

PRESERVING MEMORY: NEWARK AND RUTGERS
IN THE 1960'S AND 1970'S

An Interview with

HANNAH FIDDLER

Conducted by

Gilbert Cohen

JULY 16, 1991

INTERVIEW: Hannah Fiddler

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GILBERT COHEN: This is Gil Cohen. This is the sixteenth of July, 1991. And I am meeting with Mrs. Hannah Fiddler in her home in Maplewood, New Jersey. Okay. Hannah, you came to Rutgers—your first full-time job at Rutgers was in 1970, at the Institute for Continuing Legal Education. Could you describe just what the job involved, what you did on the job?

HANNAH FIDDLER: Yes, surely. I took the only available opening that there was at the time—that was early in February of 1970—which was a typist's job. And I typed. I typed—that was before word processors. And I don't even remember if we had Xerox machines at the time. I think there might have been. I don't—I can't recollect that. But I typed: letters, labels, envelopes, whatever typing needed to be done. Sylvia Schnitzel was the office manager at the time, very nice person. And I was delighted with the people. I was there only about two weeks when they discovered it was my birthday and gave me the traditional birthday luncheon that everybody else had, which I thought was pretty remarkable. But after a week or two of typing, it was beginning to be more than I could manage. And I went back to the employment office and begged for something else. She asked me to hold on. And within three or four weeks, I was transferred to the dean of students office as secretary to the dean. John Boland was dean then. And that was supposed to be also writing—the usual secretarial work—writing his letters and keeping various records.

At the time there was no structured service for part-time or summer employment for undergraduates. Nor was there any structured service for housing, off-campus housing. It all had to be off campus, but there were many students who needed rooms to rent. They either weren't living at home or—I mean they weren't living at home for various reasons. Or else their home was too far away, and they wanted nearby homes. This all was done in the dean of students office but in a haphazard way by one or another of the associate or assistant deans. And it was easy enough for me to take over. Inge Gambi was the associate dean in that office at the time. We got to be friends, and she was delighted to have me take it over. And I did it in a structured, organized way and worked at that for the several years that I was in the dean of students office. John Boland retired after a couple of years—or left for something else; I don't remember. And Marguerite Manning took his place. I couldn't cope with Marguerite. And when there was an opening in the Public Information Office, I bid for that, and Morris hired me.

COHEN: I remember that based upon the record there, that Marguerite Manning's tenure, her term there, was a troubled one, I know. What were the problems that you could speak of within the office at that time—with her?

FIDDLER: Well, I think it was mainly very personal as far as she was concerned in that she was an odd person. I just couldn't understand. She was, well—I'm motioning with my hand to you. That doesn't mean anything. She was mercurial, can we say. And it was difficult for me. I get

along with most everybody. And of course she didn't want me to leave, and she was amazed that I—how would anyone choose to go into any other office after you'd been in the dean's office? That seemed to be the highest. And she thought it was the highest office I could ever attain. But—and I didn't go into any details—I didn't explain; I just said I thought I would prefer going back to my old work. Before I stayed home with the children, I had been in advertising and publicity. And I thought working in the Public Information Office would be a better opportunity for me. So I went. And Morris, of course, again, was very glad to have me help out with releases. And I organized the speakers' bureau, which again had been kind of tearing along because nobody had the time or could pay attention to it. So I was put in charge completely of the speakers' bureau, and I did releases and contact work, as much as I was able. And even before this present budget crisis that has befallen Rutgers—oh, Rutgers always had budget problems. [Laughter] And there's always a problem of getting in a line for me in that office; although Jose Steinbacher [sp], who was in charge of Public Information at the time, tried hard. And her supervisor, Wayne Kurlinski [sp]—I think he was the vice president and part of his domain was Public Information—tried. But I never could get the line. However, they did hire another secretary for the office so that I was relieved of most of the mimeographing and stuff like that. I said mimeographing. Did we have a mimeograph machine?

COHEN: Probably so in those days.

FIDDLER: Yes, I think we did.

COHEN: For duplication of large numbers of letters and so.

FIDDLER: Yes, yes. Now, of course, everything is Xeroxed. But I think when I started—I don't remember what kind of duplicating machine we had.

COHEN: That's a point, maybe some transitional thing.

FIDDLER: But I didn't have.... They hired someone else to do. And I worked very happily for several years in the Public Information Office. We used to be at 53 Washington in the building that Talbott was. And the first floor was the purchasing office. O'Connor had his office just off the front lobby.

COHEN: Roger O'Connor.

FIDDLER: And that was purchasing. And the second floor was the vice president—was he vice president or—I forget what title.

COHEN: You mean Malcolm Talbott?

FIDDLER: Malcolm Talbott.

COHEN: Oh, he was vice president. Also he was acting dean of NCAS [Newark College of Arts and Sciences] until Henry Blumenthal took over.

FIDDLER: Oh, that's right. Well anyway, the second floor was the vice president. I've forgotten what was on the third floor. We were on the fourth floor. And we occupied three small rooms. And the major part of the third floor was the registration office.

COHEN: Fifty-three Washington?

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: Uh-huh. That was the registration office. And the fourth floor, which I think was the top floor, there was the nurse's office, as I recollect, and I don't remember what else. Then we moved, of course, to 15 Washington Street, the old Firemen's Fund Building, which was very elegant and very new. It's a beautiful building. I have always loved it. And when Morris transferred to New Brunswick, his successor was—

COHEN: Joe Daitch.

FIDDLER: [Laughs] And I worked happily enough with Joe Daitch. But then the opportunity—there's an opening in the alumni office for an alumni officer. And I bid for that, and I finally got the line which described the work that I was doing. At the alumni office, I was in charge of the alumni associations of the College of Nursing and of the University College. And I assisted the director, Herb Merrick, with the other colleges. And I edited the newsletters for all of Newark alumni associations. And then when Herb left and the year before I retired, I was acting director of alumni relations for the Newark campus and enjoyed it. I've enjoyed all the work I did at Rutgers except for those first three weeks, this typing, [Laughter] I enjoyed. And of course I always, for the most part, enjoyed the people. There were very few people I didn't. And I've made several lifelong friends.

COHEN: I'm one of them.

FIDDLER: And I still am. And of course for the first seven years, from 1970 to seventy-seven, while I was—well, actually it was later than that—but I mean while I was working at Rutgers, I was also a student at University College. I had to start with no credits at all and had nothing because whatever courses I had taken were non-matriculated. So my first matriculated. Then after I got my degree, let me say immodestly summa cum laude...

COHEN: Did you! Nineteen seventy-seven.

FIDDLER: In seventy-seven. I returned for graduate work in English and accumulated a bunch of credits. I don't remember now how many. I was there for several years. But then I had to drop out. I was having some trouble with my eyes and couldn't do any reading. And once I dropped out, I just never did resume the schoolwork. But I loved the class work. While I was in class, Cassie Miller, who was one of the assistant or associate deans of University College, found me and immediately suggested that I revive the student newspaper, *Night Watch*, that had been dormant for quite some time.

COHEN: Going back to the position in the dean of students office, you mentioned the late Inge Gambi, and I was wondering if you could comment on her role and how it was working with her. I remember her very well—

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: —from across the reference desk and her advices and all that sort of thing.

FIDDLER: I loved Inge. And we were good friends after, I mean particularly after I left her office [laughter] when we could really.... But even while I was there, outside the office, you know, we were good friends. And she was a remarkable person. She was devoted to her work. She truly wanted to do— Her main assignment was foreign students. I mean she did a great number of other things, but she particularly was there to be of service, to offer whatever help was needed for students who came from other countries. And there were quite a number of them. At that time there were students coming from Africa. I can't remember now the countries. But, you know, there were a number of African countries. There were a number of students who were coming from Latin America.

COHEN: These were what years now again?

FIDDLER: These would be seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two.

COHEN: So sometime after you moved out of the Continuing Legal Education.

FIDDLER: Yes, yes.

COHEN: Right, right.

FIDDLER: Yes. As I said, I was there in that office less than a month.

COHEN: Right.

FIDDLER: But there was a large number of Latin students. And while the black students were not foreign of course, still they represented a minority group on campus, and she was very much involved in supporting their activities, their organizations, and their extracurricular affairs and parties and things like that. And she was very good at it. And we were interested in a lot of the same things. Of course she was devoted to music, which was a little out of my line. But she introduced me to a lot of interesting musical events, I mean we went together. And of course we went to some shows and things together that I was always interested in. And we had, you know, we were good friends. Unfortunately it didn't last long enough. She took ill.

COHEN: When you were in the dean of students office, how did you see the relationships between black students on campus and the white students on campus at that time?

FIDDLER: That's a difficult question for me to answer just off, you know, the cuff, because I can't talk in generalities. There were incidences of tension and friction. And there also were many instances of cooperation.

COHEN: Do you recall any of those instances of either, you know, a positive and a negative maybe, any episodes...?

FIDDLER: No, I can't make—I can't remember specific episodes. I'm sorry, I can't. But my feeling is that both existed.

COHEN: Do you have any recollection of how the deans in those offices actually handled these situations—Boland...?

FIDDLER: Well, Boland particularly was a laissez-faire, you know, don't stir up things. You know don't meddle too much. Let the students work things out as far as is possible. As far as is safely possible let them work it out themselves. Just give a little guidance. But don't be autocratic, don't be, you know, authoritarian. And just don't meddle too quickly. Don't jump in too quickly in emergencies that occur. Inge was inclined to be a little on the excitable side. And when something did happen, she would run into Dean Boland's office, you know, and he would be very calm. And she'd come out, and she'd say, "Well, I guess he might be right." [Laughs] About letting things, you know...just let's not do anything right now. Let's wait a bit.

COHEN: How do you think Boland got along with the students, in particular the black students, on campus? Do you have any feel for that?

FIDDLER: No, I don't know. I don't know.

COHEN: How about Manning? Did she have any kind of....

FIDDLER: I don't really know what Dean Manning did. I have no idea. She ran around to meetings, and that's about all I can remember. [Laughter]

COHEN: I've heard that one before.

FIDDLER: [Laughs] I really can't think of a single thing that she did or a suggestion that she made or proposition that she put into effect. I can't remember a thing.

COHEN: Did you yourself have any face-to-face with students?

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: Oh, you were meeting a whole range of students.

FIDDLER: Yes. Well, particularly I mean I met those who needed rooms and those who needed jobs. Those were the ones I saw, I mean most particularly I met. And I enjoyed them all. They were a wide range. There were a lot of students who wore the prevailing uniform of overalls and

dungarees and T-shirts and long hair. And as I told you, I was glad to see the beards and the moustaches because they could tell the boys from the girls. [Laughs]

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes.

FIDDLER: And I, in fact, just recently met—I mean I was in Madison walking on one of the—with a friend, and one of the young women comes up to me, and she says, “Hannah! Hannah Fiddler! Do you remember me?” And it was Kathy. And now she was a smart young matron dressed very attractively with a year-old baby [laughs] in a little stroller in front of her, and I was introduced. And she was one of the rebellious students who was working very happily now and lives in the area. And married and with a child.

COHEN: Of the students who were looking for jobs and housing and so on, what roughly were the percentages in terms of minority students, blacks, Hispanic, or otherwise, of the group that you had to deal with?

FIDDLER: I had mainly—there weren’t too many, I mean of the minority—the great minority were the Hispanic and blacks—because their organizations did a lot of employment help for them. They didn’t necessarily...so many of them did not need to come to the dean of students office. So it was mainly the general run of the students who came looking for part-time work.

COHEN: Did you have any kind of a—did their office have any kind of liaison with the Black Organization of Students at that time?

FIDDLER: Oh, yes, closely. Yes. And Dean Gambi particularly frequently—no, it was not frequently—was always invited to their affairs and frequently attended. In fact I was very pleased to attend a lot of the affairs that the foreign students or the Latino students or the black students gave. They were always interesting and always pleasant. Sometimes they were potluck suppers, and sometimes they were musical evenings, depending. They had a whole variety of social activities in which the dean of students office helped when necessary and usually were invited to them.

COHEN: Do you remember any of the students in the organizations, of the various student organizations that you were invited to?

FIDDLER: Let’s see. Of course Ray Izzario [sp] from the—I think he was from Puerto Rico. And I met him some years later when he was on his way to success I’m sure, but a lawyer with his own office. Opened his own office in Newark. And try to remember. My memory is so bad right now so I can’t think of any other names.

COHEN: During that time, I think it was—I forget the exact dates, seventy-one, seventy-two—there were some episodes concerned with the articles, editorials, which appeared in the *Observer*, which the African-American students took issue with. And there had been—there were some, oh, an issue involving a student, I believe, and some destruction of newspapers and the office. And a student—

FIDDLER: Yes. I don't think that was in the seventies. Was it?

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: It was at that time?

COHEN: A student was involved in that, and there was a court case. I don't know if you remember the name Jim Lawrence. Does that ring a bell? He was the student who was involved. And there was quite a bit of publicity around that. It was eventually resolved.

FIDDLER: Yes. Isn't that funny. That I don't recall.

COHEN: You don't have any recollection of that at all?

FIDDLER: No. Kit Marlowe was the student who led a foray into the dean of students office, taking it over.

COHEN: What was the—

FIDDLER: And I forget what issue they wanted settled immediately.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

FIDDLER: And Dean Blumenthal came rushing over. And Dean Boland, you know, just invited them into his office and said, "Stay as long as you want." [Laughter] One of the—I never did forgive the campus patrol guy because as soon as I saw them—there were about six or eight students led by Kit, you know—come in and announce, "This is a takeover," and I was standing...and I whispered to the secretary, call campus patrol right away to tell them. So by the time they came into the office, and then they announced nobody could make any phone calls, nobody do anything else, nobody answer any calls, the phone rang. And then I—and Kit answers it. And he says, "No, there's no trouble here. Why do you think there's any trouble? Who called you?" [Laughs] So we didn't get campus patrol right away. But they occupied the office for maybe a couple of hours. And I don't even remember what issue they needed solved instantly and immediately. But Dean Blumenthal and Dean Boland did talk with two or three who seemed to constitute themselves as leaders. And whatever it was, was resolved. And nothing was destroyed, nothing—nobody was hurt. And the police were not called.

COHEN: Any recollection of how Dean Blumenthal handled that situation?

FIDDLER: Yes. He was furious. [Laughter]

COHEN: Hear it, okay.

FIDDLER: And he said, "You know there's no reason you can't talk to me. You don't have to do anything like this," you know. But they did talk, and it worked out satisfactorily.

COHEN: Any other—

FIDDLER: That's another thing. Dean Blumenthal was someone who was so good. And I've worked with him also when I was in the alumni office. And I can't believe that this warm, gentle, intelligent man is a building on campus now. [Laughs]

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes.

FIDDLER: It makes me realize I am getting old. [Laughs]

COHEN: But also involved in some historical events, too.

FIDDLER: Yes, yes. That's right, sure.

COHEN: Do you have any other recollections of dramatic moments like that where someone—

FIDDLER: No, no, not particularly. And then, as I say, I particularly enjoyed working in Public Information because I got to know a lot of people on campus because that office interacts, of course, with every area of the campus. And it also was an opportunity for me to get down to New Brunswick at the various meetings and the things that we went to, which I enjoyed, that contact with New Brunswick. And, as I say, in the alumni office, again, there were the alumni college newsletters that for the most part were defunct, this type of thing. You know let slide, let go. And I enjoyed a great deal taking that over. I liked working with the nurses. In fact, I have a little plaque making me a "Member in perpetuity of the Nurses' Association."

COHEN: Oh, that's really nice. That's kind of nice.

FIDDLER: And I am an honorary nurse. Just don't get sick on me, please. [Laughter] And I still like attending their annual affair, their brunch, their annual brunch. And I'm in touch with some of them.

COHEN: Well, in the years in Public Information, what were those years now, if you could just refresh my memory?

FIDDLER: See, I'm trying to remember. It must have been about... In Public Information I was there from seventy—my goodness, yes, it must have been about seventy—to seventy-seven.

COHEN: Seventy? I thought you started in Continuing Law.

FIDDLER: Oh, wait a minute, wait a minute.

COHEN: You went to the dean's office after that.

FIDDLER: Of course, I was in the dean's office for at least three years.

COHEN: And you...

FIDDLER: Yes. So let's say seventy-four to seventy-seven.

COHEN: Oh. So you put in a few years.

FIDDLER: Because I know I went into the alumni office in seventy-seven. It was the end of seventy-seven or the first of seventy-eight, but I applied for the job in seventy-seven. And then I left in eighty-six, I think.

COHEN: So in those years in the Public Information Office, what were some of the headline events?

FIDDLER: Well, I mean for me, some of my triumphs were...you know the *Weekly Reader* that's distributed in the public schools, among all the public school children, that they have a *Weekly Reader*?

COHEN: Oh, it's that little magazine.

FIDDLER: It must have been...Well, I got the story about the Rutgers—and that I think must have been biology or zoology—one of our professors had a project where he was attaching little radar things to turtles and other things and sending them out to the wild so they could keep track of them. And they picked up that story that I sent them, that I wrote them.

COHEN: Oh, they picked that up. I see.

FIDDLER: Which was a feather in my cap. [Laughs] And I had some TV interviews. I think there were several—I mean I'd arrange, you know, for several TV stations to come on campus. One I think was with Dorothy Duberman, and the other was with Norman Washburn. And then I did a lot of—you know my copy was picked up in some of the papers. So I mean that was good. And that's about it. At the same time, of course, I was going to school. I was going—taking credit, you know taking courses for my degree. And then working in the evenings or on weekends with the *Night Watch* paper. And I enjoyed... I still am in touch with a couple of the kids that used to work with me: Carrie Costantino did some lovely—she graduated University College roughly about the same time I did, I guess. Or maybe a year or two before me. A young girl. And she did the artwork. I'm trying to think of the name of the—I'm just terrible with names.

COHEN: Yeah... [Laughter]

FIDDLER: Who's the business manager at Rutgers now who took over Shirley Cohen's job?

COHEN: Oh, you mean Jane Chepich.

FIDDLER: Jane Chepich. Her husband—her ex-husband—whose name I can't remember now, was someone I worked with and enjoyed working with on the newspaper. And incidentally I

don't know if you know. But every two, three months some of the retirees meet for lunch with some of the current workers.

COHEN: Hmm.

FIDDLER: Let's see. Jane Chepich, Shirley Cohen. Who's the—Janet Davis of the management school.

COHEN: She just retired now. I went to her party.

FIDDLER: And let's see. Madeleine Brown and Lucile Brant who used to be in the campus center. And a few of us, you know, meet together for lunch let's say every two or three months. And that's always pleasant. Keeps us a little bit in touch with what's going on on campus.

COHEN: These are names of people I should probably see. Yes, okay. Well, during that time, during your career in Public Information—or for that matter everything—you had sort of a bird's-eye view of what was going on. And I guess, well, during that time, what major changes did you see on the campus.

FIDDLER: Mainly it was expansion and building. At the time I came, there was also a great expansion of personnel. A lot of people were hired during 1969, seventy, and seventy-one. But I wasn't too much aware about it at the time. But of course the large building that was going on was something that... President Bloustein came to the university roughly about the same time I did, because I know the very first and most impressive university affair that I attended was his convocation in Newark. It was in one of the—I think it was in one of the Newark churches, as I recollect. And when he came to meet, you know, the Newark people and everybody, of course students, personnel, and faculty, staff, everybody was invited. And I was very impressed with the whole, with the ceremonial aspect of the convocation and with Dr. Bloustein. Who, incidentally, I have always loved, [laughs] if only for his amazing memory. While I was in Public Information, there was a meeting in Newark, and I don't recollect what, how or why I happened to be there. But we were at least fifteen or twenty people at that meeting. And I wasn't particularly vocal because you know how low down on the totem pole I was. But I might have said something, you know, made one or two small contributions to the discussion. And that was that. And then it was months later there was some alumni affair or something, which Dr. Bloustein attended. Dr. Bloustein. And I was standing someplace or other, and he came over to me with hand extended and said, "Hello, Hannah. How are you?"

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes.

FIDDLER: And the fact that he remembered me and greeted me I thought was pretty terrific.

COHEN: That always gives you a lift. I can appreciate that, yes. So then you have no recollections then of—or maybe you do—or Mason Gross, Bloustein's predecessor?

FIDDLER: No, no, no. He was already gone when I came.

COHEN: Well, Bloustein came in seventy-one.

FIDDLER: Oh.

COHEN: I never get that straight. But anyway.... [Break in recording] You mentioned some people during the course of our interview. Who were some of the other people, if any, that you have vivid recollections of? Personalities that you would care to talk about.

FIDDLER: Well, some of them aren't on campus anymore. Of course there was— My first introduction to the course in philosophy, I'd never taken a philosophy course, and I did with Stuart Dalrymple. And it was very exciting, very thrilling. And as I say, my first experience with Plato and Socrates and Kant, you know, that was very memorable. And he was—I took some courses during the day at Newark, the Newark College, as well, but the bulk of them of course I took at night. I could arrange to do that because it was twice a week for an hour and a half or something. And I would take half-hour lunches and stay later a half hour in the evenings in order to make up the time during that semester. And I still hear from time to time from Dr. Hill, Roy Hill. He was in charge of Black Studies. In fact he created the department.

COHEN: Where is he now?

FIDDLER: Well, he's retired now. And I just got a letter from him, and I think it's either North or South Carolina. I've forgotten now which.

COHEN: I remember him well.

FIDDLER: Oh, you do?

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: He's a very colorful character.

COHEN: What can you tell us about Roy Hill?

FIDDLER: Well, he was a poet and a little on the flamboyant side as far as his dress and manner was concerned. Again, concerned for his students—I always liked that in him—and did his best for his students. And not a terribly organized man. I don't know. I think maybe there might have been some complaints about his handling the chair of the department. [Laughs] I don't know, I don't know about that. But I always enjoyed him, and I liked him very much. I'm wondering whether there's any point in telling you about people whose names I don't remember

COHEN: Fine, fine.

FIDDLER: But, University College—I took a course on speech because I thought it would be, you know, a very easy three credits. And he was such an amazing teacher in that he was able to help everybody: those who were bumptious and thought, you know, they're like me taking it for

an easy three credits, an easy A; and those who were too shy, to terrified to get up and speak. I don't know how he was able to do it, what psychology he used. I never was able to analyze.

COHEN: Speech?

FIDDLER: Yes. But he was an amazing man. He did a beautiful job. It was a very.... And then of course I took two writing courses with John Williams, for which I will always be grateful. He's a very great man, not only as a writer but as a teacher.

COHEN: Why is he such a good teacher?

FIDDLER: Because he makes you discover things that you didn't know you had.

COHEN: In your writing? In the process of writing?

FIDDLER: Yes. He makes you pull out of yourself stuff that you didn't even know you had. And how he does it, I'm not quite sure. He'd always sit in the back and just occasionally raise a question or make some small comment.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

FIDDLER: And it worked. It worked for me. It was a very, very—I enjoyed that very much. Of course I didn't continue in any creative writing, but it wasn't his fault. And then other teachers, memorable teachers, that I had, of course, Virginia—oh, the English teacher at University College. There goes my memory.

COHEN: Criminrud [sp]?

FIDDLER: Virginia Crimnrud.

COHEN: Virginia Crimnrud, yes. I knew her well. She retired recently.

FIDDLER: Oh, really?

COHEN: Well, I think within the last two years, I guess.

FIDDLER: She was a wonderful English teacher. And I remember the first course I took was an art course. Because I thought, again, it would be easy, and I was always interested in art, and I, you know, thought it would be, you know, something that I would enjoy. And I did. It was—you sat and you looked at all these marvelous pictures paintings. And I was introduced to, you know, Giotto and the patrons I wasn't familiar with. And all my visits to the MET, you know, and the Modern Museum. And it was a lovely course until the midterm. And I discovered that not only were we supposed to look at the paintings, but I was supposed to remember who the painters were, which I could understand that, but I had to remember where the paintings were.

COHEN: You mean like what museums.

FIDDLER: And what city they. [Laughter] Once I realized that that was part of the course... For the final I did okay. But the midterm came as a shocker.

COHEN: Do you remember who taught that course?

FIDDLER: No. A woman who was very interesting. And again, she did it...I mean for example when we were doing Egyptian art, you know, I began raising my hand because she raised her hand to make this long expanse. And said, "Imagine this long row with the Sphinx at one end and all the tombs of the...spaced out. And it got to you. She did it so beautifully, that you got a vision of yourself some three thousand years ago, and you know it wasn't a desert at that time. And you saw how it might have been to the Egyptians. And she was very colorful and very good. I can't think of one course that I took—and we're not discussing algebra—but one course I took that didn't have something good in it and some few were just, you know, really milestones for me. But every course that I took, I can't think of being, you know, bored out of my mind in any of the classes. There were some dull stretches here and there, but, you know, in every course that I had, even the zoology, which I had to take as a science, was interesting.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

FIDDLER: And I liked the professor of that although I didn't have too much contact with him because that was a big lecture hall, big lecture course. And I'm trying to remember desperately his name.

COHEN: Which course again was that?

FIDDLER: The introduction to zoology.

COHEN: Zoology. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

FIDDLER: He was a friend of Inge's. I can't remember his name. He lives in South Orange—or he did live in South Orange at the time.

COHEN: Zoology....

FIDDLER: You know we saw all the dirty bird pictures. And you had to write about, you know, what birds did what and how they....

COHEN: I'm trying to remember who lived in South Orange. Anyway. Okay. You said some of the milestone courses. Have you hit on all the milestone courses that you took? You said art...

FIDDLER: Well, in graduate school...for a time she was the chair of the English Department of the graduate English Department. And again, her name—

COHEN: Pat Gartenberg?

FIDDLER: Huh?

COHEN: Pat Gartenberg?

FIDDLER: No.

COHEN: Virginia Hyman?

FIDDLER: Virginia.... Hyman? No.

COHEN: Okay.

FIDDLER: She was the expert on the guy who wrote—I'm sorry, Gil. This is what happens. My memory goes bad on me. At any rate, I took two English courses with her, and she was terrific. She was great. And the fact that I can't remember right now doesn't mean that they're not part of me, that they haven't enriched me. It's just that the names don't come to my lips right now. I can read—I can see the books, you know. I just can't—the names just don't come to me. At any rate, I enjoyed her classes very much, and she introduced me to some, you know, new depths of writers that I had read just pleasure, but didn't appreciate entirely. And, oh, the guy who taught Shakespeare. What a great guy he was.

COHEN: There are a couple of people who teach Shakespeare: Carl Song teaches Shakespeare and let's see who else.

FIDDLER: I think he lived in Millburn.

COHEN: Henry Christian?

FIDDLER: Henry Christian.

COHEN: I believe has taught Shakespeare.

FIDDLER: Henry Christian.

COHEN: Yes, Henry teaches Shakespeare, too.

FIDDLER: You know I had a marvelous introduction to Shakespeare in high school. I had this fantastic English teacher in high school, and it's given me a love for Shakespeare that I've had all my life.

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: So I thought I had read everything, you know, in Shakespeare. And then, of course, with Henry Christian there was so much new to be discovered, I was very glad I had his classes.

COHEN: What were some of the low points in the courses?

FIDDLER: Well, really, even algebra wasn't all that...you know I didn't have to suffer too long because it was a summer course. And I think by the time we were three weeks through and I said I'm going to die, I can't live through this anymore, I realized, well, gee, I'm halfway through. It's only another three weeks. [Laughs] I think it was a six-week summer course, if I remember correctly. So I was able to live through algebra. Other than that, I can't think of any course I took that was murder. But the algebra, I really tried so hard. It was just some kind of a mindset, you know, that I guess because all my life I'd been so frightened of it.

COHEN: Most of us.

FIDDLER: That even when I had to come home and start memorizing...so you don't understand the formula, just the memorize the formula, you know. [Laughs] It was hard to do. But it worked out okay.

COHEN: You started as a student. Well, you were the typical, I guess, University College student.

FIDDLER: Not really. I was much older than most of them....

COHEN: Older than the University College students?

FIDDLER: Yes, yes. Most of—I would say that the bulk of University College were in their thirties. They were people who'd already been out in the world, you know, and realized that the lack of the degree was holding them back. They saw others, you know, moving along much faster than they did. And, well, it's high time. I, too, can get a degree. I remember one young chap I interviewed for, like I said, this *Night Watch*, said something that I've always remembered. And of course his name I don't remember. But he said, "When I told my friends that I was going to, you know, college at night, they asked how long would it take? And I said, 'Oh, anywhere from seven to ten years.' And they said, 'My God! You're crazy. You'll be forty years old before you get a degree.' So I answered. I said, 'Well, in ten years I'll be forty years anyway. And I might as well be forty years old with a degree.'" [Laughs]

COHEN: So you were how old when you started the degree?

FIDDLER: That would be in seventy, and I was born in fourteen, so how old was I?

COHEN: Fifty-six. That's when you started your degree?

FIDDLER: I fudged my age when I came. I said I was five years younger. So I must have said I was fifty; so instead I was fifty-five.

COHEN: So being in the older age group, what kind of socializing, if any, could you do with your fellow students?

FIDDLER: Well, I did it with *Night Watch*, which was, again, a great source of fun. And everybody was much younger than I. So they were perfectly willing to— And again, you know, particularly among students, there sometimes is a lot of push and pull, you know, as far as credit and honor and all that is concerned. But there wasn't in the *Night Watch* in their association with me because being much older, they naturally assumed that I would be the lead, you know. And they knew, of course, that I wasn't taking any part; that my main purpose was to push them, to put their names on their stories, to give them every kind of credit. And they appreciated that. And we had parties, and we had great fun together.

COHEN: So you were working on *Night Watch* in your capacity as a staff member?

FIDDLER: No, no. *Night Watch* was purely voluntary.

COHEN: Purely voluntary.

FIDDLER: Yes, yes.

COHEN: On *Night Watch* what was the composition of the students who worked on *Night Watch*, particularly the composition in terms of minority, white students, that type of, in that area?

FIDDLER: They were all ways. I mean they varied. But I'm trying to think of a typical year. We must have been about four whites and two blacks. And I don't remember any Latin students.

COHEN: How would you characterize the relationships among the students in the various and different ethnic groups?

FIDDLER: At University College?

COHEN: At University College. Well, let's say at the University College, apparently as a student you knew that best.

FIDDLER: Yes. That I knew of well. It was very, very good. I mean even the University College Alumni Association. University College had, you know, just as large a proportion of blacks as did the day school. And in the alumni association there were blacks in the leadership positions, president, vice president and other officers. And in the student association there were always blacks represented. Perhaps one of the reasons might be that the dean of students for University College at the time was a black, Cassie Miller. And, you know, he was the one who suggested, Hannah, why don't you do *Night Watch*, you know. He might have been the one who, you know, pushed some of the black students to varying, you know, student organization activities and all that. But I can't remember any conflict or any overt difficulty.

COHEN: How much on-campus socializing was there among the groups, that you recall? Either coffee shops and the cafeteria?

FIDDLER: Very little. Well, but even in the cafeteria, there wasn't all that.... If there was socializing it was always on an individual basis, one person enjoyed the company of one other person.

COHEN: Oh!

FIDDLER: So there was that.

COHEN: Yes, yes.

FIDDLER: And, you know, you'd see two black girls—no, two girls, one black and one white. Or you'd see two men, one black and one white. But generally...I'm trying to remember. I think as far as you could see, you know, in the lunchroom, for example, there'd be a table of the black kids and a table of white and the Latinos. And that seemed to, you know, be the....

COHEN: During that period, as affirmative action hiring policies were being followed more and more—

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: —to bring, well, students, faculty, staff. I mean how did that affect the composition of the workforce that you worked with, let's say?

FIDDLER: Well, very, very directly. In the dean of students office there was always, you know, there were three secretaries; there was always one black one. I'm trying to remember among the deans who. There was one assistant dean whose main charge were the veterans, the soldiers; at that time it would have been—was it Korea or Vietnam? I forget now.

COHEN: Well, in the seventies it would have been Vietnam.

FIDDLER: Vietnam, that's right. Korea was in the fifties.

COHEN: Probably people coming back.

FIDDLER: Vietnam. That was his main charge. And I'm trying to remember who was the black— Was there a black dean? I can't recall. In the Public Information Office, the chief staff writer was a black woman, Delora. And when they hired a secretary to give me more time to do the other work, she was a black girl. So I think they.... And in the alumni office, we had one black secretary and one Spanish secretary. And as far as the administrative, there were only two of us, Herb and me. So we were one man, one woman. So at least we had that. I think generally throughout the university, I don't think there was any complaint about lack of representation. I think everybody in every department tried very hard to make sure that every minority group was given adequate opportunity.

COHEN: How did the recruitment and the hiring of minority staff affect working relationships in the offices?

FIDDLER: I'm trying to remember. I don't really know. I guess for that you'd have to ask one of the large, people in the large offices, like the business office had a large staff, and they were very mixed. And how working relations were there, I don't know. The registrar's office also had a large staff. I really don't know. I always worked in offices that had such small staffs that there was never any problem.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Yes. Face to face. Yes. Right.

FIDDLER: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

COHEN: Again going back to the—what career opportunities.... Well, you obviously moved rapidly. But what career opportunities did the university offer? How did they encourage career development?

FIDDLER: Well, they didn't encourage me. [Laughter] But all I can say is at least they allowed me to do... whatever I volunteered to do, they permitted, which in itself was, I thought, a great opportunity as far as I was concerned because at least I was working in something that I enjoyed. But how do they—I don't really know. And I've heard various complaints. But, you know, it's all secondhand. I really don't know. Now all I can say is, just by the face of facts, people like Sally Zeiss and Jane Chepich and, before she retired, Shirley Cohen had great opportunity for advancement. And they were good, and it was acknowledged, and they received the advancement. How much opportunity there is for most people working at Rutgers, I don't know.

COHEN: How did unionization affect the relations between the staff and the administration, that you recall?

FIDDLER: I don't know. I wasn't active in that. I don't know.

COHEN: Was there any—did you perceive any need for affirmative action in the hiring and promotion of women at the time?

FIDDLER: Well, I know that there was some problem in the Drama Department, for example. And I forget her name, but she had a grievance about being passed over. And I think she won. And there were some departments that, you know, argued about the women. But again, I don't know of anything first—of my own knowledge.

COHEN: I was thinking specifically amongst staff.

FIDDLER: Well, the dean of students office had more women assistant deans than they had men.

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: And in the PI office, the only man for a time was Morris. And at the alumni office one man, one woman.

COHEN: How about women in top positions, administrative positions?

FIDDLER: Right now the alumni office is all women; the director and the assistant director both are women. I don't know about...no, the PI office still has a man director. Oh, well, Erma was acting director for a time.

COHEN: Erma Brown.

FIDDLER: Yes, Erma Brown. Just after Morris left and before Deutsch came, Erma was acting director.

COHEN: You worked under Joe Deutsch?

FIDDLER: Mm-hmm.

COHEN: And you worked under Morris Wilk [sp].

FIDDLER: Mm-hmm.

COHEN: How was it working under them?

FIDDLER: Morris Wilk I liked very much and enjoyed very much. He was a very good man. Deutsch again was extremely difficult. He liked me. He gave me letters of commendation. He tried to get me, my line raised and everything. But I was a little leery of him. He was, you know, an odd person and inclined to temper, and I wasn't quite sure. [Laughter] In other words, I wasn't as fond of him as I was of Morris.

COHEN: When you were working in the offices, to what extent were computers introduced into the office?

FIDDLER: Not at all in my lifetime. Oh, just at the very end at the alumni office, word processors and computers were being introduced.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

FIDDLER: But I was already leaving then, and I wasn't involved. [Laughter]

COHEN: You escaped.

FIDDLER: I didn't have to learn.

COHEN: Well, you escaped it. [Laughter] Oh, boy. [Break in recording] We're back. We were discussing briefly your perceptions, such as whatever you can remember, of the status of race relations on campus. And you were saying you had at least some general impressions of what was going on in that period, which of course was critical. And whatever you can recall, even

general impressions would be helpful for the historical record, a very important part of it. What you said, there were problems. What was your perception of these problems?

FIDDLER: I'm trying to remember who was handling them and what the problems were. I really—there's nothing that I can think of that, you know.... I can't imagine having worked so long in Newark, you know, and have been so untouched by any of that.

COHEN: Well, looking in retrospect, maybe if we put it this way, in retrospect, what grievances do you think the black students—your perception of their grievances as a group, you know, at the time, in the seventies, that you can recall?

FIDDLER: I don't remember.

COHEN: In your work, for instance, in the dean of students office, were there any episodes or any interviews that you had with black students which were symptomatic of the problems that the students had on campus?

FIDDLER: No, no, no.

COHEN: Housing or jobs or something like that?

FIDDLER: No, because we were always very careful. I mean every time I had a listing, I asked now—you know, now this is.... You know I recited the non-something or other and the rooms available. And when they said, Well, no, no, I don't want a black person, I said, Well, then I'm sorry. I can't list your room.

COHEN: Oh, that sort of thing would come up?

FIDDLER: Oh, yes, yes, yes.

COHEN: So that.... And was this a continuing problem with people saying this sort of thing?

FIDDLER: No, there wasn't very much of that.

COHEN: But you had to be careful.

FIDDLER: Yes. But I mean I always made sure. And when it came to job listings, you know, again I would say.... And nobody—I don't remember anybody coming, you know, and offering a job at Rutgers, a part-time job and looking for part-time help, that anyone said, No, I don't want any blacks or Spaniards or, you know, Latinos. But rooms, yes.

COHEN: And therefore the office of course was only with rooms which are open to any student.

FIDDLER: Yes, exactly. Then I always had to make that plain. I'm trying to think of the.... There was one incident of a young man who called from the airport, Newark Airport, and he came from it must have been Kenya. And he said, well, he's at the airport, and he has a

scholarship to Rutgers, and there's nobody there to meet him. So Inge told him to—and did he have any money? Well, no, not much, you know, for living. Inge told him how to take a bus or something to get to Newark. And then she handed him over to me to find him a room to stay in.

COHEN: Yes, that's....

FIDDLER: Something like that. And he got along. It was difficult at first. I mean the very first week he was in the room, he was robbed of his overcoat and a few other things.

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: But then some people from the black organization took a buddy kind of relationship to help him over. And he adjusted and stayed, and it was all.... But I mean that was one of the rare problems of somebody, you know a foreign student and a black, coming, you know, expecting that he would be looked after at Rutgers...and having been awarded the scholarship on the basis, I guess, of his marks at the school he'd been in, spoke English reasonably well.

COHEN: What could the office do about financial aid to the students? Were they under—

FIDDLER: That was a separate department.

COHEN: It was separate. Did they often make referrals to—

FIDDLER: Oh, yes.

COHEN: —to the financial aid office.

FIDDLER: Well, Inge worked very closely with the director of the financial aid office, you know, particularly for the foreign students. And sometimes, you know, she'd make a special plea for—about all she could ask for was a little speed, you know, in other words to process this more quickly than the natural order of things would take. I guess that's about the only thing that you could change. But, yes, financial aid was always a big problem.

COHEN: Did that office have any kind of relationships with admissions and the dean of faculty office?

FIDDLER: I don't know. The financial aid office physically was in the dean of students office. I mean you had to go into the dean of students office, you go into the financial aid office.

COHEN: Oh, oh! Okay.

FIDDLER: But that was only the physical relationship.

COHEN: I see.

FIDDLER: Other than that, I really don't know, except that over their front door—I mean over their door to their own little lobby section—the director had a hand-painted sign, “ASK.” [Laughter] Following “Ask and you shall receive,” but that didn't follow. Just ASK.

COHEN: No promises made as far as results concerned. Do you have any other recollections of student protests on the campus at the time? You mentioned some things before which you related to me.

FIDDLER: There were always hassles about which organizations got which allotment and how much money they were allotted from the general funds, you know. And everybody always needed more. Everybody always—there were the problems of they were supposed to submit their reports, and they never did. And, you know, you'd have to ride herd on getting them in. So we had to work with the campus center, the bookkeeper at the campus center, who kept those records. Her name was Grace. I think she retired recently, too. There was always the big hassle about, you know, following up on the student organizations who weren't submitting their proper reports. And the threat: If these reports don't come through, you're not going to get any allotment next semester, you know.

COHEN: Yes. You touched on the teaching in some of the courses, and I wanted to get into that. What were the required courses at the time, in the years that you were there?

FIDDLER: You had to have a science course. Now I was an English major, so I don't know how much English other majors had to have. You had to have a math course. And I don't know what other requirements there were. I guess...my minor was sociology, so I took several sociology courses. But I didn't... Now because, you know, of my age and all that, I didn't get any particular advisement. I just picked out which courses I thought would be interesting. Maybe that's why I had such an enjoyable....

[End of Tape #1]

COHEN: We're back. We were talking about the required courses that you took. How helpful, in retrospect, do you feel that the required courses were to you—in your academic career and in your life?

FIDDLER: I don't know that they were absolutely helpful. But they were interesting. I'm glad I know why a bird rotates the egg on which she sits. I'm not going to tell you why, but I mean I know why. [Laughs] And that's so much for science. [Laughter]

COHEN: You won't tell me why for what reason? Why won't you tell me why?

FIDDLER: You really want to know?

COHEN: Yes.

FIDDLER: Well, of course, what happens is that, you know, the whole egg that is kept nice and warm; it isn't just the top of the egg that's warm and the bottom of the egg is cold. But you know

the whole egg is kept warm. But the reason she does it is that she has an itch on her breast, and when she turns the egg, the cool part of the egg soothes the itch on her breast. So she benefits from it, and that's why she does it. She hasn't figured out that it's good for the egg. All she knows is that it's good for her. [Laughter]

COHEN: Like in a microwave.

FIDDLER: Yes, yes, yes. And let's see, algebra was absolutely useless. I mean that was just...I don't recall that I've ever used any part of it, and don't recall that it opened my mind to any concept that—and that was a total waste as far as I was concerned. As I say, I studied very hard. I spent a lot of time—well, it was only six weeks—a lot of evenings. I think the course was about four times a week, and then I spent evenings studying and everything like that. And it was a waste of time. What other required? The other courses that I took I don't think were required. The sociology courses I enjoyed, and English courses I enjoyed.

COHEN: What did you think about the core curriculum in English or the curriculum generally in English?

FIDDLER: I took some history courses. I guess that was required, too. You had to take some history. And again, they were good, and they were interesting, and I learned a lot. And I really think, you know, from my experience of college curriculum that there should be a certain basic freshman standard, you know, required courses.

COHEN: What did you think about the standards, the requirements in University College?

FIDDLER: Everybody thinks, you know, that they were not as great as—that is, not as strict; that you got away with murder at University College, and it simply is not so. I had courses with Newark professors, and I had courses with the evening University College professors. And they all were high standards. They all were strict. And a lot of the people failed as much in University College as they did at Newark, the day college. And I can't...I would bristle when people said, oh, well, you had an easier time of it at night. I mean not so.

COHEN: Yes, yes.

FIDDLER: They were professors who, you know, had their standards and maintained them.

COHEN: Do you recall any of the outstanding students that you went to school with at the time, that they went on to do? Other than yourself.

FIDDLER: Well, as I say, there was Ray, a Latin student, who became a successful lawyer. And I'm trying to remember...so many of them. Yes, I see from the *Alumni News*, you know, you see they are heads of departments in various big firms or they have their own firms. You should read the, you know, you see...I'm sure many of them were successful.

COHEN: Yes. We're getting close to the windup. I just wanted to ask a few questions, if you have any memories or perceptions of the administrations in Newark. I mean let's start with the top, Malcolm Talbott.

FIDDLER: I loved him.

COHEN: As vice president and acting dean. You know what can you tell me about him?

FIDDLER: Well, I mean I thought he was so marvelous in the people he brought into his provost's office. And we used to call them "Talbott's girls." [Laughs] And, you know he had Sylvia—

COHEN: Volkstein [sp].

FIDDLER: Volkstein.

COHEN: I don't know if she's still there or not.

FIDDLER: Yes, she's still there. And there was, oh dear, I can see their faces in front of me. Alice?

COHEN: Shapiro.

FIDDLER: Alice Shapiro.

COHEN: Oh, yes, the late Alice Shapiro.

FIDDLER: And Muriel who did fundraising for various people. These were people he met, you know, and brought them into his department. And they did wonderful work. And I thought that was so terrific of him. They started in part time. I said I wish to heavens I had been one of Talbott's girls. If I'd gone to Talbott instead of the employment office, I would have done much better at Rutgers. And he was very innovative, and I had great admiration for him. And again, you know how low down on the totem pole I was, he was most friendly and cordial with me, and I was invited with others, you know, to his home in that Prospect section of Newark. And he was very warm. They used to call him Mr. Newark not for nothing. He really was devoted to Newark and was determined there was going to be a renaissance and that Newark would be the center of education and commerce and industry.

COHEN: You said he was innovative. Do you have any recollections of how he was innovative?

FIDDLER: Well, what I thought was wonderfully innovative was this interaction that he had begun with the various colleges in the area. And as far as I know, before that, there was no structured interaction between the Essex County College and NJIT, and there were some other colleges there. He organized a whole group that had an acronym, a council.

COHEN: The Council for Higher Education in Newark, CHEN.

FIDDLER: CHEN! That's it. Yes. I thought that was great. I thought that was so beneficial to everybody and so on. And I don't remember other things, but that comes to mind right on.

COHEN: Do you have any perception at all of why Talbott didn't get the appointment as the first provost on the campus? Any idea?

FIDDLER: I don't. But I don't know. That kind of politics was way out of my realm.

COHEN: Let's just review quickly the deans that you worked under. If you came there in seventy, then you would have worked under Dean Blumenthal.

FIDDLER: Yes, and after him there was Panson.

COHEN: Well, let's review, how did you feel about, any perceptions of Blumenthal's deanship, his administration, how he operated, what people thought of him and so on?

FIDDLER: I thought he did a terrific job. Everybody seemed to—everybody I knew—loved Dean Blumenthal and admired him. I don't know within the faculty. See, at that time I had no contact particularly with faculty, so I don't know. But as far as I know, he was an effective and a strong and a well-liked dean.

COHEN: The acting dean after Blumenthal—

FIDDLER: Panson.

COHEN: —was Gilbert Panson.

FIDDLER: I don't know anything about his term in office. I mean what he did. Who followed Panson?

COHEN: Panson—after him was Richard Robey, who was recruited from Columbia University.

FIDDLER: That was a very sad and tragic—

COHEN: What can you say about that administration? You said sad and tragic.

FIDDLER: Well, except I mean that he died so young.

COHEN: Yes...

FIDDLER: Yes. And I understand that there were some unhappy marital problems...you know all the gossip that goes around. I didn't know any of that firsthand. But I felt very sad and very sorry. And he was there only for a very short time, a year or two.

COHEN: Two I think. I'm not sure.

FIDDLER: I don't know anything that I can say firsthand about Robey. And then following him must have been the present dean.

COHEN: Well, Norman Samuels was before he became provost.

FIDDLER: Norman Samuels, that's right.

COHEN: What perception did you have of his administration, as a dean?

FIDDLER: A go-getter and, you know, one—a lot of the faculty had a lot of problems with him. By that time I was, you know, acquainted with some faculty, who—and some had problems. But personally, for me, I admired him a great deal and enjoyed him.

COHEN: You're saying faculty had problems with Samuels at the time?

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: Any recollection of what these problems were?

FIDDLER: No, I can't say specificall. But there were areas of dissent, and I don't remember now. And then after Samuels is the present dean.

COHEN: David Horsburgh, yes. Now we're getting into the eighties.

FIDDLER: Yes.

COHEN: Okay.

FIDDLER: And there were a number of assistant and associate deans. Mark Mappen.

COHEN: Oh, yes, yes.

FIDDLER: I enjoyed—I mean I thought he was great, you know. I loved him and enjoyed working with him because he was assigned to cover University College, to be the liaison between the dean's office and the University College, the students.

COHEN: Oh, is that what his—

FIDDLER: Yes. So I worked with him closely and admired him no end. And Cassie Miller—

COHEN: So how is it working with—since he hasn't been, I forget what his title is now. He is the dean—the associate dean?

FIDDLER: Mappen?

COHEN: I mean Cassie Miller is dean today?

FIDDLER: Oh, I don't know what Cassie is now.

COHEN: Now on faculty?

FIDDLER: I don't really know. But of course I always worked closely with him and liked him. And who among the other associates—and then there was Stohlba [sp], Cele, with a sharp tongue, but whom I admired again. What she did was for the students. She really one who was gung-ho for the students. And, you know, you have to admire that, and you have to go along with somebody who rides roughshod because the goal she wants is a noble one. [Laughs] But she did, I mean her tongue has a rough side to it, and a lot of people, you know, were alienated. But I liked her, and I hope she liked me.

COHEN: Oh, one or two more, and then we'll wrap it up, I guess. What kind of relationships have you had with the—oh, relationships. What's your perception of the service of the Dana Library?

FIDDLER: That was a problem for me because practically every time I went for a book—I'm being very honest with you—it was listed in the catalog, but it wasn't on the shelf. And finally I gave up, and I went to the Newark Public Library, and I was much more successful with the Newark library.

COHEN: So you had a lot of trouble with access. How about the reference services and circulation services?

FIDDLER: Oh, everybody was marvelous. You had a woman who was very thin and kind of brusque, but such a source of information and so helpful. And when she said "I'll call you back in fifteen minutes," by golly, in fifteen minutes she called back. Do you know whom I mean? I can't think of her name.

COHEN: What years are we talking about, the late seventies?

FIDDLER: We're talking about middle seventies or late seventies. Thin and, you know, carried herself—again you know I see her, but I can't remember her name.

COHEN: At the reference desk?

FIDDLER: Yes, at the reference desk. She was wonderful. And you and she were about the only people I knew. The rest of the time I was always dealing with students, you know, the people who were there temporarily. And as I say, I'd want a book or have special reading that I needed to do. And nine times out of ten, it wasn't on the shelves.

COHEN: Yes, that's something we've got to work on.

FIDDLER: I once talked with somebody there at the desk there, you know. And she said, “Well, there are so many reasons.” She said, “Faculty will keep books out for a year at a time.”

COHEN: Well, that was one of the reasons.

FIDDLER: And she said, “Then, of course, there’s pilferage, students there, you know, they steal.” And sometimes they’re misplaced. You have the students that, you know, shelving the books, and sometimes they’re misplaced. I mean she said there are so many reasons why.

COHEN: Not enough duplicate copies, not enough in the collection, period.

FIDDLER: That’s true, yes. Yes, because something was in demand when a professor, for example, assigns some reading you’ve got to have a lot of copies.

COHEN: Did you avail yourself at all of the interlibrary loan in the library?

FIDDLER: No, I never did. I never did. I found that between the Newark Public Library and my little local library here, I was able to do okay. I love the Newark Library. [Laughs]

COHEN: That’s in a class by itself. Okay. Is there anything that we’ve talked about that you’d like to go back to?

FIDDLER: No. But this has been really a very rewarding experience for me, Gil. As we said, you know I’ve been telling you much more than I knew I remembered. [Laughs] I didn’t think I—You know I thought, my God, what am I going to talk about? Even with my memory—I don’t really remember hardly anything—but I found much more to talk about than I thought I would.

COHEN: Is there anything that we haven’t touched on at all that you’d like to bring into the interview?

FIDDLER: No. Except, I mean are you talking to any alumni, you know?

COHEN: Yes. I’ve already spoken to a few alumni. And in this case alumni who are currently on staff—people sort of like yourself, I mean, who are alumni, but who are presently employed in a couple of capacities, I’ve talked to them.

FIDDLER: There’s, you know, I’m trying to remember. Judith Viorst is one of the famous alumna of NCAS.

COHEN: Yes, Judith Viorst is...

FIDDLER: And then there’s Elizabeth—it might have been McFadden. I think it’s McFadden.

COHEN: What years was Judith Viorst here?

FIDDLER: I wouldn't know, but they can tell you at the alumni office. You know they can just punch it in and tell you right off. And Elizabeth McFadden, I think there's kind of a duel fighting for her alumni between the Graduate School of Management and NCAS, because I think she attended both.

COHEN: Both. Uh-huh.

FIDDLER: And she is one of these very upper mucky-mucks in the financial world. I don't know. She's chief of something or other.

COHEN: Head of something, yes. So how would you advise me to go about getting the names.

FIDDLER: Talk to Linda. Talk to the alumni office, Linda Ryan. Tell her I sent you. [Laughs]

COHEN: Oh, okay. Because I already have the list of those who attended the reunion. There was a sixties reunion.

FIDDLER: Oh, that's right. I was there.

COHEN: Of course, of course.

FIDDLER: Yes, Edith. She's a great person. Edith—what's her name? It used to be Carpenter. Now it's—it begins with an F.

COHEN: Frankel.

FIDDLER: Frankel. [Laughs]

COHEN: I knew her years ago under her maiden name, yes.

FIDDLER: She's been there a long time.

COHEN: Oh, yes. She was a student and a—

FIDDLER: She was also a student and an administrator. You've been talking to _____?

COHEN: She used to work...when I was at circulation at the Dana Library, she was one of my assistants.

FIDDLER: Oh.

COHEN: Anyway, do you have any kind of concluding remarks you'd like for the historical record that you'd like to make?

FIDDLER: No, I don't think so except to say that I've enjoyed this, Gil. It's also been an excuse to see you again, which is very nice

COHEN: Very nice to see you.

FIDDLER: I'd love to see when it's all done. I would like to be able to see a transcript....

COHEN: That's what I have to raise the funds for.

FIDDLER: Alright. Okay.

COHEN: Okay.

FIDDLER: Just write up some, you know, what do they call them? Proposals.

COHEN: Yes. That's going to have to be the next move. Well, I thank you very much.

FIDDLER: It's been a pleasure, Gil.

[End of Tape #2]

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Reviewed and edited by Catherine Carey 12/11/2012