



Jodie Davaz Oral History Interviews, May 27, 2014

Title

“Student Media in a World of Change”

Date

May 27, 2014

Location

Valley Library, Oregon State University.

Summary

In her first interview, Davaz provides a brief overview of her background, the birth of her interest in digital culture and the path that she traveled from her upbringing in northern Idaho to her undergraduate education at OSU. From there she lends detailed insight into her work at the campus radio station, KBVR-FM, discussing the progression of her own work as well as the culture of the station, its technical infrastructure, and its forthcoming move to new quarters. Davaz also provides perspective on the local music scene in Corvallis.

Another major theme of the session is the decline in interest within the student body for the *Beaver* Yearbook and Davaz' aspirations for a new publication, *Beaver's Digest*, that will take its place. The interview concludes with Davaz answering questions about contemporary attitudes on campus, including her thoughts on issues of importance to students of the day as well as student perceptions of Oregon State University.

Interviewee

Jodie Davaz

Interviewer

Chris Petersen

Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/davaz/>

Transcript

Chris Petersen: All right, Jodie, if you would please introduce yourself, give us your name and today's date, and our location?

Jodie Davaz: I'm Jodie Davaz. I'm the current KBVR-FM station manager. I'm a junior at OSU. Today's date is May 27th, 2014, and right now we're in the Valley Library.

CP: Okay. So, we're going to talk a lot about your experience at OSU and the various activities that you've participated in, but I would like to ask you a little bit first about your life before you came to OSU. If you could just give us a quick little thumbnail sketch of life before OSU?

JD: Okay. I grew up in a town called Post Falls, Idaho. It's in the panhandle of Idaho, snug between Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Spokane, Washington. Post Falls is a town of about 15,000 people, maybe it's grown up to 18,000, but I was in a graduating class of 350 students in my high school, Post Falls High School. And I was kind of—I was a big fish in a small pond.

And so I wanted to come to OSU so I could be a little fish in a big pond, see just kind of what it's like to blend in a mass of learning and culture. I grew up; it was very white. I came to Oregon and there was a little bit of culture shock. Later I learned that it's not that diverse here, but it is very diverse compared to where I grew up. People speak different languages here; it's pretty cool. People listen to different kinds of music here. So a lot of where I grew up was kind of white, middle class, Protestant or Mormon. A lot of my classmates in my graduating class of 2011 have since gotten married and had kids, and here I'm going, "Whoa!" [Laughs] Trying to get my college education, not even thinking about kids until a decade from now.

So I left to come to Oregon because, I don't know, the Willamette Valley has always been kind of a dream for me. It's more liberal, I guess, than where I grew up, and focused on sustainability. And so I really love it here. I fit in a lot better here than where I grew up.

CP: So OSU was the decision mostly because of its location? Or was there something more about the university that appealed to you?

JD: Well, gosh, I look back on this decision and kind of shake my head at younger Jodie, but I moved here because it was a good decision not only for me, but also for my boyfriend. He and I had been dating all through high school, so when it came time to decide on colleges together, we also wanted to make that decision together. It had a good program for me, and had a great program for him—he's in computer science—a wonderful location that was a public school, so even if we're paying out-of-state, it's still more affordable than a private institution. And we both love it. And we're still together today, so it's not like I regret this decision at all based on who I came here with.

CP: Mm-hm. Well, what were your initial impressions of the university and of Corvallis?

JD: It's just beautiful! You know, back home I'd been in several near misses as far as weather goes, weather-related traffic incidents, a couple of times spinning out on the freeway at 50 miles per hour. It's kind of scary. So, though the weather is unpredictable, it's still lovely. I came for the first time in the spring, so everything was blooming; everything smelled good. People were friendly.

I don't know; it's weird because I grew up in kind of a suburban town, and I'm not a huge fan of cities. But this is sort of—college towns, I've come to find, are kind of in-between. It's not super hyped up, and crazy, and busy. For a time I thought I wanted to go to NYU, and I'm glad I didn't do that. And so Corvallis is peaceful, yet still more exciting. We have shows that we can go to, or ample entertainment. So there's just sort of more of a mixture of [sighs] a quiet life and busy life, I guess. And so that's what I've come to love about Corvallis and OSU.

CP: Tell me a little bit more about your academic progression at OSU.

JD: This is kind of funny, because I graduated high school fourth in my class. I had like a 4.25 GPA, and I was so proud, and so focused on grades. And I went into college thinking I want to be a high school English teacher; this is what I want to do. I started out with an English and Education program, and then I was just like, you know what? No.

I love—my passion is for podcasts and video capture, and everything, so I switched over to the Digital Communication Arts major and haven't looked back. As I've learned more about my program, I find that I love production, but I also love leadership. [0:05:03] I love community-building, and kind of facilitating a beautiful final project or product, rather than necessarily being the one holding the camera. And so that's kind of how I found myself in various leadership roles.

As I've gotten more involved in student media, really, I've found that my focus has gone more toward student media than my grades. So now I'm kind of like, "Oh, I guess I can get a B this term. Or if I get a C, it's not the end of the world." Whereas in high school, like, high school Jodie is just looking at college Jodie like, "Who are you?" [Laughs] But I guess our priorities shift. Right now my priority is on my career and what I'm going to do after school, and it's not practical for me to go to grad school personally. My career goals just don't benefit from graduate study. And so, right now building skills is a more important investment of my time than investing all of my time in classwork. [Sighs] I love what I'm learning. I think it's very, very interesting. But there are only 24 hours in a day.

CP: You said you had a passion for podcasts and video capture. How did that emerge?

JD: You know what? My family used to go on road trips a lot. Well, they still do. But when I lived with my folks we went on road trips, and instead of listening to music, we listened to *All Creatures Great and Small*, which I guess is an audiobook. We'd listen to audiobooks, or we'd listen to podcasts like *This American Life*, or *Freakonomics*, or *A Prairie Home Companion* and the News from Lake Wobegon. And I fell in love with storytelling. And writing skills and storytelling skills have always been kind of an emphasis. Everyone in my family has a good grasp on grammar, and has tried to write a book at some point, you know.

So being able to tell stories is sort of an important skill in my upbringing, and it's sort of—when I realize that there's a program that can teach me: yes, you can do this. You can totally give voice to the voiceless, or meet remarkable people and tell their stories. I was like, "Yeah, let's do that. That sounds good."

CP: You're in the University Honors College as well?

JD: Yes.

CP: How has that been for you?

JD: I love the UHC. I think it's great. I love that we have study spaces that are kind of secluded, so I don't have to hang out at the library. The library's nice, but it's just sort of not my ideal environment. I like that we get free printing, but the very best thing is the advising. My academic advisor with Honors College is very, very, very supportive. And it's kind of difficult sometimes because I'm a liberal arts student, and most, I would say, of the Honors College students are science or engineering. And so a lot of the classes offered through UHC, honors-level classes, are science or engineering, and sometimes it's harder for me to find classes that would help me fill my Bacc Core. But I've found women's study classes, and I've found theatre classes, and next term, fall 2014? [Laughs] What year is it? I'm taking Feminism and the Bible, and it's going to be an honors class.

And honors classes are good because they promote high levels of discussion, and exploring gray area, and accepting that there are no hard-and-fast definitions to anything in life. And I think that being in a room of people who are able to accept those things and discuss anyway is kind of beautiful. That sort of an experience I don't get in my regular classes, and so I think that if, I don't know, if anyone watching this video in the future is a potential student, then consider Honors College, because it's been remarkable for me.

CP: Mm-hm. Have you developed your idea for your capstone project yet?

JD: Capstone for?

CP: The thesis for your Honors College?

JD: Oh, thesis. Yeah! Well, coming into next year, I'm going to be building a magazine from scratch. I'm sure we'll talk about that soon, but I'm going to talk about the process of building a magazine from scratch [0:10:01], and I'm going to be receiving a lot of help from some of my professors in the Writing minor, and in the Digital Communication Arts major, to complete that thesis. But we don't really have an outline of how it's going to go yet, because everything is so completely in the planning stages right now.

CP: Yeah. Well, that would be a good way to merge a couple of different things together.

JD: Right. Yeah, and I have a backup idea if the magazine thing totally blows up. You know, I have a contingency plan, but [sighs] if I can simplify things, I will.

CP: Yeah. Well, you mentioned at the outset that you were the station manager at KBVR, the student radio station.

JD: Mm-hm.

CP: How did you first get involved with KBVR?

JD: Gosh, that is a great question. Yeah, well, when I was first touring OSU, I saw the *Barometer*, and I was like, yes, I want to be involved with writing, and being a part of the media, and being a part of the student experience. Then I get to my major advising, and I learned that there is a class called NMC 409 Practicum. And I'm supposed to take 3 credits of this class, and each credit means 30 hours of volunteer work with student media. It was like, "Yes, great, fantastic." So I take NMC 409.

Back then, what happened was all of the student leaders, so people in my position now, would go up to the front of the room and say, "Hi, I'm the *Barometer*." "Hi, I'm *Prism Arts and Lit Magazine*, and you should come with me." And then they would split off and go to their respective offices, and you would follow one of them, and that's who you would work with for the term. And so I heard Elizabeth Elder, who was the radio station manager at the time, say, "Hey, we do music, and bands, and it's great!" And I was like, "Okay, I will go with the radio station."

I went up and I signed up for their brand new news department. They had just hired somebody to be the news director, and I was like, "Great, I can do radio news. That will get me into my dreams of working for NPR." So some of my dreams have changed a little, but it got me started with the radio station. And so that term, the term following, I worked with the news department and the story goes from there.

CP: Uh-huh. Well, take me through your progression as, your career at KBVR.

JD: So, yeah, those first two terms I worked as a news reporter, and there was the news director, who was Kurt, and one other practicum student, pretty much, who was Johnny, and me. And those guys are peas in a pod. And so when there was an opening for assistant news director, both of us applied, but Johnny got it because their personalities kind of mesh better, I think. But I produced a lot of content. I went and did everything, and I learned how to operate a voice recorder and conduct a good interview. I took a class on reporting so I could write better. I learned how to use audio editing software, and I would make these news packages, and just tell the news director, "Hey, here you go."

The next year, that guy who was the news director got promoted. He was the station manager, and he hired me as the news director. And the other guy, Johnny, was his kind of second in command, but he hired me up to news director. So from there, at that point we were just making these news packages and putting them on the air at random times. What I did was I made a show. I made it the "Orange Report." It was at first a 15-minute weekly show, then a 10-minute daily show, where we would get all of the news that we possibly could.

Kurt, the station manager, had a policy of weird; the slogan at the time was "A taste of weird." So we would play, you know, weird, alternative, indie music, and he wanted me to make sort of news of the weird, as opposed to kind of the regular stuff that the *Barometer* did. So I tried to—I'm not sure how well I succeeded at that, but I tried to focus on the weird news, or know things that the *Barometer* wouldn't necessarily focus on. And, yeah, and I made the "Orange Report," and it was a successful show. And I learned a lot about leadership, and about programming, and about building a community.

And at the end of the year, I applied for station manager against three other people who were very qualified and very talented, and I was hired in spite of that. [0:14:59] It's not often that incoming juniors are hired for student leadership positions. Usually students will spend their last year at the university in a student management position, and then they'll graduate and be done. But I'm a junior this year, or a third-year, and I was hired to this. So that was cool for me.

So I've been station manager all year, and it's May, so we're almost done with this year, and we've done a lot of wonderful things. We've more than doubled our DJ population. We started the year with about 40 DJs; now we have about, gosh, 120. So we've tripled it, haven't we? We've done that by [laughs]—in some ways I've succeeded and in some ways I've failed, according to the previous manager's vision. But I'm happy with what I've done, so no regrets.

We've done away with the kind of Taste of Weird things, and instead changed our slogan and our philosophy to "Dam Good Radio." And we encourage anyone and everyone to apply to be a DJ. All you need is a 2.0 GPA and 6 credits—you're taking 6 credits right now, you can train to be a DJ. And you don't have to like indie rock, or underground things. [Sighs] Sometimes it pains me, but if you want to play Nickelback or Creed, or Miley Cyrus, or whoever, you can go on the radio and play those things, because you like them, and you are a student, and you pay for the radio station, and you are playing the music that you like, and also, so many other people on campus like this music.

And we are the voice of the students, is my philosophy. We don't need to really dictate what students like. I do suggest, if somebody likes Miley Cyrus and they're playing it on their show, I say, "Okay, I noticed you like this artist that's playing on a bunch of other radio stations. Here are some artists like her, that don't get as much play, that you'll probably also like." And then that way we can also educate students about music that isn't getting as much play, and up-and-coming artists that fit in more with the regular college radio philosophy.

But really it's kind of a philosophical battle between: do we want to be college radio, or do we want to be OSU student voice radio? And I lean toward the OSU student voice radio, even if it means playing music that's so very not college radio. Because I think that's important, to do what matters to us, not to the powers that be of college radio. Does that make sense? In doing this, in doing this year, we have immensely improved sort of our training regimen. We've refined it so like you go through a very specific and regulated process to learn how to become a DJ. We've done a lot of fantastic events and ticket giveaways, and interactions with the community. And we won some awards because of it.

We submitted a lot of our work to be in a collegiate broadcasting system, which is a nationwide college radio collaborative, I guess. We submit a lot of work to them, and then we were told we were nominated for several awards, we were finalists. And so I flew out, and Matt Walton, our promotions director, and Bill Gross, our broadcast advisor. We all flew out to New York City, and we went to the kind of weekend-long conference of college radio know-how. And then at the end of it, we took home nine trophies—Wah? [Laughs] And the big one was KBVR-FM, Best College Radio Station in the Country at a University with More Than 10,000 Students. We didn't get Best College Radio Station Overall. We were a finalist for that award, but we're in the top four in the nation, and the number one at this university size. So that was just an immensely proud moment.

Then, you know, we just kind of keep plugging along. We are still growing. We're still doing great promotions and community outreach, and halfway through the year, I was like, "This year is good." But I think that for my senior year, I want to tone it down. I want to be able to work on my honors thesis and take a kind of less-time-commitment role at the radio station. Because it sucks your life, right? It's a wonderful experience, but then you realize that, oh, I'm not eating on a regular schedule. [0:20:00] Like, I need to back off my time commitment. So I said, "Okay, I'm not going to be a station manager next year. I'm going to be the productions manager, or something." So I take myself out of the running for KBVR-FM station manager. Matt Walton, who I talked about earlier as a promotions director, got hired. I'm so happy about that. He's going to do a fantastic job next year; I know it.

And then, lo and behold, nobody applies for *Beaver* Yearbook editor in chief. And suddenly, a publication that has been going on at OSU for 120 years is in the balance. Are we going to even have a yearbook from here on? And all of the money that—I think it's SIFC—has allocated to this student medium, like, where's it going to go? And I'm just thinking, "No, we can't lose this medium. This is part of OSU. It's one of our spinal disks in our spine of OSU." I don't know if that makes sense. But it's just sort of an important part of our history. I want to make sure it succeeds.

But nobody applied. And then they put out another round of applications, like, "Somebody please apply for this!" But this time they said, "Okay, maybe a yearbook isn't the best option. We've been in the red for several years. Nobody's buying a yearbook. What are everyone's ideas to keep the yearbook afloat?" And I applied. I was like, "Yeah, I mean, I can't see this go under. That's not cool." And I was like, "Yeah, let's make it not a yearbook. Let's not make it \$60 for a student to get a handful of memories that they can already find on their Facebook timeline, right? Let's make it a magazine that comes out three times a year, like *Prism*, only have it be about feature-y things, and have it focus on clubs and organizations, and have it be crowd-sourced."

So I go to an event, and I take pictures and interview people, but not only do I do that, I look at Twitter hashtags for—gosh, in 50 years this is going to sound so ridiculous—Twitter hashtags for what people are tweeting about this. Or snapshots that people are sending to their friends from the event. I ask them, "Can you send me a snapshot from your perspective?" And then we'll have our beautiful, glossy magazine. I don't know if it's even going to be glossy, to be honest. [Laughs] We'll see how it turns out, because this is just so conceptual. But we'll have this beautiful magazine with what I saw from my perspective, or what my practicum students saw from their perspective, or whoever, and a little write-up.

But then, so much of the content will be: what did other people see? So, when my boyfriend, who's the president of the Gaming Club, has an amazing video game party, a LAN, I'll take pictures, but people will also say, "Here is what I won. I won Cards Against Humanity, and these were the two cards I played that were so hilarious that got me the win." And so it's not just me telling a story; it's everyone else, too. It's the collective of OSU telling a story, rather than just a handful of students working for the yearbook. And that is my vision, and I really hope it works.

CP: So you are, you're writing and you're creating, but you're also gathering?

JD: Mm-hm. Yeah, and I've just met with Student Leadership and Involvement folks earlier today, and said, "Hey, this is what I'm doing." And they said, like, "Yeah, we always take pictures at our events. Why don't we just send you our pictures so you can spend more time collecting this creative data from everyone else?" And I'm like, "Yes." I don't want to wander around an event taking photos and being awkward. I'd rather be interacting with people and saying, "Hey, send me what you're creating."

CP: Mm-hm.

JD: So that's going to be majorly helpful and very fun, I think.

CP: Yeah. Well, it's a big, big change.

JD: Yeah.

CP: You're right that the yearbook has been historically very important, and it's withering on the vine.

JD: Right, I know that. Especially during Moms and Dads Weekends, a lot of parents, a lot of Beaver parents will take their Beaver kids and say, "Hey, this is the yearbook from when I was a kid, and these are the cool things that I did in my fraternity, and this event I helped to organize." And it's kind of a proud moment. And I don't want that spirit to go away, which is why I'm insisting on a print publication rather than an online-only publication. Because who knows? We saved yearbooks on zip drives for a while, and who has access to a zip drive on their computer anymore? So, online is permanent, question mark, because it's developing.

Whereas, you can take a magazine and it may be clunky, it may be harder to transport, but at least it's going to be there in—let's see, I'm 20; probably by the time my kids are Beavers, I'll be like 45 or 50. [0:25:05] So in 30 years, I'll bring my Beaver kids back to OSU Archives and people will be like, "This magazine"—like, say I get married and have kids with my boyfriend. "This is the event that your dad organized when he was the OSU Game Club President." And likewise, the people at the Native American Cultural Center, or whatever cultural center, can look at their events with their kids. I don't know; I think that that's kind of a special thing. So maybe that's just me being an idealist.

CP: Do you see any fundamentals from year to year as far as what this new version of the yearbook will have? Because the old yearbooks had certain things that persisted from year to year.

JD: I think that it's going to kind of grow and change as OSU grows and changes. What it really needs to focus on is student life. And the easiest way that I can think to do that is to call up every club and organization I can think of, or anyone who presents themselves to me, and say, "What's your big event this term? I'll go cover it, and I'll also do kind of a Q & A for your club as a whole." And so as long as that club persists, they should be in every issue. And that includes Greek, I think.

And other things that have been persisting in the yearbooks, and of course I'll study all of the yearbooks and make sure that any important sections are able to remain. But I think that folks aren't going to be buying ads for their graduates. We're not going to have advertising, really, at all. I mean, people can take out ads in the *Barometer* for their grads, I think, so that should be able to satisfy that need. So, I'll try to make the transition make sense, but we still need a new philosophy, I think, with the *Beaver* yearbook or the *Beaver Mag*, as I'm hoping to call it, because obviously it's only not doing well because something needs to change.

CP: Yeah, it sounds to me like you're not only developing an idea for a new product, or a new way of capturing campus history, but you are also undertaking the role of essentially establishing a large network—

JD: Mm-hm.

CP: —that this entity will have to rely upon in the future, once you have graduated.

JD: Yeah. And so it will be not only me establishing what this magazine is, but also establishing kind of a workflow handbook, so that whoever succeeds me—hopefully there will be a successor—whoever succeeds me is going to be able to, "Okay, this is what Jodie did, and I can tell that this is what worked for her and this is what didn't work for her, so this is what I'm going to have to change." Because of course, this is going to be an evolving project.

CP: Mm-hm.

JD: But, yeah, it's going to be laying a lot of groundwork, and then hoping to lay it in such a way that it's going to be able to keep growing from there.

CP: Yeah. Well, that's a big task, but I think you're up for it.

JD: I hope so! I'm really nervous about it.

CP: One of the questions I had was how do we make it sustainable for the future, and it sounds like you—I mean, you're going to have to do a lot of work next year, but there are other folks that are in similar shoes to you, and have interests in digital communications, especially. And I think that's a promising trend in the favor of this keeping going after next year.

JD: Yeah, and really it's going to be about building relationships, and then keeping a really solid list of contacts and workflow, so that whoever comes after me is going to be like, "Okay, this is the guy I need to call for this event." And hopefully they'll be able to keep it updated, but it's—yeah, it's just going to be monumentally organized. Does that make sense? It's going to be a monumental organizational task.

CP: Yeah. Well, I have some more questions about the radio station.

JD: Okay.

CP: You, it sounds like, kind of cut your teeth on the news side of things, and I'm interested in the process that you would go through for a particular news package that you put together. And I'm also interested in knowing if there are any that you were really proud of.

JD: Okay, yeah. So, I wanted to make a news story. First, you have to find a source of news. So, there's a remarkable student on campus I want to interview, or there's an event. I'll go with an event. Go to the OSU calendar, or *OSU Today*, or whoever is hosting it, then write an email. Say, "Hi, I'm with the 'Orange Report.' Will you sit down with me for an interview?" [0:30:01] Sit down with an interview, bring a voice recorder, make sure you have the voice recorder set up properly. Do interviews, conduct interviews with other people at the event, collect some natural sound so that if

there's some hubbub you can include that sound with your news package, make it sound really sleek and professional. When you're interviewing people, of course, keep it similar to the setup in a quiet space, so light, little reverberation. Pay attention to audio quality, etcetera. Capture all of your radio. Yay, you have all of the details of an event.

Now you have to sort through it. Typically what I'll do is I'll use my audio editing software, which is typically Adobe Audition, but you can use Garage Band, or other techniques. And start building your story. So you come up with a nice introduction. You lead into a quote gracefully. You pick apart the section of the quote that you want to use, and continue to build a story that way. For radio, if you're going like NPR style, you have a top of the hour kind of reading off of several news stories that last for five hours, and each—or, five minutes [laughs]—and each story runs about 30 seconds, so you get a bunch of stories in not a whole lot of time. With the way that the "Orange Report" is now, we do one story at the top of the hour, and each story is one to two minutes long. Ideally, closer to one minute so that you're not cutting into too much music time.

And—sorry, I lost my train of thought. Okay, so then you record your vocal track. You splice in all of the quotes. So it's you talking, person talking, you talking, person talking. You put in nat sound, the natural sound, so whatever birds are tweeting, or train going by; I don't know. Skateboards rolling down the street. Stick that in where it's appropriate, and you have a nice, like, 45 second to a minute and a half news. And then you plug it into the automation, and there you have your news package. Is that—?

CP: Yeah.

JD: Okay. One story I'm really proud of. I mean, I did a lot of news for the last few years, but one of the ones I'm most proud of was when we had a sergeant pass away, and we had his funeral, or memorial service, at LaSells Stewart Center. And there was this huge gathering of people, because the Westboro Baptist Church had put out a press release saying that they were going to picket his funeral because [sighs] they have thoughts—the Westboro Baptist Church has opinions, and so they must picket, is the nicest way of putting it, I think. And the community had this enormous uprising against—maybe not against the WBC, but for this young life and his family, and the service that he had done.

So what ended up happening was I went to cover this story; the WBC never showed up, but thousands upon thousands of people lined the streets in front of LaSells. It stretched down to Western and up to Jefferson, just a complete line of streets. Someone came to go into LaSells—you know, it was kind of a private-ish event, as private as you can get with a bajillion people on the street. But when the family came out, everyone applauded him. There were friends from his high school there. As far as I understand, he never went to OSU, but they just wanted to have the venue there. He had gone to Philomath High School, and so there were some of his classmates there. And I went to do this story, and I was able to interview some people who had been close to him. And, you know, it's a tight balance when you are dealing with folks who are mourning. You don't want to be hounding people who are feeling loss. And so I'm proud of my journalistic ethics there.

And I'm proud of the collaboration that I put in with the Beaver News, which runs on KBVR-TV, and with the *Barometer*. It was a project that all three of our news mediums worked on together. It wasn't just the "Orange Report." And so we all contributed information, and that was kind of new. Hopefully in the future we can continue to have that collaborative process, for sure. And it was great. [0:34:57] OPB, Oregon Public Broadcasting, picked up some of my quotes for their rendition of the story. I submitted it to the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System. That was one of the finalists for best community news coverage. That all doesn't really matter as much as just kind of being able to be there in the spirit of the event; I don't know. It's just—it kind of shakes you up when you see thousands, literally thousands, of people there to support grieving people.

CP: Yeah.

JD: That was at least a proud and remarkable moment I had as a news person.

CP: Uh-huh. On the music side of things, I'm interested to know what it's like to be a DJ, to have a show. Do people still spin records?

JD: Oh, yeah. So, as a DJ I've done a lot of things. My first show was called "So Jokes", and it was about nerd rock and nerd talk. So we would tell nerdy jokes, and do news of the weird, talk about science. It was me and an English major doing it, so we didn't know a whole lot about science. But we were like, "Well, this is cool. This is great. Science, yeah!" And we would play songs about literature, and it was all—I mean, being honest, the music wasn't that great, like, quality-wise, but it was a fun show that kind of was like the spirit of nerdiness. That we did mostly from plugging our laptop into the system and hitting play.

Other shows I've done? I've done a show called the "Time Signature," which is a jazz show, and I was able to spin some records on that one. We have some record players that are plugged into the radio. We can play records there. Also did the "Fourth Dimension," which was a progressive rock and early metal show, so think Led Zeppelin, and Yes, and Cream, and all of them—stuff that my dad listened to when he was in college, right? So I was so—I felt so cool when I did that show. And those are strictly music.

And those ones you get requests, and those are fun. We don't typically play our requests on air, just in case somebody drops an F-bomb, and you're live on air! [Laughs] And you're like, "Oh, no. FCC violations could get our station fined thousands of dollars. Let's not do that." So typically we don't play a whole lot of people on air, but we do take requests, and on those music shows, that happens.

And then my most recent show has been "Two Joes and a Bro," where I'm Lady Joe, because Jodie shortens to Joe. At least my parents call me Joe, sometimes. And then I have my friend Joe Taylor, so that's two Joes. Then we have a bro on, or a lady bro, a performer or a band that can do an acoustic set for us. And then we do interviews and sort of take sort of like a roll-call of local talent, if that makes sense. And that has been enormously fun! It's a lot of prep-work, but we have podcasts I have podcasted, and it's telling the story of local talent, so that's kind of—that's kind of been my end goal, right? Tell people stories, remarkable people, and I love that show!

As far as everyone else, I mean, we have 100 DJs with 100 different musical preferences. One of the coolest shows that is on right now is the "Kansas City Shuffle, with Random Effect." And he does live spinning, like kind of club DJ'ing. It's really, really cool! He is so good, and I have no idea how he does it. He's just a wizard with records.

CP: Using the equipment that's in the studio? Or does he bring his own stuff in?

JD: He uses the equipment we have there. We have everything he needs. We also have a show right now called "Leaves of Blast" that is put on. It's a big production. It's three hours, and we do a college media—college—CMJ, College Music Journal. Wow, I went blank there! "The College Music Journal Top 20 Countdown," so it's kind of like the Top 40 Billboard countdowns you might hear, only college music. So what are the top songs that college radio is playing? We do a countdown of those. We have a live band that's plugged in, so it's a bigger production, whereas, you know, on "Two Joes," I can just position a gal with a guitar in front of a microphone, and she can play, and it's all nice and good.

We have a whole separate room that we have to patch through to the on-air room. [0:39:59] We set up a whole band; we get them plugged in. We do sound balancing and checks, and there are like a dozen people running around making sure that this thing's happening. And we put on this enormous production, and that's even tied in with a TV program called "In the Pines," a music documentary project. So the bands that we have on "Leaves of Blast" are featured on TV as well, bi-weekly, so that's like, it's just this enormous production! And I very rarely have a part in that. That's mostly Matt Walton and Megan Cummings. And they do that, and it's amazing. It blows my mind that they can do that. But [sighs] it's always kind of improvised and thrown together, everything that happens on the radio. And I think it's a fun place to explore, and occasionally to mess up, and to find your voice, and to do cool things.

CP: Well, that kind of leads into my next question. I'm interested in the culture of the station, what it's like to be there, to work there, to hang out there.

JD: Right. So in the last couple of years—gosh, I don't want to talk smack about anyone, but there were times when there was some exclusivity, you know, "We're the really cool kids, and we know music that nobody else knows." And when you listen to them talk and they're name-dropping bands, they're like speaking a different language. And it's kind of like you're looking through a window and being like, "Whoa, they're so cool! I could never be this cool! [Laughs]"

And I tried for a while to be that cool, until I became the station manager, and I'm like, "Well, I think everyone's cool, so let's all be cool together." That community worked for a group of people, and perhaps this group of people didn't have anywhere to go else on campus; they didn't feel included at another place as well as they felt included at KBVR. And I respect that greatly. I hope that those same people can still feel included at a place that includes everyone else, because that's my goal for this year. I've had a lot of new DJs come up to me and say, "This is my second home. I can be in my apartment, or I can be hanging out at KBVR, and it feels good either way." There are people who love various kinds of music. We don't have enough country people right now, but other than that, we have a lot of different kinds of music that are represented.

And everyone respects each other, whether they're playing the most underground of underground, or they're playing songs that everyone can sing along to. I think that everyone kind of has a mutual respect and understanding that what you play on the radio is an act of self-expression, and that is not to be demeaned. Yeah, the music you play on the radio is as much telling of yourself as the sound of your own voice, or the way you wear your hair, and you just don't make fun of each other for that. That's not cool. [Laughs] I've told off people for giving each other crap for what kind of music they play. That's just not acceptable, in my eyes.

So, but anyway, it's created this really cool and giving DJ culture. I can ask DJs for their opinions on what kinds of events we should run, or for their help in running those events, and everyone hops to it. Like, they just want to be involved, and I love that! I really hope that that continues into the future.

CP: Tell me a little bit about the facility you're in now, and what kind of impact the new Student Experience Center is going to have on KBVR.

JD: Right now, we're in Snell Hall, which, when people ask for directions, I say it's the ugly blue building between Kerr and Waldo. [Laughs] And it is! And it's got bugs. You know, there's a cockroach that's made its home in the on-air room, and sometimes you'll be listening to a DJ talking on air and they'll be like, "Ah, I just saw the cockroach." But it's elusive; you can never kill it. We've actually made a meme about it, the KBVR cockroach. "What's your favorite band?" "Oh, I like Papa Roach," things like, I don't know, real groaners like that, just kind of giving the KBVR cockroach a personality. But you poke the walls and water comes out. You know, it's just an old building and it needs a lot of help. And the equipment that we have in KBVR is, it operates. [0:45:00]

CP: [Laughs]

JD: And that's kind of what you want to say about it. It operates; it gets the job done, and sometimes it doesn't operate and it causes us a lot of anxiety! We look forward so deeply to 2015, when we have our new building. It's like moving from a canoe into a space ship, is how I understand it. So the new facility is going to be the Student Experience Center, which is going to be located between the Memorial Union Building and the Valley Library. Once upon a time there was a metered parking lot near the MU that I used all of the time. When the parking lot got torn up, I was so conflicted, because I was like, "No, there goes my main parking on campus. But yes, my new home is being built. Agh!"

But we're going to be on the fourth floor. We're going to be at the top floor. It's going to be really sweet. We're going to see the whole campus from there. We're going to have this amazing setup, amazing equipment! I don't even know how we're going to be able to use it. I've heard things like, an enormous room with a beautiful green screen, that we'll be able to do a lot more work with KBVR-TV, and equipment that we can rent out for use for other departments. But one of my favorite features that's coming up is the on-air room is going to have a couple of cameras inside of it, and so you flip a switch, and all of a sudden not only are you streaming your music, but you're also just streaming your shows. So you can watch the DJs as they're spinning around in their chairs during their songs, you know? I don't know, being bored. Or even better, when we have bands in the studio, we'll be able to flip a switch; cameras will turn on, and you'll be able to watch the band play as they're in the booth.

I think that that is going to be really cool, and it's going to open up more collaborative opportunities between FM and TV, because if we can stream our cameras from live in the booth onto the TV station, then TV has a lot more content right there, right? TV is—God, I love TV, but they're kind of starved for content in a way, because it takes a lot of work to come up with—to be able to produce a TV show. And we're full-time students; we don't have time for that. So it takes a crazy amount of dedication, or a lot of part-time students to pull it off.

Anyway, so, yeah, the new building is also going to be cool because right now, we're on two floors in Snell Hall. The bottom floor is kind of where the print lives, so you have the *Barometer*, *Prism* Art and Lit Magazine, and as of next year, the *Beaver Mag* is going to be on the bottom floor. Top floor, you have broadcast, which is FM and TV. But if FM news, and TV news, and the *Barometer*, and the yearbook all want to get together on a news story, they have to reserve conference space, try to figure things out, arrange teams. It's just so not conducive to happening there.

Whereas next year, or when we move into our new building, we're all going to be on the same floor, so if I want to go out on a news story for the *Beaver Mag*, I can look around at all of our beautiful shared space, and I'll be like, "Hey you, from TV! Grab a camera; come with me. We're going to this event." And then it's happened. It's going to be so much simpler for organizational processes. Cons of that: right now everyone has offices. Next year, only student leaders have offices, and they're cubicles. So, when the music director gets in piles and piles of new CDs, she's or he's not going to have anywhere to put it. So there are going to be challenges that arise, but I think all-in-all it's going to be a lot more conducive to a collaborative effort.

CP: Uh-huh. Well you talked a bit about your—you have done what you can to try to highlight local musicians. I'm interested in knowing more about the music culture in Corvallis, from your perspective.

JD: Okay. [Laughs] Gosh, that's a really good question. You know, when bands happen in Corvallis, they're alternative, indie, rock, sometimes with blues or funk influence. And they'll come up with crazy genre names like alternafluid punk rock.

CP: [Laughs]

JD: And that's how they'll describe themselves. And then they'll just play at venues like Bombs Away, or Cloud and Kelly's, and I'll desperately want to see them but I'm under 21, so I can't. Oh, and that has been such a source of anxiety for me! Like, I can't be the best radio station manager I can be because I'm under 21, no! So I wish that there was a way that venues could kind of, I don't know, wristbands, or something, for ordering drinks. Like, I can go in and just enjoy a Roy Rogers with no problems, right? But no.

I find that there's not a whole lot of country music. [0:50:02] I mean, I'm not a huge country fan, but I know that there are, and that's important. There's a lot of singer-songwriters. And there are a lot of acts, a lot of talent, that is in OSU, students, and they don't go out performing. I don't know why that is, why they don't just book a show with Bombs, but they find that when they're in—at least on "Two Joes and a Bro," when they're in the booth with me, and they're playing to me, and the other Joe, and microphones, perhaps it's a little more comfortable than playing in front of a physical crowd? Because you can be playing to like 50 people listening on the radio, but you're not seeing them; they're just not there. And they sound fantastic, because they're just playing to us. So that's a kind of interesting and unique thing. And, you know, I have had people who play in front of larger audiences, and they're like, "Yeah, this is kind of spooky, kind of eerie. Like, I know that people are listening, but I cannot see them." [Laughs]

And, I don't know, I just kind of love that experience, as far as the music scene adapting to KBVR. But yeah, as far as music scene in Corvallis, it's fairly active but I can't speak to it too much because I haven't been able to do it. And I'm turning 21 this summer, thank goodness, so I'll be able to go and see these shows. And then, how am I going to talk about it? Maybe I can still continue to do news stories for KBVR, but I'm kind of—it's kind of bad timing for me personally.

CP: Yeah. Another question I have is about the music industry, sort of in the larger sense. It's certainly changed substantially in the last 15 or 20 years. When I was in college, we would often learn about bands through MTV. That's not an option anymore, necessarily. So how are college students learning about music, and consuming music, at this point?

JD: Word of mouth. I think people—at least I have learned about all of my favorite musicians, because my friend has said, "Hey Jodie, listen to this. It's good." And then I'm like, "It is good. Hey other friend, listen to this. This is good." We don't really trust the powers that be, you know, The Man. We don't read magazines to hear who's good, or watch shows or anything to hear who is good. We just kind of trust each other. We'll pick up each others' iPods and plug them into our computers, and download someone else's entire music collection. That's probably illegal, but.

CP: [Laughs]

JD: Well, [laughs] it happens. I guess if we're being honest here, that happens. Or we'll, I don't know, be browsing the interwebs, and a friend will like a band's page, and it says alternative rock. And I'm like, "Yes, I like alternative rock. My friend likes this band. Let's check them out." So a lot of it is just pure recommendation. And I think that I get a whole lot of that because I work at a radio station, and everyone is passionate about music, and everyone has recommendations.

And I've actually been doing interviews with each of my DJs. I asked them, "How did you get into KBVR? What is your favorite part about being a DJ? What three bands would you recommend to a new friend?" And I think that, gosh, just in asking that question, I've learned about, God, every different kind of band you can imagine, and so many of them I hadn't heard about before. And that is cool. So, yeah, that's how we learn about new music, I think.

CP: Do you find that it is new music, or is it old bands that you're rediscovering? Because I'm wondering about how—there isn't as much of a market anymore for somebody who wants to be a musician. It's much more difficult to be "a middle class musician" at this point.

JD: That's correct. And I mean, one of my three bands, when I was kind of interviewing everyone else, I also had to provide the answers myself. And one of my three bands that I recommend to a new friend is Yes, because it is some seriously good music, and people should know it, in my opinion. I think that Yes, among other bands, are important to have in our music vocabulary. And a lot of other DJs have expressed, "You should know this band. You should know Jethro Tull. You know, this is important stuff to know." [0:55:01] [Laughs] Music is so—there's a huge imbalance in the importance of music to us. It's so drastically more important to us than it is to everyone else, so you kind of have to be self-critical, and just kind of laugh at yourself about it.

But anyway, as far as becoming a musician, yeah, it's hard to become a musician through traditional industry standards. And what I find a lot of people are doing is just trying to grassroots it up. So a lot, a lot, a lot of touring, not as much making music; burning your own LPs onto CDs, and then drawing on the disc yourselves, and then sending them to—we get a lot of those kinds of CDs sent to KBVR. It's like, "Can you listen to this, see if you like it? Provide feedback? Maybe play it if you like it?" [Laughs] We get a lot of those! I've discovered a lot of good music through SoundCloud, which is a service where you go to a band's page, and you can listen to their song, and if you like it you can pay like a buck, and buy it. And it's a way to self-publish, I guess, self-distribute rather than have to go through a record label and their distribution processes. And you can have more control over your own sound and your own lyrics and everything if you're not going through The Man, if that makes sense.

So how I understand it is if I want to be a rock musician—I played bass guitar; I was in a band for, like, a second in high school. I was awful. But if I wanted to pick that up again and make it a thing, I would have to have another career, and my band would have to be a side project. And I admire those who throw themselves completely into their band and pray that it works. Chances are slim, but it is possible. [Laughs]

CP: Well, sort of closing it up here, a couple of broader questions, just kind of about the university, and about the student experience these days. And the first one is, what sorts of issues do you think are important to students at OSU right now? Kind of a grand question, I know, but...

JD: Yeah, issues. I think that students care that people are informed. I think that with any issue, you can have an opinion, and whether or not you agree with that opinion, at least the person you're talking to is not willfully ignorant. I think, like personally, I'm pro-choice. And I can be talking to somebody who's pro-life, and I can be vehemently disagreeing with them, or casually disagreeing, and not be angry. But that person who has an informed opinion and has thought it through is better than the person who is like, "I don't know. I don't really care." So, I think that that's something that OSU students really care about, is that you are informed about the issues of today. And if you are not informed, then people kind of roll their eyes at you. They don't take you seriously.

I mean, as far as, like, political talking points, I mean, we care about—gosh, we care about gay marriage. And that was recently approved; restrictions were declared unconstitutional in Oregon very recently, and everyone's stoked about it, it seems like. I haven't met anyone who's just like, "Boo, gay marriage." Like, that hasn't happened, at least in my crowd. People are concerned about gun laws, one way or the other, and I have friends on both sides of that, and about marijuana legalization, and a lot of other social issues. People don't seem to be paying as much attention to certain tax law or, I don't know. I mean, personally, I don't know.

I know there's a lot that goes on in the political world that people my age, or at least the people I hang out with, are just kind of not paying close attention to. People don't seem to be able to have an informed discussion on net neutrality right now. [1:00:02] It's something that affects everyone, but a lot of people aren't able to have an informed discussion on that. So yeah, political issues; [sighs] if you're going to be talking about them, at least know what you're talking about. Have an opinion. But then, ironically, so many of us don't know about kind of the other things that aren't hugely blown up on Reddit, right? Did I answer your question?

CP: Do you think that your colleagues or contemporaries are generally optimistic about the future, or otherwise?

JD: It depends on where you're looking. I think that the more actively engaged people are, the more pessimistic they are, and that stinks. I'm pretty actively engaged, but I'm also pretty optimistic, which makes me wonder if there's something that I'm missing. Because, yeah, there's global climate change, and it's awful, and we're deteriorating, but I know that we can do something about it. Something's going to happen. We're going to get ourselves out of this mess. I'm no scientist; I can't personally contribute, but I think something's going to work out. And there are people who are more informed than me, or are more actively engaged, who are like, "No, Jodie. We're hosed." Like [laughs], "At this point, there's nothing we can do." And I'm like, "No, I'm sure that science can find a way!"

But I'm also deeply entrenched in the problem of the media. You know, the media is—I wiggle my fingers like this because people blame the media for girls having low self-esteem when it's certain kinds of media, but not all. Like, seriously, is *A Prairie Home Companion* contributing to my 11-year-old's issues with weight? No! There is some media that is completely unrelated.

But anyway, I am completely entrenched in the media, as it were, and I still am optimistic. Like, yeah, I think that that can be a driving force for good. And again, there are other people who are like, "No, Jodie. This is awful, and it's going to stay awful." So I think it really just depends more on who you talk to. I think that good happens when you are optimistic, though. I think that once you get too pessimistic, you give up, and then there is no chance of progress. So that's why I stay optimistic.

CP: How do you think students are perceiving OSU right now?

JD: [Laughs] I think that students are really frustrated with a lot of things to do with OSU. I'm able to look past the problems because I am a privileged, middle-class, white woman who, my grandparents left a trust fund for their grandchildren, and I'm getting my way paid through college. So I don't understand struggles that everyone's going through, but a lot of people are frustrated with tuition and with textbook prices, and with the experience that they're getting out of classes, namely that they have silly rules, and they aren't getting enough out of the classes, and the regulations are too strict for the money that they're paying. And we're setting students up to be the most in debt when they are the poorest demographic. And I think that there's a lot of rage against that. And I understand it, even though I'm not a part of it. I'm in an extremely privileged place, my friend. I am so lucky! And I can rage as hard as anyone else, but I can't internalize that feeling. So I think that a lot of folks are kind of upset with, they're not sure who, at OSU. They're not sure who they're upset with, but they're upset that they're paying a lot of money, and they don't feel that they're getting enough out of it.

But then you have folks who are at OSU, and perhaps they're the privileged ones like me, who are just like, "I am so glad to be in a place where people are learning, and being smart, and being smart with each other, and sharing their smart ideas, and researching and learning, and actively working toward progress." And so of course, I'm just in this idealistic, happy fairy land, and that's great for me [laughs] and people who are like me. I'm hoping that, as much as folks who are angry at OSU can get me to be angry with them—because I am angry for, you know, to an extent—I hope that I can also help those people over to my side and say, "Yeah, but look! You are getting this education, and you are learning a lot of cool things. And so we can perhaps share in our anger and in our triumph." [1:05:00]

CP: Well, you have a big year ahead of you.

JD: [Laughs] Yep.

CP: Then you're going to graduate, and what do you hope happens at that point? What's next for Jodie after that?

JD: I've heard that if I have a resume that is as nice looking as mine, I'm not going to have a whole lot of trouble. But I am set in the idea that I have chosen a career path that is going to be long and winding, and not easy. And so I'm thinking, okay, I'm going to work retail at some clothing store. I'm going to freelance for whatever paper is going to accept my work. I'm going to intern at as many places as I can while trying to support myself by said retail job. And eventually, I'll land something and then work my way up the ladder.

Hopefully it's a little easier than that, but I know that that's just sort of the reality of positions that you get after Digital Communication Arts. Just try to support yourself with something, and make life happen. But I've seen too many be passive. Too many people just apply for the jobs that they want, rather than apply for everything and hope that you land something, and go from there. And there are very few jobs that I wouldn't take if it meant that I was able to support myself as I continue to pursue my dreams.

CP: Well, I want to thank you for spending this time with us, and wish you all the best. [1:06:41]