

KUTSCHE, PAUL, 1927 -
Colorado College Assistant Professor of Sociology and
Anthropology, 1959-1964
Associate Professor of Anthropology, 1964-1970
Professor of Anthropology, 1970-
Professor Emeritus, 1993-

FINLEY:

This is tape recording number R-72 of the Colorado College Archives Oral History Project. I am Judy Finley, interviewing Professor Emeritus Paul Kutsche on January 19th, 1994 at Tutt Library.

Professor Kutsche was born in Grand Rapids, Michigan on January 3, 1927. He received a B.A. from Harvard College in 1949; his M.A. in Anthropology from the University of Michigan in 1955, and his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania in 1961.

Kutsche came to Colorado College in the fall of '59 as an assistant professor of sociology and anthropology. Appointed associate professor in 1964, he has the distinction of being the founder of the newly created anthropology department at that time. He was named professor in 1970, and finally professor emeritus in 1992.

He was married between 1950 and 1984 to Mary Ann Stoller, he is the father of a daughter, Lawanna.

Author of many articles in professional journals, he also co-authored with John Van Ness a book, Peniones. In recent years he has been an active advocate of homosexual rights in Colorado and the country.

Do you mind me calling you Buzz, the nickname I've known you by for many years?

KUTSCHE:

I should be offended if you called me anything else!

FINLEY:

Oh, great! It's delightful that you are willing to tell us about your long career as an anthropology professor at Colorado College. I wanted to start by asking you a

little bit about why you decided to go into academe in the first place. You had some previous experiences, such as working for UPI in London, and so forth, that led me to believe that maybe you didn't choose this career immediately. I'd just like to know how you came about it.

KUTSCHE:

Well, I certainly didn't choose it as an undergraduate. When I was an undergraduate, anthropology at Harvard was regarded as definitely in fer dict. It was a collection of off-color jokes told by Ernest L. Bercoudin, who had a terrible reputation among the undergraduates, and of very esoteric studies done by other people. Studies in which the undergraduates in general had no interest whatsoever.

So I never took so much as a course, or even thought about anthropology when I was an undergraduate. What I did instead was, I had two majors then. The first one was English, and I enjoyed it, but it didn't seem to me it was leading anywhere.

So my undergraduate career was broken into two quite discreet parts, because I was drafted after I had two years of college. And when I came back to Harvard after--well, I came back to Harvard after the Army, where I rose to the dizzy heights of private first class, and was privileged to clean latrines. I never got along with authority very well, which may be the story of my life.

I came back to Harvard via Black Mountain College, where I spent the spring semester of 1947, and I got very interested at Black Mountain in the question of the Russian Revolution.

And so when I came back as a junior in Harvard I switched my major to modern European history, with a concentration in Russian. And I wrote an undergraduate thesis on V.I. Lenin's writings on the land question.

But in a broader sense, I discovered partly with 20-20 hindsight that what I was interested in was my own origins. My family origins are really quite mixed on my father's side, as I have noted in the response to your written questions.

The German immigrants since the middle of the nineteenth century, and on my mother's side, they have been in North America for 300 years, no, 200 years more than that.

And so I was interested in discovering my own and also my nation's origins in Europe, and I was pretty well satisfied by the time I got my bachelor's degree that I had

such information as I wanted, not such information as there was, but I satisfied my own questions.

And the last year and a half that I was working for the United Press in London after I graduated fed that interest further and raised other questions. I can't say specifically how it raised them, but it raised the questions of where the origins of the species were behind European origins, and that's what took me into anthropology.

I guess there were two reasons why I became an anthropologist. That was one--the search for origins, and the other was an interest that I had in a variety that I had spelled out--not spelled out, but had delved into in a variety of ways, and an interest in the relations between the individual and the society and the cultural matrix in which individuals live.

Those two things are what took me into anthropology.

FINLEY:

So you went on then to graduate school, first at the University of Michigan?

KUTSCHE:

I took my freshman courses in anthropology at the University of Michigan.

FINLEY:

Really?

KUTSCHE:

Freshman introduction to physical anthropology was Fred Theme, who later became president of the University of Colorado. And the introduction to cultural was done more casually, and less memorably, really.

I went to the University--well, I guess why I went, why I did various things in my graduate career really aren't of a whole lot of interest to Colorado College, so we don't really need to go there.

FINLEY:

No, but just in passing to say that you got your M.A. at the University of Michigan in 1955, and then I take it you went right on towards your Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania?

KUTSCHE:

Immediately on. Michigan, with the single exception of David Aberle, was not interested at all in any psychological questions. Leslie White, who was chair of the department, said he was interested in them, but he really wasn't, from my point of view.

So I asked Aberle's advice, where I could get my Ph.D., where, what universities catered to my interests in the individual, and the University of Pennsylvania was the best of several alternatives that he suggested.

So I went to Penn to study with Aerie Caldwell, who was one of the leaders of the cultural personality school, and the leader of the use of the Rorschach test.

FINLEY:

Oh, really?

KUTSCHE:

In ethnographic work.

FINLEY:

Now, you used the Rorschach test, didn't you, on some research with the people in Kentucky and the Cherokee Indians?

KUTSCHE:

I sure as hell did. I had something like 50 protocols that I used in my dissertation from Cherokee, plus some that I just collected for the fun of it. And, oh, I don't know, something like 25, a little more perhaps, in Kentucky. And made a statistical comparison between the two.

All that was of interest to Louis T. Benezet.

FINLEY:

Well, this is--

KUTSCHE:

Because as you--did you ever meet him?

FINLEY:

Oh, of course, I was a student at Colorado College when he came here.

KUTSCHE:

Of course you were! What was your class?

FINLEY:

'58.

KUTSCHE:

'58. So you graduated a year before I came.

FINLEY:

That's right.

KUTSCHE:

Benezet, as you know, then, was quite interested in human psychology, and he was thoroughly distressed, as he made known to me--he made no secret of his distress--that the department of psychology at Colorado College was then falling into the iron grip of the Skinnerians.

And he hoped, and I'm sorry to say it was a vain hope, because I did not do what he wanted me to--and I'm sorry I didn't, too. He hoped that I could exert a counter-influence.

FINLEY:

On the Skinnerians.

KUTSCHE:

He said so during the interviews.

FINLEY:

Really? Well, let's back up a minute and find out how you got connected up with the process of interviewing for a job at Colorado College. You were at the University of Pennsylvania?

KUTSCHE:

There's no mystery about that. The market is a national one, and every graduate student who is ready for a job in a particular discipline anywhere in the United States knows all the jobs that are available.

FINLEY:

But the fact that Benezet had been at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania you know, before he came to Colorado College, he was the president of Allegheny College.

KUTSCHE:

I thought he was the president of Knox.

FINLEY:

No. Allegheny. I thought maybe there was some contact there when you were at Penn.

KUTSCHE:

I don't even know where Allegheny College is. No, there's nothing any more interesting about how one learns about jobs than there is about how one learns about the price of stocks on the stock market. It's just information that's available to everybody.

FINLEY:

Right. Did the fact that your wife--you had recently

married, I guess, just about the time you came to Colorado College. Did the fact that she was from Colorado have any influence at all?

KUTSCHE:

I had not quite married, and there is a--the answer to your question is, "No." I had not quite married, and there was an amusing anecdote that goes with that, with the fact that we were engaged.

An anecdote that we learned only after we got here. I got a telegram from Louis T. Benezet, saying that he would be in New York on such-and-such a day, I having made my application to CC as well as to whatever else was going at the moment.

Benezet's telegram said that on a certain date he would be at the University Club in New York and that he would be pleased if I would come up for an interview and then said, you know, pay my fare up and back to New York and so on, and I would have dinner with him at the University Club.

And I responded in a telegram that said I would be happy to do so, and that I would be accompanied by my fiancee, Mary Ann Stoller. And so the two of us were there. I'm not sure that I knew at that time that she had also applied for the job. I think I did.

FINLEY:

Oh, she also applied?

KUTSCHE:

Well, sure. She and I were at the same point in our, we were both cultural anthropologists, and we had the same university universe of jobs to apply for.

So I guess--why did I ask her to come along? I asked her to come along because I wanted her judgement and also because she knew Colorado and also because if we were going to Colorado to live, she had as many interesting questions to ask as I did.

Well, the joke is one that Benezet told when he got back and it was told in a letter he sent to Van Shaw, the chairman of the department, saying that he was recommending that I be hired. And should I say since he was president that he had decided to hire me?

FINLEY:

[laugh] Right.

KUTSCHE:

He said that this--I don't remember his exact words, but that this applicant was apparently a clever enough manipulator to cull out the opposition by deciding to marry it!

And in his letter of appointment, he spoke, and I do remember his exact words--he spoke of the delightful bonus of Mary Ann's coming along.

And I think that phrase has a nice, anachronistic echo now in the 1990's.

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed.

KUTSCHE:

Because in retrospect it clearly says, "Hot damn! We're getting something for nothing!" In those days, it was simply a courtly gesture.

FINLEY:

When you came to Colorado College, then, in the--

KUTSCHE:

Wait a minute. Before I got here, I should say that--

FINLEY:

Oh, go ahead.

KUTSCHE:

That as befits any department chairman worth his salt, Van Shaw was not at all delighted at being pre-empted. He didn't get the visit on campus; he never got to interview me; he didn't get the competitive visits, nor the opportunity to see what a fairly broad segment of the community thought about this or any other candidate.

Louis T. Benezet, as you probably recall, was quite arrogant. And ruthless. I liken him sometimes to Kimmel Attaturk. Both of them--and several others we could add if we really put our minds to it--were eager and very effective in reforming institutions, but the means they chose to do it, or perhaps the only means they could do it within the time frame that was available to them, the means were pretty strenuous.

And as you probably know, Louis T. had almost no friends on campus. Nobody liked him, but everybody respected him enormously.

FINLEY:

Well, he certainly increased the size of the faculty rapidly, and also I guess the fact that--

KUTSCHE:

If you don't mind my saying so, he improved the quality of the faculty, too.

FINLEY:

Indeed he did; he really did. And I think the fact that Van Shaw didn't have a chance to interview you is not unusual, because even--

KUTSCHE:

I didn't know that.

FINLEY:

Most of the people I've interviewed who came during that period had similar experiences to yours.

KUTSCHE:

Really?

FINLEY:

It was kind of an informal, either a long distance phone call or interview, it was not what you would call a formal hiring process that we have now.

KUTSCHE:

I don't know that I have a lot to say about Louis T., so if I could add one more little--

FINLEY:

All right.

KUTSCHE:

Anecdote at this point.

FINLEY:

All right, do, and then we'll go back to--

KUTSCHE:

Maybe we won't have a whole lot more to say about it.

Not more than a year or two after I arrived, I was appointed to the whatever-it-was-called, the committee on student life, or something like that. And I looked into what its duties were, and found that they were, that this was a disciplinary committee, and I called on Louis T.

Now why I called on him, and not on the dean, I no longer remember, but I called on him. Because I think perhaps he had intervened to appoint me to it.

And I said to him, "I don't think I can conscientiously serve on this committee, because the duties that I see in the formal statement are duties that I don't think belong properly with the faculty. I think they belong with deans, and I think my--I would rather serve in a capacity that has more to do with the academic life of the college."

I probably didn't state it that diplomatically as a matter of fact--as you probably know, diplomacy has never been one of my long suits.

And Louis T. said, and I remember this word for word, "About what I would expect from a Harvard man!" [laugh]

FINLEY:
[laugh]

KUTSCHE:
And I was so flabbergasted I didn't have a response until much too late to use it. My response probably would have been that I had some prejudices about Dartmouth men, too, but that I would try to rise above them! [laugh]

FINLEY:
[laugh]

KUTSCHE:
Jack Bailey and I were close friends when he was on the faculty, the tape recorder probably doesn't know that Jack Bailey taught religion at Colorado College.

FINLEY:
No, I never heard of Jack Bailey.

KUTSCHE:
You're kidding!

FINLEY:
Never have. How long was he here?

KUTSCHE:
He and I came in 1959, we were both Harvard men. We had gone to quite different graduate schools, and he was in the religion department, and he became the principal person in the religion department after Harry Booth was fired. Both he and Harry Booth were here at the same time.

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

And I told Jack Bailey about the president's remark about Harvard men, and then he said, "Good grief! We've got a shyster lawyer for a president!" [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh] Well.

KUTSCHE:

Jack Bailey would have had a very large impact on Colorado College, but after he had been here three, perhaps four years, he went to--see, you and David were in graduate school then?

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, so he accepted a teaching post for two years in Kenya, and came back not to Colorado College, but to the University of Michigan, where he served until he died a few years ago.

FINLEY:

Well, that's interesting.

KUTSCHE:

You'll run into him before you're done with this.

FINLEY:

Okay, very good.

Well, I want to come back to your arrival at Colorado College. You said Van Shaw really hadn't had a chance to meet you, or interview you, and I know that at that time, you were really under his leadership, because the department was still Sociology and Anthropology.

KUTSCHE:

Well, it became Sociology; it had Anthropology tied back onto it.

FINLEY:

When you arrived; but it was still a single department. Now, tell me about your arrival and your impressions of Van Shaw.

KUTSCHE:

You want to know whether he took it out on me? [laugh]

FINLEY:

I just want to know what the whole mood of the situation was at that time.

KUTSCHE:

Van, as you would expect, was hospitality and graciousness itself. He never made me pay--in fact, it was years before I learned that he was not pleased to have been upstaged by this activity.

He had--one of the early things he told me was that getting an anthropologist was a very important piece of his campaign for his department.

And this was the third time that he had been permitted to advertise, and the first two times he had, the job had been eliminated before he ever got very far along on the process.

He was growing a little shriller with the administration at the time, and finally, so he said to me, he told Benezet that either the college should go through with it, or stop playing games.

And it was good my good or bad fortune as the case may be, and the college's good or bad fortune that when I was the leading candidate that the college did make good.

And I might add, by the way, that--I'll get back to Van Shaw, who had a great influence on my career. But I want to add in this context that--I'm blocking on his name, the name of the librarian at that time.

FINLEY:

Ellsworth Mason.

KUTSCHE:

Ellsworth Mason, thank you. Ellsworth, who was one of the most honest, energetic and skillful intellectuals I've ever known, I just thought, I did and do have enormous admiration for him, and not too many people of my generation on the faculty liked him very much.

As a matter of fact, the older generation liked him less. I think my generation appreciated his qualities better.

Ellsworth went to the president and said, "You realize,

or you had better realize that if you choose to establish a new discipline, you have got to support that discipline with library acquisitions."

And so he got a commitment from the college to spend a certain number of thousands of dollars--I don't remember the figure.

And, and he wrote to me shortly after--almost immediately after I was appointed and said, he didn't ask, he told me, that he directed me to send him a list of--I think he put it, the "four or five journals in anthropology that you cannot get along without, and a list of the basic monograph holdings that we must have in order to teach it."

FINLEY:

Great.

KUTSCHE:

It was, indeed. I didn't realize at the time how rare this was, almost unheard of in the United States, to do that. And do you remember him well, Judy?

FINLEY:

I do.

KUTSCHE:

Cocky little bastard--I loved him for it. [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

Because he was never unpleasant about it. There was a kind of a look at me, how I'm parading sort of thing about it, but it was very pleasant.

So I sent him a list of four journals we couldn't get along without: The American Anthropologist, American Antiquity, The Journal of Physical Anthropology, and to tell you the honest truth, I'm blocking on the fourth one--I can't remember now which of several journals it was.

And I got the most wonderful smug, short letter in response to that part of my request, in which Ellsworth Mason said, "Delighted to tell you we have complete runs of three of them, and I'm hot on the trail of the fourth!"

And indeed, by the time I got here, we had complete runs of the four journals that I had told him were.

FINLEY:

Great. Well, now, when you got here, Buzz, was George Mills already teaching at CC?

KUTSCHE:
Yes.

FINLEY:
Did he sort of fill in teaching anthropology courses?

KUTSCHE:
No, no. We had no anthropology courses.

FINLEY:
Oh, no. No courses before you got there?

KUTSCHE:
Well, that's not quite true. It's almost true, but not quite. I was the first anthropologist on the faculty.

FINLEY:
I knew that.

KUTSCHE:
The man who ran the museum, whose daughter--

FINLEY:
Postlethwaite, Billy Postlethwaite.

KUTSCHE:
He had taught a course or two. I saw his lecture notes, his course notes later and they were very neat and very orderly. But that's all.

I was the first professional in the discipline who had come. George had taught, before I got here, a course or two in, a section or two in freedom and authority.

FINLEY:
Oh, that's right.

KUTSCHE:
After I arrived and we wanted to offer a little more than one person could of anthropology, George agreed to switch from freedom and authority to anthropology and taught a course that should have had a national reputation.

It was one of the most exciting courses I've ever sat in on, and his special interest in the pervasive influence and culture over the private lives, private and public lives of human beings.

And he was very Socratic in his technique and he posed just endless questions, and answered very few of them!
[laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

He had no intention of answering them! His intention was to pose them. I think some of what he had to say went over the heads of some of the undergraduates because you see we weren't able to give undergraduates a great backing, a great background in anthropology, but they were just marvelously stimulating courses.

And I only wish George had stayed at Colorado College longer, because I was learning such a great deal from him; Mary Ann was learning a great deal from him, and he and she did a joint paper on arguing its relation to other aspects of culture for some professional meeting or another, and they, I'm sorry to say, never published it. But George did other publications.

FINLEY:

Was he the head of the Fine Arts Center at the time?

KUTSCHE:

No, he was associate director of the Fine Arts Center and director of the Taylor Museum.

FINLEY:

Taylor Museum, that's right.

KUTSCHE:

And as you probably know, he left town because, and I'll use his words, "Colorado Springs was not big enough for a Tutt and somebody who had rejected a Tutt."

FINLEY:

He had been married to Dodo Tutt.

KUTSCHE:

He had just divorced Dodo, whose proper name was not Dorothy, as I recall, but I've forgotten what it was. But they had just divorced, and it was George who took the initiative, and her family were not the least bit amused.

Except, of course, for that marvelous, marvelous woman, Vesta, who was a close friend of George's. Did you know that Vesta Tutt used to be an archeologist?

FINLEY:

Yes, I had known that, and I presume that you somehow got to know her immediately after you arrived through George, yes, and you always had a great fondness for Vesta, I know

that.

KUTSCHE:

I still have a great fondness for Vesta, she's very much alive in my--and I'm still trying to, I haven't done anything recently, but I'm still trying to get Marshall Cain commissioned to do an oil portrait of her that will sit in Tutt Library.

FINLEY:

That would be very nice.

KUTSCHE:

I want to take that up again. I didn't finish with--is there more you want to know?

FINLEY:

Well, no, go ahead, no, really, I was just--

KUTSCHE:

Because I didn't finish much about Van Shaw.

FINLEY:

About Van Shaw. No, I was just trying to get in my mind clearly about who was teaching when you first arrived and what your relationships were. So go back to Van.

KUTSCHE:

Van--I'll tell you. This, I think, is very important to anthropology at Colorado College. Why Van was so eager to have an anthropologist on the faculty.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

He got, if I know--I was about to say he got a Ph.D. in it, but that's incorrect. He got his Ph.D. at the University of Missouri.

By the way, is he set? Good. I'm very pleased. I hope he really opened up. Good.

He had worked at Northwestern with Melville Herskovitch and some others. Herskovitch, as people listening to this tape may not know, was a leader of my profession, a cultural anthropologist who studied at Columbia with France Boaz and was the leading authority on blacks in North America.

And then, with Herskovitch, who was then the big man in anthropology at Northwestern and perhaps with some others, taught a section of a joint introduction to the social

sciences that Hershkovitch and others had pioneered.

And so Van got a very vivid sense of anthropology's relation to the other social sciences, and he wanted anthropology here.

And he was exceedingly supportive. The department at that time consisted--golly, if there are others, I apologize to them for forgetting them, but I only remember Van Shaw and Ruth Carter, Harvey Carter's wife, and Alvin Boderman. Van was enormously supportive; Ruth was reasonably supportive; and Alvin Boderman was terribly threatened and very hostile.

And I think I'm sorry to say that Al and I have had a relation of hostility for 34 years.

FINLEY:

Really, really?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. At that time, in terms of ideas, he was in favor of applied social science, and I in favor of pure social science. Our positions flipped after a few years, but we were still at loggerheads.

For the last 20 years, we've had absolutely nothing to do with each other, so we haven't been at loggerheads on much of anything.

And I think I want to be sure that I say here that I was on some committee or another that had the, that before which came, before it came to the college as a whole, the idea of the symposium.

And it was Alvin Broderman who brought it to us, and I was very enthusiastic about it then, and continued to be, and I think that's his enormous contribution to the college.

FINLEY:

Yes, it is, indeed.

KUTSCHE:

It's a huge contribution.

FINLEY:

Buzz, we're just about to turn this tape.

(tape turned over)

--continuing my interview with Professor Emeritus Paul Kutsche, on January 19, 1994.

You were describing your colleagues in the Sociology

and Anthropology department when you first arrived at Colorado College. By 1963, after you had been here for four years, I noticed that Dean Worner, at the time just before he became president, announced that there would be a separate anthropology department and so forth, and you were going to be the chair of the department and so forth.

I'd sort of like to know how that came about, and why the two departments separated.

KUTSCHE:

Well, this is that story. On the strength of George Mills' teaching--I guess it was just one course a semester--we established first a concentration in anthropology within sociology, and then I think it was while George was still with us, the best I recollect, a separate major, still within the department, an entirely separate major.

But then when George left, we filled in rather frantically with one course that Mary Ann Stoller taught. Actually, it wasn't so much that she taught a course for us as that the dean was then--are you sure that it was Lloyd Worner as dean who announced us? Because my recollection is that Dean Currin was the one who was involved in that, that Kenneth Currin.

At any rate, yes, I know it was Currin, because many of the decisions were made in terms of the budget, and Currin put budget over almost anything else. With one conspicuous exception that I'll get to.

At any rate, Mary Ann kind of filled in for George Mills by the college paying the tuition for anthro majors to take a course of hers out at Cragmor where she was then teaching.

And that was obviously only a stop-gap. And we became a separate department when the enrollment in anthropology supported a petition for a second full-time anthropologist.

Now my recollection says this was '64, not '63.

FINLEY:

Okay. I was reading some documents yesterday, and there was an announcement by Dean Worner that there would be a department of anthropology.

KUTSCHE:

Well, my guess is it didn't happen.

FINLEY:

It probably didn't happen for another year.

KUTSCHE:

Immediately. No.

FINLEY:

That's right. By that time, he was president, and Currin was dean.

KUTSCHE:

Well. The divorce came about as follows, with the background I've just given you.

Van Shaw said to me--I can't remember if this was formal enough to make a memo of it, or whether he just, whether this was really conversation. He said, "I'm delighted that there is enough enrollment to support a second anthropologist," and he said, "You are the anthropologist, and although I am sympathetic to the field, I am not an anthropologist, and therefore the decision as to which part of the discipline you want to add should be, has to be yours and not mine." Or he said, "It will be yours and not mine."

It didn't have to be, of course, it could have been his.

"But," said he, and I really think this was a memo, because it's engraved so firmly in my mind.

He said, "If what you choose to add is an archeologist or a physical anthropologist, then I want you to get out of my department, because the image of sociology is confused in the popular mind enough without confusing it still further with trowels and calipers."

And that's exactly the way he put it--with trowels and calipers. [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

And I responded to Van--yes, now I know it was an exchange of memos.

I responded to Van that his offer was exceedingly generous, and it was trowels and calipers precisely which I wanted to add, because they were exactly the parts of the discipline that I knew least about, and I wanted to complement rather than reinforce my own competence.

So that is how the divorce happened. And I knew then, and I've known since, countless stories about sometimes and

sometimes the unpleasant non-breakup of anthro departments, and this is by far the most amicable divorce I've ever heard of in my life.

FINLEY:

Well, anthropology was at the time a pretty young field in many colleges. I mean, there weren't departments of anthropology as a matter of course, were there?

KUTSCHE:

Yes and no.

FINLEY:

Wasn't CC just following a sort of a trend toward more specialized--

KUTSCHE:

Yes and no.

Actually it's not as young as we all had thought, but it hadn't spread very widely. The University of Pennsylvania had anthropology since, oh, I don't know, the 1870's or '80's. Harvard had had it since well back into the nineteenth century. It hadn't spread widely.

Beloit, however, already had, among our own schools, already had one of the most distinguished anthropology departments in the country, for large or small schools. And Grinnell, I think, already had anthropology, although I'm not sure about that.

The other ACM colleges, or what later became ACM probably didn't have much. Maybe some didn't have any.

FINLEY:

Right. Well, when you separated out and became your own department, and hired your--

KUTSCHE:

That was Michael Nowak.

FINLEY:

--the trowels and calipers man.

KUTSCHE:

He was, by the way, both trowel and calipers.

FINLEY:

[laugh] That was Michael Nowak. Now, he came in the fall of 1965?

KUTSCHE:
1965, that's correct.

FINLEY:

That was your first, sort of appointment? Tell me a little bit about his arrival and how you decided on courses, and how your relationship was worked out in terms of the departmental structure over the years.

KUTSCHE:

I'll tell you some of it. Some of it's going in the other tape. [laugh]

Mike was particularly welcome, because his doctoral dissertation was in archeology; a good deal of his field experience was in archeology; but he had also worked with the organ primate center.

And thus knew a good deal of physical anthropology, and as you perhaps know, he still teaches a two-block field course in primatology, because the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo still has an outstanding collection.

When he arrived, it had a much better collection of primate. They had a lot of new world monkeys, most of which later died off and were not replaced--a very outstanding collection.

I think, well, we drew up the list of his courses perfectly straight-forwardly. They were all the parts of anthropology that I didn't know anything about.

And, or rather those two parts--I won't say I didn't know anything about physical. I taught and continued to teach a section of introductory physical, and I think I did it competently up until the time that Michael Hoffman arrived.

And Michael was number one, so thoroughly grounded in biological anthropology; as you know, he had a medical degree before he had his graduate degree in anthropology.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

And was so fresh in his knowledge, and rather proprietary about it, too, that the rest of us just ceased to do anything with physical at that point.

I've always been a little sad about that, because I haven't kept up with physical, and up to that point I was. Not up to snuff, of course, but enough to teach the introductory course.

FINLEY:

Right, right.

KUTSCHE:

So my--no, I simply took that part of the field. There's something about Ken Curran that comes in here.

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

That relates directly to Mike Nowak that--by and large, Ken and I didn't see eye-to-eye on much of anything, and we even had an altercation or two, but I don't know that I want to go into our altercations other than to say that it seemed to me that--his bottom line was always the financial bottom line, and not the intellectual bottom line.

FINLEY:

He was an economist. [laugh]

KUTSCHE:

I don't think that he--he was more a bookkeeper than an economist in my view, but then I've already said more than I intended in that direction.

Michael Nowak, as you may recall, at Christmas vacation after his first semester here, was in an auto accident which nearly killed him.

FINLEY:

That was right after he came.

KUTSCHE:

It was after his first semester.

FINLEY:

His first semester.

KUTSCHE:

Now I can't remember whether in those days the first semester went over a little or not. I don't think it did. I think he had finished his first semester.

FINLEY:

I didn't realize that accident was that early in his career.

KUTSCHE:

It was that early. He was in a coma for--oh, at least two weeks. He barely survived, and he was not able to return

to campus until the fall of 1966.

And Kenneth Curran, as dean of the college, decided to continue him on at full salary while he was not here.

And what Ken said about it was, I believe, in a memo to me. What he said about it was statesmanlike; he said, "If we can't be one of the highest-paying employers, we should at least be one of the best employers."

And of course, that isn't bottom-line bookkeeping at all.

FINLEY:

No.

KUTSCHE:

But that's pretty noble humanity. I mentioned this circumstance to a couple of the faculty at the University of Oregon, from which Mike Nowak had come, and they were just almost speechless, and they were so impressed with the way CC treated faculty.

And I think I could venture to say that Colorado College got, that its reputation among graduate schools improved at that point, so it was a very good investment.

FINLEY:

Indeed, indeed.

KUTSCHE:

That Curran made.

FINLEY:

Well, it's terribly hard to come back from an accident like that, and I know you will want to have more, maybe, to say about that elsewhere. But did Michael have--

KUTSCHE:

No, I won't have more to say about the accident.

FINLEY:

Well, I'm just wondering if Michael, how much difficulty he had, say just early after that accident, in the late sixties--

KUTSCHE:

A great deal, of course.

FINLEY:

--in his teaching, and so forth.

KUTSCHE:

A great deal, yes. He had difficulty speaking for quite a while afterward, and as I think Don Shearn was on the faculty already at that time, or shortly after, and Shearn, who knows a great deal about the brain and its function, pointed out, brain damage does not regenerate.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

So what Mike had to do was to train other parts of his brain to take over the functions of the parts that had been destroyed.

FINLEY:

To re-learn, essentially. Yes. That's very tough, when you're a professor.

KUTSCHE:

What Mike managed to do, little by little, was to--and I didn't appreciate this until perhaps the last five or six years, was to carve out for himself an idiosyncratic niche that nobody else could fill.

It involved competence in archeology, competence in primatology, and once Mike Hoffman came, he ceased teaching introductory physical also.

And it also involved a very personal approach to teaching, to his relation to his students, and to his sense of the place of poetry in teaching students. He writes poetry--I don't know that he has ever published any of it, but he posts some of it on his door. And it's very lyrical, very lyrical indeed.

His students have told me, actually for the almost 30 years he's been here, and more and more, in recent years, have told me that the experience of being with Mike Nowak in a field, in his field course, the archeology field school in Baca County, in southeastern Colorado, that that was the most--that that made the strongest impression on them of anything they had done in Colorado College.

And I knew this from alumni who were out five and ten years, looking back, and when things fade and take their place in relation to each other.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

These impacts are not measured in terms of preparation for graduate school, although Mike does that very effectively. They're measured in these intangibles that an undergraduate liberal arts college tries to--that are so important to us.

FINLEY:

Yes, well, you've put your finger on it. I think you really have.

Let me move on here, a little bit, from Mike Nowak to some of your other, more temporary--

KUTSCHE:

Incidentally, I don't think I have more to say about Mike Nowak on this tape. I will have on the other tape.

FINLEY:

All right; that's fine. Some of your other, more short-lived colleagues that came and went in the early seventies.

KUTSCHE:

Well, you surely don't expect me to say anything about Shirley Hill-Witt on this tape?

FINLEY:

Well, she came in 1972, and you know, she was here for a few years.

KUTSCHE:

I think on this tape the only thing I want to say is that it was a total disaster.

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

That while she was at Colorado College, the number of anthropology majors dropped to 50 percent of what it had been; that students ran away from the discipline in droves, both as majors and as casual students in the department.

What else do I want to say about her on this tape? I have plenty to say on the other tape--

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

But it's actually, it's not so much about her, as the

ways the college did and did not cope.

So if I have strong criticisms, it's not really quite so much about her, she did what she did.

FINLEY:

Was there some pressure at the time to hire, shall we say a minority faculty person?

KUTSCHE:

Okay, that I can put on this tape. There was brutal pressure, and I'm ashamed to say that I was not politician enough--I've never been an effective politician. I was not politician enough to work it to my advantage.

The pressure was brought to me by the dean of the college, who at that time was George Drake, who was generally thought of as a great figure at Colorado College.

I think he was destructive at Colorado College; I think he did no good and a good deal of harm at CC.

I don't know that I want to go into that too much here.

FINLEY:

No, but illustrate what you mean in the Shirley Hill-Witt case.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, I will; I will. George Drake was responding to one of the Civil Rights Act; I forget which one. I had been making a case--I was, my first term as chair of the department lasted nine years, so I was still in it. I had been making the case as strongly as I could every year for a third full-time member of the department.

Finally, George, after--I don't know, the third or the fourth year I made the case, he said, "Well, you can--I'll authorize it, on condition that you find a minority person."

I then sent out the usual advertisements and got almost no minority. There simply were not very many minorities in anthropology.

Sociology attracts--still does attract--more minorities than anthropology does. It's changing somewhat, but it hadn't at that time.

And I recall going back to George when I had, among others, an application from possibly the brightest young man in anthropology, who was teaching then at Yale, who said he wanted to leave Yale because you couldn't raise sheep on your lawn of a house in New Haven! [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

And who later told me that--jobs were very tight at this time. He later told me that for a period of about two years he had no, when he was at Yale, that he had no possibilities of moving anywhere except an offer from Harvard.

And he said, "You can't graze your sheep at Cambridge, either."

This young man's name was Gary Witherspoon; he was married to a Navajo woman. And I took Gary Witherspoon's application to George Drake, and said, "George, how serious are you about saying we must have a minority person?"

And George--and I showed him Gary's application, and I said, "Are you so serious that we may not consider this gentleman?"

And George said, "Yes, I am that serious."

Gary Witherspoon's response was very, was really quite amusing. I was thoroughly disgusted, and I did not guild any lilies in writing to anybody at that time. And I wrote to Gary, and I told him flatly what the situation was, and said we couldn't consider him.

And he responded, "Apparently you are interested in hiring my wife, not me." His wife was a Navajo. "Unfortunately," said he, "I have credentials in anthropology and she does not."

We did hire him for one block later, and he was a brilliant piece of work, but we were not able to consider him.

FINLEY:

So you hired Shirley instead. [laugh]

[pause]

Maybe that's all we need to say on that.

KUTSCHE:

I'm asking myself what, how much do I want to say here, as opposed to what I say there. Well, it'll all be used in the same place.

I think just to remind myself I will mention that I ruined Colorado College's good reputation among graduate schools by the good reputation that Kenneth Curran had

established, by getting in my desperation really quite blunt
in my telephone calls.

And after a while, there were very few more letters; there were telephone calls from me to chairs of graduate departments. And told them that we could consider a minority, but we couldn't consider anybody else.

And I was told by some chairs of departments that I was violating the Civil Rights Act, which in point of fact, I realized I was, later on. And by some of them, who simply said that was immoral.

And I sent a memo to George Drake after all this was over and I said, "You and I have conspired to violate the letter of the Civil Rights Act. Shall we go arm-in-arm to the Feds and give ourselves up for prosecution?"

George did not respond to that! [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh] Very interesting. That's a very interesting story.

KUTSCHE:

It was a bad passage in Colorado College's history. In that context, by the way, I've had lots of arguments and some fights with Lloyd Worner, but after the Shirley Hill-Witt fiasco was done, Worner, as president, said--and I don't mean he had just made up his mind.

I think he had just then articulated his position on this. He said, "Our obligation is not to hire minorities. It's to make sure that minorities get into the applicant pool."

And that seems to me to have been the statement of a statesman, and he did put his money where his mouth was after that.

FINLEY:

Yes, to bring in--

KUTSCHE:

George was much more a politician, and I think never a statesman, in my opinion, and he was looking, as I see it, he was looking to see how we would look to the Civil Rights Commission. I think Lloyd Worner was looking to see how the college could best serve its students.

FINLEY:

Right. Right. Which is a more important, and loftier goal by far.

KUTSCHE:

I'll have lots more to say about George and the other two, but.

FINLEY:

All right. Well, now I want to--I'm looking at these lists of various people who were in the anthropology department, some of them very minor, but a very major factor in the department has been Mary Ann Stoller.

I know that she taught at UCCS for several years and then finally was a lecturer at Colorado College after 1969, and in 1974 was adjunct assistant professor.

KUTSCHE:

That's right.

FINLEY:

Now can you tell me about her, I mean--obviously, you were married to her.

KUTSCHE:

How that camel got its nose into the tent? [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh] How that camel got its nose into the tent! I'm very curious.

KUTSCHE:

Well, I'm glad you asked it in just that way. And it's an interesting--it says a lot about how the college has changed its attitude toward part-timers, by the way.

She was what they call, and I don't know whether we use that term or not, honorarium faculty at--

FINLEY:

UCCS?

KUTSCHE:

Well, at that time we didn't even call it UCCS, it was the University of Colorado's extension.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

We usually referred to it just--actually, she taught for them before it moved out to Cragmor. They were in a house down close to the high school.

FINLEY:

Yes, Weber Street.

KUTSCHE:

Van Shaw got her that job. He was a friend of Don King, who was the administrator of the University of Colorado here, and he called Don and said, "We have this highly qualified person coming without a job; have you got anything for her?"

And he had something for her, and she was very successful there, and as a matter of fact, had several Ph.D.'s to her credit. People who were already about to retire from the service or something like that took courses from her and then went on to graduate school after they got out of the service.

Her first work for CC I've already mentioned.

FINLEY:

Yes, yes.

KUTSCHE:

When our students were permitted to take, well, had, were required as a matter of fact, if they were majors, to take a course of hers.

And then she, I ascertained from some dean or another that the college did not feel that the fact that we were married made it impossible for her to teach here. So we offered her, at some point, I don't remember just when, an honorarium position. And so she taught one course a semester, and then she taught two.

The reason she moved from UCCS to CC, by the way, was that we paid more.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

But she said it was much duller here! [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

It was! You know, we're much more selective. I was really quite indignant when I heard her say that this was a dull job.

She said, "Because my students are so much more interesting there. They've had a little of life, and they can discuss it."

FINLEY:
Right.

KUTSCHE:
Of course, after all, that's one thing that anthropologists do. She said, "Your students have never done anything, and they have nothing to say!"

FINLEY:
Interesting.

KUTSCHE:
I think that was a just comment.

FINLEY:
I've heard that from other sources, from other departments, too, about CC students.

KUTSCHE:
I expect. You know, I once, while she was still at UCCS, I gave a guest lecture for her, I think she was pregnant and indisposed that evening.

And it was property as a social institution, and Mary Ann said that her students, almost all of whom were over the age of 40, commented to her when she came back to teach. She said, "That guest lecturer has been teaching undergraduates quite steadily, hasn't he?"

And she said, "Yes."

And they said, "We thought so, because he didn't take for granted that we knew anything." [laugh]

FINLEY:
[laugh] Interesting, interesting. Well, so she started sort of building up her number of courses?

KUTSCHE:
One course led to a second course a semester, and she became adjunct when CC created that status.

FINLEY:
It was a new--

KUTSCHE:
I think she was one of the first adjuncts. I won't swear to that, but I think so. And then, it was when we could--it was 1979 that she became full-time, and I'm trying to remember what if anything that had to do with Shirley Hill-Witt's departure. The timing doesn't suggest it had

nothing to do with it.

FINLEY:

I don't know.

KUTSCHE:

Well, anyway, we needed another full-time faculty member, and President Worner agreed that we did, and the AAUP, whom I consulted at that point because of the--not because of the nepotism possibility, because I believe AAUP had already decided that nepotism, the rules against nepotism were really anti-feminist. And of course, as you know, they're very strongly anti-feminist.

It was rather because we were proposing to hire her without a search, competition. And AAUP said in that case, and has said more recently, also, by the way, in relation to my campaign to get Laura Watkins hired full-time, that when a faculty member is well-known, and has been on campus for some years, that competition is not necessary.

FINLEY:

Ah! Okay.

KUTSCHE:

I'm very pleased that they said that.

FINLEY:

Well, I have one question, and I hope we don't run out of tape before you answer it. I had heard a story that George Drake for some reason didn't know you were married to Mary Ann Stoller, and--

KUTSCHE:

You heard right.

FINLEY:

--that somehow when she was hired, it was the only time he ever lost his cool!

KUTSCHE:

[laugh] I don't know about losing his cool!

FINLEY:

And cussed in the office. I've heard this story, and I wondered--

KUTSCHE:

Not in my presence.

FINLEY:

Not in your presence, but that he really blew up and thought he had been--the camel had really gotten its nose

into the tent.

KUTSCHE:

No, no. We have to shift the metaphor then. He thought he'd been snookered by me. I think I can tell that succinctly. I'll try.

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

I recommended to him that Mary Ann Stoller be hired full-time, and he, it was an interview I had with him in the office. If he blew up and swore, it was after I left. I said, he then said, "You didn't tell me she was your wife."

And I said, "I presumed that everybody on campus knew that she was my wife. She's been my wife since I arrived."

He indicated that he thought he had been had. And apparently when I left, he then is when he must have--I never heard this before, Judy. You're telling me something brand new!

I thought then and I think now that if he didn't know enough about his faculty to know who was married to whom, it wasn't my problem; that was his! [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh] Well, very interesting.

Well, let's turn this over again, so we don't run out of tape.

KUTSCHE:

I thought that he had already been a guest in my home at that time--perhaps not, perhaps it was later that he was a guest in my home.

No! By God! He had been a guest in my home!

FINLEY:

Well, I guess--

KUTSCHE:

So if he didn't know that Mary Ann Stoller was Mrs. Paul Kutsche, that was his problem!

FINLEY:

This is one of those legendary stories that gets passed down from dean to dean.

KUTSCHE:

It's not incorrect. It's not incorrect.

FINLEY:

[laugh] Okay.

(Tape two, side one)

This is side one of tape two of oral history tape number R-72 of the Colorado College Archives project. I am Judy Finley, interviewing Buzz, Professor Buzz Kutsche of Colorado College.

We were talking about the hiring of your wife, Mary Ann, and perhaps we'll go back a little more to that later in terms of her contribution to the department. But there was another name that popped up in what I was doing yesterday, which was a little research on the department.

This was the name of a person, Dr. Judith Sherick, who was appointed assistant professor of anthropology in 1975. Can you tell me about her?

KUTSCHE:

She would then have been Shirley Hill-Witt's replacement. She had another name, and I've forgotten what it was, and I think Sherick was her husband's name and that while she was here, she decided to go back to her maiden name, and I'm sorry to say that I don't remember what it was.

Judith was a student of Sherwood L. Washburn, which within the circle of physical anthropology means that she was among the elite of people who were doing very creative thinking about primatology. I'm ashamed to confess that I don't remember which species of monkeys was her baby.

But she came with the tacit challenge of restoring physical anthropology to a position of respectability and to a position of acceptance among students. She was exceedingly generous; she was brilliant, and the students said she was a very good teacher.

I'd better define the term "generous," by the way. It's a very important one to me. A student or a faculty member who is generous, in my view, is one who lends, who shares time and energy and knowledge without stint.

A student who is generous, in addition, is one of those who thinks that the success of a class is partly the students' responsibility and not wholly the faculty's.

Judy was, she was a marvelous human being and a very, very good scholar. She was doing very well indeed and she had been here only a few months when--she had been here a

very few months--it's funny that I remember her so well.

FINLEY:

It was in the fall of '75.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, it was in the fall of '75. I was teaching a CC block course in El Paso when I learned that she had committed suicide.

I went from El Paso directly to the American Anthropological Association meeting in San Francisco, and I consulted with as many of her teachers and colleagues as I knew there, and not a one had a clue why she did this.

Everybody knew that she and her ex-husband had had very rocky relations, and as one of them put it, he knew all about that, but he said she had got over that.

And she was, you know, he said, "If she was going to commit suicide, it should have been five years ago, and not now."

It was a bitter loss to the department, and set us back badly, and it leads me--and I don't know that there's anything else I can offer about her that relates to the department, but it does lead me to one of the many nice--not really nice things, but many reasons I have for being extremely grateful to Beatrice Medicine, who has taught on and off for us, I think invariably on a one-block basis.

She happened to be teaching at CC at that time, that very block. Mary Ann Stoller had not yet--I don't think Mary Ann was teaching that block, and of course, she wasn't full-time yet.

Bea was there, and I heard when I got back to Colorado College it was Bea who kept the department together and saved it from real disaster at the time of Judy's suicide.

FINLEY:

Well, that was in '75, and you hired Michael Hoffman in 1977 so he must have sort of been the replacement for that position in physical anthropology.

KUTSCHE:

There was somebody else in between Judy Sherick and Mike, and I can't remember what his name was. We were not authorized--now, I'm not sure of the following. I think we were not quite--oh, I know why.

We were not authorized to offer a full-time tenure-track job until Mike Hoffman came. So Judy Sherick and the

gentleman who replaced her for a year, the next year, were both officially just one-year, and the reason was that Shirley Hill-Witt had not officially left the college.

She was officially on leave, with the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, and the reason that the college would not fire Shirley Hill-Witt was, as I see it, that Lloyd Worner was so afraid of a lawsuit from her.

She was--it was not unlikely she might have brought suit. He was so afraid of a lawsuit that he didn't dare just tell her she was terminated.

FINLEY:

Right, right. Well, there must have been a fair amount of turmoil in your department.

KUTSCHE:

I've already said there was! [laugh]

FINLEY:

I noticed in the ads for the hiring of Mike Hoffman there were all these candidates brought in, in the spring of '77. And the ads invariably said, you know, "So-and-so candidate for the chairmanship of anthropology will be on campus such-and-such a date."

Were they thinking of bringing in a chair from the outside? Was that?

KUTSCHE:

They said that a candidate for the chair?

FINLEY:

For the chairmanship of anthropology. There were three or four notices like this that came out when the candidates were being interviewed.

KUTSCHE:

It seems to me I would know about this. It doesn't ring a bell at all.

FINLEY:

I wondered if there was some--and obviously when Hoffman came in, he was not named chair, and I just wondered.

KUTSCHE:

He was not a candidate for being chair.

FINLEY:

No. I just wondered why the ads all said that, in the

spring of '77.

KUTSCHE:

Well, maybe I have, for psychological reasons, bought something. I can't remember what it was.

FINLEY:

Well, I don't know. I know that Mary Ann was serving as chair in 1977, I presume in the fall.

KUTSCHE:

How could she? She wasn't hired full-time until 1979.

FINLEY:

Well, I have, it shows her as chair of the department in the catalog that year.

KUTSCHE:

Oh! You know what? I was probably on sabbatical leave.

FINLEY:

Could be. Could be.

KUTSCHE:

So she was acting chair.

FINLEY:

That's probably it.

KUTSCHE:

When she was hired in '79, I recall, she was--well, I've already mentioned that she was hired. President Worner said then that it looked reasonable to him to do, and one of his reasons for saying "Okay" was that she was finally finishing a doctoral dissertation.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

She didn't get her Ph.D. until 1979, and she was hired immediately after she finished it. Yes, Mary Ann must have been acting chair.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

I'm not challenging the accuracy of what you've just said, and I expect I didn't want to remember this, and so--

FINLEY:

Well, I was surprised to find this, and I thought you might enlighten me, but if you don't remember, it's probably not important.

KUTSCHE:

I obviously should--it's not important?

FINLEY:

Well, it may be important, but I just remember--

KUTSCHE:

Quite the opposite--it's probably so important that I'm blocking it.

FINLEY:

Why Hoffman, then who came in was not chair when it was supposedly candidate for chair? They must have been thinking of bringing in a chair from outside.

KUTSCHE:

May be. May be.

FINLEY:

I'm trying to think who was dean at the time.

KUTSCHE:

Why wasn't Michael Nowak a candidate for chair?

FINLEY:

Well, he had been chair--

KUTSCHE:

Oh, he had already been chair.

FINLEY:

At times during the seventies. Yes, Nowak had served as chair for a while in the seventies.

KUTSCHE:

I see. Well, then, he wasn't up for chair.

FINLEY:

Well, that could be it; I don't know.

KUTSCHE:

It may have been at my request; that I said, "I'm tired of being chair; Mary Ann can't be more than acting chair; Michael Nowak has been chair and doesn't want to be chair again until, you know, eventually, and so we should bring in somebody as chair."

FINLEY:

That could well be.

KUTSCHE:

But it's funny that I can't be authoritative about that.

FINLEY:

Well, anyway, before we get away from sort of your department colleagues, and I'd like to move away from that in a moment, but one last sort of description, about Michael Hoffman. Now he's a forensic man as well as a physical anthropologist--

KUTSCHE:

No, no. Not as well as. That's a specialty within.

FINLEY:

Well, that's a specialty within.

KUTSCHE:

That is a specialty within.

FINLEY:

But I mean he does a lot of consulting, identifying skulls and so forth.

KUTSCHE:

That's correct.

FINLEY:

Could you just characterize Michael a little bit for posterity, for people who might not have known him personally?

KUTSCHE:

I didn't realize that you were cross-indexing like this.

FINLEY:

Well, you know, what people might want to know about Michael Hoffman.

KUTSCHE:

That--well, I'm asking myself, what do people want to know about Michael Hoffman that Michael Hoffman can't say much better than anybody else.

I think I can say this: That when he was hired, that he soared way above the competition so that there was really no question whatever.

We had two candidates, two or three candidates from the University of Colorado, where he got his Ph.D. and I put the chairman of the department at Boulder, whom I had known since 1952, because we both took introductory physical anthropology together at the University of Michigan. I put him on the spot, and I said, "You've got several candidates, and therefore you're obligated to rate them."

And he said, "All right." He said, "We don't usually want to do this, but I would rate Michael Hoffman up here and the other two candidates more or less together way down there."

Mike was--the University of Colorado had a particularly good reputation in training physical anthropologists. There is not brilliant work done in physical anthropology at Boulder except by Alice Brews in genetics, but the training of physical anthropologists at Boulder was, and for all I know still is, as good as any in the country.

Mike then, as I have already indicated, took over everything that we did in physical anthropology except primatology which Mike Nowak retained.

What else would you like to know?

FINLEY:

Well, anything else that comes to mind; otherwise, we'll move on.

KUTSCHE:

I think we should move on. Let Mike describe himself.

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

Eventually.

FINLEY:

Eventually, right. I want to move now, if you don't mind, from the anthropology department to sort of a broader focus on Colorado College, and your impressions of student attitudes over the years, a little bit about what the Block Plan did to students.

KUTSCHE:

Of course. Before we get to that, let me in a broader context speak about my perception of the reception that anthropology got at Colorado College.

FINLEY:

Okay. Perception of the reception?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. My perception is that everybody in the social science division, which of course is where it mattered most, was playing only one kind of game and that was zero some game. I met within the division of social sciences with the exception of Van Shaw, with the very conspicuous exception of Van Shaw, I met resistance constantly.

Every new course that I proposed was opposed. Every time I proposed that an anthropology course be put into the category of social science courses that would meet all college requirements I was opposed.

I remember for instance, in a divisional meeting an altercation with Paul Bernard. The late, unlamented Paul Bernard [laugh]. Not late, either, for that matter.

When I proposed that I guess introductory cultural meet the same all-college requirement that you know, western civ did and so forth. I shouldn't say that western civ did the distribution requirement that other courses did.

He said, "Why do you argue that that course should meet such a requirement?"

And I, for once in my life bit my tongue and didn't give him the hot retort that I think his insolent question deserved. I simply told my colleagues why it should, and they passed it.

But it was--every time I added somebody in anthropology there was objection from, I think most conspicuously the department of history, but to some extent other departments.

And of course, once sociology and anthropology split, and once Van Shaw was no longer chair, there was intense rivalry between the two departments for extra staff.

And I said that--I didn't finish a story that I want to finish. I hinted that I was not a clever politician when George Drake said, "You must hire a minority."

That year or the next year sociology wanted an extra person, and was faced with the same point of view from Dean Drake.

And they, much cleverer than I, said, "Well, what we really need is X and there aren't any minorities there, so yes, we'll hire a minority if you let us hire two people."

And they did. So they got the jump on me, and between

that and the Shirley Hill-Witt disaster anthropology is now definitely smaller than sociology, even though the students were at that time responding, except for Shirley Hill-Witt, responding more positively to anthropology than they were to sociology.

And then sociology, which hired Juan Antonia Chaveria as its first minority person, got rid of him after a year or two because he really didn't fit in, from their point of view. But they kept the slot, and filled it with a non-minority, so they were ever so much more clever than I.

I have never felt, and still don't feel to this day that anthropology is, I think it's still resented in the division of social science.

FINLEY:

Really?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. History and political science have been more actively resentful than other parts of the social science division. Sociology for the special reasons that I mentioned, but not for others.

It's been an uphill battle all the way, and I think to some extent still is. That, I think, is about all I--our reception in the department of biology has been splendid.

Are you aware, by the way, that the biology department, I don't think they ever proposed it to the dean, because they came to me first and the department opposed it. The department of biology proposed a joint appointment for Michael Hoffman.

FINLEY:

Really?

KUTSCHE:

Mike was neutral; anthropology opposed it because we felt that then the dean, whoever the dean might be would say, "Well, then half of his teaching will be in biology, and you will get snuffed a little bit."

But biology has been very supportive, and off and on, philosophy has been, and sometimes some other parts of the humanities division have been, depending on particular issues.

Then we have people, very influential politicians like Doug Fox, who, have you ever heard him speak of his career in

anthropology?

FINLEY:

No.

KUTSCHE:

Did you know that he was a graduate student in anthropology?

FINLEY:

No, I didn't know that.

KUTSCHE:

He said, "I was going to be an anthropologist until I got the higher call!" [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

[laugh] And always laughs when he says that. He and Carl Gamer, for instance, understand extremely well what anthropology is all about.

FINLEY:

Right, right. How did you get along, by the way, with the music department, because you often had ethnomusicologists teaching courses in anthropology?

KUTSCHE:

That was their idea, not ours. Particularly it was Steve What's-his-last-name?

FINLEY:

Scott?

KUTSCHE:

Steve Scott's idea, yes. It was his campaign to get an ethnomusicologist. We got along beautifully; we were of course delighted.

FINLEY:

Interesting courses, yes, very interesting.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, and they have been--they always consulted us very fully in hiring, we've been part of the hiring process for every ethnomusicologist, and we've always got along with the music department very well anyway.

Now, you had other questions?

FINLEY:

Yes. I wanted to move on to your perceptions of the campus in a broader sense. As an anthropologist, you're observing the cultural scene of the Colorado College campus.

KUTSCHE:

A little too close to it to do very good ethnography on it, though.

FINLEY:

But can you describe your sort of general overview of changes in student attitudes and behavior over the years? Maybe a little bit about any influence you see of the Block Plan on this sort of thing.

KUTSCHE:

Okay. You know the famous remark that one of the Marx brothers made--I can't remember which one--any club that would admit me, I don't want to be a member of. [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

We heard that from CC students when I first arrived. I think naively, that is to say I don't think they were consciously quoting the Marx brothers. Which one was it? Harpo? Groucho? Whichever.

But I recall members of, oh, one young man who came from an aristocratic family that happened to live in Denver, but their aristocracy came from farther East, who didn't regard himself as good enough to get into a decent college.

This was way back in 1959 or so. And who had contempt for Colorado College. He was a student of mine, and I asked him one way or another over the course of a semester why he was so contemptuous because CC had even then some few good faculty.

And he said, "Because they admitted me."

There were lots of people who without saying it in so many words as he did, felt that this couldn't be a good school, because they themselves tried to get into the good schools and failed and they did get into CC.

We were still--well, you know this, Judy, because you were a student here at the time. We were still overcoming the reputation of a country club.

FINLEY:

Right. Certainly in the late fifties and early sixties. I think Benezet changed some of that.

KUTSCHE:

I recall raising the question--I had heard this about CC; I had heard of CC before I came here, and before I applied. And that's what I had heard. And I asked Benezet point-blank at that supper at the University Club, "What about the country club reputation of CC?"

And he said, "Well, you know, reputations last longer than realities, and one of my missions is to change that."

And I think he did. But of course the reputation kept on a long, long time after the reality.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

I think that the students, that the calibre of students, their preparation and their eagerness has improved fairly steadily, and that oh, within the last ten years, the rate of increase in the quality of students has improved.

And I am well aware that some of my colleagues complain bitterly that students write less well and so forth than they used to, and I don't find that to be true.

You may or may not be aware that writing is very dear to my heart.

FINLEY:

Yes, I know that, because you write very well, and the way you phrase things--

KUTSCHE:

Well, not so much whether I myself write well, but I think that this is by far the most important thing that a liberal arts college does is to teach students to write clearly.

And that the next most important thing is to learn how to learn. I know this is all the cant of a liberal arts college, but I endorse it thoroughly.

And I don't find that our new students write badly. Oh, they write loosely, and sometimes they don't understand grammatical rules terribly well, but they can be worked with at least as well as people of the fifties and sixties.

We had a lot of mediocrity among the student body back then. Truculent mediocrity. A kind of--I don't mean everybody felt this way among the student body, by any means, but there were an awful lot, a much higher proportion than who said, "I'm doing as well as I care to. Get off my back."

FINLEY:

Right. Right.

KUTSCHE:

I don't hear that at all any more.

FINLEY:

Well, besides the academic ability of students and your thoughts on the general improvement from that sort of truculent mediocrity, I noticed that as far back as 1966, you wrote an article in the Tiger, called "What you live in and who lives with you."

KUTSCHE:

Oh, that. Yes, I remember that article.

FINLEY:

Which was a plea for more diversity in the student body, and that's pretty early. I mean, that's an early trend.

KUTSCHE:

I thought that article was a plea for dormitories which would promote intellectual activity.

FINLEY:

That must have been part of it, but I think you were also saying that we were such a homogeneous student body that we needed more minorities. And that was very early for somebody to be saying that.

KUTSCHE:

Bill Hochman and I agree on practically nothing, but I think we finally came around to agree on this, and we've even had a chuckle or two about it.

Yes, I was on the minority bandwagon early. Dick Wood and I were allies in this respect, and quite conscious and enthusiastic allies.

And Bill Hochman said at that time, and I suppose we're talking early sixties now, he said, "I don't think that's a good idea, because it will lower the academic performance of Colorado College students."

And as a bald statement, I can't quarrel with it. Minorities are usually not very well prepared. And Bill has come around, quite thoroughly and quite enthusiastically on that matter.

I don't mean that he thinks minorities are now well-prepared, but sometimes they are, and more often they aren't. But Bill has come to see that the contribution that minority students make toward a more, richer mix, outweighs the deficiencies of preparation that they have.

Yes, I was--Judy, I tend to get on bandwagons early, to plump causes early, and then when they catch on, I lose interest and I go on to something else.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

Robert Frost said that once, and I think he said it in a lecture I attended when I was an undergraduate, and I've had a chuckle over that many times since. I forget exactly how he put it, much better than I would, but it was the same kind of thing, that he was all for causes as long as they were unpopular.

I think I could say the same thing about the position of gays and lesbians at CC, but maybe you'd want to get to these other things first and we'd get to that later.

FINLEY:

Well, I would like to get to that. Maybe after that. Let's lead up to that a little bit by first--

KUTSCHE:

I'm not satisfying you yet about the general atmosphere.

FINLEY:

Well, I want to know something about the late sixties and the early seventies. There was some sort of a change all over the country related to the Viet Nam war.

KUTSCHE:

Oh, yes.

FINLEY:

And students became fairly hostile towards authority.

KUTSCHE:

We were a backwater, as far as that's concerned.

FINLEY:

We were. But--

KUTSCHE:

My God, Judy! The faculty was so supine vis-a-vis authority.

One of my--I think Jack Bailey shared this. One of the young Turks objections to the CC faculty when we were still just a few coming in, and the faculty was dominated by people who had been there much longer.

One of our objections was that what Louis T. Benezet said in the faculty meeting, people would agree with. And my first reaction was, "What a bunch of jerks."

But then later I began to realize that Louis T. had saved the college from extension. You're aware of that, I presume?

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

That the college very seriously considered closing its doors.

FINLEY:

Well, that may be a slight exaggeration. I remember there were financial difficulties.

KUTSCHE:

I don't think it's an exaggeration. And Louis T. saved it from extension and so I think the faculty were so grateful to him that they never opposed him on anything.

Have you gotten Bill Barton here yet?

FINLEY:

No.

KUTSCHE:

Ask him very specifically about that when you do, and I may be asking a great deal of you, but let me urge you to read his master's thesis, which was at the University of New Mexico before you interview him.

I think that he documented that the college almost closed its doors, and that hiring Louis T. Benezet in 1955 was thought of consciously by the board of trustees as a last desperate measure, the alternative to which would be just to sell the property.

FINLEY:

Really? I've never heard anyone speak to that extreme about the financial state of the college, and I think I will definitely--

KUTSCHE:

Bill is my authority on that, and--

FINLEY:

--follow up on that.

KUTSCHE:

I just happened to read his master's thesis. I came upon it by accident when I was in the stacks of the University of New Mexico library in Albuquerque one day, and I was speechless. [laugh]

FINLEY:

Hmmmm. Well, I'll have to ask him about it.

KUTSCHE:

But that's his story, and not mine.

FINLEY:

Okay. Okay.

KUTSCHE:

So the faculty was supine, in my estimation, as I'm trying to say now, for a good reason. Our student body was fairly supine.

There were two people in 19--now I think I am speaking directly to your question. In 1964 and '5, there were two students named Miles Hopper and Harris Sherman who were leading--were about as activist as we had got at CC and they led candlelight vigils and stuff like that--parades between the campus and city hall, in commemoration of the murder of four young black kids in Alabama, and so on.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

I remember. And that's as far as it went. And I remember very much to his credit, Lloyd Worner's comment on it. I saw him shortly after and Miles Hopper was the best student I had then, and I was a rabid Hopperite [laugh]. I still am, by the way; he's one of my closest friends to this day.

And I said something to Worner about "Wasn't that a

marvelous thing that he did?"

And Worner surprised me very much by saying, "Well, it was a nice thing to do, but I would have thought much more highly of it if they had held some kind of a fund-raiser and sent some money down there."

In short, he was saying, "Well, it was a nice gesture, but they're really not accomplishing much of anything."

FINLEY:

Yes, well, the faculty may have been supine, but they somehow came around to supporting a very--

[end of tape]

[side two]

FINLEY:

--continuing my interview with Paul Kutsche on January 19th, 1994.

Okay, Buzz, we were talking about the change in the faculty as the Block Plan was adopted, in terms of their willingness to undertake a new curricular experiment.

KUTSCHE:

Are you aware that in a certain sense, Darnell Rucker is the father of the Block Plan? Or maybe I should say the grandfather or the godfather of the Block Plan.

Of course, Glenn Brooks is the father. Darnell was the inspirer--

FINLEY:

In what way?

KUTSCHE:

In the following way. Darnell was the apple of Lloyd Worner's eye, in many ways, and for the tape's benefit, Darnell was a professor of philosophy and--let's see, he was a specialist in Locke, and Hume and the other eighteenth century philosophers.

Darnell resigned from Colorado College, and in the context of his resignation had an interview with Lloyd Worner that shook Worner down to his boots. In which Darnell said to Worner--what's my authority for this? I think it's probably Darnell Rucker.

Darnell said to President Worner, "There are a lot of good ideas that come to the floor of the faculty and some of them get voted up--passed." He said, "They all seem to fall

down upon a bottomless well."

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

By the way, have you got Darnell Rucker on tape yet? You know he's back in town.

FINLEY:

Yes, I do.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, you should. He ought to be on. I think he'd warm up to spilling the beans pretty well, and he's a wonderful guy, as you know.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

Well, when Darnell left, Worner, who as you know, is a very emotional person, and very loyal to, and very attached to the people he thinks highly of. Worner was very shook.

I might parenthetically remark that when Louis Geiger left, which was, I forget, that was a little later, that there was as you know a bitter competition in the history department between Geiger and Hockman as to who would run the department.

And Worner called in all of the--no, he didn't call us in. The other chairs of departments in the social science division led by--what's his name? The chairman of political science who became the college's attorney for awhile?

FINLEY:

Oh, Doug Mertz.

KUTSCHE:

Doug Mertz, thank you. It was Doug who got this meeting up with the president. Worner said to us in that context that he was afraid that whatever he did he would lose either Hockman or Geiger, and so it was hard for him to make a decision.

And as we all know, he made a decision and lost Geiger. It's no secret, I'm sure that I thought that if he had to lose one or the other of them, that he should have kept the historian and not kept the politician.

Geiger did a lot of history. Hoffman to the best of my knowledge has never published a word of history.

Well, Lloyd Worner was so shook by the defection of Darnell Rucker that it was the very next year that he appointed possibly the most energetic and innovative member of his faculty, Glenn Brooks, who had been recognized, as you know, by Benezet as a very promising young mind when he made Glenn Brooks the chair of his civic design study way back in 1960 or '61.

Appointed him, I think the title was special assistant to the president, and the charge to Glenn, as best I recollect, was simply to do something innovative. He wasn't charged with any particular plan.

And Glenn came up with the Block Plan. I opposed it during the debate in faculty.

FINLEY:

On what grounds?

KUTSCHE:

That it was intellectually shoddy. That there was not time enough to cover materials and that it was gimmicky; that we were substituting glitter for substance.

I should say right now that I no longer feel that that criticism is entirely valid, but I don't think it's totally invalid, either.

FINLEY:

How did it affect your teaching, immediately, as, you know, your own course structures?

KUTSCHE:

I don't think I want to get to that quite yet, but we'll get to it.

FINLEY:

Okay, okay.

KUTSCHE:

I recall during the debate there were some interesting things said on both sides.

I recall Chris Griffith's remarking that the Block Plan would put an unreasonable burden on both faculty and students and he then--Chris is the most wonderful healthy cynic. I think of all the cynics I know, he is the most idealistic cynic. [laugh]

FINLEY:

Okay. [laugh]

KUTSCHE:

I have enormous admiration for Chris Griffiths, and he said, "Of course, the, with these pressures that are being put on both faculty and students, the faculty, of course, will survive, because we know how to work the system [laugh] and we'll manipulate it so that we get what we need. The students are not as sophisticated as we and I think they'll suffer more."

FINLEY:

They've learned to manipulate it pretty well, too.
[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

You're absolutely right! [laugh] The students have proven themselves to be cleverer than Chris gave them credit for.

Before I get to the question of how it affected my own teaching, and I will get to it, I think I want to say about the new faculty that--not my generation, but the generation of the early 1970's--am I not correct that we passed the Block Plan so that the first year we taught it was the academic year '70 to '71?

FINLEY:

Right; that's correct.

KUTSCHE:

That's what I thought. Well, after the Block Plan had been in place for about two years, two or three years, there was a general sense on the faculty that some things didn't work as well as others, and to his great credit I want to say that Glenn Brooks relation to the Block Plan has been very close, parallel to that of Sigmund Freud to Freudian thinking.

The real Freudians was--the Freudians who were not Sigmund Freud, but some rather less creative people who were his followers.

Glenn Brooks never was single-mindedly supportive of the Block Plan; he was always among those who were saying, "Let us reexamine and recast."

Again, George Drake was, he had no two ideas about it. He had no real critical evaluation of it at any time. As a matter of fact, he caused it to be said in the CC catalog, within a year after the Block Plan started, that it prepared students much better for graduate school.

And I recall popping him on it, and I said, "George, not a single one of us has the foggiest idea whether it prepares people better or worse for graduate school, and it's irresponsible to say this, until we know."

And I forget what he said. It was something to the effect that, "Well, you have to say something positive in the catalog."

Glenn would never have said anything like that--never. I don't know that he'd say it to this day. He might; or he might not.

Well, am I ready--oh! The young faculty. There were a series of meetings held of small groups of faculty to discuss what was good and bad about the Block Plan and what we might need to do to improve. And a very interesting dichotomy appeared.

The faculty of my generation and the generation that was still left that was older than me were willing to consider all kinds of alternatives then.

And I mean both those of us who opposed the Block Plan and those of us who had been in favor of it. And the young faculty said, and I recall one of them saying in so many words, but quite a number of them said more or less this kind of thing.

They said, "We were never trained for the Block Plan and it was such a horrendous adjustment for us to make when we came to teach courses under the Block Plan that we aren't just about even to consider the possibility of making another adjustment."

And some of the older faculty said, "What the hell are you talking about? We taught for X-many years under the other plan and we made a much bigger adjustment than you made and we're willing to make another one and you're not!"

I don't know that we were hiring badly then; we were hiring people who weren't, didn't have much--I don't know, intellectual energy or--

FINLEY:

Are you talking about the mid-seventies?

KUTSCHE:

I'm talking about the early seventies, but not the very early seventies.

FINLEY:
Right; okay.

KUTSCHE:

Early to mid-seventies. We were hiring people who weren't playful about education. I think you have to be playful about teaching, or you're going to get very stale.

FINLEY:

Well, maybe graduate schools were getting more and more specialized and these young people were just focused in on their dissertation topics instead of the larger question.

KUTSCHE:

I don't know; that kind of; that doesn't exactly go along with the supine faculty but it certainly suggests that we weren't getting faculty as imaginative as we--of course, in any generation you don't get very many imaginative people. I suppose there would be chaos if you did.

Now, you were asking me about the effect on my own teaching.

FINLEY:

Well, yes, how you adjusted personally to the Block Plan.

KUTSCHE:

I suppose my reactions were not very much different from those of other people, whether they were in favor of it or not in favor of it. I had to experiment a lot before I found what worked.

For instance, I tore introduction to cultural anthropology apart into three parts, and taught these three parts for awhile. And what did we do about the relation between that and the major?

I'm not positive, but I think we said you had to have one of these three parts and either one of the other two. One was the concept of culture, and the second was--what was it? Comparative ethnography and I forget what the third was.

In almost every course I taught, I ran through several less-than-entirely-successful alternatives before I found something that worked. I don't imagine that that's much different from--

FINLEY:

No, I think that's very true.

KUTSCHE:

--other people.

FINLEY:

But in anthropology, it must have provided a lot of new opportunities for field work, that you hadn't had.

KUTSCHE:

What was clear first was not the opportunities but the difficulties, and one of the--I'll get to the opportunities.

But one of the difficulties that I had argued during the--I think I had argued it on the floor of the faculty, but at any rate I felt during the discussion.

It turned out to be very much the case when I was teaching and that is that a block does not give students any time for reflection. Doesn't give time for seeds to get planted and flourish within a semester.

Now, this hits some disciplines much harder than others. I think it would hit philosophy very hard, and for other reasons it hits languages hard. At that time, students had not had much exposure to cross-cultural thinking in secondary school.

And so anthropology more particularly cultural and physical anthropology asks the student to start thinking differently about almost everything.

And one month simply doesn't do it. A semester did it, often--not always, but it often did it. We--I don't know that we ever entirely overcame this difficulty, but the fact that students in secondary school are much more likely, and even in non-school activities, much more likely to think multi-culturally now than they used to be, means that we don't have quite so much reorganization.

Are we running out again?

FINLEY:

Just speak a little closer, if you would.

KUTSCHE:

Oh, I'm sorry.

So that was a difficulty. Now, we didn't have much problem--well, we did have a readjustment in the cultural area, of course. We used to teach a survey of North American Ethnography, for instance. And then we started teaching just a course on the Southwest, or a course on the Northwest or something like that.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

The focus got narrower, and we found that the biggest, and this was a surprise to me, the biggest advantage of the Block Plan intellectually to me was the happy discovery that we could dig holes much deeper within those blocks in social organization.

I used to teach a course, social organization through an anthropologist as compared to kinship structure, or used to be, at any rate, and I used to do a survey of all the possibilities.

The most successful goal I ever had with that course under the Block Plan was one when Gulf and Snyder's book on matrilineal kinship had just been published. And so just for fun--and the students were willing to make experiments, too. We had a lot of fun making experiments.

Just for fun, we took Gulf and Snyder's book and we did the whole damn block on matrilineal kinship. And by God! We were running the changes on matrilineal kinship.

And for my part, I for the first time in my life, I understood what the implications of [not clear] residents were. Neither you nor the tape need to worry about [not clear] is all about, but it was a relatively small detail within matrilineal kinship, which has some rather important consequences in the way society runs.

And we were able to get deeply enough into matrilineality so that we didn't understand broadly but we did understand deeply.

FINLEY:

Yes, so that was one of the opportunities you're talking about?

KUTSCHE:

Yes.

FINLEY:

Yes. Can you speak just briefly about field work?

KUTSCHE:

I can speak very briefly about it. We could do it with the Block Plan and we couldn't do it without it.

FINLEY:

Right, right.

KUTSCHE:

The first field course taught in Colorado College was Michael Nowak's field archeology, and George Drake, as dean, said about that course, once he took the trouble--well, that sounds as if he had to take the trouble; he didn't. Deans don't usually.

He did go into the lab after they came back and talked to the students and found out the relation of their digging to their analyzing, and said to me, afterwards, and I remember this word for word.

He said, "I've seen more learning going on in that course than I've seen in any other course in Colorado College."

And I think that was exactly as it should be. When as a student you get fresh information, fresh data, and then you come back into the lab, whether the lab is a literal lab or the library or what, and start analyzing it, start putting your fresh information together with older information and theories you learn far more than you do in another other context.

And we have become, as we should, one of the three disciplines that is most heavily engaged in field work.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

The other two of course are geology and macrobiology.

FINLEY:

Right, right.

KUTSCHE:

So that's been very much a benefit for anthropology.

FINLEY:

Good; good.

KUTSCHE:

So I think we're, in the department, we're still of two minds about the block course. Some things we can do much better; some things we can do that we couldn't do at all before, and others we still feel--all of us? I don't know about that, but several of us feel that we can't do as well as we used to be able to.

FINLEY:

Well, from the hindsight of a new emeritus professor, if you had to make an absolute choice between the Block Plan and a return to a traditional system, which would you choose?

KUTSCHE:

It would depend on my, what kind of a place I was teaching. Are you assuming it was Colorado College?

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

I would do one semester one and the other semester the other.

FINLEY:

[laugh] That's a rather equivocal answer.

KUTSCHE:

No, I don't think it's in the least equivocal.

FINLEY:

I can understand your rationale; not a bad idea.

KUTSCHE:

We could then go for broke, in field work, one semester and we would have the intellectual advantages of the longer period.

FINLEY:

It's interesting.

KUTSCHE:

You probably know that it's almost impossible, except as a senior thesis, for a student to write a respectably long term paper in the Block Plan. And students simply don't have the discipline of constructing a larger.

FINLEY:

Well, that's an interesting--

KUTSCHE:

Once in a while a student does, but that's a very exceptional student.

FINLEY:

Yes. Well, I don't want to wear you out.

KUTSCHE:

You're more likely to get worn out than I am!

FINLEY:

No, I'm very interested, and you're just getting fired up. We can really speak for about another hour, if you're willing. I mean, if you want a break, say so.

KUTSCHE:

I'm not hoarse yet.

FINLEY:

Okay. I thought--

KUTSCHE:

Do you want to stop?

FINLEY:

No, I'm fine. I was interested, really, in sort of moving ahead in time here, because so many of the changes in the 1980's.

KUTSCHE:

Wait a minute. Before you get into that, it may fit best in the context of the college in general to let me tell you what I have on my mind, and then you say whether you want it here or later. My sense of what students do best.

FINLEY:

At CC?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. You were asking me--

FINLEY:

Go ahead. Because that fits into--but you might relate it to--

KUTSCHE:

CC does some things extremely well. I am, as I hope I've already indicated, I'm a sworn enemy to hokum, and I think CC has indulged in a shameless amount of hokum.

I think our relatively positive financial position is due to a lot of flummery, among other things. And I think that one of the principal reasons we have not recognized that the rest of the country has looked at the Block Plan pretty carefully, and said, "No, thank you."

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

KUTSCHE:

I think we keep it as much because it brings in dollars as for any other reasons. But nevertheless, I think CC does some things extremely well.

FINLEY:

And what is that?

KUTSCHE:

The one I have on my mind right now is characterized best by the venture what?

FINLEY:

Venture Grant Funds.

KUTSCHE:

Is that what it's called, Venture Grant Funds?

FINLEY:

Yes. Students can apply for these funds for special projects.

KUTSCHE:

I'm very pleased to say that I was on the committee for at least three years, and that was as happy, I think it was perhaps the happiest committee service I ever had.

Partly because Victor Nelson Cisneros has a wonderful combination of an excellent sense of humor, of strong sense of desire to encourage creativity, and a no-nonsense approach and pretty tight hold on the budget too. He's got a really splendid balance of characteristics there. I obviously enjoyed working for him.

FINLEY:

So what you're saying is that you think these creative projects that individual students propose are what they do best at CC?

KUTSCHE:

That's one of the things we do best.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

KUTSCHE:

And the fact that the college has devoted not enough, but perhaps there never will be enough, has devoted fairly substantial resources to supporting student creative projects speaks very highly for CC.

I've checked this with students again and again, and I'd like to quote a student who's now a junior. I had lunch just the other day with two of my best students from last year, and one of them, who wrote a paper, as a sophomore, as a matter of fact, in a senior level course he took with me--I don't know how he got into the course. But a paper that I still think should be published.

He put it this way. I was asking, the question I posed to these students was what kinds of learning have you profited the most from? And then characterized different types, you know, field work, class work, analyzing theories or constructing your own, and proposed a number of alternatives to them.

And what this fellow said was, and he is in the purely textbook sense a superb student; he'll graduate at least magna and possibly summa.

He said, "I think that for me the best way to learn is to do all the textbook stuff first and get a very solid background that way and then to be given the opportunity and the encouragement and of course the financial support then to do something creative."

And that struck me as making extremely good sense. And that's exactly where Victor is, by the way.

I know, at least for the three years I was on the committee, what kind of proposals sailed through without a dissenting murmur, what ones were debated and then passed, and what ones were turned down.

And that's pretty much what Victor did. I don't recall the committee ever turning down a proposal for a senior honors thesis which logically built on coursework that the student had done in the major.

In fact, this very same student I was quoting is-- today's Wednesday. Tomorrow he leaves for Germany, he's going to be the CC exchange student with, what is it?

FINLEY:

Linerberg?

KUTSCHE:

Linerberg, yes. And then he has a venture grant to stay after the Linerberg semester and inquire into how Turkish ghost arbiter are coping with their status in a hostile environment.

This to me is CC's particular resources at their very best.

FINLEY:

Great.

KUTSCHE:

And I've seen a lot of venture grants--and of course there are other funds also that support these things. I've seen a lot of CC work that is this best sort of thing.

A lot of them in the arts, too, by the way. Students have done really crazy things in the arts.

FINLEY:

They really have.

KUTSCHE:

Some of them really crazy, and perhaps not always as thoroughly grounded, but then in the arts, it's a little more difficult to speak of this course and that course and the other course that are the proper foundation for doing a project.

I think we've done some extremely useful--we've given some very useful support and some students have used this support in marvelous ways.

In English, it's not venture grant. As a matter of fact, it's Watson grant, but Reginald McNight is a wonderful example--you know about him, of course?

FINLEY:

Yes, indeed.

KUTSCHE:

He would not be even remotely where he is as a writer of fiction if he hadn't got the encouragement to do creative things at CC which led him to this Watson proposal. And our Watson committee is just I think superlative.

And then has spent his year in Black Africa and then come back and write all these great stories.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

I think those are, that's the emerging CC to me.

FINLEY:

Okay. Well, how do you feel that the last ten years, let's say that the term of President Riley fits into what you're talking about?

Were some of these things already in place before he came, or did he push some of these things, or the floodway you were talking about, was it magnified, or not magnified when he was president?

I'm just trying to get a handle on the eighties, and it's kind of still so close, it's hard to pinpoint.

KUTSCHE:

Well, it's hard for me, too. I don't think Riley had anything to do with all that. I don't see him on the one hand--well, wait a minute, wait a minute.

He's been supportive. I'm not as well informed to answer that with authority. I don't see him as a very creative force at CC, but I do see him as supportive.

He did put pressure on faculty, which many of them, to their shame, resented quite strongly, force on faculty to get off the dime in their professions to do research and publish. If I have any criticism of him, it's that he didn't put heavier pressure.

But I don't think he could have, under the circumstances. He has been supportive of creative activity on the part of CC students, but I don't recall anything specific.

FINLEY:

What do you think was his biggest contribution to the campus?

KUTSCHE:

I think his biggest contribution, and by the way, on balance I think highly of Gresham Riley. I think his wife sabotaged him quite unconsciously, but I think that was the consequence of her activism at CC was to sabotage a good deal of his effort.

FINLEY:

His biggest contribution? It's hard to say, isn't it?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. No, but I think I can say that his biggest contribution at CC, the rest was in parenthesis, was to reestablish at Colorado College something that Lloyd Worner

had permitted to go to pot--and that is the sense of due process.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

Worner is so complex that I think just myself, I could spend at least an hour and maybe two hours giving my various opinions of him.

He's one of the most loyal and honorable human beings I've ever known. He had a vision of education that was worth working at.

Of course, he was here much too long. I don't think there's a soul on campus who would quarrel with that statement. He ran the college far too much as his own--out of his own pocket.

Now, Worner and I have had a dispute in angry letters within the last year as to whether he in turn was in Russell Tutt's pocket, and I still think he was. And Worner still thinks he was not.

And Worner gives as good as he gets in this, and he's told me some chapter and verse about Russell Tutt that I didn't know anything about and so Russell is not quite the villain of the piece that I used to think he was.

But Worner did interfere far too much in decisions that particular offices made. I'll give you one example, and I think the whole faculty together could give hundreds of examples.

Lloyd Worner instructed the admissions office on numerous occasions to admit individuals and the one I have most particularly in mind was I believe a great-granddaughter of J. P. Morgan. She was a student in a class in introductory anthropology with me and the first thing--

[end of tape two]

[tape three]

FINLEY:

This is tape three, side one of oral history interview No. R-72. I'm continuing my talk with Buzz Kutsche on January 19th, 1994.

The tape ran out, Buzz, and you were talking about Lew Worner's interference, you felt, in daily decisions and you were illustrating it with the case of the admission of a great-granddaughter of J. P. Morgan.

KUTSCHE:

Okay. She took introductory cultural anthropology with me, and the first thing I discovered was that she was incapable of doing college level work. I mean very conspicuously incapable of it.

And so when I had a few assignments so that I had the evidence, that I'd convinced myself that she--you know, there was the class and then there was this poor kid. I went to the dean of students office I think, first.

Now, something says to me that Chris Moon was still dean of students, but I won't swear to that. At any rate, that's when I learned how this kid happened to come to CC, and I was rather horrified.

Well, the student flunked the course; she was, as you can imagine, in some psychological difficulties. She then had to drop out of Colorado College, and what I learned, and I'm pretty sure it was Chris Moon because I think I remember a conversation I had with her after the whole thing was over.

And one of us said, I don't remember which said what to the other, because we agreed so thoroughly. What we agreed was that the college had done that poor kid a serious disservice. It set her up for a nasty failure, and there was no need for--I mean, she desperately needed to have some successes.

So yes, Worner ran the college much too much as his own private thing. And have you done Dick Wood, by the way?

FINLEY:

Yes, yes.

KUTSCHE:

Well, then I'm sure he's gone into that, a great deal more than I have, because he has much more information.

FINLEY:

Yes, well, what we don't really have much yet on our own history project is an evaluation of President Riley's term. It's still pretty close. You said that you felt he was more--

KUTSCHE:

Okay. Well, I was sort of setting the background.

FINLEY:

Yes, the background. That he reestablished a sense of due process, and I understand this very strongly and it

appears in several other tapes, in contrast to Lew Worner's style. Much more a man of channels, Riley was, and running--

KUTSCHE:

Have you interviewed Jack Carter?

FINLEY:

No.

KUTSCHE:

Okay. It's Jack Carter's evidence that is the most conspicuous example I can offer of Riley's due process.

FINLEY:

Okay.

KUTSCHE:

He is, as you know, the one who convinced the college that the biological curriculum study project should be here at CC.

And Jack told me, this is fairly early on in Riley's tenure, and Jack told me how this came about. And he was very positive about Riley. I think it was back when I was still rather negative about Riley and you know, he didn't grab ahold quite right at the very first, you may recall.

Jack told me that Riley expected Jack to give him copious argument and document, in writing, for this proposal. He expected Jack to have done his homework thoroughly.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

And that he very carefully refrained from giving Jack any indication whether his decision would be "Yes" or "No" but was equally clear in telling Jack what procedure he would follow and it was a procedure of consultation with absolutely everybody who needed to be consulted. Long before he got to the board of trustees, by the way. Obviously, they had to be consulted.

And then when the decision was made, even if it had been a negative decision, Jack told me he would have been satisfied that it would have been a just and fair decision that was made on the basis of, not of personality but of the merits of the case and the needs of the college and the competition between the curriculum study project and everything else.

I've had the sense of Riley in almost everything he's done.

FINLEY:

Right. And I think you've put the nail right on the head from my experience with President Riley, this weighing of all the alternatives, thorough homework, thorough documentation, and really being very objective in trying to make up his mind on issues.

KUTSCHE:

There is an exception in my experience, but only one small one, and it was a negative thing that probably led me to speak to Jack about it in the first place.

I think he made a serious mistake when I first arrived, but it was, well, he made an explicit mistake when I first arrived. I've never been happy with the Colorado College studies. It's Tim Fuller's avocation. As far as I know, he's still running them, isn't he?

FINLEY:

I think so.

KUTSCHE:

I think so. I have felt since before Riley arrived that they could amount to something, and I don't think they do. And I think among other things that they should be refereed, just as professional publications are in general.

And my one CC publication would have been much better if it had been so refereed. Now I look back at it I see some infelicities that an outsider would have caught. I need editors rather badly [laugh] and always profit when I get a good one.

And so, and one of the first things that I did after Riley arrived was to write him a proposal which I discussed with him that the CC studies be upgraded to something quite serious and I outlined what I thought was needed, and you won't be surprised to hear that I thought that they needed more money, among other things. Not an awful lot more, more some more.

And then I offered a separate memo to him and said, "I would like to take them on." And then outlined what I would like to do if I were to take them on.

And I sent a copy of the general memo to Tim Fuller and of course I didn't send a copy of the memo that said to the president, "I would like to oust Tim Fuller from this job and I'll take it on."

And I had some ideas as to ways of encouraging faculty

to contribute to just one tiny instance, or one brief instance is that I thought that people in physics, biology and chemistry, and I had specific people in mind, could contribute to a volume on the quality of the biosphere in the southwest.

FINLEY:

Sort of a topic--

KUTSCHE:

Valdeers was still doing air and somebody was doing Jojoba and you know, that kind of thing. And I approached them and they said, "Yeah, if we can get some released time, we think it would be fun."

And I think it would have been a good contribution.

FINLEY:

But Riley didn't support all of this?

KUTSCHE:

Number one, he made it very clear that he thought that was not important to a college like this. I think he was flatly wrong about this, about that, and I consulted with John Van Ness, who, an alumnus of mine who was then and still is in the fund-raising business and who had had lots of colleges as clients.

And John felt that if we had something, oh, let's say like the Wesleyan Review or one of the other small college reviews that our position to get foundation money would be greatly enhanced so that it was very compatible.

And then Riley made a horrible mistake. He sent a copy of my private memo to Tim Fuller, who didn't speak to me for about five years thereafter.

FINLEY:

Oh, oh.

KUTSCHE:

As you know, our dean is very thin-skinned, and he's one of the most brilliant people on the faculty, and as far as I can tell he's doing a good job as dean. I didn't expect he would, but I think, as far as I can tell, he is.

But he does not meet criticism of himself well.

FINLEY:

Interesting.

KUTSCHE:

And Tim and I had had friendly relations before that.

FINLEY:

Interesting! [laugh]

KUTSCHE:

And we never really have, since.

FINLEY:

Oh, well.

KUTSCHE:

And I really blame Riley on that. But that's a small thing. I think Riley learned, he learned very quickly.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

He learned very quickly.

FINLEY:

Yes. I want to ask you, because you may have had some sort of personal involvement in this--I have no idea.

There was a real struggle that Riley had with the board of trustees that, you know, got worse later on, but the point where the college put into its charter statement that it would not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation was a major sort of ripple that the board had trouble with.

KUTSCHE:

Riley denied afterward that that cost him political capital.

FINLEY:

Well, I'd just like to know if you had any part in the discussions about this, or--

KUTSCHE:

Your homework falls down at that point, Judy.

FINLEY:

Well, see, I don't have any record of it.

KUTSCHE:

This was mine.

FINLEY:

Okay, tell me about it.

KUTSCHE:

This was mine from beginning to end.

FINLEY:

Tell me about it.

KUTSCHE:

Why did I go to Riley about this, most particularly? I think because I felt the time was right. It isn't that I hadn't gone to Worner because I, my idea . . . well, why didn't I go to Worner?

I think it was simply because at the time Worner left and Riley came, the moment hadn't arrived.

I first went to Margy Duncan and proposed to her that since colleges here and there in the country were doing this that we make the proposal to Gresham Riley.

And I had several memos to Gresham Riley, and Margy and I called on him and made our pitch. And I had already done some homework.

If you don't know my relation to this then you also don't know that I am the faculty member in the United States who is augmenting the list which the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force started but which I have probably multiplied by four, at least, of colleges and universities that have done this.

FINLEY:

Oh, really?

KUTSCHE:

Yes. And by now, as you can imagine, all of the respectable colleges in the country have done it and a lot you wouldn't expect, like the University of Arkansas, for instance.

FINLEY:

What year did CC adopt this, do you know?

KUTSCHE:

Oh, dear.

FINLEY:

Well, it doesn't matter. I'll look it up.

KUTSCHE:

I will say 1987, but check it, will you?

FINLEY:

Something like that.

KUTSCHE:

Something around there. Well, Margy and I went to the president and made our proposal, and we told him that we had not yet decided what sort of strategy we were going to use.

And he said, "I'll take it to the board of trustees."

I said to Riley right then, or shortly thereafter, I said, "Gee, I thought you were going to say to us, 'Wait until the capital campaign is over and then I will take it to the Board of Trustees.'"

And Riley said, his response was quite noble. He said, "This thing should be done, and it is the right thing to do, then we shouldn't, you know, do these political maneuverings."

In retrospect, I don't know but what maybe he should have done some political maneuvering.

But he said, "No, it should be done, and so I'm going to take it to the Board of Trustees."

Whether the fact that Riley himself has a gay son had anything to do with it, I don't know.

FINLEY:

I don't know.

KUTSCHE:

I rather think not.

FINLEY:

I don't know that that was general knowledge, either.

KUTSCHE:

It is, now.

FINLEY:

It is, now.

KUTSCHE:

His son is quite open about it.

FINLEY:

But I don't know that the Board knew of that.

KUTSCHE:

Or I wouldn't have mentioned it. I didn't know it at that time. I didn't know it until much later, as a matter of fact.

Well, so Riley took it to the Board of Trustees, which sent it to its what? Legal committee, I think so, which was chaired and--this is one of the great disappointments, in my mind, of the Board of Trustees. It was chaired by a CC alumnus named Raymond Jones, a black--he was already a judge.

And that committee reported back to the board that the board did not, it did not recommend that the board go beyond U.S. Federal mandate.

And the board, as you would expect, accepted the recommendation of its committee. I think that's a responsible thing to do, and that was the end of it. As far as the Board was concerned.

That was not the end of it as far as Margy and I were concerned. We bided our time and licked our wounds and prepared our case. And it was during that time that I collected a great deal more ammunition from colleges and universities.

In fact, between those two dates, I wrote to every state university in the country to see if they had done it, and was surprised how many had. And a lot of other colleges and universities.

And we went to the Committee on Committees. Which was then chaired by Dick Storey. Dick is regarded by some people as happy-go-lucky and irresponsible. I regard him as a kind of a happy soul who is hyper-responsible.

FINLEY:
Yes.

KUTSCHE:
And Dick was chair and he said, "Of course."

And I think T. K. Barton was secretary, if I'm not mistaken at that time. And T. K. is the author of the brilliant statement which went to the dean and the president but then of course, got to the board afterwards.

"If the Board of Trustees is going to make a habit of not going beyond Federal mandates, then there isn't any point in the board making any resolutions whatsoever, because they've already been done by the Federal government."

And I hope that that got under the skin of some of the board members, but it was, you know, T. K. has a great flair for expression, and this was one of his best, in my opinion.

Well, then, so we were doing our homework, in this, between time.

And Margy and I went back, I think a full year later, our first approach to Riley must have been, oh, gosh, '84 or '85. We went back a full year later or so, and I'm sorry, Judy, that I should be able to say precisely the dates, and I can't do that.

FINLEY:

No, but we can look it up.

KUTSCHE:

Well, I'm not sure how well you can look it up. I mean, you can look up the board's actions.

FINLEY:

Well, I know when--(both talking at once)

KUTSCHE:

Okay. We went back to Gresham Riley and said, "We've got" he knew what homework had been done, because I had been feeding it to him steadily. And Margy and I took a calculated risk, and we consulted with each other beforehand, and we consciously made this risk.

And we said to him, because he had said to us before, "Please don't do anything until I take it to the board of trustees."

And he had taken it to the board and they had turned it down.

So we went back to Gresham and we said, "Okay. We played this your way, and we have done nothing in the faculty except the committee on committees. We have not gone to the faculty with it; we have not made any great agitation at your specific request."

I think Gresham's feeling, parenthetically, was that there'd been so much deviousness between the faculty and the board on so many things, most specifically, most conspicuously the switch from nine blocks to eight blocks--

FINLEY:

Yes, yes.

KUTSCHE:

Which the board didn't like. That he wanted relations to be just as smooth as possible.

We said to him, "Okay. We've done it your way, and now we're here to tell you that we are now prepared to go to the faculty."

And I said to Gresham, "We will fight this battle to win." And I said, "I'm prepared to characterize the board of trustees as all the bad things that I think about them." And I had very negative thoughts about most of the Board of Trustees.

About Ray Jones, it was just bitter disappointment, rather, because after all, as a minority person he should have had some sense of minority rights. But he had none, whatsoever--he was a right-wing Republican.

And so I said, we were threatening him, really. I mean, we didn't say it, but we were threatening him. We said, "We're going to agitate as big a storm as we possibly can on the faculty through the faculty meeting, and get as strong a resolution as we possibly can get out of the faculty, a demand to the board of trustees."

And Margy broke down crying!

FINLEY:

In his office!

KUTSCHE:

In his office. Have you ever seen her cry? Neither had I, before or since. I don't think she was crying on demand, like a movie actress, but she felt possibly even more strongly about it than I did. I don't know. At any rate, we both felt very strongly.

Gresham Riley's face, his lower jaw just dropped, and he was ashen by the end of this meeting. I had no idea it was going to affect him so strongly.

I thought he was going to take, you know, a sort of a lofty presidential view of it, and say, "I'll do the best I can; get lost." And he didn't.

He said, "I understand everything you were telling me, including what you say you're going to do." He said, "Will you give me another period of time"--I forget just what the period of time was--"but will you give me this period of time during which I'll see what I can do?"

Well, so we left, and we weren't optimistic at all, because we didn't think there was anything he could do. Faculty, political scientists are somewhat of an exception

because they're more likely, because of the nature of their topic to be talking to trustees than other people do.

But faculty in general are likely to think the worst of trustees, and I think our trustees have given us lots of reason to think the worst of them. With conspicuous exceptions, of which John Bunker is the most conspicuous exceptions; he's--gee, what we would do without him, I don't know.

FINLEY:

Right.

KUTSCHE:

But so we left, and we shared our dismay and we said, "We will reconvene, the two of us, when we see whether Gresham can do anything."

Well, the next thing I knew I was spending a couple of days as the houseguest of a gay nephew of mine in Chicago. I was in Chicago for an ACM program advisors' meeting.

And my nephew said, when I turned up at his apartment, he said, "Margy Duncan wants you to telephone her in Colorado Springs."

So I said, "How in God's name did she know where I was?" What on earth would she want to talk to me about?

And so I made the call, and Margy said, "It passed the board of Trustees."

I said, "Impossible."

It happened while I was away on this meeting, and I learned later what had happened. It was extremely nice of Margy to do this, I mean, she knew I would want to know immediately. I was going back to the Springs in another couple of days, but she knew I didn't want to wait.

This is what happened. Gresham went to the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. Now, who would that have been?

FINLEY:

John Knight.

KUTSCHE:

No! No, no, no! The City Corp man?

FINLEY:

Oh, Bill Spencer was still chair.

KUTSCHE:

Bill Spencer--he was still chair. And, by the way, City Corp had had a non-discrimination resolution forever.

FINLEY:

So Gresham went to Bill Spencer?

KUTSCHE:

And said, "Bill, we've got another confrontational crisis coming up and I think it will be very destructive, and what can we do about it?"

And Spencer called together the executive committee of the Board of Trustees.

Now, whom did I hear this from? I didn't hear it from Gresham Riley. I heard it from a variety of sources, and I'm sorry to say I can't pinpoint one. Margy, obviously, but I forget who else.

Spencer called the executive board together, and he said to them, "This has got to happen." He did not say, "Let us consider it; let us put it on the agenda." A meeting was just coming up, by the way.

FINLEY:

As I recall, Bill Hibble was not present at that meeting.

KUTSCHE:

That I don't know.

FINLEY:

I think, if I recall, he was not there.

KUTSCHE:

If Bill Hibble had been chair of the board, I think the outcome would have been very different indeed, and the relations between the faculty and the board would be much worse than they are now.

FINLEY:

Well, so Bill Spencer took the lead in authoritarian fashion and said, "This has got to happen," and the board passed it?

KUTSCHE:

And the next step was this. The next step was this. And I've checked this with several of the people who were there. The chairman of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Council pulled the, what Gresham Riley chose to

call his cabinet, together.

God! Wasn't he pompous? It's too bad, because we'd have liked him so much better if he hadn't been so pompous. I forgive him pomposity; I'm a little pompous myself, but a lot of people don't.

He called all the vice-presidents and the dean of the college, and you know, everybody who should be there, around the table in the boardroom, and Bill Spencer went round that room person by person by person, and said, "What is this really that important? Does this have to happen in order for faculty morale to survive?"

And every single one of those people, and I think it-- I'm not positive but I think it included the head of physical plant.

FINLEY:

[laugh] Could be.

KUTSCHE:

It included people who, oh, like whoever the Bob Broughton of the moment was--I forget who that was.

FINLEY:

Tom Winslow.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, that's it; Tom Winslow. It included people for whom this was just totally somebody else's issue; it had nothing to do with them.

And every single one of them said, "Yes. This must happen."

Who was the dean at the time?

FINLEY:

My husband.

KUTSCHE:

All right. He said it had to happen then. And then, so, with that support, Spencer then when the meeting convened the next day, I guess, a full board of trustees--that was not an item on the agenda.

Bill Spencer told the Board of Trustees that this had to pass. So he put it on the agenda when it wasn't on the agenda, and instructed the Board of Trustees to pass it and they did.

FINLEY:

I will have to double check as to whether Bill Hibble was present. I don't know why it sticks in my brain that he wasn't.

KUTSCHE:

It never occurred to me one way or the other.

FINLEY:

Anyway, it passed, and it's now part of our campus policy and certainly the whole attitude--at least, I feel, the whole attitude towards acceptance of gays and lesbians changed a lot.

KUTSCHE:

You're absolutely correct, Judy, but the first thing that Margy and I said to each other was, "Well, it's done. So--what's different?"

And our answer was, "Nothing." This is just so--so it's not. We're in a sense sort of, you know, post-coital moment, animal tristram, it's done and now we're back to nothing.

FINLEY:

[laugh]

KUTSCHE:

And of course, we weren't. We didn't realize it at first. It happened rather quickly, rather quickly.

The gay and lesbian organizations and individuals on the faculty as well--this did not affect the, I'm sorry to say it did not affect the staff. There were several gay and lesbian members of the staff who still felt very vulnerable. They didn't have tenure; they didn't have anything. And still don't, of course.

But the organizations and individuals felt that they could now start inviting--it isn't that they never had before, but more energetically inviting visiting lecturers and acts and so on, and being more visible on campus.

And the result has, for gays and lesbians, both on the faculty and the student body, been very, very salutary, and I feel, but of course I'm very, very biased on this matter, I feel that the range of discourse on the college as a community took a sudden jump up and out.

FINLEY:

Of course, it was, again, I think Colorado College was

at the forefront of something that then became a national focus.

KUTSCHE:

I don't know whether we were at the forefront or not.

FINLEY:

Well, maybe not the forefront. But you know, the timing of the whole discussion became a much more national issue, and CC just moved right into this, as of course was Amendment 2.

KUTSCHE:

When did David Finley become Dean of the College?

FINLEY:

1987.

KUTSCHE:

So Gresham Riley had already been here for six or seven years?

FINLEY:

Yes, six years.

KUTSCHE:

The fact that he was dean is not irrelevant, and I'll give you a specific--as you've seen, I tend to illustrate things specifically.

FINLEY:

Yes, which is very helpful.

KUTSCHE:

An incident where you were not present. And David Finley was dean-designate, he had not yet taken over. I had a pretty good sense of his style of speech, which is pretty dry and uninvolved--I mean unemotionally involved.

But the incident is an open community session at the, I forget which fraternity it is, one of the fraternities on the other side of Cascade, the one just north of the parking lot?

FINLEY:

Sigma Chi, or . . . probably Sigma Chi.

KUTSCHE:

It's the one with, well, at any rate. That was the fraternity from which, from the roof of which somebody had hollered down at the guy who took Rod Opel's place, isn't it? At some black official in the administration--what's his name the Leonard Satterwhite? Was it he or was it another black?

FINLEY:

I'm not sure, but there was an incident, and it may not have been Sigma Chi, either.

KUTSCHE:

He called him a "nigger."

FINLEY:

Right. From the roof of the fraternity house.

KUTSCHE:

Not knowing that this was a college official.

FINLEY:

Yes, yes.

KUTSCHE:

And, you know, all hell was to pay.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

And the most public aftermath was this public meeting that that fraternity then held.

And David Finley, as dean designate, came to it and he said, in a very, very sharp break from his unemotional demeanor, he said, in a tone of voice that was very moved, he expressed his horror that anything like this could have happened at his college--he didn't say "his college" but, you know, I would have felt the same way, and he placed that, "I have invested my career."

And his pledge that as dean that the respect for minorities and I felt he was saying also, in retrospect, I felt he was saying also the celebration of diversity would have very high priority and indeed, he put his money where his mouth was when he was dean.

FINLEY:

Yes.

KUTSCHE:

It was his tone of voice that told me he was very serious, and I did my best to communicate to--you know, students afterward, as you can well imagine, wanted to know what had happened. That is to say, "Was that meeting something real, or was it just some more window-dressing?"

And as best I could, I told people that when we had somebody who didn't usually emote who was emoting, "Yes, this is something real that happened."

FINLEY:

Yes. Well.

KUTSCHE:

Do you think that we're on the forefront of diversity now? I don't.

FINLEY:

Well . . .

KUTSCHE:

I mean I like what we're doing, but I'm not anywhere near satisfied.

FINLEY:

I'm not knowledgeable enough about what other campuses are doing, but I feel we're certainly on the forefront of diversity in Colorado Springs.

[side two]

--No. R-72. I'm Judy Finley and this is the last side of my interview with Buzz Kutsche.

KUTSCHE:

She thinks it's the last side!

FINLEY:

No, I got interrupted when we were talking about the role of Colorado College in focusing on issues of diversity, especially in terms of its relation to Colorado Springs and this whole Amendment 2 business.

Colorado College I feel has certainly led the way in helping open people's minds in this community.

Maybe you want to speak a little bit more about specific incidents related to CC's role in--

KUTSCHE:

In Amendment 2?

FINLEY:

Well, not necessarily that. Just the whole issue of gay and lesbian rights and--

KUTSCHE:

I don't think the college has opened the minds of people in the community, and I'm desolated because we haven't been able to. We sure have tried awfully hard.

I expect that Bruce Loeffler is the most conspicuous example here. I--it's not my place to say very much about Bruce. That's Bruce's place, and it's just conceivable that--

-oh, what's his name, the chairman of the geology department now?

FINLEY:

I don't know.

KUTSCHE:

Tyler Hendrix, when he finally retires, if he ever does, he's going to outlive all of us, I'm afraid. But if and when he finally retires, you may want to ask him about personnel matters in the department, and I think, what, I can go the following far and still preserve any sense of discretion.

It took Bruce quite a long while to finish his dissertation. It, he has had, he's experienced a fair amount of ambivalence about what area of activity he wants to devote a great deal of his professional attention to, and he, as you probably know, has a graduate degree in fine art, I think.

And the college since the, we've had protection for gays and lesbians, has in, as far as I can tell, and I of course am not intimately involved, not intimately acquainted with the details, I think both the department of geology and the dean's office have been marvelously supportive of Bruce in his attempt, which I think is now a very successful attempt, I think he has succeeded very well indeed, to develop his own career in ways that are Bruce Loeffler's career, and not merely a career in geology or a career in fine arts or even exclusively a career as a gay advocate.

So as far as the college is concerned, yes, there has been an enormous change as far as gays and lesbians are concerned. The students aren't, haven't taken as much advantage of it as I think they ought. I think they're still a little timid and still think they have more to lose than they have to lose.

The gay faculty have not all of them, by any means, but most of them have finally come out of the closet and I could site--I don't think I will, but I could site a number of people I think are more productive because of the college's attitude.

Margy and I, I will cite. I think both of us are much more productive than we would have been if we were still having to fight the internal battles as well as all the others.

As far as the community is concerned, I think the only relevant thing I can remark is that when I left Colorado

Springs last May, I had invested far more money than I could afford and far more energy than I had to spend, fighting Amendment 2, and was so dismayed both at its passing and at the constant repetition among the Will Perkinses in the Gazette Telegraph in Colorado Springs with the same God damned party line.

He expressed it in the same words. There was just no communicating with those people. I was so dismayed by all that, that if I had never set foot into Colorado Springs again, I would have been happy.

By the time I was ready to come back, I was eager to come back because there is no Tutt Library anywhere else in the world--at least not available to me! And the library resources of Western Michigan are, don't move in the direction of anthropology; they move more toward physics and theology, instead, with all those Dutch Reformed.

I don't know whether the college has had any impact on the formation of Citizens Project. I'm not aware that it has, although Colorado College people are in it. It seems to me that Citizens Project is more nearly a collection of the people who used to call the shots in the city and find that because Focus on the Family is such a potent force and has drawn in--what is it now, 40, 50, 80 national headquarters of right-wing fundamentalist organizations.

The center of gravity for public opinion in the city has changed, I'm afraid, irrevocably.

And parenthetically, I hear that Bill Hibble is now sorry that he did it. It was his, the four million bucks that he got El Pomar to give Focus on the Family that tilted the scales.

I think as I see Citizens Project, it's people like Chuck and Jane Emory, for instance and others of their ilk who were the old liberal leaders of the town, who used to have great deal of influence. I don't want to single out Chuck and Jane at all.

FINLEY:

No, but--

KUTSCHE:

I'm merely characterizing them. Who feel that they're now so to speak disenfranchised in trying to regain their position. More power to them! I hope they do regain it. They used to have a great deal of influence on the cultural life of this city, and they have far less influence.

I hope you're right in your implication that the college has opened the minds of the people in the town. I'm less optimistic, but I'm surprised there haven't been hostile and even violent confrontations between the college and the town. I think by and large there have not been.

FINLEY:

Well, that's because the college has tended to handle things in a very, well, scholarly way in the sense of being not overly emotional but reasonably objective and approached it in a logical way.

KUTSCHE:

That's true, and we've had some awfully skillful people manipulators, and I use that term as praise rather than censure, like Barbara Yalick who has been very successful at keeping the waters smooth enough so that they could be navigated, at any rate.

FINLEY:

Right, right. Well--

FINLEY:

I don't know that I have anything more to say on the gay and lesbian issue.

FINLEY:

No. I just, one more thing from my point of view. I do feel that the Rileys are very supportive on this whole diversity issue.

KUTSCHE:

Yes.

FINLEY:

And I am harkening back to a story about Lew Worner on this same issue, when he was president. This shows how times change or how people's attitudes change. That Lew was extremely upset when a gay rights student group wanted funding from the CCCA or whatever it was. Can you remember anything about that?

KUTSCHE:

Okay. Yes, I remember that, and I remember two sides of Worner's views. It was David Tiner, a, I think, as far as I know the very first openly gay student at CC. He was an anthro major. Who went to Worner and asked for space and money for a dance to support the gay student group, which at that time had no recognition by the college at all.

Lew Worner angrily turned it down and said he wasn't going to have, I don't know what words he used, because I didn't hear a direct quote, but he wasn't going to have that sort of thing going on in his college, by God!

And I think that's--well, you know, Worner was, he was a Roosevelt liberal and he was also a Southern Baptist, and these two sides of himself warred with each other. And one would come out and then the other would come out.

On the other side of the coin, I can't give you the year for this--I know that my office was down where geology is now, that narrows it, but it doesn't narrow it, it was sometime in the seventies, I think.

A student thought I was coming on to him, and went to the dean of students to complain who, quite properly, went immediately to the dean of the college, who quite properly took the matter to the president.

All this was as it should be. So there was a meeting in President Worner's office. The dean of students, the dean of the college, Worner and myself, and I was shown a copy of the student's written complain.

Worner I thought handled the whole thing in a marvelously judicial fashion. And he said to me, "Please read this and tell me to what extent it's accurate."

I told him, "This is accurate, and that's inaccurate" and so on. So then it was up to Worner to make some decision.

And this was back before there was any kind of protection whatever. And told Worner that some of the quotes in it were accurate, but that the conclusion the student had come to was completely erroneous.

I was kind of relieved to hear later when Max Taylor had a run-in of misunderstanding with the same student on a different issue, it wasn't a matter of sex. And Max who comes from other universes than ones I come from was able to say to the president, "Yes, this student has really flipped out."

I said that the central allegation was false, and Worner looked at me and, you know, looked very concerned, and so on. And he said, "Well, I guess we just go on as we have before."

FINLEY:

Uh-hum.

KUTSCHE:

And he was as good as his word. You know, I was afraid that what was going to happen was that he would try to go on

as before, but given that he was a Southern Baptist he wouldn't be able to. Not so.

FINLEY:

Yes. But at what point did you sort of formally come out of the closet at CC?

KUTSCHE:

I wasn't out of the closet then.

FINLEY:

I didn't think so, so Worner probably--

KUTSCHE:

At the point where I divorced.

FINLEY:

That was in '84?

KUTSCHE:

No, '84 is when the divorce was final.

FINLEY:

So it was a little earlier than that?

KUTSCHE:

'82. That's, well, it was one of these secrets that, I'm sure you know that I was gay long before I came out of the closet.

FINLEY:

I never thought about it.

KUTSCHE:

Yes, but your shrug says yes, you did.

FINLEY:

I don't know.

KUTSCHE:

Anybody who cared to know was aware, but students don't seem to be much interested in things like that, so they don't really figure.

It was about '82 that I came out.

FINLEY:

Uh-hum, well, again--

KUTSCHE:

So this was, this encounter in Lew Worner's office was almost a decade before.

FINLEY:

Right; before that, before that, yeah. Okay.

Well, I am really feeling that we could go on for several days, Buzz, and I wish we didn't have only 15 more minutes, but that's the name of the game today, and I really would like to have you have a chance to finish up this part of the interview with talking about what you most want to say, perhaps in terms of what you would like somebody 100 years from now, who may or may not be listening to this tape, to remember about your contributions to Colorado College, and you as a person. Your philosophy of teaching, or whatever you want to say to some mythical person who may be wanting to know something in 100 years.

KUTSCHE:

My contribution to Colorado College is one sentence long. I founded the department of anthropology.

FINLEY:

Indeed.

KUTSCHE:

And anything else I've done I think is very much less important, as far as the college is concerned.

FINLEY:

But--again, in terms of your teaching over the years, you must have had something you really wanted the students to carry away permanently, besides just the facts of anthropology.

KUTSCHE:

How to write?

FINLEY:

How to write, something about your philosophy of teaching, and you have emphasized that writing is very important.

KUTSCHE:

It's more important than everything else put together. But the next most important thing, and I hope I've communicated it--I know I've communicated to students how to write.

I've been told, at the extreme, people who were five and ten years out have said, "I've forgotten all that bullshit you told me about anthropology, I don't remember even what the concept of culture is all about, but I write better than I used to before I took courses from you."

I think that to me, the next most important thing that I try to teach--and I've no idea how successful I am--is a sense of the, oh, how I--it's difficult to know exactly how to put it--the indeterminacy of knowledge. Really, the unimportance of data. I'd better qualify that immediately before I get whacked on it.

FINLEY:

Yes!

KUTSCHE:

Data are to be respected, and are never to be violated, and one does not cook them, and one does not fudge them, and one always operates in terms of them. But ultimately, as far as education goes, what students learn of data is totally unimportant and what is important is how you approach data.

I know this is the usual liberal arts jargon, and I endorse it totally. I recall for instance, very vividly, one of these alumni symposia, you know, panels that the alumni office holds every year or two or three, at which maybe five alumni who had never met each other, who were from different era and different disciplines, were together for the first time on the panel, and the question was, "What's the relation of your undergraduate major to your career?"

And every single one of them said the same thing. And they were astonished that they said the same thing. They said, "It really doesn't matter what you major in; you can learn after you get out because you've learned how to learn. You can learn what you need to know in your career."

One of them even went so far as to say, he said it aloud and the others didn't disagree.

He said, "It doesn't really matter all that much what career you go into. Because for every given reasonably intelligent alumnus there may be five or six different careers that he or she could be equally satisfied in."

FINLEY:

Exactly.

KUTSCHE:

And as I have watched to see what anthro alumni do, I have, I see this borne out with the most interesting.

I'm a bit at, not at sixes and sevens, but at loggerheads with some of my colleagues in the department, because some of them are constantly thinking about how to construct the curriculum so that it will be a good foundation

for graduate work in anthropology. And I have from the beginning and still feel that's absolutely the wrong question. That people can fend for themselves in graduate school.

Now I know it's not as true as when I took my freshman courses in graduate school, but it's still by and large true. You learn how to learn in undergraduate school.

You do what in England you do in the public schools, and our graduate schools are like the English undergraduate university. That's where you learn your career.

I think it's very central to my philosophy that we're teaching people to be critical, healthfully cynical and take no wooden nickel citizens. We're not teaching them to be anything specific.

FINLEY:

That's right.

KUTSCHE:

I mean, you don't go--you don't major in political science to be a lawyer. You don't major in biology to be a doctor, and time after time after time people make the important contributions in careers are the ones who have more than just that career narrowly, narrowly thought.

FINLEY:

Well, you're certainly making a strong statement in favor of the mission of the liberal arts college. I'm wondering if you have any particular advice for future leaders at Colorado College, how you feel they can maintain these things.

KUTSCHE:

I'll be maybe 20 percent humorous in my answer. At least two courses in anthropology should be required of every student at Colorado College! [laugh]

FINLEY:

[laugh] Yes!

KUTSCHE:

Because--now the part that's to be the other 80 percent. Because the discipline goes all the way from biology to philosophy and everything in between, and there is no other discipline that synthesizes the way we do.

And no other discipline that requires those who are serious about it--I don't mean necessarily the professionals,

but anybody who's serious about it--no other discipline requires one to think about the relation of A to everything from B through Omega.

And that's a very--I've argued since before I came to Colorado College that anthropology is the quintessential liberal arts discipline. So when I am lobbying in favor of liberal arts, I'm really lobbying in favor of my own discipline.

Very few people have really paid any attention when I have said that, but I still think it's very much true.

Students--everybody--should learn how to synthesize and should learn that, oh, I wish I could think of a good political example just like that [snaps fingers] and I can't. But let us say that when you--oh, there is a good example.

That when Robert whatever-his-name-was, that awful man who was the Port Authority Chairman in New York for so long--Moses.

FINLEY:

Moses, yes.

KUTSCHE:

Moses, Robert Moses. When he favored highways over, big highways over railroads, which he did very conspicuously during the 1940's and '50's that he was determining the social life of greater New York and also of the rest of the United States.

There is no discipline that is as instantly at work on these kinds of interrelations including divorce patterns and marriage patterns and residence patterns and so on. No discipline that instantly "grocks" these relations as quickly as anthropology does.

And so if I'm passionate about anthropology and also passionate about a liberal arts education, there's no discrepancy between them. There's no space between these two feelings in my view.

FINLEY:

Well, Buzz, I think that's a good sentence upon which to end this interview, and I want to thank you very much for your time, and it's been a very enlightening and pleasant morning. I hope for you, too.

Thank you.

[May 2010, CC Archivist Jessy Randall's addition to transcription: Please note: Kutsche recorded two additional tapes; these were sealed with the following note (presumably in Kutche's words): "Two sealed tapes, addenda to CC oral

history project, R72. Paul Kutsche. Jan. 30, 1994. Concern how Michael Nowak almost lost his job in 1970; and also how Shirley Hill Witt damaged the Department of Anthropology, c. 1972-76, and how CC reacted with political fear rather than a regard for due process and intellectual responsibility. These tapes are sealed until Michael Nowak's retirement or the year 2010 A.D., whichever comes later."