

7-25-1985

Harriet Deer : USF 25th (1985) Anniversary Oral History Project: interview by Milly St. Julien

University of South Florida Libraries. Florida Studies Center. Oral History Program.

Harriet Deer

Milly St. Julien

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/university_history_campus_bios

Scholar Commons Citation

University of South Florida Libraries. Florida Studies Center. Oral History Program.; Deer, Harriet; and St. Julien, Milly, "Harriet Deer : USF 25th (1985) Anniversary Oral History Project: interview by Milly St. Julien" (1985). *Campus Biographies-All Items*. 30.

https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/university_history_campus_bios/30

This Other is brought to you for free and open access by the USF St. Petersburg campus Campus Biographies at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus Biographies-All Items by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

COPYRIGHT NOTICE

This Oral History is copyrighted by the University of South Florida Libraries Oral History Program on behalf of the Board of Trustees of the University of South Florida.

**Copyright, 2007, University of South Florida.
All rights, reserved.**

This oral history may be used for research, instruction, and private study under the provisions of the Fair Use. Fair Use is a provision of the United States Copyright Law (United States Code, Title 17, section 107), which allows limited use of copyrighted materials under certain conditions. Fair Use limits the amount of material that may be used.

For all other permissions and requests, contact the UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA LIBRARIES ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM at the University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler Avenue, LIB 122, Tampa, FL 33620.

HARRIET DEER

St. Julien: Today I am talking with Dr. Harriet Deer, Professor of English at the St. Petersburg Bayboro Campus, for the USF Silver Anniversary Oral History Project. Could you tell us what was your first contact with USF and what made you decide to come here? Also, what were your first impressions of this campus?

Deer: My husband and I were in North Dakota at Dickinson State College in North Dakota. It was a combination of things. Partly, we hated the weather. We were tired of blizzards, and partly my father-in-law was living in Miami. He died and we felt that we wanted to get down close to my mother-in-law. About that point accidentally we heard from somebody that we had been with in graduate school, Bob O'Hara who was down here at USF, and he said that there was a deanship open and asked if my husband would be interested. My husband thought he would be interested. Then we had found out that the man we had both worked for at the University of Minnesota, Russell Cooper, was the Dean of Liberal Arts. We didn't know that. So of course we were very interested and we came down here.

St. Julien: What were some of your impressions when you saw the campus, especially the St. Petersburg campus?

Deer: I hadn't seen the St. Petersburg campus for two years after we came!

St. Julien: What was your impression?

Deer: I will tell you what the first thing was that I heard about the St. Petersburg campus. I was in a department meeting in my Tampa department, which was not English, and the department shall remain nameless because

the chairman of the department looked at us and said, "Now the subject of the meeting today is what are we going to do with that bloody wart on the back of the campus?" He meant the St. Petersburg campus! What he really meant was that they had this property and they didn't know what to do with it. I guess that I had been adequately warned that I was walking into an old merchant marine accommodation. So I wasn't all that surprised. I guess the thing that surprised me the most was the bathrooms. The women's bathrooms had been put together for the boys of the merchant marines! There were some differences in the plumbing! There were wonderful things like that that were involved with that building. There were only two full-time faculty members. There was a man in psychology and myself. Then Donna Christensen, who was the secretary, and Les Tuttle. Herb Brames had his housing on the second floor of that building. So we had his kid running around occasionally.

St. Julien: What year was that?

Deer: That was 1968.

St. Julien: That was before they took upper level courses and before they changed it to . . .

Deer: No, that was the year that they changed. They had had the lower level. I had nothing to do with that. I came over at the time when this became a permanent upper level operation.

St. Julien: What was your first impression of the Tampa campus, if you were there for two years before St. Petersburg, when you saw that campus?

Deer: Big spaces between buildings. It is something that you can't appreciate now because so many of those spaces have been built in. We were over in the Fine Arts building and then there was the theater. Then there was this great huge space and you got to the Ad. building. Then there was another huge space and then there was the library and the Student Center. Then that whole eastern part of the campus either had not been built or was just under construction. The old business building had just been opened. There were lots of spaces between buildings. This is one of the things that we all noticed.

St. Julien: Did it have grass by the time you got there?

Deer: Yes they did. It was no longer the oasis. It was all landscaped. Then actually it was very nice and we liked it. It was modern and we liked it.

St. Julien: Concerning the founding and the early growth of USF, did you participate in anyway in the legislative or lobbying aspect of the University?

Deer: No.

St. Julien: Did you know which legislators were more supportive of the University?

Deer: In St. Pete I think we all knew that John Ware was instrumental in getting a branch at the University. I think all of us were quite aware of this. In fact the reason that this came into existence was that we had a Republican governor and a Republican legislative delegation in Pinellas County and they really were, at that time, in a position to put on enough pressure so that we might have had a competing university in Pinellas County.

So you better believe that the University decided that they better open up an honest upper level program over here.

St. Julien: So it was either going to be a competing university or a branch?

Deer: You got it!

St. Julien: Did you know of any individuals or businesses that were more supportive of the project?

Deer: Yes. The St. Petersburg Times. Beyond that I really don't know. When I think about it in retrospect that seems to be very odd because I was the first person over here and aside from the St. Pete Times I'm really not aware of who it was in the community that was pushing us.

St. Julien: So you didn't really see any business support until later?

Deer: Not until later.

St. Julien: What was your sense of the relationship of USF to older, more established schools like the University of Florida?

Deer: We were having to fight something awful to get our share of the money. I think we still do, but I think it is better now than it was. The battles that went on to prove that we had our right to a reasonable share of the budget. It was incredible.

St. Julien: What was the cooperation like between faculty members of the different universities? Was there any interaction?

Deer: None at that time that I know about, but that is hard for me to say. I think maybe some of the people who came more locally would have had alot

to do with other faculty. We came in as Yankees and we didn't pick up very much.

St. Julien: Were you aware of any debates over the specific location of the campus?

Deer: Yes, I definitely was. In fact this is something that I heard much later. I was aware that Pinellas County, once this branch opened, that they weren't at all happy about where USF had ended up. I did hear that they wanted the site to be up near Oldsmar. That would have made sense because it is sufficiently midway between Clearwater and St. Pete and Tampa so that it would have been serviceable for all three locations, but apparently because of legislative battles this did not happen. I did hear about it later from a number of people who came into my classes. Just because that is the way this branch ended up in existence.

St. Julien: Do you have any idea why the St. Pete campus opened in St. Petersburg rather than further north?

Deer: Oh sure, the land was here.

St. Julien: So that is basically the only reason?

Deer: The Merchant Marines gave this land to USF for one dollar. It is very simple. There was no thought given at the beginning to any location. Then later on when it came to building a permanent campus . . . You would have to check with some other people on all of the ins and outs, but they really did talk about locating mid-county and the land was just never there. What was more, the downtown business people were very insistent that the campus would stay at this location. So that is why we ended up

where we are. Originally it was just that the land was here and that was practically free.

St. Julien: Did you participate in the development in any of the following, such as the library, book store, or the student health clinic?

Deer: Yes. That was one of the odd things when we came. There had been an extension library here for the state of Florida and it was turned over to the campus. As it happened, in my particular area, Shakespeare, they had quite a collection. Don't ask why, it was the only thing where they had a good collection. I think the first and second year I was here, I had a student who did nothing full-time but assemble bibliography for what would have to be the standard holdings in a decent library in English literature, just the old faithfuls that we had to have. So yes, we did everything that we could to try to start building the library right then. The bookstore was just here.

St. Julien: What about student union and sports? How did the students handle the fact that this campus had no sports?

Deer: It wasn't an issue at first because the kind of students that we have . . .

St. Julien: What kind are they?

Deer: They are commuters, almost entirely. They are adults. When this campus began, there was a fear that we would be taking away people from Tampa. In fact what happened was the opposite, that was people came that could never have attended a university had we not existed over here. I still remember the kind of people who came in the first two or three years.

Some of these people had waited for ten years to have a college close enough so that they could attend. They had gone through the junior college and they had given up all thought because of family responsibilities and jobs. They had given up all thought of being able to take the time to go to Tampa. So what we got were adults. We've never had the standard student.

St. Julien: Could you give us an impression of some of your classes? I talked to one of the earlier students that said that the atmosphere in the classes were different because of the age differences among the students.

Deer: That is not all! Sure. To start out with, there was this tremendous age difference. Of course, the students who were early here may not realize how much more driven to learn those early students were than the normal university student. They were so motivated that it was frightening. You would tell them to do something, and they would come back with it done and about double in addition. They were just incredible because they had waited so long. That had something to do with it, that tremendous motivation and, of course, the maturity. All of us discovered very rapidly that the maturity made such a difference to the level in which we carried on discussions. I don't know whether they are literally better students, but at least in Humanities they make so much more out of everything that they learn because they had so much more experience kicking around. We just didn't have the normal age students. Well, we did and we didn't. We had the older students and then we would get a few lost souls wandering in who were the normal age students. I've always wondered how they handled it because they were just overwhelmed by the adults. That's all there was to it. There's something that you don't realize. You are thinking about

classes being held in a standard classroom. Half the time we were in rooms that were outfitted essentially for seminars. There would only be seven or eight people in a class. A lot of the time I had classes in my office. I had a great big office. I had classes in my office a lot of the time. It was not that it was improperly informal, but there was a tremendous amount of give and take. The guidelines were quite informal. That is partly the age of the students and it was partly the circumstance. We were all in a primitive campus. We were sort of in it together and it made a lot of difference.

St. Julien: One of my next questions was about the early administration of the University. What were the roles of the students, faculty, staff, and administration? I've heard that it was a lot closer than you would probably find and it is still a lot closer than you would find in most universities.

Deer: Yes it is. In the first place, the relationship between students and the faculty is very close in the sense that we recognized that what we are teaching are adults, and when we have problems the students and the faculty tend to work together on an adult level to try to tackle given projects that we had. You just don't get the dividing line between students and faculty that you would normally have. And the other thing has to do with the administration. Invariably, we have been very, very close with the administrators. There just has never been the dividing line between the administrators and the faculty.

St. Julien: So it was very easy to get ahold of an administrator and talk about a problem?

Deer: Oh yes. It's one of these things where that hierarchy . . . It is only very occasionally there. Once a year the dean has to evaluate and put down raises. For the rest of the year, although obviously he has the authority, it is simply a far more equitable situation than I have ever seen in Tampa. That's partly because we are small and as I said that we are all in this together.

St. Julien: How was the power and the responsibility distributed? Were there faculty members doing administration work?

Deer: Yes. The reason I'm laughing about this is that when you are talking about how it is distributed all I can tell you is very casually. There is a dean and _____ has gradually been working as his assistant because an assistant was needed. Allen Blumquist was doing the scheduling for a long time for classes because somebody had to do the dirty work. As part of departmental administration we had what was called coordinators who would do the liaison work between the Tampa department and the faculty here. In Arts and Letters, I think that all of us at one time or another have been a coordinator. That should tell you something about how powerful we feel that the job is or is not. In other words, somebody has got to do it. At this moment Dan Wells is doing it and he has been doing it for quite sometime very successfully. We are such a small group in each area that you just don't get that power situation. You would be more likely to get it in Education than anywhere else, but aside from Education it doesn't work that way very well.

St. Julien: So there really hasn't been any major changes over the years in administration and policy making?

Deer: Oh yes. For one thing the coordinator liaison has become much more formal. In addition to that, the guidelines that govern the relationship between the two campuses have become extremely formal. They have taken on practically legislative force. Yes, there has been a lot of change. When we first started there wasn't anything formal. I was doing the liaison for almost everything and this was an odd situation because when I came over here my husband was the dean of Arts and Letters. I wasn't teaching in Arts and Letters because the state didn't take a real bright view of having a husband set his wife's salary. I understood that. Anyhow, I came over here and this was an odd one where I was working under one budget. Jim Parrish, who was the head of the English department, was working for my husband. The one thing that Jim and I both knew was that we were going to have to settle whatever happened ourselves. We didn't dare let that get home or up into the dean's office. It would have been just a real nasty thing. Somehow or another between us we worked out very cooperative arrangements. I can't think of a time that Jim and I did not just simply sit down and work out whatever it was. It stayed that way until just the last few years. The liaison in Arts and Letters was simply an informal matter where you pick up the phone and we are obligated to teach the same curriculum and to try to maintain the same standards. We have always in essence served on departmental committees. That was not something that was forced on to the English department. That has always been there as part of our function. Until just the last couple of years it has been a situation where we just picked up the phone when we had a problem or they picked up the phone and asked what was happening here and that was the end of it.

St. Julien: Do have an idea of why that has changed in the last couple of years?

Deer: Yes. This is not a nasty situation. The problem is that up until the last couple of years, we have had someone heading the department who has been around for long enough to understand the oddity of the relationship. It is fine. We are part of the department but the department chairman doesn't pay us. See how peculiar that is. In the last couple of years we have had a new chairman and, coincidentally, there were all sorts of things being changed about the relationships and the guidelines between the two campuses. The end result is that it is alot more formal now than it was. I don't believe that this is a reflection of something horrible that has happened. It is just the way it is.

St. Julien: Do you know anything about the USF mission? Have you heard about the mission?

Deer: I think I have written more mission statements than I have ever wanted.

St. Julien: From what I understand it started out as basically one of the first urban universities and also there was the "Accent on Learning." Could you tell us something about the USF mission and also the curriculum?

Deer: I am going to have to pick this up from the time that we came. I did teach in the Basic College when I first came here. What happened was that they conceived of the University as stressing interdisciplinary learning and so general areas were stressed in the Basic College. There was science, the basic English program a basic math program, which was in fact interdisciplinary in nature. There was a Humanities program which encompassed fine arts as well. It is an oddity in a Humanities department to

have it encompass a fine arts contingent. It was that kind of curriculum and the problem about the Basic College was not a problem nearly so much with the curriculum, except in the sense that they came to regard themselves as the guardians of all interdisciplinary learning and the Liberal Arts as the guardians of specialized learning and, of course, people in the Liberal Arts came to the University originally because it was an interdisciplinary university. This was the thing that distinguished it. Everybody around the country knew about USF as an experiment in interdisciplinary education, not only because it was the first university from the ground up in the twentieth century, but also it had that interdisciplinary thrust and so a lot of the people who came in the first place really were dedicated to interdisciplinary thinking. You can't have a college that stands there and says only we will do this and all the rest of you will go and be specialists. That is, I think, a great deal of what happened between Basic College and the upper levels. I did know a great deal about that conflict. It was very difficult. I also suspect that simply as a matter of organization and size, the Basic College could not have continued any longer. In Arts and Letters we had an English department that was paid half in Basic College and half in Arts and Letters. That was true of foreign languages as well. You had competing math departments and competing physics departments. We were better off in Arts and Letters because they weren't competing. People were just hired and they would end up on either a basic college or a liberal arts line depending on which one was taken. So we didn't have competition. When you have competing departments, which is one of the things that was happening, and when you have people who came originally because of the pull of interdisciplinary teaching and then suddenly half of them are told that

they couldn't do this. Then on top of that this tremendous pressure for publication which arrived very quickly. It's harder to get interdisciplinary people to publish. I don't think I am saying that they are inferior when I say that. I think I am saying that they go at things in a different way and so publication for them is not as easy and natural as it is for some other kinds of scholars.

St. Julien: Do you think that the University or the Liberal Arts College has suffered from an emphasis on business?

Deer: Yes.

St. Julien: When you would say that happened?

Deer: That has always been an emphasis on the St. Pete campus, and I think that we have suffered less than the main campus has. That has to do with the personnel over here. Dave Catterson is an extremely well-educated liberal arts man and he was very instrumental on the business work. Also another man, Jean McClung, was a great believer in liberal arts and the end result was that somehow we all got on very comfortably together, and we have always been aware of the problems that the business people had and as a matter of fact when they have had a chance to support us they have. So the kind of thing that you are talking about, yes we do have a problem funding business and the other things. It is not the kind of vitriolic competition that you might find on the main campus where I think many people there have a sense that the money goes to the College of Business and to the Med School and that everybody else simply has to take the leftovers. I don't think that we have that feeling over here, but that is the advantage of being small. We see each other and we know what the

budget problem is close up. We don't get that, "Liberal Arts has suffered." The other place where I think that it has suffered terribly under Cecil Mackey was that he really did drop all of the emphasis on undergraduate education. His idea was to go out and buy a graduate school. There are some areas where you can go out and buy a graduate school. The College of Medicine is one. It's important. You make it new, you have got labs, and people go where the labs are. You cannot buy the tradition and the background that you need in humanities and many areas of social and behavioral science. It has to grow and it must grow from a strong undergraduate program to a strong graduate program. Of course what Cecil Mackey did was to insist that only those who were really involved in research and in graduate level work were to be rewarded. The end result was that I think that he seriously weakened the University. In fact, I don't think that we have entirely recovered. We were so good as an undergraduate institution when he came in and we have never since then been as good as an undergraduate institution.

St. Julien: That is what I would like to ask you about. What were the influences of the different presidents on the University and their impact? From what I understand John Allen made the emphasis on "Accent on Learning."

Deer: Yes he did. He really did believe in a teaching university. I think you also have to add very rapidly that he did not emphasize it instead of research. Many people have that notion. That is simply not true because I saw the way raises were handed out and all the rest of it, and I'm sorry, but there wasn't as much difference between John Allen and his successors as people would like to think. But he did believe very strongly in teaching. What he really did was to honor people for doing anything

in anyone of the three usual areas and doing that very well. He did like the interdisciplinary emphasis. I think he probably was not as active in getting grants and pushing graduate programs as other people might have been. Surely, that "Accent on Learning" and the idea of the interdisciplinary emphasis was from John Allen. He did it very well. Mackey came in and he was really primarily interested in business and in the med school. I think what he had was basically a kind of McNamara philosophy, that you try to quantify as much as possible. He was also the one, at least from my perspective, who created such a gulf between the administrators and the faculty. It took about one or two years after old Cecil came in before we had a union. My husband and I helped to found it. My husband was the second president of the union.

St. Julien: What kind of impact did Dr. Brown have on the University? What has been his emphasis?

Deer: It's harder for me to talk about him in the total University than it is Mackey. I saw more of what Mackey was doing. Of course, everybody is aware of the Medical School. I think that is probably a mixed blessing. What I am more aware of, to tell the truth, is Brown's apparent . . . My sense is that he has been an awful lot more willing to see the regional campuses simply used however it is handy to use that. I don't know whether I am right about that. My feeling is that an awful lot of the legalisms, not only the legalisms . . . Of course, this really started with Reese Smith as acting president. He is the one who came in in the first place and said that we would do the following things legalistically. When Brown came in it seems to me that what he did was to pick up the legalisms, pick up the letter instead of the spirit of the Reese Smith

attempt. We have had increasing legalisms. My sense has been increasingly that he really does not want to be bothered with the campus as an educational entity, but merely as an outpost. I don't know whether I am right or not or whether I am picking up the attitude of lesser administrators. My feeling is that wherever possible, he ignores.

St. Julien: How do you explain the growth?

Deer: You can't help it.

St. Julien: We have Ft. Myers . . .

Deer: That was Cecil Mackey, except of course, the affair of Lakeland that is going to start. That is because there was a speaker of the legislature. There was no way around that one. This was all Cecil Mackey. Brown had nothing to do with that. Those were all done by the time he came.

St. Julien: Do you find it is difficult to get financial support?

Deer: Financial support and, even more than that, encouragement to expand programs. They will expand business where there is terrific demand, not the programs so much as just plain enrollment. The idea of really expanding programs as such--they are very hesitant to do anything like that. I think that is probably where I am sensing this sort of disinterest on the part of the president. There is the sense that it is there and we will use whatever we can. They are really very discouraged about the idea of starting anything new or of using the campuses as really anything particularly unique. For example, when it comes around to television teaching, that is going to come over to the regional campuses. It will not come to

the Tampa campus. You see what I mean. Sorry, but that is the way it is.

St. Julien: Did this University have any experimental programs on this campus?

Deer: Not that I know of. Really the idea was that when we came over we would in so far as possible rely on those programs we had duplicates of in Tampa. We were not particularly to do something new at the beginning and as a matter of fact one of the tests for whether we would have programs or not was how well we could duplicate and maintain the quality of the Tampa programs.

St. Julien: So they didn't want any sort of competition?

Deer: It wasn't a matter of competition. We knew that we had limited resources. To the credit of John Allen and Harris Dean, they did not want to give Pinellas County an inferior group of programs and so whatever we had, had to be good quality. In fact we pulled out one program from Arts and Letters because we couldn't do it properly. We had Mass Communication over here and we couldn't staff it properly. We couldn't get experienced people with the proper academic credentials and it was not going well. We cancelled the program because it was not as good as the Tampa program. It is just that simple. The idea was always that you present what you can that is honest. You don't pull in a third-rate program just to say that we've got it here.

St. Julien: Since this campus has started to expand in the last few years, do you see any plans by the University, in light of what you have just said about the present administration, to expand the different departments?

Deer: No. I would expect that they would do something with the modern media institute across the street. To date I have seen nothing about that of any kind. I would expect that an art/history program would grow up here because of the Dali Museum.

St. Julien: One of the people that we interviewed before said that that was one of the things that the University was suffering from, was the lack of any kind of fine arts program.

Deer: Very definitely so. We have tried, in fact, to encourage it. We have presented ideas for fine arts programs and they have met a great deal of resistance. The reception has been quite negative. I don't anticipate anything like that for a while. I think they really don't want to expand any areas that are not already in existence over here. It does have to do with the idea of competition. Someone should explain to you the relation between the two campuses. Nobody was consulted about the beginning of this campus. I am the charter faculty member. My husband was a dean. He discovered that there was going to be an English program on this campus when I was offered a job teaching in the program. On top of that all of the lines to hire people were taken out of the departments in Tampa, and this was at a time when the University was growing so fast that they couldn't staff their own classes let alone donate them to the St. Pete campus. Now, can you understand how this was suddenly sprung on a bunch of people and why there might have been some very bad feelings? It didn't happen in Arts and Letters because there was a domestic arrangement here. I think somebody needs to explain that really is what happened. Every so often someone will ask why they don't like each other, and all I can ever

do is shake my head and say, "What do you think from the outset people were going to think in Tampa?" If I had been in Tampa I would have been furious. Can you imagine? This is the truth about how the thing got started. When you hear this back and forth . . . I want you to understand that this is how the thing was started. It was an honest attempt with John Allen and Harris Dean, but they could not have done it a worse way. On top of that they made the departments . . . For a long time we didn't earn our keep in terms of the students. You have to establish programs and then the students come. The departments in Tampa were having to absorb all our lack of enrollment and contribute more lines in the bargain. That was terribly hard on them. I was in this position where I could see both sides. I knew we needed it because I could see what the English budget was and the Arts and Letters budget. I knew what it was doing.

St. Julien: So the founding of the St. Pete campus was sort of a haphazard . . .

Deer: Oh very! It was not done with any great thought at all. There was no planning. Les Tuttle liked English, education, and philosophy. So we got all three of those. Business had clout. There was already a science program. I think I have now explained what happened.

St. Julien: What colleges, departments, or programs that have developed since the late '60s do you consider the most important?

Deer: The Medical School. Without any question. I would like to say Mass Communications, but they have simply not lived up to their promise as yet, but I think they might somewhere along the line. Marine Science has become a very flourishing affair. It was awfully small when we came over

here. There has been a terrific graduate program. Of course the English department now gives a Ph.D. That is tremendous growth that has taken place. I'm trying to think. I'm not aware enough of what has been developed in Social and Behavioral Sciences and my feeling is that at least Psychology has had important developments. What I am trying to think is what they are doing that everybody else doesn't do. I'm not locating enough things that are really unique as yet. Again, I think it takes time. It takes awhile for you to get good enough so you can go out and experiment and have quality emerge from the experiment.

St. Julien: Do you think the fact that it was only recently that the reapportionment of the legislature and the voting districts, that this University will have benefitted at all or do we still lack legislators who are loyal . . .

Deer: We lack legislators who are loyal to this University. My son just graduated from Gainesville Law School. I can really see the difference. We also, as a university, have to learn how to handle our alumni better. I watch what kind of treatment my son gets from Gainesville and I know that we don't treat our alumni that way. I think that we need to go out and study how you do that. No, there is no question. Even people who are theoretically dedicated to this particular university have graduated from Gainesville.

St. Julien: Could you tell me something about the quality of life here when it first started, like the housing or the extracurricular activities for the students?

Deer: You asked me about extracurricular stuff and I got hysterical. Of course we did have the swimming pool. Now, that was the one thing we had. At the beginning, you understand, we weren't using the swimming pool. It was occupied by a couple of porpoises for a psychology experiment. The first year they were terrible pets. The kids would go down on class break, and these poor porpoises . . . they died unfortunately over a Christmas vacation. It's too bad because the kids had turned them into pets. I have no idea how they would have ever functioned for an experiment because they would sail over, put up a flipper, and somebody would scratch them. Then, of course, we didn't have any housing except for Herm Bramas who was the business manager. He lived on the second floor and when he moved out I got his bedroom, which was beautifully carpeted, which became my office. Of course this had been an officers' quarters so every room had its own bathroom with it. That was terribly luxurious until the toilets sprang a leak so they had to lock them all up. We couldn't use them anymore. The other thing had to do with the snack bar. I hope people have mentioned that to you because that was absolutely an institution. It was right in the middle of the classrooms. You could not go through to your class without going through the snack bar which meant that the faculty and the students had to see each other. So we all sat around and had coffee in the snack bar.

St. Julien: Is that where the old snack bar was?

Deer: That is where the old snack bar was. Then when we moved out it was too far away to get to. But I have been watching down here (at the new snack bar). I was off this last semester when it opened up, but I have been watching down here and I walk in and I see again that tradition of people

mixing. So I assume . . . You know what I mean about the plumbing then? Have you ever broken your knees on the stalls? They were so small because they were put together for a navy head and when they put on the front door of the stalls they forgot that you had to have knee space for women. That's how it happened.

St. Julien: Were students more politically aware than the faculty? Was there any kind of political activism on this campus during the late '60s?

Deer: No. That's because we had . . . That was interesting as a matter of fact. We had adults. You would be amazed how much time in my classes was spent with these adults trying to figure out what their kids were doing and why. It was one of the most interesting times to teach that I have ever been through because instead of having the kids . . . What you had were kids that were rebellious and their parents' generation in the same classroom. It wasn't volatile nearly so much as just terribly useful for both groups. At one time toward the end of the Vietnam War, I was teaching a course in politics and literature in the twentieth century and I had in my class a World War I veteran, several World War II veterans, some Korean War vets, and Vietnam vets. If you think that that was not volatile. You've got every possible attitude toward warfare that has existed in the twentieth century that was in that classroom. It was simply amazing. We would go after a particular literary work that dealt with war and you had no idea what it was like. It was fascinating.

St. Julien: So it really contributed to the learning process?

Deer: Oh my yes! Nothing that I could have ever said or done would have gotten across to each one of these age groups what the attitudes were that the others were carrying with them. It was just terrific.

St. Julien: I would say that you probably got more of that in St. Petersburg than in Tampa.

Deer: Yes because we had so many more older students. We have always had alot more older students than Tampa has.

St. Julien: So there wasn't really so much political activism as there was interaction among the different generations?

Deer: That's right.

St. Julien: So it may have actually toned down any kind of rebelliousness?

Deer: Yes, I think it probably did. You see, we just didn't have . . . At that time very few of our students were normal college age. There are alot more now, but at that time there were so few.

St. Julien: What about the race relations? Did you have many minority students on this campus?

Deer: No.

St. Julien: It was integrated?

Deer: Oh yes. We just couldn't get our hands on very many. No, we didn't have many black students. That was minor. In fact, if it will give you an idea about the kind black student I ran into, one of the black students is currently competing for a Ph.D. in English. This does not lend itself to

that illiterate black (stereotype) we were talking about, and another one is a reporter on the St. Pete Times. Yes, we did have black students and, no, I cannot tell you exactly what the integration story was because the students that we had were universally so superior that I don't know . . . the problems might have been otherwise.

St. Julien: But there was no problem among the students?

Deer: No.

St. Julien: So the University made an active effort to recruit minority students?

Deer: Yes, but we were just not very successful. You know that one of the black students is a state legislator from Pinellas County now?

St. Julien: Jannerson?

Deer: Yes. He graduated from here. What I am trying to tell you is that this is not where to look for race problems except that we have been very unsuccessful in getting what we think is a proper number of black students. I don't know why.

St. Julien: What about the role of women on the campus? Was there any effort to recruit . . .

Deer: They never had to make an effort. It has to do with the first dean over here, Les Tuttle. I have rarely run into anyone who was so extremely fair about women. That's it. I just never saw any kind of prejudice against women here at all at anytime. So the end result was that nobody ever really had to go out and recruit women. It was just assumed that if you could get hold of a competent woman, of course . . . He cashed in on

faculty wives for a while, although most of them aren't around now, but for a while there were faculty wives teaching over here.

St. Julien: Do you ever recall any problems among women as faculty members getting tenure or promotions?

Deer: Oh yes. Of course.

St. Julien: So where does it come from?

Deer: That comes from Tampa. Tampa is the worst place I have ever worked.

St. Julien: So there were alot of problems?

Deer: Oh yes.

St. Julien: What would you contribute that to? Was it the male attitude or the closing in of the ranks?

Deer: An awful lot of southern universities have this problem. I think that USF is more southern than we realize. That is the only way I can explain this because when we were in the north I did not encounter the kind of problem that I encountered when we were down here. It was bad enough being a woman, but being a faculty wife was a real problem and it continues to be to this day. Not for me because I am tenured and promoted. That is over and done with, but I'm still quite aware that faculty wives are not welcome at the University.

St. Julien: Is there any kind of activism among the women or any kind of organizations?

Deer: Oh yes. The women have done a great deal to help themselves. I must say I will yell, scream, and snort about Cecil Mackey, but on the matter of women he was beyond reproach.

St. Julien: Speaking of the union, you mentioned earlier that you and your husband were active in the union. What could you tell us about the establishment of the union?

Deer: The reason that we began to establish a union was the kind of word that went out was that we were going to be treated essentially . . . The way Mackey defined it, and I no longer remember the kinds of terms that he used, but there was a widespread agreement among the faculty that we were going to be treated like pieceworkers. That in fact this was going to be straight bargaining market economics of the marketplace variety. Since that was so we all felt as a matter of survival we had to unionize. That's what was really involved, the sense that if we did not unionize there was absolutely nothing we could do against administrative power.

St. Julien: How did the faculty and the administration receive unionization?

Deer: The administration had a tizzy fit! Regarding the faculty, I think it just sort of happened. There were a number of us. Arts and Letters was very heavily into this. Social and Behavioral Sciences and surprisingly a great number from the Business College were supportive of this also. As far as Engineering, forget it. To this day I think you can count on the fingers of one hand the union members. The Med School never did unionize at all. It was something that just sort of happened that went across all of the colleges, and the sense was that in the face of an administration that really did not honor collegiality, this was the only thing to do and

so there was never a great struggle about whether there would or would not be a union. There was struggle later on about which union it would be. We all organized and it was pretty funny. If you can imagine a bunch of faculty members sitting around singing old Wobbly songs. It was one of the funniest looking things I've ever seen! It was very funny. The thing that did it more than anything else was the grievances. It was not money. It was the grievance procedure. I was head of the Grievance Committee at the time this happened for the University. What happened was that the state mandated for us a grievance procedure which was so expensive because it was a highly legal procedure and you had to have an attorney. It was so expensive that most faculty members couldn't afford to lodge a grievance. If we couldn't settle it informally, then the hearing was so expensive they couldn't afford it. On top of that the findings of the hearing examiner were merely advisory for the president. So even if she found for the faculty member, which she didn't very often, the president didn't have to pay attention to it and so he fired the guy anyhow.

St. Julien: So he was just an advisor and nothing else?

Deer: That's right. Now you understand. It was the grievance procedure more than anything else that gave us a sense that we were absolutely powerless to do anything to get any redress of grievances. It wasn't money.

St. Julien: What were some of the types of grievances that you can recall?

Deer: They mostly had to do with people who were being fired without what we would consider due process. People who were not given fair warning about changes in standards. That kind of thing. It was surprising how many settlements you could get informally.

St. Julien: What about tenure? Was there any problem with that?

Deer: Oh yes. When you are talking firing, you are talking about someone who doesn't get tenure. I never had to handle a case where a tenured faculty member was dismissed. This all had to do with getting tenure and of course what they got to doing was changing the rules every year for what you had to do to get tenure. That does tend to create a problem. Five years later you have had five different changes of what it's going to take to get tenure. That won't do.

St. Julien: How was the union received on the St. Pete campus and how active is it?

Deer: It's not terribly active over here. I think for a long time I was about the only member of the union over here. But then of course it was such a small faculty. Then Jack Robinson has been very active and also Wing Bridges. I'm not very active in it anymore.

St. Julien: Do you see most of the members being the younger faculty?

Deer: Yes. I think so. They need the most protection. So it makes perfectly good sense.

St. Julien: What has the relationship been between the administration and the union here on this campus?

Deer: It is nonexistent because we relate to Tampa. Wherever union stuff comes up there hasn't ever been any problem of any kind. It is just no problem at all.

St. Julien: What about community relations with the St. Pete campus?

Deer: Absolutely amazing. I've never seen anything like this except in a very small college in North Dakota where we taught. Where the legislative delegation has come in, they have had breakfast with us, they have met with us, they have talked with us about our problems, and they have tried to figure out what could be done to help solve some of the problems. That is amazing to get something that direct. The students have had the same kind of experience. At least as far as the legislature and the community leaders are concerned, it has been very, very close.

St. Julien: So the business community is very active in this?

Deer: I think so. My sense is that the Committee of One Hundred and the St. Pete Progress and alot of things like that are very active.

St. Julien: So you had the support of the St. Pete Times?

Deer: Yes. As I said because I live in Tampa and work in St. Pete I have a base for comparison. The relationship between the St. Pete campus and the community is much closer here than it is in Tampa.

St. Julien: What about the city council or the county?

Deer: The city council has been around. I don't know about the county commission so much, but that probably has to do with accidents of who you run into, who shows up to do something at a given time. I'm not nearly as aware of the county commission as I am of the city council. They have been very helpful.

St. Julien: What about the general community?

Deer: It is hard for me to know because I don't live here. I'm aware of how many retirees I get in my classes.

St. Julien: What about with the programs? I know that we have the lecture series. I've heard that the immediate area is aware of St. Pete Bay campus, but if you look at the larger area or the larger community, they are not as involved as the immediate vicinity.

Deer: I think that is probably true, but I just don't know. That is because I don't live here.

St. Julien: I know about the Johns Committee, but could you give me an idea of your impressions of it and what you heard about it?

Deer: It put a terrible damper on the University. I am terribly aware of this. There was a fellow in English, the one that Charlie Johns really descended on, who incidentally is now a very distinguished scholar in the New York State University System. He is the head of one of the New York State University colleges. This is who Charlie Johns descended upon. And of course what made my husband and I both go into a panic was that he got in trouble for teaching an essay that we booked standard and used on the subject of pornography. It was just absolutely standard. It really put a damper on what people felt that they were free to do and say. We lost not only that guy, but we lost an extremely good philosopher at that time. It wasn't because he was under pressure but because he just felt that he couldn't say what he wanted to say. At one time we had a film contest at USF, in the very late '60s. I was serving as a judge and I was also teaching some film work for Mass Communications and I had promised my

classes that I would use the prize-winning film. It was to be a film for television. Well, they got in somebody to do the judging who had forgotten about the fact that it was suppose to show up on television. She gave the prize to an X-rated film. Fine. I showed it in my class anyhow because it was absolutely relevant to talk about whether this was or was not pornography. It was a real test case to decide where you stand on pornography. Meantime, they showed a little bit of it on television and a judge in St. Pete saw it and complained to the chancellor. The whole thing evolved on me to go and explain to the chancellor why this was not a dirty film. He wanted to see the film and I said it would be alright. I would let him see the film in the condition that he also listened to my two hour lecture that went with it before that film showed up in my class. When the chancellor found out that he was going to have to sit through a two-hour lecture he somewhat lost interest. He realized that the University jumped, that this was a major crisis and they had picked on me. I didn't have anything to do with showing it on television, but they picked on me because I was middle-aged, I had four kids, and was a dean's wife. It was real simple.

St. Julien: Over your years here at the University, in summary, what would you say have been the best trends or some of the worse trends that you have seen develop?

Deer: The best trends have to do with the relationship with students. At least over here now, I'm talking about St. Pete, over here our relationship with the students has been universally strong. Probably the worst things that have developed have had to do with the terrible insecurity that the faculty here feel with the relationship to Tampa. They simply don't know

what will happen to them as far as tenure and promotion and things of that sort. That has been very difficult for the faculty, but it doesn't seem to have washed over with the students at all. So I think that most of us are really very pleased with the feeling that we get when we come in here and actually go do our work in the classrooms. We really like the atmosphere.

St. Julien: What would you say are some of the worse trends?

Deer: The worst trends have to do with freezing into terrible legalities. The relationship between the branch campuses and the main campus. This is sufficiently rigid that some day it is going to choke the living daylights out of the branch campuses.

St. Julien: Thank you very much for talking with us today.