

BOB SHORT: Thank you very much. Thank you for being here. I'd like to introduce to you now two members of the staff of the Russell Library at the University of Georgia -- Ms. Naomi Carver -- Craver, who is the Director of Audio Visuals, and Craig Breaden, who is the Director of Media and Oral History at the library at the University of Georgia. And we are delighted to have him here with us today, and we're delighted to have you here. Please help me welcome a former state Representative, Georgia Secretary of State, a candidate for Governor, and President of Young Harris College, Ms. Cathy Cox.

[Applause]

SHORT: Cathy, thank you for being here today on this program. You've had a very interesting career, which began down in Bainbridge, Georgia, which is deep south Georgia on the Florida line, all the way to Young Harris, which is in deep northeast Georgia and about as far as you can go and stay in the state.

CATHY COX: My mother keeps pointing that out.

[Laughter]

SHORT: It's quite a trip, quite a trip. Before we get into your political and public service career, I would like to ask you to tell us a little bit about yourself and growing up down in Bainbridge.

COX: Well, you're right, my mother keeps pointing out that I have found the furthest point in the state of Georgia from Bainbridge to move to and it's a long drive by car, but I'm really, really excited about being here at Young Harris and taking on all the challenges at the college. I certainly never even remotely thought as a child in Bainbridge, Georgia about being a college President. Nor did I think about being a Secretary of State! So, my life has led in a lot of different ways.

But I grew up as the oldest of four daughters in my family with my mother, Mary Cox, who's still living in Bainbridge, and my father, Walter Cox, who was a lifelong funeral director. His father was a funeral director who moved to Georgia in the 1920s from Virginia and scooped up my grandmother in Smyrna and hauled her down to rural Georgia to open up Cox Funeral Home in 1927.

And the way the funeral business kind of worked -- operating through families over the years -- my father and his brother bought out their dad in the funeral business, and when my sister and I came along, we lived in the funeral home. So, we grew up as children in downtown Bainbridge living upstairs over Cox Funeral Home and playing in the front yard and playing in the town square as our only front yard. When we finally had a third daughter, they decided we were a little too noisy for a funeral home and we actually got a house and moved out of the funeral home, but had a very typical, idyllic in many ways, childhood in small town, rural Georgia.

SHORT: And you were interested in agriculture at one point.

COX: Well, I did. I started out in college as a major in agriculture at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, actually in horticulture -- was kind of my specific area. And I landed there, because when I finished high school in Bainbridge I honestly didn't know what I wanted to major in. I liked to do so many different things. My mother is an artist and I had grown up taking art lessons and thought about majoring in art, but she suggested I should major in something I could make a living at. And my dad only cautioned my sisters and me to major in something we could make a living at, as well.

So, I ended up in horticulture because both of my grandmothers were great gardeners. One grandmother was big into camellias. Another grandmother had a great garden with strawberries and vegetables and a chicken house with eggs, and I really grew up around both of my grandparents working in a garden, and in high school had summer jobs working at a plant nursery and thought that that might be a career path of interest to me to work with plants, maybe to go into research, maybe to own a nursery. But I really found that to be an interesting challenge.

So, I ended up in horticulture until I interned during one of my college summers at Calloway Gardens in their horticultural intern program. That's where I learned to run a chainsaw, you know, great, useful skills down the road. And one day pulling weeds in 105 degree weather next to PhDs in botany, I decided that having a job in the air conditioning wouldn't be an altogether bad thing. So, when I transferred to the University of Georgia, I changed my major and again went through this struggle of what do I want to major in. I'm interested in lots of things, but I

don't know what I want to do, and I had had a summer job by then at the newspaper in Bainbridge just because my family was very close to Sam Griffin, who was the publisher of the Bainbridge Post Searchlight and he let me come in as a very green college student to work in the summer.

So, I ended up changing my major to journalism. Also thanks, I guess, to one of my professors at ABAC who was the journalism professor and headed up all the of the student publications, and I had edited the yearbook and worked on the newspaper there, but honestly had never thought about newspapers as a career. So I got into the journalism school at Georgia and loved it, and graduated with a degree in journalism and went to work for the newspaper in Gainesville, Georgia right out of school at UGA.

SHORT: Well, I'm an old sports writer so I have covered sports. What sort of reporting did you have to do at Gainesville?

COX: Well, I found that unless you're in a specialized area like sports, the new kid on the block at most newspapers gets the police beat. And that's what I got was a scanner and the police beat. And som I lived for a couple of years in Hall County, chasing fire trucks and ambulances, and riding with the police and sheriff's departments, and going to autopsies, and rappelling into copper mines to look for dead bodies. And I was fascinated by it. And I guess maybe mentally growing up in a funeral home kind of mentally prepared me for what I saw, not that I really had ever even seen a person embalmed when we lived in the funeral home, but I mentally could

handle some really gruesome scenes that I saw as a police reporter.

But I was fascinated by it and really enjoyed it. But as a police reporter, I had to cover everything from a crime scene to the trial of a defendant, and once I got into the courtroom I had no idea what was going on. I didn't know what the lawyers were talking about. I didn't know what the judge was saying and I was supposed to go back to the newspaper and write a story and explain this to the public. So, I decided that I wanted to go to law school just to get the education and then go back to a newspaper and write about legal issues because there were no lawyers in my family. I had never been inside a lawyer's office. Frankly, when I graduated at UGA, some of my friends who were going on to law school suggested that I go and I said, "Lawyers are so obnoxious."

[Laughter]

COX: "Who wants to be lawyer?" And three years later, I was there.

SHORT: You married one.

[Laughter]

COX: I married one. I became one, and once I got into law school and was putting myself through school at Mercer University Law School, I started working at law firms and found out

that it was very different than I had really envisioned. And I found -- especially in litigation -- that it was 75% writing, and as much as I liked to write and had a lot of experience in writing under pressure for a newspaper, I found that to be a really nice element of private practice. So, I did a complete turn and ended up going into private practice in Atlanta when I graduated from Mercer.

SHORT: Before we get away from Bainbridge, let me ask you about Governor Marvin Griffin.

Did you know Governor Griffin?

COX: I did. When I was in journalism school and I would go back to work at the newspaper, the Post Searchlight during all my summers and Christmas holidays, Governor Griffin was still living. And so he came into the paper every week with his columns and would come through the newsroom. And, if you knew him, he couldn't take five steps without telling a story. He was the really great, great stump speaker for all of Georgia's political history and he just exuded stories. He could not walk around without telling stories. So we all knew him. Everybody in the community knew him because he was so personable and so well loved by everyone. Even his political enemies, I think, would tell you that they still liked him because he was such a likable guy.

So, I had the chance to know him while I was a little cub reporter, but after my two years in Gainesville, I decided -- when I decided to go back to law school I needed to go save some money. So I moved back to Bainbridge for a year and Governor Griffin had just died, so his son,

Sam, hired me back for that one year really not so much to be a reporter for the paper, but to spend the year researching Governor Griffin's political history with the idea that we might write a book one day, he and I. So, I spent that year reading all of Governor Griffin's speeches and columns and writings, and traveled around the state interviewing his political colleagues and his enemies. I interviewed Roy Harris and Governor Carl Sanders who defeated him in 1962, and so many other people who worked in his administration and worked on his campaigns to collect all of that information about a really colorful area in Georgia politics. We never got the book written, so maybe that's one of those projects we'll take on one day.

SHORT: Well, that would be good. I don't think his biography has ever been written.

COX: Not fully, that's for sure.

SHORT: Okay, so you practiced law in Atlanta.

COX: Started out with Hansel and Post. I had -- as much as I had never contemplated being a lawyer, I certainly had never thought about living in Atlanta. Being from a small town in south Georgia, you sort of grow up with this Atlanta phobia and it's a nice place to visit, but you don't want to stay there very long. But when I had an offer from Hansel and Post, one of the largest firms in Atlanta, to come and work for the summer after my second year in law school, I thought, you know, it's just the summer, might as well try it out. They pay you well. It's a lot of

fun and I really loved it.

It changed my perspective on Atlanta. At that time, Hansel and Post was located right in downtown Atlanta at the heart of five points and it was a very different day in downtown Atlanta. Woodruff Park was beautiful. It was safe and friendly to walk around downtown during lunch and that summer really changed my perspective on what I wanted to do, and the firm offered me a permanent job upon my graduation. So, I went back to practice as a corporate trial lawyer in 1986 when I finished at Mercer.

SHORT: So, after you went back to Bainbridge following your law career in Atlanta. And did you open your private practice -- a private practice?

COX: Well, I stayed in Atlanta for two years at Hansel and Post and had a great experience there, but then my dad was diagnosed with cancer -- with colon cancer. And it was just one of those things that hit me as the right things to do and I wanted to be at home, and I had found out pretty quickly that in large commercial Atlanta firms there's not a lot of opportunity for you to be involved in the community. And that was so much of the way my family had grown up and how I had been raised -- not just to be involved in politics, but to be involved in your church and in volunteer groups and in civic organizations. And it was so much a part of who I was that I could tell staying in that culture at that Atlanta firm for the long haul was not going to be satisfying to me.

So I was, I guess, in a mode of looking for a change when my dad became ill and I said, "Well I



just want to be at home." So I said, "Well, I'm going to come home and practice." But at the time there had never been a woman lawyer in Bainbridge lawyer. This was late 1988. So, I called the firm where I had worked in the summers and asked if they would take me in as an associate, and the two younger partners, who were more my contemporaries were all for it. The senior partner, who was my dad's age, was not sure he nor Bainbridge was ready for a lady lawyer. But he thought about it and said, "Yeah, come on home." And so I joined the firm of Lambert, Floyd and Conger in 1988 and became a partner the next year. And became the first lady lawyer in 11 counties in Southwest Georgia.

SHORT: That was Willis Conger's firm?

COX: It was Willis Conger's nephew -- was one of the partners.

SHORT: Well, I knew your father. He was in the state legislature.

COX: He didn't like lawyers very much.

SHORT: He didn't. He was a very good legislator.

COX: Thank you.

SHORT: And I'm sure that his influence on you sort of guided you to succeed him.

COX: It -- I think all my sisters would tell you the same story. We grew up living and breathing politics. My dad first ran for political office when we were in elementary school and he ran for the city council and then he ran for Mayor while I was still in elementary school, and then moved on to the state legislature in 1974. But as children, as small children, my mother would paint t-shirts that said, "Vote for my daddy." Put them on the four of us, put us out on the street and say, "Go to every house, knock on the door, hand them a card, tell them to vote for your daddy and I'll pick you up at the corner." And that's how we learned campaigning before we were -- before I was ever ten years old. I knew what it was to go around and ask people to vote for my dad, and to get excited on election night and wait for the votes to come in.

So, I grew up seeing campaigns from a very interesting and exciting standpoint. But into my teen years I got so fascinated with legislative politics. I read the paper every morning with my dad at breakfast. And you'd read all the stories in the Atlanta paper about the legislature, and then he'd tell me what was really happening. And he'd say, "Well now here's -- they said in this in the paper, but here's what they're really after. And here's what the Speaker's likely to do, and here's what they want to trade out, and here's who's going to help them." And I learned so much, every morning I had a lesson in legislative politics talking to him about what happened to be in the news. And I loved the give and take of the legislature and the people and the personalities, and the fact that they came from all different walks of life and out of that chaos generally came some pretty good laws.

So when I got to the University of Georgia I quickly found out about a legislative internship program and applied for it, and took off a quarter during my senior year to be a legislative intern. And that in itself was a great experience to be right there in the middle of it after a number of years of following it, but the first day I arrived at the Capitol as a legislative intern. They said, "Well, her dad's in the House. We're going to assign her to a committee in the Senate." And I went to my first assignment in the Senate, and the next thing I knew I got called to the office, kind of like being called to the principal. And some Senator had complained that I might be a spy for the House. And so they jerked me out of a Senate committee, and at the time this was the 1980 session. They were doing a lot of tax reform and they had a joint House-Senate tax reform commission, so they made me the aid to the tax reform commission because it served both the House and the Senate. So I really got to be up close and personal and go to a lot of dinners with my dad, and talk to him, and walk in on the floor and listen to the debates, and absolutely fell in love with the legislature.

SHORT: You aren't insinuating that the House and Senate don't get along, are you?

COX: They didn't get along then. They certainly don't get along now. The House is always superior.

[Laughter]

SHORT: So you come to Atlanta as a state Representative, and you meet Tom Murphy. I'm sure he gave you good committees.

COX: He did. I knew him already, of course. During my dad's service I had gotten to meet him and know him, and after my dad died it had been a couple of years after he passed away before I ran. A family friend won the office right after my dad's death, and in 1992 after reapportionment that split the county up, I had the chance to run and run in some counties west of Bainbridge. And my family friend, Kermit Bates, who had won the seat when dad died kept the south part of the county and some counties east.

So, I arrived and Speaker Murphy was very good to me. He gave me all the committees that I asked for, but for the first little while I was very much Walter's daughter, you know, pat me on the head, isn't she cute, she's Walter's daughter. And I had to prove myself that I was there as an equally elected member of the House of Representatives and I worked hard to establish that reputation. And -- but I had a great advantage of going in as Walter's daughter because I knew 90% of the members. I knew the process. I knew what I had a chance to get accomplished, and it was a great advantage having that background.

SHORT: Well, you quickly gained the reputation as a working legislator. But please tell us about some of your interests at that time and what you hoped to accomplish as a member of that all male society.

COX: It was very male dominated, that was for sure. But I guess also, because I was Walter Cox's daughter, most of the men, even the very senior members treated me very cordially and opened doors for me, and helped me avoid missteps. But a lot of what I did was based on my law practice, and I think most of the folks I served with in the House would tell you that I talked a lot more than my dad ever did.

[Laughter]

COX: He sat on the back row as part of the Saw Mill Gang and didn't nearly go to the well as much as I did, but maybe that was because I was a lawyer and I knew the process so well. He was not a lawyer. He was a funeral director. It took him a while to get the hang of writing and revising the Georgia code and I could jump right into it knowing the process as well as the law. But I took advantage of my law practice, especially in Bainbridge where I did a very personal practice, and being the only female attorney in that whole region, I did a lot of domestic relations work, a lot of divorce, a lot of child custody work, child support laws, and I used my experiences to work on places I saw flaws in the law. For example, with our child support system, I was a major proponent of an overhaul to the child support laws during my service there, because I saw it needed some flexibility. Judges needed some authority to vary from a very strict formula in awarding child support, whether a non-custodial parent had other children, whether they were paying health insurance, all these kind of factors that needed to be considered by a judge, and I was able to add those to the law for judges to consider. I'm not a real big proponent of the laws that have changed since then, excuse me, for child

support, but I could use a lot of my experiences and go to a committee meeting and say, "Look, this is how this law is effecting real people. Let's change this to make it fairer and more equitable." And you find out that just because it's in the law doesn't mean it's carved in stone. If you've got a better idea and you know how to advocate through the legislative system, you can easily change Georgia laws. And I found it to be a wonderfully interesting and exciting process that I could really work for the benefit of everyday people.

SHORT: Then you had an opportunity to become assistant Secretary of State. How did that come around?

COX: Well, a lot of people didn't understand that. I had been in the House. I had been -- I was in my second term in the legislature and I was pretty much killing myself trying to maintain a full time law practice in the early nineties and be in Atlanta as often as you had to be as a member of the legislature. And also coming from a rural area, members of the legislature have a lot of constituent service work to do, much more so than urban legislators, because people in Atlanta hardly even know who their Representative or Senator is. But in a small town, they know you in the grocery store, they know you in Sunday School, they know you on the street. And there are a lot of needs in rural Georgia, particularly in my corner of Southwest Georgia with a lot of poverty.

So, trying to practice law as a -- in a small firm is difficult when you've got to spend three full months of the year in Atlanta, and this was pre-internet. I mean the internet was just coming

along, so I wasn't like if I had an afternoon off I could go click onto my laptop and work on some cases at home. You were stuck. So every Friday afternoon I was beating a path 250 miles down the road to Bainbridge trying to practice law from Friday night to Sunday afternoon, driving back to Atlanta. And I finally had come to a point of saying, "I've either got to get out of this and devote myself completely to my practice or do public service full-time." And it was about that time that Max Cleland had resigned from the U.S. Senate. Governor Miller had appointed Lewis Massey as Secretary of State, and a mutual friend suggested to Lewis that I might be interested in serving as his Chief of Staff -- his assistant Secretary of State.

Som Lewis and I had known each other. We weren't best buddies or anything, but he had been working in the Senate for Pierre Howard while I was in the legislature. So I knew him and had worked with him, and he called and it was very much one of those things that just hit me at the right time at the right place. So I had to resign my seat in the House, move back to Atlanta and work full time in the Secretary of State's office -- not knowing where it would lead, but knowing that it just seemed like the right challenge at the right chance, at the right time. And a year later in 1997, you will remember that the front runners for Governor in 1997, leading up to the '98 Governor's race were Mike Bowers and Pierre Howard, neither of whom ever became Governor because all the landscape changed in '97 when Pierre Howard dropped out of the race; some scandals arose with Mike Bowers and Lewis Massey, as Secretary of State, decided he was going to jump into the Governor's race.

So everybody kind of looked around the room and said, "Well, who's going to run for Secretary of State, and I threw up my hand, very naively, very young, I guess, and naïve. I didn't have a

statewide reputation. I certainly didn't have independent wealth, but I knew I could do that job. So, I jumped into the race in '97 and won it in '98.

SHORT: All right, and then -- and then you became the custodian of state records and election laws, and what were some of the duties that you had as Secretary of State?

COX: Well, the Georgia Secretary of State's office probably has more areas of jurisdiction than almost any other Secretary of State's office in the country. We do professional licensing, for example, for dentists and physical therapists, and plumbers, and hairdressers, and all kinds of other occupations and professions. That's very uncommon in other states. We -- I served as the Commissioner of Securities to regulate the investment industry for securities in Georgia. We handle corporations, of course, and all the business aspects for the state. We handled elections, which is the area that most people knew about, but also the State Archives and even boxing. I was the professional boxing commissioner for Georgia, which nobody knew about, but the first year I spent in the office every time I'd answer the phone I'd listen to somebody and then I'd say, "Hold on, please." And then I'd have to ask somebody, "Do we do this?"

SHORT: [Laughter]

COX: Because we just had such a broad area of jurisdiction, but that made the job really interesting.



SHORT: Well, let's talk for a minute about elections. You were instrumental in the new system we have -- electronic voting. Is that an accomplishment you set out to do?

COX: It really has and it came about, of course, as a result of the 2000 Presidential election where everybody in the world focused on the State of Florida. But while all of that media attention was going on in Florida during the recounts between Bush and Gore, I took the opportunity to do an evaluation of what had happened in Georgia. And what we found just absolutely stunned us, because we found that we had lost almost 94,000 votes for President in Georgia. That was about 3.5% of our total vote, which was a worse -- a worse accuracy rate than Florida. In fact, Caltech and MIT ultimately said it was the second worst voting accuracy rate in the nation. But the reason it got no attention was because the election was not close in Georgia. So even though we had a 94,000 vote loss, the margin between Bush and Gore was not that close in Georgia.

So it wouldn't have changed the outcome of our electoral college vote, so the media didn't care. But to us, it was just staggering to think that that many people had lost the opportunity to have their vote count. So we dug further and found out that it really was an equipment problem. We had counties voting on all kinds of outdated, inefficient, and really just obsolete voting equipment. Over -- almost over half of our counties were still voting on the old, 800-pound lever machines that had not even been manufactured in 40 years. You couldn't even buy parts for those things, but we still had counties voting on them.

And during the first couple of years I was in office it was not uncommon to have a county call up on election night in a panic, because they had unlocked the back of one of those lever machines. They're totally metal, mechanical, and they just turn when the lever is punched to rotate a little odometer on the back of the machine. And they'd open it up after seven o'clock and find a zero because something had just gotten out of whack and no votes had been counted all day long, but nobody knew it. No way to reconstruct a ballot or anything like that, no way to audit it and that's what half the votes in the state were being counted on. We were very surprised to find that the optical scan ballot, like a standardized test where you fill in a bubble by a vote -- a candidate's name, or you connect an arrow beside the candidate's name, that type of voting system had the highest error rate over even the punch cards that we had in Fulton County and DeKalb County, and that were the focus in Florida.

The optical scan had worse error rates, because we found out with one whole county they gave their voters the wrong kind of pencil and at the end of the day it wouldn't count any votes because the scanner would not read the lead from the pencil. Now, in that case we had a way, a legal way to replicate and reproduce the ballots and get them counted, but it told you some voter could have gone in with their fancy Monte Blanc pen and cast their ballot, and never known that it didn't count. We also would have people who put an X over the little bubble and the scanner wouldn't read the X. If you looked at the ballot, you'd know who they intended to vote for, but the scanner wouldn't count it. So we looked at all of this and said, "There has to be a better way. We have to give Georgia voters an assurance that their vote will be counted."

So we did a lot of investigating about the types of voting equipment that were available in the

marketplace. We put together a 21st-century voting commission with the authority of the legislature and legislative input into it and spent a year studying what was available, and came to the unanimous conclusion that electronic voting was by far a better system of voting, that could be set up in a way to ensure the accuracy of the vote and the vote totals and much easier for voters to use without making mistakes. Everything gave us a good feeling about moving into the electronic age. So, we put that in place -- the first state in the nation to do that in the 2002 election season and it worked wonderfully. It has worked wonderfully ever since and when the 2004 Presidential election came on, Caltech and MIT came back and did the same evaluation that they did in 2000 and said Georgia went from the second worst voting accuracy rate to the second best, just a hair behind the state of Maryland, which had purchased the same type of voting equipment that we purchased. So we were very pleased and really believe we accomplished what we set out to do in giving voters a great level of confidence that their vote would be counted and counted accurately.

SHORT: There have been suggestions in recent times that that system needs backing up with some sort of paper ballot. Is that necessary, really?

COX: I have been chased all over the state of Georgia by folks who think that I rig the elections and that all the elections are rigged, and that I'm part of a great conspiracy theory and they have literally stalked me around the state of Georgia for the last couple of years that I was in office. And they finally came to the point of saying, "The only way we'll know elections are not rigged

is if Cathy Cox loses the primary in 2006."

SHORT: : [Laughter]

COX: And, of course, when I lost, they had to come up with another story, which they did. But that's kind of the way they play.

But it's an odd kind of situation, because in the electronic voting we use now, the computer is not seen by the voter. And so they're suspicious of it, but they have -- the voters -- average voters have no idea of the exhaustive testing that goes into preparing for an election. Every single voting unit -- there are over 25,000 of them now in the state of Georgia -- each machine is individually tested before every single election, a whole battery of tests. Those tests are open to the public to come and watch and then the machines are sealed up until election day with a numerical seal that has to be checked on the morning of elections to make sure nobody could get access to that machine -- it couldn't be tampered with. The state elections board has set up rules and regulations for how the machines are stored. I can spend an hour talking to you about all the levels of security that go into the machines that give me the comfort level that these machines are great and are very accurate in counting the machines.

But because the computer is not seen by voters, a lot of people are suspicious about it. Now, those same people forget that the punch cards that were first used in Georgia in the early sixties, they were counted by a computer that was virtually untested. The optical scan voters are counted by a computer that until recent years had very little testing or security. So computers in elections

are nothing new. In fact, the new part is the fact that we now have level after level of testing and security before election day. So I feel very good about the machines as they are today, but I certainly came to understand and to somewhat change my opinion that if -- in elections perception is reality. And if the voting public needs a paper receipt to feel more confident in the process, then we ought to give it to them so that there isn't doubt and suspicion about the outcome of elections. So sooner or later I suspect that it will be added. The new Secretary of State, Karen Handel, has found out exactly what I knew when I left office -- that the whole industry of voting equipment is in flux, new technology is under development, it's all very expensive. And I think she has decided she needs to wait and let some things settle down in the marketplace before the state makes another investment to do that.

SHORT: What are your feelings on voter ID?

COX: Oh, don't get me started. In fact, you know, just yesterday the U.S. Supreme Court heard the Indiana Voter ID Law and I actually signed onto an amicus brief for that case with other current and former Secretaries of State to oppose the Indiana law. Because I feel very, very strongly that the voter ID law as it has been written in Georgia is a bad form of public policy. I'm not opposed to voter ID. In fact, in 1997 before I was elected Secretary of State -- when Lewis Massey was Secretary -- I wrote the law that the General Assembly passed in '97 to add an identification requirement for voting. But it gave voters the chance to use a number of different types of ID, and if they had none of those they could still sign an affidavit at the poles about their

identity and not be turned away. That system worked very well for the following eight to nine years when the legislature got into this photo ID mode, which I fully believe is a process to try to disenfranchise Democratic leaning voters, elderly, minority voters who do tend to vote more as Democrats. And I guess, maybe I'm just a little too much of a lawyer and I want to get into a constitutional battle with people that voting being a constitutional right is something you cannot infringe upon without a darn good reason. And I was able to testify in federal court during the challenges to Georgia's law that we did not have one incident of voter impersonation during the 11 years that I was in the Secretary of State's office that would justify infringing on this constitutional right to vote.

And on the flip side, I could see it causing a lot of problems to some of our most vulnerable voters, especially elderly voters, many of whom don't drive anymore and don't have a driver's license. And they're the most regular, consistent voters. So how are you going to say to an 85-year-old voter who's never missed an election, "Too bad." You know, or, "You've got to go through X, Y, Z hoops to vote now because we somehow don't trust that you are who you say you are." I think it's bad public policy and I'd love to see the U.S. Supreme Court strike it down, but I doubt that this Court will do that.

SHORT: Then you ran for Governor. I bet that was fun.

COX: There was a lot of it that was fun and a lot that was not.

SHORT: [Laughter]

COX: Over the years, I guess, of being around state government, and in my life going back even to my childhood and the discussions with my dad and serving in a constitutional office, you see that the real agenda for Georgia is set in the Governor's office, or in my opinion should be set in the Governor's office. And after the 2002 elections, I really started thinking about running for Governor, because I was not happy with what was happening from the Governor's office. And I felt like the state deserved a different kind of leader and a leader who was willing to tackle a lot of the problems we had, that it wasn't a chair you got to just warm for four years, that a Governor ought to be proactive and provide real leadership. And so, that's why I decided in 2004 or so that I would jump into the race for 2006, and did so.

SHORT: Good. You would have been the first female Governor Georgia had ever had.

COX: That's true.

SHORT: Did you think about that?

COX: Yeah, I thought about it and, you know, I thought about it as the first female Secretary of State, but I also saw between my first election as Secretary in 1998 when numerous people were not shy about saying to me, "Oh, I don't know if a woman can do that job as Secretary of State."

They'd never seen it so they really couldn't envision a woman being Secretary of State. When I ran in 2002 for reelection, it's no big deal.

SHORT: Sixty-one percent of the vote.

COX: Yeah.

SHORT: That's a pretty good margin.

COX: It was -- it was strong and I was very pleasantly surprised in my run for Governor that that was rarely an issue. The times that I heard people talk about doubting whether a woman could serve as Governor, I could trace it back almost immediately to my opponents who wanted the state to believe Georgia wasn't ready for a woman or that a woman wasn't capable of serving. But by and large, it was not a big issue. I felt like it was an advantage and that Georgians were ready for a change in the meanness and the partisanship, and felt like -- that perhaps a woman would have a chance to break through some of those barriers to actually get something done.

SHORT: Let's take a short break.

COX: Okay.



SHORT: All right.

COX: Thank you.

SHORT: Five minutes.

[Break]

SHORT: Getting back to your race for Governor, Georgia's a big state and requires a lot of capital for television, and radio, and that sort of thing. It's frightening to me to try to understand how you can raise that kind of money in order to run a race. How did you do it?

COX: Well, that -- that is definitely the hardest part of any, any election today, but especially a statewide election in Georgia, because the state is so large and you cannot hope to win a statewide election without mass media, without radio and TV to really reach the almost five million voters in this state. You can shake hands until your hand falls off, and you have to do that, and you want to do that, but you'll never reach enough voters to make a difference to get known statewide and to get your message known statewide. So you have to raise an enormous amount of money. It was certainly an advantage to have run two previous statewide races for Secretary of State before I got into the Governor's race, because I already knew the drill. It's not fun. A few people, like maybe Roy Barnes, like raising money, but most of don't. But, you

know, it just has to be done and it has to be done every day of a campaign. And you have to spend an enormous amount of time on the phone calling people and introducing yourself, and talking about your vision for the state, and asking them to support you.

And the anxiety is always on the candidate's side of the phone. People are incredibly generous and I found that out in my first race as Secretary of State. I mean, how do you call somebody I don't even know and ask them to send me \$500? Well, they do it, because they're interested in good government and people are incredibly generous to candidates in this state. So, jumping into the Governor's race, I knew that would be critical to us. I hired a good staff of finance people, who help you research people and find phone numbers and set up your whole day of calls to make and that kind of thing, and ultimately raised about \$6 million for the primary in 2006, which is -- was almost identical to what my Democratic primary opponent raised except for the family money his dad was able to toss in.

SHORT: Well, speaking of that, how do you feel about public financing?

COX: In theory, it makes a lot of sense. In practice, I don't know how you do it in a way that's really fair and equitable. Are you going to just put tax dollars out in front of anybody who decides they want to be a candidate and be on TV? How are you going to create a threshold to decide if somebody's viable? And even if you have public finance under -- at least under current U.S. Supreme Court precedent -- you're never going to be able to limit somebody from putting their own personal money into a race. So in some respects personal -- public finance could be a

bad thing, because it would give an enormous advantage to a rich candidate who could always throw in their own money. I mean, to some extent that's what happens now, but I don't know that the tax payers of this country are ready to go there until they can see a system that really looks to be fair.

On the other hand, they're disgusted with the current system. Candidates are disgusted with the current system and all the pressure for money goes to the cost -- particularly of television because you just cannot reach votes in today's society without a huge infusion of television, and it's incredibly expensive.

SHORT: May I ask you an iffy question?

COX: Maybe I'll answer it, maybe I won't.

[Laughter]

SHORT: If you were elected, what would have been your first legislative program?

COX: Well, that's easy to answer because that's what I talked about for so long while I was campaigning for Governor. And without question it would have been education and it would have been an emphasis on the early years of education. Because we have thrown money at education. We've thrown it in all different directions in education. We're still not seeing the results that we deserve in this state. We're not doing right by our children. But nobody's ever

looked at the research of what really helps a child's brain develop, and there is so much research out there that will tell you if a child is not reading on grade level by the third grade, there is about an 85% chance that child is going to be a high school dropout. And if they're going to be a high school dropout, there is an enormous percentage of opportunity that they're going to end up in prison where we're going to be spending \$20,000, \$30,000 a year to keep them incarcerated. So let's look at what seems to be so obvious. Do we want to spend that kind of money to lock up people in prison or let's spend \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year for children from birth to the third grade and give every child an opportunity to have their brain developed based on research -- to teach them the reading skills that really give them a chance to succeed. And then we've got a great chance to keep them in high school and then get them into college, and then make them productive members of society. But nobody in elective office in this state has ever been willing to really follow the research, because it's not an overnight result. No politician who does that is going to be able to say two years down the road or four years at the next election, look at the proof of what I've done. It's going to be a long-term process, but I was willing to do that and that was the approach that I felt could have long-term implications for improving all of society by better educating our children.

**SHORT:** What would have been your environmental program?

**COX:** Well, I would like to think I would have paid some attention -- again -- to the science and the research of where we were going, where water resources were going, and done something to

better prepare for a likely or inevitable drought that we've certainly had in 2007. In those days, in the late nineties and into the early 2000s, there were plans on the drawing board in environmental agencies of the state to build water reservoirs to better trap water and help us prepare for droughts. The first year that Governor Perdue was in office, he wiped all of that off the books and reallocated all the money to other resources. And I would like to think I would have not only paid attention to what we needed to do for the long haul, but that that I would have been a conservation Governor and put some emphasis on what we needed to do in building codes and in basic day-to-day usage to better promote water conservation, to help us be better stewards of our environment in the long-term and the short-term. But nobody's paid any attention as far as I can see to much of anything on the environmental table in this state for the last four or five, six years.

SHORT: How do you feel about these programs designed to move people between Athens and Atlanta, and Macon and Atlanta, and Atlanta and Chattanooga by use of rapid rail?

COX: I was a big proponent of rapid rail -- again, because look around the world. Look at the great cities on this earth and they are all -- with almost the exception of Atlanta -- moving people around by transit and rapid rail, and other newer forms of train and electronic kind of train and tram systems. And we were just very much behind the curve in Georgia. I thought the rail line from Atlanta to Athens was a great idea and to start looking at building the infrastructure for major traffic corridors to do something other than building more highways to move people. I got

very frustrated with the arguments, "Oh, we can't subsidize a train system." Well, every highway in this state is subsidized. So why not put in a more efficient way of moving people around, a quicker way, subsidize it, and let it grow, and let it help the whole economy. But -- and I came out in favor of rapid rail during my campaign for Governor.

SHORT: Before we get off the subject of politics, let's talk for a minute about parties. We've seen a great shift in recent years to the Republican party. What do you think has caused that?

COX: Well, Georgia was kind of slow to come to the party -- I guess, come to the Republican Party. If you look around the country, almost all of the other Southern states sort of went Republican before Georgia did, and I think the reason we were at the end of the pack is because Georgia Democrats by and large were pretty similar to national Republicans a few years ago. They were fiscally conservative. They were socially moderate to conservative and those were a lot of the tenets of the early national Republican movements in the sixties and seventies and eighties, I guess.

And Georgia really, if you look at national elections -- Presidential elections in particular, Georgia voted for a Republican President almost every election since Eisenhower except for Carter and Clinton's first election. Maybe I'm missing one or two, but we had already kind of aligned ourselves with a national Republican movement decades ago, but the Georgia state elected Democrats were still very much conservative and aligned, and were able to hold off that movement until the wave really nationally finally got to Georgia in the nineties.

SHORT: Can you foresee any situation where the Democratic party can rebound?

COX: Yes I can, and you can almost see the beginnings of that movement -- from what I'm reading -- going into the 2008 legislative session in Georgia. A lot of the business community that has tended to be very supportive of Republican politics has been scared to death by some of the Republican policies they have seen promoted in Georgia during 2007. They are scared to death of some of the just off the wall ideas coming out of some of the Republican leadership and the legislature and they're moving back and putting their dollars back into Democratic campaigns and to the Democratic legislative caucus, because they want to go back to some of the good old days of moderation. That's part of our state motto. I think it's what Georgia Democrats have really believed in. It's what has made our business environment so healthy and vibrant, but the business leadership I think has seen some frightening signs that some of the Republican leadership -- certainly not all -- but some of the leadership is going off in a dangerous direction that will be very damaging to our economy. And they're going back towards Democrats that they think will be more moderate.

SHORT: You know, I was very impressed by a statement made on this program by Senator Johnny Isakson, who said that he feels the difference today between the Republican party in Georgia and the Democratic party in Georgia is the fact that they have a bench, that they have candidates coming along and coming along. And when I look at this upcoming election -- say in

the Senatorial race, the Democrat -- the people running as Democrats, most people don't know and some of them have never heard of them. So is there a way that the Democratic party can do that? Can they recruit candidates? Is it possible under their present leadership?

COX: I think probably the recruitment process will be helped by the same situation that the business location has been looking at as radical, wacko kind of ideas have come out of some of the Republican leadership. That has encouraged potential candidates to say, "I don't want to line up with that kind of stuff." And I think that has and will continue to help the Democrats recruit. But I think Senator Isakson is right, because in Georgia we had for a long time such stable leadership with Tom Murphy as Speaker, with Zell Miller as Lieutenant Governor and Governor. There wasn't a lot of opportunity to move up to the top of the totem pole and it probably did stagnate the Democratic party for a while. At the same time, the Republicans are clamoring to grow. They're organizing, they're training new people and we weren't in that mode as Democrats. And I think that has been to our detriment over the years, and we're now having to get back into that mode of being like Republicans were 20 years ago -- creating a bench, training candidates, bringing people into the fold, working on good public policy, and I think in decades you'll see swings back and forth both ways.

SHORT: Now, I'd like to talk about Young Harris College.

COX: Good.



SHORT: You're here, bright future, a lot of things going on. Tell us what's happening.

COX: There's so much happening at Young Harris College that is just exciting beyond words.

The trustees voted in the spring of 2007 unanimously to grow the college from a two-year institution into a great four-year liberal arts college. Back almost before 1900, it actually was a four-year college, but for the vast majority of its 120 plus year history it has been a two-year Methodist affiliated college. But the trustees have made that commitment and that was their number one challenge to me in appointing me as President in the summer of 2007. So we are on a very ambitious time table.

I said to someone just yesterday, maybe it's only like a crazy Secretary of State that would try to implement electronic voting in one year that a crazy freshman college President would try to do all this in about 18 months. But we hope to submit to SACS, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, our application in the spring of 2008 to offer our first five baccalaureate degree programs. And under the SACS' timetable, we would have a one-year waiting period and hopefully that means by the fall of 2009, we will have a junior class here on campus at Young Harris College.

That sounds like it ought to be real easy, but that involves -- it's almost like creating a college from scratch. We have to decide on every major we want to offer, what faculty we need to hire, what buildings we need to build, and what we want to be, what we want to be known for, what we want to be best at, how do we distinguish ourselves from other four-year colleges. So it's an

incredibly exciting process and I think our campus is very engaged in seeing the chance for their dreams for this college to come true and putting into action ideas that they had always hoped to see on this campus. Ultimately, we're doing this because I think it will better serve our students. Today, college bound students know they need at least a four-year degree to be successful and so it's become harder and harder to recruit students to private two-year colleges, not just for Young Harris. This has happened all over the country and so we find ourselves in a situation of saying, "Well, we can spend all of the great endowment that we have to recruit students here for two years and then see them leave, or we can serve their needs in this great valley as a great four-year institution." So I think the trustees have made the right decision and we are up to our eyeballs in the planning right now to make it happen.

**SHORT:** Have you -- you have not determined what degrees you will be awarding?

**COX:** Well, the first five that we will apply for will be based on areas where we already have strength. English, music -- we already have a nationally accredited music program -- biology, business -- kind of a public policy related business program -- and a liberal studies program that's almost like a design your own major -- a liberal arts degree where you can concentrate in the humanities, or in the sciences, or something like that. And we hope that will give a lot of our students the opportunity who are freshman today to stay with us all four years because this liberal studies major will enable them to kind of tailor a major to their interests.

SHORT: Now, I'd like to ask you some personal questions.

COX: My age?

SHORT: No. What is your fondest memory of your public service?

COX: Well, there's an awful lot of fond memories, especially those that go back to my dad and campaigning with him, and the excitement of waiting to see election results for him on election night. In my own experience, I guess, it's been the -- probably, I guess from a public perception, the success of electronic voting, because I had newspapers all over the state, writing editorials. If this fails, this is the end of Cathy Cox, and I was also on the ballot the year that we implemented this. You know, was I going to lose my election, was this going to fail, and it succeeded beyond our dreams, and that was probably the most rewarding accomplishment. But I guess fond memories go to almost kind of mundane stories where you're walking down the grocery store aisle and somebody stops you and says, "You know, the HOPE Scholarship is the best thing the government ever did for me and my family, and my daughter's now got a college degree because of the HOPE Scholarship," or something that you know you had a part in shaping public policy or working through red tape, or the bureaucracy of state government to help somebody with something that might be seemingly unimportant to the world, but meant an awful lot to that person. That means an awful lot.

SHORT: Biggest disappointment?

COX: Well, losing the election was pretty disappointing! \*Laughter\* But you go into elections knowing you can win and you can lose. And I guess for me, I knew that if I lost the election, I enjoyed practicing law and I fully expected that I would be back practicing law if I lost the election. Didn't dream about the opportunity to serve as a college President, so I'm really excited to have this opportunity. But the loss was disappointing, because ultimately you do it to win. You're disappointed -- I was disappointed during the campaign, because you find out that in politics you have a lot of fair weather friends, people that you thought were true blue, with you know matter what, didn't have the nerve in what we had -- a very contentious primary between Mark Taylor and me -- didn't have the nerve to come out and support you. And that was disappointing.

It was disappointing to find that our -- our ethics laws in this state, or actually I guess I should say the enforcement of our ethics laws is a total sham, just a total sham. And things -- things go on in elections and there's no mechanism to arbitrate any level of fairness, and that's a shame. And it's part of what I think keeps a lot of people out of politics, but it's not healthy for the process.

SHORT: I failed to mention the chair that you hold at the University of Georgia, the Sanders Chair for Ethics and --

COX: Political Leadership.

SHORT: -- Political Leadership. Tell us a little bit about that.

COX: That was a wonderful bonus, I guess, that I got in life when Dean Rebecca White at the University of Georgia Law School called me in the fall of 2006. After I'd lost the primary, I was talking to law firms around Atlanta about joining them. I had had a phone call from a trustee at Young Harris College about whether I would be interested in putting my name in the hat for the college and I was very interested in that, but I was also dismayed that the process for searching for a President here was going to take until the next spring and January I was going to be out of a job.

So Dean White asked me to fill the Sanders Chair, which they fill each semester in the law school, to come and teach and to teach whatever I wanted to teach related to public policy and politics. And I thought, "Wow, that would be fascinating. I'd love to teach election law." And she said, "Oh, that'd be great. We've never had anybody to teach election law." So she allowed me to go over and design my own course in election law, and to teach a second seminar on law and politics, which was a lot of fun to have an opportunity every week to -- I brought in political leaders like Roy Barnes and Larry Walker and other people that I have so much respect for to talk about politics and the shaping of the law.

So I had a great opportunity in the law school to do things that I enjoy personally and to hopefully engage a lot of future lawyers in the elections process and encourage them into public

service. And in fact Governor Sanders said that the chair was designed for that purpose, to bring in a variety of faculty who could encourage law students to go into public service at some point in their career. So I hope that I contributed to his vision. It gave me a great opportunity to be in the classroom. Two of my sisters, who are educators, laughed at me the whole semester when I talked about how hard and how time consuming it was to prepare for class! But being a President now I'm so thankful to have had that experience of being in a college level -- graduate level classroom to know what difficulties our faculty have, and to know that to be a good professor is not an easy thing. So I'm blessed to have had that opportunity and it was a lot of fun.

SHORT: One final question before we have questions and answers. Is elective politics in Cathy Cox's future?

COX: No. [Laughter] N-O, no. I am so glad that I did what I did and that I had the opportunities that I had, and truly I don't think I would have ever been considered for this job had I not had the networks of contacts around the state and developed what I hope is a positive reputation in politics. I don't think the trustees would have given me the chance to lead this college. So especially from that standpoint, I'm glad I did it. But to run on a statewide level, you have to live and breathe it every day. And I had to make that assessment after the primary in 2006. Bless my husband's heart, the day after the election he said, "If you want to do this again, I'm with you."

And I had to think about it for a long time, because to do it again I would have had to get into

some kind of career path that would have given me the time to be out among all kinds of voting constituencies every day. The public really has no conception of the time demands on our statewide elected officials. They are enormous and to run again, you've got to stay in that kind of public spotlight through some means and I guess, frankly, I was just tired of it. There's a lot of it that's fun. It's a great opportunity to know and meet people, but there's a lot of it that just wears you down. And I said I'm 48-years-old. I've got a chance to do something else and still be very successful on another pathway, and wherever the lord leads me that's where I'm going to go. At about that time I got call from a Young Harris trustee, and I said, "This is a great path. And I'm glad to be here."

SHORT: You have agreed to answer questions.

COX: Sure.

SHORT: Are there any questions?

MALE AUDIENCE: You were talking about earlier about, you know, the water problem that we're facing in the state. And in certain legal and political circles there's been talk that, you know, what falls in Georgia is Georgia's, what falls in Alabama is Alabama's, what's in Florida is Florida's. If you were elected and, you know, this issue had come up, how would you have approached the Governors of Florida and Alabama and their concerns for their state, but also

being in charge of Georgia and having the responsibility to the citizens of Georgia? How would you have, you know, tried to work through what Governor Purdue is facing now?

COX: Well, kind of like I talked about with education and with other things, I think the only way you can properly deal with the water issue is to deal first with the science. And maybe my perspective is a little different because I was born and raised at the south end of the river water basins in Bainbridge, Georgia where they clearly see an impact. If Atlanta dries up the Chattahoochee River, it dries up Lake Seminole and the Apalachicola River and our whole economy down there. Bainbridge is one of the two inland ports in this state, and if there's not enough water flow in the Apalachicola River, we can't bring barge traffic up to Bainbridge to help our economy in a very impoverished area of the state.

So all of my life I knew about this water issue of Florida/South Georgia versus Atlanta. And while certainly human needs should always come first, there has to be a very strong balance with the whole ecosystem. And it's like this issue that was tried to be made last year about, "Oh, it's all about saving mussels and who cares about an ugly old mussel down there in the Flint River or the Chattahoochee River, or something like that." Well, those mussels represent an ecosystem. They're very much like the canary in the mine shaft. When the mussels die out, it's an indication that something is going really wrong with that whole ecosystem, and I don't think that any of us understand the implications if we start totally fouling up our ecosystems by arbitrarily draining watersheds and things like that.

So I think we have to pay attention to the science and the water plan that may or may not be



adopted by the legislature this year, I'm happy to see that at least they've gone back to aligning districts along river basins and water sheds as opposed to just say in this county -- in this county you're going to be drawing water from this river and when you start piping water here and there, you're just going to run into more problems than I think any of us mere humans can understand. So first and foremost, it just has to be science based and we have to get over being greedy, wasteful users of water and being better stewards of water and our whole economy. I think as people, I believe, God put on earth we're called to do that in every aspect of our life including our consumption, and we've got to do better there.

MALE AUDIENCE: Well, you started your college career at ABAC, I believe, sort-of a small, rural place. I was just wondering, do you think of that when you walk around this campus and see these young folks starting out on their college career and -- ?

COX: I do think about it. I guess from a humorous standpoint, when I was at ABAC we had a President who was very formal and aloof, and not very popular with the students or the faculty and just very distant from everybody. And I remember thinking at the time, "Boy, if I was a college President I'd be so different, you know. I'd want the students to feel comfortable around me and not scared of me and that kind of thing." And I don't know whether I've accomplished that or will accomplish that, but that has run through my mind a number of times this fall of trying to have students over to the President's house for dinners and to interact with them on so many occasions, and to let them see me as a real person in jeans and sweatpants and walking my

dog around, and joking around with students, and being much more approachable than the model I had for a college President.

But from the positive side, my two-year college experience was so good and so positive, and I formed so many friendships with roommates and friends that I still keep in contact with now all the time -- with email and, you know, we're just lifelong buds. And I know that our students have that same opportunity in this close knit environment, and that shapes a lot of what I hope we can do as we move to four years is to make sure we never lose that environment for our students to form those kind of relationships. I still am in touch with faculty members that I had at ABAC and I think our students feel the same way about the faculty here, because they're approachable and they know the faculty care about them. And that's important as we hire new faculty to make sure we bring in that brand of new hire that cares about students to that degree that we can continue offering that environment to our students.

FEMALE AUDIENCE: How is your husband adjusting to life in a small town?

[Laughter]

COX: My mother was so worried about that. She said, "Well, Cathy's lived in a small town." But Mark's never lived in a small town and he just loves it. You know, he did -- when he -- his father was in the Air Force and so he lived sort-of all over -- not the air force, the Navy -- he lived all over the world until he was in elementary school. But when his father retired and went to Emory Dental School, they lived in Decatur, and Decatur was kind of a small town in those

days. It was not Atlanta. And he feels like he had a little bit of a small town childhood, not like Bainbridge exactly, but he has come to love Bainbridge in the years of being married to me and knowing people there, and knowing whenever he's in Bainbridge he can go by the drugstore in the morning and see all the boys that are solving the world's problems having coffee and know that kind of environment exists.

And so, he loves it. He especially loves the fact that he has found a lawyer to share space with in Hiawassee and it's about as many miles from our house on the campus to downtown Hiawassee as it was from our home in Atlanta to his office in downtown Decatur. But as he loves to point out, he has 25 less traffic lights to go through.

[Laughter]

COX: So he really enjoys telling his friends in Atlanta how easy it is to get to work. He goes to work in blue jeans. His office looks out over Lake Chatuge, takes Jake, our dog, to work. He goes -- he's a pilot. He has a small airplane and so today, for example, he's in Atlanta for depositions. So he could be in Atlanta when he needs to, but for the vast majority of his work he gets to enjoy the good life up here with all of us. So he's very, very happy.

MALE AUDIENCE: I want to talk to you a little bit now about politics and, specifically, campaigning. Your campaign and Governor Purdue's campaign along with Marc Heathers' campaign had a lot of young staffers, particularly campaign managers. Can you explain that trend on a national level and on a state level?

COX: It's very easy to explain and I think people who have been in those positions will tell you that being a campaign staff person is a young person's job, because there is nothing that will burn you out faster than the demands of working on a major campaign. It is far preferable for candidates to find young, unmarried staff people who are political addicts, kind of like you, kind of like me, who don't mind putting in 20 hours a day, who don't have the family obligations that require them to get home and put supper on the table, and visit with their children, and have those family times -- that they have all the time in the world to give to a campaign. And statewide and national campaigns run at such a furious pace. Things change on the flip of a dime and you have to have staff to help you react and respond quickly to attacks and everything else that happens. It's constant scheduling and there is a definite reason you don't see older people running campaigns, because they just get burned out. They do it for a few years and they say, "I'm over this. I want a life where I'm not traveling to different parts of the country and living out of temporary apartments. I want some stability in my life." And the vast majority of top notch campaign staffers don't live like that. They do it for a number of years until they just can't take it anymore. But it's a great life and a lot of exciting things to do for a short run. You wish as a candidate a lot of times you had a little more seasoned and mature advisors, but they're just hard to come by.

MALE AUDIENCE: You mentioned the Hope Scholarship a while back. Now that you're the President of a private college, what do you think about the way the Georgia treats private institutions differently from public institutions concerning the HOPE Scholarship?

COX: Very unfair and very much not in line with Zell Miller's vision for the HOPE scholarship. Senator Miller -- then Governor Miller -- can certainly speak for his own ideas, but it seemed clear to me when he started the HOPE Scholarship, and I got into the legislature in 1993 right after the constitutional amendment had passed to allow the lottery, and so the HOPE Scholarship was just starting up. And in those days he designed the HOPE Scholarship so that private colleges got virtually an equal appropriation per student as a public college student got. Because his thought -- and he talked about this in his speeches -- was that it's really to the state's benefit to get more students to go to private colleges. Because at the time, say if it cost the state of Georgia \$5,000 to educate a child in a public college, then the HOPE Scholarship was going to pay for that, but if we could give \$3,000 to a private college, we'd get the same result. We'd get Georgia students educated in Georgia, which enhances the chance they would stay in Georgia to work and raise their families, and we'll get it done at less cost to our taxpayers.

But over the years, public college tuition has grown and the HOPE Scholarship covers every dime of it. Private college tuition has grown, but the HOPE Scholarship has stayed at the same \$3,000 level that it started in the early 1990s and therefore it is less help to students who choose to go to a private college. So Governor Miller's idea is not being seen through at the moment because of the legislature's -- I won't say refusal -- I don't know that anybody's really put it on the table for them to vote on, but they've been unwilling to raise that HOPE Grant to private colleges in a level to equal public colleges. And I think they should, because the ultimate benefit to Georgians is greater when you do that. You might be the CFO of a college here interested in

that?

[Laughter]

SHORT: Other questions? If not, thank you.

COX: Thank you.

SHORT: We enjoyed having you.

[END OF RECORDING]