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Andrew Huse (AH): Okay, well, today is September 8th, 2004. My name is Andrew Huse, program assistant for the Florida Studies Center. We’re continuing a series of interviews with USF students, faculty, staff, and alumni, in order to commemorate 50 years of university history. Today, I’m interviewing Spike Gillespie. She was here as a student and also wrote for the campus newspaper, the *Oracle*, and has gone onto a successful career in writing. Hi, Spike.

Jacqueline Gillespie (SG): Hello, how are you?

AH: Oh, fine. Thanks for being with us today. I guess we should share right out in the open that we should share something. We were both canned at the *Oracle*.

JG: That’s right. Congratulations, it’s a badge of honor.

AH: I will wear as such. First, let’s just talk about, how did you get involved in USF? When did you apply? When did you arrive?

JG: Let’s bear in mind that I haven’t been there in 20 years. I know it’s bad to lean over hindsight’s lens, but the way that I remember the story is this. I’ve actually documented this in my first book. I had a very, very, very strict upbringing. My father, in particular, was very harsh. As far as my parents were concerned, by job was to not go to college. My job was to get married. Well, be a secretary and then get married, and then stay home and have children. And I rebelled against that. One reason I rebelled against it was because they told me that’s what I had to do.

For another thing, even though I came from this very blue-collar background, where a college education was nothing to be proud of, I desperately wanted an education. I really loved academics. And so, even my high school counselor said, “Well, your parents don’t have any money for you to go to school, so you’ll just have to go to the local school and be a teacher or something,” which he apologized for, many years later. Just to give you a feel for what I was up against.

AH: Sure.

JG: And my parents told me there was no money for college; there was no way they were paying for college. Consequently, I started out at this local, nearby state college where I grew up, in South Jersey, but I often spent my summers at the beach. I had spent many summers at the beach in South Jersey, and there was a family that I rented an apartment from. They had three kids. Well, they had six kids; three of them had gone to, or were in the process of attending, USF. And they said to me—I think more, like, one of those drunken, bar things— “Hey, you should come down to USF!” But I took the invitation very seriously because I wanted to get away. And so, I applied, and there was this trembling moment where I had to approach my parents, in particular, my father, and say, “I’ve gone behind your back. I’ve applied to college.”

Sensing that they were going to say, “No, we can’t afford it,” I had also applied for financial aid. I’d done everything. Even though I was legally old enough to take myself away to school, I was under the false belief that I had to obey my parents until I was 21. And so, I was trembling, waiting for this answer, whether or not I was going to be allowed to go to college. I nearly dropped over dead, when—I think it took several days for the verdict to come in—my father said, “Yes, you can go.” And so, really, how I picked Florida was I had a friend who had gone there. Their brother, who I had a huge crush on, used to go there. And I thought, “Well, I could breathe the same air that he breathes.” (both laugh) And I really, really, desperately wanted to get away from my abusive father. And it was a good distance away. Those are, I think, mostly the reasons people pick college, right?

AH: (laughs) Some people.

JG: I’d like to add to that, because I do like to go off on tangents, that the jury is still out on whether I truly, truly believe in fate. But it’s fun and quite easy for me to trace back a trail in my mind, going back to USF and even before that, where I like to sometimes think that was where I was supposed to be when I was supposed to be there. Which sort of segues us to the *Oracle*. But I make fun of USF sometimes. It’s obviously not an Ivy League school, but for all the teasing I do, I got an awful lot out of it. Some good and some bad.

AH: Well, give us an example. When you tease about USF, what do you say?

JG: Well, my very favorite joke to make about USF is that, and you can confirm or deny this for me, in my recollection, somewhere, literally etched in stone on a building, is the motto of USF, which I recall is “With an Accent on Learning.”

AH: Yeah, that wasn’t the official motto, but it was kind of the mantra in the ’60s because we didn’t have football or anything else, so it was like, “Well, all we’ve got is learning, so.”

JG: It just makes me laugh so hard. College “With an Accent on Learning,” as it should be. And my son likes to joke, “Where in the word ‘learning’ is there an accent?” You know? We do have a lot of fun, and some of my classes weren’t that difficult. Another joke I like to make is that—and this is also true; these jokes are all borne of the truth—when I first got to USF, I was a transfer student in the middle of my freshman year. I came a week early for freshman orientation, and, while I was signing up for classes, some helpful students who’d been through the process approached me and said to me—

I remember what I was wearing. It was one of those times that Tampa actually froze. Like, literally, there was ice. But I had just purchased these new, like, OP shorts and, you know, my surfer wardrobe. I was a snowbird, and I remember being in shorts at registration. It was probably 30 degrees out, and someone came up to me and said, “Whatever you do, don’t, do not sign up for classes between ten and two.” I didn’t understand why that was, and the answer was, well, those are prime tanning hours. And that really happened. The truth of the matter is that, now, every year, even as early as April, I honestly don’t even have to step outside the door, my skin just automatically turns tan. It’s something I learned how to do at USF.

AH: Well, one of the national jokes in trade magazines, et cetera, was Coppertone U.

JG: Oh, yes. The University of Sun and Fun.

AH: Yeah, exactly. Tell us a little bit more about your academic experience. You said there were some duds, there were some hits. What worked for you? What didn’t?

JG: Well, I know I keep saying this, and I sound like Ronald Reagan: I don’t recall. But what I do recall is that—this is so funny to me—I don’t ever remember anyone telling me that I had to have a major. Like, I didn’t have strenuous counseling of any sort. I’m not even sure if I had a counselor that I can recall. I just took whatever classes suited my fancy. I mean, I did occasionally think to myself, “Oh, I should take business classes. I’ll do business,” or “I should take psychology classes. I’ll be a psychologist,” but I was really just floundering around.

My senior year, when it was finally presented to me that I would have to declare a major in order to get my piece of paper, I just went back through my transcript, and it turned out that the majority of the classes I had taken were English literature. I had tried taking a few writing classes, but either I was told that my writing—like, in a technical writing class I had, the teacher said I was too creative to be in a technical writing class. In a creative writing class I was in—well, Andy, we’re going to have to really break this down into a lot of different sections—but let’s just say that I’ve been kicked out of more than one class at USF.

AH: Okay.

JG: I’ve had big screaming fights and gone to heads of departments, and I did have a big chip on my shoulder, but there are also some real asshole professors, as far as I’m concerned.

AH: Sure.

JG: Anyway, I did go off on a tangent. Oh, academics. I don’t think I knew that I had to have a major, but I will say that I love my English degree. People joke about English degrees all the time. I think everyone should have an English degree, and I have to say that the professors that I had are so memorable to me. Bearing in mind that I came from not a very good educational background prior to getting there. I think some people will look at the courses at USF, at least when I was there, and say—you know, reading books like *The Great Gatsby* or, I can’t think of other examples.

They might say, “Oh, well, you should’ve done that in high school.” I’m a high school teacher now. I mean, I’m a writer, but I also teach at several different schools, junior high and high school. I do think the standards have risen. I think kids are reading, now, stuff that we used to read in college. That said, even if someone were to criticize the syllabus of one of my English teachers, I can say that every English class I took, every literature class I took, I was introduced with something that was brand new for me. I can still remember my teachers so clearly. Dr. Rubin and Mr. Iorio and Frank Fabry, is he still alive?

AH: I don’t know if he’s still alive. I think he just retired. But I had him for Shakespeare.

JG: Yes, I had him for Shakespeare, and he would stand at the front of the room with a cigarette dangling out of his mouth, just reciting Shakespeare, and that was so exciting to me. I still love Shakespeare. I mean, he really just filled me with love of Shakespeare. Dr. Smith has got to be dead by now.

AH: He's alive and kicking.

JG: You're kidding me?

AH: He has, like, a 300-person class right now, Bible as Literature.

JG: He is? I wish you would personally go—I would love to send him an email. Does he do email?

AH: I don't know.

JG: I have to say, he was—I think I may have had him on my last day, my last hour of my last class at USF. I had a couple of really good last day experiences. I think it was in Frank's class where I sat down, and I did the exam probably in 15 minutes. I was just, like, super manic, hyper to get out of there. I was so excited, and I think it was Frank. I took the paper up, and I put it on his desk, and he looked at me and said something like, "You can't be done."

And I said, "I'm done." And he put an A at the top of the paper without even looking at it. For as many enemies as I had—or, enemy is kind of a big word. For as many professors as I pissed off, there was also this great love affair with a number of professors. I mean that, of course, in the most appropriate sense. I remember my last day, getting in an elevator in the arts and letters building, and Dr. Smith was on the elevator, and he sort of leapt into my arms and told me how much he would miss me because he (laughs) is such a little man.

AH: Yeah, yeah.

JG: I will become sentimental, get choked up at the thought of it, but those were people who really, really encouraged me. Even thinking about it now, it's just dawning on me that those were the ones who encouraged my writing. The most creative writing I got done would be in the papers I did for them. In one of the papers I did for Dr. Smith was, you know, we had to do a research paper. My very last semester, I think I took 22 hours in a 10-week summer course, plus I was supporting my pothead boyfriend by working at U-Slave¹ [U-Save], slicing boiled ham. And so, it was really intense for me.

¹U-Save was a well-known discount grocery store chain with many stores in Tampa. It is now out of business.

I had to cut corners. One corner I cut was I just didn't get around to doing a paper for Dr. Smith. So, at the last minute, rather than do research, I took Dorothy Wordsworth's² journal, and I imagined what would have happened, had it been possible for her to run into Mary Wollstonecraft³ and if they could have thrown back a few glasses of mead and Mary could have convinced Dorothy not to kiss William's ass, what would have happened. Because William Wordsworth stole his sister's writing. And then, I just sort of re-vamped her diary in a very funny way, and he loved it. I think, maybe they let me get away with some stuff, but they embraced my enthusiasm.

AH: Excellent. Well, let's talk about recreation a little bit. What was the scene like, around USEF, at the time? Did you live on campus? Did you live near the campus?

JG: I lived, yes—go ahead. Finish your question. I'm sorry.

AH: No, no. That's pretty much it. I just wanted to set it up.

JG: I started out in the Alpha dormitory. Like I said, I got there a week early. One the back, inside of the dorm door, I did a tribute to Devo⁴ featuring a Devo jumpsuit and stuff. And my roommate arrived back, I think she'd already been living in the room, and I think she was shocked and a little dismayed initially because she was a nice, Florida suburban girl, and I was an aspiring punk-rocker. I moved out of the room with her. She was very nice, but I moved to another floor in Alpha, where I put a nice collage of surfers on the outside of my door, which I got in trouble for, gluing things to my door. I really enjoyed gluing things to my door. And then, after Alpha, believe it or not, I was a resident assistant in Gamma.

AH: Oh, wow.

JG: I was on the first floor, which was very funny because, on the first floor, we had the students who spoke English as a second language; we had all the girls who had disabilities, like, were in wheelchairs and stuff, so they needed it handicap accessible. I had all the closeted, aspiring lesbians, and the dorm mother lived on my floor. I remember our two greatest forms of entertainment were alcoholism and rampant sex. I did really well as an RA, I think. I mean, I didn't change up my bulletin boards and stuff. But, you know, the girls, we had fun. I remember I came back one semester, and I had shaved my head.

²Dorothy Wordsworth (1771 – 1855) was an English author, poet, and diarist. Her brother was prominent Romantic poet William Wordsworth.

³Mary Wollstonecraft (1759 – 1797) was an English writer, philosopher, and women's rights activist.

⁴Devo is a four-member American rock band that formed in 1973. The group was known for performing in iconic canary yellow jumpsuits.

And the parents of the incoming freshman, I think, were—I look back, now, and I can see where they were probably a little terrified of me. But I was nice on the inside. Anyway, I remember Vicky, our dorm mother; I sat down for an evaluation with her at one point. I was just sitting there smiling, waiting to get all my high-flying, check-plus marks for doing a great job as an RA. When we got to the end of the evaluations, she said, “But you need to stop having your boyfriend stay over.” I had this ritual where, in the mornings, I would get up early and all the boyfriends would sneak out of all their girlfriends’ rooms, and I would use the emergency key for the fire door to let out the parade of lovers.

And so, that was it. But as far as the drinking goes, you know, I laugh about it, but unfortunately, I think I was well on my way to something like alcoholism by the time I arrived in South Florida. You have to bear in mind that the drinking age, back in the old days, was younger. And it was probably the company that I kept, but there was no shortage of alcohol on campus, and I did drink myself silly on a very regular basis. And so, I mean, I was laughing about it then, but I’m not laughing about it now because I continued drinking heavily for a long time before, finally, it became necessary for me to quit altogether. Not to be so somber about it, we did have The Empty Keg.

AH: The Empty Keg, yeah.

JG: Oh, I loved the Empty Keg with the wine spritzers. We had comedians come in on Friday afternoons. I was an unofficial member of the office of student programming. I dated a guy who worked there, and I became really good friends with, like, Steve Chinsky(??). Steve, I don’t know if you’ve interviewed him.

AH: No.

JG: He was a sort of notorious head of OSP. Oh my gosh, we had R.E.M.⁵ come and play, back before they were big. We had a lot, there were a lot of good things. One thing I remember because I helped to run it was, on Friday nights and Saturday nights, we had movies at—was it UAL? Is that what it is?

AH: Uh, let me see.

JG: That little building?

AH: Uh, yeah, uh. I should know this.

⁵The band R.E.M., formed in 1980, was a pioneer of the alternative rock genre. The group split up in 2011.

JG: I don't know what the hell it is.

AH: Yes, the university auditorium type of thing?

JG: Something, yeah, like a little place where you can show films. And the creepy guy that I was dating at the time, our job was to go and take money and show films. So I saw a lot of films, and that was a good introduction to film. My funniest memory of that is that, and I'm going to bet that this doesn't happen anymore, but one weekend every year, it was porn weekend on campus. Do you still have porn weekend?

AH: No.

JG: This is true. You can go back in the archives.

AH: Oh, yeah. It used to be more than once a month or whatever. Yeah. It used to be quite often in the '70s.

JG: I really need to write an essay about that. Yeah, so I remember going and collecting the money from all the freshmen who had borrowed the IDs of their sophomore roommates. I would have to stand up at the front at the beginning and say, "No drinking." But I'm pretty sure back in the collection booth, the guy I was dating and I got drunk and had sex right there on the property, I think.

AH: That might still happen.

JG: I don't know if you're really going to want to include this interview in the archives, but I'm just going to answer your questions frankly.

AH: I appreciate that.

JG: You're welcome! So, the second night, we were showing the same porno film, and it was a cold night. I remember we rode our bikes over, and there were these women from the women's studies department, of which I was also a member, and they were protesting. You know, "Porno is bad for women," holding up their signs. And so, I went into the theater. They didn't know that I was there to collect the money. I collected all the money, and since I had already seen the

movie, I just decided to leave. So I left early, and these women began applauding me, not knowing that I was taking the money, but thinking that I had made the smart choice to leave that terrible film. (laughs)

AH: That's great stuff. Well, you know, I think the tradition started in the '70s because the art films of the time and porn were kind of overlapping for a while, like Warhol and, you know, a lot of these other, kind of, avant-folks. I think that's how it got started as, like, a constant thing on campus. At one point, they banned *Deep Throat*—I mean, no, they banned *Reefer Madness*, but you could watch *Deep Throat*.

JG: Really?

AH: Yeah.

JG: Oh, god, I love USF.

AH: Yeah. Let's see here. What about, did you live on campus the whole time?

JG: So then, because I was really interested in continuing to have sex on a regular basis and it wasn't really working out in Gamma, I got a job at the Village. I guess the Village is still there, right?

AH: No, they tore it down. Now, it has Greek housing.

JG: You are kidding me.

AH: Nope, I'm not kidding. I lived in the Village too.

JG: Wait, say it again?

AH: I lived in the Village as well.

JG: You did? When did—? Or what's your, uh—? When did they tear it down?

AH: They tore it down in, I believe it was 2000 or 2001, and then it was just kind of empty for a couple of years before they built the Greek housing there. Now it's just all this housing for Greeks.

JG: So how long have you been at USF?

AH: I arrived in '95, and I got a double BA in English and history, and I got my MA in history, and now I'm going for my master's in library science.

JG: Oh, so you've been there a while. You're not, like, a 20-year-old kid.

AH: No, I'm 31.

JG: Oh, my gosh. You're ancient.

AH: Yeah.

JG: (laughs) So I lived in the Village, and they didn't really have RAs, but you could be on call. Part of the reason I did all that is, you know, I was paying my own way, or I was borrowing money that I would later default on or something like that. You know, I was in charge of my own thing. Whenever I would work for housing, I would get free or discounted housing, and I would get the delicious meal plan.

AH: Yes. We'll get to that later.

JG: And so, that was really helpful. I'm just having intense déjà vu right now. Okay, go ahead. It's gone.

AH: (laughs) Well, so, you stayed at the Village for a while, and that better suited your lifestyle.

JG: It did. I mean, it did and it didn't. I mean, if you examine the situation entirely too closely, like I said, the guy that I was dating was a complete a**hole. And so, when were given an opportunity to spend more time in closer proximity on a much more regular basis, you know, it was horrible.

AH: Yes.

JG: And so, we went ahead and got an apartment together off campus. But, yeah, I was on campus. I'm trying to think when I finally moved off campus. It might've been my senior year. I'm just guessing. And then, I moved into the Gemini house, which was over there. I can't even remember logistically. It's probably not there anymore. But that was sort of like a pre-*Melrose Place*, *Melrose Place*⁶ filled with acid-dropping lesbians at every turn. I've always been attracted to the dramatic lesbian scene, although that's not my personal direction I go. It's just something very exciting about that group of people.

AH: So there was a strong cadre of lesbians on campus at the time, then?

JG: From my perspective, I would have to say yes. But, again, it's the people that you hang out with. And, you know, I think part of the reason I hung out with that group of people is, one of the sisters I told you, who invited me to come down to school, she came out of the closet at some point during our time there in Florida. And, also, I was totally into punk rock and new wave, so we were outsiders, or we were self-perceived outsiders. The fringe likes to hang out with the fringe, right?

And I for some reason feel the need to bring up, the Impotent Sea Snakes⁷ had a really great influence in my life. There's a guy named Brian Cast(??), who is still a bartender down at the Hub. He eventually did attend USF and eventually got a degree, but before he ever attended that, he would come to shows at the Empty Keg, and I met him there. I dated him for about five minutes, but we became very good friends. He was a Tampa resident, so he could take me around to, like, all the cool, like, the real thrift stores. This is before thrift stores were super trendy. He just kind of knew the scene. So that was enjoyable. I went off on a tangent, here. Bring me back.

AH: No, that's okay, actually. We can go off on another tangent. Give us your impressions. Coming from Jersey, what were your impressions of the Tampa area? Especially once you were kind of seeing the layers pulled back by this friend of yours.

JG: Well, oh, it's so hard to answer that question. If I were able to accurately capture for you how completely naïve I was when I got to Florida, you'd think that I was bullshitting you. You just wouldn't believe it. So, for me, first of all, if I came down to Tampa, I couldn't find my way

⁶*Melrose Place* is an American soap opera that aired between 1992 and 1999. The show's seven seasons detail the lives and relationships of several young adults living in a West Hollywood apartment complex called Melrose Place.

⁷The Impotent Sea Snakes were a rock'n'roll band from Tampa who became known for their sexually explicit song lyrics and live performances. Their discography consists of three albums that were released between 1984 and 2005.

around. It was sort of, like, whatever was in front of my face, that was about as far as I could see. I'll give you an example.

When I moved down there, I had to get a job. Before I started working on campus as the drunken shelf-reader in the library, I bought this used bicycle for, like, 25 bucks, and I rode out—where the hell is the Ramada Inn? I don't know, but I used to ride my bicycle to the Ramada Inn and wait my tables. It's such a weird thing that I think of, and I feel like it was pretty far away. I also remember, shortly after I quit, one of the waitresses from the late-night shift was the victim of a serial murderer. I mean, it was a weird, easy set-up. And so, even though I was out in Tampa, I think I was quite often the passenger, rather than the driver. So I need only pay attention to the conversation I'm having with the driver.

AH: Sure.

JG: I'm peeling back the layers, as you put it. I did wind up in some incredibly sleazy, creepy, strange clubs, gay bars. I was a fag hag⁸ as well, and my friend Gary, who recently rediscovered me, he would take me to these places, which, looking back now, it just feels like this absurd dreamscape. I typically have a really good memory, but that was all a blur, probably, in large part due to the amount of alcohol I was consuming. I try to think, how do I remember Tampa? Do I remember fondly or with nostalgia? I barely remember it at all. I don't feel this strong urge to come dashing down there.

AH: Sure. Well, you were contained on the campus much of the time, too.

JG: I did. I don't know how much of my book you read, but after I graduated, I got pregnant, I went back to New Jersey. That was a nightmare. I had a miscarriage. I came back to Tampa. I hooked back up with the wild lesbian community again. By then, they were living in a crack neighborhood on Emily Street, and I was working in Ybor City. Then I got to really explore more of the city. We used to hang out at this club called the Act IV, or was it the Act V? Who knows? A guy named, is it Steve Star, was that his name?

AH: I don't know.

JG: There were so many characters down there who could all be played by Steve Buscemi, you know? (AH laughs) If there's a steamy underworld to be found, I will often stumble into it.

AH: Yes. Tell us, too, how did you come to the name Spike?

⁸"Fag hag" is a slang term used to denote a heterosexual woman who is often in the company of gay men.

JG: That kind of connects to the *Oracle* thing. I want to back up for one second and say that, even though I can stumble into the steamy underside, there was always the other half of me that was getting A's and being a teacher suck-up. It was very strange. So how I got the name Spike was, one summer, when I was back at—my first couple of summers I went back to New Jersey to work, and my friend Darinda's sister had shaved all her hair off, and I just loved it. And so, she took me to see a friend of hers in a hotel room, and he shaved off my hair. I'm trying to think if I got my first punky haircut in Tampa or New Jersey. Well, regardless, I got this punky haircut, sort of this Florence Henderson⁹, mullet-y, scary, spiky kind of a thing.

One day, I was walking across the campus with my friend Dan. And a bunch of frat boys drove by; I guess they thought they were in some sort of parade. Essentially, it was, like, a pick-up truck with a keg in the back and a bunch of drunken frat boys. And they saw me and my haircut, and they began screaming, "Oh, you're the fucking ugliest bitch we ever saw! Fuck you! Look at that haircut!" And they really just ripped into me. Well, one of the guys who lived in my dorm had taken to calling me Spike. So I sent this letter of outrage to the *Oracle*, and I signed it "Jacqueline Spike Gillespie." And so, well, now I'm starting to leak over into the *Oracle* stuff. What happened at that point was, the *Oracle* called and asked me if they could run it as a column. So, you know, when they ran it with the name Spike, the word kind of spread.

AH: Okay. Let's talk about the *Oracle*, then. They offered to run one of your letters as a column.

JG: They did. It was a letter that I wrote. It was basically, like, "Yeah, well, fuck the fucking Sig Eps!" It was, I hope, a little more eloquent than that, but probably not much more eloquent than that. I think the editor who called me, her name was Karen. What was her last name? I remember her fondly. And, you know, Blake Gray, W. Blake Gray was there at the time. But, anyway, she called, and she said, "We really liked this, and we want to run it." Then they ran it and offered me a job. Maybe I pestered them for a job, but I think they offered me a job.

AH: So, at that point, you started Bloody Monday?

JG: Well, I think before Bloody Monday started, I was this cub reporter who was doing, you know, interviewing all the new wave bands. They would come over to my Gamma dorm room with their eyeliner on and their big hair. It was really fun and I loved it because I could flirt with all the new wave band guys. I think the chronology is that, before Bloody Monday came to be, I was sent on this so-called undercover assignment to infiltrate the SunDolls. Bearing in mind, I'm a lot more coordinated now than I used to be. I used to be terribly clumsy. I obviously had this haircut. It wasn't a genuine undercover investigation because, A, the topic was so preposterous,

⁹Florence Henderson (1934 – 2016) was an American singer and actress whose entertainment career spanned 60 years. Her most famous role was Carol Brady on *The Brady Bunch*.

and, B, there's no way that anybody would truly believe that I wanted to be a member of the SunDolls.

AH: Okay.

JG: So I went to the director of the SunDolls, and I was sort of like, "Here's the spiel. I want to write a series about what it's like to get through SunDoll tryouts," and they continued to socially promote me through the process. And so, there was this very, very funny series. I thought it was funny. I mean, it might not be funny, now, to go back and look at it, but there sort of was this Spike fever on campus for the week that the series ran. There were these very silly pictures of me, like, squeezed into the little SunDoll dress but wearing Bermuda shorts underneath, jumping in the air. I remember one time bringing my pompoms to class. I think I did have my pompoms, and Steve Rubin was just, like, shaking his head. Is he gone now?

AH: Uh, he was here recently. I think he just left the English department in the last, I think, couple of years.

JG: Oh, okay. Because I had e-mailed him a couple of times, and then I couldn't find him in the directory. So, I think, after the SunDoll thing, there was like a little cartoon too. Yeah, they drew a little Spike icon. It was very, very, very fun, and it got me a ton of attention, which I loved attention. And then, I think that's what led to Bloody Monday.

AH: Okay. About what year was it? (long pause) Hello?

JG: Oh, here I am. I was just waiting for you to ask your questions, and I was looking lovingly at my dog, Bubbles.

AH: So, yeah, what year did you start at the *Oracle*, then? Around about what time?

JG: Let's see. I graduated from high school in 1982, and I took my first semester in New Jersey. I got to Florida in January of 1983. I'm pretty sure that I cut my hair in the summer of '83, which would mean my letter to the editor went in the fall of 1983, I think. And then, I would say the New Wave band coverage, I'm going to guess, was '84. I would say that led—I'm guessing that Bloody Monday was the fall of '84, maybe, through the fall of '86. Or less.

AH: Yeah, I just wanted to get some kind of signposts there, but I have some citations and stuff.

JG: I couldn't believe you sent me that column that was so—I totally forgot that they allowed me to say those things about them in print.

AH: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. I know. I don't have such a luxury.

JG: No, I'm sorry that you don't.

AH: Yeah, it would've been a lot of fun. I just sent them a private e-mail, so they can savor it in their quiet moments, you know.

JG: That was such a mean e-mail that guy sent you.

AH: Yeah, I thought so too. I thought it was uncalled for.

JG: How old was he?

AH: What's that?

JG: I'm obsessed with people's ages. How old was that guy who sent that e-mail?

AH: I have no idea. I think he's an undergraduate, upperclassman, so he's probably in his early 20s or maybe mid-20s.

JG: He'll have some karma to deal with.

AH: Yeah. Bloody Monday, let's just talk about this for a second. I know you have to get going in a little bit, but it's kind of hard to describe exactly what it is. It's kind of introspective; it's very personal. You know, it's almost more thematic than topical. I don't know. Tell us about, you know, this is kind of the beginning of your writing style, I guess, right?

JG: And you know what? I can't explain it to you, so I get back to that whole thing about not really being sure whether fate is a real thing or not but saying that maybe this is a small proof in that direction. I can't describe for you what Bloody Monday was, and I still can't describe to you what my writing is. I just did a reading last night, and I was sort of like, "Wait. This certainly

isn't literature. It's kind of personal." I was giving a reading with people who have, you know, their master's in writing and stuff like that. I just think it kind of reflects my blue-collar roots. The best way that I can describe what I infuse it with—I don't infuse it with anything on purpose. Let's back up. Let me back up.

AH: Okay.

JG: I, for a long time, had to take care of a kid with autism, my friend Will. He's 16 now. When I'm with Will, Will has a couple of things that really, really resonate for me. One is this intense sense of curiosity, especially about spatial relations. If you take Will into a building, just like everybody else, Will is curious, like, with the layout. But, unlike other people, Will will just go and look because he has autism. Which leads me to part two what Will has that really resonates with me. That is, he lacks a certain filter. I don't know if you've ever hung out with anyone with autism, but it's not like Will is standing there thinking, "Is it the right thing or the wrong thing to blurt out, something that society would consider inappropriate?"

You just don't stop and think it; you just go ahead and blurt it out. And so, with me, with my writing, people say, "Oh, it's so personal," or "Is it hard to write like that?" or "It's so intense." It's not hard at all. It's really, really easy. I mean, I seem to lack that filter. I'm only aware of the filter because I hear other people talk about it all the time. People say, "I could never write like that." And, to me, I just write down what I think I'm supposed to write down. At the risk of sounding a little bit Shirley MacLaine-ish¹⁰ [sic], sorry. I don't feel like I'm channeling some monk from 10,000 years ago, but it's very easy for me to transcribe whatever little nitty-gritty, self-conscious, nervous wreck-y thing that's in my head. It's very easy for me to put it down. And I do that now, and I think I do it pretty well. I think I have a corner on the market, and I think all 10 of my readers will tell you that it's true.

AH: Eleven now.

JG: Yeah, 11, thank you. But the seeds of it were planted, and occasionally—I mean, I really haven't seen those columns in a long time. Like, the one that you sent me, even though it could definitely use some tightening and some editing, I don't think it's that far off from the way I write now. Do you agree?

AH: Yeah, I mean, the style and the tone is definitely very similar. You say that lacking a filter might be a fault, but it's also kind of a gift too. I mean, so many people stuff—

¹⁰Gillespie is alluding to American actress Shirley MacLaine's widely publicized New Age spiritual beliefs; she regularly discusses, and thoroughly documents in her books, topics such as reincarnation theories and alien encounters.

JG: I definitely think it works in my favor, yeah.

AH: Yeah, so many people stuff their memories or the things they think and feel, until they can't even reach them anymore. Then they just end up lashing out in a more inappropriate way than maybe some harsh words.

JG: Absolutely. The only filter I think I might have, now, is that my son, at a certain point, approached me and sort of told me it was time for me to write about him less. And I understand that completely. Although I still definitely write about him. Or I'll approach him and say, like—for example, I informed him recently that I will be writing about the pot brownie incident, whether he liked it or not, because that's my story too. But he sort of made me more aware that you can hurt people or upset people or make people nervous when you write about them.

AH: Absolutely, yeah.

JG: There's other people I write about. I'm just not overly concerned what my family thinks.

AH: Well, yes. That much is obvious.

JG: They certainly didn't consult me.

AH: I mean, just the first couple of lines of your book.

JG: Oh, yeah. And, you know, Simon and Schuster toned those lines down quite a bit. It was more like, "My father touched me twice in my life." And they thought that sounded far too incestuous, and I think they were just worried about losing litigation or something.

AH: I see.

JG: So you were asking me about what it was. I don't know, but I did the same thing for *The Dallas Morning News*¹¹ and similar—to jump ahead—but similar to the *Oracle*, with *The Dallas Morning News*, eventually there was this great falling out and this angry storming away. I don't know what I think. I mean, I can sit around and pull theories out of my ass all day long, but one theory is that, when you write that openly, I think people, at first, are surprised and perhaps shocked. And then, I think, maybe they're a little bit refreshed. Then you're bound to get—all

¹¹*The Dallas Morning News*, founded in 1885, is a daily newspaper serving the Dallas/Fort Worth region of Texas.

this second-person talking, I feel like Jay McInerney¹². Then you're bound to get sort of a following of people who are into it.

Of course, the extreme version of that are the people who want to write and have an ongoing correspondence forever and tell you about every nervous tick in their life. But what happens, I think—again, I'm just guessing here—I think what happens on the side of the editors is—and you know I can't stand most editors—but I think they feel this lack of control, and it incenses them. I had a copy editor say to me, once, "I was trying to tighten your story, but"—even though, if you were to read my writing, it might seem sort of sloppy and shot from the hip and all of that, believe it or not, I actually know how to edit.

And this copy editor said it was so hard for him to pull even one single line out because, somehow, it all did connect back to each other. So, even though it looks like this big, tangled ball of yarn, I hope that there's the sort of thread to connect it. Boy, that's a lot of bad metaphors all in one sentence. So I feel like these editors just have this sense of lack of control, and it incenses them. At *The Dallas Morning News*, for example, my editor turned into such a d*** that I requested another editor, which I received. Two things, she told me, that I won't ever forget.

One is that no other columnist ever received the quantity of mail that I received. I mean, the letters would come pouring in. These weren't just people patting me on the back, saying thanks for this or that. They were telling me, like, about their childbirth, or about when they were raped, or about their abusive husband, or about their dead wife. I mean, people sending me these intense things, which I have learned how to deal with over the years. But I think it really freaks editors out. They regard it as some sort of power that I have that they can't control, and that's when the fights ensue. I mean, I'll never work on staff for anybody. I'm not saying that like a vow, I'm saying that, like, nobody will ever have me.

AH: So, let me see. Talk about some of the reaction to your column. Obviously, people already knew you as a writer before Bloody Monday, but Bloody Monday kind of the culmination of all of these things that were happening before. Do you think that's true?

JG: Oh, yes. It was a culmination of all those things. I think so. Or even not a culmination, it was just like a weekly version of it. It was just like, who knows how it happened? It was like the little miracle that happened. I want to say it sort of polarized people. But, to jump to the end, when I had this big fight with Tony Panacci; and when I quit or was fired or however it went down, I can't even remember; and after I did my melodramatic farewell column saying Leo Stalaker¹³ could go f*** himself; after all that, the letters came pouring in. It was hilarious. I loved it. It

¹²Jay McInerney is an American novelist, editor, and screenplay writer. He has produced such works as *Bright Lights*, *Big City*, and *The Last of the Savages*.

¹³Leo Stalaker was a USF professor of mass communications and longtime faculty advisor of the *Oracle*.

made me really happy. That's not the right, humble thing to say, but it's the truth. It was a little bit of vengeance, and it was quite delightful.

Some of the best letters were, like, this guy Jim—shoot, what was his name? I think he was actually in the fraternity that I originally bashed. Like, some of the frat guys who would write in over the years and just say what a stupid b***** I was and how much they hated me, they would write letters in, saying, “We can't believe she's leaving! How could you do this? We're going to miss her.” Or even years, and years, and years later, like 18 years later, there was a woman named Mary Leininger(??), who was a WMNF¹⁴ deejay, for whatever reason, she decide she hated me. It was sort of like punk-girl competition, and she was more punk than I was.

AH: Ah, yes.

JG: And I remember her coming to me at an Impotent Sea Snakes show, saying, “Oh, you think you're punk now? You think you're punk now?” And she thrived on reading me out of context on the air, talking about what a horrible bitch I was. It was just awful. I don't know why she picked me to, like, beat up on. But, you know, 18 years after the fact, she e-mailed me from where she lives now, Washington DC, to sort of apologize for that. That's an odd thing, I think.

AH: Definitely.

JG: The letters kept coming for 18 years, and I do occasionally still hear from USF. You know, I went off on a tangent. How people responded, oh. People responded strongly. What I was imagining—have you ever seen the movie *The Commitment*?

AH: Yes.

JG: It's a mediocre movie, but you know how he's always imagining. He's in the bathtub, imagining his big interviews.

AH: Yes.

JG: So I was imagining talking to you, and I was going to point out, you know, what is an oracle? An oracle is something—you know, we're looking towards the future, right? And back then, two columns that really caused a big stir; one with an editor, and then the other with the public at large. The first one was about a kid who goes to school, and I think he shoots

¹⁴WMNF is an FM community radio station that services the Tampa Bay area.

everybody. So that was pre-Columbine; if we can just say, I'm a little prescient. And then, the one with the priest. Did you read the one about the priest?

AH: Yes.

JG: Well, that caused such an intense uproar, such an intense uproar. While I'm extremely sorry that so many priests sexually abused so many people who, like, want to kill themselves now, can I just say I told you so? I told you those people were f***ed up. That was nothing I really knew on a great basis, I was just going by gut instinct. Maybe—again, I'm just completely making up this theory—but I guess maybe because I just write straight from my gut, people would respond straight from their gut. It would be a terrible way to conduct a business, or even a romance.

AH: Yeah.

JG: Because somebody would get killed. It was exciting. It was really exciting.

AH: Well, yeah, and after the priest one, which, for the uninitiated out there, just tell us. Encapsulate that piece for us.

JG: A girl goes to confession, and she asks this priest if confession is really, truly confidential. He says yes. And she goes off on this huge tangent about how she hates the Catholic church, and why can't women be priests, is all knowledge stored in the penis, and blah, blah, blah. It was a lot of stuff. I shouldn't say, "Blah, blah, blah." I'm not being dismissive. I'm just saying, it was just this litany of complaints, a lot of which I learned in my women's studies classes. At some point, I know we don't have a lot of time left here, but I do want to say that my women's studies classes at USF changed my life so much. They really set me on this path that I'm still on. Marilyn, whose last name is escaping me right now—Flora Zbar is she still around?

AH: Yes. The name definitely rings a bell. I've seen it in the catalogue.

JG: I would love to e-mail her too. These women had such an influence on me. So, anyway, I write this column where I'm just trashing the Catholic church. I had a lot of obviously personal issues with the Catholic church, and I had a really bad experience in Tampa at a Catholic church. So at the end of the column, the girl says, "Well, I want to confess that I once shot a man because he represented something that really disturbed me," or whatever. And then she pulls out a gun, and she shoots him in the knee caps, which is a very IRA [Irish Republican Army] thing for her to do. And that's it. Who knows why they let the column run, but I'm glad they let the column run.

I think we heard from—this is documented somewhere—like 57 people from around the state caught wind of it and wrote in, and everybody wanted my head on a platter. I remember writing a follow-up column saying that everybody was criticizing me, but no one was praying for me. And I got this letter, I think I might still have it in my collection of letters, from a woman who worked in some department on campus. She just said, she wanted me to know that she had been praying for me. She didn't say it in a condescending or proselytizing way. She said it in a really gentle way that made me want to cry because you knew, from the tone of her letter, that she was deeply religious and, more than that, spiritual, and that she had been wounded by it. Whereas everybody else just sort of took the bait and were proving my point. They were just being idiots.

AH: Yeah. And, you know, it was a time. It reminds me of the mid '60s, where things were getting more polarized among students politically. You can see this drift happening. I think that the Bloody Monday reactions were kind of, not along party lines, per se, but along those tendencies. You know, where the more conservatives are getting completely outraged, and the more—not liberal, but, you know, with a small-case L—are going, “Oh, come on. It's a column.”

JG: You know, and it's funny that you say that because I don't think I was terribly, terribly aware, at the time, of politics or liberals or conservatives or polarizing or any of that stuff. Now, we could do a quick overview and say, “Oh, well, of course this offended that set of people and appealed to this set of people.” But back then—and, god, this is going to either sound corny or it's going to sound self-righteous. I'm sure it's not going to sound the way that I intend it to sound, but I really just was just purely writing from inside of me, onto the paper. You know it wasn't—I don't recall having a political agenda.

I don't recall setting out to cause change. It was just, hey, here's what's on Spike's mind this week. And, of course, some days, it was, hey, Spike has a really bad hangover; she better sit down and bang out a column. And I think being naïve is a blessing and a curse because I didn't realize stuff, like, I could use those columns as a tool to get work later, after college. I just think I thought, after college, it's time to go back to waitressing. I didn't have a teacher or a counselor or a parent saying, “Hey, in the world, there's a process. There's a certain number of steps that many, many people take. You know, we go to high school; we go to college; we have a career arc.” I didn't have that.

AH: Sure.

JG: That played into my education. It played into my column. It played into what happened to me afterwards. I guess the silver lining is, well, you know, I don't know. It's left me sort of eccentric. Or so I've been told. I've been told that I'm eccentric, but I don't know.

AH: Well, you had a wedding ceremony with your career.

JG: I did marry my career. Our first anniversary is coming up next week.

AH: Congratulations.

JG: Why, thank you.

AH: Let me see. God, I was just—okay. Leo. A lot of times, it takes getting burned to really get motivated.

JG: Anger is much better than depression.

AG: In a career, yes. So tell us then about what transpired with Leo Stalnaker, if you'd like.

JG: Oh, Leo. It is a shame that he died because (laughs) I just hope he followed my career. I'm sure he didn't. I'm so vengeful. I'm such a b****. But he shouldn't have—he just—I think that it was really, really irresponsible of him. But then again, I sometimes try to understand that there are people in the world who sort of—to whom I appear sort of like this Tasmanian devil kind of a force that, they either want to control it, or they don't know what to do with it. I hate to give Leo any pity or credit or anything, but I guess there's this possibility that he just didn't know what to do with something like me. But in my fantasy world, where he's being played by Robin Williams, and I'm being played by Julia Roberts, he's taking me in his office, and he's sitting down, and he's shouting me down.

And he's like, "No, you listen! You've got this raw talent! You could do something with it, but you're going to have to let me help you," but that never happened. Leo just wouldn't acknowledge talent. I think, too, and I hate to do this; I hate to take any responsibility, ever—just kidding. But I'm sure there was a lot of transference, where I was so angry with my father at the time—and I've never really stopped being entirely angry with him—but I was so angry that, I mean, I pity the older white man who crossed my path at that age because I would want to do nothing but rage against the machine man.

You know, Leo and I were not a good fit. And I don't even remember working with him that closely. I think that he worked more closely with Amy Walsh, and then with—oh, my gosh, Beth. There was this whole, big scandal, where Blake Gray had been voted in as the new editor, and Leo overruled it and put Beth in charge. And she was such a little, tiny, mousy thing. I shouldn't

judge her by her stature, but it was a reflection of her personality as well. Blake was another one of those people who, you know, was just like considered to be this loose cannon. I get really defensive about that because, I think, people like Blake and me, for as loose cannons as we seem, we both have had a measure of success in our careers. We haven't jumped off of a building. We haven't killed anyone. I guess we just think a little differently. I'm going off on a tangent—

AH: No, no. This is all good.

JG: But what was the original Leo question?

AH: Well, just, what transpired? What, basically, happened? You kind of set the scene.

JG: Okay, well, this priest column came out. All these people wrote in letters. A lot of them were really, really, really angry. It picked up enough steam that the *Tampa Tribune* decided to do a piece about it in their religious section. I think that woman's name was Karen too. I'm just showing off my great memory skills. She interviewed Leo and asked him what he thought about the whole situation, and Leo said that my writing was trash and shouldn't ever be published. Thanks a lot for your support, Leo. I mean, you know, with friends like that or with advisors like that. And so, that did give me anger. I'm still at this point with the crappy boyfriend, who is part of the reason I quit.

It's like, come on. It was sort of, like, this perverse Andy Rooney, Judy Garland thing because it's like, "We'll start our own paper!" And, you know, what that amounted to was, we had this really weird, little word processor. We came up with a two-sided flyer once. It was weird. He would silkscreen peace t-shirts and sell them at the flea market when he wasn't home screaming at me or whatever. So he had this idea that we were going to overtake the *Oracle* with our little two-page flyer. So I had, like, a lot of forces working. I had the Leo factor. I had the Tony Panaccio factor. I had the bad boyfriend factor.

All the wrong men, you might say. I had my own self, and I'm sure my drinking probably was—I can't even remember where I was in my drinking at that point. I'm sure that there were all these factors that were contributing towards me becoming enraged with this, "Oh, yeah! I'll show you!" And that's an attitude that has not entirely left me in my life. I think almost all writers feel that, anyway. You know, that sense of competition, or when's the big break going to come through? I sort of think you need to keep that momentum going if you're going to keep writing and not kill yourself.

AH: Yeah, well, it's—

JG: Or get a job, which is, you know, the symbolic equivalent of killing yourself.

AH: Yeah, of death. The stasis. So we picked up on a lot of interesting things, now that we're talking about the writing and the different, you know, you mentioned threads before. You know, of anger, rebelliousness, tendency for drunkenness, all these other things. It seemed to be semi-universal traits of writers, at least here in the West. I don't know. What do you make of that?

JG: Well, it makes me want to semi-pretentiously jump to an interview I read, with Haruki Murakami¹⁵ once. Do you read any of his stuff?

AH: No. What's the name again?

JG: Haruki Murakami. I can't remember how to spell it, but he's the most popular novelist in Japan, and he's got a book called *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*. I think that's the only book of his I've actually read. The book was so beautiful that I actually tracked down the translator and sent fan mail to the translator. It was a life-changing book for me. But in an interview I read with him—I'm pretty fascinated with Japan. I've been to Japan. I have a Japanese exchange student living with me right now, and I like that Eastern stuff. He talks about how, you know, people have a certain perception of writers living this certain type of life. He was talking about his life; it's pretty regimented, you know.

He goes to sleep at a reasonable hour, he gets up, swims, he writes. There's nothing, like, wild and crazy about it. And so, I do think that I could look to the so-called great writers who preceded me; pick any great writer, Hemingway or whatever, who was a drunken, falling down, wife-abusing a**hole, and I could probably point towards them and be like, "Well, they live this lifestyle. It's necessary to chain smoke and drink heavily to be a writer." Of course, that's all changed for me now. I'm super regimented. I'm like my dogs. The more rituals I have, the happier I am. And the more productive I am. And so, I don't know if I'm answering your questions very well.

AH: No, no. I think you have. I mean, in that those stereotypes are just that: they're stereotypes.

JG: Well, and my problem, as a teacher, is that I have these kids. Like I said, I teach at a lot of places, but one place I teach is an alternative high school, where some of the kids have already faced some pretty tough obstacles. Some of them are in recovery. It's like, how can I tell them and make them believe? Or even my own son, who is predisposed to alcoholism, like, desperately predisposed to it, on both sides of the family tree, as far back as you can go. It's like,

¹⁵Haruki Murakami is a bestselling Japanese author whose novels and short stories have been translated into 50 languages. His most celebrated works are *A Wild Sheep Chase*, *Norwegian Wood*, and *The Wind-up Bird*.

how can you just tell someone, “Look. I made these mistakes for you. You don’t need to make these mistakes.” Like, they could just point to me and say, “Well, you did it.” Well, my son is also an artist, he’s a musician.

I mean, he’s only 13, but he plays gigs out and stuff like that. It’s just, like, that’s an even worse set of circumstances to be involved in, in drinking and drugs and all that stuff. You can look at all the great musicians. It’s like, hey, look at Kurt Cobain¹⁶! You can kill yourself, and you’ll be really famous. So, to use a more radical example, it’s like women who’ve had abortions and then suddenly think that other women shouldn’t be allowed to have abortions. It’s like, who am I to try to stop—if I were going to go give a lecture on campus, though, I would say, “You guys, just skip the drinking part or skip whatever and just get to the writing part. Apply yourself. Go out and get good experiences.” But who am I to tell them that, you know what I mean?

AH: Yeah, it’s a difficult, if not impossible, thing to tell someone, right?

JG: It is, it is. I guess, you can just say, “Well, when you bottom out, here are some possible resources for you.” I don’t know. What do you say?

AH: Yeah, sure. Well, what else about USF experiences? Obviously, I would like to talk to you, personally, about everything that happened afterwards, but how do we end—?

JG: But lucky for you, we have a deadline.

AH: What else didn’t we cover? Is there anything that we’ve missed? Any funny stories?

JG: Well, we didn’t talk about when I worked at Saga.

AH: Oh, food service. Oh, boy.

JG: Oh, I had a great job. I worked on the Alpha Gamma side of the street. Wait, weren’t there two cafeterias?

AH: There still are.

¹⁶Kurt Cobain (1967 – 1994) was the vocalist and guitarist of the prominent grunge band Nirvana. His lifelong battles against heroin addiction and depression culminated in his highly publicized suicide in 1994. He remains, today, a venerated and influential icon of rock music.

JG: I mean, I should say, aren't there two?

AH: There probably was, by your time.

JG: Yes. And I worked with Mom and Roberta, and I would go in. I remember, like, if I didn't have a bra on, they would want to send me home. They wanted to take care of me. Or I remember, our manager was this guy—what the hell was his name? I can get a picture of him so clearly in my head, but I can't think of his name. I would be in the back, and I would sing at the top of my lungs, or I would whistle, and he would come back and be like, "If you don't stop singing, I'm going to fire you." Like, just like crazy stuff. It was a crazy place to work in. My job on Sundays was, I made everybody's meal on Sundays in the morning.

So I would be out drinking all night Saturday night, you know, trash can punch or whatever. And I would come in, and I remember one particularly bad experience when the only food I could find in the dorm room was some cold spaghetti sauce and some air-popped popcorn. I remember wolfing that down, and (both laugh) this interview is never going to be presented in public because it's just not painting a very pretty picture. But I remember I would make a batch of scrambled eggs for, like, 100 people, and then I would run to the bathroom and just puke, and then I would run back and make more scrambled eggs. But I think the bigger point I'm trying to make is I'm really responsible, and I didn't call in sick.

AH: Yes, you toughed it out.

JG: Or shelf reading. Like, back in Casa Gallardo's, before they passed a law saying it's not a good idea to serve alcohol in 72-ounce glasses, we would drink like four frozen margaritas. And then I would go with my Walkman¹⁷—that's another thing. See, this is a silly sort of a pop cultural reference, but Walkman had just come out when I got to campus. And I can still remember riding my little Batmobile bike—it was this pink bicycle that a husband was selling after the divorce; it was his wife's bike. I took silver India ink¹⁸ and painted cool punk-rock stuff all over it. I can still remember riding the bike across campus, with my headset on, listening to Elvis Costello. I remember meeting—what was his name? Was it John Brown? What was the president's name?

AH: John Lott Brown, yeah.

¹⁷Walkman is the trademarked name of Sony's line of portable cassette players, the first of which hit US markets in 1979. The term Walkman, however, has universalized to signify any form of portable, personal stereo.

¹⁸India ink is a highly pigmented, water-based, typically black ink used for writing and drawing. It is a popular medium among comic book illustrators.

JG: John Lott Brown, yes. I remember going up to him at some function, and I had on my Elvis Costello, like, “50 million Elvis fans can’t be wrong” t-shirt, and I had on my Chuck Taylors, which I had dyed one pink and one yellow and put tiger stripes on them. I remember going up and, like, chatting with John Lott Brown as a punk rock representative of the school.

AH: Okay.

JG: Just, like, there’s a million silly mem—

End of interview