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### Interview with Wayne Tukes, 2001

Columbia College Chicago

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## Wayne Tukes

*Today is May the 17th, 2001. This is an interview with J. Wayne Tukes, Academic Advisor in the Department of Academic Advising here at Columbia College.*

**And if we can get started by if you could tell us about when did you come to Columbia, what the year was and what were the circumstances that brought you here.**

The month and year, November and the day, November 19, 1979.

**Must have been memorable.**

Yeah, it, it was in the sense that I was glad to be here, not knowing what I was getting myself into. But what I was leaving, I was at the time working with the Better Boys Foundation in Lawndale on Pulaski in a scholarship program as a counselor and had read and heard about an opening in the—at Columbia. And I knew a part time faculty person that was, was teaching here at the same time. And I did talk with that person and kind of tried to get a sense of what to expect.

**What, what did they tell you?**

Well in essence it was a good place, you know, environment because they had been teaching here for five or six years at that time previously. And even though they were part time, they enjoyed it because of it being a wild and a crazy place, very creative atmosphere and environment. And I was looking for something in, in that kind of vein to address some of the issues I was dealing with in terms of my own creative expression. And also higher education, one of the things to, one of the ways I heard about Columbia

was also the, the scholarship program. A couple of students that I had talked with had mentioned Columbia also as possible options in terms of a professional area of employment.

But yeah, it—you know, I came, you know and called the school contact, the—at that time the department consisted of a director, Steven Russell-Thomas. And two part timers, Esther Ruskin and Jim Stratigakas. And the college it seemed at that time wanted to expand in terms of hiring someone full time. And I think to address a growing population of students and to help faculty in terms of dealing with the needs of these students because at that time too, part of it focused on helping with issues, personal issues with students that were interfering with their academic articulation or advancement and interpreting academic policy for the college, for faculty as well as students. And so it's pretty much even to the day I think with variations has continued to play that two-prong role at Columbia.

**Did you apply for, was it a full time position?**

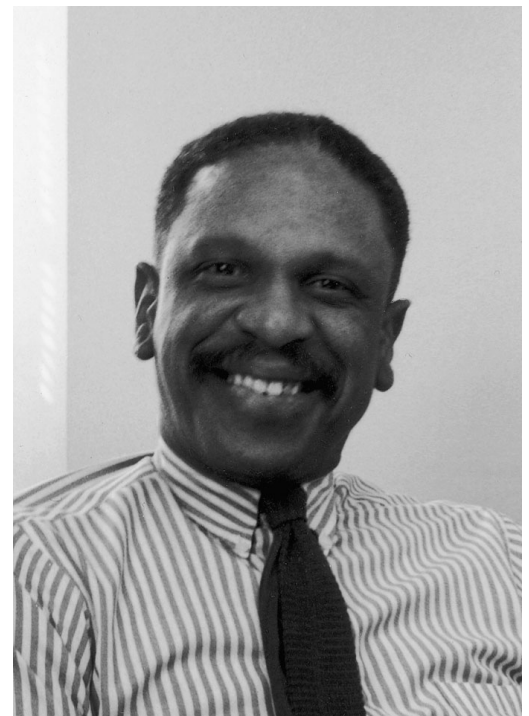
It was a full-time position. At that time it was—they were looking to expand, that's talking with Steven and a couple of our conversations. It was, it was a good interview I felt too and I was located at that time, the advising department was the third floor of 600 South Michigan. There were two buildings at that time, the 600 building and the dance center up on Sheridan, 4730 North Sheridan. And but yes, the position was full time.

**And what do you remember of that interview in with Steven Russell-Thomas, and did you have to interview with anyone else or was that exactly who—**  
The dean.

**The dean? Okay, so if you could tell us—**  
The Academic Dean.

**—a little if you remember what some of your impressions or what you talked about?**

Well we talked about at that time in '79 in terms of where I was, professionally where I was, personally my, my views of the, of the arts, my social views, and the relationship to, to education in the arts. We talked about—and I think one of the things was—while remembering that in terms of in connection with in the interview the relationship to Columbia was you know my interest of course in, in the urban scene and dealing with—at that time it wasn't called diversity. But dealing with a range



of, of different—people who, who follow different paths. And I think one of the reasons too in the interview, in, in the process of talking and so forth with Steven, and as I said I interviewed with the academic dean because advising at that time was under the academic dean's office as opposed to under the Dean of Students' Office as it is now.

I think they were looking for a—because they were—I think they were looking for a ethnic-wise, heritage-wise at that Black male because of the growing Black population at that time at Columbia. In those days to be talking about tuition driven, it was definitely tuition driven. And a large percentage of the population was African-American and they wanted earnestly to deal with that and have someone that they—the students could also go to and talk about issues they felt to someone that they could relate to.

I mean I don't think I—it was solely that. I think it was a combination of things. But that definitely was a part of it in, in terms of the interview and in terms of the dialogue. I have fashioned myself even when I was young as a visual artist. My father used to draw horses and later on went on to play the horses. And it used to fascinate me. I remember this in the sixth and seventh grade. We talked about some of this at the interview. And in my grammar school I was the—in every class you know there's always someone who does the art work for the instructor. And I was at—kind of one of those people, you know, and we I think had moved into a new building and we were looking for new pictures for the wall.

So I mean I'm in like fifth or sixth grade or something and they were talking about going to the Art Institute, you know. So at that time my home room teacher was an art instructor. Going to the Art Institute and looking at the Van Gogh and the Gaughin and you know these folks and you know. It's a little art appreciation thing. But the point was some of the pictures that we collaborated on were in fact purchased by the school and based on the laws and so forth.

So I had a predilection in that form of the arts growing up. And later, I don't know if you remember this, but they still do it—at least they have in the newspaper ads for art school and draw this—

**Oh, right, right, right.**

—you know, and I think they were in Minnesota and so I did the thing right, and sent it, sent it off to them. I got accepted, right? And my mother said “are you crazy.” That—it didn't stop me but I mention that just in terms of my inclination in terms of that particular aspects of being able to express oneself in different mediums, and the connection with Columbia. I couldn't have predicted it. It wasn't planned. It, it happened. I kind of backed into it.

**So did you feel that possibly your opportunities had been limited or diverted and what you were going to help other students possibly pursue this?**

That's, that's an interesting observation in terms of what I've been speaking to. I think, I think the undercurrent was that. I think that that was something that I hadn't quite articulated at the time or synthesized. But absolutely in terms of helping students fulfill. Now the other major issue that came, since you mentioned that

also, and this was probably more key or the essence of what that dialogue was about between Steven and open admissions.

My views on talent that is it is measurable. The whole pedagogy question of how one, how one sees education, teaching and learning because in essence what we do is kind of like student developmental thing. We have some grounding in student development and development psychology to a certain degree in terms of how people do what they do. And what was fascinating to me on the one hand, I mean I didn't know all the ramifications at the time, was that in art school there's open admissions. That sounds like a contradiction in terms.

Most associations are with a very selective process. But what Columbia was doing was allowing in a democratic way, students to come in to an opportunity back to the point. And the test was being able to come out of that experience a better for it. It means graduating. That means portfolio. That means being able to go out into the world and, as the missions says author the culture of your times kind of thing. And that I thought was a real different approach to education as opposed to the selection taking place before the person got to the doors in terms of those opportunities.

And so I did see a pick up of being able to help some other young people fulfill maybe some of the yearnings and so forth that I directly did not in the sense of becoming the artist or the great communicator or the—in that kind of vein. So I guess it was a re-continuation in the ability to

combine my interest in learning in education, in art. I didn't notice it all at that time, mind you. But reflecting and I, and I guess it, it—

**Right.**

—was, it was packaging and it was a—you know Columbia's been a dynamic basic change every year since I've been here. That's one of the I think compelling factors of this experience. No matter how one looks at it, whether it's number of students, the quality of students, the number of buildings, the number of programs, the number of faculty. But the mission has pretty much up to this time remained constant. And that's a difficult challenge that, that it has I think spoken to.

You know I had the opportunity last week to attend Thursday the College Council Meeting and the issue on the table was the academic restructuring of the college. The vote and the new, and then that Friday I attended the service for Mike Alexandroff which was a celebratory experience. And, and both combined together was a—I say an epiphany in a sense of, you know looking at it, looking at the view from the bridge, you know, and it's Columbia's mission.

And even for the years I've been here but, but even long, much longer has remained an open admissions institutions for the arts, for education for the media, to people who otherwise wouldn't have that opportunity. That's a unique mission and it's done that. And I think it's done it well. Difficult it's been, stumbling and fumbling, but I think it's done it well.

**So are you saying that at both that meeting with the Academic Council and the vote on restructuring and at Mike's memorial—**  
Right.

—that the commitment to that out of both those are very different things that commitment came out of both?

Let me give you an example. Yes, absolutely. In the council meeting, and three and a half hours of going back and forth discussion. I mean you talk about being in a room with a bunch of academics, right, okay. Educational institutions and opinions and points of view, and you know issues of integrity and all that kind of thing, what was consistent and what was common on all sides of the question was how do we do or continue to do and adapt and even be innovative doing what we do, and be true to the—to, to our mission to the students that we normally serve.

And so the restructuring is correlated directly with keeping open admission, keeping tuitions at a certain level so the students then continue to look forward. I mean even now there's some issues in terms of students being able to address the tuition question, but it still remains one of the most affordable private institutions in the State of Illinois in terms of cost. How does one do that?

So you know, for the life in the long view, traditionally when you depend on tuition and loans, and this came, you know, at some point and you don't have large endowments, so how do you address rising costs of just living in, in this environment and keep your quality education and stay true to your mission and your students and be

student friendly? That's the, the issue. And, and so when it came down to, to that, that and the vote, I think everyone in there understood at least in terms of the mission that that was the most important thing—that, that we have other issues.

And there are, because there are people here who want this to be very strong criteria and for admissions. That's an ongoing kind of thing. That's a group and there are others who want to go back to the old days of ways of doing things. But I think what's coming out of that and the new structures, I think they will provide not without a core struggle and, and that kind of thing. But I think they will provide opportunities for revenue and for faculty to pursue grants and pursue studies that ultimately will benefit students in terms of what they bring to the classroom what the faculty brings to the classroom. And I think the, the deans that are coming up, at least the proposal, the deans have kind of—they will have to have that fund raising capacity. So it's that kind of—that's the example in terms of this—

**Yeah.**

—this, this mission question. And to be the authors of, of the times, I mean what we educate people here to do is, is basically and metaphorically we—to draw pictures for—perceptions for the general public. In one way or the other to—in collaboration or as an individual to do that and, and with some integrity.

**Is the vote, is that the results of the Academic Council Meeting public?**

Yes.

**Because for this we might—could you comment on was the vote close, was—how did it go?**

The vote was 24, 15 against and 1 abstention.

**So the restructuring now has passed?**

Yeah.

**Just for future people listening to this tape.**

Sure, yeah, yeah, for, for the record it's, it's—it was on e-mail so I mean it's, it's out there.

**I want to return to one point that you were making earlier that one of the reasons that you were hired was to address the issue of diversity and specifically one other reasons for the African-American population or the Black population here.**

Sure.

**How has that changed or has it changed, and what have you brought to the position in recognizing or what is the importance of cultural difference diversity amongst the student population and how does that work into, you know, your, your role, your position?**

Historically I would say probably when I'd say demographics that, that the—it might well even—Myron Alexandroff may have even mentioned this in his oral history piece. I'll speak of Black students right now, and then I'll expand it in terms of other areas. And we're experiencing right now—out of all of these ethnic groups, still split by 50/50, male, female in terms of gender. But the ethnic groups in—on a contemporary basis, the only group that has shown any statistical decline has been Black students in recent times.

But as in an interview Mike gave too, he was mentioning that at one time some of the best Black students came to Columbia, because in the earlier days of course, the options and opportunities to go to other universities and colleges wasn't there. And so with that, we can talk about Oscar Brown, Jr., for example, being at Columbia But with that came a tradition of Black students at Columbia College an association. And during the time that I was here in the earlier aspect of my experience at Columbia, at one time and I would say probably around the early 80s, '83, '84, '82, '83, '84, '85, and we didn't do a lot of statistics.

We didn't have an institutional research office but just in terms of anecdotally speaking, close to about 40% at one time, and a lot of the—because it was tuition driven too, but it was also open. It was also a history associated with that and students felt comfortable enough to say hey these folks are judging me. They're giving me an opportunity. Now some folks disagreed, but you had at least the, the right to do that.

But I think what's happening too is that Columbia, since it's decided that it's going to be true to their mission, has now also shortened the student affairs side of the college. So both side working together to serve the students in terms of what we're doing, that's the change that's taking place. So we've got left and right brain hemispheres and, and coordinating what we reduce to be the—and this is the I think the mission or the goal, and we put it inside the mission is to make this the premier student driven arts and media college on the planet.

But to the question of the diversity in other respects, you see when we think of diversity we're thinking gender, we're thinking culture, we're thinking ethnicity, we're thinking race. And that—and all that's true about Columbia because it attracted—has attracted historically those demographics. And I'm not depersonalizing it but those people, the types of people from different walks of life—urban, suburban primarily initially when I—most of the students were in the Chicago proper.

They were about—when I started I think about a little over 2,000 students. And they were, yeah, basically Chicago, Chicago medium area and so forth. Compare it to then and compare it to now, different, expanded in terms of—particularly the geographic gemo—there's some, there's some other changes too. We had those who in those days wanted—and then this the other part of the diversity question, the diversity is also, you know, the background of the person, the outlook of the person, the age and interests. Those aspects of diversity that are rarely looked at because they're such soft areas. You know all of that in the mix, you know, the experiment, the hands on stuff that—along with the developing people who had some breath of depth of all things. And hopefully some, some reflection upon the self in the process of, of this journey through Columbia.

So most definitely the demographics have changed. The diversity, at least initially if you're doing it in black and white I'd say at the peak it was maybe about 40% and growing.



**And so one of the points that you're making is that it's dropped from 40% and one of the other points you're making—**

It's 18. The last one it was at 19%.

**Nineteen percent that to interpret that you don't necessarily have to interpret that negatively because it's also assigned that opportunities have increased for African-Americans.**

Right.

**So they aren't immediately—we aren't the default.**

Right.

**I don't want to put words in your mouth, but that, that—**

Yeah.

**—you see that sign is not necessarily something in and of itself negative. It's also a sign that there's more places for Black students that they feel comfortable?**

Right, and they're getting money.

**And they're getting money?**

To, to do this and, and they're going to other occupations even, you know, you know. And like, you know, it's, it's six in one hand and half a dozen in the other. I mean so no, not totally at the, at the feet of Columbia in terms of assessing whether or not we've been turning certain students away. In terms of the college here, but it's—I was going to mention too what's the growing populations though are the international students and primarily from Asia but not solely. We have a lot of students from Botswana in that particular part out of Africa.

You've got Latino student population is growing. And, and from all

over the regions of south central and America as well as the country. So yeah, I mean, you know, and, and also I, I—there is, there are students now coming from all parts of the country. I mean along with all of this is a growing reputation. We've got people out there now who graduated from here who are doing things and, and folks who now in industries and business from—and, and we're finding that in the area in terms of Columbia does and how it does it that it likes what Columbia does and in terms of this experience that people come out of it.

So when I hear you know back in the earlier days it was definitely a city thing with primary focus—I'm not suggesting folks, you know, in parts of the nation didn't know about Columbia. In fact in the earlier days I heard there was a Columbia College that still exists out in Hollywood, California that was a sister school at one time. But most definitely now in terms of its—

**Okay, before we leave this topic, you had mentioned that you had a story or a reference to a former student, Oscar Brown, Jr.**

Yeah.

**Do you want to just, you know, to tie that in?**

Well I, I think that during that time that Oscar attended here, being in college himself—

**And when would that have been approximately?**

I think he came out of here—let me get this straight—I don't want to be—

**It can be foggy. You don't have to have—**

It's a little foggy, late 50s, let me put it that way. Late 50s, and I, you

know I think he's a gifted artist. His family is, is—but he, you know, he will tell you he was here last month, the month before performing with his daughter right down in the 623 South Wabash building. So he still comes back and gives back and his daughter attended here for while after she left the U of I.

And, and Oscar Brown has an international reputation. But he talks about Columbia. I mean in, in certain contexts. I mean he doesn't go out and talk, about Columbia. But in fact I, I should have brought that I have an old year book with his name in it. It'll tell you in the year, you know, alumni book directory. He's in there. So this—the adaptability and I think in certain ways the innovation and I think that's the thing we have to be very mindful of this place is absolutely exceptional that we can continue to generate that I think is real key. The, the—whatever in terms of the history of this place is 1890 until now, and the modern era with in terms of the accreditation and all of that, that's something that we need to continue in terms of the innovation, the niche that Columbia has carved out for itself to attract people like Oscar Brown.

I mean when Brooks taught here before a whole series of folks to (*inaudible*) his faculty side of it that because it did what it did and had the mission it had, and it serviced the student population—wanted to be a part of the Columbia experience. So I just mention Oscar in reference to a person or an artist who doesn't suffer fools easily. And he's genuine to his craft. I don't think he would have attended this institution if he wasn't getting something from that experience.

And, and that's true to Columbia also. Even in the older days—

**And that has remained?**

Yes, it's, you know, that's part of the, the theme now in this identity question about Columbia, about who am I. And you know who is my constituents. You know that is exactly what it's going through and, and it, it, you know—is that, that school for a little different people in that different place who do those odd kind of things and wearing yellow and purple hair with rings through their nose or is it this standard college with suits and ties and portfolios and resumes. You know in fact it's both.

**So and you feel there's, there's room for both—I was going to ask you do you think this identity question, is that it's biggest challenge or you think that that—**

The identity, absolutely at the heart, the essence of the matter absolutely. The essence of it, the epicenter of the thing, yes. On, on the foundation it's of course how do we pay for this experience. How do we underwrite this and maintain who we are? You know I think that's the other connected issue to it, you know and, and, and be true to our mission, you know that identity. How, how do we, you know, that's destroyable, you know.

And people fall on different sides of that but, you know, I'm not, you know, the view is it's not about taking sides. It's about let's collaborate and address it as Columbia has always done since 1890, the challenge and then, and then still remain true to yourself. Just, you know, people think because of change that somehow they're going to lose something. And it's about—life to me is about of course being

selective, but also as individuals as institution is, and institutions outlast individuals. So it's, it's going to be here before and it's going to be here after me but you know.

**That's a good point.**

Yeah. I'm going to try to make my own little contribution when I can. But you know it's, it's a—not an either or proposition. It's not necessarily either or. I, I think that it's akin to home surgery. So, you know, it's, it's a you know a sign of I think health that these struggles take place because at the end of the day or when the dust settles the folks, I think they, they vote or if it's a vote, it's called for the consensus made that is in the best interest of the community, the academic, the Columbia community and so forth.

**Okay, I want to talk about academic advising for a little bit. And if you could talk about how that has changed, how that has evolved in your tenure here, have issues changed, have students needs changed or have new—just gotten more complicated?**

Yeah, that's so. Well, again initially a director, two part timers and myself. So we had on, one full timer and we were un—structurally we were under the academic deans department. And I think we changed back in under Herman Conaway back in the 80s, late 80s in terms of that. But as, as a department, there have been—there was, uh, (*inaudible*) after Steven there was Mark Kelly. And then the current director Janet Talbot in terms of persons at that helm.

Yes, we've had to, to do a couple of things. At one point earlier we were pretty much solo as an isolated unit even though, you now

we—in other words we kind of did what we did and we always helped students in the best way that we could. What happened when they—Mark came to the department and it was merged with career—it's now called career, arts and media and to a counseling center so that we could collaborate in serving or helping students.

Our role with department, academic departments and faculties, at one time in fact the department dealt with student based upon (*inaudible*) the last name. That was a little personal and strange kind of stuff, right. It's logical. Yeah, but reality setting in right? And we started dealing with departments and, you know, areas and we'd be responsible for certain areas based upon the interest of advisors, academic advisors which makes a little more sense, and, and students because some of the advisors—most—or a lot of the advisors, a lot of us teach a class and normally in the area which we are advising students.

So it's, it's the current kind of watch word is the buck stops here that was, that was determined. (*Inaudible*) invented but used in the 90s in the department. But to a large degree is true. The buck stops here. We are clearing house to a large degree in terms of getting the college community, primarily students, but collaborating with departments and dealing with other aspects of departments, other units of the school.

If not answering the questions, at least guiding folks to the appropriate areas in which their issues could be addressed. And we still do that to a large degree. We kind of—even though we're under student

affairs at this juncture, in reality and under the organizational charts, in reality we operate both under student affairs and academic affairs. We work with the departments in reference to orientation registration.

We speak to classes. We do workshops. We teach. And we do things like waivers or collaborations in terms of we have to stay abreast of the curriculum and the curriculum changes. And you know at Columbia they change almost every year, right, trying to stay current with the world we live in and that kind of thing. So I know what's part of the question and you know just being relevant. So you know having current accurate information and to a large degree a sense of history because in order to connect the dots and deal with students who have been here or were here and are coming back, then, then to no hold policies and academic policies practically becomes really important. To be abreast of new changing policies and practices for incoming people, and those who are here, who keeps up with all that? Who cares, right? Okay, so—

**The student might.**

Exactly. We have to service the students.

**Yeah.**

That's the whole point and so that part of our major role. We in that sense the buck stops here in the sense that we say hey, no matter what other folks are saying, if you can't get an answer, some talk with us. Either we will be able to provide that or we'll be able to refer you to those who can.

**Do you oversee it yourself certain departments or areas?**

Absolutely.

**What ones are those?**

I—television.

**Television?**

Radio, sound, science, math, I was kind of liaison with the science and math and the Science Institute. And the prelaw advisor.

**Okay. Do you teach as well?**

Not now. I have taught.

**Okay, what—I just want to make sure that we've included this before we run out of time. What have you taught?**

This is a course that I created back—you see the date on that.

**Okay, '80, fall semester, 1980.**

Yeah, this is just so—it's related to that. That related—what built off of that was the whole classes and the freshman seminar program.

**Okay. So let's say it's for the tape though this is, this is '81 but students survival, is that the same?**

Yeah, it's the same course.

**It's the same course? Okay.**

They changed the name to student development, student development, yeah.

**And this is what grew into the freshman seminar?**

Well, hold it, I want to be clear on that.

**Okay.**

Because I don't want any misinformation.

**Okay.**

I'm not saying that, that this is a precursor to it.

**Okay.**

Not that it grew into. Okay, I'm just—I want to be clear on that because—

**But the precedence for it—**

Yeah.

**—that you were teaching this.**

Yeah.

**Okay, good, that's important.**

Yeah.

**And then—**

Also, because like you say time is of the essence, the his—for historical purposes, resource and referral center now that we have for students in counseling services also something that I initiated.

**Good.**

And it's full fledged. It's on the student services. The student—the, the staff advisory council was something that was initiated back in 1990 under Herman (*inaudible*). And at that time I was the chair. It was a new one. Yeah, that's—it's a different name.

**Student services advisory council and you were the chair of that.**

**And this is from March 1990.**

Right. Now there's a staff committee to address similar things related to staff but also students in terms of how to better service them. So I, I had brought this data just for that. Let me see. You had questions about—

**Well I wanted, I wanted to make sure that the—what I was leading up to was your specialties and that point that you were making earlier that the curriculum changes constantly to stay current. Then how do you either—stay current, right?**

Well one of the things I do is I attend—I'm a—first of all I'm an avid reader/researcher. I go to conferences. I join associations. In fact when the department, TV department began to deal with



cable back in the early 80s and mid 80s, I became a part of a cable association. And so now with the changes taking place in terms of technologies, I mean reading the journals, staying current with people who are in the business, sometimes I've taken courses too.

#### Really?

Yes, absolutely. No recently here but, but I would say the last time was maybe early 90s. But I've taken courses, but the changes taking place now, in terms of the technology whether one talks about television, radio or sound, absolutely staggering. And the, the—and this is part of the change too here in terms of the academic structure, the lines are collapsing between the technologies.

You've got to a large degree two things that are happening—more than two things but you're getting, you're getting a concentration of ownership on the one hand. You're getting an proliferation of technology, and entangled relationships on the other hand that people are exposed to. And it's a strange kind of dynamic that's taking place. So film television now, video and computers, computers with streaming—you've got the DV's the digital videos now out where film folks, move—are, are take—are doing digital work without the use of film because film of course becomes expensive. But also film is an art. We're going to start off and be FA's in fall 2001 along with BA's. Another change, adaptation.

So how do I stay current? By collaborating with people in the business, by, by going to classes, by reading the, the magazines and journals and I'll sit in on a class too. I'll sit in on classes. There are always people from the industry

who come in to talk with students. I'll (*inaudible*) those sessions and I'll stay abreast and so forth. But it's, it's, it's part of my, you know, passion. I have an interest in, in communications. I have an interest in how people draw pictures.

**I like that. Someone else, you know, very similar said to tell stories. I mean it's the same—** It's the same thing. It's, it's a story. Yeah, the narrative is, is—it is. Drawing pictures is the narrative. I, I operate pretty much on the same basis. Yeah.

**You, you've referred to this already but I want to make sure that we covered it, but can you talk a little bit about what has kept you here. You've been here over 20 years and you mentioned, you know, that Columbia is a dynamic place that changes every year. Yet you also talked about a lot of the consistencies and, and what you found hasn't, you know, changed.**

That's a good question, that's a good question. And how could you stay here 20 some years doing the same thing or basically the same position anyway, not necessarily doing the same thing, but you know what I mean.

#### Do people ask you that?

Oh, yeah, I get asked that sometimes, absolutely. How do you stand it? You know people who have been in, even in the department going on to do other kinds of things that I, you know, may still keep in touch with and that, you know, kind of thing. We've had previously in the department, Bob Padjen who teaches in the marketing communications now department, and Ilene Cherry who is

teaching at DePaul now. She went back and got her Ph.D. She's at DePaul. Harry Parson who just called me last week who's down in New Orleans and working for Quest now who was with Cox and you know and stay, and stay wet. I love that (*inaudible*).

**I like that. I was going to say enthusiastic or passionate, but that's, that's, that's a great term.**

You know I—you know what, this place is such a rich resource and such a treasure in terms of its ambiance, in terms of it's, it's what it—you know the environment, the people, the resources, the library, the equipment, the 14 buildings now, the programs, that people that come through here from all walks of life, from all parts of the world in the context of learning and teaching.

And you know the—for me the arts and media and the thinkers of the world, the people who deal with perception, the people who do, deal with expressing, the people who write the stories and, and draw the pictures, I've always wanted to know how that worked. And you know, what that was about. I didn't know it. I could not articulate it when I was younger. But you know in terms of being here for—because you know my, my tenure for jobs before I came to Columbia was like three and a half years. I mean I'm out of here. Different out there, but the world comes here one way or the other.

That's why I get, you know, I get a chance to travel too but the group I was in involved in '99 with a masquerade group and (*inaudible*) and so forth. Yeah, it's a, you know, it's an incredible place. It's one of

those things, you know. It's, it's one of those things but I think it's also been the continued growth and over the years. I mean the—has probably played into it. You know I'm, I'm one—I'm going to put this on the record. I think that, that we want to deal and the be the premier student center arts and media.

I think that we, in this triage—I see it as a triage anyway, and there are other features to it but primarily the two, the three key elements, the student, the faculty and the staff. And most definitely in terms of the primary relationships of student/teacher. Here at Columbia we have a staff that brings in a lot of talent and a lot of things to the table. And it's called upon to help collaborate and support the relationships, and I, and I suggest, and that's why I think there's a student, there's a staff committee to address the—to address these issues, to allow even staff to take sabbatical, to rejuvenate, to raise some funds, to give grants so that all factors of the academic community—I mean there's administrators, senior administrators.

There's maintenance, there's alumni and there's board and there's a whole lot of other factors, but the triage on a day-to-day basis in terms of the, the heart of the institution is there. And so I think that's one of the things that would help the pretension because for me so that I con—so that I continue to, to address students in the best way that I can and address faculty and so forth in terms of levels of appreciation and so forth in the institution and not just myself but

the other folks who are here, who on a day-to-day basis, you know, deal with this—with Columbia.

I think in terms of considerations there are things to be looked at, just looked at. But that should be one of the areas that after a certain period, after a certain thing, not even necessarily on par with what the faculty does because a whole another (*inaudible*), bodies that, regulatory bodies in the college community. But there is this—something that, that we need to address and, and put on the table because the rejuvenation, the creativity, the energy, I think, and the contribution to the larger college community could be enhanced. So I—that was a pitch.

**What about the concern amongst some faculty in certain departments that students in the past have been recommended to take courses outside of their major at other institutions and then come here, have you heard—**  
Oh, yeah, yeah.

**What is your, I mean has that changed or what is your—**  
It's changing.

**It's changing. Could you—**  
Those students coming in the fall 2001 will have a different set of criteria than students who previously attended Columbia. There will be restrictions on a student's ability to—once they enroll to transfer classes back into Columbia. And, and it's being, it's in the catalogs, in the current catalog in terms of what those particulars are in terms of that. But that's being relooked at to, to—in terms of its potential impact, in terms of students attending. It's a big issue—big thing about retention of course that we're dealing with here

at Columbia. It's a complex kind of thing. It's you know, we've got a lot of occupations, professions, you know, folks get hired, you know. They leave and they go on and they come back later, you know, when things are not happening. You know it's the open admissions, different levels of preparedness and that kind of thing.

So that's a, that's a thing. But in terms of credit question, there are students who—they'll intend a two year school, do the 62, and in admissions there are some changes taking place also. But there are students who will take—do their two years in a community college for the cost and for the convenience. And then they would transfer to Columbia, or they'd do most of the gen eds. We have students, you know, those students who—you can transfer the maximum of credits, not—a smaller percentage of those students. But what I think the college is working on is a retention question and have—I mean it's a financial aspect to it too in terms of taking classes here, but to—as much as possible help shape what a student—

