

Spring 2016

# Dr. Cherie Clodfelter: An Educational Journey From Segregated South to the Height of Academia

Kevin Thornton

*University of Dallas*, [kthornton@udallas.edu](mailto:kthornton@udallas.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.udallas.edu/oralhistory>



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Thornton, Kevin, "Dr. Cherie Clodfelter: An Educational Journey From Segregated South to the Height of Academia" (2016). *Oral History Interview Projects*. 2.

<http://digitalcommons.udallas.edu/oralhistory/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Education at UDigital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Oral History Interview Projects by an authorized administrator of UDigital Commons.

**Interview of Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**

**Conducted by Kevin Thornton on February 24, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Duration: 59:37**

**“C” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

**“K” denotes Kevin Thornton speaking**

1 K: Alright. Here we go. So the first thing I'm supposed to do is just ask you to state your name  
2 for the record

3

4 C: Cherie Clodfelter

5

6 K: Cherie Clodfelter and the date is February 25.

7

8 C: And I was born and raised in Oklahoma.

9

10 K: Born and raised in Oklahoma

11

12 C: And I always ask the students are you from Oklahoma? And most of them say no but they  
13 laugh.

14

15 K: Alright. Ok so, I guess. The questions that I have for you are going to kind of focus on two  
16 areas. Your experience going through primary to college and also your experience as an educator  
17 at the college level and other levels. So the first question. Sorry. The first question I have is what  
18 are your earliest memories of going to school?

19

20 C: Well I never remember not being around schools. My Dad was superintendent of schools in  
21 Bartlesville Oklahoma. And So I came from that background. He was first to college he was in  
22 the olympics in 1932, wrestling.

23

24 K: Wow

25

26 C: And he didn't win and he always said the Jap beat him out. But my uncle won. And the  
27 olympics was in Los Angeles that year, whatever, 1932. But I don't remember the first time. That  
28 would be hard for me to say what I remember. I do remember vividly in my first grade  
29 teacher...her name was Ms. Huff. And you notice I say it with disgust.

30

31 K: You didn't like her?

32

33 C: Oh well, you will see why in a minute. She was reading a story to us, it was one of the  
34 grimms folktales. And...She started out and I interrupted her immediately. You know this was a  
35 5-year old and she said..and I said you didn't start the story out right! And she said oh i did but  
36 let me look and see. So she looked back. So she started over. And she started I was.... And I said  
37 you didn't start out right!And she said well how should I start it out. And I said you should start it

38 like my daddy does. He starts all his his stories with “when I was a little boy.” And she said I’m  
39 not a little boy and that's too bad.

40

41 K: Yeah

42

43 C: So that's one of my first memories. I was always the smallest one in the class and..so therefore  
44 I often had to play the villain or play the person that was not the heroine of the story

45

46 K: yeah

47

48 C: And I... loved school I really did. It was a great experience because I only had my brother  
49 who you met when you came in and.. I love being around people particularly other children. I  
50 thought that it was fun to play games and whatever. So that's my first memory of that. Also my  
51 mother and dad both reading stories to us, or telling stories to us. And what I found later in my  
52 work as an educator is that image of that voice...Well let me ask you this, do you have any  
53 memories of stories being read to you?

54

55 K: Yes. Of course.

56

57 C: And what voice do you hear?

58

59 K: My fathers.

60

61 C: See that..it goes together. I that that's one of the things that children are not receiving today.  
62 They get things that are electronic or whatever and they don't get the touch of the human voice  
63 that's very very important. Ok, what's next.

64

65 K: Next. Well, do you think...so you said your family..your dad was superintendent of schools,  
66 and how do you think...i guess being...how do you think the way your parents told you stories  
67 and bringing you up right...do you think that increased your classroom performance.

68

69 C: Oh gosh yes. It very much did. I’ll never forget when I decided..well I entered college on a  
70 music scholarship..organ and piano and i hated every minute of it. But i knew that i needed to  
71 help my parents with my education.

72

73 K: yeah

74

75 C: so i..you know...I went to OSU on that music scholarship. Thats where my dad went, my  
76 mother went and all my aunts and uncles went. And when I got there I was asked which  
77 wrestling clodfelter I was? And...because all my family went there. And I was playing volleyball  
78 one day. It was in the second semester of my...what I was doing where I had to practice. I got so

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

79 i could play with my feet. Id eat and pound on the piano in the practice room with my feet. It was  
80 ridiculous. It was ridiculous. Anyway I broke three of my fingers playing volleyball and the  
81 finger that was the most difficult to heal was this one, the thumb. So my scholarship went out  
82 the window and I went to science...earth science. And i loved earth science  
83 geology....oceanography...and all these things that deal with the surface of the earth. And I loved  
84 it. I just loved it. And I played golf

85

86 K: I play golf too.

87

88 C:Do You? I won the women's championship at OSU. But what's interesting is I only had three  
89 matches. Things happened along the way. I should've had six matches but somebody was  
90 sick..something happened to the field rain or something. So i only played three matches and won  
91 the championship. And I was very active in my sorority and by the way a lot of people at UD  
92 have erroneous information about sororities and fraternities. Most times they do a lot of good.  
93 Anyway...I think that the thing that was important to me was that I finally I realized that I  
94 needed to do what was important for me and that was the earth science thing. Now when I got  
95 out of college I came to irving to teach and was going to be married . And my fiancée was killed  
96 in a car wreck with a drunk. And...anyway so I came home and Texas by then payed a lot more  
97 for teachers than Oklahoma And Mother got dad to promise that when my brother and myself  
98 were in college he would quit the superintendency and do something that wasn't quite so hard to  
99 manage. The job of the superintendent is horrible in any public school. And we all liked texas it  
100 was good to be all in texas. Is that enough?

101

102 K: Yes that's great. So next question. Let me see here. What were you school buildings like in  
103 secondary school and high school?

104

105 C: Terrific. Bartlesville had a Dad started the idea of getting college credit while still in high  
106 school. And Tulsa was very close. OSU was very close, there were a number of college. They  
107 came about mostly through state funds. And college high was probably one of the best high  
108 schools in oklahoma. Well I had lovely wonderful buildings. There was this crazy idea at the  
109 time were girls all had to take home economics for two-years. Two credits. The guys all got to  
110 take things that deal with building something...i'm trying to think of the...mechanical arts. And  
111 they had to take two years of that. You could not graduate from high school unless you swam.

112

113 K: Swam. Thats interesting.

114

115 C: Well Oklahoma has more lakes than Minnesota. Well anyway that was part of it. At the time  
116 when i started high school The Jim Crow laws were in. That's where the blacks went to a  
117 separate school and the whites went to others. And the mason dixon line came right to the top of  
118 Oklahoma. So if you take a train to any place north you would see where that line was. Blacks  
119 just pouring into all the cars. And when never had any trouble whatsoever. Never never never.  
120 And when I got to College it was integrated and you did notice that the blacks stayed in small  
121 groups. They didn't, as they do now, want to mix. So the buildings they were super. That's the  
122 physical part of it. I know that more graduated from high school then, than they did later. But  
123 there's been a greater flux to take a test and get a diploma. Did you go to private school?  
124

125 K: Yes I went to all boys school.

126  
127 C: Catholic school?

128

129 K: Yes

130

131 C: I'm not Catholic but I can sure talk Catholic.

132

133 K: Yes I'm sure after your time at UD.

134

135 C: Yes when I was dean at UD I was particularly...I went to all the functions that the Catholic  
136 Church had at UD. And I almost could say that many of the things that you utter during the time  
137 at Church. If you're at a church service. But I love them. I never felt discriminated against. I  
138 think of myself as a very religious person because of my church. Its really strong in my soul.  
139 Alright what else?

140

141 K: Alright. So you said you went to College High and so was that a state funded public school?

142

143 C: Uh hm. See I never went to private school my entire life. Until I went to a private school to do  
144 some work on linguistics. I went to george washington University. And I had a complete  
145 scholarship there. And that's where I got my...most of my phd.

146

147 K: Alright, what years were you attending College high.

148

149 C: I graduated in 1963. And then I finished. Came to Irving and taught in elementary school.  
150 And also I taught high school because they couldn't find...they couldn't find an earth science  
151 teacher. So I finished with my elementary. It was about 3 o'clock, maybe 2:30. And you know  
152 what the first thing my students said to me?

153

154

155 K: What?

156

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

157 C: They said there's no use in geology. There's no use in astronomy. I think that is what one of  
158 the things that has in schools today.

159

160 K: Why do you think they were saying that back then.

161

162 C; Because it was taught as a thing that was rote. See I told all of the folktales to the  
163 constellations. They all have wonderful tales, there mainly greek and...yeah there mainly greek.  
164 But it was interesting what do we have to teach..why do we have to take this? I think they  
165 realized that they had to take a lot of things that they didn't think about. My mother gave me the  
166 best piece of advice I've ever had. And you remember this. She said “you're responsible for one  
167 thing and one thing only when you teach And it's when your student leave you, they want to  
168 know more.” See oneof the reasons I dislike economics. Even though Doyle teaches it. Because  
169 I had a teacher who killed it for me. Absolutely killed it. Made it a drudgery. It wasn't something  
170 that wasn't fun to learn. If you cannot pass that on to your students you should not be in the  
171 classroom and we have many of those at UD. I think that UD has more in proportion to ones  
172 that... like Charles Sullivan. Charlie, he is fantastic have you had him in history?

173

174 K: Dr. Sullivan? I have not had the privilege, but I've heard great things.

175

176 C: Now how are you classified? Are you a Junior or Senior?

177

178 K: Im a sophomore. Undeclared.

179

180 C; Undeclared. What are you thinking about?

181

182 K: Im considering History and English right now.

183

184 C: Go and talk to him. He is fabulous. He will leave you wanting to know more.

185

186 K: Ok, I will have to do that.

187

188 C: Be sure to tell him I sent you. Hes a good friend of mine.

189

190 K: Alright, let's continue here. Let me see. So...you said in college you were playing volleyball  
191 and golf. And I'm assuming in high school were you also playing sports as well?

192

193

194 C: Yeah I did. I had a cloud over me in highschool mainly because I felt very responsible to  
195 doing anything that harmed my dads opinion of the the students. Except one time i did a very  
196 ornery trick and put scotch tape over the fountains. And he immediately knew who it was. But  
197 the high school was huge in the sense that it was...I'm trying to think how many. I don't know but  
198 it was a huge highschool

199  
200

201 K: Looking back on it did you sense any inequality regarding extracurriculars, were the more  
202 geared towards boys, were boys sports more important?

203  
204

205 C; I didn't think about that back then. Right now I've joined some of the female faculty in  
206 objecting to the salaries for women at UD. But there was none of that in high school. I could care  
207 less if the boys had all these sports and I didn't.

208  
209

210 K So it wasn't an issue back then at all.

211  
212

213 C: Yeah in fact we had our own..whatever.

214

215 K: Well even despite gender, what about general..well you said this was when Jim Crow laws  
216 were still in effect, but did you think that the class and race divide did that hit you as a student  
217 and make you feel different?

218

219 C: No because that's the way it had always been. My dad, one of his best friends as  
220 superintendent schools was the principal of the separate school. The black school. And he was a  
221 very good friend of his. And they were always going to this conference and that conference. So  
222 you...some of the blacks have made our problem today, they have made it out of what has been  
223 going on. Their are some leaders in the black community who I find absolutely appalling. And  
224 some of them are from Chicago.

225  
226

227 K: Yeah it reminds me, I was reading this article the other day about this guy did an interview  
228 with one of the big, confederate, someone who you would call rascist nowadays. And this guy  
229 was saying when he was in high school he thought he got along better with the bkllack  
230 community than now. Because there's so much pressure to be politically correct. And he said  
231 that he had black friends but he would wear his confederate flag to school or whatever. And this  
232 was interesting to me. And from what it sounds like this experience is similar to yours. It was  
233 just what it was and you didn't experience any outbursts or anything in your schools.

234

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

235 C: No, absolutely not. Education was just education and you didn't have issues that dealt with  
236 things that were...you didn't have the crime that you do today, that is race...embedded in race. If  
237 you oppose the police...I mean it was...you should be shot...that's what the idea was then.  
238 But...one thing I cannot get used too. And that is a person from each race...black and white  
239 marrying...because I know what it does to the children.

240  
241 K: Yeah...so as a student, looking back, did you see, which I'm sure you did because Jim Crow  
242 laws were still in effect. Do you think that the social change in education such as government  
243 policies like Title IX and the integration of schools. Do you think these have helped or...qualify  
244 that. What do you think it's done to education so far?

245  
246 C: If your talking about education... one of the most difficult times that we've had...and those that  
247 were in education had to deal with..we had to go to Austin and deal with it and so on and so  
248 forth. Because supposedly education is a matter of states-rights. Nothing in the constitution ever  
249 mentions education. It seems as if many of these laws are almost like blackmail from the federal  
250 government. The federal government is involved in our education and because of that you get a  
251 lot of...well the schools in Texas are still trying to recover from the blackmail of the federal  
252 government in doing this with this or that or whatever. Its very impossible to try and work  
253 through it and it's gone too far.

254  
255 K: Do you think it's just over-

256  
257 C; Kevin I think we've got to leave something alone and let it...I taught in the golden days of UD.  
258 That was about 20 years ago. Dr. Olenick were talking about it the other day. We talk about it  
259 quite often. And at that time you...We'll let me tell you how I was hired at UD and you'll get the  
260 idea by what I mean by how different it is now. I was in DC and I was visiting a friend, and  
261 mother called and said there's somebody at the University of Dallas and I gave her your number  
262 and she's probably going to try and get in touch with you. Now this was in August. And So I  
263 called and it was Dr. Teller who was chair of the Education department at the time. And he asked  
264 if I would consider a position at UD. I had talked in several cases to various groups at Ud and  
265 they had remembered me. So I said sure. I was working on my doctorate at the time. And I don't  
266 think you should work on a doctorate unless you have an idea of exactly where it's going to fit in,  
267 because it is too much work. So I came back and I went out to UD and was interviewed by Dr.  
268 Teller, and it went very well. And then I had to be interviewed by Dr. Cowan who was president  
269 of the University, it was a delight. We chatted and talked about various things that I had done,  
270 and that he had done, and he said after he had gone on for about 30 minutes or maybe a little



271 longer. He said, "What do you think about John Dewey?" And I thought, do I say what I think or  
272 do I try to fake him out? And I said I don't think much of him. And he said you're hired. And that  
273 was it, hats the way it used to be in all the departments. And you had a strong leader in...for  
274 example history, we had one of the most renowned..folk tales that collected folktales on  
275 education. No let me tell you another story. There is a little town out in the panhandle of Texas  
276 close to Amarillo. And when they were building the railroad out there and this was gosh I don't  
277 know my teens. And they finished the railroad and the first train came by and the engineer was  
278 on it and there was nobody at the stop in this little town and he said what's the name of this burg?  
279 And the guy on the platform said, it ain't got no name. And he said what's your name? And he  
280 said Quanah. And he said that's the name of this town. And it's had that name ever since. So you  
281 had that kind of...education took time. I mean I'll tell you one of the recent things I'm thinking  
282 of. When they changed history and geography to social studies..boy did that foul things up  
283

284 K: How so?

285

286 C: Because how do you study social when that's what you're in. Maybe you could if you're  
287 working on some masters degree of something. But it's a shame that we've neglected geography  
288 and other history. History is the thing that has suffered the most from it.

289

290 K: Ok let me see here. So when you first became a teacher were you teaching high school?

291

292 C; I was teaching elementary. Second grade. And that's when I was on released time from the  
293 high school because they couldn't find an earth science teacher.

294

295 K: And what year was that? Post college or during?

296

297 C: No it was after I received my degree...1962

298

299 K: How was that, your first time being a teacher, teaching elementary school, did you go in with  
300 any...

301

302 C: Do you want to teach?

303

304 K: Possibly.

305

306 C; Well keep it open because we are losing some of our brightest people to teach. And its  
307 mainly because people find it boring and this and that..

308

309 K: You found it exciting?

310

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

311 C: Oh, yes. To share your mind with others...i mean... my gosh to have a college ask you why  
312 and you are able to explain something to them. Its exciting. And if you leave them with the idea  
313 to learn more about something. But anyway I got off the subject there...you should leave so much  
314 possibility. That you want to share with others what you know. What you're particularly keen  
315 about. I had a young man write me several years ago and I had him in the second grade. And he  
316 wrote to me when he was in college and he said I want you to know that I learned more about  
317 astronomy in the second grade than I ever learned since. And i started it by going through the  
318 idea of the myths and the legends. I mean you can't think of anything more exciting. Now have  
319 you taken Astronomy?

320

321

322 K: No I haven't but I plan to with Dr. Olenick. Can't wait

323

324 C: He's very good.

325

326 K: Yes I've heard a lot. So... I guess is having things happen like when that student wrote that  
327 letter is that what you strive for as a educator?

328

329

330 C: Sure! It's far above what ever you would think of as monetary value or things like that, its  
331 when you've touched that persons soul.

332

333 K: Did you teach predominately, prior to UD, were you teaching mostly in public schools..so I  
334 guess with public schools.

335

336 C: Well now wait a minute. Do I did in the private sector with UD....for a while there I was  
337 going all over the country talking and....giving my beliefs...My mother then developed  
338 Alzheimer's and I had to really cut that out. But that's all right..let me tell you this. I love this  
339 story. I went to Philadelphia, big big big conventions there and I was a keynote speaker there.  
340 And So we got on the plane, and a friend of mine had gone with me to Philadelphia. And so we  
341 were Very excited because you can always tell when your on and when you're not on. And so I  
342 was really on in Philadelphia and it was a great experience and we just chatting about how great  
343 it was and how it was wonderful. The plane didn't take off, and the plane didn't take off and  
344 people got very restless. And finally the pilot came back and started chatting with people along  
345 the line. And he came up to us and said, “ are you ladies going back to Dallas” And we said yes  
346 and he said “and you’ve been to what? have you been to a convention” and we said yes, the IRA  
347 and Hazel really fired him up and they were really going strong and it was wonderful. Just

348 wonderful. And at some place in that conversation I said “ International Reading Association”  
349 and he said that’s the name of your organization? And I said yes. And in I’ll say 5 minutes we  
350 were taxiing down the runway. And so the guy in front of us leans over and said I turned you all  
351 in. I thought you were Irish Republican Army. He said I couldn't imagine that she was, he said  
352 pointing at Hazel. But I sure thought you were. But it was a great great experience. It was so  
353 funny. I never thought of the Irish Republican Army and International Reading Association  
354 before. I was teaching in Switzerland later on in the year, at the American University there. And  
355 the convention for the IRA international was in Vienna, and it was a wonderful experience got to  
356 speak and so forth.

357

358 K: What was the.. I guess main focus of the IRA? Just to create awareness for reading?

359

360 C Say that again

361

362 K I guess the International Reading Association, how did you get involved with that? And what  
363 was the goal of that.

364

365

366 C: That’s an interesting question, I’ve never been asked that. Some of the most renowned people  
367 in the field of reading, which is the basis of all education, were IRA, and when I visited in  
368 Switzerland I was with 2 or 3 of the international people and I just felt it was important for me to  
369 learn as much as I could and that way I could impart that info to students at UD or wherever I  
370 was.

371

372 K: Alright Let me see here. So you said the advice from your mother where you said...

373

374 C: That's the thing that governed my entire teaching career. I thought of it as a very sacred  
375 responsibility. That doesn't mean that..you know.. I think that often I was thought of as being  
376 pretty hard-nosed working with the younger children and at UD. The greatest award I have had  
377 Is there is award given in Texas to only Texas teachers involved in College work. Its called the  
378 Minnie Stevens piper award. And I was nominated by my university which was UD. And I got it.  
379 There is a very nice stipend that comes with it. And UD has won the Minnie Stevens Piper  
380 award..for a small university it's almost impossible to think of the involvement that there's been.  
381 Do you know who the Kelly's were?

382

383 K: The Kellys? No I do not.

384

385 C: Well they were in charge of Drama and she won it. Louise Cowan won it. Rich Olenick has  
386 won it. Frank Doe has won it. Churchill won it. Now you talk about a very bright person. Alot of  
387 people don't realize he's a genius. He gets off the subject. I asked him to speak at various

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

388 organizations in Irving and He'll get way up there and I'll say come back to the meaning of it.

389 But all those people have won the Minnie Stevens Piper Award.

390

391 K: Alright, so earlier when we were talking you mentioned..that you were on the petition to get  
392 better women's pay at UD.

393

394 C: Say that again

395

396 K: You had mentioned a petition to get better women's teacher pay at UD...

397

398 C: I don't know whether I signed a petition.

399

400 K: You supported it?

401

402 C; Yes I did. Dr. Ruth May who is in the school of business. She brought it up somewhere or  
403 other, and the president acted like he didn't know anything about it. Even though he did. So i  
404 supported Ruth.

405

406 K: Is this recently?

407

408 C: Yes well this is two maybe three years ago. And nothing much has changed.

409

410 K: Really?

411

412 C: But at least the president can't use the excuse that he didn't know about it.

413

414 K: I guess what I'm asking is, have you ever run into trouble with that in the past? Or have you  
415 ever been part of other organized change within a school.

416

417 C: I have been parts of other organized change, but I have never been reprimanded. I have never  
418 been talked to and said you cannot do that. Lots of times at a University they will have unspoken  
419 rules... you should no better than to violate them. UD doesn't function that way. It functions in a  
420 way that is...what is right? When I first came to UD it had the most docile student body I've ever  
421 heard of. And when they complained and came in and talked to me about whatever it was. I said  
422 you know how to go about this. Go about it in a way that is good for all. You may raise your  
423 voice and you may get angry, but there is no way things can get worse because of your  
424 involvement. Now that's easy for me to say. UD's student body has got some teeth..they've

425 gotten some strength... in the way they participate in the way they participate in things. I've  
426 never known them to be able to change the date of something until, it was about two years ago  
427 they changed the date of a meeting that was thought of as being very important. But the meeting  
428 was, they didn't like the person who was coming. I'm being vague on purpose, but you had the  
429 right leadership of students at the time and they succeeded.

430  
431 K: and this was a couple of years ago.

432  
433 C: I retired in 1997, but I was still teaching. I taught the geology course. I guess the last time I  
434 taught a full course in 2010. No what was interesting about all this teaching that way, is they had  
435 very interesting way of... a former president worked with you in your retirement to see how you  
436 could deal with your retirement. My retirement went on till 2010. And... it was great.

437  
438 K: Yeah, did it..was that nice to be able to relax and focus on what you wanted while at the same  
439 time have the opportunity to teach a couple of classes?

440  
441 C: When my retirement hubbub...bring that over here. This is a paperback of the last book I did.  
442 And this is one, all kinds of people talked about me, "Cherie sheds light on the word and ideas  
443 that are hidden within each individual. She offers a lifetime of insight into what will help each  
444 person become a better and more knowledgeable student." That's good.

445  
446 K: Sounds excellent.

447  
448 C: That's not always the case, I had one of the best teachers at UD. Ms. K--...come in and  
449 Barbara cries very freely. I don't cry ever, never never never.. And she came in she was crying  
450 because she thought she failed a student. And I told her when you have a student whether they're  
451 in a college or in the first grade. You have them from that period of time to this period of time  
452 and you have them physically, but the impression that you leave them last them a lifetime. And I  
453 asked her and I didn't want her to answer of course, "did you do something that you're sorry  
454 about?" And she cried, "no I didn't do a thing that I sorry about!"

455  
456 K: How often would you say..either professors at the college level or any teacher..how do you  
457 think they forget that what they're doing actually should and needs to have a continued impact on  
458 that student. How often do they have the mindset of oh I just need them to do well on this test.

459  
460 C: Frank Doe, Doctor of Biology he gave the faculty a talk and said, "what do you think you're  
461 all doing?" The middle student, the b and c student, runs our world and they will continue  
462 running our world, not the brain who comes out with all A's. And that's true Kevin.

463  
464 K: I would agree with that.

465

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

466 C: Where do you fit in?

467

468 K: Im definitely the B student not the A student.

469

470 C: Well let me tell you something. Why did you come to UD in the first place?

471

472 K: Well.. my parents went here and that made me not want to go to UD. But then I visited and  
473 sat in on some classes and compared to state schools and other private schools and semi-ivy  
474 league schools that I looked at, it just seemed like everyone cared more about what they were  
475 doing at UD.

476

477 C: The religious part was important to you?

478

479 K: Yes definitely. And also...

480

481 C: Did you know DR. O is from Chicago?

482

483 K:I did not know that which is funny cause I've been to his house for a Christmas. I'll have to  
484 talk to him more.

485

486 C: He calls himself an orphan right now. Because his sister died and he only had two sisters and  
487 the other one had died long ago and they were half sisters, 13 and 17 years older than Dr.

488 Olenick. So Dr. O was really like he was an only child. You have brothers and sisters don't you?

489

490 K: Yes five younger.

491

492 C: Oh my gosh all boys or girls or what?

493

494 K: One brother and four sisters.

495

496 C: What's the next one closest to you?

497

498 K: My sister, she's a freshman at UD.

499 C: UD? How nice, I guess.

500

501 K: Yeah we get to keep track of each other.

502

503 C: Alright, anything else?  
504

505 K: Yes. Just two more and they kind of tie in together. I guess with the recent evolution of  
506 instructional resources and the internet and such and the use of media for education..do you think  
507 that's been a good thing or a bad thing?  
508

509 C:I think that when they pair big boxes, which are referred to in every discipline people have the  
510 big boxes. In education you will have it in reading and all the subject area you can think of. The  
511 reason I love teaches linguistics and children's literature, those kind of subjects is because thats  
512 where the creative juices really begin to flow. I think some...well if you teach something by rote,  
513 your big boxes are super super fun. You do that much and give a test, and you do so much and  
514 give a test and that's it. But if you teach where your influence as a human being is thwarted that's  
515 going to cause problems.  
516

517 K: I agree with that. And then I guess going from your experience being in primary school and  
518 having your dad be a superintendent through through college high and growing up through all  
519 this change and then teaching at UD, where do you see the future? Are you worried?  
520

521 C: Yeah I am. I'm worried about the fact that a lot of the things that are thought of as being in  
522 education and you even see this at UD. It's become something other than education. If ever you  
523 can remove the human being from the process that we call education, you've lost. This  
524 administration scares me to death, and I'm not being political here, it does. It scares me to death  
525 of what has been taken out of our schools and also parochial schools have been feeling the  
526 influence of it as well as public schools. It becomes rote. It has nothing to do with the human  
527 touch. And that's what worries me terribly. I won't be around to see it.  
528

529 K: Do you think it's become too, I guess structured  
530

531 C: Yes, see lots of time in your class when you see things that you'd like to do, but because of the  
532 structure of the course.  
533

534 K: They don't let you and they pull you back.  
535

536 C; The one room school was the greatest invention ever made. Teachers and students taught each  
537 other. My Dad went to a one room school in Oklahoma, and this was in the ancient days. But  
538 Oklahoma and some of the Dakotas and so forth have kept that whole livelihood, and its amazing  
539 how they've let that whole thing skip by because of progress.  
540

541 K: And also because of government interference. Ok one last thing, how often do you think you  
542 were teaching your students but actually learning more from them all the time?  
543

**Transcript of recorded interview with Dr. Cherie Clodfelter**  
**Interviewed by Kevin Thornton on February 25, 2016 in Irving Texas**

**Length of Interview: 58:37 seconds**

**“K:” denotes interviewer speaking**

**“C:” denotes Dr. Clodfelter speaking**

544 C: Yes probably, you see the whole cliche that's used is that you teach the whole child, the whole  
545 individual at UD or no matter where it is and once you forget that and you start on the road of  
546 doing otherwise, you don't really get to see it. I'm sitting here and saying gee I'd like to get to  
547 know Kevin better but what's the restriction? That's why the one room school was so good.

548

549

550

551 .

552

553

554

555

556

557

558

559

560

561

562