



Jim Edmunson Oral History Interview, November 10, 2014

Title

“Oregon State During Turbulent Times”

Date

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Location

Valley Library, Oregon State University.

Summary

In the interview, Edmunson discusses his family background and upbringing in Lane County, Oregon, his interests as a boy, and his decision to attend Oregon State University.

The primary focus of the session is Edmunson's recollections of his years as an OSU undergraduate. In this, he comments on his academic progression and his living arrangements. Of particular note are Edmunson's reflections on his work with the *Daily Barometer* newspaper. He describes his initial involvement with the paper, outlines his advancement within the newsroom, and speaks of faculty and fellow students who made an impact on him as a young journalist. He also shares his memories of covering student unrest during the Vietnam War era, and of coordinating the *Barometer's* reporting on the murder of OSU student Nancy Wyckoff in February 1972. He likewise shares his perspective on other important moments on campus during the early 1970s - including the first Earth Day celebrations - and the broader culture of the *Barometer* newsroom during his years of affiliation.

From there, Edmunson outlines his professional career in journalism, noting stints working at the *East Oregonian* and *Daily Astorian*. He then provides an overview of his work as a lawyer, public servant and political party leader, describing his accomplishments as a member of the Oregon legislature, his activities as chair of the Democratic Party of Oregon, and his contacts with national leaders within the Democratic party. The interview ends with notes on Edmunson's family.

Interviewee

Jim Edmunson

Interviewer

Mike Dicianna

Website

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

Transcript

Mike Dicianna: Well, today is Monday, November 10th, 2014, and we're at the OSU Valley Library, in the Wilson Room, and we're going to interview one of the members of the class of 1974, Mr. Jim Edmunson, an individual that has a long history with the university and with the OSU *Barometer*. Well, basically, what we like to start with always is to come up with a kind of brief biographical sketch of a person, like where were you born, and your elementary days, that type of thing.

Jim Edmunson: Okay. Well, I was born in Eugene, in 1951. I'm a sixth-generation Oregonian. The Edmunsons came to Oregon in 1845. I actually have several Oregon Trail ancestors, including one who signed the Oregon Constitution. We've been in Lane County since 1851, 100 years before I was born. I grew up on a farm south of Springfield that my great-grandfather farmed—hops, originally, and one of the first hop yards in Lane County, and then fruit. So when I was growing up, we had cherries and agricultural crops. And I went—I lived there until I was in about the fifth grade, and then we moved to Junction City, where I ended up graduating from high school.

MD: So what did you want to be when you grew up?

JE: Well, I guess I thought I was going to be a farmer, because that's what everybody in my family did, but my grandfather and his sisters sold our land [laughs], and so I was something about the sixth grade, realized, "Oh, boy! I guess I better think of something else." Actually, was very interested in biology, and my dad gave me a microscope when I was in grade school. I remember getting water out of the ditch and looking at the little organisms in it, and I was fascinated by that. So I was very interested in the sciences. But when I got into high school, I got involved in the student newspaper, and I always was a writer and a reader, and that—one thing led to another, and I was the editor of my high-school newspaper. And it was—the late '60s were a tumultuous time to be in high school, or anywhere in this country, so sort of the bug bit me.

MD: So what influenced your decision actually to go to Oregon State? Were you looking at other universities?

JE: Well, my father died in November of my senior year of high school. Up to that point, I expected—I didn't know what I really did expect. Like most kids, I was a good athlete. I had offers to go to play football, and also in track and field. I was a long-jumper and sprinter. Steve Prefontaine was a contemporary of mine. I knew Steve fairly well. But after my dad died, I pretty much was seventeen and on my own, so I realized I better come up with another plan besides sports. So, fortunate to obtain a Georgia Pacific Foundation scholarship to attend any university I wanted to, full ride, and I started looking at schools.

Oregon, at the time—the journalism program at Oregon was an excellent program, but there was—I was from that area, so I didn't really want to go there. I wanted to spread my wings, and Corvallis was 25 miles away, so I thought, "Well, I could go all the—I could go there!" And living in Junction City, I was very familiar with Corvallis. And they had a technical journalism program that very much interested me, and I had discovered a love of horticulture. So that's what I started in. The degree program didn't last as long as I did, and eventually I realized that I was more interested in the journalism side, so my degree ended up being in liberal studies. I was very impressed at the time by Oregon State's liberal arts program, and Dean Gilkey was a very impressive man, and I just felt comfortable here. And it was a good decision. I was able to keep [0:05:00]—help my mom, and my younger brother and sister, and not too far away, but still, I wasn't living at home.

MD: So you enrolled at OSU and became a Beaver. Now, you said that you basically started with technical journalism, but quickly realized that news reporting and photography was more to your liking. Wasn't that part of the journalism program? Or was it that you were going to specialize in—?

JE: Yes, yes, we really had a—it's almost like a dual degree, where I had a science emphasis in horticulture, but a science curriculum and then a journalism curriculum, and I absolutely loved the journalism program. The professors there were just wonderful. I was excited about it. I don't think I struggled in science, but it was clear that it wasn't in my blood.

MD: Yeah, your direction-

JE: And photography was just exciting, and Professor Zwahlen, Fred Zwahlen—we called him "Casper"—taught a photo, "Introduction to Photography" class, where we had to go around campus and take pictures of statues, and things like that. And I've never had so much fun in my life! And I just really was in love with it. In fact, I tried to get all of my friends to take the class, two of whom were Dennis Dimick and Chris Johns, who both went on to great things at *National Geographic*. And we were just—we were taking pictures of everything and everybody. I'm sure people were very irritated with us.

MD: So, as a freshman, you were having these science classes, but as well you were still involved with the journalism from the word go—

JE: Right. Right.

MD: —coming into college. What kind of a schedule did you have? Was it crazy?

JE: Well, it was. Actually, it was particularly crazy for me, because my first term, I became—I contracted an illness and had to drop out, and so the university allowed me to withdraw from my classes, and then I started up again in winter. But by then I was mid-sequence, so I was taking the second term classes that I really hadn't taken the first term. And that was a struggle. I ended up taking—I remember in particular an Archaeology—I mean, excuse me, an Anthropology series, and a Horticulture series, and then I had to go back and take the first class last. But I really learned a lot, and to this day, horticulture and anthropology are two of my favorite subjects, and I'm a huge History Channel buff, because I understand that part. Later on, when it was pretty obvious that the science piece wasn't working for me, and I went into the liberal studies program, I continued to take classes in the social sciences. And so I took a lot of those, and a very well-rounded education. I'm very proud of it.

MD: Lot of history classes?

JE: Oh, yes. American history, primarily, political science and the history of politics, the history of religion, art history. Home economics—amazing! Pharmacology, I studied. Meteorology. These were more science, but it all seemed to fit into my world, and that was—the focus of the liberal-arts degree was to explore the world, sort of beginning as the world I knew, and expanding it out to this world that I had no idea existed.

MD: And that's the big thing with liberal arts. Ben Franklin said a true gentleman must have a liberal arts degree.

JE: Well, there's a saying that a liberal arts degree won't guarantee you a good job, but it will guarantee that you know the difference between a good job and a bad job. [Laughs]

MD: So what were your living arrangements while you were in college? Did you pledge a fraternity?

JE: Oh, no. No, no. I was what was called a GDI, and a "Gosh-Darn Independent," but that wasn't the exactly the words we used. For those who—most of us in my generation remember the movie *Animal House* [0:10:00], and that's actually a pretty accurate depiction of what the fraternity culture was at that time. Fraternities were undergoing a huge change socially, and a lot of us viewed them as sort of stodgy old—our dads' and moms' generation. In the '60s, that was the last thing we wanted to be. So I lived in Finley Hall, and that's where I met Dennis Dimick, and Dennis and I became very good friends. Dennis pledged his fraternity; I believe it was Sigma Nu, as did Chris, and, later, the editor of the *Barometer*, Christian Anderson—known as "Kit" then, Kit Anderson—they were all in the Sigma Nu. And they were great guys, and I think had it worked out differently, I would have probably pledged there, but I didn't. And like I say, the first term of school my freshman year, I was ill, and so I wasn't really on campus.

MD: Mm-hm. What other activities were you involved with? I know that your life was revolving around the *Barometer*.

JE: Well, that was my introduction. I came from a small town, and lived in a rural area, so I really felt like a sponge, just trying to absorb things, and figure out classes, and girls, and all of that. I believe it was in the spring of my freshman year, my second term on campus—I wanted to work on the newspaper; I knew that, because I loved that in high school. So I pitched a job to them, to be the intramural sports columnist. Now, it was just—I was so proud of that, that I thought I was arrived—a Pulitzer was just around the corner! [Laughs] And so I threw my whole energy into covering intramural sports,

and the rest, as they say, is history. But that introduced me—Mike Chamness became the editor of the *Barometer*. Mike was a wonderful—is a wonderful man, and gave me—the next year, I was a reporter and a photographer. I took a lot of—

MD: Yeah, I've seen your byline on a number of the photographs.

JE: Right. And so I did both, and then eventually became a campus editor, and edited the *Barometer* one term, the summer term between, I believe, my junior and senior—the years blend after this many decades. [Laughs]

MD: Well, you do; you have this huge history with one of the—this campus institution, the *Barometer*, which has been around since the late 1800s. And so I mean, people who work on the *Barometer*, is that kind of a fraternity, "friends forever" type thing, where you maintain—?

JE: We are.

MD: Kind of a brotherhood?

JE: Steve Clark, I know, is back on campus now, and Steve and I were on the staff together. And Anderson is the publisher of the *Oregonian* now, although I don't see him much. In the earlier years, we were quite close. I think what—journalists, students who were interested in journalism at that time had, really, two choices: Oregon, with the *Oregon Daily Emerald*, and then Oregon State, with its program, which was very robust. But the *Oregon Daily Emerald* was going—had went through a huge upheaval, going independent from the University of Oregon because of what they perceived as censorship. And Grattan Kerans and Ron Eachus were editors of the paper, and Ron became the student body president, and it became—the journalism program at Oregon, for lack of a better word—and this is probably not fair—"radicalized," and became much more like the Berkeley newspaper. And at that time, it was very much of an activist newspaper.

For lack of an alternative, in a many ways, Oregon State acquired many journalism students who probably would have gone to the University of Oregon, and we just felt that we wanted to study journalism. We wanted to understand the mechanics, and the ethics, and the process of journalism as a social science. [0:15:00] And I just didn't feel comfortable with the direction that Oregon's program was going at that time. And so it seemed like a perfect fit here. I liked the campus. I mean, it was a wonderful environment to be a student. And I liked the fact that they taught us journalism without any slants or angles. I have many good friends who are alumna of the *Oregon Daily Emerald*. In fact, I later, in law school at Oregon, was the chairman of the board of the *Oregon Daily Emerald*, so I'm a proud alum of both. I'm a Platypus.

MD: Yeah, there you go. Yeah. Well, you did speak a little bit about Dean Gordon Gilkey. He is one of our famous emeritus.

JE: We didn't know that at the time.

MD: Yes, well, at the time he was dean, Dean Gilkey. Give us some reflections about him. I always like to hear about these big names.

JE: When I decided to migrate away from technical journalism, and Professor Zwahlen, who had really become a friend—I can't tell you how fondly we held, we thought of him—he arranged a meeting for me to go see the dean about changing my major. And I had no idea why he was doing this; I had no idea that this was an important meeting. It was just, Casper said go see the dean and talk to him, and then we'll take care of it.

And so I did, and the impression he made on me is of this deep wisdom. He talked to me about me, about my life, my interests. We just had a conversation like we're having here, and he would smile knowingly, almost like seeing your childhood doctor, where they'd just say, "I think you're going to be okay." And that meant a great deal to me. It gave me confidence. And I'm a very curious person, and I really was just bursting with questions about the world, and he just encouraged me, and he said, "I think this is a good choice." And he didn't—he sort of validated my decision that sciences weren't my passion, and I felt like I knew him, and he knew me, and it was just a meeting. He was always a presence on campus, and he was there, but he wasn't an activist academic. He was very—he was a man of great peace and compassion, and we felt very warm in his presence.

One particular time I recall really clearly. I completed my degree in the summer term of 1973, and degrees were only conferred once a year back then. And I had a job in Pendleton, as a reporter, as sports of the Pendleton *East Oregonian*, and I was all ready to move my family. I was married at the time, with a child on the way. And they did the typical degree audit, where you go through and you make sure that you've met all the institutional requirements, and I came up an hour short. So I went to Professor Zwahlen, and I said—I was just panicked. "I've got a job! I've got to move. What am I going to do?" And he says, "Go talk to the dean."

So I made another appointment, and went in to see the dean, and by then I was fairly well known on campus. I'd worked on the *Beaver*, on the yearbook. I'd worked, of course, on the *Barometer*, and I was on the publications committee for the university, and so I was involved in the university. So he asked me about, "What have you been doing outside the university?" And I'd worked at that Albany *Democrat Herald*. I'd worked—I'd been a stringer for the Associated Press and for the *Oregonian*. I'd worked at the *Gazette Times*, and was really a working journalist by then. And he said, "Did you ever think of getting extra credit for that work experience?" And I was amazed! [0:20:00] I thought, "Well, I was paid." Not very much, but I never occurred to me. And he said, "I think we can confer your degree." And I shook his hand, and I walked out of there, and it was like the clouds parted and the sun came down. But it was this—I was totally confident in myself, and I think Dean Gilkey was a big part of that.

MD: Well, it's wonderful to hear, because I've learned about so many people we have buildings named after now, with the alumni that I've spoken with, and how they knew them, and this is always real special for me.

JE: Yeah.

MD: Yeah, you spoke about the publications committee. I was doing research about the *Beaver* for our new online *Beaver*—the *Beaver's* now online. And I find that during the '70s, it was a time when yearbooks were falling away. They were being—now, is that part of this committee? Was that part of this discussion? Was the *Beaver* ever in jeopardy of being discontinued?

JE: Oh, I think so. It was almost an afterthought, and I was approached—my senior year, I was working at the *Democrat Herald* as a photographer, in Albany. I was pretty much out of campus publications then, and I was approached by the editor to be the copy editor of the *Beaver*, and so I did that. That was my role. I really—all I did was read the proofs, and go through them. And I'm an editor. I check spellings of names and everything. I'm a very, very meticulous person. And so it was—there wasn't a vitality. And it was like, "What's the point?" And that was the mood of the campus, too. We weren't here for *Animal House* and football games.

Don't get me wrong. We loved our football, and sports in general, but there was a sense of greater purpose on the campus, that we were changing the world, and the annual represented, again, like, our parents' generation. And it was, like, the memories we were going to have of that, of our years at Oregon State, were not going to be bound up in a book of coeds smiling, and lettermen flexing muscles. It was just really an interesting time. At the same time, the *Barometer* was thriving, as we very much were—again, I think under the leadership of M. Christian Anderson, in front of Kit's leadership, we were a real newspaper. We were a morning newspaper. Those days, most all newspapers were afternoon papers, and we scooped them regularly. And we were very much professional journalists who happened to also be college students.

MD: Well, you were such a huge part of the *Barometer* during some of the most turbulent times here on campus, as well as within the nation, and I'm kind of interested in your reporting, and your student protests, and the changing society, and that type of thing. But before we get more specific about those issues, how you feel the editorial policy of the OSU newspaper changed and adapted to those times? And was it your personal editorial policy, as well?

JE: That's a great question, and really highlights the difference between what was happening at our sister university in Eugene. There, the university administration—at least the students perceived—was censoring and attempting to direct the policy of the student newspaper. And as a result, the *Oregon Daily Emerald* became one of the first college newspapers in America to be an independent newspaper, and solely responsible for its own—it never left campus. It's still on the MU, EMU offices, but it separated itself journalistically from the administration.

At Oregon State, we were very much aware of that, and Ron Eachus and Grattan Kerans visited myself and Mike Chamness, before [0:25:00]—well, he was before Kit became the editor. And really, there was a big discussion about

whether Oregon State should also follow that mode, that direction. [Sighs] I guess we didn't feel the yoke of the administration. Robert MacVicar was the president. He had great respect for students, and he trusted us, and there was none of this paternal, "Dad telling the teenager to cut his hair" kind of an attitude. We decided that we were able to practice journalism, as students, without being told what was right and wrong. The university trusted our judgment. This goes back to what I was saying about Dean Gilkey. We felt comfortable. We felt that we were confident. And nothing shakes a young man's confidence more than to have an adult tell them, "You're wrong. Don't do this. You're stupid. Do it this way. Do as I say, not as I do" kind of a thing. There's none of that at Oregon State.

And we were very sensitive, though, to our responsibility as journalists. And again, the curriculum we had in the Journalism Department was of ethical, traditional American journalism. And so it was natural that we would be critical, and we were aggressive, as a newsgathering organization. And for sure, people didn't like some of the things that we wrote, but they were about—that we were very careful to always make sure that our sources were good, that they were accurate. This was the era where Watergate was beginning to break, and it was just a different climate. Had the administration at Oregon State been more oppressive, or oppressive at all, I have no doubt that the *Barometer* would have spun off. And so we kind of were in a partnership with our colleagues at Oregon to see how the two newspapers were going to function, and I'm proud to say that for different reasons and different campuses, we both did well.

MD: I have read the *Barometer* from era to era extensively, and there's an edginess to some of the stories, and it's such a mirror into the society of the day, and the issues of the day, but brought down to a campus-wide level. And that's one of the things that I'd like to look at, is: what was campus like? What was the mood on the campus for the Vietnam War? And how did we compare to the radical University of Oregon? I've heard from a number of alumni that their protests—they went to Eugene, because that's where all the good protests were.

JE: And those of us in Eugene went to Corvallis, because they weren't!

MD: [Laughs] Yeah!

JE: Boy, I guess maybe you had to be there, but there was a draft. Coming out of high school in 1969, the Vietnam War was more than just on TV. I had friends who went there and didn't come home, and we were—I think as a generation, we were scared to death. The notion that we could be taken against our will, conscripted into an Army or a Navy, and sent to a place that we really had no concept of, fighting for something that we didn't understand, much less agree with, was terribly frightening. And I think that undercurrent was always there, in campus life.

The protests, in hindsight—and my memory—maybe age mellows memory, but the protests were not about the war. They were about America's future [0:30:00], and where we were heading, and what we were going to do with our country, and what would our children grow up with? We were very—we had the sense that we our generation had already matured, and we didn't agree with what was happening in the United States. The protests were—well, this is just an example, but there was—Jefferson Airplane. The first time I ever saw a concert at Oregon State, in Gill Coliseum, was the Jefferson Airplane. And Grace Slick came out on stage and said, "This is the biggest garage I've ever played music in." And so the music of the generation was very important to us, and the Jefferson Airplane, and Slick, have a song called "Volunteers in America," or "Volunteers for America." I can't remember. And it talked about a counterrevolution to change the direction of the American culture to—it was okay to love each other, and peace was not a weakness, it was a strength that we could export to the rest of the world.

And I think that idealism—naively, I admit—was thrilling. It was an emotion that most students coming to campus in those years had never felt before. We were raised by the Greatest Generation, of World War II. My father was not a veteran, but both of uncles were. My brother is a decorated naval veteran. I have the utmost respect for the men and women in the armed forces, and tremendous gratitude for them preserving our freedom—and I believed that then. It was a terrible time when our veterans were being spit on when they come home from Vietnam, and yet for the vast, vast majority of us, we were sad that they had—the horrors they had faced, and we didn't want that for our children and our own people. The protests were as much about organic food and housing.

One of the biggest protests that we had here at Oregon State was at Camp Adair, a military base that was being mothballed, and we, as a student body, wanted it for low-income house. And we had a massive demonstration. Ron Eachus came up from—then the student-body president of the University of Oregon—came up and spoke to the crowd.

He had just come back from Hanoi, in a delegation of protestors to the Vietnam War with Jane Fonda, and so Ron was rather famous, and himself a former *Emerald* editor. And we had a huge rally, really a statewide rally, at Camp Adair. And I covered it for the *Barometer*, and we got there, and everybody was chanting, and there were signs—kind of like what game day would be today, if it was a sports event. And Ron spoke, and I remember—I can't remember who photographed him, but I know I covered the story.

And there were National Guard snipers on top of the buildings looking at us through rifle scopes. This was after Kent State, and we—it was very scary. The resolve in the crowd was that that was wrong, that is not how America lives, and if we do nothing else from this day forward, we're going to change America, and we're not going to allow this in our country. And we took ownership of our country then. And that wasn't just our foreign policy. That was very much our domestic policy. And I believe that the journey continues, but that ethic of responsibility to your nation and to your village changed. It became part of our personalities, and very much, for me [0:35:00], led me into my career in journalism and law and politics.

MD: Now, I have spoken with a couple of alumni that have told me that there was a chapter of the Students for a Democratic Society on campus, SDS.

JE: There was. There was. The Weathermen.

MD: The Weathermen, yeah.

JE: The Black Panthers. Yes, all of those things.

MD: Now, in your reporting, in your dealings through the *Barometer*, did you have a chance to interact with these "radical" Beavers?

JE: Well, I have reason to believe that I have an FBI file, so I probably should be careful.

MD: [Laughs] The statute of limitations may be gone.

JE: Well, I don't know. I'm pretty sure I'm safe under the current administration, but I'm only half-joking. Yes, I was. As a reporter, I was never—I was always as a reporter. I think that reporters are the guys who stand in the back of the room and listen a lot. [Laughs] But I believed in those principles, as I just described. I'm a nonviolent person; that was part of why I was opposed to military service. But the radicalism of the Weather Underground, the SDS, the Black Panthers—well, understandable. I mean, I intellectually understood their motives. I didn't agree with our student body president at the time—I believe his last name was Sweet, was very—and I knew him quite well, and I remember visiting with him at his home.

And they were very, very committed. And Ron Eachus, from the University of Oregon—they were very, very committed to—I don't think they had the faith that society would change through peaceful protest. And so there was almost an anger. It was anger born of passion that is rejected, that you become angry, like, "Why can't you see what's going on in front of your eyes?" And they reacted, as young people often do, with—they had a lot of energy. [Laughs] One of my colleagues, later, in law school—actually, a man named Silk—was a graduate with me, a wonderful student—was denied membership in the Oregon State Bar because of his antiwar protest activities. And it came at a cost.

I'm glad I was a journalist. I'm glad I wasn't an organizer. But when we were in a room not a lot different than this, talking about issues of war and peace, there was a great deal of agreement between the rank-and-file student and what these groups were doing, about why they—our philosophies of life. But their means of protest, in my opinion, were wrong. They were going about it the wrong way. I think you can change society from within society, and they wanted to very much be on the outside, poking the monster. I wanted to tame the monster.

MD: Yes, there was a lot more activity on the University of Oregon campus, as far as those type of ultra-radicals striking out, than there was on the OSU campus. You didn't have to report about us having any ROTC buildings vandalized or blown up. I can't remember-

JE: Well, I had a roommate who was in ROTC. I don't know if he'll hear this interview, but he was really one of the craziest people I ever met, and he was gung-ho. He wanted to go "kill gooks." And it was just like, "Buddy, I can't deal

with this," and I mean, he'd go around with a bayonet. I mean, he was—it was almost that he was just as radical as these other people.

MD: Yeah, the other side.

JE: And the vast, vast majority of the campus were more moderate. [0:40:00] We had candlelight vigils. I recall pulling a 24-hour vigil, at the MU. We chanted, sang songs, and there was no doubt that we opposed the Vietnam War. I think most Americans did, to be truthful. But the university, the administration, allowed us—allowed that steam to escape, allowed us to express ourselves, break some rules, for sure, say some bad words, for sure. And we always, I guess, thought at one level, the administration agreed with us, that they permitted us to express ourselves without telling us we were bad people. And my impression of what was going on at Oregon, and indeed, I later became—and I still am—very good friends with Ron Eachus and Grattan Kerans, from Eugene. They lived in my neighborhood. I actually have a political career intertwined with them. They were—it wasn't how it was there.

MD: Or nationwide, if this was a phenomenon nationwide, like Berkeley, and it was our administration at OSU being a little bit more enlightened than the administration at Kent State, or at Berkeley, or at NYU, and not fighting, pushing back against the movement.

JE: Well, I don't know. I honestly don't know. But I know that the philosophy, going back to Dean Gilkey, was to discover the world, was to come to a university where you literally expanded to fill your world, and this was part of it. This was current. This was what was happening in our nation. On the other hand, we didn't burn any buildings down.

MD: No.

JE: My experiences with the people in the SDS and the Weather Underground, in particular, was that some of them wanted to, but there was no critical mass. And they couldn't get a rabble crowd throwing bricks at this campus, because we didn't want to harm our university. Why would we do that? And I get the feeling at other campuses, that wasn't the attitude. So, why? I'll leave that to you scholars, who can study that, and then I can read all about it.

MD: Yeah, because I remember in Eugene, the big news was they wanted to attack the ROTC, or the National Guard, and all there was was a bulldozer, so they set the bulldozer on fire. [Laughs] And that was it!

JE: We still had some of those things going on in Eugene.

MD: So let's shift gears slightly.

JE: All right.

MD: One of the stories that you were deeply involved with, and covered, was one of the darker stories of the OSU and its history, was the murder of Nancy Wyckoff in February of 1972. Let's hear about reporting something that—

JE: My heart's pounding. [Laughs, sighs] Nancy Diane Wyckoff. Oh, I'm sorry. It really was a terrible, terrible thing, and it was a loss of innocence. Another student, as it turned out, a 17-year-old freshman, snuck into her dorm room and stabbed her with kitchen knives that he bought at a local retail store. Steak knives, I think they were. It was an unimaginable crime, and it created sheer terror on campus. I think it's fair to say that up until that moment, we all felt safe, and in a heartbeat, we didn't feel safe, at all. We were terrified that—who would die next?

For about ten days—and I'm going to say "about," because I honestly don't remember; it seemed like a lifetime passed—the campus was gripped with a terror that transcended any fear that, I think, we'd ever felt. [0:45:01] Women, men formed patrols, carried baseball bats and golf clubs and things like this, to walk women to and from campus events, day and night. There were a couple of episodes where women reported attacks that were hoaxes. It became like a frenzy, where we didn't know who had killed Wyckoff, and for all we knew—and in fact, we were right—the murderer was still in our midst, was a student.

I remember—I have two distinct memories. One, standing outside of the dorm room where she was killed, and in the window were the words, letters, "Cowgirl in the Sand," and somehow that was something that she had put up there, I

believe. And students would gather on the lawn below her room, in sort of a vigil, but not like we have vigils today, with teddy bears and flowers and things like that. It was just, we stood there. How could this happen? How could this happen to her? Could it happen to me? And it was, like I say, the loss of innocence, the brutality of humans to other people had been an abstract, almost academic discussion. And here we were in the midst of a terrible war, and yet, suddenly, the brutality of humans to each other became very real and very personal. I cannot listen to a Neil Young song without remembering Nancy Diane Wyckoff.

I covered—the second memory I have—and this is when the *Barometer* was covering it. We were a morning newspaper, and we were doing a lot of enterprise journalism. We were interviewing students; we were following up on leads. We had access—the national media was here, this was a national story, and there was some tension with the afternoon newspapers, including our local Corvallis newspaper, that we were stealing their thunder. [Laughs] But we were going to have the story first, and so *Barometers* were flying off the newsstands every morning, because we had the latest story on the investigation, and the prosecution, and the trial, and everything else, along with some other very good journalists on our staff. Jenna Dorn—I know that you've talked with Jenna—was, and probably still is a very excellent journalist at heart. Her father, of course, was a professor of journalism here.

We were covering—we were mobilizing the campus press to cover the story. We had reporters out talking to people, and tracking down leads, and it was very thrilling from a journalist's point of view, but always with this huge sense of responsibility that—what's next, and can we actually, maybe, by keeping people informed, help them to settle down and not—kind of relieve some of that fear and terror? Fear is an easy, it's a soft word compared to the sheer terror people felt. So later, when Buchanan—Marlowe James Buchanan, I believe was his name, a 17-year-old freshman—was arrested, and tried, the courtroom was packed, and I remember him walking in, and he was just a kid. He was just a child. He could be your little brother. And to think that he had done this monstrous thing! I interviewed many murderers in my career as a journalist, subsequently, but nothing every impressed me the way that case did.

MD: And so it's a dark day in OSU's history, but to be with a person that was in the middle of that, I mean, from the very beginning through it, it brings life to the incident, because we don't have that now. I mean, there's just the newspaper articles.

JE: I read some things. [0:50:00] I know the tree was planted here on campus, and hopefully today I'm going to get to go see it. But for many students, I think it's just—first of all, they don't know the story, and thank God, because those students could be my grandchildren now. They really could never imagine the horror. I mean, Ted Bundy visited Oregon State years later, but now I—serial murderers, we are sort of desensitized; perhaps television and movies have desensitized us. But there was very much a—when Diane Wyckoff was murdered, we were still living an *Ozzie and Harriet* life in this country, and those things just didn't happen.

MD: Yeah. And it was more personal. Now it's—

JE: Yeah. Yeah. We were very sensitive to that, and something I'm sure none of us who lived through it have ever forgotten.

MD: Yeah. Well, we've spoken a little bit about the Vietnam War protests, and how did you guys handle—and I've read some of it—the national news, especially, the Richard Nixon scandal at the time, before his—?

MD: Did you pull from, like, the AP, or did you guys do research, and write your own stories?

JE: We were really—I think President Nixon was universally disliked, and it wasn't really news. [Laughs] Another story about, "Students Decry President Nixon"—oh, again? Well, I mean, that was yesterday's story. [Laughs] And so it was a foregone conclusion that we considered the American presidency corrupt. [Laughs] So Watergate came along, and it sort of validated for us, at least in student journalism, that what we were doing was very important, that we were shining light in dark corners of our country, and discovering some things that people were surprised to learn. And that's news!

MD: And that's what you guys were all about.

JE: Yeah. That's right.

MD: Well, now there's all kinds of things that are being protested, or activism today—this is the beginning time of the environmental movement.

JE: Oh, yes. Earth Day.

MD: Right around this time. Earth Day was huge on campus here, and so you guys were kind of proto-activists, almost.

JE: And that's what I said earlier, that the war—this decade was known as an antiwar protest, but actually the protests were much, much broader, and much more domestic. And here at Oregon State, we understood, perhaps at a level that some students elsewhere didn't, about the importance of agriculture, the importance of forestry practices, the oceans. This was a time when the Sea Grant was being set up. Atmospheric science, meteorology was part of our curriculum. So we maybe were a little more sophisticated about the danger of pollution and the degradation of the environment. And these were very deeply held beliefs, where people—we did not want to put farmers out of business, but we didn't trust chemicals as a better life, that we saw nothing wrong with growing food organically. The Corvallis Co-Op started then. It's still, I think, going.

MD: Yeah, it's still going now.

JE: Down in the south part of town. And I bought my sprouts there, my alfalfa seeds, and I sprouted them at home, and I made my own yogurt. And there was not—it wasn't that I was protesting, and to this day, I'm still a—I have a very large vegetable garden, and it's not organic by purpose, but it's organic because it's healthy, and it tastes better, and it's superior food. And I think now we're into local sourcing, and sustainable farming practices. [0:55:00] We have farmers, small family farms, producing vegetables and delivering them to people, and that's not a protest, that's just a good idea. And so we were reacting to, like, to the corporate America, which we didn't trust, first of all. The military-industrial complex was killing us overseas, and we began to realize that they were trying to kill us at home by feeding us poisons in our food. And we were pretty sure that that was a plot to get rid of all of us. [Laughs] And *Doonesbury* helped!

MD: Yeah. [Laughs] It was a big help with that. Now, do you feel that some of the stories that you covered were—I mean, obviously, the Wyckoff incident—but, I mean, were important to the overall scheme of things, as well as being important and unique to OSU? I mean, did you really have that belief that you were doing good?

JE: Oh, yes. Oh, yes.

MD: Accomplishing something? And was that kind of within the spirit of the paper?

JE: Oh, that was in our blood. I mean, we were a professional newspaper who happened to be staffed by young Americans. We took our—and, again, I credit Fred Zwahlen, Harold Dorn, Ted Carlson at the Journalism Department with teaching us well. They taught their children well, to use another Crosby Stills and Nash song, that we had a responsibility to tell the truth, to seek the truth, and to not be afraid to tell it. To be objective, but yet to be inquisitive and curious, to ask hard questions, to not accept no for an answer. And it wasn't just a personal career we were starting, it was a solemn obligation and a duty to our community, that if we knew the truth, our communities, our nation, would be free. And that's a very American ethic. And a free press enabled us to educate our neighbors about what was really happening in their community.

And as an attorney now, I tell my clients my job is to teach them so they understand their options, so they can make the best decision for themselves. And that's, essentially, what democracy requires. And if the press doesn't educate and explain the options that America faces, then democracy fails. And we felt that deeply, both from our studies of journalism, as well as our studies I mentioned of American history, and political science, of religion, comparative religions, and the principles of those. And again, back to that liberal arts education—having that perspective, it was a solemn obligation, and we very much—although we may have eschewed the military, we very much felt that we were doing America's work.

MD: Well, this is your time at the *Barometer*. I'm going to make sure that the current *Barometer* staff benefits from this wisdom.

JE: I hope they do. Well, I'm very proud of our young journalists today, and I think that we're in good hands.

MD: Well, let's shift gears again. Now, you've graduated from Oregon State in '74, and already had a job and everything. Tell us more about your first jobs in journalism, with the *East Oregonian*, the *Daily Astorian*.

JE: Yeah, actually, I'd have to say that the *Gazette Times* and the *Democrat Herald*—John Buckner, in particular, at the *Democrat Herald* in Albany, and Fred Rickert, a sports editor at the *Gazette Times*, actually—during this time, as I was kind of finishing up at Oregon State, I had an opportunity to work in professional newsrooms. I started out as a photographer, and then gradually took on farm reporting at Albany [1:00:00], and worked briefly in the sports department at the *Gazette Times*. So the job that I was hired to do in Pendleton was to be the sports editor of the *East Oregonian*. But when I got there—which was great. I love sports, and I have been involved with sports all my life; remember, I was the intramural reporter for the *Barometer*.

MD: Yeah! [Laughs]

JE: That's the best job I ever had. So I arrived in Pendleton, with my camera, and all my belongings, and my family, and then they said, "Well, you're good. You're the sports editor. You get to be—to write all the sports stories, and take all these things. You're going to have to write a column, a sports column," which I loved doing. And they said, "But then we're also going to have you cover a couple of small towns out in rural Umatilla County: Athena and Milton-Freewater. And we also need somebody to do the weather, so you're going to do that." And then, "Oh, oh! Did we tell you we need — because you've worked as a farm reporter in Albany, we'd like you to handle agriculture." So I said, "At least thank God I'm getting 150 bucks a week! [Laughs] With big bucks like that, I can do this! This is 600 bucks a month. I'm livin' large." So I did, and it really was fun. It was just great fun.

I then took over the—a fellow retired. We had a bureau in Hermiston. I went to Hermiston, where I covered something called Pebble Springs Nuclear Plant, and was very involved with another activist named Lloyd Marbet. And Mr. Marbet was first intervener in the national regulatory commission, or Nuclear Regulatory Commission—the old Atomic Energy Commission. The former governor of Washington, Dixy Lee Ray, was on that commission, and they pretty much intended to nuclear-ize Oregon. My reporting, along with that of Jerry Boone at the *Tri-City Herald*, with Jim Long at the *Oregon Journal*, I think at the time—maybe it was the *Oregonian*—the three of us tag-teamed the nuclear story in Oregon. And of course Pebble Springs was—and we don't have time today for me to tell you that story. But other than a Trojan at St. Helen's, I think it is? Yeah, we never had nuclear power in Oregon, and I was intimately involved in reporting that story, and actually was very intimately involved in the story. I'll just leave that there. I was still an activist journalist at some level.

I then became the news editor of the *East Oregonian* and ran the newsroom. I was essentially the managing editor. Among others, I had my friend Dennis Dimick, Steve Clark—brought a bunch of my old Beaver buddies over there, and we had a hell of a good time. And in 1976, I decided to return to Eugene and get a master's degree in journalism from the University of Oregon, and I was admitted, and prepared to begin my career, or my studies. But life has a way of intervening, and I decided that it wasn't the time for me, and my family was going through quite a bit of upheaval, and I was then hired—the Pendleton paper was owned by the Forrester family. I worked for Mike Forrester, a wonderful man, and his dad, Bud Forrester was the editor of the *Astorian* newspaper.

And because of some of the interaction we had between the two newspapers, he was aware of me, so he hired me to be a reporter, which is what I wanted to be—I didn't really want to be an editor—and I then spent four wonderful years in Astoria. Met my wife there, and covered a wide variety of things, beginning with public education. Went to government reporting, and eventually investigative reporting. Won my share of awards, Associated Press awards, and the national—or the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association awards for my reporting on gill-net fishing [1:05:02], on timber resource—or, excuse me, timber revenue for county governments.

I was involved in a teachers' strike, one of the first strikes in Oregon, and just the life on the north coast. It was there that I began to have a great interest in land, public lands, and follow—I would go in and read deeds in the courthouse. [Laughs] And I was fascinated by how land—and Astoria's such an old, old community. And my family—being an Oregon Trail family, I actually had a relative, a great, great aunt, who had lived in Astoria, and some of her descendents were there, and they worked on the courthouse. And I got to know them, and she had displays of family—Indian artifacts and Native American artifacts in the Flavel Museum there.

And so I really felt like I really loved living in Astoria, and just got involved in some investigative reporting—were very important stories about land fraud, involving some unsavory characters. Had my life threatened. This is after the Don Bolles murder at the *Arizona Republic*, which involved—organized crime was really starting to take hold in the west, and a group called Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc., was formed to basically share information with each other from various parts of the country, mostly big-city newspapers. But Bud Forrester, who was pretty much a legend in Oregon journalism—wanted our newspaper, which was pretty amazing considering our size, to actually be part of that. And lo and behold, we discovered it was going on right under our nose.

MD: In Astoria, Oregon. Organized crime.

JE: In Seaside. Yeah.

MD: Because of—did it have to do with shipping?

JE: No, it had to do with selling subdivisions, where old subdivision plots that had never been developed—and 100 years ago, you could sell property, oceanfront property, in a desert. There was very little regulation around land sales, and so these old plots were on the books. And there was the sunny Seaside subdivision in a desert! [Laughs] But it was there; it was legal. It was on the books. Nobody ever bought the land. So what was happening was that these syndicates were purchasing these old subdivisions, and they were then going—defaulting on their loans, and then they'd go to a public sale, and then somebody would show up and buy this land on the public sale, and it was a form of money laundering. And it was quite—it was a very big deal.

And so, anyway, at that point, a judge told me that I should—that maybe if I had so many questions about what the laws were, maybe I should think about going to law school, and stop asking him. And so I did.

MD: Yeah. And so you graduated from the University of Oregon in—?

JE: 1983

MD: 1983. Is that a law degree?

JE: Yes.

MD: And so you've practiced in Eugene, mostly?

JE: I do. I've practiced now more than 30 years, representing injured and disabled people. I like to think that that volunteer spirit that I had from my student days—I've lived the dream. I was also involved in the University of Oregon, in its campus politics, as a graduate student. I was the vice president of the student body. I was elected to the incidental fee committee, and, as I said, served as a chairman of the *Oregon Daily Emerald*, so I was quite involved in that. As a result, I came quickly—soon after I graduated, I became involved in community affairs.

Then-County Commissioner Peter DeFazio asked me—and some others did, as well—if I would be interested in serving on the planning commission. I did that, and was chairman of that when my state representative—small-world department, a guy named Ron Eachus [1:10:00]—resigned his House of Representatives seat to join the Public Utility Commission, and I was appointed to fill his expired term. And then our state senator was Grattan Kerans, again, from the old student days, so it was a circle completing itself.

MD: Yeah, so you spent, what, three terms in the state legislature?

JE: Yeah, actually four. I completed Ron Eachus' term, and then I was elected three times, and in my final term, in—it was a long time ago—1993 session, I was the democratic whip. I was the assistant minority leader, with Peter Courtney, who was the minority leader at the time.

MD: Yeah, so heady times in Oregon politics?

JE: Well, it was. I got involved in the legislative side of it through workers' compensation laws, because there was a huge push to reform the Oregon workers' comp laws. And being a young attorney representing injured workers—and I was an appellate attorney at the time; I wrote nothing but appeals. I did about—I counted this up once, it's somewhere in the neighborhood of 1,000 cases in the Oregon Court of Appeals, the Supreme Court. Several hundred, more than a hundred, I should say—I don't know how many—published opinions where I was the lead counsel for the injured worker, against Safe Corporation, and the various insurance companies.

So I was asked to testify in the 1987 legislature on the reforms that were being proposed then. And I did, working with the Oregon Trial Lawyers Association, and apparently—I think through my training as a journalist, and sort of the background that I had in this liberal arts education, I was able to—and growing up in a farm, I was able to explain fairly complicated legal principles in simple words that even a fourth-grader could understand, which was a challenge for some legislators, but still. [Laughs] And then I joined—and actually, a friend of mine was secretary of state at the time, Barbara Roberts, and she later became governor, and the rest is history.

MD: Now, you've continued to serve the state, and your party, the Democratic Party, as the chairman of the Democratic Party, between 1999 and 2007.

JE: Yeah. Four times.

MD: Yeah. And so you've been a leader, as far as a legislator, but now you're leading your party in the state.

JE: Yeah.

MD: During this era—well, like now, the Democratic Party is super-super-strong in Oregon, but at the beginning—

JE: Oh, no. We were not. We were bankrupt. [Laughs] As the assistant minority leader, I was the Democratic House caucus' delegate to the Democratic Party Central Committee, and so I attended some meetings, which I was interested in. I was fascinated by politics. Being a reporter, and having a political science education, and then being an attorney and having been through the legislative testimony as a witness, I was very interested in that. I had actually campaigned for Jimmy Carter before I—when I was still a reporter. My boss wasn't real happy about that.

But my family—as I said, we came to Oregon on the Oregon Trail from the south. We were southern Democrats, and we were very partisan, as only southerners can understand. The damn Yankees were a bunch of damn Republicans, and then that damn Lincoln! And I was raised with that kind of a life, so that was how we kids were raised. So it was natural to me to be a Democrat. I was approached. I was actually the chairman of the Lane County Democratic Party when our party pretty well dissolved at the state level. It was essentially bankrupt, and we had lost, I think, both the House and the Senate by then. The governorship we managed to hold onto, but it was a very dark time for the Democratic Party. [1:15:02]

So I was approached, and it was generally a Portland-based party, and frankly, we didn't think—I love Portland; it's a nice place to visit. I'd never live there, and I have no real interest in it. I have family that lives there, including my youngest daughter. Anyway, some of the downstate Democrats came to me, and said, "You were a legislator. You tend to be outspoken. [Laughs] Would you be interested in helping us rebuild the Democratic Party in Oregon?" So I ran against the sitting chair, who was actually a friend of mine. And I did not—and having been a candidate, I had been the victim of a negative campaign—a very, very awful experience for me.

And I said, "Only if I do it my way." And they said, "Well, we want you to do this. We want you to do this," and I said, "Well, I don't know if I'll do that or not. I'll do it my way." Well, so one man, I remember him asking me, "So, in other words, you just want us to hand it to you on a silver platter?" I said, "Yeah, you got it, pretty much." And I said, "That's my terms. It's a volunteer job. I've got a family." The legislature damn near broke me, financially." I mean, I'd wasted—I'd experienced seven years of very low wages, and my wife began to wonder how we were going to pay my student loans, and so I was just getting back on my feet, and here they want me to run the fricking state party. And I said, "I'll do it one way," and that is, I said, "I'll do it my way. If you don't like it, you can leave, or you can tell me to leave, and if you get enough of your friends to agree, I will." It's just as simple as that.

Funny thing about leadership—I think Daniel Boone is the one who said the only difference between being a leader and being lost—or, you only know when you're a leader or your lost, is if you stop long enough to look behind you and see if

anybody's following you. And so I found people were—they bought into it. I used my experience, going back, really, to Dean Gilkey, to construct what I believed to be an effective strategy to run, be competitive as Democrats in every county in Oregon. We weren't going to just count on the tri-county/Portland area to elect our leaders. We wanted people from the coast. We wanted—where I had been a reporter. We wanted them from eastern Oregon, which I knew, from Pendleton. We wanted them from southern Oregon, where I grew up. We wanted them to run in their districts, to be representative of those constituents.

And we're a large state. We're a nation in Oregon. We're the end of the trail. All types of people moved here. They still do. And those people deserve representation. So we're not going to be a liberal, left-wing party. We're going to be a successful party. And we're going to be competitive in all of those communities. So we went about it. Years later, I'm glad to say, a friend of mine named Howard Dean took over the Democratic National Committee, and created what he called the 50-State Strategy, and that was the child of Oregon's 36-County Strategy that we adopted. I created—I founded the Oregon Summit, in Bend, to be the counterpart to Dorchester. Republicans met at sea level, where there's lots of oxygen, and Democrats went as high in the Cascades as we could, where we had to be more vigorous to survive the low—the thin air. But we also had vision, and we could see. And I'm proud to say that conference is still going, and every two years, it is held at Sunriver, where we gather not to talk about campaigning politics, but to talk about people politics. Funny thing, that's kind of what we were talking about at Oregon State all those years before.

MD: Yeah. Well, now so I'm assuming that with this involvement on a statewide level, that you might have had contact with some of the national politicians coming through? [1:20:01]

JE: Oh, yes. Well, as a state chair, I am a member, was a member—state chairs are members, automatic super-delegates, to the conventions, and members of the Democratic National Committee. And state chairs—the 54 of them, there are, counting the territories and District of Columbia—are kind of the ruling class of the Democratic National Committee, and it really comes down to about twelve or fifteen, maybe twenty members who make the decisions for the nation. And I was part of that, simply by my longevity. Plus, I was from Oregon, and there is an Oregon mystique, and people on the east coast are fascinated by what makes us tick. And I was more than happy to tell them tall tales of how I personally cut down giant old-growth trees, split them by hand, and how my brothers and sisters in the Indian nations were my blood brothers. And of course, to say that some of the folks on the east coast are gullible is an understatement, but they loved hearing about Oregon.

And we are very successful—in the national field, we're viewed as a blue state. We're viewed as a state that is in line with the Democratic principles, which as chair, was a kind of a very personal concern of mine, that we were not being successful at our own—in our own elections. So I became involved in that. I met, many times, Bill Clinton—many times. Campaigned with Al Gore. Donna Brazile, his campaign manager, was a colleague of mine on the national committee, and we worked very hard here in Oregon to deliver Gore for Oregon. I wrote some essays, one which was published by the *Los Angeles Times*, and one in the *Oregonian*, talked about Al Gore, and Howard Dean, as well.

As I said, I was an early and vigorous supporter of Howard Dean, and I greatly admire him, and what he did for the party. And then John Kerry, and I was actually pretty close to Edwards, but that was—and knew his wife, Elizabeth. That was a very sad chapter of how a very talented man sort of just fell into pieces, and I knew some personal details of that, and it was just—it was very sad. John Kerry was a great American for taking on Bush the junior. It was a patriotic campaign. He was doing it for the nation. There was never any chance he was going to win. And so he and John were sort of throwing their—giving up their bodies for the cause, but it led directly to, in my final—and I took two Oregon delegations to presidential conventions.

I was a presidential elector in 2000 and 2004, and was part of the group that talked about coming up with somebody really exciting for our candidate in 2008, and when he gave his—I don't know if it was the keynote. It might have been the keynote speech in the Boston convention in 2004, and we saw Barack, then-Senator Barack Obama, we said, "There's our guy." And my daughter ended up working for him, and I have a picture of Michelle and my daughter posing during the campaign on my mantle at home, right next to my picture of me and Bill Clinton and Al Gore and John Kerry. But I'm most proud of her.

MD: [Laughs] Well, I wanted to be able to find out a little bit about family. The opportunity to embarrass a colleague, your daughter, on camera here is—I just can't pass that up. Tell me about your kids, family life.

JE: Well, I'm blessed. I absolutely am blessed. Having lost my dad at an early, formative stage of my life [1:25:00], I hold parenting in extremely high—very important to me. Tiah, my oldest daughter, who is an archivist and librarian at Oregon State University, is brilliant. She has a wonderful wit about her, as I'm sure her colleagues have learned, and has recently rediscovered our family's—some of our heritage, with her development of the Hops and Brewing Archives here. I mean, and who can't be happy about beer? So I even now grow hops in my garden, and it's amazing. First, an Edmunson growing hops in Willamette Valley again—this should be news.

And then she and her husband, Craig, who is a psychologist here in Corvallis, have the world's smartest daughter, who is my granddaughter, Ella, and she is just a true joy. She's the love of my life. I mean, I absolutely adore her. My other daughter, Christina, who is ten years younger than Tiah—we had our children ten years apart, so that we could enjoy them. I think that's what we told them. It's just the way it turned out. And so we had, basically, two only children. Christina is now the director of communications for the attorney general in the Oregon Department of Justice, and was a former deputy communications director for the U.S. Peace Corps in Washington, D.C. She's a graduate of the University of Oregon and the University of Denver, so she's not just a Duck. Tiah, of course, graduated—has two degrees, from Miami of Ohio and San Jose.

My wife is a schoolteacher who retired a few years ago, but she's been back teaching more. You can't keep a good teacher down, and she's a reading specialist in the Springfield schools, help the "kiddos," as she calls them, learn to read. And sometimes they were not such "kiddos" when she was teaching the, to read in middle school, and trying to help kids achieve their potential. Many children are not—are disadvantaged through their families, or through their moving around, or through their community, where they live. And so Ellen's work was very important.

And we're by no means wealthy. Too much of my work was for free. But we're rich beyond words, and there's nothing that an old student activist/reporter loves more than to have two beautiful, successful children who wonder why it was ever any way different. And that was what we wanted, I think, for the world. It may be that we didn't really know it at the time, but we wanted to change America. We wanted the next generation to buy into this country together, and heal it, and make it a place that would be safe not only for the food and the air that they consumed, but for their—for education, and for healthcare, and for all of those things that we felt were important, and weren't being addressed—which is what we were protesting about. I think today is better because of it, and my kids are proof.

MD: I usually ask if there's anything more a person could add that there's—?

JE: I can't.

MD: Nothing that can be said.

JE: I'm exhausted! [Laughs] I'm on the other side of the camera, remember?

MD: You are a true gem, as far as an OSU alumni, and your participation in the Sesquicentennial Project is going to fill in a spot in—

JE: I hope so.

MD: —the turbulent era of the 1960s, from a perspective that really sheds some light on that period of time. And we appreciate your participation, and I'm truly honored to be able to capture your story.

JE: Thank you. Well, thank you. And I am, as well, because, at the time, who'd have think it? [1:30:00]