

INTERVIEW OF DR. JOHN GAUGL, 1994

BLAKE HAILEY: Today's date is March 8th, 1994. I'm Blake Hailey and we're pleased to have with us Dr. John Gaugl, Associate Professor in the Department of Physiology, is that correct?

JOHN GAUGL: That's correct.

BLAKE HAILEY: Here at the University of North Texas, Health Science Center at Fort Worth. And we're making this videotape in the Biomed Communication Center of the Gibson D. Lewis Health Science Library. Dr. Gaugl, after saying all that, now I'm going to let you say some things, if you could. I'd like to go back to your prior experience, a little bit of background. Long before you came to TCOM, if you could.

JOHN GAUGL: How far back?

BLAKE HAILEY: Well, how far do you want to go? That's always interesting to see where you -- what you did before you got here.

JOHN GAUGL: I spent my adolescent years in Dallas, South Oak Cliff High School. Went to college at North Texas State University. Received my BA and MA from North Texas State in biology, and then went to the University of California at Berkeley for my Ph.D. I spent the time out there from 1961 to 1970 during the very tumultuous years on the campus, and then I -- I taught for a year in the Department of Physiology. Then I started putting out applications to come back to Texas. One of the applications I put in was to TCU.

BLAKE HAILEY: Oh.

JOHN GAUGL: And Dr. Hart, who was our first dean, who at the time was looking for faculty, had access to the -- to the academic file, to the personnel file of TCU and caught my application and contacted me and I came here.

BLAKE HAILEY: Oh, and you've been here since -- so that would be --

JOHN GAUGL: 1971.

BLAKE HAILEY: 1971. What are some of the things you've done here at TCOM, which is now the Health Science Center?

JOHN GAUGL: Well, I was chairman of the department of physiology from 1971 to 1981, and served on a number of -- of college and departmental committees, admission committee, curriculum committee, I was in the first curriculum committee back in 1971 and '72. Recently I was put in charge of an ad hoc committee to revise the faculty handbook, we just put out a second revision of that in the past few months.

BLAKE HAILEY: So you're keeping quite busy then, it sound like, in some of the committees, then?

JOHN GAUGL: Committees, I'm first director and have been for a year or two now in physiology. And our course, as well as most of the others in the college now, are undergoing a lot of change, revision, and updating. And it's my responsibility to make sure that is carried out in our department.

BLAKE HAILEY: Oh. Okay. What are some of the research things, perhaps, you've been involved with in the past, or maybe you're currently working on as far as research projects go?

JOHN GAUGL: Generally, I do research in the area of cardiovascular physiology. I've been working with two teams, actually. One with Drs. Caffrey and Barron in the area, of the peptide regulation of cardiovascular physiology. Endorphins, enkephalins, that type of thing. And the second general area I'm -- I'm working with Dr. Fred Dunning's group in the area of regulation of the coronary circulation. An area of particular interest to us is the regulation of right coronary circulation. There appear to be many differences between it and the left.

BLAKE HAILEY: Interesting. So this is an ongoing research project you're involved in now, right?

JOHN GAUGL: It is. I've been forced to reduce it somewhat because of the academic activities which take lot of my time now. But yes, I'm still in the lab.

BLAKE HAILEY: Oh. I bet that does take a lot of time. There was a -- a number of years ago, I believe in the late 70s or early 80s, I don't have the date in front of me, but an institute for human fitness that you were involved in, in starting. What was -- what ever happened to that particular organization? I was curious about that.

JOHN GAUGL: Well, what happened is it died a natural death. How it got started was that there were a number of us in the late 70s, 1978, I believe is when we got together and started talking, but who were interested in the general area of health and physical fitness. And knowing that the osteopathic profession puts a large premium on self-health, and not only disease prevention, but health maintenance, that we thought it would be a good idea if we could organize such an institute and get the college, at that time to -- to support it. Our first meeting was at the house of Dr. Joel Alter, Who was a surgeon at that -- at that particular time on your faculty. I was there. Dr. Bob Cayman was there. And there were several other representatives from the community who also were in on the founding of that. As you may know, we -- the institute took over a building down at the River Plaza Complex after the basic sciences moved out of that, back in the mid to late 70s. And for several years, had a very strong ongoing program both in the areas of activities, education, and in research. But even though the institute received several grants, for example, for testing of Fort Worth firemen and policemen, there wasn't enough money coming in to support the institute, and the college felt that it needed to be self-sufficient so it couldn't exist, and so it went out of existence.

BLAKE HAILEY: No way to get the funds in, to bring in, huh?

JOHN GAUGL: That's right.

BLAKE HAILEY: I'm curious as to your thoughts on why it was necessary for TCOM to become the UNT Health Science Center. What -- how do you see that as a good thing for the school? The growth and success?

JOHN GAUGL: There are many health-related professions that support the physicians. Obviously, nurses, laboratory personnel, physician's assistants, to name just a few of the many that are available, who don't have training in osteopathic theory or philosophy or technique. And I see it as an advantage to be able to help train these health associates along with the philosophy of osteopathic medicine. There is also, of course, the practical advantage of being able to have a higher visibility in the community and most likely we will certainly hope we will be able to be more readily funded because of that.

BLAKE HAILEY: How do you see things as far as the Health Science Center is concerned in the community? Do you have -- is it looking pretty good for us, do you think? Got some good community support?

JOHN GAUGL: Well, I'm not in that aspect of the -- of the institution, so I don't know that for a fact. I suspect is certainly ought to.

BLAKE HAILEY: Right.

JOHN GAUGL: And I'm certainly hoping that it will garner some community support for the institution.

BLAKE HAILEY: How do you see this Health Science Center, or what does it have to offer that the other, I believe there are six health science centers in Texas, don't have?

JOHN GAUGL: Like I mentioned earlier, the philosophies might be different. Right now we're small. All we have is the medical school and the directive school of biomedical -- the graduate school of biomedical --

BLAKE HAILEY: -- sciences.

JOHN GAUGL: -- sciences. Right. And we certainly will be adding more of those medically-related professions in the future. What do we have to offer that they do right now -- that the other centers don't right now?

BLAKE HAILEY: Right.

JOHN GAUGL: Probably not a whole lot. But we will.

BLAKE HAILEY: Well, that brings me to a point then. What do you see some challenges are and maybe you mentioned some other programs that will be added. What would you like to see added in the future. What challenges will the health science center face in the next two years?

JOHN GAUGL: Well there would be the physical challenge of it getting more advanced, a larger campus. I suspect there might be some community opposition to that. And I don't know. We need to continue to upgrade the quality of all our professions, the medical school, the graduate school, and to make sure that whatever other services or professions come on board, it will be at the highest quality.

BLAKE HAILEY: What do you see challenges for yourself coming up in the future?

JOHN GAUGL: As I mentioned earlier, I am course director and I think that developing that course into what it needs to be, to continue the evolution -- we haven't had a revolution, but an evolution in the course, it's going to be an ongoing challenge for me for the next -- at least half decade I suppose. There is a growing demand, if you will, throughout the profession that basic sciences be more clinically relevant, be more accessible to the students with regard to clinical cases. The National Board of Examination as well as the USMLE are all requiring that the questions and the students be able to answer questions that are case-based. And up until -- up until now, and even at this point, many colleges and institutions around the country are still very traditional. And it's a challenge to all of us to go beyond that.

BLAKE HAILEY: So the Health Science Center is changing that now, then, going more toward that way.

JOHN GAUGL: Yes.

BLAKE HAILEY: A case-based situation. How do you see -- what are things you see changing in your role in the department of physiology and what you're doing. What are the things you see changing in the next few years with this creation of the Health Science Center?

JOHN GAUGL: Well, like I said, I don't think it's going to be a major change, there's not going to be a revolution -- an evolution. There will always be a -- a -- a -- an emphasis on research. And even those of us who are more deeply involved in the academics will still be required and desire to do research. So, this -- there's always wide open fields for that, what we can do with that and along with, of course, the students.

BLAKE HAILEY: Well, I don't know how you have time to do research with all the other academic parts that you're doing, the committees that you serve on. We've covered a few -- a number of topics here Dr. Gaugl. I'm sure I missed some things. Is there subject areas you'd like to bring up or some things you'd like to mention that I haven't already asked you about off the top of your head?

JOHN GAUGL: Well, there are some of the early development of the college that a few of us around here are still witness that you might be interested.

BLAKE HAILEY: Please. Feel free.

JOHN GAUGL: You know, Dr. Harrison, Dr. Libby Harris and Dr. Mary Shunter were here for the very first year of the college, 1970, '71. I came on board the second year, 1971, '72. And they and I have taught every one of TCOM's graduates. So whenever you see them out there, it's to some extent the product of what we have been able to accomplish. There have been many moves -- well, physically and administratively, that have occurred during -- during the last couple of decades. Association with North Texas, the sometimes rough pathway that we had during that time. And then the coming back to the Fort Worth campus, which I believe was a good thing for us.

BLAKE HAILEY: You said there was a rough time with North Texas. Was there any specific events you can recall that you'd like to bring up concerning that change from a private institution to a state-supported?

JOHN GAUGL: Well, there are -- there are differences in philosophy, perhaps. When those of us who originally with TCOM went up to the North Texas campus for the four or five years that we were up there and intermingled with the ongoing North Texas faculty to teach the basic science courses. And like I said, sometimes there is a difference of opinion as to what should be taught, who should do the teaching, what should be the role of our faculty and their faculty in the -- in the Osteopathic College.

BLAKE HAILEY: Has it always been kind of a -- well, not a strain, but maybe a tough relationship with North Texas? Has there been -- it's kind of leveled off, I assume, with the North Texas faculty and the Health Science Center now?

JOHN GAUGL: Oh, I think so. Yeah. I think the marriage has gone along a lot smoother in its later years than it did at first. I think that both institutions see the mutual benefit and advantages of being together, and I see nothing but good for the -- for the relationship in the future.

BLAKE HAILEY: Sounds like, to me, that everybody refers to it as a marriage. It's like it's been a relatively successful marriage, then. And there is a lot of talk about working between the two campuses with

other departments at North Texas in here to advance the Health Science Center. I assume there is a lot of possibilities then, as far as linkage between departments and the Health Science Center.

JOHN GAUGL: Linkage with -- between us and North Texas?

BLAKE HAILEY: Right. With the education and maybe business and those types of departments. Do you see a lot of --

JOHN GAUGL: There has been talk of that for -- for years now. And not too much has come from it. One would think that, for example, the with the business school and the history department that we might have more linkages, but it just hasn't happened. And you know, 36 miles between us, it's a big distance. Those of us who traveled it in the early years know how big it is. Maybe -- maybe in the future.

BLAKE HAILEY: I guess this is a problem. I mean, it's not that far but then it is a good distance away.

JOHN GAUGL: Uh-huh.

BLAKE HAILEY: Is there anything -- other things you'd like to bring up? You want to explore off the top of your head?

JOHN GAUGL: Well I think you've done a pretty good job. I appreciate being here.

BLAKE HAILEY: I appreciate you taking the time out of your busy schedule to meet with us. I know that you've been a great asset to the health -- UNT Health Science Center and will continue to be in the research and definitely in the educational aspect of it. And the school is indebted. I'm glad you are a part of it. Thank you again for taking time to meet with us.

JOHN GAUGL: Thank you.

BLAKE HAILEY: And with that, I will conclude this interview. Thank you and have a pleasant day.