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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH

ANNA JANNEY DeARMOND

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

May 9, 1976

Transcribed by:

R. Herman

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Interview with Anna Janney DeArmond

Newark, Delaware

May 9, 1976

Interviewer: Rebecca Button

B = Rebecca Button

D = A.J. DeArmond

B: This is an interview with Anna Janney DeArmond, Professor of English at the University of Delaware from 1935 till 1975. The interview is being conducted at Ms. DeArmond's home on Manns Avenue in Newark on May 9, 1976. Going back to 1935 is a long trip, isn't it?

D: Yes, it is a long trip. Sometimes, however, it seems closer than it actually is because of the fact that I remember so well what happened in those early years. It was an interesting life. It would horrify a great many people today, particularly young people who are convinced of course that if a woman is not free and independent and so on she can't really enjoy herself. I don't think we thought much about that and it was important to me because I had never been, I think, so much a part of a community...as I was in those first years.

B: Oh, that sounds very interesting. Were you, do you think, perhaps more a part of the community because of your having to live on the campus, for example?

D: Yes. I think so. If I had been older, in fact when I was older, I was very glad to get off the campus. But when I came here I was myself only twenty-five. It seemed terribly old then and I'm sure I seemed old to my fellow...I mean old to my students and
young to my fellow teachers. But it was an interesting kind of life and everybody pulled together. There was an element of harmony, esprit de corps that I think is lost when you get into a bigger place and when you don't have that kind of relationship. I taught the students. I saw them at meals. I saw them in the dormitory, taking showers together, all the rest of it and it really was a happy, rather gay, pleasant life, and there was far less red tape than there is today and therefore you did the jobs that were really important. And you had...at least I had a considerable amount of leisure.

B: When you say you did the jobs that were important, you mean in terms of your students, working with...

D: Yes.

B: The students and teaching.

D: Yes. You taught and you saw the students in other contexts and advised them and helped them. I don't remember that there were such people as counselors and all that kind of thing. We didn't have psychologists running around or anyone of that sort, but you talked to the students about their personal problems. You came to know them. You frequently met their parents. You knew their boy friends. It was a very harmonious, pleasant relationship and for a young person it was extremely valuable experience and well worth it.

B: Do you think we're ever going to be able to have this again?

D: Well, certainly not here and I doubt whether it's likely to come anywhere, because it is perfectly true that the demands that were made on us were in a certain sense unreasonable. We really gave our lives to the job--morning, noon, and night, any hour of
the day or night. I've had kids call on me at one o'clock in the morning, wake me up because there's some problem and to a certain extent as you get older at least, you need more privacy than that. But I was doing...this was my first job. I was perfectly willing to give myself entirely to it. And there weren't as many distractions. I didn't own a car until I was thirty-one.

B: How did you happen to come to Delaware?

D: Ha ha! I graduated from college in '32. It was the lowest year of the depression. Practically nobody had jobs. I did graduate work on scholarships for three years. Just living from hand to mouth on scholarships which at that point were really huge if you made seven hundred or five hundred dollars. And at the end of my third year I heard of an opening at the University of Delaware. The University of Delaware I knew only as the place where the Delaware Foreign Study plan originated. I'd known that for years. And it was an instructorship in English. My teachers at Bryn Mawr recommended me for it and it for me. I took the job and I was so glad to have a job that I think I would have done it even if it had been far less interesting. I would have put up with almost anything in order to have a job and therefore a good many of the, well, group sacrifices that we made in privacy and such weren't very important.

B: But we weren't comparing privacy versus no privacy in that time.

D: Well, well...

B: It was a...all right...

D: And women expected in those days...a professional woman expected to make certain sacrifices again, that no woman would be willing to make now if she had any gumption at all.
B: You're beginning to sound like the modern feminist where...

D: Well...

B: Did you think of yourself as a feminist then?

D: No. Only insofar, I think this is true, only insofar as I thought of myself as being headed toward and interested in a career. But it didn't...though I probably, I don't remember, I probably griped at the time about some of the restrictions on my freedom. The fact that I wasn't allowed to smoke. I didn't really care whether I smoked or not, that I was theoretically not permitted to drink. I'm sure I thought this was unreasonable. The fact that I didn't have a key to my own dormitory and couldn't go in and out as I wanted--I'm sure I griped about these things.

B: Did you have to be let into...

D: We had to be let in just like the students.

B: By Mr. Harrington.

D: By Mr. Harrington. You have to...I used to go to the Philadelphia Orchestra regularly. One got back at a reasonable hour, usually about midnight. And as often as not, you would go all over the campus hunting for Mr. Harrington and probably he was asleep in a chair tilted back against the wall near Miss Long's office. (Laughter) But we had the same thing. Then...then when Mrs. Golder came as Dean, instantly a great many of the restrictions which Miss Robinson had imposed disappeared. We were instantly given keys to the dorms and no longer had to keep any particular hours. And, we were allowed to smoke and we were allowed to drink in moderation. I dare say if any of us had gotten really soused we would have been checked out.
B: Was Mr. Harrington under the same...

D: Mr. Harrington was still there. I can't remember how long Mr. Harrington lasted, but he lasted a long time.

B: If you could for people who may hear this tape a hundred years from now (laughter from Ms. DeArmond) describe Mr. Harrington and tell about his role.

D: Well, Mr. Harrington was the police force, really, of the women's college. He was already, I'd say, an elderly man--at least he seemed so to me--a short man with white hair and a mustache that was always stained with tobacco. Right? (laughter) And with a rather twinkling expression. I don't think he was always sober and I don't think...he was very slovenly in appearance. I mean his collar was always open and so on. I think that his great virtue probably was loyalty. And I suppose he did his duties reasonably well, but you didn't need much of a police force in those days anyhow. (Laughter) And he was...he was a campus figure. (Laughter) You must remember...(Laughter)

B: Yes. I thought he was wonderful. (Laughter)

D: Some people called him Mr. Harrington and some people just called him, brusquely, Harrington.

B: Or Pop.

D: Or Pop, that's right. Pop Harrington, that's right, sure they did.

B: Well, this conversation is going the way it might go with anyone reminiscing about the University, but you, well, in your professional career were teaching English...

D: That's right.

B: And when you think of teaching English for forty beautiful years at the University of Delaware...
D: (Laughter) Sometimes beautiful (laughter), not always.

B: What would you want to say about the kinds...if you were talking about the teaching of English in retrospect over those years to someone, perhaps a professional colleague or someone who would know something about the teaching of English, when you would look back that far, what would you think of in terms of large, maybe changes, or methods of teaching?

D: Well, it's certainly true, I guess any teaching, and of English teaching also, that the more there are changes, the more it's the same thing. I think there are differences. I think, first of all, students are all, by and large, not as well selected now. I think that we have had far more in recent years...far more very able students and we have had also far more students who are not able at all. I think that the difference between the good students then and now is that, by and large, the students we have today, this is nothing very liable to say, they're much more sophisticated. They're much more worldly. I think the students we had forty years ago...most of them were, at least the girls, nice little girls from a very provincial state and they themselves were very provincial. I think that any kids of equal intelligence now would probably be a great deal more sophisticated. They might be very possibly more purposive than they used to be. But, the...what we teach and the way we teach it, though there have been minor changes, I think...I don't think these amount to a great deal. I'm perfectly convinced that students today, by and large, are not as literate as they used to be. There's no question about that. And I don't think that we're dealing very well or very honestly with the problem of basic illiteracy in college. I think we did
better then. The classes were, by and large, smaller. We didn't set up remedial programs as such but we...I think more conscientiously dealt with these problems than we're doing today. On the other hand, of course in those days, we didn't have graduate students. So that what we have done is to extend in both directions. We have people who would be incapable...would have been incapable of going to college in 1935 who are here and, on the other hand, we have people who are going far beyond what we had in 1935. We had no graduate program in English at all until about 1950 and then we have a handful of people taking Master's degrees. Our Ph.D. program is only about fifteen or sixteen years old. I think about 1960 we have the first ones in English. The first graduate programs were in Chemistry and Chem. Engineering in the...immediately after the war. But, I don't know as far as methods are concerned and all the rest of it, I'm not very much interested, frankly, in methodology, anyway. I think what you actually have is simply a certain person who has the interest and whatever his academic field is...that is, intellectual drive combined with a sense of personal commitment to the students he's teaching. And, you have to combine this with students who are interested in whatever it is they're taking.

B: You were given at least one teaching award. Was it really one?
D: Two...two.

B: Two... What were those? Were they in particular years or particular reasons or...
D: Well, these...I think that the teaching award is in general whatever...whatever you call it...it's the same thing.
I won the first University Teaching Award in 1954 and at that time there was one award with a comparatively small financial attachment. That was not really the main thing. And then later, I should say in the '60's, not more than about ten years ago, there was more money available and then they began giving several awards in a given year to different people. And I think what the teaching award amounts to is very simply that for better or for worse students nominate for this the people that they think have done well by them and then a committee made up...I think originally of faculty, only now of faculty and students, because I've served on that committee, look over all these nominations and make a decision on the basis of this. But, I think anybody who knows anything realizes, particularly in a university as big as this now is, that this is symbolical. It doesn't really mean, though it appears to mean, that somebody or other is top dog. What it really means is that the university...the students and the administration and the faculty, too, presumably, are simply saying teaching is an important function. We want to recognize it in this fashion so that anybody who wins a teaching award is really a symbol of something that the university should stand for. I believe in the teaching award for that reason because I think that it keeps reminding people that that's what our job is. And of course I'm thoroughly convinced that we're hired--in spite of what some people think--we're hired to teach. This is our first job.

B: What do you think some people might think? That most...

D: Well, obviously...

B: An opportunity to continue research and writing?

D: Yes. Yes. I think that a considerable number of people backed
by a considerable number of administrators think that research is the primary purpose. Now I think that this might be true in certain fields, that is, let's say, in the School of Agriculture, the School of Engineering or Chemistry, or something of this sort. Part of the reason for the existence of a university is precisely research, but for most people hired in most colleges and most universities the primary job is teaching, and for some people it seems to me reasonable to expect that this is it. In other words, if I want to play the flute for my own delectation this seems to me all right but an English teacher, after all, is supposed to be teaching appreciation of literature and polishing the students' styles and in some way enhancing their sense of values so that their own lives are more interesting to them and perhaps more significantly...something that will make them more significantly able to contribute to society.

B: Do you think a large freshman English class can...the only requirement can...

D: Make them literate?

B: Make up for everything?

D: No.

B: In other words, can that be han...when you've got that many students?

D: No. It can't. I think that we fool ourselves. I think we fool ourselves probably because of necessity. I mean we cannot do what we have to do for as many students as we have and therefore we make pleasant noises about, well, but we give everybody a chance and if he's willing and able, et cetera, et cetera, and this isn't true. The only way that a person will learn to write if he doesn't already know it--and almost anybody, even the good writers who come
to college can learn to improve. The only way is having help, it's perfectly true, at an early stage, which is what freshman English is about, but in addition to that, he must live in an atmosphere where it is expected that he will write well and where he will be expected to write a lot. And since a great many of the curricula at the university now, any university, we're not different...since a great many of the curricula do not require students to think coherently and to write in an adult and reasonable fashion, obviously freshman English can't do very much. It should be one part of constant pressure. And I think we did much better in the past before there were so many ways by which people could take machine-made tests and machine-rated tests and things of that sort. Of course, when I began this wasn't possible. I suppose you could still give multiple choices, but they weren't very common, and a student was expected to come to college and write and write and write and write and write. And in this way if people supervised his writing carefully and if he didn't...if the teachers didn't have too much to do to supervise, they really learned.

B: What is your opinion of the use of the graduate assistant? Again, it's very necessary because of the numbers.

D: Yes. I think it's a necessary evil. I myself for...of course I went through the graduate program and I was never a graduate assistant. I never even attempted to become a graduate assistant. I think that it's dangerous. I think it works for some people but I think that when a graduate assistant...the ordinary graduate assistant is taking courses himself and also teaching, he's going to be graded on the courses that he takes. Nobody really, even if there's some oversight, nobody really is going to grade him on the
teaching. I think the graduate assistantship tends to encourage a graduate student to think that teaching is not very important. In addition to that I think that graduate assistants are...this was not true as a matter of fact when I began teaching because when I started Lawrence Wilson, whom you will remember, and I, who were the young people in our department, were supposed to be much the toughest teachers. In fact, both of us were taken to task by Doctor Sypherd who was Chairman of the department because we were too hard on the students. You may not have known it before. But, at any rate, now the...the fact is, and I hear it on all sides so I'm sure it's true, that most graduate assistants are much too lenient with students. I don't know whether this is because they, themselves, have grown up--of course these people would have graduated from college in the sixties--whether they themselves have grown up in a very permissive society or whether what I think is true, they have never learned to distinguish something that I think a teacher must be able to distinguish--between his sense of the person as a person and his liking, or perhaps the opposite, of the student and his judgment of that student's capabilities. And I think a good teacher...you can never do this perfectly...but I think a good teacher essentially must be able to make that distinction. I have flunked students whom I liked and admired. I've given A's to students whom I disliked and distrusted. And I think that you have to make these distinctions and I think a lot of young people nowadays beginning teaching don't seem able to do this. And I also...I think they have a notion which I believe entirely erroneous, that you curry favor with students by giving them good grades and in my experience there are a few students who
will resent it if you mark them down and will love you dearly if you give them high grades, but in my experience—and I've had a lot of experience in a lot of places—a student is usually pretty honest in his judgment of you and students whom you treat fairly, even if harshly, will usually not resent it and very often will like you. And I think that young people now don't seem to be able to realize that this happens. I can't myself...I could never, I think, give a student a grade in order to make him like me. I'd rather be liked by students than not but I don't think I could ever be persuaded that this was the way to win his liking. And I don't think it is true. I have had students whom I have treated harshly from the academic point of view who have...I'm quite...without any hypocrisy...I'm sure without hypocrisy have obviously liked me and that I've liked. But I think this is something a lot of the younger people don't seem to understand. I don't see why.

One of the problems that I think is with us today is that in the sixties particularly departments like English and History and Mathematics, the basic academic subjects, turn out teachers so rapidly to go into the public schools that very often these people were not of the quality that you really want your high school teachers to be, and I think some of the problems that we're suffering today in college are the result of the kind of teaching that the youngsters have had. Some of it is, of course, the result of social conditions. The permissive society in general and television, as everybody says, but a great deal of it is that we did not have a chance to select the best people to go into teaching. These people now, many of them, have tenure in schools and we're turning out now a smaller number of potentially very good teachers but they
can't get jobs. In general, of course, like any other college teacher, I approve of tenure but tenure does sometimes entrench people who aren't first-rate and to some extent this is what has happened. And how we're going to escape the problems of this sort, I don't see. For the moment this is what we have to face. But the larger issues I think are the disorders of our society in the last fifteen years or so and we have not and we will not very easily recover from the difficulties of the sixties. And we're in difficulties of course right now of a different sort. This doesn't mean that I'm not reasonably hopeful that American democracy will survive and all that sort of thing but I think that we are suffering in education from things that are much wider than just educational problems. That's some of it. I don't know how relevant that is to what we're talking about.

B: I...I think it's probably many answers into one.

D: Yes.

B: That that would be the underlying problem.

D: I think it's hopeful, as a matter of fact, that the pressure on students to go to college is very much less than it used to be. More students and often very intelligent students now are saying, well, there are other things that are just as good or better and I'm not going to go to college. But there's still a tremendous pressure to go to college and what I think is even more...this is really outside my bailiwick, but what I think is even more significant and I think it's very hopeful, people are beginning to say now--why keep everybody in school till eighteen? Why does everybody have to graduate from high school or why not set up alternative programs and let people quit at fifteen or sixteen or something of
that sort? I think, in other words, that if fewer people graduated from high school and if more people went into other kinds of work than essentially academic work, colleges also would improve and the drop...the drop rate of entrance into college is an excellent thing. We have far too many people trying to pursue a single track...a single more or less intellectual kind of training.

B: Of course the problem is what about the other jobs--the skilled jobs disappearing and becoming--needing additional highly skilled technicians...

D: Well, this is true, but on the other hand, we need a great many people to do simply ordinary simple things that really aren't very simple. We need more good plumbers and more good builders and more good carpenters and more good this, that and the other. And I think it's a misunderstanding of democracy to assume that in a democracy these people are not valuable and important, and my idea is not that you go into carpentry and are therefore considered inferior to somebody who goes on and takes a Ph.D., but that each of them is doing something worth doing. And if we could only make people realize that there are different ways of satisfying their own lives and also of satisfying the needs of society, we would be much better off.

B: What has been your particular interest? You taught American literature for how many years?

D: Well, I taught American literature from 1937 until I retired, so it's pretty nearly forty, but I didn't originally go...I went into American literature, as a matter of fact, simply because...lots of people have done this kind of thing...it was the most vacant field at the time I was working. Now it is terribly overcrowded. If you
look at any bunch of people applying for a college job, a tremendous proportion of them will now be in American literature. But I went into it because at the time it was a field that I thought was fresh and interesting and not very much...not very crowded. But I didn't train to do this primarily, you see. I trained to do...first I trained to do Elizabethan drama, then I trained to do eighteenth century English literature. Well, I never taught Elizabethan drama at all except peripherally as parts of other courses and I did teach eighteenth century English literature a few times, but not very often.

B: What was your favorite American author in terms of teaching?

D: Well, I think Henry James, without question, and I've taught several times...I've taught graduate courses with Henry James as the focus. In fact, courses from which James is one of several figures and then several times, of course, in Henry James alone. He seems to me one of the great English novelists. I think that the reputation of James, or the change in the reputation of James, is very interesting. This happens, of course, to other writers as well but when I first became interested in James, which was when I was a college undergraduate, I think I had read *Daisy Miller* or a few short things earlier than that. But I became addicted to James when I was about twenty-one or -two and at that time. James had been dead a relatively short time--less than twenty years and--oh yes, everybody knew Henry James but after all he wasn't, I suppose, very important. And for a good many years thereafter James was the kind of writer that people nodded to politely but didn't pay much attention to. And I've lived my life...all my life I've been interested in him and I've lived long enough to see him become
in the eyes of critics and English teachers and a great many students as well one of the great writers of our time, and this kind of rise and fall in popularity, I think, is characteristic of the whole pattern of the study of English literature. When I began teaching, for example, Donne was not considered by any means a major writer. I think we've talked about this before. He was a minor writer of the seventeenth century and he...an innovator and he wrote some curious and interesting prose and poetry. Now he would be included in almost any anthology of major writers. And the same sort of up and down, of course, happens in many cases. I suspect, though I'm not of course sure of this, that Henry James's reputation will drop again, but I'm convinced myself that he is one of the great and lasting American writers--indeed, one of the great writers...novelists in English literature. But I've seen enough of this to know that these things change. When I first taught American literature, for example, I did not teach Faulkner but I taught Thomas Wolfe. Nobody reads Thomas Wolfe now as far as I know and of course Faulkner is very, very important. And these things simply alter. I began by teaching people like Steinbeck and I'm not at all sure that anybody teaches Steinbeck now except possibly Of Mice and Men and I think that's primarily relegated to high school classes. And what you see invariably if you teach for a long time is changes in style. My orientation as a teacher, of course, was also historical. The teachers who came along a generation after I did for the most part took a, well, a literary critical point of view and I think now we're swinging back again toward the historical point of view. I don't think any of these points of view is sacred and I don't
I think any of them is complete. I think you have to do all these things. I think we learned a great deal from the new criticism. I think we learned to ask students to look in detail at pieces of writing and to read less and to read more carefully, particularly poetry. But I think that the new criticism also had the very serious effect of cutting pieces of literature all from life, and particularly from the life of the writer and from the life of the times, and I believe this is beginning to be rectified now. The new criticism is no longer as popular as it was and I think this is right. But I think that different people growing up in different periods more or less tend to correct the balance in one way or another. But there is inevitably, I think, a change in opinion. At the time, for instance, that I began teaching I suppose the Victorian period in general was looked upon as--for one thing old hat and for another thing as being, oh, narrow-minded and fussy, and so on and so on. Right now we're in a Victorian revival and I think this is even...even a revival, heaven help us, have some of the worst artistic atrocities of the Victorian period. Terrible Victorian furniture as well as good things coming back. But Tennyson is now on the way up again and this happens, and it's inevitable. I think that the really good writer, like the really good artist, has staying power and will probably come back. I doubt whether very many great writers are completely lost. They go in and out of fashion but I don't think many of them disappear.

B: What do you think the value of writers' workshops is?

D: I have very little sympathy with workshops in general. (Laughter) I think that often it's a sort of thumb-twiddling business and I
don't think people learn to write by workshops primarily. I think writing is probably a very lonely business. I don't think that they really learn very much about writing. I think that there are far too many colloquia and workshops and, oh, all these things. I'm not sympathetic to this kind of thing.

B: You...you have...you don't know any writers who've come out of writers' workshops in your...

D: Well, I dare say there are some but I must say I'm not vividly aware of them. (Laughter) I'm not sure either what is worse. I understand the reason for it. I'm not sure that the current tendency of colleges to employ as members of the staff people who are practicing writers is necessarily very good. I don't think the practicing writer is necessarily able to teach. I don't think the practicing writer always knows, though sometimes he does--Henry James is a great exception, I think--I don't think he always knows how he gets his effects and I think a little like the graduate assistant, he is divided in his own mind. This is one of the ways, of course, in which a creative writer now makes his living. And, I understand, from this point of view, economically it's a good thing, but I don't believe for example that...I remember Robert Frost talked about himself as...as domestic or domesticated poet and I don't believe that Robert Frost probably created very many poets while teaching in college, and I don't believe that his teaching in college helped him to be a better poet. I think this is an illusion. I don't think that the creative writer really belongs in a university, and I have very little faith in taking courses in how to write poetry or how to write short stories or something of this sort.
B: Well, I think that...

D: You can learn expository writing, it seems to me, but I don't think that you can learn to...creative writing. But I feel the same way about art.

B: I was going to say, it's like the artist in residence.

D: Yes, the artist in residence or the musician, or whatever.

B: What about Robert Hillyer coming to the university?

D: Well, now, Robert Hillyer, as I understand it--I'd heard this from a number of people who would be better judges than I--Robert Hillyer was apparently that rare bird who did have the knack of teaching. The rare creative artist who has the knack of teaching. And I think that there are some. And I think that if a university for its prestige likes to have attached to it somebody who is important, really important, this is all right. But I don't think that such a person is genuinely part of the teaching process. I don't think probably he contributes a great deal. For instance, I don't think that Robert Hillyer was particularly successful in teaching English seminar. This was not what he was cut out to do. He read poetry superbly, and not all poets do read superbly. He did apparently have the knack of stirring peoples' imaginations and if people had a natural tendency to be creative in this fashion, he did something of this sort. But I think he was a rare bird and I've heard other people say the same thing. He was a most charming person. He was also a very difficult person, but that's neither here nor there.

B: But don't you think probably that that person, as you said, would be the lonely worker and would not be the group...

D: Right.
D: Yeah. I think the kind of people that we have in most colleges now, I think all colleges apparently yearn for such people. I think they're quite talented young men and women who have a knack at literature and music or what not, but are not first-class creative minds or figures, and I don't object to having them or anything of that sort, but I think that we bank upon their being successful in the fashion that the result doesn't prove. I haven't...I haven't very much sympathy with that sort of thing. For what it's worth, the subject that has been of most interest to me and taken more of my attention in the last, oh, fifteen years, more or less, than any other is a course in the English Bible. This was a course established at this university, I don't know how far back, by Dr. Sypherd who taught it for many years, and despite that Dr. Sypherd was an old man even when I first knew him and despite the fact that he was in many ways very conventional, I know enough to realize that from the point of view of teaching the Bible, he was extremely open-minded and objective and not at all religious in a matter of sense. Then after he gave up the Bible course when he became Acting President, I think, and then President, Dr. Allen took it over and Dr. Allen had a better linguistic background in this than either Dr. Sypherd or I. For one thing he knew Greek, which I don't. I don't know either Greek or Hebrew but of course it is supposed to be the Bible in English, and I guess this doesn't matter very much. But at any rate, this has been the most exciting course that I have taught in the, well, the sense that are--isn't my academic
career. (Laughter) For the fifteen years--this I think statistically is quite interesting for the benefit of anybody who wants to know something about teaching in the future. The year I took this over...well, I should go back to say that one of the reasons I took it over was that either the last or next to the last year that Dr. Allen took the...was teaching the course, I decided that it would be fun--because I didn't have a very systematic knowledge of the Bible--to take it with him, so I sat in on the course. I started out by sitting in for the first three days or something like that, and I was really bitten and I stayed through the whole year. I don't think I missed a class. And then a couple of years later when he retired, the department wanted somebody to take this course and I said, being still remarkably young and foolish--because I was old enough not to be young and foolish--I said, very well, I'll do it. Well, it was the best decision I think I've ever...ever made. And I took it over, and the first year I taught it I kept a record of how much time I spent on this course. It met, of course, three fifty-minute periods a week. I spent an average that first year of twenty-seven hours a week preparing for that, an average of nine hours for every fifty minutes. I worked like a very demon. I had to. There were too many things I didn't know and students--and of course I've always encouraged this in class--students would ask me questions I'd not know the answer, and between that period and the next one I'd have to find out. And this is, of course, the way you learn and of course now I have it pretty well under my belt, I suppose, and each year I change it to some extent and add a little here and take out something there, modify it depending a little on the response of the
students, and so on. But it is endlessly fascinating and it has been...I think it has been a particularly rewarding course because nobody has to take it...nobody. And I have had students, of course lots of them are English majors, a good many are History majors, but I've had students in Physics, in Engineering, and Chemistry and Home Economics, and all over the countryside. Most students in it are extremely good. I have had more A's in that course than in any other course that I teach and it's not an easy course. On the other hand, I've had a considerable number of very poor students in it because they probably have come without sufficient knowledge of history or sufficient interest in history, and some of them come in deceived by the fact that they've taught Sunday School for ten years to nice little children and they think that this is what they're going to be doing in this course, and of course it doesn't work out that way. But partly because it is in a sense outside my own field and partly because it's an enormous field anyhow, I never finish and I never will, but something new is happening all the time.

B: You sound like the Rabbi in the...

D: (Laughter) Well, I doubt whether I am. But one of the things that it...you see what happens in this is that something new is dug up somewhere or other and instantly--and I'm sure I don't know all the things that are happening, but I find out a good deal of this--and instantly changes what I have to say about something or other, so that I'm more or less on the front edge.

B: When you say dug up you mean...

D: Well, I mean...

B: You would mean Dead Sea Scrolls or...
D: Well, yeah, this sort...

B: Foundations of building...you mean...

D: I mean...new research which very often is something that's been dug up. When I first started teaching the Bible, which wasn't very long ago, I said that it was probable that the story of the Tower of Babel came from Mesopotamia and after I'd taught it for a few years somebody found the tablets with the story of the Tower of Babel on it in Mesopotamia. Now this, I suppose, is the kind of excitement that scientists have to a certain extent. I regret the fact that I don't know Greek and don't know Hebrew. You can even if you're not...even if you don't know these languages, it is not, of course, difficult for you to find out the backgrounds of key words and this you have to do sometimes, and a great deal of the scholarship is put into reasonably good form in English. A tremendous lot is done in English. And what it amounts to is there's more to read than you can possibly keep up with and, after all, this is only one of the number of things that I've been doing for the last fifteen years and I've still gone on teaching the other things as well, American literature and such. But, by and large, this has been the most exciting thing in the last, oh, approximately fifteen years of my academic life. And...

B: Probably you do need to concentrate, work and find out...

D: That's part of it. And the other part is the attitude of the students, because if you get as I think is generally true... if you get a group of students most of whom are essentially quite ignorant of the Bible but who want to learn more, and who have open minds, it is great fun to see what happens to them.
I almost always on the final examination try to include at least one question which is not a question of how much they know or anything of that sort, but I say something like, "What that you read in the Bible was most surprising to you?" "What did you least expect to find?" And of course you get all sorts of answers. One of the answers that I cherish most, almost all of them are astonished that the Bible has so much humor. They don't anticipate this at all and I suppose they wouldn't take the course in the first place unless they thought it would be interesting, but I think almost all of them find it more interesting than they expect, just as I am sure they have found it increasingly interesting. The students who have taken this course of course fall into all sorts of categories. I've had a great many Jewish students, a great many Catholic students, and then all varieties of Protestants. In general, the Catholic students and the Jewish students are the most receptive to the course. Some of the Catholic students say, well, I never read anything in the Bible before so I have no prejudices one way or the other. The Jewish students very often know the Old Testament--some of them of course know Hebrew--and they're very often able to help me out in things that I don't know. But, by and large, they have been excellent in their attitude toward the course and have adjusted to the non-sectarian, the secular point of view very well. The Protestant students fall into two categories. Some of them are exactly like these I've been mentioning--most of them, as a matter of fact--but the students who found the course unpleasant or who have resented the approach in the course have almost all of them been Protestants. And they've been right
wing Protestants, the Protestants that belong to the various fundamentalist churches. I try at the beginning of the course always to say that the course is taught from a non-sectarian point of view which, of course, it has to be because I have this mixed group of students and because this is a secular institution. And I try to make clear that the approach will be objective and scientific—that we are interested in the Bible as history and as literature and from a textual point of view, and so on, and almost invariably a student or two will come up afterward and will either ask me for more details on this or else will drop out, though not invariably. I've had trouble with the students sometimes who have stayed in the course and then have been unwilling to accept the course on the basis which I have set, and these students are always a minority, but sometimes they have been fairly obstreperous. On the other hand, and this is, I think, the most interesting of these experiences, I've had students sometimes who were fundamentalists but who took the course precisely because their point of view was different. And once in awhile I've had students who have said to me, "Well, I will answer the questions that you give on tests or answer in class in the way that you want to be answered, but of course I don't believe this." For instance, they will say...they will argue the...the, oh, for example the authorship of the first five books of the Bible from a scientific and scholarly point of view and then either say or imply, well, of course these books really were written by Moses. (Laughter) So that I've had this sort of thing. I haven't had many students who were really destructive in class, though I've had a few who've tried to interrupt class
discussion and tried to bend the situation to their own purposes. Indeed, I had one student a couple of years ago, a not very bright boy unfortunately but a very sincere boy, who, well along in the course when he'd interrupted for the nth time and I had suggested that he should not interrupt in this fashion, said flatly, "I am in this course in order to save the souls of everybody in this room." Whereupon I told him, "I'm sorry, Sir, but that is not the reason you're here." So that I have had all kinds. And of course I've had also many discussions—and I suppose in some cases you could call them arguments—with students out of class, and I'm always willing to talk in this fashion to students regardless of the point of view, and I've gotten along perfectly well with most of them. But most of the students who take this course are willing to buy, I suppose you would say, the approach that I take and to study the Bible as a work of ancient history and ancient literature, and obviously come to a much greater appreciation of it because of this. And I try never in teaching the course...I try never to be iconoclastic. That is, I never say anything with the intention of affronting anybody, though obviously some people are affronted. But that's a different matter and a good teacher can convey by his tone whether he is deliberately needling people or whether he is being as objective as possible and that's, of course, the way I've managed to handle the course for the most part. But I've had the experience of having Jewish students who have come up and said at the end of the course, "Well, of course I've never read the New Testament. It's fascinating. I had no idea that Jesus Christ was a perfectly good Jew and held exactly the point of
view of...as the prophets that I believe in." So you have all sorts of things of this sort. One Catholic student came up at the end of the course and said, "It was just like you're opening a window and letting in fresh air." It's this sort of thing that makes it so interesting, the response of the students, as well as the fascination of the material itself.

B: You're still teaching aren't you?

D: Yes. I'm teaching it right now. I'm teaching it in Extension in Wilmington at Wilcastle and I hope I'll be able to continue. I had the interesting experience last fall, almost immediately after I'd actually retired, of teaching a course--a mini-course in the Bible at the Westminster Presbyterian Church in Wilmington. When the minister asked me whether I would be willing to do this--it was sometime during the summer that we met--I said, "Well, I'm not a Presbyterian nor indeed anything very much like a Presbyterian and I don't know whether my approach will be acceptable to your...to your group." And he said, "Oh, that will be perfectly all right." And it certainly was. This was a group of adults and...

B: Do you find that a very interesting change for you? Are there any pluses that you can find in the Continuing Education course versus the usual student that you've been used to?

D: Well, I haven't taught enough in Continuing Education to make a real judgment on this. I think as long as we're touching on the same thing, not exactly in the same fashion--but I think one of the most interesting developments in recent years in this university, and I'm sure in almost all others, is simply the fact that there are so many more what you might call adults in the
university than there used to be. There are so many people who are a generation or part of a generation older than the ordinary undergraduates. When these people first began to come in they were so rare that they, I think, were uncomfortable and most of the students were rather uncomfortable with them. There are now so many of them that I think everybody takes this in stride and I think that these older students have the great advantage over the ordinary undergraduate of more experience and more maturity and, of course, they are only here if they are really interested and they are extremely...extremely useful members of the class right now. They have courage enough to speak up, express their opinions, and they are usually bright—as the education people say, highly motivated—one of the delights of teaching nowadays.

B: What about your experience in teaching as a woman, has your being a woman affected your career?

D: Well, so far as the teaching itself is concerned, I don't think my being a woman has any relevance whatever. In other words, I've taught exactly the same kinds of courses as men and I've carried the same kinds of schedules and all the rest of it. But I don't think there is a question, I think any woman of my age would tell you the same thing, that being a woman in this very masculine world of the upper academic reaches, as I suppose it is, has been a very tough business. I think this is something that you mightn't know and I think it is quite interesting, it must be fifteen or twenty years ago that the Modern Language Association made a study of women in college and university teaching to find out who was in and when and how, and what not. And what they
discovered in the course of this survey, and I'm sure this is quite accurate, is that for many years at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century there were a very considerable number of women, particularly in certain fields. The Modern Language Association of course was interested in people in English and French and so on and so on. And then a change took place with people born in 1910. Well, Ms. Clift and I were both born in 1910, and I think the reason for this is very simple. We came of age professionally, I mean we were ready to enter into the profession in the depression years, and when there are few jobs, women don't get them. And I think what actually happened is that a very few of us were lucky enough in one way or another to get into the sequence and stay in it. But if you look around you, I think you will discover that people like Ms. Clift and me, who are just retiring, who've just reached sixty-five, represent a comparatively small number of women and they...there is a gap really of a generation before there are any large number of women again. There are very few women in this academic game between our age and the group that's coming up to about forty now.

B: Why...

D: A whole generation you see...because first the depression, then the war, after the war the tremendous push of everybody to have big families and all the rest of it. So that for something like twenty-five years a...a regular generation, very, very few women went into teaching.

B: But you're saying that you and Eve Clift came in at the bottom of the depression.
D: Yes. We're among a handful of people, the sort of rear guard of that first generation or second generation of women teachers who managed to get in and then there's a long period beyond which--1910 according to Modern Language Department was--Modern Language Association--was the cut-off point and we just...just made it, so to speak. But very few people made it afterward. This is one thing. The other thing, of course, is the fact--and there's no question about this--but all the years of my academic life and hers...all the years there was often overt and certainly undercover discrimination of one kind or another. I am quite sure that when I began to teach I received the same salary, seventeen hundred a year, that any men would have. But over the years the salary fell back and back and back and back, and then later in comparatively recent times when very frequently you got a percentage increase, if your salary is already smaller than that of your male colleagues, of course you get farther and farther behind. In addition to that, there is no question about the fact that a woman has a much harder time, and I think this is probably still true, getting a promotion. I was put up for full professor in 1954. I got my full professorship in 1968. And...

B: Did you complain during those years?

D: Well, I was put up over and over again for a good many years because I had a department Chairman, Dr. Allen, who was willing to go to bat for me and did again and again. I also, at at least one point, had a Dean, Dean Squire, who was willing to go to bat for me. But at a certain point after I'd been put up a good many years, according to Dr. Allen himself, he was told you are not to put up DeArmond again. And I was myself told by a Dean, the Dean
of Arts and Science who shall be nameless, you are not a fit person to be a full professor. And so what you have is sometimes, as I say, overt discrimination and sometimes discrimination that is covered up in one way or another. Let's face it, nobody is perfect and a person who is making distinctions can always find something wrong with you to keep you from getting the increment in salary or the rise in rank or something of this sort. And if it isn't on one ground then it's on another. Most people...I don't think anybody really seriously has objected to my teaching but there are always shortcomings, weaknesses of one kind or another that you can find in anybody's work and this, I think, is one of the things that is used constantly to keep women down. Now I think that at the moment women have a much better chance than they've had for a long time and of course this place has brought in a lot of women. But one of the things that I think is also very interesting, a couple of years before I was before I knew I was going to retire, I made a real effort to introduce into the department as a candidate for an associate professorship or at least a full...or a full professorship or at least an associate professorship, a woman who seemed to me very, very good and I could never get this woman even interviewed for the job. Now in the English department, I am not only the only woman in its entire history who has ever been a professor, which is true, but in addition to that there has never been a woman brought in at tenured rank. We brought in associate professors and full professors but they have always been male. But of the handful of women, and we've had only a handful, no one has ever come in except at one of the lower ranks and then, of course, over
the years have to move up. Now Ann Weygandt is the only other woman who reached an associate professorship by the end of her career except for one associate professor, female associate professor we have now. I remember quite a good many years ago when I think Ms. Dyer was the only remaining full professor, female full professor in Chemistry--after Ms. Drake retired she was a full professor--that the head of the Chemistry department said, "Well, we don't need to have women in our department, at least one is enough, because we don't have very many women students." But the English department has always had a preponderance of women students and it has never considered this a good reason to have very few men, so that it's worked one way but not the other. I think it's important, probably, for you to realize what you may not have, that at the time that I came here, the time Ms. Clift came here, Ms. Dyer and the various other people of the older members of the faculty now mostly retired, there had to be one woman in each of several departments. There was a slot, in other words, for a woman only in the English department at the University of Delaware, that person assigned to the Women's College. And I was fortunate enough to get that job. Ten years later when the colleges were combined, the university was under no compulsion to have any more women brought in, and by and large it didn't. But those of us who had already been here because we'd been attached to the Women's College--at least many of us stayed on and, in fact, almost all the older members...older women members of the faculty, now almost all retired, I think Mrs. Bohning is the only one still left, came in at the time when there had to be such a person in the department. One person had to be of the
female sex. So that a good many of us sneaked in, so to speak, through the back door and when Women's College went out of existence, the college...the university didn't have any particular reason to employ women, and obviously it didn't.

B: Why did you choose to remain at the University of Delaware? Certainly you who received teaching awards and had the respect of the students and the department would have been other offered... other opportunities at other places.

D: Yes. This is perfectly true. I was offered other possibilities several times and at least one of them was very attractive to me. I almost went to Goucher at one point and there were several others. There was one in the middle west, there was one up in northern Pennsylvania, and so on. I really liked Delaware very much. Part of the reason is the simple fact, and I'm sure this is important for other people as well, geographical location. I'm an Easterner and I'm fairly urban and being close to Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, Washington, and so forth, is important. Another reason was that I have genuinely very much liked most of the people I've had to do with. I've enjoyed most of my colleagues in my department, a great many other members of the faculty. I have liked, I should think, ninety-nine percent of my students very well, even ones that weren't particularly very able, and I also had an opportunity to teach a considerable variety of courses. Now, it is true that I counted up recently this fall and I found out that I had taught freshman English seventy-one times, which was dotty even to think about (laughter) and certainly dotty to do. But on the other hand, I did have a chance to teach a good many things that I was interested
in. I think that that's part of it and then, of course, it was also true, and this might or might not have been as true there, that I was able to vary...I don't think I could have stood it otherwise...I was able to vary my teaching to some extent by teaching in other places. I've taught at the University of Pennsylvania. I've taught at Goucher. And I've taught three times overseas. I've taught at the University of Munich. I've taught at the University of Sheffield, and most recent...

B: Oh...

Note: The tape has run out at this point on side one of the DeArmond tape as she was in mid-sentence about her most recent overseas teaching.

Side two of the DeArmond tape begins as follows:

D: (Laughter) The first opportunity I had came about 1955 or so when through somebody at the University of Pennsylvania I was asked whether I would go to the University of Kiel, Germany, to establish an American Studies program. I didn't know whether I was really confident to do this or not but I was willing to try it. But the University of Delaware would not allow me to go because they said they hadn't had sufficient notice of this and I therefore was not permitted to leave. So after that I applied at the suggestion of Dean Squire, who was one of my very good friends and supporters, to go on a Fulbright and I gave western Europe in a general way as my...the locale I wanted and after various backings and fillings it turned out that I went to Munich, Germany, which I think was probably the best place
that I could possibly have gone. For one thing, the university, of course, is a very famous and an excellent institution. For another thing, Munich was a fascinating place to live. I worked hard but I had a good deal of leisure. I didn't have to work very hard at weekends, and compared with the kind of work that I had done at the University of Delaware I had a great deal of freedom and so I went to of music and theater and I traveled and did a great many things that were great fun. The experience of teaching at the university...it was the first university except for Delaware that I had ever really been associated with and I was there a year. The experience of teaching there was extremely interesting. The students were all of them candidates for either a Ph.D. or what we would call certification for high school teaching, which was a very much higher standard kind of program than in this country, and I found them almost universally very good. I also found that they...many of them or almost all of them, indeed, wrote a great deal better than most of the American students that I had taught. They were far and away the most intellectually exciting students that I had ever taught and to a large extent that I have ever taught down to this day. The experience was in every way very rewarding, very refreshing, a splendid kind of thing and this bit me with the idea that I wanted periodically to go to some foreign country and teach. So that after approximately ten years, that was '55... '56, '57...approximately ten years I tried to get another teaching job overseas. This time I didn't work through Fulbright but through a person I knew and it turned out that I went to the University of Sheffield. I'd been in Munich for a whole year.
I was in Sheffield for only seven months, from January to August or thereabouts, and my teaching was quite different. In Munich I had taught lecture courses, seminars at various levels. Here I taught only tutorials. I didn't have any lectures at all, which was partly what I wanted to do because I wanted to get to know students intimately as you do in small groups. I taught chiefly things I had taught already in English and American literature. But the other reason that I went to England was that between the time I was in Munich and this time which was now 1967, I had taken over the chairmanship...I don't think I had a title at the beginning...of the English Education program. That is the program in the English department. There were about four hundred students in it. It was very nearly half the group of majors. The program was for students who were expecting to teach in the secondary schools of the state--and I had supervised student teaching. I'd made contact with, well, I suppose not most, but very many of the high school teachers in the state. I had advised, oh, I suppose hundreds of students who were in the program and I'd become very much interested in the way we were and in some senses were not preparing the students to teach. And since I knew that the English universities were by and large more selective than ours and since I knew that the English schools were presumably better than most of our schools, I wanted to go to England, and England was important because here a real command of the language was essential. I wanted to find out something about English education at first hand. Though I went partly because I was trying to find out something about the preparation of teachers, it seemed to me I wouldn't know very
much unless I taught in the university and therefore had a standard of comparison. What was the product of the school like? So I attached myself to the University of Sheffield on a very small honorarium. I was on leave of absence this time from the university with a salary. I had never been before. Delaware did not give me a sabbatical in the ordinary sense until '67. But I was attached to the University of Sheffield as a member of the English department but I also had contact with the department, as we would say, of education and I spent a great deal of that year going around to other universities, to secondary schools of all sorts—that is public schools in the English sense, private schools, the comprehensive modern schools, the old-fashioned segregated schools for boys and girls, the grammar schools, and so on, and even some...some what we would call elementary schools, and then visited various universities, the traditional collegiate type like Durham. I didn't go to Oxford and Cambridge. It seemed to me that was fruitless. Bath, a technological university just developing liberal arts and teacher training programs, to teachers colleges—I made all sorts of contacts and did all sorts of things. This was an entirely different experience from the experience in Munich. By and large, the students I taught—and they were of course B students for candidates for Bachelors Degrees—these students were not as good, I think, as the students in Munich, but I don't think one could have expected them to be. They were not as sophisticated and they were not as advanced, and they were again distinctly superior, by and large, to the students that I had taught here. Across the board they were much more highly selected. Then, having done that, approximately...well, it was
seven years later, I decided that I wanted to go abroad for a different purpose and to a different kind of place. I wanted to go this time to another part of the English-speaking world and that limited, of course, the places I should go very distinctly because I wanted to find out what the...first of all...
what the literature of another colonial English society was like and I wanted to do it not by reading books at home but by reading them in context, and I also wanted to see how the English education program in another colonial British society operated. I didn't want to go to Canada because I've been to Canada many times and Canada, it seems to me, is very much like the United States. I didn't want to go to South Africa for political and social reasons and it seemed to me New Zealand and Australia were the two places most likely. Besides that, I'd never been in either of these places and I thought it would be rather fun so I managed to get a job very much like the Sheffield job, as a matter of fact, in the University of New England which was once part of the University of Sydney. It's in the northern part of New South Wales and then, I think, in the fifties--twenty years ago--became a separate university. This was an extremely interesting experience from many points of view. Australia is more like this country than any other place I've ever been except, of course, for Canada. It has most of the faults and most, I suppose, of the virtues of this country. It is very much Americanized compared to most other places I've been. The university it seems to me is in many ways more like the university that I know here, but it's not so good as the University of Delaware and the students are not nearly so good as the University of Delaware. I thought that the training
in high schools...and I didn't have much chance to get out into schools there as I'd hope to, partly because I was teaching in a very small and very remote town and I didn't have, as in England, the opportunity to go from place to place. But I did, of course, see the products of the schools and I did know a little bit about what was going on. I think the educational system in Australia, as far as I was able to judge it, is inferior to ours. The students at the university were, by and large, a not very well-trained group of youngsters. Like youngsters in this country, they're friendly and warm-hearted and very attractive personally but, like a large number of our students, they're not very intellectual. The other half of the experience...the exposure to Australian life, which of course Australia is a huge place and I was there only five months...the Aus...the exposure to Australian life and the beginning of a real acquaintance with Australian literature...a serious acquaintance with Australian literature...were very profitable indeed. And that was the reason...one of the reasons I did this, of course, was that I hoped if I could to...to teach Australian literature and that's the reason that when I came back--now this was only a year ago this past term--when I came back I had taught the first course in Australian literature that had ever been taught here and one of the very few Australian literature courses I think taught anywhere in the country. I am also supposed to be teaching it this time next year again. The course...as it worked out I had a very small group of very enthusiastic students. I think it was, as far as such a course can be, and on the first go-around you can't really tell...I think it was a success. But the thing that
interested me...the reason I wanted to do this was that I wanted to find out...find out by actual contact with the people and the country and the literature...I wanted to find out what happened when you transplanted English literature in the English tradition to another country. I know my own pretty well. And so I now have the background in English literature that I have developed over many years. I taught American literature for a good while and now I know a third aspect of the...of let's say the Anglo-Saxon culture and this seems to me very profitable to me and I...I wish I had more time to go on teaching because I think it would be profitable also to students. But this is...this is really the story...a person I knew at Swarthmore who retired after not as many years as I've been at Delaware, who was very amusing and witty, said at the time of his retirement, well, he'd been at Swarthmore for thirty years or whatever it was and he'd enjoyed it very much but he enjoyed it a great deal more because he'd been away quite often. And I'm sure this is true in my experience and I think I've been overseas to teach...I don't guarantee this is true...but I think I've been overseas to teach more than almost anybody else on the university faculty and certainly more than anybody else in the English department. Several people have gone to Germany or to England or this place or that but I think I've done better, if it is doing better by this aspect of teaching, than anybody else in the department and I've enjoyed it very much. I think it's...I think it's extremely stimulating. A great many people would say, well, I should have put in those sabbaticals doing research and turning out books and articles. Well, I've...I'm not particularly interested in that. I have one
book that's gone through two editions and I have a good many articles and I've written lots of reviews and that's enough to satisfy myself that I can do it if I want to, but I really don't think it's very important. And as a matter of fact, I think this is an ironical thing to have...there's a great deal of talk about, well, if you're not doing research you really can't be very good teaching. I don't buy this at all, if by research it means necessarily publication. My one book I had had occasion to refer to...I dare say I could have dragged it in by its tail if I had wanted to...but my one book I've had occasion to refer to in my long teaching career in exactly one course which I've taught once. There is no necessary connection between your research and your teaching. I think that for a person in English the important thing is to keep on reading. I don't mean just reading novels which are pleasant or poetry or something of this sort, but just to keep on reading and reading and reading in a relevant pattern, and I think this is far more likely to affect your research...I mean far more likely to affect your teaching favorably than necessarily...than doing research. I...I think that it's been very helpful to me that I've had to review a very large number of books because this means I have to do a lot of reading. And I suspect that this is more valuable also than research. The other thing that I think is important--and after all I gave at least fifteen years of my life to it and a very large part of my time--was the whole English education program. I don't in the least buy the notion that English teachers in universities and colleges are somehow above their contemporaries in high schools and the lower schools, and I think frankly it's enlightened self-interest to see that the kind of people we
turn out to teach are good. And I therefore deplore the ivory
tower point of view that many people in college education seem
to have, and I have enjoyed very much going out into the schools
and seeing what goes on there and watching my own students in
many cases develop into good teachers, and all this sort of thing.
I really think that this is one of the things that I've done at
the university that from my point of view has been very valuable
and that most of my colleagues have hardly valued at all. I
don't think that this did me any good worth mentioning in getting
promoted or in winning raises in salary or anything of that kind
and yet it seems to me it was a very important service to the
university and very profitable to me. I think it made me a better
teacher. I think it gave me much more understanding of the whole
professional scene. But the...not the sort of thing that counts
because you don't sit down and write about it and you don't even
go out necessarily and talk about it very much.

B: Who is now doing that?

D: Frank Newman is doing it. And he was on my committee, if I can
call it such, for years and years. He's an excellent man. He's
done a great deal of hard work on it and I think that he also is
being undervalued for this work. There are not as many people,
of course, now in English education since obviously when you
can't supply jobs for people, they're less likely to go into it,
but it is obviously going to continue also and it seems to me
that when you compare the importance the English department and
the promotion and tenure committee and the university higher-ups
place on these things, they will put a tremendous amount of im-
portance on...on the person who is chairman of the graduate
program and chairman of freshman English and this sort of thing, maybe chairman of the...of the speakers' series and such, and they forget entirely that if you're in the English education program, at least for a time as I said awhile back, I think...I was effectively in charge of almost fifty percent of the English majors. In addition to that, of course, I served for many years on a series of state committees and I was the liaison person with the College of Education which is not always an easy job, but I always managed to get along harmoniously with those people. I was on search committees for members of the uni...of the College of Education staff. I did all sorts of things of this sort. Most people didn't know these things were going on at all. That may have been partly because I was a woman but I don't think entirely. (Laughter) Well...

B: Do you think that's what you want to say?

D: Well, I guess so.

B: Thank you very much.