

Chapter 9. San Antonio: Flirting With and Separating From Administration, 1998–2004

When I ponder our six years in the Alamo City—when the Battle of the Alamo was not yet declared a triumph of White Texan Americans and a “war for American independence” by Governor Greg Abbott’s “1836 Project” and Mexicans were still present in the Mexican-American War (see my “Busting Myths: How Many ‘Projects’ Does it Take to Obstruct a Truly American History?”, 2022m, and “The Nondebate About Critical Race Theory and Our American Moment,” 2022d)—I think of the lovely, historical, and diverse city, our Victorian house in the substantial Monte Vista historic district just north of the city center and the River Walk, a group of dear colleagues and friends, and a West Highland white terrier new family member named McDonald. I do not think first of the University of Texas *near* San Antonio or its division of behavioral and cultural studies/sciences.

To make a long story succinct, the personal, political, academic, and place—educational institution and city—intersected in diverse ways, albeit with contradictory parallels between the two suburban branch campuses of the University of Texas System and their adjacent cities, whose names they not-quite-accurately carried.

We left the home of our Dallas friends the Orlovskys, where we and our cat Shadow stayed overnight after our moving van left for San Antonio, on a sunny August morning in 1998. I had only the barest glimpse of what awaited me at UTSA. We drove separate cars for the three-and-a-half-hour trip. Vicki and Shadow arrived several hours after I did. Shadow did not want to leave Dallas (or the safe space under the Orlovsky’s porch), and their car stopped for his needs, a nap for Vicki, and lunch. I waited for them and the moving van.

We spent the first days moving in, scouting the neighborhood, and meeting new neighbors. We were delighted with the lovely, late-Victorian house—more than a century old—with turret, wraparound porch with outside ceiling fans, separate rooms for my study and Vicki’s office, guest bedroom, and extra bathrooms. It had a deck, guesthouse, and two carports in the back yard. We hired contractors to build bookshelves on the walls of almost every room and reinforced the floor under the one we designated as the “library.”

It was more than comfortable. This was important because Vicki now did her work for the American Heart Association remotely from her home office under the Victorian turret. She searched briefly for a San Antonio-based job but quickly learned that the city lacked Dallas’ significant sector of headquarters like the AHA or other nonprofit organizations. Not wanting to lose her talents and expertise, the AHA approved her proposal to become their first full-time, off-site employee. They flew her computer to San Antonio with a technician to install it

and paid for a second telephone line in the pre-cellphone era. Her AHA tenure lasted until August 2004.



Figure 9.1. Harvey and Vicki's 1896 home in Monte Vista historical district, 1998.



Figure 9.2. San Antonio house book-lined interior.

We also began to explore the city with neighborhood walks, strolling along the Depression-era Works Project Administration's River Walk, the historic King William District south of downtown with novelist Sandra Cisneros' controversial "purple house," the Spanish Mission Trail, and other parts of the city. San Antonio immediately felt more like home than Dallas ever did.

The next week I began my near-daily expressway commute to the suburban campus on the northern outskirts of the city (much like UT near Dallas). Welcomed at first, I moved into the director's office suite and began a positive relationship with my administrative assistant, small staff, and new colleagues. In words that rang loudly, then and later, my assistant repeated that my predecessor informed her that "anthropologists go to the field," "historians write books," and "psychologists do research," in ascending order of significance. That sentiment summarized the situation and circumscribed the arena of competition and conflict I largely unknowingly entered.

At first, I felt cautiously excited about what I then believed to be a genuine opportunity to reimagine the division into a more equal, cooperative, and intellectually interactive and engaging operation of faculty and students. I did not yet know that 1998–1999 would be one of the worst years of my academic life, rivaling my protracted tenure "war" and my first year of teaching's near-drowning.

Cracks appeared in the division's walls quickly. I later learned that one psychologist whose parents lived in Fort Worth and who came to Dallas several times to have lunch with me during the gap year was actually "spying," trying to get the inside track on the new, non-psychologist, and therefore dangerous, alien director.

While several younger psychologists, especially one married couple, were enthusiastic and welcoming (she was head of the undergraduate honors program and invited me immediately to teach a seminar), the rest lobbied me to guarantee budgetary support for their experimental "labs" (tiny interview rooms). I had not yet received a copy of the budget, and other faculty clusters also had legitimate bids.

The former, long-term director—an unproductive psychologist but staunch defender of his flock, especially in the face of the presumed challenge by the new, much-too-scholarly director—intrusively looked over my shoulder and literally listened behind pillars in the hallways. He was sometimes aided in these activities by his former administrative assistant.

Unmistakable rumors and before long repeated, undocumented criticisms—warranted and unwarranted—seeped out first in the hallways and then in faculty meetings. The majority of the dominant psychology faculty feared change and the new, interdisciplinary, humanities scholar *and* social scientist, historian (and book-writing) director. They distrusted me and barely contained their desire to flex their muscles.

In contrast, at least at first, the one faculty member in American studies, the anthropologists and archaeologists, and especially the historians were outwardly supportive and personally welcoming. The social and cultural anthropologists, one and a half of the three archaeologists, and all except the older, more

conservative, and typically less productive by simple number of publications historians were eager for greater equity and mutual respect among the programs, curriculum reforms, and support of teaching, research, and service.

The dean—who had hired me and falsely promoted interdisciplinarity and desire for reform of the division and his college—stood by unhelpfully, mainly unresponsively. I never knew what the dean knew, understood, or desired, except that I must always avoid problems for his office and maintain his budget. I recall his ire when I hired a full-time, adjunct assistant professor at a fair, full salary instead of the dean's cut-rate approach. That was another warning sign.

Despite having almost 25 years of university experience, I was an inexperienced and sometimes uncertain administrator with too little knowledge of my new university. Instead of trying explicitly to rally the troops to frame a new agenda and having more division meetings, in retrospect, perhaps I should have gone door-to-door beseeching and reassuring faculty. There was no time for that, and it is not my style. Greater savvy and/or administrative experience might have allowed me to read more of the signs more quickly. Or not.

A perceived personal or programmatic snub to one faculty member in early spring 1999 led to an in-house "revolt." I no longer recall what the incident was. That faculty member soon left the university. Two relatively junior professors, neither of them psychologists, began a door-to-door campaign of personal, nonprogrammatic complaints and character assassination against me. Neither came to me. I learned about their conduct secondhand—a clear sign of the division's culture or lack thereof.

Quickly amplified by the psychologists, the complaints reached the dean. Without consulting me or investigating, he emailed the division faculty, asking each of them to rate my short-duration performance. I had some strong defenders. Some took a middle ground, stating reasonably that it was simply too early for this kind of review to take place.

The dean called me into his office for a brief meeting. Showing me a handful of examples from his polling on his computer screen, he murkily suggested that some unspecified course of action was needed. He then forwarded me all the responses without any identifying information.

I remember my shock. The character assassination was stunning. It far exceeded my imagination in its personal assaults, inappropriateness, and irrelevance. In contrast to UTD's British antisemites, I was attacked as either or both a homosexual or for being inappropriately supportive and tolerant of LGBTQ faculty members in 1998–1999. I was not aware of any such faculty members. There were a few antisemitic slurs and a few comments about my progressive politics and my academic accomplishments. Nothing was directly relevant to my position or performance as division director. Nothing was actually explained, discussed, or documented.

Expectedly, I was assailed for being too scholarly for the division and the university and either unfair to or ignorant of the glories of pseudo-experimental psychology. I admit that it is not a discipline I hold in the highest respect. I may have made a few off-hand remarks, but that in itself was never an explicit issue.

I went home badly shaken. I sat in my second-floor study in tears. And I decided, with Vicki's concurrence and support, to offer my resignation as director to the dean the next day in advance of his formally requesting it, or worse. He accepted. I began to consider what to do next.

My colleagues' responses were predictably mixed. There was immediate outrage and strong support from those who were becoming our friends, especially among historians and anthropologists; a fairly silent, neutral, middle group; and a quite satisfied group across the disciplines, especially among psychologists. I recall the immediate, positive outreach from the younger historians and now longtime friends, Europeanist Kolleen Guy and Asianist Wing Chung Ng, among a few others.

From colleagues elsewhere in the university there was broad surprise and dismay, which I did my best to calm. Bob Bayley and Juliet Langman—my culture, literacy, and language colleagues in the College of Education—voiced strong condemnation of the dean and division and support for me.

It was now June 1999. The spring semester was over; summer school was beginning. I taught one course as planned and prepared to move from the spacious, comfortable director's suite to a tiny faculty office down the corridor. Many of my books went home. I stuffed as many bookcases and file cabinets into the room as I could and squeezed in to sit at my desk with my computer beside me. If I needed a physical representation of my downfall, I had it. Fortunately, supportive colleagues, respected historians, and friends to this day occupied offices on either side of me. Through my personal physician Bradley Kayser, I connected with an excellent San Antonio psychiatrist, Dianne Martinez.

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In some ways it felt like Dallas in 1979, but with tenure, full professorship, and a most satisfactory residence in a desirable area in the center of the historic city—and with my learning experiences of the preceding two decades—it was not the same. The intersections, especially, of the personal, the academic, and place differed markedly. Beginning with the combination of the city and the location of our house, there was a level of comfort and compensation unlike anything in our Dallas years.

We already had a well-developed life separate from university and campus. We had neighbors who became close friends, especially attorneys Kathleen Doria and Ruben Silva, their son Joaquin, and their dogs, three houses away. My fellow literacy scholar and linguist Bob Bayley and his translator-weaver wife Ann Robinson were two blocks away.

Shortly after we settled into our new abode, we began to search for a new dog. Vicki discovered a breeder of pedigreed dogs who was downsizing her stock that she was not using in her breeding program. Among them was a West Highland white terrier named McDonald born in Norway who had won championships—for his good looks, not for his performance arts—and who had papers affirming his award-winning breeding lines.



Figure 9.3. MacDonald at home in San Antonio, 1998.

Aside from urinating on a pile of newspapers and a box of my notes that I was unpacking, McDonald quickly became a beloved member of the family for 14 years. His owner offered him to us at no cost as long as we provided a good home and loved him, neutered him, and promised to return him if we were ever unable to keep him. From time to time, she checked on him, and Vicki provided updates.

McDonald cured Ann Robinson's childhood fear of dogs by softly leaping onto the couch and laying his head on her lap. She became his devoted friend, on occasion coming to take him for walks. He was often the center of the student seminar potluck dinners I regularly hosted at home. I don't know who loved whom the most.

A special relationship quickly developed with my physician Bradley Kayser and his wife Gemma Kennedy. At the time of my first checkup, my new San Antonio internist informed me that I was "his first historian." He urged—almost demanded—that I bring him one of my books. I dropped off *Conflicting Paths* (1995a) at his office, and a week or two later he telephoned to say, "I've read your book. I have questions. I'm taking you to lunch." He did. They weren't bad questions, that is, for an internist rather than a historical specialist. At the end of the meal and conversation, he stated, "sign the book for me to keep; your next checkup is free."

We quickly became close friends. We socialized with Bradley and Gemma, got to know their children and attended their Bat and Bar Mitzvahs, enjoyed their annual at-home jazz fest, and more. To this day, Bradley delights in quoting passages from my books to me. I remain awestruck.

There were shops, a particularly good Mexican and other restaurants within two blocks of our house, and accessibility to River Walk, downtown, and a shopping center with a movie theatre that featured foreign and alternative films.

Despite my miscalculation in accepting the UTSA division directorship, we quickly made many collegial contacts and good friends from behavioral and cultural studies and elsewhere in the university as well as from Trinity University near our house. Some remain in communication today. Among those who combined faculty collegiality and personal friendship were Kolleen Guy and Wing Chung Ng. In addition were American historians Yolanda Leyva who moved to UT-El Paso, Jim Schneider and Jack Reynolds both now retired, Anne Hardgrove and Kirsten Gardner, and later John Giggie and Gaye Okoh, both of whom moved on from San Antonio. Anthropologist friends included Jim McDonald, Dan Gelo, and archeologist Laura Levy.

Wing Chung recently reminded me of a “cold soup dinner” that Vicki and I hosted. Each couple or individual prepared a cold soup of their choosing, and a group of about eight people shared them in multiple courses. I hired Wing Chung’s then high schooler son Chuck and his football teammate to pack boxes of books when we prepared to leave the city. Chuck and his sister Stella, who was also McDonald’s friend, are now adults. So too are Kolleen’s children, who completed their college degrees and now live in Europe. Kolleen later joined a university in China affiliated with Duke University.

Reflecting my significant relationships outside the division were Bob Bayley and Juliet Langman in linguistics, as well as Art Vega and Woody Saunders in sociology and political science. In addition, I became well acquainted with Trinity University historians John Martin and Char Miller (soon to leave for Duke and the Claremont colleges, respectively). I occasionally played tennis with Jack Reynolds. And my friend and former student in Dallas, Tony Fracchia, visited with his tennis racket, staying overnight in our guesthouse, sometimes with wife Pearl Garza.

Another friend from our first years at UTD, political scientist Paul Peretz, owned two rental houses in San Antonio, part of his personal retirement fund. Every now and then he came to check on them, staying in our guesthouse. A few times he brought his wife, the outstanding political scientist Jean Shroedel. At UTSA Gender Studies’ and my invitation, Jean lectured at UTSA.

These years were marked by memorable travel. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, we often went to the Western states for whitewater rafting and kayaking. International travel featured trips to Sweden around ceremonies and conferences (more about those later) and Spain where earlier I had been invited to speak at conferences. We returned together in 2000 for a Spanish holiday to Madrid, Bilbao and Frank Gehry’s new Guggenheim Museum, San Sebastian on the northern coast, and most memorably Barcelona. The latter remains a favorite world city for both of us. I am well versed in “reading cities.”

As in Dallas, but proportionally less given the duration of our residence and the fact that I was not researching or writing San Antonio's history, I was active locally in public history and public humanities. I served on the advisory group for the San Antonio History Website Development Project (funded by a NEH grant to UTSA in 2001) and participated in an experimental graduate seminar titled "Exhibiting Adolescence/Adolescents" in 2004. The course explored different approaches to "exhibiting" adolescents and adolescence museologically, with the cooperation of the Witte Museum's curatorial and administrative staff in San Antonio and the Chicago Historical Society. As in Chicago, I also served as a history fair judge.

As in Dallas and in Columbus, I assisted and contributed to local and national media. This presaged my greater focus in retirement but stemmed from the relationships among the political, academic, and place. With newspaper editor Joe Holley of the *San Antonio Express News*, I advised on reporting and also published "Comment: Race between San Antonio, Dallas Like Fabled Tortoise and the Hare" (1997c), "Comment: City Must Create Own Mold for Public Universities" (1998), and "Alamo City's Different Futures: 'Fast Forward' Left Important Points Muddled" (2001f).

I also advised, consulted, and moderated electronic discussions for National Public Radio's "The Changing Face of America" series that aired on *Talk of the Nation*, *All Things Considered*, and *Morning Edition* from 2000 to 2001 (find information about the series as well as a link to its archives at <https://news.npr.org/programs/specials/cfoa/>). In print media, I assisted reporters from *The New York Times*, *San Antonio Express-News*, and the *Times Educational Supplement*.

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At UTSA, I was officially professor of history. I was also a member of the doctoral faculty in Culture, Literacy, and Language in the School of Education; doctoral faculty in English in Arts and Humanities; faculty in the Division of Bilingual and Bicultural Studies; graduate faculty in Public Administration (Urban Studies); and faculty in the learning community and freshman seminars for undergraduate studies. My teaching ranged widely from first-year seminars and large lecture courses to doctoral seminars in Culture, Literacy, and Language. Many of my classes were cross-listed.

Specific courses I taught included Introduction to Historical Study; undergraduate and graduate seminars on the history of growing up; cross-listed graduate seminars on the history of literacy and literacy studies; and my least favorite, large lecture courses on United States history. I learned to make do but never truly accepted the latter, taught without teaching or grading assistants or small discussion sections.

In classes with 200 to 300 or more students, I required practice in writing in collaborative group essays with checks to promote participation and reduce cheating. For the only time in my teaching career, I used exams with multiple-choice



questions scored by machine readers. I did have assistance in running the cards through the machine reader and compiling the results. I recall holding a discussion in one of these several-hundred-student classes the day after the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York City, trying to add historical and contemporary perspectives. Military veteran class members aided me.

My graduate students included master's students in history; master's and Ph.D. students in culture, literacy, and language; and master's and Ph.D. students in English. Some of these mostly nontraditional students were excellent. A few were not prepared by prior education or ability for graduate work and needed to be counseled out.

Among my clearest memories is one doctoral student in literacy studies, Michael Campbell, who with his wife Susan and adorable daughter remain our friends. We transferred possession of Vicki's last, large, stuffed animal, a leopard from her sophomore year at Northwestern, to young Lily who is now a graduate of a German university.

I also recall fondly my fall 2003 doctoral seminar students in English 7063 who collectively presented their research on a panel titled, "Reading Critically the Sources of Children and Childhood: Literary and Historical Perspectives" to the American Studies Association of Texas annual meeting in San Antonio. I had the honor of chairing the exciting session, designated at the conference's end as an "outstanding session."

As at UT-Dallas, I continued to contribute nationally to the collective enterprise of improving teaching. I shared graduate and undergraduate course syllabuses on H-Child, H-Education, and SHARP electronic networks.

First as division director and then as professor, I had major administrative responsibilities. Given the immaturity of the institution, the number of other full professors who were reluctant to admit others to their hallowed halls or to accept their fair share of responsibilities is not surprising. I recall being called to testify at my chair's request before a university-wide, faculty personnel committee about why another full professor's listing an article that was not accepted for publication as "forthcoming" was not a legitimate action. It is not.

I recall my surprise when without warning a package arrived for me on campus with my 25 years in the University of Texas System Award. A few years later as I left UTSA came a clock that never worked, my University of Texas at San Antonio Retirement commemoration. There is a message in that gift.

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More significantly and powerfully, the years 2000 and 2001 were etched with lifetime recognitions. In November 2000 in my home city of Pittsburgh, the SSHA celebrated its 25th anniversary. I was president, set the theme for this special meeting, and presented my address, later published as "The Shock of the "New" Histories': Social Science Histories and Historical Literacies" (2001/2005).

I had the additional pleasure of my parents, still living and in Pittsburgh,

sitting in front of the head table with Vicki, Michael Katz, and a group of my closest academic colleagues and friends. Several historians, social scientists, and present and former colleagues who did not usually attend SSHA came that year to share the experience and to honor me.

Eight months later, I was awarded another rare distinction. Linköping University, Sweden, presented me with the Honorary Doctor of Philosophy degree for “contributions to knowledge.” Dean Bengt Sandin, a fellow historian of children and youth, surprised me with a long-distance call one morning to ask if I would accept an honorary degree. He did not want to bother writing a formal letter if I would not! I was one of the distinguished scholars from around the world that the university recognized that year.

The honorees assembled in the front row of the elaborately decorated concert hall with university leaders, attired in university-rented tuxedos and with laurel wreaths on our heads. The dean had telephoned me again to ask awkwardly the length of my trousers’ inseam.

I will never forget the faculty member, a professor of communication and also a baroness, formally bequeathing me the honor, proclaiming, “Before you, Honorary Dr. Graff, we thought we understood literacy. But you taught us that we did not. Before you, we thought we understood childhood. But you taught us that we did not.” Tears streamed down my cheeks beneath the slightly crooked laurel wreath perched on my bald head.



Figure 9.4. Harvey receiving Honorary Ph.D. from Professor Viveka Adelswärd, Linköping University, Sweden, June 2001. Photo © Masood Khatibi.

The celebration occupied three days, including a banquet with reindeer steak and entertainment by a male glee club. Vicki purchased a special outfit for the event; we shopped for it in New York City. In addition to my diploma, Linköping presented me with an engraved ring (like a wedding band) and a traditional, formal, silk burgher's hat. I wear the ring but have little occasion to wear the hat.

The day after the ceremony, we visited the baroness and baron's stately manor for lunch. It was the servants' day off, so royalty cooked for their visitors. The university paid full expenses for both Vicki and me. This allowed us to spend a spectacular week in Paris following the Swedish adventure.



Figure 9.5. Harvey in robe and hood with laurel wreath and Vicki in gown after ceremony.



Figure 9.6. Harvey with Dean Bengt Sandin presenting honorary burgher's hat and Viveka Adelswärd at Baron Adelswärd's castle.



I did not permit UTSA to interfere with my national and international activities. I needed intellectual stimulation and valued the distraction. In any case, I had too much research, writing, teaching, and collaboration underway.

I continued to hold office in the SSHA and attended annual meetings. In most years, I organized sessions on literacy, growing up, cities, or interdisciplinary themes. I became a consulting editor for *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung*, a German journal, from 1998. I also served on the scholarly advisory board for *LifeTimes/Everyday Life in America: A New Way of Doing History* from 2002. My general historiographical essays in these years addressed social scientists, historians, university professors in general, and scholars in education: “Teaching and Historical Understanding” (1999b) and “Teaching [and] Historical Understanding” (1999c).

With respect to literacy, I sat on the board of advisors and was project scholar for the proposed documentary film series, *Rewriting Literacy*, in 1998. I served on the international editorial board of *Literacy and Numeracy Studies: An International Journal*, an Australian publication, from 1998 and the editorial board of the *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education* from 2000 to 2007.

More significantly, I was co-organizer, coordinator, and speaker (with scholars from Sweden, Australia, and Canada and with support from the Swedish Bicentennial Research Fund to Linköping University) for “Literacy, Religion, Gender, and Social History: A Socio-Cultural History for the 21st Century. An International Conference for Egil Johansson,” held in Vadstena, Sweden, in May 2002 (coordinated by Bengt Sandin at Linköping University). Egil Johansson contributed to the international advancement of historical studies of literacy from the 1970s. He was my friend, colleague, and host in Sweden for decades.

After the Vadstena conference, Linköping University invited us to attend the ceremony and banquet for its 2002 honorary doctorates. The university again paid full expenses for both Vicki and me. In addition to spending time with Bengt and his family on their farm, this trip allowed us to stop in Iceland on the way home to tour that majestic country. The then young cultural historian Sigurdur “Siggi” Magnusson hosted us in his home city, Reykjavík. His graduate advisor Peter Stearns had connected us when Siggi was a doctoral student studying literacy and Icelandic folk cultures at Carnegie Mellon University. This was another of our several experiences of our lifetimes.

My contribution as a regular voice on literacy past and present grew. I was a featured speaker at the 2000 Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) annual meeting, and again at the 2004 CCCC annual meeting, “Educating the Imagination and Reimagining Education.” I regularly shared the podium as a featured speaker with my colleague and dear friend Deborah Brandt. Through CCCCs, I met and became friendly not only with Brandt but also her graduate student John Duffy, as well as Mike Rose, Patrick Berry, and others.

I was also a featured speaker and discussant at the Institute for Literary History and National Conference, “Prospero’s Plots and Caliban’s Critique: Literacies, Texts, and Nationalisms in the New World,” held at Miami University, Ohio, in 2000 and the University of California at Los Angeles’ California Center for the Book’s forum for print and electronic culture and department of library and information studies seminar, also in 2000.

My books on literacy in these years included *Alfabetismo di massa: mito storia realtà*, in the series “Il Sapere Del Libro” (2002a). Other series authors included Roger Chartier, Robert Darnton, Anthony Grafton, and Donald McKenzie.

I coedited a special issue of *Interchange* with Alison Mackinnon, Bengt Sandin, and Ian Winchester (2003a) that collected papers from an international conference in Vadstena, Sweden, in May 2002 called “Egil Johansson, the Demographic Database, and Socio-Cultural History for the 21st Century: Literacy, Religion, Gender, and Social History.” Those papers were later published in an expanded book, *Understanding Literacy in its Historical Contexts: Socio-Cultural History and the Legacy of Egil Johansson* (Graff et al., 2009), with support from the Swedish Bicentennial Fund/Stiftelsen Riksbankens Jubileumsfond, Linköping University, and Ohio State University.

Articles and book chapters on literacy included “The Nineteenth-Century Origins of Our Times” (Graff, 2001e), “Literacy’s Myths and Legacies” (Graff, 2001c, 2001d), “Literacy,” in *The Oxford Companion to United States History* (Graff, 2001b), “Literacy, Religion, Gender, and Social History: A Socio-Cultural History for the 21st Century” (Graff et al., 2003b), and “Introduction to Historical Studies of Literacy” (Graff, 2003).

Following the publication of *Conflicting Paths: Growing Up in America* (1995a), my multi-level teaching of the history of children and adolescents and my active role in the Society for the History of Childhood and Youth (SHCY) led to my increasing involvement in that growing field. I participated on the executive committee of SHCY (2003–2007) and attended most annual meetings during these and later years, often organizing sessions. I was also on the board of advisors of H-Childhood (Humanities and Social Sciences Online’s network on the history of childhood and youth, available at <https://networks.h-net.org/h-childhood>) from 1998 and the advisory board for *The Child: An Encyclopedic Companion* (Schweder, 2009) from 2001 to 2009.

A special opportunity arose when Marie Scatena of the Teen Chicago Project of the Chicago Historical Society (later renamed the Museum of Chicago History) contacted me in 2001. Marie wrote at the urging of the president of the society, Lonnie Bunch, who knew my book *Conflicting Paths* (1995a). After ascertaining my interest, Marie formally invited me to serve as principal academic advisor, a position I held from 2001 to 2004. This was a unique endeavor which took me to Chicago four times a year for more than three years, including the memorable, final performances and presentations in spring 2004.

Teen Chicago was a multi-year project on the history of teens, oral history, public programming, publications, and transformation of the roles of young people in museums and historical societies. With funding from the Joyce Foundation, Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust, Chicago Community Trust, Nathan Cummings Foundation, Field Foundation of Illinois, James S. Kemper Foundation, Illinois Humanities Council, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, it garnered a great deal of attention in Chicago and across the nation. It was awarded the American Association of Museums' Excellence in Education Award and Honorable Mention for the Muse Award (Media and Technology) in 2005. The program worked in association with Chicago's NPR station, for which I served as advisor for their series on children and adolescents from 2003 to 2004.

Expertly coordinated by Scatena, the project revolved around a group of Chicago high school teenage students. They did local historical and contemporary research, conducted oral histories, and wrote about their firsthand experiences. I assisted with background, context, questions, and leads.

The result was an impressive, original, historical exhibit at the Chicago Historical Society, an archive, personal writings, and a performance at the end of the project in late spring 2004. The major written project was published in a special issue of *Chicago History* titled "Coming of Age in Chicago" (Bivens & Graff, 2004), for which I was consulting editor, advisor, and contributor.

Writing about the history of growing up continued with "Interdisciplinary Explorations in the History of Children, Adolescents, and Youth" (1999a) and "Growing Up in America" (2001a).

Looking toward *The Dallas Myth* (2008a), which I began to draft, I served on the Urban History Association board of directors from 2002 to 2004 and participated in the conference on The University and the City: Urban Education and the Liberal Arts at Wayne State University in 1999. I also organized SSHA urban history sessions.

My research and writing continued to secure funding. During my tenure at UTSA, I received faculty awards for research and travel. In 2001, the Swedish Bicentennial Research Fund awarded me an international conference grant to Linköping University. In the same year, the SSHA awarded Leslie Moch, Philip McMichael, and me a grant to prepare a collection of papers from the 25th anniversary meeting. The next year, UTSA awarded me a semester's faculty development leave for research to advance my writing of *The Dallas Myth* (2008a).

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My days at UTSA began to end with the arrival of an unexpected letter of invitation from the chair of the Department of English at The Ohio State University late in 2003. She told me about the award of a state-endowed, chaired professorship, the inaugural Ohio Eminent Scholar in Literacy Studies, to the department and the university. Her lengthy letter sought to persuade me of the position's singular importance and opportunity and to solicit my interest. I was surprised and

flattered. I recall walking next door to Kolleen Guy's office to debrief and share my mixed feelings of honor and questions.

For several weeks, the department chair, search committee chair, and I exchanged emails and telephone conversations. Given my history with a new position at UTSA and earlier travails at UTD, I responded cautiously. I was concerned about the position's location in the Department of English's Rhetoric and Composition program and about Ohio State being an overly large university in the Midwest, best known for its football team. That caution lessened with OSU's commitment to a full, joint appointment in the Department of History and the chair's promise of institutional flexibility. At the same time, I was biding my time institutionally and professionally at UTSA.

I agreed to visit OSU in early 2004. It was less a traditional job interview than an opportunity to meet one another and exchange initial ideas about the possibilities of the position—and to persuade me. Barbara Hanawalt, my old friend from the Newberry Library in 1979–1980 and regular SSHA colleague, held an endowed chair in Ohio State's History Department. She told me, “the word is: the position is yours to lose, Harvey.”

My campus visit was delayed for a few days because of my father's expected death of multiple causes including Lou Gehrig's Disease (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS) and stroke in late December. Given his medical condition, he very much wanted to pass away. For the family, it was a time of relief and celebration of his life. Vicki and I flew to Pittsburgh to oversee arrangements with my brother Gary, who had taken initial responsibility.

In the first week of January, as the new semester was beginning, I flew to Columbus. I felt no pressure but rather anticipation and great curiosity. The search committee chair graciously met me at the airport and gave me my first of several tours of residential neighborhoods in the campus area. Potential new colleagues were primed to welcome me. It marked a real contrast with all my previous interviews dating back to the mid-1970s. Never before had I been so actively and unreservedly sought for what I had actually accomplished.

I learned that this was the second year of searching to fill the new position. At first, the department looked for a person who would lead to K-12 school linkages. They found no suitable, qualified person. In year two, they elected to “find the best scholar.” Their inquiries led directly to me.

For the two departments and the university writ large, the centerpiece of my visit was a public lecture relating “lessons from the history of literacy.” Just prior to my presentation, one faculty member stuck her head in the room in which I was waiting quietly and asked, “Is there really only one of you? You've written so many books.” The search committee chair, Nan Johnson, then brought me dark chocolate to enhance my preparation.

The lecture was well attended, with an overwhelmingly positive response. The questions were appropriately probing. It was an intellectually positive experience. Campus invited lectures are not always so mutually satisfying.

I met many prospective colleagues at the seemingly endless succession of group meals and meetings. During a driving tour of the university area and learning about my excessive personal library, Chris Zacher, professor of English and longtime director of the Humanities Institute, commented, “Oh, the house next door to ours is for sale. It would hold your books.” He drove me past the two houses, and I spied my future, nearly century-old home with its landmark sycamore tree, a ten-minute walk to my Denney Hall office.

The department’s job and salary offer came shortly after I returned to San Antonio. Vicki and I were both positively inclined. We negotiated salary and especially support for my research and building a distinctive campus-wide, cross- and interdisciplinary program in literacy studies. OSU also offered a substantial stipend to offset the costs of our expensive move.

Despite some hesitation about returning to the Midwest, the underachieving city of Columbus, and about OSU’s size and identification with big-time collegiate football, it was well past time to join a more established and substantial academic institution and leave Texas. A joint appointment in history, the promise of wider connections, and solid support all enhanced the attraction. As it happened, the history department voted unanimously on my appointment before the English department did.

I informed UTSA about OSU’s strong offer. Colleagues and a few of my deans were saddened. The provost responded that he would mount a counteroffer. He never did—a fitting conclusion to my UTSA years.

Vicki and I made our first of several visits in April. On these trips, we house hunted, job searched for Vicki, and saw new colleagues and old friends including Barbara Hanawalt and Ron Giere, Randy Roth and Alison Sweeney, Chris Zacher and Kay Bea Jones, and Amy Shuman and Amy Horowitz.

Remembering our habits from the Newberry year and our SSHA meetings, Barbara and Ron predicted that their restaurant-going and communal dinners at home were about to improve. Without family in the area, we regularly dined out on Thanksgiving and Christmas with Barbara and Ron and shared the contents of his wine cellar. Longtime SSHA colleague Randy Roth facilitated campus connections. The early visits and continued meetings with new people made it much easier for me to start quickly in the fall to build LiteracyStudies@OSU.

Similar to the situation with our move to San Antonio, Vicki hoped to continue working remotely for the American Heart Association from Columbus. Before she could make the request, however, her boss informed her that she could keep her job if she were willing to move back to Dallas, contrary to national trends. Because that was not possible, the AHA offered her a generous severance package that helped to cushion the transition. Despite promises of assistance from OSU, Vicki’s job search in Columbus continued for more than a year.

Notwithstanding our English department-related realtor’s conviction that we should settle in a comfortable middle-class suburb like Worthington or Upper Arlington—not in the campus area within walking distance from my office—we



persevered. We house hunted in older residential areas, especially Victorian Village and the University District.

We purchased the University District house next door to Chris Zacher, his architecture professor wife Kay Bea Jones, son Sam then 10 years old, and dog Prince. It was then an 89-year-old, late-Victorian, architect-designed house. Immediately hiring a woodworking contractor to build bookcases throughout the house, we drove one car to Columbus in late July and the second car, McDonald, and ourselves in mid-August. Two moving vans with our possessions, but mainly my books, arrived shortly thereafter.