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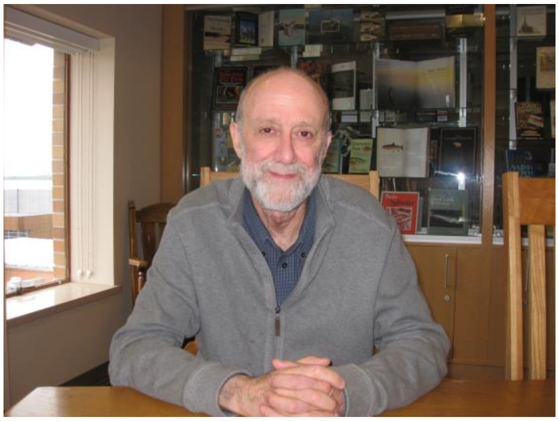

This interview was conducted with Fred Moody on April 10, 2015, in Western Libraries Special Collections on the campus of Western Washington University in Bellingham, Washington. The interviewer is Tamara Belts.

TB: Today is Friday, April 10, 2015. My name is Tamara Belts, and I'm here with Fred Moody, who was one of the first students at Fairhaven College, and we're going to do an oral history with him, basically about his time at Western and his experiences at Fairhaven.

So our first question is: How did you decide to go to Fairhaven, and how did you decide to come to Western?

FM: Well I grew up in Bellingham. I didn't really have much in the way of college plans. I applied to Western, was the only place that I applied, and I was admitted. I was not sure I was going to go on to college, but a friend of my mother's, named Rosemary Paglia, worked in the Admissions Office here, and she called up one day and said that they had gotten a grant for 13 students to try this experiment that they were calling Fairhaven College. And if I was interested, she could set up an interview for me, and I was, mostly because it meant a free first year of college. I didn't know that much about the program, but it did sound really interesting. They told us it was a cluster college, it was going to be a sort of autonomous school, and that for the first year we would be helping design the curriculum, but then it was going to be experimental. There wouldn't be grades. That also was very appealing. And tuition would be free, and we would be paid room and board for doing work on the curriculum, and that kind of thing.

So I went to this interview. There were 13 of us there, and I think about five faculty. Charles Harwood was there, Don McLeod, Annis Hovde, are the three people I particularly remember. And they asked some questions about why we were interested and what we thought we could bring.

I had spent my high school years in a Catholic seminary, and so I told them that I thought maybe that might be of some value because it was a, you know, kind of a learning community, and it sounded like it was not all that different from what Fairhaven wanted to do. I was basically saying that because I thought it was the one thing that would set me apart from everybody else. Once I walked into the room and saw the people, I was pretty anxious to be accepted because it looked like a pretty cool thing. And then it wasn't that much later that they called and said that I was one of the people, so I'm not, it's not clear to me how – that was really all I knew. I didn't know how many people were interviewed or how many people even knew about it, because my impression was that they got the grant unexpectedly. And I think they ended up starting the school a year earlier than originally planned.

Anyway, I came up a few days early, as I recall, and met some of the other students, and we started meeting in a little white house, which they told me, I believe, was the former president's residence, and that turned out to be for the first year what Fairhaven College was, the 13 students and five faculty, and I believe some Western faculty that helped out. We had all our classes there, although I took a couple of extra classes at Western. I lived in Highland Hall. My roommate was another Fairhaven student named Tim Bauer. And we spent most of our time in that little white house, having little one-on-one or two- and three-student sessions with our professors. David Mason taught us a science class. Don McLeod taught writing and literature, and I remember attending lectures of his over at Western, because he was on Western's faculty at that time. And it was a pretty enchanting first year.

I was on the Admissions Committee for the next class. I also interviewed some incoming faculty. I didn't realize that until I met Bob Keller, met with him recently, and he reminded me that I had interviewed him for his job. And I told him I hope I wasn't insufferable. (Laughter) My wife says that we were very self-important people, and I think she's right about that. We felt pretty special. But we worked on next year's curriculum, worked on sort of the admission standards for the incoming freshmen class, and led a lot of tours of people who were interested in coming the following year. I have more memory, really, of these meetings, working on that stuff than I do of the classes. The classes were obviously, you know, extreme seminar versions of . . . since really the biggest class I had, probably had three students in it.

TB: So let's back up, one thing is, what year did you start, then?

FM: The fall of 1967.

TB: Fall of 1967. Okay. And so you lived in Highland Hall, and you were doing something in a white house. Was it close to Highland Hall?

FM: Yes, it was actually, probably, basically it was just past that building and down the hill a little bit. I don't even know if it's still there.

TB: It's probably before the bypass road got put in, because that got put in in 1971, so that may have taken out that house and they may have bought it already to have it.

FM: That's possible.

TB: Okay, so then, so it's interesting, because I think everybody always thinks of the first year as being –

FM: The next class is the –

TB: -- the next year. Okay, so you guys were really kind of a planning group, almost.

FM: Yes.

TB: Because then you didn't all have the same classes, from what you've just said. Like you had some classes that only had three students in it. So how did you determine like what would be the admission standards?

FM: Well we had everybody submit an essay, which at that time was a little unusual. For some reason they sent pictures, and I don't know if we required that or what. They sent transcripts, but we weren't really looking at grades. We were looking more at teacher recommendations. So, in fact, we kind of made a decision not to look at grade point, so we looked at the recommendations and the essays, and then when students came on their tours, we usually would take some notes, or maybe report something that was interesting. But we were really militant about the grade thing.

The main thing was – I think most of the essay was, Why do you want to come to Fairhaven? Why do you want to do this different kind of approach to education? We were looking for people that we thought could kind of contribute to building the school, and I guess enrich the community, because we knew it was still going to be a really small community. There were only going to be about 200 students the next year, and that was the year that we moved over to Edens Hall, so it was the first year that we really lived all in the same place, in a kind of co-ed dorm situation. But I think we just, I think in retrospect, highly impressionistic what we were doing.

I'm not sure even what the, how the final decisions were made, but we felt like the student members of the committee had a lot of say in kind of who got in. I don't remember anything about turning people away or rejecting people. I just remember the people sort of being really excited about certain students, and that kind of thing. So I think there must have been a higher level of decision making than, you know.

TB: So what about the faculty? Was that, in that first year did you also, is that when you also interviewed faculty that would be a part of the program starting the next year?

FM: Yes. Well Bob Keller, and that's the -- I think the second year faculty was pretty much the same. That's the year I remember hiring people. Keller came then. So he would have been interviewed during the 1968/69 year, and then I think he either started later that year or the year after. It seems to me that he was there in 1968/69, because that was the year that William O. Douglas came to campus, and he was the one that arranged that. But that core faculty, there was Jerry – well Jerry Garcia was an administrator.

TB: So this is also dated 1969/70. Let's go back and see if I can find the –

FM: There was Annis Hovde, Don McLeod, David Mason, there's a Dr. Van Wingerden –

TB: Yes, he was from –

FM: From the education school.

TB: Yes.

FM: His daughter actually attended either the next year or the third year. Oh, it's on the tip of my tongue, this history prof – August Radke. Yes, he was a terrific guy. But he stayed on Western's faculty, as I recall. McLeod and Mason became full-time Fairhaven faculty, as did Annis Hovde. And then Harvey Gelder came, I think in 1970? I can't remember now. I ended up doing almost all of my work with McLeod and Hovde.

TB: And that's not the list until 1969/70, so . . . So tell me a little bit more the curriculum, and then talk specifically about the kind of courses that you –

FM: Oh, Phil Miller, that was who I was trying to remember. Yes, they all kind of came at the same time almost. Well the first year I took a lot, I took quite a few Western classes. I took political science classes, French, Spanish. I remember going to one big lecture class in history and dropping it because it was so alienating. And eventually we developed this "Great Periods Curriculum" at Fairhaven where we kind of read in the Greek and Roman, kind of the seminal texts of – it was almost like a great books thing. And then when I determined I was going to major in English, I took my whole major in the Western's English Department because Fairhaven didn't have its own major until, well, probably sometime in the Seventies. I mostly remember these seminars, reading Aristotle and Plato and Lucretius and the [Odyssey] and the Iliad, and things like that, and then having pretty intense discussions about them.

We had to do a lot of writing. They were really rigorous about the writing. It was the first time in my experience where professors really red-penciled things, really thoroughly, and gave them back and made you re-write them, and that was a real eye opener for me that way because I had always through high school been praised for my writing kind of uncritically. McLeod in particular was really tough that way, as was Hovde. So they were, for me, just those two gentlemen were really, really influential.

And Mason was the very playful and mischievous science teacher, and would kind of guide us through these experiments where things kept going wrong, but he wouldn't tell us what they were. And we would just beat our heads against the wall trying to figure out why things weren't working. And one of them was just, turned out to be the weight of our fingerprints were throwing things off by this massive number, but of course the number was measuring something so tiny that the – I can see in retrospect how he was really trying to show us how attentive to detail you had to be as a scientist and how difficult science could be, but also how rewarding it was. We were trying to measure like the weight of our breath. That's a particularly vivid memory I have of my very limited experience with science. But really, highly, unforgettably informative, just in terms of how you really even took in scientific information for the rest of my life.

TB: So even at that time, then the idea was you would have this kind of core learning experience, but that you probably would be out taking other classes from Western?

FM: [Yes.] [Ed. Note: Noding his head].

TB: And so do you want to talk a little bit more about – we've got phase one when you were starting out. So what about at Edens Hall in the second year? What was the second year of the school like?

FM: Well that was quite an adventure for us, because to go from 13 to 200, and then the 13 of us, at least some of us, and I was one of them, were resident aids, and we called them *confrere*s, because we had to do everything differently. So I was in charge of basically a floor of our dormitory, and that was just being there as a resource for people. It was a little bit of a chaotic situation in that – the offices for the faculty and the classrooms were in Edens Hall too, so you would just sort of roll out of bed and walk downstairs to class. And it was that same core curriculum where we did a lot of reading, and then seminar discussions, and a lot of writing.

Our science requirement was met by this kind of history of math and science thing that fit into the great periods. So instead of kind of learning math methodologically, we studied the history of science and how it interacted with culture and all that, from kind of the Greeks on through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, and all of that. So it was a completely different approach to the much more structured approach that they had at Western.

TB: So you were all integrated at that point? I mean, so you've got the first year students that kind of started it, and then you've got this next year students, so you're all kind of in the same classes together? I mean –

FM: Yes, there wasn't like a, at least for that first full year, we weren't separated by grade, and I'm not sure, I'm not sure what that meant for the first year of our tutelage, but we had so much one-on-one attention that by that time I was doing almost like individual study things with Don McLeod. So he would make a reading list for me, and I would be like his only student. And then he did that with a lot of people. I don't know how he had the time for it, but there were quite a few students that did that. And then Keller would design his own kind of legal and world history classes.

And you know, he was new to the faculty then, so that was all new material too. And then at the end of each term, the professors would write these pretty long prose, evaluations that went into – in lieu of a transcript for us. And then we had our Western grades that were kind of a separate set of records. But I think they were kind of feeling their way along then, because the idea, and I don't know if that was supposed to continue, was that they would do all of their general education requirements at Fairhaven and take their majors at Western. And that was really after my time, I think, when they introduced the Fairhaven major and made it possible for people to be complete Fairhaven students from beginning to end.

TB: So you were only a Fairhaven student for two years, or where were you at on your third year?

FM: Well, my third year I was still a Fairhaven student, but I was taking all of my classes, except for some of these individual one-on-one things with McLeod. But Western, they worked out – this was, things were, a lot of things were kind of done on the fly because we would propose doing something, and it would be the first time anybody

wanted to do that. So Western was, at least the English Department, was really cooperative about giving us credits towards our major for these classes we were, you know, inventing, so. McLeod introduced me to Russian literature and Latin American literature, things that weren't available in the English Department. And he would write these pretty detailed summations at the end of the term to turn into Western. Then I didn't get a Western grade, but I got credit toward my major. And then I kind of filled in with quite a few just normal English classes. So then my senior year, I was probably taking all my classes at Western.
TB: Were you still living now in the Fairhaven environment?

FM: My senior year I was living off campus, but through my junior year I lived – My sophomore year we started planning the Fairhaven campus, and a bunch of us were on the architecture committee. We were kind of consulting with the architects and the faculty and various other administrators. We were sort of part of this committee that was designing the campus. And there was a pretty big rebellion about the requirement to live on campus after two years. I was there my junior year because I liked it, but a lot of people wanted to move off, and they finally agreed.

TB: So, did you live then, the junior year, did you live in that Fairhaven complex?

FM: Yes.

TB: So how did that seem to work?

FM: I liked it a lot, and in a sort of similar – the ground floor had a big kind of seminar room, so we would just go downstairs for class, and then the faculty offices were in that main building, and some of the classes were there. And I remember Eugene Garber from the English Department would come down and teach a class at Fairhaven that I took. I took a lot of his classes on the Western campus too. But there were faculty from Western who came down and taught sort of on loan to teach Fairhaven classes. And I think for them, they were experimenting with that model just to see how it would work.

TB: So what did you feel like overall? I mean, your living environment and learning environment were the same, so how did it happen after class? Did that really crossover into your life by all living in the same dorm?

FM: Yes, we pretty much, as I think back on it, after the year in Highland Hall, I really didn't have any friends that I socialized with on Western's campus. They were all Fairhaven. And we would, especially after we moved onto the Fairhaven campus, we pretty much – the food service was there, some of us had kitchens in our suites, so we pretty much, our social life was down there. And friends that I had in the Western English Department often would come down to Fairhaven, and I think just to sort of hang out because it was a freer environment, a lot more relaxed, and I think prettier. But yes, we didn't feel any sense of isolation or that we were doing without anything, or anything like that. And the faculty seems like were always there. I mean, I know that they went home to their families at some point, but it seemed to me it was not uncommon for them to be around in the evening. But sometimes there were classes in the evening as well.

TB: And then what about – well, do you remember other things that were going on, on the Western campus maybe during that time, in terms of like student protests, the war in Vietnam, or any of those issues? Or even, I mean, you were here still then, the Kent State shootings and –

FM: Yes, there was a lot of – my freshman year was really enlightening. That was my first encounter with the Black Student Union here, and they were pretty – pretty visible. And then in my Highland dorm, there were two black students that I got to be pretty good friends with. And when Martin Luther King was shot, that was just really devastating to see how it hit them. And as consciousness raising experiences go, that was as extreme as it gets. I still have a really vivid memory of the two of them storming out of the dorm yelling, *It's time to stop lootin' and start shootin'*, and they were just so distraught. And growing up in Bellingham, I never even had an encounter with an African American, so getting to know those guys and then seeing them go through that was life changing for me. And then of course we got – Don McLeod was a really vocal anti-Vietnam War person, and he probably had more than anyone to do with kind of raising my consciousness on that issue. And it was a really big deal, even on

Western's campus. I don't think it was a majority in the students, but it was a substantial number. And Fairhaven was, you know, uniformly leftist that way, I think. There were very few exceptions, so. We did come over to Western for those kind of meetings and demonstrations. A matter of fact, it was a Fairhaven student who named Red Square.

TB: Really?

FM: I don't know if people know that. It was Tim Bauer who, when it was under construction and they were putting the bricks in, because when we came up here it was grass. And they were putting the bricks in, and there were these plywood barriers up, and he just had a can of spray paint and he spray painted, *Welcome to Red Square*, on the plywood, and that name stuck. (Laughter) I've always felt that he should've gotten credit for that. That was before the University of Washington had a Red Square as well, so.

TB: And it was actually proposed though, because, you know, the first gathering on the square was after Martin Luther King's assassination, because it had just gotten completed, or it was almost completed, and a faculty member, Elwood Johnson, actually suggested it be called King Square. I don't know exactly how he phrased it, but before it gets called Red Square anecdotally, he proposed that it be named King square. Obviously the Red Square, your Tim Bauer, was more successful.

FM: (Laughter)

TB: And what about, do you remember any of the reactions when Robert F. Kennedy got shot?

FM: That was another, yes. I was raised under a really devout Catholic family, and I had been to the seminary, and I was in the seminary when John F. Kennedy was shot. And when Kennedy was elected President that was an emotional thing. That was just huge. So when Kennedy was shot, that was really devastating. When his brother was shot, we just went into shock. And I just remember that as, for me anyway, being a really private thing, because I just felt, I think all Catholics felt, so connected to that family. But it did give me, again, I think a lot of more empathy and kind of insight into the black students' experience.

TB: Because listening to you just say that, it is almost the same thing. I mean, so I'm not Catholic, even though I was a big fan of Kennedy, but I wasn't Catholic, and so I hadn't thought about how you would feel from that connection because you shared your religion and there had been some kind of, I don't know, oppression, or a reluctance anyway, to elect a Catholic prior to that. But it did almost be like the black feeling that kinship with King, which is really interesting.

FM: Yes, yes, we were – when Kennedy was elected, there were all these rumors going around that he wanted to build a tunnel to Rome. So we sort of felt, it's a little pretentious to use the term bigotry, but we did feel discriminated against in that sense.

And the other thing, and I am not as connected to campus life anywhere as I used to be, but we had this feeling, especially at Fairhaven, but on Western's campus too, we felt like huge racial progress was being made, and we just – Don McLeod was a really active recruiter of minority students, so Fairhaven always had a pretty substantial Asian American and African American student population. I had a black roommate for a couple years. And we just felt like this was the future, that everything was going to be completely integrated, and by the time we got out of school that there wouldn't even be a racial problem anymore. So over the ensuing years, it's been really kind of depressing to see things in some ways kind of go the other way. The racial separation just seems much more pronounced to me now than it did then. And just walking around campuses now, I don't see the visibility of black students that I remember, and I'm not really sure how much of that is romanticizing my own youth and how much of it is how much the culture has refused to progress, I guess.

TB: Anything else about your actual experience at Fairhaven or when you were a college student here at Western?

FM: I have to say, the English Department here, and I was probably more of a critic than a lot of people would have been because I got so much guidance and attention from McLeod and Hovde at Fairhaven, but the English Department here was really strong. Woody Johnson actually, when you mentioned him, I took a lot of classes from him, and from Bill Keep and Eugene Garber. They were all really strong attentive, intelligent professors. Really I just loved taking their classes. And Reed Merrill was another one that I ended up taking every class that he taught, I think, because I just couldn't get enough of that guy. And yes, we –

What I mostly remember was just how much individual attention you got from the teachers. Even at Western you could go into a faculty member's office almost anytime you wanted and talk forever. But the down – not the down side, but the other side of that was that they were very demanding, I think, in a way that the less attentive people aren't. So it's not only that they were nurturing and helping you, but they kind of held you to account much more than I realized at the time. When it came time to apply at graduate school, having these pretty detailed narrative grades proved to be a real boon. And that was something that they mentioned a lot, the graduate – we were the first people to present that kind of thing. But even though it was extremely unusual, I think it was a big help to almost everybody that came out of Fairhaven who went on to graduate school.

TB: That was going to be my next question. What do you feel the impact of attending Fairhaven was? And yes, getting into graduate school, did almost everybody go into graduate school, or?

FM: It seemed like it. When I look back now, a lot of the people in that first class especially went to places like the University of Chicago and Harvard and Yale. I went to Michigan. My wife went to Michigan. And it was just all of us got scholarships and pretty substantial grants and everything, so we didn't have to really pay for graduate school then. How long that continued, I don't know. I know a lot of those people went on to have really successful academic careers. And I never even would have considered graduate school if Fairhaven hadn't kind of brought out my kind of inner academic.

TB: So what did you study at Michigan?

FM: Well I went to Michigan to get a degree in library science. But when I was there, I went over to the Russian Department because there was a professor there who was a really famous person who I had read some of his translations and some of his criticism when I was here [Ed. Note: Carl R. Proffer]. And I just asked if I could take his classes. And after he got over the bafflement of somebody that didn't speak Russian wanting to do that, I took his graduate seminar classes, one on Nikolai Gogol and the other on Vladimir Nabokov. And he also was starting a publishing company in his house, publishing dissident Soviet writers in both Russian and English that couldn't be published in the Soviet Union.

So I started – I just asked him if I could, you know, do something there, so he let me. I started out just going out there, doing his mailroom stuff a couple days a week, and then I started working on page proofs, and then I sort of worked my way into a full-time job. So instead of – I still got my library degree, but I ended up working there for the next six years as a, eventually as an editor of the English language manuscripts. He kept telling me when I first got there and he started giving me writing assignments and stuff, and he said he was really surprised at how good of a writer I was, which I attributed completely to my time at Fairhaven. I really learned how to write critically and think my way through extended pieces of writing and all that. So he ended up being the person to publish my work in an academic journal. And it was almost a second extension of my Fairhaven experience to be in this kind of hothouse. And all these Russians were always coming through, and often living in Ann Arbor for a few years. Joseph Brodsky was one of their first writers. He ended up on the faculty of Michigan, and I spent a lot of time with him. And then with, really this roster of probably the best writers in the Soviet Union at the time, that all at one time or another came through Ann Arbor.

TB: Did you ever learn Russian?

FM: I learned enough to be able to carry on a conversation and read Tolstoy short stories, but I was never fluent. And that was another example of one of the emigrant people that we were helping them find a place to live, and get their kids into school and all that, and she gave me Russian lessons in exchange. So yes, it was a phenomenal time of my life.

TB: What happened after you left Michigan?

FM: We came back here after our daughter was born because we wanted to be closer to family and raise her in the Northwest. There wasn't anywhere to go really at Ardis because there was like the publisher and then there was me, and there was no career track, other than just stay there and do that, which would have been fine, but we kind of felt like we should move on. So I came back here and started the typesetting business, and then I started freelance writing for the *Seattle Weekly* and the *Seattle Times*. And over time that sort of grew into a full-time career.

TB: You said you started a typesetting business. So what was that?

FM: Well, at that time you would – a typesetting machine was about the size of this table, and it had a big – it was a camera apparatus, so you sat at a keyboard it typed the stuff on photographic paper, and a little light proof thing, and then you had to run it through a developing tank. But it would format so you could do page design on this thing. And then you'd have to paste it on the boards for printers. So we did everything from the input through pasting it up, and then dealing with the printer. I was just running this out of the basement of our house.

TB: So it wasn't like fine print editions. That was like more other, like publications and fliers and stuff for—

FM: I was doing, well I was doing everything from business cards to books. So there were a couple printing houses that you could take your page layout to, and then it was camera-ready copy it was called, so they could photograph it to make the plates. But I started – kind of the big break in my business there was when Microsoft started contracting with me to do their user manuals. And they were a really small company then, but they were doing these little basic user manuals for programmers, and I was typesetting all those. So it turned into a pretty lucrative business for quite a few years, until then Microsoft started doing its own typesetting. (Laughter) And that was the end of that. That was the end of my business. But I did that for about seven years.

TB: Okay. So, anything else about your favorite, or most influential teachers? I think you kind of touched on that as we went through, but is there anything you haven't said about that?

FM: It's really hard to qualify just how enormous and important, especially Don McLeod, was then, David Mason too, because it wasn't just the academic material but kind of, how to kind of live and be intellectually engaged with the rest of the world, just sort of seeing how they, you know, their sense of play about things, and how almost everything in their lives seemed to be material for meditation and thought and engagement. They were just real exemplars that way. And then Western's English Department, Gene Garber and Reed Merrill, were just in terms of really forcing you to be rigorous as a thinker. They just really pushed that. And the way they conducted their classes and forced you and engaged you and invited your participation, but also insisted on being a mentor and a guide, and kind of always raising the bar for you, is really, really important. And I think being able to avoid the standard lecture class, at least for us, was a real boon, being in that seminar setting from day one. At least for me personally it was critical to my -- I think, even getting through college.

TB: And have you stayed in contact then with all that original group?

FM: The only one I stayed in contact with over the years was Tim Bauer, and his younger brother Chris, who actually entered Fairhaven as a 15 year old.

TB: Oh my gosh.

FM: Yes, he's somebody you should interview sometime. Christopher Bauer, or Chris Bauer I guess. He has kind of an ethics, psychology business in Nashville, Tennessee, but he's easily findable. He travels a lot. He comes through the Northwest quite a bit. But his experiences, I think really illuminating that way, I mean he didn't even have to graduate from high school to get into Fairhaven, and got through Fairhaven, I think, in less than four years, if I remember correctly. He was a brilliant, brilliant kid. And his older brother, Tim Bauer, had a real problem, he couldn't, I don't know, he had some kind of test anxiety disorder or something, and his parents knew David Mason, and that's why he ended up in Fairhaven. He was my roommate my first year, and we were really, really, good friends. And he went from Fairhaven to the U. and worked in the primate center for years, and then graduated with a degree in veterinary medicine and became a really famous veterinarian in Seattle. He was known as the one you went to when no other vet could solve your problem. Even years later, on Bainbridge Island, when we had a sick pet, our vet just out of the blue said, You know, I don't know what's going on here, but if you could take him to this guy, Timothy Bauer in Ballard… That really told me how well he had done.

TB: It sounds like he's passed away?

FM: No. He just retired recently. He spends most of his time now in Hawaii, I think.

TB: Oh, okay, okay.

Well is there anything else we haven't talked about that you would like to talk about? I just really want to get your story and –

FM: Well for what it's worth, when I was on the admissions committee, we were looking through things, and actually Tim Bauer and I, quasi I guess, but we started looking at all the girls' pictures. And we both picked out girls just for their picture that we wanted to make sure that got in. And the one I picked out is still my wife.

TB: Oh nice!

FM: Yes, she, like when she came up here, I made sure that I was the one who was guiding her tour. And then when she showed up here, I was, you know, helped her get settled into her dorm room and everything. I kind of didn't let her out of my sight, and Tim did the same with Meredith Aldridge, and their relationship lasted a long time, but not as long as mine. But they were together for years and years after college. I don't know, I guess it's a sign of how much things have changed. But that sort of thing wouldn't even be probably legal now. (Laughter)

TB: It might not be legal, but I wouldn't be surprised if something didn't still go on, although I don't think we have admissions pictures, but I mean, yes.

FM: I still have that picture actually. On our 40th wedding anniversary, our daughters threw us a surprise party, and they had a slide show, and that picture was in it. So that's become very much part of our family lore, how my wife and I met. And it was such a small community, and we all had this kind of weird set of shared values, so I think it was the emotional climate was conducive to romance, I guess you would say.

TB: Do you want to talk a little bit more about the shared values overall of the community?

FM: Well we definitely had this vision for completely reforming college education, which, you know, from my point of view now is really pretentious, since I didn't know anything about college education. But we really were militant about the no grades, the community, the learning community. I was a little dismayed when students rebelled against staying on campus, because that was really, I thought, critical to our – I kind of wonder now what kind of sense of community Fairhaven has since most students don't even live on that campus. But that's a separate problem. We just, we thought that what we were doing was going to become a model that would eventually just take over. I don't think it's really practical to do that.

But I know that, like when I went back to Michigan, they had a cluster college there that was basically set up along similar lines. It was a little bit less intimate I think, but they had a little separate campus within the campus and a separate faculty and separate set of classes and all that. So I think that kind of Sixties vision for how education was going to be, we really imbued with that. And I remember going around doing a lot of speaking at high schools and to groups on campus who just wanted to know about Fairhaven then. You had time to kind of proselytize, convert some Western students to come over to Fairhaven and stuff. Because we were really fervent about what we were doing.

TB: Anything else?

FM: Yes, it seems like I should remember more, but mostly I remember a lot of parties and –

TB: That's always a part of it.

Did you participate in the May of 1970 I-5 protest, where they closed I-5?

FM: No, I think that was probably during – there were two times that I dropped out of school and worked for a while. That was another nice thing about Fairhaven, you could just make a phone call to come back. So after my sophomore year, I took what turned out to just be two quarters off, and then I called Don McLeod and said, Can I come back? And he actually, not only did I come back that spring, but he let me teach a three-credit class on the writing of [Alain Robbe-Grillet], so I taught all of his novels.

TB: Well that's pretty awesome. Tell me a little bit more about that.

FM: Yes, for some reason they let students do that. I had taken a class on, well Don and I had, you know, it was one of those individual things where I did a bunch of kind of the "New Novel Movement" (Le Nouvelle Romain), French writing at the time. So Michel [Butor], Marguerite Duras, Raymond Queneau and then Alain [Robbe-Grillet]. And then I got really fixated on [Robbe-Grillet] read all of his books, and McLeod kind of took me through the context of that writing, and I was fascinated with him for years. And so they were letting students teach classes. Like a friend of mine, James Winchell, taught a class on Thoreau because that's all he did for two years was read Thoreau. And I taught this [Robbe-Grillet] class.

In retrospect I was a terrible teacher, but it was kind of a chance to introduce a writer that nobody would have heard of. There's a professor over in the French Department here, whose name I can't remember now, but I consulted with him a lot about kind of ancillary writings to include in my class. They were really good about letting us do that. You know, I think it was a valuable experience even for the people that took the class. So when I came back, I taught that class and started working basically toward my major.

And then I dropped out again for almost a year and a half, worked for this company called Friese Hide & Tallow Company in Bellingham, and then spent about three months in Mexico, and then just came back and decided it was really time to finish, so that's when I kind of took my – I was taking 20-25 credits a term or a quarter, and mostly all of them English classes because I was trying to finish my major by the time my wife was going to graduate, because she was a year behind, or had been, so we could graduate at the same time.

TB: Nice.

FM: But yes, that was very – if you wanted to leave, you told them you were going to take some time off, and when you wanted to come back, you just told them and they said okay. (Laughter) So there was no real procedure there. That was obviously, for someone like me, a real boon. I might never have finished if Fairhaven hadn't been there.

TB: Terrific. Anything more?

FM: That's probably the best I can do. (Laughter)

TB: Well you've done awesome! I think Fairhaven is a very, very, very unique experience.

Okay, if you have nothing more, I'll say thank you very much, and we'll shut this off.

FM: Awesome.

End of first recording

Addendum

TB: We're just going to talk a little bit more about some of the faculty members.

FM: Yes, the two real writing influences for me were Don McLeod and Annis Hovde, and they were kind of Jekyll and Hyde in a way because McLeod was so intense and Hovde was so laid back. The thing that really excited me about him was that he was a published poet, which I never in my life would have ever dreamed I would be in the same room with a published poet, so he was a real celebrity that way. And he was kind of a colorful character. He was very tall and thin, and then he had this kind of genteel manner, and he always wore a jacket and tie, which for Fairhaven was pretty outrageously formal. And he smoked just nonstop in his office, and he'd sit there in this haze of smoke, and he'd talk in this kind of almost like poetic cadence when he talked about poetry especially, but just about writing in general. And he was just a fount – any time you mentioned anybody you were interested, it seemed like he could just almost pull the book out of his hat and hand it to you to take and read and just bring back whenever you wanted. He was probably the first one to make me realize that in anything you read by a serious writer, there was a subtext to be explored and, you know, you had to learn how to read between the lines and look for the broader themes and all that.

I also remember he was building a new home out on Chuckanut Drive, and it was this beautiful setting. I remember him taking me out there once when it was under construction, and he was telling me they wouldn't let them use bulldozers because he wanted to leave everything as much a natural setting as he could. And his wife was a painter, and they had this wonderful studio with these south facing huge wall-size windows looking out over this incredible scene. And he had all these peacocks out there.

TB: Live?

FM: Peacocks, yes. It was really, you know, just the, kind of the imaginative lives the faculty members lived that was just really eye opening to see this kind of really alternative way of not being an organization man, I guess. So, he just had this just pristine place out there that he was always bringing students out to and having class sessions. He was like the –

TB: You also mentioned Bill Keep. Is there anything else more about him that you would like to say?

FM: He was the one that I took all of my Shakespeare classes from, and he was just a really soft spoken, gentle man. Shakespeare I think for anybody who is only quasi-literate the way I was, was a real challenge because the language was so hard to read, and he was just really patient. He always had really good texts selected with really good footnotes and things so you got all the kind of allusions and everything. And he just was really great at bringing alive Shakespeare and making you understand how he spoke to the contemporary mind and soul.

TB: Do you just want to look down the list of those professors and see if there's anybody else that you remember on this list that you could especially speak to. It's always nice to sort of get something about them, the personhood.

FM: Yes, there's a lot of names I remember. Gene Garber was a really great creative writing teacher and also brought alive a lot of writers I'd never heard of, D – not D.H. Lawrence, but I'm trying to remember now that famous Alexandria Quartet... I can't remember the author's name now [Ed. Note: Lawrence Durrell] , but he was the one who introduced me to those books and that whole kind of ex-patriot scene post-Hemingway in Europe. Oh, and Robert Huff too (laughter), there was a guy! My main memory of him is going through court ordered alcohol (laughter) classes. I'd gotten arrested for public intoxication and had to go to these –

TB: Oh, so you were both there.

FM: Yes, I look up and there's one of my teachers. (Laughter) He recognized me too. He thought it was hilarious. But I just remember sitting in these classes, and he was taking notes all the time. And I finally looked over his shoulder, and it turned out he was just working on poems. (Laughter)

TB: Had you wanted to be a poet, because you really liked –

FM: I was really, I went down that path for quite a few years because of Hovde, I think, and Huff of course made you think that that's what poets were like. But it turned out that I had no gift for it. I wrote a lot of really bad poetry for a good part of my undergraduate career. But I kind of figured out or found my strength was kind of this hybrid between fiction and nonfiction, that McLeod really helped me develop.

TB: Did you by any chance have Dr. Lawyer? Robert Lawyer?

FM: No, I don't remember.

TB: He might have been almost the director of the library by the time you were a student, so.

FM: There was another professor in foreign language, let's see if he's here. Yes, Robert Balas, a great teacher. He and Reed Merrill were really good friends, and so I took classes from both of them, often one of them suggesting the other's class. But they did a lot of collaborating, and Balas I ended up, again I guess because of my Fairhaven experience, but he let me do a one-on-one class on these French novelists from the – it was kind of the Oulipo poem movement and the – they were called 'Pataphysicians, and they had a college in 'Pataphysics, and it was called the science of things that are necessary. It was a really – I took classes on [Louis-Ferdinand Celine] and [Boris Vian] from him. He was another one of those really colorful characters on the Western campus that I kind of felt like should have been at Fairhaven.

And I think between Balas, Garber, Keep, Johnson, Reed Merrill, and then the Fairhaven faculty, that was pretty much it for me.

Paul Woodring of course was a huge kind of guru for us, because he was the one that we understood to have come up with the whole idea for Fairhaven and had gotten the grant that got it all started.

TB: Did you have much connection with him?

FM: He was around all of the time that first year, and so we were always having meetings with him, talking with him a lot about what Fairhaven was going to be, and how we were going to design it. He was sort of both guiding and I think really good at soliciting input from us.

TB: Nice.

FM: I think it – my impression was that it grew into a kind of a monster that he felt like it couldn't contain. Tim Bauer and I in that second year in Edens Hall, I don't even know how this happened, but there was this group called the, they were followers of this guy named Alfred Lawson, who thought that we had these little things in our brains called menorgs, and he had a school in Wisconsin, and for some reason they started sending me stuff. And so I sent away for their newsletters, and then one day this couple showed up with a trunk full of literature that they gave me. And so Tim Bauer and I started reading this stuff, and it was just insane. But we started this thing called Radio Free Fairhaven, and he had this loud speaker, and we would just randomly stick this speaker in his window and do these radio broadcasts, calling for a revolution and to follow the teachings of Alfred Lawson, and it was just this kind of parody of campus movements in general. And one day I was standing outside when he put the speaker up and turned it on, and as soon as he went, This is Radio Free Fairhaven, I saw these windows pop open. (Laughter)

But Woodring was just horrified, and he didn't realize that it was a parody. And he just was livid. He called us in and just read us the riot act about blackening Fairhaven's reputation and start -- He thought we were going to be sitting in, like they were doing over at Western's offices. So that was, I think, the beginning of Fairhaven's morphing into something the founders didn't really expect. The younger faculty were really enthusiastic about it. Almost anything students came up with by way of outrageous behavior, they seemed to encourage. But the founding group, they seemed to drift away after that.

TB: Could we just about the impact of Fairhaven on your life?

FM: I would, I mean, to look back on it, I can't even imagine what would have happened to me if that accident hadn't happened. I couldn't – the seminary experience would have been pretty scarring, and I wasn't really, I think, capable of going on to college. But because of that first year where we had so much care, and you almost – it would have been impossible to be under the radar the way, you know, you hear about student suicides and that kind of thing now, where they just get lost in this environment and nobody really notices. But this was such an intimate setting that the first sign of any kind of trouble, somebody was asking you what was wrong. Pat Karlberg, who was the, you know, I'm sure she's a legend here now, but she just – there wasn't a day that went by that she didn't know exactly what you were up to. And the faculty were that way too. You just – a lot of our social life was spent in their homes, and we just didn't have the opportunity to fall through the cracks because there weren't any.

TB: Do you think Rosemary, maybe even in calling you and asking you if you wanted to participate, knew that you needed that?

FM: Probably. I mean, she knew that I was troubled. I'm sure my mother was telling her that something was deeply wrong with me (laughter), because I came home and I was really depressed. And I think she probably also thought that I was the kind of person they were looking for though, because of my seminary experience. And I think that, my understanding is that they only made calls – I guess they sent out some kind of mailing, and then they made some calls. But I never even would have known about it if she hadn't been there. So that was really lucky. And it was just life changing to have people – to be told one on one, day after day after day, kind of, what is expected of you as an intellectual. The impact of that just can't be quantified. You can't – it's easy to skate through, especially those first two years, with kind of minimal effort. That just wasn't an option for us. And that just turns out to be an accidental blessing.

But I think Fairhaven still operates very much that way, because I've been back now after being away for so long, and there's new faculty there, and the community, from what I have seen, is just really, really close, and I think it's really unique, still.

TB: Okay. If you have nothing else, I'll shut it off again. Great. Thank you very much.

End of second recording

The End