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Interview with Dr. Roger Ray
Rollins Alumnus and Professor of Psychology

Wednesday, June 7, 2010

Wenxian Zhang, Alia Alli & Jennifer Ritter
Rollins College Archives

JR: Good afternoon. My name is Jennifer Ritter, I'm a student at Rollins. With me this afternoon are my fellow student Alia Alli and Wenxian Zhang, Head of Archives and Special Collections at Rollins College. Today is June 7, 2010 and we are going to interview Dr. Roger Ray, an alumnus of Rollins College and now a professor of psychology.

RR: Thank you.

JR: All right. So, can you start by telling us a little about your family background, your childhood, formal education?

RR: Ah, I was born in Indiana—central Indiana, and my father was a self-employed businessman most of the time after I was born. We were in the fast food restaurant business and in that period of time, fast food—which was mainly in the form of drive-in restaurants—did not remain open in the winter time, so we began wintering in Florida. That began when I was about nine years of age and by the time I was in high school I began to spend all of my time in Florida. So I was in school in Florida for about five months a year, from fifth grade up until eighth grade and then ninth through twelfth grade I was full time; and that was in Winter Haven, Florida which is in central. I was—we lived on a lake so I was an avid water skier and skied for Florida's Cypress Gardens, which was a very active tourist center at that time. They maintained a very active competitive professional tournament team and I was a member of that team. So I did a lot of water skiing in my early teenage years. And when I came to Rollins I actually had a small scholarship from the Kiekhaefer Mercury Marine Outboard Motors that I had won because of winning a national tournament, and Rollins had a ski team and so Rollins was one of my favorite picks of somewhere to come. And I had by that time retired from professional skiing but continued to ski for the Rollins team during the three years I was here. I actually went through the undergraduate program here in three years instead of four. I ended up going to summer school a couple of summers and taking overloads; and so, I skied for the Rollins ski team for those three years.

JR: I understand in 1991 you were inducted into the Alumni Sports Hall of Fame as well.

RR: I was, I was. That was a result of the little bit of post-professional skiing that I did for the Rollins team. Yeah.

JR: So when you were a student here, what was the college like?

RR: Much smaller than it is today. I actually entered Rollins in 1959, so I'm just closing about half a century of affiliation with Rollins. I came in the fall of '59 as a freshman. I graduated in 1962. And the school was about seven hundred, seven hundred fifty students at that time. Probably less than half of the number of faculty we currently have. I was both a well—we had at

that time what was called a combined major, which allowed you to do about two thirds of each of two majors and put the two together. So I was a math and psychology combined major, and I decided to go to graduate school in psychology and minored in math even in graduate school. So it was a friendly, small place. We had a psychology department of about two members, two faculty members. And we had a math department of two members and maybe our registrar taught a couple of math courses, so it wasn't a very large place at that time.

JR: What was your impression of the student body then compared to now? How has the school changed in your years of absence?

RR: There's a sizeable proportion of the student body that's still very much like the student body was when I was here. It was a school that was an expensive school of the time to come to, although I think my tuition for my first year was only around eight hundred dollars for tuition and room and board. By the time I graduated it had moved up to like fourteen hundred or fourteen fifty a year. Now it's in the mid to something forties. So it's changed a bit. But even in that era there were a lot of students from the Northeast and the Midwest who were from prep schools and wealthy schools and so forth. We had probably a much smaller minority and a much smaller cadre of really bright students than we have today.

JR: So, when you graduated in '69, did you ever imagine that you would return as a faculty member?

RR: Had no prospects of that, didn't think about it at all, and in fact, when I went to graduate school I thought I might be a clinical psychologist and somehow end up in private practice. I went to the University of Wisconsin for two years and then took a leave of absence from graduate school and taught high school mathematics—back at my alma mater high school as a matter of fact—in Winter Haven for two years. This was in the Vietnam War era and I was on deferments for teaching and so I never served in the war, but as the war wound down I was able to get deferments again, I went back to graduate school. When I went back I shifted from clinical to general experimental psychology and my two years of teaching in high school convinced me that I would much rather teach in probably college rather than high school. Then I would have a clinical practice. So it wasn't until probably four or five years out of undergraduate school that I decided that I might want to teach. Fortunately, as the year that I completed my Ph. D. Rollins had an opening and I applied and interviewed and been here ever since.

JR: Back tracking a little bit, what sparked your interest in psychology, say, over mathematics?

RR: The first spark came—actually both of them—where sparked in high school. I had some excellent teachers both in math and psychology in high school and my course in psychology was a year-long course. It really got me interested in psychology and I had followed the math track for college preparation pretty much anyway and liked math. So when I got here I just pursued both of them and it turns out that while I was here I enjoyed both of them, but I liked psychology better. So, I decided when I went to graduate school I would go ahead and continue in psychology.

JR: In teaching your psychology, what kind of courses do you usually teach? Which ones do you enjoy the most?

RR: Well, I teach intro. That's not my most enjoyable course although it is certainly a fun course to teach. I teach a sophomore level course that's a descriptive methods and statistics course. I teach an upper division course in learning, which is really one of my favorite courses, and I occasionally teach a senior seminar in advanced general psychology, which is really one of my favorites. And I usually maintain a research seminar with independent study research students which I really enjoy a lot; gives me a chance to work with students somewhat like the summer research program does.

JR: Going through your files I noticed you both do a lot of research yourself and are very heavy on emphasizing research for students—

RR: (at the same time) I do.

JR: —Could you elaborate on that?

RR: As an undergraduate at Rollins, when I went to an R1 research level institution for graduate school, I found that Rollins had not prepared me all that well for a research environment. We did not have a psychology department that had any laboratory component to it. We did have a senior research project, but it was pretty much invent your own materials and it was not, it was not very well developed. So I found when I got there that I was under prepared for the kind of program I was in. And when I came back to Rollins I actually—during the interview—they were looking for an experimental psychologist and they had already made a commitment to try to expand the laboratory component of the psychology program, which was then actually an integrated department called behavioral science. There were psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists in the department at that time, which appealed to me because I had had also graduate minors in cultural anthropology. But that whole program of research started when I interviewed and they gave me some start up money to actually build a laboratory here. And so I did and then ultimately got some grants and added to it and over the years it expanded. And that was really when I first got here we had a spool of wire and a screwdriver and that was the entire laboratory. It wasn't very much. (laughs)

JR: Along those lines, several years into your time here I know the psychology department was moved from—I believe it was the Knowles building—

RR: (at the same time) Yeah.

JR: —and construction began on the Johnson Center.

RR: We're almost sitting right under what my office—where my office was, as a matter of fact, Knowles sat on the corner of where Olin sits now, and the science division had just moved out of the building and moved and moved into—for the first year, it was just opening—Bush Science Center. If you'll look on the side of Bush Science Center, I think it says '68, '69 something like that. And so they moved in that fall and we moved into a stripped out, vacated chemistry and

math facility. Still had the hard surface sinks and so forth, and they were calling that a psychology laboratory. But I had a nice corner office that overlooked the lawn of Mills, had a nice window on the east side, and a nice window on the north side, and a nice great big oak tree on the outside. So I had a really very comfortable, nice office. That lasted until they decided to tear Knowles down and replace it with Olin library. And we moved to temporary quarters, which was at that time the Park Avenue old school house that's over where the SunTrust building is now on Park Avenue. And we were there in temporary quarters for quite some period of time; I wouldn't exactly call it temporary but that's what it was called. Until we built the new social science building and added Johnson Center to the inside nook of Bush and got our new facilities then.

JR: Actually, we have a clipping of earlier discussing the development of the Johnson Center, talking about how it built up laboratories. Can you tell us a little about what was added and what it was focused on?

RR: Yeah well, it's interesting because for several years after they built the Bush Science Center there were a lot of complaints about how large that building loomed over the rest of the campus because it was oversized, had relatively sterile kind of walls with very little window or breaking of dimensionality. So it was a very imposing building and when they came to have conversations about a social science building which had to be almost at least as large, and then began to look for the place where they were going to place this building, that was done by a committee and I was on the committee and I began to suggest to them that we did not want to repeat the old mistake of building a very large three or four story building over on the only place we had that was large enough to put such a building, which is where the Cornell Social Science Center is.

And so, I also noted that we had—by that time—live animal research facilities, we had a colony room that housed both rats and dogs and occasionally mice. And that it made a lot more sense to me if we could take advantage of some unused space behind the Bush Science Center to build a psychology building and remove psychology—physically at least—from the social science complex, which would relieve essentially a whole floor requirement. And there was enough of a footprint available behind Bush inside of the L to put at least a two story building. And so, we ultimately put the laboratory upstairs because it articulated with biology who could then share our animal facilities because they also occasionally had live animals. And so we consolidated into one colony and put our laboratories in the second floor and built an office complex on the first floor. So it evolved as a way of taking advantage of some not very usable footprint space behind Bush anyway. There was nothing but a loading dock and trying to keep the footprint of the social science building to a much more reasonable size.

JR: I understand that one of the first large projects undertaken there was a collaborative one between yourself and some scientist from the Soviet Union.

RR: Ooh! You've done your homework. (laughter) Yes, actually at the dedication of the Johnson Center I was able to announce that I had been successful in arranging actually two collaborative projects, both of which involved Soviet collaboration. One I had in 1985 spent a summer in the primate research center at the University of Washington in Seattle and they were gearing up for a project which they invited me to participate as a collaborator on with baboons

and hypertension. And they were going to conduct a lot of their experiments in the Soviet Union as part of a very large international collaborative project.

So, I'd been invited to participate there but I had also been an exchange scientist in Pavlov's original laboratory in what was then Leningrad and now is St. Petersburg, again in 1974. And while there—of course I spent six months there and got to know quite well the head of the department—and between that 1974 period and the 1985 period he had been promoted and had become an institute-research institute director in Tbilisi, which was his home country which was the Republic of Georgia, which was one of the Soviet Republics. So he was able to come to the United States and made a site visit and I went back over there about 1987 for a two week period and he said, "Why don't we do some collaborative work?" And so by the time the Johnson Center was completed I was able to announce that in fact, we had also signed an agreement to do some collaborative work with the Beritashvili Institute of Physiology in Tbilisi, actually two members of that collaborative team. That whole process fell apart by 1990, '91 because of the fall-break up of the Soviet Union. But I still maintain very close collaborative ties and employ with two of the people who worked with me on those projects yet today as research-computer programmers in my current research.

JR: And speaking of computer programs and your current research, I understand you've done a lot of work with adaptive internet programming—

RR: (at the same time) Uh-huh.

JR: —Can you tell us a little about that?

RR: That's a complicated story, a long evolutionary tale actually. I'll try to abbreviate it a little bit. A part of the 1985 collaborative project on baboons and hypertension with Seattle, part of my contribution to that project was a descriptive research method called observational behavioral coding, and coding involves taking video tapes of behavior and then having a very formalized taxonomy of the behavior and parsing out what's going on using that taxonomy over time as a continuous record or description of what the animals are doing. That and concurrent measurement of about four different cardiovascular measures were translating into about eleven data points per second and we had over eight hundred and fifty hours of data. And so, we had a huge, huge data set and you have to remember this was '85, '87, the PC was just recently kind of coming into its own. And I got interested in large scale database management by virtue of computers and began to experiment with ways of not only having the data digitized and accessible by random search in a database, but also linking that to digital reproductions of video. And in the late 1990s—eighties and early nineties—digital video was really just kind of being invented. And so we pressed some laser discs for random access and ultimately Apple invented QuickTime and there were a couple of other similar digital players. And we began to hook the physiological data and the behavioral data together in the database and reconstruct them so that you could randomly choose a graph of data and click on any point in the graph and bring those data up, both video and tracing of—a polygraph kind of tracing of all the cardiovascular data. So it was actually reconstructing the original data after it had been deconstructed through analysis processes, and that reconstructive process got me interested in a variety of other reconstructive processes that are largely driven by modeling processes which ultimately became simulation.

And one of my first and major–still popular–programs that I developed was a digital video representation of an animal that you can actually train, it’s called CyberRat.

JR: That’s cool. I also understand that you have our own company now that you distribute these through AI²–

RR: (at the same time) AI², yup, yup. You have done your homework. (laughs) AI² was merged with another company that I had back in the early 1990s when I brought my Soviet collaborators over to train them in computer work. That company was called Learning Applications. But anyway, about 1993 I signed a rather large development contract with a publishing group that was owned by Times Mirror Higher Education, which was a publishing–higher education publishing group owned by the same company that owns the Los Angeles–or did then–owned the *Los Angeles Times* newspaper. Their college publishing wing–they had several of them–but one of them was Brown & Benchmark Publishers, and Brown & Benchmark in 1993 saw a presentation that my laboratory group made at the Society for Applied Learning Technology meetings, and began to have discussions about what kinds of concepts we might have to replace textbooks with electronic products. And so in those discussions we ultimately ended up with a development contract. And to handle that contract I created a company called AI² that was actually a research and development company. We worked with Brown & Benchmark for three years developing what became an adaptive online text based tutoring system in an environment–it’s called MediaMatrix, which is really a general purpose publishing engine that does adaptive tutoring and online certification mastery-certification testing. And that’s been in use now for about fifteen years at various schools. It’s used in about five, six different universities and colleges. We ultimately ended up and Brown & Benchmark was sold just as we were finishing the project–sold to McGraw Hill. And McGraw Hill looked at the project that Brown & Benchmark had paid for and said: we don’t see any use for this. And I said, “Well, the contract that we had signed leaves me the copyrights on the software. The content was yours but–” So I went looking for alternative content and a part of AI² became a publishing company. So we also publish and distribute content through the software we develop. They–I also had negotiated with McGraw Hill, with Brown & Benchmark to extend the contracts into additional products and additional years and McGraw Hill axed that before the contracts were signed. And so I made a decision at that point to find my own content, become my own publishing as well as R&D, and hopefully market those products to the successful end of funding my own continuing research and development and we’ve been pretty successful at that. We’ve been self-sufficiently funded now for since 1996, so about fifteen years. So my software research and development and all the research that my laboratory does on education and on learning products, mostly artificially intelligent laboratory simulations and/or adaptive systems–expert systems–has been funded out of that enterprise.

JR: Wow, that’s impressive. Returning to education here at Rollins, can you tell us a little about some of the people you’ve worked with, or students that you’ve enjoyed collaborating with?

RR: Oh, wow. I’ve been teaching here for forty years so that’s a big order. (laughter) If I started enumerating them all I’d leave a lot of them out. But I do have some very memorable ones. Interestingly enough, I remember some of my students from my first two or three years about as well as I remember any of them. It was a very bright group of students and very active,

and we immediately launched into a number of research projects that turned out to ultimately get published about three years after that, that became very widely disseminated in the profession, and so some of those students got their names on publications that circulated fairly widely. As a part of that, I had a colleague that I worked with and collaborated with for almost thirty years, Jim Upson, who came in at the same time that I did—into the behavioral science department—he was a psycho-physiologist and clinical psychologist and also began to do research. And we established a field school in the island Bahamas. And at that time Rollins had a winter terms that was well, at the time we came to work here there were two winter terms, each four weeks long and each involving one intensive course. So you had two winter term courses, four weeks each. And by creative design of courses you could actually take students and spend six weeks in the Bahamas. And we developed a school whereby we could take a dozen students down and literally camp in tents on the beach and lived in an out island village that had no running water and no electricity and only a few wooden structures and a one-room school house. And we began to do cross cultural research on child rearing and educational practices. Some of that—in fact—did get published and we had students with us that participated in that. So those were memorable days.

One of the advantages that I've always found by working at Rollins is that I could do some very off the wall kinds of teaching and research combined activities like that. Ten years after that experience, I taught a winter term course that went down to Miami Seaquarium and sat on the roof and watched killer whales for five continuous days, day and night. We slept in two or three hotel rooms and had random shifts where people would come and go every four hours, and then got home in time to analyze all the data and get it all put together before the winter term was over. And ultimately those became a series of two or three publications, and of course I remember the people that worked on that project quite vividly as well. Not the least of which were the Carsons. There were three Carsons who went to school here: a retired colonel and his two sons. And their—the wife/mother of the Carsons actually—for many years—was a secretary here in the president's office, Anne Carson. So those were memorable ones and then my Soviet extensions. I took a winter term group to tour Soviet research facilities and institutes in 199—I think it was—'90 or '91. I think it was '91. Which, was the last time I was in the Soviet Union actually, and they were crumbling then. It became a not very safe place to travel with students. And then it wasn't too long after that Rollins decided that winter term teaching was not as good an idea as they once thought it was, and I've always missed winter terms.

JR: So, what were some of the challenges that came along with the various projects and undertakings over the years?

RR: Probably the biggest challenge has been trying to do truly professional work without graduate students. Because, undergraduates don't give you the continuity of time and expertise that graduate students do. So, and unfortunately many of my projects have been very complicated ones and it's hard to bring an undergraduate in quickly, plug them in where they can really be productive, and learn a lot from it and at the same time, get out quickly enough to where they not only have the advantage of it but maybe can get a publication out of it. And that's always challenging. It's fun when you do it, but it is challenging.

JR: I also understand you have some administrative duties: head of the department and the Qualitative Learning, I understand.

RR: Yes, you know those are two different stories. (laughs) When psychology splintered off of the behavioral science department and we ended up—ultimately—with three departments: psychology, sociology, and anthropology, I became the chair of the new psychology department and stayed chair for—I think—about fourteen years. Shepherding through all the construction and moves and so forth, and near the end of—well, just about a year or so—maybe even at the time of, I was going so say a year or so after, but maybe even at the time—that we moved into the Johnson Center. The administration was dissatisfied with the way the then business department in the undergraduate program was structured and functioning. There was a lot of internal strife; it was an overly popular major for an undergraduate—it was beginning to almost consume the entire undergraduate program by virtue of everybody getting interested in business studies. And at one time the dean's office quite literally took over the business department, business studies department. And the president created what was then euphemistically referred to as the red ribbon committee of faculty that would hold hearings and try to see what could be salvaged and/or reconstructed from the remnants of that business studies program.

And I'll make a very long story very short—the outcome of that was that we decided to create a multi-disciplinary program that incorporated people from the economics department, people left over from essentially the accounting side of the business studies program, and some quantitative people and made a program—not a department—out of that mix and called it the Applied Quantitative Systems Program. And so, I agreed to chair that for a period of time. It was about that time that we also were working on the quantitative learning and teaching program grants for developing the quantitative learning center at Rollins. And much of that came together just after we had started the department and I had a sabbatical coming so, I left that department and after my sabbatical the quantitative learning grants came in and I kind of assumed the beginning—founding role of heading that program up. That lasted maybe a year and a half or so before I then got the publishing contract with Brown & Benchmark.

JR: Just to clarify, which presidency did all of this occur under?

RR: (laughs) That was some of the complication of the project. By the time we got funded and I was the founding member of the Quantitative Learning and Teaching Center, the grant and development process of that whole program had gone through four deans, three Provosts, and two presidents. And so there was a lot of turmoil and loss of historic memory—institutional memory. And it just made for a very rough transition to bring that program to bear. The presidency was the shift from Dr. Seymour to Rita Bornstein's presidency.

JR: You've also been awarded a number of recognitions over the years: the Bornstein Award, the Hugh McKean Award. Can you tell us a little about some of the memorable moments that you've had during your time at Rollins?

RR: Well, probably the three greatest awards I've had were—in fact—the McKean Grant, which is different from the McKean Award. The McKean Grant you actually apply for, the McKean Award is just a not applied for recognition, but the McKean Grant is a fund that allows you to fund a once in a lifetime opportunity. And that actually was the funding foundation for the work that I did with Seattle and the Primate Center. The induction into the Alumni Sports Hall of Fame was a good one. And of course there was a nice stipend and nice recognition from the

Bornstein Award as well. So yeah, those three have been nice ones. The McKean Grant came in the mid-eighties, the water ski award or the sports recognition award the early 90s, and then in the more recent years was the Bornstein Award.

WZ: You also have a very successful track record with outside grants. The National Science Foundation, NEH, and McArthur Foundation Grant—

RR: (at the same time) Uh.

WZ: —Tell us about that.

RR: Well, I—the very first National Science Foundation Grant I actually was merely a collaborative author on and we had early funding in the 1970s of a program called—I think it was the CSIP program, College Science Improvement Program—that Dr. John Ross had essentially been, come to the PI on, but he had solicited other departments to write proposals and make it a kind of a college wide science initiative program. That's the grant that actually helped get me to Pavlov's laboratory in 1974. That was the first one, I was not the PI on it but I did contribute the psychological part of the proposal and that had a lot to do with building some of our laboratory facilities. It bought equipment, it involved re-building the internal structure of some of our laboratory facilities, and so forth. So, that was a good one. I don't take very much credit for that other than John Ross soliciting our input and it becoming a very important part of it. The other NSF grants that I've had have been largely laboratory equipment grants or curriculum development grants. And, I have not had NSF research funding so much as I have had funding for laboratory development and curriculum improvement and so forth, we were able through NSF to put in one of the very first multi-media classrooms on campus over in the Bush/Johnson Center area—had one of those really big projectors and so forth, and actually had closed circuit large screen TVs with our laboratories upstairs. We had a sleep lab and you could actually watch students sleeping while in the classroom downstairs and had feeds so you could see the polygraph tracings and so forth. It extended a laboratory into a classroom teaching environment and at the same time you could do digital projection. This is 1989-1990—so digital projection was not a big thing at that time. It was not highly developed yet.

Yeah, those grants have been very useful and productive in constantly keeping our facilities updated and upgraded, and have been important. The McArthur Grant was—not the Genius Award— (laughs) it was a grant that I got to actually help support the work on the baboons in Seattle as well. And I also got some supplemental funding to go to the Soviet Union the first time through a program that Nixon had just—as a president—had signed and put into place that was the US/USSR Health Professional Exchange Program, which targeted environmental health and cardiovascular. And because I had had quite a bit of research in cardiovascular psychophysiology, I was able to get some funds from that to support the six months I spent in the Soviet Union.

WZ: I want to go back to—want to check with you—when you decided to come to Rollins you said the main reasons is because Rollins have a water ski program and also you have a scholarship?

RR: That was as an undergraduate. Rollins of course was a very appealing physical plan. I was a relatively naïve undergraduate and didn't know much about how you go about choosing colleges or universities, and came largely because it looked good and was commutable from home and just—was still in Florida.

WZ: Okay, what is your recollection of the president Hugh McKean then?

RR: Ah, I have fond memories of Hugh. When I came to work at Rollins as a professor Hugh, had just been replaced and he had become the chancellor, which didn't last all that number of years but he had been—had moved from the presidency. When I was an undergraduate at Rollins, of course he was the president, he also taught art and so forth. And I was kind of known by the administration as an undergraduate here for decorating my college dormitory room. No matter where I lived I radically re-designed the room that I was living in. And so the first year that I was here I lived in Rex Beach, which is still here. It was the KA house and I was living there as a freshman. And we found some cut down large bamboo poles and so we made a screen as you came into our room—it kind of made a foyer—and put our beds in an L and had a fountain in the room and had a lot of indirect lighting and so forth. And somehow or another Hugh heard about it and had to bring Jeanette in to see it, because Jeanette was very interested in art and interior design. After that we moved into—well, I was in Rex Beach for two years—my last year I was in Lakeside, which was between where Olin is and where the Beanery was. It was an old front porch wooden house structure and my former—well, my roommate who had been my roommate in Rex Beach also got moved and we moved to Lakeside, and we each had our own rooms but we had adjacent rooms and we had a door in between them. So we converted one room into a bunk bed bedroom and the other one into a living room that had a raised floor and a fireplace and entry foyer and so forth. And so there again, Hugh and Jeanette were always wanting to see what our rooms looked like. I remember a good story about Hugh. I had a friend that was living in the same dorm and he was taking an art class from Hugh McKean and it was an eight o' clock class and he missed one, one time and Hugh came and knocked on his door and got him out of bed to get him to come to class. He had gone to class, found that he was missing, came to the dorm, got him out of bed, and he brought him to class. (laughs) Not sure the president would do that anymore. (laughs) I'm not sure he missed very many eight o' clock classes after that either. (laughs)

WZ: So, what are some other classes or professors you remember while you were still—you mentioned art class.

RR: Yeah, one of the well—the professor that I had—Alex Waite in psychology was a very well known, by then elderly professor, and I had probably three, four classes with him. So obviously I remember him. And I had a cultural anthropology class from Dudley DeGroot—I don't know if any of you have ever heard that name—but Doug was also the mayor of Maitland and he was a really, really good professor. And I remember sitting on the front porch one day when he—of the Lakeside dormitory—and he came up and parked in what was then a parking area just behind Mills. And I was teasing him about having lost the light that he used to have on his car, as a—he had a police kind of light on his car as mayor of Maitland. And I was kidding him about—that apparently he had been beaten in the race and had lost his light. He said, “Well, you lose the prestige, you lose the symbol.” And he had a good sense of humor. He was a very, very

memorable individual. And we had a private contractor who was the water ski instructor—Henry “Gramps” Suydam, and one armed and very proficient skier and he was a good close individual while I was here.

WZ: Then you come back and start teaching in 1969. So, for the past forty, forty-one years—

RR: (at the same time) Yeah, this fall it’ll be forty-one.

WZ: —Yeah, so you have been through four administrations. So, what is your view of the four different presidents from a faculty perspective?

RR: Well, some of us older faculty members will frequently say, If you don’t like the administration just bite your tongue and wait, because administrations come and go (laughs), faculty just seem to keep going on (laughs), but there have been some very innovative and some very productive administrations here; some not so memorable as well. But I would say that over the years that I worked here, I was always very well supported and had a very good relationship with all the administrations. Especially as a department chair, I got a lot of support for the programmatic development I was trying to do. They always believed that I had—and I always felt that I had—the institution’s best interest in mind in what I was trying to do, that it was less self driven than institution driven because, I really came back with a sense of mission to Rollins of improving the programmatics in my area of responsibility so that students who came through our program did not have the same graduate experiences that I had—suffered is probably a good word for it—for having not been as well prepared as I should have been for an institution that charges as much and delivers what it should deliver as a college institution. I think Rollins has made huge strides in that regard in all departments, but psychology especially. I think we’ve—over the years tried to convince administrations that psychology deserved its part of the support of the institution to become a center of excellence. And we had one administration, Dan DeNicola, who was a very good colleague through many, many of those years and was very supportive, whether he was dean or Provost, that understood that commitment quite well.

WZ: So, over your fifty years or so association with Rollins, what are some of the most memorable events) or stories you would like to share with us?

RR: Wow. (laughs)

WZ: That’s a long time.

RR: That is a long time. You can’t live in an area like Central Florida for fifty years without first, and foremost recognizing what a physical difference the environment has—what a transformation it has gone through and what a difference it represents, today versus then. When I came here as a student in 1959, you could drive from here to what is now shopping centers over on East Colonial such as Fashion Square, and from Rollins until you got to Corrine was all orange groves. There were almost no houses. There were a few over on the lake areas—Lake Sue and so forth—but Quail Hollow and all of that was orange grove. We, when we first came to Rollins as faculty we used to have after graduation the Mint Julep parties over on the lake at the presidential house and have ski parties and you don’t do that much anymore. That was, those

were different times in—that Genius Drive was all dirt and filled with peacocks and no houses and was all essentially zoned agricultural and was agricultural. Winter Park ended at Lakemont, from there out was all pastures and pretty much not developed land, 436 Semoran Boulevard was not there, it was and in fact, even Fairbanks after you cross 17-92 was soon turned to dirt or clay. And it was a different town. Orlando at that time was approximately thirty-five thousand populations. I saw it as I came back here, it probably had grown to maybe fifty. But I've seen it, as a resident, grow from fifty thousand to whatever it is today, a million and a half- maybe, metropolitan area. So it's a big change. One of the most memorable tales that I tell about change physically in the environment is that I used to commute on weekends back to Winter Haven. My wife and I were dating at that time. I would go home and spend weekends there. I had to come up through Kissimmee and 17-92, 441 to come to Rollins from Winter Haven. I-4 was under construction and I have actually driven I-4 from downtown Orlando to US 27 and never passed an automobile. Because it was under construction when it first opened, you could make a trip and never pass a car. (laughs) Now you can't drive twenty feet and not pass thirty cars. (laughs) So I've seen a lot of changes in terms of the physical environment.

Rollins has changed a lot culturally and a lot of it is our diversification, our growth, we have a thousand more students than we had then, and those thousand extras represent some very bright people, some cultural diversity, some very nice changes actually. And the same is true of faculty. We have—we still have a long way to go but we've made some changes that are in the correct direction. And Rollins faculty is not only becoming more diverse, many more women for example are faculty members than were when I was here, although there was a woman that was one of the three of the psychology department when I was an undergraduate. She had helped to establish the childhood development center, Carol Burnett. She was still in the department when I came back and began to teach, so I had her both as a professor and a colleague. And she started the child development center and shepherded it through and retired just about the time that we left the Knowles Hall building. But there've been mostly dimensional size growth kinds of things over that fifty years. But with that growth came quality. That's good.

WZ: I think that you also teach a course called Motivation.

RR: I do.

WZ: Yeah, so what motivated you every day (Ray laughs) for the past forty years doing the same thing?

RR: It's interesting because I have colleagues who have off and on over the years say: how do you continue to do this? And the analogy I sometimes draw is: if you were an actor and you had been cast for a lead role in CATS on Broadway— (laughs in response to Ritter withholding laughter) I hit a nerve here. (laughs) You do two productions a day and for—you know—can go on for years. You get to where it's routine but it's not routine because there are dynamics in the cast. Every production has its own quirks and its own unique—and every audience interacts with you differently. And that's true of teaching. Every time you put a class of students together you have a different mix of individuals and they all respond to you differently, they all have different kinds of dynamics that the mix puts together, and even though you know your script to the point where you no longer ever look at notes, it—you ultimately end up ad-libbing at least 50 percent of it because it's that kind of a process.

So, I find teaching very creative, a very challenging and interesting and dynamic process, and I especially like working on research with students because every class is a new research project and of course that's new and you're never quite sure how it's going to come out. Some of them come out really well, and some of them are absolute flops, and so that's a kind of a continuing discovery that's collaborative that I enjoy. So um, what keeps me at it is in fact that novelty that's in every class and classroom. And that's motivating because I like novelty, I like that creative challenge part that basically says, some of this is impromptu. And so, managing the impromptu is kind of fun, and is a creative part of the process.

There's another thing that has kept me going—especially the last twenty years—and that is I've moved my research from its early focus on psychophysiology and psychosomatic health problems to computer and technology as it supports the teaching/learning process. And when you do research on the teaching/learning (pounds hand on table for emphasis) process and you're engaged (pounds hand on table for emphasis) in the teaching/learning (pounds hand on table for emphasis) process and you help students (pounds hand on table for emphasis) learn to do research on (pounds hand on table for emphasis) that process, they're not only participants but they're (pounds hand on table for emphasis) researchers. That's a very symbiotic exchange and if I didn't have that it would be a different process for me. But I probably have as much integration between my teaching professional interest and research professional interest as anybody has ever had. And so, I enjoy that a lot and if I didn't have the students (thud), I couldn't continue (thud) to do the research I do. I just couldn't do it (thudding). Some people could in their research (thud), they could take their laboratory and stay there and not have to have students as a part of the process, but because I do research on learning I have to have learners, which means I have to have students.

WZ: So, how do you view your Rollins career of forty years?

RR: I could not have had my career, like my career in much of any other kind of environment. If I wanted to take five years to work on a research problem, I had that luxury. If I wanted to use undergraduates as a class and take them anywhere in the world—up until just very recent times—I had that opportunity. And so, I could do very innovative kinds of research, I could do very innovative kinds of teaching, and—give you an example: one time after I came home from the Soviet Union I thought, you know, the touring that I did while I was in the Soviet Union, seeing various researchers doing various different kinds of things, different approaches to science, why not make a model of that and teach it here? So the next winter term that I had after I got back, I taught a winter term course called *The Games that Professionals Play*. And we read *The Double Helix*, which was about the race to the Nobel Prize about the double helix in genetics—a highly recommended book if you haven't read it—and then we got a van and went on the road and did site visits to various kinds of research institutions and environments. We left Rollins and went to FSU and visited the psych department, and then we went to Hollins College which is an all women's master only-masters and undergraduate only and visited a very well known psychological researcher there, and talked about the differences between the way he did research in that kind of smaller school environment versus a large state university. And then we also visited the University of Tennessee, the department chair there who had had a very esoteric career had done a lot of visiting professorships at Harvard and in Europe and so he had had a non-traditional career. And each time we got to interview, and in some cases stay all night with

these people and ended up at John Hopkins at the medical school at N.I.H. and research institutes.

I cannot imagine teaching at the University of Florida and offering a course like that. I just—it just (thud) wouldn't be feasible. And yet that, winter term in the Bahamas, winter term on killer whales, we even did a research project once at Daytona 24 Hour Grand Prix and it was measuring heart rate of race car drivers. I mean, it just—opportunities just come up and you don't have to justify to anybody that you decided not to publish that one, or you took four years to publish this one, or—I couldn't have the kind of publication career and because of that I've published some things that it would be very, very difficult for other people to publish, because they couldn't do it. They wouldn't have the luxury. When you are under publish or perish circumstances in large research institutions timing is everything, and here that's not been the critical factor. I've averaged probably (thud) you know, at least a publication a year for the forty some odd years I've been here but, I've never felt the pressure to get that out. So it's been unique.

JR: All right, is there anything else you'd like to share with us before we close?

RR: You've about covered most of it.

JR: Well then, Roger—Dr. Ray, thank you very much for participating—

RR: (at the same time) It's been my pleasure.

JR: —and for helping us preserve the history of Rollins College and thank you for all your contributions.

RR: It's been my pleasure. Thank you.

WZ: Thank you.