when I was still in school. No, it was not, it was just before I went.

Spaccarelli: Okay. But you're saying, but given the reality of the draft, it was massively inequitable. Is that what you're saying?

Preece: Yeah, absolutely. And to my mind, that was one reason why it would have been grossly unfair of me to avoid it. If I wasn't going, somebody else was going to go.

Spaccarelli: Right.

Preece: And I'm enough the working class kid. And I think I mentioned this before too. I think so many of us were one or two generations from working class and had very working class ethics. Interesting thought, Tom. I don't know if I want to go there. One amongst our Raymond group was always told by his parents, he was very, very special. And I think he'd been perfectly happy to work in a lumber mill in his hometown and work the green chain and do all that stuff. He's fond of telling a story about taking a summer job, moving cattle around and talking to an old cowboy and saying, asking the guy if he'd ever been to San Francisco. This is from a ranch high in the Sierras. And the cowboy said, yeah, I went once. Didn't much care for it though. But special as this guy was, he went to Raymond. He was told all the time that he was special. And when I got on the bus, finally, to go take my draft physical, they took a roll call of people who'd been called up to be on that bus. There were several members of my class, including that guy, who were not on the bus and who did not end up serving. I may have told you already, I probably would not have. I was running the address scam, which you could do fairly quickly. I was foot loose and fancy free and for the most part, making my living with poker. And I would simply change my address to someplace else outside the jurisdiction of where the envelope had showed up. That worked until my roommate opened the envelope. Then it became impossible to send it back and say, not at this address. And I don't know why they weren't on the bus, but they weren't on the bus. And that was the life of privilege that we were taught to expect to have. You could fight a blood war and spill

American blood and let people less privileged than you zap their guts out. I'm going to do a big jump here, but it illustrates the point too well. For a long time, the adjudication officer in the VA regional office where I worked, would tell the tale about how he as a rating specialist, he was working the Portland, Oregon office, which meant largely he was seeing claims from Portland, Oregon- from Oregon residents. And what he and the other members of his board in Oregon recognized was the great preponderance of Latino names amongst the disability ratings. And of course, the vast majority of disability ratings were guys who got shot, which meant they had been in combat. And I've read since that the draft raked the streets of Latinos in Los Angeles who did not have jobs and say, wow, I've got a gig now. But they didn't get any special training. Most of them didn't end up in the officer corps or anything like that. They ended up being turned into ground pounders. And that class and privilege were... Class and privilege of all kinds, I think, were always on the table in Raymond discussions.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: Why can't we all just get along? Let's see what other categories that you mentioned. Feminism we covered.

Spaccarelli: Yep. Vietnam War. I honestly am also curious about when that was actually posted. Is it possible it was posted twice? Because I remember Nancy Chappell Roberts mentioning it, and- which is- she started in '65. So I don't know how the timeline lines up at all.

Preece: Well, I think it is more than possible that it was posted more than once. Certainly, in the immediate aftermath of my graduation, the campus had thoroughly turned against the war.

Spaccarelli: Right. Right.

Preece: And speaking of divisions against the university, I mentioned that I got recruited to teach a draft seminar. I'm forgetting my UOP geography, but the original old antique building, the heartland of the university.

Spaccarelli: Are you talking about Knoles Hall?

Preece: I'm sorry?

Spaccarelli: Knoles Hall?

Preece: Well, I know it best in memory now as the place that Harrison Ford bails out the window of in the first Indiana Jones movie.

Spaccarelli: I think that's Knoles Hall.

Preece: Yeah. Okay.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Not 100%, but I think so.

Preece: So the seminar was scheduled to be in there. And of course, it was an assortment of students from all over. And I hesitate to say this, but it seems to me that what we were there to do was to propose what your alternatives were. Here are the various ways you can avoid the draft. Of course, you can sign up if that's what you want to do. But there's conscientious objector status. There's continuing in an identified field in graduate school that they think they may need for defense. I don't remember the whole litany. My particular session was attended by people who were meant to disrupt the training. And the one I remember that I think, again, represents the paternalism and the traditionalism of the UOP campus was a young woman who literally said, you shouldn't be trying to duck the draft. You're a man. As a man, it's your job to go off and fight and die and make sure that me and my babies are safe. And it's amazing to me that that young woman in that context could even believe that. Like so much of today, the facts were right there where you can see them. Nobody could justify why there was except for this really vague and inarticulate reference to the plague of communism seeping over the world. I think if anything, Vietnam got taken over by really good capitalists who are now in charge.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Anyway, that's really internalized paternalism right there.

Preece: Yeah. And the whole, you know, Diane has said this a couple of times. She kind of attributes the lack of vocational direction to the school... To the idea, which I think, frankly, Raymond flouted, or at least Raymond women flouted all the time. That, you know, we were there to get our BA or BS degree. They were there to get their MRS degree.

Spaccarelli: Oh, definitely. Raymond flouted it. There's- so many of the ones I've met have been incredible careers.

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: Like they go on to get their doctorate or whatever, you know, these are really highly educated people.

Preece: Well, and one amongst those prominent, and this is just a sheer illustration of the times. She graduated from Raymond, didn't have the money to go immediately to graduate school, and frankly, I'm not remembering what her accomplishments were. This is Linda Lee Sherrill, and her sister's accomplishments are more widely known. Adrienne ended up marrying John Cupples. They both had pretty storied careers. Linda couldn't find a job, and she ended up working in San Francisco, as an exotic dancer, simply because it was the only employment she could find that paid her decently. And that was, in the very sense, it may reflect again the paternalism. Yeah, they were all preaching that this was your gateway to the graduate education you might select. Well, that didn't work for me, and it didn't work for a lot of people. And if it didn't work for you, you were kind of lost. I mean, the one thing that I swear to God, if I could go back and do over, is I'd have paid a whole lot more attention to my application to San

Francisco State for their graduate program in creative writing. Hell, I might have been a well-published novelist by now if I had managed that small jump.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. But yes, anyway, not all the women went to grad school.

Preece: That's for sure. Although Linda Lee did eventually do that, but never mind.

Spaccarelli: Just took her a couple extra years, but she did that too. That's funny. The other topics that I mentioned in that very large question were civil rights, the discussion around civil rights, especially given that, you know, it was the 60s. And then, of course, the community activism. What did you do local in Stockton, and what did Raymond do about those?

Preece: There were certainly advocacies. I don't remember that- any organized thing. That doesn't mean they weren't there. I was very narcissistic in my youth. There may well have been. The civil rights thing was much, much bigger. We had a contingent of people who went to Mississippi in 1966, Pete Windrem included. We had a contingent of people who were founding members of SNCC. They were revered. It was a often referred to- celebrated, not exactly celebrated but regretted I suppose. Martin Luther King was invited to speak at Raymond High Table three times, agreed to do it three times, and three times canceled and then was killed. One of the, again, the paternalism reflections. Oh, this is going to get me into one of my best war stories here, I know. Despite all of that activism, we had in Raymond, practically no black students. Probably the most well known is Yvonne Allen, the late Yvonne Allen I must say, who ended up working as a community organizer in West Oakland for most of her life. Intellectually respected and revered by a great many people. Dave Wellenbrock kept close tabs with her for most of her career. And in my experience was the person who announced to the Raymond community that she had died. You always had to ask the question, why do we not have more, but it was self answering. Our tuition at that point in time was comparable to Stanford's tuition, and there wasn't a whole lot of tuition money going out. And I think the modern practice, which did evolve in part because of the cluster, was the business of providing local support to local students from the Stockton community. Really, really important to the university's development and growth, I think.

Spaccarelli: Oh, the community involvement program is fantastic. And Raymond deserves credit for that. That's a couple of years after you, but Raymond was part of that initiative.

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: To my understanding.

Preece: Mine too. Yvonne, this is again flashing forward. She was contemporary with my experience. She was in school, I believe, in the, beginning in '65. But in the years after I graduated, when I was an RA at Wemyss House, something had happened to her scholarship or loan money. Her dad was a sergeant in the United States Army, and he took leave to come out to Raymond and UOP in order to see what could be done, if anything, to get her more sponsorship. Now, he must have achieved something

because she did graduate and has had that storied career. But it was very painful for him to do, quite clearly. He was welcomed by the students into the community wholeheartedly. The would-be guys that the mafia might have rubbed off, they got him drunk on the third floor of Ritter House. He roamed the campus all that evening, and he ended up in my residence hall, where I was serving scrambled eggs, seasoned specifically with oregano. I'm still noted for that by some of these people. I don't believe I had any alcohol at the time, so I wasn't sustaining Papa drunk, but one sort of wonders if it wasn't on. In the room at the time was Papa Allen, me, my friend Bill Bargeman, my friend Rich Pearlman. They're both Jews. And Papa Allen comes in and says, this race stuff is all hooley. Anybody can tell what race anybody is just by looking at him.

Spaccarelli: (Laughs)

Preece: With my big, big kelp nose and says, you're Jewish. He looks at redheaded Rich Pearlman and says, you're Irish. He looks at Bill Bargeman and says, you're English. I tell that story, not just with a... It's an illustration of how deeply racism affects all of us.

Spaccarelli: Yes.

Preece: He was perfectly willing to make the differentiations as though it mattered when we were all working very hard to make sure that it didn't. And Yvonne succeeded. Good on Pop.

Spaccarelli: Yes, yes. That's interesting. Okay, well, I feel like we've covered a lot of that now. Civil rights, feminism, community activism and Vietnam. So if you're ready to move on.

Preece: Sure.

Spaccarelli: Okay, so this one might be shorter from what you said about community activism, but what contributions do you feel that Raymond made to the local community?

Preece: I don't have any doubt... Social awareness. This doesn't get spoken of often, but one of the traditions of high table wasn't, wasn't ours. There was always a member of the John Birch Society who came to every one of our talks in order to monitor what these crazies were doing over here. A peculiar incident in my life is a good illustration. Timothy Leary came to campus. I think he spoke at Chapel and he also did a talk in the Raymond common room. I went to that talk. I know exactly where I was sitting. If you stood in the Raymond common room, past all the clutter of computer equipment that you would now see there and looked out to the fountain. I was sitting to the left edge of the fountain. Timothy was right, right there in front of the fountain. And that made the Stockton record. Photographs of Leary at Raymond College made the Stockton record. And I was wowed because I must have a twin. There's somebody looking exactly like me sitting on the other side and realized only later that of course that meant they'd turned the negative over. Because we were- became this magnet for difference... We certainly contributed huge amounts to this. I think this is from my later career but it's a negative illustration, but it says so much. You've heard me say this in different ways, I'll say it again. To have been

a student at university in those days was to be part of an elite. And there's no question in my mind that that did not sit well with people who knew they were not part of an elite. I stayed over one Thanksgiving holiday beating on a paper that I don't even remember what it was but I was way behind getting it done and I didn't dare go home and leave it unfinished. And I walked to what was then the McDonald's on Pacific Avenue. And I got jumped by about six Latino boys, largely because I had a beard. And was therefore a hippie and therefore part of the elite enemy that hang around the UOP. When I got back to the university- I actually, civil rights training did me a good set. I put myself in a fetal position and protected my head and they gave it very quickly because I wasn't fighting back and there was no slaughtering to be done on this inert body on the ground. But when I got back to that campus I called campus security, told them what had happened. They called the cops. And an hour or two later, in come the cops with a parade of guys saying, were these the ones? If I was a different kind of elitist I could have easily said yes. I didn't know if they were the ones and I sure as hell was in no position to recognize a damn one- one of them with my head tucked between my arms on the ground. I said, no way I can tell sir, sorry. I don't know what happened but they took them away from the campus. But it's the illustration of inadvertent leadership that being those outside guys. And let's not question it at all, Burns and Martin set out to create an elite. And yeah, I now admit I belong to it. I'm an elite graduate of Raymond College. There aren't a lot of us. We're special. Some of that special was just inherited by the position we were put in by being set apart, having the eucalyptus curtain between us and the rest of the campus. Years later, one of my differences from a lot of the Raymond students was that I hung around with a lot of the UOP guys. I had a habit of going over to what was then called the end zone or enzyme to those who wanted to make it more colorful. And it was what was then the campus bookstore. And I would usually get a snack somewhere around three in the afternoon, a Coke, something. And I ended up hanging out with a bunch of guys. Interestingly enough, many of those people became fixtures in the rest of my life. And none of them were Raymond students. Jim Bain ended up not a distinguished career, but a real career with NASA. Roger Caldwell was at that table. Years later, I knew him and didn't recognize him. And then we sat down one day and said, Oh, you used to go to the end zone, and we used to talk. Yeah. Bain and his roommate connected with Raymond first. I'm not remembering his roommate's right name. I'm substituting the UOP's quarterback's name at the time, but that's not it. But they'd gone to the beach. And school hadn't started yet. Raymond had started, but COP hadn't started because we had that different calendar.

Spaccarelli: Right, right, right.

Preece: And Jim drove a TR3. They'd gone to the beach. He read the entire Lord of the Rings trilogy lying on his stomach on a blanket and the sun burned the hell out of the bottom of his feet. So they came over to the Raymond common room looking for someone who was licensed to drive Jim's car. And I volunteer. And lifelong friendship comes out of that. One of my later roommates, also that table. I'm blowing Richard's last name as I sit here, but he now has a huge gasoline franchise and supplies a great many of Central Valley farmers with their gasoline. Lowry, Rich Lowry. That crossover meant a lot to me. There were Raymond students who would never have dared to even make that trip.

Spaccarelli: Right, right. So Raymond definitely had some sort of, there wasn't a ton, but there was some leaking out into the surrounding campus and into the surrounding community.

Preece: Yes. Yeah, yes.

Spaccarelli: Okay. Okay, perfect.

Preece: And I, there's... How can I put it? I think at least when it came to the war, and certainly when it came to, to civil rights. A good deal of the Raymond leadership leaked into the community. Now Pete Windrem's repeated election as student body president, I chuckle about that and say well, everybody voted for him. But somebody at College of Pacific had to vote for him too or he couldn't have ended up with a majority. And Peter was right there, providing real community leadership about civil rights.

Spaccarelli: Yeah. Yeah. Well, that's perfect. Anyway, has Raymond College met your expectations as an institution, and as an education, and why or why not?

Preece: Well as an institution it's failed because it died. I've said this before. And I could not have known in advance, unless you take the emblem of Carl Van Meter on a skateboard as- as some kind of symbolic literary meaning. It was the perfect training ground for me. And what's really delicious is knowing that was the perfect training ground for other people whose minds do not work the same way. We've addressed this before. David is one kind of person. Greg is another. I am a third. We all like each other. We're all different in the way, what our intellectual approaches are and for whatever reason, the school addressed our personal needs wonderfully. I'm sure Greg would still tell you- he- apparently he did but can't figure out how I can see things in literature that he can't but I can't figure out how can he retain all the damn facts in his head that he can.

Spaccarelli: It seems you are plenty good at remembering some stories here. So you know, you both have some memory going on, so...

Preece: And that's, that's the other, that's the other thing I think it exceeded my expectations. I was not at all sure that- I had no expectation that the community we formed then would continue. And it- by fits and starts- it's made several efforts. Clearly, it is deeply there.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: The- it was impressive to me that Doug Haner was one of the people who tried to make sure this happened. You may have been there when he said that it was Jinx's death, amongst others, that, that prompted us to say, you know, we need, we need to be together, one more time. Doug would not tell you this, but I will tell you this because I read it from Jinx. They were going out together at a certain point early in Raymond history. And Doug broke up with her. And the words to her were, you're too smart for me. Jinx was never going to be anybody that a man could dominate. And I'm not trying to accuse Doug of being someone who dominated, but he went on to a career, teaching high school. And

he was, as it were, very much conforming to norms and Jinx, at least at inception and I think in many ways afterwards, was never conforming to norms. She was always pursuing her inner heart, all the time. And maybe Doug was too and some of the token of that I think was how very important it seemed to be to him that I show up there. This, this goes back to the sort of Raymond cliquishness. I spent December of 1966, taking classes at University of Cal, San Francisco State. And I room with Paul Frobose and David McBurdo. Bob Sullens was hanging out a whole lot in there, Sandy, later Sandy McBurdo was hanging out a whole lot in there. Fred was in and out. But Dave and Sandy and Doug and Fred and Bob remain friends the rest of their lives. They were really in pretty constant communication. They had phone, phone calls or even meals together, at least once a month if not once a week. And for Doug apparently, I'm included in that group, even though I've been fairly remote from it, because I was there that summer, because I watched all that coming of age stuff, happened for all of them, for all of us. It's, it's tragic and I- Sandy was the first woman of a certain kind of maturity, who willingly talked to me about my rather clumsy adolescent sexuality. And not, not... She was in no way coming on to me or anything else. She was simply observing what she saw. And, and watching how I reacted. And I've always felt, ever after, really close to her. It was just somebody I respected enormously for what she was willing to do for me at that time. I remember, at some point, she and I walked over the hill to a movie theater, and I think we saw... Steve McQueen movie, that's all I can remember. But, but in that walk she was smoking cigarettes constantly and I said, you know, you got to get that stuff up, it's going to kill you. She said no no by the time I get cancer we'll have a cure. Years later, I ran into Dave and Sandy at one of the proto reunions earlier. And Dave had stopped smoking. And I said, I said, Dave, she's still smoking, she's smoking like chain smoking. I had chain smoke too but I gave it up at three packs a day when I was about 27. I said, can't you encourage her to stop? He said, it'd be the death of me if I tried. And yeah, she got the can- she got cancer. And yeah, she died young, younger than she should have. But I know she was following her own bliss at the same time. I never expected that continuity, and it's real, it's virtuous. Part of my ambivalence about talking to Diane is knowing that she's on the periphery of it, but I can't, I can't give her the same thing. In one of the earlier reunions when we were getting real serious about founding the Raymond Phoenix. People said, well, what would our purpose be? And a whole lot of people stood up and said, how about doing something for the education of our kids. And if voting would have done it, that would have been the winning agenda. Voting had nothing to do with it. And we've done nothing more for that generation of kids except educate their parents and hope that they manage to do the same thing for the kids. And I know what they're talking about. For those of us from a sincere liberal arts perspective, the specialization of education is tragic.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: It may have been necessary to our economy, but maybe it is at the cost of our soul. It ain't humanism.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah, no, and it seems not very human. Yes, I understand completely.

Preece: To my mind, there could be no greater signal of the importance of- in the future of liberal education than AI. Because it's going to be a values conversation. It's not going to be a factual conversation. It's not even going to be a scientific conversation.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah, no, that's true. That's true. But, yeah. Anyway, that's outside the scope of the interview. We could also talk about that afterwards. Happy to talk about that. But, yes, I think that that covers the Raymond question. Definitely sounds like it met your expectations as an education.

Preece: Yeah. The interesting thing is, I don't think they expected it would.

Spaccarelli: (Chuckles) Why?

Preece: I went on to graduate school really just because I said because I want to learn to write, not because I wanted to teach English. And I was not the prototype of where Martin and the gang were aiming at the beginning. Not even close. But it served me so well out there in the real world, the so-called real world, that I could write that letter I talked about earlier, writing for Ted, and communicate to him the real, you know, what it means to be a government servant.

Spaccarelli: Right. Yes, perfect. Okay, moving on here, because this last question is a little bit lengthier, given what you've mentioned about how you want to talk about your post-Raymond experience. And that is, how has your education at Raymond influenced your career or your life choices? And, of course, the obvious one, probably going to be both of your wives, but, you know, beyond that. (Laughter)

Preece: (Laughter) This is going to sound like an extract from a novel. It's an extract from my experience. And I think it says a whole lot about... Intellectual integrity has always been important to me. That's a Raymond value, I abhor hypocrisy. And that meant when the United States Army drafted me, I was not unwilling to tell them that I was unwilling, despite the fact that they had drafted me. At the same time, I did, I think, a very Raymond thing. I said, okay, I'm here. What's the best way to learn as much as I can from this experience? And they gave me the option of going to a non-commissioned officer candidate school. This is a war story I have to tell a lot, unfortunately. I didn't initially say yes to that. The question was, my mind was, you know, was I going to be able to ride this out and I was already assigned to the infantry, I was in infantry advanced training. In those days, just a little bit to the north of me, here in Lacey Washington, there was Fort Lewis where I was. And the commands were in the habit of nailing a copy of the orders of their last graduating class to the door of the orderly room. So you could see where each person had been assigned once they left AIT. So, using a very sophisticated sampling technique. I took a clipboard. And one Sunday when I had no other duties as assigned. I patrolled the entire Fort Lewis AIT campus and recorded the numbers. 97% of the graduates that I could record went directly to Vietnam, after a short leave. 3% went to Germany, or other places. Germany is the placeholder for some places. I said, hmm, maybe I'd better volunteer for that non-commissioned officer candidate school. This is a quote from my novel now. After all, Kissinger's in Paris. Peace could break out any day. So, I not only went, settled. Most people who graduated from the course were promoted to E5 and sent to the field as E5 sergeants. I was a quote distinguished graduate. I was promoted to E6. And then you have the

question of how do you perform this duty that you've got to perform. I was officially going to be cannon fodder. And do it with integrity and do it. You already heard my lecture about not wanting to consider myself elite against anybody else. So, once I ended up, well, there's more to that. The intermediate step was they sent you to some place where you're supposed to serve duty as a sergeant. So, you could prove whether or not you had the cojones to tell other privates what to do. Especially since you'd so recently thought of yourself as a private. And the classic way, the 11 Bravo way they did this was that they sent people back to the training units where they became part of the training staff of the AIT companies. And, you know, they have AIT 11 Bravo graduates who went to NCOC school and came back 11 Bravos. Well, I went to 11 Foxtrot school, which is operations and intelligence. And the duties of an operations and intelligence sergeant are one of two things. Duty in a recon platoon. That's what I ended up with, surprise, surprise. Or duty in a tactical operations center where you kept the marks on a map so that the commander could at a glance understand where the trouble spots were, what the deployment of his troops were, what was going on moment to moment as the intel came in from the various reports. The top sergeant was supposed to record that. And we had whole courses on what the various marks mean. And I'm so glad I didn't get that job because my handwriting is crappy. I'm sure the colonel wouldn't be able to read a damn thing off of my mouse. I'm still with the, you know, what are you going to do? And like I said, I didn't misrepresent myself. One of my fellow distinguished graduates was a guy named Ken Bosco. Ken and I both ended up being assigned to Fort Ord for our OJT. Ken showed up and they started to send him out to an AIT company and he cried foul. He made a very loud noise. I think he even called his congressman. You can't send me out with 11 Bravo units. I am 11 Foxtrot. My duties are encompassed in operations and intelligence shop. At the very least, you should fit me in the operations shop of a battalion or brigade. Well, they kept his wishes. They sent him down to a battalion where I have very good difficulty seeing how he would have any duties other than continuing to staff, pushing trainees around. I was the other E6 that went to Fort Ord. They sent me to brigade instead of a battalion because Ken had been there first. And they had a problem, which I'm recounting in my second novel. The protests of the war had reached the point, this point, that people were refusing to train. And when they did that, they of course got disciplinary action. I don't know if it was Article 15 or court martial, likely it was Article 15. And they'd spend time with the stockade. And they would get sent back to the company they'd been a part of. Well, they wouldn't get sent back to the company they were a part of. The way AITs were organized, I was really close to the heart of this at brigade. They had a lot of discipline. Because you were disciplined. You couldn't plug in (...) to a bunch of courses you hadn't had yet. You had to get plugged into a company that didn't have it yet. And here's the bad part. The officers' evaluations by their commanders were based in part in how many of their folks refused to train. So when this fellow came back from the company he'd been in and landed on this other company, it was a bad tick mark on the second company if he still refused to train, took his court martial and went home. So here I end up, no more protestors, but rated confidential, allowed to do his job, all this stuff. And they recruit me to talk to these guys as they come back off that initial thing with the stockade. And I put it to them really straightforwardly. And this was with the most integrity I can. I know you don't want to be in this fight. I don't want to be in this fight. I've said so to command. I'm going to be in this fight because that's the job I've signed up to do. And it served me pretty well. Look at the E-6 stripe on my shoulder, please. You're going to have a choice. If you want to get out and you can't stand this, I'll send you back to the company where you came from. You can refuse to train again and you'll be- get a court

martial and be outside- with bad paper. But that's on you. You'll have to decide what that means to you. If you decide instead that you'd rather tough it out and see if you can get to the other side and get that honorable discharge. I'll send you back to where you can get that training. I probably interviewed something like 20 guys with that conversation. Only one guy who said he wanted to go back to training refused when he showed up. So I wiped out a whole lot of bad black marks and I did it, telling the truth about who I was and acknowledging the truth of who they were and without, without military bullshit in the way.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: I, my, my major wrote a letter that was supposed to go in my 201 file about how well he thought I had performed. When I was discharged, I asked to have a copy of it and it was no longer in the 201 file. Perhaps because I had applied for and gotten an early release. I'd like to think that some piece of that- it's your choice. It's really your choice. You need to think about this- rubbed off on every one of those guys. Later, and this is something I'm actually pretty proud of. The best lieutenant I had in Vietnam was a guy named John Lynch. He's also dead. I spoke at his funeral. John was a really electric leader. You could tell what he wanted to do from the way he stood and the way he talked and he could justify it, hands down. He'd actually decided as a very young person. His father had been killed in World War Two and he decided that he would perfect himself as a soldier as a way of making up for it. And he did a good job. He had his own... I won't, I will not tell the John Lynch story. I will not. But he was pretty gung ho and I was clearly not. One of the tactics that was employed in Vietnam was called recon by fire. If you don't see anybody, then shoot at it and see if somebody comes out or fires back. We were in a free fire zone. Most folks don't understand what a free fire zone really means. Free fire is what we were told as grunts. We were told if it moves, you can shoot it because there's only enemy here. There are no good guys. And in our area of operation, all of us knew that was a flat lie. My very first battalion maneuver in Vietnam was to be inserted on a cultivated field where people were growing food to establish a perimeter and establish the fire base that became fire base 3. And we were walking through fields of maize and other clearly food or useful stuff, crops that had been tended. Those weren't the enemy. At least we couldn't know that they were the enemy. So a day came that John took control of the platoon because Smitty, who had been the platoon leader, had taken the job of being the armorer in our company, which was rear based and took men. And John proceeded to test each one of us about what he was doing. At this point, I was the second squad leader. He took us out. He walked point, which was to his great credit, it was basically saying, I'll do anything you guys, I require of you guys. We saw a little shack. We deployed left and right. Online in case there was anybody there. John kept looking and looking and finally started to yell, remember this is my squad. These are the guys I've trained. Shoot, goddammit, why aren't you shooting? And I said, sir, we have no target. We did not fire up the little shack. We went home. And that day he made me the platoon sergeant. Not because I was necessarily the best platoon sergeant, but I could do all the platoon sergeant's duties. And I would not be in charge of combat elements who weren't going to fire their guns.

Spaccarelli: That's true.

Preece: And it was a discipline that inhabited all of us. There's another war story that follows on this that's in the heart of my first novel. We were (ambushed?). This road, division intel said that NVA might be infiltrating down it. And I'm not going to give you all the backstory that makes it really elaborate and memorable, but down on the trail came several hundred natives. And they are waving on sticks, Chuhoy pamphlets. These are propaganda that was dropped from the bush to say, turn yourself over to the government and all will be well. You can leave this disputed area and be safe. And they're chanting, Chuhoy, Chuhoy, Chuhoy. Well, the question for all of us is, we know those guys we can see are not bad guys. But we don't know that there aren't bad guys mixed amongst them or they're not being driven by bad guys. And nobody wants to fire their weapon. Lynch is not there. He's left the platoon in charge of another sergeant who is pretty gung ho. And even Doyle is pretty reluctant to pull a trigger at this point. And my friend Steve stepped out on the trail with his one shot at a time sniper rifle and said, Chuhoy! And did not get killed. So we knew they were okay. And I believe the count was 123 mountaineers that we med-evaced from the field and got them out of harm's way. Because the platoon had the integrity to say, we'll just take care of each other, but not to kill anybody. Not to kill any nice people, whether or not it's a free fire.

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah.

Preece: Now, you may not credit this. But for me, the basis of that was having intellectual and moral integrity about what I was doing. And the training for that came directly out of Raymond College. And the Methodist Church and a bunch of other places. But it was an intellectual exercise as much as anything for me. And in very real ways, when I worked for VA, I became the emblem in the office for leadership, for, see, here's a combat vet who's okay. And I could tell the troops that they had a sacred duty to adjudicate these claims fast and well. Because we owed it to everybody who put pen to paper. And they would believe me when they wouldn't necessarily believe the guy who stayed in the States the whole time.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: That's probably not the answer you expected, Lorenzo, but it's an answer I will give.

Spaccarelli: Yes. No, that's perfect. Yeah, that's great. This is the other, this question, though, does leave open the opportunity if you want to talk about your awareness of Raymond when you were studying at Pacific. Do you want to talk at all about that here? You know, post... when you were grad- as a graduate student.

Preece: There are pieces that are, I think, apparent to everyone. I hope you read or have read Neil Lark's oral history.

Spaccarelli: I haven't gotten around to it.

Preece: But it's a real picture of what his expectations as a faculty member who participated in the development of the core curriculum were about. And he says, I think with accuracy, that one of the problems that happened with Raymond was the recruiting didn't improve. I believe I already told you the story. I'll tell it again because I don't know if we were on the record or not, of making a sales call in Cleveland, Ohio, in someone's home, and having someone because Burns had promoted it so thoroughly, be amazed that I was doing door to door selling as a graduate of Raymond College because they understood it was this elite special institution. Well, he might have been able to get that publicity. But he wasn't selling enough parents who had enough wherewithal to send their kids to University Pacific to pass that message on to make it viable. So in many ways, Raymond was already failing, almost from the time it began. I don't think there was any class larger than the first three in any of the subsequent years. The name pulled a lot of stuff. I believe I told you that my father became a part of that recruitment chain. In return for kind of soliciting the admission of my friend Mark on a full ride scholarship. And he said to the admissions folks, I will refer selected students to you that I know can be successful Raymond students. There were at least two that I know about. Judy Buckner, and the form intended letters I sent you Doug Louman. I know Judy's happy, I don't know how successful she is. She's, she's married and has a family and lives in Ashland, Oregon. And she's not been someone attending this stuff. Neither is Doug. There's that division between old Raymond and new Raymond...

Spaccarelli: Yeah, yeah.

Preece: That they found alienating. But it gave me a monitor on what was happening in the school. Neil says, I think with some proof that the quality of recruits dropped. I wouldn't be surprised that perhaps the quality of recruits to the entire university dropped. It was that time- and, and remember, College of Pacific was very much a liberal arts school at that point in time, you had majors, but there's still a very heavy liberal arts foundation. The pharmacy school was being born, it was- it did not yet exist. McGeorge had not yet been adopted. The dental school and all those elements were as yet absent. We weren't doing heavily vocational training.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: And it was becoming clear in the eyes of the public, especially if you're going to have to spend something like three grand a semester to pay for tuition, and that must seem small now.

Spaccarelli: Oh yes.

Preece: I'd love to know what the adjusted for inflation numbers would actually be but that was just the tuition; that was not the board and room, which all came on top of that.

Spaccarelli: Yes, yes, yes, of course.

Preece: But the, the, as the quality went down. It's Neil's opinion, not mine, that the student engagement in, in things Raymond went down. When I look at Doug, at least... And because I stuck-

stuck around so long... I got to see who the new students were, the ones who went on and continued to lifelong learning, continued investing in the community feature. When you get to Paula Shield you'll see that in spades, when you get to Wendi Maxwell you'll see it big time. That set of ethics stayed with them. And the idea that they were going to an elite place was not ruined for them until the college was collapsed into Callison. And interestingly enough, those late Callison-Raymond graduates from the combined enterprise of finishing all their educations.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: All sort of feel, seem to feel like martyrs. I'm actually on the Callison College Facebook page at the invitation of Wendy Casey who's administering it for some time, and I get to see the way they talk about themselves and it's real close to the way we talk about ourselves. And they celebrate those later classes with more vigor than the Raymond alumni have so far. There was already a late... I don't know if you call it organization, but community group established by the later years of Raymond, they did picnics together every year. And there was the moment, very early in the Raymond listserv when David was quite elitist in his description that anything but the core curriculum was a waste of time and you guys didn't have it half so good as we did, etc etc. And a great many of them left almost instantly when they- when they hit that. One of the guys who he'd said it loudest to, I knew was from probably from Doug's class. So I found Doug and hooked them up and he was very glad to see it. And that was my gesture as a part of communicating and community that I think they all got and kept having. I'm not at all sure that it perished with that. I think a good deal of the Raymond DNA did go to the rest of the university.

Spaccarelli: Certainly.

Preece: Oh yeah.

Spaccarelli: Well, I think professors alone.

Preece: Yes.

Spaccarelli: Is huge, right? A lot of them went on to the rest of the university, and you know they had their connections with community, other professors, their- department's not the right word- their academic specialty peers in the rest of the university, they had an impact.

Preece: Yes. Well, another post-Raymond story from their very recent past, and the very distant past. I'm home from Vietnam. By this time I've dropped out of graduate school. I know it's not working for me. But John Smith is newly added, teaching literature at Raymond. And I hear about it. And I'm not going to get any academic credit for it, but I've heard enough about him. He's going to teach a course in writing fiction. May I audit this class sir? Of course you can, Tom. You're a member of the Raymond community, aren't you? And boy, there were some really interesting loud voices, some of which I've known- I'd love to know where Bruce, Bruce Kogashield is, he was really vivid in that class. But I have

already been practicing some writing. And I know John could see it. And I look back and I know how relatively horrid it was. Well, flash forward to one of the very recent Raymond soirees, and John comes. And I get to buy his book. And he bought mine.

Spaccarelli: Fantastic.

Preece: It's a full circle.

Spaccarelli: No. The strength of the Raymond community, despite its divisions, not saying there aren't divisions...

Preece: Of course there are, yeah.

Spaccarelli: But the strength of the community is remarkable. Like, the way in which you all relate to each other and connect and still have that sort of, you know, personal connection but also, also the sort of deep intellectual- intellectualism.

Preece: And I- enthusiasm companies that, right at the same time.

Spaccarelli: Of course, yes yes yes yes and I think that that is really remarkable.

Preece: I wish you could read and I'm sure they're not protected or preserved anywhere in the- too often the many dialogues on the Raymond listserv are, are navel gazing or argument instead of discussion. Jinx wrote some of the best pieces of analysis and writing, I've ever seen in response to things that came up. And she was retired, she was living on the coast. Even later, she had cancer, she was still turning this stuff out.

Spaccarelli: I would love to see some of Jinx's writings if you have any of it.

Preece: I probably don't. It may be that Paul has preserved some, I'll ask. He'd be perfectly happy to share them, I'm sure, I'm sure. I might have stashed some of them in, I have a habit of keeping old emails like crazy and I may have some of hers there. I'll look.

Spaccarelli: Okay.

Preece: She never did glib. I do glib as a matter of routine. And I was very complimented when we visited Paul, she and her husband share an email address. So, at one point I made very clear that everything they were saying about Jinx was being heard by her husband, and they should have to take that into account when they said things. He said to me when, when he described her departure, that for the most part, the three people he read on the listserv were his wife. And I'm going to forget this other guy's name for the moment. He's from the later classes. He's really brilliant. He ended up founding a social work program at the, at the Sioux Indian Nations private college. That was essentially his last big

hurrah as a professor. Wonderful, wonderful way with words. Descriptive, he wrote everything autobiographically as well as illustration to his... And Paul said, he read that guy, he read Jinx and he read me. There's a whole lot of me he didn't have to read but some of it was probably a bit okay. I tend to not be the one arguing, I bring up stuff, very occasionally, it's just a news story I think they're overlooking. I'm being accused of being irrelevant right now because I'm speculating that no labels will not run Joe Manchin for president. I think no labels might run Joe Biden for president and John Huntsman for vice president. Of course, Harris would still be the vice president if that happened. But it would put Huntsman back in a political conversation where he was when Obama made him ambassador to China. And basically set up a political fight.

Spaccarelli: Anyway, but Raymond, Raymond, Raymond.

Preece: I bring that up only as a way of saying, that's the kind of thing that I, that I would, that I would write to those guys. I'm not... I have no interest in that. What-about-isms or any of that other kind of stuff that people use it in place of thinking. I suspect it's, it's, well I know it's universal. Wendy Casey and I in conversation basically said the university owes the clusters a legacy.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: I don't think it has to be Raymond's legacy. Interesting enough, there's actually probably some significant money out there to be had.

Spaccarelli: Clearly.

Preece: Well, I'm talking like some, some big money. One of the Raymondites is a Hollywood producer now.

Spaccarelli: Wow.

Preece: Of considerable success. I don't even know his name but I've been told that by other Raymond stuff. And at one point I tried to track down who his agent was without success. The... There are a couple of stories like that. They're not participants in the alumni stuff. But one suspects that if Callahan knew they existed. They'd be perfectly happy to, to endow a legacy to what those schools were. And I'm only talking about Raymond there. Covell famously was a place where rich Latino kids could go to school and get an American University degree.

Spaccarelli: Yeah

Preece: And some of them stayed rich.

Spaccarelli: Oh yeah. Yeah. No, some of them were like big name ambassadors and all sorts of political leaders in Latin America, right?

Preece: Um, ask Gene Bigler, he would know, I would not.

Spaccarelli: Yes, sounds good.

Preece: That may be the other reflection on Raymond. The boss who first promoted me to management said I never tooted my own horn loudly enough. And that's because of the working class ethic that I grew up with. My dad always said, it doesn't matter how you look, it doesn't matter how you dress. What matters is what you do. And I always felt I should be recognized for what I accomplished instead of how I shine my shoes. There are people within the Raymond community for whom their image of themselves became quite inflated. Whose impact is, I will not say insignificant, but less than they would like to imagine it would have been. And I feel frankly a little sorry for those guys. They bought too much of the elite myth. And it has not served them well. It served me damn well.

Spaccarelli: Yeah.

Preece: Is that enough?

Spaccarelli: That's plenty. So and then, okay, that's that's great. I will. That's, I'm done with my questions. And now I turn it over to you. And I ask you, what have we not covered in this interview that you would still like to discuss? You know, the five hours of interview that we've done so far.

Preece: What could be left?

Spaccarelli: Well, I mean, it was, it was several years worth. So five hours probably still isn't covering it. I'll acknowledge that.

Preece: Well, this might surprise you and it even surprised me. I find myself really only in the last few years, and this precedes Callahan, wanting very much for the university to succeed. Wanting it to build itself into the kind of institutions that various presidents have imagined it could be. And yeah, I make alumni donations and will continue to. They're not gigantic. Now, somebody said, we're going to endow a chair, send your check, Tom. I'd send a pretty big check. At least big for me. We haven't touched on this at all, but I found myself in a very weird position. As far as I'm concerned, for reasons that have nothing to do with Vietnam, or my military service, as far as I'm concerned, I'm rated 100% disabled according to the Department of Veterans Affairs, and I draw a significant amount of money tax-free from you, Mr. Taxpayer, every month. That didn't happen until about five years ago. And I had pursued things that I recognized to be legitimate claims, although I did not think myself that they were service related. Quite frankly, there's nobody, there's nothing the United States government can ever do to make up for what they did to my life by drafting me and driving me into that. I would have been a very different person, and I don't doubt equally successful if I had been allowed to do something else, and not aspire to work for Vets for the rest of it. But I retired from the Civil Service at GS-13. Diane has a significant retirement. Those retirements alone are more than enough to deal with our needs. And then

I get this whumping big chunk of change because of the weirdness of the way the government administers what they call service-connected disability. Why do I think it's not service-connected? Well, the root disease is ulcerative colitis. My grandmother had it until she died at 103. My mother had it and died as a result of complications of treatment for it. My sister has it. Sure sounds like some genetic component to me. And say what people say to me, well, maybe the stress of Vietnam brought it on. That's perfectly possible. The first visible symptoms I had were in the South Vietnam, in the middle of combat, and that's what gets me the big check. But it also means I got a whole lot of money I never expected or planned to have. I'd like UOP to qualify to give me a reason to give them some.

Spaccarelli: I'd like that too. I would love to see that, you know? Anyway, that's fantastic. That's fantastic. I will end the recording, and then we can chat about some of that other stuff that you wanted to talk about. Thank you so much.