

**INTERVIEW WITH LOUIS FARON
FORMER CHAIRMAN DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY**

March 22, 1987

Dr. Hartzell: This is an interview with Louis Faron at his home on Siesta Key on March 22, 1987.

Dr. Faron: And I continue, I think. Number 1, I came to Stony Brook in 19', now shall I talk?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, talk right in there.

Dr. Faron: I came to Stony Brook in 1964. Now, this might be important, Stanley Ross, who was instrumental in my appointment at Stony Brook as Full Professor and Chairman of the Anthropology Department, got in touch with me by letter when I was doing field work in Mexico and was an Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Pittsburgh. He got in touch with me in 1963, the end of 1963. feeling and emotion.

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, go ahead, please be freewheeling on this.

Dr. Faron: I immediately got out a map of the eastern United States and tried to find Stony Brook on the Long Island insert the map had and saw that it was about halfway between New York City and the end of Long Island. I wrote to Stony Brook that I would be returning temporarily to the United States to renew my visa. At the same time a friend of mine who was teaching at Columbia University at the time, I sounded him out about Stony Brook, the prospects and whether I would become isolated if I made the move from Pittsburgh. I wrote, after returning from the states to Toluca, I wrote to Stanley Ross and said that I was interested in the position, that I would be returning for good to Pittsburgh in several months, and that I would be interested in getting in touch with him then. I received no answer to my letter, but did get a telephone call from Stanley Ross at the University of Pittsburgh shortly after I arrived. At this time we agreed that I would respond favorably to a letter that he said he was sending inviting me

to come to Stony Brook to be looked over for the position of Chairman for a newly established Department of Anthropology. Now I think that takes us through question 4, unless you, how old were you at the time? I was 40 years old when it began, and when I was finally hired at Stony Brook I was 41 years old when I became active as Chairman and taught my first course at Stony Brook. Number 5, who interviewed you for the position at Stony Brook? The most impressive thing is that I was met at the fledgling airport, MacArthur Airport, by what seemed to be about 12 or 15 faculty members from Stony Brook. I felt like a visiting dignitary with my new attaché case in hand, and went to lunch with some of these people, including Stanley Ross and Hugh Cleland from the History Department, and others which I won't try to remember now, although I can think of a few names, David Fox and others, I'll think of them later. And we went to lunch, at which time I think the interview began in a very informal manner. And after that I eventually met Karl Hartzell, who was then the Administrative head of the University, spoke to him for a while in the company of Stanley Ross. And then there were lunches and at least one dinner, during which informal interviewing took place. I remember also having met again rather informally Ben Nelson, who was Chairman of the Department of Sociology which had formerly been the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and our interview was quite friendly, and I recall one thing that I noted at that time and which since that time became very important in the development of the new Anthropology Department. Ben Nelson told me that he didn't agree that a social anthropologist was a sociologist with a backpack who went to the remote corners of the world. I gave the interview with Ben Nelson, which was across the desk in his office. He brought up the anthropological library, which he made a condition of the transition of anthropology from the sociology department to an independent department I'm not a library man, I did not intend to develop archeology or physical anthropology when I came to Stony Brook, and I immediately felt saddled by a responsibility for which I had little interest and no talent. But to keep in line with Ben Nelson's idea that anthropologists were not really social anthropologists, even though they called themselves sometimes

sociologists in the British tradition, what Ben Nelson seemed to want as an offshoot of the Sociology-Anthropology Department was a Boazian four-field anthropology department. Indeed, this was one

Dr. Hartzell: Four-field?

Dr. Faron: Okay, it means what was called cultural anthropology and I think then called social cultural anthropology, cultural social anthropology, both misnomers indicating wide theoretical differences, differences in methodology, differences in goal, etc. Cultural anthropology was one field that Ben Nelson had in mind, physical anthropology was another field of anthropology, archeology was another traditional field and linguistics is the fourth traditional field. Ben Nelson envisaged a department of anthropology covering the four major fields. Now the major fields were developed at Columbia University by Boaz, and therefore the whole schmeer may be characterized as Boazian anthropology, or United States Boazian cultural anthropology, and broken down and rearranged in any number of ways, but clearly distinguished in the minds of British oriented social anthropologists from the kind of anthropology, which at that time and for decades before and after, produced some of the most meticulous and useful monographs ever written by anthropologists, and this is out of the British tradition, which either Ben Nelson was unaware of, which I find hard to believe because he was an erudite man, or wanted to overlook or not take into full consideration. I don't think I was the kind of anthropologist Ben Nelson fully approved of.

Dr. Hartzell: What kind were you?

Dr. Faron: I was a British oriented social anthropologist, self-taught while doing field work because I became aware that my training at Columbia was inadequate to the kind of understanding I hoped to achieve in the field. In my mind at that time and now over a thirty year period is that the British anthropologists were the most productive, made the most sense, whereas the Boazians did not. The Boazians have produced monographs which I am unable to view in my research. I don't want to get too far afield

on that now. So, Ben Nelson I would say, in answer to the question who interviewed you for the position here, was the man who should have known most about what I was up to and what I stood for. Now, either he did nor he didn't; and if he didn't, that's just ignorance; if he did, because he saddled me with a museum I never should have had and never intended to have.

Dr. Hartzell: A museum?

Dr. Faron: Yes, a museum. There are no such kinds of museums for social anthropologists, because social anthropology deals with cultural values and ideas and social organizations, which cannot be seen, they can be read about, but what an anthropological museum contains are artifacts, skulls and bones on the one hand, and pot shards on the other. And I had nothing like this in mind when I came to Stony Brook to develop the Department, and I can see in retrospect that I got in trouble from the very beginning. Stanley Ross was also a principal interviewer, who shuttled me around the Stony Brook area looking at houses and taking me here and there and finally deposited me for the night at Sunwood. This quite another thing, why did you come? I woke up early at Sunwood, the sun was up early. I went down to the water's edge, it happened to be high tide and most of the horrible boulders were covered, it was easy walking, and I looked out and thought, oh, boy, this is where I want to live. Now, that is one reason I came to Stony Brook. I was raised on Long Island, it always appealed to me, and I had the feeling that I was coming home. It was not a major factor in my decision, it just made everything else seem right. Now, what factors were most important in your decision? I called from the University of Pittsburgh at a time when that department was riven by faction, and I was unhappy. I thought that coming to Stony Brook would give me the opportunity of forming a department of my own along the lines I thought were most important and would to hire faculty whom I either knew personally or knew about because of their good reputation in anthropology. At that time I wanted to form a nucleus of social anthropologists to get the department going. I was told then that, this is spilling over into 7, that my mission was to develop a department

able to go into graduate work and that I should use a period of five years as my guide. So I thought that in the first few years of recruitment I could hire social anthropologists who had worked in North America, South America, Southeast Asia, perhaps India and certainly Africa. And within a few years all of this was achieved. But that's getting ahead of the story.

Dr. Hartzell: You had the funds, you had financial support, the lines and so forth with which to do that?

Dr. Faron: No, I was promised, but I didn't get what I was promised. And that didn't because I didn't expect everything. I have a set of project statements of several years, which I will let you look at, and copy if you wish, indicating what was asked for and what was refused. In my thinking at that time, I was looking for faculty who, like myself, could cover in an introductory course, since we were dealing only with undergraduates at least for the first five years, coverage of the four major fields of anthropology, and I considered myself competent to cover the others well, everything except physical anthropology. For that reason one of my first appointments was Peg Wheeler, who, although having done social anthropological field work and trained under George Peter Murdock who was a social anthropologist at Yale, as a social anthropologist, she had a background in biology, human evolution and physical anthropology, and I immediately turned over the introductory course to her because she could fill that gap. Now, so my intention was to give the students who took an introductory course, a one-year introductory course in anthropology, a coverage of four fields with an emphasis on social anthropology, which would be a lead-in to any other 100 level or 200, 300 or 400 level courses. I don't think we had 400 level courses, I think there were just 1, 2 and 3, and 300 level undergraduate seminars. That was my intention. Now, in answer to question 7, what was your understanding of the purposes behind the creation of Stony Brook? I'm going to defer that for a moment. What was the vision being transformed into reality? See, I'm thinking of Nelson the first few days of my

interviewing and in the first semester of teaching. I'd rather put my answer to question number 7 later.

Dr. Hartzell: All right, okay.

Dr. Faron: Because we come right into number 8, give your impressions of Stony Brook when you first came. I'd rather come with that. Well, at that time, the main meetings during my two days of being interviewed at Stony Brook took place at a roundtable luncheon in a local restaurant with a number of department chairmen present. And I recall that one of the tasks I took upon myself at the time was an explicit definition of social anthropology, cultural anthropology, and the differences between them. I remember a lot of heads nodding, but almost no questions. I remember speaking through most of the main course, we were eating lunch at that luncheon. Stanley Ross took me on another tour of the area and continued the interview, and I told him more of what I meant about the distinction between cultural anthropology, which is a four-field approach, and social anthropology, which emphasized social relations as it was being taught at Harvard, the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford, and in the Department of Anthropology at Chicago. It was at that time, and continued to be, the three main centers for social anthropology in the world. I wanted to make Stony Brook something like the best of all of these departments. Stanley Ross seemed to agree that this was a possibility but he would not go along with my request to label the department as the department of social anthropology. His explanation was that in effect Ben Nelson wouldn't approve. Now, do I have to explain that further. He didn't say much more about it but that Ben Nelson wouldn't approve. After my interview with Ben Nelson there was a tacit understanding between Stanley and me that Ben Nelson felt as though anthropology had been torn away from him. Ben Nelson considered himself an anthropologist as much as a sociologist and a historian and was unhappy with the creation of the Anthropology Department, and this is one of the unhappy people Stanley Ross left behind, and which the Anthropology Department had to contend with when Stanley went to Texas.

Dr. Hartzell: Do you remember offhand when Stanley went to Texas?

Dr. Faron: I think it was 1969.

Dr. Hartzell: 1969.

Dr. Faron: I think it was before I went on sabbatical, because after I came back from sabbatical in 1971, I was no longer chairman. Things had changed. The organization of the University had changed in ways which made it rather difficult to get the ear of the dean immediately. I don't remember who took over, I don't think it was Weisinger that early. I just can't remember.

Dr. Hartzell: All right

Dr. Faron: I didn't have that because Stanley wasn't there, and I felt initially before for the first few weeks after I returned from sabbatical, I dealt with John and that's the extent of my recollection. But anyway I had the sense that when Stanley Ross left the Anthropology Department no longer received the kind of support that he had given us. But other things happened, we were beginning to get into a budget crunch. It was during these latter years of my chairmanship that our department received a zero library budget for the year, zero. Let me come back to that. One of the reasons that I was interested in coming there was that Stanley said I had *carte blanche* in buying books for the Anthropology Department, and at least on paper I bought over \$100,000 worth of books in the first year that I was there for the Anthropology Department. now, a little overlapping, the purposes behind the creation of the University of Stony Brook, I still want to hold off on that one, but the vision, my part of the of Stony Brook was to develop a new department of social anthropology which would be closely related to the department of sociology from which it emerged and also to the department of, which part of the interest of British social anthropology. British social anthropology because they felt that the Boazian approach in trying to understand societies, made terrible errors resulting in misunderstanding. But I wanted to build an historical aspect that social anthropology under a much more controlled manner than the Boazians did,

and that is simply by using actual written records. Boazians paid lip service to historical reconstruction but seemed to a man never to have read any archives, which is curious, but these are part of the problems of growing. And one of the results of growing up was the separation of social anthropology from the rest of anthropology. And I thought that I could do this on the Stony Brook campus and research and I would therefore receive support from the Dean of the Social Sciences, who in fact was a Messiah, and Now if you consider this both a practical consideration as well as a hope for the future of the development of anthropology, not only at Stony Brook, but by the Stony Brook image at other newly developing institutions, graduate departments of anthropology around the country. This was a period of growth in anthropology, it was the tail end of it as it turned out, but it was, anthropology departments were growing I can a second and then

Dr. Hartzell: Uh, huh.

Dr. Faron: Because I have to think about, I left out so much of

Dr. Hartzell: Take your time. I can turn this off for a while if you want.

Dr. Faron: Why don't you do that.

Dr. Hartzell: All right.

Dr. Faron: There is one thing I should add. When I was being interviewed for the position at Stony Brook, I found that everyone was very friendly. There were no trick questions, there was no attitudes of superiority, successful faculty members at that roundtable luncheon who wanted to know something of my background and presumably had not read my cv, so I told everybody for the first time that I had started teaching full-time teaching in 1959, and had gone to Mexico for a period of a year and a half, during which time I was at the University of Pittsburgh but on leave, and was now at Stony Brook being considered for a Full Professorship with only three and a half years of teaching behind me. And some of the people were startled at this rapid rise. I didn't think anything of it at the time but later on I found out that some of the department chairmen thought that I was too green for the position as chair, that I should have had

more experience at administration.it was in my favor I think in Stanley Ross's mind was that I developed an interdisciplinary program while I was at what is now called California State University, an interdisciplinary program involving anthropology, history, sociology, geography and economics.

Dr. Hartzell: one of the state universities of California?

Dr. Faron: Yeah, Los Angeles State College is what it was called when I was there; before I left it was what I said, it's difficult to remember now.

Dr. Hartzell: UCLA.

Dr. Faron: No, no, UCLA is something else. This is a state college and was called Los Angeles State College when I was hired there, The name had changed during the couple of years that I was there. Okay, so this is something that might have been questions and might have resulted in some difficulty for the Department of Anthropology as some department chairmen took higher administrative jobs during the first five years that I was there. Well, nevertheless, the whole atmosphere was quite friendly and I established a good relationship with a member of the sociology department who left a couple of years later. We've had common research interests, okay, to continue, we have common research interests, this young sociology and I, and specifically we were interested in rigid social stratification. And we had both worked over Peruvian materials, he from written sources and I both from written sources, colonial manuscript and two years of field work, so there was a lot of immediate rapport between the new Department of Anthropology and the old Department of Sociology. Hugh Cleland became my closest friend in the History Department, and there were others that I remained in close touch with for the first couple of years of my chairmanship. Afterwards the relationship simply became less intense, they were always good between the History Department and the Anthropology Department and good between the Sociology Department and the Anthropology Department. Over of years they tended to break down, not because of hard feelings but simply because of attrition and a lack of effort to maintain them. So I would say the events, in continuation of question 8,

the people that I came to know and the spirit which I came to know which I got from my own feelings in the new Department of Anthropology and the friends I had made in the Departments of History and Sociology were high. I was pleased, I thought that I had made a wise decision. Okay, now as to the campus, the campus was the butt of many, many jokes and that really didn't involve me. The campus at Los Angeles State College was new and raw and everybody had hopes for its future, and I sensed the same kind of hope for the campus at Stony Brook. It certainly was in a lovely setting and also appealed to me. Okay, now the leadership. I felt very comfortable with the leadership as I came to know it in faculty meetings, committee meetings in which I was asked to participate and was given the opportunity to express my thoughts about the development of anthropology. I didn't ever feel cramped with the exception of admonitions about budget and this restriction was shared by everybody. So it didn't bother me. I was very hopeful in getting the first four or five years of my tenure. I may as well get back to question 7 and answer what was wrong with understanding the purposes behind the creation of Stony Brook. My understanding was that the main purpose was to develop a center of graduate advanced studies in our part of the State geographically, in our part of the State. And while the development was most pronounced in the so-called hard sciences, every effort was going to be made to build the social sciences and humanities into line with the high level development, the expression peaks of excellence had not been coined at that early date, but the impression was definitely that we were going to be a major intellectual force in our region, and that there was going to be intellectual interaction between the universities in New York City and the

Dr. Hartzell: Public universities.

Dr. Faron: Well, Columbia and all the universities in New York City, a center of northeastern intellectuality, and that, what's that place out east, where all the scientists hang out when they work?

Dr. Hartzell: Brookhaven.

Dr. Faron: Brookhaven, yes, and I was hopeful that anthropology would develop apace, and in my new role as chairman and sole administrator of the anthropology department for a number of years, my main concern was in recruitment and in trying to recruit the best people I could find, money was always an object. Now, I turn back to information in this letter, I note a call for any documents that I might have in my files, and I have very few, but I do have several budget statements from different years. All of them indicate my reasons for wanting to recruit new personnel and the successive ones indicate the shortfall. I did not get what I asked for in any case. This is the understanding of purposes behind the creation of Stony Brook.

Dr. Hartzell: Right.

Dr. Faron: And was the vision being transformed into reality? My answer to that is that I thought it was. I feel that it still is with respect to the sciences and especially the magnificent health sciences center, but it wasn't before long that I shared the opinion with my colleagues in the humanities and social sciences that we were not getting our fair share of the pie. And this includes support for recruitment and cutbacks in, I can't remember the bureaucratic titles for these things any more, but supplies, materials.

Dr. Hartzell: Support personnel like secretaries.

Dr. Faron: Something like, oh, secretarial support was, I think, among the worst in the social sciences. I could go into that at some length in a moment. I just, the year before I left I asked for supplies, I said I wanted a package of pencils and a few note pads, and I was given one pencil and a half and one note pad and told that we were running out of supplies. What events, what persons and what experiences stand out in your mind?

Dr. Hartzell: I might have put lectures, conferences, speakers.

Dr. Faron: In my department?

Dr. Hartzell: In your department or of interest to your department.

Dr. Faron: Okay, well, in essence originally our first anthropological speaker of not only note, but renown, was Mr. Leakey, who came to

Brookhaven, who had the money to pay his way, and agreed to come for nothing to our campus at my intercession and gave a talk. That was a major event. The next major event was the appearance of another anthropologist

Dr. Hartzell: Not Lauren Eisley.

Dr. Faron: No, that would have been wonderful, this guy was, he won some chair at Princeton, very popular as well as being a trained anthropologist, anyway, I'll think of his name I don't know how we're going to go back and do this. I'm quite willing to listen to a rerun to pick up anything I've left out. Okay, and this second person was, approached me and asked me if he might be considered for a professorship in our department, Ashley Montague, whose reputation was made not in his Ph. D. field of physical anthropology but as a popularizer, not in a bad sense, but a popularizer of anthropology male, female and things of that sort which had a physical base to them but nevertheless was designed to educate a literate audience and very commendable, but he wasn't the kind of a person that anyone in our department wanted to have around. We had an impression that he was strictly moving to Stony Brook from Princeton because there was nothing for him.

Dr. Hartzell: He was at Princeton?

Dr. Faron: He had a chair, and he had come, this was the rumor, it was with his money, named but that he supports himself. Now, you mentioned Margaret Mead. Margaret Mead appeared, not as a guest of the Anthropology Department, but as a guest of the University in the presentation of the new Benedict Hall. We had them all, we were never given the opportunity to make the invitation ourselves to Margaret Mead to, who was not only one of my first professors at Columbia but a lifelong, fairly close friend. The Anthropology Department was once again bypassed, or not taken into consideration. When we did ask, this takes me back to the agenda for going into graduate work. The Anthropology Department was accepted or approved for Ph. D. work two years before the Sociology Department had approval to begin a Ph. D. program. The Sociology Department should have preceded the Anthropology

Department by one year. It went into graduate work at the M. A. level the same year that the Anthropology Department went into Ph. D. work. Now, you can check this, I am not absolutely sure, I believe that this is so. And it is now, this is something else you can check on, my impression that they were told they had to beef up their faculty and at this time they hired as a Distinguished Professor Lew Coser, after which, more on the promise of which, they went into Ph. D. level program. I requested, after we had gone into graduate Ph. D. work, the appointment of our own Distinguished Professor Victor Turner, whose reputation in anthropology is based on his study of the symbolic system and system based on his extended field work in Africa but generalized to other societies including the United States of America; I thought as a Distinguished Scholar he would put the stamp of social anthropology on our department. The first thing I was asked to do was to present Xerox copies of book review of the seven or more books that this outstanding scholar had written. We resisted all along the line in our effort, our unanimous departmental effort to get this man an invitation by the Dean of the Social Sciences or somebody else to come to campus to be looked over for a position. We didn't just want to invite him here to give a talk to the anthropology club, we wanted him to be invited here to be considered for a position. It never came to pass, and it dragged on for too many months until he finally accepted an offer at the University of Chicago, and we lost him. This is part of my experience as administrative head of the Anthropology Department. Since the end of my chairmanship, things have certainly not become better. Between my chairmanship we never received an unfavorable review from an outside team of reviewers. After I stopped being chairman, we received one favorable review from outsiders.

Dr. Hartzell: Who were they?

Dr. Faron: I can't remember. About five years I stepped down, but every outside review since that time has been negative. Negative to the point that five or six years ago, the then acting, what is it called, acting Provost?

Dr. Hartzell: Probably.

Dr. Faron: Acting Provost, temporary Provost, he only had it for a year, I think, Sokol, convened us, stood at the head of the table, shook his finger at us and said, I'm going to retrench you people if you don't do as I say, because we had just had a very unfavorable review. I will hold off on the evaluation of these reviews, but the Anthropology Department did not want to be retrenched, we did not want to lose our jobs, and we did what Sokol told us to do.

Dr. Hartzell: The light went on, I don't know why. Let me try the other side.

Dr. Faron: I can repeat, it's easy enough to remember. Okay, he told us to make an overture to the anatomy department and eventually draw up a separate contract and institute a new program which was not by any means supposed to be called a new program, in anthropology called DPAS, Departmental Program in Anthropological Science. At this meeting I didn't open my mouth and not many people had anything to say at all. We agreed, we wiped our brows, we figured the Anthropology Department was saved, and once more we were willing to do what we were told to do. At this time I was completely out of the administration in the department, which was in the hands of Phil Weigand, officially chairman at the time, Pedro Carrasco and Paula Brown, who constituted a triumvirate others of us used to refer to as the establishment, and who had retained control of the department by shuffling back the chair between them thirteen or fourteen years. Without going into details, I would say that this clearly indicates that those of us who were dissatisfied with their performance and the way the department was being run could not agree among ourselves and present a solid front. I'll go into what happened during this period if it's called for, but it does not deal with the early years of the department, it deals with the last decade of the department and might be titled "who did what to whom, when, where and how." Now, some time before Sokol told us that in order to save ourselves we had to make overtures to the anatomists and go into a graduate program which refurbished our old program with a heavy accent on physical anthropology, some time before that, the anatomists it turned out, had made an overture to the anthropologists. This was some six years before that. During that time when Paula

Brown was Director of Graduate Studies and the story came out six years later that she had snubbed that because Paula Brown was a social anthropologist who felt that we should not have anything to do with physical anthropology. And this again is after several years of Peg Wheeler's efforts to develop some kind of reciprocal program between at least a few physical anthropologists and some of us in the anthropology department. This went not unnoticed but was not considered to be important. There was not attempt to establish any sort of working relationship between the Anthropology Department and the Anatomy Department. Now, this brings me back to the earliest years of my chairmanship, sitting at the old fashioned budget meetings where we all rolled up our sleeves and tried to hammer out a budget for each department. Each chairman had an opportunity to present his budget, speak his piece and argue with, the main person that comes to mind is Bentley Glass. In my relationship with Bentley Glass I believe that we reached an understanding that the Anthropology Department would cross reference courses with physical anthropologists as soon as they were hired, either by the Biology Department or by the Anatomy Department, which wasn't even in existence in these early years. That was the arrangement. As it turns out, I don't think the Biology Department ever heard of physical anthropologists, and when the anatomists, who were all

[end of tape 1]

Okay?

Dr. Hartzell: Yes, go on.

Dr. Faron: The point I wanted to make is that early on, at least by the second year of my tenure in the Anthropology Department, the groundwork was laid for a relationship involving the cross listing of courses at that, the then undergraduate level, between me and Bentley Glass; and it was over with as far as I was concerned, he never raised it again. Every once in a while he would say he had heard of a physical anthropologist that we might be interested in and that was the end of it. And recommendations came from other departments saying there may be an anthropologist we might be interested in. They knew we were a growing department, they were being helpful and that was that.

Nevertheless Bentley Glass was very interested in a four-field development in the Department of Anthropology. My argument at that time, which I think was legitimate and which I think everybody understood, was that I wanted to cover the world ethnographically as best I could and as economically as I could by hiring people who were social anthropologists but had other specialties, such as linguistics, archeology, ecological interests and historical interests, and I was successful in hiring people who coupled an interest in social anthropology with what I have just mentioned. I left out physical anthropology for several reasons. One, physical anthropologists cost half again as much to hire as a social anthropologist because they are in short supply and were very expensive. In those days when we were hiring anthropologists at \$8,000 a year, some physical anthropologists, young physical anthropologists looking for jobs were demanding as much as \$18,000 a year. Bentley Glass seems to have understood this and applied no pressure at all for me to hire a physical anthropologist. But nevertheless a door had been opened. When a physical anthropologist appeared on campus, Peg Wheeler not only got in touch with him but shared her office with him in the Anthropology Department. He was hardly ever there, but nevertheless his name was on the door along with Peg Wheeler's -- I can't remember his name. And this, as I said before, was noted as long as ten years ago and was never taken seriously. I'm not sure what I might have done if I had been, if I had had a major administrative job in the department, but I didn't have anything to do with it. So, to get back to Sokol and the formation of the DPAS graduate program, which had been in force for approximately five years, several things had happened. One,

Dr. Hartzell: You're now in the '80's.

Dr. Faron: Now I'm at the very end, the last five years of my So, I'm approximately 1980 to the present. A number of things happened. At the, our graduate program now acquired six additional faculty, all anthropology, in addition we hired two physical anthropologists in our own department. to my mind, and I know from talking to other social anthropologists, this makes the

department top heavy with physical anthropology. Very few people are happy about this, and there have been all kinds of problems resulting from this imbalance and from what has amounted to a development of control by the physical anthropologists of the entire anthropological program. This is one of the reasons I decided to take early retirement. With respect to the training of our graduate students, we have recruited a number of outstanding graduate students who plan to return to Stony Brook because of the heavy emphasis on physical anthropology since 1980. They have turned out to be in my classes the best of all of them, the most intelligent and hard working, and therefore the best of all our graduate students who, after taking one year of classes in cultural and social anthropology are left to our department and literally move to the west side of Nicolls Road and get lost in the maze of offices in the Health Sciences Center.

Dr. Hartzell: That's the east side.

Dr. Faron: East side and we never see them again.

Dr. Hartzell: They wind up in the Anatomy Department, is that right.

Dr. Faron: No, no, no. This is the whole point. The anatomists wanted to grant degrees in anthropology, therefore they needed students. They did not want to grant degrees in anatomy. They grant degrees to students that they get from the, those are students who come into a general program of anthropology and after their year, and even during their first year, specialize in physical anthropology. They have been very upsetting to the program because of the demanding twelve hour laboratory courses and other heavy reading courses that they have to take in anatomy. The program has been changed a couple of times to make accommodations to students who have been unable to comply with the rules of standing for their exam two years after arriving on campus. They haven't been able to digest all the material that has been added on to the original program. Therefore, the whole program has shifted and the social anthropological part of it has been whittled down to a mere token of social and cultural anthropology. With the physical anthropology dominating, as I said before, many social anthropologists in the department are dispirited by this, are unhappy because of this, and

yet seem to be powerless to do anything about it. I don't want to get into the rest of this because then it will be getting into personalities, and that's not what you want, just movements that have taken place. Now, what expectation did I have when I, let's see, what was my understanding of the place and the future of Stony Brook. My own place was going to be the founder of the Department of Social Anthropology, which I soon realized was not going to develop the way I had intended, but nevertheless I was pleased at the quality of the faculty I was able to recruit. I might say that the recruiting years, even though we didn't get the financial support I had asked for, were joyous years. I felt very successful in attracting the best possible people to our department, and for the first few years everyone seemed to get along well together. An indication of this is that we had informal social gatherings, parties at the houses of different faculty with everybody else invited. This degenerated into, I can remember the time when I had more than a hundred people in my house, the nucleus being formed by the faculty and their wives, the rest by people in different departments, mainly sociology and history. This degenerated into parties including only or mainly anthropology faculty, some of whom did not show up. That further deteriorated into cliquish little parties given by one faculty member for a select member of friends within the department and usually no one outside. And in my last couple of years at Stony Brook there was nothing, no social event involving anthropology faculty that could even be called a party. The Department had been split by factions and interpersonal discord for at least the last decade, and only getting worse. As I say, in general, this is one of the things that prompted me to think about early retirement. I no longer saw a happy future for myself in the Department, and that's that. In answering were my activities confined to the Stony Brook campus, this changed over the years. In the beginning of my chairmanship, I used to go to all important anthropology meetings to talk about Stony Brook and our new, and over the years, growing department. I always had my eye out for possible faculty recruits, but I also spoke to members in other departments who had undergraduates in anthropology and always suggested that they think about sending their undergraduates to Stony Brook.

These were the good years. I went to more anthropology meetings in my first four or five years as chairman at Stony Brook than I'd ever had before or since. I also welcomed the opportunity to accept awards, accept an opening to teach two semesters of anthropology at Columbia University and a semester at NYU, partly to attract students and partly to make money. I also for years had been a member of the Columbia Ecology Seminar, which had monthly meetings at night which were a happy mixture of professionalism and socializing with old friends and make new friends, and I also attended the Cooley Graduate Seminars downtown for a number of years, and over the years participated frequently, even giving a paper of two at the ecology seminar and the CUNY graduate seminar. Did I have relations outside? Well, no relationship with the Central Office in Albany, I think that answers it.

Dr. Hartzell: There are a couple of questions on the last page you can take a look at. I think you've answered 14 pretty well.

Dr. Faron: I can say in answer to what do you feel you had accomplished at Stony Brook by 1971, I would say not everything according to my expectations and hopes, but everything that I ever actually accomplished at Stony Brook. It was all done by 1971.

Dr. Hartzell: Right. Fifteen, can you name individuals, not necessarily in your own department; by the way what is your reaction to the leadership of the University as a whole.

Dr. Faron: Okay, I would say, starting from the presidency, I would say that I had to believe that John Toll wanted to build up the humanities and the social sciences because he said he did, and he then didn't do it.

Dr. Hartzell: Do you think he knew how?

Dr. Faron: Well, ah, that's something I really don't know. And I also want to say that I think that John Marburger is sincere in his wish to build up the humanities and social sciences but that he hasn't done it to date. Now, I assume that these people that run universities know everything, okay. I do see, however, a connection with building up a, not only departments, but building up the

humanities and social sciences as different from the hard sciences, a connection between that kind of build up and money. The social sciences and the humanities do not bring money to campus, the hard sciences do. Maybe the president has not been able to get around this and get beyond it. There's always a call for bringing money into the department. And I remember in the Anthropology Department a \$2,000 grant to write this, that and the other thing and make trips into the city to use the library or I got a \$15,000 grant that took me into the field for six months, this is the not kind of money that advances a program. It's not the kind of money that enables a faculty member to support a half dozen research assistants that add appreciably to the physics library, let's say, or buy new machinery. I have a feeling that before computers came into view, the humanities and social sciences were dealing with pens and pencils and chalk, blackboards and pads; now we are all dealing with computers and the University is very liberal in giving us that kind of machinery. Did we ask for it because it raises the level of scientism in the non-scientist, I don't know. My feeling is that after World War II, or because of World War II, there was a great development in the humanistic, in my field, the humanistic end of social sciences. I never liked the concept of social scientist, I never believed it, I still don't. I'm a humanist in anthropology. Social anthropologist are not scientists, they are humanists, and they declare themselves as such and distinguish themselves from trying to be scientists. I felt that after the '60's, shortly after the '60's, in the late '50's, the interest in this country, the United States, divided research money very easily to anthropologists, and I know the best and presumably through social scientist, lost interest in attempting to understand the value of people in the so-called third world. These people had time to shape up and become like us. And in a sense that failed. The people who grant money for people like me to go out and study what people like them considered to be basketweaving and other strange supplements, they don't care about these people anymore. We're not interested in their social systems, we're not interested in their values. If they cannot measure up to civilized ways, the hell

with them. Let's put our money into and that's it. So I think that after the 1960's anthropology began to, cultural and social anthropology began to go on the decline. Also for political reasons, anthropologists were aligned with liberal, if not radical elements in developing nations. They were coming back and writing bad reports about how Indians in Peru and Bolivia were being treated like animals and whatever. The government didn't like this, and money dried up, but money didn't dry up for physical anthropologists and it didn't dry up for archeology because physical anthropologists and archeologists didn't deal with the living, they did not deal with individuals. They are not troublesome and they also come back with some beads, show them to the public. Just like moon rocks, the archeologist coming back to the country would hold his hands and photograph and describe and people would view it and go, ah, isn't that nice. And the other people were bums who came back, social anthropologists had nothing, nothing but books.

Dr. Hartzell: I think the only way you can make your ideas concrete is through film.

Dr. Faron: That's developing, but even then you cannot show the value that involves in the organization of cultural No one has ever photographed You can take a photograph of a patrilineal, people, you can't bring back by film the kind of anthropology that I have dealt with all of my life, you can't do it. You have to live through it, and to the extent that you can live through anything by reading books, read through it that way. And I've heard more and more, oh, how many pages do we have to read, that I don't think for literacy. Oh, something else I'd like to inject here, several of our brightest graduate students that I've ever had in this department in the last few years have come into our department with the intention of going on to physical anthropology, not all of them have, some of them changed their minds and stayed with social anthropology, and that's just in our department, but with me and with a couple of other faculty members, that's it. However, some of my most illiterate undergraduate students come from the sciences. Students who have never written an essay type exam in their lives, they've all taken set answer and

multiple choice, and they cannot read or write; they can't organize their thoughts. And I explain to them the difference between the kind of material, well, the difference between multiple choice and essay exam. The essay exam you have to do the organizing, in short answer multiple choice I do the organizing and elicit a response. Some of them understand it. and when he came into our graduate program, and these were the days when we were hungry, we'd take any warm body in our program, this guy used to turn in term papers in the graduate program two and three pages long, he didn't know any better, couldn't do any better, couldn't write. But who took remedial English lessons and eventually wound up learning to speak Japanese, took basic courses in Japanese in this country and then spending a year and a half in Japan, and coming back with a humdinger of a monograph on the martial arts in contemporary Japan. So from nothing he went to Ph. D. quality, but that's a very rare case. Most of the students who can't do well in anthropology, I think, take anthropology because somewhere along the line they hear that, and some of those change their minds and go on and do well. The others drop out, we never see them again. The ones who come in from the, well, as physics major, bio majors, math majors, those people are obviously very bright but and they do very poorly on And of course this is something that we leave as a new problem. I remember we were urged to get the students to write term papers for our courses. My god, I remember ;when I first started teaching, I stood one of these California kids up in the corner of the room and he'd stand in a corner and turn his face to the wall and he did it without any objection because he insisted that 'and' was spelled 'an;' he said that's the way I learned it, and he had the audacity to ask me how many years I had been teaching. Of course I told him that I hadn't put in a year yet, so I took my anger out on him, I told him behave yourself, and if you're not going to apologize, you stand in that corner with your face to the wall until you do, otherwise I'm going to kick you out of the class. And he didn't apologize, I forgot about the whole thing, the bell rang and that was the end. But he insisted that 'and' was spelled 'an.' Now, I've deal with some illiteracy from the

beginning of my teaching career. In some places it was much less. There was a time in the mid-'60's and the early '70's when we got the highest caliber of student as an anthropology major; that was before the University was taking in just anybody that came along.

Dr. Hartzell: Okay, well, thanks very much.

[end of interview]