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Dr. Carl Becker interview for Wright State University History Course 485

Jason Elkins

Carl Becker

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Jason Elkins

Introduction

This interview was about Dr. Carl Becker, a semi-retired Wright State University professor, who taught for nearly twenty-six years. He was one of the first faculty members at Wright State when it opened in 1964 as a branch of Miami University and Ohio State University. He was involved in WSU's public history program and the university press. He will discuss his early years teaching at WSU; his education background; the field-trips he has taken with students visiting historical societies in Ohio, Chicago, and Washington, DC; his war experience; the book he has written; and the WSU's archives and special collections.

I interviewed Dr Becker at his home in Miamisburg, Ohio on 22 April 2001 Sunday evening around 6:30pm.

Jason Elkins

Tape Summary

Dr Becker you were once a student, tell me about when you were in college.

[00.00] He went to Oterbine College, Wisconsin University, University of Cincinnati, and Miamisburg High School; Majored in history, English history.

How did you become interested in history?

[1.00] Instructor at Oterbine.

You were one of the co-founders of WS's public history program.

[2.77] The founding of the public history program and archival work.

How would you define public history?

[3.08] A program that would tell the public what archivists do: preparing manuscripts, records, and material viewed by the public at museums.

Tell me about the program and courses.

[8.60] Courses were offered about archival work: preserving material, cataloging, preparing the use by the public. The director of the Montgomery County Historical Society would teach a course on what curators do in a museum. The preservation of local history.

Tell me about the field-trips.

[16.13] Faculty and students went on weekend field-trips to various places: Chicago, Washington, DC to explore museums, national parks, and historical societies. Not much financial support by the university.

Tell me about the early faculty members.

[18.86] Some concerns from the history department faculty members about the program swallowing up the masters program. The public history program did not need a lot of resources as there was not a full-time faculty teaching it.

How would you rate the success of the program?

[21.20] Rated in two ways: program declined a bit and evidence to revive and keep the program moving along. Many graduates found jobs in archives at universities, historical societies, and National Archives. They eventually rose to administration positions.

Jason Elkins

Tell me about the early years at WSU.

[29.45] Many new faculty members coming; developing curriculum courses; constant changes. Many students struggling to get their doctorate, most came from Ohio State. WSU was not an independent university yet (from Ohio State) and received little direction. The program started to grow and faculty members needed more resources.

Tell me about the courses you taught.

[33.25] Dr Becker taught courses of American history survey, Ohio history, Civil War, honor's sports history, World War II, and American War in the Pacific.

What was your position in the war and what were your war experiences?

[41.14] Dr Becker was in the army and served in the Philippines and Okinawa. He did not engage in fighting. He and some colleagues wrote a book about their war experiences.

Tell me about the book you wrote.

[42.45] The book called *Common Warfare...* is about Dr Becker's war experiences. Now he is working on his post-war memoirs.

Tell me about the university press.

[45.88] The university publishes books. Specialized in history of Ohio, blacks, aviation, and child development. Published a diary of a WW1 flier and the mayor of Cleveland, Tom Johnson. The press was called the University Press of America.

Do you know a lot about the archives and special collections?

[54.67] The archives has a collection in business, aviation, census records, micro-film from the 19th and 20th centuries, and genealogy records. It's an important office at WSU.

Do you know a lot about the Ohio Historical Society?

[63.21] It operates through out the state, about 90 historical societies. Huge collection of manuscripts and newspapers. Dr Becker wrote a book about the history of Germantown.

What kind of jobs would one be able to get with a history degree?

[72.90] With such a doctorate one could seek employment at a university or college; state and federal government; archives; or oral history.

Jason Elkins

Transcript

Jason Elkins: I'm Jason , this is 22 April 2001 Sunday, interviewing Dr. Carl Becker. Dr. Becker you were once a student, tell me about when you were in college?

Dr. Carl Becker: I was educated at Oterbine College in Westerville, major in history, of course at Wisconsin specialized in English history then at the University of Cincinnati, in my later years took a Ph.D. That's where I got my education and at Miamisburg High School.

Jason: How did you become interested in history?

Becker: Probably , primarily the instructor at Oterbine College, Harold Hancock. He made it very interested and sparked my interest in history. Couple of other people up there also encouraged me especially a guy in the English department, [he had]been doing a study of Johnny Appleseed.

Jason: You were a student at Wright State?

Becker: No no I was never a student there. I was in the first group of faculty when it opened up in 1964 as an extension of Miami University and Ohio State. It was not an independent. It would not become independent until three or four years.

Jason: How was, like, that different from now?

Becker: Now WS is independent, but wanting a degree one would go to Miami or Ohio State. I don't recall what the residence requirements were. I don't believe one could complete a degree requirement at WS with out going to Miami or Ohio State though I'm a little fuzzy on that at any case. We became independent in '67 or '68 and students could then take a degree there.

Jason: You were one of the co-founders?

Becker: I was really one of the first group. I was hardly a founder.

Jason: You helped found the public history program at WS?

Becker: Yes I did. I was interviewed on this subject by Nancy Gardiner of the history department. She was preparing a presentation on Society of Archivist. I wasn't prepare for that question of origins. I did a little thinking and spoke to Charles Berry. It appears that the idea conceived by Charles Berry. Charles was the chair of the history [department] in 1972 to 73. The masters program in history was not doing very well. It was two pronged. One could get a masters who was primary in education, especially in social studies and in other words it would not go beyond beyond that. Well there were many, many teachers seeking that degree. The other program was a conventional master of arts, which require writing a thesis, the other did not, and primary for students hoping

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to go on for a doctorate, but '73, 1972 to 73 but it wasn't very much, it was limping along and after all I think few students would want to pick up the maters and go on to a doctorate when it was more feasible , more practical, more useful to go to lets say Ohio State then go on to doctorate. Charles Berry was concerned about it and was looking around for a way to move the masters programs along. We did oral history at University of Louisville on a program of the Louisville Symphony. And about that time we had our first full-time archivist Pat Noland who came from one of the state universities in Wisconsin. Pat had a doctorate in history from the University of Minnesota and Charles floated the idea past Pat and past me. He knew I had some interest in archival work. And about that time I had invited a fellow named Leonard Tucker. He was the assistant commissioner of commission in the state of New York. He had run the Cincinnati Historical Society. He was interested in curatorial programs and he came to WS and talked about such programs. They were willing to think about going into archival. But in any case he talked more about it and decided to go ahead with it. That's how it came about, as I recall it. Pat did much work on a propose curriculum. I did some of the writing of the project I don't recall exactly what I did, but then we had to present the program to our own department, then to the College of Liberal Arts and finally to the University Curriculum [Department]. And also we had to get permission from the board of regents, which we did with out any real difficulty and so in 1974 the program began and so soon we had ten or fifth-teen students in it. It was call Plan C. Plan A and Plan B. It was not called the public history program. Plan C. Students did not have to write a mater thesis. They did have do an internship. I think eight weeks and soon we had students working for the Montgomery County Historical Society, the Ohio Historical Society and I think we had one at Cincinnati Art Museum.

Jason: How would you define public history?

Becker: That's a good question. I guess it probably came in positions envisioned by the program kinds of positions that graduate students would take. Would be ones that tell the public has archivists preparing manuscripts and other kinds of records for the use by the public or as a curator in museums, again preparing material for viewing by the public. I know we did not call it public history at that time, called simply Plan C. We expected that some of these people would rise to administrative positions in museums and archives, archives and special collections at universities.

Jason: Tell me a little about the program, the courses?

Becker: I don't remember much about the courses, but of course Pat Noland was offering several courses of what archivists do; preserving material, cataloging, preparing for use by the public. And we always brought in the director of the Montgomery County Historical Society to teach courses on what curators in historical museums did. For a while I taught a course on local history in which we emphasized, I emphasized the means by which historians preserved local history, the kind of research they did. So well that the curriculum was two pronged; it dealt with both archivist work and curatorial work. I suppose had we considered a little more narrative we might have restricted it to one, to

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one of these it might have worked out that way. It was not a course by the way for librarians.

Jason: Tell me about the field-trips you took?

(Both laughed & smiled)

Becker: The field-trips.

Jason: yes

Becker: Well Jason, we could spend all day here talking about the field-trips because they were wild, wild adventures. I think we began the first year, of '74, with the so-called field-trips, we usually went on a shoe-string. We typically managed to get some support by the university, by way of transportation; we were able to use university vehicles. I remember once for example we use three station-wagons. The students usually bore expenses; food and lodging, and sometimes the faculty members received a little help on lodging though not a great deal. We typically went on a Thursday and then visited the host institution on Friday or Saturday and returned on Sunday. First field-trip was to Washington, D.C. There {we} visited the National Archives, I think we visited the Smithsonian. Later in on another field-trip to Washington D.C. we went to the National Park Service, National Trust for Historic Preservation. Other field-trips saw us going to Chicago, where we went to Oak Park; visited the home of Frank Lloyd Wright; also went to his famous Unitarian Church in Oak Park; went to Roosevelt Auditorium, a famous building designed by Louis Sullivan in the 1890s; we visited the Chicago Historical Society. Other field-trips included visits to New Harmony, Indiana to look at the program there and Shakertown in Kentucky. They're always great fun. We did them on a shoe-string. We usually ended up in lodgings. Always a great deal of fun. But always fruitful. I think the students learned a great deal and a number of occasions students ended up with leads to internships. For example one year when we went to Chicago a student managed to make arrangements to do an internship at Chicago Historical Society. Another time one worked on towards an internship at the National Archives. So all that was useful. Students saw some great institutions, in both Washington and Chicago. I think one occasion we conducted a tour on museum archives throughout Ohio. But we usually went to Chicago and D.C. They were always accompanied by various, bizarre adventures that made them all the more memorable.

So I understand the program hadn't been doing them for a while, but I would urge that the administrators pick them up again. They were very instructive, useful, and developing kind of speed of core that was interesting. There was this one time we went to Chicago by train, by Amtrak. That was a different kind of adventure. So that's very briefly the field-trips, the famous field-trips.

Jason: Tell me more about the bizarre stories on the trips.

Becker: (laughing) Well bizarre stories. Well I know the first trip we ended up in a beat up jalopy. I don't know exactly what it was. It wasn't exactly a hotel, it wasn't exactly a

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motel, but there were a group of children there; nine, ten years old and they were making noise all night and then they complained about us getting up early. But there was always one individual who provides entertainment for us. I recall this one young woman who feasted on doughnuts and made a spectacle of herself. Lets just put it that way. I don't know want to go any further than that. I recall one field-trip to National Park Service and another in Washington, D.C. The director of Montgomery County Historical Society, I wont name him, there were three or four of them that went with us. That position changed through out down the years. He engaged in a heated argument with the director of the National Park Service and them at some other institution we were rather amusing, a bit embarrassed by that. On one occasion have a very fine tour of the archive and when the guide had completed it he had asked us if there were any questions. Much to our embarrassment, one of our students asked "Why aren't the clocks all the same in the archive." Of course [that] was a silly question to ask of a profession and rather embarrassing, but we laughed about it for years. So that sort of some when I say bizarre incident. Too many to count. Some would not bare the light of day as it were.

Jason: Let me go back, like when you, when you were part of the groups that helped start the program, tell me about the other faculty members?

Becker: well, ah, the department to be frank was not enthusiastic about it. I think there was some concern that the program would swallow the masters program. That it would become dominate. Which it did. But I think it was a salvation for our masters program. I can't say that any one vigorously oppose the program, but I always did detected some note of concerns, some reservations about the program, some fear that the students in the program were really not first rate. They could not cut it in the more conventional masters program, that sort of thing, sort of concern they certainly never swallowed up many resources, because we didn't have a full-time person directing it. Didn't have full-time faculty teaching it. I taught one, one course in it. Pat Noland was in the department; taught one or two courses. And we had add on from the Montgomery Historical Society. So it was not a program that demanded a lot of resources in a great measure.

Jason: Like today how would you rate the success of the program?

Becker: How would I rate it today. Well in two ways I suppose. I know we have many graduates out in various kinds of institutions. Let me take off some: I know we have one of our graduates as heads up in the division of the archive at Kent State archives; we have one at the archives at William and Mary's ; I know we had people employed at the National Archives, which is kind of a branch of the National Archives; we have had people go into various museums and really transform them into important institutions. For example a fellow named Floyd Barnum took the program. Floyd must have been in his late twenties, he ended up as director of Clark County Historical Society, which was kind of a ragtag operation when he went in there, but he transformed into an outstanding facility and just opened a new, new quarters downtown Springfield. I think cost something like \$16 million. A fellow named Marty West went to Fort Lincoln in Pennsylvania and directed the museum for many years, very successful. Ray Sharp went to Allen County in Lima and there has been really, build a really strong program around

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Lima, Ohio, especially dealing with railroad locomotive manufacturing. There had been some kind of factory there at one time. Many, many, students who went on to good work. Bill Gates for example became an expert in ceramics; he directed a ceramics museum in East Liverpool. It was a branch of Ohio Historical Society. Bill I suppose is the nation's leading expert in ceramics. He wrote a fine book on ceramic industry in East Liverpool. So just a many people went out and found employment entry-level jobs and usually rose to some position of administration, some position of real responsibility. Number of them in Ohio Historical Society. One young man ended up in the some kind of tonic program and helps writes, study down there. A couple ended up in all places North Dakota, at the historical society there. So there they scatter all around. I understand at a recent meeting of the society of Ohio archivists when hands were raised to show where people came from, a 1/3 maybe were from WS, so for students [they] had really good success in locating positions in their field. I said look at it in two ways unfortunately in recently years, from all I gather I have not been close to the program, that it decline a bit. I don't know why, but there's evidence there to be an attempt to revive the program and moving again. I hope it happens. Sounds to me it will. I know for example we have finally a new brochure after all these years. So I think we really achieved a niche in this kind of program and had some recognition to the mid-west.

Jason: You say it decline but.

Becker: Well from [what] I have heard, see I retired some years ago, but I had the impression that a number of students had toppled off. We typically had like 12, 15, 20 in it all the time and I understand it decline somewhat and WS, but I can't, that's my surface impression. I don't know exactly why, but rather it was sufficient attention given to it or what was happening. But along with Charles Berry and Pat Noland I regard it as some important contribution and why I hope it thrives to succeed.

Jason: Have you talked to anyone involved in the program that would might have ideas about how to make the program better?

Becker: Not in recent years. See I really haven't been close to it. I have been fully retired seven years, partially retired since 1996 on. Incidentally talking about students who did well, they, the current directors of the archives and special collection at WS is a graduate of the program, Don Dewey. So we were very happy about that. I notice a woman who graduated from it is leading a very important program at the Montgomery County Public Library. I should note that we typically ended up with a number of people in the late twenties and thirties. Slightly older people who had become interested in archival work or curatorial work.

Jason I'm going to go back, when you were a professor at WS, tell me little bit about the early years.

Becker: Well the early years, they were interesting. New people coming in all the time, new faculty people. We were developing curriculum courses. Constantly there were constant changes in it. A number of people were still struggling to get their doctorate,

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that kind of activity going on. In the very early years the number of people with doctorate in liberal arts was probably 25-30% while over in engineering, science and engineering most of them already had the doctorate, then appoint to the position from Ohio State. Typically I, I had figures not at hand that indicate that a very, some high percentage of them were from Ohio State graduates. In fact I'm doing a work how on my memoirs in which a suggestion perhaps dangerously [that] WS became a hiring hall for Ohio State graduates in liberal arts though relatively few came from Miami University. They came from many other institutions. There were heavy concentration of Ohio State though in engineering and science. Of course in the very early years we were not a full pledge university and we received minimal direction from our parent institution in liberal arts. That would be Miami University. We receive some direction but we were free to bang our own gig. The departments all accrues with in the college and I suppose with in the university were jockeying for resources for me. Faculty appointments arguing they needed them for this and that, that enrollment was increasing, thus the number of faculty should be increase. So it was always interesting to see that, that kind of struggle. Internal politics always at work.

Jason: Tell me about the course that you taught?

Becker: I taught a course, initially American history surveys. At that time they were required courses so there were heavy enrollment. I also taught Ohio history for a number of years. For people who go in education often took those courses. So those are the two main courses I offered for a while. Mid 1970s I was giving a course in Civil War as well as a seminar for our graduates. I always liked the Civil War course. Its rather ironic, it always seen to me that the more difficult courses were the survey courses. They encompass many subjects over two to three centuries. A course in Western Civ's even more [than] that and yet one required them, incoming freshmen. I thought they were difficult courses to teach, very difficult courses for students to take. Where as the more specializing courses covering relatively few subjects, few topics over a limited number of years. The Civil War for example four years. There was a course that seem to me that an incoming freshman would have found easier to master than the survey course, but of course the Civil War course was open to students who had, met some pre-requisite only in history. So I did those. In the '80s I taught each an honor's history in sports history. I was increasingly teaching sports history and in resent years, before, well before, I fully retired. A colleague and I began to teach a course in WW2. And we continue to teach it. Professor Tabogan and I are teaching a course on the American War in the Pacific and it is quite different than the war in Europe. But we were very much like that course and we bring to it a little different dimension: we were both soldiers, both served in the Pacific during the war. You might say what we say comes from the horse's mouth. That's quite true, but it's, we was there we know something about places we speak about. So, so I'm teaching a little bit about that.

Jason: What was your position in the war?

Becker: I was in the army.

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Jason: In the army.

Becker: And in the artillery outfit. I was a private most of the time and severed in the campaign in the Philippines and Okinawa; April, May, June 1945. The best part of the war for me was my service in Hanoi. No fighting there; marvelous climate; easy life. It didn't seem right the war was going on and I took it so easy.

Jason: Can you tell me about your experiences.

Becker: Well I didn't do much. I was an observer, looking for Japanese aircraft. We got cut off by a Japanese paratrooper attack. Finally we were able to save off the attack. That probably was the main excitement. We did very little in Okinawa. I don't know why. There were few Japanese air attacks. The Japanese soldiers did suicide missions. It's been a long time ago. My colleagues and I wrote a book about our life in the army. It's filled with tales of irony. On occasions I'm not doing much at work while with in a mile men are dieing by the 100s. The typical aspect of war.

Jason: Can you tell me a little more about the book that you wrote?

Becker: It's call *Common Warfare*. It's not very scholarly at all. And it got few reviews that were favorable, it hardly sold 1000s of copies, but we were still happy to see it got out. He and I are now working on our, what we might call our post-war memoirs about life for veterans. We have a long way to go on that one.

Jason: Being in WW2 did that help influence you to become a teacher?

Becker: No, not particularly. It was my experience at Oterbine that did that. I had not thought much about that when I was in the army. I came under some direction by a young man from Stanford. We talked about journalism. I was interested in writing. I did find other ways in my own research writing as a historian, very fruitful, we continue to do that.

Jason: I know you are semi-retired.

Becker: Well I'm fully retired now.

Jason: Oh

Becker: I retired partial in 1986, had taught one quarter a year, then about 1990 there about I became part-time, as part-time position director of the university press. WS decided to get into the publishing business. And I managed to get that position and we kept going for four or five years before the university decided to close the press, most unfortunately thing. We managed to publish ten books. A couple of them very good books. But I think the university made a foolish decision during a period of some fiscal crisis, decided to cut it. It was spending a great deal of money on it. So it went by the way-side. So I said I presided over the destruction of the WS Press.

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Jason: Tell me a little bit about the press.

Becker: Well it has what publishers call a profiler: a list in what we would specialize in. We had four. We were going to specialize in Ohio History, aviation history, black history, and studies in child development, that was because it was a school of professional psychology that had opened at WS. We published one book and edited a diary of a WW1 flier. Another was account of B25, B24 pilot and shot over Yugoslavia and rescue by patricians there. We had one on black history. We had a book published on Ohio history on Tom Johnson mayor of Cleveland. Very scholarly book. So all together we published ten books. We published through an organization called University Press of America. We were affiliated with it. It did the actual physical work, we decided what would be published, so that was our role.

Jason: So before the program, the press...

Becker: Yah.

Jason: Was it very popular though?

Becker: I don't know what you mean by popular. It certainly had very little visibility in the university itself; but we got constant inquires and manuscripts from all over the nation, but we were certainly not, getting us great manuscripts. We were just getting into the business and there are presses all over the nation. Unfortunately the university gave up on it far too soon. There was some kind of study done by Dwight Tush in accounting firm. Some young man came in and careering me about the press; that he had no idea what it was about and went back with some recommendation that we be close. And it was sad, it was heartening that the university gave up after such a short period. Part of the reason that it began, the press, was to have the means to publish a photo graphic history of the Wright brothers. We should have gone farther.

Jason: Was it very disappointing for you for them to close the press?

Becker: Well I was disappointed. I thought the university administration was short-sighted. The press could be very expensive, no doubt about that. We had archives something we had some books in print and a couple of them quite worthy and to give up after only a few years. It was quite disappointing and sad. Of course I became fully retired and have time to do my own research.

Jason: Let me go back to the public history program.

Becker: Yah

Jason: How do you think the program is going right now?

Becker: Well I don't know that much about it. But it sounds that Prof. McLellan is determined to get it moving. So I talked to her on several occasions and she's very

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interested in pushing it along. I wish her success. We still have some visibility in the mid-west as a leading institution and the training of the archive curator, so there's that background work. And we have a fine archive and special collection.

Jason: Do you know a lot about the archives?

Becker: It has a fine collection in business, aviation, and it has a good collection of census records, micro-film of census records from 19th to 20th centuries. Though it's not in the archive now. The archive are instrumental in acquiring micro-film of Ohio newspapers for south-western Ohio, which is really a treasure. Many small newspapers, from lets say West Liberty, Ohio, Spring Valley, Wapakaneta, Troy, and Miamisburg.

(Tape stops)

Jason: Please continue about the archives and special collection.

Becker: Well it's an important office here at WS. I know hundreds of people come in using it, especially people interested in aviation history. They come in. We also have I think a portion of the Cox papers. James Cox was governor of Ohio; presidential candidate in 1920. I know we had some collections on him. Number of collections on local business firms. There's much there that researchers can use. Of course many genealogists come in, that's inevitable.

Jason: I'm interested in genealogy myself. I personally would find that interesting to go to the archives and look at the genealogy reports. Do you know a lot about the Ohio Historical Society?

Becker: Well it's a very vigorous organization. Constantly have problems of all sorts. From what I understand, operates more sites throughout the state, 90 some, than any other state historical society in the nation. It has a vigorous collection, huge manuscript collection, newspapers collection. For example if you wanted to read the Marion Star 1917 you can go to the Ohio Historical Society and can see it on micro-film. Thousands of newspapers. Huge collection of Warren Harding papers. Biggest publication program. It publish a state journal, very scholarly, called Ohio History and it publishes one of the most popular, popular historical magazines in the nation called Timeline. It comes out every two months. It covers a vast range of subjects. I got into it five or six times. I always have to get an article into it. It's really a very important institution. Of course you know that the historical society in Ohio has sprung up by the score from about I'd say 1960s on. What happens as I view many communities were going through a historical anniversary commemorating years of their founding. Miamisburg for an example my hometown was about to celebrate it's ...centennial in the 1960s, not surprising some people decided that we needed a historical society and we now have one and it's very active, has its own building, it's a museum. I did a little study about nine years ago, I was able to determined that 1900 to about 1950 maybe six or seven societies organized an estate about getting one. In 1960 typically you had 10, 20 big organize every year. You look around this area, for example and find Centerville, West Carrolton, Farmsville,

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Brookville, Franklin historical society. All of these just appearing in recent years. A lot of lay interests in American history and history of local communities. Germantown has over 400 members. They even publish a very scholarly book. I wrote it myself of the history of Germantown. Even if one doesn't work in the field, there are opportunities for all kinds of volunteer work in local historical societies.

Jason: Can you suggest what they might do to make them better?

Becker: Well I think a lot of legwork; a lot of promotional work; a lot of advertising. Get out to other colleges and offer to urge students into the program. I think we have to seek assistantships. Right now I don't know how many the department has. Obviously that's one way to do it. And to increase the amount of assistantships. The last I knew the value was far below that of other state universities. I don't know what that figure is now. There's two ways: increase assistantships; do a lot of promotional though out the mid-west. At one time when I was director of the program I went out several times to universities and talked to prospected students. I would hope that would become a regular part of the program.

Jason: Ok. One last thing, how would you describe the program like if a student asked you how they could if they were interested in like becoming a historian how would they go about doing that?

Becker: I would want to know what they have in mind, thinking about entering the profession in an academic setting as a faculty member, if so they would have to face the fact it can be a pretty difficult task because today to get into a teaching position one would have to have a doctorate and a doctorate from a well recognized program too. In American history there's a great deal of competition. You get in certain field it's less. If you were a woman, black you have a leg up in employment rate. But in American history it's, it's a very crowded field and so if I was talking to someone who was interested I would point out to him or her that it can be a difficult road to travel down. It takes years to go to the best institution that you can for a doctorate. On the other hand if interested in archival work, curatorial work I wouldn't hesitate at all to advise them to think about WS.

Jason: How would you rate WS?

Becker: I don't know that much about their program. Well certainly we would not be in curatorial field. I've been out of the field for so many years I don't know where it stands. I do know. I think there may be a competing program out at Kent State, but I don't know anything about it. I understand library programs have taken over some of the archival world so that might be an opportunity for someone who is interested in archival work going to libraries. Incidentally I forgot to mention it to you. A number of our students end up in records management. Now records management is not an archival field per say, but it's kind of a branch. I know one of our students, he didn't even in fact graduate, he had offers of jobs, ended up as records management. First at University of Cincinnati and then first records manager at Harvard. And right now we have a woman who is the records manager for Green County. It was kind of an allied field. It was not a direct

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program of the public history program. So that's, it's usually called records management. It's been another advantage of that program. In fact perhaps the public history program should opt consider to develop a specific program in records management.

Jason: Tell me a little bit about like what kind of jobs like one can get with this kind of degree.

Becker: With a doctorate you might end up, you probably seek a faculty appointment at some university or college. There are of course positions for historians in the government and state department. For example especially in the state department and in other departments of the government, historians might be found too. But in another level of course curators, you get in all kinds of fields. I know I mention Bill Gates became a expert in ceramics and curator of a ceramics museum. A fellow was interested in military history and he is an expert in military hardware, the 19th, the 18th and 19th centuries. So that kind of position. In the archives you of course would be dealing with manuscript collections and processing them; inventorying them; know what these manuscripts contain; for what conditions they could be used. Of course there is some room too for people in oral history. I don't know how fruitful that field is.

Jason: That's a lot of information.

Becker: Yes it is.

Jason: I appreciate the interview.

Becker: Well ok, Jason goodluck.

Jason: Thank you

Becker: I just have been out it, doing my own research, writing here for history five or six years and I don't know much beyond that. I keep in touch with the history department and I say I teach that one course in the war. The war in history.

Jason: Well you told me quite a bit and I appreciate it.

Becker: Ok

Jason: Thank you.