

An SfAA Oral History Interview with J. Anthony "Tony" Paredes
Ethnohistory, American Indians, and Effective Application

Tony's research and application focus was on contemporary American Indians. In this realm he worked with the Poarch Band of Creeks in Alabama in support of their application for federal recognition. The interview discusses, among other topics, this process as well as its outcome and impact. He served on the SfAA board and as president of the Society. He also was elected president of the Southern Anthropological Society and the Association of Senior Anthropologists. For thirty years he was on the anthropology faculty at Florida State University, and following that he was regional ethnographer for the National Park Service. Tony died in August of 2013. To honor and commemorate Tony's contribution to their development, the Poarch Band of Creeks endowed a fund to support a plenary session that is presented at the Society's annual meeting.

J. Anthony "Tony" Paredes was interviewed by Peter J. Brown in January of 2012. The transcript was edited by John van Willigen.

BROWN: I was going to say that in the generation before you, that a lot of applied anthropology had to do with Native Americans, or American Indians. And, at least when I was a graduate student and Vine Deloria came out, or the American Indian studies came out, and anthropologists were kind of vilified, I don't know if that's a correct thing, but how did you get into studying Native Americans and was it applied anthropology from the very beginning?

PAREDES: I think my route into American Indian studies, and I have worked specifically with American Indians, never done any Alaskan native work, and in Indian country, if you're talking about just Indians, the preferred--at least in the United States, the preferred term is usually American Indian, I think in part because so much of their sovereignty as tribes rests upon laws, regulations, and even the US Constitution that uses the phrase American Indian. So, the legal basis is American Indian. But I think I came into it, on a venerable route, going all the way back to Louis Henry Morgan, who belonged to an organization that adopted Indian costumes. And I think the romanticization of American Indians has been a thread of American popular culture for a very long time. And partly because of that, and perhaps remotely because on my mother's side of the family, there's an oral history common in many Southern families that we're part Indian. But at a very early age, I became fascinated by American Indians. Right after I was a kid growing up, right after World War II, I was born before World War II, but my days of playing were primarily from the

end of the World War II onward. And some might say I'm still playing. But at any rate, I got an interest in American Indians, and that led me, kind of in reverse order to most people, into joining the Boy Scouts. I was in Cub Scouts, and I hated Cub Scouts. But my interest in Indians brought me to Boy Scouts, rather than usually the other way around, and I've met a lot of anthropologists who do American Indian studies who came into American Indian studies through the Boy Scout Order of the Arrow route.

BROWN: Same with me.

PAREDES: Yeah. (laughs) And that interest continued, well along, even though I had side forays into other interests, and I decided that I would probably have to make a living doing something, and I'd try to be a schoolteacher. I wanted to be a history teacher. And growing up in Florida at that time, there was an arrangement, I don't think it exists anymore, that you could get your education paid for by the state of Florida and pay it back by teaching in Florida public schools, and that's what I was going to do. And at the last minute, I switched because of spurious reasons to thinking, maybe I could be a professional Boy Scout executive, I had been involved in Boy Scouts enough that I got really close --

BROWN: That's funny, I thought the same thing. (laughs)

PAREDES: No kidding. Well at that point, a friend of mine, age mate of mine, he was going to follow the same career track. And he introduced me, this was in Orlando, Florida, and I can still remember the night, I was spending the night at his house, and he introduced me to something called the [American] Humanics Foundation. And the Humanics Foundation was an organization that still exists, and is today dedicated to training people to be CEOs in nonprofits. In those days, in the fifties, it was dedicated to training people to be professional workers in various kinds of youth organizations, principally Boy Scouts, but also YMCA, Boys Clubs, Girl Scouts, YWCA, and also to become juvenile parole officers. There were four schools in the country that had such programs, and one of those was Oglethorpe University, right here in Atlanta. So, I came to Oglethorpe, and about my junior year, having taken all kinds of courses that are required to this day at Oglethorpe as part of the common core, I became interested in lots of other things that I didn't even know existed. I learned some economics, learned some philosophy, lots of psychology, and I took my first course in the Humanics track and decided I didn't want to do this at all. I wanted to be a college professor, and I wanted to do it in anthropology. And partly I think that came about because even though there was only one anthropology course at that university which I took late in my college career, and I think made the poorest grade that I made

in any course in college. In my freshman year, in one of the common core courses, I was introduced to--it was a biology course, as a matter of fact, the end of the course, after some readings on insect societies, we read *Patterns of Culture*.

BROWN: Oh, really? Oh, wow.

PAREDES: And in a religion course that I took farther along, we were introduced to [Bronislaw] Malinowski. And I had a sociology teacher who was a graduate of University of North Carolina, in sociology, but he was very taken with John Gillan-- John Gillan's work at that time in cultures of the South. And learned a lot of it, had to read all of those books in cultures of the South. He also was an almost fanatic, I would say, on the rural-urban continuum [of] Robert Redfield.

BROWN: I remember that.

PAREDES: So, (laughs) so, I decided I wanted to be an anthropologist. And I got to looking around for graduate schools, and I pretty much had decided, with my interest in American Indians still continuing strongly, that I wanted to go to University of New Mexico. I'd been to New Mexico as a Boy Scout, Philmont Scout Ranch. And I also thought maybe I ought to go someplace where there's some famous anthropologist. The only one that I really knew was famous was Margaret Mead, and so I talked to my advisor about going to Columbia, where she was just an adjunct, I guess. And he said, "Well Tony, those big places like that," he was trying to get me to go to North Carolina, he says, "oh those famous names, they're hardly ever around, you should go to North Carolina," but I persisted, and I applied to one school, New Mexico, and I got in there. And that's where I went. And in New Mexico, I happened to be at the department at a time when there was kind of a suspicious eye cast on applied anthropology as something that was perhaps not quite right. And one ground for that was, we don't know enough to tell people how to solve problems. But at the same time, in the sociology department was Tom Sasaki, who had been part of--

BROWN: Oh! I had a course from him. He went to Notre Dame.

PAREDES: That's right, that's where you went after New Mexico. I guess he went to Johns Hopkins before he went to Notre Dame. But he had been part of the Cornell-- not the Vicos project, but I've forgotten the name of it. It was the health project, with primarily the Navajo reservation.

BROWN: Right, Many Farms.

PAREDES: Many Farms and all of that. And he ended up getting his degree in sociology. And I took a lot of his courses, I remember him as being a lecturer that you had to work at listening to, but him being a wonderful seminar teacher. Just wonderful. And he picked me to be one of his two graduate assistants, in the early days of the Peace Corps training center, which was established in New Mexico right after the Peace Corps was established. And so, I worked with him on that. And at the same time, two of the main line anthropology faculty, Harry Basehart and Florence Hawley Ellis, were doing ethnohistorical work for land claims. So, I was kind of surrounded by these people doing applied things, even though it wasn't called applied anthropology. That encouraged me to do that.

BROWN: Were they in the anthropology department?

PAREDES: Basehart and Ellis were in the anthropology department. Basehart is one of those people that never got a bachelor's degree or a master's degree, he had only a PhD from Harvard. [laughs] And Florence Hawley Ellis did some of the early work in dendrochronology.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: She did, a lot of applied--you might almost call it. She worked pretty closely with the living Pueblo Indians, as well as the archaeological past. And I never took one of her field courses, but she was the expert at that time on Taos archaeology and two or three other Pueblos. She taught the courses in Pueblo and non-Pueblo ethnology. Had a wonderful teacher, at the time, Nibs [Willard Williams] Hill, who among other things had been an altar boy in the Episcopal Church with John Steinbeck. And that's, I suspect, where I learned to write, was from Nibs Hill, because I would write in this flowery way that I'd learned in philosophy classes at Oglethorpe, and he would sort of throw his head on the table and say, "Paredes, write it like a newspaper!"

BROWN: (laughs)

PAREDES: Some of Steinbeck's writing skills must have rubbed off on him. But he was one of those who was I think most suspicious of applied anthropology.

BROWN: And so he was an ethnologist?

PAREDES: An ethnologist who worked with the Navajo primarily, but also with the Pima. At any rate Nibs was a very interesting guy, his nickname was Nibs, and everybody knew him as that. He published, to the best of my knowledge, the first monograph on humor in a non-Western culture. Which was the Navajo. He published the first paper, I think, on Navajo transvestism. But he also published things on Navajo warfare, he wrote one piece that if anyone knows about Nibs Hill, and knows nothing else, they remember him from a piece that was in one of the anthropology readers in the anthropology of religion. He wrote a piece in response to a complicated economic explanation of why the Navajo didn't accept the Ghost Dance of 1890. His response was, it's because they believed it was true, and in their culture, they don't want to have any--

BROWN: Yeah, they were afraid--I remember that. (laughs)

PAREDES: It turns out that I found out from a paper that I encouraged a much younger professor, who's now retired just a few years ago to do a paper in a session on anthropologists who made a splash, but then were largely forgotten. And I had him do one on--I encouraged him and practically begged him to do one on Nibs Hill, which he did. It was Karl [H.] Schwerin, I asked him to do it because he's become sort of the historian of the anthropology department at New Mexico. And he said in that paper that despite his long career and chairman of the anthropology department at New Mexico for many years, he only had seven students. And Nibs passed me off to Harry Basehart, who was my major professor, at the PhD level. And Harry was a North Americanist. I think he was kind of commandeered into doing some work, partly by Tom Sasaki, on the Jicarilla, but he also did marvelous work on the ethnohistory of the Mescalero for their land claims. But he was also an Africanist, and because of that, he introduced me at the doctoral level to a lot of the literature on African urbanism. And through that, I got introduced into network theory. And through this literature he introduced me to in urban Africa, I was one of the few people who ended up doing my dissertation on small town Ojibwa Indians in Minnesota. I was one of the few people doing urban Indian studies, I think, who was also looking at the African literature in urbanism. And I found that very intriguing, I found it an avenue into another aspect of urban anthropology. And focusing on urban American Indians brought me very quickly into the field of applied anthropology. And I remember one of the first sessions I ever went to of the American Anthropology Association meeting, not the first annual meeting I went to, I remember Sol Tax saying, you can hardly do urban studies these days without also doing applied anthropology. And I took a little bit of exception to that, because I had done some other things with my informants, as we called them in those days. It was not really urban anthropology. But it was clear to

me that that was another route to go, and I also, being reminded of earlier in my career, actually it was before I started college, I think it was the 1954 presidential address of Ralph Beale's, who commented on the fact that more and more anthropologists were going into urban studies, and he cautioned that it's important that anthropologists make connections with other people who've done urban studies as well. Because otherwise, we will perhaps make the mistake of reinventing the whole field of sociology but fifty years later. That stuck with me as well, having had a sociology background. Well, all of these things are sort of peripheral to applied anthropology, the Peace Corps, being associated with people doing very applied ethno-history, a lot of people don't think of ethno-history as applied, but it's very applied when it comes to making claims...

BROWN: Oh, they have land claims...

PAREDES: --land claims, mining claims, all kinds of claims. Ethno-history is a very applied field in some ways. I knew in graduate school a guy from history who went on to get a job working for a law firm as a historian working primarily in mining, in Arizona and--

BROWN: Yeah, and Stanford's had that archaeology project at Zuni, or training Zuni archaeologists that...

PAREDES: Cliff Barnett has been part of that, I think. At any rate, I had all of this background, but an opportunity came along for a job to work in a mental health center for a funded, externally funded project on culture and personality, basically. And I jumped at the chance to take the job, even though I had not yet, at that point, once I signed the dotted line, I hadn't earned my master's degree yet. Which was on Plains Indian clowns, of all things. But I had not even passed--in fact, I attempted, against my better instincts, but the faculty insisted I go ahead and take my PhD exams. Which I did not pass all parts. And I came back four years later, and did better than anybody in the history of the department had done on the PhD exams, but I'd been working for four years at that point. And I took this job with the mental health center as coordinator.

BROWN: Now where was the mental health center?

PAREDES: This was in, Bemidji, Minnesota.

BROWN: So, that's how you got up there to do work...

PAREDES: That's how I got there. With my master's degree in hand, all the coursework for the PhD done, but the exams not done yet. And the chief anthropologist in that project, then at University of Minnesota, was Pertti Pelto.

BROWN: Oh, really? Wow.

PAREDES: And then a number of the field workers in the project who I was the coordinator of, and sort of oversaw them in the summertime, and in the wintertime, did field work myself, and did statistical research and so forth. Field workers in that project include Stephen Schensul, Barbara Simon, Gretel Pelto, who wasn't Pelto at the time, she was then Gretel Whittaker. Doug White, who went on to be one of the leaders in mathematical anthropology and the like. And so, and there were lots of others as well. Jay [Jean J.] Schensul was in the project. All of these were, I learned later they thought I was some kind of experienced anthropologist, but I was, you know, only a day and a half ahead of them most of the time. (laughs) But anyway, that got me into doing very applied work.

BROWN: Now who was funding this?

PAREDES: It was funded by a private foundation, when I read the transcript, it'll be inserted in brackets, I can't think of the name of the foundation now. It was a very rich Minnesota family, and they wanted--and--

BROWN: And they were interested in American Indians?

PAREDES: The heir to the--to the founder of the foundation lived in the area, and they weren't interested in American Indians, they were interested in northern Minnesota, which was going through a major economic crisis at the time.

BROWN: Oh, Okay.

PAREDES: And most of the work of the project was with the non-Indian population, the Indian population was about 10 percent. My dissertation research was done partly within the project, but mainly I did it outside the project when I stayed on for another year and a half after the project was over. The project has never been fully written up. There were several students who focused on Indian parts of the project, or mixed Indian and white towns, and those studies were reproduced in edited form in a book that I edited way too much later, in 1980, called *Anishinabe: 6 Studies of Modern Chippewa*. And there were several dissertations. I think actually, one of the

dissertations was by Gretel, I think her dissertation was on all the white communities and we had a series of communities that we studied. And, out of that came a paper that Steve Schensul, Pertti Pelto, and I published in *Human Organization*, my first professional publication called "The Twilight Zone of Poverty, a new perspective on economically depressed area."

BROWN: Was that title referring to the TV show?

PAREDES: It was at the time, it was referring to the TV show, which I suppose was referring to something else, I don't know. But it was a situation of, in terms of absolute need, there were people, even the poorest, were far better off than the people in absolute terms, the people in many foreign countries, Third World countries. But relatively, even to their own past, and certainly to the surrounding world, they were no longer part of a boom time timber economy, they were no longer part of a booming homesteading, go-get-them farm economy. Their children were all leaving. But in terms of perceptions of depression, perceptions of economic depression, clearly, they were economically depressed. Their area was. And this is what led the psychiatrists at the mental health center to initiate this project in the first place, to look to see whether economic depression and the social maladies that go with it were conducive of all the kinds of ways in which people could be mentally ill, or did lead to higher incidents of depression psychologically. And this, Bert Pelto picked up immediately, was, you know, very closely related to the Sterling County studies that were coming out of Cornell.

BROWN: I was going to say, was it--were they coming out and...

PAREDES: They had just come out, became sort of the model for the project.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: It turns out, in terms of the psychological data that were collected, I remember a psychiatrist saying toward the end of the project, well these people are stronger than I thought they were, because there was a bit of a blip in things like MMPIs, and projective tests and so forth, on depression. But it was not--

BROWN: Well, were things like the Beck scale--

PAREDES: We used only the--let's see, we used a modified version of the TAT.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: We used the MMPI. We used--the psychiatrist used kind of a Q sort technique for his interviews, but he didn't do very many of them. And we used, for the work that we anthropologists did, the psychologists did the TATs and the MMPIs. And we did have a--I want to think this was my suggestion, but that's probably just glorifying myself--but we did have a mental health center population as well.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: So, what turned out was that mental health center population that was showing a lot of depression was skewed, because we went out in the field and did these psychological tests, and I would go with the psychologist sometimes to do them, and some of us did some of them as well. Pretty normal population out there, right, so it was--if you're going to get really sick, you're apt to get depressed. But if you're out there not sick, you're not going to be any more depressed than other people are. So, we did that. And the instrument that we anthropologists used was a kind of self-anchoring scale that was developed by Hadley Cantril. And it was used in international studies way back in the sixties, and I've forgotten, it was Cantril's field, it was-----so, people picture a ladder and say describe your best life at the top, and your worst life at the bottom, record all that. And there are ten rungs to the ladder, which rung of the ladder would you say you're on now? Where were you five years ago? Where will you be five years from now? And we used that as a measure of optimism, pessimism. And that's what our psychological instrument was. And that was largely Bert Pelto's work, doing that. And through Bert, I became a dyed in the wool, hardnosed kind of empiricist ethnographer. Clearly, with all that experience, there was no way for me to get out of being an applied anthropologist.

BROWN: (laughs) What was that--quantitative orientation or empirical--which characterizes applied anthropology still today?

PAREDES: Yes.

BROWN: And did that come from partly the cooperative work with the psychologist and the psychiatrist?

PAREDES: Partly, but I think--

BROWN: Or was it more--

PAREDES: Bert came armed. I did all the area-wide [in five counties] statistics of various kinds. Then we had these individual field workers doing community studies.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: Community study field workers, would as teams, and this was partly my brainstorm, would do studies in the summertime of community celebrations and themes. We would go as a group sometimes to study powwows, the lumberjack festival, and all those kind of things. And I must tell the story, for the record. Steve Schensul and I were at some community's lumberjack festival, and he talked me into entering the burling contest opposite him.

BROWN: Is that the one where--

PAREDES: Where you're rolling logs, barefooted. I said all right Steve, this is going to be embarrassing, and I got on with Steve, and purely by accident, he fell off before I did. (laughs) Which meant I had to face one of the local guys. And I remember the crowd just hoo-hawing, because the local guy held the log for me while I got on. (laughs) And then I got on and immediately fell off.

BROWN: That's real participant-observation. [laughs]

PAREDES: But I want to make sure that, for the record, that Steve Schensul got me in a lot of trouble that way. A lot of embarrassment. But any rate, we also had these family studies in each community, there was a sample selected, and we did these interviews that ranged anywhere from an hour and a half to I think the longest one was six hours or something like that--it was a long, long interview schedule. And within that sample, there were these psychological tests that were done. Well, it's unfortunate that there's never been a full publication of this, but the closest they came to it was in Bert Pelto's chapter in--do you remember the book? He was at Northeastern University, wrote the work--the first work on the Iroquois high steel workers.

BROWN: Oh, oh yeah.

PAREDES: Morris Freilich. Morris Freilich did several editions of a book called *Marginal Natives*, on doing fieldwork, and the first edition had a chapter by Bert Pelto in it, in which he compared his work as a lone anthropologist with the Skolt Lapps in Finland, and his work as the chief anthropologist in this team project in

northern Minnesota. And that's the closest I've ever seen to a full-fledged account of the project. Unfortunately, his chapter is not included in later editions. And we've written some background about the work, Steve and I, in later articles that I did some back work about the project. And as I say, there are all these dissertations.

BROWN: It is interesting that things like the Fox Project, and Many Farms, and all the, Sterling [county], and this one.

PAREDES: And Vicos.

BROWN: And Vicos, they were all--they were all team projects.

PAREDES: I must add one thing. Bert had just come from a year of teaching at Cornell when he came to Minnesota. So, he was primed, because of the Cornell experience, I think. He is a Berkeley graduate, so yeah.

BROWN: Oh, Okay.

PAREDES: Yeah. And I'm sorry to interrupt, but you were about to make a point there that I think is an important one.

BROWN: Well, that in the history of anthropology, and applied anthropology, there's been a lot of calls all the time for more team projects, but it seems like those might have even declined from the past. Anyway, what do you think are the main problems that need to be solved, and I don't know if you want to talk about urban Indians, or I'd like to also move onto the career with the National Park Service.

PAREDES: Okay, so another piece in there that I have to touch on. When the project at the mental health center finished, opportunity came along to work, for me, to work part-time with the local state college, and part-time for the area of the state, that area of the statewide agricultural extension service. The idea was that at the state college I was the acting, founding director of the American Indian studies program at Bemidji State College, now Bemidji State University. And I was hired as the second anthropologist working for the agricultural extension service, out in Minnesota, and I worked in the northern Minnesota area. I did some research reports and that sort of thing, but I was there as an anthropologist to look at the cultural side of things, and that was where I learned an important lesson. This was shortly after the beginning of the War on Poverty, and *The Other America*, and Oscar Lewis' notion of the culture of poverty, and so forth. And there were a lot of agencies at that time that I think were

taking the view that if we can't solve the problem, it must be the culture. And so, the ag extension service had already hired one anthropologist, Ron Bender, on a quarter-time basis, who was an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota, to work on family dynamic issues and that sort of thing. And they hired me at the behest of, at the urging, I guess, of some of the local people in Minnesota who had gotten to know me through the mental health center project, and the welfare department and ag extension service, to go to work for them part-time in their regional office there in Minnesota, to work not only with Indians but to work on the culture of poverty, including that of white folks. And I remember one of my shining moments there was at a series of seminars that were organized by a brilliant rural sociologist who I don't think ever finished his PhD, but he was brilliant, on getting people to understand what their strengths were. Local businessmen, civic leaders, religious and educational leaders, in a series of small towns, all smaller than Bemidji. You know, in the 5,000 range. About what their strengths were, and how to build up their economies, because they were all suffering badly. And I gave a presentation on the cultural aspects and talking about the, I guess we would say now the human capital, and the educational levels, and surprised people with things like Indians had, at a certain level, a certain age level, had as good education as did the whites, and things like that. But I gave a presentation several times, comparing a lot of things that were happening there, like building these industrial parks with chain link fences around them, and green lawns, and big sign out front that said, you know, the Prairie Home industrial park, and then showing them the figures on how many industries were looking to move to little places like theirs. Practically none were, and I then drew an analogy with cargo cults, and that made a wonderful hit and it really impressed some of the businessmen, and it impressed, I think, a lot of people. And that--that was an analogy that uh, Allen Burns had used in a paper he did on some small town in Arizona at one point, and then later on, some--one of my graduate students at Florida State University, I was also an adjunct professor at the University of Florida, but one of my students at Florida State brought to my attention a story from the *Christian Science Monitor* about how some business professor from Northwestern was doing these seminars on commercial industrial development and cargo cults. (laughs) I don't know where he got that idea.

BROWN: Those things spread.

PAREDES: So, that experience led me to be more comfortable when I was at Florida State University, entering the then-burgeoning field of the social sciences in fisheries management. In part because the Sea Grant which was set up in the 1970s, was open for people to apply for grants from them, which I did to study a small blue crab

harvesting community in northern Florida. One thing led to another, and I ended up being, as I described in an article some years ago, on the appointed committee that advised the Gulf of Mexico fishery management council on developing federally mandated management plans for various fisheries in federal waters, but not in state waters. And that introduced me to the whole field of fisheries management. And a whole lot of people have since become quite prominent in the field, like Jim [James M.] Atcheson, who've done fisheries work, and Jim was a real pioneer, and I think Jim was very important in getting that cultural sensitivity, because the regulations for these plans specifically called for examining and paying attention to the social and cultural framework of fishing communities. And that has expanded so much now that, a lot of this I have to be honest with you and say I really am repeating myself and here, if I can put a plug in for a book, recently published is book, edited by Alice Kehoe and Paul Doughty called *Expanding Anthropology: 1945 to 1980*.

BROWN: I don't know that.

PAREDES: It just came out this month from University of Alabama Press. And I have a chapter in there called a bottom-up view of big anthropology. And I write there a lot about my experiences in all these areas of working.

BROWN: Like the fisheries?

PAREDES: Yes, and a lot of what I've said today is a repeat of that. I also recently did an interview which is not yet published, somewhat like this interview, which will be published in *Collaborative Anthropology*, which is edited by Sam Cook and Eric Latimer. And it comes out of the University of Nebraska Press, and they're starting a series, and they picked me first on people who have done long-term collaborative anthropology as I have done with the Poarch Creeks. So all of that is about my non-Creek work--other than the urban anthropology, and I should say that while I was in northern Minnesota, early on, I was on a civic commission on trying to better relations between Indian and white people in Minnesota. I was on a technical assistance board at Bemidji State College that provided technical assistance to Indian community action projects throughout the upper Midwest. And so I guess I was doing more applied anthropology than I remember.

BROWN: Yeah, because even with--related to this fishery stuff, you did something on hurricane. . .

PAREDES: Yeah, I did hurricane, and I got into that because of the fishery stuff, and that led ultimately to my being the guest editor for an *American Anthropologist* special issue in 2005 or '06, I've forgotten which, on Hurricane Katrina. So when I say I've dabbled, I've dabbled in a lot things.

BROWN: The main thing has been the Creek?

PAREDES: Creek Indian, the thing where I think has not been where I've spent my most applied efforts in terms of time spent specifically doing applied things. But with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, all the time I was doing those other things at Florida State University in fisheries and hurricanes and doing workshops for school teachers and all that, my first love for anthropologic research were American Indians. And I discovered quite by accident in reading something about Oklahoma Creek Indians that there was a small group of Creek Indians in Alabama, who were not known by anybody. And indeed, when I looked much later on, when I was doing some ethnohistorical research, I came across none less than John Swanton and some other very famous [researchers of] the 1940s. Duncan Strong had received a letter from a minister trying to find ways to help these people, back in the 1930s. They got it from the Bureau of Indian Affairs, who sent it to the Smithsonian, and they gave a reply on who they thought they might be. And they said, and the nearest town to this group of Indians is Atmore, Alabama, which you see on your TV set every night here, because they have a wonderful casino, and there are advertisements for Wind Creek Casino. [This] is the Poarch Creeks of Alabama. But at any rate, they wrote back to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and said we can't even find the town of Atmore on the map. And in a much later paper, I went back to the contemporaneous Rand McNally tourist guide and the GS--the geological survey maps of the period, and there's Atmore on the maps. [laughs] And that was sort of the last thing in federal records about them for a long, long time.

BROWN: Oh really?

PAREDES: At any rate, I discovered some Indians nobody had ever studied before. In fact, Frank Speck had been there once for a few days, and wrote an article in *Medica Indigena* of all places, and he wrote a couple of things in a couple of other places on a general book he did on gourds of the eastern Indians. Well I went off with funding partly from University of Florida oral Indian history project, which Doris Duke had funded, and partly with research moneys from in-house sources, Florida State University, and with living arrangements provided by the diocese of the Episcopal Church, which was the first to send missionaries to this group of people in a formal

way, though they'd had lots of visiting Baptist preachers through the nineteenth century.

BROWN: How big is this community?

PAREDES: Now a tribal membership of about 3,000. When I went there, living in the immediate vicinity, the population was--the numbers, the exact numbers left my head, but it was around 300 people living in the community itself. But they had, through initially farm labor in nearby counties, been to places like south Florida, been to places like Virginia, tobacco, and then ultimately to dig potatoes and pick beets and things in the upper Midwest. They had sort of satellite communities in places like Zion, Wisconsin, I think was the name of it. Harvard, Illinois, and other places. And because of World War II, they'd been scattered like everybody else.

BROWN: Why historically had they not been relocated like--

PAREDES: Because they were the descendants primarily of the friendly chiefs during the Creek Indian War of 1813-1814.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: And in the treaty that ended that war, their ancestors, who had lived just inside the boundary of the Creek Nation, were granted reservations, and one of those, actually three of those reservations, had been held by the original grantees...this is a long complicated legal story, because their grants were, according to later acts of Congress, referencing the treaty, but not directly from the treaty, they had held their land until the 1920s. And that's where a lot of the poorer Indians of this community called the Tensaw community, which was just inside the Creek boundary, that's where they ended up settling. The others, they intermarried with whites, and rather than continue to intermarry among themselves, were gradually absorbed into the general white community. They were quick to come to the fore though in the 1940s, when the Poarch Creeks led the way on a land claim against the federal government. Suddenly, as one of the local jokes had it, there used to be three races of people around here. White, Indian, and "colored." Now there are only two, Indian and "colored." [laughs] And the land claim led to the Poarch Creeks becoming much more involved in Indian affairs at the national level. They participated in Sol Tax's American Indian Conference of 1961. They became, through that, active in other organizations at the national level. They were very visible locally because of the land claims case, and due to later political activism under their now almost-legendary

leader, who was dead before I arrived on the scene, a man by the name of Calvin McGhee, who was very shrewd politically, apparently. He knew how to handle local politicians. And they got very involved in various projects through Lyndon Johnson's OEO, Office of Economic Opportunity. And that had already happened before I got there. I went there just to find out who are these people, and why are they suddenly taking so much interest in their Indian background? Are there any remnants of their Indian culture left? And I very quickly got caught up in their own interest, and I got around to doing, Bert Pelto style, household interviews, trying to do everybody, every household in the community. And part of the interview schedule I used had been the one I used with my urban Indians in northern Minnesota, which was based upon the grand master interview schedule we used in the mental health center project. Much pared down, because there were a lot of questions I didn't bother to ask. Then I'd presented that to them, they weren't even a tribal council, they weren't federally recognized at that point. I presented that to what was called simply the council—they were the board of directors of a nonprofit corporation, basically—by the time I got there. And took their advice and questions they'd like to see me add in and do various things. And one of the areas where I had some fairly intensive questioning was on health matters. This was all by self-report. But one of the interesting things that came up when I analyzed those data collected between 1973 and '74 is that by self-report alone, the Poarch Creek Indian community—which was at this point a fairly mixed blood community, and had been mixed blood from the beginning, because their ancestors were living way down there at the edge, because they were mainly descendants of Indian-white marriages, and were—as the records of the time, in the early 1800s, said—they were making trouble in their own towns, in the Creek Nation, and they asked can we go down there and live close to our white relatives? And they did. This is all in the papers for their federal acknowledgement as an Indian tribe. At any rate, I discovered in analyzing my self-reported data on health that the Poarch Creek Indians had almost exactly the same rate of diabetes as did the general American Indian population, which at that time was about seven times higher than the general population. I understand now in recent conversations with one of my student workers at the University of Oklahoma that now it's only about 3 percent. I said what? Making headways in Indian country? She said, "No, the white people--the white people are catching up." [laughs]

BROWN: White people are catching up.

PAREDES: That questionnaire led to a lot of the first body of survey data that the tribe had on socioeconomic matters, to apply for grants, through things like the Administration for Native Americans, which was in the Department of Labor, rather

than the Bureau of Indian Affairs. I had hoped at the early stages of my ethnographic research to interest some historian in doing the documentary work that needed to be done on this...I discovered, my God, they have a documentary history at the local level on lands, on marriages, all kinds of things. Couldn't find anybody interested in doing it in the history department at FSU. So, I ended up doing it myself, getting a little seed money here and there, and compiled a fair amount of ethnohistorical data.

BROWN: How far was it from Tallahassee to--

PAREDES: Two hundred and ten miles.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: And I was going every weekend, the first year of that lived in the community for a long summer, in the summer of '73. Then I went to the community every month, every month in '73 and every month in '74 during the school year. And then spent another summer in '73 living in the community, and then in '74 got another small grant and went back and um, what did I do? I finished up with Neil Henderson as my assistant, by the way.

BROWN: Oh, Okay.

PAREDES: A survey work. And then, um, went back for a longer period with another small grant in '77 to do a lot of the ethnohistorical work at the local level.

BROWN: I read your paper that you called the anthropology old time looking at the powwow.

PAREDES: Oh, my paper I gave at AAA last year.

BROWN: Yeah. I really enjoyed that. I recommend that to anybody about kind of the advantages, I guess you see this in the association of senior anthropologists, but the advantages of long-term fieldwork.

PAREDES: You find out how ignorant you are, for one thing. And that work that I did was primarily, initially just for me to get a handle on who these people were, how they developed as a distinct community, what held them together, what was the background that led to this surge of revitalization, because they fit the Anthony F.C. Wallace pattern perfectly.

BROWN: Right, yeah. And also, the American Indian movement, were they involved?

PAREDES: They were not involved in the American Indian movement.

BROWN: Okay.

PAREDES: As a matter of fact, the person who was the chairman, but called chief at the time, son of Calvin McGhee, he was interviewed, during the time that the occupation of Wounded Knee was going on. And he was sympathetic, but, this was an interview for one of the Alabama metropolitan newspapers, Mobile or Birmingham or Montgomery, I can't remember which now. And he was sympathetic to their cause, and talked about the importance of honoring treaties and so forth. But, they were a little alarmed one time, I was with them at a powwow in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. We went to a powwow the summer of '73. And there was some guy there sporting an AIM medallion, and some of the Poarch Creeks said, "well, we won't have anything to do with this guy or not," because they, as their ancestors had been, were accommodationists.

BROWN: Were accommodationists. So, when you first approached the council, they were welcoming?

PAREDES: Yeah, because they had wanted to get some oral history themselves. And I was doing a lot more--they wanted the community documented. And it turned out that while the oral history I did was important, my community survey, the community genealogies, my participant observation, all of that was essential to their federal acknowledgement as an Indian tribe. Because acknowledgement is just not about the history, and being descended from this tribe, but demonstrating that throughout time, you have been a political entity of some sort, and that you have a viable, ongoing community today.

BROWN: And that was a legal necessity for the...

PAREDES: Yeah. My ethnography was the documentation of their community and their own administrative record from about 1945 onward. An important piece of it was documenting. But then, partly on my own, but partly with a grant that I got from the Alabama Indian Affairs Commission, at the behest of the tribe. [It] was not yet a tribe, but just a corporation. And then later a grant from the Administration of Native Americans that I was led into by my former student, Larry Haikey, who had gone there to do field work. He was a Creek Indian from Oklahoma and he got a job with the

Poarch Creeks. He's now regional archaeologist for the Bureau of Indian Affairs out of Oklahoma. He was the tribal planner during the 1980s. And he and I together got a grant from Administration of Native Americans, what was then called a status clarification grant, for me to do more ethnohistorical work, and that grant took me to Washington a lot. And basically, here's the way it went. The tribe, through their intertribal connections, all the way to Maine, where they had gotten to know Tom Gerine, who brought the famous case against the state of Maine, made it not to the Supreme Court, but very high, and got a huge settlement for the Maine tribes. His organization called Pine Tree Legal Assistance, through him, they tried once to get federal acknowledgement, on the grounds that they had been improperly terminated in the 1920s. That didn't work. And then along came, in 1978, the administrative regulation for becoming a federally acknowledged Indian tribe, which opens the door to, among other things, the US Constitution and the rights that follow—the principal right there being that Congress directly controls trade among states, with foreign countries, and with the Indian tribes. And that's the Constitutional foundation of basically everything in tribal sovereignty.

BROWN: When did the casinos come in?

PAREDES: You don't get a casino unless you're a federally acknowledged Indian tribe.

BROWN: Right.

PAREDES: And unless the surrounding state does not absolutely forbid all kinds of gambling. So, if the surrounding state allows Catholic basement bingo games, Indian tribes can run bingo under their own regulation, not that of the state. That's jumping ahead in the story a bit. They decided then, after 1978, and after the promulgation of the regulations for administrative as well as Congressional acknowledgement of Indian tribes, they decided to go for it. And they had a law firm that was headed up by Tom Gerine, who'd done the Maine thing. His firm had tried before to get Poarch Creek federal acknowledgement. They wrote up a petition for federal recognition, which has about seven criteria. Then I was the person behind the scenes doing the backup on that. And it was sent in, and they almost immediately got, as most tribes do, most groups do that try for federal recognition, an obvious deficiency level. Their petition was missing some things. And at that point—partly I think because of the urging of Larry Haikey, who worked for them at that state, and certainly they were willing to do it, the tribal leaders were good friends of mine by this point—they wanted me to do this contract with the state of Alabama funding to prepare the

response to the letter of obvious deficiencies, and at that point, Larry started working on getting the ANA [Administration for Native Americans] grant to do even more work. And I went to work.

BROWN: So, this is where you--

PAREDES: For the first time, I went to work for the tribe, in doing--at this point, essentially ethnohistorical work, and combining the results of my own genealogical work, oral history and the like, to prepare a response to the letter of obvious deficiencies. That went in, and it was after that that I started full-fledged working on this ANA grant to get even more stuff together. And that never resulted in anything more than a kind of perfunctory final report to the tribe, because all along the way I was sending in copies on the tribal leadership, which was not yet fully a tribe, to the office in Washington that reviewed the petitions. And sending last minute updates of new things we were finding up to within a month or two of their making their final recommendation to the assistant secretary for Indian affairs. Which finally was a positive recommendation that the United States of America should acknowledge the Poarch band of Creeks as an Indian tribe. And there was a 180-day waiting period for comments on that. Only comments that came along were positives, so far as I know. Among other things, the Poarch Creeks being politically astute got the entire Alabama delegation to sign a letter in support of their federal acknowledgement, which introduced a sort of political element to it, which BIA [Bureau of Indian Affairs] tries to avoid as best they can in order to make the decision based upon the historical, genealogical, ethnological, legal and other kinds [of] legal evidence. They acknowledged in 1984, the whole process has gotten much more contentious and much more expensive to do, and in a sense, the Poarch Creeks were lucky that I came along and did a lot of the work *pro bono*, and at the expense of the federal government by that ANA grant.

BROWN: So--

PAREDES: Once they were federally acknowledged, they immediately opened a high-stakes bingo hall. And it was very, very successful. And I just moved on from there step by step to enlarging the bingo hall, setting up another gaming facility nearer to Montgomery to land that had been taken into trust by the federal government. And this tribal sovereignty only applies to land that's taken into trust by the federal government. And so, an Indian tribe can buy all the land they want, but unless it's taken into trust by the federal government as an Indian reservation, they can't run a casino on it. And the tribe built its bingo hall in a wonderful new housing

development (one of many that they built) on one of the pieces of land that was, ironically, land taken into trust by the federal government. It's almost exactly at the spot where then-Chief Houston McGhee took me one Saturday afternoon, in my car. We looked across the horizon at some land just south of the state prison, across the interstate, and he talked about his dreams for acquiring that land, and turning it into an amusement park that would feature Indian culture, and would provide camping and recreational opportunities. Because at that point, the farthest ahead the Poarch Creeks and Creek community were thinking, was to try to get some land from the state, and try to get some funding to set up some modest little cultural center and amusement park. That effort rolled along for a while, and then it just folded in to federal recognition, and folded in to a lot of other things that now are coming to fruition at this very moment, in building a museum. But I'll never forget when I saw the casino, now thirteen stories high, and they've had almost full occupancy despite the recession we were going through, and I realized that it was almost in that spot where I sat with Houston McGhee and listened to him talk about his dreams, and I talked about that moment at the dedication of the casino. And that has resulted in a lot of people coming back, and a lot of people trying to get on the rolls that can't get on the rolls. And it's resulted in first class medical care, social services, a museum that's not done yet, employment for a majority of people who work in the tribe now at the casino and elsewhere; they have other industries, they have a metal project, they have a machine shop that—as it's going for some grants, some contracts with Boeing and the like—has meant that there have been some ensuing social problems of tribal members who did not grow up in the community. And they are now officially a tribe under the rules of the USA, and they're one of the people that the US has to report about [to] the UNESCO and the UN.

BROWN: Oh.

PAREDES: They are now an official tribe, even as far as the UN is concerned. People who have not grown up there have come back. A recent dissertation done by one of the tribal members, Kelly Fayard, recently completed her dissertation at Michigan on her own community. And she talks about the difference between the "BG" and the "AG" members of the tribe, "before gaming" and "after gaming."

BROWN: (laughs)

PAREDES: "Before gaming" being the people who were part of that social community that I encountered and studied. But "after gaming" being this much wider group of people who, by virtue of a genealogical link to the census of 1900, can claim

tribal membership. And that in part is a result of the shrewdness of the early leaders of the community during land claims time, going all over north Florida, Alabama, Georgia, and Louisiana, trying to stir up the interest of anybody who claimed Indian descent and joining an organization, I can never remember the full name of it, but it was--his acronym was "KILROY"--this was right after World War II.

BROWN: KILROY.

PAREDES: KILROY. Kinsmen of Indians for Liberty, Organization, and Reform (sic) or something like that. And he was building--Tommy McGhee basically did it by himself--he was building up a voting bloc. And he projected an image of much more power of Indian descendants in the South than I think they actually had. But he was soon courted by --I have it on tape, the announcement of positive recommendation on federal recognition was by a man who had been their Congressman at the time. And he talked about, when they first met McGhee, he said, in comes this man with a war bonnet, and I thought "What a photo op this is!" (laughs) So, and I must say, I have been so candid in some of my work about Indian people, and I make sure that I get it reviewed by them, if it's something the public--general public is going to read. I once wrote a paper that I never had published on the rise of Bingo and pow-wowing, and all of that kind of stuff that I experienced in my career from Minnesota on to federal recognition of the Poarch Band of Creeks. And I've sent it a lot of places; it never got published. But one of the last reviews was from a reviewer from *Current Anthropology*; I don't know who it was. He says, "This is very authentic stuff, but it can never be published." (laughs) I guess because of the furor that might start in some quarters in the Indian Studies crowd--you brought up Vine Deloria. Vine Deloria had just published his book about the time I was starting the Poarch Creek work, and it published in '68--'69. In '68, the Indians and other--I mean, "Anthropologists and Other Friends" --not Indians, "Anthropologists and Other Friends" chapter had been published--I can't remember if it was in toto, or in condensed form, in *Playboy* magazine.

BROWN: Oh really?

PAREDES: And I often had the feeling that the only thing about *Custer Died for Your Sins*, the title of his book, that many people knew about, was the *Playboy* version of that chapter. Because in a later chapter, Vine Deloria talks about how in the end, anthropologists--and I think he said missionaries too--are some of Indians' best friends.

BROWN: Yeah, no, I remember he says that, but I'm kind of—what seemed to happen, at least to me, was—maybe because applied anthropology expanded in so many other areas, but the focus on American Indians was really kind of taken over by American Indian studies. Maybe I'm incorrect in that.

PAREDES: Well, resulting in what I call a “prissier” kind of American Indian studies.

BROWN: Ah, Okay.

PAREDES: But I think the door got opened when Indians began to be more prosperous, and city planners, and sociologists, and others discovered this, and especially, I think, the urban Indian presence brought a lot of interest from other social scientists as well. But that leads me to—maybe we should talk—are we ready to talk about Society for Applied Anthropology?

BROWN: Yeah, I was going to say, we should probably...

PAREDES: And, all of what I've talked about here has been published elsewhere.

BROWN: Yeah. No, this has been great for me. But let's talk more specifically about Society for Applied Anthropology—you were president in the early nineties.

PAREDES: That's correct.

BROWN: Yeah. And, so what was that time for SfAA, or, tell us about your presidency.

PAREDES: I'm about to reveal something known well by a few people, but not widely known. I think I had been to one SfAA meeting in my life when I was elected president.

BROWN: Mmm. (laughs)

PAREDES: I had tried to reconstruct, but I think I'd only been to one in my life, and I had been to that one because they met jointly with the Southern Anthropological Society, of which I was president that year.

BROWN: Okay. (laughs)

PAREDES: I had been involved in SfAA but had not been to any meetings that year. I had been the co-sub-editor for the government and industry of a section of *Human Organization* back in the early eighties, and early to mid-eighties, and that was partly because of my friendship with John Poggi who was not on the Minnesota project, but I had gotten to know him as a graduate student at Minnesota, through that project. He was the editor of *Human Organization* at the time, and SfAA had just broken from the American Anthropological Association.

BROWN: Right.

PAREDES: So I was involved in the journal at a very critical time, which John had, I think--at the time I came on board, he had just successfully crossed into being more successful with the journal, because they had a very tough time financially. And I was not in the inner circle at that time to know about it. I just knew it was bad for the journal, and for the organization.

BROWN: So did the split occur before--

PAREDES: Early eighties, early eighties.

BROWN: --early eighties?

PAREDES: Yeah, it occurred--I guess, I came on as that subeditor, about 19--about the time the split had happened, I think. And at that time, Tom May, an applied sociologist at the University of Oklahoma was the treasurer, and the organization voted not to stay with AAA [American Anthropological Association].

BROWN: Right, I remember that.

PAREDES: --just as the Society for American Archaeology voted not to stay with AAA. And the association with AAA was merely one of a consortium for billing purposes [rather] than a consortium for publication purposes. But the IRS disallowed it. [The AAA] were about to lose its nonprofit status. And that was the beginning of the section system, to create all these sections of sort of various interests, the previously separate societies had. And Tom May was treasurer, and became eventually, no longer elected officer, but the business manager for SfAA. I had been somewhere about that time nominated for one of the committees of AAA, I think it was the nomination committee, and I didn't make it. And then I was nominated by--the person who contacted me was Maxine Margolis who had nominated me shortly

thereafter for the president of Southern Anthropological Society, which I hadn't attended in about five years at that point. (laughs) There's a lesson from this; stay away from the meeting if you want to be an officer. (laughs)

BROWN: Become more and more fam--(laughs)

PAREDES: If you want me to be honest, if you want to be a dark horse candidate for something. And one night, in the eighties, late eighties, early nineties, I guess it must have been '90, I get a call from George Roth. Let me tell you a little bit about George Roth. George Roth was chief anthropologist in the office that reviewed petitions for federal acknowledgement. And George and I had worked very closely together, closer than we would be allowed to work now in the more contentious adversarial turn that federal acknowledgement has taken, so he tells me. Worked very closely together in his reviewing things I had prepared for the Poarch Creeks. By the way, Poarch is spelled P-O-A-R-C-H. And, I don't know whether he was responsible for it or not, but he was on the nomination committee for SfAA, and he called me up one night; I remember I was in my basement study working frantically on something, wondering if I would be willing to be nominated for office for SfAA, and I said, "Well, which one?" He says, "The president."

BROWN: (laughs)

PAREDES: I said, what? (laughs) And I sort of owned up to it that I hadn't done that much. He said, "That's all right." And I found out afterwards that I think she was also--she was either on the executive committee, or on nominating committee. Ruthbeth Finerman at the University of Memphis, apparently, she told me this, had been so impressed with my work, for the Southern Anthropological Society as their president, and I don't know whether Linda Whiteford was on SfAA leadership position at that time or not, but, she had been very impressed with--oh, I'd forgotten that. I was on the SfAA program committee at the time. I went to my one meeting. (laughs)

BROWN: (laughs) And it was the late eighties.

PAREDES: And Linda Whiteford, in the course of that, complimented me one time on how careful and systematic I was in my work. And maybe that had something to do with it as well. But, uh, then it came out who the candidates were. And I saw that my opposition, the person I was running against, was Rich Stoffle of the Bureau of Applied Research in Anthropology at the University of Arizona. And I was, goodbye, that's it, I'm not going to get elected. And to my amazement, I was elected the

president of SfAA. The night before I officially became president-elect, I had a sit down with Art Gallaher, who had just completed chairing a committee doing a performance review, basically of the business office that managed SfAA affairs. And to sort of get oriented to what the hell I was going to be doing as president of SfAA. (laughs) And he said, "You know your election is an anomaly," or an anathema, or something or other--was an "aberration," that was, he used "an aberration." Because unlike most presidents, I had never served in an elected office of SfAA.

BROWN: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

PAREDES: And I think one of the reasons I was elected--I gather, retrospectively, is there had been a very difficult time for the executive committee at that time of infighting and conflicts, and lots of disturbing things going on, and I came as a dark horse--

BROWN: As outsider.

PAREDES: --as an outsider not colored by those things. And sensing those things in my inaugural address, if you will, I said something like, "Perhaps everything is in a name--in the name, and," my name being Spanish, "And you're probably surprised here to see before you tonight somebody that sounds more like Andy Griffith than Ricky Ricardo." (laughs)

BROWN: (laughs)

PAREDES: But I went on to say, uh, that I was not planning to do anything new and different. I was going to do as best job I could of minding the store and keeping the conversation going. And that's the way I approach my candidacy was by trying to, quite frankly, be a cheerleader. And I think that, although there had been some presidents' letters before with the encouragement of Mike Whiteford, who was then the editor of, what was then the SfAA newsletter, I started a regular column of the president's letter, which I kept pretty light-hearted but tried to make some serious points all the time. I had started in that vein of writing by initiating a "President's Corner" in the newsletter of the Southern Anthropological Society, where I started--

BROWN: Yeah, I remember that..

PAREDES: --started testing my op-ed skills there, and carried on, and I had lots of compliments on my president's letter. And I guess it stir up some more enthusiasm. I

don't know what else was happening, but when I became president, the SfAA had--as a matter of fact, I think I brought along with me the figures. When I became president of SfAA, its membership had dropped to, in 1990, membership had dropped to 1,500--oh, no. In 1990, there was a membership of 1,925, but by 1993, three years later, it had dropped to 1,561, which was when I took over as president, and had been going down, down, down, down, down. By the time I ended my presidency in January of 1995, it was back up to 2,294 members. And *Human Organization* institutional subscriptions had rebounded as well. And I don't--I didn't take credit for that, but among other things, we instituted being able to pay your dues by MasterCard, which I think had a big success. And the central office...

BROWN: SfAA has also become well known for choosing interesting places for meetings.

PAREDES: Yes, that's true, that's true.

BROWN: And, at least for me, my involvement, the periodic co-meetings of the Society for Medical Anthropology.

PAREDES: Yeah, and we had been doing some of that. And that was part of the strategy for buildup. It just happened that it was during my presidency that SfAA membership reached its lowest membership in modern times. It had been going up since [the] 1940s, and then it began in the eighties to take this serious dive. And I think that was probably related to the reorganization of the association with the breakup of AAA. But it just happened to be [that] it was on my watch that it began rebounding, and go back up. But I worked pretty hard at it, and I also worked pretty hard at trying to bring us into the modern world. I was the last president, I'm sure, to do their SfAA work on a manual typewriter, and I wrote lots of op-ed pieces blasting away at imprudent, let's say, adoption of the latest technology. I argued very strongly for, let's not go too fast on this and I was quite correct in one respect. I continued with that manual typewriter, to the amazement of everybody banging out all letters all the time to all the other officers. We were not doing business by email at that point in the early 1990s. And people just sort of laughed, but they got the point, and some people sided, "Yeah, Tony was right about some of these things." But the one thing where I really sort of stood firm in thinking, "I'm not going to be the president who leads us down the blind alley," and that was on a fairly strong move to put all the journals, on, what were they called?

BROWN: Oh, floppy disks, or?

PAREDES: Something, something like that. I said, let's wait a while on this. I appointed a committee to look into it. And we didn't do it. And we waited. And we got them all online now. And we did it--you know, we did it in a way that's going to be there, I think--

BROWN: Forever.

PAREDES: --not forever but for a long time. And so my anti-computer turn, served the organization well, I think. Well you know, one of the things about being president of the SfAA, was, it was sort of this way, I guess, being president, of SAS, but not really, because with SfAA, my picture appeared in a lot of places, and I would run business meetings and things to a fairly large audience, and for the first time in my life after that, I would have people that would say, "Hello Tony," and I'd say, I have no idea who they are. (laughs) Because they had recognized me from something that I had done with SfAA. The other thing I was very proud of with SfAA that I did that helped bring us into the modern world, and which is now over and done with, was I got a call from the business office one time wanting me to endorse a grant application by somebody doing HIV/AIDS research, as an institutional, endorsement from SfAA. And it just didn't sit right with me, because why should SfAA be endorsing one private anthropologist's application when there might be others out there that just hadn't asked for it. And, it doesn't seem fair to our membership for the organization to get into things like that. And I didn't quite know what to do because AIDS research was about as far from my knowledge as anything could be. I'd once be asked if I'd be interested in doing some research on social networks, and I said, "No, no, no, I can't get into yet another thing." So, I contacted, Doug Feldman, who at that time was at South Florida University, so I'd gotten word from somebody that I'd--I started him on the phone saying, "Who do you know that does AIDS research?" Got in touch with Doug, and through my contact with Doug, I set up an advisory committee for SfAA, executive committee on HIV/AIDS research. I think it's gone now, but-- The one thing I didn't do was to use SfAA to promote anthropologists in fisheries as it had done promoting anthropology in the national parks, because I never even talked about national parks.

BROWN: Let's talk a little bit about national parks.

PAREDES: All right. Yeah, the National Park Service, that comes about because of the fact that--again, this is published in that piece I did for the *Expanding Anthropology* book that's just now coming out--Florida State University became the host institution for the southeast regional office of the Southeastern Archaeology

Center, that's what it was, the regional office was in Atlanta, but the Archaeology Center moved, to, it had been in Macon, Georgia, and moved to Tallahassee. And it was during a period of time in the 1970s when the national office of the National Parks Service was trying to get their research centers to be located and affiliated with academic institutions to upgrade the quality of the in-house National Parks Service research, and that's why NPS moved to Florida State University.

Further Reading

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Suggestions for persons to be interviewed for the SfAA Oral History Project can be sent to johnvanwilligen@gmail.com.

The SfAA Oral History collection is at the Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History at the University of Kentucky Libraries. The content and scope of the collection can be seen through their webpages.

<https://kentuckyoralhistory.org/catalog/xt79p843ts6c>