

Phyllis Williams:

When the strike in '73 happened, I was the direction of the student loan office. So that was where I worked and literally for six weeks we couldn't get in our offices. We were unable to work, we worked at home, and it was very, very chaotic. The only things we had access to were things we just happened to take home the day before. We were in the process of converting all our student loans to a billing service and I had the printout, but I didn't have all the account cards so I could verify that. And for six weeks, to be unable to do those things, it created real havoc. That same year, when we finished in June, we didn't finish our audit until the following March.

Now in the business office, it created an awful lot turmoil, because things still had to happen. We dealt with people's unhappiness about classes not being held, and that type of thing. You know, "Why should I have to pay for the quarter when classes weren't held." But some classes were. Some faculty members, I don't think they even missed a class. They held them in their homes, they held them in different parts of the campus.

When we came back to work, we actually had rats. There was garbage on the front campus. It created a climate for the staff that there was an anger, we had to come back in and clean up messes. Our papers were just all over everyplace. Some of them were gone, and then they were hidden, and then they were found and so the staff, I would say, was very upset over it. Angry with the students, angry with the administration that couldn't get [the strike] resolved. I think the leadership kind of had their hands tied. It was in court, things were trying to happen, and some people went ahead and did what they needed to do, some classes were held; other people just didn't do anything.

It was just so chaotic, and it was two months after we had had a three-week strike from the maintenance staff, when they walked out. Of course, we got into work, they would ask people who were not members of the union not to get into work, but we did come to work. So it was like we just get recovered from that, and then we have this other one. It affected everybody, I think.

How long did it take for you to get the office in working order?

We were months doing it, it literally took until the following March to finish our audit that would have been done by sometime in September. It was the following March when we closed our books for the year ending '73. You could never get into the next year, and of course, it [had] an immediate impact on the enrollment. People just withdrew. All of a sudden, everything changed on the campus, the number of students here, dealing with the students who argued and said, "I went home, I wasn't here." We had to do something with their billings and then we agreed that some people, if they stayed, their last study quarter before they graduated, they got a free quarter, their last study

quarter. They didn't have a graduation. In fact, they had one, I think last year, those people from '73, finally had a graduation.

It wasn't postponed until a later date?

No, because we didn't get back into the offices until about the tenth of June.

So you couldn't process anything...

No, you couldn't process anything. So they didn't have a graduation ceremony. It had a tremendous impact on a lot of people, in a lot of different ways. I think what happened in some cases is that our reputation, and I don't know whether it was the reputation of the administration for letting it happen, or the reputation of the student body being so much in an uproar, but this had an effect on continued enrollment.

What about the first ten years after the strike, in terms of what it was like to work here?

Because we suffered the decline in enrollment, that you were constantly dealing with less money. The budget had to be cut; we were laying people off simply because there was not a need for them. At that point in time we probably had more than twice as many maintenance people than we have now. In '82, we actually laid off tenured faculty people.

In '82? Because I know that happened in '74, right afterwards...

In '82 we laid off tenured faculty. Some of them did what we call a tenure relinquishment, simply because we had more faculty than we did students. We were down to about 400 FTE's and we had all this faculty which we did not need. The morale of people, seeing their colleagues being laid off, some people left. Some people left of their own accord. There were no salary increases. I think one year, two people got a bonus of \$200, and that was the only salary adjustment. Needless to say, the faculty salaries were always low anyway, and they didn't go higher at all. The student-faculty ratio is so low now, but you can imagine what it was then. We had 50 some faculty and 400 students and not all were here at the same time.

We also, during that period of time went from the four quarter system to what we presently have. And that made a change. I think in one respect that was probably a little bit better because it gave people time to be away. It doesn't work for the co-op program, though, the current calendar.

I think it was a depressed time if it was not your nature to be an upbeat person. You would just basically come to work and then work and go home and that's all you did, there was no enthusiasm. Recently some of the faculty members started doing research, and when they do a grant proposal they put down what they've done. And there was just this whole period of about

12 to 14 years where people didn't do anything. They had no initiative, no enthusiasm to go on with other things. Even though, with the enrollment the way it was, they had the time to do it. But they had no encouragement, and I think part of was the administration, but what the administration was trying to do was how do you get enough dollars together to keep the place going.

You're talking about Birenbaums's administration?

Right. When Birenbaum came on, he was brought on to try to close some of these campuses that were opened. We opened too many campuses and there wasn't enough administration to deal with it. And [Birenbaum] worked on the ones where the quality of the programs was just atrocious. Those are the first ones that he closed.

Did it help?

Well, it helped the drain, but then what happened at the college with the continued enrollment- it costs so much to run the campus, no matter how many students you have. And when you go to 200 students under that number, there's no way you can operate with a balanced budget. You see, most of the fundraising comes from Antioch College alums. Because all the emphasis was being put on the rest of the campuses around the country, the alumni stopped giving money.

Stopped giving money during Dixon's time?

No, Birenbaum. Antioch's never been a wealthy school, it never raised a lot of money. It was in '79, when we had our payless payday, they had just launched a 16 million dollar capital campaign, and then we come up with a payless payday, and it just died right there.

Yes. What they did is, they had a stabilization fund, which is basically money that they raised about a million and a half dollars just to get us so we could turn around and start going forward. It was chaotic in that respect, that you couldn't think to the future because you had to get through today. And you had to worry today about paying last year's bill. At one time, we were probably eight months behind in paying bills, simply because we were meeting payroll, and so we were constantly using today's money to pay last year's bills.

I just interviewed Nina Myatt, and she talked a lot about '79 almost being worse in some respects than '73

I think '79 was worse because a lot of people live payday to payday. The date was May 17th, a Tuesday or Wednesday, and to be told on Tuesday or Wednesday that you're not going to get a paycheck on Friday. People that were paid monthly, we had

two weeks to know. So it's like, "I haven't spent all my money yet, so I'm not going to go buy that new dress. I'm going to save it so I can buy groceries next month." I think it affected them financially in a different way, the payless payday. A lot of the employees actually came to work knowing that they weren't going to get paid. And what we had was people were coming to work, and because they couldn't pay a babysitter, they brought their child with them. Somebody's sitting there trying to work, and here's a little child saying "Mommy, I want to do this, Mommy I want to do that," and it didn't work. Supervisors didn't feel like they could say to someone, "Would you do this." How can you tell somebody to do something when you're not going to pay them? I think it affected them personally, and as I say, a lot of those people lived payday to payday, so they were able to go out after the first week and apply for unemployment, and they did apply for unemployment. Eventually it came down to where there were maybe six or eight people working in the business office; we had about 22 originally. Then as we were able, we would call an employee back to work. In September of that year, I think we called almost everybody back.

How long did it go on?

We didn't get paid in May, and then the college didn't get paid in June. But it was not the same way all around the university, because in some states, state laws say you must pay people. And so some of them actually got paid. In the state of Ohio, nobody got paid. Eventually though, everybody got all the money that was coming to them for all the hours they worked, plus interest.

That happened for two months?

Two months for the college.

I asked Nina this, whether or not you think '79 would have happened if it hadn't been for '73?

Oh, I don't think that it would have. I think the decline in enrollment at the college, the strike of '73, was definitely the problem. Because people were just not coming, they were unhappy with it, they didn't like what was happening; it was an entirely different student body. We had a case where we actually paid students to stay off campus. They were students that were not ideal people, and the only way we could get them off of here was to say, "Okay, you go to California and we'll pay you to stay out there." Nobody went to class. I've seen where you come here and you go to the cafeteria and see students studying. It was like, "This is great," because it was not the "in" thing to go to class. They'd go to the first and last class of the quarter.

You're talking about after the strike?

After the strike. Even before that, we had too many students here, too. I can remember one quarter when we had 1,000 students on campus. Now, this campus cannot handle 1,000 students. Everything was packed, people just lived where they could live. They had to go to Xenia and Springfield to live, the cafeteria was a madhouse; you basically had two shifts of people who ate their meals in the caf. Classes were large, it was just not ideal. Because the campus is not geared for 1,000 students-- actually 500 at one time is too many. Somewhere, 450 is the magic number.

So did you see the quality of the student body change a lot?

Oh, absolutely. I've seen it where, what ever was there they took, they didn't care who it belonged to. They didn't care about going to class. I've seen it where students walked in who were full financial aid students and they wore clothes better any of the employees who were working here. They just had unlimited source of funds from some source. There was a lot of stealing on campus, it was just not safe to leave anything anyplace. This is from the time I came in the 70s, when there were so many people on campus. One student stood up and said, "We were raised that if you saw something and wanted it, you took it. And then you brought us to Antioch and you expect us to abide by the rules. We weren't raised that way." We made it in some respects too easy for some students, and they didn't appreciate the opportunity that they had. I think that in the last three years, I think we've got good students here now. I think they want an education, and I think that's important. Other times, it's a case where they're just at school and they don't care what they do.

Is this is the 70s and 80s?

It took different turns during that period of time. We had a time when you never saw a student reading a book, it just wasn't the same, they never worried about going to class.

Actually, since '86, I've been more involved with the students because we've moved back over here from G. Stanley [Hall]. [Our office] moved over to G. Stanley in '77. So from '77 to '86, the contact with the students I had would be the ones who were coming over to G. Stanley and we'd have CWSP students. I just think the student body now, I just really think they're super people. I think there's some of them that really want to learn about things and they've got common sense. They're not living in their own little world, that "This is what I want and that's the only way it can be." I think they listen to other people. I served on Comcil now, this is my second quarter to do that, and I'm really, really pleased with how people think. The students-- they're not selfish. They're thinking, "I'm representing a whole group of students, and what do they want." And I think that's to our credit.

And that's a change.

Yes. Definitely a change. One of the problems we have is that a lot of people think Antioch closed. They still think we have a lot of financial problems. We're better off financially, we're not well by any means, but we're in much better shape than we were five years ago. Every time we closed one of our adult campuses around the country, it reads in the paper--"Antioch College closes"; they think it's the [Yellow Springs] campus. This is something admissions found as they went out and made contact with counselors. So how do you get the word back out there that we didn't close, and that yes, we did have financial problems, but we're better, we're turning that around?

Could you speak a little more about how the strike affected [Antioch's] image and/or reputation?

Once it comes out and says that you've got a payless payday, immediately what people think is that you're going to file bankruptcy. [Also], because we weren't getting any grants because we weren't making any proposals for them; our name wasn't out there to show we were still doing things.

With the alumni even, the fact that the fundraising went down to almost nothing. No matter what we did, you got money, but you got it from two or three people.

Was there also a lot of poor coverage?

You get the coverage with the strike, while the strike was going on. Once it's over, it's not news, what's happening to the institution and how it's trying to recover. It's only news when it's bad. As I say, we weren't doing anything to get our name anyplace. And then I think with Birenbaum, the fight between Birenbaum and the college was so intense. He didn't like the college.

He wanted to close it, didn't he?

As you look at the campuses that were losing money on the basis of, you've got x number of students, the logic would have been to close it. [The Yellow Springs] was the biggest drain. It literally could lose two million dollars in a year. [That's] a big difference than a program that's going to lose \$50,000. At the college, there were some costs that you couldn't cut. You can't heat the power plant halfway; because of the system that it has, if you turn it on, it's going to heat all the buildings. And you can't use less electricity in a classroom because you've got two students instead of twenty. The fixed costs were there.

I'm certain it was talked about, but it never went as far as going to the board to ever be presented to close the college. Part of the reason I think it never would have happened is that the majority of the board have always been college alums and I don't think they would have tolerated it. When Al came on board, we had the law school that was losing hundreds of

thousands of dollars and the college was losing hundreds of thousands of dollars every year, and there was no way you could save both of them at the same time. When he was hired, it was to save the college. He looked at the situation, and after two months, saying "I can't do both." Al looked at it and said, "We've got to refocus all our resources and our efforts on the college", which we did. And getting the name of Antioch College back there again.

How do you think the strike has affected the leadership of college?

I think at the time [of the decline] there were so many things you had to do, and what did you do first? You were in a survival mode, and when you're trying to survive, there's no vision. You can't think beyond this year, or this quarter. I think we've gotten beyond that to think, "What are our priorities?" We've had one session with both the top administrators of the university and the board of trustees talking about what is our vision for the year 2000? In 1973, we didn't even think about 1974, let alone several years down the road. I think it changes how you have to operate, because you have to survive. We've gone through the change of people so much that you never have time to really come together and know each other so you can work together and take the next step.

Nina was saying there were a lot of faculty and administrators changing hats and roles?

Some of that came out of necessity; you'd have an administrator leave, and somebody has to step in there in the interim. At Antioch it takes a long time to fill a position; we've always had the committees and all of this, so you can't just go out and hire somebody.

I think the fact that we didn't have enough continuity with the people, there was always somebody at one of our campuses changing leadership, and then its working with them. We also went from one campus having a problem to another campus having a problem, and we were putting out fires all the time. It would be nice to think, "What are we going to do next year, what are we going to do next quarter?" instead of putting out fires.

What about the mission?

The overall mission, and the Antiochian concept, I think it's always been there. The people that stayed, they had that vision. They just put it to the side to stay around and do [certain] things. I see a lot of the faculty who were very depressed over the time beginning to get excited about things again. They're doing different things in different areas, they're doing grant proposals and they're successful. Between '73 and '79, that there's an awful lot of people who are desperately afraid that it's going to happen again.

That something like a strike would happen again?

Well, it might not be a strike, but something that would put us to where everything is just stopped again. Since Al's been here, the one year we made a big jump in enrollment immediately everybody thought, "We've really coming back and we're going to continue to do this every year." Well, the next year we went up just a few, and then we stabilized and stayed the same. And people say, "Well, it's going to happen again. We're not going to make it." It's a little bit like when we started building the new dorms and renovating buildings. Everybody was very enthusiastic, they were very excited, things were happening. Once we got to the point where we had all of our projects done, and we hadn't started on the next one, it's like, "Oh, we're in trouble again, we're not doing anything." It's this attitude that they've got to get over and they can't let go of it. I started in 1970, and so I've been through all the stuff that's happened. What's happened to us in the last five years-- I'm not saying that I didn't think we could do it but there's no way I thought we would have done it in the short period of time we did. It was just unbelievable what we did in about a two year period. A lot of the credit goes to the college alums, who contributed money so we could go out and do those things. But our reputation among financial institutions-- if I had to borrow money before that, I had a terrible time ever getting a line of credit or borrowing money and it turned around to where I had banks calling me and saying, "I want to come in and see if we can do anything for you. As soon as we started doing the building, that was the biggest step towards turning around, then getting the qualified statement out of our financial statement. For fourteen years, our financial statement said, "We've done our audit but we can't guarantee that this company will continue, or should continue.", because we didn't have enough assets to cover our liabilities. In '87, that came off of there, which was a major, major accomplishment.

Speaking of finances, what was the estimated damage of strike, the financial loss?

The financial loss came over a lot of years, because we went from 2,500 FTE's to 400 FTE's. That was a direct result of it. There was damage, just physical damage. People came back to work, and typewriters were damaged, things were missing. I would say just the initial cost of cleaning the place up and getting things back in order had to be a couple hundred thousand dollars. And a couple hundred thousand dollars then would have been a considerable amount of money.

Community. You talked some about decrease in morale and depression. and how people were just surviving. What changes did you see from before to after in the cohesion of the community?

Before the strike, with the number of students that we had,

I don't think there was the same feeling of community that there is now, because there were too many people.

So there wasn't really a community?

I certainly didn't sense it to the extent that I do now. I think just numbers made a difference. Now, when you have community days and you have a group of 14 people; 14 people can talk; 3,000 people can't talk. Now by going to community meetings, people can sit there and everybody can have their say, but you couldn't have it then. A minority of people controlled everybody.

Students, faculty?

I think students controlled more than anything.

So there were really a few students making a difference?

Yes, and not necessarily the right students. I think it was a case where even the other students didn't like what was happening, but they wouldn't fight it. I think it just wasn't worth the battle.

You mean intimidating?

Yeah.

What about relationships between different groups on campus?

Right after the strike, everybody had so much to do, but there were always the running battles between administration and faculty. I don't think it was any different, I really don't. I think there was the question of, "How could the administration have stopped the strike?" It was always the administration's fault, when in fact the faculty probably had more working relationships with the students who instigated [the strike]. They actually had, not more control, but more contact with the students, and could have convinced them that what they were trying to do was not right. It wasn't that it wasn't right, but that the college couldn't do what they wanted them to do. Because the college could not guarantee something that they had no control over, and we didn't.

But did the relationship between different factions change?

Oh, I have to believe that it did. It seems there was always turmoil between the faculty and the administration, and the changing of-- the turnover of people. I think it was always somebody new coming on board. If you wanted to change one little thing, you upset somebody. If we could get people into positions and they would stay for four to five years, I would say in probably your third and fourth years, you'd see some stability with things, and things beginning to move forward every year we've had somebody new. Connie Pelekoudas was in [the Dean of

Faculty Office], Valora [Washington] was in there, then Connie was back in there and now Gene [Rice]. And everybody comes and they work differently, they interact differently with people. If Gene's here for five years, things should start falling into place and beginning to make progress. Then I think all those old battles can be won. I don't know whose idea is right, whether the faculty's or the administration, but maybe they can at least work together and solve them.

What about administrators and students. Did that relationship change?

I've interacted more with students in the last year. Well, I did when I was the director of the student loan office. I met with every student that was a financial aid student. Basically, it was all business because there were so many students, you didn't have time to really know anybody. And I've had dealing with some of the students in maybe a co-op job or something and particularly in the finance area and feel real comfortable with working with them, love it when a student comes in and talks. Some of the students have become very, very special to me. I think that administrators who get along with students, they can do it if they treat the student as their equal. But if they don't treat the student as their equal, they don't get along well. I can look at different people and just tell why they don't get along with students.

I'm wondering if something like the strike affected the relationship between those two groups in terms of the trust? If there was more or less trust?

Well, at the time, I was angry over the whole thing. I was angry over what happened to my records, but I wasn't angry at any particular student. And I don't think that people took it out on any individual student. Now, some people could have, but I don't think that that was the case. I think if anything it's like "How much involvement should the students have?" and "We've got to make decisions and the students are not going to be in there this time making decisions," because otherwise we could have the same thing again. I don't know what happened prior to the whole thing in '73 that prompted it. Something had to prompt it though. I had no idea whether it was some kind of a meeting, whether they were talking about financial aid, but all of a sudden it happened. It could've been a meeting and somebody made some remark about there's no guarantee on financial aid and that prompted the whole thing. "I came to Antioch and I want to be guaranteed that I can be here for five years." and somebody else said "We can't do that," thinking that the next time, "They won't be in our meeting." I don't think people took their spite out on [students].

But was there maybe a feeling that it could happen again? Or when students are confronting administrators about policies or challenge them in a large group, I wonder if the strike runs

through people's minds?

I think it does run through people's minds, I think as we've had little ruckuses with the union. The union sees their viewpoint and they don't see the administration's viewpoint

And there are two sides to every issue.

Back in this time it was not unusual for the union to have walkouts. And in almost every case, whenever they had a walkout, whatever they wanted, the administration gave to them. Needless to say, it was part of what almost bankrupted the institution. They would get things and they would lose employees, because the college couldn't give them the additions that they wanted and keep all the people on the payroll. It was a case where, the administration was the enemy, to the students, to the faculty, to the union. What it was really is that the administration was trying to run a business and keep it going and try and keep everybody happy and it was impossible.

People didn't sit down and really talk either. I think they yelled. We had people who were not open.

What about the change in attitude among administrators and faculty towards student dissent? Was that affected by the strike?

I think people were perturbed by the whole thing, really saying that it was such a waste because they wanted us to do something that we couldn't do. The whole effort, the time, the damage, the dollars that were spent, was so unnecessary. At the same time, the students did not see that.

What about the attitudes towards innovation and experimentation in education?

As I said earlier, the fact that what we were trying to do was to survive from then on, you didn't have time to think about that. All that you were dealing with was what you were dealing with now. We changed from a school that had too many students and had a lot of good ideas to a school that went into a survival mode and stayed there for a lot of years.

And changed with the coming of Guskin?

Oh, absolutely. Bill Birenbaum did what he was hired to do. He closed some of the campuses. He didn't close enough of them and he didn't pay attention to the college and he needed to that along with closing the other campuses. It was the battle between the "we" and the "they", the college and the university. The college was "they". And the battle got to the point where Bill just gave up on the college and said "I'll go ahead and deal with the university and let the administration of the college deal with the college."

What about the quality of the academic program?

One of the things that we lacked was a critical mass. You have a class with two or three students in it and it can't be a good class; here's just not enough interaction. That was probably one of our biggest problems and the faculty's lack of enthusiasm. Not all of them. Some of them really stayed in there and did what they needed to do. They were depressed, and that has an

impact, it has to.

Why do think so many people stayed?

Well, it's a little bit like myself in particular in '79. My husband worked at Wright-Patterson and people knew where I worked and he had people ask him, "Why does your wife stay there when she's not going to get paid?" And he said, "If somebody doesn't stay, they can't survive." I think that we felt that there was something here that needed to survive. Some of the people that are still here that work for me today, Debby Caraway, Jim McKee in personnel, Florence Borton, they were all there, they worked through it. If they hadn't been there, doing what they needed to do, we wouldn't be here. I think it was the same way with the faculty. The faculty believed in what was here and they stayed. It's funny with Antioch, when people leave Antioch, they come back. Employees that will work here maybe ten years and then go somewhere else, in two or three years, they're back. There's just something about Antioch-- it becomes part of your life.

A few more questions. One is how you think the strike affected Antioch's commitment to a more diverse student body, both in terms of ethnicity and in terms of economics.

I don't think it has an impact. Every school wants diversity and there's only so many students out there. Every school in the country is catering to minority students. If you're not a wealthy school that can offer an excellent financial aid package, or offer a big scholarship, you're not going to get those students. At our adult campuses, we're facing the same thing. [They're] predominately White, female institutions and no matter what you do, you get more White females. Here, it's pretty much of an even mix, but predominately white, simply because we don't have the scholarships and the dollars to go out and recruit the minority students that can go to another school and really get a good package.

What about the strike's affect on the relationship between the town and the college?

I think there's some people in the town that, and I think I've sensed it more since I've moved here, don't like the college, even though a lot of the businesses survive on the college, not only from the student body, students probably spend a lot more downtown than anyone realizes, but the number of employees, even if they don't live in town. Every employee here pays the city income tax. It's like when we couldn't pay our bills. People in Yellow Springs wouldn't give us credit, some of them still won't give us credit. And they only hurt themselves. We can go someplace else and buy it cheaper, but it's convenient here. Its like, "Well, back in '79, you didn't pay your bills." That's twelve years ago, it's a different institution now. They won't forget the past and some of them never will. It's like some

the faculty that will never let go of what happened then. They will never let go of the "we/they", the college and the university. The college lost as much money as anyone else lost but they don't want to believe that.

Do you think there's a lot of bitterness among faculty?

Not all the time, it just comes out at certain times. Something will be said, something will happen and it's there. In the back of their minds, it's always there. But most of the time, they go on and do their job and you don't feel that animosity.

I have one last question. Do you think the strike had any positive affects of any kind?

It's hard to say this long after the fact. Some people probably learned about financial aid and really realized how it worked. Maybe what it did is it brought out the good in some people and the desire to make the place work. It was an individual type thing of the student that would come in and say, "Well, I know where your student account cards are" and that really knew that what was happening was wrong because somebody had taken them all and they were hidden and then we got them back. Individually, it made people think about the school and think about what they wanted to do and I think the people that stayed have to be better for it. They liked the college atmosphere, they like working with the students or they wouldn't have stayed. Other than that, I hope we never, ever have to go through it again.

Joyce Clayborn:

How long have you been here?

How long have I been here? By September I will be here 27 years. I came in '64. You know, [the union] had a strike in '73 too, and then it went right into the [student] strike not long after, I guess it was a matter of months.

Feel free to talk about both because I know they had something to do with one another.

They did and they didn't. What I was really trying to remember was the mood of the campus at that particular time. I remember the strike had to do with the program of New Directions students and financial aid. It got cut out and I know that's why they were angry and that's why they struck. Back at that point, students were a lot more militant than they are now. If something like that happened now, people wouldn't do the same thing.

Why do you think?

Well, we had a union organizer at one point at Antioch and this man was so prophetic, because he told us ten years ago, he said, "Antioch is soon going to be run like a business, more than like a college, and the bottom line was going to be the almighty dollar."

I think that that's what's happened, and the kind of students that come here, they're here to get an education and they place the most importance on that, which there's nothing wrong with, but the other students had two priorities. They were here to get an education, but their quality of life meant a whole heck of a lot more to them than the students of today. They were very angry when decisions were made without their input, or even when they had input, when [decisions] went the wrong way.

Do you think what you perceive as Antioch's "corporatization" is due to something like the strike?

I would never say that it didn't have its impact, I would say it did. Also, the biggest thing, in my opinion, Antioch got to be more like a business because there was so much money mismanaged. If you go back and look at some of the old newspapers, there were people here who weren't doing what they were supposed to do, and I think that's the principle reason.

Do you think the change in students happened after the strike, because of the strike?

Possibly. I know one thing that's very glaring. The black population, well, I'll just say the minority population period, dropped drastically.

Do you think the strike has affected Antioch's commitment to creating a diverse student body?

Definitely.

How so?

Several things. We have the economy, the percentages of students on financial aid is a lot more than it used to be. I've talked to some students who don't want to get involved in things because they're given "a hard time." That's really bad, when people get into a routine of saying, "Well, everything is status quo and I'm going to go along with the program, I'm not going to create any waves."

How do you think something like the strike has affected the administration's attitude toward student and union dissent?

The strike of '73 has been brought up time and time again. There were two, so whenever they bring them up, I think immediately they're talking about ours. I think the administration does get leery because we were accused of pressuring the students to support us, and to me, that's insulting student's intelligence as far as I'm concerned. It's like we twisted your arms. They can make up their own minds. It's like I told The Record, "Your tuition pays my salary."

Students on this campus used to want to be informed about everything. You have a right to know and to me, I give you enough intelligence to say you can make up your own mind. You go to the administration and get their side, you listen to us and hear our side, and you make up your own mind. But I think you should be informed.

How do you think the strike has affected the relationship between the different groups on campus?

I've talked to students who have been in AdCil meetings, and the ones I've talked to are the ones that are really concerned about what's going on, and maybe feel that students should have more input into what's going on. And I get a general consensus that Al [Guskin] controls the meetings. You may get to say your piece, but it doesn't mean anything. And I remember part of his "State of the College Address" too when he was talking about student input, and my impression is that he was saying, "Student input is okay up to a point, but we're still going to make these decisions." I realize, there's got to be someone at the top, that's the way the capitalist system works. But sometimes when you're way up there, you better look down and see what the other people want and what they need.

I don't think students are given as much say. It looks like a facade to me, they create all these task forces, but when it comes down to it, it's just like the way they treat us, they're going to do what they want anyway.

Contrast that with the situation when you first came here.

You can remember stories that stand out in your life and I remember one of the grape boycotts. If the farm workers were protesting, students thought nothing of walking into our kitchen, and going into that walk-in [refrigerator] to see what kind of stuff we were serving. There was a boycott on grapes and this [the Antioch Inn] used to be a public eating space. That's when Dixon was president, and he was out here eating with some friends, and students were back inside with those grapes. They came out here and set them on the table in front of him. Can you imagine students today doing that?

Speaking of the president, how do you think the strike has affected Antioch's leadership?

Well, maybe that's one of the reasons why there's less student input, and maybe that's why you're on committees. They say you do have representation, but to me that really doesn't mean much. Maybe they decided to go a different avenue: "We'll pacify them and give them their say-so on what's going on," but really and truthfully, they're really going to do what they're going to do. Students are handled more with kid gloves than they were.

What about the strike's affect on Antioch's mission, winning a victory for humanity, etc?

Those missions? Whatever happened to those? I didn't know we were still on that starship course! Yeah, they canceled that series, this is "Star Trek: The New Generation!" I have problems with Antioch's mission, because in the first place, I don't really understand what Antioch's mission is anymore. As a union member, am I part of the community or not? So I can't really answer, because to me, Antioch's mission has sort of detoured, from what it was when I first came here.

Talk a little about the differences you see.

Well, the difference in students, the difference in students not getting involved in things and letting things go status quo, difference in student dress, more conservative students. Administration-wise, more business-like administrators that don't seem to deal with some of the problems on this campus. They set priorities that sound really good, but [not] common sense things...We were talking once in a meeting over in the presidents room and we were telling the college, "It's good to have students here, but what about when you get them here? How do you keep them here and what about their dorms?" The housekeepers, they're real frustrated, because they were always told that student dorms are priorities. Now, the academic buildings or main buildings, now they're priorities. They have to go over there every day just to pick cigarette butts up, because that offends somebody. Priorities are different, and to me, the people in main building's comfort shouldn't take precedent over where students have to live every day.

I don't know the faculty that well. I remember some older faculty, people that I really liked and respected, because they seemed to see both sides of a dilemma whenever there was a confrontation. There were a few that were always pro-union, probably because of their background.

Do you see that as a result of the strike, did the relationship between staff and faculty as well as other groups change?

Maybe not directly. Communications here just broke down period, and they still leave a lot to be desired: faculty

interaction with students, student interaction with administration, faculty interaction with administration, staff interaction with administration, staff interaction with students...

You think all of them were affected?

Sure they were.

Can you describe what it was like to work here for the first ten years after the strike?

It was a downhill trend and everybody was concentrating on keeping their jobs, giving up raises, and giving up cost of living: "If I keep my job, that's the most important thing." ...Trying to work with the college in the only way a union can, by giving up, and not asking for a lot, trying to work things out.

In the summer people just worked everywhere. The skilled trades were everywhere, and we all banded together and said, "Well, we're going to keep this thing afloat." We sort of put the contract aside because we had to concentrate on things that needed to get done. Violations, we turned our heads, because it was more important to keep the place afloat.

There were a lot of staff cut directly after the strike, right?
A 25% cut?

Yes, and we were at a big AdCil meeting and AdCil said, "No, there won't be any cuts." I will never forget this incident, just before Christmas break, and people went home during Christmas time, and got letters in the mail [telling them] that they were laid off. That was just devastating.

How did the loss of people affect your work?

We have eight people in this kitchen and when I first came here there were about 40 people, so you can imagine. You had to double up, do whatever, do things that you'd never done before. It was hard to adjust yourself to, but you look back on it and you made it.

That's why it's so hard now when new administrators come, and you try and educate them as to how it used to be, and you get statements like, "Well, that was all in the past." I don't care, the past is always a basis for the future. We get called radical, and we get called this, [but] we made a lot of sacrifices and no one wants to hear that. We talked to one administrator about the pay-less payday [in 1979], [they said], "Well, you got paid, didn't you?" Yeah, but what about the two or three weeks when we had nothing, and the humiliation of going down there [to the unemployment office] and those people treating you nasty, talking to you like you were dirt? But that doesn't even matter, because we "got paid." The attitude!

Did the relationships within the union change as a result?

No, I think we got closer. When the going gets tough, the tough get going. We got smaller, we started feeling insecure, and when you start feeling that, you get closer.

Why did you stay and why do you think other people stayed?

I stayed because I'm just the type of person that, it's in my work life, my personal life, and if I commit myself to something, I'm committed, if I feel like it's worthwhile. I stayed here because I liked Antioch, I liked my job, I liked the students, and I never thought about leaving. I tell you, now, in the past few months, I feel more like leaving here than I did back then. I didn't even think about leaving back then. I guess it was a challenge and we were all waiting, saying, "It's going to get better, we know it's going to get better."

Mostly everybody had that same feeling, that Antioch had given us some things and we weren't going to turn our backs. We decided to work so the [students] could graduate [in 1979]. If we had said, "Oh, we're not going to get paid, we're not going to work," that class wouldn't have been able to graduate! At least I don't think they would've if all the staff had gone home and all of us had gone home.

Do you think there was a sense among the staff and faculty who stayed that they were helping Antioch to survive, that this was a common mission?

Yes, that's the way I felt anyway. But, now it's like, survive to do what?

What about the strikes' affect on the reputation and image of the school?

I think it was really bad. That was a prime reason that the enrollment dropped. But see, a lot of people didn't know the real story, and if you read the news media, you can't believe everything they print, because I was out there in the strikes and The Yellow Springs News would have stuff in there that wasn't even true. I was there and I saw it. It was just really sad, because maybe some people would have understood, and maybe some parents would've understood back in those days, that those students felt they were right in what they did. I'm not talking about the destruction they did, but in their principle. When we went on strike, we felt we were right in what we did. The students survived. At what cost, everybody pays.

Al Denman:

First, I think the strike has to be put in the context of what was going on throughout the society and throughout the world at the time, the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the counter cultural movement. It has to be put within the context of the spread of Antioch College into an enormously widespread university, the deliberate decision of the president and the board of trustees to extend our assets, the five million dollars we had approximately in endowment, plus all of our assets as ability to borrow and the name of the college, to extend all of these in order to try to carry out what was a very laudable aim, taking education to the people who were normally left out of the mainstream of higher education. And the strike also has to be put within the context of the president's inability, or maybe disinterest, in careful management.

We lost two or three very important vice presidents in the late 60s, they were never replaced by people of similar quality, and the president was not interested in control. He had a philosophy of enabling people to achieve their own goals on their own, and he liked the idea of putting the assets of the college on the line, making it possible for people who had ideas about how they'd like to use these assets for their education, making it possible for them to do that.

It was a time of enormous, messianic dreams, not only on the part of the president and the trustees, "What Antioch College could do leading the way into the future of higher education, maybe the whole future would, to some extent, be led," but it was also among students and faculty, it was primarily leftist and Marxist. It was not on his part.

Not on Dixon's part?

No, not on Dixon's part. He was a leftist of a certain anarchistic type, but he was definitely not Marxist. The [two ideologies] could go down the path together for a while, but they finally came to great conflict when it appeared that the president of the United States whose name was Nixon decided he couldn't support student loans. And [Antioch] students demanded a guarantee, and a guarantee could not be forthcoming because the college had already overspent its endowment. We were probably by that time five, six, seven, ten million dollars in debt. So the [administration] had to say, "Too bad."

I think many of the strikers thought the strike was the beginning of a very important, maybe world-wide movement, the forces of good against the forces of evil. The forces of good were people from working class backgrounds, people of color, people of a Marxist orientation, all challenging the vested interests, Dixon representing the vested interests of Antioch College.

So, [the strike] was a really complex kind of thing, but some of the consequences were fairly simple it seems. We lost, I think, one quarter of our student body in about a three month period from the spring to the fall, and that meant that the

next year we had to cut about a quarter of our faculty. I don't know whether you've ever seen the enrollment graph, well, it was a pretty steep slide for almost ten or twelve years.

The image a lot of people got of Antioch College was that we were a very troubled place that couldn't find ways to resolve our problems, and that probably we would close. We ourselves talked about closing and there were lots of phrases like "going down the tubes." We found it quite amazing sometimes that we were still open. It was very discouraging of course to have a budget cut every year for ten years, and not just a budget cut but also cuts within the year, because we almost always overestimated the [number] of new students we would have. A number of us still speak about how its almost miraculous that we're still open.

The way we were able to stay open was faculty took tremendous cuts in their salary and had no salary increases for years. We cheated on building, maintenance and will pay for that for as long as these buildings stand. Leo Drey gave a million dollars or more for about ten years in a row to meet our deficit.

Who is Leo Drey?

He was a trustee, an owner of a business in Missouri, he owns a lot of woodlands, he's in the timber business. He graduated from Antioch, he had three of his children here. Two of them graduated from Antioch during this period of sliding, hard to know why they stayed. One of them came from, I think Harvard, and turned around and went back after a year or two.

There was tremendous loyalty on the part of a number of other alumni who kept supporting presidents who tried to deal with [the aftermath], or interim presidents, pretty good support of the faculty, and in emotional kinds of ways.

Now, how did the faculty deal with it? Well, there were a few people who felt enormous anger. I told you about George Geiger, he'll never recover from it, he's resolved that it's immoral really to forget it, to recover from it. For some faculty it meant there were scars that made it difficult to be sensitive like we used to be to each other. We related to each other more distantly, or with a bit of suspicion over the years that has all but disappeared, except for a very few instances. But it made the faculty awfully apprehensive about our future and I think it turned us inward.

Up until that time maybe we had felt confident about ourselves as an institution, and ourselves as scholars, sufficiently so that we could march to a different drummer. We had a sense of our own cadence and what was really good education. It didn't matter to us a great deal really how the outside world evaluated our education, because we were convinced we had vital, challenging, fun, productive education.

After the strike, and as we began to fall, fall, fall, we found ourselves working harder on maintenance problems, trying to just keep things together. We found ourselves exhausted by the attempt to overcome our despair, and simply tried to make

the place look attractive and produce good education, in spite of the lack of the normal kinds of supports, physical supports and economic supports. We no longer invented ideas with as much confidence or with as much verve as we used to. Many faculty, I for instance, put all of our energies into these maintenance tasks and gave up our contacts with other institutions, we were just too worn out.

So Antioch became pretty isolated...

It became isolated out of necessity, to try to deal with our constant set of crises. Then came Guskin and he gave us a tremendous shot in the arm, helping us to believe in ourselves the first year. The second or third year he began to talk about quality, and he had put his finger correctly on the fact that we were not, from the outside, looking like a very academically productive faculty, we didn't publish for instance. I think he misunderstood what we had been doing with our time and didn't understand the sense of weariness and discouragement, the lack of confidence that still was with us, even though he helped us feel we had a future.

Some faculty took his criticism and exhortations to be a chastisement toward the many faculty who had not produced the traditional kinds of research. That skewed the whole understanding of what faculty development meant. Faculty found themselves awfully polarized for a year or two over whether we were going to be a publish or perish institution. I think only in the last six, nine months have we begun to develop a sense of balance about that, we understand that there's more than one way for a faculty to pursue intellectual and other kinds of goals, you don't have to write papers and go to conferences and deliver them.

Guskin's been here five and a half years. I think I said soon after he came, maybe before he came, that I thought it would take about an equivalent amount of time to repair the college that it took to nearly destroy it. It took ten, twelve years for us to come to this and I think it will take ten or twelve years to regain our position. I think we got very euphoric [Guskin's] first year or two, he gave us raises for instance and enrollment increased, and wow, that was wonderful, and buildings began to be maintained. That euphoria didn't last and it was very discouraging to discover that he couldn't keep the incline as dramatic as the decline had been. That has made people cynical, it has made them very self-pitying again in a lot of instances, and made us kind of accusatory. [There was a] a feeling he had misled us, betrayed us, that there was something kind of deliberate about him.

So I think we're still in the midst of the problems that all had their first obvious manifestation in '73, but had their roots far earlier.

When you were talking about maintenance, what kind of maintenance were you referring to?

I was talking about maintenance of every kind, the maintenance of our own individual psychology, and the psychology of our departments or our colleagues, because as we lost faculty and students, we had to redefine who we were as faculty. We found ourselves trying to work with people who we hadn't worked with closely as colleagues before. In some ways that was advantageous, but in some ways it was difficult, because we were thrown together out of necessity rather than out of intellectual, or other kinds of interests.

Which was quite a new situation

Yes, because this had been a place where people had been encouraged, and encouraged each other to form alliances on the basis of their passions. Now our principle passion was to stay alive. And there were maintenance problems of trying to interpret to the outside world who we were, to keep student morale up so that they would stay, trying to make things look good when they weren't very good, trying to live within buildings which were dirty, and in some respects falling apart.

Did anybody ever tell you about the gym for instance? For a number of years we just couldn't repair roofs, and the south gym, which had a magnificent dance floor, it was rained on for really years, and tens of thousands of dollars of beautiful flooring buckled. At least one, maybe two or three of the handball courts had the same problem. The swimming pool leaked like anything.

This building you can see here from my window, its right behind the science building, it used to be called the engineering building and was really quite a nice building, but it had a flat roof unfortunately. The roof began to leak, and they took all sorts of academic things out of there and they put maintenance in there. You could go in there on spring days when it was raining, and there would be two or three or four inches of water on thousands of square feet of flooring, and that went on for years.

So it was rendered unusable?

Practically. It was just amazing, they still used it, they put plastic over equipment, and plastic inside as a kind of temporary sub-roof to drain off the water. The library had the same problem, leaking in dozens of places. If you ask Joe [Cali] to show you, he can tell you the exact spots where they had swimming pools, little children's swimming pools. Right in the lobby for instance they had one, and they even gave it a name.

You can see how this is only physical maintenance, its psychological maintenance, its a maintenance of practicality, because there are certain kinds of things that you can't do, like you can't use the library in the way you had been accustomed to using it.

You mentioned cynicism after Guskin had been here a while and I was wondering if that reaction was from the older faculty

who were here during the strike, or also included newer faculty.

I've wondered about that and I'm not sure. To a large extent it was led by faculty who at least had been here for a while, I don't know about faculty who had been here during the strike. But it was faculty who had felt they had made so many sacrifices over the years, and who had had enough of discouragement and being on the short end of promises.

Were there a lot of promises made in the years when Birenbaum was here too?

I suppose so, my memory's a little less clear about that. We had such a contentious relationship with Birenbaum that it was not possible for him to make promises and have use really buy into them. Almost from the beginning, it was quite broadly felt that Birenbaum's sympathies were not primarily with this campus, and that grew to a suspicion, which seemed to have some confirmation that he thought that the way to save the university was to get rid of the college. Because the college was a big drain hole down which far too many of the limited assets of the university were going.

His idea was just to keep the centers?

Mmmmm-hmmmm. He himself didn't live here you know. He lived in New York, would come in to visit or do something periodically. There was a real sense of estrangement, we felt quite like a colony does towards the colonial masters, felt that we were owned by outside interests who couldn't understand us and our needs, probably didn't have our welfare and our needs at heart, people who certainly had not linked their destiny with ours.

So, for years then, there wasn't any acting president on campus, during Dixon's time as well.

That's right. In 1972, Dixon decided to move the president's office about five blocks from here up on High Street. It was supposed to be a symbol that, what we now call the university, then called the system, had outgrown Antioch College and the central administration should no longer be housed in Antioch College buildings.

We searched for a dean of the college who would take the president's central management role here. We found a young man from the University of Pennsylvania, Peter Carn was his name. He accepted, he came here to begin his acquaintance with us about maybe a week after he accepted, and students took him down into the faculty mail room for three days in a row, for about six, eight hours a day, mau-mauing him. That was a term which means to pepper people with questions and comments and bring them around to your point of view. They convinced him that this place was on its way down, that the whole administration was corrupt, so he resigned even before he took over his office. He dropped the whole thing maybe two weeks

after he had accepted.

So Dixon, being desperate, had decided he was not going to come back and be president of the campus or dean of the campus, but rather asked Ewell Reagin to do that. Ewell Reagin had been the associate academic dean, he had been asked by a number of faculty and others to be a candidate in the dean's search. He said no, I guess he preferred his role as academic dean associate and he also felt he wasn't up to it. But he was appointed dean by the president and then all hell broke loose [during the strike] and the president fired him. He was a fall guy really.

During Birenbaum's time, who essentially ran things while he was in New York? Was there a dean of the college?

Well, we had at least a couple of designated deans [of the college.] Erma Adams was for a year, she had been professor of business. I think she was here for the year when we were cutting all of the faculty, a quarter of the faculty. Almost immediately afterwards she had a stroke and she died.

Eventually Frank Shea came, he had been a professor of literature and then the president of a catholic college, he was an ex-priest. He was here as chancellor, that was our new term instead of dean. He got into two severe conflicts with the president. The first one was with Dixon, and resulted in the firing of Dixon, and Birenbaum came. Then [Shea] got into a conflict with Birenbaum, was not renewed at the end of his three year contract, and within a year, had died of a heart attack. So there were a lot of bodies, both physical and spiritual, lying around. That's three of them, Ewell Reagin, if you can take the destruction of his career, Erma Adams and Frank Shea.

[These events] are very good evidence of the turbulence of the place, and of the fact that it was impossible for faculty or students to feel the place was well managed. These were people who had both thrown their deepest interests into common lot with us and had power, had some kind of authority, and ability to carry it out. Frank Shea was trying to be a good leader of what he understood to be the college's interests, feeling that we had to have much more autonomy from the university than we had. That brought him into conflict with the president, and we won the first battle and got a new president, but we got somebody who was as bad or worse, somebody who didn't even live in Yellow Springs, who didn't even have his office on High Street, but had it in New York. We lost the second battle over autonomy.

Why do you think so many people stayed?

We used to be interviewed very frequently by all kinds of publications, not just local publications, but national publications. They were interested in the downfall of Antioch. They would come up and ask me exactly that question, and not only me, but almost all of the faculty. We all had complex

answers, but one element that was an almost universal element in our answers, was that we still find it a fascinating place to work, especially because of the students. Throughout we would get students who were strong individualists, who would not take our word as the final word, were self-motivated, had fascinating backgrounds, who were at odds with the society, and were trying to make it a better world. We liked that kind of stuff, that's why we came here in the first place.

And that was enough to keep you here?

It was buttressed I think by the fact that many of us had given up our contacts with professional organizations, and had been concentrating all of our energies here. If we still had professional interests, they were kind of dormant, they were somewhat asleep.

How did the faculty-student relationships change after the strike?

Well, during the strike, students were divided into at least three camps: those who were strikers or with the strikers, those who were highly critical [of the strike], and those who seemed to be uninvolved. The latter two groups continued their studies and the first group was starting the world-wide revolution here in Yellow Springs.

You really think the strikers saw their role as being part of a worldwide movement?

I think many of them did, there's no question in my mind that they did. They got a lot of support from some faculty about that. Well, it depended upon what kind of position you had as a faculty member. People like me who were trying to carry on their classes, who were critical of the strike, we had close relationships with students who were also critical, and had close relationships with students who were apolitical, who were continuing their education. They were very alienated from the strikers, in fear of them in some ways. Some faculty got beat up who tried to enter their classrooms. I guess you know it was a lockout, we couldn't use any of the facilities unless we had the [strikers'] permission, and their permission only went to those who were p.c., but nobody knew that phrase.

Would you say there was a lot of intimidation going on during the strike?

Yes, a lot of distrust. I don't have a very clear recollection of our ripple effect. It certainly must have rippled, but I just don't have a very good recollection of it. You might be interested to know, just as a little anecdote that indicates how close some of the relationships were, one of the three students that brought the [injunction] suit [that ended the strike], Nate Bowles, has just recently invited me to come

down and give a talk to the bar association of which he is president. That's kind of an illustration of how affections that were developed during that period continue.

Do you think the divisions during the strike in some ways formed closer alliances?

I think so. I have no idea how they continued on the other side. My recollection is that there wasn't an awful lot of bitterness on the part of the strikers toward faculty. Maybe there was a sense of relief that we were back in the business of education, we sort of pretended that maybe it hadn't happened.

Afterwards you mean?

Yes, say six months, a year afterwards, five years afterwards. On the tenth anniversary, we had a meeting in McGregor, a number of faculty got together to reminisce and chart the events [of the strike]. Bill Houston was there, Hannah Goldberg was there, Victor Garcia was there, I was there, Connie Pelekoudas. We each gave our recollections of the events, tried to talk a little about what it meant, and a guy stood up who introduced himself and said, "I was one of those strikers."

He felt he was doing a very important thing, he just happened to be wandering through, and [said] "Over the years I have come to see that I have participated in the near destruction of the college and come to regret it a great deal." He came back about a year or two later and joined the admissions staff and I think was the associate director or assistant director, Ed Amrhein.

So, there was a willingness to recollect, to remember the strike?

We tried to rethink it, we tried to patch things up somewhat there.

What about the strike's effect on administrative and faculty relationships?

I think this is very important. Until about 1964 or 1965, there had been a peculiarly harmonious relationship between administration and faculty. Part of the evidence of this was that most of the administrators had faculty status. They were called administrative faculty, and then there were teaching faculty [or] classroom faculty, and then there were co-op faculty, and there were library faculty and so-on. Administrators were [also] faculty.

Did they teach?

No, [but] they had faculty status. The idea was we all had teaching roles, but we had somewhat specific kinds of teaching roles. They were involved in the education process, they weren't just administrators of education, but they were

educators. That had been cultivated for a period of ten or fifteen, maybe twenty years by successive presidents.

Dixon carried that out, I think, quite well until about 1964 or 1965. At that time the idea of expanding the college into what we now call the university, developing other centers, began to take place. Morris Keeton, the academic dean, presided over a study on the future of liberal arts colleges, and he developed the theory that bad times were coming for colleges. Those that were going to survive would be the ones that had a strategy for coping with the problem of growth, and we were to grow in a completely unique, Antiochian way. That was the way the system or the university took place, taking education other places. The strategy was we would not build buildings or get involved in the high expense of residential programs, [but] that cheap education could be delivered efficiently and so on.

Now, as President Dixon began to buy into this for his own ideological reasons, he felt that Antioch had a unique role to play in the history of higher education in the United States at this particular time. He was willing to gamble our resources. As the president began to buy into the [network], he began to take a role that put him against a number of the faculty who sensed that our resources were going to be squandered, and that began the alienation or the splitting off of administration from the faculty.

We began to resemble other colleges and other universities, with a great degree of suspicion that worked in both directions. Jim Dixon has been quoted a number of times, I think its probably reliable to say, [he said] that the faculty was obstreperous and terribly conservative about intellectual or educational inventiveness, pedagogically. And the faculty was highly suspicious of him, feeling that he never told us the full truth of where he was trying to lead us.

In 1966 or 1967, we had a three day marathon faculty meeting on the library's second floor for hours on end. We submitted the president to interrogation and debated the future of the college. If you want a really good recollection of what took place there, talk to Barry Hollister, he presided over those meetings. It was an attempt on the part of the faculty to get control of the president, and if possible, to get him to resign. From that moment on, probably long before that, the faculty and the president felt they really couldn't work together with each other. Each was trying to destroy the other's vision of what the future ought to be.

So this alienation existed between faculty and administration...

And it's lasted. There are a lot of faculty who will never be able to view the administration as co-educators, [but think that] their job is to administer. It's kind of a mechanical job as opposed to our really pedagogical job.

It's hard for me to imagine administrators as co-educators who don't teach. It sounds really interesting, but I don't get a

sense of what that meant.

Well, let me give you a specific illustration. Algo Henderson, who was president after Arthur Morgan, helped to develop administrative council. It had been started by Morgan but [Henderson] helped to develop it, and part of his theory was that the role of administrative council was not just to advise the president but it was an educational role. Part of the educational role was to educate all those who were members of administrative council, faculty, students, and administrators, as to how democracy works, so that they would understand each other's functions, and they would understand decision making in a democratic society. It was real preparation for the outside world. Also, the whole community would be educated, by either being first-hand witness, or reading, or hearing about what administrative council does.

I think the idea was that in all contacts that administrators had with faculty or students, they were trying to be a model for the way we work through difficult decisions, having different values, different roles, responsibilities. They had an educational role here, and it was really their primary role. Their primary role was not to balance figures, but to be a part of the total educational strategy. Antioch is not just an institution, but educates students in the classroom, the laboratory, the co-op experience of course, and the total community. [Administrators] were members of the community, community was defined in completely comprehensive terms, except for the laborers, who never really got defined as community members.

It sounds like the relationship between students and administrators used to be quite different as well.

Yes, it was. In one other illustration, when I came in 1965 I was an assistant professor of philosophy and the college pastor, and half my time was [spent] trying to help students address deep, value concerns, that's about the way I defined religion. In 1965, all of a sudden LSD and mescaline were discovered, and marijuana of course. There was the development of the drug culture almost overnight on campus. It was an automatic response on my part, to try to seize that interest and turn it into an educational event as college pastor.

So what I did was look around to see who could help students think through what drugs could mean in their lives. I said, "Oh, the president," in part because he was the president and was extremely respected at that moment, but also because he was a medical doctor, a very thoughtful and well-informed man. So I asked him if he would invite students over to his house. He invited them over for two evenings, we had about 50 students who came over to his house and sat in the living room for two or three hours talking about drugs in personal kinds of ways.

To me it seemed natural enough, and it seemed natural not because I had seen it done at any other place, but because it was part of the ethos of the place. He was an educator just

as clearly as I was an educator.

What about the changing attitudes toward student dissent or criticism of the administration after the strike?

Well, anybody who was here and was not a part of the strike and was not a sympathizer of the strike, saw [the strike] as a defining event. If they had been confused about the dangers of messianic ideologies, utopian ideologies, they got clarity about the dangers there. They understood that to take an idea to its ultimate could endanger institutions and people's lives. They became very critical of utopian ideology, critical I would say, but not antagonistic. This has always been a place that's been open to dreamers, and it also made people critical about Marxism. Marxism ruled the day here for eight or ten years, a few years before, a few years after, but they understood that Marxism was potentially very dangerous, because a Marxist ideologist could, I didn't say always would, divide people into interest groups and have them fight out their interests in ways that could be mutually destructive.

Connie Gahagan:

How do you think the strike has affected Antioch's relationship with Yellow Springs?

I don't think Yellow Springs was affected by anything having to do with Antioch until the great financial crisis [of 1979]. Then [our ears] perked up and everybody got nervous. But the strike was all part of a ongoing political climate at Antioch that everybody was used to. Of course, a lot of townspeople were faculty people and friends and neighbors knew that that was tough for them, but I don't think that the town became alarmed until Antioch threatened to possibly close down. Then everybody had to re-evaluate their support of the school, what it was going to mean for their property values and all that kind of thing.

But before that, had people's attitudes changed towards students in town?

You know, it's very hard to say because I was a student and I feel that when you're a student you aren't recognized by town people at all. It's almost as though they're looking straight through you, they're so used to transients that they don't want to get emotionally involved. It wasn't until I walked into Weaver's carrying a baby that someone said, "Oh, How are you?" You know, I was acknowledged as a person. So it would be impossible for me to say how people really felt during that time. I think that the distinctions had been so clear that nobody was particularly alarmed.

Distinctions?

Between what happens over there and what happens over here. It's not until many years later when the school was possibly closing down that people got freaked. Because what did that mean for our school system and that kind of thing if Antioch really went under? And then there was conversation that maybe Cedarville College was going to buy the campus and I remember that rumor going through town. I think the town relies on Antioch to a certain extent for some cultural and some political milieu. But I don't think the town is particularly involved with the college.

Nor was it before?

Except that various individuals who lived here in town were going through hell. Like Ewell Reagin. It was really sad what happened to him. He had to step in and take over at a time when no one was polite and no one was listening and he's a very polite, very nice man. And he was treated very badly.

By the school?

Well, by the students and I think probably by the administration. Really, he was fed to the dogs. He's the prime one I can think of during that time who was treated really shabbily by everyone. And he was doing his best, he was always trying to listen to people. I remember our meetings in the cafeteria were supposed to be community meetings, and there was no community there, it was just ugly. It was just, "Why aren't you doing this, why aren't you doing that?" and not even listening for a response at all.

You were a student for two or three years following the strike. How did things change afterwards for students on campus?

Well, some people transferred out and that was sad. It crossed my mind, because we were paying a fair amount of money to go to school and there weren't always materials; there weren't even always professors. And I think just inertia kept me here, fear of trying anything new. Of course, I had my friends, too, that I cared about. I just think we felt like the last generation of Antioch, that Antioch was still resting on its laurels from the 30s, 40s, 50s...that nobody gave a damn what happened to us in terms of quality of education. And yet in a way, it was its own education. It was like, "Here's your life, deal with it." I think college should be sort of a not particularly coddled time, but it should be a little bit insulated, so you can study hard or what ever. But when you're worrying about "What will I do for dinner tonight," and you're living kind of shabbily, it's too much real life at a time when you should be sort of the ivory tower.

Students were really worrying about that kind of day-to-day survival? Because the college didn't provide any reliability?

Yeah.

Do you think a lot of students were resentful of that?

I think people that were studying a particular thing that might have disappeared [were]. I remember anthropology people at the time, and their department disappeared. I remember engineering, that department disappeared as well. And yeah, I think those people probably do feel some resentment. But for most of us it was playing at real life, it was all part of the show.

But was your studying affected by the fallout, or your program, your interaction with your studies?

You know what suffered was not so much any one program as far as my studying was concerned, but the overall lack of any type of guidance whatsoever. There was always somebody assigned to you, a faculty advisor or whatever. And there either wasn't time for that, or it wasn't given priority, or whatever. But when you're investing as much as \$40,000, somebody should say to you somewhere along the line, "Well, what do you plan to

be when you grow up?, " and I just didn't get any of that. I continue to feel some resentment about that. That we were the last generation and of course people who always know what they want to do... will get there. And there were a lot of determined kids at Antioch, then and now; I just didn't happen to be one of them, so I was just kind of floating in college. That's not high quality.

How did you see relationships change between different groups on campus because of the strike? For instance, between faculty and students, administration and students, faculty and administration...

Student on student, there was a lot of polarization. I remember I was living in North Hall and when they took over the main building, a lot of us went running downstairs and came outside, like, "What's going on?" And they said, "Either you're with us or you're against us," and they were like fascists, "Go back to your room," and they escorted you back to your room. In other words, "We're the politcos, we know what's best for you, shut up," kind of thing. And "You're welcome to come tomorrow to a rally, or protest," or whatever, "but we're not going to spell it out for you at this point." So there was hostility between students.

At the time there was still a lot of Black power, Black is beautiful isolationism with Black students... They were under a lot of pressure, like if a White girl was interested in a Black boy, she was basically told to get lost and they were under pressure themselves if they were seen talking. Strike or not, that was still there.

Faculty and students, I think a lot of them became very close, because faculty had to take kids into their homes to teach them and everybody was struggling through the same difficult time, and so I think that [relationship] actually improved for a lot of people.

Student-administration, it got worse, because the big honchos, I would say the board, and the president, they didn't really care about the Yellow Springs campus at that time. They were really focused on, it seemed to me, taking their money and spreading it elsewhere to all these satellite campuses.

Faculty-administration, I don't know. [Faculty] were so resentful, always. I think they were never paid well, they were underappreciated. If you published a paper, it went unrecognized. It may be a little better now, I understand they pay is better, and I do read the publications and they seem to be stroking people that are out there doing things. But I think the relationships between faculty and administration was bad the whole time I was there, and it was bad as a faculty wife as well.

What about faculty relationships with each other and not just immediately after, but a few years down the road. How were they affected?

Well, it's like when you put a lot of rats in a cage. Too much crowding, too much pressure, that was the situation then. "There's not enough money", "I've got to get what I need to run my program", there was a certain amount of ugliness there. But, maybe, and I can't say this since I wasn't on the faculty, some of them grew closer too because they were going through the same struggle. When everybody, years later, ended up in the unemployment line down in Xenia, I'm sure they were feeling for one another.

What about faculty and administration's attitudes toward student dissent? How was that affected in the years after the strike?

I'm trying to think what dissent there might have been. I can't think of any. Well, there was a lot of gay awareness, and a lot of pressure for everyone to be bisexual. Antioch's always finding some new pressure to apply to you to make sure you're politically correct. There was an emerging need and desire for women's studies and I think sometimes people felt like they were being told what the priorities were by a bunch of 18 year olds. We had lot of these discussions. As a psychology student, it seemed to me that people would say, "We don't need to know statistics, we need to know the psychology of gay women," this kind of thing. So I remember a lot of late-night discussions with five or six other psychology students about what we should do, what we shouldn't do. There was just always an awful lot of pressure.

It sounds like you're saying there was a big drop-off in student dissent after the strike.

Yeah, I can't remember any big, organized thing at all. I would just say [there was an] emerging, politically correct pressure cooker, where you're getting it from all over.

Less challenging of administrative practices and policies directly?

Maybe, maybe not. I mean, I wasn't really all that involved with it, but it seemed to me that there was a lot of pressure put on the administration to come up with a women's studies program when money was scarce and a lot of things like engineering and anthropology weren't even being offered. So, I'd say there was still dissent, but not the whole campus striking over something.

How do you think the strike affected the school's commitment to experimentation in education, innovative techniques, programs?

I think that the strike made the existence of the school so precarious and for such a long time that everybody was walking on eggshells. The news of that strike was national if not international, and the effect was so devastating in terms of kids applying that I have to think that everybody who had any

interest at all in graduating or teaching there or whatever had to quiet up a little bit, pull together.

What about the school's commitment to ethnic and economic diversity in the student body, did that change? Not just in terms of capability to do that, but also attitude towards having it.

Well, before I got there, they had been so starry-eyed that they'd actually gone to places like Detroit and walked around the ghetto and said "Oh, well, you seem like a neat guy, how about coming to this liberal arts college in Ohio and we'll foot the bill for you," and I think what we learned from all that was economic and racial diversity is fine, but we're not ever be the idealists we once were. I mean we got burned in quite a few of these instances. In terms of economic, I was a financial aid student. I never felt much support from the school. It's just not the kind of school you go to if you're financial aid and want an easy time of it.

What about the character of the student body. Do you think it changed as a result of the strike?

Well, I do, as I say, remember people dropping out, trust running out. Some people might have finished up a little earlier than they would have otherwise. And then, after that, it was so grim and there were so few people and so few people coming in, that everybody who was there was like a survivor, and I don't know who came in. I think, from what I heard, there were a number of wealthy parents who discovered that Antioch was a copasthetic place for their mentally troubled children to go, and they could send them and it would be less expensive than a private mental hospital, and their kid was at school at the same time. I remember for years following the strike, the counseling services at Antioch were way overworked, and there were a lot of burnouts who were attending. And then, it kind of seemed to get sort of preppy for a few years. And then, it just seemed to be Antioch again. Kids who were interesting and knew what they wanted out of life and mostly from New York...Back to being itself, I think, at this point.

What about the character of the academic program? How did it change, other than reduction in innovation and that kind of thing?

Well, as I say, I think it's improved since the time I was there.

What about Antioch's leadership? How do you think that was affected?

Well, there simply wasn't leadership until Guskin. I mean there really wasn't. And among other institutions, among higher education, it lost status. And it hasn't regained it. It's doing better, but...I'm on the Village Council here in town, and so

I do things like I recently visited Morris Bean Company, and there was a new president there and I said, "How are you doing? Is there anything the village can do for you?" And he said, "In order for Morris Bean to survive, we need to get more engineers in. And when I go out and try to recruit engineers for our company, they say, 'Oh, Yellow Springs, that's where Antioch is.'" And they seem to have mentioned to him any number of times the [Sexual Offense Policy] where if you're accused of sexual assault, you have to leave, you can't attend during that time? And he feels that the reputation of Antioch is negatively affecting his company, he can't get people to come.

What about reputation and image, did you get a real clear sense of the change during your years here, of the change in Antioch's reputation nationally?

When I came, I bought into this whole dream of it being a community and all for one and this kind of very idealistic thing. And I found out almost immediately that it wasn't that way. I think that for a while, and for a lot of the people that continue to give money, they're still looking at Antioch the way it was in the 40s, 50s, 60s, maybe even, although [in] the later 60s [it] was getting pretty rocky. I never experienced what other people were talking about, this whole thing of when you walked from one class to another, it was an unwritten rule that you said "Hello" to everyone. Everybody greeted one another, everybody made an effort like they do at Oberlin, I think it is, where everybody keeps the campus clean, and all this kind of cooperative stuff. But there's only so long that this image was out there of this being an idealistic place. And I think it's been gone for ten years. I think people see it now as just another competitor in the small, liberal arts school market. Probably the best thing it has going is the co-operative [education] fact, and a lot of other schools have that as well.

Do you think the strike had a lot to do with the change in image?

I certainly do. There was a lot of coverage. I mean, it was in *The New York Times*, it seemed, weekly. And to what purpose? I mean, no goddamn purpose? There were some kids there at the time, I remember, being financial aid I worked in the cafeteria, and they were just really almost out for their own glory. The glory of the workers' revolution. And they were inciting a workforce that had basically been happy up until that point. I remember hustling around the cafeteria picking up this or going to clean that and people saying, "Hey, no, slow down, don't do anything unless somebody tells you to do it and do it slowly," and all this kind of stuff. The students I'm thinking of went on to, whether they graduated or not I can't say, but they went on to work at places like Hobart and big factory shops where they could organize workers and I remembered them talking about how they were going to get ranch houses and big color TVs and join the middle class and try to organize. Really, they were just egomaniacs and they screwed up something that was

pretty good.

What about Antioch's mission, do you think that was affected? Both in terms of what Antioch was ideally and also in its ability to attain that.

Yeah, I think if it wasn't lost totally, it was lost by at least 80%. Because I think in the 40s, everybody understood that if you were a poor kid, you could come to Antioch, you could work hard, and you could become whatever you wanted to be. And it didn't matter if you were Black or White or male or female. And that was really unique, after the war. Then it seemed to be so quirkily insular that people wondered, "What the heck are we about?" How we had a relation to this work-study ethic at all. It seemed to be studying its own navel too much. I know there have always been kids who graduated and have gone on to go to South America and really help out a village and this kind of really neat stuff. But I tend to think that it lost almost all of its real common values. The Arthur Morgan philosophy was just tarnished.

Why do think so?

I think instead of looking outward, they started looking inward too damn much. To an unhealthy degree.

I wonder if you think there are any good, or positive effects of the strike.

I think it was a complete waste of energy, complete waste of money, complete waste of people and I really, really believe that it all sprung out of the heads of, well, I can really think of one student, but let's say a clique of maybe eight kids. And the hell with them, that's what I think, they really messed up a pretty good place. Guskin, I don't know what this place would be without him, if he hadn't come along. If we had one more bad administrator who didn't understand what the original philosophy was, I just don't think it would even exist.

Do you think the mission has been somewhat regained?

Yeah, because it needs to have a sort of base in practicality to be Antioch. And that was always a real appealing part if it, that you could be whoever you are, we'll accept you, we want you to be something of an idealist, a person who wants to help others, and we want you to really study hard and at the same time put it to practical use.

Virginia Garrett:

The typewriters had big gashes in them and the rolls were strung out on the floor. We called IBM and they took all the typewriters in. They took the best parts of one to fix the other ones, we always referred to them as our strike typewriters. And we had resumes completely destroyed that we had to ask students to re-do. We pulled together what we could. Our records person, her records were in the ceiling, whatever you call that up there. Glass was broken and you picked up glass for months, little bits and pieces had flown all over the place.

And we lost employers because we didn't have students to send, because after the strike, enrollment dropped. Somebody did a survey on the drop in enrollment and it just went down from '73. And then '73 tied right into '79 with the pay-less payday. So we had six years of "Are we gonna make it, are we gonna make it?," and then, when we went into to pick up our check on May 17, 1979 there was no paycheck, but people worked anyway, so we could graduate the students.

We worked ten years without an increase in pay. The staff did get five cents in '82 because we were so much lower than the maintenance workers. We got that five cents. But that's all in a ten year period.

A lot of people would ask me, "Well, why did you stay?" Well, because I had a lot of years in, I had five weeks vacation and sick leave, and to start another job you'd have to start all over, work a whole year with one week off, and then drive 20, 25 miles to work. Ten miles is enough far me with driving, because I live in Springfield. I had two job offers with people I knew and all I had to do was go and go to work. But I stuck at Antioch because you hate to give up that much vacation after you've been at a place for a while. I've been in the same department, and I like working with the students, I liked what I was doing.

I thought, "We'll make it, we'll make it," and when employers of the students would call, I would always give them the pitch, "Oh, it's not that bad." I was scared, but I wouldn't let them feel that. Because then they [would say], "We don't want to take anybody", and students [would say], "Oh, I don't know if I'm coming back if its shaky." I said, "I'll be here." I really didn't know if I'd be here, but as far as I was concerned I'd be here.

Why do you think other people have stayed?

I think other people stayed for some of the same reasons: vacation, they had been here a long time, they didn't want to give up their benefits, and they felt like they'd ride it out too. New people or self-supporting people did not stay because they couldn't afford to stay. My husband and I both work here, so we both chose to stay for the same reasons. We had roots and we could make it. When we went in to pick up a paycheck, it wasn't like we had to have it that day. Other people didn't because they lived from payday to payday.

We lost staff. We went from six secretaries to two over a period of time, because student enrollment just dropped so. When I started here we had about 900 students on campus and 900 out working. That was a lot of work, that's why we had six secretaries and we had both floors in this building. We had to take on more work [after the strike]. Instead of working for two advisors, we now worked for three, and that was a period of time when we didn't have students to do the filing and stuff, we did our own.

Do you think the people who stayed had a sense that they were helping Antioch keep afloat?

Yes, because we even had people in maintenance that brought their own lawnmowers in to cut the grass. A lot of things were destroyed, not just our department, but buildings, plate glass, my husband's windshield, and all that stuff the college had to pay for. They estimated \$300,000 for physical damages. Maintenance actually brought their own cleaning supplies in, people who were stable and could suffer through and wait for unemployment. During graduation, the maintenance people went over and helped with the cooking, and serving the senior parents and all. Everybody just worked everywhere and they weren't getting any money.

We did get paid for [the pay-less pay period] five years later, we kept up with the time we put in, and we got paid over that, all that unemployment didn't give us. They paid us, we were five years getting it, but we were back to work then.

Did things get better after '79?

No, because after drawing unemployment and coming back to work, people were laid off in summers. In co-op for instance, we took turns with the layoff. There were three of us left after the strike and we traded, like I would take the layoff one summer, and one of the other secretaries would take the layoff the next summer. So, everybody had a steady income every other year, and then it finally got back to where we all worked the whole year.

Has morale improved?

I think. Especially with the two people that I worked with up here. I guess I was really lucky because the people I worked with, we always kept our morale up. I think ours was higher than in some of the other departments, because it was just the type of people that I had to work with. Some of the faculty departments weren't as close to the workers or secretaries as up here, because we were just like a family. We kept each other going.

What was the morale like on the rest of the campus?

Real low.

Do you think people would have stayed if it wasn't Antioch, if it was another kind of place?

Antioch has a lot to do with it, because Antioch is a unique place. I think in other places people would've left. Yes, there was more loyalty than in any normal place. I think if it had been a factory, or something like that, people wouldn't have stayed. Because it was Antioch, it was very different.

How do you think the student body has changed as a result of the strike?

As far as students are concerned, I think they're different. I know they are from the students we had in '73. I think students now just take a different look at things, they don't look at the unions the same way. In '73 there was the part-time employment union. We have students now who support the union or go through a fight like that, but not like they did in '73. I don't think they would ever form a union, or get into anything like that. They're not as political as the students in '73.

Has your interaction with students changed up here since that time?

No, I don't think mine has changed, because I've always had this "over and beyond the call of duty" to students. To me, this is what I'm here for, and I don't think time or anything would change the way I feel.

How has the co-op program changed as a result of the strike?

I think students are looking for different things now than they did then. They're looking for different types of jobs. I think students then were more academic-oriented, and [only] some are now. I think we have a different caliber of students that are coming in now. We had a lot of problems back then, because we had the New Directions program, which was a bummer, it turned out to be.

What about Antioch's commitment to economic and ethnic diversity, do you think the strike has affected that?

I don't think so. They just do it differently now.

What about the strike's affect on the cohesion and/or unity of different parts of the community?

I think it pulled together more [after the strike]. I think it really pulled the students, and staff, and people together.

Because they needed to survive?

Yes.

What about the change in attitude among the different groups towards each other. Do you think administrators viewed students differently or vice versa?

Not in all cases. I know the workers, I don't think it changed their attitude. I think the president and administration, it changed some things through there. It probably did at that time, but see all those administrators are gone, and of course the students are gone.

You don't think Guskin is wary of something like a strike whenever the students today demonstrate?

I don't think he wants that. He doesn't want a strike from either students or staff, or workers. He doesn't like upheaval. He wants a non-adversarial place.

What about the affect of the Union strike of '73. Did it have a long term affect on the relationship between the administration and staff?

We've had a lot of support from the administration and faculty during strikes. It may not be everybody, but now when something comes up, we get support. It's surprising to me when people say, "I'm on your side", even right now. Not all of them, but some.

What affect did the strike have on the faculty?

Well, of those that are still here, I think they all had difference of opinion about the strike. Because they were real down from the strike, and leading up to '79, their morale was shot too. A lot of them left.

And did their relationship with students change as a result?

I don't think so, because a lot of them realized that students had a legitimate gripe.

Even with all of the destruction of the strike?

Well, the destruction did [change their attitude], but I think their attitude was toward the group of students that did the destruction. Not everybody that was striking destroyed things. It was just certain ones that were destructive. The others were just supporting a cause, so to speak.

Do you think the strike changed the relationship between the faculty and the administration?

Some of the faculty felt that the administration should have been more [active] in trying to do something about the financial aid business.

What about the reputation and image of Antioch, how did the strike affect that?

It was damaging, very, very damaging. We would get all kinds of calls: "Are you closing?", "We expect that out of you". [Antioch] always had this reputation and it went down, and you had to really convince employees. Students just didn't come here. We tried to, over the years, get it built back up, but I still don't think we've built it back up.

How long do you think it will take to get back to where we were?

Well, two years ago we said ten years. Probably after I'm retired.

What about the strike's affect on Antioch's leadership. Do you see any relationship there?

If it hadn't happened, we would've gotten another president [anyways], because there were things going on before the strike. And then after the strike, what with '79 and all, they had to get rid of Birenbaum and bring in someone like Guskin. And Guskin had to live in Yellow Springs, because the others lived out in New York and weren't too attached to the college. So one of the requirements was that the president had to live in Yellow Springs. But I think they would have had another president anyway [after the strike].

Birenbaum, I don't know what to say about him. He wasn't what Antioch needed, because we needed someone to try and pull Antioch back up and Birenbaum wasn't doing that. I think Guskin is a whole different kind of person.

Do you think Guskin is succeeding in pulling Antioch together?

I think he is. He's really trying and he's done a lot since he's been here. I have faith that he's doing all he can do, not only to pull it back together but to keep it up, not to let it go down again.

Do you think the school has changed since he's been here?

Yes. We've sort of had to join the rest of the world a little bit. We weren't just Yellow Springs .

Sounds like the years after the strike made this place pretty isolated.

Well, it's always been a unique place, and everything was always, "Oh, well, this Antioch, we'll do what we want to." But you can't always do what you want to, that's what I mean by join the rest of the world. You have to abide by things that are going on outside your little haven. So, it's changed, but it's still unique.

Do you think the Antioch mission has changed?

I think they really tried to hang onto that. I don't think it has changed. I hope not.

Do you think we've been successful in holding onto it?

Of course generations change, and the students have changed. We have a different caliber of students. As the rest of the world changes, the students change, different attitudes. I think people come to Antioch because of its uniqueness, and then we have students that come for the co-op program. But when they get here its too different for them, the whole atmosphere, its not what they really want. I think we have more of that [kind of student] now, then we did back then.

Do you think the strike has affected the quality of the kind of education that Antioch offers?

I think it did at first, but we've had a lot of curriculum changes, and we've built it back up. I think at first it tore down because we didn't have the faculty, and there was so much money lost. I think we're going back up. I know we are.

It's been a long wait. Do you the strike had an effect on the way the town and the college interacted?

I'm sure it did. The town's always supported Antioch. I think people's attitude changed, especially in giving. We didn't have any money, and when people wanted to give, they wanted to use it for what they wanted to use it for. I know that this happened a few times. People said, "No, I'm giving it for one specific thing." We really needed it for everything, and it got so that people said, "Oh, I'm just not going to give anymore." I know we had a whole turnaround in giving when Guskin came. People who didn't give started giving again. I had people call and say, "I have money to give. I want it to go to Antioch and not the University." When Guskin came, he assured people, "This will go to Antioch college." So that was a big change, because we had people in the village that hadn't given for years, and then gave huge donations, and I actually know about that because I saw it on paper. To me, Antioch is Yellow Springs, and the village doesn't want this place to close.

Do you think Antioch's commitment to being different, to being unique has changed as a result of the strike?

Probably a little bit, because I think they had to. But I don't think that's total. When you lose that much money you have to get away from the way you've been doing and do things differently, to join the rest of the world.

Do you think the strike had any positive affects at all?

Yes, I think so, because students were striking for financial aid and I think it made the college see the real needs of students coming here. When I first came here the reputation of the college was that it was a rich college, you had to have a certain grade point average to get in, but financial aid students had a need and [the strike] made [the college] see this. Before, maybe it was overlooked.

Bill Houston:

In terms of politics, it wasn't like they were picking the most visible strikers [during the May 22, 1973 confrontation]?
(Houston was one of seven faculty fired at this event).

I'm sure there were a lot of people they wanted to get rid of that didn't get picked. I just don't know what their reasons were. I would have thought they might have been reluctant to pick Martin Murie and me because we weren't generally perceived as being as radical as some of the faculty members. Probably it helped the other [fired] faculty, because we had our personal friends among the faculty that didn't want to see us fired, and it was hard to reinstate us without reinstating everybody else. Just because we'd been here longer, and because as scientists we weren't seen as being quite as radical, because radicalism wasn't our profession. I was surprised that they picked us.

Do you have any thoughts as to why they didn't pick more people? It seemed as if, just from reading Reagin's memo, that they would just say, "Okay, everybody here is fired or expelled..."

But they had to get the names of everybody there and we probably weren't going to sign a list. They said they got the faculty members that Ewell Reagin recognized. Until now, I've at least pretended to be objective, and talked about it in those terms. I was personally very much involved of course, and I felt that what the administration was doing to the New Directions students ...I don't really know what promises they had made to the New Directions students, in terms of what exactly was written down on paper or said in words, but I know that the general feeling that was conveyed to these students was, "You come to Antioch and we will guarantee to find the money for your education." They were suddenly being told that they would have to leave, or that they would have run up terrible debts.

Antioch was, and this was to our credit I think, one of the few schools that in our efforts to broaden the base of the student body had deliberately gone to poor areas. I would say to the administration's credit, I gather, because they were basically the ones who made the decision. They went to ghettos, Appalachia, to Native American reservations and so forth. They encouraged the poorest of the poor to come here with the guarantee, if not an explicit guarantee, an implicit guarantee, that we would find the money to help them out. These people had already built up, a lot of them, huge debts. Maybe they wouldn't seem huge to a middle-class student, but to people who came from the backgrounds they did these were just terrible debts. If they didn't finish their education, and didn't have that degree, which they saw as helping them to get a job, this would make it almost impossible to every pay off these debts they had already contracted. Then, telling them that, "If you

can stay at all, which we're not sure you can, it will be a lot higher debt rate, a lot more of this financial aid will be loans rather than grants...." This just seemed to me a terribly inhumane thing to say.

The administration hadn't really thought of that possibility? That the aid might run out?

They hadn't thought of it, so that, to some extent maybe they didn't know how they were going to raise the extra money that would be didn't know how they were going to raise the extra money that would be needed. They had just gone on the assumption that the Federal Government would be a perpetual source of funds for this. I thought they were obliged, even if it was necessary to phase out the program, to phase it out at least so as to protect those students who had been brought here under those pretenses.

And did the [New Directions] actually have to leave?

A lot felt they had to leave. And actually, so many left that the administration then had the money for those who were left to more or less help them out. [The administration] had enough money, it had to be divided among fewer students now because so many left after the strike. After they lost the strike, they felt they didn't want to come back to Antioch. So, that sort of solved the problem for the administration. Then the administration did begin to phase out the program. Whether they said or did or not, they in fact did. But this was something which to me I felt they had no right to do.

I didn't approve of some of the tactics which the strikers used. It didn't upset me terribly that they closed down the campus, that seemed to be a reasonable strike action. But firebombing the Dean of Students' Office, some of the destruction that went on in the Co-op Office the night before the strike was ended, those things I didn't support, didn't approve of. It seemed to me that what was happening, particularly the day they had the big confrontation, (May 22, 1973), that seemed to me that that was a situation where the students had to be supported. It seemed to me that if we broke the strike, as it seemed the administration was trying to do, and which they did, that that would mean a real turn to the right for everything at Antioch. I didn't think that a strike winning would mean a turn to the left, necessarily, but the breaking of it just seemed to be a reactionary act.

I saw Antioch as a much less pleasant place to work after the strike was broken. Now, of course, part of the reason why it was less pleasant to work was the general deterioration that had been caused by the fact that we couldn't recruit students for the following year, and so there were terrible financial problems. It seemed to me that there was a change in the atmosphere here.

A change in the atmosphere how?

It became a more repressive atmosphere on campus. "We had broken the strike and we'll do it again." The faculty seemed much less tolerant of dissent.

The administration as well?

I never had that much contact with the administration. It seemed to go on the same old way it always had, far removed from me. But I had day-to-day interaction with the faculty, and there was less of an understanding, or less of an attempt to understand [different] backgrounds, less tolerance for dissent. I didn't feel as much a part of the faculty for several years after. I felt like I did my job, and I went home, and that was it. I didn't have anything like as much of a pleasant interaction with most of the faculty.

Were there a lot of interpersonal as well as factional resentments built up among different groups?

There was. Particularly a resentment of Mary Kaufman, she was a Communist lawyer who was on the faculty here. Andy Winnick, John McChesney.

Do you think a lot of this, the decreasing tolerance of dissent and the lack of attempt to understand people from different backgrounds, do you think that's carried over?

Well, the composition of the faculty has changed so much since then.

Or even carried over for the years [immediately] afterwards?

It carried over for several years. Also, another thing which carried over, in dealing with Birenbaum, he had the strength of weakness, that everybody was afraid to challenge him. That if we did really challenge Birenbaum, refuse to go along with the things that he was forcing on us, that it would precipitate another strike of some sort, and that the College would go under. And so, there tended to be a feeling that no matter how bad he is, we have to go along with what he wants to do because there was a feeling that he didn't have the responsibility to avoid a showdown that would ruin, would mean the end of the College, and therefore we had better avoid it. We, the faculty.

So, in other words, "Keep your mouth shut!"

Actually, not literally "Keep your mouth shut." Everybody talked about it terrible, but "Don't take it beyond talk."

Did students feel that way too? Was that sentiment extended to the whole campus, that nobody better challenge anything?

I think the students were influenced a lot by the faculty, so, yes. I think a result of the strike was there had been a great deal of student independence of the faculty, but when the strike was broken, many of the most radical, free-thinking students had left. An awful lot of students left, across the board, but more of [the left], and it made for a more docile student body. The students, for the next year or two, who wanted to come to Antioch tended not to be as radical as those who came before. I didn't see these as effects of the strike so much as the affect of the fact that the strike was lost, and that the administration won.

Did the administration ever own up to the fact that they had treated New Directions students unfairly?

I can't say that they ever did, no. I think they generally said that they wished they had more money, and I think that's the truth. From the beginning they said they regretted the fact that they weren't going to be able to give the money to the students, but its sort of like regretting that there aren't 25 hours in a day. You can regret it, but they were implying that they were doing the best they could.

They never said, "Oh, we planned it poorly."

No, I never heard that. I'm sure that no one claims to be infallible, or to never had made mistakes, but basically they might have said, "Well, we made a little mistake here, a little mistake there..." As far as I know, the administration never said they had planned poorly, and they said they never regretted the starting up of so many centers. They continued to say that that was a good idea. This is something which periodically happens at Antioch, which is that a new person comes into a job, and he admits the mistakes of his predecessors. But never their own, and always after it was too late to do anything about it.

It kind of surprises and troubles me when I talk to a people and they say that, "Well, APIE, the Program for Interracial Education worked great because that was based on particular academic criteria and New Directions wasn't, and that had a lot to do with the strike. Back to attitudes towards economic and cultural and social diversity, what do you think about the affects there?

There are a couple of things that need to be said here. One is that the Program for Interracial Education was troubled from the very beginning. A white administrator was put in charge of that, someone who sincerely believed in better education for Black people, but was inevitably perceived and perhaps inevitably was, somewhat paternalistic. I don't think it was particularly his fault. If I'd had the job, I would have done many of the same sorts of things he did, been paternalistic and been perceived that way. But it was the students in APIE

who insisted on taking control of that program. And Dixon had to give in on this, because [it was] clear that program couldn't continue as it was. Dixon just became so unpopular with the Black students, with the students he was working with.

Dixon did ?

Dixon Bush, Dixon was his first name. There was Richard Nixon, Jim Dixon, and Dixon Bush. [He] was the man named to head APIE and he became extremely unpopular with the students. I don't think it was his fault, it was the faulty of the situation of the situation he was in. A white man heading up a predominately Black program. It was like if I had been named head of the Women's Studies Program...

Sort of inevitable...

Right. And probably his values were different from those of most of the students. The other big thing was, that there were an awful lot of cultural differences between a lot of these students, who came in from completely different kinds of environments than most of the faculty. I grew up for the first ten years of my life in a slum in Georgia, but I'd been away from that for a long time. Not all of the faculty were from upper-class backgrounds by any means, but in the process of getting our Ph.D.'s and so forth, we had been educated away from that. These were students who were coming in who were just fresh from it. It was a valuable part of the education of all of us at Antioch, but it wasn't necessarily an easy or pleasant kind of education to be told that some of our ways of acting, just because they were middle-class, weren't necessarily the best, and they weren't necessarily the way they were going to do it.

The other big thing that happened, I don't know who was at fault in this, apparently the administration of some of the money that went to the New Directions program fell into the hands of some gangster types.

There was a lot of misappropriation of funds.

There was misappropriation of funds, but there was also the intimidation of students with guns, and things like that.

From other students?

Yes. All of this hearsay, but I heard it said so many times that I believe it. I never personally had any interactions with gangster types. Nobody ever threatened me in any way or I never observed this first-hand.

There was a lot more crime on campus overall, wasn't there?

Well, part of this, drugs. There was a lot of use of illegal drugs, and not just pot, either. More dangerous illegal drugs,

and that inevitably brought crime. A lot of that was controlled by the Mafia... the general feeling on campus was that some of the dealers were tied into the Mafia. This wasn't all New Directions students, by any means. Drug use seemed to be across the board.

By the counter culture students?

Some of it was thought to be that kind of thing. A lot of the faculty blamed the New Directions program for this crime.

And that was just an immediate reaction, without really knowing who was doing what?

I think so. Two of the most widely people believed to have the strongest crime connections on campus were New Directions students. I'm sure there were many others among New Directions students and non-New Directions besides the two.

How have the negative attitudes about New Directions affected commitment towards diversity?

I think most of the faculty that had those feelings have retired or died or gone somewhere else. I don't think its as strong and direct now. I don't know to what extent Guskin is influenced by it.

It doesn't seem like we do have much commitment to economic diversity.

We don't have that much commitment to economic diversity.

Or ethnic diversity as much as we say we do, as much as a lot of other more conservative colleges.

I think the College really would like more Black students, more Black faculty and other kinds of diversity too. I think the fact that we're not putting more energy into that has to do more with financial problems which may be vaguely connected with the strike, but it's been so long ago now that it's hard to know exactly how they are. I do think that there's much more willingness for ethnic diversity than there is for economic or cultural diversity. Not cultural in the sense of whether you listen to jazz or classical music; culture goes a little deeper than that. I do think there's the fear of getting in the ghetto people, in theory of what culture they would be.

How do you think the strike has affected the faculty?

I think I see this attitude all over the country, and our faculty are a little more liberal than the average American, but we're not insulated from the general meanness that's in this country right now.

It's really interesting what you said before about how the conservative upswing really coincided with the downswing of Antioch.

I think one of big effects of the strike was on faculty attitudes. it scared an awful lot of the faculty, and made a lot of people who had been vaguely in favor of student activism and student action afraid that this was going to mean their jobs, because there was a real feeling that Antioch might go under as a result of the strikes.

You are aware that are two strikes involved. I don't think you can completely separate the strike of the two unions, the part-time employee's union and Local 767, U.E. I guess winter quarter [of '73] was the strike of the unions. And that was the thing that began to really frighten the faculty. There was some feeling that these people that are sort of below us on the totem pole, below the faculty, the lower classes, were taking things into their own hands. And there was a realization that they had a lot less to lose than we did, because they didn't have as good a deal as the faculty did. There was a fear that they could bring things down, and also the fear that there was a awful lot of student support for the U.E. strike and the part-time employee union strike.

Did the union strike also include a lockout?

Yes and no. The U.E. did not institute a lockout, they instituted picket lines which some of us observed. But the part-time employee's union, which was students, primarily caf employees, students who worked part-time, both unions were striking together... As part of that strike, they did chain up Main Building. My recollection is that they didn't close the other buildings on campus.

That strike, like the student strike, was eventually won by the Administration, eventually the union gave in. I believe it is true that the U.E. sent one of their representatives here to advise, to more or less put pressure on the local to settle, because they were beginning to be afraid that the strike was going to make Antioch go under, and that the national union would get the blame for that.

The union was afraid of that, and so they compromised?

The national union, and so they encouraged the local union to, it wasn't so much compromise, it was pretty much giving in and settling with the administration. Basically, the union gave in. I think the part-time employees would have been more inclined to hold out, but they realized that they couldn't by themselves and so they gave in too. This was the first time the administration had really stood up against any kind of student or worker protest.

This whole strike frightened the faculty very much. The faculty was very much opposed to the Dixon Administration prior to this, and still was in a lot of ways, and so they were

reluctant to support the administration in any kind of strike. They did then, and for the most part, the faculty did support administration in the spring strike by the financial aid students.

What about the union strike provoked the administration to take a strong stand? What was so different about it?

A couple of things. Previously, the demands had been for things like union recognition; [they] had not been for primarily financial demands. They had been demands for greater student control over the administration of certain funds, but they hadn't been for larger funds to control. They had been [to change] the nature of some of the exams which were required for graduation, which were perceived by students as being culturally biased. And these were things that the administration could give in on without losing any money, which they maybe didn't have anyway. Some of the demands had cost money, but at that time it was always easier for the administration to get more money by just increasing the number of students on campus, and that would increase the amount of tuition available and everything would be fine. There had been lots of federal money available for things like that.

In terms of special programs?

Special programs and in terms of student grants, so that they could afford to take in students who themselves couldn't afford to pay the money the administration needed, but they would be financed by the federal government. The administration, every time they had a financial problem, they would solve it by taking another hundred students, and so the college would grow.

And that didn't create a problem?

They weren't problems for the administration. I might make it so there were too many people on campus, and it might make problems for faculty in dealing with larger classes, and for students dealing with larger classes, and for students in dealing with larger classes, but none of these were problems the administration really saw that they had to face. If it made the campus really overcrowded it might create tensions on campus, and maybe some of the tension which caused the strike may have been directly due to that sort of thing, but the administration didn't perceive themselves as feeling those pressures, so it was easier for the administration to give in on issues like that.

But there was no problem attracting another hundred students, was there, as there might be now?

No, there hadn't been. There was no trouble attracting students, male students were exempt from the draft. So, there

was no trouble attracting to finance whatever needed to be financed. Of course, for females it was different. But, the administration could probably see several things coming. By 1972, it was beginning to be clear that the U.S. had lost the war in Vietnam and they began to wind it down, and that would mean there wouldn't be the pressure on men to go to college in order to keep out of the draft. It was beginning to be clear that there were going fewer people in the college age in the next few years, so there would be problems attracting students that way.

Also, to a fairly large extent, the reputation of the college was going down, partly due to the fact that they had taken in so many students and it was so overcrowded. That was making it harder to attract new students. All of these things were conspiring to make it clear to the college that they couldn't finance things out of taking new students. The feeling was that there was some limit, but that we could take as many students as we wanted, that the only limit was to how many students we could take care of in the dormitories and in the classrooms and that sort of thing. People wanted to come to Antioch.

Especially at that time, too, because it was seen as sort of the Berkeley of the East Coast.

Yes, there was that too, that the students generally wanted alternative kinds of education, and that was what we were offering. I don't think we realized that people in the age range we attracted, that they were going to become more conservative over the next few years. There were going to be fewer of them and we were going to be less attractive, the draft wasn't pressuring them to come.

Also, I'm sure you are aware that the immediate thing that provoked the strike itself, was the fact that the Nixon administration was beginning to cut back on student aid. So, even if we could attract students, unless they were rich, we wouldn't get any money out of them. If they didn't have any money, and if the Federal Government wouldn't pay something for them, attracting poor students wouldn't solve any financial problems. Attracting poor students had solved financial problems in the past, because the Federal Government gave us the money for them. Whether it was used for their educational needs or for other needs of the college, whatever it was used for, it was spent. It didn't go into a backlog.

Your point being that Antioch finances were tuition-based, one way or another, either with poor or rich students.

Right. The administration didn't ever explicitly say this, but this was sort of in the background. "We have been awfully good to you people. We have given you an awful lot of money and so forth and now you're biting the hand that feeds you." But the fact is that the students had been awfully good for the administration. They had, even the students who hadn't paid

anything themselves, had brought the administration a lot of money. It was almost the administration biting the hand that fed it.

There was also the problem of the increasing number of centers around the country, all of which were a drain on the college. There were all sorts of fancy bookkeeping schemes which were designed to show us that the Yellow Springs campus wasn't even paying its way and that we were being financed by the others. Also, the central administration, they called it the Network rather than the University then, the Network administration was a terrible financial drain on everybody.

I know that later on, the Institute for the Study of Social Problems was dissolved. What was the faculty's attitude towards the educational component of New Directions?

There were a lot of problems there. The faculty did support the setting up of ISSP at the time it was set up. I don't think there was really faculty opposition to the idea that we needed more study of social problems and more Black studies and Marxist studies, things of that sort.

So there wasn't an anti-leftist sentiment among the faculty?

There were individual faculty members certainly who were antileftist, but the faculty as a whole, even those parts of it that weren't personally leftist, saw Marxism as a serious academic discipline that needed study, that hadn't had enough study, and did not oppose the idea at that time of ISSP. Now, later on, they saw ISSP as having supported the strike, most faculty members affiliated with it had, and so later on they turned against it after the strike. But, basically, although there were faculty members who were opposed to it in the beginning, I think it had a good solid majority of the faculty supporting it. The feeling was that it was doing serious academic work. There was some concern that that was done in a biased way, but the feeling was that it was serious enough academic work that that made it okay.

Do you think the dissolving of the Institute was mainly because of the strike?

I think it was. Of course, it was some time later when it was dissolved, if I'm not mistaken, about a year or two later. And there also some faculty members that other faculty members very much wanted to get, to get rid of after the strike. I don't think they particularly wanted to get rid of me, but I knew there were some people they did. Most of them had been affiliated with the ISSP, most of whom had been seen as ringleaders of student discontent. Some of those people were people who were very lukewarm in their support for the strike.

There's a lot of mention in the Record directly after the strike about the effort to eradicate the leftist politics on campus.

One other important effect, one positive effect the strike had was that, prior to the strike, the Board of Trustees had been one-hundred percent behind the administration. But one of the big reasons the Board of Trustees supported the administration was that they had seen student unrest all over the country, causing major problems at schools, and Dixon had managed to avoid such problems by twisting and turning and double-dealing and whatever. There had been a closing down of the campus during the, for example after the Jackson State and Kent State killings, but that had been done with the cooperation of the rest of the school, rather than against the administration.

Jewell Graham:

Describe the first ten years after the strike of '73 vis a vis the physical, emotional, and spiritual climate of Antioch.

During the strike I was associate dean of the college, during part of the strike. Connie Pelekoudas was associate dean of the college too. Connie and I were both working in the dean's office, and the dean, who was the head of the campus, was Ewell Reagin. But it was very strange, because during that time I also went on sabbatical, and in the ten years afterwards, from '75 to '79, I was going to law school at the same time as I was teaching. I was going to law school full time and teaching full time, so everything is a little fuzzy. I think my memory is especially dulled because I try to forget that period, because it was so frantic for me personally.

I think people were depressed during those ten years, there was a lot of Antioch bashing that took place, and part of the reason we went into a downward spiral, because we did go into a downward spiral, is that people convinced themselves that we were in a downward spiral.

Up until '73, this was a very heady place. There were lots of applications from students, faculty found it a very desirable place to work, there was the air of vitality about it, and the feeling of being in the vanguard of experimentation in higher education. I think the strike made us more conservative, and we became more prone to try to do the thing most colleges and universities did, rather than be as creative as we once were. I may be wrong about that, but I just got the feeling that [there] was a feeling of wanting to pull back, retreat from being out on the forefront.

Wanting to pull back or having to pull back?

Probably both. I don't know that we had to pull back. Now, that was confused by the expansion [of the Antioch network]. I can't remember when Birenbaum came.

'76, '77?

Was it '77? Because we didn't really start to pull back from the expansion into the world and all these centers and campuses until he came. So maybe we were still in the process of expanding during those early years. The expansion, it was a different kind of educational creativity, and a lot of people were very unhappy about it.

Faculty?

A lot of faculty were very unhappy about the expansion. The other thing that probably puts me at a handicap is that I think I've always had a kind of marginal position on the faculty, because faculties, not so much now, but they're kind of an old boy's network. I was black and female and teaching

from a practice perspective, because I was teaching social work, and then after law school, law, or law courses. I think the practice perspective is a little different from the theoretical perspective. The focus in most liberal arts colleges is on the theoretical perspective. So that made me a little marginal too.

So, I was an observer more than a participant in a lot of the feelings of the faculty. I wasn't feeling a lot of the anger and despair I think a lot of them were. I personally was not feeling that.

The anger and despair concerning the strike?

Yes, and the impact it was having on student enrollment. I do think the strike precipitated the decline in student enrollment. It was very traumatic and a lot of students left the college during the strike. There were a lot of them participating in the strike, but a lot left, and a lot of those who left did not come back. They either went off on co-op and didn't come back, or they transferred to other institutions, but they didn't come back. Some didn't come back because of the turmoil, but I think some didn't come back because they were disillusioned.

Were a lot of the students who left financial aid students?

That I don't know. That would be interesting to know.

How different was it teaching after the strike?

I didn't find it different at all. My classes weren't smaller even, because social work was very popular. And to me, the students weren't different from before, it was just that there were fewer of them. You can imagine this place with three or four times as many students running around. It just has a different feel.

Do you think the strike affected the character of the student body, not just immediately, but over years?

I don't know. The college had already made a commitment to increase diversity, and I think they kept trying after that. I think the "selectivity" of the college probably went down. There was a time when we were turning away four or five students for everyone who was accepted, and I think that went way, way, way, way down. But I think a lot of the selectivity at Antioch is self selection. I've always believed that students select themselves for most colleges. It's the word of mouth and what students believe about a college that draws them to a college. So, at least for a long time, what students continued to believe about Antioch, drew the same kinds of students to Antioch. That means they were very brash, and challenging, and articulate, and bright. It's just that we couldn't turn away as many as we turned away before.

The physical climate, we went into deferred maintenance

with the decline in student enrollment. That meant there was less money and things got really run down. They've improved since Alan Guskin has come. Some of it had to do with the destruction during the strike. My office was not vandalized, but there was theft from my office. I had some reports and some photographs and some slides that were lost. But in some parts of the college there was real vandalism, destruction of furniture and records. We had a dean of students then, he was a black man who was writing a novel.

Carl Clark.

Carl Clark's novel was destroyed, and he had worked for years on it, and it was gone. He never forgave the students for that I don't think. I think the strike had a long term negative influence on the college and I think it was probably as much our reaction to the strike as much as the strike itself.

You think the reaction could have been different and [cause things] to maybe turn out differently?

Might have, I don't know. We fed on [the strike] for years.

Fed on it in terms of decreasing morale and depression?

Decreasing morale, and blaming everything bad that happened, everything negative that happened in the college, on the strike.

What did it do to faculty relationships?

My impression is that it created some hostilities that lasted a long time. Because there were a lot of faculty that participated in the strike. Some of them were more enthusiastic about the strike than the students.

What I have heard, that I really feel strongly about, is that in the subsequent years, it seemed to me that the strike was being blamed on the black students, and it was not the black students. It was students on financial aid, both black and white, and some of the faculty who were almost inciting to riot. Some of the faculty were encouraging the students, and supporting the students, and speaking for the students, and some manned the picket lines with the students-- not many, but I think one or two did. So they became scapegoats for the strike. People have long memories around here. They were blamed sometimes. I don't know whether they were blamed, but people resented and disliked them for a long time.

Certain faculty?

Mmmm-hmmm

Is it mostly the ISSP [Institute for the Solution of Social Problems] faculty that you're talking about?

Some of the ISSP faculty but some of it was regular faculty, tenure track faculty.

Was there a purge of leftist faculty?

After that? Well, some of the strongest leftist faculty stayed around for a long time. Some of the ones who were at least supportive, or at least didn't work against the strike, are still here. I know there were allegations of a purge, but I don't know that that's true. What might be true is that [when] people came up for contract renewal or tenure, the whole array of factors worked against them. I don't think it was possible to say that it was just their political opinions. There were some people who were very, very leftist who were around for a long time. People have probably mentioned Andy Winnick, but there were other people who were around for a while. There were also allegations of a purge of women, some of those leftists were women, and there was something that looked like a purge of women, because a lot of the women who were outspoken, their contracts were not renewed. So, I don't know if that was the political purge that people are talking about. I didn't know enough about it to characterize it as that, and I don't know what went into whatever it was that led those people to leave the college.

John Ronsheim said it was "only the obnoxious ones" that were purged.

Well, Andy Winnick was about as obnoxious as you could get, but he was around for a long time.

Do you think the hostilities between faculty have stuck?

I don't think so, but people have long, long memories. I know that when James Dixon, who was the president before Birenbaum, came just a couple of years ago to his alumni reunion, George Geiger refused to go to whatever it was [the college] held for him. George Geiger, he probably has a list of people who participated [in the strike], but George will never forgive Jim Dixon, and he's been gone for a long time.

What about the change in the relationship between faculty and administration?

That's hard to characterize because the administration changed. I think James Dixon had pretty much used up his credibility by the time he left, and the faculty was active in trying to get him dismissed from the presidency. Then Birenbaum came and he was a disaster from most people's perspective, and so the relationship between him and the faculty was bad. We haven't really had a dean of faculty for any length of time, I think since Boyd Alexander, who was dean when I first came. Between the faculty and the higher reaches of the administration, like the presidency, things never really got

good until Alan Guskin came and I think that's probably getting holes now.

Did you come before Dixon or during Dixon?

During Dixon.

And [the faculty-administration relationship] was pretty good for a while, wasn't it, before the expansion? [Dixon] was pretty well liked.

Oh, he was loved. He used to go in the student dormitories and read ["Winnie the Pooh"] to the students. His door was always open to students, he loved students, loved talking to students. He was a medical professional and he had certain ideas about experimentation in higher education. He was an idea person, a very creative person, but I don't think he was an administrator.

When the invasion of Vietnam, or the bombing of Cambodia, its terrible that I don't remember what it was, but on all the campuses in the country, there were a lot of strikes. So when the students here started talking about striking, the faculty and the administration, everybody joined in the strike. There couldn't be a strike against the administration because the president was down there talking to students about their concerns. I remember a couple of other students traveling through and they stopped and went to these meetings, and there were faculty and administrators, the president was there, and [they] said "Who are you striking against? How can you strike, who are going to strike against?" Because most of the students were striking against the administration in some of the other colleges.

But then [Dixon's] relationships with the faculty started to deteriorate. Part of that I think was [that] he was so popular with the students that he drove a wedge between the students and the faculty. At least that's what some people have said.

Did the relationship between students and faculty change?

Afterwards? Students change so, every couple of years you have a new generation of students. I think the relationship between the faculty and the students regained its former strength, but I don't know whether I can remember enough to characterize any kinds of changes in the relationships between faculty and students.

Two questions regarding administration. One, do you think the role of administrators has changed, or how they see their role?

I think during the Dixon years administrators saw their role as initiating curricular innovations and social change, more than just administering. They saw themselves as leaders. I think Birenbaum saw himself as an educational leader, but nobody else did. They didn't and they never accorded him that

kind of recognition. I think the administration saw its responsibility as trying to keep the place operating.

There were some very tough years. You've heard about the years we went to the unemployment line. See that blue slip over there? That's my unemployment slip. That's my application for unemployment. I think the [Birenbaum administration] saw their job as keeping the place open and going. We owned a lot of these houses that you see around here [in Yellow Springs], that they used to use as faculty houses. [Birenbaum] sold those. He sold the golf course, the playing fields to the village. He would've sold Glen [Helen], I think, except that he couldn't. But Birenbaum lived in New York City, and spent lots and lots of money traveling back and forth and having an office in New York. Nobody that I know of, at least on the faculty, or in the community, had a lot of love or respect for him.

What about Guskin? How do you think he sees his role?

What he articulates at least, is that he sees his role to help the college grow. I think when he first came it was restoring it to past glory, but I think realism has set in and he sees it as building a strong liberal arts college, smaller than the one we think about for past glory.

Do you think his focus is less as an educator and more as a manager?

Right now its more as an administrator or manager probably, but I think he would like to see himself as an educational leader. But you have to work with the faculty to be an educational leader in an institution, you just can't be a leader all by yourself.

What about attitude among administration and faculty toward student dissent or student criticism? Has that changed and how is it related to the strike?

Has it changed? I think students just don't do that very much now. Students now are remarkably docile compared to the students back in those days. There were some arrogant students, I tell you, back then. I mean, really arrogant students. My impression is that the faculty, by in large, encourage students to question and criticize, to go to the demonstrations in Washington, but I think their support would be a lot less for something really drastic like a strike. I don't think there'd be any support for that. People left with raw nerves about that.

What about administration?

I think that's the one thing that's more frightening than probably anything else, for the administration, a recurrence of something like that. Because they are acutely aware of and sensitive to the long range impact.

I always wonder if, when something like the food service protest happened last spring, if [the strike] is on the minds of the administration.

I think so. If I were an administrator, that would be in the back of my mind. Because the press still loves that kind of happening at Antioch. We don't get a lot of good press, but if anything like that happens, if we had a strike, we would be in the paper. We can create an international, cross-cultural program, and do all sorts of wonderful things and we won't get much press for it, but let us have a strike and they will be ready to bury us.

Quick way to get famous.

Quick way to get dead.

Speaking of this, what about the reputation and image of Antioch. How was that affected by the strike?

Its surprising, because for a long time there didn't seem to much impact on the reputation outside of the college. People still had the same perceptions of the college, [that it was] a place where you have radical students, where you have a lot of political activity, and educational innovation all over the place, and that perception gradually changed. I think it changed in part because we didn't manage some of the grants we got very well. We used to get a lot of grants, from the government, from foundations. At least my perception is that we got quite a few. But we didn't spend the money on what it was supposed to be spent on. I think we lost the reputation in some circles as an innovative institution. But I think there are people out there who still think, "Oh, boy, that's a really forward looking place." But I think it affected the reputation. I see a fair amount about Oberlin in the press nowadays. Antioch was seen as a really educationally innovative place. It was widely known.

And that's changed?

I think so. I think not to the extent that people here think it so. But I also think it was gradual, even though we had the strike and all the bad effects of the strike. Because I was doing a lot of traveling, I'd go to a lot of conferences and meetings, and people would say, "Oh, Antioch! What are you doing now?"

What about the difference in the commitment to innovation?

I think [the strike] made us a little less courageous, that we really didn't want to be that different, we didn't want any bad publicity, we didn't want to be weird anymore.

Again, I'm wondering if this is because we had to due to economic factors or that we just got scared.

I think we got scared, but there's debate about that. Because some people feel we would have been better off to be really innovative and to stay out there on the cutting edge, and that would've injected some vitality, that would've maintained the character of Antioch, the old Antioch, and that in itself might have reversed the downward spiral. Then there are people who believed we had to pull back to attract the students and faculty that we did have. Who knows.

How did the quality of the education change?

That's hard for me to talk about. I've heard a lot of people say the quality of education declined. In my own personal experience I did not see that, and I don't know how one judges that. But we had the same faculty and they were teaching their hearts out, we had lively students. I think one thing that happened is there wasn't money, and faculty didn't get out to go to meetings and conferences, and they began to shrink back from national visibility, mostly because of money. I think that probably had an impact on the way faculty felt about itself, because it became more isolated from colleagues, but I cannot speak to whether or not it changed the quality of education. It didn't for me.

In some ways it sounds like the faculty were working harder.

They were working very hard. Salaries were not going up. They were working very hard for not very much money, and it was the faculty working at reduced salaries that kept the place open actually, for all those years. And we still sent a high percentage of students to graduate school.

Do you think the faculty's commitment has been acknowledged?

Oh, yes, I think so. I think in the beginning, when Alan Guskin first came, there was an inordinate amount of attention paid to new faculty, and he talked about building the faculty, about increasing the faculty, which made the faculty who had hung around for a long time feel very bad, resentful. But he's changed that over the past few years. I don't think it matters that much to new faculty, they don't have that history, they don't worry about that. [Guskin] realizes now the contribution that the old faculty made. In fact, last year or the year before, I think he paid more attention to the faculty of full professors, and most of the people who are full professors are the ones who were here during those years. So I think he recognizes their value now.

Why do you think people stayed?

I don't know, I've often wondered. Of course some people said they stayed because they couldn't find any other jobs, but I don't think that's true, because a lot of people did leave. Probably there were some who stayed because they didn't have

anywhere else to go, but I think most of the people stayed because they cared. They cared very deeply about Antioch and it was more than just a job to them. It was an institution and a culture that had to stay alive, and they would do whatever they could to assure that.

Why did you stay?

Well, I think it's probably a combination. I believe deeply in Antioch. I don't work for money. I mean, I like money, I like to get paid. But if I worked for money, I would've been gone a long time ago, I could've gotten a much better income. That was part of it, and part of it was just convenience: my husband works here, my children were in school here, I went to law school while I was working here, I like Yellow Springs, I didn't want to move from Yellow Springs, I didn't want to commute anyplace else to work, I enjoyed my job, I enjoyed the students. It may have crossed my mind once or twice that maybe I should think about alternatives, but I never seriously entertained the notion of leaving. But see, I was in a favorable position because I have a husband who works, we were a two-income family, and we could survive. Some people couldn't.

Do you think the people who stayed were conscious of keeping Antioch alive, that this was somehow a mission?

Oh, yes, I think they knew what they were doing, I think we knew what we were doing. But one thing is that people seem to forget is that its the faculty and the students who are the center of the college or university. You can't have a college without students, that's the reason for having it to begin with. And you can't have it without the faculty, because its that relationship between the faculty and the students and the teaching-learning process that is the central mission. And administrators are people to help make sure that relationship goes on. But administrators come and go, and people who have been here a long time have seen many administrators come and go. I have seen three presidents, and that's not counting the acting presidents in-between. I can't even remember the names of all the deans, the deans of faculty, or the deans of students even. There have been so many people who have gone through the business office and Michelle Genthon's office, that if my life depended on it, I couldn't name all of them. But the faculty and the students go on. There are changes, there are changes in the students every few years, and there are changes in the faculty, but there is a kind of continuity of these people who feel the responsibility for what it is that goes on in the educational process. I really believe that.

What did the strike do to the cohesion of community?

I think it was very negative for a long time. Because I think people didn't trust one another, didn't want to talk with each other. Everybody kind of retreated into their own lives,

their own teaching, were dedicated to teaching, but doing their bit, not worrying about what other people did, or what the institution was doing.

Did it break up the unity among faculty too?

Well, let's not say unity, let's say collegiality. I think so. Although that's hard for me to judge because I wasn't really a part of that collegiality before the strike, I don't think. Maybe other people think I was and I'm overplaying that. [But] I didn't start teaching until 1969. From 1964 until 1969 I was in a special program. I was working as an administrator and a counselor, and then in 1969, it was only a couple of years after that that the strike happened. I didn't have to take sides.

You were working in the counseling center?

No, it was a special program called the Antioch Program for Interracial Education, and there were three or four of us who were responsible in that program for the administration and counseling, financial aid, admissions, everything.

What about the commitment to maintaining plurality of the student body?

I think the college has tried. Now, that wasn't a result of the strike, but things that happened long before the strike, starting back in 1940 with Jessie Treichler and Coretta King and Higgenbathum and that crew. Then, during the 60's there was a lot of involvement here in civil rights. You've heard about that, people went to Mississippi with voter registration on co-op, and some students spent their co-ops in jail during the anti-Vietnam War protests. It was that fervor of the civil rights movement that made the college look at itself and see that it was deficient in its inclusion of, not just black students, but also students below a certain socioeconomic level. So they started trying to change that in the mid 60s. Since then, we've maintained at least a philosophical commitment to [diversity].

So you don't think people's attitudes have changed about it, just the ability to realize it?

One thing that I don't know about, because I've never been privy to any discussion like this, I told you I had this feeling for a long time that people were blaming black students for the strike, so I think there might have been some trepidation about having too many black students on campus. But that's just a feeling, I have no evidence for that.

Or students from a certain class?

That's right, students from a certain class. Well, I did hear people talk about students from a certain class, but black

students from a certain class, not white students from a certain class. But I don't think it decreased the theoretical, philosophical commitment to diversity and pluralism, but maybe its a narrow class definition of what that would be.

People I've interviewed have talked about an unwanted culture being here.

There were lower class black students and lower class white students here. But, its not unwanted culture, what it was really was that they had some students who were, and we've had them ever since actually, just unsocialized. Its not the culture. They were ruthless. There were students who stole, sold drugs, and we still have people like that around.

No matter what background.

That's right, that's right. But they were visible and we created them because people allowed themselves to be intimidated by them. They'd ask for money, loans, that people knew they weren't going to pay back. The institution made it possible for them to behave the way they did. And then we blamed them for it after they did it.

Why do you think this happened?

Why was the institution intimidated by it? White guilt. Some of it may have been real fear because some of these were tough kids, but I think most if it was white guilt. So I think the strike has altered our commitment to lower class students of all stripes.

What about the mission of Antioch, not just our ideals but our ability to realize them.

I think the strike now is retreating too far into the past. I guess it was the faculty who proposed it originally, this task force on the curriculum that was organized three or four years ago, and the task force started with a discussion on the mission of the college. I think the mission as it is now articulated, is partly out of the experience of old faculty, there are quite a old faculty on that task force. But in reality, the mission of the college is being created now by new faculty and new students, different students. There aren't many of the old, [pre-strike] faculty left around to have much impact on the college now. I think there's a transition going on in the curriculum changing from what we old ones perceived it to be, to something that the new ones are creating. I don't know what its going to be yet.

What about the strike's affect on the relationship between the town and the college?

I think for a long time there was a decreasing impact of

the college on the community. I like to say that I'm basically a townie, but I don't know if I can continue to say that or not. I grew up in Springfield and I lived here without working here for seven years as a townie. I was in the League of Women Voters and the human relations counsel, the this and the that, and had two children at home. So my identity as a townie, and my husband worked at Vernay's, was set before I came to Antioch, and I have a feeling about the town that developed before.

It seemed to me that the college was more important in the life of the village early on, than it was during this period after the strike. [Then], there was probably not that much energy to put out into the town. As far as I know, there's never been tension between the town and the college, the [two] have gotten along well. People in the college are active in the town, the college always opens its activities to the town, and people in the town like students by in large. They don't always understand them, but they like them. I don't know how the students think about people in the town, but over some of those years we made real efforts to connect townspeople and students. People would have a group of students over for dinner, townspeople, not alumni or anything, just people trying to get to know one another better. I think the town felt sorry for the college, and the village government bought the [golf course] property with an option for the college to repurchase it after a certain period of time. It was a loan actually, with the playing fields as security. I think the college has had less impact on the town because its smaller. There are fewer faculty living in the town because there are fewer faculty, and there are fewer students. The students used to live in the town when there were 2400 students and a thousand here at a time, and there wasn't enough room on campus for them. One year they had so many students they were pitching tents till they found room for students.

And some students were sleeping in the common room. [The administration] thought there would be students who wouldn't come and more came than they thought. Students used to live in town in these expensive places, people were gouging students with high rents. So there was a lot more interchange, interaction between the students and the town then, than now.

Do you think the strike had any positive affects?

I can't think of any. Maybe you can count as a positive affect that we would be very wary of letting anything like that happen again... I don't think it was very positive that we had to scrounge, because we got used to scrounging, and for a long time we didn't know how to ask for the things we needed. We didn't learn that again until the new faculty came. We said, "Oh, you can get that!" We got used to living on this bare, subsistence level. I think there are lessons to be learned as to what not to do, and what not to allow to happen, but I don't see that as particularly positive.

Do you think that it could happen again?

I think its a totally different era, and I think students are different, and I think there wouldn't be faculty supporting and encouraging [something like the strike].

Kenneth Olson:

I wasn't walking in picket lines or those kinds of things, nor was I a party to the people who brought an end to [the strike] and went to court. My opinions at the time were fairly divided as far as where I stood. Clearly, to me, the administration had made a lot of mistakes in terms of making commitments to people I felt they should have lived up to, but it was not at all clear to me that the action of the strike would have any desired affect on making a change, that it would deal with those problems. [The strike] seemed, even as it was going, that it was going to make those problems worse by the amount of damage being done to the campus. Here was a place that was in trouble because of limited resources to begin with, that overextended itself to people, that made commitments to people that it couldn't keep because of poor financial management. There was enough damage being done by students to the campus that it was clear it was going to tax the resources that were there. So I wasn't that an active strike supporter in the sense of "This is a good idea for us to be doing."

At the same time, you're kind of empowered. Students feel like they had a measure of control over things that I think we were all experimenting with at the time. When I came to Antioch in the summer of 1970, and up through that quarter in '73, I don't think I was on campus at any time there wasn't some kind of strike going on. There was always something. The first quarter I was here there was a part-time workers union strike, so the cafeteria was all closed down. Well, "Where am I going to eat?" and those kinds of problems. In one sense, the strike [of '73] is difficult to ascertain because all the strikes sort of flowed together and the problems sort of flowed together. It's hard for me, in retrospect, to remember whether a specific incident was an incident that happened during that strike or during some other kind of confrontation.

Do you think people are false in their assumptions that the strike of '73 was the culminating force that led the college in a downward spiral?

I think it was an era of events that culminated in that one event, and that one event accelerated things dramatically. When I came in the summer of 1970, there were on the order of about a thousand students on each div, so we're looking at a total enrollment of about two thousand students. In my memory, there was a gradual decline in enrollment between then and the strike. People were leaving because of problems, but it was precipitous. During and after that quarter [of the '73 strike], people left in droves. Half the people I knew on campus transferred, or dropped out, or otherwise left within the year.

A lot of other people would've left, had they not felt like, "God, I don't know whether my courses are going to transfer if I try to transfer someplace else. I've been here for three years. I've got so many credits, if I have problems transferring those credits, then I'm going to end up a freshman

someplace else. I will have thrown the money down the tubes, so I'll try to stick it out as long as I can in hopes that the place will still be around."

You stayed until '75. What was it like in the two years after the strike until your graduation? How different was it to be a student at Antioch?

The students of my era that were here then, at least most of my friends, we pretty much divorced ourselves from the university. We were done. We were here from that point on. not to so much experience the university in what it had to offer, but to meet our own personal goals: "I want to get a degree and I want to go to grad school." The next step was coming up. So we lived off campus and stayed off campus. I had very little to do, after that, with the politics of the campus.

I think there was a sense of total frustration, not only with the college administration, but also with the political forces that had brought on the strike. I felt like I didn't really have much to identify with in either group. I hate to characterize people as strikers or non-strikers, because some of the people who were involved in organizing the strike and concerned about the issues were genuinely committed, real good people trying to do the right thing. [But] it was also clear that a tremendous number of people also involved with it were really, despite their protestations to the contrary, in it for the thrill of it. I think [the latter] were involved in a lot of the destruction that took place on campus, those people were a real destructive force to the university, those people alienated an awful lot of the rest of us.

So, I became very politically apathetic when it came to Antioch. My vision of Antioch that I had when I came, that it was going to be this wonderful place where we all shared similar kinds of values and things that were important to us, that a lot of the rest of the world had difficulty with, was put to death during that strike. A belief that the college administration would have a vision, and a capability to carry out the vision, was shattered. There may have been a vision, but there was no capability to carry it out, and not even the vaguest understanding of what it would take to carry it out.

Jim Dixon had a tremendous vision, he was a tremendous innovator, a real terrific idea guy, but he didn't have a clue as how to finance it. Or if you made commitments to students... The standard routine of the college was then to admit somebody and say, "Here's a year of education and you would never otherwise have gotten this." If people thought what they were getting was four or five years of education, and it was unspoken, I think they had every reason to believe they were being offered a deal that they could expect to be ongoing. Then [Dixon] would come up with some new plan a couple of years later, and the financial resources would go to the new plan.

The people who were here had thought they had a scholarship, that they had some kind of support in aid, [now felt] the money would suddenly evaporate, and people were in danger of not being

able to come back, even though they had put in two years here.

I was a financial aid student and there was never a year in my five years here that [my aid] didn't get cut. It wasn't because my family's income was going through the roof, it was because that was what Antioch did. Antioch enticed people in with a reasonably good offer of aid, and then, as they progressed through college, cut more and more and more and more. It's not clear to me that that was something done with a lot of intent, but I think it was done without much planning. The people making the financial decisions were much more interested in being on the cutting edge and exploring something new, than following through with a program they'd already put in place.

Do you think a lot of other students experienced disillusionment with Antioch after the strike?

Oh, yes. That was the common sentiment. It's very tough to characterize your own experience at Antioch as being characteristic of somebody else's experience at Antioch, because everybody's experience was so different. What div you were on made a huge difference. There was a running characterization of the early 70s that one div was the political div and the other div was the love, peace and happiness div. In one div everybody did a lot of drugs and had a good time, and in the other div there was always a strike. So depending on where you were at a given point in time, whether you were on one div or another, whether or not you went to co-op in Boston or Topeka, really made a big difference in how people experienced the whole thing.

It's very funny, I come across people very often that were at Antioch at the same time I was there and I've never heard of them, and they've heard of me. It was possible then, it happened all the time. I came to Antioch with a very close friend of mine from Massachusetts and we came on opposite divs even though we had both come to look at the school together. I entered in the summer, he entered in the fall, and we didn't see each other for two and a half years, our paths virtually never crossed. But that was fairly common.

What was it like on campus in the years before you graduated physically, the climate in terms of morale, and the emotional climate?

Over the five years that I was a student, there was a huge deterioration in the physical plant. When I came I had a financial aid job and I worked for maintenance mowing lawns, and there was a big maintenance crew. There was a large group of full-time of maintenance employees here all the time, and a group of students that worked in maintenance, and the grass got cut all the time, and the bushes got trimmed, and the place looked pretty sharp. By the time I left, the effects of the cutbacks in those areas were apparent in the way that the campus appeared, in the way buildings appeared and were maintained.

When I came there were four squash courts in great shape,

everything looked terrific, there were full-time maintenance people in the gym, and by the time I left the floor in one of the gyms had completely buckled. One of the squash courts was essentially, permanently shut down because of the water damage from leaking roofs.

You saw that everywhere, in the dormitories to the classrooms, to the quality of the equipment in the science building. I had this co-op in Baltimore where I was working in a lab, and I was just amazed at the equipment. It was a well-equipped lab, but it stood out as a point of contrast to me to Antioch where I realized just how bad, how outdated the equipment was.

But it was deteriorating over time.

That's my impression. It seemed that there were less and less resources, it was always a question of "what's there" in the way of resources, and they seemed to get less as affiliated organizations fell off. As Antioch's relationship with the Fels Institute fell off, as Antioch's relationship with Kettering Labs fell off, there were real losses, in terms of faculty that had been teaching at Antioch and working at Fels.

Some very top people in psychology for instance, were bringing in grants to their associated organizations, were bringing students from their classroom. I was psych major, and I spent a lot of time in the Fels Institute as an assistant to one of my professors. He was doing research over there and I would go over there with him, have access to all this hotshit equipment. Those relationships fell off, as the college was divorcing itself from them because of this or that or the other reason, some kind of financial arrangement they didn't want to be involved in anymore.

For instance, the staff from Kettering Labs used to love to come over and play volleyball and handball, and they'd always been allowed to do that without buying CG passes. Money got tight and somebody said, "Hey, I'm paying money to be a CG member, and that's because I like to use the gym, and these people from Kettering come over here and use it any time they want. That doesn't make any sense to me, so let's make them pay CG fees." [Kettering] had gone out of their way for the college in a lot of ways and they felt like, "Well, screw you."

What about the emotional mood of the campus, how do you think the strike affected that?

It made everybody depressed that the administration could not be moved. The kind of idealism a lot of us had had, was lost in all that. Most of us had come to Antioch with this notion that if we could just get the right people together in a big group, we could make a really alternative kind of system work. Some of that was our own naivete about what really works and what doesn't, and any time you come face to face with your own naivete, it gets depressing. It's hard to swallow and there's a real temptation to say, "Well, if I can't have everything

my way, I give up and I'm just going to get apathetic."

I think there was a lot of cynicism and sarcasm both towards the administration and towards the heavy political types on campus too.

What about the changes in the relationships between different groups on campus? Did you see the strike affecting the way in which faculty related to one another?

Whether or not a faculty member was politically active was important to another faculty member who was politically active, and vice versa. Faculty who were not politically active, who were interested in their areas of academic study, felt very threatened by events which threatened their jobs. A lot of them left. A lot of them said, "My job is in danger, I've got to think about my family and whether or not I can provide for them."

At the time as a student, I felt like, "Well, they should be committed to the political aims being identified as being morally correct." I think I was fairly blind to the fact that these people, despite what their political agenda might be, also had family responsibilities they didn't care to risk. They needed some kind of feeling of job security.

There was a moral problem for me too. I was working in the psych department with various psych professors and we had a bunch of animals over in the basement of McGregor, and the building was locked up [during the strike]. The people who had locked the building up said, "No, nobody can go in and feed the animals," a lot of whom were animals who had problems, who had some kind of surgery. That was my first taste of, "Hey, wait a minute. I'm not sure the ends justify the means."

[The strike] was not espousing the kind of values I had or expected people to have. "Okay, I understand we've got problems here, that there may be some justification for some sort of strike action." But there were a lot of things there was no justification for. There was no justification for things getting slashed and trashed, for trying to keep people out of the psych lab and keep people from feeding the animals. That made me not very sympathetic [to the strike].

Did all the animals die?

I know that one of my professors found a way in, he could break into McGregor and he was doing that for a while. I don't recall whether he got them out, or whether he continued to maintain them by going in. There were ways to get into almost every building. I knew people at the gym, I got in the gym fairly frequently during the strike, despite the fact that it was padlocked.

But it was a pretty intimidating atmosphere nevertheless.

It was a very intimidating atmosphere. I knew people who were spotted coming out of a building, who were chased by people on the picket line with a lot of threats of physical harm. It

was a very, very scary time.

My most vivid strike recollection was the day the injunction was served. I was living out of town in an old farm house and I drove into town coming in Polecat Road, I was driving in that way and where the driveway goes into Whitehall farm, it's a long driveway that goes back into Whitehall farm, disappears under the railroad, has to be a quarter of a mile. There were police cars, from what I could see, and as far as I could see, there were police cars, two in a row. There had to be a hundred and twenty police cars lined up there, clearly from all kinds of counties. I realized that it was a very dangerous time, that very dangerous things could happen.

A friend of mine at the time was walking with Russ Bradley, he was the Greene County sheriff who served the injunction, and this friend was a student who was involved in a lot of paralegal stuff, so he had spent some time talking to the sheriff. At one point, Bradley turned to my friend and said, "I don't know if I can control my officers. I hope you people will understand how scary it is for these cops, because we know there are guns here, and we don't know that somebody's not going to lean out of the window, or walk on campus and shoot somebody. If that happens, I can't promise what my officers are going to do."

It put the cops in a somewhat different perspective, to have me realize the cops were just as scared as we were. I knew he was right, there were guns around, and some people had them who were scary people.

It was a frightening time, there were a lot of times I would not have been willing to speak my mind about what was going on. The person you were speaking to might become violent.

A guy I know who had been here in the counseling department in the late 60s, around the time that college was recruiting inner city black kids, and some kids whose histories had been fairly violent, who had grown up in violent circumstances, he described it as, "You got these white kids from New Jersey and their idea of an argument, is that you escalate, and you escalate, and finally, at the top end of the argument, you call somebody a 'motherfucker'. You were taking those kids, and putting them in a conflict situation with other kids, who were from inner city ghettos, who started at 'motherfucker' and went from there." Those situations were very difficult to resolve.

New Directions students felt they had been assaulted by the university and justifiably so. I had a number of close friends who were New Directions students, who really felt like the rug had been pulled out from under them. They felt a tremendous amount of resentment towards the administration and a fair amount of resentment towards students who didn't support them, that didn't seem to understand that this was very real to them. For New Directions students, this was the only way many of them were going to get a college education. Their financial circumstances were such that simply a full-tuition ride with room and board was not going to do it. They needed some of the other aspects of the program, like traveling expenses, and books, and those kinds of things they were very

unlikely to get someplace else. In a sense, their education was being taken away from them, they had every right to be very angry about that. For them to listen to some student from Gross Point say "Well, you're denying me my education," when that kid had all sorts of opportunities available, they had a real problem with that. It affected some relationships between students.

What about the strike's affect on maintaining that diversity of the student body. Did it change Antioch's commitment to ethnic and economic diversity?

The college remained as committed to that as they could be. I really don't fault the administration for not trying hard enough after that, because they have to operate within the financial reality. Their mistake had been to overestimate their ability to operate outside of it. They committed to too many people, and what they needed to do was to commit to fewer people, but be able to keep those commitments. My impression was that [commitment to diversity] was followed with a certain amount of good faith.

What about relationships between faculty and students, how did those change as a result of the strike?

All I can really speak to are my own relationships with faculty. I think it was during that time that I began to understand faculty as humans, rather than as some sort of symbol of authority. It's very tough for me to say whether that was just a function of my own growth and development, that at that point in my life I was becoming an adult and beginning to understand that these people had other responsibilities besides just teaching in a university, or how much of that was a function of the strike. I tend to think of it in more personal terms, rather than having the strike have a big impact on that for me personally.

I got into faculty's homes more, because during the strike you couldn't have classes on campus, but you couldn't meet off campus, so we met in faculty's apartments. That was personalizing, sort of "We're all in this together" for those of us that were still trying to have classes.

But you didn't see any general patterns of change in this relationship?

No, the faculty who were interested in doing its work and were alienated from the faculty that were heavily politically involved, were just as alienated. I suppose they were maybe more alienated afterwards than before, but they were pretty alienated before.

The faculty didn't resent the students because of the strike?

No, the faculty didn't. Even the most anti-strike faculty

that I knew, they didn't always like individual students that may have been active in the strike, but I never felt they blamed them. They blamed the administration. The faculty felt the administration let things get way out of hand.

How did that relationship change, between faculty and administration?

I don't think the faculty trusted the administration after that. The really serious financial problems didn't hit until probably two years post the strike, I can't recall exactly, [but] there was a period of time when nobody got paid. A lot of people who had been around for a long time, who had put up with a tremendous amount of strife, who had gone for a long time without seeing any kind of reasonable compensation system in effect, went a long time without raises, went a long time without changes in benefits and things like that. There was a crisis in the faculty's faith in the administration to deal with the problems that were at hand.

Do you think that's continued?

My perception of Guskin's coming on board has been that there was considerably more optimism from the faculty on his arrival, and in his first year, than I had [seen] here since since the early 70s. Not that there was much optimism then, the level of belief was higher, but it was falling off at that point. It's funny living in town and yet not having so much to do with the place.

How observant or close to Antioch have you been since your graduation?

I feel pretty much out of touch. I catch things and I can kind of smell the wind a little bit, but I don't feel like I'm right in there with it. A lot of things go on that I don't find out about until a lot later. It's almost like [Antioch] was so overpowering and did so much control my life for a long time, that once I was away from it, [I said], "That's okay, you just go on over there."

You've lived in town ever since?

Yes.

What about the relationship between students and the administration?

The flavor that I get is that there's a lot of disenchantment among students now with [the administration], but I don't know quite what to make of that, because the kinds of things I hear as the cause of this disenchantment are the same kinds of things that caused.... To do what students want now, may end up with the same kinds of problems that happened

in the early 70s. If you say "We've just got to be more socially responsible and get more students in here who are coming from diverse social backgrounds, diverse economic backgrounds." Well, those are really laudable goals, but what's the plan, how are you going to do that, how are you going to attract enough paying customers to subsidize the rest of this?

It's very funny, college students are on the one hand, the world's most mistreated consumers. Where else do you spend so much money and get treated so badly? If you operated a car dealership the way that universities operate, where you've got to stand in line for two hours to give them a check for ten thousand dollars, your car dealership would not stay in business for very long. Students are purchasing a service, and it's a very expensive service, and I don't think they are treated the way that people who purchase expensive services are usually treated.

That's the one side. The other side is that the responsibilities have got to be on students to offer alternatives if there are things that they don't like. If you don't like the way the economic structure of a college works, how do you solve it? What is the economic structure that is going to work, because while it's very expensive to attend the college, it's very expensive to run a college too. Buildings and faculty and all the things colleges are responsible for, and that contribute to the quality of your education, cost money, and lots of it.

What about that relationship between administrators and students in your years at Antioch after the strike?

I just don't think we ever trusted anybody. When I came we did. Jim Dixon, for a number of years, gave a speech to every entering class, and the "fishbowl" speech was the famous speech. The last entering class he spoke to was mine in the summer of '70. He went on for about forty five minutes about Antioch as an oxroast, "You can't cook the whole roast at one time, you gotta turn the thing, and there are seven sides to the ox and this side was the..." It was complete bullshit but at the time it was wonderful. I was grinning ear to ear, "Antioch the oxroast, the metaphysical man is up there, he's running the show, I can't believe it, this place has got to be great." That was pretty much all I could think about at the time and it was only about an hour later when we were sitting around talking and somebody was like, "What did he say?" I didn't have a clue, I had no idea what this man was saying, or what implications this had for program, or policy, or direction, or whatever.

But he was very charismatic, and the charisma was something I bought into. This all sounded good to me, he could come out and start talking about the New Directions program and it sounded terrific and we bought it. I bought it. But what hadn't been thought through was "How are you gonna pay for that?" By the time the network rolled around, I was less inclined to believe that it was going to work, but it still sounded like educational innovation to me, and anything that sounded innovative I was generally supportive of at that time. I said, "Well, why not,

it's going to take the education to the folks instead of bringing the folks to the education, that sounds good." But that was an extraordinary drain on the financial resources, it was not well planned.

So was there a gradual decline among students in trusting the administration?

And finally to a point of essentially no trust. It was the era of Richard Nixon, we didn't really believe in much of anybody who had any sort of power as somebody who could be trusted to follow through with plans or ideals.

What about the change in attitude among administration and faculty towards student dissent? Did that change as a result of the strike?

It's a little hard to speak globally about that. I think that if there was a shift in attitude, it was towards a limitation of [dissent], that like any value, it's bound to conflict with some other values. While I never heard anybody abandon the notion that students have the right to dissent, what I heard after was that the right to dissent cannot supersede all other rights, can't supersede people's rights to fair treatment, can't supersede their rights to receive an education, to receive a number of other rights. Prior to the strike, the right to dissent was so revered that it had to supersede all other rights, and after that, the faculty said "No. There is a right to dissent, but it does not and cannot be presumed to supersede all other rights." Before that people may have felt that, but because of the social climate, were reluctant to say it, or if they did say it, they were sort of drummed out of the corps. That was not something that was acceptable at Antioch, to say, "No, there are limits to the right to dissent."

Would you say that the students' distrust of the administration was accelerated or solidified by the strike?

By that point, it was solidified no matter which side you were on. If you thought the administration should've taken more dramatic action sooner, you were pissed that the administration didn't do something about it, didn't deal with the problem, and either go to court and bring in the troops to open the college back up again, or somehow stand up to the student dissent.

The administration was damned if they did and damned if they didn't. I'm glad I wasn't an administrator then. Poor Ewell Reagin got a very bad rap on the whole thing, he just happened to be the person in the wrong place at the wrong time, to take a tremendous amount of heat for decisions he'd had no control over, things set in place long before he was called in as a figurehead.

If you felt the administration had made commitments to people they should've kept, you didn't trust them. If you felt

they should have taken some kind of action, after all it was their responsibility to administer the college, it was, "Well, we're just going to sit back and wait for this thing to end."

The resolution that took place when the college was re-opened, the same resolution was available to everybody two months prior to that. They could've done the same thing months earlier and saved a tremendous amount of grief and loss. There were real questions about whether or not [the administration] was negotiating in good faith. So no matter which side of the fence you sat on, it seemed like the administration was doing a bad job. In a sense, it would have been better if they had taken either position.

But they weren't taking any?

None that was clear to me, and so nobody liked them.

What about the change in commitment towards innovation and experimentation in education?

The ability to innovate is always at least partly related to the ability to be financially viable. How are you going to start a new program if you don't have enough money to finance the programs you already have? What's the core of an Antioch education? I don't even know what the curriculum says that is now.

When I was there, the core of an Antioch education had to do with a certain amount of job experience in terms of co-ops, a certain amount of credits in social science areas, humanities areas, and physical science areas. This was what everybody who came out of Antioch, no matter what they did, were going to experience. And then there are some other intangible things that people who came out of Antioch were also going to have, which were probably even more central, this notion of just blasting here and there, to be on campus three months, then in Boston three months, then back here for six months, then in Chicago for three months, then back here for three months, then in Baltimore, constantly moving. In the first three years at Antioch I could carry everything I owned, because I had to. You have to be able to pick up everything you own and walk through an airport and then live out of that for three months, a duffel bag, and a suitcase, and a guitar, and a typewriter.

That experience was central to being at Antioch. You've got to be able to fund that, you've got to be able to have those central experiences solid, which means you've got to be able to have a solid co-op program that has advisors, and available jobs, and people who can match people up with jobs, that's got to be working. You've got to have a curriculum that exposes people to a commonality of a body of knowledge. In order to be innovative you got to have that, and I think they've had to, due to money pressures, work very hard just to keep the core together, to keep the core from disintegrating. In that sense, it's affected their ability to innovate.

One of the factors for me choosing Antioch was its creative innovation. I wanted to be someplace that was innovative in the way that it looked at education. I was not particularly concerned about what would happen to me afterwards, whether or not I would be in a position to step onto Wall Street and make a lot of money.

It's interesting that the conservative political climate of the country has paralleled the decline of Antioch. But the decline has been because of other reasons as well.

All those things interrelate. If your enrollment drops off because of a changing political climate in the country, then there's less money available, and fewer programs that would attract students.

And having people leave in droves because of something like this strike accelerates that even further?

I think that's pretty much exactly what my overall analysis would be, that [the strike] accelerated the curve of [enrollment] in Yellow Springs, and other things accelerated that curve too.

The network and the financial mismanagement of earlier administrations caused a tremendous number of people who had graduated around the time I graduated to never give a dime. What students today may not be aware of is that that's what Al Guskin brought back, he brought back alumni who started giving money back to the school.

I'm certainly not someone who's made a lot of money, but I can tell you that his return to Antioch resulted in the first check I wrote to Antioch ever, as an alumni contribution. Because for the first time I really felt like "Maybe this won't get thrown away. Maybe somebody will have some sense of how to manage the money."

During part of the Birenbaum era, you couldn't give money that would go to the Yellow Springs campus. You could only give money to the university, and then Birenbaum would spend it on his office in New York. And a lot of people said, "No, I'm not doing that."

What gave you that sense about Guskin? Did he seem to have a clearer vision?

None of this was first hand, but the flavor that I was getting back from the people I knew that had some contact with him, was that he had the courage to stand up to some Antioch sacred cows. He had established a set of goals and priorities that I understood to place the rejuvenation of the faculty as being a real primary goal. But even in doing that, he was probably going to face a lot of faculty heat. He was going to, for instance, try to get some quality people in and pay them, because that's what it takes to get quality faculty in, despite the fact that it would cause a lot of resentment among the faculty who had been here through a lot of hard times, and who would not be making the same kind of money. Who would say, "But I've been here through all the hard times, I've stuck by you. How can you now get somebody from the outside and pay them more than me?" That was going to be an attitude a lot of faculty were going to have, but for him to stand up to that and say, "No, I think it's critical to get some really good people in here, and the only way we're going to do that is to pay them, and we can't afford to wait 'till I gradually build salaries back up. Let's get some really good people in here, they will presumably attract some more students and some more positive stuff in, then our second priority can be to rebuild current faculty salaries," I thought that was a gutsy plan. I have no idea whether he came close to doing that or even tried to that, but it was a plan.

Antioch has had too many "Well, let's try this plan," and you sort of stick your foot out there, and the minute six people jump on it you say, "Oh, okay, no we won't do that plan, we'll try this plan over there," and you end up plan-less.

Do you think the role of administration has changed to a large degree since the strike, because of the strike?

If by the role of the administration you mean their priorities, then I think it has, it's had to. It's necessary at a place like Antioch, to have somebody who can articulate a vision and yet has a plan to go with that vision. We've had visionaries and we've had some planners. I don't know many people who have been head of the college who have been visionaries and planners. We may have not had one yet.

I think Guskin will be in trouble, if he's not already, if something doesn't happen within a year or so, if there's not a real dramatic upturn in enrollment in the next eighteen months. I think the trustees will lose some patience with him and try somebody else. I wouldn't want his job. I think it's a tremendously difficult position for anybody to be in.

What about the character of the student body? Have you seen that change after the strike?

I think it was a more diverse student body than it is now. By that, I might not mean the same thing some students might think I mean. I was teaching for a while as an adjunct over at UD and I think if you had gone into one of my classes at UD and pulled a random ten students out and brought them to Antioch it would be much more difficult for those ten students to get along at Antioch today, than it would have been in 1972.

My impression is that the social pressure of political correctness at Antioch is much higher now than it was then. It was a lot then. But in that sense it was more diverse then, there were students then who wore make-up. Maybe I'm wrong, maybe I'm misjudging the students of today at the college, but I think it'd be tough now.

What do you think about that? Would it be difficult for some Catholic kids from UD to go to Antioch?

I think there could be a lot more diversity at Antioch in terms of ideology, a lot more acceptance of other views. But I don't have any way of gauging in terms of then and now, because my perceptions of "then" are kind of mythical and probably not very accurate. But actually, I'm wondering if the New Directions brought a more conservative element to the campus because they did want some real skills and wanted a real standard education in some ways, whether they weren't as interested in experimenting.

That's true. Believe me, you never saw a New Directions student in "They Myth of Reality and Experience of Consciousness," or something like that, some class where you'd go in and they'd show weird movies, a weird hippie class. They were much more likely to be found in science classes, or business classes, much more traditional education. They wanted an education, that's what they were here for, and a lot of kids who had been exposed to the best in education who were here, wanted to have a good time.

What about the quality of students, do you think that's changed?

My impression, for what it's worth, was that I came at a time that [Antioch] was very difficult to get into, it was very selective. I had a number of friends who had applied, very bright people in my view, who were rejected. Antioch said no to my brother who applied in '66. I watched that change.

By 1975, if you could find the door and had the dollars, you were going to get accepted. It became so hard pressed for students, that you feel like you're not going to have an academic level admissions requirement.

It does seem to me that if you were going to design the school of your dreams, you'd want to be able to be selective, you'd want to be able to say "Well, what do I want here. I want some people who are very creative thinkers, so I'm going to look through these applications and I'm going to find the six best creative thinkers in this whole group. And I want some people who have had a lot of success educationally, because they'll help generate a value of studying hard and working hard, so I'm going to pick six kids who have got great grades. I want some people with some artistic ability..." But I don't think that you can get the best quality unless you're being selective.

It sort of rubs me the wrong way to hear myself saying that one person is somehow better than another person. My own educational experience has been that it's been at least as important who the other students were in the class, as who the professor was. You can take a seminar from the most brilliant person in the world, and if the other members of the seminar can't express themselves verbally very well to discuss fine points, make coherent presentations when its their turn to make a presentation, you lose a tremendous amount. The quality of the school suffers if you're just forced to admit everybody who wants to be admitted. You run this risk of becoming a real homogeneous group.

What about the quality of the academic program, has that changed?

I've got to say it suffered just on the basis of looking at the number of faculty. How many people are there in the psychology department?

Three.

Three? There had to be at least eight when I came in '70. If the process of going through college has something to do with choosing an area of study and finding a mentor in that area, and I think it does, it's hard to find a fit if you've only got a couple to three people to choose from.

If you've only got three people in a department of psychology, chances are very good that one of them is a researcher that studies perception and is real interested in the retina, and maybe another one has a clinical interest, probably a specialty, maybe eating disorders, and the third one may be somebody who's interested in learning theory. Well,

that's terrific if those happen to be the things that you're interested in, but if you've got a real fire about clinical work that has to do with schizophrenics, the clinician whose focus is eating disorders, they're going to be all right for you, but only to a certain point.

I think colleges have got to be big enough to be able to support a large enough faculty to have more diversity in individual areas. You can take any department and make the same argument, whether its geology or biology. I just don't see how you can keep up the level of quality when you're reducing the size of the faculty.

What do you think the strike did to the reputation and image of the college?

The local reputation here, there was always this Southwest Ohio notion of the college being a place of weirdos and crazy people, and [the strike] just confirmed it for them. The local take on the whole situation might be the most accurate one, "These people are shooting themselves in the foot again!"

In terms of national reputation, it went to hell on a sled. This was a place that had an extraordinary national reputation going into the late 60s. I would start the period of decline as being '68-69. Before that, people's heads turned around when you said [Antioch] in far away places. It was considered a competitive place, you had to be real bright, or real creative in order to be here, and it had these various faculty who had national and international reputations. I don't know what to compare it to today, but that was the reputation. You'll still find people who don't know about the decline, who will still have that impression every once in a while.

I've had people who graduated around the same time as I did, who have said to me in the past three or four years, "I don't think I could recommend it to somebody. What would I say to somebody who came to me and said, 'My kid's thinking about going to Antioch. You went there and you know something about the place, do you think that's a good idea?'" People who went here saying, "I don't know if I can, in good conscience, say that that's a worthwhile investment." That impression has been changing in the past two years somewhat, it's not quite that bad. But those are among the people who supposedly would know, the alumni. You'd think that that would be a source of support and that alumni would be encouraging [prospectives] to go.

What about the relationship between the town and the college, how do you see that changing?

When I was a student, I thought Yellow Springs was Antioch. It was kind of arrogant, but it was fairly common for students to think "Well, without Antioch this town would be nothing. It would just be a small version of Xenia." And that's clearly not true, the town has a life of its own, [although] it's influenced by the college tremendously.

The boom at the college was a boom in real estate, the

decline at the college has been a decline in real estate. The problems with declining enrollment in the public schools in the town are related to the fact that a lot of young faculty who had kids up and went. People who had jobs associated with the college, whether it was direct or indirect, a lot of people went as the college was in decline. The feelings for the college from the town improved with Guskin.

Did they deteriorate because of the strike?

I don't know. I wasn't really a townie then, so I didn't get a real flavor of how people in town felt about the strike or felt in its immediate aftermath. It was really a few years after that I started becoming more a member of the town and less a member of the college community. I think the sentiment was more that the place was going to hell in a sled.

As long as I've been here, everybody's speculated that there were two years left [for Antioch] and that was it, since the strike. "We'll make it for the next couple years, but after that I don't think so." Sometimes it seemed more serious than others, and certainly [it was] at the time when no one getting paid.

Do you think the strike has had any positive effects?

Certainly not in the long term. In the short term, I think there are some students that probably were able to finish up here, that without the strike's support, some of them probably would have not finished college. I tend to transfer things into individual people terms, and those are really only the positive things that I see coming out of it. There were some students who, if the college had not been pushed to the wall, the college would have just probably said, "Well, no money. You're on your own." And pushed to the wall, [the college] was able to make some accommodations here and there.

Connie Pelekoudas:

The decline, just numerically in terms of the economics and consequences and the numbers of people, you go from a financially healthy institution to an institution that's in terrible debt, in a ten year period. To go from an institution that has something like 2400 students, which by the way was one of the causes of the problems, to one with a little over 400 students. an institution with 160 or so faculty members to one with 45, that was the number for a ten or twelve year period, that has a lot of consequences for the people who remained.

[In '73], we had been bringing in 750 new students each year in the fall for the last year or so, and were anticipating another 750 or so and we wound up with only 350. So we lost immediately about 400 prospective students in the fall of '73 who didn't come, who we were anticipating to come. We lost another couple hundred students who didn't come back, people who were not graduating. In addition to the graduating class, another 200 or so who didn't come back as a consequence of the strike. It put a real massive hole in the very first year in the terms of numbers of student and the budget that has serious consequences. And then its straight downhill from that point on.

I think one of the most important consequences of the strike had to do with our natural constituency. Our natural constituency up to this time had been liberal, it had been non-violent, it had been professional in many ways, and I think a natural part of our constituency was lost as part of the violence of the strike. [They] could not understand how we could allow that to happen at a place like Antioch which had a tradition of debate and argument, but non-violent resolution of conflict. We lost a natural constituency of people which had a consequence for years to come because it was the people from whom we would have drawn successive generations of students. So we not only lost the 6 or 700 students that year, but we lost students in future years who normally came out of a bank of alums and friends of the college who sent their children nieces and nephews, convinced friends of theirs' to send their children to Antioch. That meant that the pool from which we were drawing from also shrunk, and that was generational. That blows a hole in the pool for subsequent years.

You sound like you're saying we alienated alums.

Not just alums but friends, people who admire Antioch especially over other colleges and universities, who admired Antioch for what it stood for got turned off by [it] at that point. And it wasn't just a matter where you just lost one entering class which you could then make up the following year. We lost an entering class and that entering class was for a generation, hundreds of people because of that.

It's curious, because [the strike] seems like such an obvious phenomenon of the era, with everything going on at other

campuses, and Antioch having a liberal background, why alums and friends didn't necessarily see it as "Oh, its just the times, it's just the anti-establishment movement"...

No, I think they saw it as a breakdown of the value system, and it was not just any kind of change, revolutionary change, it was a total discontinuity. You had Antioch that was this before and you have Antioch that was totally different, and it wasn't the nice ten-year transition to that new kind of Antioch. I think they sensed that not only had Antioch lost its traditional value system, but that everything was spinning out of control, and there was just no way they could influence what was happening.

There was an administration that had already physically left the campus by moving its offices up to High Street. It had already physically moved itself, and had turned the academic and administrative leadership of the college over to the Dean of the College, who really didn't have the kind of administrative clout, because all the important cards were in the hands of the president and the vice presidents who were on High Street. And there was nothing the local, campus administrator could use, or do independently, to deal with the problems of the college, and so there was no way for anyone on the campus to be effective in dealing with the problems on the campus. It all had to be done outside.

Did you start here as an administrator or a professor?

Faculty member, I started in '62 as a member of the economics department. I was an administrator in '72-3, '73-4, I was associate Dean of the College and Jewel Graham by the way was the associate Dean of the College in '72-73 as well. I worked on curriculum matters and she worked on faculty and personnel matters. Ewell Reagin was the Dean of the College....

So I think it was a discontinuity that threw people outside as well as here into a state of anxiety, uncertainty, loss of a sense of direction and bearing in a way that you don't if you're just evolving into a new model. You just sort of lose all sense of place, time, [are] disoriented totally I think [from] what Antioch was all about.

Sharp divisions among the faculty, that lasted for about a ten year period, some still exist. The only thing that has caused that to modify is that so many people who were there now are no longer on the campus. But people who were on opposite sides continued to simply not deal with each other for ten years, so it meant that the faculty was splintered, and could not be a force for change in the institution after '73. The splintering had already come before then, but there was a sense up through about 1970 of some shared values among the faculty that began to erode in '70-71, '72, and shattered completely during the strike, and was never recaptured.

The loss of that shared sense of values among faculty at a private liberal arts college in particular, means there is nothing at the center to hold everything together; the students

do their four year thing, and they come and go on co-op and they challenge the system, as they should do, but in effect, there was really nothing to challenge, so students during that ten year period got cheated. There was no central core value represented by any particular body within the institution, which could help the institution meet the challenges that occurred after the 70s, and it meant there was no effective campus response to the administration. An effective campus response to administrative initiative normally comes from the faculty, and that fits here...

Have you seen the new book that Dixon wrote about his years at Antioch?

I haven't seen Dixon's book yet.

'Cause he mentions that for a long time it was faculty challenging administration and I guess students are pretty critical now of the absence of that.

We still haven't recovered, right to this very day and this is almost twenty years after. Even though we've got an almost new, entirely different faculty, most of our faculty have come from 1980 now, still I sense [them to be] very timid, very cautious, very wary about that role. Its too bad, 'cause a good college needs that, needs the faculty playing that role and we still miss that.

That's one of the legacies of the strike. Even as new people came in, there was no longer a way of socializing new faculty into a received set of values, 'cause the older faculty were already split; so new people came in, and were almost put on a spot of having to choose sides within the faculty. That meant they couldn't evolve. It had tremendous consequences to that notion of faculty leadership. I don't buy the argument that faculty are always necessarily right about everything, but faculty in liberal arts colleges do tend to carry the traditions forward into the future from one generation to the next. Then change normally comes about 'cause they get challenged by administrators or students.

Administrators come in with a different vision, a different notion about what should be done. Students come in challenging most traditional values, but normally what happens in a healthy institution those challenges to the traditions that are carried by the faculty, result in a kind of debate that generates a new model. If the faculty isn't carrying those traditions, then there is nothing to engage in the debate about, everything then winds up in people, students and faculty, working the system, manipulating the system for particular parochial ends, instead of a debate going on about central issues and central values. We lose the ability to grapple with the core issues, and end up manipulating the fringe issues about who should get more money, and we argue about nickels and dimes around the fringes of the budget, instead of focusing on what the essential core of the institution we should be supporting, in terms of our

budget discussions.

The long period of decline brings with it a kind of a psychology of decline. A psychology of falling into decline tends to lead to defensive behavior; protective of turf, closing up and taking care of my own classes, and making sure at least the economics program is going well, and not seeing that my friends in psychology, or history need help. "I'll just deal with the administration directly, and make sure my program gets taken care of", that kind of psychology. That worked during that time of decline, and it is very difficult to reverse that.

Referring to why people stayed, was there any sense that there was a sort of a common mission, or goal to help the college survive?

It's a very difficult question to deal with, because in retrospect, I suspect we would all look at that question, and try to rationalize it in the best possible light. We talk about commitment, we talk about saving Antioch. Realistically, you had to look at what was going on in the academic world in the 70s; there weren't any jobs out there. The market for faculty members was shrinking, and in many cases, the question was "This is it," the sense of being trapped.

I don't want to make that the central reason, but you can't ignore the fact that this was all happening in a period of relative shrinkage of the market for faculty members nationally. If someone had wanted to leave, they might not have been able to leave. That isn't to say that people who stayed didn't have a commitment, that isn't to say that people who stayed are somehow less worthy. I think each one of us who stayed during that period could probably make an argument, that in addition to the fact that the market was weak, there were good reasons, positive reasons, for staying at Antioch.

One of the things that Alan Guskin has misread on his arrival on campus, is this whole issue about why people stayed. Because he treated people who were here when he arrived, essentially as useless, he characterized them in very negative ways, suggesting that they weren't really very good, and that the world would depend on the new group of faculty they were going to bring in. And consequently, one of the problems we've had in the past four years as we have been getting revitalized, is that attitude that he brought in towards people who in fact paid a high price for keeping this place going.

For many of us, I think, in addition to the fact that the market was shrinking, there was a sense of wanting to experience Antioch in a way that we did. We still had hopes, not to restore everything to the way it was, we still had hopes that some of those values could emerge, we still had some feeling that we could try to heal the divisions that were tearing the place apart. We still felt that, if there was any chance at all that if Antioch, as an ideal as well as an institution, could be salvaged, that we would like to be a part of it. It was different for each one of us. There were some altruistic reasons for

staying. Some of us got, in the faculty, more or less into the process of trying to rebuild the place, some of us closed ourselves up into our own little programs, and, in effect, went underground as it were, didn't participate in very much and trying to do much of the rebuilding, but focused our attention on our own piece of the action. I'm not saying that pejoratively, I mean that's how they felt they could commit themselves to saving Antioch, was by saving that piece of it.

The consequence of that, however, was very damaging, even if we had stayed with the best of motives. I think there comes a time, and it's different for everybody, when you start developing a psychology of self pity, almost. I did my share of "Look at all this, why doesn't anybody appreciate it?"

Or acknowledge it.

Or acknowledge it, or appreciate it, and I think that's the nerve that Guskin hit when he came in. Whatever he might of thought of people, he could have least acknowledged what they did. There are people who still have not forgiven him from when he first came in five years ago. I think for myself there are a couple of things. One, at a minimal level, there was still, in the economics program, a group of faculty members who had worked together for a number of years, three of us, and we were still able to have an active, good, interesting program, attracting students. That in itself provided a support base that made it possible to stay afloat, and that's not unimportant for other people who saw their college, and their programs disappear.

The other is, I came in '62 and I've said often that I am happy I came then, because I've had four or five years of association with people who are still linked to Algo Henderson, or even Arthur Morgan for that matter, who had been here in those two periods. People like George Geiger, JD Dawson, Oliver Loud, Irwin Abrams, and those associations were important to me. I suspect that if I had come in '68 and not had those kind of associations, I don't think I would have stayed. That connection to that, particularly to those who had been active during Algo Henderson's years when we really developed a sense of community, a sense of collaborative association, a sense of a share of responsibility among students and faculty and administrators. That was a tremendously powerful value and message and I bought into that. I didn't know anyplace else that had that kind of commitment to that particular value that Antioch had, and as a faculty member who went in and out of the administration over the last 20 years, that value I have felt has made it possible to be effective in those roles and its, for me, more central to Antioch than anything else, that's the share of responsibility, the share of authority. That students have authority, faculty have authority, we all have responsibility...

The kind of community spirit that existed then...

Not just the vague community spirit but sense of shared responsibility. Algo Henderson, when he sat on Adcil and when he was president, participated in Adcil, was a member of Adcil, sat equal with students and faculty; he was the one who brought students into Adcil as a matter of fact. He believed literally in the share of responsibility; he did not take the position that there were presidential prerogatives or overrode everyone else, and if he differed with it, he did not simply assert presidential prerogative.

Jim Dixon, in his early years, had that sense of member Adcil meetings in which literally, the group would stay there until they talked out the issues, and it wasn't a question of "Well, lets get to vote." The difference between settling an issue by raising hands, and finding out that six people are in favor, and four were against, and continuing to discuss until they reach a point where they, the group as a whole, can say "Yeah, that sounds right." Its tremendous and its the latter that attracted me, that model. I still believe in that and I think that that is still, despite the fact that other administrators have come and gone, and presidents have come and gone who don't share that... I still think its worth hanging in there for and trying to recapture. And we may someday.

Do you think it has been recaptured at all in the last few years?

More or less sometimes. There have been times when it works, and I have seen it work. I don't think Guskin trusts it, and that causes problems a lot of problems, 'cause its risky. I don't want to get into evaluating him, but he simply is not comfortable with it, and he doesn't want to take the risk, he doesn't want to go to that ultimate last phase. I think its a mistake. You run the risk of maybe having some decisions come out differently than you would like as an administrator, but in terms of quality of life at the college, and the quality of interaction...

And also how people relate to you and whether or not they trust your interaction.

...One of the things that changed from pre-strike to post-strike is that question of trust. Before the strike, people generally trusted each other to take care of their interest, they didn't feel they needed to be in the room every time a decision was made. After the strike, no one felt comfortable when a decision was being made, unless they were right there and doing it themselves, and making sure that somebody isn't trying to do them in.

Nobody meaning administrators, faculty....?

The faculty and administrators. Faculty don't trust each other enough to say "Okay, if I don't go to that meeting, my colleagues are not going to screw me, they'll look after my interests as well as the interests of the college, I trust them to do that."

I don't think we trust each other to do that.

How did the strike change faculty interaction with students, administration's interaction with students? And then my question which is also part of the same subject, how did the strike change the attitude toward student dissent?

I think one of the things that happened in Dixon's period of presidency is that he lost confidence in the faculty, and so what he did was talk [issues] to you in the way that split up the natural collaboration between faculty and students. So he drove a wedge that ultimately put students and faculty in different political camps. I don't mean political in terms of social and political issues, I mean in terms of governance issues on the college campus. He lost confidence in generating support for what he wanted among faculty, so he would generate support among students.

Issues like the network expansion?

The first year program, the expansion, and the strike exacerbated that; it didn't start it, but it made it worse. Even though the student body wasn't unified on the strike. It was students who actually brought the axes and brought the sheriff on campus to open the place up. There was a division within the faculty involving the issues around the strike, and there was not uniformity at all in terms of position.

But the consequence of the strike drove a wedge between faculty and students, an ideological one which had not existed before. Once it was split, it was more difficult to breach the differences, and that was unfortunate. It also meant there was an ideological split among the faculty as a result, and the way in which the community generally viewed the union, that really shifted.

You realize there was just not one strike. At first there was a couple of union strikes and student union strikes and then the student strike. There was some feeling among faculty, and I think this still occasionally surfaces, that the union was using students in an alliance, to get a response to their issues; there was some feeling among faculty that the students were being manipulated. I don't happen to think that was the case, but none the less, that was a perception. There was a natural kind of alliance there; the unions did not particularly actively support the student strike in a sense that would say that anyone is manipulating anyone else.

There was a deterioration in the relationship between students, faculty and the union members. I think administrators have, in one way or another, been successful in manipulating the divisions within the community over the years, to the point where the unions have been pretty much isolated. Relatively speaking, you don't see any concern about unions and membership of the union. Union positions have shrunk the same as the student body has. But the kind of intense support between students and union members is not what it used to be. Again, during the period

of decline, the administrators may have been able to manipulate the situation so that they pit one group against the other. So group A gets something out of a declining budget, B's going to get less, and that exacerbates problems. There is a lot of healing that still needs to be done among the various groups on campus as a consequence of that.

What about reactions towards dissent?

I think that there has been, but I don't know if that may have just been a social phenomenon, a post-Vietnam phenomenon. It may be a consequence of the strike immediately, but I never had a sense that, within the faculty, that was the case. I think very much among administrators, that's been the case for years. They really don't like dissent. I think it may be disturbing to them, and I think that may be a consequence of the pressure on them to think of public image when they seem to be coming apart, and our image was declining. Trying to restore the image, and trying to rebuild an endowment fund to try to pay off debts, I think they had a tendency to be a little more concerned about dissent.

I think its true for some understandable reasons, not excusable reasons, but understandable reasons, [that] their concern is more external. That's one change, by the way, that I haven't heard anybody over the years focus on very much, and that is the extent to which administrators since then have been more focused externally, [rather] than internally. Administrators do not seem to be viewed as much now as being a part of the college community as they were.

That's partly the creation of the University, and Dixon's move off campus, and Birenbaum's move to New York City with the university's presidents' offices, but its deeper than that. It's not just the physical separation. Since Dixon's early years, I think top administrators have wanted to distance themselves from the internal functioning of the college, and that means the risk taking about collaborative process, to leave themselves more room to maneuver.

The second part of it is the extent to which they are concerned with external image so much, [that] I think that they get caught up with how they look to the outside world, and to the national educational establishment, rather than how they look to their constituents here. They're operating with a different constituent world than we are, and I think the college suffers for that, for that reason. They never really feel the values I think we sense in the community, in Yellow Springs, which they can't understand fully. I know Guskin thinks he does, but even when he is engaged, he is never really engaged in that sense, and that's a change in the last 20 years, since the strike.

Would you call that the role of the administration?

Deeper than just a role, because you can define the role of the administration in a lot of ways, in terms of the kind of

tasks they have to do. I think it's a sense of how they see themselves in terms of the job, and I think that's more the central issue here.

Alan [Guskin] came in saying "I'm moving to Yellow Springs, making sure I put the college at the center of University and that's going to be the focus of our attention," and he has done all that and should be applauded for that. He helped give some people some sense of hope about the ability to rebuild the college, but not that final, personal kind of investment, the risk taking and commitment to being really in the college, as opposed to managing the college. I understand the kind of pressure he is under, and I think that explains a lot of it. But also there is a part that is not just explained by the pressures, there's a part of it I think he doesn't really understand, or if he understands it he doesn't accept it as the kind of thing he can commit himself to, and take the personal risk of doing, 'cause it means giving up power, and I don't think he likes to do that.

What about the academic relationship between students and faculty and how that changed? Not just in terms of political bodies but also in classroom experience.

To some extent, the ideological split caused some tension, because some people wouldn't deal with other people. But on the whole, I'd say one of the consequences of the strike is students and faculty, in their academic programs, drew closer together. I think that relationship was in many ways strengthened, because right before the strike, and during the strike, the ideological divisions were driving people away from each other; you wouldn't go take a class with someone who doesn't have the right ideological view, etc. But after the strike, I think because this place was shrinking, I think students and faculty in their academic pursuits felt support from one another, and drew closer together in individual departments. So you have the phenomenon of the art students and the art faculty doing, as far as anyone could tell, great work together, but closing ranks within the arts, and that was happening in pockets all around the campus. A great deal of mutual support being given, and that's not just faculty to students, but students to faculty, who were staying in those programs.

In many ways it was tremendously beneficial, but in many ways it was hurtful of the college program as a whole, because it was so internal within individual programs. But I know a lot of faculty members who might not have been able to get through without that.

What about the change in the character or the quality of the student body?

When the pool shrinks, they're going to have less ability to be selective and choose the students, and the consequence is a different kind of student body. Part of the problem of talking about quality, is you have to talk about what is the measure

of quality you're using. It was a different kind of student body because it was for some while, particularly in the late 70s after the lengthy decline, maybe less academically oriented. So that some great types of programs that would be dependent on some kinds of students were hurt, because those kinds of students were no longer coming. Through part of the 80s there was a sense that we were attracting a different kind of student body, [who] might have been looking more for a kind of supportive atmosphere which would help them grow personally, rather than an academic community that would challenge them academically. And it meant that for some faculty and some programs they weren't getting the as many students as they had before, or they weren't getting the same kind of students as they were before.

Realize that some students were [still] coming for academic reasons, and some students were coming for other reasons, but I think it tilted the balance of the student body in a way that may have been detrimental to our ability to continue to recruit larger numbers of students. So that we can't attract science students, because the science program may have deteriorated because fewer students were coming to Antioch looking for academic challenge in the sciences, and as a consequence, we have fewer science faculty.

So that change that was detrimental was not a change in the quality of the students, but the change in the character of the student body and its composition. Less diverse in a lot of ways, and I don't just mean in terms of gender or race or other characteristics, but less diverse in terms of the kind of things they were looking for when they came to Antioch. In order to have a well rounded liberal arts education program that offers a lot of different kinds of learning, you have to have a lot of different kinds of students. I think that is more a problem than the quality question, that for a while we weren't getting a balance. I don't know that we are now. I think it's better than it was, but I still think we are missing kinds of students who are interested in science for instance. It doesn't just hurt the sciences program either, it hurts the college 'cause those kinds of students take other courses, and they bring a different kind of perspective to how you deal with community problems.

How was the academic program affected?

I think we lost the sense of what we were about collectively as an educational institution, and I think that hurt us most in general education. In individual programs people were still giving very good programs in art, very good programs in history, very good programs here and there, but where I think we got hurt most was in a sense of trying to accomplish in general education. Now I think that with the new curriculum, we're finally getting some idea. We talked about "What does it mean to have a general education course in the social sciences? Why is that different from just another economics class? Are we trying to accomplish something different in the general education course than we are in a field course in psychology?" I think

that's important because it gets faculty to talk to each other across the disciplines in a way that they didn't have to in the old general educational program.

What about the impact in terms of lack of economic and physical resources?

Daily, its very depressing and debilitating. On the other hand it has a sense of "By God, we're going to do it anyway," and it energizes people. And "We're in this mess and we're going to do the damn best we can and we're going to focus our students" and that same spirit of students and faculty was strengthened by the sheer enormity of the physical decay around here. I think to the sciences for instance, that was important because there they rely so much upon the physical facility itself, and it brought them closer together. "We're going to make this work in spite of everything."

The other kind of consequence of lack of funds for courses, what it did to families and the consequential impact on people's motivation here, it affected our incomes. By '79 there were lots of payless paydays and they reduced salaries and no raises. All of that for year after year after year. It meant that a lot of people who came to Antioch in the mid to late 60s, were reaching that part in their careers where they had been forming families. I say that because we were mostly married people with young families, and the inability to be able to deal with the economic issues of raising a family was tough on people. It weighed on them a lot, and had consequences for their attitudes about the place. There are still some scars about that.

When Guskin came and talked about raising salaries, he was talking about raising salaries for new people, it took us a long time to say "Look, you're talking about a number of people, who have made a sacrifice over a number of years, that has cost them a lot in terms of what they can do for their own families." Many of them, now, or at some point in the 70s or early 1980s, were struggling to send kids to college. I estimated at one point, because the trustees simply were not being responsive to this concern, very conservatively, that in lost pay, the faculty had contributed at least six million dollars, over a ten year period or so. Probably more than that if you think in terms of not only actual pay, because in addition, you lose benefits in terms of money set aside for retirement.

It is much higher than that, the number, 'cause you throw in staff, who also didn't receive pay increases, and the lost retirement benefits that go along with lower salary, and that is a tremendous and significant contribution to the survival of the institution. Not only had they been here for whatever reason, good, bad, or indifferent, but in fact, the financial contribution from the faculty and staff kept the place afloat, 'cause its the single largest contribution to the institution during those years when it could have gone under.

Do you think [Guskin's] attitude towards older faculty has changed?

Basically, no. We had to fight with him every inch on that.

Do you think the strike has affected our commitment to the plurality of the student body in terms of class and ethnicity?

I don't think the strike itself did, but that's so difficult to weigh, because it didn't matter what our attitude for ten years was; we were taking what business we could get. I think it affected some individual people's perceptions, but in terms of the institution as a whole, I don't think it did.

In fact, our resources don't match our language. Of course, other sources of financial aid were available in the 60s which made it possible for us to go to 2,400 students. Federal grants are not available in the way they were then, not really available to many places in the same way. We don't have our own resources. A lot of places have endowment money that they use to finance minority scholarships, which we don't have. We actually finance diversity, in terms of class and race, out of tuition.

ATG?

We have been doing that historically. In the 60s, we did have some money from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation and financial aid from the federal government, but we also financed a lot out of tuition. But in the 60s that was deceptively easy to do, because there were always a lot more students out there wanting to come into private colleges than there were places.

The student age population was growing like mad in the 60s, the baby boom from the 40s was hitting the colleges, so you could increase the number of students easily to pay for anything you wanted. You could use the extra tuition from students coming in to pay for diversity, and they saw no end to how fast you could raise tuition, 'cause there were so many students wanting to come. In many respects, the ability to raise tuition was made easier by the fact that federal grants were more generous, and could take up a lot of the slack. So a lot of the colleges, this one in particular, made the terrible mistake of, instead of focusing on building endowments during that period, we simply kept financing on a "pay as you go." And if we were running short, raise tuition, or increase the

number of bodies.

We never should have gotten 2400 students, this place couldn't handle 2400 students. Once we got the notion of continually increasing tuition, we were bound to have a collapse, some kind of traumatic event. We were bringing in so many first year students that a large number of them were living off campus. Hall Advisors were not living in the halls they were advising, they were out in Yellow Springs. How do you build a tradition and a sense of community?

I think that was a terrible mistake, to [finance programs out of tuition], instead of trying to build an endowment. The problem was, in the 70s, we couldn't do that anymore. We kept raising tuition because the supply and demand was changing, and until '79 the number of high school graduates was still going up, but not at the rate it was going in the 60s. Then it stopped going up and it started going down. Well, the consequence of that is that the ability to push tuition up, and the ability to draw in new students.

In our case, because all the strike issues we talked about, the numbers were going down dramatically. In terms of racial diversity, we may have peeked during this declining period, simply because it was easier for financial aid students than it was for upper-middle class white students. They would take their money and go somewhere else because of our problems. In any case, we continued to finance, and still continue to finance, our diversity primarily out of tuition. We need to get out of that. We need to find a way to shifting some of that burden to endowment, instead of tuition. It would also ease the pressure on tuition.

What about the affect on experimentation and innovation educationally?

I think that was particularly devastating. It is still difficult to get a number of faculty to really want to be aggressive about innovation. We couldn't fund it for one, but we lost the spirit of innovation under budget pressure. We put limits on students' abilities because we didn't want to see the money going out, we wanted to keep it here. We didn't want to try experimenting in ways of effectively using the network in an educational way, because it meant some of our students would have to go to some of those places. People became afraid to take risks, and when you're afraid to take risks, the consequences are just terrible, or less exciting than normal. A lot of that was a consequence of budget, but over a period of time, if you don't practice the art of innovation, you lose the knack for it.

Partly as a consequence of the general replacement of faculty, who don't have the old history to worry about, as a result of having a little more money to play around with, people have been willing to take a few more risks working on designs for new programs. They didn't want to do that before, because they would spend a lot of time working on a new program, and then there wouldn't be any money for it. I think there is a more hopeful sense among faculty, now that we managed to put

together last year a couple of programs. One of the things that Guskin did do that was helpful, was he re-created in a sense, the Development program from an office that didn't really work, so that gave everyone the sense that if they did have an idea, they had someplace to go with it, to see if they could get some money.

One of the reasons I asked that question was my wondering whether or not the failure of the New Directions program or the network changed attitudes [towards innovation] as well...

The network expansion did several things. It siphoned off from the college most of the people who were actually involved in innovative education. They wound up going to San Francisco, or Baltimore, or one of the network programs. So in a sense we lost, during the expansion period, the kind of people who were thinking innovatively. We also lost, as a consequence of the decline, other kinds of innovative people who went elsewhere, and left the college altogether. And then because of our experience with the network, people got turned off by the idea of innovation, and that was reinforced by the budgetary cutbacks. It wasn't the budgetary thing itself, but there is a spirit of innovation that got damaged, which was then exacerbated by the budget cuts.

The New Directions question is an interesting one, because I don't think that turned us off to innovation. There were so many cloudy issue around New Directions. What did we mean by New Directions? In a sense, the New Directions was an admissions program to dramatically diversify the student body. In another sense, you could think about it as part of the network expansion. [The expansion] was never called New Directions, but it was similar in going into communities, dealing with populations which normally would not have been able to participate in a traditional liberal arts college. So in a sense they were similar tasks.

The problem with the New directions program on campus is that it lost the focus. On the one hand, there was a developing academic department that was called the Institute for the Solution of Social Problems that was a left, meaning a philosophical, ideological base for an education. There was a New Directions admissions program, there was a Black separatist movement, there was a poor people's movement, all those sort of churning around on the campus simultaneously. And it became tremendously confusing which ones of those were parts of the New Directions Program, and which ones were not. For various economic and political reasons, they sometimes grouped together and called the whole package the New Directions program. At other times it was separated out.

When ISSP identified themselves as the educational wing of the New Directions program, it meant that they then put the cloak of left ideologies onto the New Directions Program, and that created a problem with the way that the rest of the community viewed New Directions. There was a Poor People's Alliance, which was a conglomeration of different organizations

on the campus which claimed to speak for New Directions students, and then the Black Separatist movement, which clouded the issue even further. Were New Directions students just Black students? That makes it difficult to even talk about the reactions to New Directions.

In the name of New Directions a lot of awful things happened. In fact, there was on campus a group of people who came in and became part of the program, who were serving their own personal ends. It led to a lot of violence on campus. The college gave, in fact, the board of trustees gave to a group of students, the Poor People's Alliance was one of these groups, several hundred thousand dollars, and said they should manage that money, and that turned out to be a disaster. A small group of people got control of that organization and used that money for their own private ends, and [the rest of the ND students] didn't get the needed support. A classic case of a good idea being corrupted.

[All] these things make it very difficult to get a sense of a pure reaction to the New Directions program. I don't think a reaction to the program itself weakened our commitment to our diversity. I think a lot of the other things that occurred caused people to raise questions in their minds about whether or not a residential liberal arts college was capable of dealing effectively with certain kinds of students. We were literally recruiting gang members from Inner City ghettos who, in their home environment, played a certain kind of role, and we would bring people here without any sense of how we were going to change our program to deal with that. So we said to them, "Here's some money." It raised some questions with some people about whether a residential liberal arts college was capable of building that kind of population into its ongoing program. And the answer to that is obviously "No, it can't without changing", and we weren't prepared for the change. We somehow thought we could do that without changing, and then when it all happened we thought, "My God, we have to change!" and it was too late, too late to do it effectively. I'm not convinced that an institution can't deal with that problem, but it has to do it with knowing that kind of change.

What about attitudes towards leftist ideology post-strike? In the Record there are articles about the quarter cut of the faculty referring to whether or not it was a leftist purge or not.

One of the things we didn't even talk about is the purge idea. The emergence of this was after the first big cut back occurred in the fall of '73, '74, when about 25 faculty members were let go, tenured faculty.

I thought it was 25 percent.

Well, it was not 25 percent overall. Some left voluntarily, but in fall quarter there was a cut back of about 25 faculty positions again. In fact, the practice that was used was awful

to go through, but was not one, I don't think, which could be characterized as a purge of one group or another. The ultimate decision was made by Adcil, but a lot of the recommendations that Adcil acted upon came from faculty members in the various programs.

Part of the confusion is that, simultaneously with the cutback, there were also regular contract negotiations going on. What you would find is people who lost their jobs had the bad misfortune of coming under contract renewal that year. People who, on two year contracts and were not coming up for review that year, were in a safer position than people who were in tenure. It is hard to explain; I think that was wrong but I think that was a wrong reading by attorneys. They felt that if you broke a specific contract you would have more problems with damages than if you broke the tenure relationship. I still don't believe it. Of the tenure people who were let go, I don't think that any of them could be classified as left. If there were an inordinate number of left faculty members who were let go that year, it was because they were the ones who were in the pool coming up for contract renewal.

But as far as general attitudes towards left faculty?

There was a tremendous split in the faculty, and the perceived participation in that strike by some of the left faculty solidified the ideological split. Before that, people still tried to talk to each other over the ideological line, after that people stopped.... From that point on, very few people crossed the line.

How did the strike affect Antioch's mission, both in terms of vision and implementation?

The rhetoric remained pretty much consistent in terms of the mission. Our ability to realize was damaged by the budget, by the declining numbers, but I think the spirit of the vision was also damaged. I think people were both shocked by, not just the strike itself, but the events leading up to it for several years, and the movement off campus and all the rest of that. So I hate to say, "Just the strike", but the strike was kind of a crystallizing event. I think the sense of the mission, and the spirit of the mission was damaged in that people started turning inward instead of outward.

I like to compare the involvement of Antioch students and faculty in the civil rights movement up to '67, '68, and the involvement in our problems and issues surrounding the counter culture movement in the Vietnam War in the later 60s. The spirit of the civil rights movement was one of reaching out there in the world, extending ourselves, students and faculty, individually, and sometimes collectively. In the late 60s that all turned inward, and we tried to focus too much attention [on the] institution, Antioch College itself. I think in that sense, the spirit was damaged, the mission was damaged.

Two more questions. One is how the strike affected the changing relationship between the town and the college. The other is whether or not there were any positive affects of the strike.

I think as a crystallizing event, the strike itself was very damaging, but it was symptomatic of a whole series of events. The simple size of the college in a town which had a population of 4000 people, in a village like that, where they had 2400 students, had a serious impact, and I think our relationship deteriorated for a long time. ...Anger in the way the [Yellow Springs] community perceived the administration to be destroying the institution that they loved, just difficulties about numbers of people in town, students in town. I think there was a kind of a backlash view that was raised because there was numbers of minority students, and the perception that it was primarily a Black student problem on campus, in terms of the strike and that had some consequences. But none of that was very long lasting. It was damaged for a while badly, but it was restored, and I think its fairly healthy now.

On the positive aspects...There are a lot of positive aspects about what we were trying to do. We did it badly and as a consequence, we had a strike, but what we were trying to do had value. We just managed it so badly that it was bound to blow up on us.

Nina Myatt:

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I realized when I was looking over the questions that a lot of my feelings really go back, not to '73 but to '79, when we almost went bankrupt and there was this great disruption in terms of people's lives and such real anxiety that we might not make it. In '73, my remembrance of that time is more of a deep sadness, because of the effects of it on faculty members, those who were dismissed, including tenured faculty who were let go, and one of these happened to be a very close family friend. And the kind of stunned disbelief that such a thing could happen, especially when the tenured faculty were let go, but some faculty with just two-year contracts were not because of some legal thing. The two-year contracts seemed to have more validity than the tenure. I guess the other remembrances are less personal to me then. I think of it in terms of my husband who was on the faculty and I know how he felt and how his students felt and how he behaved after this. I was working here then, but somehow that part of it all seems less important than the bigger picture of the college or how it affected Don's work and his relationship with colleagues and friends.

Was he a professor then?

I think by that time, he was called maybe communications and engineering. When he came, Antioch had a straight engineering department and at the time that the college lost its engineering accreditation, they switched, sort of took a step sideways and continued to offer some of the undergraduate courses; and of course co-op has always been important in the engineering program. They also went into a dual-degree completion program, because the college could not really maintain an engineering department. They used to have an electrical, a mechanical and a civil program, and those are fairly expensive to maintain. So he, in some ways was an unusual engineer in that he really had a broader outlook than the narrow field, and enjoyed dealing with students who were in the arts, always had friends among those, the filmmakers and so forth. He shifted his focus to teaching science courses for the non-science people.

Speaking of the larger picture, in the faculty relationships can you talk a little about the effects on the relationship between faculty, or faculty and students and what was wrought because of the strike?

Okay, you know that there were a group of faculty who supported the students in every way and they of course were censored, but were not dismissed. First of all, they were fired, and then they were reinstated.

You mean those seven faculty that were fired and rehired [on May 22, 1973] ?

Yes, right. And I can't help but believe that those teachers,

and Don was one of them, that continued to teach his classes during the strike and a lot of faculty did not. I shouldn't speak for him, he's not here to speak for himself, but I can't help but feel that certainly it must have changed their relationship and how they dealt with one another. [In] the period right after the strike, there was such a decrease in enrollment, which meant a great decrease in money, which meant immediately the beginning of laying off of staff, union people and non-union people, and faculty were non-renewed when they were trying to keep the faculty down to match the new, smaller enrollment. It was a time of, the one word that comes to my mind is really a deep sadness. Nobody really wanted it to end this way, and there were really mixed feelings about the rightness of the cause of the students.

Over the cause or the tactics?

Yeah, the tactics got so rough that I think they lost a lot of credibility, but there certainly was a realization that Antioch had been very active in seeking government money to bring students here, and in some ways we brought the problem on ourselves by not carefully planning or just blindly assuming that everything was going to work out okay. And [we were] left holding the bag when the federal money dried up. It just seemed like the students really did deserve something, but on the other hand, no one could see how you could guarantee a five-year program with this kind of wanting to do the right thing by the students we brought in, and yet feeling that realistically it was not possible to. I think that had a big part in the sadness, that somehow we'd had a good idea to begin with and it had noble purposes and [we] kind of flubbed it up.

Did the sadness continue for a long time?

Oh, I think so. Because really right after the strike the layoffs began, and [they] just kept cutting back and cutting back. It really wasn't until Guskin came and said "You can't just keep cutting back. You have to be bold and say things are going to get better and we have to hire faculty instead of trimming down the faculty and staff to match the smaller and smaller [enrollment]." It was like a catch-22 situation. The financial situation got worse and worse and that was the period when James Dixon fired [Frank] Shea, who was trying to negotiate a way out of the network, and it ended up that Shea was reinstated by the trustees and Dixon was fired. So the period after the strike seemed to be one sort of turmoil after another, and then when Birenbaum came he promptly started pulling in all these fringe little parts of Antioch that had sprouted up all over the country. I think when Birenbaum came there were thirty two bits associated with Antioch. And then everything culminated in '79, the spring of '79 when we had the cash-flow crisis and the college couldn't meet its payroll and so forth.

I was going to ask you about '79. Do you think '79 would have

happened if there hadn't been the strike of '73?

Now, you know we probably would have really had to re-think how much we could afford to do in terms of a New Directions program, or minorities, but it would have happened over a period of time that would not have caused such turmoil. The strike was just very costly to the physical plant and everything else.

I wanted to go to my first question about what the emotional and spiritual climate of the campus was like for the first ten years or so [following the strike], and what it was like to work here.

Well, it's peculiar that so many of us stayed; I stayed, as my husband had been on the faculty. He didn't die until '79, so that was six years after that. But there were lots of staff people who didn't have any particular connection the way I did, and yet they stayed too. We all had a decrease in our salaries, not that we didn't get raises, we actually had to take a five percent cut in salary, which didn't get made up for about three years. People really supported the college immensely by sticking with it. To this very day, which I think is some of the cause for the anger that sometimes erupts among staff, probably more than the faculty. Actually, there are very few people here now who were here then in terms of faculty, and there are a few of the senior faculty. Like here in the library, Joe was here, Ruth was one of the ones who was laid off, or let go. But I'm not sure there's a community recollection about that period now, because a lot of people were simply not involved in it.

Why do you think people stayed?

I think they really felt that Antioch was worth preserving. The only reason I can think that people would willingly put up with a cut in salary was that we just felt things had to get better, and slowly they are.

What other kinds of things did you have to put up with?

I think it was probably sort of a demoralization that came from extreme poverty, so that the grounds weren't properly tended, and the buildings were in terrible shape. We're in much better condition now, and even so we look pretty scrappy around the edges to some people. But those of us who know how bad it was for a while know we're doing much better. It was just sort of a family embarrassment, especially when students came, or when the alums came and they were just horrified with how things looked.

What about that in relationship to the changing reputation of Antioch? You would probably know better than anyone, seeing all the newsclippings, how the strike affected our national image.

Probably immediately, it affected it very strongly, just because national periodicals had picked up the story, and I'm sure that families could easily decide to have their kids choose a college that didn't look like it had such shaky underpinnings. Especially when it's an expensive school to go to; even then it was expensive, although I guess if you look at it we're not at the top of the heap, I'm not sure we're even at the top of GLCA schools. I think it takes a long time to dispel some negative something. It may be something that the families or the school counselors couldn't quite put their fingers on, what it was that made them uneasy about Antioch, but I'm sure that continued for a number of years. During that same time we didn't have a consistent administrative staff and admissions and I think that probably hurt. That's one of the things the College had to do to stay within their resources, was to move faculty from teaching positions to administrative positions to take up the slack. That happened in admissions.

What about Antioch's reputation before '73?

I think its reputation has been different at different times. I don't know if anyone's mentioned the first year program to you. Some consider it the first crack in Antioch's foundation. By '73 already even some of our faculty certainly thought we were not what we once were and in bringing in students who were just marginally qualified to go to school here, without really having, being able to give them the full support services they needed, that we had to then change our expectations of students. And then, there was a long time [when] we had probably had to minimal admissions work. The applications came in and you chose as many people as you wanted to come. [After the strike] there was a long time where we had to take anyone who looked as though there was any possibility of them coming, and there were a lot of those who probably never should have come because they added to our burden, because they presented either emotional problems or severe academic problems and we just weren't able to deal with it. I don't know how other faculty feel, if they feel they had to change their way of teaching because of the students they were dealing with, I'm not sure. I don't know what Don would have said about that.

That's another question, how [the strike] affected the academic program and the character of the student body. Could you touch on that a little?

I think compared to the late 50s and early 60s when we had sort of an elitist group of students here, very highly motivated, highly academic types. Like Frank Adler, that's his vintage. And it's really different than when I was here. We were serious about our schooling, but I think for the most part we were not as competitive in an academic sense. I think we were stronger in some of the other aspects of the Antioch program, in community. We had a different kind of balance to the student body, during that time, the time that I know. I have a feeling

they probably had more people then like I was, in that I would say had an adequate brain and probably overachieved, worked hard enough to maintain good grades or whatever we thought an adequate student was. But I think probably in the late 50s and into the 60s, they probably had students with much greater intellectual ability than our group.

And in the last years since the strike?

I think through all the years we've always had a few good students, it's just that they're fewer and farther between. I think the faculty wouldn't have stayed if they always had students who needed remedial reading or whatever that they always had some students who had capacity and who challenged their thinking, or who somehow made them feel it was worthwhile staying here to teach. Why would you stay if you felt like you were dealing with people who really could not appreciate what you were trying to offer in terms of academic programs?

What about community and the cohesion of community across the barriers of different groups, you know, between students, administrators faculty and staff? Did you see that change after the strike?

I feel less comfortable commenting on that. In name, things look the same, you have so many faculty and so many students on Adcil. Adcil itself certainly changed in its power and the kinds of authority it could exert once the University structure came into being. Adcil used to directly select members of the board of trustees, not nominate them, but select them, very powerful.

I was reading about students in the early 70s trying to elect Angela Davis.

Yeah, she was nominated, but some way or other it didn't happen. It seems, thinking back on it now, it seems there was more political polarization. I think in the old days, there might have been sort of faculty issues and student issues and those were the two groups, faculty and students. And then, in this later period, really before the strike, [with] all the political issues going on, with the integration issues of the whole country and the Vietnam War, the groupings were faculty and students who had the same political agenda, and that probably affected also the way the governance worked. If you paid attention to who you voted for on Adcil, you could get the vote to have certain political happenings come to pass. Because you'd have a certain number of students, or a number of faculty who'd make up a majority.

So faculty and students were in agreement?

Yeah, around a political agenda. And I think that's different from the way it was in earlier years, where often students had

one set of issues they thought were important and faculty had another. Certainly they could come together, but in the late 60s, early 70s, it was either Marxist political thinking or whatever. Which I think was different.

Was it [some] faculty and students belonging in one political camp versus those believing in a different ideology, warring ideologies?

I'm not sure it was that clear, but certainly there were times when Adcil had faculty and students whose agenda was either to get the Marxist study program in, or to push for something that was probably on the left. There was never a strong right wing on this campus.

One of the really key issues I'm interested in is how the strike affected the relationship between administrators and students and administrators and faculty.

I think the administrators who are here now, except maybe for Connie Pelekoudas and Bob Parker... I'm not sure that they make any kind of connection. Have you gotten the feeling that the administrators are nervous about student involvement in goings-on at the college?

I've gotten the feeling that criticism is not welcome. Not so much that they disagree on certain things but that [the administration] just don't appreciate critical voices existing. I wonder if the economic downfall following the strike, which snowballed to create a whole bunch of situations, I wonder if it also created a distrust of student dissent of any kind.

Yeah, it's possible. The one difference I see is there's so few students around. When there was dissent in the 70s, it was a big bunch of people. Our enrollment on this campus was very high, it was probably 800 on campus, not total enrollment. 800 on campus, which meant a lot of bodies and if they were organizing around an issue, it could be a goodly number of people, would be very intimidating. One of the things that's different is that during Dixon's time, he was an Antiochian. I think that made a difference in how he looked at what the students were doing. I'm wondering whether the newer administrative structure we have coming from a more traditional way of division of responsibilities, even though they talked about student government and our literature- one would believe there's still great store put on having student involvement in a lot of things. I have a feeling it makes [the administration] nervous.

It's very interesting how [the strike] keeps coming up. I mean, you're doing this on it, and practically every fall when freshmen come in, somebody wanders up here and they want to know about this thing they've heard about. Some sort of a fascination with the period. I'm not sure I understand how, what triggered that. They don't seem to be wanting to pick up

the issues or anything, but just they've heard about the strike in '73 and they want to know what it's about. It's interesting.

Speaking of administrators I wonder if you've seen the role of the administration change. You were talking about Dixon and his more Antiochian background.

Well, there was a time, about the time of the strike, when Jim Dixon and his administration literally moved off campus. And that meant that we needed someone to run this campus. It seems to me that the administrative structure's gotten very complicated, there's a whole new level. Except for Al Guskin taking over as head of this campus, supposedly as well as the University. But on the other hand he had to have a sidekick vice president, who is what used to be called the provost, or chancellor, the name changes, but essentially, it's the head of this campus. I think there's still another level of administration in there, many more administrators than we used to have.

But do you think their role is becoming more managerial, less managerial? For instance, Al Denman talked a lot about how administrators had a role that used to be a lot more educationally-oriented, that they were almost considered administrators and faculty both, an interesting duality.

I get the sense from what I see going on, not really being a part of it, that faculty and students how seem to be anti-administration, it's not students against the faculty and administration, it's the faculty and students against the administration; that they often share common ideas. Everybody who comes to Antioch seems to feel they own their part. Every student who walks on campus, everybody who works here. It's hard to give everyone as much power over what happens as they would really like to have. I can fully understand the people who have to pay the bills and come up with the money getting very nervous about people deciding how things are going to be done. If they have to come up with the money, they want to have more say-so over how the place goes.

What about Antioch's leadership of that time? How has it changed?

I think Birenbaum when he came, probably had educational ideas that he was never really able to carry through. I know a few projects because Don was on them. I think Bill Birenbaum and Al Guskin, their main concern has been financial, and I think that would be very dissatisfying, to just be plugging up the dike all the time, and never really getting on top of it, and feeling that you can leave some sort of a stamp on a place, that was "When Birenbaum was here this good thing happened, and when Al Guskin was here this good thing happened." I don't think either of them were able to do that.

What about the mission? Do you think the strike has affected

our idea of the Antioch mission, or not just the idea but the actualization of such?

I think so, I think we have to be very cautious. We used to be very bold in going and looking for high risk students, and people who needed a great deal of financial help and so forth, and I don't think we can afford to do that without getting ourselves in a bind again. I think we still try in the admissions process, and I'm not sure how that works. I don't think there are quotas, and yet I think they certainly do send the Antioch missionaries to certain high schools, or to certain parts of the country, or certain alums to have contact with some of the diverse groups they would like to bring here. I don't think anybody wants a white, middle-class college, I don't think they do.

But nevertheless, do you think the strike has affected the plurality of the college in terms of economics, ethnicity, economic background?

It probably has. I think there's actual data that the registrar's office keeps that you can look at to see the racial mix. I know the registrar's office does it for a period of years back, maybe not back to '73, but ... we seem to have in recent years more foreign students than I remember. We probably used to have in the early 70s, more Black students percentage-wise than we do now, but I think we now have a great number of Oriental students, American Orientals..I think maybe there's more diversity of nationalities here, probably percentage wise. I don't think we ever had 30%, but probably in the teens, but that was high, because in the preceding years at Antioch, as much as we'd talked about wanting to have a diverse population, we didn't have a very high Black population here. I could count on one hand the number of Black students who were here when I was.

You were saying about how we aren't able to risk anymore, or be bold financially and I'm wondering if you've seen changes in Antioch's commitment to experimentation, innovation educationally since the strike.

Again, I think its very cautious. The new cross cultural center is very safe. That's sort of a traditional academic thing that a college ought to be doing, its not like the New Directions program, or the first year program, or something that was really off by itself in not having been done before. Probably because of money, when you can't bear to make a mistake, you have to be very careful.

What about the effect the strike had on Antioch's relationship with Yellow Springs?

I'm not sure the effect is long-ranging. Certainly at the time the strike was going on, the village tried very hard to support the college in opening up places for classes to be held, churches

and so forth, providing rooms. Probably the bigger effect is just that the number of students now don't have a tremendous effect on the village the way they once did. At this period when we didn't have enough housing on campus for all the students we had, the students were living all across campus. I don't think that there's any long term negative effects on the community because of the strike, but for the fact that the support of the college is lessened because of the enrollment's being down. Certainly the strike which led up to '79, it's a straight progression that ends up there. The town was very supportive; committees were organized, people volunteered to come in and help in offices or the bookstore, just wherever to shore the place up until it could get on its feet. I guess I don't see a long-term negative effect on the community because of the strike.

Do you think the strike had any positive effects?

I really can't imagine what it could have been. Has anybody thought of anything positive?

Yeah, Al Denman said something, Al and Harold Wright said interesting things about that. Al said that it, people saw what taking ideology to its extreme could do, and that people were more wary about their beliefs.

Well, maybe you could phrase it this way, that I think it helped people to realize how much they really cared whether this place survived or not. I'm sure Al is one of those who put a lot of heart and soul and energy into this place.

John Ronsheim:

Outside of making hundreds of thousands of references about the strike in everyday living and the stress of Antioch College, I never really sat down and formulated any kind of coherent statements about really what... in other words to see the whole. All I know is that the strike made my life much more difficult.

When I came to Antioch there were four slots in the music department. In summer '75 I was the only one in music. I was left alone in '75. We had four slots, permanent, after the strike we had two in music. The colleague I had who had been here since '55, he left in '74. So I was alone, but I was taking the Antioch chorus to Europe in the fall of '75.

I just had a friend of mine who's a very well known composer come up and he teaches at Brooklyn College, and he's [into] computer music. He said that Antioch really truly is on the avant-garde because, the New York State University system, they went from 1750 to less 1500 in one and a half years. Over 200 faculty had been fired at Brooklyn College. Antioch started going down before the strike. We were before anyone else in coming down, so you can always say Antioch is what the rest of the country is going to do. Just look at Antioch.

Liberal types of people have a conflict. They want two things. They want the ideal of the United States of America, the individual, everyone has the right to pursue happiness, but at the same time we have to make sure that everybody has all the opportunities, we take care of everybody. The pope said, capitalism can be just as bad as communism because without the morals, without the ethics, capitalism is zero. Just as bad as any other ideology. So what's happening is this idea and Antioch's been practicing this for a long time. And if you make integration the most important word in a college situation, you're going to end up with terrible problems.

The whole idea of middle class, read "Wuthering Heights", it's a perfect novel for this. Heathcliff, the romantic, he'll die but it doesn't matter. He's got to find out. If everyone has this, who's going to keep the normalcy? The only reason people can fly is you're on Earth. You have to have a middle class to keep that stability. You have to keep people in order, you have to have order. If you don't have order, you have nothing, you're going to fall apart.

When Antioch didn't pay us in '79, presidents of other institutions said there has to be an Antioch, we'll invent an Antioch, a school where I gave a student credit, he was writing a novel. He didn't come to class the whole quarter, he was learning, he was expanding. In other words, I gave whole credit to rock musicians. But I was the only one who did it. Now what does that have to do with all this? Plenty.

Antioch, we had a well-known poet teach here in '69, a Scottish boy, Alasdair Reid. Now I remember him in our house. We said that you have got to have conservative faculty at Antioch. If you don't, the students couldn't fly. You have to have that stability you have to have the middle class,

otherwise...You have to have order. If you're an artist you have to practice discipline. Freedom only comes from limitation.

People think freedom is letting yourself go. Imagination is the key. I've always tried to tell people that fantasy and imagination are two very different concepts. People can dream like crazy. As long as they have dreams and fantasies and it doesn't affect people it's no problem. But imagination is working within something that has a tradition; it comes from somewhere. Antioch, in its very nature, the good Antioch, it can be a wonderful place as long as there is stability. What happened with the strike, of course, is that it all came to a head.

The strike was a pragmatic thing. It was money. Antioch lost a hundred some students. Millions of dollars. Got a bad name. It lost its freedom to fly, because as long as Antioch was stable and had programs and money. See, a lot of people say it all began with the first year program. The first year program was the seed that really started destroying the place, that was not a seed, but it was a part of the whole thing that was developing. Open admissions. Antioch was the only place with open admissions. I'm speaking of before they could choose out the people with the highest scores. They knew that they had to become more democratic, not just for the elite. Ask Karen Shirley, she came from a farm in Iowa. She was so alone here. It was about 80% Jewish. She was of a Protestant farm family. She had all kinds of conflict here, before open admissions.

So Antioch tried like hell to have a more representative of this country student body, and that in itself could be dangerous. First of all, Antioch made a mistake in not having enough people here to help those Rockefeller students here. I knew ghetto kids who didn't know anything except the streets of Chicago. Come on here where anything can happen! That's idealism to the nth degree. Liberals play dangerous games. The idea is more important than the actual execution of it.

The whole point is that without money, you can't dream so easily. The third world countries, if you're a poet, it's very difficult to be aesthetic with all those people dying around you. You write a different kind of poetry. You know its the people who have all the necessities more or less, [who] don't have to worry about it daily, then you can delve into all kinds of things, other issues to develop the psyche, to make us more integrated, etc. Jean-Paul Satre said that, "Third World Poets: how can they be poets when there's so much to do?"

Let's get back to the basic question; you want to talk about what effect. Well, pragmatically, the music department got cut to two, and then one with no help. When I started teaching at Antioch...up until the strike, actually until '75, I could start of the ground in my classes. I didn't have to be basic. I could do anything, extremes, they could always follow me. They were with me, the students, absolutely, they were so quick. I could use my imagination and do all kinds of things, and they were there with me. In '76, when I came back from taking the Antioch chorus abroad, it was such a difference I couldn't believe it. Holy Cow! What had happened? What are the students like? I had

to start down at the basement and constantly reiterate things. They couldn't follow me. They didn't understand me, many of them. Antioch couldn't get the students they wanted, or was it something to do with the students in this country? Or was it a combination of both? I think that it's a combination of both things. I think that [it's] the television generation, number one. The 60s are gone, the less vital kinds of young people maybe.

Antioch become smaller, the students weren't as cultivated. See, cultivation, I remember I would attack students when they would use the word elite. Tell me what elite means! Where does it come from? What does it mean? You disarm them and make them realize they're using that word. They themselves are the elite! They are the chosen ones! I don't want pretense, see, I want people to value the opportunity to devote themselves. I asked my classes, the past few years particularly, I said, "You people are lucky!" In the 70s, I started saying this to faculty people, and I finally said it to students about four years ago in a class. Pretty harsh. I said, when I'm angry at students not being sincere about checking out what life's all about, goofing off, indulging in whatever. I always say, "The most spoiled bunch of people are right here at Antioch. You're lucky! But you don't appreciate the opportunity you have to have the time to devote yourself to finding out who you are." I get furious about that. Students before the strike, of course they indulged, of course. I can tell outlandish stories about Antioch and students, but see I don't know. It could have been the war, cause I came in '67. War sobers people up. You could get out of being drafted by going to school, and we had guilt.

You want more basic answers. Of course the obvious things. There were less courses, the choice of students to come you don't have. So, if you don't have quality...and Antiochians were so well traveled and so independent. And when they came here, they already knew; they had already rebelled. That was the most important thing about Antioch. There's still some of that and that's good. If you don't rebel, if you don't get lost, you never go to the next stage. Most people, they stay where they come from. You have to be a part of something and integrated, but at the same time you have to have your individuality. The most important thing is to individuate yourself. That's what Antiochians, I hope, did, individuate themselves. They weren't afraid to take chances. They wanted this experience. That's top. That's essential. That's Antioch! But you have to have balance, because you have to have good academics, you have to have discipline. You have to have all of these things at the same time. And what happened in '76 is that we got people who were confused. They were confused, and confusion, is a different thing than rebellion. To be rebellious, sure you're confused, but it's not confusion anymore. You're purposely taking yourself out of the stream that you were a part of, which kept you in order, that kept you naive enough to have faith with your parents, you're going to have enough money, you're going to do this, but if you cut yourself from that, then where, then you can't do what you want so easily.

As long as you have money, you can do all kinds of things, but if you don't have any money, that's a whole different ballgame. You had all kinds of diverse students here. We had a lot of people who just weren't very bright. That's terrible to say but it's true. No matter what you told them, they couldn't learn. They didn't have the capacity for different reasoning. They may get over it; it may be a disability, you don't know why, but they just weren't already at a certain place. Some of those people maybe didn't have even the desire. They had to take people that shouldn't have come to Antioch. It's a terrible thing, but hell, come on! If you want to be a saint, that's one thing. If you want to save the world, but you've got to have your own development, self, you know, in order to help somebody else. A person who has no idea of themselves, how can they help somebody else? Antioch had all these people, that kind of people, then there were still some good students. Then you had mixed between. I remember our voice teacher told me about five years ago: if you have people who are, need help all the time, if you have everybody that way, some psychological help, if you have wounded people, wounded in some mental capacity, in other words, neurotic, who just can't function, how are you going to get the people who are healthy enough imagination at the same time. You have to have more of those people than the people who need help. And I think that the strike reversed that. We had crazy people. We really did. I could tell you wild stories. We had people who were really neurotic and who really needed help, but we had enough people who were sympathetic enough that were intelligent and who were developed enough, who could maybe withstand these people who were... If you have too many of those people, you're going to lose the people who were healthier because if the healthy come here, they don't want to be in an unhealthy climate, and they'll leave. 'Cause what will hold them here? I think that the strike caused that to happen. The reversal of things. See, we always had more healthy people that were imaginative and seeking things other than themselves and so you had a group of people who weren't mentally in good enough shape.

How do you think the strike affected relationships between and students?

The stress was so bad. The toll on the faculty was immense. There were only a couple of people who died, but I know that I lost ten years of my life, I'm sure, by staying here. It was a sacrifice, because the stress was so constant. When you live in a country that's poor, or when you live in a family that's poor, let's say a number of families and you're really just poor, it's a terrible thing. Always not knowing what's going to happen the next moment. And you have to have a certain amount of peace in order to develop your inner capacities. I think that this stress played such a havoc on the faculty that the spark was gone of a lot of the time. It was just struggling to keep up, to stay afloat, and this affected everybody, the climate.

Before the strike you could take a pair of scissors and

cut the tension. I had a student who I sent away, he went to the University of Chicago,...he was walking to the caf and there was a car out in front of Main building and these fellows said, "Come on over," and stuck his head in and they stuck a gun to his head and they argued, "shall we pull it?", but they didn't pull it. He met them in the caf. Anyone could come on this damn campus at any time. I had more female students raped. If I told you the stories you wouldn't believe it. This is before the strike. Dayton thought, "Oh, this is a free town." After the strike, Yellow Springs became such a dangerous place, to go to a dorm at eleven at night, people had to be escorted. The police would stop you if you were walking in town after eleven and try and get you help. It was a dangerous place But before, things were happening. The tension here was fantastic in '71 and '72. It was just incredible.

And then this pus kept coming out, all throughout the 70s, and Birenbaum was the wrong president. As I say, he was a burned out man. To have a burned out egomaniac here, the worst person possible. Not a healer. He lived in New York City. That's where the University offices were. He was the wrong person He was a drinker, an alcoholic. He brought that New York element. It wasn't a New York institution. So that, and all the people he brought, they weren't Antioch types. He played games. The idea of an Arthur Morgan, or even Horace Mann, the whole idea of what an Antioch College president should be, it's a human thing. Antioch needed to be the most humane place possible. An intelligent, humane quality. If you don't have the leaders like that, who were washed in this humanity thing, this feeling for human beings... The most valuable thing we got are human beings. Dixon played great games but he was a humanitarian 'cause he was bred here. He was an Antiochian. The trustees can be blamed for a lot of it. They're the ones who brought [Birenbaum].

Ah, the stress level, you can't believe the stress level. Just to read about it, not to have been here, it was unbearable. It killed us all, but we kept at it. I suppose because Antioch is like that. you fight. Antioch, instead of fighting football, you fight the rah rah for humanity. It goes back to Horace Mann, doesn't it? That could be the theme song of Antioch; "Our team to fight the world, to get the world integrated, to do things for the good of humanity." That is the idea, you see. You need a pluralistic student body. You need a pluralistic faculty. In other words, you need all kinds of people. I'll tell you what happened with the strike. Sure, we had our Marxists! Sure we had Andy Winnick!

Do you think there was a leftist purge as a result of the strike?

I wouldn't put it politically. I would put it, the obnoxious ones. But see, you need obnoxious people and they aren't all obnoxious. A good faculty was all kinds of people, coming from different places. All good scholars. [After the strike] we didn't have enough faculty, I was alone, the way I had to fight to get a faculty member, it was unbelievable. Then they got rid of him.

My students always got everything I needed. Student power, that's another thing that's missing; student power was much better, much stronger before the strike. Even after the strike, but it's really deteriorated lately, in the past five, six years. Oh my lord!

What about faculty, administrative attitudes toward student dissent and how was that affected by the strike?

It was terribly affected. The last real "sit-in" was the lesbians sat-in in Main building, maybe seven years ago. That was the last time we ever had any kind of real confrontation.

Do you think the attitude [towards dissent] has changed?

Oh, absolutely. The whole country of course, the whole country. Oh, yeah, I'm so disappointed in the young generation it's unbelievable. They don't fight for anything anymore.

Has it also affected faculty dissent?

If you get wounded, if you have things happen in your family, of course, they become safer. You don't take chances anymore. You're afraid. Oh, it happened fantastically, oh, of course! Tremendously! people got scared...Yeah, we lost the guts, the rawness, not having the guts to fight and argue and everything. Vitality! People indulged. I remember a student was sleeping all the time, I asked her why, she said, "Oh, they don't wear clothes in the dorm and I get tired during the day." I think they're more indulgent. I think people became more selfish; they want to have a good time, to hell with everyone else.

What about faculty relationships with one another? How were they affected?

Oh, tremendous. Because, of course, the people who stood for the strike, there would be friction there but just in general, just the idea that if you got problems, you're going to be in a different mood. You aren't going to take chances. You're going to be more into God. You're going to be more conservative.

Do you think this affect has continued?

I would almost put it this way, the strike was 80-90% of it, in relation to the way the whole country or the world is. And I'd say slowly it's changed to this, you still have some, tremendous amount, because there's no money! That's still enormous, that's still bigger than anything! But I think that the rest of the world's problem, I mean the change of the climate, the conservatism of the country. That whole thing has to come in, and now it's a part of it. I think it's an integrated mass now. It's a big negative mass. I think that 90% of the alums or more would have been against the expansion. I think the strike made the expansion more real, the problem of it.

Before, as long as you had the money. I remember the Record saying, that in '62 Dixon, he didn't put anymore money into the college, things needed fixed. They didn't put in any money into the college. They put in all into starting these [centers] and I think that the strike brought on the consciousness of what had happened. We found the negativity of expanding became apparent after the strike. You don't notice the disease until it's taken effect and we don't have enough of something. And then when you don't have enough of something, you say, "How can we solve this? Oh my gosh, we lack, we lack." Well, why do we lack? Oh well, we did these things.

Antioch would be an entirely different college without the strike. The strike was a culmination of all of this indulgence, and in a sense it had to happen in order to purify, something had to fall, but unfortunately the wrong people were in power to be able to make the strike a positive thing.

If we'd had an imaginative president post strike, with a great rapport with the alumni, who could get them to be one with him or her, I think we could be in terrific shape, in spite of the conservative America. People say "How could such a liberal institution flower during the Reagan years?" We could have been even more glorious. Because we were alone and we had the base to really keep this country a wonderful positive image, that we aren't going backwards, but going forwards in this country, and Antioch as a symbol of that going forwards. Instead, we became the symbol of poverty in every way, mentally and physically. We sometimes take, probably, pleasure in our condition, 'cause we were ahead of everybody else. We fell first. That's, of course, no excuse.

It was awful. We couldn't attract, probably better students because of our condition. We had a bad name and we needed those students too. We needed all kinds...we needed plurality. See, we don't have it anymore. I think it's distressful.

Plurality among faculty and students?

Absolutely

Economic, ethnic and social?

Absolutely. See if we had money, we could have more minorities here. We wouldn't have the excuse not to have them, if there are excuses.

And poorer students?

Yes, oh, absolutely.

It's really homogenous here, more than my old university.

Well, it was always that way in a way, because everyone was always liberal. It's true, we didn't have many Southern people, if you look at the breakdown. The students are from Maine, California, New Jersey, now it's Ohio. You can just study where

the students come from and you can make some kinds of rationalizations about Antioch. I think Birenbaum could not face the challenge.

What about Guskin?

He's tried hard, but when I sat in the tent at his inauguration, I said, "No, he's not an Antioch type. He just isn't an Antioch type. I don't want to say nasty things about him. I think that his divorce caused a very bad thing. I think that people looked up and they thought he had a good marriage and everything. They idealized him and when that faltered, I think that hurt him. But he was brought here as one thing, to be a manager. Ok, he could be a manager, but we need a president. I think we need an Antiochian. He just wasn't an Antioch type. An Antioch type has usually come from a well-off background, highly-educated, knowing deeply the liberal tradition, a person who had quality in living who knows what refinement means, who could impress upon the people who are very sophisticated out there, alums, and who could identify with him because he is sophisticated.

Just to be blunt, [Guskin's] just not sophisticated and he's a very insecure person. He doesn't have enough faith in himself. He has an inferiority complex. I said that from the very beginning. I don't like to talk against the man. he's worked hard, but he just lacked the confidence of an Antiochian. I blame the trustees and the committees who chose. I blame them because they had the power to choose the proper spirit to be here and they completely became conservative.

Imagine they wouldn't pass my "Art, Wine and the Five Senses" course-- just too far out! "That's not academic enough." Connie Pelekoudas got that passed. Everyone was scared. It was like McCarthy, they were scared. Faculty were afraid to say anything out. There were afraid to stand up for imagination. They got scared for their jobs. They just had no guts anymore.

Do you think the strike had an effect on the commitment to innovation and experimentation in education?

Yeah, that's what I'm talking about. They thought the answer was to close all those things down. That was a total mistake. It's true that we had too many student-initiated courses, of course, but that was the age, but that didn't mean to close of your imagination. People got scared. The answer to life is imagination and to be different. See, I blame the people who have the power but don't have the imagination and the breed! I'm going to say breed! To be able to choose out unusual human beings. To be able to pick out ten people who are the people who are unusual in spirit and in mind. They don't know! How can mediocracy pick out unusual people? When they do meet them, they turn them away because they show how mediocre they are.

I told Howard Greenlee we should have the vital committee. All people who want to teach at Antioch have to got through the vital committee! People who are vital, who are intelligent, who are imaginative. That's the people we need. Ordinary people

only want ordinary people around them. It's a threat. And so when Antioch started getting more ordinary, the more ordinary we became, because the ordinaries wanted the unusuals out.