

Archie Green, AG
Tracie Wilson, TW

AG: Hello Tracy, what's doing? How about your trip back home? When do you leave?

TW: Oh, uh tomorrow. Well actually I'm going to LA after tomorrow for a meeting with my fellow post docs.

AG: Oh, what meeting is it?

TW: Um well our post doc is sponsored by the Counsel for Library and Information Sciences um it's a think tank in Washington, so we meet together and talk about important access to information

AG: Do you have a degree in Library Science in addition to the folklore degree?

TW: No, not yet, but I'm taking some classes at Illinois right now and I might get

AG: Will that be a master's in library science, but do you already have a Ph.D.? That ought to be worth something.

TW: Yeah, it ought to, ha ha ha.

AG: Ha ha. Well, I have a master's in library science from Illinois, Ph.D. from Penn.

TW: Right, well I'm going in the other direction.

AG: Well, what made you come to Illinois when you left Indiana?

TW: Well, it was because I got this post doc, they were looking for a folklorist.

AG: Someone had a consciousness of folklore. You know I used to raise the question, why didn't they have a folklore program at Cal- I mean at Illinois and I indicated that McEdward Leach had a professor, Gertrude Shepardly, back at the time of the first World War. She was important in American folklore, but why did they neglect it? And when I was there, you know Dorsen was so big at Indiana, he sucked all of the oxygen out of the room and the proposal to have a Folklore program at Illinois, everyone said 'Oh no, we don't want to compete with Indiana and there's no reason that students would come here when Indiana is available.'

And I used to say 'But Dorsen is giving the wrong message. He's not dealing with issues of reality, and we ought to present an alternative,' but it was too great an academic challenge. And the one folklorist in the English Department, John Flanagan, I think he was politically conservative, and his subject was old fashioned, you know on folklore. He did a big anthology on folklore and literature, but he didn't want to pioneer. And I think he knew that he couldn't compete with Dorsen and I didn't want to make waves, academically, because at that time I had my master's and had no status as a folklorist.

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As I indicated yesterday, Bob Downs in the Library supported me and Martin Wagner in the Labor Institute supported me. So I had a secure base as long as I stayed in the library and it wasn't until I went to Penn, I suppose, when I realized that I would rather be a folklorist than a librarian, or folklore was more important as a career, that's when I decided to go to Penn. If I didn't take advantage of getting a Ph.D. in folklore I would be doomed to work in that departmental library.

Then when Martin retired I might, you know most of the people in Industrial Relations were personnel colleges, personnel big business, I think the verb to co-opt it was the way that Motorola and General Dynamics, Amex and Standard Oil, you know all the big corporations would send their headhunters to each grad school and they'd grab up these students, they'd give them scholarships to get their master's in industrial relations and they'd go to work for the personnel companies. I didn't have much use for that because, what were they trying to do?

They sugar-coated their appeal but they'd keep the workers from organizing, even a bad union is better than a personnel department, because even in a bad union, you know, the guys have some autonomy but, in a personnel department, where everything is done at a welfare level for the good of the workers, that is a kind of elitism that I object to. Big unions, big companies, big politics, big love, you know.

Anyhow Martin Wagner came out of the school of intellectuals who were attracted to the New Deal and worked for the New Deal, so initially the Industrial Relations institutes were very progressive. They were set up after World War Two by fellows who worked for New Deal agencies, the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Standards, NLRB, three examples. Martin had worked in Harlan Kentucky, he had been in traditional coal mining communities, and when it was "Bloody Harlan" we got along like that and I played an At Molly tape, it resonated him, it reminded him of why he had ever gone into labor relations.

And we had Phil Garmen, I mentioned him as the father of the daughter who must still be in Urbana, Butzow? Look up either under the name of Garmen or Butzow. I think they had a call the Chamber of Commerce in Urbana, they must have had a Western goods store, and Cathy Butzow must still have the farm out somewhere near between Champaign and Danville, and she would have a good memory of her father. But as Phil Garmen was an intellectual who was a socialist, pro-labor. He had been with the autoworkers in Detroit when they went through their struggle organizing against Ford, violence.

And Bernie Karsh, he was a socialist; he had gone from the YPSL, the Young People Socialist League, into graduate work at the University of Chicago. The University of Chicago's sociologists in the twenties were influenced by Robert Parks, and they were studying particular occupational groups. The classic book on the hobos in 1923, Nells Anderson, and they had books on the "Jack Rollers" and books on the taxi dancers. And he was sort of the tail end of that tradition before sociology became very econometric, very mathematical, and very dull. But his sociology was still human and worker oriented.

The combination of people like that of Garmen, who handled workers' education in the institute, and Martin Wagner as director, and Bernie Karsh as my mentor, I was a natural. I thrived on that scene, as I described, I would do my work at 6th Street, we were

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in an old building, I assume, but we moved down to where we are at the present, we're across from the Armory. Have you been to the present ILAR?

TW: No, I have not yet; it's really close to the library.

AG: It's a block from the library, so go and get acquainted. There might be a few people there who remember me, but anyhow... [DOORBELL]

TW: Should I get that?

AG: Yeah. [Inaudible conversation].