

2-9-1984

Interview no. 687

Virginia Fisk

Carolyn Fisk Overley

Richard Overley

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.utep.edu/interviews>



Part of the [Oral History Commons](#), and the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Interview with Virginia Fisk, Carolyn Fisk Overley, and Richard Overley by Rebecca Craver, 1984, "Interview no. 687," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Institute of Oral History at ScholarWorks@UTEP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Combined Interviews by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks@UTEP. For more information, please contact lweber@utep.edu.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE: Virginia Fisk, Carolyn Fisk Overley & Richard Overley
INTERVIEWER: Rebecca Craver
PROJECT: History of the University
DATE OF INTERVIEW: February 9, 1984
TERMS OF USE: Unrestricted

TAPE NO.: 687
TRANSCRIPT NO.: 687

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

The Overleys attended Texas Western College 1962-66;
Ms. Fisk attended the College of Mines.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Recollections of college life in the 1960s, including dorm life, the engineering fraternity and initiation; social life; going to Juárez; college life in the 1940s, including physical aspects, social life, and sororities.

Length of interview: 1 hour Length of transcript: 32 pages

Carolyn Fisk Overley, Richard Overley and Virginia Fisk
by Rebecca Craver
February 9, 1984

- C: Tell me what years you attended UTEP?
- CO: It was Texas Western College, but then when I graduated it was UTEP. It was '62 to '66.
- C: And Richard, were you here the same years?
- RO: Yeah, I graduated in January of '67.
- CO: Yeah, that's right. Then he went to graduate school there until he destroyed his thesis.
- C: What happened?
- CO: It melted.
- RO: It melted.
- C: How?
- RO: I was heat treating it and we had this. . .
- C: What was it?
- RO: It was an alloy. Or it was three alloys, and they melted together.
- CO: The machine broke down or something.
- RO: The furnace overran itself and they melted.
- CO: He came home with the plan of hand out, and he said, "This is my thesis"--this little thing like a little button, and that was it.
- RO: There were three different alloy compositions, and after you worked hard enough on them you had to reheat, treat them, and then work hard on them again.
- C: Well, you were in chemical engineering?
- CO: Oh, no. They don't have chemical engineering.
- C: Well, what kind of engineering were you in?

RO: Metallurgical engineering.

C: You were the real mining engineer.

RO: Well, no. The year I graduated, or actually two years before I graduated, they decided that since they had only two mining engineers that they'd discontinue it. I guess it wasn't the year before or anything like that, it was a couple of years back when it was done. So there was no mining courses that I took. I probably could have but I had no interest in them. But that's the old hard rock and pick and shovel guys, and they acted like it, too.

C: Did you live in the dorm or at home or where did you live?

RO: Well, I'm from Odessa so I didn't live at home.

C: Okay. You didn't commute then?

RO: No, it's a little tough. But when I first came here I lived with my brother and sister-in-law at the trailer park there across from the Phillips station on Thunderbird. Finally, I got fed up with that after the first year and I went to the dorm after that. Hudspeth Hall.

C: Hudspeth Hall.

RO: Yes. That was the one where the "rowdies" lived. The smart ones lived at. . . what is it? Oh, gosh, it was next door to it. Worrell. Worrell Hall.

C: The smart ones lived at Worrell and the "rowdies" lived at Hudspeth.

RO: Yes. And then the jocks lived down there at Animal Hall.

CO: This was, I believe, called Miner's Hall, but it was nicknamed Animal Hall.

RO: Yeah, it was the jocks' /hall/, or the animals lived at the jock hall, or whatever.

CO: These were the years, and I don't remember if it was '62 or '63, when we had some of the California football players /that/ came in, and we had never experienced them before.

RO: Mooning.

CO: They mooned. We had never had that at UTEP and all of a sudden here are these guys mooning out the windows.

C: At the dorms?

RO: No, no. Out of their cars. They drove by on the street.

CO: And it was these guys, the new football players who had come in, that brought something new to UTEP.

RO: We usually didn't get the Western or the Eastern influence that quick. (Laughter)

CO: Well, you don't know if it was quick. It could have been real late. Could have been years late. But I think it was like '62, '63, something like that, the first couple years there.

C: And you lived in the dorm?

CO: /Yes./ I lived in Bell. Might have been Benedict, too.

RO: Yeah, you did.

CO: I lived in Bell and then at Benedict, and then back at Bell.

C: Well, let's hear some dorm tales.

RO: Well, here's one of the guys that we dressed up as far as our initiation to Alpha Phi Omega, non-boy scout fraternity. /Shows picture./

C: Non?

CO: Well, not the boy scout. This was the engineering fraternity.

RO: We had the distinction of having the name Alpha Phi Omega back in 1919, whenever the "boys" from World War I came back to go back to school. The guys that were in engineering or geology--hard rock or engineering or something--decided that they wanted to establish a fraternity because they couldn't afford the SAEs or the Phi Taus, because their monthly dues were probably \$10.00 dollars a month or something back then. Well, they decided that they'd set up a fraternity, and I guess they did some research and found that there was no fraternity that was called Alpha Phi Omega and so they established it. And like I said, it was back in 1919, and for years and years and years it was just the engineering fraternity. Then they spread out to the geologists, the chemists, the physicists and math and stuff of this nature, because all the engineers at UTEP were not quite as grody as the APOs were noted to be, and so they had to find new grody members. But the monthly dues were a dollar, and that went towards river parties.

CO: Not very far, but... (Laughs)

RO: Well, it did, because kegs of beer didn't cost but \$15.00 dollars a keg, and if you got twenty-some-odd members you could have a couple of kegs each month. Plus the rodeo that is here right now used to pay us anywhere from \$300.00 to \$500.00 to \$700.00 dollars to usher, to seat people.

CO: And they'd get their girlfriends and we'd go down there. I helped a number of years. It was fun.

RO: For a week during February, we were the nicest guys in the world because people liked to go to the rodeo and we'd allow them to work at the rodeo for us, and we would have a beer party afterwards.

CO: What was it, Pabst Blue Ribbon?

RO: No, it was the Pearl. Well, river parties, until they got sticky, we'd have them anywhere on the levee over here. We'd turn down Frontera Street and head for the levee and go and find us a tree, or maybe two trees.

C: What they call Jack Vowell Park?

RO: Oh, no. No, no.

CO: Further down.

RO: Right straight at Frontera is an expanse.

CO: I'll tell you about river parties. A bunch of drunk engineers, a stick of dynamite. Although that never happened at any party I was at. That was usually the parties where there were just the guys, and they had a couple of nutty ones, because you know how engineers are.

RO: No, they were not engineers. Those were the geologists and the mining types. They would always have some dynamite, and they'd save it for St. Pat's Day where they'd set off a charge back in the old mine back there, which would break a few windows on campus and stuff.

C: What mine? Where is the mine?

RO: We had our own mine.

C: Where was it?

RO: You know where you walk from the stadium, you know at the Sun Bowl, around Seamon Hall, going towards campus, about 50 yards up the hill was an old mine. I think it's all caved in and closed up or something now.

C: But you all used to go in there with the dynamite?

RO: Oh, well, they'd set off the charge inside the thing, and it would ricochet off the Juarez Mountains, come back, and smack a few windows in some of the dormitories and stuff.

- C: Well, sometone told me in one of these interviews that they had to stop doing the dynamite that started St. Pat's Day because the hospitals complained quite a bit.
- RO: That woke everybody on campus up and says, "Come one, we're...."
- CO: But they still did it when we were there.
- RO: I would say that probably '65 was probably about the last year that they /lit/ the dynamite at the mine. They also did a trick on Kidd Memorial. /The/ seismograph was real close to where they set out the dynamite. I think that Kidd Memorial was there at that time. I don't remember it not being there or ever not being there.
- C: I didn't know there was a mine back in there. What did it look like?
- RO: Just a hole.
- C: Just a hole? You crawled in there?
- RO: No. I'd walk back in there a certain distance but I never went very far. Spelunking didn't interest me at all.
- CO: Especially with a mine that had been dynamited so many times, you can imagine. We were talking about their river parties, we used to ski, water ski.
- RO: Water ski, yeah. That was on the levee.
- C: On the river?
- CO: That was with a car on the side.
- RO: Driving along with the ski rope attached.
- CO: You drive along the side /with/ the ski rope, and they would ski.
- RO: There were a few dummies that would do that, but they were very proficient in water skiing.
- CO: Or either drunker than him. (Laughs)

RO: They were the "Valley Boys," from Ysleta. They learned how to ski on Ascarate Park, which is a pond--Ascarate Lake--so I guess they knew their stuff. I would never try that in a million years. But later on for the fraternity, we had big steak fries out there, steak barbecuing and all that stuff, plus the water skiing. That was when we got more civilized. We had to take up an extra donation for the steak.

CO: A lot of the APOs were married. I know it sounds like they were immature, but a lot of them were really very mature people that had come back to go to school.

RO: Well, not all of them.

CO: When I was dating Richard I was the only one that was steadily dating anybody. The rest of them were married. There were a few guys that dated a little, but the majority of them were married and /had/ very lovely wives.

RO: Well, the thing about that was that I guess they got married...

CO: Those were probably not the ones that were throwing the dynamite.

RO: No, they really weren't. But they got married out of high school and stuff like that and decided that /they wanted to go to college, and / some of them were from families who could help them along.

CO: Serious-minded, good students, made good grades.

RO: And then went out and raised hell, you know, at the river and stuff. We finally got to a point where we couldn't use the levee very well because the police would patrol it and they would frown at a lot of fast driving on the levee, and finally they just ran us off. They'd say, "You can't have it here," and we'd say, "Well, you appear to be New Mexico police and we're right here in Texas." Sometimes they couldn't dispute it. If it was the Texas police, we'd say, "Oh, well we're here in New Mexico." You know, it's tough to dispute.

In fact, it was all federal, sort of federal type of land I think. You know /those were/ the dispute types. But we had a lot of good times out there, and the river didn't have any more water in it then it does now.

C: Tell me about St. Pat's Day.

RO: St. Pat's Day. I never went through it when it was held at Oro Grande, New Mexico. Those were some real tough times. Those were the days when they were initiating people.

CO: Hazing.

RO: Well, it was initiating.

CO: That's hazing. (Laughs)

RO: No, that's engineer to engineer and making him respect what he's going to be someday. But they went through some nasty areas. But I understand that where they crawled in the mines and stuff there was some sandy areas and stuff /and/ you had to crawl bare-kneed. You couldn't use these knee pads or anything like that.

C: Well, where was it?

CO: It was just behind Seamon Hall.

RO: Yeah, it's that nice parking lot they have down below the nice /Landscaping/ that keeps the Sun Bowl from eroding out into the parking lot.

CO: That was a big gully.

RO: A big gully.

CO: You crawled on your hands and knees there, didn't you?

RO: On hands and knees there.

C: What was the Blarney Stone?

RO: Just any old rock down there that they painted green.

- C: And you had to kiss it then.
- RO: Yeah, and then the St. Pat would, with his gloves on, he would smear you with green paint on the face and all that good stuff.
- CO: And tell them what you had to eat or to chew. The chewing tobacco had...
- RO: Anything a low-life Mexican wanted to feed you. (Laughs)
- CO: Eggs, chili. Chili, it was real hot.
- RO: A few gringos and güeros and all that good stuff decided, "Well, we can get it a little bit tougher for the Mexican participants," and so they'd attempt, and I don't think they ever came close.
- CO: But it was hot stuff.
- RO: It was painful whenever you put it in your mouth and chewed on it. Something I had, I don't remember what it was, but it was very, very dry when I put it in my mouth. And they said, "Chew it up," and the longer I chewed the hotter it got, and I don't know what it was. But I would have loved to have been able to figure that one out.
- CO: Then the girlfriends or wives would go through, and I finally went through one year. It was just a minor...it was a little bit of it. But we had to walk through blindfolded, and they didn't put egg on our head. And we had to chew tobacco.
- RO: And the person was always blindfolded, okay, for the whole crawl, and they had to do whatever the person who was administering this initiating requested them to do, and so it was very involved. Sometimes they would make you crawl in the opposite direction of everybody else and you'd bump heads, and you'd have to then crawl back the opposite direction. If you ever felt that somebody had turned you

around you'd wait until they'd get out of earshot and you'd turn back around. You got fairly initiation smart after a while.

C: Well, now, you only had to go through it once didn't you, Richard?

RO: Yeah.

C: Was it when you were a freshman?

RO: Oh, no, it was anytime you wanted to or felt that you were safe to do it. There were some seniors who their professors said, "If you don't go through engineering initiation, you don't graduate." And there were a few people who went through initiation under protest.

CO: Raised the money for the annual milk fund.

RO: We gave probably a tenth of all the money that we received, well, probably more than that, we actually did give money to a milk fund for underprivileged kids. Of course it was not the majority of the money, it probably wasn't half of the money. But that was how we collected some of our money for river parties and stuff.

CO: I think they all knew.

RO: The way they are dressed up and stuff it...

CO: Well, it says welcome to the Peace Corps. /Looking at photo./ That was when we had the Peace Corps, well, not real long, a couple of years?

RO: That's Dameron. He was the head of it. Was that '63? Yeah.

C: Let's talk about the dorm. What were the rules in the dorm?

CO: Oh, heck, they were very strict. Those were the days that you didn't have any men in your room. You had hours every night, of course longer hours on the weekend, like midnight. You had to sign in and out of the dorm, and the men were only /allowed/ in the lobby or the lounge.

RO: T.V. room.

CO: And we never had anybody sneak up. I don't think we ever had anything like that while we were there.

RO: Now, you had that one panty raid /while/ you were there, but that was '62 or '63.

CO: I think I went home that weekend.

C: Were you there at the panty raid?

RO: Well, it was interesting. I came up to the dormitory that night, but for some reason I didn't know what was going on--you know, very naive. I didn't even think about it until the next day /when/ there were a number of guys who were called by Jimmy Walker and /he/ says, "Naughty naughty," and stuff. But it was nothing to it to my knowledge. It was just everybody in the street and on the lawns and stuff like that, yelling and what have you.

CO: Most of our rabble rousing came in the cafeteria because the food was God awful. And in fact on Sunday, one Sunday would be steak, the next would be fried chicken, and everybody always prayed for the fried chicken. You could not cut the steak with a knife, and Richard would get out his knife.

RO: No, Bassett would get out his knife and pass it around to all the girls.

CO: You know, his pocket knife, and that's the only way you could cut the steak.

C: Would the men and women eat in the same...

CO: Oh, yeah.

RO: Oh, yeah. It was co-educational.

CO: Oh, we had a ball. We had food fights, the works. Jello on the ceiling. But they were really good about it. I mean, we never got in trouble. We really never did get in trouble, but we had that good-looking George that ran the cafeteria. He was a student. One time I was eating my

salad and there was a live green worm in it moving down the salad.

And I took it up to George, "Look at my salad." And he said, "Oh, isn't that interesting." (Laughter) And that's all he said. /PAUSE/

The Chi Omegas lived on the third floor in Bell Hall and most of the Zetas lived in the second floor. I can't say all the Chi Omegas, but anyway, there was a big difference, and there weren't many Tri Deltas in the dorm. And I can remember several of the Chi Omegas who consistently would do things to irritate us. And one of them, when I was rooming with Carol Ann Robinson, we were on the second floor with the stairs going up to the third right in front of our room, so they would fill trash cans full of water and throw them down at the door. They were constantly trying to find little things to do that /were irritating/, and they did. The only other thing I can think of is that they used to play blackjack, the girls would. I wouldn't 'cause I'd get real tired at night, I wanted to go to bed. But they would, oh, /till/ 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning they'd play blackjack. Because you couldn't do anything else. I mean you had to come in at 10:00 or 11:00 on the week nights, and on the weekends, well, you were usually out on the weekends.

C: Were there any dances held on campus?

CO: Yeah. Richard was one of the...not the Twirp King but he was like first runner-up for Twirp King. Those were fun. But you know, I don't remember a lot of dances because there was always so many fraternity parties. They weren't allowed on campus.

C: Well, was the Co-ed Council going when you were a student?

RO: Co-ed? Inter-fraternity Council was going.

C: But this Co-ed Council, girls in the dorm...

CO: Girls in the dorm were doing what?

C: Kind of had this club.

CO: Well, there was a...I sat on the dorm council, but it was running the dorm, and making sure that the rules were enforced. And if you had any /problems/, you went before the council/. This is real funny. Sharon and Chuck...you know who Chuck Hughes was? He was a famous football player. He died on the field. He was from here, I mean he went to school here. He went Pro. Just a really neat /guy/. We used to see quite a bit of him in the lounge because there were a lot of couples that were going together. And one night Sharon and Chuck went out on a date and fell asleep. They were watching a movie at the drive-in and fell asleep. They were always so honest that you wouldn't doubt them in /your/ mind, but they had to be brought up before the dorm council. I'll never forget that. And Sharon was so horribly embarrassed and Chuck came and spoke for her. He was really a neat guy. He came and said, "We fell asleep. We were watching the movie and we were tired and we just fell asleep. And when we woke up, all the cars were gone." /Laughs/ "And so I rushed her back but it was too late." But I always thought of that. She still lives here, Sharon does. She lives...who'd she marry, Charlie Walters the builder?

RO: /Yes./ There's an Inter-dorm Council, but I don't know if that's what you're talking about.

C: But the fraternities and sororities had their dances off campus?

CO: Oh, yeah.

C: Where?

CO: Well, the Phi Taus' /parties/ were at Billy Crews a lot. Well, like for football games, I know the SAEs would always get somebody's house--you know, some alumni's house--and have a party there. Or if

they couldn't, they were off campus /someplace/ and they could have them there. And they did, but /it/ just kind of varied, I guess. If it was just a football pre-game party, they'd try to have it someplace real nice, real classy. Jack Chapman, they had one at his house, I can remember. I dated a lot of SAEs. Kappa Sigs, I don't remember as much. The Paso Del Norte, and then there was Billy Crews and the Cortez, if it was a real fancy, big party.

C: Formal.

CO: Yeah.

C: Did you go to Juarez much?

CO: Yes. There was a lot of Juarez hopping then.

C: Where would you go over there?

CO: Well, there was the brewery over there. What's the name of the...

Carta Blanca? Did you ever go to the beer gardens in Juarez?

RO: /Yes./

CO: There's beer gardens and whatever the big, what is the big beer

/Brewery/ over there?

RO: Carta Blanca? Yeah, one of those.

CO: Had a big brewery and a garden, and you could go over there and have a big party. And I never did, have never liked to drink. It just has not been my cup of tea. But invariably your date had too much to drink and you would pray that when you came back to the border, that he was going to say "American," because they used to, you know, they would yank you out of the car and hold you if said "German" or something real cute. (Chuckles) I can remember one guy in particular, I was scared to death, you know. The driver was sober but we were in the back seat, and he had too much to drink and I hadn't seen him all

evening. And I was scared he wasn't going to say anything and we were going to be stopped. But the Lobby was kind of a wild place to go to. And /in/ Mother's day the Lobby was the place. Now in my day it was a little... But, you know, when you'd try all those places, you'd go up and you'd go to the Cavern of Music and over to the Alcazar Bar, the Manhattan Club, isn't that where we were? The Manhattan Club has been there for years, really a nice one.

C: Didn't it burn several years ago?

CO: We went into the...remember where we went with the McGills? What was that? Really neat, fantastic bar on the corner.

RO: This was not during college, this was later.

CO: I know, but I'm trying to think of that bar. It's one of the most famous bars in Juarez.

RO: Oh, Kentucky.

CO: The Kentucky Club, that's what it is.

RO: That's no bar, that's a watering hole.

CO: Any of the really nice bars, we would go over and they would just bar hop down there.

F: We did that, too--different day. Went to the Chinese Palace, the Manhattan Bar.

C: What years are you talking about?

F: Well, are you talking about college?

C: Yeah.

F: It's just college you're involved in. Well, when I went to Texas Mines, it was 1940, about 1940. And it all is blurred in my mind, but I think that's when we would go to those places, the Tivoli and the Lobby and the Manhattan Bar. And there was a little man, he

played a little funny harp and everybody loved to listen to him. You know, one of those funny things like that. And then also there was a man who played the xylophone, and everybody was there. And we went to the Casanova Rendezvous (chuckles), and that burned down. In fact, my husband and I used to go to the Casanova Rendezvous, but that was just a little bit later. A lot of the kids used to go there, too. That was a very glamorous place with great big portraits and stairs and everything. But the Tivoli and the Lobby were really the places to go. We occasionally went down to Zaragoza, and the Waterfill Gardens was down in Zaragoza.

CO: Maxfim's?

F: Well, there was Maxfim's, but I think that was a little later. But in our time Waterfill Gardens was down there and the college kids would go down there.

C: Where did you live in 1940 when you were a student?

F: Well, I lived with my friend, we lived on Louisville Street. Or I also lived with my sister occasionally on Memphis Street, so I lived in the east part of town.

C: How would you get over here to school?

F: One of the girls had a car. And we all worked at the same time we went to school so we were...it was pretty tough, but we went to school in the morning and worked in the afternoon.

C: So how many years did you attend?

F: I only attended about, oh, about a year and a half, and that was part-time. I did go /back/ to school many years later. But the things I remember about it was, of course it was College of Mines. The place where the students /met/ you know, there was no Union building or anything. There was a room, and in that room was the bookstore

where you got drinks, and it was in the Old Main Building. I suppose somebody else has told you all this. There were wooden benches all the way along the sides of the room. /PAUSE/ All those rocks right across from Old Main, you know. We'd go over there and have our lunch and sit out on the rocks.

C: Well, Carolyn told me that you lived in those trailers.

F: We did. See, this was when I was very young. When Randy and I got married and I went to work and my husband was in school, and he started to school in 1946 when he came back, we lived in a house out on the east side of town and it was very expensive. So when those things were to be opened, well, we had our name on the very, very first list. And we waited and we waited and we waited and we waited and we waited, and finally got in. And when we moved in it was really something else. The floors were all creosote, so everybody borrowed... we rented a floor sander and everybody sanded those floors. And I think that those floors were probably one-quarter inch thick by the time we had all gotten through sanding, because then we stained them and varnished them. We did it ourselves, you know, because it was really a crude situation. We had to buy all our furniture and we had to go in hock to get all that furniture. There was a furniture warehouse that everybody went to, went into debt to get some furniture to live in that place. It was so cold, and they had radiators because this was a redone barracks. And the heat somehow came from these crazy radiators, but it didn't come really, and the coldest year that we have ever had in El Paso, it was 8° or 10° or 15° below, it was just terrible. And the snow was outside and our place was so cold that we all would go in and sit on the radiators. And at night we'd have electric blankets, so we had, you know, blankets up to here. It was just terrible.

C: Well, where were these barracks?

RO: It's hard to describe right now because /it has changed/. From Hudspeth Hall you go past /the new/ Burges Hall. You had to go about a half a mile down. And they have filled up all that arroyo.

F: It was roads and different things. It's an entirely different /scene/.

C: Well, how many buildings were in there?

F: Gosh, there must have been 30, don't you think there were thirty?

C: Now, was it a one family per building?

F: No, it was like barracks, and there were four apartments to each barracks, and we had two bedrooms. We had a laundry that was run by Henry and Lilla Lyde. They were the entrepreneurs of the area and they had a great big car because they always knew how to make money. So he had the big car and he ran the laundry. He bought all these machines and they gave up a building--it was a little one--to the laundry. And of course there was no dryer but it was a washer and we'd all go down whenever we could and go down, and Henry charged whatever, I can't remember what he charged, but he made a lot of money out of it. He was always good at that.

C: And did you have community clotheslines to hang the laundry?

F: No, we had a clothesline behind each one.

C: Oh, did you? Were children allowed?

F: Oh, yes. We had...Carolyn was there. Oh, everybody had a child. These were all people who...

C: The baby boom.

F: Yes, it was the baby boom. Almost everybody had babies of some kind. The community telephone, we had no telephones, but there was a pay

phone right outside our bedroom window. We heard a lot (laughs), we really did. It was right out there, and we opened the window and we could hear what anybody was saying if they left the door open, and of course in the summertime they certainly did. And they had to go out there to use the phone.

C: Well, were the buildings as hot in the summer as cold in the winters?

F: Oh, yes, because there was no insulation. But we were very happy that we had that because it was very cheap. I can't remember what we paid, but it was pretty cheap and, you know, made it possible. We left after about two and a half years, so we weren't there as long as some of the others. Now Jane and Tommy Rush were there the whole time, and Henry and Lilla were there the whole time. Let's see, next door was Henry Chavez, I remember, and he was a coach at Bowie for a long time. Some of the Timberlakes lived directly across the street. That was a little gossippy thing 'cause they had terrible fights and they'd throw things at each other all the time. It was lots of fun, you know, looking out. (Chuckles)

C: Looking out your window.

CO: Now, that housing was still there when we were there and in about our sophomore or junior year they took those out, because Richard had a friend that lived there. Do you remember who that is? Or was that my other boyfriend? (Laughs) But anyway, I can remember visiting.

RO: Well, one of the Homecoming parades, we went down there because most of them were vacant, and we stole the toilet.

C: And what did you do with the toilet that you stole?

RO: We put it on the back of a cotton trailer.

F: Guess who rode it?

RO: Well, the theme was Greek gods.

- C: The theme for the Homecoming Parade?
- CO: Something to do with the Greek gods.
- RO: Yeah, because only the Greeks and the APOs, which were Greeks, did the Homecoming parade, really, because not very many other people got involved with it.
- CO: That's true. It was the Greek parade. If you didn't have the Greeks you didn't have a parade.
- RO: So, what we did was, we designed the throne of the gods.
- CO: And Richard was the god, The Thinker.
- RO: I got sent.
- CO: And he had a little laurel wreath on his head. You could always bet-- except for one year--that the APOs would come up with some rank float.
- RO: We had a pile of cow manure on one float. I don't remember what it said on the side but it wasn't, you know, pleasing to a lot of people. (Laughter)
- CO: Then one year, I don't know what got into them, they designed the Flying Miner hat.
- RO: Well, it was Dobbs' hat.
- CO: Doobs' hat, was that it?
- RO: Yeah. And we won...
- CO: The sweepstakes or whatever.
- RO: Well, no, we didn't go for sweepstakes. We just went for a lower deal, but had we gone for the sweepstakes we would have won.
- CO: I thought you won the whole thing.
- RO: No, we didn't win the whole thing.
- CO: Well, I was there when the Zetas won in floats a couple of years.

RO: We used to have a real good time building floats down in some barn at the Coliseum.

CO: That was always fun.

RO: We went down there just to enjoy ourselves. Everybody else went down there to work, so we didn't...

CO: That's true. I remember that. One year everybody was in the barn.

RO: Yeah, we went down to meet people and to drink beer and things of this nature.

CO: We went down to win and we did, and we even got to be...we were in the Sun Carnival.

RO: When we resorted to winning ourselves, we did it over /at/ Seamon Hall because it had /an/ electric welder over there and we could weld everything and wire all the... I cut my thumb off practically, cutting crepe paper. Got too far over on the paper cutter and...Dave Brubeck. That's what you get for going straight, Carolyn. (Laughter)

F: And you know your college days were entirely different from ours, you know, because we were so serious and so...trying to get along, and here they were having all that fun.

RO: Well, Dad helped me out, so it makes a lot of difference, it really does.

C: Well, you ought to have been able to have some kind of social life in those barracks.

F: Yes, we did. We had a little club and we had meetings and that kind of thing. We were all so busy, though, because you know, working so hard and with children and that kind of thing. I remember we had, there is a very prominent lawyer here in town who lived out there at that time. Of course my husband's a lawyer, too. He would go around in the

nude all the time in his house, and our houses were just, you know, you could just see right through them, and he would run around like that. He'd even come to the door like that and the whole neighborhood was up in arms because he'd do this. They were really angry at him because the kids were around. This is the way he felt--you know, he had a kind of a Norwegian name and he evidently felt this was the way to do it. It was quite a big scandal then. (Laughter) We never did stop him.

C: You didn't?

F: No. 'Cause he wasn't scandalized, just us. (Laughter)

C: Didn't bother him a bit.

F: No, it didn't bother him a bit.

CO: I can remember, now, a party at Holliday Hall.

RO: That's the old gymnasium.

C: You mean when you were a child?

CO: Well, I was a little child, going to a party at Holliday Hall. Did you all have some parties there?

F: Yes we did. We had, you know, get-togethers and things like that.

Not a lot, we really didn't have a lot of time for social life.

We were so darn busy. We couldn't afford anything either 'cause

we were all living on the income from the veterans' pay. And of course

I was working, started and worked at El Paso High School, and worked

for...I think I started at \$125 a month, in the office.

C: Did you work when Carolyn was a baby?

F: Yes.

C: What did you do with her?

F: She went to school. Well, she stayed with my sister most of that

time, but there was a fun time when we...there was no day nursery in El Paso, none. There was a nursery called the Sunshine Day Nursery and it was down in South El Paso. You know where the Sunshine Bakery is. But it was a /respectable/ thing to do to send your child to the Sunshine Day Nursery. So, oh, Jane Rush and I, oh, there must have been 10 kids who went to the Sunshine Day Nursery, and Carolyn was one of them. And one day we opened up the paper and there was this picture, this big, on the front page of the El Paso Times for the United Way on the Community Chest at that time, and you know, like the poor little underprivileged. And there was Carolyn, because /they had taken her picture/.

CO: Eating soup.

F: Soup. We just couldn't believe it, and she was adorable.

CO: And it said something about give to the Community Chest. (Laughter)

F: I must have had 150 calls at school that day. /Our/ relatives were horrified, but it was the only day nursery in El Paso. We paid for it of course, you see. But Carolyn was cute. She was very photogenic. But it was the biggest picture you have ever seen in your life. It was every bit that big on the front page. /Richard Overley leaves./ You really forget until you start trying to remember some of those crazy things that you did.

CO: Course I don't think we did as many crazy things as Richard.

F: Probably not.

CO: They used to have some of their special parties down at the Mexican food place, La Hacienda. That was another place.

F: We went there too. Even when we were first going, even when I was

going to Texas Mines, we used to go to the Hacienda and then here we went again when Bradley was in school, and then Richard went, and now people are still going. That's a really old place.

C: Probably one of the few places that has been in continuous operation.

F: Yes, I think it is.

CO: Was Billy Crews around when you...

F: Yes, it was. Now of course our place was Tom Rochelle's. Oh, my goodness, if you weren't seen on Saturday night at Tom Rochelle's you were not in.

CO: When was this, in college?

F: It was in college.

C: Is that someone's name?

F: Well, Tom Rochelle. Now, Tom Rochelle, see, Billy Crews worked for Tom Rochelle, and then he opened up his own restaurant. But Tom Rochelle had a marvelous bar and it was right there beside where Billy Crews is, up a little ways. And, you know, you just had to go to Tom Rochelle's or you just weren't in. It was in New Mexico, barely in New Mexico, so you could have drinks, because of course we didn't have any drinks in El Paso. The man who owned that seafood place in Bassett the Seafood Galley, he was the bartender at Tom Rochelle's many, many years, and everybody knew him. He was just an institution. But you just had to go there. Every kid in college was there. It was packed. It was a little tiny place, just packed.

C: Well, you're not originally from El Paso?

F: No, I came from Payo, Texas, a little town. I came up here when I was fifteen.

CO: She graduated when she was fifteen.

F: I lived with my sister and went to school, worked.

C: What did you wear to class?

CO: I wore nice clothes.

C: Girls didn't wear slacks then?

F: Never.

CO: No, no. Richard wore white Levis. When I graduated from high school, at that time, I'm sure at U.T. Austin, the penny loafers were /in/, brown penny loafers. Well, here at UTEP it was not that way, at Texas Western. It was black suede loafers and white socks, that's what was /in/.

F: I have pictures of me when I was at Texas Mines, and you could have passed for the same time right now. I wore tweed looking skirts, the length was right about here. I wore cardigans or pullovers. But I did wear saddle shoes and ankle socks, but they weren't biggies, you know, like Carolyn wore. Carolyn wore great, big, heavy ones.

CO: We were not big on the preppy look, you know, the east coast look.

F: I looked like the east coast, I really did. I look at those pictures, I can't believe it.

CO: It was just a variety of everything at UTEP. I mean it really was strange. We wore the straight skirts and the sweaters and some just wore dresses; nobody wore slacks. But you just didn't find a particular style that was in, even with the sorority girls, except for the black /suede loafers/.

F: Well, when I was in school at first we were really preppy-looking. Almost, I guess, a copy of the east coast, we probably were. Very, very simple things. Cardigans, the cardigans that were very

cardigan, the thin thing with the sweater set, that kind of thing, that's what we wore.

C: Well, I remember matching sweaters and skirts, dyed to match.

F: Yes, but that was mine. That's what I wore, 1939 and '40 and '41.

CO: You had some of that but there was not a whole campus style. It was pretty much an individual look.

F: We all looked exactly /alike/. Pleated skirts, we wore lots of pleated skirts, you know, Pendletons, that kind of thing.

C: Well, were you a student in '41, when Pearl Harbor?

F: Yes, I guess I was, part-time at that time. '40 and '41 was when I went there.

C: I've heard people that were students at that time tell me that all the men left, that in '42 that most of the students were women until after World War II.

F: Well, that's true. They really left. But of course we didn't have any problem with dates because we had all those neat guys out at Fort Bliss. (Laughs) Yes, we really met some really nice people, really nice young men.

CO: You know, that was still the case as you got older at UTEP when I was there. You started out and you were involved with the fraternity boys, but there was a lot of nice second lieutenants.

F: Second lieutenants.

CO: And going to school at UTEP, stationed at Fort Bliss. They had all graduated from college. They were, you know, just doing their tour of duty before they went on. And I even dated one, I think he was a lawyer, young lawyer, and he would take me out to Martino's in Juarez, to the nice places. It was not like the fraternity boys you dated who just were willing to pay for a few drinks, that's all, and

they wanted to dance. These guys wanted to take you out to dinner.

F: Yes, and they had the tea dances out at Fort Bliss and we'd go every Sunday. We were invited out to the tea dances, you know, all in the afternoon. It was a dance. Everybody, you know, you dressed up.

C: Did they have a live band?

F: Yes, a live band, and all of the young men dressed in their neatests uniforms. It was really nice. And the Saturday night dances out there were spectacular. Oh, we really dressed up pretty for those in beautiful formals, antebellum type things, like Carolyn's in her time. But almost all of the young girls did date young men from out there because they were really nice people, a lot of them West Point graduates and all college graduates.

C: Do you remember any of the big bands coming in?

F: Oh, I remember seeing Tommy Dorsey here, and Frank Sinatra was there.

C: Really?

F: /Yes./ He sang in a group and then he sang alone, and oh, thrilling, you know. It was down at Liberty Hall.

C: Was that before you were married?

F: Oh, yes. Quite a few years before I was married.

CO: Well, Benny Goodman was here.

F: I saw most of them.

CO: He was here for one of the anniversaries, UTEP's. Wasn't it when I was in school?

F: I think it was.

CO: It was /at the/ El Paso Country Club while I was in college and it was one of those /anniversaries/, you know, in October. He was here,

just packed the place. It was fantastic.

F: Well, all the dances that we went to were at Liberty Hall. I remember seeing Frank Sinatra and getting very excited. (Laughs)

CO: I do remember now when we were talking, coming back, that there were dances at UTEP. Not a lot of them, but...

C: In the Union?

CO: /Yes./ But there weren't just tons of those kind of things. They had to be a very special occasion like October when you had your class reunions, that type thing, something really big. And then the one at the Country Club, I can remember it being packed just because it was, you know, such a famous person that was there.

C: If there was going to be a big dance, would you check out of the the dorm and go home for weekend, so you could stay out later?

CO: Sometimes. It just depends on, like, if you're dating somebody that you care about, yeah. If you're not, you have an excuse to be in at midnight. (Laughter)

C: Do you recall her bringing some of her friends from the dorm out?

F: Yeah, I think Carol Ann stayed two or three times. Carolyn, was that in high school when you all did that wild wrapping thing, or was that in college?

CO: No, that was high school.

F: Oh. That was so wild. They did their...are you interested in this at all?

C: Yeah.

F: Well, she and her date, this was the beginning of the toilet paper wrapping, so Carolyn and her date did wrap somebody, I don't know who.

CO: It was a neighbor.

F: And this young man who is now a very respectable dentist. They were driving and the police came along and he got panicky and got scared and started speeding, and they started chasing them. You better tell it. You know better than I do.

CO: It's not quite right. We had, in wrapping the house, they had a fence in front of their house, and we wrapped the fence. And the girl's parents came home and we jumped in the car and took off, and they started chasing us and they kept chasing us. And we couldn't figure out why they were chasing us, just for toilet papering their house, what was the big deal? Well, he panicked and I kept telling him to slow down and he wouldn't slow down. Well, pretty soon, we had two cars behind us, and finally, the other car pulled us over and it was a policeman off duty. And I was just a nervous wreck, and he, Johnny, got out of the car, and, "What's the big deal?" They guy thought we had painted his fence. All he could see was white on his brown fence.

F: See, this was new then.

CO: And once he realized what it was, we all drove back to the house. And Johnny went to UTEP for a while.

F: I remember one night my husband and I came home from a party and it was, you know, like about one o'clock, and we drove up in the driveway and they didn't see us. Carolyn was selected Duchess of the football court, you know, and the whole football team was out there wrapping our house. And oh, it was...I have never seen so much toilet paper in my life. And my husband took a dim view of that. I thought it was hilarious, you know. But my husband was so mad and I had to just practically pull him inside. I thought he was really going to choke those kids.

CO: He used to put a note on the door, "Do not come in until you've picked up all the toilet paper."

I've got something /that's/ not real funny, but just some of the things they did on campus. We had snake dances. You know, the campus life on the whole was very boring because there were so many commuter students and you really felt a comradery with the small amount of kids that actually did live on campus. And during the winter we didn't do much, but in the spring there was always the spring fever, and that's when we had a snake dance out in the street. And there was lots of closeness between the kids and we'd sit out and talk and chat. That's how I met Richard, of course, because he lived in the dorm, too, and I was dating a friend of his. And I was going to tell you, too, Benedict, was so small that you put two beds in a room, and in order to get to the closet you had to climb over the beds. It was just wild. So I only lasted what, one semester, and then Carol Flemming went on to North Texas State, so I decided I'd move back to Bell. There was no way I could /stay there/, although that was a neat drom because it was small and the people in the dorm were real friendly with each other.

C: How many of you lived at Benedict?

CO: I don't know. Oh, there was somebody in that dorm, too, that one time...and I know it was Joe Lewels, who was later at Mass Communications. I walked outside to go someplace in the evening. Well, first of all, Benedict's first floor was half underground and you had to go up the stairs to get to the first floor, really, and then that was the basement. And I walked down the stairs and out and passed Joe, who was just standing there staring toward the dorm. And I said, "What are you doing, Joe?" And I turned around and looked and there was

this girl who had quite a good reputation and she was undressing with everything, open right there. Joe was just... (laughter), he was really enjoying it. And I said, "Oh, Joe," but then I couldn't help but look, too, and finally she walked off. She never did completely undress but she was in her bra and panties.

C: Well, did they have a Dean of Women? They did, didn't they?

F: Resley, Louise Resley. And she married later Dr. Wiggins. Very nice person, very nice.

CO: She was good to sororities. Sororities had it really pretty good on campus back then. Things got hairy later.

C: Do you remember any standards committees?

CO: Oh, yeah. They were a little too prudish. I never was involved.

I never sat on one or had to be sent up before one. But they were.

And in those days it was chewing gum with a roof over your head or

smoking without a roof over your head, or being seen kissing a boy--

you know, that. After I graduated, Richard was going to graduate

school and I got kind of bored so I helped with the sorority. And

about that time--'66, '67, '68, UTEP was always behind, you know;

it was radical every place else, but never at UTEP--that's when it

changed. There was the biggest difference from the girls that we knew

in the sorority and on campus. The type of girl that came in had a

whole different view. I'm not talking just sorority, but just in

general. The pot smoking came in, you know, the sleeping with guys

and everything that you...it was just amazing.

But, yeah, it was so...you had to be so perfect when we were in the school. Do you remember? You couldn't do anything wrong, you know.

And what was wrong? I mean kissing a boy in public, that was wrong in

'62. But, you know, those standards are better than what came later.

But that was a lot of fun.

C: That was about the time they stopped having the hours in the dorms, too.

F: Yeah.

CO: Has anybody told you about the Zeta house? It was the neatest house on campus and that's why it's still there. It was a beautiful, beautiful home, and I wish you could talk to some Zetas.

C: Whose home was it originally? It was a home wasn't it?

CO: No. The Zetas built that themselves, because in the fireplace, which I assume is still there, you can see the names of girls that were the original members.