6-17-2008

Interview with Patrick Schmidt, Professor Political Science

Patrick Schmidt

MACALESTER COLLEGE

Macalester College Archives, DeWitt Wallace Library

Oral History Project

Interview with:	**Patrick Schmidt** Associate Professor of Political Science, 2006-present
Date:	**Tuesday, June 17th, 2008**
Place:	Macalester College DeWitt Wallace Library, Harmon Room
Interviewer:	Kayla Burchuk, Class of 2010
Interview run time:	1:29:52 minutes
Accession:	2009-09-10-05
Agreement:	Signed, on file, no restrictions

00:58	Educational background prior to coming to Macalester
02:53	Coming to Macalester, previous exposure to Macalester
10:21	Interest in political science
13:19	First impressions as a faculty member, contrast to working in Texas
22:07	Impressions of colleagues
26:01	Interactions with other departments
29:50	Opinions on school administration
35:03	Macalester culture and politics
39:57	Observations about Political Science Department
44:09	Classes he teaches
48:52	Legal Studies concentration
1:00:12	Getting tenure
1:02:45	Personal research
1:07:10	Work in the Twin Cities, fieldwork
1:14:02	Opinions on working at Macalester, changes he would make, bureaucracy
1:21:10	Memories of Macalester, a capella groups, bagpipes
1:23:49	Looking forward

Interview with Patrick Schmidt

Kayla Burchuk, Interviewer

June 17th, 2008
Macalester College
DeWitt Wallace Library
Harmon Room

KB: Hi, my name is Kayla Burchuk and I am a Macalester College student, Class of 2010, conducting interviews for the Macalester Oral History Project. Today is Tuesday, June 17th, and I'm interviewing newly tenured Assistant Professor of Political Science Patrick Schmidt.

PS: You become "Associate" when you get tenured.

KB: Oh, *Associate* Professor of Political Science, Patrick Schmidt, in the Harmon Room of the DeWitt Wallace Library. So if we could just start off and you could tell me where and when you were born, and how old you were when you came to Macalester.

PS: I don't calculate my age very well. I was born in Saint Paul; I'm a native Minnesotan. I was born on June 8, 1971, and was raised in Minnesota, same place in Roseville until I finished undergraduate college at the University of Minnesota. And then I came to Macalester—I've just been here two years, I came here two years ago. I guess that would be at the age of thirty-five, I think…I think, yeah.

[00:58]

KB: Okay. And what is your educational background and what had you been doing prior to coming to Macalester?

PS: Well, I'm a political scientist the whole way through. I got an undergraduate degree in political science at the University of Minnesota and then I went immediately to graduate school at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore and spent three years there. And then a couple of years doing dissertation but away from Baltimore—including one year back here in Minnesota writing up. And then in 1999, I finished in April '99, and in May began a position at what's called the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at the University of Oxford, attached to Nuffield College. And spent a little over three years there. It was sort of a postdoc—I guess you would refer to it as a postdoc—but it was a research position, I could have stayed there, the position was funded for ten years. So I was there for three years, and we moved back to the United States partly because of finances; it was very difficult living in the UK financially. Their academic salaries are terrible, and their taxes are higher, and their cost of living is higher, and so. So we're looking for a position back to the US because we already had one child and another on the way, I think. And so I got a position at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, and went there and spent four years there. And I was on—I think it was the sabbatical after my third-year review there that I was always keeping my eye out. I was always looking for jobs when I was at SMU, and there were a couple of positions in Minnesota that were available that year, including this one, and I applied and got it. So that's when I came to Minnesota, that was in, that would have been the fall of 2005. I interviewed in November, December-ish of 2005 and began here in summer of 2006.

[02:53]

KB: Was there anything in particular that drew you to Macalester?

PS: Well, yes. I mean, Macalester was always my dream job, from all along. I had a good friend in graduate school, he's now at the University of Connecticut—David Yalof. And we would go to conferences together. We were driving one day to the American Political Science meeting in New York, I think it was. And we were playing this game all the way there and back because we were both sort of thinking about jobs and being on the market. So we picked two schools for the other person and ask which one would you go to. So we would say, "Harvard or Stanford?" Right. Not that we were dreaming big or anything. And in playing this game, it was always, "Would you go to Harvard or Macalester?" And the one school that always trumped was Macalester. Macalester always won the contest for me. And that was because it was just always the place I wanted to be. Not that I necessarily wanted to be in Minnesota. Like, I'm fine now with being in Minnesota, I've come to terms with that. If you'd asked me twelve years ago would I ever want to be in Minnesota, no. My dream always was and still is I'd rather live in England more than any place else. But I can't because of family reasons, so I'm here and anyplace else, I'd rather be here.

[04:15]

KB: Great. What can you tell me about the hiring process?

PS: Well…I don't know. I mean, my perspective having gotten hired here or my perspective now on seeing it? My experience going through the hiring process here?

KB: Yes, yes.

PS: It was smooth, in my case. I was fortunate that I was on sabbatical so I had the time to get into the mindset. I think, had I been doing it when I was in my full throng of the semester, even SMU which was a lighter teaching load in a sense—at least a lot fewer student demands—it would have been much harder. But being that I was on sabbatical, I had the time, I spent some time really preparing my class for this and preparing my presentation. And I came up to Macalester, it was November, it was cold but not obscenely so. And it didn't bother me at any rate because I'm Minnesotan. And had a B&B down Dale and Grand, something in the Victorian homes down there. And it was a nice place, it felt right. Roxy Fisher, our administrator in Political Science who won the Employee of the Year Award last year, she's wonderful, I mean she's just a goddess among administrators. She picked me up and came down to campus. And I just had these meetings, and I was just very relaxed; it went really, really well. And the presentation was on the night of the first day, that was fine. I remember driving back to the place, Andrew Latham gave me a drive back and said, "That went well, that was good." And then the class the next day just went brilliantly, just went perfectly, the students in the classroom—you don't know the students so it's hard creating the same rapport, but just everything I did laid out fine. And even though I had to make some adjustments on the fly, I had too much material there, it went really seamless. And then on the way out, I think David Blaney said, "This was really, really good." And even today, I mean, Adrienne Christiansen's been saying it was one of the best classes she's ever seen. I was just, you know, I couldn't have hoped for a better class period. So all that was great. And had the individual meetings and can't

remember much of those meetings except maybe meeting Norm Rosenberg, a couple other people that—you know, tough questions that they asked me. I remember meeting with the students over pizza, and they were interesting. And it was just a great couple days, you know, I couldn't have felt better about it. And then, you know, I got the job. And I understand now that they had, of the three candidates, one of them really had wowed them, and I was really fortunate to get the job over them.

[06:53]

KB: That's great. You mentioned that Macalester had always been your dream job. What kind of previous exposure to Macalester's reputation or what impression of Macalester had made it your dream job?

PS: Well, I had a personal background with Macalester in a number of ways. One was that when I was—I was always just sort of an odd child, most of us are in academics. So I always tried to do things that were very, very different. My mom was a music teacher, she was a piano teacher, she always encouraged music. So if you said, "I want a trumpet," she would buy you a trumpet. That was just a thing she would do. And I said I wanted to take bagpipes. In eighth grade. So she called up Macalester and found a teacher. I think at the time she was piping with the Macalester band. Andrew Hoag was the instructor here at the time. I think he got banned from campus for a period of time. He was a complete megalomaniac. He was a really good piper and a really good teacher, and really could understand me, but he was also just, as a pipe major he was a rather remarkable personality. So he put me in touch through a woman named Tracy, she was blind, really amazing piper in her own right. So, took lessons for that, and was

always out here for the Scottish Country Days. That was just part of my yearly cycle, was always the first weekend in May usually I'd be here for the Country Days, Scottish Festival. And I think I played in it once or twice in the mass bands, and piped. So Macalester was always central to that. And then when I was in high school I was a high school debater. And the high school debating circuit in Minnesota, especially at the time, was very important sort of as, sort of the—I don't know if it was gifted and talented, but so many of the people that I know who later went on to academia were high school debaters at the time. And so I went to high school debate camp here, the—I guess it would have been the summer of '87. And spent three weeks, you know, living in Bigelow Hall. And my instructors there, who we venerated, were Molly McGinnis and Paul Benson, who were—they were two-time national champions for Macalester in the CEDA [Cross Examination Debate Association] college debate circuit. Molly McGinnis now is a member of the Board of Trustees. And so I knew sort of the history then—I've always been sort of a historian of whatever I do, so I knew of Scott Nobles, and history of the program. He was NDT [National Debate Tournament] debate champion in '55 I think, and Paul Benson was top speaker at Nationals. So it was just a great, great debate place and so it was sort of the place you go. We had a lot of Macalester people, Macalester debaters, on the debate circuit, judging on the weekends, occasionally helping out with my team. I had good friends that went to Macalester. Kathy Kerr, who now teaches at Roseville High School, went to Macalester, and my best friend in life, Eric Doherty, was a Macalester grad of '94, '95, he's now a lawyer in San Francisco. So Macalester was the place that I just always knew of. And hung around a little bit while I was in college, I would visit him or people—not really much, but enough to know, you know, the old library and the old student union and to see the campus change through time. So it was always just a place that I felt comfortable and I really wanted to be.

[10:21]

KB: That's great. Just to backtrack a little bit, what initially sparked your interest in political science and how did you end up going into that field as a career?

PS: I don't know. I don't know how you pick those things. You know, in high school I thought I was going to be other things; I was going to be in nuclear physics or something. I ran into calculus. I made some mistakes in how I took math and so I didn't learn as well, and so when I got further into higher maths I got frustrated. In debate, because I was a debater, we spent a lot of time in high school going to college libraries, law libraries, and researching and working in law. So, it was part and parcel being a high school debater that I was always reading law reviews. Which is sort of odd, I mean, but it's great training for yourself in reading higher level and more difficult, more abstract library work, et cetera. So, I think it was very early on—well, by the time I got to college I knew essentially political science was where I was gravitating. It wasn't politics, I still don't enjoy campaign politics, whatever, that's sort of boring to me. But it was law, it was judicial processes. So, very early on in college I started taking judicial process and constitutional law, and had great teachers at the U of M actually. Some really, really good people like Sam Krislov and Paul Murphy, who is now late Paul Murphy, great legal historian. So that was, I just had great—and then Kevin McGuire. So great people, and they—I actually was very poorly mentored all the way through in high school and college, something that really, I think, drives me. In colleges I think a lot of people have very poor mentoring, so I think being an advisor is a very important part of being a good college professor. And I didn't even know in college—because the U of M is just a big school and you don't have people helping you unless

you seek people to help you—I didn't even know what the LSAT was until I was…beyond college I think. I mean, I know one person mentioned LSAT and I had no sense of how one would become a lawyer. I could have become a lawyer; I sometimes think, you know, financially I'd be a partner by now making a million a year had I done so. But I didn't. I've always had people saying, "You'd be a great college professor." Even in high school, "You'd be a great college professor." So that very early on forms my identity**,** was here's what I'm doing, I'm going to become a college professor. And the college professors at the U of M so rarely get students who are interested in that route that they said, "Well, here are the places you could apply and here, you need to take the GRE." So I did, and then I ended up in grad school. So that was—but I knew, within political science, I knew I was going to be doing public law with a subfield of political science that deals with law.

[13:19]

KB: Interesting. So, you nail the hiring process and you end up at Macalester in 2006. When you set foot on campus, what are your first impressions of both the physical plant, the students, and the administration and faculty?

PS: Well, they're not first impressions because—

KB: Right, you've only been here for two years.

PS: Well, no. They're not first impressions when you set foot because—in one case, I already know Macalester, I know the physical environment, I'd spent time out here and I live in

Roseville so Grand Avenue is very familiar to me. And even the interactions with the students and faculty are not first impressions when you arrive on campus. I mean, I think it was April of 2006, I was still at SMU and I was starting to get emails from who would be first of my two honors students, Herschel Nachlis. You know, so you're starting to already—they're throwing ideas around, "I'm looking for an advisor, I understand you're going to be the person closest related to my field, what do you think of this idea?" So you're already getting a sense of them, and actually the sense was very positive. Now, Herschel is a spectacular—I don't know if you know Herschel, he was a spectacular student. He was the graduation speaker a year ago, I guess, graduating class of 2007, manager and chief of the *Mac Weekly*, captain of the Mock Trial team. He's just outstanding. So my first impression is, well, "Wow. If all students are like this, this is going to be, you know, great fun." And they're not all Herschels, but still the standard of student was just a sheer magnitude above where I was at SMU. SMU is a private university, but the comparison—I'd gone from Oxford to SMU to Minnesota, to Macalester. And those comparisons were really sharp, but I think the sharpest cultural divide I would have ever experienced would be between England and SMU. Texas is just a different place. It's hot, that was the number one thing, I never—my body's never been able to adjust to anything over seventy-five degrees Fahrenheit. So, just [exhales], Texas was just a heat blast of intolerable heat. And then Dallas is a weird sort of place. I guess if I ever harbor presidential ambitions I should probably be careful what I say, right? [laughs] That's sort of meant to be ironic because I can dream about being president, but not actually being able to do it. You know, Texas is so socially conservative. The students were so unconcerned with exploring the world. I had students say verbatim, "Why would I ever want to leave Texas, everything that you'd ever want is in Texas." You know, like literally say it in those terms to you. And I'm like, well, actually,

you know, get out and see the world a little bit, you'd be surprised. They were socially conservative—not just politics, I mean there's certainly the political conservativeness, put that aside for a moment. They were so socially conservative in the sense of their ambitions were really—many of them were only to get a degree, and I had some literally say, "I just am here to find a husband." And some literally say, "I just need to get a degree so I can go to work for my dad's company." And it was just such a different mentality, the students were not interested in academics, we didn't do honors theses, we didn't do major projects in that sense. You had your classes and some students would come to your office hours, occasionally, but that was about it. So coming to Macalester, all those things are changing. The students are, certainly they're socially engaged in different degree, they're far more progressive politically. The Princeton Review, which is the organization that does surveys of college students, the one dimension—I compared a lot of the things, I tried to look for SMU and Macalester before I got here. And the one thing that there was the most clear, sharp disparity, is they have a question: alternative lifestyles are most and least acceptable. And SMU ranks up in the top five—at the time, at least, it did—with Brigham Young, and I think Air Force, and like Liberty University, Oral Roberts, of "Alternative Lifestyles are Least Acceptable." And Macalester is in the top five for "Alternative Lifestyles are Most Acceptable." So this is a dimension in which you'd expect there to be a major difference, and of course there is. There's just a level of progressivism—which for me was very comfortable. I didn't have a problem, in any respect, adjusting to that. It was a breath of fresh air. But that's just a huge difference.

[18:06]

So, I don't know, I've deviated from my impressions. Academically, students here are, I think, seventy to eighty SAT points higher, and there's just that level of sharpness. They read their

material when you assign. You can assign them anything here and they'll read it, for the most part, and be ready to discuss it. SMU you couldn't assume that students ever read anything you assigned, you just didn't, it wasn't part of their genetic code. And part of that just being better students—you know, I didn't change my grading, sort of, scale, but all of a sudden the C's disappeared. You know, I tended to have—I always look at my statistical breakdown of how I ended up assigning grades. And at SMU it was sort of a ten to fifteen percent A's, and then equal distribution of B's and C's. And getting here I just couldn't give C's on that scale. Everybody could write. Right? At SMU not all the students could write, some of them clearly had serious problems in putting together a paper or putting together a paragraph. Everybody could write. So you're not dealing with the student at the level of mechanics, you're dealing with, okay, where do they need to go next step intellectually, what are their blind spots, where do they need to be pushed. And that remains the same. So, at SMU where I was teaching a course on judicial process there, was a recent book entitled *Gay Rights and American Law*. And it was a very heavily statistical study about judicial behavior, and that was the perfect thing to assign to them because it was just a very cold, mechanical, classic study of judicial behavior, but they had to deal at the same time with the fact that it was about gay rights. And you just deal with it in very phenomenological terms for me—I use that term not in the philosophic sense, just, this is a phenomenon of life. Here's gay rights, it's a social issue pressing on the judicial agenda. How do you deal with it? How do the courts deal with it? And it was always fun in an intellectual sense to see students grappling with the fact that they were talking about gay sex just in very, you know, standard, dull, academic sense. And they never would say "gay sex" in their personal lives, and it was very uncomfortable for them. So, you know, you push them in that way. But in the same way, then you get to Macalester and you do the same thing. It's like, now I'm teaching

constitutional law and I assign a book by a quasi-libertarian, classical, liberal University of Chicago economics law professor. And so we're talking about federalism and economic rights and property rights, and that's sort of uncomfortable to them. I mean, in the same sense. You find where your students most have their blind spots and you push them on that dimension, or you make them think about the things that they aren't thinking about. So in that respect that doesn't change, just that their ability to deal with the material is so much superior. And they're just ready for it. And I think that students, from the feedback I get both formally and informally, in their evaluations on it personally, they appreciate that. That I try, at least in my classes, to create a sense of balance and openness and anything's fair game if there's no idea off the table. And there are people who—there is diversity within the Macalester student body. All centered to the left, but there are disagreements that are latent within the progressive left versus social. You know, different kinds of left, and different kinds of center left. So you find that there are people who will say to you privately, "You know, I really welcome that, because I'm somewhat uncomfortable with that idea and I haven't felt like I could push that." And so that's been really fun to see, you know, how it opens up in the classroom. Anyway, so that's where I—sorry.

[22:07]

KB: No, it's all right. It's very interesting; wow, what a difference. When you joined the faculty, what was the feel you got for your colleagues?

PS: It's really warm. I mean, I have got a great department. We have a eight person department—I'll sort of go around the offices. Adrienne Christiansen, she was not the chair when I was hired. David Blaney was the chair when I was hired. She became the chair as I was

arriving. So the first two years I've been here she's been the chair; now is the director of CST [Center for Scholarship and Teaching] for the next three years, at least. And she's been extremely—an awesome chair. Just, you know, wonder chair. By going around to the offices on a regular basis or peripatetically asking people's opinions and, "How are you doing?" and, you know, "Here, I have an issue, and can we find consensus on this?" Just wonderful. Julie Dolan is my senior colleague in American politics, and so she's the person who I look to talk to. She's great because we share actually, sort of, we overlap in interests sort of on bureaucracy and regulatory interests. So very different backgrounds academically but we have this sort of shared—so that's really nice, because you don't normally find that. I mean, I had applied some years ago, I'm not sure when—I got an interview at Kalamazoo College in Michigan. And that was a college where I think the Political Science Department was three, maybe I'd be one of three or four. And so you have to do everything, and there's a theorist, and an international relations person, and maybe a comparative person, and you. Doing *everything* American. It's very uncommon in liberal arts colleges that you'd find people who share any kind of overlap with you. But Julie and I share this sort of common overlap around administrative bureaucracy, procedure in American politics, so that's great. And, jump out of my department—I'm thinking visually around the way the department is, the current second floor of Carnegie is laid out. My office is actually not in the Political Science suite, my office is located in the Sociology suite because we ran out of rooms down on this end. And what's really nice is that in the Sociology suite, I'm co-director of Legal Studies with Erik Larson. And this is sort of funny, I get a smile on my face, because Erik and I go back, we were both high school debaters, right? He was a coach for a team that we beat up on a lot. And we never debated, but he was the champion of the Macalester debate tournament, high school tournament that the college program here ran for high

school students, in January 1987. And then I won the tournament with my partner in the January of '88. So we sort of had that little shared history, we both ended up doing things related to law: he's a sociologist doing law and society, I'm a political scientist doing law and society, so we have that connection. So Julie, Erik and I both have these different connections, perhaps more intense than you normally would find in a typical liberal arts college where you can be, in some cases, be more atomized. It's really nice. The rest of the department is perhaps more further afield from me. Frank Adler, Paru Shah, and his next office David Blaney, Andrew Latham, and Paul Dosh—little bit further afield, but we're all very friendly. I mean, generally speaking it's a young department. We have a lot of kids. How many children do we have? I have three, Julie has two now, Paru has two now, Paul has one, may have another one, Andrew and Wendy Weber have one. So we have all these kids, and gatherings with the department are very fun, friendly, lots of kids, and so we get along really well. It's a really good feel. Very consensus-driven and amiable; it's wonderful.

[26:02]

KB: That's great. Have you had many experiences interacting with faculty from various departments throughout the school?

PS: Well, I have the sociology thing going on, so that's really nice. And it's not just Erik; Mahnaz Kousha is in Sociology, and she and I were this past year on SSIRB, the Social Sciences Institutional Review Board, next to Khaldoun Samman. And Terry Boychuk has been really, really helpful. Terry Boychuk has a great institutional knowledge of the place, and just a great way of articulating it. You know, he's a great person to go to for advice. So having him—and

also he is relatively independent of the Political Science Department, which is something that people are saying increasingly about how you mentor new faculty. It's really great if you can have people outside your department, so that you can ask honest questions about things and not be thinking about, "Well, but my department is reviewing me for tenure at some point." So having Terry in the Sociology Department, getting to know him, has been really valuable and that was a great blessing. Outside the department is less common, although actually the new faculty seminar was really very good. I chose to participate; I didn't have to participate because I came in with the years, I didn't have to participate in the new faculty seminar, but I did. And so the group of the eight or ten or twelve new faculty getting together every week Wednesday for lunch up in the CST was really, really good. And so I got to meet, particularly, Dan Trudeau down in Geography, and just some great, great young faculty members. Devavani Chatterjea in Biology is wonderful, and…I don't want to, by omission, forget people, but at any rate that was really nice. And Karine Moe in Economics was our faculty mentor for that, and she's also a really great repository of knowledge. So I felt really well-supported, like there were so many people who were friendly, so many people who knew the place who were happy to talk, and there's not a sense of competitiveness. Much more knowledge—young faculty here are much more closely tied to faculty governance than they ever were at SMU or Oxford. At SMU, it's sort of a great and a good system at SMU, where only full professors have decisions on some things. There's representation to a faculty senate, usually from among full professors, and I was completely sheltered in all respects from any kind of faculty governance. Except for department meetings, which was more or less the chair saying, "Here's what I'm going to do, do you approve?" And there was never any sense of you need to be involved in curriculum formation, we need to make decisions about how we're going to handle xyz, issues about honors theses or

graduation requirements or anything. And so you get here, and even as a young faculty member you're a full participant in faculty governance. There are reasons why, as a young faculty member, you don't necessarily, you know, put your neck out in all respects. But that said, you're very much involved. So, it was a really very supportive environment that year. You're brought in, and you get to meet other people, and I'm not sure it was true for everyone but I think it's pretty easy to take a faculty member to lunch. Which they had at SMU as well, but here you occasionally had meaningful lunches with people outside of the department. So, I mean, Marty Gunderson was the pre-law advisor—still is the official pre-law advisor, I think—and was the director of Legal Studies before Erik and I took it over. You know, you'd go out to lunch with him and he's just—Marty Gunderson, how many years has he been? Thirty-five years or something here, and he's just a repository of—he's Mr. Macalester. So it's been great, it's been a very welcoming environment.

[29:50]

KB: That's wonderful. And as someone who analyzes bureaucracies and governing bodies professionally, what do you think of the administration of the school?

PS: Well, it's been very good. Brian Rosenberg—I'm not alone in saying this, I'm sure, at least among my colleagues in my department—Brian Rosenberg is a wonderful president. Some of the things that are wonderful about him: first of all, he never puts a word wrong. Like, there's never an event I've seen, staff appreciation, lunch, events with alumni—a number of those I've been to—events with students, he always just has the right thing to say, with enough gravitas and enough sort of awareness of the moment, but genuine appreciation and great articulation and

word choice and metaphor. I mean, graduation speeches, he just hits every moment, right? In a way that as a debater, public speaker, and the rest of us who are say, "Wow." You know, he just does a great job. So the figurehead role is great. There are certainly decisions that I'm aware of students disagreeing, like the athletic center. Which I support, I believe is important to the college. Some people, I guess, worry, "Oh, it's too corporate," or whatever, but I don't disagree fundamentally on any of those things. And the fundraising is going well for the current Step Forward campaign for the next few years. So, you know in that respect—I mean, I think my biggest concern on the presidential level is, at some point he must have to leave. You do so well at this college you'll be attracted off to either higher-ranked institution or, as I've seen other places, like a major foundation might want him or something like that, so. But we just appreciate him while we have him. I found the provost who hired me and who now is departing, Diane Michelfelder, to be great. I mean, she's been very supportive of me, you know, no problems whatsoever. Now obviously there's campus politics around the provost and we'll get a new provost next year, but from where I sat I didn't have any run-ins or anything that I needed to be concerned about. So that way's been fine. And beyond that, what I—I just had a meeting just before I came here just now with Lynn Hertz in the provost's office, but it just reminded me again: I have been so impressed by the caliber of all the staff. And I don't say that just for those couple staff members watching here. Ron Joslin in the library, David Sisk in ITS [Information Technology Services], Mike Porter in the internship office, Paul Schadewald in the civic engagement office, just consistently the level of—the quality of the people. Brad Belbas now is the AIA [Academic Information Associates] in Carnegie Hall—really, really good. Now, I think there may be some institutional reasons. I mean, Macalester's a great, friendly employer. Among Twin Cities employers, I think it would be a desirable place to work. Twin Cities

generally has an easier time recruiting; we have a bigger hiring pool. So we just get a bigger pool of fish and we get good fish. Really good, just sophisticated, and they don't see their jobs as working nine to five. I mean, like Ron—I run a project with my class, create a website, and Ron would be, if they need it, in on the weekends to help them out with their project. Like, it's not, you don't see yourself as a nine to five job. They see themselves as being, in many respects, the boundary—maybe they don't share that view, but in my view, the boundary between faculty and staff is much narrower than at other institutions. I mean, at other institutions—like Johns Hopkins, where I was at graduate school, it was literally built on an old plantation, and it had a plantation feel in certain respects. Certainly by racial divide. Baltimore, ninety percent African American population base, they are the staff. Faculty are the faculty. You know, "never the twain do meet" sort of thing. And compared to that, there's much sense of—I mean, I went to a conference on critical thinking in teaching, and Dan Trudeau, myself, and Brad Belbas went to the conference. So we were hanging out, had a luncheon, all the seminars together. So you know, sending staff to conference? That just doesn't happen at other places. And I know of other faculty/staff members who have gone to events like that. So staff here are really the—I know statistically, the president reminds us we're understaffed relative to other top forty colleges. But the staff here are really good and do a lot of great work, and go well beyond. Beyond the higher levels of administration, there are a lot of people who really run this show.

[35:03]

KB: We spoke to this a little bit earlier when you were contrasting with Southern Methodist University, but I was wondering if you had anything else to add about the cultural and political

climate of Macalester when you first came, and if you've seen any changes over the past two years?

PS: Oh, it's too soon to see changes.

KB: Right, yeah. I figured.

PS: Yeah, you know, I arrived…the discussion was happening on the need-blind admissions while I was applying. And I didn't really get a sense of how contentious that was. There was a wee bit of protest over, I think, the athletic center opening; somebody showed up topless. But other than that, you know, I haven't gotten the sense of real protest. I think, actually, some people would suggest—you know, we're political scientists, we talk about this—that in some ways it's surprising, the students aren't as engaged in some things as you might have thought that they would have been. To some people…Macalester sends a lot of students to graduate school, but it doesn't have the intellectual engagement that you would expect of an East Coast liberal arts college. I have had some students; I think, again, of Herschel in this respect, where he's currently interning this year for *The Atlantic*. And he was editor-in-chief of the school newspaper as I said, he was always sort of engaged in what's the current thinking that the sort of intellectual elite, reading the *New York Times Review of Books*, sort of the thing, and *The Atlantic*, and *Harper's,* and *New Yorker*, sort of thing. Keeping in touch with who's writing what and who's aware of that. That isn't actually that common, a sense of really being plugged in to sort of the intellectual elite of the society. It's sometimes hard to get attendance at evening events, lectures, I find. So there's actually not that much protest. Maybe it's just that we're in

an era in which students aren't, you know, really driven. Like the war, for example, hasn't generated that much—there's a slice of the college that's been concerned with it, but it hasn't been that much, so. And some of the political stuff has come up in the faculty meetings. You know, we had a resolution for a day of protest for the war this year that failed at the faculty meeting. So you know it hasn't been just a [intentional sound] sheer mobilization. I'm not sure if I recall in the question if that's what you were asking about, but sort of the politics, the social tenor of the times. In other respects…well, I mean, talking to other professors at other colleges, you know…I think, some professors are clearly surprised. The change in social tone since the 1980s regarding gay rights—because this is obviously for law and constitutional law this is an important topic for us and we talk a lot about it. And clearly we've gone a long way since the 1980s. But people at other colleges do not, cannot say that they have openly gay students. I mean, in my "Constitutional Law" this fall, there were three openly gay men in the class, and probably more. So it's a very different, very open environment, very progressive environment. I don't think students actually appreciate how the world out there—especially like if your first job is in Texas, you know, it's a very different environment there. So there is a certain level of openness and progressivism which is really just wonderful, just put things on the table, sort of thing. There isn't necessarily a *protest* kind of thing. There's certainly a level of me-too-ism, you know; self-interest cannot be defeated as the foundation of politics. So I'm not sure if that answers all your question…?

[39:18]

KB: No, no, yeah, that's what I was asking; just general political climate and your observations about general campus culture, not necessarily relating to politics?

PS: Yeah, I don't really know. I mean, campus culture, how do you get a sense—I mean, the faculty don't ever really cross Grand Avenue. You know, we only hear secondhand what happens in the dorms. Or maybe see Facebook photos of what happens in the dorms. But not that much. So, there's a sense in which, you know, we see students as they are in class and not necessarily as what they think in their entirety of it, and you get little dribbles and drabs of it, but not that much.

[39:57]

KB: Right. Back to the Political Science Department a little bit. Do you have any particular observations about political science students in particular you'd like to share? Do you see a certain kind of student being attracted to political science, for example?

PS: I'm not sure. I mean, right now the Political Science Department's the largest major on campus right now. Right now we have about 160 majors or something, including everybody who's just declared and people who just graduated. So, classes of fifty to sixty political science students each year. So, it means we attract a fair bit of diversity, it also means that we—well, we are one of the easier majors to complete in that we only require nine courses and have a lot of flexibility within that. So you can double up political science with a lot of different things; you can double up Latin American studies and political science by taking Latin American politics courses. You can double up…well, to some extent environmental studies/political science. You know, it's not hard anyway. So we attract a fairly broad cross-section of the students, and a fairly diverse one from top to bottom, from the 3.95 GPAs to the sub-three GPAs too, so a full

range of students. You know, I think different departments on campus attract different student bodies. We have a fair number of students who are involved in politics, who are, who see themselves—or are interested in campaigns and the like. A fair number of students who don't do that, who see themselves more as public policy. We have a fair number of students who see themselves as pre-law. But then pre-law spans across college, actually. So it's not just that. You know, I would say we're probably—I don't know how somebody would read this—we're probably, we're less, we are…the political science students are less typically multicultural left, if you use that label on people. I teach one course now, right now, called "Law, Economy, Identity," which doesn't have anything to do with economics, but it's American development through the intersection of how law has affected American politics, but also with a particular focus on people identity. So reading things like the property rights of women in the colonial era and whether they could inherit from their parents, or whether they're all their husbands' possessions. And Native Americans in American law and treaties as ways of taking land. The law of slavery, and progressive era, right on through the political development. And when I teach that class—I've only taught it once so far—but I had a really diverse, by major, set of students. And that was eye-opening, actually. We had a great class; I mean, I think I had six or seven honors students in the twelve. It was really, really high-level discussion, and I basically—it was graduate seminar, let them discuss the material, source material and secondary material. And I had history majors, an economics major, political science students, women's, gender, and sexuality studies major, you know, pulling from a variety of different places. And there the rifts opened up in terms of perspective. Like how the kind of views that the history majors would come in with, both politically and methodologically, and what the political scientists—who were typically more moderate in their political views and their approach to studying law, you know,

sort of institutional frame rather than the bottoms-up. It was very, very interesting. So you start to get a sense of how the departments differed, not only by the traditional academic lines, the disciplinary lines, but the kind of background perspectives. So, on the basis of that, limited as it is, political science students are probably relatively different. Although within a class of fifty or sixty certainly there's great diversity.

[44:09]

KB: Wow. What other classes do you teach?

PS: Well, the main, sort of the bread and butter is the constitutional law to civil liberties/civil rights sequence. It's a two semester—it doesn't operate as a sequence, some students do carry over and some students actually end up taking civil liberties first and then liking it and takes con-law next. So it's a set of two classes, and that's traditional case law, undergraduate. Which in many colleges is the…in many colleges the constitutional sequence is sort of a rite of passage. A lot of great con-law professors, it's very difficult material, it's challenging, but it's also always great. I don't have to do much to make the material great. It's just great. It's Brown vs. Board of Education; it's Roe vs. Wade, and classic cases that people are interested in reading. But I don't typically now get it as a capstone, sort of senior year thing; it's a sophomore thing. And I view that—the case law is only the beginning, and the "Law, Economy, and Identity" is more the end point. I teach also a course called "Law, Lawyers, and Litigation," which essentially began as the judicial process; you know, courts and judges, in earlier manifestations at SMU. And then I eventually over time realized that it really wasn't where traditional behavior—it wasn't judges that were so interesting, it was litigation, it was what drives America as a society with the idea of

suing people and mass tort claims and class action suits and creating policy like tobacco laws through litigation rather than through congressional action. So that's a separate class. And then so far I have—well, next year I'll be teaching "American Political Thought" for the first time because that's just a class we need filled and I can do it. It's going to be a stretch, but I'll—well, not a stretch, it'll be just a challenge for me. And then senior seminar, doing senior thesis—

[46:06]

KB: You're also teaching a first-year course on advocacy, correct?

PS: I'm teaching a first-year course. Yeah, it's called "Legal and Political Advocacy." And it's partly because we have so many—you know, that debater mentality. Adrienne Christiansen was a debate coach actually as well, so that is part of… Ray Robertson upstairs in Economics was a debater a couple years ahead of me who I knew of as sort of a…*phew*, important debater when I was in high school, somebody you look up to, and there are other people on campus who are. So, yeah, I mean, we don't tend to teach much in college with oral communication. It's not just about oral communication, as I'm conceiving this first-year course. It's just about—it's advocacy. It really stems out of something that happened just in my neighborhood, I was involved with Roseville City Council on zoning matters, trying to fight it. And it was very instructive as to how city councils actually work, but how you write documents, write letters, that are powerful within an institutional context. In part because I have legal—I don't have any legal training, but I have legal background, so over Christmas break I spent a couple days in the Hamline Law School library writing this letter, just hitting all the right notes, given what you know about zoning law, to make the city council pay attention. And that's something that then I

began to globalize from there, because it was at the same time that Adrienne was thinking, saying that you really need to teach a first-year course. Partly to get more advisees and bring people to the major and the like. And realizing that how you advocate in different institutional contexts, like city councils or appellate courts or small claims court. Like what makes a person, if you have to go to small claims court, which anybody could have to do in life, what makes you effective. Actually, Roxy Fisher, our administrator, her daughter had to go to small claims court recently fighting a landlord/tenant dispute, dispute with their tenant, where they got kicked out of an apartment down at Hamline University. And so I was helping instruct her a little bit about what would make you effective, what makes your ability to get your money back, get the most money back you can from your landlord through the small claims court. So it's something that I think I can do a good job at, but it's a little bit of an academic context of appreciating political science. Well, in political science we tend to study Congress, courts, and whatever and the White House, but actually a lot of what you need to know for politics is applicable in your life about local city councils, and small claims courts, and then a couple other things are a little bit more high-faluting. We'll be looking at federal rule-making in the bureaucracy and State Supreme Court, where we have a Mac alum on the State Supreme Court.

[48:52]

KB: You mentioned earlier that you're co-chair of the Legal Studies minor? What are—

PS: Co-director, yeah.

KB: Co-director, I'm sorry. What are your duties as co-director?

PS: It's what you make it. It's a very small minor; it's something we hope to maintain as a minor. The minor is interdisciplinary in nature, it's meant to be a track by which people who are interested in law can study law, but it's not meant to be pre-law. It tends to be pre-law—I mean, no surprise, people who tend to be interested in law as an academic pursuit tend to also be interested in going to law school. But the heart of it is what we call the Law and Society Movement, Law and Society Association, major national interdisciplinary organization. Political science, sociology, and philosophy, in this case with Marty Gunderson particularly and Bill Wilcox teaching "Philosophy of Law" and "Ethics." It might well have history, anthropology of law. In fact, just as I was arriving here it was in history. Two long-time Macalester professors, Norm Rosenberg and Paul Solon, taught courses—"Dramas in American Law" and "History of the Rule of Law," respectively. And now they've retired so we've lost that history component. Working on Arjun Guneratne to teach "Anthropology of Law" again, he will at some point. That's an important part of it. You can do all kinds of things, you can do law and literature, you can do law and environment, you can do all kinds of things. But the heart of it is seeing law like any other major thing, whether it's religious studies or gender studies or—you know, law, there's certain common themes through all societies, all time, and those are the great aspects of life. Religion, gender, environmental studies, legal studies, whatever it would be. That it's a way of studying it from multiple perspectives, and what do you get when you take anthropology, political science, sociology, philosophy, and add it all on to the same subject of how people argue and dispute across societies and form rules for societies. And how it is it happens, how law gets created, the impact it has, you know, top-down, bottom-up, by taking the classes across different majors. So we try and, first of all, just create a curricular framework that allows

students to have a track that makes sense, so they can take five or six courses and have it start to generate, percolate in their mind and create connections. And I think in the long term as we're starting to develop—now Erik Larson was on sabbatical this past year, so it was my first year co-directing it, and I was going for tenure so that was difficult, a lot of time consuming that, so we didn't do a whole lot with it. But creating events, creating an intellectual framework of at least discussions occasionally and a guest lecturer, and you know, just that kind of framework where people can think about it. And the thing I've done the most, the first couple years I've been here, and they've been enormously successful—returning again to that self-interest—you can always get students out for career events. So I've had two alumni panels each year, actually this year we had two alone because one of them was a development-related event, but just getting alumni in. There are four hundred and fifty-plus Mac grads in the Twin Cities alone with J.D. degrees. And so you bring in people from different legal backgrounds, whether they are public defenders or corporate lawyers or working for the government in some capacity or non-profits. And get them in and just talk about, why did you become a lawyer? Would you do it again? What are the pros and cons? And we always had twenty-five, thirty students attending those events just out of, "Okay, so I'm thinking about law, is this right for me?" And those are really productive times, because students either don't know a lot, or they know a lot and it just confirms or denies why they want to go to law school.

[52:59]

KB: How many classes is the minor?

PS: It is—oh, I should know this. I think it's at five. Is it, or is it…no, it's six. You have to have—ideally you would spread it around, but you can, in some ways you can have up to three classes in one department, and then two/one as long as you split your classes. Ideally you'd do two, two, two, given that we have currently sociology, political science, and philosophy. And hopefully it will widen out, we'll have more people consistently teaching in other departments at some point and that'll be good.

[53:41]

KB: Wow. I had no idea it was so interdisciplinary.

PS: Yeah, it is. I mean, for example, we had "Islamic Law" until the person who was teaching that departed, so that was a class we counted. We're working to regain some history offerings, like this course being offered, "History of Church and State" or "Religion in America," we're going to count under conditions this year. So, yeah, where we can find classes—and there's some overlap with human rights concentration which is sort of an odd situation we're trying to sort out. But, yeah, it's a very interdisciplinary focus. And you have to do that in a liberal arts college; the departments aren't that big, you have to make connections across departments and find people who share the common interest. Because they're not likely going to be in your department, they're going to be people studying similar things through other departments.

[54:37] [Note: tape change]

KB: So, where we left off last time, I'd like to start by asking you about the tenure process. What was that like and, obviously it went well, but what was the process like?

PS: It's a black hole. Or a black box. Coming up for tenure—first of all, I came into Macalester with a negotiated situation. I had had three years in England, four years at SMU, I was feeling like I'm ready for tenure. And I had enough publications, I think I wasn't worried about it. So when I got the job, I negotiated, as someone else did, as well, at the same time, for when my tenure clock would—so I wasn't going to start again at a six-year cycle, that would have been horrendous. So I negotiated—I "negotiated," the provost *offered* this and I said thank you—was you could come up for tenure in the second half, or after a year and half here. So I was here last year, and then—now, most people who come up for tenure come up in the fall. And so you have your materials for tenure actually submitted sometime around the—I think actually the summer, sometime in the summer before your sixth year. But I didn't have to have mine in until November of this past year, 2007-2008. So the biggest part then was just pulling together your materials. Now, back this up for a minute. When you come in, then, with a negotiated short clock, what I've heard from other people at other institutions, it's sort of a social contract or an understanding that they're not going to move you here if they didn't think you're probably going to get tenure anyways. Because it would be horribly cruel to bring someone here, and then say a year and a half later, sorry, you don't get tenure, you have to go. So for that reason, institutionally I felt comfortable. But additionally, between Adrienne Christiansen and everybody else saying, you're a lock, don't worry about it, right, it was very comforting. But not—it wasn't completely comforting. Actually I was surprised at how much stress I had, background stress that I was aware of when I reflected on it. So the biggest part of it then is putting together your materials, all your articles. You have to produce—the biggest thing was writing a PDP, professional development plan. Which turned out to be quite lengthy. I'm not

sure how long it was, it was probably single-spaced eighteen pages or something. It was just quite long, for the meaning. And got all that in in November. And couple moments heading for the deadline where I just had these stacks creating—you have to create four copies, and it was all over the Political Science Department floor, and Clare Ryan, who was one of my honors students and a great student worker as well, was helping me put it all together. And calm the nerves and saying it's going to get done, and eventually get it over to the provost's office, and then it just goes into the black box. And it goes out to the external reviewers, they get letters back in. The department meets, the review committee, basically your department, reviews those letters and your files. And they all write letters, and then the department chair puts it together into one letter. So it all goes in and then goes to FPC [Faculty Personnel Committee]. And you have basically a sense of when things are where, like where things are. People say that the letters are in, or it's going to FPC in a few weeks, or things like that, but you don't know what anybody's thinking. Terry Boychuk, who I said I had spent much time talking to, was on FPC this year, and he actually had to recuse himself, because my office is in the suite, he's department chair. I'm in his suite, plus we've talked a lot. So he recused himself from FPC. But he was just helpful in telling me about the broad parameters of how FPC operates. And I think you get a lot of sense of confidence in the professionalism of FPC. That no one's going to be denied for just snotty reasons. That we don't like you, or we want to kill your program, or whatever. That it's not about that. In my case, I felt perhaps better about that than others because I hadn't been here for six years. So I hadn't had enough time to create my enemies; I will eventually, I'm sure. But I didn't feel like there was anybody out to get me; people barely knew me. In fact, if anything the risk is that they just didn't know me, and so the anonymity felt like they didn't feel any need to approve you. So you get the FPC decision, and actually you don't even get that, it goes on to the

provost and at some point you get a decision. And it was—I think one of the questions you have on your sheet pertains to fond, particular memories of something. The granting of tenure was fun. The provost, Diane, because she knew of my historical record of bagpiping and that, had the college piper, Mike Breidenbach, come over. We normally have little cocktail hours in the Political Science Department, Adrienne Christiansen's been running these things. I knew something was up, because a lot more people attended than ever, from all around Carnegie, and the like. And then she brought the piper over to Carnegie and to look at the tenure letter. Which was really fun, actually. I didn't—because I sort of had been looking at tenure and sort of knew it was coming for so long, I didn't think it was going to be a big deal. But even that moment was, sort of, touched me a little bit. It was nice. And I was thankful to her for making a little something special out of it.

[1:00:12]

KB: What's your understanding of the criteria that go into getting tenure?

PS: My understanding is that it changes. You know, FPC forms itself with new people each year, so it creates its own sense of what the standards are. The standards don't seem—they're always amorphous. And I study law, so what you have on the books, or in a text, isn't the final answer. The final answer is what people do to give it life. So, you know, at some colleges it's probably quite clear. There are colleges that will go much more to either extreme of it's all research, they don't care what your teaching is, or it's all teaching, they don't really care what your scholarship is. Macalester's somewhere in between, where you're expected to be a really good teacher and interested in students. You're also expected to be academically engaged. You

can't get by with just two articles or something, as you might do in different kinds of liberal arts colleges or small colleges. So it's sort of a little bit of both, you know. Unlike other colleges, Macalester has a very extensive—and maybe forty years from now, if anybody ever watches this video again, they'll still have the same process. But Macalester, the student opinions really matter. They survey the students about all the classes. Every student now, because it's all electronic and it's easier to do, they'll survey all the students who have ever taken a class with you at Macalester. And ask for their feedback on the professor. Additionally, they have solicited letters from ten to fifteen students, who I chose, gave their names to Adrienne. And she sent out letters saying we'd like to have your feedback on this professor. So, now, given that I'd only been here two years, I didn't have that many students. Or people who were that far out and able to really reflect on, you know, compared to other professors. But it was still important that when I got here I had to make sure from the get-go to invest myself in the classes and the students. And I did anyway, and I enjoy that immensely. And I hit the ground running, because I had those four years of experimentation at SMU with teaching. I knew much, much better what I wanted to do in the classroom, with my curriculum. And what kind of student interactions I wanted. So it was easy to do, and fun to do, and I had a lot of students who were very supportive, so that helped out I think.

[1:02:45]

KB: Speaking of research, what personal research and publishing projects have you been engaged in?

PS: Well, I put the dissertation well behind me many years ago, in a sense. It came out in 2005 as a book. I have a lot of different things going on. I guess I've always just kept myself all in little things. And you know, if there's any one complaint that people could offer in the external letters for the tenure process, it's that I'm not particularly focused on a single area of law. Area of study. That's fine. It's just to me—and what Adrienne did in writing the consensus review committee letter was saying that this is actually a good thing for studying law at Macalester, is that I can do anything, whether historical approaches to law, or I can do a little quantitative if I have to. I'm interested in courts and lawyers and lower courts and it doesn't matter, so I can float really widely. The current project that's—couple things that are on my agenda right now this summer, and they've flowed out of what I've been doing here the past couple years, is one, I'm doing a book with a former colleague of mine in England who's now in Scotland. Simon Halliday. And it's a collection of interviews with leading members, people who've written major projects in the law and society tradition over the past four years. It's interviews with them, like you're interviewing me, about the research project, and how they conceptualized the project and did it and wrote it. And often finding—it's sort of, we view it as a answer or a different approach to the black text of a methods textbook, how you do research. When you actually read major works, they look beautiful and elegant; often the reality behind it is that they didn't have a *clue* what they were doing. But they would go out in the field, and they just got this opportunity to sit in on some meetings, and they are not sure what they're theoretically interested in, but they're just taking notes. And then they, eventually, they figure out the project. And it's hearing people say this in the interviews that I think is really important for students to hear. And actually I've given some—what our project is is interviewing, editing those interviews down from ten to fifteen thousands words down to four thousand words, and putting

introductions with them into a book that you could use in a course, or you could use just chapters of with—when you're reading that great book in sociology or political science. Read that interview along inside of it, and sort of think about what they were thinking about, what was driving them to write that book. I've given some of these chapters to my honors theses students and they just said, [sighs in relief] "*Ah*, thank you for giving me this," in the sense that this is really reassuring because what I'm doing, I feel is completely ambivalent about, like I have no idea what I'm doing. It's good to know that even the great people doing these projects don't know what they're doing in this sense. I mean, you know somewhat of what you're doing, but not that much. So that's one project, and that's ongoing, we have to finish it by the end of this summer. And I did the interviews—actually the college had money to support me to do these interviews, we did them at the Law and Society meeting in Berlin, and that required money, so I appreciated the Wallace fund to provide money for that. I also, right now I'm writing two chapters of a biography; it was my dissertation advisor, is now emeritus and getting old, and can't finish the book on his own. And so I'm writing two chapters of a biography. David Yalof in Connecticut's writing a couple chapters as well, and we're trying to finish a biography of this anonymous, this judge that no one has ever heard of. Anyway. It will get done. I'm writing—student interaction, I'm always interested in getting students involved in projects, and right now I'm writing an article with Hopi Costello, who—she's going to be a junior this year. She came into college with just a great love and understanding of constitutional law and constitutional history. Very up to speed on things. And so I said hey, do you want to be involved in this project with me? Here's an idea I've had. And so she's worked on an independent project this semester to write, and she's written about six, seven thousand words, meeting once a week with me. And I'm going to work with it now, and we're probably going to go to a conference with it

next spring. And try and get it published as a good article. So that's, those kinds of things pop up and they're really fun to do.

[1:07:10]

KB: That's great. Have any of your personal projects involved work in the wider Twin Cities community?

PS: Well…not really yet. I have one project; the big sort of ongoing sole-authored empirical project is a study of disclosure. Hopefully it will get to—I have a couple of chapters that are completely, where the fieldwork is all done. It's about laws that produce disclosure within organizations. There's—all over the place, we're always required to disclose things to the public, organizations are, and it's about how that actually happens. So I've done, over many years, fieldwork with, interviews with securities lawyers who, post-Enron, are responsible for telling their clients, okay, this is what goes into your financial statements, and this is what goes into your public disclosure to the Securities and Exchange Commission. But how do they actually do that? Actually there's a lot of discussions and negotiation that happens with their clients, when clients say I don't want to do that, can we find a way to cover that up, that's sort of embarrassing, or we don't want to—we want to shape it in some way. The other chapter where the fieldwork is done is with Freedom of Information Act officers in Washington, in federal bureaucracies. Every government, when you submit a letter to them saying, a request, a document, do you have—Department of Navy, what information do you have on UFOs? Right. They are expected to produce all the relevant documents to that in your response to your request. How do they do that? And this can be very, very difficult in federal bureaucracies where

documents may be lying in repositories in the desert someplace. And again political embarrassment. Freedom of Information Act officer, the FOIA officer, is responsible for bashing heads with someone. And the third area, where I'm starting now to get into the Twin Cities, is campaign finance. Campaign treasurers, specifically, in federal races. So every campaign is required to have a campaign treasurer. Now whether it's just in the primaries, running for people who lost in the primaries, running for the senate, for the U.S. Senate seat or the House seats, they have to have a campaign treasurer who signs the documents that go to the Federal Election Commission, saying that all of our numbers are as we—as they are, as we state them to be. Well, as you can imagine, there's going to be pressure on them as well. So what I've done a little bit in Texas, I need to do a lot more in the Twin Cities, is interview them about the dynamics of their office. Their position. And that will get me out into the Twin Cities some more, and probably other states as well. And then those three chapters are the core of the book on—the tentatively title, *The Truth Will Out?* Question mark. *Making Disclosures in American Politics.* How people, when it comes to all the laws that require disclosure, does it actually happen that way.

[1:10:00]

KB: Interesting. And this is just a side question, but is fieldwork a common methodology, a research methodology, for political science?

PS: Mixed. I mean it depends a lot; there's both quantitative and qualitative. Political science is not a discipline, is something I tell students. We are not a method. There's an anthropological method, there's a historical method, economics essentially has a method. But political science

doesn't have one. We have a field. We have a subject which unites us all by our interest—we're interested in politics. However it is you get at that is a function of the question you ask. What are you interested in asking? So if you're interested in asking the question why do democracies seem to go to war less than non-democracies, well, the typical method there is a mass quantitative study, comparative. You put a hundred and forty countries into your database, you have zero/one, are they a democracy or non-democracy. All kinds of other variables, like economic growth, and voting and whatever. And ask, so are there any patterns of who goes to war and who doesn't? But that's only one approach. If you're interested in how, essentially sociological questions—I somewhat see myself as a political sociologist. Not quite, but almost. How do, within political organizations or bureaucracies, how do people understand, create understandings, and create rules when they have a law on the books? They're acting as lawyers. Many people are non-lawyers, explicitly will tell me, "We're doing the work of lawyers. We're trying to interpret a statute and create rules that govern our organization, and implement them in practice." And how do you do that? Because that's politics, but that's—and it has a huge effect on people, when they create rules within their organizations. It parcels out costs and benefits, it decides who gets benefits from the government and who doesn't, when it's a rule from the Social Security Administration. How do they do that? Where do they come up with this? How do their norms, how are they shaped by the organizations, by the interests, by pressures, politics. So to me, fieldwork is—I enjoy fieldwork, I feel like I learn much more that I can tell students about how organizations actually work when you've interviewed fifty people in an organization, in an area of government. I've interviewed so many lawyers, I feel like I can advise students about the life, the lives and the work lives of lawyers because of that research. And then all the research I've done about lawyers in the past. So I think it's rewarding to me, and that to me is what I'm

doing. I'm doing what interests me. And it's not driven by a sense of need to publish in certain journals, where if I wanted to publish in the American Political Science Review, I would need to probably be much more quantitative and do entirely different kinds of projects. That's not my ambition. And I think it works well given what I'm doing teaching-wise here, there's—Erik Larson and I say, call ourselves synergists. We believe that teaching and research really helps each other.

[1:13:08]

KB: That's great, that sounds so, like, human and subjective and really interesting.

PS: Yeah, I mean, it is. I mean, I think there's a lot of subjectivity to qualitative research. But in a sense I think it's also reproducible. I think someone asking similar questions would—can't help but find certain things. Now the writing of it is the art of writing qualitative research up into a chapter, is how you spin it. There's so—you leave data out that you could have talked about, you have your own voice as an author, and style, and style of writing. And you can, how you spin the data is how you twist it in your choice of words. That is very individualized and subjective. But I think there's also some way in which the kernel, the core understandings, are something that other people would find. And eventually, hopefully, your literature in the field confirms that.

[1:14:02]

KB: That's so interesting. Just to get some ending questions, what do you most enjoy about being part of the faculty at Macalester?

PS: Well…I think it's the students. I enjoy the time I spend with students in the office hours is great. My honors students, I've had five in the past two years. They are wonderful. Herschel Nachlis, Rachel Brady, and then this year Clare Ryan, Ahna Minge, and Allison MacWilliams-Brooks. I mean, they're just great students. And with a couple of them, in different ways, they were very different than other students. Just—there's an intellectual intimacy that's so wonderful. You see them working through the projects, they're struggling with the project, they're thinking through. Sometimes I'm helping them drive it, sometimes they say, but I don't like that, and they come back and they want to do it a different way. And you say, but have you thought about this? And the yearlong exchange is great. Now that happens a lot with other students in smaller projects in other ways, the senior seminars you get that. And across the fifteen, ten to sixteen senior seminars I'll do in a senior seminar course, you get a variety of levels of engagement. Some people who don't want to do the project, and some people who are essentially, they wanted to do an honors thesis but didn't qualify by GPA. And so they're looking for the—every bit a rich of experience. And then in individual classes, there's a process of knowing students. I mean, my case law class is very interactive; we're reading the cases, and then I'm somewhat sort of mildly pseudo-Socratically pushing them. So do you agree with that? Why not? Well, what rule would you adopt? Well, but what about that? And pushing, and taking moments in class to push them for five minutes, and then they eventually you let them off the hook and ask someone else to say, but can you help her with that problem that she's running into? And you get to know the students over a period of time and in a way that I think is, it's fun. It's just, it's dialogue, it's interaction, it's academic but you also get a sense of the human

with them. Yeah, I mean, that's the best part about it is the students. Takes a lot of time, but it's really, really rewarding.

[1:16:27]

KB: If you could changes some things about Macalester, what would they be?

PS: I'm not sure about the design of the IGC [Institute for Global Citizenship]. Yeah, it just…you know, there are different kinds of colleges. There are colleges that are model form, model type. There are some colleges—like Johns Hopkins was built around an explicit Georgian style. Which the pillars are repeated form—really very, very mimicking University of Virginia, for example. Blew past the original Thomas Jefferson design, but that iconic imagery has remained there. Or Collegiate Gothic, for example. Macalester has a bit more of a mishmash. It's not mono-anything. Except it has the red brick. I'm really not quite sure that the new building is going to fit well. But there's another few who are concerned; I see some nodding heads around here. They might have considered alternative ways of doing it. But you know, they didn't ask me, so. You know, I've been thinking about this a little bit, because the new provost we have coming in—I'm going to blank on her name, I'm terrible with names. That's why I'm not a politician. In one of the sessions she did with the faculty in her interview process, she described how when she got to her current institution, Birmingham-Southern College, that she'd done interviews with all one hundred of the faculty members. And one of the questions she asked is I think what are you most worried about with the college. And that, in her institution they had a lot of problems, a lot of things to worry about. But I was thinking, well what if she does the same interviews with us; how will I answer that question, what are you most

worried about. So I've been thinking a lot about that. And I don't know, I've heard some more senior faculty members in these interview process, particularly, talk about how they've been here since the '80s or early '90s, whatever, and always waiting for something in particular to happen. Like a real step forward in curricular development, or for certain elements of the faculty to get along. And at this point I'm still naively optimistic and hopeful that things are going to happen, but I guess that's a little bit of my worry, is that institutions like Macalester—but all colleges, this is true of all colleges, it's not unique to Macalester—change slowly. And it's hard to get people to agree on things. It would be nice if there was someone who was a big thinker that wasn't shot down by some portion of the campus, whether it be faculty or students, griping, "But we can't do that!" And some, you'd like to see that there be leadership and development in ways that all sort of make sense. I mean there are things right now that just, like, don't—administratively we're working on it, curricularly that doesn't make sense, how is it going to change? And people would say, well, give it ten years and it will change. So I guess I'm…it's not just I'm interested in what make change on those things, but will the process of change change over time. That's the second derivative, I guess, right? Or is it the nature of…anyway. I still have a little math in my background. So that's I guess my…yeah.

[1:19:55]

KB: Yeah. No, that's interesting, as someone who kinds of studies bureaucratic processes and decision-making, you'd think a liberal arts college would offer a completely new kind of model for looking at that kind of change. It's really interesting.

PS: The collegiate forum is part of that. You know, collegium, it's a college in the Latin sense. It's different than a bureaucracy. There's certain things administratively that have evolved in America over the twentieth century that remain—we've developed administrators. In England, in Oxford, my colleagues at Oxford were—they do their admissions themselves. Like, they're professors, and they get all the applications, and they interview incoming students, and they decide who they're going to accept for the political science major. And you apply for seats. Very different. Like at some point, I'd say, you spend two weeks of your year just doing admissions. It's an enormous burden. But, so we developed administration here, but there's still elements in which we're as a college, we are a collegium, we're a group of people who are trying to collegially get along and decide how to govern the college. So that, it's very interesting to me. And I think as a mode of organizational behavior, it's interesting.

[1:21:10]

KB: Do you have any additional standout experiences or memories you'd like to share?

PS: I don't know. I had mentioned, obviously, the provost delivering the tenure letter, which was nice. Couple things. My first year, the—I found it amusing the first time and annoying the next three times, it was the delivery of these Valentine's Day singing telegrams by the students. It was fun the first time and then, you know, the a cappella groups coming to campus, coming to your classroom. And that was sort of annoying. And the a cappella on campus needs to be better. You know, it's very enthusiastic, and it's really a central part of…it's important to the students. But I sang in a choral group in graduate school, and saw a lot of East Coast a cappella. And they do it much better out there. The whole circuit of Swarthmore, and Penn, and the

colleges traveling and visiting each other, and Georgetown, very high standard of a cappella. And one of my impressions on campus is we need to improve the a cappella. The piping, I really enjoy the piping. Actually I really enjoy hearing students saying how they enjoy the piping. That a student said to me, "Whenever I hear piping it's always a happy day." Because you have piping like at graduation, or at the pipers standing outside the chapel at awards events. It's a happy thing, we don't play Flowers of the Forest. Flowers of the Forest is the piping tune for, lament for the dead. They don't play that, they play happy music. So I really like the Scottish element of the campus, I think that's great. Erik Larson and I, I have a kilt, sometimes I'll wear a kilt and that's always a bit fun. He does research in Fiji, and so he has a sulu, a Fijian skirt, so he'll throw that as well. We do things, just create little eccentricity. I don't think it's entirely deliberate eccentricity, some of its just natural eccentricity. He has Friday pickle days, where he brings pickles in on Fridays. I think with my first year course, I'm going to have a potato chip of the week. Every week I'll bring in a different kind of potato chip. There's new wasabi potato chips, and like in England, you'd get salt and vinegar, and chicken tikka masala potato chips, and lamb and mint. Anyway, so you just create sort of a fun environment. Make it fun.

[1:23:49]

KB: That's good. What are you looking forward to in the coming years?

PS: I don't know. I don't know… I'm looking forward to getting in all the committees at one point or another. I expect over the next ten years, you know, health willing and all that, to do a rotation through all the major committees. Next year, probably too early because I don't know all the faculty members really well, I'm the presiding officer of the faculty meetings. It's going

to be an experience [laughs]. Here comes *Robert's Rules of Order*. Which is, shouldn't be too bad. So I'm doing that. At some point then I'll probably, I'll do FPC; I won't do it in the next few years because I know too many people through my first year course, I shouldn't be involved in that. But do RPC, the Resource Planning Committee, and whatever comes of the changes they're making essentially to the curriculum, kinds of committees. So take a tour on through faculty governance. Get to know the institution really well. I clearly don't know—I mean, after two years, obviously. I need to get to a level where people like Terry Boychuk or Marty Gunderson or Adrienne Christiansen know the institution, all the ins and outs. And then we'll see, I don't know, I mean—will I ever be interested in administration? I don't know. Some people have said, oh, you should consider that. I'm like, well, maybe. As they say, they tend to chew up their provosts here, so I'm not sure that's what I want to do. Or maybe just you know, certainly I'll have to be department chair. We've already talked about the rotation of department chair in the future, and I'll be department chair at some point. So there, I'm looking forward to the administrative side and seeing what happens on that front. I'm looking forward to my future honors students. I've took pictures, I've taken pictures with me after the defense of each of the five, and will probably frame them, so I'll have a wall of honors students, which I think is fun. You know, just looking forward to teaching the classes I teach, and always learning. Because I always just assign the new books that are out in that—litigation, what are the most recent books on litigation. So it's fun to learn the material with the students, and relearn it and think more about it. There are some things I'm working on, I didn't mention, but books that I hope to write from things that I've been teaching, and really leaving classroom and going back to my office and then writing little bits and bobs and outlines of the materials. At some point, hopefully, it comes from there. It's a much more engaged experience with the students and the teaching than

it was at SMU. There's a real, you know, symbiotic, I guess, what's the right word—syncretic relation. Mutually reinforcing relationship between students and teaching and research and thinking and intellectual growth.

[1:26:42]

I'm looking forward to the new rec center. My god, the first two years here, I had the old rec center, which was fun in the first semester I was here. And then it shut down. And Macalester does so much food. Right? Like, there's not a single event that doesn't have cookies and bars at it. And free meals all the time. I mean, this is, the people are laughing, this is true! There's always—and you get to know the bars but you still can't refuse them. They do their best, they try and throw in some new recipes, but there's always that peanut butter bar, there's always that brownie bar, the butterscotch bar. And you just, you eat two or something, and you get free food. I think in April there were days—there was one day in April where I had three meals free given to me, breakfast, lunch, and dinner, all on various aspects of the college or some event. Plus bars in between! And people had food on the tables, and Wednesday treat day from Roxy in the department. So you get so much food. And I wasn't working out. I mean, talk about freshman fifteen, I had my Macalester fifteen, I put on ten to fifteen pounds getting here. So now the rec center is going to be opening up [laughs]. I've been working out this summer now and I've felt so much better the past two months. That I got tenure, and I could actually spend—okay, I'm going to spend minimum five hours a week exercising. I'm looking forward to the rec center. I think it's going to change—some people and students are saying it might change the actual campus flow patterns. That there'll be, because of the health services being down there as well, what used to be in Winton, there'll be more students hanging out or going down there that you'll interact more perhaps with people at the sciences. Or it must just change the gravity,

maybe fewer people at the dorms, more people down there. I'm looking forward to meeting the students. I love meeting students. A lot of faculty members don't like meeting students when they work out. I like playing basketball with students. At SMU I used to challenge students to beat me on the rowing machine. And even the strong ones couldn't. So it's sort of a way of saying, like—especially at SMU when you had Division I athletes, it was sort of a way of getting respect with some students. Who, they weren't particularly interested in academics, but I would say, oh, I'll meet you on your turf. Like, you know, I'll take you on one-on-one basketball. I'm looking forward to meeting students on those terms and just chatting. That, to me, is the idea of a college. At University of Virginia, where Thomas Jefferson builds the University of Virginia, and builds it with a hundred and forty student dormitory rooms, and eight pavilions where the professors are going to be living next door to them, rocking their rocking chairs on the lawn. And the library at one end. That to me is the ideal of a liberal arts college, that you know your students at the individual level through their humanity, or through other parts of their existence, and then you have a chance to engage them at the academic level. So I'm really looking forward to the new athletic center, I think it's going to be an important and useful thing in my life, and just generally the college.

[1:29:35]

KB: Great. Well, is there anything else you'd like to add before we close?

PS: I don't think so. As long as nobody—I hope nobody watches this.

KB: Okay, great. Well thank you so much, Professor Schmidt, it was a pleasure, and thank you very much for participating in the project. We value your commentary a lot, thank you.

PS: Thanks! Good.

[End of Interview, 1:29:52]