This is an interview with C. Chadd Taylor done on November 29, 1997, and I am Bill Pickett

Pickett: I'm speaking this morning with Mr. Chadd Taylor. You were saying that when you were SGA [Student Government Association] president you would give the report of the SGA every time there was a Board meeting.

Taylor: Right. And we had both an oral report and a written report. My recollection is what we would do is — there were several committees of the Board of Managers: finance, student life committee, academic committee — I would attend one of those committee meetings. Usually, I would attend the student life committee, I think, and would send some of my cabinet members to the other committees — academic or finance, or whatever there was. I don't remember [the specifics]. Each of us would present a written report with budgetary information and other various types of information that would be passed out to all of the Board members. There was a section on sort of the issues of the day from the student's perspective. I think that was probably how we got involved, initially, in the coeducation issue. I had made a decision at some point to put the issue of coeducation in this report and to take somewhat of a stance on that — which I think had never really been done by the students before, at least in recent history. It was something that the students tended to . . . the students, basically, just deferred generally to the Board on hot topics in the '80s. It was quite a privilege to just be able to sit down at the same table as the president, the CEO [chief executive officer] of Delco Electronics, or Mead Paper, or whatever. So the last thing that you wanted to do was upset anyone [on the Board]. I agreed, to a large extent, to that philosophy. But it was also like, "Hey, why are we here? Are we just presenting [only] budgetary information to the Board of Managers that they can rubber stamp?"

Whatever: twenty thousand dollars. Something very measly, compared to the real issues that
they are thinking about day-to-day. And it seemed like this was an important issue and [one in which] the student voice needed to be heard. So at some point we made the decision to break away a little bit from that mold and start to get involved. And my recollection is that you'll probably find the first voicing of that to the Board of Managers in one of the reports. As we continued to write reports . . . you know there is a Board of Managers meeting two or three times a year, at which we would submit a report. I think that we may have gotten more aggressive as time went on. The first one was probably not as aggressive as the latter ones.

**Pickett:** When did you become president of [the] Student Government [Association]? Were you vice-president at first?

**Taylor:** No, I wasn't. I ran when I was a junior. I started here in the fall of '87. I graduated from high school in '87. I started here that fall. So, I graduated in '91. My junior year would have been '89-'90. So I would have ran, I think, in 1990 and taken office that spring. The term of the presidents, at that time at least, went from — I want to say — spring to spring. But I'm not sure. That's a good question because the timing of all this is kind of important.

**Pickett:** Well, the first vote of the Board during this time period was in May, 1991. That failed. The second vote then was in October, and that succeeded.

**Taylor:** Right, and I think . . .

**Pickett:** At the time it succeeded, you were an alum by that time?

**Taylor:** I was an alum. I was living in Terre Haute when it succeeded. I was still working on a [Rose-Hulman related] project, but I was going to law school [at Indiana University] in Bloomington. I was also working through my best friend, George Shumay, who had taken the
reins, to some degree, on the coed coalition at that time. But, yes [I graduated] in May of 1991. I believe that the president of the SGA at that time was Jeff Haggerty, who succeeded me. I was president that year [during] the first and second quarters and then during of the third quarter of the previous year. I think that's right.

**Pickett:** Third quarter one year . . .

**Taylor:** You would do the third quarter one year and the first and second quarter of the next year. So Jeff Haggerty became president. He was also a very good friend of mine. We were on the same [residence hall] floors and did RA [residence advisors] stuff together and that sort of thing. I think I supported him to a large degree in his campaign and he became the SGA's president. The coed coalition started in May [1991]. I lived on campus that summer over in Deming Hall.

**Pickett:** So he was president by that time. But the coed issue had come to a head during your time. So he was carrying forward.

**Taylor:** I think so. But really it was a concerted effort in the truest sense. The entire, and I'm sure we'll get into more of the details of the strategy later, but, the entire strategy was known to the Student Government Association and to the people on the coed coalition. So we all worked together. Although the specific tasks that were performed were different between the Student Government Association and the coed coalition. Because, politically, the groups were made up of different constituents. The coed coalition [was] made up of not only students, but faculty and administrators, as well. The coalition had to take a different approach, a different line of attack, I suppose you could say, than the students. Our view at the time was — my view at the time was —
that the students were more free to take an aggressive stance. And so we worked together to
make that happen to push things through the Student Congress that were a little more aggressive
than the issue addressed by the coed coalition. The image that we wanted the coed coalition to
have was a more constructive one. But, all along, the two groups were working together.

**Pickett:** Members were cross listed?

**Taylor:** Absolutely.

**Pickett:** Members of coed coalition and members of student government . . . the leaders of both
were often the same people.

**Taylor:** Absolutely. No doubt about it.

**Pickett:** But as entities they took a separate . . . one was more radical than the other. That was
part of the strategy?

**Taylor:** Absolutely. I think it was very . . . I think it was very well planned. It was very well
orchestrated. I don't think I could characterize the Student Government Association as radical
*per se* — especially when you think of the radicalism of students in the last thirty years on other
issues around the country. What I mean by more aggressive here, was the students simply came
out and denounced the decision by the Board of Managers not to admit women to Rose-Hulman.
And that decision was in May of 1991. You know the fact that the students came out and
denounced them was very upsetting to many of the Board members. It seemed a bit
presumptuous [to them], I'm sure.

**Pickett:** You denounced it in a letter — I think, a list of "whereas" [statements], a list of
difficulties you saw with the decision — that you distributed to all the Board. Is that right?
Taylor: Yeah. That's right. I can't say "we" because I was no longer a part of the Student Government. But, I certainly take a lot of the responsibility for that although I wasn't a part — officially — of that. What happened was . . . I don't know if it was me or someone else or a bunch of us came up with the idea of having the students sort of denounce, for lack of a better word, the decision of the Board of Managers to not approve coeducation. But, we had made that decision that we were going to do that prior to the vote. We had anticipated a negative vote. I don't remember when this meeting happened. I think we called a special session of the Student Government Association, which is made up and was made up of maybe thirty or forty students representing different entities around campus [including], perhaps fraternities, perhaps clubs, perhaps dormitories. And the idea was to get this body of people — not just the president, Jeff Haggerty and his executive board — the whole Association, the whole congress, to come up with something. So, I remember making a presentation one evening here in this big . . .

Pickett: The GM room?

Taylor: The GM room, that's right. . . . basically saying to the congress, "It's my feeling that it would be very helpful if the students took a stance on this and really clarified how they felt." We had done a survey of the students I recall, sometime just before that. And I think we may have even done a survey of the faculty to see just what the feeling was out there. And I believe it was 60-70%, something like that, of the students who were in favor of coeducation. And I think . . . this is probably in one of these reports somewhere, probably 80% of the faculty were in favor, if we did that survey — and I think we did. So I made the pitch to the congress to speak up. And
then Jeff Haggerty presented the details of a bill — maybe a better word is a declaration — that we had worked on together.

**Pickett:** You and Jeff?

**Taylor:** Jeff and I. But, I have a feeling, and I don't know this for sure, that we probably showed it to some other people, and even some faculty who were working with us on coed. It was more the students who came up with this. But, we sought advice, [asking] "Are we doing something really stupid here?" That type of consultation. Not so much, "Should we do this or shouldn't we?" Certainly no one from the faculty or the administration was controlling what we were doing. But we would leak stuff, just as a sanity check, to make sure what we were doing was, indeed, constructive — especially if it appeared in the short term that it was not so constructive.

**Pickett:** If the language seemed to be inflammatory, for example?

**Taylor:** Exactly. So we put that together and presented it to the congress. And they approved it, and approved mailing it to the Board members. I don't remember if that meeting took place before the vote or after the vote. But I think there has got to be a way to check into it and see the records or call Jeff Haggerty and ask what his recollection is — that meeting was, I think, before the Board vote. I think all this was approved and ready to go contingent upon a negative vote, which is, in retrospect, a bit striking. It really demonstrates just how orchestrated the "radical" movement was.

**Pickett:** And then once the vote came and it was negative, the seniors wore pink ribbons on their [graduation] gowns.
Taylor: Rose colored ribbons. We ordered rose ribbons and they turned out to be a bit on the pink side, unfortunately. (laughing) The pink had nothing to do with gender. They were supposed to be rose colored ribbons in the spirit of the school. That was the idea from the beginning. Unfortunately, they turned out to be pink so we had to do a little mouth to mouth PR [public relations] as we were passing them out. "They aren't pink ribbons. They were rose colored ribbons." (laughing)

Pickett: Was that part of the strategy, or was that more spontaneous?

Taylor: No. That was definitely part of the strategy. I remember sitting around, and I think Jeff and I, and maybe George Shumay. I don't know if George was involved at that time or not. I can't remember how involved he was at that time. I know that I kept him abreast of what was going on because we were such good friends. But I think even faculty members on the coed coalition were aware that we were trying to figure out how to constructively demonstrate in the event of a negative vote at graduation. Now part of the rationale was that the campus was getting very tense. My impression was it was particularly true among the faculty. I mean, the students were interested, and many students were very passionate. The same goes with the administrators. There were some administrators who were very passionate. Others were hopeful. I think the faculty took it much more personally in a lot of ways and were, as a whole, more passionate about the campus going coed. But they also probably felt more constrained than anyone — certainly more than the students — just because of their political situation. So the idea was, "How do we allow a release [of those tensions]?" How do we allow people to speak up without making everyone angry? People, I think, in the Mid-West — and maybe in Terre Haute,
specifically — in some ways don't want to have anything to do with any sort of student uprisings, or things like those that went on in '68 in Chicago that they saw on TV. Any hint of that type of thing, I think, tends to be squashed pretty quickly here by the establishment. I don't mean physically squashed. I mean just not . . . either ignored or not encouraged. It's just not something that's going to get you anywhere; to be outside protesting, outside wherever — Hulman & Company — whatever. It's just not effective to, like it might be by some on the East Coast or the San Francisco area, etc. So we wanted to come up with a constructive way to let people voice their concerns. And someone . . . it may have been Jeff Haggerty who had the idea of, maybe, wearing something. Or it may have been someone on the faculty who was involved. So we ordered . . . like a thousand rose-colored ribbons. I think, once again, that this was done before the vote was even taken. I think the vote was taken the day before graduation.

Pickett: I think so. It was very close. There wasn't much time.

Taylor: Right. So, at graduation Jeff Haggerty had boxes full of these rose-colored ribbons that turned out to look a little more like pink and passed them out while we were in line.

Traditionally, the graduates walked down from . . . . Is this Olin [Advanced Learning Center] over here? In from of Olin and Moench [Hall]. They start there and they walk down . . .

Pickett: Actually, they form at Hadley [Hall] lobby area.

Taylor: That's right, and then walk down to the gymnasium. And, while we were forming the lines, we made sure Jeff was there handing them out. I think that we had also tipped the press as to what was going to happen, and they were there. There were cameras from the local TV stations and newspapers. We got a spot on the evening news. I believe that Jeff Haggerty was
interviewed and said a few words on the news that were actually aired. And so then we rolled into the gymnasium with . . . I'd say, maybe half the senior class, if not a little more, were wearing these rose-colored ribbons. We made them available to the parents, as well and many faculty members wore them, too. Even some top administrators wore them.

Pickett: Up on the podium?

Taylor: Up on the podium. George Shumay, who was the senior class president, wore one and gave the senior class speech. And I believe mentioned a few words — I don't recall specifically what they were — about coeducation as well.

Pickett: I bet he still has that speech.

Taylor: He may, somewhere. I don't know. I'm not sure how good George is about . . .

Pickett: Keeping records?

Taylor: He might keep things, but I don't know if he'd ever be able to find them once he kept them. (laughing) But I can ask him that. I'll see him before I go back to Chicago. I don't remember if he came out and denounced the decision or exactly how he handled it. But there was definitely something mentioned about it.

Pickett: So, this rose ribbon episode really was able to get the attention of the press that way. That tended to create more pressure and let people know right away that the students felt — or that the coed coalition felt — that a mistake had been made in this vote.

Taylor: Exactly. I think that it was . . . Jeff might remember who actually thought of the idea. But I think it was a brilliant idea, in retrospect, because it did exactly what we hoped, and did so
in a constructive way. It made people look like they were protesting, but were protesting very peacefully without stirring up any . . .

**Pickett:** Yes. Do you have any memory of the origins of the coed coalition?

**Taylor:** Yes. Well, this I think happened maybe a few weeks or maybe a month before the vote.

**Pickett:** You are talking about the May vote?

**Taylor:** The May vote. The whole time . . . from the time I became student-body president until the May vote, I was learning more and more about who on the Board on Managers was on which side of the issue. There were people on the Board who kept very close tabs of exactly what the vote was at any given time. There weren't [actual] votes taken. It was very much like what you'd see [each side knowing the count before votes are cast] in the United States Senate.

**Pickett:** Everybody knew where everybody stood on the issue.

**Taylor:** Everybody knew where everyone stood. And there were a few people out there who had recently switched or indicated that they might switch. They were the people to key on. So what had happened was by, maybe, February or March, it became evident to me as information from the Board leaked to me, that there was a good chance that it, once again, wasn't going to fly, in May of 1991. So my thoughts were twofold. One, how can we turn the key people around by May, 1991? And, in the event it doesn't happen, how can we make sure that when the vote comes around again . . . a.) Make sure the vote *does* come around again. And that's actually a bigger, in some ways, a bigger political issue than the outcome of the vote — actually having the vote. And, b.), Making sure that we do everything possible to increase our chances of turning those key people around. And, as I said before, having the vote was really a key issue among the
Board members. I mean, there obviously was a fight about whether there should be a vote at all in May. In Congress [for example], if something is voted down, it's not likely that you are going to see it come up for a vote again real soon. That was one of the things that we were worried about. Even if it was a very, very close vote, if the vote came out against coed, the people who were against coed, would say, "Hey, you've had your vote. You've had your chance. And it's not going to fly." And then they might start laying the groundwork to make sure another vote didn't happen for a substantial period of time — maybe a year, or two, or whatever. So, we were concerned. I was concerned about that, as well. So we started thinking long-term — I started thinking long-term. I think that you [Bill] were . . . I started talking to you and Thad Smith.

And, what was her name — Professor Ito?

**Pickett:** Ito. Barbara Ito?

**Taylor:** Barbara Ito. There were probably a few others as well that I'm just missing right now. And we started speculating as to what might happen, and what needed to be done. At the same time, I was probably doing the same type of speculation with members of the Board, including Guille Cox. So, the thought that occurred to me was, there needs to be some sort of organization here. There was also the additional problem of the faculty being very, very tense about the whole thing. There were even some people who said they were going to quit if it didn't pass.

Eventually they just didn't see themselves being willing to stay around in an all-male school for a substantial period of time. And I think that people were very serious about that. So, another worry was, what's going to happen after a negative vote in May? How do we constructively divert energy from not only students but from the faculty? How do we make sure that we get to
vote again, soon?" And also that we increase the probability as much as possible that it would be a vote that we [students, faculty, etc.] all liked. Long story. But, the short of it is that, I think that myself, Thad Smith, you (Bill Pickett), Barbara Ito, and maybe a few others began meeting regularly, and just talking about the issue. And somehow the idea emerged to come up with something a little more organized to get other faculty involved in the discussions.

**Pickett:** And this is, interestingly, still maybe a month or so before the vote?

**Taylor:** Absolutely. We all thought that was a good idea. The timing of it was an issue. I think what we decided was it would be better to wait until after [the vote] but to start laying a little bit of the groundwork — just through conversation, or whatever — beforehand. So, there was the negative vote and then [the May 1991] graduation. Then I recall there being a faculty . . . I don't know if it was necessarily a faculty meeting. It may have been a faculty meeting. Sam Hulbert was there presiding.

**Pickett:** [It was an] Institute meeting.

**Taylor:** An Institute meeting?

**Pickett:** A special meeting, I think, called because . . . well, there is always an Institute meeting. This may have been the meeting [at which] the faculty votes on graduating seniors. Or it may have been called as a special meeting. I can't remember.

**Taylor:** I don't think it was the meeting where they voted on seniors. I think that this was either a special meeting or it was a meeting that occurred . . . I believe it was after graduation.

**Pickett:** I think you're right.

**Taylor:** It was held down by the . . .
Pickett: E-104 [of Moench Hall].

Taylor: E-104, down by the auditorium there. So my expectation was that people would be pretty hot under the collar about the vote and upset. Wanting to vent. I think I was right about that. I think that we all had probably anticipated it because it was an easy one to call. So my thought beforehand was, "what a great opportunity to try to get people moving in a constructive organized direction." So, my recollection of the meeting was that people all got a chance to speak and ask questions of Sam Hulbert. It was, basically, a firing line at Sam. And then at one point, I think near the end, I stood up and said that I thought that we had an opportunity for another vote sooner rather than later. And that I thought we had an opportunity to get a vote that would be favorable to those people voicing their opinions — who were upset who were in that room. But I thought that we needed to do it in a constructive way. And we needed to sit down and meet regularly, and think about how to approach these issues, and what to do. I think I may have had a few specific ideas. One was, perhaps, in a paper to put together the case for coeducation — in a report or a brief, if you will. I don't necessarily recall whether that was my idea originally or not. But I'm sure that we had talked about it beforehand.

Pickett: And, certainly, that happened. It was one of the things the coed coalition . . .

Taylor: Correct. Correct. And, I think that, I may have had a few other ideas. I, basically, didn't ask for volunteers. I said, "I'll be contacting you later." I don't know if there was much focus on what I had to say at the time or not. But, I think, shortly thereafter I sent out a form [asking,] "Do you want to be a member of the coeducation coalition?" If so, sign your name and put it in my box. There was a great response. So, the timing was, I think, very good. I don't
remember how many people there were. But, in total, there were over one-hundred students, faculty, administrators, and staff members — from secretaries to fairly top administrators. And then, of course, there were top administrators who were, in spirit members of the coed coalition and would show up to the meetings. But they were sort of unofficial members because of their situation with the Board. And that's very understandable.

**Pickett:** They were keeping abreast of the activities and the decisions of the . . .

**Taylor:** Yes, but they also provided important input. And not necessarily input [like], "You need to do this. You need to do that." But, again, they were a good sanity check. If a top administrator says, "I think that's a bad idea." Well then, I don't necessarily need them to explain. I assume that they know something that I don't. So their input was probably very helpful, although, you never necessarily saw what the pitfalls were. But I think that all that was helpful in keeping me and the coalition on the road instead — as, perhaps, I may have been — steering toward a ditch every once in a while.

**Pickett:** The campaign, in other words, had adequate intelligence. It had an intelligence arm.

**Taylor:** Oh absolutely. Absolutely. And we had intelligence from every source.

**Pickett:** From the Board, from the administration, from faculty, from students. So you were clearly . . .

**Taylor:** And, my recollection is that we may even have had sources from outside of the Rose-Hulman community. But that memory is kind of vague. I think Jeff Haggerty at one time may have had a run-in with a relative of one of the Board members. I don't remember the details of that, but I do remember it being an issue.
Pickett: Do you have a sense of what ultimately, in the summer, or after the vote . . . which of the actions of the coed coalition, or other actions, might have been decisive in bringing one or two Board members [to a new position]. Either causing them to abstain or causing them to vote in favor of coed, so that it would pass in the fall? I suppose you found out after the fact. You had, maybe, had some sense by talking to people after the fact.

Taylor: I think that . . . I'd like to say that there were specific things that happened and directly influenced people, changed their minds. I don't know. There probably were, but I couldn't tell you exactly what those things were. I think that the people who ended up changing their votes are probably the only ones in the world who know exactly why they ended up changing. My real sense of the situation was that the people who supposedly — and I never saw who voted what — but, when you look at all the numbers and you know who is on which base, you can see who's sitting over on the sidelines. So, we had a good idea of who was about to change. And I think the people who were about to change wanted to vote, probably, [for] coed in May of 1991, but did not feel for their own personal reasons like it was the right time for them to make that vote.

Anyone looking at this ten or fifteen years from now needs to understand that many of the Board members are members of the Terre Haute community or near-surrounding areas. At this time, maybe a quarter or a third were like that. I don't know how many. Then the rest of the Board was made up of out-of-towners. But there were certain pressures. And, maybe, just because these people were friends or whatever. And many had strong feelings about it within the group of people who lived in this area.

Pickett: Either social pressures or economic pressures.
Taylor: Could be. Or it could be both. I could not say which or either. But I know if I was in that situation, a Board member in Terre Haute, especially if I cared about what other people thought of me and what they needed from me and I needed from, etc. Sure. You'd think twice about the ramifications of what you are doing. Especially if everyone on the whole Board knows who is solidly against and who is solidly for [coeducation]. It become fairly obvious within the Board who ended up changing their votes even though I think it was supposed to be a secret process. So, it may have been that the people who came around in the fall of 1991 were possibly fairly ready to do that in May.

Pickett: But something had happened in the summer that caused them to do it.

Taylor: Right. So I don't think it was anything direct. I think that it was more of the overall pressure of things. I think it was more of a realization from the Board's perspective as to how important this issue was to the faculty, administrators, and students. It became a big morale issue. No one on the Board wanted to be seen as a bad guy. There were a few people who probably cared less than others. But generally, these people are good people and they did not want to feel like they were stopping everyone else in the Rose-Hulman community from doing what they thought was right. I think just the mere fact that we were organized, we got a lot of press, key press. We worked behind the scenes. We talked to members of the Board. We talked to some members who were probably on the fringe. We talked to some members who were probably not.

Pickett: Do you remember any of those conversations that you were involved in?
Taylor: Yes. I was involved in a couple conversations with Greg Gibson who was one of the newer Board members. [He was] a very young Board member. And his father was a member of the Board for, I think years and years. Greg ended up . . . I don't know if he took his [father's vacated] spot. But I think when his father left, Greg — not too long there after — ended up on the Board. Greg was a Rose-Hulman graduate. And we had talked on the phone a few times, I think, before and after the vote. I had met with him for lunch over at the Boston Connection at least one time.

Pickett: Just the two of you?

Taylor: Just the two of us to talk about things. And, you know, I can't say for sure whether he was a key person or not. But I know that he aggressively challenged my ideas about why coeducation was such a good thing and whether it really mattered. And how important it really was to the Institute. And I don't know . . . I can't say, in retrospect, whether that was because he really believed in sort of the questions and challenges he was making toward me or if he really wanted to hear the strongest arguments so he could resolve doubts in his own mind. My other recollection with Greg was, I don't think the pressure that was applied by the Student Government Association pleased him in the least. I think that it may have had more of a negative than a positive effect on him. I don't know.

Pickett: He let you know that though, too?

Taylor: Oh sure. He wasn't happy about the students declaring in public that what the Board did was, in their opinion, wrong. And I understand his perspective there. I would probably feel
the same way. The Board of Managers is not paid for their time. He doesn't get paid for his time. It's a voluntary thing. So I understand the sensitivity there. But, he had to realize . . .

Pickett: So you got to see first hand, face-to-face the result of your strategy. (laughing)

Taylor: Yes. (laughing) And I'm not sure whether it was a good thing or a bad thing. But I think that it was a good thing in that he got to see how passionate people were and how important it was to the Rose community. I think that Greg's a perceptive person and he probably knew that this issue wasn't going to go away. He could see that. Because he was irritated by the whole thing, I think, indicates that he had a very . . . it personally affected him. And he could see the personal affect on the people out here. So, whether or not that ended up being the key to the fall vote or not, I don't know.

Pickett: There are other Board members with whom you talked, as well?

Taylor: Yeah, there were. And I should also say that people like Greg and other Board members, Guille [Cox] and John Titsworth and others — maybe Clyde Willian and others on the Board — they were working with these people, too. Having lunches and talking on the telephone and all that stuff probably multiple times more in terms of the amount of time than I was. I knew all this was going on at the same time. So I just had to use my time wisely. But I did talk to other members of the Board. I can't remember exactly who. I think that we talked at one time . . . and I don't think that I was there, but [I] had helped set up the meeting with Don Smith.

Pickett: In his office. You did not attend that meeting?

Taylor: I was not there.

Pickett: I wasn't either. Do you know why you weren't?
Taylor: I think that I was in law school. I think I may have been unavailable.

Pickett: I think this was the summer. No, I'm sorry, that meeting occurred on September 17th. You may have well been at law school by that time.

Taylor: Yes.

Pickett: Because another meeting occurred that same day. A group of the coed coalition met with Tony George and Greg Gibson.

Taylor: (indicates agreement)

Pickett: I thought maybe you had been at that meeting.

Taylor: I had met with Tony George once before. And I think we talked about coed. It wasn't a personal meeting between just him and me. It was the two of us and a couple of other people over in the Student Union. I don't remember exactly why. I remember it was near race time [the Indianapolis 500] because he was very busy. So that may have been before the vote.

Pickett: Maybe before the first vote. Or after the first vote.

Taylor: My recollection of that was that I was working on him, trying to persuade him why this was such a good idea for the school. And at the end of the conversation, I think, he piped up and said that . . . well, I don't want to put words in his mouth. But he indicated that he wasn't so sure it was a good idea. He wasn't so sure his family and his uncle, grandfather . . . Tony [Hulman].

Pickett: Tony was his grandfather.

Taylor: . . . would have wanted it. And he wasn't convinced of the economic benefits of it, etc. He didn't say how he was going to vote. But I got a negative impression of where he stood from that conversation.
Taylor: It was during [pre-race] qualifications I think. So he [Tony George] had to leave pretty abruptly and we didn't get a chance to . . .

Pickett: So this was maybe a trip he took over here. It wasn't at the time of the meeting when the vote occurred?

Taylor: No, I don't think so. I think it was before.

Pickett: A special time. Did he come over just to meet with you, perhaps?

Taylor: I don't recall. I think it was something we had set up.

Pickett: It might have been an executive committee meeting that he came over to attend.

Taylor: It may have been.

Pickett: And then you were able to talk with him after that?

Taylor: It may have been. I remember that we sat at a table in the Union and there were a few others . . . Guille [Cox] may have been there, in fact. I'm not sure.

Pickett: But you were able to put forth the case of why you thought it should . . . And he listened?

Taylor: Yes he listened.

Pickett: And then he explained that he wasn't sure it was a good idea.

Taylor: Correct. That's right. And, I don't remember . . . I know that I talked to other Board members that summer. But I just can't remember.

Pickett: The group from the coed coalition had lunch with Greg. And at the meeting with Greg, Greg agreed to set up a meeting with Tony — a luncheon meeting.
Taylor: Yes.

Pickett: That luncheon meeting, then, occurred the same day as the meeting that a group of coed coalition people had with Don Smith, in Don Smith's office.

Taylor: Yes. I remember that development and being apprized of everything that was going on. But I think it may have been George [Shumay] who may have been present at those meetings.

Pickett: I think so. I know George was present at one of them and probably the other one as well.

Taylor: And Jeff Haggerty may have been present, as well. I don't know. Although I'm not sure whether Greg [Gibson] was too interested in meeting with Jeff after his name was signed to the declaration that was sent out earlier. I think Jeff ended up being kind of the fall guy.

Pickett: Firebrand. Identified as a . . .

Taylor: Yes.

Pickett: Going back to the episode in which Jeff, maybe, had an encounter with a person outside the Rose community. Do you remember what that was?

Taylor: I want to say that it was Don Smith's niece or something.

Pickett: Daughter.

Taylor: Daughter? There was a conversation there that had something of interest . . . I just can't remember what.

Pickett: As I recall, for some reason the coed coalition was having a meeting in the alumni room one evening during this time period. At the same time, the Terre Haute First National
Bank was promoting their ATM [automated teller machine] machine and trying to get students to sign-up. This must have been near the beginning of school, I suppose.

**Taylor:** I think that's right.

**Pickett:** Before the second vote. We were filing into the Union building and this booth was right there next to the door that we went through. People noticed that there was a young woman standing there at this Terre Haute First National Bank booth. We all went back to the alumni room. And Sam [Hulbert] was back there. Sam said, "You know who that woman is up there staffing that booth?" We said, "No." Talking to me, he said, "She is Don Smith's daughter." So, I went to either you or Haggerty... You were there, do you think?

**Taylor:** I was around.

**Pickett:** I went to one of you, in any case. Haggerty ended up talking to her. He went over there and really put the pressure on her, telling her that he didn't see any reason why Rose-Hulman student should sign up for an ATM card from Terre Haute First National Bank since [Don Smith] the president of the bank was oppose to coed. (laughing)

**Taylor:** I think I remember that now. That's right.

**Pickett:** When it was over...

**Taylor:** Was that before the meeting with Don Smith?

**Pickett:** That was before the meeting with Don Smith. So the word got back to Don Smith, needless to say. Because she apparently was embarrassed by it. And she said that she didn't know her father was against coed and didn't think that was true. But she was going to ask him about it. (laughing)
Taylor: Well, it sounded like . . . I wasn't at the meeting with Don Smith, but, from what I understand, through hearsay, he didn't sound too promising.

Pickett: He basically expressed his unhappiness with the idea there might be economic pressure and threats of boycotts [against Terre Haute First National Bank].

Taylor: That's right. But there was . . . I remember we talked about all that. We talked about Terre Haute First [National Bank] and whether or not there was anything that could be done there. I don't think anybody seriously pursued anything with that. But there were . . .

Pickett: I think there were one or two faculty members who actually withdrew their money. But of course it didn't make a dent in [the assets of] Terre Haute First. But it had symbolic value, perhaps.

Taylor: That's right. You know that summer we gave . . . I had a few interviews, I think, with the Indianapolis Star [newspaper]. I believe that there were some stories — at least one — in the Indianapolis Star. I remember a reporter came over that summer and we talked for quite a while.

And there was a story that was printed. That was important for us because the Hulmans were somewhat based in Indianapolis more than Terre Haute, at that time. I think if I sit down and look through some of the . . . if there are any documents left over in the SGA office. I could . . . there are probably a lot of things that we were doing. There were a lot of fronts in which we had people out there working. All over the place. I think that day-in and day-out, I talked to a lot of people. But I can't remember exactly.

Pickett: You didn't keep a diary?

Taylor: I don't think I kept a diary but . . .
Pickett: [I remember] you did keep a Franklin Planner.

Taylor: Yes.

Pickett: Do you still have it?

Taylor: I bet I probably do still have the... I could probably look through...

Pickett: You probably have a day-to-day record of all these things. I remember you had that planner. That's when I learned about it. That's how you kept everything on track.

Taylor: That's right. That's right. We would have... I would take that to the meetings we would have once or twice a week. We would have a coed coalition meeting once a week in the Union during that summer with all the committees and whoever wanted to come. A general thing, basically giving a report on what was going on and what should be done. There was always a lot of discussion. This would go on for a half-hour to an hour. And sometimes Dean Eifert would be there. I think maybe Sam [Hulbert] might have stopped by once or twice or something. Then there were individual committees working.

Pickett: One was an implementation committee. (laughing) There was an implementation committee and there was a publicity committee that sent out a newsletter. And then there was the "case for coed" committee.

Taylor: And I think those might have actually been the main three [groups].

Pickett: That was your idea, I think.

Taylor: Yes. I think so. The idea behind the case for coed... that's fairly obvious. To put down on paper the real reasons why it would benefit the school. The problem that we were having was that people... it was easy for Board members who were against coed to just say,
"Well, this is just kind of a political issue or a moral issue that people have differing opinions about. We're trying to run a school here." So the political/moral aspect of it naturally tended to be de-emphasized. Maybe even degraded in some sense. "What's really the meat of this thing?"

So, I think the brief that we put together — the case for coed — was intended to show that there was an economic issue. There was also a student-life issue. There were a lot of internal Rose-Hulman issues besides the moral or political or gender . . .

**Pickett:** There was an educational issue.

**Taylor:** Educational issues. There were all these issues that were involved. We weren't just a bunch of students who wanted women — males who wanted women at their school — and liberal faculty members or whatever. That was the perception that we were trying to dispel — because it was an incorrect perception. The implementation committee . . . the idea behind that was an argument that, "Well, this is just going to be too hard to implement. Once we do it, it's going to cost too much. There are going to be rapes [for example] and problems." The world is . . . the *Chicken Little story.* The sky is going to fall as soon as you implement this thing. "We don't know. We've never had women here at this school for a hundred years or whatever. How are we going to do it? No one knows how to do this. So even if we do decide to do it, we are not going to do it for awhile." Which is what ended up happening. Not because of implementation so much as, I think, the politics of things. So the idea behind the implementation committee was to check into these things and come up with a plan.

**Pickett:** And show that it was feasible. It wasn't too hard.

**Taylor:** Right. And disaster was not going to ensue simply because women were admitted.
Pickett: Tell me how in your knowledge — maybe you don't know — how they were able to get that vote again the following fall.

Taylor: Well, that's something that Guille [Cox] would know something first hand about.

Pickett: Do you remember? I know. Do you remember who moved that there be another vote?

Taylor: I don't.

Pickett: It was Mike Thomas.

Taylor: Oh yes. I remember Mike Thomas now that you mention him. Yes. Mike Thomas was very active, I think, in trying to get coed implemented. And now that you mention that, yes, I think I remember that he was the one who moved to do that [move for another vote at the next regular Board meeting].

Pickett: Clyde Willian cannot understand how he got away with that using Parliamentary Procedure. You mentioned the difficulty that you foresaw. And one of the reasons for the coed coalition was trying to figure out how to get this thing back once it was voted down. Did you or anybody that you know of talk with Mike or talk with Clyde so they would be there right ready to move as soon as . . .

Taylor: No, I don't think so. I talked to Mike . . . I think I did talk to Mike a couple to times. But I don't think I talked to him or Clyde about that issue. By the way that reminds me . . . I think I may have talked to a fellow from New York — a Board member.

Pickett: Mike Percopo.

Taylor: Percopo. Yeah. I think that I may have . . . I don't remember if I met with him or talked to him on the phone.
Pickett: He came to campus that spring before the vote and spent a week here. You may have talked to him during . . .

Taylor: I think that's right. I think I did talk to him then because he was such an important player. It was because he was . . . my recollection was he was dead set against coeducation. This [Percopo's position] was a big win for the Terre Haute Board members who were not in favor of coeducation. I think they felt like, "Well, it looked like to everybody else that [was opposed to coeducation] are just so tied in with each other and the Hulmans and what not that we're just opposed for selfish reasons." I think that they felt that that perception was out there. And I'm sure to some degree that perception was out there. But here's Mike Percopo who gave an air of independence and credibility to their position. Sort of an intellectual type from out East.

Pickett: [He] countered the Carter Smiths and the Mike Thomas.'

Taylor: Exactly. So, we saw him as a very key person, politically. I think we worked on him. I don't know if it was to any avail. I don't know what his position ended up being in the end of things.

Pickett: It's interesting. Just as a side note here — I don't either. He may have voted against it, but what has happened is that he is now a great advocate of coed. And he has just given more than a million dollars to the school for scholarships for people who are going to business school.

Taylor: Right. And I think that at the time it was one of the underlying arguments may have been, "here is someone with connections and money. He's an asset to the school. We don't want to irritate him." That's ironic that . . . well, I guess maybe it shows his underlying good character. That even though he was defeated on an issue, in one sense . . . I mean he took the
opposite stand. And it eventually went through, but that he is still so dedicated to the school speaks something very highly of him.

**Pickett:** Loyal opposition. Remember that one? His loyalty has come forward.

**Taylor:** Right.

**Pickett:** Some people, and . . . I think it might be important to get on the record. The Board argued at the time that Sam Hulbert was fulminating this whole thing — was operating behind the scenes — to get people to go coed, because it was something that he wanted.

**Taylor:** Well, it was something that Sam wanted. He basically knew what was going on, I think, in the spring of '91. He was terribly disappointed [at the vote] in May. I think he would have liked to have been involved [earlier] with the coed education. I said before that he may have stopped by at some of the meetings to see what was going on. I think that is the case. But I couldn't swear by that. Sam and I had a good relationship. He was very open to me coming to his office and talking to him about things. But, I think that he always did take a pretty independent position when it came time to make decisions. He let his opinion that he was in favor of coed [be] known, certainly. Because a person of his position was vocal about that. That certainly . . . I don't know if it fueled things, but that certainly created an environment in which we could be free to pursue all these avenues that we were doing. But, on the other hand, he wasn't the mastermind [of our efforts]. He wasn't thinking up any of the ideas. He probably wasn't even weighing in very much on whether our activities were good or bad. I think he was probably quite careful not to do that because of his position and because he knew that he could be seen that way.
Pickett: So you tended to keep him informed. But you were not taking instructions from him or carrying out his will.

Taylor: Not at all. No, no. Not even close to that. I mean, again, he was an advisor in the purest sense. "Sam, I just want to let you know this is what's going on." And if he ever said, "Well, you don't want to do that," then I would listen. But he would never... he just wasn't very proactive...

Pickett: Yes. Of all the relationships that you had with key people, what was the most important one in developing this strategy and carrying it out.

Taylor: I think there were two. One was Guille Cox, who I think was vice president of the Board at the time.

Pickett: Vice chairman.

Taylor: Vice chairman of the Board at the time. Probably the other was with the faculty members — the key faculty members: yourself [Bill Pickett], Thad Smith, Barbara Ito...

Pickett: Noel Moore, probably.

Taylor: Yes. Noel Moore and other people on the faculty. As well, I had relationships with Jess Lucas and student life people. I was a resident and sophomore advisor, so I already had a very good relationship with those people. And all those relationships were helpful.

Pickett: The Gustafsons?

Taylor: The Gustafsons, sure. Tom Miller, Jess Lucas. But certainly the relationship with faculty was very key, as sort of an advisory thing. You know, I would not have known how far to be able to take things without really understanding the psyche of the faculty and being able to
take the pulse of the faculty from week to week to week. That was extremely important. The students were important but, to a large degree, they were secondary. Because for the faculty this was such an important issue. In some ways, the students were more influential than the faculty. But in other ways the faculty was more influential than the students. Then, Guille Cox — he basically became a role model for me.

Pickett: How did you make your contact with Guille Cox?

Taylor: Well, what happened was when I was a junior in that third quarter and started my term as SGA president — student-body president, whatever — we had a meeting in Indianapolis at the Radisson on the north side of Indianapolis, I believe. [It was] a Board meeting and I was invited to participate just as the student-body presidents in the past always were. And I gave a presentation on the student activity/life, etc. committee about the issues of the day. One of them was coeducation, I believe — that would be in the report, if it were. And Clyde Willian was in the room at the time. Clyde Willian, at that time, was the senior partner of a law firm called Willian Brinks and Hofer in Chicago. Guille sent me to them — the second largest, at the time, intellectual property law firm in the United States. Clyde had graduated from Rose-Hulman. And he had asked me what I was doing after engineering school. I told him the truth. I said I didn't know but that I was going to work for Andersen Consulting in Chicago for the summer but I didn't know what I wanted to do. And he said to me, "Well, you gave a nice presentation in there. Have you every thought about being a lawyer?" I said, "Well, certainly, I have thought about being a lawyer since I was a kid. But I've sort of taken on a new direction here being in engineering school." And he said, "Well, that doesn't matter. I went to Rose-Hulman myself.
Why don't you come visit me in Chicago." So, I visited him at his firm and at his home and he had me talk to his [firm's] attorneys, and got me interested in law. And I also learned, probably from Clyde, that Guille Cox went to MIT and, I think, majored in physics. And then ended up at Harvard Law School and was senior partner to, I think, the oldest law firm in Terre Haute. So, I decided to go to law school and I contacted Guille. And Guille probably had heard of me by this time because I had become quite active in the student government my senior year with the coed thing. And everything [that I was involved] with was something of interest to him. I think after the fall Board meeting in 1990, I mentioned to Guille that I'd like to talk to him and that I was going to go to law school, etc. And so we took an interest in each other. And he ended up giving me a job to work at his family's abstract company based in Terre Haute and Brazil. His wife Cindy worked at the company, and so I ended up working with her most of the time in Brazil. We all became social friends. They became a sort of in some ways a second set of parents in some ways for me, and certainly role models for the law aspect of things as well. And so we became good friends and I even did some work for his firm I think that summer or maybe during the year. Through that relationship, which sort of started with Clyde . . . if it weren't for Clyde, I'd never have gone to law school. If it weren't for that day in the elevator when he gave me a compliment by asking, "You ever thought about law school," I probably would have not have gone. He probably doesn't know it, but that was a big influence in my life. Then that led me to seek out Guille. As we became social friends, we also talked quite a bit, obviously, about coeducation at Rose-Hulman. And then I think that grew into a relationship in which we developed a trust for each other.
Pickett: Yes. That was important, I think, to this whole thing, wasn't it?

Taylor: Well, I think so. Because I'm not sure that anyone in the faculty, in the students, and in much of the administration — Sam [Hulbert] certainly is the exception, I'm sure that he confided in his top layer people — but, I'm not sure anyone else had a direct line to what was going on with the Board of Managers. And this enabled me to have that direct line. To be able to — maybe not take the pulse directly — but at least pretty good second hand with some one — Guille Cox — who I think at one time was against coeducation but had come around . . .

Pickett: By the time you got to know him, had he come around? Or did he require some more convincing?

Taylor: I don't remember. I remember debating the issue a lot with him.

Pickett: But sometimes it's difficult to know exactly.

Taylor: Yes. Of course. I think he had pretty much come around by the time we started talking about it. But, that began our relationship of debate which still continues today.

Pickett: But then he was able to get out of you, then, what the students were thinking. By debating you and being the devil's advocate and getting a sense of . . .

Taylor: Sure. I mean . . .

Pickett: What the students and the faculty . . .

Taylor: . . . the students and the faculty and, to some degree, the administrators were thinking and doing. And it allowed us to not step all over each other or on each other, and do things that made sense from a more big picture, a holistic, point of view.

Pickett: Strategic.
Taylor: Yeah. The right arm knew what the left arm was doing and vice versa. And I think that probably made a big difference.

Pickett: You could calibrate what you were doing.

Taylor: Right. It was a . . .

Pickett: You had a feedback loop.

Taylor: There was a feedback loop, right. It was a delicate situation. So, Guille was probably the one person on the entire Board who — this is my perception — it seemed to me that he was the one person on the entire Board who talked to everyone and really funneled all the information that was going on out here. And, really — I don't think he'd ever admit it — but I think to a large degree, he probably was a key person behind getting the vote again. Although Mike Thomas was obviously a key person, too. But Guille was not only the vice president of the Board, but he also knew all the Terre Haute Board members very closely.

Pickett: And I think took it upon himself to try to talk with all of them.

Taylor: He did take that upon himself. He fulfilled that obligation very well. And he is very good. He is very talented at knowing how to approach people, knowing when to back off, knowing when to be aggressive, and [knowing] who to be aggressive or lenient, or whatever, with. He's a mastermind. He's a genius at that. Plus, he had already established most of the necessary relationships. So he was in a very good position to make a difference. And I don't think anything would have happened at that time without his unique situation and influence.

Pickett: Well, he's descended form Josephus Collett who, I guess, drafted the Articles of Association for this school. Josephus Collett was Chauncey Rose's attorney, or key man —
maybe not attorney. [He] was the second chairman of the Board of Managers at Rose-Hulman and succeeded Chauncy. That's from Guille's mother's side. So there is nobody who has a more legitimate connection with . . .

**Taylor:** Yeah. Historically. That's interesting.

**Pickett:** Yes, and his father was just absolutely adamant against coed — Guille's father was. After the vote in '85 I guess, Ben Cox — Guille's father — came to us [on the faculty]. He had been chairman of the Board but was no longer. He came to us and said, "Well, it's not a good idea to go coed." (Laughing) But his father [Ben] had orchestrated the Hulman gift back in 1971 which doubled the endowment of the school.

**Taylor:** Wow.

**Pickett:** So his credentials were impeccable.

**Taylor:** That's something about my experience with . . . a lot of this sort of — on paper — will sound like such a game of adversaries. But, in retrospect and I think at the time, I felt that as a whole the Board of Managers was a very impressive group of people. Not only were they impressive as individuals, but they worked very, very well together. And it was because most of them if not all seemed like they really cared what was going on out here. From what I could see in participating in Board meetings, they weren't just there [in an attempt] to hopefully get business or something.

**Pickett:** It wasn't just a social time.

**Taylor:** It wasn't a social time. It wasn't a business thing for their own selfish reasons. They were there because they believed in this school. And I think that, because they are often behind
the scenes, people don't realize how important that is to this school. Because they do make pretty key decisions. And I think you realize how important every component . . . I mean, the coeducation thing really demonstrates how important each individual group at Rose-Hulman is and can be. And it's remarkable that such a hot issue did finally get resolved in a constructive way. Not that it would necessarily make everyone happy. But everyone wanted to do the right thing. That's pretty impressive. You don't see that everywhere. That was true from the students, I think. I think the students behaved responsibly. The faculty, administration, and the Board of Managers. And I think that's pretty remarkable.

**Pickett:** Do you know of any wounds that are still kind of festering?

**Taylor:** Not that I know of. It wouldn't surprise me. But, not that I know of.

**Pickett:** Is there anything with regard to this issue that we haven't talked about that we ought to have on the record?

**Taylor:** Probably, but I just could not think of [what it might be].

**Pickett:** Jeff Haggerty and George Shumay, Brian Hales, any other names?

**Taylor:** Yeah, I'll talk to Brian. Brian actually works in my firm now. Brian Hales does.

**Pickett:** He does?

**Taylor:** Yeah. I actually got him to move [from another firm]. I worked on him quite a bit. He was working at Baker and Botz in Dallas. He was doing mostly patent applications stuff it seemed like. What we do at my firm was more litigation-oriented. He, I think, realized that he wanted to do more of the litigation stuff and he had connections back in Chicago, as well. So,
he's working there now. So, I see him virtually every day which is kind of nice. We're good buddies.

**Pickett:** That's wonderful. Well, say hello to him.

**Taylor:** I will. But, I'll mention it to him and see if he remembers anything, as well. I think those reports would be really interesting.

**Pickett:** I'll see if I can get my hands on them.

**Taylor:** I might have something in a box somewhere.

**Pickett:** Well you've got your Franklin Planner someplace.

**Taylor:** I've got those archived somewhere. I'll have to go back... I've got a bunch of boxes underneath the floor. [It's] full of books and Rose-Hulman books and papers and notes and all that stuff.

**Pickett:** Underneath the floor? Where?

**Taylor:** In my apartment.

**Pickett:** Oh, in Chicago?

**Taylor:** Yes. Chicago. But there ought to be an archive in the SGA office of all the reports, I would think. And if not there, then maybe even Sam's secretary or someone up there has archived the Board of Manager's meetings.

**Pickett:** Oh, we have all that. That's all down there in our [history project] office down there [in Logan Library].

**Taylor:** Okay. I'd be surprised if those reports weren't in there.
Pickett: That's right. That's true, because the reports of the entire school are a part of Sam's report. So that's what you're talking about?

Taylor: (Indicates yes)

Pickett: Okay. All right. I have those things. That's good. Let's talk about you a little bit.

What about you? You were born in Shoals, Indiana?

Taylor: I was born in a hospital in Washington, Indiana. I think my parents were living in Loogootee... Indiana... Loogootee, Indiana. They were living there at the time. My father's from Loogootee and my mother's from Shoals. They ended up, when I was a few years old, moving to Shoals. Just outside of Shoals, between Shoals and French Lick — which is the same location in which they live, right now.

Pickett: Your father did what?

Taylor: He was and is... well, he was in the army for a little while. Yes. He was in Germany for four years during Vietnam, luckily. He came back and started working in gypsum factories down in Shoals. There are two big gypsum factories there. One is US Gypsum Company. Ironically, [US Gypsum Company] is a client of mine, now. Their world headquarters is in Chicago. [And the other] is National Gypsum, which is where he works. I've also worked there various summers when I was in college, and so forth. He's just a factory worker. He's worked there for probably nearing thirty years now... twenty-five to thirty years.

Pickett: When you came to Rose-Hulman, you decided to become an engineer and came to...

Taylor: Rose-Hulman to do that... Rose-Hulman is very well known in Indiana and at Shoals. It seemed like there was one person [who would enroll at Rose-Hulman] in every class, or every
other class. And the classes were small. I graduated in a class of 45 students in a very small public school. For such a large geographical area, it was very sparsely populated. So I had some role models that had come here. The person before me, Jeff Pickett, who I think maybe graduated third or forth in his class here . . . the class of 1990 . . .

**Pickett:** P-I-C-K-E-T-T. That's interesting. I've seen some of his mail. I've gotten some of his mail.

**Taylor:** I know Thad [Smith] had him in class a few times. Thad might even remember him because he was such a good student. He was a GM Scholar and the whole bit. He still works for GM, now. He lives in Hoboken [New Jersey] across the river across the East River [actually, the Hudson] in Manhattan.

**Pickett:** So you see him?

**Taylor:** I saw him a few weeks ago in fact, when I was in New York. He's doing very well. So, you know, it was kind of a big thing just to go to Rose-Hulman no matter what you wanted to do in your life. I've always been a little worried about narrowing myself too much. I've always had a diversity of interests. I've always just been a very curious person I think. Just very curious about different things and . . .

**Pickett:** Did you read a lot?

**Taylor:** Yes, in high school I tried to. I spent a lot of time reading on my own — generally the classics. I was raised "the only book that you needed to read was the Bible." We went to church three times a week. Two hours Sunday morning and an hour Sunday night and an hour Wednesday night. My parents still do.
Pickett: What Church?

Taylor: Church of Christ. It's kind of a non-denominational . . .

Pickett: Evangelical?

Taylor: Yeah. I think you could probably characterize it that way.

Pickett: So there is a lot of Bible reading.

Taylor: Oh yes. The viewpoint was that that was really . . . you really didn't need to read books of philosophy or literature or blah blah blah. And Shoals was a . . . unless you stood out or had aptitude for something, it was kind of difficult to be pushed along. There were other students who weren't ready for what you were ready to digest. So I found that lacking. Although we did a lot of Shakespeare stuff, which I think was good. You didn't get a very broad sense of what was out there. So I took it upon myself to do that. Because I felt like I was missing out. When you come from Shoals it's easy, I think, to either feel like there is no other place in the world because you've never really been anywhere, or [on the other hand that] you are the only person in the entire world who hasn't done X, Y, Z. And the latter is probably how I felt. I felt like I was missing out all the time. So I thought, "By George, I'm not going to be left behind. I'm going to go out there and do what I can for myself."

Pickett: So you undertook your own independent reading program in the classics?

Taylor: Yeah. It was basically the classics. With other stuff. I'd dabble into a little of everything. But, yes, it was the basic classics — the Hawthorns, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and, you know, the hard stuff and the easy stuff, both.

Pickett: Plato and Aristotle?

Pickett: Where did you get ahold . . . I mean how did you know about the classics, even? A mentor, or somebody?

Taylor: You know, I don't know. Probably a lot of it was I'd go to . . . there was a little bookstore in the mall — a Waldenbooks or something. And there was a classics section.

Pickett: I see. A paperback section.

Taylor: Yeah, a paperback section of classics. I couldn't afford hardbacks. But I would go there and I'd sit down. A lot of times I'd just sit on the floor and start reading, and so forth. You know and I probably was idealistic, and I think I felt like, "I want the best stuff. I don't have time to waste my time on trash or second-rate, or whatever." And of course I didn't have enough knowledge to know what the good contemporary stuff was — the Saul Bellows, the Updikes, the whatever. There was just no general knowledge about those things at all. There's no *New York Times* book review in Shoals but you have heard of Plato, you have heard of Aristotle, you've heard of Shakespeare.

Pickett: You might have had some teachers who were versed in the classics who might have referred to them.

Taylor: Oh sure. I think that's true. That's definitely true.

Pickett: But then you came to Rose-Hulman and you decided to major in . . .

Taylor: Chemical engineering. I came to Rose-Hulman . . . the point of that whole thing was I came to Rose-Hulman mostly because of it's name and reputation and that I can get a $30,000 job right out of school.
Pickett: Did you get scholarship money?

Taylor: I did. I got some scholarship money, some grant money. I certainly was not a [top] candidate with high SAT scores. I was third in my class in Shoals which was barely 10%.

(laughing) So, I didn't come in with the best credentials. I was very happy to get in to Rose-Hulman. I majored in chemical engineering. And I was very intimidated by the whole place and scared that I would flunk out. So I decided that I was going to work . . . to work ten times as hard as they said that I was supposed to my first semester. I remember this part . . . just before I came in here I was just walking around some of the classrooms. You mentioned E-104, I think. That was my first chemistry classroom with Doctor . . . oh, I can't remember. [He] memorizes everyone's names from the very beginning. He may be head of the Chemistry Department now.

Pickett: Do you mean Dennis Lewis?

Taylor: No. Not Lewis.

Pickett: Is he an older guy or a younger guy?

Taylor: He wore kind of horned rim glasses and very buzzed, short haircut.

Pickett: David Erwin?

Taylor: Erwin.

Pickett: Really? David Erwin.

Taylor: I believe so.

Pickett: . . . Cal Tech . . . and he is my next door neighbor.

Taylor: Scared me to death, the guy did. Ran his class fairly sternly. A very good teacher. But I would go in there at night and I would sit down and I would study in the classroom. I'd come
over here and study to really try and concentrate and try to prepare myself for taking the tests in
the classrooms. And, so . . . I'd get really into it, you know. I did nothing, nothing else at all. I
didn't care about fraternities [or] anything else. I wanted to make sure I didn't flunk out, you
know, and do as well as I could. I never before had a class in calculus or any of that stuff. I
remember at the end of the first semester I had a 4.0. From there, I could only go down, and I
did. But I ended up graduating *cum laude.* Probably a lot [of the reason was] because my grades
my first year and second year were high enough to sort of counterbalance my dwindling grades
in my junior and senior year as I became more involved in student life. But my humanities
average was basically an "A." So I think that I proved to myself that I had an aptitude probably
more in the humanities area even though math came pretty easily to me. It's just that with the
sciences I don't think I ever really got a lot of the big-picture stuff. I was pretty good at really
getting into the nitty gritty of problems and thinking, even theoretically sort of, about what was
going on right then. But, [with] science I had a big-picture problem. [With] humanities, [the]
big picture was already there. I already had a feeling of why things were important. So I think
that probably propelled my interests and made me question, "Do I really want to stick with
engineering?" And I think it helped push me toward the law.

**Pickett:** Interesting. (interruption) . . . [it was] humanities that caused you to consider the
possibility of law school.

**Taylor:** Yeah, absolutely. And the other thing with the humanities was, I really enjoyed it. I
enjoyed the history classes that you taught and the political science classes that Thad taught.
[They] were just perfect for someone coming from Shoals, Indiana who had never seen a *New
York Times — to sort of get in there and understand the issues of the day and of the past. The anthropology courses that Barbara Ito taught . . . all those things were just really influential. I think I took an English literature class. I can't remember his name.

Pickett: Cal Dyer?

Taylor: Cal Dyer. And I remember in the spring time reading Shelly outside of Mees Hall over by the lake, and just really loving it. Really procrastinating [and postponing] all my engineering work so I could do that. And it's still a lifetime love you know of reading literature and history and political science. That has became very influential in my life, not just from a career perspective.

Pickett: Okay. So that propelled you toward law school, then. You contacted me, I know . . .

Taylor: Yes. And those along with the influences of Clyde Willian and Guille Cox it propelled me toward law school. So I ended up going to Indiana [University]. I took the LSAT. I remember driving down to Bloomington [Indiana] and taking the LSAT, and I was good enough to get into Indiana. And that was cheap [tuition]. I thought about maybe attending Northwestern [University], but that was $21,000 a year. And I had already paid quite a bit — or taken out a lot of loans — for Rose-Hulman. So, I ended up going to Indiana, which was a good experience.

Pickett: I guess I’m asking you to look back and evaluate your experience at Rose-Hulman. And for the purposes of this history, does it give young people what they need to have to go out into the world? Be engineers, or lawyers, or businessmen?

Taylor: I think, especially from an engineering perspective, there’s probably not too many places that do what needs to be done as well as Rose-Hulman does it. The engineering school part of it
very thorough. You have to work hard, no matter how intelligent you are. I knew some guys who were really, really bright people, and could really spin-out problems very quickly. They still had to work pretty hard, they still had to develop work-habits that were good, sound and well-thought out. Those habits stay with you for life, I think. My understanding from friends in the engineering world, is that Rose graduates tend to be head-and-heels above other people in work-ethic to focus on the problem at hand. Getting things done. So, I can’t imagine a place doing a better job at that. Now, I’m also always a critic about everything. So, in retrospect, the one thing that would have helped me more on the engineering side was seeing the "big-picture" of things. Maybe it is because I am different than a lot of the students who come here, or that I am more representative, I don’t know. A lot of the students who come here are from Indiana or the mid-west, and many of them from small schools. And, the small schools, although they do a good job — maybe even a better job — of getting kids ready who are intelligent, who read well, do math well, write okay, and focus-in on problems and really develop an attitude for working hard and doing math and science problems, etc., the programs generally don’t have enough funds and resources to give kids the big-picture side of things. I mean, big-picture as in [for example] now, talking about the Mir spacecraft. And, maybe, the problems they’ve had or the purposes of the mission. That’s the science area. There is the politics area, etc. Because small schools are isolated, and not very well funded, the student kind of miss out on a lot of these issues. The only time they really get to think about them, is on the evening news. And many of us [during that time of day] were at basketball practice, or baseball practice, or whatever — or didn’t want to watch the evening news because at the time we didn’t think it mattered. But as far as doing math
problems, I became pretty good at doing math problems. And, so, when I came here I did pretty well at doing problems, and doing problems on a test that were like those I did before. What Rose tends to do is test you a little more creatively than that especially in the junior and senior engineering classes where you are expected to take the knowledge that you’ve learned and apply it to something bigger. And maybe not just problems close to what you have seen before in exercises. That becomes very difficult for someone who doesn’t understand, who has just kind of looked down at the bottom line of things and not really looked up. And, now your asking this person to look up a little bit higher. And they don’t understand where you are trying to go. They can’t put things in the right perspective to be able to focus in on the problem correctly. And that is very important in the real world.

**Pickett:** So, you are suggesting, that right away, when freshmen come to campus, that they be given an opportunity . . . be required . . .

**Taylor:** Well, I don’t know if right away. I don’t know if there is a specific course that would do the trick. I think that it needs to be an effort inside the classroom in each individual class for professors — I’m being a bit presumptuous in telling professors how to run their classes, because I’ve never been a professor, and I’m not qualified to do so — so all I can say is from a student-perspective this is the way I felt. The way I felt was, it would be helpful to me to have more discussion about the big-picture of things. Instead of, everyday, going in and writing an equation on the board. Or even, in the lab, you’re taking chemicals and mixing the chemicals together, and you get a certain output. Well, that’s nice, what application does that have in the real world? Can you name a couple for me to give me an idea. Not only does that help me understand analytically
what is going on, but it also motivates me. There is a feeling in probably in any school, but definitely at Rose-Hulman, "why are we doing this?" You know, "I’ve got to do these stupid, esoteric, problems. The distance a projectile is shot." Now, am I really ever going to have to sit down and figure that out? No. You probably won’t ever have to figure that out. So why do I need to learn it? People need to know why it is important to learn those things. Whether it is a building-block [of knowledge], and when it is a building-block. Then why not tell me up-front where it is we are trying to get to? This is where I want you to be at the end of the semester.

**Pickett:** Tell them at the beginning of the course.

**Taylor:** So you have some direction.

**Pickett:** So they know where each stage is leading.

**Taylor:** And this may be more of a problem in my generation than in previous generations. Because my generation tends, I think, to be a little less focused on specific things, and trying to figure out, "where am I going?" What is it that we’re trying to get, here? What is it I’m trying to do with myself, here? My generation, and particularly the kids who are very intelligent/bright who want to be successful, or want to find the job they love but are not exactly sure of what is out there, and how to get there. A recognition of that problem may help some teachers focus their students a little bit better, and give them the big-picture of things.

**Pickett:** Excellent! Yes. That is a really important insight into teaching. The students need to know the relevance of what they are doing.

**Taylor:** Right. And, as a teacher it is very natural for you to take that for granted. Because, it is so internalized, the relevance of it is so internalized in everything that you do. And you hope that
a lot of that just comes out. But, unfortunately, the subtle approach does not always work. Some of just haven’t been brought up in an environment to get those subtleties; to put two-and-two together. Sometimes, we need to have things a little more explicit. And, then, based on those explicit things, we start developing a talent or skill for putting two-and-two — the building-blocks — together.

Pickett: Excellent. Based on what you know of Rose from reading *Echoes* and talking to Guille [Cox] and whatever other contacts. Would you say that Rose seems to be heading in the right direction?

Taylor: Yes. I would say that is true even more-so than when I was a student. It seems like . . . I basically just talk to George [Shumay] and Guille [Cox], and that is really about it. And just from those conversations and seeing the place, my perception is that it really is putting itself in a position to where it can be seen as the top engineering school in the country. I mean, it did not get there, naturally, from just spending money. But, I think a lot of the facility improvements, and certainly going coed are important. There seems to be — and I don’t know if it is true right now — but in the last few years there also seems to be very high-morale, especially since the place became coed. There seems to be a willingness by everyone to be on the "same train" to get to where we all want to go. And that is really important. As long as everyone can stay on the train, and someone like Sam Hulbert is conducting it and knows the direction to lead it, then this place is just going to continue to go to bigger and better places.

Pickett: Anything else we ought to have to the cause, here?
Taylor: I cannot think of anything, other than... I guess the only other thing I would say is, the student life aspect of this place was a huge influence on my life. Not just the humanities courses but...

Pickett: Co-curricular activities.

Taylor: Yes. Absolutely. Student government, being one. Resident assistant — all that stuff. The fact that it was pushed so much. When I got here all I wanted to worry about were my grades. And after I relieved some of that pressure, it was good to know that there were all of these activities to get involved in that were really being pushed very hard. And it was a good thing that I did or I may not have ended up going to law school. I think [that] was a good move for me, personally, because of that. Obviously, the connections that I made were incredibly influential in what I decided to do with my career. But, my co-curricular activities prepared me very well for law school. Not only speaking in class, and so forth, but I was able to become editor-and-chief of my law journal, at IU [Indiana University]. And I already had opportunities for leadership — run an organization, those things — at Rose-Hulman. A lot of people get that kind of opportunity here, to be president... a fraternity or the rifle organization, or whatever. I think that is very important. And the extra curricular things I did in law school which weren’t so much — were extra curricular — but were more directly relevant to my career as a lawyer. Certainly, being on the law journal — editor-and-chief of the law journal — that activity is much more relevant to where I work... than being student-body president at Rose-Hulman. That backdrop was very influential and very helpful, and probably helped me get to that [law journal] position.

Pickett: One thing led to another.
Taylor: Yes.

Pickett: Are you in a position of responsibility for other lawyers, now?

Taylor: Yes. I’ve gotten to the point — I’ve just started my fourth year — so, I’ve really gotten to the point where I have first- and second-yearers [attorneys] working under me, now. The whole management thing . . .

Pickett: How many attorneys are working under you?

Taylor: Well, at this trial in January, there will be two or three. There are two under me right now. There will probably be another one or two in that case. There are other cases where I have different first- and second-yearers.

Pickett: Will you be the lead?

Taylor: No, I won’t be lead. I’m still working my way up. But I should get some courtroom opportunities with witnesses, and so forth. Which takes awhile in a big firm. This is, potentially a half-billion dollar case. So, to be twenty-eight years old and to be able to take part in a trial in front of a jury is a good opportunity. A few weeks ago, I argued a motion that was really half of the case, an interpretation of the patent-suit. I — it was myself and partner — gave half of our argument with the Motorola big-wigs listening, and so forth, against a managing partner for fifteen years for Arnold, White & Durkee — which is one of the top-three intellectual boutique property firms in the country. It was he and another older partner — and I’m a fourth-year associate doing this. So I have been able to have good opportunities in court. And also [as SGA president to have] the Board of Manager thing was really . . . working with faculty members, people older than myself was very important in what I’m doing right now. Because most of my
clients are much older than I am and have been in the business world, or the lawyer world, a long time. And to be able to communicate in a fashion that gives confidence in you as a very young person is not a skill that comes naturally. You have to learn that. Certainly, my experience here.

**Pickett:** How did you earn that . . . the confidence? What you did here helped to produce that confidence?

**Taylor:** Right

**Pickett:** But, I have to admit that when you walked into my class, the first day that I ever met you, I thought that you were able to hold-your-own . . .

**Taylor:** [Chuckling] I was the only one in your class who raised his hand when you said, "was there any benefit to the ‘60s movement . . . to the hippy movement? [chuckling] Does anyone here think it was at all good?" And no one raised their hand, except maybe one other person. So you knew you had something strange going on here.

**Pickett:** Well, I really appreciate this. This is really an excellent interview. Appreciate it.

**Taylor:** Oh, good. I’m glad.

(End of conversation)