

Skelly: Well, the meals — they had the cafeteria my freshman year, but as soon as I pledged, I was eating at the Alpha Chi house. I mean, I just went there for my meals because the cafeteria, being in line, it just was not conducive to me getting to class on time. I mean, I could walk to the house and eat my breakfast, you know, and go walk to the kitchen and pick it up, sit down, and eat it. And you got to be with your sorority sisters. I didn't know that many people in my dorm.

Sellers: Well, it was a big dorm.

Skelly: Everybody had places to go. And a lot of people dropped out of school. I was amazed at the attrition rate. People were friendly, but when you're a freshman away from home, there are a lot of people suffering from homesickness. I had been away from home at camps at Florida State for five weeks, so I knew about college life and, you know, living in a dorm room and living out of a trunk. You just didn't have very much room.

Sellers: Right. Who are some of the professors that you remember? You mentioned the people involved with the band and twirling and things, but your classes — do you remember any professors from those?

Skelly: Oh, gosh. I had — oh, my gosh. I'm terrible about names, but the chemo has erased my ability to recall names. That's the worst thing. I look at people and I have a really hard time with it. But I remember that I didn't have — if I could have my yearbook in front of me, because all the faculty was in there, I would know. But I don't even remember my freshman year.

Sellers: Well, it's not that big of a deal.

Skelly: My chemistry teacher was wonderful. I remember that. We didn't have that much selection, but the chemistry teacher that I had was wonderful. And all my business teachers. Of course, I did *not* like Economics. I never did get that picture. I mean, that's a very dry, hard course, and the people that study it as a major amaze me. [laughs]

Sellers: [laughs] Yes. I agree with you there. You graduated in what year from FSU?

Skelly: 1961. And my class, my freshman year, we had the first panty raid.

Sellers: Oh, really?

Skelly: Oh, yes we did.

Sellers: And your freshman year you were in Bryan Hall, so tell me about that.

Skelly: Bryan Hall. Ooooh. We didn't know what was going on, and all of the sudden the

dorm counselor and all of these floor counselors, “Shut your doors! Shut your windows, and stay low!” And we're going, “What in the world is going on?” They said, “Well, we've got these guys roving campus, and they're having a panty raid.” I said, “What's a panty raid?” They said, “Don't worry because you *don't* participate. You'll get in trouble if you participate.” And so, you know, they thought we were going to be raped! They had policeman down at the doors so they couldn't get in, and we're all like, “What? What is this all about?” [laughter] So, they're running around. And this went on until about four o'clock in the morning, and I can remember that it was not a school night. It was a weekend night, as I recall. We just turned the lights down and we studied with our lamps and stuff. I can remember at about three o'clock, this kid came underneath — they were roaming around — and he came underneath our window. And you could see out. It was a bright night for some reason or other. Outside lights were showing up. And here he was, over his jeans he had I don't know how many pair of panties pulled up over, you know, starting at the top of his leg. “Please,” he said. “Don't throw me any more panties.” [laughter] He said, “I just want a cigarette. Does anybody have a cigarette?” And my roommate, the devil that she was, said, “I'm going to give him a cigarette.” I said, “No, you're not.” Because, you know, Bryan Hall had that center section that stuck out in the middle of the square, and they had these dorm people posted at those windows. The windows, the screens moved out from the bottom, and so they're standing in the corner, looking down at every window on your floor. And they are watching.

Sellers: Uh-oh.

Skelly: And she said, “I'm going to flip him a cigarette. They won't catch me.” I said, “Don't you dare!” I knew — I'm the type of person, I'll be caught! [laughter] I know it. I'll be caught. I said, “Please don't do it.” She said, “Oh, I'm just going to crack it a little bit, I'm going to roll it out.” Well, she does. And not 30 seconds later, *bam bam bam* on the door. I said, “Oh, my God, you've gotten us in trouble!” She answered the door, and the person said, “Who threw the cigarette out the window?” And I looked and I said, “It wasn't me.” Because I thought, “No. I'm not saying I did something when I didn't do it.” And my dad always said, “Don't lie. If anything, you always tell the truth.” I don't know why I couldn't teach my children that — lying will get you nowhere but trouble. [laughter] I looked at my roommate, and my roommate says, “Well, *I* didn't do it!” They said, “It came from this room.” And they went on for about five minutes, and I never admitted that I did it and she didn't, either. I don't know whether they believed me or not, but it was ridiculous the way — Of course, they had our safety, in those days, at a really high level. You had to — if you wanted to have a boy, or a gentleman call on you, or even take you on a date, you had to have parental permission written before you ever came to school. That was something that your parents had to write, that you had permission to have visitors and to date. You left campus, you signed out. And in on time, you'd better sign in. I'm telling you, everybody must have had 40 cards each. And I mean, they were full legal sizes of paper. You put your name, the date, the name, the time, where you're going, what time you're coming back. And when you get back, you sign back in. You know, if somebody came to pick you up on a date or to even study with you in the break area there in the middle, you had to wait to be called. It was just — they were very strict. The boys could run loose, but the girls were

just like under a thumb. And the panty raid went on all night. They didn't want the responsibility that maybe somebody would get raped or hurt. They didn't know what was going to happen, and I think it was one of the first ones held in the nation. I didn't even know what a panty raid was. I said, "Why do you think they want all these panties?" My roommate said, "I can't even imagine!" You know, it was such a new thing. The guys just — of course, they didn't have any rules or regulations or times to be in, so it was perfect for them to do whatever they wanted to do. But it was a night to remember. [laughter] Then it snowed right after Christmas that first year, and they let us out by one side of the dorm, surrounded by police all the way around the area. But they let us out to go play in the little bit of snow that we had. And it was — you almost feel...I look back and I think, "My God. It's like a concentration camp." You know, everybody letting you out. You have no freedom, but it's for your safety but —

Sellers: Uh-huh. Well, they had a tremendous responsibility to the people of the state.

Skelly: Oh, sure they did.

Sellers: I mean, heavens knows what would have happened to the school if something had happened to some of the students, the female students.

Skelly: Well, right. And it's also — I didn't realize, but I went there in 1957. They didn't integrate — go coed — until like, that was, I think, ten years that it had been going on.

Sellers: Yeah. That was in '47, uh-huh.

Skelly: Yeah. They were really trying to establish having men and women on campus together.

Sellers: Do you remember about — were there three or four girls to every guy?

Skelly: Uh...There were a lot of girls to every guy.

Sellers: [laughs] Okay.

Skelly: I don't know what the ratio was, but it's sort of like — in Key West, it was the opposite. My husband said, "There were *no* girls to all these guys. All these military guys." [laughs] So, you didn't really, what you say, have your pick of the litter, but there were a lot of single guys looking around for dates and things. A lot of people, you know, didn't get dates. Especially, people that really were not used to making the first step, talking. You know, they grew up in a high school that they knew their people. I went to school with people for 12 years.

Sellers: Yeah. So you knew them all. Everybody knew each other.

Skelly: Well, you know everybody. That's right. Everybody knew each other, and if you