

Interview with William and Margery Vandament.

February 5, 1997, Marquette, Mi.

RM: Let's begin the interview with a...do you want to start with a general statement about the I don't know your presidency or do you want us to go with the questions?

WV: Well I think we might as well go with the questions.

RM: I guess the first one and we had some background material was: How did your previous experiences prepare you for the presidency at Northern?

WV: Well I'm glad that you assume that I'm prepared for the presidency of Northern, first of all, so I thank you for that. Well actually I've been in higher education now since 1964 it's now 1997. I've really been in higher education more than thirty years in short and about twenty years of that a little more than twenty years of that now has been spent in administrative work. I guess if I give you a broad characterization is that I've been pretty much a journeymen administrator in my career I've had a lot of different kinds of assignments different kinds of university's to work for range there so it's really been a broad range of experience that helps me do what I do. Should I numerate some of those and talk about them? I started as a faculty member in the field of psychology learning and memory sort of basic experimental psychologist and after a few years after that I was sort of tagged to become the director of planning in institutional research it's a job it's sort of a combination of what Paul Dubey does here and what Fred Jolell does it's kind of a combined thing in the office of academic affairs so that planning didn't mean putting together planning documents but it really meant developing new programs. I would get a program under way and then spin it off so that it would become part of the regular line, so that was I think a very good experience. The background in psychology believe it or not primarily because in my psychological preparation and in my research and teaching there's a strong quantitative and so dealing well with numbers, in what I call ninth grade algebra, ninth grade algebra can take you along way in life. It meant that I could deal with the kind of institutional research activities and so I started out in that kind of role and got advanced to assistant vice president then we had a president who left and there was a search for a new president they chose they ending up choosing the new academic vice president that we had that most of us didn't regard very highly but there was a move on part of the faculty to force stability so we had to go with this fellow for President they said and they passed around a petition. Most of the administrators signed it but I didn't along with my basic mentor the fellow who had tapped me to go into administration, the vice-president emeurtus so to speak. So I immediately had to go into exile and we were a part of a system office or system, so I put out a call to the system office and said could you use some help up there for a year while I find a job. So I commuted from between Bingington,

New York and Albany, New York. Coming home for weekends, living up in Albany and became the director of studies for a kind of major effort that the Chancellor Ernie Bower had going on. So it was a thing on system priorities: an organization study system priorities. So I served as a staff role there.

While I was out looking for a job there came along a job at Ohio State. And it sounded interesting to me because it was called Director of Budget and Resources Planning and Executive assistant to the President. So I had been doing the academic budgeting at Suoni/Bingington and then I ended up doing it for the state university of New York system as we prepared for our dealings with the legislature. That kind of academic budgeting then lead me to move really to a major university and do the budgeting for the entire university there. I inherited a very talented staff at Ohio State but a staff that could not communicate with other people. They were very good technical people but they had difficulty communicating. And the President when I walked in said "Well now you may feel free to fire all these people and get your own people." As it turned out the people that were there were excellent people, they couldn't communicate with the outside world. They taught me, they were my mentors in financial management and so I made the shift then out of academic affairs into financial management with on the job training by some very bright staff members that we had in Ohio State. So at that point I got active in the National NACUBO, National Association of College-University Business Officers became chairman of the financial management committee for that national organization. That really broadened my experience and helped me develop in the financial area. But always dependent on very good technical people, in other words I could not have done the job by myself. I needed the people that could do the accounting and do many of these other technical kinds of things.

So at Ohio State I became the title was changed then, I was promoted and then became Vice-President for Planning and Finance at Ohio State. Again there was a turn over at the top, the boss who had hired me in got into it with the medical faculty at Ohio State over the disposition of their practice income and they were getting a we called a full time salary was not a high salary for physicians. They were getting salary, they were seeing patients at our facilities that we provided, they were collecting all the money and keeping it all for themselves. So we were trying to move into a practice plan arrangement where by there was a sharing of revenue in the end I believe that it was the conflict with those physicians at Ohio State who were actually treating all of the wealthy, and influential at Ohio that forced him to resign at about the age of 62. I had not been around many presidents who walked out on their own esteem I might add it is rather like being a infantry first lieutenant.

MV: Still might be the first.

for dealing with the state government's both the legislature and  
WV: I hope, we have a few months to go so we will see. Well in any event when my president at Ohio State was leaving well I immediately began looking for another job and ended up going to New York University. That again was something that came up very quickly and it was almost another period of excel. I have been in excel a few times in my life. So that was a period of exile. I went to NYU, it was not really my environment, it was a private University, not a public university. And I was not really a very good fit in New York City. I think I could of become I suppose had I stayed and worked at it and but I had a misunderstanding with my president, shortly after I came there. My position was a new position, supervising other vice presidents. Then when one of them was going to bolt, he removed him from under my jurisdiction. And so I felt that I couldn't tolerate that, this isn't the job that I signed up for. So I began looking for another position. So I was at NYU. As senior vice president of administration for two years. In the intern, a lady who I worked with at Ohio State who had come in as a young provost in academic vice president, Ann Reynolds went out to California to become chancellor of California State University system. She immediately began trying to get me to come out to California then as her provost and academic vice chancellor so I made the switch into the academic side of the house out in California for that system it's a system at that time it had 19 campuses and about 325 330 thousand students so I went out and joined her and worked for her in that position for a while. Ann was fairly a controversial person and was under a fair amount of pressure. The board had voted to make me provost by a vote from nine to six so when you go into something like that and actually the each of the six members who voted against me managed to tell me that keep in mind that your margin was only nine to six so don't have all friends on this board so it was kind of a contentious period of time and so I worked at that until finally life became unbearable and by that I was in my mid 50's so I thought well I'm going to go back to the faculty. I'm going go back to psychology were I belong and when I had come into California the psychology department at Cal State Fullerton. had reviewed my credentials and named me a professor full professor of psychology so I went out to join my friends out in Cal State. We stayed in Long Beach, we were living in Long Beach and then I made the 30 mile commute. So then I went back and I had three years of very pleasant faculty experience and of course its a very pretty campus and just north of Disney land and the climate is marvelous, beautiful spring mornings you could walk to work you walk around campus. It was a very nice feeling and I was doing actually want I wanted to do be so I thought I would teach my way into retirement. When I got a call from a search farm, a head hunter group asking me if i was interested into coming up to Northern Michigan University up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan which neither Margie or I could really locate on the map for awhile. But you can see in all of this there was experience...there was experience in academic program planning evaluation there was the financial management in the process also at Ohio State and at NYU and in California I was primary officer

for dealing with the state government's both the legislature and the executive branches as well. So I got to see a mix of politicians and got to serve at that kind of interface. So all in all I was sort of a "jack-of-all-trades" maybe the master of none but certainly I had a lot of different kind of tools in my kit.

RM: Do you want to be part of the interview? (directed toward Margorie Vandament.)

MV: Well if you were to ask me a question I'll answer it.

RM: Okay.

WV: Did you want to get her observation about that career.

MV: Well I cried every time that we left moving from one place to another because he would just come home and tell me, I mean twice he said "Well I quit my job." I was dumbfounded and then he had another right away so that was alright. But I hated to leave New York City that was one of the nicest...well I hated to leave the other places that we were and I would hate to leave here.

INT: What was your favorite? You know you moved around a lot but what place would you like settle in the United States?

MV: I love living in New York because we lived right in the "Village" but I would not want to live there for more than five to seven years. We left after two, I would have loved to stay another three or so. We loved Columbus, Ohio... we really have liked every place that we have been.

INT: When you came here realizing it was a one year experience, were there any surprises? I mean in a sense where there were things that you could not have anticipated.

WV: In coming were there surprises? I think the surprise was that we ended up liking it well enough to stay. I think quite frankly we were regarding it more as a sabbatical year, I think it was rather like going to Switzerland for a year or some other place.....

MV: We thought that we were in Utopia.

WV: To go there for a year we said of course because you see we hadn't discovered California until we were in our 50's and when we got out to Southern California we said "My word why haven't we been here all of our adult lives?" Because the climate was so great, weather was never a factor in your planning of anything. We thought how did it take us so long to discover this so when the prospect came up of coming up to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan we did it with quite a bit of trepidation. But we thought for a year it would be a good experience. So what was surprising was I think was that we adapted as well as we did.

MV: we adapted because of the people here are splendid people and it was the first place that we had come to that everyone seemed to want to help the university. And we had the best board that you could ask for when we came.

INT: That is surprising.

WV: Oh yes that was a job.

WV: Yes, to find a board for a university that was all pulling together, that were helpful and were positive about things that was something that we never encountered.

MV: And not being on the board to make a name for themselves which is what we had encountered.

WV: Yes, it really was very unusual for us.

INT: How do you describe your previous board? I didn't realize that we had a unique board in that sense.....

WV: Oh yes. No well.

MV: Tell them about the incident when you had a meeting in San Diego and they blamed you for going back to the....

WV: Well we had rather a large board in the California State University system and by and large most of those board members wanted to be regents of the University of California. So they got their appointments it was like second class appointments to them and there... my observation is about a 1/3 of a board normally egotist and hard to get along with and the fact that it was a big board meant that there were, you know, a lot of them. There were about six or seven people who were almost impossible. But the incident that Margie is talking about is one in which I had had a secret meeting with about three of the board members down in San Diego and it was discussing some strategy that we were developing for dealing with State Legislature.

MV: The chair been Dale Ryde, who's daughter was Sally Ryde was the astronaut. He was at this meeting...

WV: In any event, the strategy that we laid out ended up getting leaked to Willy Brown, Represent Willy Brown who was the chair of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee and really roused his hair and I was blamed for leaking that information to Willy Brown. And of course it was not true actually our board chair had done it I learned later and one of the members of the committee said "What are you kidding when I have to choose on ratting on the board chair or you what do think I am going to do?"

MV: One board member came to Bill and said "What can you do...." "What can I do to get my name in the paper?" What can I do for the Cal State System to get my name in the paper.

WV: He expected me to showcase him so that he would get publicity. Another one that eventually went off to the University of California, God help him, they got him. A big developer, commercial developer once actually called me a "God damn academic!" That was the worst insult that I could have. And actually it was because I had fixed a public address system connection when he couldn't just prior to a meeting. He just got so mad.

MV: We went white water rafting with him and he fell off the boat. We had liked to see ol' Roy just float right away.

INT: You didn't push him.

MV: No, he fell.

WV: There are people on the Ohio State University Board that by and large at Ohio State was comprised of kind of the protege or the understudies of the real people who ran Ohio but it was not the real people that ran Ohio who were on the board it was underlinks and shadows so they were very insecure and it was very difficult to deal with them because if the situation got tough you looked around and there was nobody there with you. They had all talked as though they were going to stand firm on some issue and then you found them scattering and running for the hills as well. I can honestly say that I have not really held a really high opinion of typical board in a public institutions.

INT: Do you think it is because Michigan has a autonomous board and there is not a system here....

INT: Ohio was.

INT: Oh, Ohio was also.

WV: The universities in Ohio are all autonomous as well. I don't know perhaps at Northern Michigan University what should I say, there is not much glory in it for them, when they try to get on the board. I think you get the kind of people that are looking for visibility and I think that is a lot of the problem with boards and board members. Beware of that innocent little statement "I just want to make a difference."

INT: So then when you had this very positive relationship with the board and they asked you to stay, was then it difficult to say no or did you basically want to?

WV: We had really planned...

MV: We had no intention of staying, none.

WV: We really had planned on leaving.....

MV: They had asked Bill to put his name in actually to stay and he said no that he wouldn't do that because if there was an inside candidate then they wouldn't get the best people.

WV: Wouldn't get the best candidates. But by that time we had made many connections here. The university was beginning to move along to and I could see things happening I was getting things started that could not be finished in a year and so I thought that it would be nice to stay around and see a little more maturity in some of those things that we were underway. I had first said "Well.." When it came clear that they were not going to settle on one of the candidates, on any of the candidates they had. They couldn't all get behind anyone of those candidates. And they approached me with it I said how about a year and they said no well have to start searching all over again so it has to be at least two years well I wanted five years or something indefinite so eventually we settled on two years which kind of and then I was on unpaid leave from the California state University system and they would not extend it beyond one more year they said two years on unpaid leave is as much as we allow and so at that point I simply retired from California State system and went on a rolling two year basis with this board. You know there's never a good time to leave there are always things that are undone I think the sense that we have here now is one of not looking out to retirement but more looking at getting things cleaned up before we leave you know all those things will be an embarrassment after were out of here and the new person comes in and says what you left that in that kind of shape and there's sense of frantically trying to get closer on a lot of things. It's kind of interesting I thought my mind would be drifting to sandy beaches in Southern California instead I feel more pressure and feel more focused then I did last year.

What are some of the things that you have done that are most important ?

WV: Well I think we've got about eight hundred more parking places then we had when I came.

MV: And it's still hard to find one.

WV: We have two covered walk ways and I noticed are little upper peninsula young people are using them. I don't know it's hard to say I think well a couple of things would stand out in my mind. I think we are a more unified campus then we were five or six years ago my sense was when I came in that the faculty and administration were basically at war with each other. I recall the stories that they even had better toilet paper in the administration building you know the concerns got so ridiculous and I felt when I first

came and had to deal with the AAUP for example, with the almost what I would call dirty tricks waging public relations campaigns against the administration. I thought the students in many ways caught in the middle with faculty poisoning the minds of students against that building over there the administration. People working in administration by the way almost ashamed of there jobs cause they were administrators. It was something not quit respectable being an administrator. I felt we really had to pull together to become more of a community I think we've done that and I think it helps us in many ways. I guess a second thing is that surprisingly during a time in real fiscal constraints you know we did have budget cut after budget cut of particularly for those first three years were very difficult. We have gotten a lot done in terms of our facilities development. We know have a much better environment for our instructional programs getting the faculty out of the first floor in the learning resource center. Those were thirty year old temporary offices to get them into decent quarters and to you know make the campus more serviceable campus we did manage to do that despite the fiscal hardship that we had I wish I was going to be around to see old West Science done. I mean that will, I will have been gone three years or at least two years before that project is finished. But that is another thing, I guess maybe a third thing John really is (turn tape over) holding the place together during those times, when we had budget cuts to make and fiscal stringency. And so it is difficult to do that and maintain moral. And I think we did a very good job in protecting the academic programs. We lost in total through the whole episode, I think maybe about the equivalent of 12 faculty positions FTE positions, about 3%. Despite the fact we were making very significant cuts elsewhere in the University. I guess that would be something I could take certain amount of pride in.

INT: I'll watch how to phrase this so well, if you want to respond. actually said this in one place, I forgot how the phrase know I forgot the article if somebody wants or needs the job. The reason I bring it up because someone that is here from the peninsula as a visitor said in general passing he doesn't <sup>need</sup> do his job. What I am getting at is are you practicing your own philosophy some how, projecting that or is that natural?

WV: Yes, yes. No, no that was an observation that came really fairly early, I think, in my administrative career, that people who really needed the job were unfit. It drove them into unwise actions they were to eager to please other people, often it would mean that they didn't have any backbone. It meant that they could be impulsive because they needed to prove themselves so desperately. So generally speaking, my observation was that the people who really did need the job were the ones that I wouldn't want to hire or work for. So it is kind of imbedded in me and it has been a real advantage to be here under those conditions. You know to come in as a temporary person and I had tenure back there



in California and to be able to back there, it allows you to be as relaxed as you can permit yourself to be in a position. No, I firmly believe that if you need it, you better not do it.

INT: You mention that you feel good about having created that greater sense of community at this institution in the last few years or so. Is it possible for a president to move from that into creating a institutional pride structure, institutional persona that is identifiable. Can that happen intuitively, can it happen just by changing the old facility or does that sort of change require a formal program of action?

WV: I think the sense of community is a necessary but not sufficient condition for there to be pride I think that you have to have that sense of community before you can have the pride. I've struggled with the problem of how to instill more pride in the institution. It took me awhile to discover the quality that we have at Northern Michigan University, primarily because the people themselves were so modest. They were not exsutting that kind of pride publicly and to me that's something that still needs, really still needs quite a bit of work. But I don't think that you could get that in a formal program. I have seen institutions where, where they make a kind of commercial internal marketing effort and it's a kind of self-conscious proclamation, a set of proclamations they make. They set up, you know, like it would be Northern Pride Week or something like that, something that seems artificial. And I don't think that will do it, I really don't think that will do it. I think people have to know in the university about the quality that exists in other parts of the university. They really do need to recognize the quality that goes there. I have been to many places where the people know the quality of their own department, they say "Were good, it is a shame that the rest of the university isn't of our caliber." And knowing about each others achievements is I think a help, it's difficult in a comprehensive university to get that sense of pride because, you know, here we don't have the Noble laureate, we don't have the multi-million dollar contract, you know, we don't have the National Academy of Science fellows. We don't have that kind of visible symbols of quality and we have to get it in other ways which is the value added by our work and that is a little harder to grasp and to find.

INT: What about trust as long as we are on the issue of pride because I think that they are so much related.

WV: What about what?

INT: Trust.

WV: Trust. Well I think...No I think that's very, very important I don't know how this relates, a thought occurred to me that it may be off the mark. To me a great university that has a sense of pride is one in which people feel pride in other departments and other parts, the achievements of other parts of the university. And it sometimes makes me very unhappy when I see some of our people being jealous of something that someone else got, something that someone else did, rather than having that kind of pride and rejoicing in it. In terms of trust, I think that you can't have a sense of community unless you do have trust. I think that that is a very important element in developing a sense of community.

MV: I think that we need cheese heads and then role together.

INT: We should come up with dome hats. But when I talk about trust....

WV: Trust, yeah, talk a little about trust.

INT: The administration, and faculty, community, and students and so forth. Do you think that has improved over what it was when you came here?

WV; I hope so, I hope so. People indicate that it was and I know some of the kinds of issues that seemed life and death back five years are nonexistent now.

INT: One thing that still bothers me it is the community outside the university still don't trust us I don't think. They don't want to participate or don't except in very limited ways, you know that famous rapport thing that we did inviting people to come visit the campus and I think that we only filled one taxi cab. We still, people don't feel comfortable coming to campus.

INT: I think that is not just ??? on the Jacobetti Center because it is named after Dominic Jacobetti we had chamber after hours last year and we just got a ton of people ??? the whole nine yards. And we also with the hand full of people coming there and I think that the chamber has probably has sent out 250 to 300 invitations. So it was even a comfort level for someone to come to that building which I found really surprising that we had such a ????

INT: I know that I am going to fall on my face next week when the Lake Superior Art Association wants to come over and I know that all three of them are going to be there. It's just they don't ... it is the separation. Even to the point of contributing money and so forth it is too much of a struggle.

WV: I don't know that I would verify that observation. I honestly see very strong interest and support wherever I go for the university. Now in terms of events that is something else and in Marquette I don't know whether, it seems strange, in a small community like this there is so much for people to do. They are involved in so much that they are time poor it's hard for them to get away and go to things or whether they are self-absorbed like most modern people are now.

MV: They do seem to attend the theater but see you have four nights and a matinee and if they can choose the night then they are not busy I think they'll come because there are a lot of townspeople that by season tickets. But if something is just on one night or on a Saturday morning....

WV: It will go by.

INT: They really should involve the academic programs if you are going to be a successful. We really got to get the academic program in the community all together or these are superficial you can start with them probably going to have to do it somewhere else again I think that bringing together what the university is doing academically

WV: Yeah that's very difficult. I honestly can not say that I have been affiliated with the university for a significant number of academic programs there was a link with the community. I just never seen that happen. I mean you know there would be special interest groups that they would relate to those programs but not really major involvement.

INT: In your conversations with other presidents at state institutions have you developed an opinion of whether an individual with a straight industrial background feels less than necessarily prepared to be a university president. Terry Sanford was a very successful governor of North Carolina, very successful president of the Duke University but there seems to be a discussion of if there is an successful CEO that can run a corporation then those business skills should be transferable to running a good ???? ???? What is your sense, what is your growing opinion in the discussion of the presidency? Are they seen as models or they themselves presidents coming from industry.

WV: My own observation is that the basic intelligence level of the person is probably more important than the particular background. I have seen, for example, some attorneys, lawyers without having had the real academic experience who have been good presidents. Smart and they know how to mediate, they know who to work out things, they are fast learners. And always in academic administration who know more about their discipline than you do so you are always a amateur eventhough you are an academic. Your an amateur in dealing with most of the people in the university. think

that, however, it would take a business with an very distinguished career to make that kind of move. I think that the safest bet is to stay with one who has the academic experience. But I mean also, I think it is important for a president to have faculty experience not just administrative experience. There are a lot of people today the go into the higher education administration doctoral programs and, you know, they go to school to become administrators and I think they have some difficulty generally with understanding the mores and the culture, really the culture of the university. I think the strongest, the best background is a background of ????, probably. So it is not impossible for a very distinguished businessperson to become a good president but I think it is very difficult.

INT: Let's go back to that topic the we were talking about. There were a few things that really stood out when I was reading it ??? and it was primer for academic administration ??? That is institutions operating below the ??? line often have the ??? characteristic of an underclass ghetto. Because the supply of prestige higher up is limited all ??? ??? operate in student poverty and failure?

WV: Yes, I believe that.

INT: Okay, so I want your opinion. Do you think that we operate here or do you think that the community response to us as a university operating from poverty and failure?

WV: Yes, although not entirely I think that we don't value ourselves highly enough because we don't value ourselves highly enough that means that the surrounding community doesn't value us as highly as they should. But no I don't think we have a real awareness of the quality that we have at Northern. I agree with that. I think it is better though. I think people are more aware of the quality of our programs within the university. I think people, I think that they know more about the science programs and pre-med, nursing these things are finally beginning to work their way into people's consciousness. That I suppose is one of my phony programs David, where we call off our points of pride and I do that every chance I get. But I think that we have made some improvement but we have a long way to go.

We have artist out there making a living that Marvin has turned out and with distinguished careers, highly regarded people. You can look all over the university and find those things.

INT: I think that we have covered in respect to Michigan Tech during the presentation. In the U.P. I knew it was here ever since I came here but I think a lot of it is not true. I am thinking I knew that thought extremely high of the chemistry department at Michigan Tech and Northern's was really good at all. My own observation with having people in both places is that I don't think

that they are much better than we are in some respects I don't think they are as good as we are.

WV: That is true.

INT: The perception out there is that they are totally superior and that is not true at all. And I try and tell people that.

WV: Just in the way that we get our graduates placed in graduate professional schools, I mean, the people who are insiders have a higher regard for us than the people that are surrounding us.

INT: In one of the prepared questions talks about you having been a "hands-on" president. I don't want to do a lot of comparing and contrasting but it seems pretty clear that your predecessor was perceived as more of an outside president, external from the campus. Not really involved a lot, at least that is the impression I get and while you obviously have to travel a lot for your job, you are much more present. Is that conscious on your part or is it just personality. And I think that has clearly been a key "involvement" Do you say to yourself "I am going to make sure that....."

WV: Yes, I have consciously tried to be visible on the campus because one of the things that my experience has taught me is the less that people know about you the more they can make up their own stories about you, that is their own opinions about you. So if you are visible you try to create your own story line, your own personality so that you are in trouble in something people will say "No, no that can't be true." If you are absent and people don't have a very good picture of you and someone comes along and criticizes things and calls you stupid you don't have anyone out there to protect you. So it is very important to be visible within the university community.

MV: We also like a lot of what we do. And we really like the job, we go to games because we like to and different things...

WV: We like yeah...yeah we really do enjoy the university events.

MV: Sometimes it gets to be a bit much but most times it's very nice. And sometimes when we are so tired and we think "we just can't do it" were boyd after we go there and come home very...

INT: To pursue that I think one of the things that's out there in the community is the idea, and again I think it is necessary to Jim Appleberry, but I think that it was more interwoven even. a sense of a loop. Marvin is probably better to explore the idea that the president didn't interact at all with the common folk that was out there. I think that is a major difference though....

INT: I was just thinking that a lot of it was the idea of the university president derived from what was it the Halls of Ivy radio program, you know, with that husband and wife team. And then we come to the university and find out all the ??? number pushers, you know, and then what the hell happened, what is going on? And I am just kind of wondering how could we revive some of that romantic notion of what a campus is here, I don't know what we can and can not do. It is like when the President is not here it's like, Jim Appleberry is someplace else in Lansing 90 percent of the time or wherever it was.

WV: Actually it is difficult to get followers within the university to any even either though. And I think that people are becoming more and more time poor, and more and more occupied with their own lives then they have....have you heard of the book Bowling Alone? I mean they don't even have bowling leagues anymore, people don't even get together with that. It is very hard to get people into things. We seem to get a fairly large group at the opening convocation each fall. But I bet we cannot do that you know four or five times a year. We couldn't attract a crowd.

INT: So the numbers have dropped from the very first time, the place was packed, people were standing.

WV: Well it was curiosity. But I think that really there are changes in the culture at large that are occurring. Now that are reflected here. And our student population is different. We really have two groups, the average age of our students is 25, but we don't have many 25 year old's. We have a lot of 20-21 year old and we have a lot of 30-32 year old's. So we have two distributions. And that one distribution they can be very good students but I don't think they are going to participate in the kind of things that we get kind of romantic about when we think of the old days.

INT: ? ? ??? Michael and I have talked about on certain occasions. Have we moved passed the point of education where the leadership is the academic leadership is the romantic sense that the department head is the distinguished senior psychologist. Has the time and the assignment to be the academic leader. If we move past that into the post modern administrator and is the manager and supervisor.

WV: I am not so sure the good old days were the good old days in that regard. If you, you see if, well American higher education basically started out as private education, private colleges, and private university's. If you trace the backgrounds of those institutions and a lot of other ones all you had was clergyman as your presidents. Not necessarily intellectual leaders. So I am not so certain that it was ever like we like to think it was.

INT: What was one of the things, we were talking about ? awhile ago, one of the things that ? here at Northern, certainly need to be addressed is that people perceive it to not have any academic standards. We have something called the right to try. How do you feel about that particular ?.

WV: It is a major part of the Northern tradition. And I think we have to perpetuate it, I think we have to continue it, it gives us some confusion, even though it provides some confusion in the public image. But I think we have to stress that we are paradox that we, have to find a way to I think we have to find a way to do that cause I don't think we can turn our back on the right to try for this region, you know for the young people of this region. I think it would be considered a betrayal and probably our enrollment would shrink where the legislation wouldn't support us as well as they do.

MV: It sounds like it is very unique.

WV: Well it's hard Marjie to get that point across to people, you know the very bright student in a high school class gets offered admission at Northern and then he sees this other kid who hasn't opened a book for the last two years also offered admission at northern and he says why did I work so hard? You know where going to the same place.

Int: Well I think we lose a lot of ? In fact I think were getting less than we had at one time many of them are going to Michigan or Michigan State or some other place. I get a sense were not really getting the good or top students

WV: I think we've reversed that trend John. We've reversed it. Are freshmen class this past year is doing well.

Int: At one time we've always had some really outstanding students, and for about the last fifteen years or so I just haven't seen in the numbers we used to have in our area has changed totally because we got anyone graduating from MArquette Senior High school, never. And now we are....

WV: We are...

INT: in the last three or five years.... but we never got a single one.

INT: They are working harder.

INT: Dramatic switch this year. It was in the paper also that the freshman seminar we became aware that the overall g.p.a of the average freshman coming in was higher ?? ??? ?? But that was real hearting to all of us.

WV: I think we have turned a corner, we made a concentrated effort at that we really have the last two years. You see before I think we were drifting in regards to admissions we just kind of took who came and didn't put a great deal of emphasis. We pay more attention to the high school counselors in the region now than we did before. We stress the quality points.

INT: By the way one of the six points that you didn't bring up on things you did. There has been a big change..well studnets are already coming on campus, checking it out all last semester I found that it never happened before and that is something new within the last two or three years. I don't know what happened, something happened whether you put the bug under somebody or whatever but it was the right move. Somebody did something.

WV: Were trying to get students coming in and exploring the campus at an earlier age now so that you don't always see the immediate benefit in enrollment but you hope that over time....

INT: Cause somebody did something because it was a big change.

WV: We have done some busing in of students for example and were putting a big push on some of those downstate counties where we normally do not get a lot of students. But the markets are good, the student markets are there. We have a new scholarship program, you know, it is a merit based scholarship program for students in seventeen counties in Michigan so you have to live in one of those counties to be eligible for it, it really is for a B quality student it isn't really for the top student that you were talking about but I think we had forty freshman this fall who came in with a 4.0 average from high school.

Int: Margie do you mind if we change of direction a little bit before we start do you have that survey? I wanted to ask you about ?? but I wanted to talk a little about ?? How you see that role or function.

MV: well you sort of have to play the role that your dealt. We came to this community and feel in love with the people here. I felt that those at Hammeling University just fine I wasn't needed there I thought that I should work in the community and the people here seemed to want that they liked some dealings they seemed to like a presidents wife to do things with them you know to feel comfortable with them and I just saw that as sort of my role. There are things, the hardest thing to do is keep your mouth shut, when you loved to say some things and you just can't. That's a role, and sometimes you smile until your face hurts but I this I didn't read the question right I suppose on that paper I was just looking over other spouses and the roles these women had to play and men, as well but I thought it was just such a, the role of the spouse is changing rapidly first of all your going to have women presidents, and the husband is not going to be catering to a



community or anything else probably, or maybe, but and so many wives are professional women and working outside the. They want their own profession and do what they want to do and what there husbands do is his business. It so happens that we have been together so long and I just follow him and enjoy all the perks.

WV: I guess were probably are using an old fashion model.

MV: Yes, pretty much. With the younger people

INT: It is almost an expectant model. Maybe

MV: In the Upper Peninsula it is an expectant model. I think, I don't think they would be very happy with a presidents spouse who is working. I think they need, look forward to

WM: Well it is what they think they need, they would get used to it.

MV: do you think so, well probably. They are adaptable.

INT: What about a single president? ??? ??? he managed to fulfill the role and he did not have a spouse with him.

MV: It really is different wherever you are.

WV: This is a college town and a college town people expect some.

MV: You have to feel your way and

INT: People discriminate against the single people too.

MV&WV: Oh of course not, yeah yeah.

INT: the university expects that kind of thing to make support. We often have been in situations where he'll bring the wife along and we pay the airfare.

MV: No, when we go on alumni trips they do pay for me. But there are other times that no, we pay my way.

WV: If she doesn't have a role or a part in the program.

MV: If you were going to a meeting for instances, and I didn't have any role there at all. When we go too the ASKU meeting they pay my way because there is a spouse program and they want the spouse's there as well. But no, I will pay if it is a place that I want to go I'll pay my way.

WV: Otherwise she doesn't go, I am on my own.

MV: And I say, weh! out of that one.

INT: Can you tell us a little bit about they go through with classes in the ASKU program. It is not just ????

MV: Oh no, no, no there are all kinds of programs that they have. It is just different speakers, it is really quite nice and then they do a tour of the town pretty much where ever it's held and it is always in a very nice town.

WV: They talk about things like contributing

MV: I was also trying....

WV: to the community....

MV: yeah....

WV: on campus.

MV: They always have a panel of spouses who talk and they are both men and women, they try to have a mixed batch. I go to, other then the breakfasts I go to all of the meetings when we are there. But it could be on anything, I was trying to think what this panel was that this woman was talking about. She lived on an island and they had a lot of chickens and oh gosh...

WV: She organized a community in some kind of project.....

MV: chicken shit. It was really funny I guess I'll have to look at my notes, it was good. I looked at the person next to me and I said "She is the best speaker of the four and here we are listening to chicken shit." But they are doing something with it, they are gathering it up and they run it through something and using it as fertilizer.

INT: They would make big bucks raking up deer shit up here.

MV: But they do use it as fertilizer, it goes through a process. There was so much of it....

INT: What they are saying is there is no roles that are been asked or imposed upon them?

WV: Oh, or advocating. no, no

MV: There are some meetings that I go with Bill..

WV: Yes, there are a boarder topic.

MV: Sometimes it just gets to be a griping session with a lot of the spouse's. And they are just saying all that can go wrong and I don't need that so don't go to those. I go to those that I think will really benefit.

INT: Can I just say one thing. It seems very clear that you do not like (unknown????????). *the title "First Lady"*

MV: Yeah, first ~~????~~ *Lady*

INT: What I am getting at is I would assume that you made some effort to ~~delegalize~~ *deregulate* the presidency. Making it more accustom....

MV: Yes, I would rather come across as a person....However, we had some little kids coming to the house one day, and I have told this story. They were selling coupon books for some hockey team or something and the oldest must have been around nine and they went down to about four. And the little boy whispered to the little girl "Is this the president's house?" This was about four in the afternoon and I said "yes" and he said "is he here, can we see him?" And I said "No, he isn't." I knew that they thought that Bill Clinton lived in this house. And I said "I am his wife can I help you?" and this little girl said "you mean your the queen?" So I found my title, that isn't listed here.

INT: Somebody told me the just the other day, I'll tell you when we are alone. Somebody said "Well ya know it is really to bad that President Vandament is leaving but it is really a shame that Mrs. Vandament has to go." They said it with all sincerity to ???  
????

WV: Oh I think so.

INT: ???? Presidential ?? He said to me we don't want nobody to ??

WV: I had to tell ya why I had cufflinks. I go through shirts pretty rapidly the colors get frayed and I have some shirts ordered but frankly I was looking this morning for a shirt that didn't have a fray color and low and be hold it was the one with the cufflinks.

MV: I have to tell ya what he did on Saturday.

WV: One that I don't where very often.

MV: Was it Saturday or Sunday afternoon you went out and came back with a piece of he went to the dollar store. He went out to order shirts first of all and then he stopped at the dollar store and he brought home this little thing of sand paper he said I'm going to try to sand paper my collar and I said well your president you really don't have to sand paper your collar

WV: Well my shirts have slipped into disrepair and it's going to take a couple of weeks to get new ones and so a

MV: He has to wear long, I mean it's an extra long cut and that's why he has to order them.

Int: In your shared experiences here what one or two bits of advice that you would give us as faculty in try to recruit president ?? one or two things that you think we should, are understanding of is institution the, job. Should we really keep in mind the when we put or recruiting hats on.

MV: Oh Lord that is difficult.

WV: I said actually that the characteristics of a president really are like pornography, you really can not define it you just know it when you see it, and I think there are different styles. There are many different styles that, I think it is a mistake to go in with preconceived notion of what you want, frankly. Like those you might miss some real talent if you do that.

INT: When we see what we want how do we convince them that they want us. How do we convince that couple to join this family? And a couple of things from your understanding of the culture, the community institution that might be keys to our successful effort to recruit these people.

MV: I think every one of the four who came in....everybody that come to the Upper Peninsula I haven't seen anybody, I think they all wanted the job. I don't think that you don't have to do much at all except be as nice as you were when we came, oh you weren't here when we came.

WV: We would have come anyway.

MV: The people here were so great. The first time that I came Ellwood had said to Bill, Ellwood Mattson said " Were going to sneak you into town, we just want you to look it over." and he said "now at breakfast tomorrow were going to have a little group of people" and there were how many, 40?

WV: Yes.

MV: Forty people. And then we had a lunch with probably 60 people, they were sneaking us into town. And the people were all just great, they didn't hang back they came up to talk to us, they were as friendly as could be. I said to Bill "I don't believe that place it is a ????" When we were on the plane flying back to California I said "it's not there when we are on this plane, it is going to disappear." But that's how we really fell in love.

WV: I think so to....

*Brigadoon*

MV: Of course it was summer with nice weather to... the one thing that we hadn't experienced.

WV: It was June wasn't it. I think the thing that might get overlooked though by the candidates is the quality of the programs that we have, that I guess my advise to you would be to make certain that the people know that. I think they will be attracted, they will be attracted by the people and they will be attracted to the place and they will sense something special here, this is not just one of the points of the compass university's I mean there is something a little special here. They might not pick up the quality that is here.

INT: What do you think your own contributions will be since you have been here on campus as soon as you leave?

WV: I think it is a sense of community probably and a beginning to have greater pride. In a more pragmatic way probably I should take most pride in protecting the appropriation base of the university in the state given the loss of Dominic Jacobetti. I think probably.....

MV: That is an important thing to look for in a new president.

WV: Yes, yes.

MV: You have to get one that deals well with elected officials.

WV: Yes. I think we were in real jeopardy and I think we remain in jeopardy, are budget remains in jeopardy. Every year is a cliff hanger.

INT: That is even more important then like you said in Ohio where ??? ?? , here you are clearly all on your own.

WV: Yes, it is. You are on your own and we are supported at a favorable rate compared to the other universities in the state.

INT: I read also in your writing, you said that there was some place that you mentioned that there were things that you, that presidents were really pleased that they were able to accomplish but sometimes there is just one really key piece of business that you worked at that you wished you could have completed. I am not sure if you want to answer that, in the fact of West Science.

WV: The one other piece in terms of an academic community is the development of a community of faculty as educator we do well, are faculty do well in their discipline with the students once the students get into major programs and reach the upper division they found their niche, they have a home, they do well. But our faculty like almost all American faculty do not really pay enough attention to the general education of the student. I don't mean general education in the formal sense of general education requirements or liberal education. I mean actually they know very little about the curriculum outside their own, they know very little about the

student's educational experience. they know next to nothing about teaching, really in that sense. Many of them are intuitively excellent teachers but, you know, we have an american faculty that is illiterate in matters of the history of higher education. They don't know where we came from and I have really tried to have an academic senate to get them more actively involved in matters of educational significance and have not really succeeded. I think that we are seeing some movement in that direction but I think faculty responsibility for really for the way the institution is administered is important. When I started out as a faculty member we tolerated administrators but we ran things, I mean we had an academic standards committee, we monitored the progress of our students and took actions when we saw something amiss. We didn't just shrug our shoulders and do our own business in our own departments and that kind of faculty really a faculty governess in which the faculty feel a sense of obligation that the academic programs in the university are healthy is something that I feel I have left undone. Now having said that I don't know of any other presidents who has achieved that, to me it is a glaring it is kind of glaring weakness of higher education.

INT; can not hear her, like a whisper.

WV: ya, ya,

INT: well if you think that it is something that is due to faculty attitudes or something due to administrator attitude, or how about both?

WV: Well I think it is primarily faculty attitudes. Along with there being a vacuum, power vacuum, therefore administrators go into fill it, but you know we are trying to get greater faculty involvement in decision making, but it is in that decision making it has to be there. I can tell you here I have had kind of a struggle to get the academic senate to come into that kind of decision making roll.

INT: Well I wonder, you know a lot about this sort of thing, no it isn't clear cut, that is the problem, right, the history, to all the topics, because the things that maybe faculty should be doing administration has taken over certain roles, and so it is nobody really knows, we need something to clearly identify what the jobs are, the roles are and

WV: I recommended, I put forward a proposal for podra of elite faculty that would have responsibility for academic support operations, university. This group would actually be the board so that the head librarian and all those other people would report to that board rather than to the administration of the university. And to provide the entire budget for that group as a start. And I was working from a model that we have in the disciplines. I thought if we chose about half dozen faculty members that everybody knew

were top notch teachers in academics and that group would set it's own standards as in a graduate research university only become graduate faculty, there wouldn't be any salary adjustment or anything like that for somebody getting that designation, but they would be able to join the ranks of the elite, just like the disciplines were. Would be though peer review. But than once in that body, there was an obligation to promote a professionalism in education. More generally within the university and those resources would be at the disposal of the group to make those decisions. And when I presented that, with in the elides model, I got no where.

INT: There is a basic structural problem, we have a pyramid model, boy I will tell you when I first came here and for many years after there was no doubt of who was sitting on top of the pyramid and faculty was just simply invited out. You know. we all sort of ? at that time. It is run by a guy who I consider kind of a tyrant and he certainly had a tyrant mentality. He wasn't one outright. He made it quite clear that the board was the board of control. Which sort of surprises me I went to the University of Virginia for sabbatical and they had a board visitor, which was nice we had a board of control.

Many People talking at once: yes I didn't like that, the name itself. can't understand everyone.

INT: But the thing is the very terminology used. Already discourages you from getting involved. And I can tell you from experience, the faculty was just simply invited to just simply but out. These are administrative things, we make the decisions you can talk if you want, we may even listen but we make the decision.

Another Int: Is a good symbol and this is actually what happened, but it was symbolic of everything. The Charcoal room was the dining of the campus all the faculty, all the administration had lunch there. You had to leave class early to get to dinner or get lunch there. Stand in line down the hall, one vice president had a circular table reserved for himself, he would stand by the door and assign who could sit at his table. yes.

WV: That is interesting. Now you see what I would like to see that would more approach the old European model, where the rector is a faculty member who temporarily comes and serves. And your senior faculty have true responsibility for the institution. That is not going to work completely in the modern world, because after all we belong to the people of the State of Michigan. We don't generate our own money to support ourselves, but still I think we need that, we need a convey of elite faculty who really have, who show the responsibility to run the University, with the president and the administration.

yes in terms of promotion and tenure achievement, I always kind of worry about that. But mostly what I worry about in this university and other universities across the country is

INT: It may be too late. Thing is we kind of have a corporate model and the faculty in reaction to that corporate model has formed a union. Now you have a real problem on your hands. What your trying to do is dam near impossible.

WV: It is impossible with that model.

INT: Maybe one could try, but maybe your going to have to change the model.

WV: it is impossible with that model. Yes.

Female voice: asking a question and it is in a whisper she is not speaking into the microphone.

INT: There is a Jacobetti union and then there is the rest.

INT: yes, that is what it comes down to. There is again historical reasons for that.

Female INT: I am wondering like what we were talking about attitude, I wonder how ? ? a lot of things ? ? ? is this attitude helping ? ? ?(she talks too soft).???????????????????? our board has changed

INT: I think they just come into the structure and accept it as it is. I mean what they see as a more rigid structure than we had 30 years ago, no question about it. And we either adapt to it or you don't a lot of people

Side B

RM: When and I guess he was talking to other, his peers, and they were complaining about I think the restructuring of the liberal studies program, and how the senior faculty weren't too happy about it because of what happened ? ?, I was one of them I guess, he said basically well a bunch of old dinosaurs and wait until you retire and die. So that is sort of how the younger faculty ? with the situation. And as you look at the faculty retire and what not, not so much pass away, yea it is a few years to wait and they will have the power, so that is how the younger faculty view us; view the older faculty and I was kind of shocked by it but, yeah it made sense.

INT: Do you see that though as kind of maybe the mentality of the younger faculty verse the older.

WV: There is some of it, sometimes I worry about our younger faculty doing to much university wide service that they maybe short changing themselves in terms of promotion and tenure achievement, I always kind of worry about that. But mostly what I worry about in this university and other universities across the country is



that the faculty that you would clearly regard as your top faculty are not involved anywhere in the important governance machinery your not getting the benefit of their intelligence in the decisions that are being made. Somehow they are doing their own thing, doing a marvelous job with their students but there not the ones by and large who are on the academic senates of the country. There not the ones who are the officers in the union of the faculty union. They are out there doing their own thing; they are bowling alone I guess and are not part of the process. To me that's a major deficiency in American higher education.

INT: They have given up on the process, they do not want to waste their time and the recognition that they get is outside the university not inside the university, in other words, if you give a paper somewhere your colleagues outside the university will recognize that while the colleagues on the inside will say, you know, "Who is he?" basically and the is the way it works. So why waste your time?

INT: There is a younger faculty that I think is an elite faculty or a master educator and I not really sure how much involved ???? ???? But I know that this individual is very committed to his students and very much in teaching. I feel very lucky over the last few years ??? ?????. The times that I have been able to talk to him and get advice from him he, sit down and learn from him has meant tons more to me then anything that I experienced in the last thirteen years as a teacher. But I think it is unique because I was in desperate need when I started to teach primarily the freshmen seminar classes. I called him and I said I need some advice from you, actually he called me as a teacher. And at that point in time we started to build this relationship and I think that is really needed on this campus. Where the younger faculty ??? ???? ????? ??? But thinking in terms of what we would like to see happen I think it would be an absolute blessing for them, it would be wonderful.

WV: It is hard to move the ship around now we have gone so far down the other path. Well haven't you had just about enough of us tonight?