

Transcript of Interview with Grace Meacham by Alyssa Kumler and James Leach

Interviewee: Grace Meacham

Interviewer: Alyssa Kumler and James Leach

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Location (Interviewee): Cincinnati, Ohio

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Transcriber: Kevin McPartland

Summary: Grace Meacham details her time at the University of Cincinnati as a professor in Fashion Design in DAAP. Meacham returned to the University after studying in France and spent her career both at UC and teaching around the world. She enjoyed the students the most and has maintained long connections with many successful graduates working in America and overseas.

Categories: DAAP, Student Engagement, Gender

Tags: fashion, international studies, faculty hiring, France, student experience

Fritz Casey-Leiniger: We are rolling. So whenever you're ready,

Alyssa Kumler: Hello, this is James. And I'm Alyssa. And we are here with Grace Meacham. As a part of the University of Cincinnati history, 3—3097 honors seminar, titled Bearcat Legacies. And the date is February 14, 2018. And the time is [mumbled from background] 11:11. So the interview is taking place at Grace's home. Thank you for being here with today. Grace.

Grace Meacham: You're welcome.

James Leach: I guess we'll get right into questions. The first one for you is have you always seen yourself going to college? And what made you want to go?

GM: Oh, I think my parents instilled that in me when I was very small, then I would go to college. And it was a given that I would go, yes. What I would do would be entirely left up to me. But I was so involved as a child and at a young age in art, that I knew it would be something in the art field. Yeah.

JL: Okay. So along with that, what made you want to go to Paris to continue your education?

GM: Well, it was a choice between going to Paris or maybe going for a master's degree at the time. And I decided I would do better by going to Paris. And then I put the masters off until after I came back and started teaching. And then I got—But Paris was a high point, I think of my education. I was exposed to, at that time, really the center of fashion of the world. And I was accepted into a school that was very well known throughout the world for the education. My

teacher, one of my teachers, was the teacher for Yves Saint Laurent, I don't know if you know him. But so it was an excellent experience. And further experience was working for Christian Dior. Within an all of this, I would say it was very difficult. It was not easy. French are very rigorous in their training. And you have to do everything exactly as they say. You don't have to do so. But it was a fantastic experience. The whole thing. School, they educated me well. One year and at the end of that year, I had to take a week of tests and exams. And then I wanted to work for designer called Givenchy. But my teacher mistakenly told me to take my portfolio, because I drew well. Big mistake, which she should have known. Because the woman that I interviewed with the moment she saw the portfolio, she said, 'I can't put you in a workroom if you can draw,' because they were so hyped up that you were going to copy and send that to the United States. So on my way home, I just decided to walk into Christian Dior and apply there.

JL: I guess, along with that, what kind of work are you doing while you were in college?

GM: In college, I was in the co op program.

JL: Yeah.

GM: In the co-op program. And I—that was one of I would say a wonderful mentor that I had on my current job. It was a local manufacturer, really pretty moderate to lower price garments. But I had a fantastic patternmaking designer that I worked for. And all I would do would be asking questions, he would encourage me and he taught me so much. And during my lunch hour, the seamstresses would teach me how to work a power machine and do piecework like manufacturing. So, it was great experience. In college, My teacher, when I began was Mary Light Meyer, who later became the curator of Costume and Textiles at Cincinnati Art Museum. She was very fine person. And all through my life, she would contact me. But in a design, she wasn't really technically trained. But she was a historian. And from that standpoint, she taught you a lot about history and fashion and things like that. But the Co Op program really was a great education to me

JL: Did that help you, sorry, sort of pay through college or did you have a scholarship?

GM: I didn't have a scholarship, I was paid, of course, they were paying. But my parents paid my tuition. I had a wonderful grandmother, who for various and sundry reasons, put my name on the property she owned when she died. And the house we lived in, a building downtown, etc. was money that I used to go to France. It was a great gift. And I think about that now with my grandchildren. The two oldest ones, I've given certain stock that I'm betting on. The day Facebook went on the market, I bought Facebook, the oldest one has Facebook. Then when I heard first heard about it, Aliaba, I bought Alibaba for the second one. So that I've been lucky on both cases. But I think that kind of a gift, and it's for their education. You have to—grandparents need to do that, if they can.

AK: So you were talking a little bit about your time in the fashion industry. What made you go back to teaching?

GM: Um, I first as I said, in New York, I did Shakespeare in the Park. And then I was at Saks Fifth Avenue. And I was just about a year and a half, I guess, I spent in New York, and I had been in New York, this summer working for Simplicity Pattern Company before I went to Paris. So I was very familiar with it. And they called me, and, at UC, and they had two positions for the department head and another position. And I couldn't quite decide. And I talked to a friend of my mother's who said to me, I think this was and I always remember it. 'When you teach, many doors will open to you that would not otherwise be open. You can go into any top designer anywhere in the world, ask questions they will take you through, because they intend for you to give it to somebody else the information. You will—you can travel all over the world.' And I thought, 'hey, that sounds pretty good.' So that's why I did it.

AK: So how do you feel that your time working in the industry affected your teaching or got insight?

GM: I think I think it was very good. I think I kept learning all the time. Even when I when I started teaching. I was also—there was a store here much like Saks called Gidding Jenny and I was the artist for Gidding Jenny that came out in the paper. So a couple years there I, I wasn't married I was doing both. And I felt all along you have to constantly learn as a teacher, constantly. So my time in industry, I sort of have different experiences and from time to time I go back to those experiences and constantly learn. And I think that's important for students. They—they were great. They were very absorbing, always interested in what you're doing. And they still contact me today.

AK: Yeah. So did you think that—did a lot of the work you did in the fashion industry, like informed with what you taught your students that from experience?

GM: Yes. I mentioned the draping before. The cutting experience in France was very specialized. And no one else actually make patterns that way. Most manufacturers here use flat pattern method. When I taught in China, the Chinese said to me in the conversation talking, 'oh, do you know how to take fabric and cut it on the form?' I said, 'ooh, yeah.' I mean, they came every night to learn. Every night, they wanted to know, Japanese do all flat pattern. So when I taught in Japan, it was the same thing. You know, how do you do this? What do you look for? So what I learned there, the drawing, not so important. But the cutting, that was very important. You learn about the body, how the body moves. So you have to think of that as you're allowing for excess fabric, as you're cutting a design.

JL: What was your—what—while you see what was your path to becoming a tenured professor like?

GM: At first, easy, you know. But my last appointment was difficult. I put three volumes together. It just, you know, the each promotion—I started out as instructor, they had instructor that. So I was promoted four times. I wish in those days, they had given you a mentor from another college like they're doing now. They will give new faculty mentors, That—I was fortunate that I did know a few people who gave me advice as when and you can go up for tenure. And when you should, you can go up sometimes a little before, but maybe you should hang back. They would teach me about that. What you really want in your vitae, you know. bBut if you did not have somebody to mentor, it was not at all—a lot of times it really didn't. You didn't get it. And we had excellent faculty member who didn't get it. And mostly, I'm sorry to say the dean at the time, had to cut money. And they just didn't approve her tenure, so she left.

AK: Who was the dean at that time?

GM: Berenson.

[inaudible] Berenson has a long reputation of being probably the dean throughout the university in history that only spent, I don't know some minimal amount of time in his office. He was always conducting some tour through Europe for somebody. And the secretary at that time, ran the college. And anyone will tell you it's part of the history. Yeah.

JL: Oh, was there a difference for getting tenure to male and female?

GM: Oh, yeah. back then. Yes. It was a big difference in salary. Everything. I think if I knew then what I know now I would never have gone in as instructor. Never. I would always have gone in as Assistant Professor. With the amount of experience that I had. Which was, as I mentioned once earlier to you, my depart—the person the other person that they hired us, the department head had far less experience. But she was quite a few years older. And not that—she did a fine job as a department head. She really did I think it was in the area she was good, very good. And in building a department. But I should have gone for Assistant Professor, but you don't know that. You think, 'well, I'll go, I'll do a good job, they'll promote me.' It doesn't always work that way.

JL: Over time, what factors have made DAAP a consistently well recognized design program?

GM: I think certain department heads and administration has really built the college, I think they have also had, like in the School of Design, in general, and industrial, graphics and fashion, some excellent teachers that have had experience in the industry, and continually develop themselves to develop the students. I think that's a big factor. I think sometimes departments have been extremely stressed in terms of not enough faculty. And our department had a history of hiring a lot of adjunct, which was good in one way and that those people brought a lot of knowledge from outside in. However, they didn't have the responsibility that faculty did. And it became a lot for faculty. I know that another thing is a lot of other colleges did not have the same requirements on the faculty, as they did in DAAP. We worked—we—because it was studio, we worked 18 hours

a week in the classroom. You had—I advise senior class, as well. And I had graduate students to advise. So there was very little time to develop yourself. As time has gone on, I think there is more opportunities, they have hired more full time people, and the faculty are able to do research in different areas. In 1990, I started clothing for people in wheelchairs. And I did that for 10 years, which was extremely worthwhile. I actually—another professor kind of picked it up when I retired. She—I helped her with a class or two, where students were involved. And we gave a paper in 2009 at the Royal College of Art in London, which I thought was quite nice to go there. The whole conference there was on products for people with disabilities. So.

JL: How has the co-op program developed over the years?

GM: It's great. I think the only problem is, we never have enough jobs. That's a problem. The student enrollment has grown and grown and grown. But there doesn't seem always to be enough jobs. And students sometimes now are going out and getting jobs themselves. Some turn out well and some do not. But, that's the biggest thing that I see. But the benefit that student gets, is tremendous. A good Co Op job, even a not so good Co Op job really teaches you not only the professional side of what you're doing, but also how you have to get along with people. That's a very big thing. That you may be very talented, but quite often, when you just come out of college and you step into a job, if you are extremely good at what you step into, there may be somebody there, that's—has been there 15 years, and started at a much lower salary. This is always a problem and sometimes resent. But you have to deal with those things on a co op. And you see that happening. And you know how to approach it. We also have, I assume you do an engineering, we have a course, the freshmen here, and really to kind of prepare you. And I hope, I don't, I've never said in on the course. I don't know if it's something that you have found on your co-op job. We find it all the time, there's a little bit of envy.

JL: Where there any changes you want to make within your department or college, and how did you go about making those changes?

GM: Now?

JL: Or in the past?

GM: Well, there was a lot of change [Laughs]. I was the first person to apply and get maternity leave. There was no maternity leave. My second son was born in 1976. And my first son, I did not have maternity leave. I had five weeks off. And she said, 'I'll take your class,' my department head, 'for five weeks, and then you have to be back here.' So that was, yeah. I also my oldest son had a tooth—teeth problems. Wasn't an overbite, it was an underbite. And, at any rate, you did not have faculty did not have orthodontist rate at that time. And so he was the first. He had to have a new apparatus that someone had just developed. So it was in the paper. So I made a big case for this. So then we began to get dental care for children. So there was not—I was one of, I would say, eight or 10 black faculty that first began the Black Faculty Association at UC, there was just a handful of people that came together. I was the first black woman in the college.

There's only been two since in 35 years. That's a prob—that has always been a problem in DAAP. And CCM is much better now. That I don't think it enrollment of minority students has increased any. There's always been a low number, nor faculty

AK: Do you think specifically within the DAAP college, it hasn't improved?

GM: It really hasn't improved. I brought out the book that they have put out, it's down there on the table, that shows the develop—well tells you the development of the program. at the college. A.J. Chatterjee had them put together, the history of the college afterthat building was built. And there is a picture of the millennium. And I opened that picture There are students and faculty. There's not one black person there. And I thought, 'hmm.' There Someone from Korea and the Dean was Indian. The dean had, I would tell you, a rough time on and off, because he was Indian. And he would tell you that. But, I don't know.

AK: Yeah, so you said you had to like, kind of advocate for your son's teeth, like, were you doing a lot of like pushback or like to get these things?

GM: No, I just, I think I knew a lot of people in the university. I would write a letter, I knew who to write to. That's another thing you don't know who to go to. But I usually knew who to go to. And I think it was a blessing when we got a union. Because that helped a lot. Because that was during the period of time, there was not a union when I started teaching. And that helped a great deal on things like this, like maternity leave, teeth, and so forth. And contract.

JL: When was that?

GM: Oh! I don't know. When—I know when about the teeth was. But I do not know, when we've got the union.

JL: Okay.

GM: I don't remember.

JL: That's fine. Have students changed over the years?

GM: Oh, yes.

JL: In what ways?

GM: They're—they seem to know far more about the world and what is going on in the world. They are, I think, very knowledgeable about subjects that they study. I think they're highly influenced on the political time. I was there before the Korean War. And then I saw students change, a seriousness come over them. And at some periods of time, they seemed to be more fun loving, and outgoing. And then sometimes they're very serious. And that is all about the time that

we're going through, it does affect them. I think students today seem to be—I'm not in contact with them every day, like I was before, that they seem to be very involved with the world. They are knowledgeable, far more knowledgeable about the world. That's—they're good.

JL: You go.

AK: You sure?

JL: Yeah.

AK: I was just gonna say, like you said, there was a lot of—you were there during the time, when there was a lot of serious things going on. How did you see the students like, react to that like their activism and things like that?

GM: Well, at different times, it was a riot. I think in the class, the first day, somebody mentioned that, and, and it was basically students who were protesting various things. One faculty member in CCM, did not get hired. She was internationally famous. She was a black female. And that seemed to be part of it. But then I think there were problems in other colleges. They closed the university. So there was activism.

JL: How focused was the University on interacting with the community around it? Has it changed over the years?

GM: It's changed. Yes. When I started out, it was a city known as a City University. It became when it became affiliated with the state, I think state politics comes into it. The governor, as you know appoints the new members to the Board of Trustees. And so if the governor is Republican, he's gonna appoint another Republican. And that's the way it goes. So I find that that sounds simple at the top. But the politics, I think of the state tends to filter down to the universe—to the colleges to the university. Whereas before, just from my brief knowledge is there was more, I know, interaction between my college and the community, and CCM and the community in terms of the arts. There was far more than I think, than there is now at one time, the, the beginning of DAAP, was connected with the Art Museum, the Art Academy, it was part of them. First it was called the McMicken School and Drawing and Design. And then it succeeded, but then people thought it should be moved. So was in—so therefore you had that beginning of community involvement with the museum. So then it came back to the university and the College of Engineering. And then, then it's separated into DAA, it was called first and then to DAAP. But it seems to be, from my perspective, more involved with the community before than it is now. I don't know how many projects are being done with the community right now. There were a lot at the time and say 60s and 70s. It was a well known planner, [unknown]. He, unfortunately died at an early age of cancer, but he was very strong on his belief of community involvement, he designed playgrounds for Sand's elementary design. And that's just one example.

AK: So DAAP was involved with that?

GM: Uh huh. He was from the school planning.

AK: Okay. So

JL: What was the transition like from your professor to head of department?

GM: Ah, not a huge transition. I had been there some time. And my department head, we were on a quarter system. So we taught seven out of eight quarters. So that means I taught every other summer. That was built into it, because of the co-op system. And every time my department head was off, I would step in. If she took us a sabbatical, I stepped in. So I was familiar with what to do and running the department.

AK: How did your role change?

GM: Well people were [inaudible, laughs] scheduling classes, a lot more people work. And I told her at the very beginning, 'I'm not really ever after your job. I'm not a paperwork person to begin with.' But I did it. And it's okay. But then, you know, they change from departments, to schools, and basically having nine departments in DAAP, and then they changed it four schools. Changed the administration. It took away a lot of responsibilities. A coordinator, which they're called now, it moved from, from department head to chair, to coordinator. Of course, as it did, that was less responsibility and less money. So the school director, as we speak, the new school director for the School of Design actually has taken over as the Coordinator for Fashion I hear. But it—it wasn't difficult, you know, at the time that I did so. And that the changes didn't bother me at all, from chair to coordinator. The only thing that really, I think, bothered me was when it changed and you had less responsibility, hiring of new faculty should be I think you should be more involved than it was. The school director kind of took over. And in several cases, they made very big blunders, very big blunders. And the person was out of there before the year was over. So there, there really needs for faculty to be directly involved in a hiring. I mean, they can see how that person fits what that person is going to bring.

JL: Did you have to apply or you chose to become the new department head? Or how did that work?

GM: No, I—you're asked by, like, school director would ask me.

JL: Okay.

GM: Yeah, I went on sabbatical. And when I came back, he asked me, you know, did I want to do it? It had gone from chair to coordinator. So, but the school director would ask you.

JL: Okay. I think we've covered this a little bit, but what was the largest change, you see at UC?

GM: The number of students in fashion design is overwhelming. As you know, I went to undergraduate school there. And I think we may have had eight to 10 people in the class. The last two years, there were 50 in a senior graduating class. So it's growing. We turn, I'm sorry to say, far too many people away. I think I was thinking about this the other day, that move—that television show Project Runway. More people became interested in fashion, it really had an effect. That—we turn away a lot of people and the people that are chosen, well, selected to come are based on their GPAs. Which we are not a portfolio school, you don't present a portfolio, which, that to me, I would prefer them reviewing a portfolio. Because I've seen some people who are really dedicated who would do better academically if they were in something that they love, they would know. I think the opposite is true. The theory is, well, you have to make sure that they're not going to flunk out that freshman year just because they're talented artists. But it also works the other way around.

AK: So were you ever, like, involved in the admissions process?

GM: Oh, sure. Sure. At one time, and I think sometimes they still are doing it. If you saw a student, and they came to you with a portfolio, although that wasn't part of the selection, but didn't have the GPA, you would ask them to apply to Arts and Science freshman year and take as many of the freshmen courses in DAAP and then make sure that you have a very good GPA at the end of the year and transfer in. I saw several people do that and just to get in, it really influenced their academic grades. And they did very well. That doesn't always work, but it can work.

AK: So you did a lot at UC, was there any time you thought about leaving, or to do other work?

GM: Um, I thought about going to another university when I was approached. But I felt my husband was administrator at UC, and I had two boys. It wasn't a good time to uproot the family. Not at all. So I stayed.

JL: Sorry. So did your family influence your decision a lot to stay or do things within the university?

GM: Yes. My family have always been extremely supportive. I don't think a lot of husbands would just let their wife, go to China for six weeks and take care of two boys. Always have been supported. I went to India for six weeks, twice. I once—before I retired once after I retired. In 2004 I went to India, again, the same school. So. I went to Japan. That was—I went to Japan twice, but it was shorter period, one week, and then I went back for another week. But India wanted me to come and stay two years. Which The last time I was there, I had already retired. I retired early, a few years early, because, unfortunately, I had cancer. And I had recovered, and I was fine. And then I went to India for six weeks. But I asked them, did they have a doctor there on campus? And they said, 'oh he comes once a week.' I was like, 'ehh. I don't think so.' If you knew India, but I loved it. I loved India. Wonderful, but you have to be prepped before you go.

And this is what you can expect. And then you deal with some of the hardships, but it was a wonderful learning experience.

AK: Do you think earlier in your career, you would have probably entertained staying there.

GM: India? Uh, yeah. If I was single and didn't have a family? Oh, yeah. Yeah, definitely.

AK: So I think you talked more about this earlier. But what kind of other struggles Did you see other women facing at the university?

GM: Well, the salary was a big factor. Really getting involved and making decisions in your college. I think a lot of it early on list. Men, middle aged men. And it was that way, a long, long time. Long time. They just didn't seem to have the same respect for someone's opinion, in terms of a meeting, that you would go to where decisions were being made. I sat on the committee, I was selected to sit on a committee for the School of Design building, the Eisenman building [Laughs]. Anyway, for seven years. I had to deal with it. I was on there at the library and was on there. And now it was a hard way to go. Eisenman. And his assistant would come from New York and spread out a drawing of the spine of the college and how he was getting to these wonderful things. Then he would just gradually, it would just gradually change each time. He was definitely a person who had a huge ego. He wanted to be filmed. Every time he came and spoke to anyone, he had to be on film, and then he wanted to see the film if he was too fat or not. It was but good example. After maybe about six years, he showed a plan. And he went through first floor second floor, every floor. And I said this fashion design department next to it was the college kitchen. I said, 'does this mean that kitchen—this cooking and the sewing are together?' I was just so angry. Yeah. That was the mental state of Eisenman, right. Let's just shove it in there. He said the smell would be in the fabric. It would just be horrible. Next time he came, went through the whole thing again. I mean, this took a couple of hours, at least. And I said, 'I'm sorry, I don't see the fashion design department at all. At all. It wasn't there. And that assistant said, 'well, we were up until about two o'clock this morning, getting it ready for today. And don't worry, we'll find a place for you.' And I thought this sounds just like a student who stays up all night for critique. Yeah. But now, this was in the latter part, you know, that building of my career. [AK inaudible] I'm sure architecture went down first. But in the end, you know, when the assistant dean at the time spoke up for me and said, 'well, last time, you put it next to the college kitchen.' So we got the best place in the whole building. I don't know if you've seen the fashion, overlooks a park. We got the best in the end. But it was a fight. And that was that wasn't that long ago, you know? Well, it is now but, at the time.

AK: Yeah, you said that, like racially, your department wasn't very diverse at all was, like

GM: Oh, my department was better than others, the college was not good. College was not good. I know, they would take sort of a census, every so often, how many minorities were in the college in different departments. And I remember, once it came out, we had eight in the program, more than all the rest of the college put together. It was a problem also with hiring faculty. I don't

think they either mentored the faculty, when they—during 35 years that I was there, there were two women hired in architecture. One stayed about two years, the other one maybe five years. And there were many problems for them. Or one male was in industrial design, a few years and he was getting along fine. But I mean, he told me just he had to go back to California. It just—it really wasn't very good for him. So, but when they—I do know, for a fact, they would offer people jobs. But they would offer them sometimes less than their current, current salary, or their current position, and their current position. And usually people aren't going to come for less. And I think with students, students are one of the reasons why they're not that many minorities in terms of students in the program. Parents are really—desire that they're when they send their children to school, they want them to have professions that will be lucrative, that appear—that are going to be highly professional. And if you say fashion design or graphic design, they often do not see that in the same light as engineering. You know. Engineering has more clout in many cases than an industrial designer. And I know a man at one time that was recruiting for the university that would go to black churches, and when there would be meetings and talk to parents about that. But because he felt that it really started with the parents' influence and I think that's very, very true.

AK: So, you said you had friends in like, other colleges and things like that. Do you think their experience being a woman, a woman at the university was the same as yours are different?

GM: You know, one of my friends is Barbara Ramusack, who was at the end of the table and she talk often. She became the head of history. And she talks often about—I know, we would go to New York, there would be four of us who go to New York, and we still do. And she would say—I would say, 'oh, by that Barbara.' We would go shopping. 'Oh, this is too wild. If I walked into a meeting with all these men,' you know?. She would be unconscious on what she wore to a meeting. Of course, I wouldn't. And I couldn't say that, but that—they do have, you know. And that she is one who will tell you when they hire someone new, why the struggle she had way back when and the small salary that she had. And, so it has improved a great deal. But they—many women had problems. I mean, South—and that was in all the colleges, everything.

AK: Were there any like policies that like kind of helped improve?

GM: I think that again, establishing the union was a place that you could go and asked, what can be done about situation. I had an incident, and I went to the union. It didn't go anywhere. But [laughs] that didn't make any difference. But the other person was called to task about the situation. And then the team became involved and having that union there was a very good thing for a woman.

AK: When was that you said you had to go?

GM: I would say about 1990? Maybe? [joint talking] There are—human nature is—especially I feel there at UC and I'm sure to other places as well. Is there's a lot of competition for grants, for money, for—that was the merit system. I think human nature is possibly to envy somebody for

something. And I think I found that with faculty, a lot. Sometimes male faculty. I had an old, it wasn't new, red Mercedes. And I got comments from some male faculty. It just—anything, you know,

AK: where they're more male faculty compared to women in your department? Or is it?

GM: Not in my department, but in the college. The women were the most in my department. [Laughs, inaudible] Yeah. But in the rest of the college. Architecture was, hh, my goodness. If you were a woman and you step foot in—this black woman that was hired, the first one in architecture. faculty member said she came in, 'well, can you go get me a cup of coffee?' Yes, that's why I think she only stayed about a year.

AK: Do you think they like handled that at all? Or just kind of like that was the norm?

GM: That wasn't handled. Industrial Design was in my area, was also one person. There was a faculty member in there, who was noted for being extremely chauvinistic, students and with other faculty. Yeah.

AK: Maybe just to like, wrap up in a sense, but do you have any like memorable relationships with colleagues or students that you want to discuss?

GM: Oh, yes, I have a lot of relationships. As I go through when I met you last week, the students are the best part of it. I wouldn't have stayed 35 years ago if it wasn't. The students are wonderful. Being creative minds who are really interested in what they're doing. Have a desire to succeed in what they're doing. It's just wonderful to work with creative minds like that every day. I—when I go to New York, every time I go to New York, they will come out, and we will go to dinner every time. At one point I said to my husband, when I went to Japan, first time I went to Japan, I said, 'you know, I've like halfway around the world. And when I get there, three former students were there to meet me.' That's wonderful, really wonderful, yeah. One was working and going to be there that week, another one lived in the Philippines. And she and her husband manufactured clothing for children. And she came, and then the other one went lived to Japan. And I was going to go, that we all met in Hong Kong. And I was going to go back to Japan with her. So it's just, great feeling. And I hear from all of them.

JL: Do you have any reservations about doing this interview with us?

GM: No. I'm used—I don't think I'm the best speaker in the world. And afterwards, I always think, 'oh, I wish I said that? Oh, why didn't I say that? You know.

AK: I think most people all say the same too.

JL: Why did you decide to do this with us?

GM: I don't know. I thought it would be interesting. I thought it would be interesting. And Barbara asked me.

JL: what is your? What's the thing you're most proud of accomplishing during your time at UC?

GM: Well, I started several programs of which students won big awards and developed—I started the network program, which I wrote, I heard of small net machine. So I got one and fooled around with it, then I wrote a program. So I took a leave of absence and went to conferences, and I wrote proposal and got a grant to get machines in the department and started there. They did wonderful things. I have many, many students who went into network design. You know. One's at Nike, and I just all over. That I'm very proud of. Most people know that I did a leather design, clothing design. And I, I discovered a place here in Norwood that had a lot of leather. They sold to US Shoe Company. And so I would go over there and for like, no money at all students could buy leather. And it was wonderful, everyone got excited, because it's the only material that has a smell. You know, it's very sensuous., leather is. So I started—we started making leather clothing. We won—they won the—there's a big show in New York every year by the Leather Industries of America. And from 1990 for 10 years, the students took first, second, third. My students won it every year. So I was selected by the Leather Industries of America to represent them in Bologna, Italy one year, so I went there and gave a paper. So those two things in terms of the—accomplishments the students did in developing, you know, with new materials. And I think that's a key right now because materials and new materials and experimentation, that really where it is. So I'm very proud.

AK: That was our last question for you. But if you have any other final thoughts you want to share with us.

GM: It's gonna be one of those things that I wish I did [Laughs]. Now, I think all in all, I chose the right thing to. I would never have gotten all that I got out of teaching. Experiences were terrific. New York is interesting, but it's a place that gets very old quickly. And you see the writing on the wall. I once asked at Saks, 'how did Mrs.—How did Sophie get her job?' That was the designer supposedly. And they said, 'Sophie's Mrs. Gimble. She married that owner of the store.' So it was, it's difficult, life in New York. There is even if there highly successful, I have some highly successful students in New York. It's very difficult.

AK: Thank you so much for your time today.

GM: Thank you for coming.