



Bill Lunch Oral History Interviews, March 23, 2015

Title

“Reflections on OSU and Oregon Politics”

Date

March 23, 2015

Location

Valley Library, Oregon State University.

Summary

Interview 2 focuses on two main themes: Lunch's work in television commentary and his thoughts on individuals who were important to OSU during his association with the university.

The session begins with Lunch's recollections of his involvement with two television shows, *Real Time* and *Seven Days*, both of which were current affairs programs produced by Oregon Public Broadcasting in the 1990s and 2000s. In reflecting on these television shows, Lunch describes the ways in which each evolved and, ultimately, ceased to exist. He also discusses the differing preparations required for an appearance on television as opposed to radio.

From there, Lunch notes the ways in which his commentary work was received on campus, and suggests that the positive reception that he received was in part because the work fit within the spirit of the land grant mission. He also details the resources that he uses to stay informed and offers his low opinion of much of what is published on social media.

The session next turns its attention to prominent local and regional figures, beginning with a post-mortem on the career of John Kitzhaber, who had resigned from the Oregon governorship about one month before the recording of this interview. Lunch describes Kitzhaber's fall as a sad story, pointing out the major impact that the governor had made in many areas, and especially with regard to health care in Oregon.

Lunch then discusses Mark Hatfield's influence on OSU, including the important role that he played in the expansion of the university's marine science center. He likewise discusses former Oregon governor Tom McCall and the history of the McCall Lectureship at OSU.

Other individuals singled out by Lunch as having made a crucial impact on Oregon State in the past three decades include two former university provosts, Graham Spanier and Bill Wilkins, as well as two OSU presidents, John Byrne and Ed Ray. In discussing Byrne and Ray, Lunch points out the very different approaches that the two leaders utilized to respond to the funding dilemmas that they faced.

The interview concludes with Lunch's memories of two former Oregon legislators and OSU faculty members, Cliff Trow and Tony Van Vliet.

Interviewee

Bill Lunch

Interviewer

Chris Petersen

Website

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

Transcript

Chris Petersen: Alright, today is March 23rd 2015, this is our second interview with Bill Lunch, we're in the OSU library and we'll talk about two broad topics that we touched on in our last interview we want to get into a little bit more specifics today. The first one is your experiences as a commentator, which we talked about specific to radio, we didn't talk about television. You were involved with a TV program that was on for a while on OPB, called *Seven Days*.

Bill Lunch: Yes, actually *Seven Days* had a number of predecessors. *Seven Days* probably had the longest run, I imagine it was on the air five, six years, maybe even seven years, I'm not quite sure. I'd have to go back and check the record. But there were predecessors to that, there was a show which was on initial—same thing, it focused on public affairs, political choices, things of that nature, but started well before *Seven Days* did. *Seven Days* came to an end in, as I recall, 2002. It was the recession, the early years of the aughts, between 2000, 2010. And one of the things that got eliminated was the last residual scrap of public funding for OPB. OPB had been operating up to that point with ninety percent, I think it was, or something in that ballpark, of its funding from donors, individuals who joined, corporate support, some from the national government through PBS, but not a lot, and then a little tiny bit of what had been originally the main funding source, so that was the state.

Well, that went away as of 2001 budget year, so in 2002 the funding stream ran out. TV is much more expensive than radio, so that *Seven Days*, which was about as simple as you can get in television, the production costs were virtually nil, but nonetheless you need cameramen and the equipment itself and so on. So, it cost about two hundred thousand dollars a year to put that show on the air. And Morgan Holm, who had a variety of titles, I think of him as the news director, which he's not, he's more elevated than that now, he was a vice president for something or other at OPB, but an extremely talented guy, very, very hard worker, very, very good at what he does. Anyway, Morgan looked and looked for a corporate supporter, other forms of support for *Seven Days*. He tried hard but he just couldn't find the money.

And there has been periodic attempts since 2002 to revive the show, because it was, in a certain group of people in Salem and, to some extent, Portland, who are regularly involved in the political system, it was sort of required viewing every Friday. I think it was on Friday that we did it. And I was one of the regular panelists. There was a rotating group of people who would come on. There was usually, there was a host or a hostess who would anchor the show. Anchor might be a better term. And then there were panelists and I was one of those. I would basically be on there about once a month. In other weeks there would be other folks, you know, week one, week two, week three, and on week four I'd be there. It wasn't as regular as that. Sometimes around election time, because of my disreputable interest in elections and political statistics and things of that nature, I would actually be on more frequently. But then I'd go six weeks without being on, so it wasn't that regular.

Anyway, but to go back to your question, which I'm sort of dancing around here, *Seven Days* was on for I think, let's say, six years. I'm not sure that's right, but before that, there were other shows which had different names, and I can't remember them all. The names kept changing. The first one was called *Real Time* and *Real Time* was on probably, if *Seven Days* left the air in 2002, *Real Time* probably started in something like '90, '91, maybe '92. That's the ballpark, the early nineties. And at that point, I had been serving as OPB's guy in the capitol, I told you about that, I was on sabbatical so I spent six months in Salem reporting to the radio but, as I think about it, it must have been '91, because I think that was when I first went on TV with that show. Then with—but *Real Time* was on for two, three years, something like that, and it had a bunch more interview kind of format, much as we're doing here today, people sitting around a table, sometimes what's called an open set, which means you have a coffee table and you could see the whole person, it wasn't just from the shoulders up. And then they'd have segments; they'd have prepared sort of news segments and it was an hour show rather than half an hour.

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I thought it was quite stimulating, and I think it was, but it just didn't generate a large enough audience, although public broadcasting doesn't have to have the size of audience that commercial broadcasting does by any means, and doesn't, horribly, so the *Downton Abbeyes* of the world aside, normally it does not. But nonetheless, the size of the audience does matter, and so *Real Time* lasted, I'm going to say, three years. I'm not really sure that's right. And then there was—it was followed by another show which had some of the elements of *Seven Days*, the kind of *Washington Week in Review*, four

or five talking heads around a table, format. But the one that was intervening, and I can't remember its name at all, had essentially news stories. A reporter would go out in the field and interview people about topic X, whatever it was, and then would edit the tape that he or she had gotten, and so it would be much more along the lines of what you would see on say the *CBS Evening News*. But there, of course, the reporters are limited to two minutes or I think three minutes now is a long story on the commercial NBC, CBS, ABC news programs.

The advantage of public television is that the reporters could do more extensive stories, so they would go six or seven or sometimes even ten minutes, which is unheard of these days in commercial broadcasts. So, and then they would have, so they very typically, they'd have a reporter doing the story on let's say what the legislature have been doing or what have you, and then they'd come to a panel of talking heads, me included, not every week, this was again on the same rotating cast of characters. So, Hasso Hering, who was the editor then of the *Albany Democrat-Herald*, he was a regular guy on that, and also Mark Zusman from *Willamette Week* who is their managing editor, or maybe editor in chief, I'm not sure what his title is, but Mark has been around Oregon politics and northwest politics for a long time. So, Mark is a liberal and Hasso is a conservative and they try and mix it up and have differing kinds of views, but it wasn't along the lines of *The McLaughlin Report* where people yell at each other. Much more restrained than that.

Finally, they gave up on doing the standard reports that I'm describing to you, the edited kinds of things that you might see a different version on commercial television, and just went to the talking heads, which is the *Washington Week in Review* format. And that seemed to work better. It's kind of funny and, in a sense, sort of strange, but the audience for those shows was always fairly limited. Most people are not that interested in politics, so you're probably talking about a segment of the population and it's maybe ten percent, probably that may be exaggerated, but it's very limited.

You may remember from the classes that you took from me that talk about the stratification pyramid, and there's a small subgroup near the top who pay regular attention to matters like this and who are—and some of them are involved, actually involved in politics. They do things as volunteers or what have you. That group is, at any given moment, three to five percent of the population. If you get something really stimulating going on, like a closely contested presidential election, you might possibly push that out to ten percent, but that's probably an exaggeration. So in Oregon, we have a quite attentive population. So OPB, the radio *Morning Edition*, which is the most listened to radio show, a proportion of the total audience for radio in the morning, has one of the largest in the country. Washington D.C. leads that list because people, this is basically what people do for a living there, whether they're lobbyists or members of the congressional staff or what have you, and so it's understandable.

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It's interesting, the second, at least last time I heard these statistics, these are a few years old so it may be slightly different now, but the second city in terms of audience penetration, which is a term that's used by people in this business for this kind of statistic, is Minneapolis, and then Portland is third, but not far behind Minneapolis. And so, Oregon has, there's a level of interest in public affairs here, which is higher than in most of the country by quite a bit. And it tends to be concentrated in northern cities. It's not an accident that it's Minneapolis; you also have pretty high numbers in Seattle. If you work your way across what's called the northern tier of states, places like Vermont and Wisconsin and Michigan and Minnesota, those sorts of places are where you have consistently the highest levels of public interest and attention to public affairs and public issues.

CP: I'm wondering if there is substantial differences for you and your preparation for radio versus television?

BL: Well, yes and no. There's not any significant difference in terms of the substance of what one needed to know. There probably was a modest difference, but only very modest, in terms of the way that one could express oneself. So, in radio I did, I have done a little tiny bit of training at OPB on sort of how to present oneself, how to make ideas digestible on radio. And there's a good deal of emphasis there on, for example, short sentences. So, if you're writing a script for radio, particularly if you're writing it for somebody else, which I did sometimes, you want to keep the ideas moving along but also simple. I think any given concept should be presented in a sort of quick or relatively quick fashion, whereas on television, because people are watching you, you can go into a more elaborate, more complicated kinds of explanations if you want to do that.

Also because the audience for the television show we knew was, it was substantial, but *Seven Days* we'd have an audience of twenty thousand, thirty thousand. In a really strong week, say in a run-up to an election, it might go to fifty or sixty thousand, whereas *Morning Edition*, which is the most listened to show in a typical period of time on the radio, easily on an ordinary day will have an audience of a hundred thousand. When you get something really interesting going on, such as say, for example, the recent resignation of Governor Kitzhaber, the numbers for *Morning Edition* go up to two hundred thousand. So, it's orders of magnitude larger on radio. But so, the consequence of that was that the audience of the television show you're talking about, *Seven Days* and its predecessors, was more sophisticated. As the audience shrinks, what you get are more involved, attentive, sophisticated folks who are watching. So, in that way it was a little different.

The other thing is that you have to be, you have to pay attention to what you're wearing on television so—because somebody's going to see it. So, I'll just give you an example: You have on a checkered shirt today, which is nice, good colors and all that, but for TV it would not be good because cameras, if you have on a checkered shirt like that, the one – I have one on too, mine isn't quite as bad because it's – the weave is not as tight. I'm not sure I'm pronouncing that or saying that correctly, I'm not a fashion maven, but if you're wearing a shirt such as the one that you have on today, it will, I don't know if you've ever seen this or not, but every once in a while on one of the news networks they'll interview someone that happens to have on a shirt such as the one you've got on, and what happens is the camera can't really focus properly, and so you get this kind of in and out blurriness. I don't know how to describe it. I'm sure there's a technical term for this problem. So, I always, when I was on television, I always wore a light blue but plain shirt, and if I would be wearing a tie, and I always wore ties that didn't have so much pattern in them that they would be distracting. So, there were little things like that.

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CP: Yeah, speaking of technical issues, I'll point out to whomever might watch this, there's some drilling going on in the library unfortunately, it's messing with our audio, but we're fighting through it.

BL: The construction folks are here.

CP: Yeah. How was your commentary work received on campus?

BL: Pretty well. This is a land grant institution, and as I think I mentioned in the first interview, for that reason the idea of reaching out to the public at large went over pretty well here, people liked it, whereas I knew people at and I have a lot of respect for and like the folks down at the U of O where, for all of the kind of silly rivalries, were in the same system of state – state system of higher education as it used to be formerly called. And so, when our budget gets clobbered here at OSU, it does at Eugene as well. But there the Political Science department in particular, but more generally across the campus I think, had a much more, what's the right way to put this? Ambitious view of their role. They envisioned themselves as one of the top twenty Political Science departments in the country, which, some years ago, probably before I got to Oregon, it was, but it was also a department that was riven with internal disputes, some of them just really intense.

And so, lots of people left, and then also the other problem was that, as I'm sure that others in this interview series, other faculty have mentioned to you, the OSU and U of O faculty are both woefully underpaid compared to comparable institutions elsewhere. So, I remember meeting one guy who I went to grad school with who, he was a little bit behind me, a little, not a whole lot, and he took a job and was a very good scholar of the Middle East, and took a job at the U of O for a couple, three years, but his pay was as it is for all of us around here, quite low by comparison with other places. So, he started applying for other jobs because he could see he wasn't going to be able to buy a house on the pay that he had, and he had student loans to pay off, and so he left and went to University of Virginia where they paid you a lot better.

But anyway, so the U of O department has had some really serious problems, but they see themselves as a theoretical sort of above the fray sort of group of scholars. And that has a role, I'm not necessarily disparaging that, but the engagement with the real world that my broadcasting, whether it was TV or radio involved, was something that really would not have gone over well at all in Eugene. And I had no way of knowing that initially. And it was just pure luck that I, in part, I think ninety, ninety-five percent, that I happened to land at a land grant school. I applied here, as I may have mentioned in the first interview, because I had such a good experience the year I taught at Davis, and it's a land grant school, and

I thought, well, that sort of speaks well of such places. And so, I applied for the job here. But it was fortunate for me because I enjoy the public outreach component of this, and on this campus it was well received.

So, as you may know already, Chris, my wife was a member of the central administration for a long period of time, and so we would go to social events at the president's house and this kind of thing every now and again, and whenever I did that just about, the president of the university, whoever it was, would say, "gosh, it's terrific what you're doing on the radio or on TV." So, people here liked it whereas at a lot of campuses I think at the very best folks would look down their nose at it, and in fact it might have been an impediment to promotion or tenure at many institutions. It wasn't that of a – obviously the promotion and tenure process is very complicated and involves, quite frankly, some strange elements that have never made a whole lot of sense to me, but different institutions have different expectations and goals for their faculty, and I was fortunate that I was at a place that valued what I was doing. I think if I had been at a place like Eugene I would have probably had to give it up because it would have been discouraged, but that wasn't the case here, so I was fortunate in that regard.

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CP: I'm wondering about ways of staying informed and how much information has changed, especially in the last decade or two. And obviously you have a need to stay informed out of your own interest, I'm sure, but out of your need to be an informed commentator as well, but information is now so widely available on, for example, Twitter. Is that something you've had to adapt to?

BL: Yeah, to a degree. Less Twitter, and Facebook and so on, which, frankly, I regarded as an invitation to invasion of privacy. I don't mess around with those things unless I absolutely have to. I'll look at them but I don't have a Facebook page for example, which I know is total folly for a whole raft of reasons, but the availability of information on the web, the fact that newspapers now, though some of them such as the *New York Times* have what are called pay walls, nonetheless, you can get to stories from all over the country very, very quickly. So, as an example, in the recent past when we had the governor in trouble and eventually resign, this is now at the time we're doing this interview about a month ago or something like that, I was able to go to *The Washington Post* and other sources in Virginia to read about what happened to the governor there who has within the last six months or eight months been convicted of, essentially, bribery, he and his wife. But the dynamics of the scandal at Virginia, because it involved a governor and his wife, were at least to some extent parallel to what was going on with John Kitzhaber and Cylvia Hayes. And so, it was very easy to get, at least in a preliminary fashion, some familiarity with that situation in Virginia and what happened as a result very quickly.

And so, then at that time when all this happened, reporters had my name and I always, when developments occur in Oregon that have national visibility, I get lots and lots of calls. And I was able to draw out the parallels and contrasts between the situation of Kitzhaber and Hayes here versus the governor, former governor, a guy named McDonnell, in Virginia. And that was pretty easy to do. So, in some ways it's easier to gather information. The other thing that goes on, however, is that there are just more sources of opinion, essentially, blogs in which this one and that one bloviates about whatever their particular topic may be, whatever axe they have to grind. So, there's a great deal of silly things and stuff that it's best to ignore that shows up on the web as well. You have to sort through. The positive side is that more information's available, the negative side is that most of it is junk that it's best not to pay much attention to.

CP: Yeah. Well, you touched on this a bit, but I would be remiss if I didn't ask you about what it was like for you to experience the decline and fall of John Kitzhaber, who seemed bulletproof in this state for so long.

BL: I think it's just a terribly, terribly sad story and is a tragedy in the Greek sense of the word. That is to say, this is a guy who reached for the stars and fell as a result of it. John has been an important figure in Oregon politics for decades, first as president, presiding officer of the state senate and then as governor, and he got to that role as governor in a most unlikely fashion, in a way.

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And he was able to persuade the legislature, which included, at the time that he did this initially, lots and lots of republicans, but was able to persuade legislators, some of whom had very different ideological views than his, that expansion of public healthcare through what's called the Oregon Health Plan, which nationally is Medicaid, that it was

a good idea to expand the coverage in Oregon Health Plan. And it is literally the case, I am not exaggerating, there are hundreds of thousands of people, most of them single moms with kids, who have some, it's not perfect, but some form of health insurance as a result of what John did, who otherwise would not have it.

The numbers bounce around and they also vary according to where the state budget is, sometimes it's more, sometimes it's less, but pretty much consistently since the Oregon Health Plan got rolling, which is really in about, depending on how you count, '93, '94, somewhere in there, there have been at least a hundred thousand and oftentimes as many as two hundred thousand people. Two hundred thousand is more than five percent of the state's population who are covered, they have some form of health insurance because of the expansion of the Medicaid system now called the Oregon Health Plan—that's what John named it—as a result of what he did.

And that was not why he got into politics. He was an emergency room doctor, obviously has experience as a physician, he's also just in terms of raw intellectual horsepower, I've met lots and lots and lots of politicians in the career I've had, more than I can count; he is one of the two smartest people, just in terms of raw intellectual horsepower, I've ever met in politics. Brilliantly smart, could have done all kinds of things. And the reason, if you asked him, which I did, I interviewed him a number of times and when I was in the capital in '91, among other times, I asked him why he got involved in politics, because I'm interested in that question for anybody who's involved. And he said, "well it wasn't"—he immediately responded—"it wasn't because of healthcare," which is by that time what he was coming to be known for; said "I was mostly interested in environmental issues."

And he did do, he's done a lot of things on the environmental front as well, most notably a very complex salmon recovery plan, which started here in Oregon, involved the national government, because there are national issues having do with the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act, there's a number of national pieces of legislation which have bearing on this. And then Washington state joined up and, to some extent, California has as well, so all three of the west coast states but particularly Oregon and Washington. That's the Oregon Salmon Plan, which doesn't get nearly as much attention. But he has been very much involved and very serious about environmental policy, in a variety of ways, ever since he became involved with politics, getting elected initially to the state house from, of all places, Douglas County, which is where Roseburg is. It's not a place that would necessarily elect a Democrat anymore; in the days when he got elected in the late seventies, it was possible and he did that. And then he was a state senator from there for a long time.

His interest in and concern about environmental policy is what put him in touch, in a certain sense, with Cylvia Hayes. And as it has turned out, that was his undoing, although it took a long time to unfold. They've been a couple since 2004, so that's a period of ten, eleven, maybe twelve years. But she clearly did not understand the limits that normally are thought to be applicable to essentially the spouse of a public official at a high level. And anyone who's watching this has the capacity, we're talking about available information. This is March 23rd, *The Oregonian* for March 22nd had a front page story about the inside dynamics, what happened sort of day by day, almost hour by hour in the last period of time when Kitzhaber was governor and what led up to his resignation. And so, folks can read that if they're interested in details.

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But it's an ugly outcome for a politician who has done lots of good things for literally, no exaggeration, hundreds of thousands of people, and most of whom, if you said to most of the people who got health insurance coverage from the Oregon Health Plan "who is John Kitzhaber?" I would be surprised if half of them would know who he is. And that's because these are people who are very vulnerable, they are as a group not very attentive, they're usually probably, well in a state like this it's not entirely fair. I was going to say they're not usually voters but in this state, the level of voter participation in Oregon is high enough they might be. But a much higher fraction of the people who are covered by the Oregon Health Plan than we would normally see in a profile of Oregon voters are non-voters, because they don't register to very vote and if they do, if they are registered, they'll forget to cast a ballot. So, these are people who are marginal in terms of their involvement in society and economically they're obviously very vulnerable. So, I have a lot of regard for Kitzhaber, and what has happened to him strikes me as being very in the tradition of the Greek tragedy.

CP: Well, let's switch over to OSU a little bit more, and in some emails that we sent back and forth I had asked you to think about folks that you felt had made an impact on the university during your time here, and one of the people that you mentioned in our correspondence is Mark Hatfield, and I was interested to see that.

BL: Yeah, what happened there, the reason I mentioned Mark Hatfield is that when I got here, it was 1984, and it was very soon after, in fact it may have been that year but it was maybe the year before, that what had been called the Newport Marine Science Center, the name was changed to the Hatfield Marine Science Center, out in Newport. And I had a notion of what had gone on there, but I did some investigation. I was just curious, and I discovered what had occurred was in 1981, the Republicans took—Ronald Reagan was elected president and the Republicans took control of the US senate for the first time in quite a while. Hatfield was the senior Republican, what's called the ranking member, on the Republican side, and then when his party, the Republican Party, gained control of the senate, he became the chairman of the appropriations committee in the senate, which is a very powerful position.

Well, the Reagan administration in its first budget in 1981 proposed the outright elimination of a whole raft of federal programs, among them the Sea Grant Program, which is at the heart of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA as it is called. But NOAA is the agency that John Byrne headed before he became president of OSU. It's also the organization that Jane Lubchenco from here was the administrator, the head honcho in the first term of the Obama administration. So, OSU has an important link to and connection to NOAA.

Within NOAA, if you look at their budget, I can't remember what it is, it's eighty-five, ninety percent, a very, very large fraction of the budget, at least as it regards the oceans, they also have an atmospheric component, so the Weather Bureau is part of what they do, and that's kind of separate, but on the ocean side, most of the budget there is for the Sea Grant program. Well, back to the Reagan Administration, they proposed just elimination of the Sea Grant program, along with a bunch of other things. And at that time, as I say, Hatfield was chairman of the Center of Appropriations Committee and there was also another modern Republican from Connecticut, a guy named Lowell Weicker, who was in an influential position on a different committee, but nonetheless. And the two of them, Weicker and Hatfield, but Hatfield really was the leader on this, said to the Reagan Administration "you can cut the budget," and they did, they cut the budget twenty-five percent, so it was a very substantial reduction, "but you can't eliminate the program."

So, for the folks out on the coast at what is now called the Hatfield Marine Science Center, the reason it's there and the reason it's part of OSU and has been able to sustain itself, obviously after the assault by the Reagan administration, the Sea Grant program was able to regain some of its budget and all of the—it's not as large as it was at one time, it's nonetheless an important presence and it does important research that matters to fishermen and coastal communities and lots of folks. So, Hatfield is responsible—and the naming of the research institute in Newport is a reflection of that importance—for the continuance, maintaining an important research function that is very closely associated with this institution.

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And I'll tell one last little snippet on this, which is kind of amusing, I kind of teased out, I figured out what had happened. I'm sufficiently disreputable, I can sort of figure out the way in which the back and forth kind of went on that, and so I called soon after I got here, within a year or something, maybe even less, by the time I arrived at OSU I called the director's office out at the Hatfield Marine Science Center and I said "I'm interested in why you changed the name." And of course they didn't want to admit that it was because Hatfield had saved their bacon and basically without him they would have disappeared, but I got some poor woman who was an administrative assistant to the director or something and she was just absolutely flabbergasted at the question and had a terrible time responding. And she eventually said "well, uh, because he was governor," which he had been. Nonsense, but it was funny. I sort of felt bad afterwards, that I had posed this very awkward question to this poor woman who obviously had nothing to do with it. But that was Hatfield's significance to the institution, has to do with sustaining an important component of its research mission and outreach to the coastal communities. The Sea Grant program does a lot in that regard as well.

And then you had asked me, I will have to get going fairly soon, but you had asked me to think about other people who were important to the institution, obviously OSU is a sufficiently prominent institution in the state, that there's been a relationship to all the governors. The whole length of time that I've been here I was involved in helping to organize what is called the McCall Lectures, a long story having to do with when Tom McCall left the governorship and actually came here for a very short time, I think only about six months, as a faculty member and taught courses and complained that he would give what he thought was a terrific speech, which probably was, and the students wouldn't even applaud. He found being a professor very unsatisfying, and so he left.

But there had been money raised, and not a lot but enough to pay his salary for a while, and there was still some of that left over, so the money that was left over was turned into an endowment for a—and McCall died not too terribly much ago, about five years after the events I'm describing, maybe six, but something like that, and so at his death, the funds that had been raised for basically to support him as a faculty member were turned into an endowment for a lecture, and we had a number of prominent people. Every time a new governor would be elected, so Barbara Roberts in 1990, for example, John Kitzhaber in 1994, but every time we get a new governor, we would invite that person to give essentially a kind of semi-inaugural address. There'd be a formal inaugural address in Salem, of course, usually in January at the time, or when the person was sworn into office.

But this was an opportunity usually in the spring to kind of step back from the required remarks in the capital and to say something more, we would hope more profound. Some did, I mean the record of the governors on that is mixed. Some of them really did take it seriously and did a quite good job of describing their goals for the state, which is essentially what we wanted them to do. Others essentially brushed up an old campaign speech and gave it again. So, Neil Goldschmidt was in the latter category of went to an old campaign speech. But Kitzhaber really took it seriously and gave a quite thoughtful address, particularly about the environment and healthcare, the things he really cares about the most. So, we've had, as I say, a mixed record on that.

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But the McCall Lecture was a good forum, I think. It still is a good forum. And it's held annually and there have been a variety of interesting speakers who have some intimate knowledge of Oregon politics. And originally we were trying to do it with folks who knew McCall or had some involvement with him. That, as time has gone by, that's obviously become less and less possible to do. But, and I, since I've now retired, and even before I was retired, I left the role of being coordinator of the McCall Lecture, but I was involved with it for a long time.

So, that's been, the relationship with the governors has been an ongoing one for OSU and has helped the institution, I think, in important ways. Other people who I've thought about were a couple of provosts, Graham Spanier, in particular, who then went on to become president of the University of Nebraska and then later Penn State, which is where he always wanted to go, and he's now in some trouble there. But when Spanier was here as provost, he did things to make it more likely, more possible in a way, for faculty in my college, College of Liberal Arts, to actually do research and publication and so, which we expect of faculty members. Prior to that time, the teaching load in CLA had been so heavy that it was not entirely impossible, but it was very, very difficult for folks to do research and writing and so on. So, Spanier changed the internal dynamics and rules at OSU, also ratcheted up the expectations for faculty in that college. And I think, as a result of that, got better recruits. People were, folks who otherwise might have gone to other institutions were willing to come here in some cases, even though the pay was pretty lousy. There was a time when housing was inexpensive. That's no longer the case, but that helped for a while.

Another important provost was, at least for me, from my perspective, was a guy who had been dean of my college, Bill Wilkins, who became provost for a while, Wilkins had goals to become the president of the university somewhere and applied for a number of those positions but didn't ever achieve that. But I think here, internally again, Wilkins was an important figure in terms of the relationship between liberal arts and to—the liberal arts are in a particularly weak position because it's not quite impossible but it's very difficult for people at liberal arts, as a rule, to raise external funds.

And that's kind of one of the important rubrics that's used in evaluation of faculty, how much outside money has Professor X brought in. And occasionally somebody will be able to do that. I, for example, I was involved at one point in a study for the US Parks Department, having to do with the role of or the challenges raised by animal rights activists relative to the policies that the Parks Department has, regarding certain animals. And so, I generated a little tiny sliver of outside funding, but it wasn't very much and it's not something that people in fields such as sociology or political science or certainly English or history can do at all easily. In the sciences field, such as chemistry and math, it is possible—or physics—it is possible to generate external funds. And that's done fairly extensively in the College of Science. But they've had some really serious budget problems because even with that they weren't able to fully meet their budgetary targets.

So, those two colleges, the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Science, have been the ones that have been the most vulnerable when budget cuts have come, which has been a regular feature of the—I was on the faculty here for twenty-seven years and it seemed like twenty-seven years of budget cuts; that's not true, it was probably twenty to twenty-seven

years or something like that, but we were constantly barraged with budget reductions from the state. And last time when we did the first interview, I talked about why that is, the dynamic that's going on for all universities, public universities around the country that are driving them more and more towards raising their own funds, on one hand by tuition and then on the other, another is with external research funding.

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So, if you look then at the College of Oceanography, something like ninety-plus percent of their budget comes from NOAA and the federal government. In forestry it's not as high as that, but the Forest Service provides a very big chunk of the budget for the College of Forestry. So, there are certain—Pharmacy, there's a lot of external funding for pharmacists—so, there are certain colleges here, quite prominent ones, that raise a lot of external money, and OSU has the highest, just in broad dollar amounts, of external funding for various academic units of any institution, way more than the University of Oregon, which is a very good research university, I'm not disparaging what they do in Eugene, but I think the ratio is two to one or maybe more than two to one between the research, the externally funded research budget here versus Eugene.

So, what that means though, internally, is that the colleges that raise less external funding, certainly the one I was in, College of Liberal Arts, and even College of Science, though they can raise a fair amount that way, suffer in terms of the internal power struggles that go on here. And so that's been an ongoing problem and continues to be one. So, Wilkins and Spanier, I think Spanier in particular but Wilkins in some sense carried it on, were able to reduce the vulnerability of liberal arts and science to some degree, not entirely.

Other people who have been important, I think of the distinction between the approaches to budgetary problems of John Byrne, who was the president when Measure 5, the initial property tax limitation measure had passed in November of 1990, that hit all of the higher educational institutions starting with the budget in 1991. And Byrne's response was to say "we're going to shrink and we're going to do well what we do, but we're not going to try and do everything." And so a number of programs and departments were just eliminated in the period between '91 and '93; we have a two-year budget cycle here. So, that was one approach and OSU shrank down at that time to about thirteen thousand students. When arrived here it was more like fifteen, sixteen thousand. So, that was a noticeable reduction. This is all undergraduates. Grad students are mainly externally funded, and so those numbers bounce around a little bit but they're not nearly as up and down, as volatile as the undergraduate numbers.

Jump forward over a couple of presidencies and you get to Ed Ray, who's an economist, and his insight, which is pretty straightforward, is the size of classes can grow, you're still just paying one faculty member, even if you have to help the faculty member out with a teaching assistant. If you have sixty students in a class instead of thirty, it is much more economical in a certain sense, and if you have raised the tuition, which we have done under the pressure of all of these budget reductions that I'm describing, it's possible for the institution, by growing its undergraduate population, to get itself in better shape in terms of the budget. Now, it's harder on the faculty because the size of the classes grows, and it's harder really on the students, though they don't usually recognize this, because they're in a class of sixty instead of in a class of thirty. But if you come to an institution as a freshman where even the upper division classes are sixty instead of thirty, you never knew that there was anything differently from that, nor did your parents, and that's an important component in all of this.

So, Ed Ray's response to the budgetary problems—and it's, being president of a university, I've got a friend who was a very prominent political scientist and eventually ended up as the president of one of the very well-regarded liberal arts colleges not too far from here, and he once said at a meeting where I was present that the role of a president of a college or a university is to be a beggar in relatively nice clothes, but who's out with the tin cup and lives in a nice house. And I thought that was a pretty good description. And so, presidents of universities or colleges, whatever it is, are constantly preoccupied with raising money and sustaining the institution on that front.

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So, I understand why they do what they do, but the response, the institutional response of John Byrne on one end of this continuum versus Ed Ray on the other, has been very, very different. And I'm not sure which of them has the better answer. There are problems and tensions and difficulties associated with both approaches, and because I'm no longer

actively on the faculty, I'm not sure what a typical faculty member would say about Ed Ray. He's a pretty popular figure externally, I'm not so sure about internally. But as I say, I'm no longer in a position to say very much.

But the, I think the contrast between what Byrne did and what Ed Ray has done is pretty striking and if somebody fifty years from now or something like that is writing an institutional history of OSU, they will be able to look back and say "well, here's how the institution evolved because of these budget"—I mean this is all being driven by budgetary pressures. That's what drives a very, very large fraction, probably most, of what causes higher educational institutions to change and evolve and so on. It's not, institutionally, it's not easy.

I'm going to have to go here pretty quick.

CP: Okay. Well, I just want to ask you about two more people, operators in Salem that are well-known around here, one of them being Cliff Trow and the other being Tony Van Vliet, both of whom we've interviewed for this project.

BL: Right. And Cliff and Tony are both friends of mine and both very good guys. Cliff, as you know, is a Democrat, Tony is a Republican, but the Republican of the type, such as Mark Hatfield or Tom McCall, who we've mentioned, moderate to liberal Republicans. And when I came to town, Tony was the state representative and Cliff was the state senator. And I actually, I was teaching a class on legislative politics, I invited them with absolutely no expectation whatsoever that either of them would show up, it was really *pro forma*, and they both immediately said "yeah sure, I'll come." And they did a presentation together and they were clearly good friends, although they had some differences, but they were good friends who worked together. And so, Cliff and Tony are figures who, for a long period of time, many decades here, had a lot of influence in Salem on behalf of OSU. Different kinds of folks, in terms of their personalities, but worked together very well and, as I say, one was a Republican, one was a Democrat.

I think, viewed historically, the more important figure is probably Tony because he represents what used to be the old form, for want of a better term, in Oregon of what the Republicans were like. Moderate Republicans have a level of respect and regard for how the market works but they also recognize that there are some things that the market can't do very well and they're open to some flexibility on those kinds of questions, particularly education. The types of republicans who I've mentioned, Ronald Reagan and the attempt to eliminate NOAA or most of the budget of NOAA, as an example. And the successors to Reagan in the Republican Party have adopted positions which are very hostile towards public sector enterprises of various kinds.

And that's not, it's not the only factor at all but it's one of the things that helps to explain why institutions such as Oregon State and the University of Oregon and Portland State, all of the schools in what I still call the state system of higher education have had some of the problems that they have had. But I don't want to claim that's a partisan matter, because it's going on all over the country. And to go back to John Kitzhaber for just a moment, Kitzhaber was asked when he was here on campus, I don't think I was the one who asked him, but somebody asked him about the budget for Oregon State being such trouble, and similarly for other institutions in the state system, and he essentially put it much more elegantly than this, but he essentially said "look, you guys are smart and you have lots of other sources of funding, both from the national government and from student tuition. I am very supportive of what you do, I think it's very important, but you're on your own, because we've got poor people who need health care and we've got other needs, we've got to keep the K through 12 system going, which is very expensive, so I applaud you, I'm in favor of what you're doing, good luck."

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