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## Interview no. 1611

Bill Conroy

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## THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

Interviewee: Bill Conroy

Interviewer: Cesar Villarreal

Project: Farah Oral History Project

Location: El Paso, TX

Date of Interview: May 21, 2010

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Transcript No.: 1611

Transcriber / Summary: Alejandra Garcia

Bill Conroy, born in Norwich, New York in 1925, began working for Farah in 1955. Conroy had completed high school in New York, and received a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Denver University in 1949. Conroy worked at several public accounting firms before moving to El Paso to work for a local firm. Due to his close relationship with Farah while working at the El Paso firm, he was offered a position, which he accepted in 1955. Farah at this time was located on Third Street, and the factory was one big room where everyone had a good relationship with one another, but did not have much contact with the workers from manufacturing. He began as an accountant, but at the end of his employment with Farah he was the president of the company. Working at Farah had benefits such as, onsite doctors and free food from his cafeteria. Conroy did not participate in the strike, but he explained that calling it a strike is a misnomer because none of the workers actually stopped working. Farah, at the time of strike, was seen as too authoritarian. Conroy described some of the factor that led to the company's decline in the late seventies. Due to its decline, Conroy received the opportunity serve the company as its president for eight months. After Farah, he was employed at another apparel manufacturing companies, such as Levi-Strauss, but also considered Farah the standard that other companies need to be more like. When he decided to leave Levi-Strauss, Conroy went on to receive a master's degree in taxation, and obtained a CPA certificate. Looking back at his time at Farah, Conroy still believes that Farah was an amazing place to work and a place where learned a lot about the apparel industry.

Length of interview 60 minutes

Length of Transcript n/a