PROFESSOR BILL WALTON

"Sorry about the dishes, honey, but I've got to get some papers corrected by tomorrow! See you tonight."

Bill Walton used a half-truth as he excused himself after Sunday lunch to drive over to his office at the graduate business school of All Carolina University (ACU). The late January day was clear and crisp, and Bill would have preferred to spend the afternoon with his wife Linda and their children—Liza, 7, and Chappy, almost 3. He felt he simply had to sit down by himself, however, and sort things out.

The question was whether he should stay on as an assistant professor at ACU or start looking for another institution. At stake were his career direction and a life style: what did he really want for himself and his family?

Bill was 37 years old, he and Linda had been married for almost 10 years, and their last 4 years had been spent at ACU. Maybe those had been their best years, he thought.

As he drove over to school, he was keenly aware of how much he and Linda had seemed to "settle into" the ACU community. He tried to convince himself that this was not the most important decision of his life but to little avail.

Bill sat at his desk and mused in wonderment at his own dilemma. Only a few months previously, he had been at ease with himself and fully in charge of his career. A series of events, however, of which a denied promotion to associate professor was the most visible, now showed him his whole situation in a different, and uncomfortable, light. The most disquieting issue, and the one that today had forced him to barricade himself in his office for some soul searching, was that he might not be granted tenure at ACU. If so, and if he were to avoid the embarrassment of tenure denial by moving on, he had to act soon.

Bill was miserable thinking about this problem by himself. Linda and he usually worked everything out together, but this problem was one they had not been able to resolve—perhaps because the issue was so important that neither of them had wanted to preempt the other by

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stating a clear preference. Now he embarked on sorting out his feelings by himself so that he would be prepared—would have thought through the tradeoffs—when the final decision had to be made.

Bill wondered how he had made big decisions in the past. Had he really ever "made up his mind," or had it all been a matter of circumstances? Some lines by William Earnest Henley kept running through his mind:

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate;
I am the captain of my soul.

Had he really been the master of his fate? By what path had he come to be where he was now?

Bill Walton got his MBA degree from Carnegie Mellon in June 1971 (for further background, see Exhibit 1). He then began work as a stock analyst for Dalton, Piedrick & Co. in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. At the same time, he taught an evening course in investment theory at Appalachian Community College, where he met Linda, who was taking a course in computer programming. Linda had been trained as an executive secretary and had just been transferred from Portland, Oregon, when her Pittsburgh-based employer decided to close down the Portland office. Her boss had convinced her to transfer back East by promising that she could take a series of continuing-education courses with financial support from the firm. Linda and Bill had been married in three months, and with some help from Bill's father, they bought a small house, with a large mortgage.

When Bill thought back to his MBA years, he felt good. He had received high grades and developed a fine relationship with several members of the finance faculty. He had become particularly friendly with Professor Iosona, who had suggested that he continue on for a PhD and become a teacher. At the time, Bill rejected a teaching career in favor of the high salaries that awaited him in the banking/finance community, but one reason he had accepted a position with Dalton, Piedrick, he thought, had probably been a desire to stay close to Carnegie Mellon.

Iosona's teaching idea kept cropping up in Bill's mind. Thus, when an acquaintance asked if he would like to pinch-hit teach an evening course at Appalachian for a month, he jumped at the chance. It had really been a good experience, and it led to one evening course after another.

In 1972, when Bill started to talk seriously of getting a PhD, Linda had supported him. With some help from Iosona, Bill had been accepted in the field of finance at Carnegie Mellon's graduate business school, and he embarked on a new phase in his life. He worked hard, completed his course work and seminars in 18 months, then worked 6 months on his dissertation proposal; his main interest was investments.

While in the doctoral program, Bill found Professor Barton Southerly a willing mentor. Southerly, not many years senior to Bill, had received his training at the prestigious University of Chicago. Southerly's dissertation had dealt with a test of the capital asset pricing model, and he was still trying to apply his dissertation findings to a special data base on mutual-fund stocks. Bill helped Southerly in this work and, in return, got co-authorship on an article that was eventually published in the Financial Analysts Journal. Bill's dissertation was an extension of this work, but with some inventive new statistical techniques.

Even though they were not far apart in age, Bill had come to think of Southerly as a second father. He saw in Southerly a combination of intellectual strength and teaching dedication that he greatly admired. In the course of generating a viable dissertation proposal, they had spent many hours together—at school,
in Southerly's home, and at the local beer parlor. A strong bond of friendship had developed between them.

Immediately after Bill's committee accepted his dissertation proposal, he started looking for his first teaching appointment. He was eager to start teaching before his dissertation was completed, and his committee had accepted that he wanted to get on with his new career. His big decision had been the selection of a school. He had three firm offers among which to choose, but they were very different in character.

**Northwestern**

Bill owed Southerly for his most prestigious offer, the one from Northwestern University. The opening had come when Southerly and Bill made a joint presentation at a meeting of the Financial Management Association, and Southerly introduced him to personal friends at Northwestern. Southerly subsequently supported Bill during Bill's approaches to and interviews at Northwestern, and Bill knew that Southerly had made several personal telephone calls touting Bill's research talents.

**San Jose State**

The second offer had been from San Jose State University (SJS) in California. Bill and Linda had talked a great deal about settling on the West Coast. Linda's parents lived in Portland, Oregon, and she wanted to move in that direction if it did not hinder Bill's career. Therefore, Bill went out to the West Coast and interviewed with UCLA, SJS, the University of Washington, and Washington State University. SJS had been included on the list because a faculty member there who had previously been at Carnegie Mellon called Bill to come for a visit. SJS was the only West Coast school to make him a firm job offer, and in terms of salary, it was considerably more attractive than his other two offers.
Appalachian

The third offer was from Appalachian Community College. The dean of that school thought he had a chance to attract Bill because he knew how much both Bill and Linda liked their present home, knew that they were hesitant to move with their second child, only 10 weeks old, and knew that, by staying in the area, Bill could continue his joint research with Carnegie Mellon faculty. Bill never considered the Appalachian offer in terms of a permanent position, but it did attract him as a temporary job that he might hold while finishing his dissertation (and maybe a year or two more, until the value of their house had appreciated so that he could pay back his father and have enough left over for the equity in a new home at a new location).

Comparing Offers

To facilitate the comparison of these three offers, Bill had pulled together the information in Exhibit 2. Bill and Linda found making the final selection difficult. They felt as if they were comparing apples with pears. The schools were so different, and the choice had obvious implications for both career and lifestyle. Northwestern attracted Bill because he believed it would challenge his intellectual capacity and he would receive substantial support for his research efforts. This support was important, because he was ready to launch several research ideas as soon as his dissertation work was finished. A drawback to Northwestern was that he and Linda knew how deeply involved he would become in these research efforts, to the detriment of family life.

SJS was obviously Linda's first choice, but she was very careful not to push Bill too hard. He also, however, saw much that was positive about SJS. He had concluded that excellence in teaching was the way to advance at this school, and his experience at Appalachian had convinced him that he would do well in the classroom. At SJS, he would also become involved with the whole department early, through committee work and administrative tasks. He would have more time for family life and less stressful competition for tenure than at the other schools he was considering.

A particular point in working at Appalachian for a short time was, as Appalachian's dean had surmised, Linda's apprehension about moving with a 10-week-old child. Bill had thought about what it would mean to his reputation if he stayed at Appalachian, but after talking with various faculty at Carnegie Mellon, he decided that such a step would not be held against him when he again entered the job market. It probably would be regarded as a simple extension of his pre-PhD employment.

One nagging concern for Bill was that he had not gained real insight into the atmosphere at any of the three prospective schools. He did not know exactly what would be needed to please the people in power or, for that matter, who these people really were. At Carnegie Mellon, he had observed, with dismay, a lack of congruence between the business school's outward "face" and its internal behavior. This split was particularly apparent when he compared the sales pitch given to interviewing teacher-candidates with the intrigues and tenure competition common to everyday life. The discrepancy bothered Bill, and even though he thought that it was probably a way of life in academia, he had wanted to understand the real climate at the schools he was considering better.
Exhibit 1

PROFESSOR BILL WALTON

Background on Bill Walton

Born: October 15, 1945
Home community: Couchnee, Arkansas: pop. 34,500

Family

Mother: Education: BA from the University of Arkansas Nursing School, University Hospital.

Work: 29 years as anesthetist at University Hospital.

Personality: Strong willed, intelligent, tenacious.

Expectations of Bill: When Bill was in high school, his mother wanted him to become a doctor (at least a "professional") and to attend the University of Arkansas.

Father: Education: High school.

Work: 46 years with Razorback National Bank of Couchnee. Got job through uncle when basketball scholarship to college failed to materialize. Had been vice-president of bank for 12 years and was its real boss (president was semi-retired); major bank shareholder. Held in considerable respect in community.

Personality: Easygoing, gregarious.

Expectations of Bill: Nondirective — "Do what you have to to feel good when you get up in the morning." By virtue of Bill's reverence and respect for his father, Bill had always felt that he owed his father "to be somebody in life."

Sister: Education: "Got herself pregnant" (mother) in first year of college and dropped out.

Work: Part-time librarian in hometown.

Personality: Bitter ("drinks too much wine"). Advice to Bill when he was in high school: "For God's sake, don't let Mom run your life too! Get the hell out of this stuffy place."
Bill's School and Work Experience, through 1972

**Undergraduate Education**

Couchnee Union High School; graduated June 1963; GPA = A-.

After considerable debate, and driven by an adolescent desire to establish independence, decided to become an engineer and got a scholarship to Bucknell University; graduated June 1966; GPA = B+.

1st Job: Project engineer with Procter & Gamble in New York City. Resigned after three years, primarily because of social maladjustment to the City and disenchantment with an engineering career.

**Graduate Education**

MBA from Carnegie Mellon; graduated June 1971; GPA = B+.

Exhibit 2

PROFESSOR BILL WALTON

Bill Walton's Analysis of His Original Offers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Salary</th>
<th>Northwestern</th>
<th>SJS</th>
<th>Appalachian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work load</td>
<td>2 prep.</td>
<td>3 prep.</td>
<td>3 prep.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 classes</td>
<td>3 classes</td>
<td>3 classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publishing expectations</td>
<td>Average of 2 articles in 3 years (academic journals)</td>
<td>Occasional publishing in practitioner or academic journals</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee work</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>2 hours/week as junior member</td>
<td>Probably a lot, to organize new courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure-track requirements</td>
<td>Quality publishing, good student ratings, later some course design and doctoral seminars</td>
<td>Some publishing, high student ratings, later administrative responsibilities</td>
<td>Hardly any</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty size (finance area)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Exhibit 2 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th><strong>Northwestern</strong></th>
<th><strong>SJS</strong></th>
<th><strong>Appalachian</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere, general</td>
<td>Collegial but high pressure &amp; heterogeneous</td>
<td>Very friendly &amp; cooperative</td>
<td>Disorganized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere, research</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Weak at SJS but good in &quot;Bay Area&quot;</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living</td>
<td>+20-25%</td>
<td>+35-45%</td>
<td>Same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Apartment living</td>
<td>House impossible, condo possible</td>
<td>Stay put in house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>Damper</td>
<td>Great!</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Day nurseries</td>
<td>None good</td>
<td>Have recommendations</td>
<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Linda job opportunities</td>
<td>Maybe OK</td>
<td>Seem good</td>
<td>Not near</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>