

INTERVIEWEE: DOWRENE HAHN

INTERVIEWER: Samuel C. McCulloch
Emeritus Professor of History
UCI Historian

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SM: This is an interview with Dowrene Hahn at 1:30 P.M. on May 25, 1990 in Humanities Office Building 360. And the first question, Dowrene, is when did you come to UCI and what was the title of your position?

DH: I came to UCI in 1963, end of October 1963. At the time, I had no title. My payroll title was administrative assistant. And the reason I came was to establish and develop a central records concept for all of the campus administrative records, which was unknown on any campus in the University of California. And I had been in the academic side of the house for several years in Berkeley before I came to Irvine.

SM: (inaudible) you were what?

DH: I worked in the School of Education in Berkeley for David Russell.

SM: Yes.

DH: And then I went to the College of Engineering in Berkeley for two or three years as administrative assistant to the dean, to Dean O'Brien. And that was my experience working on the academic side of the house. And at that time, during those particular positions that I had, I realized that there was so much information that we couldn't get. It was too hard to find things. There was no place we could go on the campuses

to get any kind of information, to get records, and we were always sent from one place to another, and nobody ever seemed to know what the answers were or where to go and get them. So, when I came here, and it was L. E. Cox's idea that we have what he wanted to call central files. And I think it was probably something that he had experienced, I'm sure, to a great degree in his army days. So that was what I came here to do, was to try and establish an administrative core of administrative records, and also with the idea that it would be the beginning of the Archives for this campus, which it indeed was at the time.

SM: Now, two questions. One, is who was brought in right away to be Archivist? And secondly, were you satisfied with the way things were coming through to you and you were making your decisions and so on? And I do want you to comment thirdly on your experience of singing with Roger Wagner. Well, Maurice Allard trained you, apparently, but Roger Wagner had you for several days and then took the credit.

DH: Well, Roger Wagner, it was one of the most wonderful experiences I ever had in the entire years that I spent singing, and I started when I was about ten years old. And to sing under the direction of somebody like Roger Wagner was just incredible. In fact, when I left the chorus, which I did because we had enough students then and it was the university,

I never did any singing after that. That was sort of the end of it.

But as to your question on the Archives, I believe the first Archivist on campus . . . As a matter of fact, I know the first Archivist was Roger Berry. And he came here and I don't know just how he began to take on the function of Archives, because I think he was in serials or something . . . I don't know, you'd have to ask him.

SM: Well, I've interviewed him.

DH: Yes. And so he started and then Sharon Pugsley, of course, came along later.

SM: Yes.

DH: But we began collecting all kinds of material, all of the first documents. I remember the first catalogues and everything that we would get, and anything we could get our hands on I would get a copy of and get into an archival . . . ^{what?} Like, we had a huge drawer full of stuff. And when they set up in the Library, we started sending material over to them. And all of the early permanent records, administrative records, are in Archives. Much of the material has been sent over.

SM: Yes. That's what I want to hear. Much of it was sent over. I have interviewed Roger Berry and I've interviewed Sharon, and what you say is correct. Now, what has always bothered me or worried me is that we're losing things somehow. Would

you like to tell me ^{Now?} know what your present position is and is the work of preserving the necessary and important documents being done now?

DH: My present position, Sam, is Coordinator of Administrative Policies and Information Services. I no longer have any responsibilities or anything really to do with Central Records. The Central Records Department is not a central records anymore. And what has happened to the records that they have there, they've all been put in the basement of the Administration Building, and, indeed, there's not a member of the Central Records Department who now knows how to get into and find anything in those old records.

SM: Well, I've got to bring this to the attention of a Chancellor because we can't have that happen. We can't be losing things. Now Sharon, I know, got along very well with the person whom I talked to two or three years ago, but she's gone. She's now in some other office. And I guess what you say is so, that these things are down in the basement and there's nobody who can really identify them, and somebody's got to do it. There's another thing I wanted to ask you. It'll come to my mind in a minute. I'm getting forgetful. Now, third question, how well do you think the administration functioned before? Well, I know what I was going to say. Eloise Kloke, according to Roger Berry, was very interested in Archives, just to, you know, qua archives, and so she did a lot to see

that things were, you know, going along. And I think with her departure it isn't as smooth as it was or as effective as it was, and we're in trouble.

DH: Well, I think early on Eloise was very supportive of Central Records and very concerned about the Archives situation, and I know I certainly was, too. And I used to . . . whoever the Publications manager was, whenever they'd change and new ones came in, I would always try and make sure that a copy of every single thing that came out of Publications did go to Archives. And, for instance, Barbara Van Hoven, I try and make sure that she gets a copy of everything that she's responsible for publishing gets over to Archives. And I think that Sharon does a pretty good job of getting a hold of stuff. Now, the other day, Dorrie Nelson . . . I don't know if you remember her, Dorrie Deneau who worked for Dr. Gerard.

SM: Oh, yes, I know.

DH: And she was the first assistant dean.

SM: Oh, sure.

DH: And she called me. She's moved over to Hawaii now, but she called me about three weeks ago and said she had some stuff that she'd been cleaning out and would I like it? So she sent me two big packages. And I think Archives has most of the material, but it was all the early on stuff. There was an original catalogue and programs from graduation and things. I think Roger said they had most of it, but at least we got

it there. So there are people who . . . And every opportunity we get, I try and get the departments to send anything to Archives. Of course, we have a section in our campus manual now on Archives and what should go to Archives. And that's about the best that we can do, I think.

SM: Oh, yes. If you've got a list in the catalogue, that's good.

DH: Yes. Now, down in Central Records, in the old records in the basement--many of which are still active. I mean, they are . . . I've had to go and try and find things down there and we simply can't find it. But they're also totally catalogued: you know, our old Central Records system of doing a precis on each document and then cross-referencing it.

SM: Oh, yes.

DH: But the alphabetical key word cross-reference index is lost, and that makes it very difficult to try . . .

SM: (inaudible)

DH: It would probably take me about two or three years to redo, to totally redo it. I might be able to do it, but, you see, in it might be words or listings that really did not fit into any title of a particular record, necessarily. And so that's going to be a . . . There is not one around that I know of. And I think, ultimately, eventually they intend to put all those records on optical scanning, if they ever get their optical scanning system, which I don't know whether they are or not.

SM: Do you approve of that?

DH: Sam, I don't know. I don't know enough about it. For the kind of records that they have, I don't think it would do what the old system did. See, the new people that came in felt that the old system was too difficult for anybody to learn, so they developed a computer system without knowing what the records were supposed to do. And they now think that they consider Central Records the corporate memory, but nobody can . . . The memory is sort of disappearing. *what?*

SM: Well, what you're saying, Dowrene, is that the present administrative functions really are not necessarily working properly, because the computer work is not going to do it the way you want it done. And so where are we? If I suggest to the Chancellor . . . I might show him your interview and ask him for funds for someone--not me, of course--funds to straighten that thing out. It may take a fair bit of time, but for the university now becoming one of the great universities, why, we've just got to have it right. And you've given me the best analysis that I've heard up to this time. Sharon Pugsley is very good and she's on top of things, but she has to depend on the cooperation of the materials coming in. Is that right?

DH: That's right. In my present job, I do have to depend on those records. And it's been difficult because a lot of the material apparently cannot be found. But, you know, there's

got to be some way to . . . somebody who should know how to work it. And apparently there's one girl, Norma Jean Nebeker, who was in Physical . . .

SM: How do you spell that?

DH: N-E-B-E-K-E-R.

SM: (inaudible)

DH: Yes. She and I, I think, are the only two still on campus who know the system, know the old system.

SM: Well, I'm going to . . . You and I might sit down for lunch sometime with her and talk about it, because I am very concerned. I haven't got around yet to all the senior officials, as to how well they are sending their material.

DH: Yes.

SM: I did talk to . . . I guess it was Parker, and there was no point in getting . . . Dr. Tien is about to leave, so no point in talking to him, but I will get around to the others. Now, therefore, the fifth question, Dowrene: Are UCI records properly classified and the important ones sent to UCI Archives? You've answered that. You've answered it, am I right, this way? The records are not properly stored and classified, that it's very difficult if you go down to look for something, or, I suppose, if Sharon does, and we aren't necessarily getting into Archives what we should.

DH: This probably is true to a certain degree. But the thing is, those records that are there in the basement of the

Administration Building I'm talking about are actually active records. And as the older records, you know . . . or as a file becomes obsolete or inactive, then it would be sent over to Archives. And I would say up through 1984 everything was sent to Archives in good shape.

SM: In what year?

DH: Up through 1984. I think in 1985 was when the system began to break down. So I don't know after 1985 what has happened. I do know now that in Central Records, I think basically what they do is they open the Chancellor's and Vice Chancellor's mail and they copy all the pieces of mail, ^{they} ~~the~~ keep the originals and then they send the copies off and that's it. They do have a computer system in which they input . . . try and identify what the subject is, and then they file by numerical sequence. They just number each document as they open it. This is not a good system for correspondence type records. It's better because ^{? Sense of this sentence?} it's too difficult, but they don't know how to find the old things. For instance, somebody asked me in Extension about two or three weeks ago what were the policies on taping lectures. And for the life of me, I could not find that material because I couldn't find it down . . . It was downstairs in the basement records. I could not find that material because the key word index had been lost. I located it when I was looking for something else.

SM: Located the key?

DH: No.

SM: Located the key?

DH: Yes, I located the two policies and the letter that Carl Hartman sent. He sent those two documents to the deans, directors and departments chairs with a cover memo. I finally located those ^{on} in the top, ^{of} on one of the volumes of another file, which is where it should have been. But, see, I couldn't get to it.

SM: Now that's very helpful, what you say, and leads me to a question that's not here. Isn't it a fact that you have systemwide meetings, say, once or twice a year? And if there are these meetings, do they come out with or do they publish a policy of record keeping, so that as a system we're . . . each campus is not going to lose . . . The reason I bring this up, I attended a seminar this year, after my heart operation. I started attending about February or January and went once a year to Berkeley where they're having a seminar on writing a history of Berkeley. Then they realized, after I had given a report, that they really ought to go beyond that. And they had a report from a lady from UC Davis who is doing the side that has to do with animals and all those things and agriculture, and then there was another person reporting on . . . I think it was the development of Biological Sciences at Berkeley. And you know, just taking a part, they realized that they are being parochial and they

ought to do a history of the nine campuses. So they made a decision and sent a memo up to the present Chancellor--I guess he's not left yet--and the agreement was that they've got the money now to do it. Now, this is interesting because some of them will be . . . I don't know what my part will be because I'm writing my history by itself, you know, a history of UCI, but these systemwide meetings should set up important policies.

DH: Well, so far as records go, there has been since 1963 when the president established the University Records Management Committee, on which sits one representative from every campus and then several systemwide officers, depending on . . . from the appropriate offices. We do meet once a year. At that time, they established a records management program, and it was the only one in any university in the entire United States. It was the first program. It's very strong on this campus, as you may know, and Eloise supported it very strongly. She was the first representative on that committee. I then became the second representative, twenty years or so ago.

SM: Twenty years?

DH: I think I've been on the committee since about 1972, somewhere along there. But on this campus we had a pretty strong program. But systemwide they did, and now they have a series of business and finance bulletins which cover records

management as well as information practices. And one of the aspects of the program is archives, and they all are different. And then we have a . . .

SM: Is Sharon going to those?

DH: No, she doesn't, but there is an archivist. One of the archivists, usually the Berkeley archivist, attends and is a member of the committee; and, of course, then she gets all the information from that archivist. But the committee is still functioning, of course, and they do have a very large . . . what we call the Records Disposition Schedule, and it gives retention periods for all types of administrative records. You'd be interested in this, Sam. Several times we tried to address the records called Blue Books. And we've always . . . We didn't only table it, we just simply deep-sixed the whole idea. We've never tackled any faculty records or any records which faculty have. We do encourage disposition of material that is no longer needed and so forth, but, you know, we . . .

SM: Dowrene, what do you find in a situation of the academic records, the personnel files? In other words, I understand that they're kept somewhere by themselves on every campus of the university and it practically is very, very difficult ever to see them. Is that right?

DH: Here at Irvine the academic personnel records, the office of record is the Academic Personnel Office. And every faculty

member, every person who has a record in that office, those records are put on microfilm. And they are . . . as far as I know, only the latest action is in paper. And as soon as another action comes along--for instance, there might be a promotion and the next one would be a merit--and when that merit action comes along, that previous promotion is then put to microfilm. Those records are permanent forever, and they're one of the few records that are considered permanent.

SM: And they're kept where?

DH: And they are kept . . . I think all of ours, since they're all on microfilm, they're all kept in that Academic Personnel Office. Now, of course, the departments and deans' offices have academic personnel records also, but those only need to be kept . . . I think it's five years following separation or something like that. But that is the office of record, and Carl ^{was?} is very, very careful and insistent on how they maintain them. If you need more information on that, Pat Price can tell you.

SM: I may well add another interview beyond my sixty-five and talk to Pat. And if they run out of money . . . Jack Peltason is funding me for sixty-five, and I'm now up to fifty-one. You're fifty-one, I think. And Pat would be very helpful. You know, Carl Hartman, I'm happy to say, he lives around the corner from us and we wish we saw more of him, but we were sick and this and that, and we don't want to give him any

bugs. He's very frail, but he comes whizzing over on his machine, you know, battery driven, and we have him for tea. And I've given him a set of questions and I said, "You could use your left hand," which he has--he's left-handed, "for your computer, and would you please . . ." Well, he said, "A year ago, I wouldn't have wanted to do this." He said, "But now I am." And this was about three months ago, and so he is now busily typing away, giving his side of a lot of things. Well, not his side, but an account. See, he came in 1967, I believe, or 1968, with Roger Russell, and he's been, you know, really in the midst of most everything. And I'm sure that if he were here that the Education Department would be a little quieter and not so unhappy because he really understood it. The same thing with the Library. He understands the Library and he understands every person in it and so on. (chuckling)

DH: Yes.

SM: So Carl was very useful.

DH: One thing you might be interested in, Sam, is that I have a list of what I call old-timers. And it's a list of every person who was hired, from the first one, which was L. E. Cox in December 1961, through May of 1965. And of 265 or maybe a few more than that, there are only sixteen of us left that haven't retired or terminated or whatever. I just thought you might be interested in that.

SM: Oh, yes. I'm going to suggest to Jack, before the next couple or three or four weeks, that he's got to get together . . . This is, you know, our twenty-fifth anniversary coming up in September. And those of us who came before 1965 . . . I was appointed December 13, 1963. But all those of us, and you say there are only sixteen . . .

DH: Left on campus, on the payroll.

SM: On the payroll, right. Yes, some of them are around and are retired. Well, that's very interesting. Now, tell me, Dowrene, because we're always interested in your travel plans, I understand your Tunisia . . . Was it Tunisia you were going to go to and it fell through? You were telling us at lunch.

DH: Morocco.

SM: Morocco. You told us this at lunchtime the day before yesterday. We like your lectures and slides. I understand Marilyn has arranged with your consent to have one on the English and another on the South Pole, Antarctica.

DH: Yes.

SM: So that's good. Now, let's review a couple of things. Are you optimistic that we'll get this thing straightened out so that we can A, find our way through the present material in the basement and B, have it worked out so that the computer can identify a document? I think the computer is a great thing if it's worked properly, but what's your view of it?

DH: Well, my concern, I guess, I'm not totally unoptimistic, but I'm certainly not totally optimistic about what's going to happen to the records that are there in the basement, because I think that nobody really does understand how to find something in those records, although there are procedures and it tells you exactly what to do. Of the records that are coming in now to the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors, which are . . . they're xeroxed. They xerox the copies and they keep them. I don't know what they intend to do with those and I don't know . . . I do know that people come to me in desperation and say, you know, can't we find something.

SM: Well, where are they right now to be found? Where are they located?

DH: You mean the current records? They are in Central Records and they are . . .

SM: (inaudible)

DH: I guess they can find . . . If you ask for something and if you know who wrote it or who it was to or something like that, I think they can sort of find that. But I don't think they understand the nature of the material that they're working with. I think they don't . . . They know what a delegation of authority is if it says "delegation of authority." But if in a document it gives . . . Say, it delegates authority without a specific title or subject line that says "delegation of authority," they might not pick that up. I'm not sure that

they're picking up really policies or procedures. I think that they're just simply maintaining material, but there's no . . . You have to be pretty specific. They do have key words, in which, if you ask for something on . . . Well, for instance, that taped lectures, you know, the policies on taping lectures. We went to their system and they put in the word taping and they put in the word lectures and they put in a couple of other words. Well, you see, they don't have any of that because it's prior to the present system. And I don't know when they're going to get this optical scanning system. Somebody is supposed to be working on it. But I just don't know because I have nothing to do with it anymore, you see.

SM: My understanding of taped lectures is this. This is according to a course I am giving. They have to get permission from the professor or instructor. If he or she doesn't want it taped, then that's it. Now, otherwise, secondly, you let the student . . . And I've got an Oriental student, South Vietnamese, I guess, and she is having a bit of trouble with taking notes and things. So I'm letting her tape the lectures. But she's not, you know, just to play it to other people and generally make it public use. Now there's a third thing that I want to do, and I intend to write a memo to Jack probably within the next two weeks, to ask that we tape record most every important lecture or certainly a speech and event. I'll give you an illustration. I don't know whether you attended the

congratulatory little party given to Jim McGaugh and Ricardo Miledi for being appointed members of the National Academy of Sciences. And it was up at the University Club and I guess there were eighty people there. And Jack made a very nice, very warm, very personal remarks, and the response from Jim McGaugh was just as interesting as it could be, and Miledi's a very gracious person. So, I mean, I thought to myself, "My God, this is all down the tubes. There's no record of this." But you know what they're doing at Berkeley, Downre? They are tape recording, video tape recording, the big events. I was asked to participate in Past and Future Campuses, or some title like that, and they talked about how the campuses were started back in 1963 and where should they have the new one. They talked about Fresno and near Fresno. Dean McHenry wanted it up in the hills a bit and not in the ^{thule?} tule fogs of Fresno.

DH: That's a very good reason.

SM: But it was very successful. And Dean McHenry told how it was a hot day and the regents had to make a decision between a cattle ranch and something else in the Santa Clara Valley, and they decided upon the cattle ranch. Besides, it was going to be given to them. But it was very interesting how they reacted to that beautiful site. And this conference, which was a whole afternoon, and I talked about the . . . Ivan even talked about founding at the beginning, and I talked about the curriculum and how we all made it up by something like twenty-

one or twenty-two of us sitting down; in four days we made the whole thing up. (chuckling) And they video taped it, and they have looked at the video tape. That is, the people who are running the seminar on the history of Berkeley and now of the nine campuses have gotten pretty interested in doing things like that. Now, maybe it's too expensive to video tape it, but at least we ought to tape record it. Don't you think so?

DH: Yes, I do, Sam.

SM: A lot I've missed.

DH: All those things.

SM: Yes.

DH: (inaudible)

SM: Now, who taped the Aldrich memorial ceremony? I'm not on the ball here. I'm sending my remarks, [on Dan Aldrich] typed out and so on, across to Sharon. But I think that I should ask Jack to ask the [whole list of speakers]. Now, for instance, I know that they all read it. We had to speak for five minutes. We are asked to speak for five minutes. What's-his-name went over, Vern Cheadle, but it didn't matter to me because he was telling me things I never knew anything about. For example, Dan Aldrich went from where he was in Rhode Island to Arizona following a professor. He was teaching at . . . Then he got an M.A. and then, of course, he went to Wisconsin. And things of a personal nature, and Cheadle, was

quite wound up, you know. He was real upset. We were all upset, of course, but he was extra upset and he hardly got through the thing. He was in tears at the end.

DH: Yes.

SM: Well, now, where are those things? And I've got to get going on this? Oh, dear. Now, can you suggest anything more, questions I should ask you, or you'd like to tell for the history of UCI? Because these are immediately put into the Archives.

(tape is turned off)

Now, Dowrene, this is your chance to suggest any questions and solutions, anything you want to see done.

DH: Well, I hadn't really thought about that particular question and I don't know . . . I do think something should be done about those records in the basement of the Administration Building, since we're talking about records. But I don't have any solutions at this point and I'm not so sure that I . . . I'm really not free to make any suggestions because I no longer belong in that department and it's not my responsibility. So, therefore . . .

SM: But since you've made them to me and to a historian . . .

DH: Yes, that's right. But I really haven't thought much about it because I don't know how soon this new system--if it gets off the ground--is going to. It's going to be expensive and I don't know whether they have the money for it. And I do

know that there is in some cases . . . For instance, with the policies and procedures manual, hopefully that will be, when the whole campus gets on Ethernet or something, which will be able to . . .

SM: On what?

DH: On Ethernet. It's a computer connection.

SM: How do you spell that?

DH: E-T-H-E-R-N-E-T, I think it is. And it is one of the methods of transmitting information. And we'll be able to use a computer to bring up everything that is now written in the policies and procedures manual. So I think that that's quite an exciting . . .

SM: Now, who, if you can't do it because you're out of the area now, shall we say, who would be the person for me to talk to or Dr. Peltason to write to, to try to get this thing worked out in the basement?

DH: Well, the person who manages . . . In Administrative and Business Services there is a section called Support Services, which includes four or five departments. It includes the Mail Department and the Printing Department and Central Records and Financial Services--and that's collection and cashier and disbursement, and then my administrative policies function. And the head of that is . . . Her name is Lynn McLeod.

SM: Oh, I know Lynn.

DH: Okay. She's the one who is overall basically responsible, other than the manager of Central Records. So she would, I think, be the one, Sam, that you probably should talk to about it.

SM: Thank you for that, Dowrene, because I know Lynn very well. I haven't seen her. I saw her a lot when I was in the Academic Senate next-door to her; but ever since then I don't see her but once or twice a year. Well, I'd better have lunch with her and find out what's going on. And maybe I'll get to talking to you and who was the other person we ought to sit down with? You had someone you mentioned (inaudible) or that could possibly solve this problem.

DH: Well, she was just a person . . . She worked in Administrative Services in Central Records.

SM: And who was that again?

DH: Norma Jean Nebeker.

SM: Yes, I remember her. I know her, yes.

DH: Yes.

SM: Right.

DH: And she (inaudible).

SM: Spell her last name.

DH: Well, it's Norma, N-O-R-M-A, and then J-E-A-N, and N-E-B-E-K-E-R.

SM: Okay.

DH: And she is still here on campus and would remember . . . I don't know that she would remember where all the records are. That would be almost impossible without an index, but she at least knows what the system was, what the old system was. And that's about all I can suggest.

SM: Well, that's very helpful, Dowrene. And if I get onto Lynn and have a good talk with her . . . If she's going to say, "Well, we know what we want to do. We haven't got the money to do it." (inaudible) what do you call optical scanning? Is it very expensive? Is that right?

DH: Yes, the equipment is.

SM: Oh, the equipment is. Well, have you any other thoughts for us, Dowrene? (chuckling)

DH: (laughter) Well, Sam, I don't know. I can't think of anything, at least in the area of records. I think that it's interesting to note that we have come a very long way in the area of policies and procedures on this campus. And we had the very first manual of any campus and I think we still have the best one.

SM: Good.

DH: So we really . . . We did a very good job on that and we took all of the staff personnel programs and put them all in the one manual, which none of the other campuses have done.

SM: That's great.

DH: So we've really done the best we can to get as much information as possible to all the departments, deans, directors, secretaries, anybody who needs any information. And we try to have as much available as possible.

SM: Well, that's good to hear. And that's one thing that's working. Well, now, if we can get it going the other way and see that everything gets to the Archives or gets stored correctly, where we can identify something when we want it. Because I'm going through . . . I will be going through Archives when this is completed. This project Jack has budgeted me for sixty-five interviews, and I think you're fifty-one or something like that. So I'll be finished in . . . I'm seeing Fred Reines next week, and, you know, I'm beginning to line up Sherry Rowland. I want to catch him while he's in town. (chuckling) And it's been very interesting and it's interesting to find out what one person recollects as against another. But this has been a very enjoyable interview and I want to thank you, Dowrene. And we may talk some more about this, maybe not as an interview, but getting me straightened out. Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW