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Interview with Frances Case

Frances Case

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**LOUISE PETTUS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**Interview #289
CASE, Frances**

CASE, Frances

Double major in History and Library Science.

At Winthrop: 1947-1951
Interviewed: October 11, 2012
Interviewer: Robert Ryals
Index by: Michelle Dubert-Bellrichard
Length: 1 hour, 28 minutes

Abstract: In her October 11, 2012 interview with Robert Ryals, Frances Case details her experience at Winthrop from 1947-1951. In particular, Case provides insight into the many rules and regulations students had to follow concerning dress, the Blue Line, curfew, cars, and smoking. Case speaks about student and dorm life, and her experience as a graduate student at Columbia University in New York City. Case concludes her interview by discussing her involvement with Winthrop since she graduated. This interview was conducted for inclusion into the Louise Pettus Archives and Special Collections Oral History Program.

Keywords: 1940s, 1950s, History, Library Science, Breazeale, band, uniforms, traditions, food, Harold Wolf, coeducation, practice teaching, Catawaba Indian Reservation, New York, Graduate school, polio, mononucleosis, tobacco companies, smoking, Blue Line

Interview Session (October 11, 2012): Digital File

Time Keywords

00:00:00 *Start of Interview*/Interviewer's Introduction

00:03:11 *Question:* Why did you decide to attend Winthrop? *Answer:* FC didn't really decide. The school superintendent convinced her father to let her go to Winthrop. FC says that in her time most women that went to school went to Winthrop, because it was close, supervised, and cheaper than other schools.

00:04:07 *Question:* Where were you living at this time? *Answer:* North Augusta, South Carolina in Aiken County.

00:04:40 *Question:* What did your father do at that time? *Answer:* He was in construction.

- 00:04:50 *Question:* When did you graduate from high school? *Answer:* Graduated June 1947. Application to Winthrop was sent after that time. FC accepted a few weeks later.
- 00:05:20 *Question:* Your parents drove you in the car? *Answer:* Yes. It was a quiet car ride. FC brought her footlocker. FC said it was a little emotional.
- 00:06:30 *Question:* Any friends from high school with you? *Answer:* Yes, but they were not in her dorm. FC in Breazeale on the third floor. FC always lived on the third floor. FC in Breazeale in the freshman year. Her roommate was very homesick, so FC didn't "have time to be homesick." FC talks about tending to homesick roommate. FC agreed to swap roommates with a PE major.
- 00:08:25 *Question:* What instrument did you play? *Answer:* Sousaphone. FC played for seven years. Her roommate played the clarinet. FC mentions not liking the band director. FC was the only sousaphone player, so she took part in parades but didn't go to practice regularly. FC talks about the band uniforms and where parades took place.
- 00:11:34 *Question:* Anytime you experienced homesickness? *Answer:* Winter of 1947/1948 was in infirmary. FC had first case of mononucleosis. FC could not take first semester exams. Doctor didn't want FC to go back. FC managed to go back and take exams. FC took exams in the hallway outside the professor's office very late in the 2nd semester.
- 00:13:27 *Question:* What was the closest theater? *Answer:* Pix? On Oakland near the railroad tracks. FC would see all of the Cornel Wilde movies. FC would also go to Main Street to see movies.
- 00:15:15 **[no question]** FC says students walked everywhere, because cars were not allowed. If students had a car, they had to get permission and give the keys to the Dean. Before FC graduated, seniors could have a car, but they had to turn in the keys to the Dean. FC speculates that this rule existed, because a lot of people didn't have cars and students couldn't run around town.
- 00:16:58 *Question:* Was there a curfew? *Answer:* 7:30. Freshmen had to be in their rooms by 7:30. The Canteen stayed open till around 10. Freshmen could only go at 9:50 P.M. Students would wear their pajamas under their clothes. The Canteen was located in the bottom of Main Building (Tillman Hall). FC says that students were told a person drowned in the pool in Tillman Hall. Students got uniforms near the old swimming pool.
- 00:18:30 *Question:* Were these uniforms issued by the college? *Answer:* Yes. Students got a suit, skirt, jacket, white dress, navy blue dress, a "hideous" yellow gym suit, and a bodysuit with no with no lining for swimming. FC talks about students being

embarrassed wearing these swimsuits.

- 00:20:00 *Question:* How did you feel about wearing the uniform? *Answer:* FC loved it. The uniforms made everyone equals. FC says students knew when someone was leaving campus, because they were wearing clothes “out of uniform”. When students would leave campus they could wear whatever they wanted.
- 00:21:35 *Question:* Room inspections? *Answer:* FC says their rooms looked like “prison rooms.” Two beds, footlockers, and a double desk. Small closets too. Heat would come on at 5:30 in the morning and wake students up. Students were not supposed to have irons or a hot plate, even though students did. Students could have a radio.
- 00:23:14 *Question:* Fire drills? *Answer:* FC talks about tales of fire drills in Roddey Hall. FC says there was a person that walked the halls at night to keep the girls safe and make sure they didn’t leave. Upper classmen had to be back by 10:30. Freshmen had to be back at 7:30. Some students could get late night permission until 11:00. Seniors could go to Charlotte on the bus – Saturday afternoon. FC went to Charlotte shopping once or twice.
- 00:26:10 *Question:* What was that trip to Charlotte like? *Answer:* Students would go to a movie. FC would always look for shoes.
- 00:26:30 *Question:* Blue Line? *Answer:* FC remembers it being hot and the clothes students had to wear. FC talks about going to church and Sunday school back home. FC talks about converting from Baptist to Presbyterian. FC talks about the appeal of the Presbyterian religion.
- 00:29:40 *Question:* Do you remember the students being inspected for proper attire during the Blue Line? *Answer:* FC said students were always inspected for attire. FC doesn’t remember anyone being sent back. Students didn’t try to get around the rules and regulations of attire for the Blue Line. Students were more lax with the rules of attire during concerts and dinners.
- 00:31:10 *Question:* Were there any events that stood out? *Answer:* FC remembers USN Navy band performing during her senior year – 1950 or 1951.
- 00:32:32 *Question:* Any other kinds of clothing students could wear that were not the uniform? *Answer:* Students could wear what they wanted if it was navy or white.
- 00:33:05 *Question:* What about the food? *Answer:* Everybody had to stand outside until the dining room doors opened. FC talks about fish and eggs for breakfast. FC recalls the food students ate. Students sat with the same people every day all year. There were large platters of food. FC remembers a dish everyone called “roast beef and gravy.”

- There were certain foods that couldn't be bought in stores. There was a lot of pineapple in food. Students had to dress for teas – recalls London Fog tea concoction.
- 00:37:30 *Question:* Was there ever a food fight? *Answer:* No, but students sang a lot of songs. FC says there weren't any pay phones in Breazeale. There was one in Roddey.
- 00:39:09 *Question:* Assemblies? *Answer:* Every Tuesday and students were required to attend. Assemblies had speakers, there were devotionals, etc.
- 00:40:00 *Question:* Clubs? *Answer:* FC lists off clubs. Most of the clubs were involved with academics. No sororities on campus. FC was hall representative for freshmen. FC did this for two years.
- 00:41:27 *Question:* Any special projects? *Answer:* No. FC talks about going to the Indian Reservation during practice teaching. FC recalls her feelings about the situation. FC talks about bringing supplies to people on the Indian Reservation.
- 00:43:38 *Question:* Any professors you liked? *Answer:* Dr. Harold Wolf – History. Wolf taught the students interesting information about American History. FC had Contemporary History with Wolf. FC did an independent study with another History professor – helped him with research, and he did not cite her work.
- 00:47:45 *Question:* What other classes? *Answer:* FC took Classics as a freshman with seniors.
- 00:49:00 *Question:* What was the typical class setting like? *Answer:* Teachers had similar teaching principles. Classes were very structured. A lot of tests were multiple choice.
- 00:50:40 *Question:* Least favorite classes? *Answer:* French and Children's Literature. The Dean's wife taught Children's Literature – FC did not agree with her teaching style.
- 00:53:33 *Question:* Athletics? *Answer:* Students had to take four credits of PE. Swimming, archery, recreational sports, and possibly dancing. FC talks about a friend of hers teaching everyone how to do modern dance. FC swam at Peabody. FC had swimming lesson before.
- 00:56:00 *Question:* Any other practice teaching experiences? *Answer:* FC had to observe children in select age groups – psychological studies. There was a diverse (economically) group of students. When FC taught, she would meet with students one-on-one to help students.
- 00:57:40 *Question:* What happened after graduation? *Answer:* Became librarian at Eau Claire High School in Columbia. Librarian for 4.5 years. Went to graduate school at Columbia in New York City. FC explains why she went to NYC.

- 00:58:50 **[no question]** FC recalls life at NYC. There were no rules at Columbia summer school.
- 00:59:50 *Question:* How did Winthrop prepare you for Columbia? *Answer:* Columbia would not let her enroll in basic courses, because he came from Winthrop. Columbia considered Winthrop's Library Science courses to be equivalent to their graduate level courses. FC completed degree in South Carolina.
- 01:02:24 *Question:* You met your husband in Columbia? *Answer:* Yes. In 1953 when he got back from Korea. FC's husband majored in accounting.
- 01:03:10 *Question:* Dating life while at Winthrop. *Answer:* Went on very few dates. Students would go to the drive-in on Cherry road.
- 01:04:10 [no question] FC talks about her daughters attending Winthrop. Her oldest daughter was there when it became co-ed. Her second daughter met her husband at Winthrop. Her third daughter did not stay long at Winthrop. Her oldest daughter got her Bachelors and Masters - Louise Pettus was one of her advisors.
- 01:12:10 **[no question]** FC talks about how her daughter knows Ron Chepesiuk and a cat named "Honky".
- 01:13:15 *Question:* What did students do on the weekends? *Answer:* During the Polio epidemic, students were quarantined; FC learned how to play card games.
- 01:14:22 *Question:* How do you think Winthrop's image has changed? *Answer:* It is totally different. Winthrop still provides a quality education. Students then could not belong to AAUW (American Association of University Women), because of a certification issue. FC protested Winthrop becoming coed.
- 01:16:30 *Question:* Why did you not want coeducation? *Answer:* When it was all-female students had more responsibilities and could hold higher positions. It took away opportunities from females. FC was a 'warm body' in the protest. Winthrop wanted to go coed because of money.
- 01:19:30 *Question:* How did Winthrop prepare you for your life? *Answer:* "I think I did alright." Students learned how to get by with what they had.
- 01:21:45 *Question:* What other items were sold at the Canteen? *Answer:* Cigarettes. The cigarette companies were providing samples to students. Students could smoke in their rooms just not in the dining room or in public. During Polio quarantine, fellow students tried to teach FC how to smoke. Winthrop let tobacco companies give

students cigarettes.

01:23:35 *Question:* Do you remember Goodies? *Answer:* Yes. FC remembers going to the Waffle Shop, but there was always a “tell-tale” aroma afterward...

01:28:07 **[no question]** Wrapping up interview.

01:28:59 *End of interview*