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This interview was conducted with Dr. Frederick E. Ellis on April 2, 2007, at his home on Shaw Island, Washington. The interviewer was Tamara Belts.

TB: Today is Monday, April 2nd, 2007, and I, Tamara Belts, am here with Dr. Fred Ellis, who was a student teacher at the Campus School, and also got his education degree (credentials) at Western and then [later] was a [professor] at Western. Our first question is: How did you come to be a student teacher at the Campus School?

FE: I was interested in teaching in the State of Washington, so my primary reason was to

be certified, so anyway, I came to Western.

TB: Do you know what the years/grades were that you student taught at the Campus School?

FE: I think the [early Forties], that's something of a guestimate. I graduated from Reed in 1938. Then I was at Harvard graduate school [in] 1944. [Ed. note: Dr. Ellis first entered 6-23-1941]

TB: Did any other members of your family attend the Campus School?

FE: No.

TB: Okay. Do you remember as a student teacher, what a typical day was like?

FE: Well, attending class; I lived in a rooming house right on the street that goes by Old Main.

TB: High Street?

FE: High Street. Yes, it was close to the campus; went back and forth to classes. There were probably four other guys living in that rooming house which had its ups and downs, probably way too much socializing. When you were trying to study, someone [would] come in, “Oh Fred, break it up, let’s go out and get a beer;” very typical.

TB: Then after you left Western is that when you went to Harvard?

FE: Yes.

TB: And got your advanced degree. Did you always know that you wanted to teach [in] higher education?

FE: Yes.

TB: Do you remember who were your favorite or most influential teachers at Western were when you were a student?

FE: Gee, I think of people who would tend to be [later] Fleetwood, I don’t think he was teaching then. Stan Daugert, I don’t think had gotten there yet. I would say none that really stood out in the way they did at a place like Reed, which I can pull out four names right away on people who were just unbelievably effective.

TB: What about Paul Woodring? Do you remember him?

FE: Yes, I remember Paul Woodring. My impression there was Paul’s interests was so much on methodology. I thought excessively so. [I thought] that if people had a good, solid grounding in the area they were going to teach, and then the persona to go with it, they’d do a good job. That taking courses had very limited [effect], which is, to put it another way, saying that if you’ve got the talent for it and can relate to children, in a constructive, positive way, your going to be a good teacher. If you have hang-ups, and children are a pain in the butt, how can [you] be that effective?

TB: That’s right. So right after you got your degree [from Western] that’s when you went to Harvard and got your master’s degree and your ...

FE: Doctorate degree. But that was interrupted by WWII. When I was at Harvard the British government had sent people to this country to try to recruit. They were having a hard time (and it was before we got into the war in a serious way), so they were recruiting mainly, in my case, medics, and casualty station personnel. We went to Camp Riverside in California to be trained to do that. So for the next two years, I was involved in that activity.

TB: So you did service in WWII as a medic?

FE: Yes, that's right.

TB: Did you go over seas then?

FE: Yes, I went to Burma. And I was in jungle warfare, that's a bigger description in a lot of ways, you can't tell where sniper fire is coming from, it's so heavily forested. All kinds of beetles and bugs and snakes and so on and heavy rains of the monsoons; for example leather shoes would turn white as snow, it was amazing. And drinking Irrawaddy River water, I remember one time, we were swimming in the Irrawaddy River and probably thirty feet up stream women were doing laundry, and as you were floating in the river, these bitches' fecal material would go drifting by and the tanker was pumping our drinking water out of the Irrawaddy River and I said to the driver, "There's no way I'm going to drink that," he said "Fred, no one's going to force you to drink it, but I'll bet you'll drink it." I would drop iodine pills into it; it was the color of coffee. It was a lifestyle very different from being on any campus.

TB: Wow. How did you decide to come to Western [as a professor] in 1965? And also you came in the middle of the school year, January of 1965.

FE: That's right, that's an interesting story, we had a cattle operation on Lopez, and I had gone to the sales yard in Marysville to sell a truck load of cattle, and this is when James Jarrett was president. I think in some ways a mighty incredible person for an administrator. Anyway, he called the sale yard and in the middle of this auction going on with cattle mooing and so on, this man came out and he said, "If there's a Fred Ellis in the audience, will he please come to the office to take a telephone call." I couldn't imagine, because my wife was the only person that knew where I was, so I took the phone call. He (Jarrett) introduced himself, and he said, "We would like to interview you for a post here at Western." I said, "There's no way I can come to Western, I am at a cattle sale, I have dirty Levis on and boots covered with manure," I said, "I simply can't do it." His comment was a classic, he said, "Dr. Ellis, there's [so much] bullshit around here already, whatever you bring isn't going to make a bit of difference, come on anyway," so I went. And then, was very impressed. Does the name Vernon Haubrich mean anything? He taught there, very sharp, young, bright guy; Starbird was there at the time. Anyway, I drove up in a cattle truck, had my interview, and signed on. But I thought Jarrett's comment was fantastic.

TB: So you had not been teaching, were you looking for a job, or someone just knew that you were out here?

FE: Someone knew I was out here, and I think Vernon Haubrich, who I had some correspondence with, not very much, and on other matters, probably told Jarrett.

TB: Wow, that's interesting. So what was the atmosphere in your academic department like when you came: The student attitudes, faculty attitudes and student-faculty attitudes? You came in 1965.

FE: It was open, none of them were lecturing, because I don't like lecturing, I'd rather have seminar-type classes. I'd say it was a healthy, constructive atmosphere.

TB: I know that you later on became involved in the student protests, was it very political in 1965 when you were first there?

FE: Yes.

TB: I noticed that in 1965, at least the State Legislator was looking at the issue of having a loyalty oath, were any of you thinking about that yet?

FE: Yes, that didn't affect me at all, a lot of pressure was put on the University of Washington, a philosophy professor there refused to take a loyalty oath, wish I could think of his name, terrific scholar, excellent teacher, but he said, "I'm not going to sign a loyalty oath."

TB: Right. There was a lot of expansion going on campus when you were there, do you remember was there a sense of [excitement]? There were a lot of new people being hired; there was a lot of rapid growth.

FE: Not that much. No, I didn't think it was that dramatic.

TB: Any thoughts about when Jarrett [left], I mean, Jarrett leaves almost right after your [first] year.

FE: Yes, that was a real disappointment because he pulled out and went to Berkeley. I'd only been there about a year, I guess, and then he left, and he was replaced, by what I considered a total incompetent, a man by the name of Bunke. I don't know how the trustees [came to hire him], and I knew one of them who was an attorney in Bellingham, oh you probably know the name.

TB: Marshall Forrest?

FE: Yes, Marshall Forrest, who was very enthusiastic about Bunke, I never could understand that. I had a run in with Bunke because in the political science department there was a young instructor who was named teacher of the year, but his department head, for some reason, they just couldn't get along, and so the pressure was put on him to leave. At that time I was the editor for the *Faculty News*. That's probably on file there, when you go back why don't you look at the back files of the *Faculty News*, because I edited it for at least a year, possibly two years, I think two years, and editorialized about Bernie Weiner, who was the young instructor in political science.

President Bunke called up one day, and he said, “Dr. Ellis, can you come over to my office, we have to talk about something of real importance.” So I went over and he started the conversation by saying, “I’ve been looking over your load, and I think that you need to slack off a bit.” I said, “Well, okay, if I have to, I don’t feel that I’m overly stressed, but I could drop a class.” “No,” he said, “Would you consider giving up the *Faculty News*?” I said, “No, that’s the one thing I won’t touch,” he said “You don’t have to decide now, think it over, and come back.” So, two weeks later, I went back over and he said, “Well, what are you thinking, can you give up the *Faculty News*?” I said, “No, no way.” (I got a lot of support from the faculty for that news, wonderful support. I mentioned this to some colleague and he said “Fred, don’t give it up, you’re doing a fabulous job with it.”) So I told Bunke [no], and it angered him, he was quite upset, but he and I just didn’t hit it off at all.

Do you know what’s become of him?

TB: I know that he’s still alive, and I think he went back to the Midwest. I’ve heard, I don’t know if this is true, I’ve heard that he [isn’t well.]

FE: Interesting, his thesis, which was in economics, it was selling as a remainder, ten cents a copy, they were stacked up like cord wood. I wasn’t very impressed by it.

TB: I have not read it. Where was your department located when you first came? You were teaching in education.

FE: I was in Old Main; just about everything was in Old Main. They didn’t have a Campus School, at least at the beginning. I thought my student teaching was in Old Main.

TB: Yes; [The Campus School wasn’t completed until 1943]; and you did the junior high age, upper ages?

FE: That’s right.

TB: The Campus School [opened in 1943] but the junior high was never in the Campus School, it was always in Old Main.

FE: That accounts for that.

TB: Right. But your office, when you were an education faculty member, your office was in Old Main as well? Probably until 1968, because they re-did the [Campus School].

FE: That’s right and then we moved to where I imagine it is now.

TB: Right, Miller Hall.

FE: Miller Hall!

TB: Do you have anything more to say about what the campus governance structure was like at that time: faculty governance, faculty council, the power of the president, the power of the board of trustees, any of those kinds of things?

FE: My impression then, and maybe it was from coming from Reed which is so free-wheeling and open and that Western was tightly structured and treated students too paternalistically. I think that pretty well describes the difference. The experiences I had at Reed, where it was open and of course the *Oregonian*, the local paper there, was very critical of Reed that it was way too informal, and I found Western going too far the other way, too structured. Now I imagine, it's far less so, I mean the students aren't treated as they were then, monitored and paternalistic.

TB: Well, you were there during the era of the big changes.

FE: That's right. And at the time, I think it was under Flora. What's happened to him?

TB: He's alive and well and lives out in Everson.

FE: Anyway, I think he was president and then talking about having a university designation. I said, "Look, Western is no where near becoming a university, if it becomes a top-rate college, that's enough. We don't have to try to be a university." We discussed what constitutes a university and I said, "Well, I think a graduate school, law school, medical school, where you give advanced degrees," and the answer there was, "Well, we could give a masters." I think degrees, even starting with a baccalaureate, masters and doctorate, they really got to represent something solid, or the currency gets cheap. And I think honorary degrees are handed out much too easily.

TB: Probably so; any other thoughts about the curriculum, or the teaching styles, or faculty expectations when you were there? Was there a big emphasis on research or teaching?

FE: Yes, the teaching style, I was encouraged, and Tommy Thompson was the head of the department then. Does that name ring a bell? I think he's dead now.

TB: Ralph Thompson, I think.

FE: He said, "Fred, it's your class and it's up to you to do with it what you can." I thought that was great.

After I left Western, I got a job in Anacortes at the high school. That building's been torn down. But the superintendent there was a man by the name of Cramlet, who later became the superintendent at Bremerton. Haven't a clue what's happened to him, but I was teaching algebra, and he came, no notice, just walked in, he said, "Can I talk now?" and I said, "No, I'm

in the middle of a class, there's no way I can talk, I'll be glad to make an appointment." That put his teeth on edge; he came back subsequently and sat in the back of the room, taking meticulous [notes], tiny handwriting, on a lot of cards. After the class ended, [he] said, "Mr. Ellis, I think that's about the best algebra lesson I have ever witnessed. The way you handle kids, is something else." That day, Edith Pardiff [who] was the principal of the building, and I went up to her and I told her about this, she said, "Fred, that's not what I heard." And I said, "Edith, what went on?" "He came up to me and he said, 'I don't want Ellis's contract renewed'." But she renewed it, for another year. I thought, and its still [there], there's so much politicizing in the public education, I think it's a shame. Look at the Seattle schools now, I think they're in a sad state, superintendents come and go, public education doesn't get properly funded, kids have to be bussed for hours, this is one of my criticisms of culture in this country, it's all going into the Iraqi War, and these other things that are facilitating people's growing up and becoming good citizens, that's all being cut out. We can't afford it. I think it's very unfortunate.

TB: Any other thoughts about some of your colleagues, you've mentioned Dick Starbird, Stan Daugert, and ...

FE: Tommy Thompson.

TB: Tommy Thompson. Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like working with them? Were you in one of the poker games? I know that Stan Daugert was a big poker player.

FE: Stan Daugert, I think he has a son who's an attorney now in Bellingham. I don't know what's happened to Stan.

TB: I think so too. He's fine; I did an oral history with him.

FE: You did?

TB: Yes, he was very fond of Jarrett as well.

FE: Oh, well Stan Daugert, gosh, I thought the world of him. Western was lucky to have him on their faculty. Fabulous person, Dick Starbird was in school administration, a lot of fun to work with, trying to think of some other people.

TB: Well you mentioned Hugh Fleetwood.

FE: Hugh Fleetwood, in philosophy. What's become of Hugh Fleetwood?

TB: He's fine; he's still in Bellingham and is doing good.

FE: But he's retired?

TB: Yes, he's retired.

FE: He has a son I think by the name of Seth. What's Seth up to?

TB: I don't know right now, I mean he's been active in politics. I think he might be on the Whatcom County Council.

FE: Good. I think Western had some really terrific people, I'd put Stan, and certainly Jarrett right at the top.

TB: So I know you didn't like Bunke, you commented about not getting along, but he also did things like brought Timothy Leary, Sidney Cohen, and Ken Kesey and all those other people to campus, or they came during his time, did you feel like that influenced the Western community?

FE: That doesn't ring much of a bell, really. It seems to me a college [should] have anyone, representing any point of view. It's up to the students to go hear what he has to say, what she has to say, and then criticize it. I remember in a philosophy course I was teaching, philosophy in education, I had students read Machiavelli's *The Prince* which the only change you'd have to make on it now is the copyright date. Otherwise it fits beautifully. And by the way, Ian Richardson, a British actor who recently died, he did a series called, "House of Cards" and the next one was, "To be King" and the next one was, "The Final Cut". You've got to see it, if I were teaching at Western right now, no matter what course I was teaching, I'd require the students, before we'd go any further, [I'd say], "You've got to go to the library and get that tape and watch those three sections." They are so relevant to what's going on now, and how you climb on the back of people, politically, how you flatter them to their face as you're sticking the knife in their back. It's done beautifully, have you seen it? I wonder does Western have a film library?

TB: We have a lot of videos.

FE: Because this was put on PBS, KUOW put it on when it came out as masterpiece theater sort of thing. That's when I saw it.

End of Tape One, Side One

I have two grandsons, college age, and this summer, they're literally being forced to look at that Ian Richardson series. Because one is going to be graduating a year from June, and leaving the campus and going into the world of reality, and seeing those three films; what an eye opener.

I used to tell the students at Western to read Plato's *Republic* because that has a lot of relevance, and they'd come in and I'd say (I'd just randomly pick out a student), "What is this Plato saying? What does it make you think about?" And then they would give me back, if they had read it, [what they had read]. And I said, "Look, I've already read it, I don't have to get you to read it

for me, but the thing I can't get is your reaction to what he's saying, whether you go along with it, do you criticize it? What are the weak points in it? I can only get those from you." And it just stopped dead.

One of the first classes I ever taught at Western, we met, it was the second class [session], I assigned Plato's *Republic*, and to bring back their reactions to it. None of them reacted, they all had these elaborate notes saying what *The Republic* was saying, and I said, "Look, let's dismiss the class because we don't have anything to talk about until you've read this, formulated it in your head, and what your reaction to that material is." So I disappeared. It was an exciting class, really, and we did that, all the people we talked about coming right up to modern times in terms of [what] teaching was all about. "What does this material make you think about? Don't just parrot it back to me, I've already read it."

TB: Wow, you would have been a pretty exciting teacher.

FE: [I was], and I got a letter, I wanted to show it to you, but I couldn't find it. From a student at Western, a woman, and she said, "Dr. Ellis, you probably won't remember who I am, but I was in your philosophy class," and she said, "I've never forgotten it, it still comes up in the back of my mind." I've got it here somewhere, but I couldn't put my hands on it.

I think that teaching involves give and take, not just talking for an hour, that's a recipe for putting people everyone to sleep, just to lecture. I was asked to talk about WWII at Lowell Elementary School, not very long ago. Because I have a grandson that goes there, and I said, "Look, in about five minutes, I can tell you what I want to tell you, but you people jump in, what questions do you have? What is there about war that you think about?" These are elementary school kids, and some of the material that they brought up, especially the girls, about what was it like to have to meet the needs of someone who had just been hit. I told them right off, I said, "The first time I went to help someone who had been picked off with a sniper's bullet, I threw up. That reaction of seeing this guy with his blood gushing out, I just threw up." And I was telling my superior at the time of what my reaction was and he said "Ellis, that's typical, you've got to get over it and you've got to get over it right now. You can't take a week." It was really traumatic.

TB: Now, were you drafted for World War II?

FE: No, because I volunteered. World War II was going on right then, and the British were having a terrible time, just being pushed back by the [Germans].

TB: So was that even before the U.S. entered the war then?

FE: No, we had gone in, but just. And Roosevelt was very ambivalent about even going in, and finally though Lend Lease came along, sending some destroyers to England, but no personnel. So I volunteered when I was at Harvard, got shipped over to Calcutta, and going up the Hooghly

River on this freighter out of Los Angeles, and as we went up the Hooghly River I was way up at the bow of the vessel, looking down where the cut water goes in, and I saw these [things which] looked like bundles of cloth going from one side to the other, turned out it was bodies. The ship didn't deviate at all, we just kept going straight and it would bump into one of these, send it to one side, and you'd see an arm or a face, what an introduction!

TB: Right. I know that you have different views of the war now, did being in World War II effect your mindset about war, or is it just the current [situation]?

FE: I felt World War II was highly justifiable. I think if Hitler had gotten his way ... I'd volunteered for the Lincoln Brigade, when I first went to Harvard, when the Spanish Civil War was going on. They turned me down and said you're too young. So anyway, I was convinced that World War II made sense, I don't think the Iraq war makes any sense at all. I think we stir up more trouble; we're hated all over the world. I heard on the news going to the ferry that the Iraqis can't stand us, they want us out of there, and yet Bush keeps pushing this surge. I read in the New York Times every day a list about this long (demonstrating) of these kids that are getting killed. They're younger than my oldest grandson. And I think to be sent off to a war at nineteen [is too young]; what do we know at nineteen? What did I know at nineteen? Nothing: just totally naïve. What did you know at nineteen?

TB: You're right, nothing.

FE: Nothing. And then to hear that a lot of them think they'll get a job or get some sort of training out of it, here they end up coming back in a body bag. So my feeling about war now is very different than how I felt in World War II.

TB: Okay, let's go back to Western. You also mentioned Flora, what did you think of his presidency and campus during that time when there were a lot of student protests and the Vietnam War was heating up?

FE: That's right! That was heating up and there was a lot of campus interest in it, including myself, Hugh Fleetwood. I mean these people there again, the mortality of the Vietnam War, what did we lose, over a hundred thousand?

TB: I think 56 or 58,000 killed.

FE: Killed.

TB: There would be a lot more wounded.

FE: Wounded, and of course a lot of these wounded are not very far from a cemetery although they're still alive. My wife and I were very active along with other Western people; we picketed the government building there. I had a contact with the American Friend Service Committee

which is a Quaker organization in Seattle, that's how I got involved in the Underground Railroad.

TB: Could you tell me some more about that?

FE: Yes. We had heard about kids wanting to go to Canada to avoid the draft, get out of it. (I felt about the Vietnam War as I did about the Iraqi War, it was a senseless war, the French had gone in there, they'd sacrificed a lot, they advised us, "Look, don't go in there, we have bled to death in Vietnam, you're not going to get anyplace," but we still went in). Now, anyway, so the American Friends Service Committee said, "Would you be willing to help in getting kids to Canada?" I said, "Absolutely."

Let me give you an example of one whose portrait, was on the front cover of *Life* magazine. (Do you remember that pictorial, about so big? They always had a prominent photograph of that person or someone on the front cover. It's no longer published; it was a pictorial magazine, a lot of circulation.) One of these kids was on there. He had applied for passionate leave because his dad was dying of cancer and they denied it. He hadn't been sent overseas yet, or was to go back on a second tour or something, so he went A-W-O-L. The FBI was after him, the Army was after him, and I got this phone call at home in the evening, it said, "Will you please call..." it gave me a number that I've forgotten now. So I went to a payphone, called the number, and that's how I was given a description of this guy who was coming to Bellingham by bus. A minute description of what he would look like, like oh, a scar, or a mole, whether he was clean shaven, or a moustache, you name it, and the Bellingham bus station was bristling with FBI people and Bellingham police, bristling! I mean, you'd go in there, it was scary. So I told my contact in Seattle that once this guy gets out of the bus station, to what's the street? I don't know maybe the bus station is in a different place now.

TB: Well it is, but it was on State.

FE: It was on State?

TB: Yes.

FE: Okay, walk down State about two blocks, so I went outside on the sidewalk and just watched kids coming out, you know older people, men, women, girls, boys, and then military-age people coming out. And I saw this guy that fitted my description so I followed him. He was ahead of me maybe a hundred feet walking west on State Street, I followed him, got closer, closer, closer, and closer and when I got up abreast to him, I said, "Go back to [the car]," (I've forgotten the sort of car I was driving, but I said it is parked on this side of the street, go back to it), and then I kept walking. He turned around, and went back and got in the car. I took him home (we lived on Briar Road), got a shower, my wife fixed a good meal, got a good sleep (as much as you can get a good sleep under those conditions). And then the next morning, we put him in the car with a full bag of dirty diapers that was in a container just back of the driver's seat.

He sat there with a couple of kids and we schooled the kids, don't do any talking, either mom or I will do the talking, just do the listening (because you know how kids can blurt out something, or you make a statement, and then, "Oh, no, that isn't the way it was, it was this way.") Anyway, they were good about that, they didn't open their mouths. So we got to the boarder and the immigration guy said, "Where are you going?" I said, "We're going to the [Holian] to a Chinese dinner, and then we're coming back tonight." And he said, "Are you all U.S. citizens?" "Yes." "Go ahead." So we got into Vancouver, and I went to an address that I don't remember now, where he was picked up and taken to North Vancouver, and then I lost track of him, once they got out in Canada, then I lost track of them.

TB: So about how many people did you assist in this way?

FE: Oh, oh gosh, probably a couple of dozen. If we had been picked up, if we had been caught, we'd have been doing prison time.

TB: So how many other people were helping you, I mean I heard that Bill Scott was involved I think?

FE: Bill Scott, what's happened to Bill Scott?

TB: Oh, he passed away, oh, twenty years ago.

FE: Really?

TB: Four months after he retired, he had a heart attack opening day of fishing season.

FE: Oh my gosh, he was a courageous guy.

TB: So tell me a little more about all of you [who participated], I mean you and I think Dick Bishop I think was involved.

FE: Dick Bishop was involved, what's happened to him?

TB: He passed away too.

FE: Oh, gee.

TB: Not too long ago, though.

FE: Was he in reasonably good health?

TB: No, he had cancer or something. It was within the last couple of years.

FE: But he had his mental faculties?

TB: Oh yes I think so. I'm pretty sure so. There was a nice obituary in the paper, and he, I think had done an interview not too long before he passed away talking about just his military service or something. But so how did you all work together and coordinate your efforts ?

FE: [We didn't] particularly, most of my contacts were by telephone from Seattle.

TB: What about the Sodts; they were involved somehow weren't they?

FE: Oh, yes; do you know what's happened to them?

TB: They've passed away.

FE: Both of them?

TB: I think so, because he passed away a long time ago, and she just passed away in the last year.

FE: But both of them were, gosh, do you remember who was connected with the Campus Christian Ministry?

TB: Well that is Bill Sodt isn't it?

FE: Yes, Bill Sodt, but there was another one. He moved to Seattle, was involved in a divorce, and had a daughter. Can't think of it, I know it as well as I know my own name. He was very active. [Ed. Note: Lyle D. Sellards; minister/director of United Campus Christian Foundation early Sixties)]

TB: So was the Campus Christian Ministry sort of a connecting point...?

FE: Very low key, very low key.

TB: And then Dr. Harris, you were probably involved with him in the protest?

FE: Yes, what's happened to him?

TB: I think he's still fine.

FE: Living in Bellingham?

TB: Yes; and like I told you, they still protest every Friday at the Federal Building.

FE: Well good for them.

TB: And I understand it goes back to when he started it, just that peaceful protest.

FE: How much of a crowd does it bring?

TB: It can get to be pretty good sized right now. I mean I guess I don't know how you would define that, but all four corners will have people on them. I'd say forty to fifty people sometimes. And then there's still some student protest that go down to the Federal Building and stuff like that. They're always well organized.

FE: We were photographed protesting by the FBI, never saw the pictures.

TB: Well, how did you feel about that? Was that ever kind of frightening?

FE: Yes, it was scary, that's right.

TB: Okay, let's see, well this is more going back to just your time at Western, what were your hopes and dreams when you came to Western and did you accomplish them?

FE: Well, I certainly wanted to go into teaching and that's [what] I did, I ended up university teaching, at a number of places, Harvard, Illinois, University of Minnesota, met my wife in Minneapolis, and let's see, UBC, Western, University of Hawaii.

TB: Is that where you went after Western?

FE: UBC.

TB: Okay.

FE: And that was highly politicized, I found the climate there was highly politicized.

TB: Now why was that?

FE: Why was that? I tell my grandkids, if you want to see politics in action, look at the state level, the national level, or a university campus. I mean it can be mighty cut throat you know, people clawing away for advancement, and playing off one against the other, that's nothing new.

TB: Was that something you hadn't anticipated though, when you went into education, and wanted to teach at a college level did you think that maybe you'd be avoiding the politics?

FE: I'd be avoiding it or getting it in a more tolerable way, but I found it didn't work out like that.

TB: What are your both favorite or your worse memories at Western?

FE: Well I think the [experiences] of teaching the Campus School was very positive. I'd say the worse class I took was one in Geography, which was required, by oh what the heck is his name? He had a spinal problem.

TB: Hunt? Tom Hunt. Tom Hunt I know taught World Geography, but I don't know what else he taught, and I don't know of anybody who had a problem back, which doesn't mean anything, but...

FE: Yes, Tom Hunt. You'd notice it if you saw him, it was very apparent. Anyway, it was just, he'd sit there pretty much and read from a book, and then the assignment would be to read some more of the same book, now I found it was just totally dull.

TB: Well, any other thoughts about the influential campus leaders or anything else about...

FE: Well, Jarrett was a terrific campus leader, I think he really, gosh, he lifted the campus by its boot straps, I mean he came when we were [really in need]. That's why I was so disappointed when he left because gosh, to be followed by Bunke -- it was unbelievable. Because under Jarrett -- you can imagine the sort [of situation it was if] Jarrett was making that observation when I was at a cattle sale. I mean that's typical of Jarrett, he was so down to Earth, but totally committed to an excellent school. We've got to be more than just a teacher's normal school, and I think Western still had some of that aura about it, of a normal school, rather than a college, and he told me when I was visiting with him, he said, "Fred, my goal here is to make this a first-class college. And I want to recruit people who will help me do that." He was just awesome.

TB: Wow, well, he's still alive, he's down in California.

FE: He was dean of the graduate school at Berkeley. Gosh, they picked him off.

TB: Yes, he visited in the last couple of years.

FE: Really?

TB: At the library, yes. I think his first wife has passed away, but he had a new wife and stopped by.

FE: Fascinating.

TB: Well is there anything else I haven't asked you that you'd like to talk about?

FE: Well, gee, I think that you've just covered a whole lot of topics. Trying to think, the Larry Summers thing at Harvard intrigued me, you know he resigned. And they've appointed, I think, a dean of Radcliff, a woman, [Drew Gilpin Faust], the next president. But I thought Summers made some sort of a comment that I think set people's teeth on edge in an unfortunate way, maybe it was the way he put it -- that there weren't enough women in science because they didn't have, what do I say, the brain power of males -- at least that's the way it came across. My reaction to that was, why not research this and get some hard data on it. That Summer's remark, instead of being taken personally, playing down women, this is a challenge to come up with some hard data that women are just as capable as males to do a job.

But I heard the other day, it was the day before yesterday, at Wal-Mart, this woman was objecting to her supervisor [saying], "The job I do, I get paid x dollars, the man who is doing identically the same job, same hours, gets x + y dollars, and I don't think it's fair." And the supervisor, I couldn't believe it, said, "Well, I've got to remind you God made Adam first, and took a rib from Adam to make a woman, second." I mean, are we living in the year 2007 or 1207?

TB: Really?

FE: Really! That anyone would make a remark like that! I think this country in many ways is awfully sexist. Really! In a lot of subtle ways, we are extremely sexist, and that Wal-Mart, I mean, what a feeble reason to do it, but the very fact that women are paid less than males for doing the same job. I've often [thought], what's wrong with a female priest in a Catholic Church? What does a person's reproductive system have to do with their competence to do the job? Nothing, it's totally irrelevant. But, that's the way it operates. How do you fight stuff like that?

Since I've been out of teaching, I do some limited teaching -- Friday Harbor High School, met with them, Orcas High School.

End of Tape One, Side Two

Oh I've got to tell you about that, I taught science class at the Orcas High School, and talked about just pretty much climate change and taking care of Planet Earth and we discussed things like we're the only planet that has plate tectonics which makes mountains, which effects the climate, trapping moisture, and getting rain and so on. We're at the optimum distance from the sun so we don't get incinerated or frozen, water is liquid which doesn't happen anywhere else as far as we know. We have oxygen, which is available for the vegetation, which has taken millions of years to get it. Anyway, we went through all of this stuff. We have one moon, instead of several moons which would make a big difference in terms of preserving sanctioned life, and having conditions that allow sanctioned life to survive.

This wasn't a lecture, it was a seminar, I told the kids, "Look, I'm not going to lecture, I'm just going to throw out some ideas that you people can react to;" and those are some of the ideas that I threw out. I'd say for example, "Let's talk about tectonics: what do you know about it?" Or the fact that we're 93 million miles from the sun, unlike other planets that are too close, so they have surface temperatures the melting point of lead, or else frozen. Anyway, and at the end, we finally got to one problem, I said, "There's one problem that effects life, our life style, our survival, the planet, the fact of overpopulation," and I said, "Go home, discuss this with your families, read about it, think about it. Because is it possible we're going to overpopulate the resources that are available to sustain that many people? You need to think about that." Well, that night, some parents called the school, said, "Look, when you have a visiting instructor come, I don't want him jeopardizing my chances to have a grandchild." I thought it was amazing. Isn't that something? Fabulous!

TB: So you're still very involved in teaching and doing different things?

FE: Yes, I'm on the Board of the San Juan Preservation Trust, and we just finished acquiring Turtle Back Mountain and I'll point that out to you when we go back to the ferry. It's visible from the head of Blind Bay, over fifteen hundred acres to be kept permanently as habitat. The developers were panting to get their hands on it. We almost lost it -- that took a real battle. And then when you get on the ferry and go back to Anacortes, just before you get to Anacortes, there's a big island on your left, so sit on the left side, when you get there, there's this big island, Cyprus Island, which is pristine. Well this is twenty-five years ago, we had a battle royal, a developer came in, was buying Cyprus Island, he had applied for a permit to pipe portable water from the city of Anacortes to Cyprus. He was going to put a five star hotel, a jet strip -- you name it -- a marina, and then all of these lots that people would buy. That was a battle royal, I would get telephone calls 2:30 in the morning, "Ellis, why the hell don't you back off, you don't even live in Skagit County." They would hang up, no name, no identification, a number of those calls would come in, "Why are you messing around with Cyprus Island? Why don't you keep your cotton picking hands off?"

Anyway, the final hurdle was we went to the state legislature to get the department of natural resources to buy it; "We don't have any money" (They say that all the time). Well, we finally got the legislature to appropriate the money and bought it. So, every time I go by Cyprus Island ... (laughing). So, when you go by it this afternoon, take a good look at it, I don't think you'll see a house anywhere. Heavily forested, and this developer was going to knock down those two big hills, flatten that out for the air strip.

TB: Wow; that's exciting that your activism worked to save something like that.

FE: Oh, I get a psychic high out of that. I don't need drugs or alcohol I get it from other things. And let's see, Cyprus, through the preservation trust we've preserved -- there's a conservation easement on this land, no subdividing, no clear cutting, it's tighter than the skin on an onion.

We should leave here soon enough to drive around Shaw so you get an idea of what it's like and areas that have been protected.

TB: Okay, well, if you have nothing more to say, anything else you want on tape?

FE: No, I think we've pretty well covered it, don't you?

TB: Yes, we done good!

FE: I should swing by the campus. I haven't been to Bellingham for ages.

TB: Yes, come up to campus, there's been a lot of changes but I think you'd enjoy it.