



Natalie Dollar Oral History Interview, August 5, 2015

Title

“Looking Back on a Leap of Faith”

Date

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Location

Graduate and Research Center, OSU-Cascades, Bend, Oregon.

Summary

In the interview, Dollar describes her family background and upbringing in Mississippi, her schooling at Mississippi State, Arizona State, and the University of Washington, and the development of her interests in communication theory and cultural communication. As part of this discussion, Dollar reflects on her encounters with social and racial prejudice, the impact that these experiences made upon her, and the broadening of her perspective that occurred as she moved to different parts of the country and confronted new types of discrimination. She likewise outlines her first interactions with communities of houseless youths in Seattle and the ways in which these contacts influenced her academic work while a doctoral student.

From there, Dollar details her move to OSU, her impressions of the mid-Willamette Valley, and the important contacts that she made while in Corvallis. She then shares her memories of the "leap of faith" that took her to Bend as an early faculty member at the fledgling OSU-Cascades campus.

The remainder of the session focuses primarily on Dollar's life and work in central Oregon. In this, she provides her perspective on the early years of OSU-Cascades, the evolution of its leadership, and the challenges that it has faced during her years of association. She also discusses the history of the Community Dialogue Project that she initiated in 2002, details her years of research on the community of fans surrounding the Grateful Dead musical group, and examines the means by which "Deadheads" have communicated over the course of multiple decades. The interview concludes with Dollar's thoughts on the unique opportunities presented by OSU-Cascades as it moves forward as a four-year university.

Interviewee

Natalie Dollar

Interviewer

Janice Dilg

Website

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

Transcript

Janice Dilg: OK, if you would introduce yourself please.

Natalie Dollar: Hi, my name is Natalie Dollar and I serve as the Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences and the Oregon State University Cascades campus, where I am also an associate professor of Speech Communication.

JD: And my name is Janice Dilg, I am one of the oral historians for the OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, and we are on the Cascades campus here in Bend, Oregon. Today is August 5th, 2015. Welcome.

ND: Thank you.

JD: It's always useful, I think, to have someone start with a little personal background. Where you're from. A little about where you grew up and what influenced you early on in life.

ND: OK. I grew up in Natchez, Mississippi, a very small town located in southeastern Mississippi, right on the Mississippi River. It's a very historical town; there were over fifty pre-Civil War, or what we call antebellum, homes in my town. It was a very rich town prior to the Civil War, it was also very engaged in the class conscience struggle throughout the history of the United States due to the plantation homes and the slavery that was there.

My family are Italian immigrants. My great grandparents came over as indentured servants and a group of about five or seven families came over and settled in Louisiana before moving up to Mississippi, some still are in Louisiana. They worked there ten years for their freedom and were denied their freedom upon the conclusion of the ten-year contract, so to speak. And so the families banded together and for the next couple years worked underground, so to speak, together, to hire a lawyer and seek their freedom. And this is one of the stories that influenced me a lot growing up because I was born the day before President Kennedy was assassinated, and as I said I lived in a very tense Southern town with a lot of racial discrimination and history. But as I also was finding out, in my own family there was class discrimination as well. And because our family was Italian and had come as indentured servants, that was a whole type of slavery that wasn't discussed anywhere, openly. So as a kid, I was learning this on one hand, at school I was learning about slavery, and in my own daily life I was embedded, all around me, a lot of prejudice. At the time I didn't know that it would influence me as it did, but as I got older and started thinking about it, I became pretty uncomfortable with the social dynamics in the South and decided that I wanted to leave after I had graduated from college.

I went to Mississippi State University for my undergraduate degree, up in the delta in Starkville. It was a wonderful experience; very good university. And I had no idea at the time that I would go on and get my Ph.D. and become a professor at a university. In fact, I was majoring in biomedical engineering in 1981 when I went to college, and after my freshman year my professors called me into their office and asked me where I wanted to go to graduate school. And I said, "I don't know what you're talking about. I just want to graduate in three years from now." And they said, "well, you know, there's really not a lot of jobs in the field currently, as it's a new area. What you need to do for your career is go on to graduate school and by the time you get out of graduate school, there will be more opportunities in the field, because it's certainly going to grow." And I said, "no, I'm not doing that. I want out of school." And I left their office and I changed my major. And I changed it to communications, I don't know how or why, I had friends in the area, but I just didn't think I was going to graduate school and I thought, "why waste that time?"

So I changed my degree and did graduate and moved back to Natchez, Mississippi for one year and worked in sales and didn't enjoy that kind of a climate. So I started working at a friend's independent bookstore and just started exploring graduate school. All the sudden I found myself thinking, "boy, I should have gone to school like they told me, graduate school." So I started exploring it, didn't even know what I was doing. No one in my family had graduated from college; I was a first generation in my family, college graduate. So I really kind of, like I said, didn't know what I was doing; exploring graduate schools and was fortunate enough to have a few professors who remembered me at Mississippi State and were willing to write some letters of recommendation.

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Arizona State University was kind enough to take a chance on me in a master's program and when I got out there I found that I just loved it. I knew right away then that that's what I wanted to do, because in my field, when you're in graduate school and you get a teaching assistantship, you don't have a professor in the room with you. You are actually teaching a course from the first day, and I remember being terrified but also having fun doing it and learning. One of the things that was the hardest for me though was, I had my own prejudices about my own accent as a Southerner, and I was very conscious of it. And at that time I had a very deep Southern accent and people would comment very graciously, "oh, that's so cute and so sweet," and I would say, "and so stupid sounding, right?" Because my prejudice was that I thought if people heard me speak Southern, that they were going to impose all of their prejudices of the South on me.

And it was about that time that I really started thinking more about myself and how much the context I grew up in had influenced me and how uncomfortable I was with these prejudices. And even internally, I questioned my own upbringing and what it meant and those sorts of things. I was just fortunate that my parents, even though they didn't go to college – my dad reads at a third grade level and he can barely write as well. And just an amazingly smart man and provided well for his family, but he wanted more for us. And he and my mother literally made minimum wage until they retired in family business, which came from the family that I was talking about – the indentured servants – when they finally freed themselves they opened a market. But eventually my great grandfather became the first licensed plumber and electrician in Adams County in Mississippi. So we just shut that family business down on the 31st of December, last year, 2014. So it's been in the family and my dad came in through marriage to it and was able to contribute to it greatly. But they wanted more for us.

And I remember not really understanding what it meant until I was older. But they literally went to the bank when we were in high school – my sister and I, thirteen months older – and took loans out to pay for us to go to a private school because the public schools were struggling, and are still struggling, in my hometown in terms of academics. I didn't know what that sacrifice meant at all, as a young person. As I got older, it became more and more clear to me just how important education was to my family, who hadn't had the privilege of having it. And it also became more clear to me how I just assumed everybody had it. I mean, it was just in that one generation, things changed in our family. But the understanding was – there's such a big gap between it – because I really just thought that's the way it worked: you grow up, you go to private schools. "Yeah, we don't have a lot of money, but I'm going to private school so something's going right in my family in the sense that, we're not so poor we can't feed ourselves, right?" But as I got older I realized it was all about my parents' commitment to education. And I just couldn't be more proud of people than my parents.

And we couldn't be more different also. I am the black sheep. I am the one who left the town and went west and never came back. And eventually drug my older sister to Seattle. It's been a great thing for her, she happens to be gay and living in the South was not a good experience. She came out to Seattle in 1991, found a new career, developed a lot more self-confidence, is very successful. My parents have really grown to understand her and the culture of a supportive culture and why she moved.

So those kinds of things really led me to be more interested in social dynamics. And I came to learn that the role of communication is huge in how people organize themselves – and by organize, I don't necessarily mean politically, I just mean in everyday life, how we do things. And I came to understand that this field that I had studied, just by chance, provided a really great foundation for exploring intercultural relationships within our own national country. So within our own national country culture, I'm very interested in different cultures within the United States of America. And studying communication is one way to look into that and understand how do prejudices get established? How they get perpetuated? How do they actually become laws and real things we have to grapple with? Those sorts of things.

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JD: You mentioned people remarking on your accent, but I'm sure that was just kind of the outward manifestation. But I'm interested in your comments about your view of this very different culture in the Southwest, from what you grew up with. What was your reaction to that?

ND: It wasn't what I expected. I expected to go to the Southwest and feel like I had walked into the holy land or heaven or some magical place that wasn't the South, that the rest of the country didn't view as behind and holding us back, those sorts of things. And what I found was another part of the country struggling with other prejudices and unaware of their own prejudices, just as the South seemed sometimes to be unaware of theirs. And the prejudice I'm speaking about, of

course, is toward Native populations and Native Americans in Arizona, as well as Hispanic families moving up from Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries. So it was fascinating to me to see the amount of prejudice and the lack of awareness. People would say, "oh, you're from the South, that's that place." And I could just feel myself tightening up and wanting to protect the South for the first time, going "no, you don't understand." And then catching myself like, "what kind of a fool would I look like?"

So it was really a lot of contradictions and I've come to find out that life is full of contradictions like this. And anyone who told us there wouldn't be and that we could erase these contradictions is not telling us about the fullness of life. Life is full of contradictions. And sometimes it is at those points – at those borders and boundaries – that the most interesting things can happen. Like for me, the collision of seeing my own feelings about the South, then how I felt when I moved to the Southwest and saw the experiences of prejudice there, and then what it made me think internally about my own. I struggle with it because it puts it in my face more and it makes me think more deeply about it. It was a positive experience but at twenty-two I was like going, "oh my gosh, did I make a mistake? Should I have come here? Am I just running from something that's never gonna be not where I land, type of a thing?" And then I gradually just began to work through it and realize, "no this is what it means to be human."

People are raised in places and they have deep cultural roots, whether they're around faith-based organizations, whether they're around regional places we live, whether they're around occupational cultures, which become some people's entire lives. But that everybody is as entrenched as much as I am, and it's my obligation to try to understand where they're coming from, and us to reach a place of commonality. Because there is some commonality there. And then we can work out of that together. Because we're bonded by our prejudices. Whether they're the same or not, we all have them. So if we can put them on the table and admit it, "how can I overcome mine instead of asking you to overcome yours?" It's more moving for other people to see me struggle and make some advances, and then they can struggle with their own, but it's not my job to push them into making those changes, I don't think.

And when I left the South, I thought it was. In fact, I thought it was my job to go back to the South and change the South, and that caused a lot of controversy within family and community. And that's a common experience when we go away. We come back and we try to change it. My students have that experience. Yeah.

JD: As you're going through your master's program and then you decide at some point to do a Ph.D. – I believe it was in cultural communication – and you ended up going to the University of Washington, could you talk a bit about how you decided that program and that location and a whole new culture?

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ND: Yeah, a whole new culture. Well, I didn't get there directly; I don't think I do anything in a direct line. So when I finished my master's – or was coming up on finishing it at Arizona State – I knew I wanted to go on for my Ph.D., I knew I wanted to be a professor and teach and do research. But I also, in the back of my mind, had always wanted to go to Louisiana State University, which is eighty miles from where I grew up. And just really really wanted to go, and didn't go as a kid because of out of state tuition. And I convinced myself at the time, "well, I'm paying for it now and I've got these teaching assistantships, I'll just go down to LSU and get my Ph.D., go back home and do that."

Well, guess what, when I went there I was not a freshman, I wasn't as interested in going to the football games and enjoying the culture of all those things I thought I would at LSU and thought I'd miss. And I basically wasted a year's worth of money trying to study something in a place that didn't offer my specialty. So that year, I refocused and said, "gotta go to UW." Everybody told me I should have gone to University of Washington. Everyone told me I should be studying with Jerry Philipsen, doing this work that we call ethnography of speaking, which is deep immersion in communities as an anthropologist would, and studying processes through communication as a cultural lens. And the only place to do that at the time was University of Washington. And they were willing to accept me and Dr. Philipsen was willing to take me on as a graduate student.

So I went to University of Washington and that was a wonderful experience. It was just another different culture, completely different type of western culture than Arizona. And I love music and it was a central place for a lot music that was happening in the early '90s – the grunge scene, those sorts of things. I wasn't necessarily into that type of music, but I understood I was at a moment in time and I should check some of these things out. And just began to get to know the

social communities in Seattle a little more through music, and was kind of led down through some interests and found that I was interested in working with youth who were homeless in Seattle.

And so my first real study of marginalized cultures through this framework was to begin working with a group of young people in Seattle who referred to themselves as "houseless youths." And there were a lot of things going on at the time around being able to just sit on a sidewalk in Seattle. There had been a young woman who was a runaway in Spokane, who had been brutally killed and they created a law in the state called the Becca – it started out as the Becca Bill. And it was an attempt to keep kids off the street and in their homes. It turns out that the young woman who had been so brutally killed was fleeing home, because home was not a very safe place as well.

So I became really interested in why young people felt like they wanted to be on the streets instead of in their homes. And I was fascinated because some of the first young people I worked with, their parents were working at all of the big important computer places in the Seattle area; they weren't the people you expected to find on the streets. They were there because they didn't have what they called a home, and they had that in common with other kids on the street. They talked a lot about "house" and "home" and what that means, and no one had ever really slowed down to think about those terms and why would a young person intentionally say, "I'm not homeless, I'm houseless." They would say, "my home's right here on the streets with these people. Isn't a home a place you feel safe? You have brothers and sisters, you take care of one another, you eat here. We have this. It might be in this tent, it might be under this bridge, but we have this. What we don't have is a house. We don't have what our government calls an official house that has plumping, electricity, these sorts of things. So don't tell me I'm homeless, because to me that's an insult. I'm houseless."

And that slight discovery of how they referred to themselves and how much using the term "houseless" felt respectful to these individuals – for them it gained their trust, it was so important to understand the difference of that term of reference. It was an entry point to working with the youth. So that was a cultural communication discovery – a single term, to be that powerful where to understand the term and how it's used can either grant you access or exclude you from a group of people. I really started thinking heavily then about how important language is, how important the terms we use to refer to one another – whether it's a name or not a name, it can be a title. These sorts of things.

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So that got me really excited about working with what I would call marginal cultures. And these are cultures that choose to be – I'm interested in cultures that choose to be marginal. They understand and they share some of the values with most U.S. Americans, but they have other different values that aren't as consistent, and those values are important enough that they distinguish them from the mainstream, somewhat. Those are the cultures that interest me, more than the mainstream. I think that there's a lot of study about the mainstream that we know. I guess I feel a little more marginal and part of my self-exploration has resulted in – I haven't been marginalized by other people in my adult life, I've chosen to be outside. I'm interested in things that aren't mainstream as much.

So that was one of the learnings of how does your growing up influence you? It's not that someone has necessarily done this to me. Sure, there have been things in the past that people have done that I haven't felt so good about as an Italian-American or as a female, those sorts of things. But overall, it's what I do with those things. It's how I respond to the social situation and to my interactions with other people. I own that. And I realize that communication is incredibly powerful in shaping that.

And so, bringing that here has been fun at OSU-Cascades, because one of the ways I was able to use this notion of words and language was with the students in a course I teach called "Community Dialogue." About four years ago at this campus, we were trying to determine – there's a lot of movement among the citizens, among the people of central Oregon, who say, "we want a university called Oregon State Cascades." Or there was a movement at one time, people wanted a separate university from OSU, "we want the University of Cascades," those sorts of things. And we were trying to explore the impact on the students. What did the students think? So my students in my dialogue course engaged students at OSU that weren't in the course, in a series of dialogues about titles and names.

And we found out some very important things, which is our students at the time did not want to be University of Central Oregon. They did not want to be a free-standing private university. What they wanted was to be a part of a known brand of a known university, and that was Oregon State University. They wanted that name. That name meant a lot on their

diploma. When they left here they wanted to be able to go to employees and say, "I got a degree from Oregon State University at Cascades. My degree, in quality, is exactly the same as a student who earned a General Business degree at that campus." It was so important and it was in very similar ways that the "houseless/homeless," that single word. Here it's not a single word, its three words: Oregon State University. But that was important, we found that out. And as we began talking to more and more people, it became more clear that a lot of people felt that way. And it was very important for us to emphasize our connection to the main campus; that we are a part of OSU, that's who we are.

I think that's important because it shows how the community really does feel about Oregon State. They're proud of Oregon State. They believe in it. They want people to know they graduated from Oregon State. That makes me proud to hear that, because I must admit, people move to this state and if they don't go to school, it seems like they – and by saying, "don't go to school," what I mean is they don't have children who are university age or they themselves have already gotten the degrees they want, so they're not in the business of going to higher education for a degree in our state when they move here – that overwhelming kind of perception is that they're going to be Ducks. They're going to be University of Oregon fans. And I know that through my own anecdotal data, my friends are that way. And part of it is there's a glitter and a glamor about U of O, and if you don't dig into the details and start looking at – well, if you're not interested in what is a university beyond our sports, beyond what we can project, then U of O jumps out at you. And I'm not in any way criticizing and downplaying what an extraordinary university, academically, U of O is. I'm just saying the perception, you know, "we're they cow college, they're the law school."

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And I've always been to cow colleges; I'm a state college girl, I guess: Mississippi State, Arizona State, Louisiana State. My one leap out of the state college system was my Ph.D. at University of Washington, but I jumped right back in at Oregon State, where I've been twenty-two years. So maybe there's a chip on my shoulder about the state schools, I don't know.

JD: Well, that's a great segueway into what appealed to you about OSU? How did you end up there after you graduated UW?

ND: You know, I had a couple opportunities to go to some other universities. One of those was a well-known, in the South, private university outside Austin, Texas, which would have been – I would have had some of the best students coming in with – in the South they tended to use ACT scores at the time – the highest ACT scores, those sorts of things. And I just felt like that wasn't what I was interested in. I wanted to go and be part of a university that reached out; that it was part of their values that they brought in students like myself, that were first generation college students, that did not see themselves at a private university. That had maybe never even thought of college until that recruiter happened to come in their high school class. Or they happened to be riding with their friend in town and stop by the community college to pick up a pamphlet and decide, "oh my goodness, I want to go too."

I knew I wanted to be at a state university; that was very clear to me. And it just so happened that Oregon State was looking for someone in my area. And I loved the Northwest by then; I knew I did after four years in Seattle. So when the opportunity came up and I applied for the job and was fortunate enough to receive the job in Corvallis in the Department of Speech Communications in 1993, I jumped on it. And I haven't looked back. Most people don't keep their initial job in academics and I did, and I believe that if OSU hadn't opened this campus, I would still be in Corvallis. I don't believe I would have gone anywhere else. It's easy to think that your university is slow to make changes or doesn't support this area or that, but all you have to do is talk to your colleagues at other universities – just like in other sectors of business, everybody has their challenges. I learned quickly that place is important to me, and sense of place.

Here's another thing that I'll say that probably some other people won't like to hear: there's not a lot of difference in Oregon and Mississippi and Louisiana. Now there is on the I-5 corridor and the valley and Portland and Eugene and Corvallis. But once you come east, Oregon is a lot like where I grew up. There's a lot of poverty. There's a real need to educate and raise our high school graduate rate, certainly, and of course our community college graduation rate and our university graduation rate. So those are very similar phenomena for me. It's probably the first place my parents have ever – Bend – the first place my parents have ever visited that they felt comfortable, that they would literally get in a car and go do things by themselves while I was at work. I thought Corvallis was a sleepy college town, but it is a college town. And it is in the corridor where things are happening, and art is happening, and people are open to trying new things and dying

their hair and wearing crazy clothes that would seem crazy. And when my parents came to Bend, they were like, "wow I feel at home. I look around, I see people in cowboy boots, I see people in flannel shirts. I see people in running gear, I see a bunch of different types." But they didn't feel intimidated. And I told them, "it's not that different from where I grew up." It happens to be a really far geographical trip out here, but culturally...

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And then, one of the things that I've learned in teaching my intercultural class, relates to the history of Oregon. And I came to learn a lot about the Ku Klux Klan's history in Salem and that area, and I didn't realize that it was as vibrant and oppressive. It has a stronghold on Oregon as it did in Mississippi. And again, that's one of those, what we might call a hidden history. And I say hidden because it's intentionally left out – it's not overlooked, it's intentionally left out. We're starting to grapple with that in Oregon; I've heard a lot of people recently acknowledging some of our racial/ethnic history of struggle and discrimination, and that's what I grew up in. It's hard to be around when you're not used to it. It's uncomfortable for a lot of people.

One of the big struggles that we have at OSU-Cascades is helping our students understand that diversity is more than ethnicity or skin color. And I don't think it's particular to OSU-Cascades, but one of the reasons its exaggerated – a more pronounced feeling here – is that you look around and most people are of a whiteish tint, a whiteish skin color. So we tend to think we're all alike because of that, when inside the cultures I was talking about that I was interested in – and national cultures, all these different ones – that's where our diversity exists. It exists in class, it exists in faith-based, it exists in sexual orientation, it exists in ways that we think and organize our world views. That's the diversity in central Oregon. It may have to do with rural and more urban cultures. A lot of people move to central from a much more urban cultural perspective, and that has challenges when it butts up against a more rural. And Bend is grappling with growth and the urban growth boundary. They're grappling as OSU-Cascades comes here. How does OSU-Cascades fit into the community and be a part of the community in a way that is responsive to those deep agricultural roots? That is responsive to all of our needs in technology? Which quite often come from the more urban cultural immigration here.

So Bend has a tremendous amount of diversity. And one of the things we're starting to have our students recognize is because we are so – I would say we put an emphasis on experiential and service learning in a lot of our coursework at OSU-Cascades, and we can because we're smaller, meaning that our students are out in the community doing things, helping organizations solve problems, come up with ideas, those sorts of things. Because we do a lot of that type of work, our students are learning, through experience, about diversity, as they go into these organizations. So it's an advantage to be able to do that. In a larger university, you have already built and broken a lot of relationships in community in terms of student access. I mean, just simply in capacity of giving students a chance in the community to work, and you've had that done so long. Bend, we've been here thirteen years, but Bend is still hungry for our students to contribute, and that's a really unique learning opportunity for our students. And its part of what makes OSU-Cascades a place I want to be, is that immersion in the community. What we do is never separate from the community.

That and that interdisciplinary nature at OSU-Cascades, because we are much smaller than Corvallis. We, for instance, have one building now on the COCC campus we rent. We have another building off campus we own. And we're in the beginning construction phase of our own campus. But because we're in this building, a chemist's office is next door to a business professor, whose office is next door to maybe a communication, maybe an art historian. And we end up having conversations and our faculty are working together, interdisciplinary, because they get to know each other better. And in a larger place, you're in completely different buildings; you may never have a conversation. And even though, for instance, the whole world of digital arts is really exciting, and how it interfaces with engineering, computer science, American Studies. How it interfaces with both the humanities and the hard sciences is really exciting and happening all over the country. Yet it's hard to enter into that discussion when maybe the Engineering building is on one side of the campus and Art is on another and Wood [?] Services is yet another, and those are some of the integrations. Well here, naturally you're sitting and having lunch together, having coffee outside, and those conversations begin.

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And so, for me, that's been really fun to partake in as a researcher, and now as an administrator as well, to help facilitate some of those synergies that faculty are noticing and wanting to work on. And now I can help them bring those ideas to fruition. Students are involved in the research here at very high numbers, and that's another reason to be at OSU-Cascades,

is if you enjoy working with students and you enjoy doing research, here we do bring them together at the undergraduate level. We don't have a lot of graduate students and that's fine. I like that, kind of. I like keeping my hands in the weeds, so to speak, my toes in the mud, like we used to say down South. I like to keep my toes in the mud, I like to be involved in what's happening with students. I never want to be out of contact, regularly. I still teach two courses a year. And Cascades, that's a lot about what it really is, our relationship with our students, our faculty, and our community.

JD: I want you to try and take a couple steps back to when you were on the Corvallis campus. You said, "if Cascades hadn't happened, I would have stayed there." So it was clearly a good nurturing environment, you were a popular teacher there. And try and take yourself back to those early conversations about starting a branch campus, and what I believe you've referred to as a "leap of faith," and why you decided to be one of the few to take that and come to Cascades in 2002.

ND: Sure. I was fortunate because one of the original conceptual drivers of this campus was Dr. Henry Sayre, distinguished art historian, who just retired from OSU-Cascades this past June. He was one of the original creators. And so I knew Dr. Sayre in Corvallis and I had heard him talk with other faculty in the liberal arts about this idea. I had heard him talk in Faculty Senate some. President Risser, who was our president at the time, was very very supportive of the idea. So it was picking up some momentum. And at that time, I had been in Corvallis eight years or so and I was, quite frankly, getting a little tired of the grey. The rain never bothered me, the grey kind of got to me a little bit. And so, in the back of my head, I started thinking, "wow, that's interesting what they're talking about. How would this work? Who would they hire?" That sort of thing. So I actively sought out Henry and began talking with him, and it turned out there was a group of about seven or eight of us that were in the liberal arts that were interested in this idea of starting a new campus. Initially that really was the appeal.

I would have stayed in Corvallis, I would have gotten over the grey. I loved what I did in Corvallis, I had great colleagues, I felt supported by my College of Liberal Arts, I enjoyed teaching the students there, I loved the large campus. I grew up in the southeast, I am a college sports fan – rabid. So I totally took advantage of all of those kinds of opportunities as well as all the speakers and plays and that sort of thing. So I was not really looking to leave, even though the grey was back here.

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But when I started talking to these individuals, I got excited about this idea of building a new campus. That was what we were all attracted to, quite frankly. This doesn't happen very often, when it does happen it is a leap of faith, because you don't know if the campus is going to make it or not. There's not a lot of examples to go out and study, like what happened to these individuals who decided to leave their home tenure departments to take on this? I can't ask my home department to wait a year or two to hire behind me so I can figure out if I want to come back. At the same time, when they move ahead and replace me, that's where the leap of faith is, is "oh my goodness, what happens if it doesn't work out?" And by "work out," that could mean a lot of things. What if I don't like it? Have I made a bad choice? Can I go back to place I know I like? It can mean, what if the university doesn't make it? Will the university take care of us? Do we have what we might call "re-entry rights" or "retreat rights?" Those were some of the terms we were throwing around as we were just investigating, and there weren't a lot of universities who had done this to provide that model.

What I liked was that OSU, as a university, took that challenge and got involved in a process of, "OK, it is a leap of faith for these individuals, so what kind of structure can we create? What do we want? We believe the university is going to make it, so we want people to know that. We feel confident about it. At the same time, we do want to take care of people if something we don't think of could happen and come back." And when they started that discussion, they figured out that we could retain – our tenure lies in our home department, legally. It's the way that the university worked. And so, we began investigating and setting up a more official process of what it would look like if someone needed to move back. For instance, what would be a legitimate reason that the university would want to welcome you back to your home department. Because there could be things like, maybe your program does not make it. And so, the university was very proactive in saying, "sure, if you go over there and you start a program and the program doesn't make it and there's not a need for your area of specialty up there, then it would make sense for use to welcome you back." So I really was attracted to that kind of problem solving. "We're moving along, we don't have all the answers, we'll never have all the answers," they were honest about that.

And it really came down to, as an individual, what sort of a career do you want? And for me, I don't have children, I am married but we don't have children, by choice. And I didn't have as many complications as a lot of my colleagues did, to move. I was much more free just to pick up and move, literally, than they were. They had family, they had kids, those sorts of things. So a number of them, in the end, were not able to make the transition.

But there were three of us that did. Henry Sayre did it, Dr. Jim Foster in Political Science came over, and I came over myself. So there were some that it worked out for. And that was very important because that gave us some sort of institutional historical relationship, to have faculty and administrators on this campus that already had positive working relationships with Corvallis. And positive working relationships where you can be honest with one another, that you could question one another, that you could challenge one another, which is what's needed when you start a project like this. And that's what's continually needed, I've found out, at Cascades, because we're still growing. In many ways we're much more like a start-up organization that requires an innovative spirit, an entrepreneurial spirit, a can-do spirit. You don't want to say, "that's not in my job description, I can't do that." It's more like, "wow, that sounds like fun, I'll try that!" We wear all kinds of hats, we do all kinds of different things.

So for a person like myself who enjoys learning new things, wants to learn more, this is a great place for me to be. Because, for instance, I am learning to be an administrator. And I don't think that I would necessarily have taken that on in Corvallis in the larger structure. For one thing, I felt like in a smaller structure I had more opportunity to learn and grow and have more one-on-one mentoring in that position, that I wouldn't have in Corvallis. So I felt more comfortable taking it; I was giving back to the university as much as they were helping me learn.

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Another great thing for me is I really have never worked for women. And OSU-Cascades is populated by a woman vice-president, a woman academic dean, and two women associate deans, and that's been a real interesting and rewarding experience, to be mentored by women who have been successful in the university. And they've been successful in different ways from one another. And that, to me, has been a truly irreplaceable experience, to be able to talk with, consult, be mentored by four or five different women who have been at different universities and also have had some real practical experience outside the university in businesses as well. And it's been a safe place, but not safe to the point of no challenging – I don't want to present it that way – because it is challenging. And I think it brings extra challenges, additional challenges, that we are a female-led campus, in some sense, because it's just uncommon.

JD: Is that something that is viewed internally or externally or both?

ND: I think both, I really do. From my experiences, I think as women, we're more aware that we're working for women – and more conscious and reflective of what that means and how that may be similar or different to working with men – than I think men are. I'm very careful; I don't want to speak for the men on our faculty and staff. But my impression from talking with some of them individually is they're just not aware of it as much. And maybe it might affect how they interact or how they think, but they don't talk about it at that level. Whereas for women, or the women that I have experience with here, it's interesting to us to observe and reflect on.

So maybe, again, it's one of those things, wherever your position is – and by "position" I don't necessarily mean title but how we situate ourselves in the world – we see different things and notice different things. And because I'm a female working with a group of females, and I look and talk to my colleagues at other universities who are associate deans and deans, and they're not working in a team of females, we naturally have those conversations. It's just where I'm looking at it from. But it's been a good experience for me just as it's been a really good experience to have the male leaders and mentors that I've had, because I've had a number of positive male mentors, throughout my career, academically. And I would say most of my mentors have been male, up to this point.

JD: You've talked about the positives, there certainly have been a lot of challenges that have come along from the very beginning, with outside events and budgetary issues at the state level. Can you talk a little about how you and/or your colleagues have met those challenges and kept the process moving forward and growing?

ND: Yeah. I believe it's a commitment to a certain attitude when you start the process. And that attitude is that people are going to have different perspectives and that we live in a world that, in our culture of the United States, we expect things

to move so quickly. In fact, things that matter greatly don't, and they take time. I have to remind myself of that all the time, and I have to remind my colleagues of that. And the faculty in the Division of Arts and Sciences, with whom I've worked closely, we talk about that. These things are going to take time and that time means that I also, and my colleagues, need to be replenished; they need to feel motivated again. So part of the process is kind of going, I want to say, not tick-tacky, not jumping back and forth, but kind of holding these ideas in tension of, I'm geared to teach and do research and be part of OSU, and there's certain things I need to do here. I'm also part of this new organization – a university trying to be part of a community – that people choose to move to this community, very intentionally. Therefore, they're very involved in the growth of the community and the ideals and values of the community.

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And I think sometimes it's very easy to feel one end of this tension pull and tug at you so much, and you just kind of forget about this. So part of my job is to help reshift that sometimes, and help the faculty and the staff refocus on why they're here in town. What they're doing means good things for the community. So also helping them learn to translate what they're doing with their students and in their classes that is going to contribute to the community. And not to always focus on the negative as well. I think that's a little simple thing to say, but we don't do it enough in our society. Last night I sat down to watch the news and the first little five story previews were just all of these horrific things. And then buried at the very end were a few positive news stories. And it's like, in our society it's not news if it's not negative. And I think that's the way society is; we tend to talk about the negative more than we do the positive.

And so one of the ways that I've been able to share and help faculty and staff understand some of the struggles that we're having in the community, and the legitimacy of those struggles, is comparing it to other businesses in the community that are experiencing similar things. And a great example is 10 Barrel Brewing, which is a very popular local hangout, and a very popular beer. However, they sold to Anheuser Busch a few months ago, and their two top brewers are dear friends of mine, and we have had many many conversations about the community's response to them, and how that makes them feel. The community really was very tough on them initially, and the pub – you couldn't get in ever in this pub, you could never get in. All the sudden, no one was there. You could walk up and sit down. There were literally people writing editorials in the paper and in the weekly *Source*, saying, "you've sold out, you turned your back on our community," these sorts of things.

So one of the things I was able to do with that was talk about how, when things change, our immediate response is to notice it and critique it, but let's think about what is the critique of 10 Barrel? And the critique is that you sold out, you're not local anymore. Let's really examine the facts. They're employing more local people now. The quality of the beer is increasing because the brewers have access to more diverse hops and better equipment. And then to begin asking questions of other people such as, where do you get that toothpaste you brush your teeth with every day? Where do you get the clothes that you wear? They're not made in Bend, necessarily, so why would be place that demand and that requirement on this company and critique the people that work for it? And then you can go to your job every day and work for some international corporation and not see the hypocrisy there. And does that have any comparison with what's going on with OSU-Cascades in the community?

So we begin talking about that and what you quickly notice is it's about change. That's really what it's about. It's about change and it's incumbent upon us to explain that change, to present ourselves in a positive way. To acknowledge the real challenges. To reach out more – traffic, transportation is a challenge, there's no doubt. We believe that we have some ideas and some structures we're putting in place that will help and facilitate those challenges, but we also know that there will be more challenges. And I think that one thing is just being directly honest with people and respecting your audience enough to know that, yeah, they're going to be excited here. You say that their problems are first, like, "we won!" But they're honest, they're smart people, they want their community to grow in a positive way too. So give them a little time to take that home and think about that. They just said they would help. They just said, they admit it, this is a struggle. But they know they want to help us on it.

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So that's the way I think and try to process. Now that doesn't always work in public and we certainly still have a lot of challenges. But I've been very proud about the way OSU-Cascades has reached out to the public, the amount of groups that they've taken into the public in neighborhoods, just different task forces inviting people in. For two years at least,

we've really really been reaching out and engaging individuals in the community with their ideas and the process, and really tried to have transparency. And I know that people still don't believe that, some people. And I totally respect that, I understand that. There's just more work we have to do in that area, and that's one of the challenges of living in a democracy, quite frankly. The work isn't ever done.

I believe in OSU and OSU-Cascades enough to believe that we're going to create a university that not just Bend/central Oregon is proud of looking back, and that OSU, more broadly as a university, is proud of what they have accomplished in central Oregon. And I think one of the ways we're doing that is really through the new faculty we're hiring. I'm excited about just hiring and individual that, in a roundabout way, ended up here. He's a young man who was a graduate student who was part of the hosting group when I interviewed for my job at Oregon State University. He was finishing his master's degree in my department. He went off and has done wonderful things, part of which was a nine-year tenure at Cornell University, and has found his way back out here. And I'm just delighted to welcome him to our faculty. We have a lot of new faculty that are very invested in our community and working with central Oregon, so that's really exciting for me.

JD: As you've been talking about reaching out to the community, I think it would be really important to talk about the Community Dialogue Project that you've engaged with, because that's been very much out there, you leading a variety of topics – important topics – that were current at the time.

ND: That Community Dialogue Project is an important part of, I think history here at Cascades, because of a number of reasons. But one, it wasn't just my idea, it's in my field of specialty, so I was able to spearhead it. But it was actually supported and grown through my colleagues. And just a brief history of how it started was, in between terms, in between winter and spring term, when we began the war with Iraq, I found myself in lines at grocery stores, in doctor's offices, waiting rooms, not having casual conversations that had always taken place in these very public-type spaces in our society, where we as U.S. Americans have felt free to talk about politics, life, whatever we wanted. All the sudden, people were nervous. They weren't talking to people that they didn't know. And the people that I did know, they would say, "I'm scared I'm gonna offend someone, but I have really strong beliefs about this." So I came back and in that week I got together with some of my colleagues who were on Spring Break and said, "I have this idea, let's create this course for our community and students and call it 'War and Peace: A Dialogue.'"

And so for ten weeks, every Sunday night, we'd get together for two hours here in Cascades Hall. And what we did was each of the faculty had certain areas of specialty: a marketing professor came in and talked about marketing, English professor came in and talked about poetry, different kinds of things. And we did some readings together. We ended up maintaining a group of about forty-something individuals who stuck with us. We also had – three times – we had people who were just in the community on vacation for the weekend read about it in the paper and join us on a Sunday night, which was wonderful. We had veterans, we had international people who had grown up in Iran and different places who were living in the United States and studying on visas and working at the time. So we had a very diverse group and we worked through some very difficult topics, all based on the idea that we are coming together to understand, not persuade. And that was kind of the birth of the Community Dialogue Project, the idea that our world is full of differences of opinion. And one of the things that we fail to do is emphasize our commonalities. Because it is on these commonalities that we can begin to address the differences.

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So for instance, in the war and peace class, for an individual whose family has been veterans generationally to interact with someone who is a peace activist, who maybe went to Canada during the Vietnam War, to have two individuals like that come together and realize they have something they care about that they bond over – whether it is, for instance, the early death of a child due to an auto accident. Whether it's that you grew up in this tiny little region of the country that you live and that nobody else does. But whatever, if you can find those commonalities that are important to people, what happens is you build a relationship that will really lend itself to empathy. Where you can try and want to see the other person's point of view. That your first approach, your first thought, is not, "I'm gonna debate and win." And so that was kind of the initial point.

And what we've tried to do with the Community Dialogue Project is bring together different age groups of people – all the way from young people to what we might call a senior citizen in this country – to come together with the idea of can

you put aside what you've learned your entire life, which is "life is about winning and losing?" And what you learned in elementary and high school, and even in college – which is debate, argumentation, persuasion. These are words that are common and that we're comfortable with, but when we mention dialogue and understanding, those are terms people don't spend a lot of time thinking about. So just that shift in attitude of, "my attitude is to understand and not to persuade," is what dialogue is all about.

So over the years, we've just tried to take on new projects that come to us from the community. Some of the times, we've worked with neighbor impact, and worked with ideas around asset building, and this notion that people in the community – not necessarily just this community – but one of the things that is kind of at the heart of the class struggle in our country is, "I picked myself up, why can't you?" That kind of, if you don't succeed it's your fault because this is the land of opportunities. The opportunities are different now than they were at that time. But how do you approach someone in their eighties or nineties who really lived in that time and really did pick themselves up and really did do this, and help them understand that this other individual has had different opportunities. And that they are not totally individually responsible for some of those. And so dialogue seeks to do that, and a real goal that we would love to see in the future is that our elementary schools and our high schools and junior high begin to emphasize more about dialogue and its importance, side-by-side with debate and argumentation. So that's kind of what we do here.

JD: You've talked some about some of your early research, or perhaps ongoing research, with street youth and houseless youth, self-defined. But I know one of the pieces of your research, and some public presentations for sure, is around the Grateful Dead and their role in American culture. And I want to give you a chance – I'm going to pan back a bit, because you're sitting next to a Grateful Dead cookie jar, and perhaps a bear that you'll enlighten us to the significance as well, as you talk about this topic.

ND: You bet. It has been a great joy to actually have a career that, part of what you do for your career is something that you thoroughly enjoy, which is going to see live music, for me. And part of seeing live music for me is about the crowd, is about the social, the coming together. One of the things that I figured out early in my adult life in my academic career is that, in the United States, even though we're an incredibly casual culture, we don't have very many places we encourage adults to play, to have a good time, to relax. And going to see music is one of those. That was impressed upon me at an early age in 1972, '73, '74 – somewhere in that range – I went to see Elvis Presley with my mother and my mother's best friend. And growing up in Mississippi, Elvis has always been a hero, and it was just such a big deal to get to see that and to see how the crowd came together.

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And so my parents were influential. And I joke with my parents all the time now because they are of the age, they could be Deadheads. But they were Motown and they were Chubby Checker. And I love that and I tell them all the time, "you made me into a Deadhead and a love of music because you took us to concerts." We went to see Sonny and Cher. My dad took me to see Jerry Lee Lewis, who grew up thirty miles from my hometown. And "you kind of interest me in that, even though the type of music maybe I listen to is a little different, you're responsible for this, Mom and Dad." They get a big kick out of it.

But getting back to the Grateful Dead and why that I would study it. What's legitimate? And, of course, it's not without critique that people say, "wow, you're studying that. How could that be a real topic?" Well, Grateful Dead, what I'm particularly interested in, as I've said, is the grouping. So I'm interested in the group, the followers, of the band who refer to themselves as Deadheads. And the reason I got interested in this group was because, as I said, I was interested in how people come together and how communication is a part of the way we create identities, we create boundaries, we negotiate boundaries. And I learned that Deadheads, from attending a few shows and not knowing much, I learned that Deadheads were doing something in the '70s and '80s that a lot of people weren't doing. Which was they were gathering together at these different geographical locations across the country and across the world, where they would gather with people and be convinced and know that they were going to run into certain friends, without having any kind of communication with those individuals outside the confines of a Grateful Dead show. And it's not by mistake that Deadheads call it a Grateful Dead "show." Not a concert.

But people would literally go all the way to Europe and know they were going to run into these friends. And it's like, how could people stay connected? Well, one of the things I started learning was I started looking into what I call the

"communication landscape" of Deadheads, all the way from fan clubs. And you may remember fan clubs, but my student today does not remember sending a dollar in to an address and getting a hand-signed poster back from the Jackson 5 or from Elvis or, every now and then, from your membership you get a pin in the mail. We had all these fan clubs and I started thinking about those and going back and looking at how they worked, and how in the 1970s the Dead created a fan club called Deadheads. And in the sleeve of one of their original albums they made a call: "freaks unite," is what they said, and asked people to join their Dead fan club. And they did an initial thing in this manner too, is they would send you things, a monthly newsletter and that sort of thing.

And then all the sudden there became rock and roll magazines that were dedicated mostly to the Grateful Dead and this type of music they played, and the fact that there was a relationship between their music and social causes. Not that the band necessarily advocated it, but their followers did. And so I began tracing the types of communication that this group had used to stay organized, when they had no geographical center. And upon continuing research, I learned that they were some of the original participants in creating the Internet and email – they were some of the first users of email. And so as we begin looking at technology, one of the things that became quickly apparent was that Deadheads were on the cutting edge of any kind of technology that allowed you to communicate. And what also became very clear was that Deadheads were a group of people that had a bunch of different social groups within that were very different, but one of the commonalities was that a good percentage of Deadheads are highly educated. They're highly educated, they have advanced degrees, they make good money, thus they can spend it traveling around the country and seeing this band and doing things that cost a lot of money.

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But they're also a group of people that were very interested in community. So it gave me a way to look at how can a group, how does their communication system evolve over time through technology? It also allowed me to understand how people could be so close and so connected to people that they literally see once a year. If you wanted to talk, in those days you had to do it on an old land line. We couldn't get on the computer and look at things. There was this hotline called the Grateful Dead Hotline, and when word got out that they announced a tour, you called the hotline and you found out when the tickets went on sale and those sorts of things.

We engaged in a social practice of tape trading, where – Grateful Dead were one of the first people to allow their audience to actually tape their shows and trade them among themselves, rather than buying the official album. But there was a social process involved in that tape trading where there was a protocol. You would send the individual who had the tapes you wanted blank tapes, cassettes, you would send them something kind from your hometown that was special, you always sent them a self-addressed stamped envelope for them to return it. They would make the copy of the tape that you wanted, they would return that with something from their hometown. And it was this drawn-out two or three week process, but you were on edge looking forward. And it was really fascinating to study. And what I soon realized was there's these communication rituals that all groups go through. And if you can understand what are the communications rituals groups use to socialize new members into the group – to engage in the group once you're in it, to negotiate boundaries and conflicts within that – those kind of things are important because we can compare them across different types of cultures. And we can see who does things similarly, who does things differently, how can different rituals be used to prevent inclusion, to create more inclusion, those sorts of things.

I began looking at, for instance, one of the things that people from the outside wouldn't suspect of Deadheads as important to their cultural code – and I wouldn't have either had I not learned about it – is there's a sense of "anything goes" with Deadheads. "You go to a Grateful Dead show, you can do anything you want." It is not. It is managed by Deadheads, and if you get out of line by doing something like tying your dog to your car and leaving it in the heat for the show, somebody will do something about it. They'll report you, they'll have your dog picked up and saved, or they'll address it themselves. When you're in a Grateful Dead show, you do not talk over the music, you will be asked to leave or step back. So just that discovery is important, that there is never an "anything goes" culture. There's always regulation and maintenance. So how did they do it? And how does this cultural group?

So it's been fascinating that Deadheads have lent themselves, from the '60s through now, as a type of group that we can study and learn things about other cultural groups, whether they're musical fan groups or whether they're social groups or work groups. I have books on my shelves about Grateful Dead leadership. A colleague of mine wrote about the Grateful Dead business model. I use it in my "Communicating Leadership" class, and my students partner directly with leaders in

the community and we share readings, if they want to read them. The community leaders always tell me the articles on Grateful Dead leadership are their favorite because they speak to their heart and they show that these practices work.

So to me, it is still fascinating that the Deadheads still continue to lend themselves, and I think that they will continue to. We just had the fiftieth anniversary shows, which of course I went down to Santa Clara to partake in, and it's a new generation of Deadheads bringing in new ideas. So we see how is it a cultural group can historically transmit their culture for so long, as a culture changes? For instance, when Jerry died, that was a big schism, a big break. Can this group move on? I don't mean to downplay people who have strong faith-based orientations and identities, but for a lot of Deadheads it was a similar kind of a thing – the leader's gone, can this culture go on? Well they did and it's interesting how they have and how other groups haven't, and what they may have done if they had intentionally adopted certain practices. So there are really important things that we learn from cultural groups, whether it's about communication, business, anthropology, psychology. Those sorts of things.

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JD: And, if I understand correctly, they've also sort of spawned a new generation of another band.

ND: Absolutely. A whole genre actually. When people began to look – the Grateful Dead has become a real important and legitimate area of study in musicology and ethnomusicology. And that is because they are – we would say...when I say "we," let me back up, the Grateful Dead said from day one, "we are an American band." And what they meant by that was they were truly a mixture of U.S. American genres, from blues, bluegrass, country rock, rock and roll. They were no one style, they were truly an American band. I didn't have any idea what that meant when I began studying them. And what I came to learn was exactly this: that they were a group that intentionally brought in classical – they were classically trained, a couple of them. They had all kinds of backgrounds and they weren't interested in doing one type of music.

And so when they did that sort of thing, they kind of created a genre in some sense, and the genre is known as jam bands – J-A-M – and that is because an essential part of their music repertoire are songs that involve long, lengthy music, minus vocals. And that resonates of jazz and all kinds of things. And so there weren't a lot of people that actually got air play, and there still isn't a lot that get air play. But what it is, is they've created a whole industry around touring and they're partially responsible for these notions of festivals. And one of the things that they do different from other types of music is when these bands in this new genre of jam band that was started by the Grateful Dead, which was carried on Phish – who was in Bend for two days, two weeks ago, and it was a wonderful experience, I believe, for the city. A tremendous amount of money made. I've heard from lots of folks that the people were well-behaved and well-received, so that was a good thing. But what they've created is these bands don't play one night, they come to a community and, if possible, within the venue, allows itself for the booking of multiple days, they will play up to three shows, sometimes four shows, in a single place. And you may say, why do you want to hear that band? Because they don't play the same show every night, and so you get to see different music.

And that kind of lead to this notion of you go to a venue and you camp and you stay and you set up a community. And the Grateful Dead had a very important part of the show that was called "Shakedown Street." "Shakedown Street" is the name of a really important and fun song for the Grateful Dead, but it also was a place where artisans and Deadheads sold their wares. They create ceramics, they create t-shirts, clothing, food, and you buy from within. It's again part of that communal thing. And for a long time the Grateful Dead was really absent in terms of enforcing copyright so, for instance, this [holds up stuffed bear] is a bear that we recognize from a Grateful Dead symbol. And it came because one of their original sound guys and investors, his nickname was Bear, he was a very tall guy that would stand in the front and get in the way. And they became a symbol; people were excited about it. And this little symbol, if you can see it on the back, is what we call the "cats down under the stars." And this is a Jerry Garcia symbol particularly – it doesn't refer to the whole band, but to Jerry Garcia. And then this crazy ice cream guy is reminiscent of R. Crumb and his artistic cartoons in the '70s, and the whole *Mad* comics. And this is actually an emblem that comes from the 1972 Europe tour.

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So what I was saying about the Grateful Dead being absent – and then of course what's known as your Steal Your Face symbol, the iconic symbol – they would let people use that. They would let people put that on their t-shirts and sell it. Now when things became so crowded at shows and there were problems with too many people not going into the show,

never intending to see the music, but coming for the scene, the Grateful Dead cracked down on copyrights and vending and those sorts of things. So we've seen how vending changes; it's adapted. It's adapted for Phish and Widespread Panic and all of these other bands. And like I said, it's kind of fed into this notion of huge festivals that we now have for country music, for bluegrass, for rock and roll, for different types of rock and roll. They have the Vans Warped Tour and these sorts of things. I said that I would never go to something big like that again, I had passed that, but when the Grateful Dead did play their two-night stand in Santa Clara, I was part of the 65,000 people who made it.

And some of the things – this would be one of those kind of coincidences of, you say, "why do people go? What are you going to miss the second night if you went the first night?" Well, the rainbow – another symbol that I have here, that comes off the same kind of European tour type of artwork – during one of the Santa Cruz shows, what happened was, at a point in the concert – and this was right after the Supreme Court passed gay marriage – that night at the concert at a point during the show, out of nowhere, a rainbow started developing. And it started small and then within minutes it was across the full spectrum, a full rainbow. And it was just one of those magical things that everybody at the show noticed. And then the band noticed it. And the band was like, "can you believe that?" Especially given the Supreme Court decision. That's the type of value that's important and that's the type of magic that Deadheads go to shows for.

And I believe that type of magic exists in most of our cultural and social groupings. And it comes in different ways. And what is that? I'm interesting in studying – what is that for that group? What is the magic that brings together a group of veterans? You may never associate the word "magic" with veterans, but there is some magic there and there is some connection. And also, I'm using "magic" a little metaphorically because I'm using it in terms of, like in dialogue, we talk about the magic of dialogue. And what we're talking about is that connection – it's powerful enough, it has emotion, it has feeling. Yet it also has some sense of legitimacy, and in our society, rationality is legitimacy. So there needs to be some rationality for these feelings. So those are the kinds of things that I am allowed to – not allowed – but I investigate through Deadheads and other types of marginal cultures.

JD: Well you've been really offering interesting insights, and I've been asking questions, and there may be some elements of your work or your life at OSU that we haven't addressed yet that you want to make sure we capture, so I want to give you that opportunity now.

ND: Well, the only thing I really would like to make a brief comment on is going forward. We have such a unique opportunity as we move forward at Cascades, and we take that very seriously, and I want to just speak a little bit about my colleagues here. All the way from our students through our staff through our faculty, just are incredible pioneers, innovators. It goes back to something you and I were discussing off camera which is, most people don't associate OSU-Cascades with – OSU – with innovation, because it's usually thought of as the agricultural school. It's the cow college. And even though we're Land Grant, Sea Grant, Air Grant, Space Grant – only to be in that category with Cornell – we're still not thought of as the kind of progressive, innovative university in the state, until you begin to do your homework and dig and see the types of things.

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And I believe that OSU-Cascades is just yet another example of OSU's entrepreneurial, innovative spirit, its willingness to take a risk and a chance that's based not on hope with no grounding, but on actual evidence that there is a possibility to do something. But it is risky and it does require chance. And people don't associate OSU, I don't believe – at least in my anecdotal experiences – people think of U of O as that school. And I think what we're doing is just another example.

And as I had the opportunity to review some of the other interviews that you have done for this project, I'm even more reminded of how innovative OSU has been in hiring practices, in the people that they've brought aboard to run programs and creating new programs, and the willingness to restructure when things don't work out. And so, I guess for me, I'm honored to have been invited to participate. And I don't guess that, I know that I'm honored to have been asked to participate in this project. I'm honored to be able to contribute to OSU, on-going, for the rest of my life. I feel like OSU is a huge part of my life – a lot of who I am has come from the opportunities I've gained with Oregon State University. And we just really want to make people proud with OSU-Cascades, and I really believe we can do it. I just know that we're up for the challenge and the growth and looking forward. I'm not looking forward to retirement, I can tell you that.

JD: That seems like the perfect note to end on. Thanks for your participation, on behalf of the project.

ND: Thank you very much for inviting me.

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