



Denise Lach Oral History Interview, July 21, 2015

Title

“At the Intersection of Social Science, Natural Resources, and Public Policy”

Date

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Location

Valley Library, Oregon State University.

Summary

In the interview, Lach describes her family background and upbringing near the Twin Cities in Minnesota, her school experiences growing up, her decision to attend the University of Minnesota, and her academic progression as an English and Education major. From there, she recounts her first jobs as a junior high school teacher and management consultant, her relocation to Corvallis, the renewal of her interest in furthering her education, and her enrollment in the Sociology graduate program at the University of Oregon. In reflecting on her years in Eugene, Lach details the process by which she came to develop her perspective as a social scientist and makes mention of faculty members who made an impact on her. She then describes her tenure as a research sociologist at Battelle and outlines the process by which she came to return to OSU as director of the Center for the Analysis of Environmental Change (CAEC).

The remainder of the session is focused on Lach's multifaceted career as a faculty member and administrator at Oregon State. In this, Lach touches upon her work with CAEC and its successor organization, the Center for Water and Environmental Stability. She likewise comments on her involvement in studying the Klamath Basin water crisis as it played out in the early 2000s, her connection with the Sociology department at OSU, the forward progression of her research on natural resources - including work on forest policy and climate change - and her years of collaboration with OSU political scientist, Brent Steel.

As the interview nears its end, Lach offers her thoughts on the shift from departments to schools within the College of Liberal Arts (CLA), her assumption of the role of director of the School of Public Policy, and her sense of the future direction of the CLA. The session concludes with Lach's ideas on change in the community of Corvallis and on the positioning of the university as it approaches its sesquicentennial.

Interviewee

Denise Lach

Interviewer

Chris Petersen

Website

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

Transcript

Chris Petersen: Okay Dr. Lach, if you would please introduce yourself with your name and today's date and our location.

Denise Lach: Hi, my name is Denise Lach. Today is Tuesday, July 21st, 2015 and we're at the Valley Library on the OSU campus in Corvallis, Oregon.

CP: Terrific. So we're going to talk a lot about your career here at OSU and your involvement with what is now called the School of Public Policy, but I'd like to begin talking about your upbringing a little bit. Where were you born?

DL: I was born in Norman, Oklahoma, while my dad was stationed in the Navy there during the Korean War. We always kind of laughed, "how do you get in the Navy in Oklahoma?" It's kind of a good job, right? But I grew up in Minneapolis, in the Twin Cities, in Minnesota. All of my siblings and my father are still there.

CP: And how many siblings do you have?

DL: I have three sisters and a brother, and I'm the oldest. And I'm the only one who doesn't live in Minnesota still.

CP: Tell me about your parents' backgrounds. Your father was in the military?

DL: Well, he was in the military like everybody else was, but then he married my mom and they very quickly had five kids in seven years. And my dad worked a couple of jobs while he was going to college, he finished his degree, and then he went to work for Caterpillar and he worked there for the rest of his life. He's part of that generation of people who got a job and worked for the same company forever. He was a salesperson and then a sales manager at Caterpillar, which I also always thought was kind of a joke because, for Caterpillars – which are the big earth-moving equipment – you basically sign up and wait your turn for the one that comes off of the line. So I don't know how much salesmanship there really is, but my dad was really good at it, and then he was good at managing.

My mom was a homemaker for her whole life. She raised five kids very competently. All of my siblings and I, I would say, are successful. We had a great growing up with a mom and dad who cared about us a lot. We all took music lessons, we played in sports, we had that sort of Middle America, middle class, mid-century upbringing.

CP: That leads into my next question. I'm interested in community life growing up in the Twin Cities.

DL: Well, when we first grew up, there were a lot of kids in every house – our house with five kids was one of the smaller families. So any time you wanted a game, there was two teams out on your street. We very rarely went beyond our block; there were twenty-five or thirty kids. On the next block over there was a big forest with lots of trees, so we built forts and we spent a lot of time outside. My mom would shoo us out of the house at the beginning of the day and we'd come in at the end. I went back at some point to look at that forest, and it can't be more than an acre. But as a kid growing up, it was full of hiding places and big trees that you could play in, and it was just far enough away from home that it felt dangerous. It really was only about a block away from home, but as a child that just felt like forever.

We had a lot of freedom as kids. We spent a lot of time outside. We spent a lot of time at the public library – we'd go every week with our wagon full of books and we'd come back. My dad would come home from work every evening and play with us in the yard, and this was during the summer. During the winter when it was snowy, we would go ice skating almost every evening at the local rink. So we'd have dinner early then we'd head out to the rink and we'd skate and play hockey and those kinds of things you did in Minnesota.

CP: Sounds fairly idyllic.

DL: It was totally. When I think back on it, it was everything that was *Leave it to Beaver* or even the Huxtables and *Cosby* before all that stuff came up with Bill Cosby. But it really was; I think my parents really wanted that for their kids.

CP: Some exposure to the outdoors and the natural world played into your professional interests a little bit later on.

DL: I don't think we had a lot of money. I don't know that. The first house that we lived in had two bedrooms, so with five kids... My dad fixed up the attic for all the girls, so we lived in the attic. But we were never really rich, we didn't have a lot of things. My mom sewed most of our clothes and we all learned how to sew. But again, this was the '50s and '60s, and I don't think anybody had a lot of money. There wasn't this sense that you went out to dinner at restaurants, at least not in the class that I was in, which would probably be lower middle class. But we had a lot of fun, we had a lot of things going on with my family.

CP: You mentioned reading and playing outside, was there anything in particular that really you focused on as an interest growing up as a girl?

[0:05:01]

DL: Well, everyone in my family also played a musical instrument, so there was a lot of music in our house. I played the French horn for probably fifteen years. So we went to a lot of concerts, we played in bands and orchestras, I played in the marching band. I was in the first cohort of women at the University of Minnesota marching band. So that was in 1972, prior to Title IX which was signed in 1973, so it was right at that cusp of women being allowed into all kinds of things at universities in particular. But I was with the first cohort of women, all thirteen of us, that were allowed into the men's bastion of the marching band. So I think it was music and reading and sports, the kinds of things that you did in a relatively small town; which, I grew up in a small town outside of the Twin Cities. It's now been absorbed – it's part of the suburbs – but at the time it was a very separate little town.

CP: What was the name of the town?

DL: It was Rosemont.

CP: What was school like for you growing up?

DL: School was really easy for me and I went through some accelerated programs, so I finished all of the math that my school district offered by, maybe, ninth grade. So teachers went out of their way to help me do things extra special. I remember my seventh grade English teacher took me out of class and gave me a project, she said, "I want you to think of something special that you can teach the rest of the class." So I did a big project on Greek myth, and so I did a lot of research, I didn't have to go to class, I got to go to the library and do this research. She would take me to the teachers' lounge, which was just kind of like this sacred place where students couldn't – you know, this was junior high, we were seventh through ninth grade then. So teachers did a lot of things like that for me, I think.

Everyone in my family is quite intelligent, so we had a lot of extra opportunities as a relatively small school that didn't have a lot of opportunities, but teachers went out of their way to help us. My history teacher in high school did something quite similar for me, where they would set me up on a project and then let me go, rather than having me sit in class and listen to the lecture and do the assignment. So I was really fortunate that – there wasn't anything really organized, like Talented and Gifted, at that time, but our teachers really looked out for us.

So school was easy. I kind of skipped through. By the time I was a senior in high school, I had taken all the classes and started to get into trouble. I had tried to convince my parents to send me to the university without graduating, and everyone advised against it, and I think it was a good idea because if I hadn't graduated from college then I wouldn't have had a degree at all. So I stuck it out that last year and then went on to the University of Minnesota.

CP: Was that just a natural decision to go the University of Minnesota because it was close by?

DL: It was close and it was inexpensive. Tuition my first term was \$168; I can still remember it. So at one point my parents' had four kids in college, and there wasn't this sense that we would go somewhere special. My sister who is a year younger than I am actually went out of her way to do something different, and she got a scholarship at Gustavus Adolphus, which is a really nice school in Northfield. She only lasted a year and then she was back at Minnesota. All of my siblings graduated from the University of Minnesota.

All of my nieces and nephews however, have graduated from the University of Wisconsin, because they all wanted to leave home. So they all went to the next state over and went to Madison. So it's kind of interesting; we're definitely a Land Grant family.

CP: You majored in English and Education, is that right?

DL: I did. I majored in English – like I said, I really liked to read. The University of Minnesota had a very good English program and I was fortunate to have some really great teachers there. One of the things that I remember the most is that, when I was a senior, I had a class in literary criticism – so it's sort of the capstone class for English majors. And I had some famous professor whose name I've totally blocked out because he had a teaching assistant who graded almost all of the papers, and I would write these papers and I would get these glowing things – "brilliant, brilliant, brilliant" – and then, the week that he graded my paper, he said "this is the worst piece of crap I've ever read. In fact, it's so bad I want to read your other papers to make sure you weren't over-graded." And it was like, "whoa," this is the first time ever somebody called me on it.

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So I went back and I re-wrote it and I talked to him the whole time, shaking, and again I'm terrified of this man, I can't even remember his name. But it really taught me this lesson is that there really was something deeper that I could go for if someone challenged me. At the University of Minnesota, which I think is a great university, I didn't get challenged again. I was able to sort of skate through because I had enough facility with language and capacity that I was just getting through until a teacher finally just stopped and said, "wait a minute, I want more from you." And so that was a real transformational moment for me.

But also, as an English major, I wasn't exactly sure what I would do with that. So I backed it up with an Education certificate and went on to teach junior high English for almost four years.

CP: Yeah, well there's a gap in our knowledge about you from '76 to '87, so were you teaching?

DL: I taught junior high English. I taught two years in Chicago, in the suburb of Chicago where I moved with my husband at the time, who was a computer programmer at the beginning of computers. I remember that was when there was all those cards in the boxes, that's how you programmed computers. Anyways, we moved to Chicago for two years and I taught at a school outside of Chicago in Oak Brook – what is it? It's where McDonalds has their headquarters. I can't remember, this was so long ago. Every Wednesday, McDonalds gave us hamburgers and orange juice – all the kids got hamburgers and cheeseburgers for lunch. So I taught there for two years in middle school English and then moved back to the Twin Cities and taught for two years in a Catholic school north of the Twin Cities – again, English for junior high kids.

Then my husband and I split up, and I could not live on teacher junior high English at a Catholic school. So I went to work for a management consulting firm in the Twin Cities that said, "we want liberal arts graduates because they know how to read, write and think." And they truly believed that, so they didn't hire MBA's or people with Economics degrees, they hired liberal arts people and they trained them how to do management consulting. So I consulted around the country at Fortune 500 companies with that company for maybe almost four years again. I traveled a lot and actually did a project in Corvallis with the paper company here. And that was in the late '80s and Corvallis was really quiet in the summer, and it was before there was a decent restaurant here, we stayed at a really crappy hotel on 9th Street. And I would go home and I'd say, "what a dumpy little town Corvallis is."

During that process I met and fell in love with my husband, who was a graduate student at the University of Minnesota in Forestry. And if you're in Forestry there are a few places in the country where you can work: Minnesota being one, Corvallis being another, Seattle, and then places like Auburn and back east. And he wanted to be at Corvallis because this was like the best Forestry school in the country, so he wanted to move west, and he did, and I followed him. So that's how I ended up in Corvallis, again, even after having been here as a consultant.

When I first got to Corvallis, I actually went to work for OSU in the Productivity Center that was managed by a professor, an industrial engineer, named Jim Riggs. And it was very similar to the work that I was doing when I was working in

Minneapolis, except for it was just with Northwest companies. So I did work for J.R. Simplot – they're the ones who grow potatoes for McDonalds – and also for other big companies in the Portland area, doing consulting for them. And I did that for about a year, and one of the best things about that was that one of the assistant professors in the department at the time was Sabah Randhawa. So I've known Sabah since he was an assistant professor at the College of Engineering.

So that's how I came to OSU. And being at OSU again really sparked my interest in learning. And so I decided I would go back to grad school. You know, it Corvallis everyone has a graduate degree – doesn't it feel like that?

[0:14:56]

CP: Just about, yeah

DL: So I thought, "ok, I'm gonna go back." But I thought, "I better figure out if I can do this," so I started out by taking statistics classes, because I wanted to do something around organizations, which is what I had been really involved with with the consulting. And so I thought, "ooh, I don't know if I can do this." So I went to take a statistics class, and on the first day I lost my \$100 textbook, and I failed the first quiz. And I thought, "oh my gosh, I'm not cut out for this. Maybe I can't be a graduate student." But I went and talked to the professor, who I didn't get along with at all, but the next week, because the class was so large, they decided to split it in two, and I got a new teacher who I hit it off with. And by the second term of statistics I was the TA in the class, and then I TA'd for the faculty member for two years in statistics, while I was taking the classes. So I could do it, I could figure it out, and I just needed, again, someone patient enough to get me back in the swing of things.

So once I decided that I could do that, I could do the statistics, I started applying to graduate programs around the country. And one of the places I applied was at the University of Oregon where I wanted to work with Joan Acker, who was there, and another guy whose name I forget because by the time I got there, both Joan Acker and he were gone. So I get to my graduate program and the two people I identified as working with were gone.

CP: And Joan Acker was in the Sociology department?

DL: They were both in the Sociology program.

CP: What attracted you to her?

DL: Well, I was looking at MBA programs and I was looking at Sociology programs, because I wanted to study organizational behavior, and those were the two places that you do it. In business you do it from a management and from sociology you do it from an institutional perspective. And Joan Acker had done a lot of very early work on women in organizations, so I was really interested in working with her. Her and Rosabeth Kanter at Harvard were sort of the seminal women thinking about women in organizations. And remember, this is still relatively early in thinking about women in organizations.

So I got there and she was gone, then the other person who did organizational work was gone as well. I got a great education at the University of Oregon in theory and methods, and I wound up working with Patty Gwartney – Gibbs, her name was at the time – and Patty took me under her wing, and she has basically been my model of what a mentor means. She got a grant to do a research project and she included me on everything, from doing the interviews, the transcripts, to the writing of the papers, to the publishing, to the presenting. We did a lot of interesting work together. Her field was quantitative methods, and she ran the Survey Research Center at the U of O for a long time. So she had never done qualitative work, so we were learning how to do it together, which I think it was really good for both of us. Her husband at the time worked at HP in Corvallis, and he scored us some early laptops, HP laptops, that were about the size of a sewing machine. And we would cart those around; we thought we were just the cat's pajamas, carting our little laptops around. Boy things have changed since I started. But we got a lot of good publications and I learned a lot about what it meant to be a researcher from Patty.

And the education that I got at Oregon is second to none. I've worked with people who've come out of the best Sociology programs and I think I'm better trained. It was a small program, and there was a lot of attention, and there were really high expectations there. I meet with my colleagues who went to places like Wisconsin, which is the best Sociology program – they had a lot of people in their cohort and their classes were big and they felt like they were just going through kind

of a factory. I never felt like that at all. I got a lot of attention from everybody and the faculty were very engaged and the program was right sized for that faculty. Plus I got to stay in Oregon and my husband was happy.

CP: Were you still working?

DL: I wasn't. I went to work as a teaching assistant and a research assistant when I went to grad school. I lived on my stipend, which was \$3,000 a year and paid my tuition. Then when I graduated with my Ph.D. from Oregon, I started looking around for jobs and I interviewed around the country. And again, I have a husband who's a forest ecologist, and there aren't a lot of places that he can work. So you know there's that dual-career couple that's all the rage now, I think it's been an issue for a lot of academics for a long time.

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I got a job offer to work at Battelle, which is a large – probably the largest – R and D firm in the world. It's a not-for-profit organization that was set up by Gordon Battelle, who was one of the holders of the Xerox patents. So he set up this big research company. When I worked for Battelle, they had about 8,500 scientists working for them around the world. There were 300 social scientists in their Seattle office, which is where I went to work. So then, my husband could continue his work at OSU but he did it at the U of O [sic U of W]. So he was working with Jerry Franklin who was the famous forest ecologist, who used to be at OSU and then went to UW. So he was able to keep his job and continue working, just doing it up in Seattle instead of in Corvallis, so that was good for him.

But I got to work for Battelle. Like I said, there were 300 social scientists – there were more sociologists at Battelle than there were at the University of Washington at the time, so it was a really, really heady place to be. It was very applied and it was very interdisciplinary. So some of the projects I worked on when I was at Battelle – for the Atlanta Olympics, we designed the people movers. So I was working with lawyers, psychologists, transportation people, and then the sociologists were trying to think about institutional norms and practices. And so working for Battelle, those were the types of projects that I got to work on, so it wasn't any really kind of small potatoes. And there wasn't any expectation that a sociologist could solve a problem; a sociologist could bring a perspective to a problem, but then you sat around the room with other kinds of scientists, engineers, lawyers, and you worked on problems together.

So for me, that was what I wanted to do. I wanted to do applied work and I wanted it to mean something and I wanted the insights of sociologists – which is really about institutional norms and practices and the way people are organized and controlled – I want all of that to be able to go into the thinking about some of these big projects that Battelle was working on.

Another project that I got to work on was for the – I want to make sure I say this right – the Atomic Energy Commission. That's not what it's called any longer, but they were really interested in whistleblowers at power plants. So I got to work with a famous psychologist, thinking about how do you create institutions that support whistleblowers but are able to manage them? Because whistleblowers, it turns out, are kind of an interesting breed of people that are everything like the movies say they are. Which is really interesting – I learned a lot on the project, but once again I got to be involved at this really high level of thinking.

Projects like that just dropped in our laps. I helped President Clinton implement his executive order on environmental justice in the EPA when it first got started. Those are the things that they came to Battelle for, is that kind of stuff, and then the sociologists got engaged in the projects where it seemed appropriate. So talk about candy stores and talk about really honing your craft, your research craft, writing proposals, dealing with people with problems, thinking about big issues. It is an education, it is amazing. So anybody who has an opportunity to go to work there, I really encourage them. We actually have graduates of our program now working there, so that's really fun too, to start giving them really great people.

CP: I want to ask you about perspective; this is something that sociologists – at least when I was in school – talked about a fair amount. You entered into the discipline in graduate school and I don't know how much connection you'd had to it before then-

DL: None.

CP: -there's this period of time where you're learning and developing the sociological perspective, I'm interested in learning more about how that evolved for you.

DL: Yeah, that's really interesting. I had no idea what sociology was. I hadn't taken an undergraduate course in sociology. I have no idea why Sociology programs let me into their programs. It might have been my application letter or my experience or whatever, but they let me in, and I read this, "oh yeah, there's this sociological imagination, blah, blah, blah," and I thought, "oh yeah, right." The first term, I was taking a theory class, and it was probably Marxist theory or something like that. And we had to read a book every week, literally. So here I am, I'm a good reader, and I'd read and study and I'd go to class, I would have no idea what they were talking about. I had no way to link. So people who had had other classes were able to say, "here's the history of this," not me, I'm just sitting there like this little bird with, like, no idea. I bet it took me six weeks before things started to click, but I didn't give up, I just kept reading and writing and talking.

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And finally it clicked and something really shifted in my perspective in that – the way I think about it is that most people, for most of their lives, have a psychological view of the world that's really centered on me, on the "I." And the shift in sociology comes when you shift to this "you" or "we" perspective that's really much more institutional or social, I guess is the way to think about it. And all of the sudden you're looking at how is this working for the world? How is this working for groups? How is this working for others? And there really was this shift – and I'm not even very good at explaining it any longer, and I don't think I have that other perspective any longer. I have a hard time thinking about – as a manager now, I have a really hard time thinking about how this affects me. It's more like, how does this affect this group that we're working in? How are my actions reflecting on us? How are they affecting other people? How are we creating norms that promote what we want?

So yeah, there was a moment where it clicked and I don't know how that happened. I was surrounded by sociologists who were working and talking and thinking that way, and for six weeks I had no idea. Literally. I would go home from school and I would be shaking my head thinking, "what are they doing?" There were some words, like I would read these words – I'd never seen them before, I'd never heard them before – like "hegemony." And I'm thinking, "what is that word? Where did that come from?" But again, patience, I had very patient instructors.

CP: So were the paradigms or functionalism or conflict theory or symbolic interactionism, was that something that made an impression on you, one way or the other?

DL: Yeah! All of that stuff. The University of Oregon is really really designed that you learn those theories. So we had to take two terms of Marxist theory – historical and contemporary. We had to take a whole course on Weber, we had to take a whole course on Parsons, because there were a couple of students of Parsons on faculty when I was there. So this is just like the second generation away from Parsons. And we were reading Durkheim, we were reading Kant, we were reading everything and we had to read it and we had to understand it. And I think the other thing that they're really good at is methods. And so the rest of the stuff – what their feeling was – is those content classes, they change so quickly, "you can take an environmental sociology class. Good. But in two years it's going to be different. We want you to know how to think and do research," and so that was how the program was designed.

CP: Do you feel like you fell into specific mode of thinking?

DL: Well, I have to say, at some level I'm probably a Marxist, because that was – Oregon had a reputation as a Marxist program, and for a long time probably the majority of faculty there were Marxists, and there was a real respect for that kind of conflict theory. So if you weren't a Marxist you were a feminist or some other kind of "ist" there, that was sort of – it isn't like that any longer but it was when I was there. So I would say I'm a conflict theorist at heart, I'm post-modern, I'm really intrigued by all those French post-modernists, and I think I got a good training in Foucault and Derrida and those people. So all of that is sort of floating around in my head, while at the same time I'm really an applied researcher, so I have a little bit of tension that is always there. But it's what I think keeps my passion alive for sociology, is I'm trying to do applied work with people like the Department of Forestry or NOAA or something, but all the time in my head is all this stuff going on about, "oh yeah, let's watch how you're constructing those frames of whatever." So I don't talk to

people about that very often, but there's certainly, that's what underlies the way I think about the world. And then when I write you can see it, probably more.

[0:30:07]

CP: Well you were at Battelle for three years and it sounds like it was a great place to be, but you came back to OSU-

DL: It was.

CP: -in '96, what brought that about?

DL: One of the things that I did at Battelle, was Battelle had entered into an arrangement with EPA, the Forest Service, and OSU to create a Center for the Analysis of Environmental Change. So people at Battelle had built one of the first global circulation models, or GCM, for climate. The scientists at Battelle, that was on one of the first models that was being built. So what Battelle wanted to do was create this institute where they could start using the output from the GCM. This is so early, I don't know what we were thinking of. I have to tell you, the first research project around climate change I did with some people at Carnegie Mellon, and we were trying to figure out what people knew about global warming and radon and the ozone hole. That was where we were, that's where scientists were – they couldn't figure out how the ozone hole was connected to climate change. I mean, that's how far back I've been doing this stuff. And it was like, they don't have anything to do with each other, but we didn't know that at the time.

Anyway, so the GCM at Battelle. They had created this Center for the Analysis of Environmental Change with these four institutions, including OSU – there are some great atmospheric scientists at OSU and there always have been – and so Battelle and these four institutions had created this institute and it had been sort of humming along. And then the board decided they wanted to do human dimensions of climate change, so they all kind of looked at me and said, "why don't you apply for the job?" [makes gulping noise] I didn't know if I wanted to go back to Corvallis. I didn't know.

My husband would go back to Corvallis, so I applied for the job and I got it, and that's why we came back. So I was the Human Dimensions Director for the Center for the Analysis of Environmental Change for a couple of years, and then took it over when Mike Unsworth left. And he's one of those great atmospheric scientists. He's retired now but he was at OSU and he was head of the Center.

CP: So you were sort of at OSU as an arm or a branch of Battelle, it sounds like.

DL: Nope. I came to OSU. It was a job that they created. Although all of those entities were paying for the institute, it was one of the research institutes at OSU, so it was CAEC. So I did that for a while, and then Mike retired, and at the time I started working with Ken Williamson, who was the head of Civil, Environmental, whatever – I can't remember what all those Engineering departments were. Ken was the director of the Water Research Institute on campus. So we started working together on writing proposals and doing things around climate and water, and we decided to put the two institutes together. So we created a new institute called the Center for Water and Environmental Sustainability, or CWEST. And I think at that time, I was the first woman who was a director of a water resources research institute on a campus. There's one in every state that's funded by the USGS, and there weren't any social scientists and there weren't any women. It was all men civil engineers. So the focus was really on civil engineering and not on water resources, which Ken really fought against. Even though he was a civil engineer, he really thought of water as more of a natural resource than of something that needed to be channeled or dammed or whatever. So he was also a maverick in the water field.

So Ken and I spent a lot of time at CWEST doing a lot of work around the state on drought and water, water management. We also got a grant from EPA to sponsor undergraduate research, so I think for a while CWEST probably had the largest group of undergraduate researchers – maybe twenty or twenty-five each year that were doing work with EPA on their research. So we spent a lot of time writing proposals, we spent a lot of time convening people and working on projects.

CP: Yeah, I want to ask you about one of those projects specifically. As we were talking off camera, I just returned from Klamath Falls, so I have some connection with the story there of the water crisis, and I gather you were in the middle of that as well.

[0:35:00]

DL: Yeah, that was interesting. I think that during that drought, there was concern that the sucker fish in Klamath Lake, which are endangered, would be damaged as the irrigation water was pulling the water out of the lake. So there was a biological opinion that came down that said, "you have to stop the irrigation," so they turned off the irrigation water. It was a first, I think. It's interesting to watch what's going on in California this year, which is kind of echoing that. But, oh man, it was a brouhaha, it was like finally the West and the government were going to come together. Bad things were going on, lots of arguing, Governor Kitzhaber, in his first term, went down there – he wore a bulletproof vest when he went down there. And that just killed his reputation down there, as you can imagine. He was afraid to go down there. His advisors said "you have to protect yourself," but when the farmers found out about it, they were appalled.

So, anyways. Things went from bad to worse and so the Land Grant university decided that it would step in and so we partnered with the Land Grant universities in California – Berkeley and Davis – and we brought together a team of about twenty scientists who would take a look at the latest science around the whole issue. So I headed up the social science program and we were looking at any social impact that was coming from the drought or the shutdown of the water, and so we did a lot of interviews, we talked to people at the hospital, we talked to mental health. We heard a lot of stories about how people were having heart attacks and how people were losing their farms and how people were having mental breakdowns, people were committing suicide. We heard all these stories, but we couldn't find any evidence of it anywhere. We couldn't find it in the hospitals, doctors' offices or county health, we couldn't find any evidence of any uptick in any kind of public health kinds of issues.

We did find out some interesting things around racism and classism in the community that really – it was really an interesting project all around in that the farming part of the economy was less than three percent of the total economy. More than half of the economy in Klamath County is federal transfer payments.

CP: Oh wow.

DL: Do you know what that is? Social Security, mostly. Medicaid, Medicare. It's very much a retirement community. And so you could shut down the whole farming industry and it wouldn't make a dent in their economy, but the way it was being fashioned is that it was the end of times. But it was only the end of times for a really small portion of the population who felt very privileged in what they were doing.

The other thing that was really striking to me is that most of that farmland was relatively new, since World War II. These were not Century Farms; these were not like the farms in the valley where people have been farming them for a 100, 125 years. They were new farms. A lot of that land was taken up by people returning from World War II and turned into sort of productive land. There's a lot of problems with farming down there, one being that the groundwater is warm – you can't take the water out of the ground and put it on the fields in most places, you know, all that geothermal activity down there. So the water has to come from surface places. So it's an interesting place to farm and the farming is relatively low value.

So it was an interesting thing and it was interesting to work with Extension down there, it was interesting to work with our Land Grants, to watch OSU compared to Berkeley compared to Davis. That was an interesting experience.

And so we got all our work done and we went to report to the community. And we had, of course, a standing room only audience. And the first person who got up to talk was the fish biologist, and he started talking about all the work they had done on the lake, and how they had carefully randomly sampled at different levels and different times – he was describing this really complex project. And the first person who stood up to question him said, "you must think we're idiots, the way you're treating us by doing this *random* careless work." Because that's the only word that they had heard was that they were doing random sampling. And so again, it was one of those instances where I watched scientists sort of hoist themselves on their own petard, their own language, their own world, their own vocabulary. And things just went downhill from there; that meeting never recovered. That scientist, he couldn't backpedal from that. How do you explain to someone the scientific method when you're trying to talk about your results?

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So that was an experience for me that suggested that those things have to be thought about really really carefully, and it was worth study. And I've been studying that since. That's what I've been interested in is how it is that you can integrate scientific information and scientists into decision processes around natural resources. And I've been doing a lot of

experiments and a lot of different things to try and figure that out. And right now I'm working on a grant that's funded by NOAA thinking about the co-production of knowledge around climate change in particular, that we can't answer people's problems with science because they're not scientific problems. Science can be a part of the answering, but it has to be only a part. So I'm trying to think about how you create networks of people who are working together to solve problems, and that includes the scientists as well as the planners and the county commissioners and the elected officials, as well as the citizens. So we're doing projects around the Pacific Northwest to think about, how do you co-produce knowledge that people can use to adapt to climate change in the Pacific Northwest?

And that's how I got started, watching that debacle in Klamath Falls going, "oh my gosh. There's gotta be a better way to do this. We've gotta be better at this." So that was my Klamath Falls – it was kind of an inspiration but I will never, I never want to go back there. It was horrifying.

CP: You mentioned the work on climate change – is what you are learning or researching, is it making you hopeful at all for?

DL: [shakes head]

CP: No.

DL: Well, actually I shouldn't say that. Humans have adapted to everything that gets thrown at us. I think that socially we'll adapt, things will not be as good as they could be, we should definitely be doing things now. I think that these hot summers that we've had, these droughts that we're having, this lack of snowpack – this is the new normal, so we're going to have to figure out what that's going to look like in the Northwest. We have relied on the snowpack to store water for us and we won't be able to do that any longer. The models all suggest that the precipitation isn't going to change that much, but it's going to be rain it's not going to be snow. So we're going to have to think about what we're going to have to do to store water for our summer months, which we don't get any rain during. So virtually everything in the Pacific Northwest that's grown is irrigated during the summer, because there's no rain. And that's all snow melt, so what are we going to do? What are we going to do?

So I think people are starting to think about that finally, these last couple of summers have been enough to shake people up. This last winter in particular was, I think, a harbinger of what our winters will look like. There's snow at high elevations but not enough snow to refill the reservoirs. So it'll be interesting; it'll be really interesting.

CP: Well lets back up a little bit and get back into the institutional memory here. You came to OSU with the Center for the Analysis of Environmental Change, was there any direct connection with the Sociology department at that point?

DL: My academic appointment was in Sociology and I would teach classes for them. I created and taught an applied methods course for them every year because, again, that sort of became my passion, is doing applied work. So I started out teaching it as what we called a "slash course," undergraduate and graduate. The undergraduates weren't particularly interested in it, but graduate students really were, so we switched it over to a graduate-only class. And so every year I worked with the students on a project, and we continue to have that class as one our required classes for our graduate program. And we've also created the Oregon Policy Analysis Lab which actually does the same thing for people around the state, and now around the world, to work on policy problems where the students are actually doing the work for a client. So that was my connection to Sociology.

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I also attended faculty meetings and I sort of acted like a faculty member. I was a Research Assistant Professor, that was my title, and they promoted me to Research Faculty Associate Professor while I was working at CWEST. So I got promoted based on my scholarship and my teaching and service and all of those things.

Then – so we were working at CWEST and a job – I can't remember the exact sequence on this – but one of the things that we decided to do as a water faculty on campus was create a Water Resources graduate program. So CWEST took the lead in convening that group and we ended up creating five new graduate programs in Water Resources, which is still going today. I think we just had their ten-year review last year. So a very successful program, very interdisciplinary, faculty

from every single college except Pharmacy and Vet Med. So all of those people, more than 100 faculty, working on water at OSU and contributing to that graduate program.

So while we're doing that, we're also – the first round of Provost Initiatives had come about. And what it was was not faculty hires, it was to create these initiatives that, for five years, would get money to sort of kick start some big idea. So we created the Institute for Water and Watersheds and got funded for that, and then actually were able to hire a full-time director. So the whole time that Ken and I are doing CWEST, it covers .25 of my FTE and zero of Ken's, so I'm writing grants, I'm working on research projects, Ken's teaching, he's running this program. So all of what we're doing is sort of on a bootstrap. So I was basically on soft money the whole time I was here, but that was ok because that's what I did at Battelle too – soft money in the sense that you had to earn your keep by writing a proposal and getting funded. So I did that for most of my career at OSU.

So we said, "ok, if we really want to turn water into something big, we're going to have to put a tent into it." So we did a national search and we hired someone, and Ken and I stepped back and said, "here, do something. We now have graduate programs and we have this institute with \$5 million for five years." Ken and I were running it on about \$40,000 a year, so we thought, "wow, what could you do with a million dollars a year?" You know, we had all these glorious things happening. Well, you know, to tell you the truth, I'm really disappointed because not much happened. We hired someone who was at the end of his career instead of at the start of his career. We made a lot of mistakes. "We" – I'm going to claim, as a sociologist, that OSU made a lot of institutional errors on that whole Provost Initiative, which Sabah never did again. He switched over to hiring faculty, which probably was a good idea. Anyways, that was his first try at trying to kick start something. The Institute for Water and Watersheds is still there, it's still sort of hobbling along. The graduate program is doing really really well, I think we can be really proud of that.

So at the same time, a new position came open in Sociology, a tenure track position. And so I applied for it. And it was a national search and I had to go through and give my presentation and go through the whole interviewing thing while two other people were doing it as well. So they finally decided to offer me the job, although I've heard interesting things about what that conversation was. And I decided to take it and so I moved over to a tenure track position. So I was an associate professor there for a couple of years and then I went up to promotion to full professor the year before we reorganized. So I'm glad I did that.

CP: At this point, were you still associated with CWEST?

DL: No, there was no CWEST. At the same time we were creating the Institute for Water and Watersheds, we took CWEST down. So there's only one water institute on campus, so it's still partially funded by USGS but also partially funded by the Research Office. So after Sabah's money ran out, they went back to the \$40,000 a year from the Research Office in addition to a really small amount from USGS that's challenged every year by the Congress, because the funding is federal. So it's kind of a hit or miss kind of thing; they never cut the funding for it completely but it continues to decline over the years. It'll be interesting to see now with water as such a big issue, and climate, if more money will go into the water institutes. It'll be interesting to see. But I'm no longer affiliated with water except as a regular faculty member.

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CP: So there was this period of time then, when you had entered the tenure track and you didn't have administrative responsibilities?

DL: Exactly.

CP: A change for you.

DL: All I did was teach. It was interesting however, because they couldn't really afford my salary; I only have a partial FTE with them. So I was still writing grants and I was still raising a lot of my salary, so that didn't change. But then I was teaching and working with graduate students. What really changed was I just wasn't administering anything. Instead I started serving on committees, so I was like on the Bacc Core Committee and the Graduate Committee and all those kinds of things. So I sort of shifted over to doing that kind of work instead.

CP: I'm interested in how your research evolved. It sounds like it was a catalyzing moment in the Klamath Basin in 2001, and we've talked about climate change being more contemporary, but there was stuff in the middle. There was some forest management – is that a piece of it?

DL: Well, it's all about natural resources. So I'm interested in natural resources. My dissertation was on the pre-summit that ended up with what we call "the rider from hell," that Mark Hatfield, in a fit of pique with the inability for people in the Pacific Northwest to come to a conclusion, tacked on. And they cut two billion board feet in a year before Clinton was elected and then they had the summit of Clinton. So I was interested in all those kinds of machinations that were extra legislative, extra regulatory, where they were trying something different in the Pacific Northwest, where they were trying to get people to come to some kind of consensus. So I was really interested in watching how that played out and the role of science in that kind of alternative dispute or alternative policy-making arena. As it turned out, the Northwest Forest Plan was developed by scientists. Bad policy – bad, bad, bad policy. And we still don't have spotted owls; they're in more danger than they were when the instituted it. So it's interesting – I haven't done any work on that, I haven't gone back and looked at it, but plenty of people have and it's interesting to think about it.

Anyways, so all of my work has been around natural resources: water, forests, climate change. And again, what I'm really interested in is how people make decisions about those kinds of resources. So I'm interested in the institutions and the norms and the practices that people create to manage these somewhat collective or common goods that we call natural resources.

CP: So I'm hearing you say that the role of the social scientist is vital in sort of providing that bridge between the science and the public policy.

DL: I think social science can be a bridge if it wants to be. It's an interesting idea, this whole idea of "boundaryness" that social science can play if it wants to. Most social scientists don't really want to do that, because they don't want to have to understand what's on the other end of the bridge and then create this kind of structure that people can walk across to work with each other. I think you have to be a special kind of person to do that and you don't have to be a social scientist. I do know some natural scientists who can do it equally as well. I don't think it's automatic for social scientists to be that bridge; in fact, they can be barriers as much as anything. They can be as much a barrier as any physical or natural scientist, let me tell you.

I think what I was interested in though was, again, I have only done interdisciplinary research. I have only done that. If you look at my CV, you will not find a single sole-authored thing until quite recently, because before that I was always working on a team and you wrote papers together. So sometimes it was with other social scientists, different kinds of social scientists, but mostly it was with natural scientists and social scientists together.

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CP: I notice somebody you've worked a fair amount with is Brent Steel, a political scientist here at OSU. Do you want to talk about that collaboration a bit?

DL: Yeah, so Brent approached me when I first came to OSU at CAEC. He was working with some people in Forestry and in Philosophy at the time, and he asked me if I wanted to join that collaboration, and I did. And Brent and I are the only ones who have survived, the other two have retired – they're fine, they've retired. But we started doing this work on the role of science and scientists in natural resource decision making from a really quantitative perspective, which was quite different for me. Even though I'm trained to do quantitative methods, I sort of gravitate towards interviews and observations. But I've learned a lot from Brent. So we've done a lot of work on creating a lot of scales on a lot of indexes, and thinking about expectations for scientists in natural resource policy-making.

So we were focusing primarily on ecological science, terrestrial, and recently I've started working on the role of science in marine. And it's been interesting because there's been a lot of work in ecology on ecosystems and conservation biology, which are all really large landscapes, systemic kinds of thinking. And that kind of thinking is just starting in the marine arena. So in those sciences, where there's this real understanding of systems, there seems to be this quite openness to other kinds of knowledge and other kinds of information that's needed to understand the system. So we saw that for many academic and agency scientists that were ecologists, they were very open to this idea of science as being contingent and

science as being really flexible, and science being really a social construction that changes. There was this real openness to that and it was interesting – it was really kind of shocking to Brent and I to see that and be able to quantify, and then start talking with people and realize that while much of the stuff they wrote really looked like straight-ahead positivist science, the work that they did and the way they thought was really quite post-positivist, really quite different. And they were kind of struggling to find ways to publish that kind of material, and I think that's really changed over the last ten or fifteen years.

But we went over to marine and it felt like we'd gone back ten years, because they're back struggling with – they're just starting to think about preserve areas or bigger areas in the marine, like they had in the terrestrial ecology. So it's been interesting to watch that shift over, now more than a decade of work. So that's the work that Brent and I do intellectually together. We've been doing that a long time and still are publishing on that, and we have students working on projects. I would like us to think of something new – each of us have different projects that we work on with other people, but I really like working with him. We're very fruitful when we work together; we think very differently and we come at problems in very complementary ways, so I keep saying, "Brent, let's just write a little tiny NSF grant to get started on something new," because now we're involved in these big multi-million dollar projects that mostly are just overwhelming. So that's my dream, at some level, is in the next couple of years to write something tiny that we can work on together and maybe add something to this body of work that we're creating. I don't know if it'll happen, we're too busy.

CP: It's striking to me to hear you talk and to think about the path of your career. You taught junior high for a long time and had this big gap between bachelor's and master's, and entered a completely different world, a different milieu. But it seems like it suited you very well from the get-go.

DL: Yeah, I think so. I also would have to say that I think I'm very flexible and I'm really adaptable, and I think that as long as I'm learning something, I'm happy. So working at Battelle, that's what I did; working at a university, that's what you do. I think I have found the place. I need to be doing something like this. I would have a hard time working at a corporation or even working in a department where I just had to do the same thing over and over again. Which is one of the reasons I don't think I'm a very good teacher, because I don't like teaching the same thing over and over again. I have to change it up every single time. So it's always new to me but it's also sort of fumbling for the students.

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CP: Never any anxiety about having to find your salary with the grants you had to write?

DL: I never did. I think I was pretty successful early on. Working at Battelle, man, you learned how to write a grant fast. If you didn't, you didn't survive. People did not survive that environment if they couldn't write a grant. And I've been pretty lucky and I still have a lot of grants, I still have a lot of research money that comes in, because I think it's what I do. It's who I am – I'm a researcher. I don't write as much as I should, but I write grants and final reports. That's what happens when you get to this stage, I've decided, is that the graduate students and the assistant professors get to do the fun work, I get to do the administration – I'll write the grant, I'll write the final report, I'll do the budgets.

CP: Speaking of administration, you mentioned you achieved full professorship in 2009 and the next year the School of Public Policy was created. This is a big shift.

DL: Huge shift.

CP: So you were appointed as the transitional director and then, eventually, the official director. I'm interested in what this meant for you and also for your colleagues. I've heard a lot of different things about the shift to schools from departments – some good, some bad.

DL: Well, I have to say it's brilliant. I think it has revitalized the College of Liberal Arts. Larry Rodgers is probably the best thing that's happened to us. And Larry, in combination with Ed Ray and Sabah, has just revitalized CLA. Potentially it could turn us into a real College of Liberal Arts – I better back away from that a little bit. So when Sabah and the president – this was in 2008, wasn't it? When was it, I can't remember. But the economy was exploding, there wasn't any support for the universities, so it was all about saving money. And so that was the first thing that came about, so what they said is that we need to think about reorganizing the university for the twenty-first century, we need to think about closing

down small departments, combining things. And the only rules that they gave us was that we had to have a department that had at least ten faculty and a certain number of students – I can't remember the exact numbers – and we could do whatever we wanted.

So for about six months we sort of did this dating thing, where we would have meetings together and we'd talk about, "should we get together? What would it look like?" Some of those meetings were pretty hot, some of the meetings were pretty tense, but ultimately we decided to go together with Economics, Political Science, and Sociology as the School of Public Policy, because we had been delivering this graduate program in public policy now, at that point, for about four or five years. So we had some history together, we had created this program together, and we decided that would be the best for us. We had talked about maybe bringing in some people – Anthropology we had conversations with, but there were enough differences that they went somewhere else. We talked to some people in Communications – they thought they didn't fit with us. So it was interesting. We didn't have conversations with Geography, but we probably should have. We weren't as brave as some people in crossing college lines.

So ultimately seventeen departments in CLA were transformed into six schools, and one of them is the School of Public Policy. And I think that it has been great. The thing that has been the most amazing is the people that we've been able to hire, the new hires, we're getting them from the very best programs – Harvard, Stanford, Michigan, London School of Economics – because all of the faculty coming out of these programs want to do interdisciplinary work. They want to do policy-related work, they want to do applied work. They want to do all those things that those of us who came out of traditional disciplinary programs wanted nothing to do with.

So all of the sudden, we have a faculty now – we have a faculty member who has an environmental science Ph.D. from Stanford, who did her Ph.D. with Doug McAdam. Do you know Doug McAdam? He's a sociologist who did all this work on social movements in the '60s and '70s. And so she did work with him on community organizing against energy facility siting. She has a book out; before she got out graduate school she had a book out with Doug McAdam. And her master's degree is in mechanical engineering. So all the sudden, here we have someone who doesn't have a sociology, economics or political science. She's right in the middle of our program, our students adore her, she has a great amount of money from NSF to do research. She's like a star. And why would she have come to the old OSU? And where would she have come to? What program would she have come into? Environmental Science? That's not a program.

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So instead we were able to create this place where people who are interested in doing policy work that's related to the strengths of OSU around natural resources, engineering, climate change, water – all those things that we're good at. Those are the people who want to come here and do policy-related work. So it's been so exhilarating. We have some of the smartest faculty that I've ever seen in my life. And I have to say, in the past, that hasn't necessarily been true of CLA; that it's been a bit of a backwater, it's been a place where people came because they couldn't get a job somewhere else and then they got here and they had a really big teaching load so they weren't do a lot. There were a lot of things that just weren't working for CLA. And I think if Ed Ray wants a top ten Land Grant university, he has to have a College of Liberal Arts that blows people's socks off. And I think that's what Larry Rodgers was brought in to do, and I think that's what he's about doing right now.

And so everything that's going on in Liberal Arts right now is exciting. I think it's just amazing to watch the hires and the people who have been here a while getting recharged. I have a faculty member who I thought had just settled in to this, "oh, I'm just going to finish out my career as associate professor." She has just been kicked into – I have never seen someone so productive and so engaged. And she's now in demand by people all over campus to be on proposals. It's amazing to watch; it's just so much fun to watch her get re-energized into doing the work that she used to do. But now she's doing it again with this big sort of slowdown in the middle.

So I'm really excited about where Liberal Arts is going and where our school is going in particular. Our goal is to be a ranked graduate program and to that end we've gotten accredited, we've created a public policy Ph.D. program – one of the few in the country. We have an almost one-hundred percent placement rate, either in a graduate program or a policy job for our master's students, which is somewhat of a terminal degree, kind of like an MBA, where these people go out and work. The Ph.D. students we just started so we don't have a graduate yet, but boy, do we have good students applying

from all over the world. It is really exciting. So I'm very very excited about where CLA could be in five years, in ten years.

CP: Does that potential vision, is that focusing a lot on expanding the graduate offerings?

DL: Well, we just finished writing our first ever strategic plan for the College of Liberal Arts. And one of them is that we will have a ranked graduate program in every school – that is one of our goals. There is not a graduate program in Psychology, and that one's going through the process right now to create a Ph.D. in psychological sciences that's focused on psychology and engineering, isn't that cool? So instead of creating this sort of general, generic Psych program, they're teaming up with Engineering, because they have all these psychologists over there in Industrial Engineering, so we have this kind of capacity that nobody really knew about it until we started talking to each other. It's stuff like that, it's thinking like that, that's really leveraging what's strong at OSU already to make CLA stand out as something really different and unique. So I think that's what we're doing, all the programs are doing, I think that's so exciting.

[1:09:55]

CP: Continuing that strong interdisciplinary focus, it sounds like.

DL: Yeah, and I think that's the future. I think that people who want to do disciplinary work can still do it. I don't think we will ever get away from that and I don't see a real need to get away from that, but I do see a need to add this interdisciplinary focus. And I think policy is an interesting paradox, in that there's definitely a discipline to policy – there's policy science, there's policy theory, there's policy methods – but the problems are interdisciplinary. So you bring up technique and you bring an understanding of the world, like everyone with a discipline does, but you work on every problem under the sun. So there aren't any boundaries on the topics, which there are often in disciplines – we just don't look at certain things when we're sociologists, for example. The policy people, they look at every problem under the sun.

And so, again, what we've really tried to do with Policy is keep it focused on OSU's strengths. We don't do public health policy, for example, because we have a School of Public Health, let them do that. We don't do urban policy – PSU has a perfectly good Urban Policy program, we don't need to do that. But we do do rural policy, and there aren't a lot of places in the world that do rural policy. Well, for good reason, there aren't a lot of rural places left in the world. But that's somewhere that you can say, we do that, that's pretty unique. And it's something that matches up with our Land Grant, with our College of Ag. So that's what we're trying to do is that kind of leveraging and that kind of linking up. And I think it makes for really strong programs.

CP: What has the return to administration meant for you?

DL: Well, I have to admit, I probably am an administrator at heart. All of my siblings are managers of one sort or another, as was my dad. And I think it's just maybe in our blood. I think I like it. I like being a leader, I'm not so sure I like being an administrator, the paperwork. I have an amazing Executive Assistant who I could not do this job without, she's great. So she helps make sure that I stay on track with the minutiae – and there is a lot of minutiae at a university, it's kind of mind-boggling. But I think creating opportunities for people and creating an environment where people can be successful, I think I'm good at that and I like doing it. So I think that's where I get my energy from; that and research. I don't get it as much from teaching which, when I did get to be a faculty member and I had to do all three of those things, it made me realized that I'm really probably not a teacher, although I've been one almost all my life. I don't think that's where I get the most energy in my life, from teaching. I think it would come from being a leader or doing research.

CP: We've been asking everybody a question about the direction of OSU, which I'll ask you in a second, and that's how we sort of wrap up our interviews. But I'm interested though in your perspective on the community of Corvallis and how that has changed and evolved over the course of time. You've been here a while now.

DL: I've been here a long time and I knew it even before, when things were – actually, I moved to Corvallis in 1982 at the bottom of a recession. And it was an anomalous El Nino year where it rained all summer. If you ever look at the hydrographs for that year you can see the spike go up. "What did I get myself into?"

The town has changed a lot. A lot. And I would say mostly for the good, if you are employed. And if you are employed at a good-paying job. I would say, when I first came here, there were a lot of people here who had bad jobs and who could

live here. They could rent a house; you just can't do any longer, I don't think. You can't rent a house for less than \$1,500 a month, you can't buy a house – the housing costs are really high here for an Oregon small town. It's really changed in that sense, that it really has turned into a middle class town with a lot of services for professionals, and those services range everywhere from good restaurants to massage therapists to accountants to lawyers to a good hospital – all of that has emerged since I've been here.

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And it's really changed into a small town that, I think, is really sustainable. I think if it hadn't transferred, I think we would be a lot like Sweet Home or something, where we're off the highway, we've fallen into this place where not a lot of people want to live. But I think it's really changed and I think there's been some people with vision in this town that have really turned it into a place that you want to live. It's not dominated by big box stores, there's still a lot of local character.

I think that the relationship between the university and the town has shifted over the last years, and a lot of that has to do with growth. But I think a lot of it too is the way the town handled it. I look at some of the housing units that have been built and I think, "what was the Planning Commission thinking?" That doesn't have anything to do with the university, that's their decision, how they handled that. I think it's turned into a very sustainable and livable small town. It shows up on those lists of best places to live and I know why, because it is, if you have a reasonable job, if you have a good-paying job. If you don't, it's too expensive. So you have to live in Albany or Philomath or Lebanon and drive in, which is kind of unpleasant because the roads aren't very good, especially over the bridge. Yeah, it's kind of nasty. So that's what I think.

I think that campus itself has changed incredibly over the last five years. Sometimes I just don't recognize it. It's just amazing, the amount of building that's going on.

CP: Well, that feeds into the last question – you're clearly bullish on the future of CLA, but we're asking people how they feel about OSU as it's being positioned heading towards its sesquicentennial. Where do you think the university is going?

DL: I think that Dr. Ray had a vision that we would be a top ten Land Grant university. I have no idea what that is; I can't find a list of top ten Land Grant universities. But when I think about those, I would think Berkeley and Davis on the west coast, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Ohio State, Rutgers, Cornell. That's our competition; for me, that's the competition. We don't have a hospital, so we're not ever going to play with the big boys, I don't think. Not like Minnesota, Wisconsin, even Davis; we're just not going to play because we don't have a hospital, and I don't think that's a bad thing. But I think that it's right to have that as an aspiration, is that we should have – whatever we have at OSU should be at the same caliber as Wisconsin or Minnesota. Not Wisconsin anymore, because they're eviscerating their higher ed program. But I think that we should aspire to being the best. Not the best that we can be, but the best. And I think that we're on the way to doing that.

I think we slowed down, we lost some momentum in the last couple of years, and a lot of that has to do with this rejiggering of the state system, where we had to create our own board, we had to sort of find our feet again. We have to get that Board of Visitors or whatever they're called, that Higher Education Board, we have to get them engaged in creating that momentum with us again. I think that we have an amazing leader in Ed Ray and he has a vision for us, and that he's agreed to stay on more is only good news for us, because I think that his vision is getting translated in just the physical facilities as well as the people who work here. The Provost Initiatives, and that's Sabah Randhawa, I think those initiatives have really changed the face of this university and positioned us for being the best at what we do. And we just have to stay concentrated on being the best at what we do and not trying to be the best at everything, but figuring out that we're the best at what we do. And I think that's the way forward is to concentrate on that and figure that out. Focus on it and just be the best that we are, always keeping our eyes open for the next thing that leverages that best thing.

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So I'm excited things like the Marine Studies Initiative. That feels like it could leverage stuff; it feels like it has the potential. I haven't seen that potential excited yet, but I think it's there. There's so much going on at OSU right now, it's really hard to find enough people to bring into new initiatives, because everybody's on their own path for creating this excellence that we are. And people have been given the wherewithal to make that happen. I think one of the best things that happened for OSU is the capacity to be entrepreneurs. So we were able to create online curriculum, we were able to

get involved in the INTO program, which is the international program. We're able to create short courses, we're able to create all these ways of raising revenue that we didn't have access to before, and I think that's only been good for us. It taught us how to be in the world with people who might be willing to pay for what we have to offer, and us rethinking what the role of Liberal Arts is within that modern world.

And I think that Liberal Arts has a lot to play in the future of OSU and it probably, when we pop through, I think that will be – we'll be sitting up there next to the College of Forestry, which is rated very highly, Oceanography. I think we'll just be able to bring the rest of the university up with us. I truly believe that. When I think about those other universities that I named, those Liberal Arts programs are the best in the country, and they're part of what make them really strong Land Grant universities. So we can't do it without CLA, and I think everybody's positioned us to make that happen.

CP: Well I want to thank you very much for this. This has been a real treat for me and I appreciate you sharing your memories and perspective, and I wish you and the School of Public Policy all the best.

DL: Thanks, yeah. Thanks. I get all excited about it. My history, I hardly remember. [laughs]

[1:22:03]