



Dick Weinman Oral History Interviews, October 25, 2014

Title

“Memories of Broadcast Media Communications at OSU”

Date

October 25, 2014

Location

Weinman residence, Corvallis, Oregon.

Summary

In his first interview, Weinman discusses the roots of his interest in radio, dating to his youth in New York City, and his arrival in Corvallis. In recalling his early years at OSU, Weinman notes the university's need for an educational curriculum in broadcast media, its rudimentary facilities, and the role that he played in building the Broadcast Media Communications program and KBVR-TV.

Weinman next backtracks to recount an earlier teaching stint at the University of Georgia, commenting on his experience of race relations in the American South and how this influenced his teaching and programming later on. He then reflects on the closure of the Broadcast Media Communications program at OSU in the wake of Ballot Measure 5, and his subsequent engagement with an early form of online teaching.

From there, the interview retraces again to the activities with which Weinman was involved during a time where Broadcast Media Communications was flourishing. He speaks in particular of his work with the Minorities in the Mass Media workshops, his involvement with the Tom McCall Lectureship and other campus events, and his efforts teaching a wide variety of classes, including one on "Isms." The session concludes with Weinman's memories of multiple individuals whom he taught and with whom we worked during his years as an Oregon State faculty member.

Interviewee

Dick Weinman

Interviewer

Janice Dilg

Website

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

Transcript

Janice Dilg: So this morning I'm with Dick Weinman in his assisted-living facility in Corvallis, Oregon. Today is October 25th, 2014. My name is Janice Dilg, and I'm the oral historian for the Oregon State University 150 project. Good morning.

Dick Weinman: Hi, Janice.

JD: Thanks for agreeing to include your recollections in the collection for this project.

DW: Well, my pleasure. And at my age, it's hard to recollect recollections, so I hope I can get to the main points.

JD: I'm sure you'll do fine. You were talking before we went on the recording about doing a beginning of how you came to Corvallis. Maybe that would be a great place to start.

DW: Well, that is the beginning, and I came in the fall of 1967 to start a new program in radio and television at the university. And later on, I changed the name "Radio and Television" to "Broadcast Media Communication," which seemed to me to carry a more socially embrace-ive title. But all of the courses dealt with the mass media, the electronic mass media, which were radio, television, and, at the time, film. And so my job was to create, initiate, and develop a program, which I set about doing. There had been a 10-watt closed-circuit radio station on campus, called KBVR, and that was received in the dormitories of the university. It didn't go out over the air; it was closed-circuit.

And during my time, I enlarged the radio station, and what it did, and how far it went, until it became a regular mid-Willamette Valley FM station that many people listen to even if they're not affiliated with the university. And the television station was something new. I had come from Iowa State University, and the emphasis at Iowa State was to let students get involved in their education, and produce and direct their own work, rather than hear a professor lecture to them and tell them about things. And so I carried that philosophy here to OSU, and I used the television facility as a way of giving the students a practical experience in broadcasting to an audience. Of course, I had to find the audience. But this was the beginning of cable television around the country, so I got in touch with the local cable station, and asked them if they would be interested in carrying works produced by students, and they were very happy to do that.

And so we set about producing programs on a nightly basis, sometimes a weekly basis, that the local television station carried on the channel that they had adapted for themselves. At that time, cable stations had to have a community-access channel to broadcast events with the community. In Corvallis at that time, the cable company shot film of the high school football games on Friday night and played it back on Saturday, and that's how they used the channel. We came in with a whole plethora of programs, eventually, and the cable system dedicated a channel to KBVR. And so we were off and running with our own student produced and managed television station.

And the material that was broadcast, the programming, and the production of that programming was tied into the classes that were being taught in the academic arm of Broadcast Media Communication. So we were a theory and practice kind of—we provided a theory and practice education.

JD: Mm-hm. So I want to back up just a bit and explore what your personal interests were in broadcast media and communication. How did you go about wanting to study that, which brought you up to the point where you were doing this professionally at OSU?

DW: Well, I always wanted to be in radio as a teenager. There was no television. Well yes, I know there was a little television. So when I was choosing a college, like most high-school seniors, probably [0:05:00], I didn't know where to go, but I had heard from a neighbor that Indiana University had a good radio program, whatever that meant. So here I was, a sophisticated New York City youth, going out into the Midwest, where people didn't speak the same way I spoke, and set out to become a radio major at Indiana University. And they did, Indiana did have a very fine radio education system. They had a radio station, which eventually became a National Public Radio station after I had left. But it was an active radio station. I was on it. And the beginnings of television as an academic curriculum, a B.S., started when I was there.

So I became one of the first persons around the country, I guess, along with my peers, to study television as a medium of communication in our country. And that interest never waned, even when I changed my studies to theater arts, became

a speech and theater major, graduated from Columbia with an MFA in dramatic arts. I was still very interested in radio, and had always worked, I guess you'd say, on the side in radio. Whatever town I was in either as a graduate student or as a faculty member, there was a radio station, and during the off-times of the university—we do have them, during Christmas vacation, or spring vacation, or the weekends—I would work at a local radio station. And that continued into my years at Oregon State University, where my job was more prestigious, working for Oregon Public Broadcasting for almost 25 years. And I was on the air in the early-morning hours, from 5 AM to 8 AM, and then I cycled over to the other part of the campus and engaged in all of my teaching functions.

JD: So what was important to Oregon State University that they hired you to create this?

DW: Well, at that time, I mean, radio, the media, the electronic journalism, if you want to call it that, was just beginning to be understood. And more importantly, it was beginning not to be understood, and so there needed to be some kind of a curriculum, an educational curriculum, that would prepare young people to take a part in this new, unfolding media of television, and all of the effects that radio and television were able to have as a consequence, which they did have—and still do have.

JD: Mm-hm. So describe a little what the scene was, what the facilities were when you arrived in Oregon.

DW: Oh, I just about cried! I was ready to leave. I did not do a campus interview for this job, so I didn't really know what the facilities were like, and we were in—the radio and television were located in the top of Shepard Hall, the 100-plus-year building, house, old house, former YMCA, on campus. And there was hardly any equipment, and you couldn't really do—you can't communicate in media without media equipment, and there was hardly any. The studio was a very a tiny room, one of the classrooms on the second floor of Shepard. There was a radio studio to broadcast the 10-watt radio station, KBVR, and to do a few classes that were here in radio. But other than that, there was a facility-less facility, so I was very disappointed and unhappy. But I said, "Well, let's do with what we have," so we did, and we went on the air in television in the spring of 1968. The first program had to do with the president of the student body. He was on the air, and I think there was a group discussion of some kind. [0:10:00] And we did a regular news program. And several of those news reporters are now retired from careers in broadcasting, pretty significant careers in broadcasting. So that's how we began. It was very rustic. Rudimentary.

JD: [Laughs] Sure. Or maybe both. So talk a little about the process of building the program. There's kind of the academic component, there's the facility component, and you're sort of orchestrating all of this.

DW: Yes, well, there is the academic program, and I wouldn't call it facility; I would call it experiential or practical arm of the program, and they worked hand in hand at the time. Students received workshop credit, undergraduate workshop credit, for taking—oh, how do I want to put it? For working on programs, whether they were the producer of the program, or they were the talent of the program, or whether they were the production crew of the program. They would get credit through what was called Speech 250-350 for that participation. And the courses were going on at the same time, but they were not using the facility. The facility was used to carry out the coursework, carry out the learning of the coursework.

For example, we'd talk about the importance of the media in educating a public for voting. So KBVR television produced a number of programs centering around the election coverage at the time of elections. We had the various candidates for Benton County office, for City Council, in our studios, and it was an interview, a question/answer format that was had. And in order to facilitate some of these programs, I worked with the *Gazette Times* newspaper, one person in particular, whose name was Wanda McAllister, and she was, I think, the editorial editor of the newspaper. And she hosted many of our programs, and talked to the candidates. So there was a tie-in between OSU and the local organ of news communication. That went on continually.

JD: I was going to say, it sounds like the program built a lot, or you built a lot of collaborations, both kind of locally and nationally, in order to accomplish the goals of the program?

DW: Right. And the goals of the program pretty much remained the same, that a person was going to be a communicator in a community, in a society, and therefore not only needed to know about how to communicate through the media, but how to know what to communicate. And that's why I really liked the system at Oregon State, compared to the University of Oregon, where there was a school of journalism. Here at Oregon State, we were housed in the College of Liberal Arts,

and so liberal-arts courses were mandatory for the students who went through the broadcast program. And I think many of the hires in the early days of news programming were not so much, "What do you know about television?" but, "What do you know about the world? How are you going to represent the minority community? How are you going to represent diverse communities and diverse ideas?" And there was a big push at this time, nationally, by advocates for broadcasting—who were for the most part anti-business—a push to make radio and television stations more reflective of their actual community. And so that all tied in with what we were doing here with our students, and the community of Corvallis.

JD: And so the perspective of the importance of having many communities, many cultures reflected in the reporting, in what was visually being seen—how were you developing your own perspectives and philosophies about that, and brought that to your work?

DW: I think I always had them. This is how I grew up, as a liberal progressive Reformed Jew in New York City, and so I had a political inculcation that way [0:15:00], and I brought those ideas here. And I also had heard about the left-wing, pinko college professors, but I was really not—I did not integrate my political beliefs into my classes, although I did want to stress the importance that we were a culture, a pop culture, maybe, but we were part of a culture, an American culture, and so we had to do work that was societally and culturally responsible, and moral, and ethical. You could choose your political party either way, but you can't just get up in front of a camera, or get on a microphone, as was done often, and is done now, and spout some kind of demagogic information that's not true. You have a responsibility. I made that important in the curricula that I designed for the classes, as well.

JD: Mm-hm. You did a short teaching stint at the University of Georgia, from '59 to '63.

DW: Mm-hm.

JD: Those were years of, shall we say, upheaval and change in the American landscape, and certainly in the American south. Perhaps talk a little about what some of your experiences were there, and how that might have influenced you as you moved forward.

DW: Well, one of my media experiences there was watching the national network crews trying to rile up the students, so that they could get good footage for their programs. And I was there at the integration of the University of Georgia. Two young African-American students were entering. One was Charlayne Hunter, who has gone on to become Charlayne Hunter Gault, and the internationally known reporter on African affairs. The other was Hamilton Holmes, who ended up in medical school, and I guess died at an early age. And Charlayne was a journalism major, so we had a little bit of interaction from afar, and some of my colleagues worked with her at the university to try to ease her stay at the university.

And I don't know why I was interested in the case, but I would go to the federal courthouse when the NAACP was arguing against the state of Georgia, or the University of Georgia specifically, and I watched the trial. And I don't know why I remember the name from so far, so many years ago: Judge Bootle declared that the university had to integrate. That was that.

And then what was interesting about teaching speech, which I did in those days—I taught speech and radio; well, not radio so much as television. What was interesting about teaching speech and speech courses was that the students really were very conflicted in their position about integration. On the one hand, they had the parents who might have been staunch segregationists. On the other hand, they were young people in their late teens and early twenties who were questioning whether their parents were right. And so there was this dichotomy and uncertainty on the part of the student body. They were really confused people. And that was manifest in the kinds of speeches that they gave in class, in public, to a public of 20 other students. So personally, to me, it made the role of teacher much more than one of passing information to people who were listening to you, because you're participating in the lives of these students unfolding at that time.

JD: And it was certainly a time of turmoil in the nation. That probably intensified in the south. You mentioned there were the Freedom Riders. The Civil Rights movement was in full swing. The women's rights movement was kind of nascent at that period, so I'm guessing you experienced those kinds of struggles in your students for some period of time after that, even.

DW: Well, I also noticed it in the way the media handled things. As I said before, I usually found a radio station to work at, and I was working at this one small radio station—not that small, really, as far as radio stations go—and the manager of the radio station was also the news director of the radio station [0:20:02], and he was pretty adamant about things. His news copy was that "outside agitators" came into Corvallis and upset the good people of Corvallis. Castro was also rising at this time, and his copy said, "the Cuban dictator, Fidel Castro," so he was very firm on the way he represented what was the tremendous social changes that were going on in the way he—hold on—the way he had us and himself present the news—very one-sided, much like a Rush Limbaugh, but more polished, in those days.

JD: So you mentioned earlier that you—

DW: Well, let me go back. But that was a lesson to me, as a person working in the media. Number one, you don't do what the manager says, or the manager has to be educated. And news and administration and management need to be—and sales—need to be separated as functions for the community. So I interrupted.

JD: That's fine. And so you're—I'm assuming—thinking about all of this, and integrating all of this into the courses that you designed at the time, and in the types of thoughtfulness that you wanted your students to develop. Talk a little about how you developed courses, and how you kind of kept your politics out of it while still developing the types of important perspectives that students needed to bring to communication, and journalism, and broadcast media.

DW: Well, in the curriculum that I devised, along with other faculty in broadcast media—we didn't have very many people, although one person, at one time, through no pressure, outside pressure of any kind, was an African American woman, okay? Another faculty member was an African American man, who had come to us—come to me, anyhow—as a student in one of my Minority Mass Media workshops years before, and he was working in the profession as a producer of programs, and then whatever happened I don't know, but he came to us and worked as a faculty member. And the advisor to KBVR, the student wing of the academic program, was also a woman. And I don't say this as any reflection of, "Oh, wow! You're doing a good thing, Weinman," or, "The university's making you do this thing." It just happened. These were the people who were there to do the work. And were not all very happy with each other, but we all gathered around what we were doing, and we saw it as a correct mission to have. And even now, in 2014, 2013, some of us who are still here from that period get together once in a while, and share coffee and stories, as old people do, about the good old past.

But I added the core curriculum, which was the core curriculum in broadcasting courses—not all of them, but a core. Then the university had its baccalaureate core, which was the kind of general liberal arts education you needed. Then I had an area called Allied—well, Allied Areas, I guess I called them. And these were courses from various departments at the university that I thought and the faculty thought would enhance a person who was going out into the professional world of broadcasting. So they included specific courses in sociology, in psychology, in business college—we were able to move between one college and another—and in writing, English literature—oh, writing, and English literature, and knowing English, knowing literature, and art. And mostly they were in liberal arts, but I did think that courses in business were important [0:25:00], especially those that dealt with regulated businesses, as broadcasting was a regulated business, and which had to deal with marketing, which was interaction between a communicator and the public. So I had these allied areas that were recommended for the students to take.

And the classes kept getting—increasing in volume, as the times changed. And the times did change, because broadcast media became old hat, and a new media was being created. And fortunately, I, and we at Oregon State, were getting in on this new media, which at the time was cable television—which is not so new now—and the sense of the Internet, which was not called "The Internet" then. There was the "information superhighway." But there was the beginning of the technology of today, being conceived, thought of, all except the consequences of that technology. And so I saw it as my role to try to give studies in the consequences of the new technology, and very much followed the rather simplistic aphorism of Marshall McLuhan, that "the medium is the message," and it is. The nature of the technology that you're using to pass that message through does affect the message itself. It shapes it to the nature of the medium. So this was part of the philosophy that I was espousing in my classes.

JD: Mm-hm. And so can you give some examples of some of the coursework, and how it changed?

DW: Ah, yes. Part of it starts with a negative, and I don't want to say "phoenix rising from the ashes," but that kind of the thing. There was a ballot measure, which at the time was called Ballot Measure 5, which curtailed a lot of the

spending that was done that was put into education, among other things. At this university, it eliminated the broadcast area, eliminated the Journalism Department, eliminated the College of Education, had effects on the Department of Music, and in effect, just decimated the communication world. And this was at a period when communication was growing in importance, as being part of the lives of the people that were gone. I was a tenured faculty member. I stayed. The rest of my faculty that I mentioned to you were let go, and found different jobs in either the industry or at other universities. But I stayed.

But production was—there was no production anymore. So I put my attention on the so-called theory of—can't say "mass media" anymore, but the theories of communication through media, and developed many special classes. One class in particular I titled "*1984* or *Brave New World*," discussing how the changes of media were reflected in these two famous books, and how they were being carried out in the society at the time. I taught classes on the "information superhighway." I can't think of—

JD: What did that entail at that time? This is the early '90s we're talking about.

DW: This is the early '90s. I guess. I don't know. I can't—I have to take time and think.

JD: Well, '91, I think, was when the Broadcast Media Communication program was closed.

DW: Okay, you know better than I do. Right.

JD: Well, I've been putting notes together. [Laughs] So it would have been shortly after that.

DW: Yeah.

JD: Can you think back to how you framed the discussion of the "information superhighway" at that point, which people would probably now consider the Internet? Is that a fair analogy?

DW: Well, yes, I'd do that in two ways—one, in my instruction [0:29:59], because there was a small cadre of people who were teaching by—I don't want to say "online teaching," because that wasn't the phrase then—but we were using e-mail to teach our classes, and the person who founded this was John Dorbolo, who you may have come across in your studies. John is now the—last time I saw him, he was the head of all technology in education at the university. But he was teaching philosophy, a big philosophy class, and he taught it through e-mail. And I wondered how he could do that, and many other people did, too. But he gathered together a few people. I don't know what the motivation was, or what the base was, but I was one of—I think there might have been five or six people who taught their classes on the Internet, by e-mail.

And so I taught my classes that way, especially the first, the beginning class, "Introduction to the Broadcast Mass Media," although the title was not quite consistent with the age of—the goings-on in media at that time. And I did it by e-mail. We met as a class one day to see who was who, and then everybody went their way. I called the whole sequence "anytime/anywhere communication." And so all of the tests, if there were tests that were made were sent out on e-mail, and students responded on e-mail, so it was very person-to-person, myself and the student. It was very time-consuming. It was really very hard to do.

At one particular time, I was teaching the introductory class, and I gave the students a choice in how they wanted the class handled, either by e-mail or by a non-lecture, completely interactive discussion format, where I would propose a topic, and then the students would go at it in the class, with me there, and the third was the traditional lecture class. I think two or three chose the traditional lecture class, so I had to come in and do a lecture for those students. And about maybe a fourth chose the group-discussion class, so I would come in, give them a topic. They would come in and discuss, and I would be there, and lead the discussion. And most of the class wanted to do it by e-mail, and so I taught the class three different ways.

The funny thing about using e-mail in those days was that most students didn't know what it was or how to do it. And so I would always have somebody from the computer center—I don't know whether that's there still in 2014—but they were from the computer center; these were the nerdy students who had worked in computers. And they came into my class, usually the first day, and explained what this new medium of communication was, this new technology. And then the class, oftentimes, would go over to the center and we would spend maybe a week, maybe two weeks, getting the students

prepared for using computers and e-mail. Think of today, when you come to school with your laptop, and nobody takes notes anymore in pencil and paper. They type in their laptops and watch Facebook. But we had to teach the students how to do this.

JD: That's so interesting that they signed up for it, not knowing the medium.

DW: Well, and their teacher was not that familiar with it, either. But I benefited from these instructions, too. One class I taught on using virtual reality, where I had an avatar representing the student, and you could move the avatar to different places on the campus and in the community. For example, you could go to the courthouse, so you moved your avatar to the courthouse, and inside the courthouse were documents by the FCC about what the regulations for cable television were. Or you could go to the coffee shop, and in the coffee shop you would be able to have a chat with other members of the class. So we had chat groups, and I was permitted to go in on the chat groups. [0:35:01] I don't know if chat rooms are still—oh, it is, they are?

JD: Probably a slightly different interface than what you're recalling, but same idea.

DW: Okay, well, we had chat rooms. We had four or five people doing a discussion on a topic that I had selected, and I was there so I could be part of the group if I felt it was necessary, or they did. We had bulletin boards. I selected topics, and different students e-mailed their answers to the bulletin board, and other students could comment on the bulletin board, and I could, too. So we were doing all these things where the technology was guiding the messages that were being taught. And I know I was so excited once in teaching a course—I'd e-mail, and having somebody from Texas take the class. Wow! That's what it was there for. And there were courses also about the early history of the Internet, the WELL in San Francisco, and the neighborhood that was created there, and all of these things that were happening.

And Vice President Gore played a role, too, in his comparison—I remember using the comparison that he made about Russia as a society with its huge mainframes, computers, and America as a society with its smaller desktop computers, which eventually became laptop computers. And he used that as a symbol between the free expression of ideas that were part of our society, and the monolithic authoritarianism of the mainframe computer sending information out.

And one of the big changes, which I represented in classes also, was the fact that the big change in communication when we went from mass communication, mainly NBC, CBS, ABC, could be Fox—these major information and entertainment centers pushing out programs that everybody gathered together as a mass, and absorbed—the new communication was more a pull. I go to Nordstrom's website, and I pull what I want to buy, what clothing I want to see. I go to *Huffington Post*, and I pull what story and what columnists I want to read. It's not pushed out at me as a large group. It's me, individually, choosing, and pulling in that communication. I think that was—these are the kinds of curricula that I was involved with. This was the real change of mass communication to, for want of a better word, "indie" communication.

JD: Mm-hm. Mm-hm. I do want to go back in time a little bit, just because I don't want to get away from kind of the heady days of the Broadcast Media Communication program, and when KBVR was really kind of going full-bore. And at some point, it went from being those couple of rooms at the top of Shepard Hall to a TV station.

DW: What was then Snell Hall. Refurbished Snell Hall, which happened in 1977, my tenth year here. And now, in 2014, a new building is being erected which is called the Student Involvement Building or Student Engagement Building. And that will include all of the student media, print and broadcast, and it's being completely refurbished, obviously, with state-of-the-art equipment.

I was having coffee the other day at Coffee Culture, and I heard this couple behind me talking. One was a young man, talking to a young woman, and I heard the words "KBVR" come up, so I overheard, and I turned around, and I introduced myself. And the young man had just graduated OSU. He was working in a media startup company in Portland. He used to be the news director at KBVR. [0:40:00] And the woman was the present, either—some administrative post. She was the either the news director, or the station manager, or the program director. So we were talking about KBVR, and they said, "Oh, well, we're going to this new building! It's so great, and the old building was just falling apart!" And I told them I remembered when we went into that new building, that old building when it was a new building, and started to say the same equipment is there, and the same drapes are there, the same cracks in the floor are there. But it was really interesting for them, as I discovered, to meet me and to hear about what once was, and for me to see and hear them.

And I think the academic curriculum is pretty much split away now. There is a New Media Department. From what I understand, they don't make use of the production aspect of the facility in their classes, although they do have some practical classes in field production. I don't think—and I'm not sure; you can probably check this out—there is that integration. I know there's not that integration. And I thought that was so important, and I don't know whether I would—I would still think so, so that you don't just have technocrats, but you have educated people. And I'm sure they're doing the education as media history, and ethics and law, and all that going on, too, but when students were allowed to—not allowed to, forced to practice, experience what they were rummaging through in their brains, I found that to be of great value, and hence developed the program I did, and had then.

Part of the reason for change was money. The Speech Department could not afford KBVR, and so Student Activities took over funding. And so there was this tenuous relationship between Student Activities and the academic arm. And we sort of lived with it, got along well with the people, but then the activity role took over, and the horrible name "Sandbox Television" was created. I didn't, but it was used.

JD: Gotcha.

DW: But I would like to hit on some of the things that KBVR did—

JD: Absolutely.

DW: —and broadcasting did then.

JD: Please.

DW: And I mentioned the "Minorities in the Mass Media" workshop at one point. This was something I conceived for a summer period, and the first—and there were several "Minorities and Mass Media" workshops that were done at OSU. In the first one, there was a small cadre of students who were not necessarily media students. They had a strong media interest, but they were more interested in social change, and well, I guess, how to reach the various ethnic communities in Oregon. And so we met as a class, but we also went out into three main areas of Oregon with our equipment; we took our truck out there. And these were northeast Portland, which was primarily an African American area; Woodburn, which was segregated in a Latino area; and the Warm Springs Reservation.

So we would take our equipment out these facilities and show the students there. Well, the students were picked for us by community members, who—no, I take that back. We showed the students in our class, as well as the people who were in these communities, how to use the equipment. And in Portland, there was a big controversy over licensing of broadcast stations, and serving the needs of the communities, and the minority community in Portland felt it was not being covered in the newscasts. A fire was being covered, but not a meeting of the local prayer association, which had some community project that they were behind. [0:45:00] And so we went into these communities and taught the people in the communities how to do the social things that needed to be done, and the practical things that needed to be done. So it was pretty much not a hands-on program. And then you're interested in the archives, you will probably find a 16mm film called *You Gotta Start Somewhere*. You're nodding your head. You know of it?

JD: It's been digitized. I've actually watched it.

DW: Oh, well, okay.

JD: It's great.

DW: And I saw it at some archival celebration not too long ago. And this was the first practical "Minorities and Mass Media" program. And the students who participated were not OSU students, for the most part. They were selected by their community, or by people at the university who knew of the minority communities, to participate in the program. And it was an interdisciplinary teaching team, and all of my—a lot of my work here at OSU has been interdisciplinary. As a side light, we - there was an American Studies minor, which was made up of me, Speech Communication, Political Science and English. So this was also a interdisciplinary team, made up a man, Harold Dorn, from the Journalism Department; my friend Denny Miles, who was in the school of—in the Department of Information, he was a filmmaker; and Harris Branch, who was African American and was a photography teacher.

So the four of us were the faculty, and we had different classes in our expertise that the students participated in. That was the first four weeks of the—maybe two weeks of the summer. The final two weeks of the summer, the students were placed in internships throughout the state—not the whole state, mostly western Oregon. OPB participated; a student went to Oregon Public Broadcasting. The newspaper in Salem—

JD: The *Statesmen Journal*?

DW: —took a student, one of the Latina students for a newspaper, and I assume that was the *Statesman Journal*, but it might have been another. And KGW also took students, and I can't remember right off the bat, quickly, to tell you what other stations did. But these students all were placed in broadcasting stations, and given internships, and learned all about the stations, and learned what the different requirements of the different jobs were. And the belief was that if you're going to make a change, it's okay to picket and demonstrate outside, but it's a better—you're better served if you're working from the inside, and have a job, and were represented in the studio rather than on the street. And many, if not all of the students, went out into broadcasting jobs at that time. And I do have a picture of an article from the *Barometer*, unless you have the whole issue, that talked about—

JD: Yes, I have an electronic version of that.

DW: Okay, with the truck, the big trailer that we used. We had it behind Shepard Hall. I think it was our mobile unit.

JD: I think maybe I saw a different article, because they're almost all inside the studios.

DW: Oh, no this was outdoors. This is the same building that had Tom McCall and I walking down the steps after we discussed his teaching at OSU. That was another accomplishment, I guess, I think I had. But anyhow, back to the minority students. And then we repeated that program the following summer, and we had a grant from within the university, and I think the Oregon Commission on the Humanities gave us a grant, as well. And let me think for a moment.

JD: Sure.

DW: We did not use internships there. We produced programs. Oh, we did produce a program [0:50:00], and had people from around the state come. We produced a program in the quad. I know we had to rent a cherry picker for one of the cameras, to shoot down there, and it was a presentation of African American music. It was in the quad, but students were asked to give donations, which would go to scholarships for the students who were in the program when they weren't in the program—when they became regular students. And so we had collection plates, boxes, whatever. And then Wayne Bass, who I mentioned, who was also part of a gospel singing group in Portland—and he brought the whole gospel singing group down. They were on the steps of the MU doing their thing, and there was other entertainment during the day. So it was a big outdoor jam that this class spent the whole term on putting together, rather than going out on internships.

And then we reached a point that OSU became a center for minority people, students, to come. We didn't need these special bias programs to attract minority students to Oregon State University. They came because they had heard that this was the place to come. And we reached, I guess, the pinnacle—maybe not the pinnacle, but a high point when we had an all—I guess we called it "all-black newscast." All of the anchors, which were two or three anchors, were African American students, broadcast students. The production crew were all our students, African American students, and the director and producer of the program were African American students. And that went for one term. And there were no ratings taken, or no studies of audience, but it was done, and the students who did it felt really good about doing it.

And one of those students had, as many of the students did—got an internship on her own, in Roseburg. I think she might have been the only nonwhite woman in Roseburg, but she worked for the sister station of what is KBAL in Eugene, which owned, owns, stations in Goose Bay and Roseburg. And then eventually, she became a producer for *NBC Nightly News* out of Los Angeles.

JD: And so as we've talked before the interview, and I've looked at some of the materials about the program, it seems that both the Broadcast Media Communication program, as well as both KBVR TV and radio station, really kind of had some effect on, perhaps, whether the media culture of Oregon, and how Oregon looks at itself. Can you talk a little about what

you think the effect of that program, and the students, the many years of students that went through that program—their effect?

DW: I think it had a striking effect, particularly as I hear from former students who are now in their mid-50s, who have children who come to Oregon State University as broadcasting or new media majors. And I'll give you two—let me give you one example.

JD: Sure.

DW: There was one student who was, last I heard from him—well, he came to my 80th surprise birthday party, so it was not too long ago that I heard from him and saw him again. And he was not a very good student, but he worked hard. He was not one of the top, or we'll say top of the line students at the time. He's not a producer-director like some of the others are now. He's a production assistant for movies in California, in Hollywood. And he worked on—oh, what was that program about brides, or newlyweds, or housewives?

JD: There are so many!

DW: Oh, now there is. This is *Desperate Housewives*. [0:55:00]

JD: Ah, yes.

DW: And he emailed me, and he said, "Dr. Weinman, I know this is crap, but I still remember all of the things that you taught." So I think I had that kind of an impact. And then I see the students and the high quality of their work, and the values that they put into their work, who are producers and directors in Portland, who have worked nationally, and around the country, really. And I see the consequences of their education in their work. And as an older man, on Facebook, putting out material, I hear from these students. Of course, I only hear the good stuff, right? But even from the students who I did not treat—I don't want to say, "I did not treat very well"—I didn't have the highest regard for, and they knew it.

I hear from them in response to the things that I put on Facebook, and they always talk about the impact and—it's the usual thing I think teachers love to have. "I wouldn't be the person," "I wouldn't be doing the job I did," "I wouldn't have reached the position I'm at if it weren't for you." And that's what—that's, I guess, the reward of teaching. And I'm finding that in my new career, also, which is also a kind of a teaching career, but a different kind of teaching career, but I'm using all of what I learned and had experience in with undergraduate and graduate students, applying it now to elders in our society, and have become a voice or an advocate for quality long-term elder care.

JD: Why don't you expand a little on what forms that has taken?

DW: Well, I'd like to just—I could. We could back to the university. Is this too much there?

JD: Well, no, no, we can stick with the university, but we'll make sure we come back to this.

DW: Okay.

JD: How about that? Because it's important, too.

DW: Well, there was several highlights that I thought I did for the university.

JD: Sure. Please.

DW: One was the online teaching I mentioned. The other was the McCall Chair, which I was not solely responsible, but when Tom McCall left office and wondered what he could do, I had the idea that he could come to OSU and teach a class. So the head of the Journalism Department and I went up to Salem to try to talk Tom McCall into coming here. And then, of course, we had to get a chair funded for him. I don't know how that was done, but it was done, and Tom said yes, he would come. And he did. He was the first of endowed chair, the Tom McCall Chair of—I don't know what it was called, but it was broadcasting, it was journalism, and political science. And he conducted a seminar for a term, and then I think he had—from what I hear, he had enough of it. [Laughs] The students were not doing what he was saying, so he wasn't

used to that, and so he left. But that carried on, and there was a Tom McCall Memorial Lecture, which may or not be still here, but it was for many years.

JD: I'll have to check that out.

DW: But it was for many years, and me and someone from the Journalism Department, a man named Denny Miles, who rose pretty high in the Alumni Association—a good friend who warned me about being blindsided when I met with the president—he, and then there were other members of the faculty who chose who would be the Tom McCall Lecture speaker for that year. So getting that started, I think, to me, was important. The various symposia that I did, I thought, were important, bringing people from around the country. That made a national imprint, to let the students meet them and hear from them [1:00:02], as well as the community at large, in public lectures. One of those was something I called "American Film Studies."

JD: Mm-hm.

DW: Oh, you know about that.

JD: Well, I've been doing my homework.

DW: Okay. With Sydney Pollack, and I really wanted to bring Jane Fonda with him, to talk about—well, I guess mostly for the headline effect, really. Sydney had just finished *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* and was his way to making *The Way We Were*, with Barbra Streisand and Robert Redford. So he came down, along with the writer of *They Shoot Horses*, Robert Thompson, whose credits are, were, still available on movies. The editor, Fritz Steinke—I saw a movie the other day; the editor was Fritz Steinkamp, Jr.—and a man named Charles Champlin, who at that time was the film critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, and then became their cultural commentator. So Sydney and those three came.

They put on a four-day symposium. They were at the home economics auditorium. There was no LaSells Stewart auditorium at that time. And Sydney spoke, and I think the three of them—on one night. The next night, all four of them engaged in conversation. We had a Sydney Pollack retrospective at what was then the Varsity Theater downtown, which is now the Majestic Theater. The Varsity showed all the foreign films, and all of Sydney's films were there. And we had a special curriculum set up, between me and whatever department I represented, and the English Department, and it was, of course, in film studies.

And Sydney's films were shown, and he came to the classes, and he talked with the students. I had him in to my "Advanced Television Production" class, which was a handful of people, about ten, eleven people. He came and joined the class, and talked to the class. Jan Barrows, who was a filmmaker in Corvallis, who made *You Gotta Start Somewhere*—she had Sydney out at her house, and there were a small group of people who were out there, and we had more talk about filmmaking, and the nature of film, and the influences of film. And I remember Sydney was—took issue with the writing of the program that I did about film studies and society. He said he never thought about it that way. I guess that's why you have a doer, and you have a looker, and a thinker.

JD: [Laughs]

DW: And that's why I created the program, the broadcast program, as I did, so you could do as well as think. And then we went to what used to be called Mother's Mattress Factory. Yeah, okay, a wonderful bar, and sat at the bar for—see, I could sit then, regular. I was mobile then. I had to stand up and introduce all these things. So we had a good night out. And Sydney went to the various homes, my home and some of the other faculty members. That was a good time, and the students got this real, personal contact, touch, exchange of ideas and philosophies from a person who eventually became one of the leading American filmmakers.

JD: Mm-hm. And this was in 1973 or thereabouts.

DW: Was it? Okay. In the '70s. And then I did another symposium that was also interdisciplinary in nature. That was—I called it "Dolls, Dingbats and Domestics." The subtitle was, "The Image of American Women in the Mass Media." And I worked closely with Vera Krantz, who I still see, who at that time was the first director of the Women's Studies—at the Women's Center. There was no such thing as Women's Studies, I don't think.

JD: Yeah, close in time, but—

DW: Close in time. There were courses, and Vera might have taught—did I say "Vera"?

JD: Yes.

DW: Vida Krantz taught one of the classes, so together [1:05:00], we put together this symposium. And for the speakers, I went to some of my former classmates from Indiana University—a man named Bob Shanks, who was a producer for a large advertising agency. He had produced a PBS television program, *The American Dream Machine*. I don't know if your memory goes back that far. And he came. His wife was also a producer. So Bob came, as one responsible for television programs for the advertising agency. Then we had a man—why do these names stick with me? A man named Michael Moritz, who was a researcher for another advertising agency. He had all the demographics of who watched commercials, okay? There was a woman faculty member here at OSU, whose name I don't remember that well. And oh, I mentioned there was the producer, the writer for *Mary Tyler Moore Show*, so he was an engaged professional. So they made a presentation, as well, and this was open to the community. And none of these people came into classes, but they were presented onstage, and they took questions, and they gave answers to that. And that was that. And that was a one-day affair.

And then we had another symposium called "Television News: Myth or Reality?" And I don't know the year of that, but the principal speakers were the president of ABC News, who came down, and a man who—Michael Novak, who has become—who was a fairly right-wing commentator—maybe not so much then, but is now—and was pretty much against the news, as it was being presented. They debated. It was in the form of a debate, again in the home economics auditorium, which is all we had.

And then part of that was to—and this was another grant from the Oregon Committee on the Humanities—was to choose a handful of humanists from Oregon State, and give them training for a couple of weeks here in the mechanics of broadcasting, broadcast news, and send them out as interns, faculty humanist interns, into the television stations in the Portland area, where they would eventually produce a humanist version of a news story. And that humanist version of the news story was shown in Portland to the news media in Portland, in a large meeting, and those who didn't have anything to show spoke on humanism and what they learned from their internship. So this is pretty much a hostile audience at the end, and it was pretty hostile all the way through the internship, but our students brought their point of view to the news departments, and they had the help of the regular news photographers and producers as they produced their own humanist programs.

And before that, as I said, we gave them a brief two-week, hands-on experience. Also for that, I called on some of my former friends from Indiana University. One man, Jim Ganser, was a news producer at CBS News, so he came down to help in this little two-week workshop, and he brought with him a reporter-anchor. I know she was hypoglycemic and couldn't go for donuts, but I don't remember her name. And the two of them talked to the humanists on campus in our little workshop, telling them about how to do a story, and what's important in the story, how the visuals fit in to the sound, and all of that. And then they were off on their way. Now, one of those interns is now distinguished Emeritus Professor Bill Robbins [1:10:01], who you've talked to, perhaps, and you should.

JD: I know Bill.

DW: And I got him into running. He denies it, but I began his running career, which he still does at 79. I can't. He'll deny that story, but I did start him running, I think. Bill Robbins and Mike Oriard, who you must have met. I don't know what his title is now, but he works in the dean's office.

JD: I'm not sure, either.

DW: Associate dean, and author of many books on sports and media. So they were interns at the time, and they went up—they did all these things that I'm describing.

JD: And so you said by the end they were in a completely hostile audience. Expand on what you mean by that.

DW: Oh, well, these were college professors and newsmakers. They don't know the real world. And that was part of the program, to let them know the real world, and let them have some influence on the real world. And I don't know how you measure that, or how it was done, but it was done. So that's what I meant by "hostile." They were—

JD: Coming from different perspectives?

DW: Coming from a business-commercial perspective that the audience, coming from an academic, societal, humanistic perspective. But they worked together and they got the job done. So that was that. I thought that would be—that was a major accomplishment, I thought, at the university. And there was one other similar one, which was kind of interdisciplinary, because it involved the academic and the student activities. I'll tell the full story, and then you can judge whether you want to include it or not. But there had been a Martin Luther King commemoration day for a number of years. There was the breakfast in the morning; you weren't supposed to go to the classes in the afternoon. Faculty or students supposed to go to what turned out to be rather dull affairs of speeches, and students took the day off, and faculty took the day off, also.

So we got an idea—we being the head of student media, Frank Ragulsky, whose name you must have come across, Anne Robinson, who was head of—or they're advisors, not heads—the advisor to KBVR, to electronic student media, and me. And so we decided to have African American media leaders come to OSU and give a—they'd each gave speeches; let's put it that way, or talk to the audience. A man named Eldridge Samson was the Oregon—now the National Association of Broadcasters, the NAB. He was their director of minority affairs. They had to have one, okay? So they took their token, and this was Eldridge, a really great guy. Oh, never mind that part.

But then there was a woman who was a radio host in San Francisco. I don't know her name, but she had a big following in San Francisco and wherever the environs that her program went onto. The other man was a producer, not of African American, not of black programs, but a big-time producer in television and cable. The fourth person was the son of Bill Cosby on *The Cosby Show*, Malcolm Jamal-Warner. Now, he didn't come, because he was in New York, and so we set up a satellite TV network, where he could go into a studio in Queens, New York, and his speech would be recorded and sent to us in Corvallis. And the whole video was interactive. So while the people on stage could answer questions, Malcolm Jamal-Warner could also answer questions from the audience. [1:15:01] So this had to be timed perfectly, so that he would start speaking at his time in New York, three hours earlier, and it would be right there when we say, "And now, here is," he'd be there on this large screen. And by this time, there was a LaSells Stewart auditorium, and so that's where we were.

It was a big crowd, lots of enthusiastic, eager people, and the speeches went over very well. The interaction was very good. And of course, the star was there, and we were wondering what—"Please finish your talks; finish the questions. We've got to get this TV signaled in." It got in perfectly. He did his speech, he took questions, he talked with the other participants, and it went well. That was the morning. Then there was lunch. Then the afternoon, we brought together minority people in the Oregon media, and we ran it as a conference, so that there were, like, maybe half a dozen conferences going on at the same time. Then time was over, and you went to the other, the conference you didn't go to. And I don't know exactly who we had here, but we had the anchor for KGW. She's still anchoring in the morning. Debbie? Deborah?

JD: I'm not going to be able to pull it out.

DW: Okay. Anyhow, if you look at Channel 8 in the morning, she's there. And I can't remember the names of other people, but they were all media people. They were all Hispanic or they were all African American. And they talked. They gave a workshop, well, interactive workshop on telling about themselves and their lives as minority people in the media. And then I think it ended it. Then I don't think we ever came back. It just sort of broke up. So that was that symposium, bringing people here to interact with Oregon State University.

JD: And did you get many people from just kind of the Corvallis or the Willamette Valley area as well, that would come to these?

DW: Yeah, Willamette Valley. I don't know about Corvallis. I mean, these were high-visibility people. Everyone—well, not everyone, but people knew Fred Friendly, and he really came down hard on [unclear] when he was—oh,

and there was the program that I had censored during the culture shock when I came here. Another thing I discovered early on was that—this is my history with the Oregon Association of Broadcasters. Whenever people in the industry of broadcasting in Oregon thought of journalism or broadcasting, they thought University of Oregon. When anyone thought about broadcasting at Oregon State, they thought about KOAC, which was then what OPB is now. It was the educational broadcaster for the state. And that was it.

So with my practical bent that I had gotten in Iowa—yes, and probably had all my life—with my practical bent, I said, "Well, we need to get more recognition in the real world," what's erroneously called "the real world." So I wanted to let the broadcasters of Oregon know that there is a program in broadcasting at Oregon State University, and so I made it a point to go the meetings of the Oregon Association of Broadcasters, and I also made it a point to bring in some broadcasters to speak in some of my classes. And I'm fairly gregarious now, but I still feel myself sort of intimidated by people I don't know in a crowd. But I went to these meetings, and they're typical professional businesspeople meetings—a lot of drinking, standing at the bar [1:20:00], going to have a dinner, and everybody chatting away, with a nametag. So my job was to say to all these people who I did not know at all, "I'm Dick Weinman, and I teach broadcasting at Oregon State University. Nice to meet you," [laughs] and do a lot of all of that. And so I went to other meetings also, and I started letting people know about our program.

And there was a time—I don't know what prompted it—but the Oregon Association of Broadcasters was run by a board of directors, and oh, that's right, there had to be an education component of that board. It's coming to light now. The educational component was the dean of journalism at the University of Oregon, but that meant that all of the board meetings had to be in Eugene. Most of the broadcasting at Oregon is not in Eugene. And so his position was not guaranteed anymore, and I guess through my friendships I was asked to be on the board of directors for the Oregon Association of Broadcasters, representing educational broadcasting. So I served as a board member for several years—I don't remember how many—and of course solidified a lot of friendly relationships and guest speakers in classes.

And as part of our practical production ethos at OSU, a select senior group of students produced a program, which I called *OSU Today*—that's where I met Bill Robbins, by the way—which focused on the research being done at OSU that had a bearing upon the lives of Oregonians. I forget what kind of research Bill was doing. Well, he was a historian, so we know that. And one of the programs I devoted to the College of Liberal Arts—that's where Bill came in, and there was somebody who did screen work, screening, from the Art Department, and I don't remember right off-hand who the other person was. So I had these programs, *OSU Today*, so my goal was to get them shown around the state of Oregon.

So I went to the managers of the stations in Oregon, Portland and Eugene, with it—those were the days of tape—with a tape, and said, "We have this half-hour free program. You could fill up Sunday morning, Sunday afternoon, and the quality's quite high." And it was very good. Oh, to sidetrack, in order to put on these programs, we needed new equipment, which we got from President McVicar at the time, because he saw the importance of media as soon as he got here, and saw where we were housed in Shepard Hall, and really played a large role in us moving over to Snell Hall, and the development of broadcasting at OSU. And so the production quality was good. So every station in Portland, 2, 6 and 8, and the two Eugene stations—the big one that—KMTR hadn't started yet—KVAL and—?

JD: You got me.

DW: KVAL is CBS, the NBC station. No, the ABC station—oh, my goodness!

JD: I could rattle off the Portland ones, but—

DW: KEZI. So I went down to the people and showed them the tape, and discussed the merits of taking the program, and they did. So these programs were played not only over KBVR, which they were, but also over all of the major television stations in the state. We did one a term. We had a special class. The students got credit for a full term's of work. They had to gather, identify the people, had to do the research on them, had to interview them, had to shoot them, had to edit them, and so I thought it was worth a full term's credit. And I think we made about half a dozen *OSU Today* programs. [1:25:00]

So that's what I used my OAB board membership to do. I was able to do it through that. So some time passes, and I think we're now going back in time. But as I mentioned, there was this flurry of activity in the society about broadcasters not being responsible to their communities. They needed more citizen action. And so there were some leaders of the national

movement; one was the media person of the Universalist Church in Massachusetts. Now it's Universalist United, but at that time the Unitarian and the Universalist were two teachers. And this man, whose name I can't remember, was a very active man in trying to make the broadcasters adhere to their responsibility. After all, it was a licensed industry. It was a fiduciary of the public. It had to operate in the public interest, and they weren't doing that. So this man was a big fighter, and speaker, and writer, on that. And so was Nicholas Johnson, who was an FCC commissioner; wrote a book on how to talk back to your television set, and was a Johnson appointee. And there was—oh, there was another man of import in this.

So I had invited the man from Massachusetts, Reverend Somebody, to come to speak during the summer. And I wonder if I invited other people, too. I might have. My memory is vague on that, whether he was the only one or not. So Denny Miles was working in the Department of Information. He was the film/radio person, to go along with the print people. So he told me, "There's a big meeting going on in President MacVicar's office today. You should be there." Okay. How do I go there? So I went. I don't know if Denny and I went, or I went, but I went and told the president's secretary I'd like to join the meeting, and I went in. And there were two other guys, men, at the meeting. One was the president of the OAB; the other was a big radio owner. And they didn't want this person coming down to speak. They wanted him—they wanted his program dismissed, eliminated, and they were making the case to President MacVicar.

And so I was there listening to their case, and when it was over, the president said something like he sees absolutely nothing wrong with this man speaking, saying that the mass media is really derelict in the work that they're doing in America, and on and on and on—very anti-broadcasting. And so these people left; the speakers came, and that was that. And I was still able to carry on my love affair with the OAB, to the extent that we even had board meetings held at Oregon State University—all these big *machers* from around Oregon. We had dinner made by the MU, had a room in the administration building, and they had their board meeting. That went on for—I think it might have happened two or three times.

It did, because now the university—there's another hire—the university hired a vice president of university relations, who was a black man. And he was thrilled at the relationship with the OAB, because that was his job, to get the university out in the media. So he came to one of these board meetings, also. I don't remember his name, but he didn't raise enough money for the foundation, and he got fired. So that was that. Now, I mentioned President MacVicar was really very helpful for us as far as John is concerned [1:30:00], and we're still friends, of course. But he had Anne Robinson, Frank, and me into his office. He said, "What a great program you guys did! To be commended, that was wonderful." And it was; it was very good. It brought a great deal of attention to OSU.

And then I think it was two weeks later, broadcasting was cut, journalism was cut, and student media was left without its basis of journalism, and KVBR, and we were dismayed. That was a nasty thing to do after congratulating us. But obviously, John changed his mind, and I understand—I didn't hear it, but I understand he changed his mind publicly on KLOO radio at the time, in an interview. He said he had made a mistake. The big mistake was that no one covered OSU in the media. I shouldn't say "no one," but when OSU was a story, came up in a newsroom, the graduates of the University of Oregon—not when OSU, when higher ed came up in the newsroom, the graduates of the University of Oregon were there. Of course, we no longer had our graduates, because we didn't have a program, and so OSU was losing its position in the media, and in newspapers, as well as on the air.

To the extent that there used to be a thing called the Board of Higher Education—you know that—so we went up to the Monmouth to appeal to the Board of Education that they should keep broadcasting. And we made a very good appeal, in fact. The guy, the chairman, was very friendly. And the program was carried live by Portland television stations, and who do you think was there covering it? All the OSU students who had been our students in the past. And there were a lot of hugs and kisses and—not kisses, but a lot of hugs and handshakes, and this was the media covering the end of the media, and I think that irony was not lost on people. So John said, well, he wanted a new program. He didn't want broadcasting and journalism resurrected, but he wanted something new, and this was the time when all these heady changes were going on in the media.

So Anne, Frank and myself, as well as George Beekman in Computer Science—he was teaching multimedia at the time—oh, Jeff Hino, who was the video person at the forestry school, still around, and another OSU video person—don't remember—we formed a committee to create a new curriculum in—what are we going to call it? So it was called New Media. It was an interdisciplinary medium, curriculum. It didn't reach any—it was given a liberal studies prefix

in the catalog, and was treated as a liberal studies, LS, minor program. Okay, now it's a huge major program, with a separate faculty of its own. And we created a web—well, I guess you could call it a web—yeah, call it a website, for this curriculum. And it began, and I retired. Yeah, that's about it.

JD: [Laughs]

DW: Well, New Media has taken on all kinds of growth. And after I was disabled, I went back as a co-teacher with Anne Robinson. We taught several what were formerly workshop courses, now practicum classes, together. In fact, you might have seen a picture story in the *Barometer* my first term back, teaching in the control room of KBVR. The headline was, "Weinman's Back in the Classroom," or, "Weinman's in the Classroom," or something.

JD: I missed that one! [1:35:00]

DW: And there was a picture of me in the control room, and a lengthy story about my accident, I guess. So I taught, with Anne, "Basic Production," for a little while, then taught with her twice on more extended classes, specialized classes, and then I taught also with Judy Backer, of the Speech Department. I don't know if you found that or not.

JD: No, I'm familiar with her, though.

DW: You know Judy? Yeah. Oh, she really raved about my documentary, too. And she has started taking media classes. And so we created a class, which was a—the university has these classes you don't have to be committed to with a number, but you have a circle in the middle—workshop projects. And this was a class that eventually was supposed to use the media to give voice to the voiceless on campus, which included disabled people, minority people, others who couldn't—who were part of the general diversity of OSU. Handicapped people; I guess I said that. And that was a real failure. The students were really disinterested, and most of them are Speech/Comm majors, who Judy and I just shook our heads at. [Laughs] But anyhow, I taught the class with her, and in winter term I taught with Larry Roper, who you know, obviously you know. Did you interview Larry?

JD: He's on my list, coming up soon.

DW: Yeah, Larry and I have been friends for—oh, I forgot about that, too—many years. When he first came here we taught an undergraduate class together called "The Ism's." Did you hear about that?

JD: Yes, that would be a great topic for you to cover.

DW: Okay. You mean like now?

JD: Sure. You're there. Why not?

DW: I think I've said most of all of what I wanted to say.

JD: I think "The Ism's" one is certainly one that popped up a lot, and I was going to ask you about it, so please proceed when you're ready.

DW: Okay. Well, they do serve lunch at noon, but I could go late to that.

JD: Should we take a break?

DW: Oh, not that long. Unless you're tired or need to go to the bathroom.

JD: I'm not tired. It's your call.

DW: I'll just have to let them know that I'm going to be late for lunch. I still don't know if I have an afternoon appointment, and I'll have to look at my email. A friend is giving a book reading.

JD: Becky Norton?

DW: Oh, no, Becky's tonight.

JD: Oh, someone else.

DW: This is another friend this afternoon.

JD: Okay.

DW: But I need a ride, and another writer, Rick Borston, is going to drive me there, but they only have one car in the family, oh, and his wife is going to take the car. Yeah, so I don't know if I'm going or not. But anyhow, "Ism's" was a national program sponsored by the Ford Foundation, and the idea of "Ism's" was to have minority, I guess mostly African American students, report on their life and community in the college they were going to, and the community they were in. And they were to report by making a documentary. Each university that participated—I think there were twelve to sixteen. Oh, you know.

JD: Mm-hm. Twelve.

DW: Okay, each university that participated would have its "Ism's" class produce several documentaries, depending on the number of the students in the class. They would all be gathered, and then they hired a professional to edit all these documentaries and make a single documentary, and it would be broadcast—I guess PBS, if anywhere. It never happened. And that guy turned out to be sort of fraudulent, anyhow, as I understand it. [1:40:00] So Anne and I were the people who first started this. I don't know who got the invitation first, but we decided to work together. It was the KBVR facility, and I was the academic person. And so we needed approval, to send the grant in, by the vice-president of Student Affairs, which was just changing at that time. Larry was the new vice-president of Student Affairs, so we sent the information to him for his signature to the application, the grant application, and he phoned or wrote back, and said of course he would sign it. He would like to fund it, and he would like to teach in it. And that's how I met Larry. And so Larry became part of the "Ism's" class, as well as a—poor guy really got burned. We had a national conference. He was from Georgia, and he spoke like he was from Georgia. He was the videographer, and I see him still in town. Do you have a name?

JD: I don't. I was looking.

DW: Anyhow, he showed hands-on how to video and edit. I talked more aesthetically about television and what you can do, and interviewing, and all that kind of stuff. Larry was there to talk about, I guess, racism and social justice. And I guess we were the teaching team then. Again, you find a team, which has always been part of my M.O. And so we did the program. We had various documentaries that were done. They were not very good. And they were sent off to the national headquarters. Dave Bogen and—oh, let me step back. Our grant was not approved by the Ford people. That's why Larry contributed the money.

JD: Oh!

DW: So we had to find money if we were going to do it. And Larry contributed the money that carried it over. And then the whole grant ended anyhow, nationwide, and Larry and I thought it would be shameful to just drop this now. And so he and I created one of these zero-number courses, giving it a Speech prefix—Speech 406, no, Speech 408 workshop—and we co-taught it. And one of the requirements of the class was to produce some kind of media that would carry out the mission of the class, which is to create diversity in a community. So these were to be community-oriented. It could be a television documentary. It could be an appearance in a public school. It could be a public presentation, slide show, using some kind of media to deal with the issue of "Ism's"—then, mostly racism.

And in order to promote this class, we decided to first look at the minority students on campus, let them know about it, and so we chose the Athletic Department. I can't remember her name now. She's now the head athletic female, athletic director. She was the academic advisor to the athletes at the time.

JD: I'm going to fail you on coming up with the name, I'm afraid.

DW: Okay. Okay. Well, she spread the word amongst the athletes, so that at the beginning, many of our classes were filled with people who were athletes. Not all, but most of the minority population were athletes, and there were a few

Caucasians in the class. And as the class grew, it became all-Caucasian, and big guilt trips, and changes of life. In fact, there was one young lady who was from Georgia. [1:45:00] Of course, we exchanged discussion, and she was one who, in her paper for the "Ism's" class, saw how her parents had led her astray, and it's all what you're taught. And some of those students saw that they were taught to be hateful people, and that's why the attitudes changed, and it was a life-changing experience for many of the students then.

So Larry and I taught this for about five years, I think; started off with mainly black students, mainly athletes. And then there were a couple of the athletes who were really good students, who wanted to go more, go further, so Larry and I taught individual projects classes together, where we'd have a reading and conference, where we'd have individual students. And one of those was a Caucasian. He was the band director of Highland—of the middle school, formerly Farmer's Insurance salesman who wanted to go back and get a master's, do NEIS here. And he was one of our private students. He also took the class. And all these people are still here. I'm here, Larry's here, and some of our students are still here, too. So that was how "Ism's" began, and that's what it was. And then last winter term, Larry said the graduate school wanted to teach—have "Ism's" taught as a grad school course, with no name, just "grad something." And so he asked me if I wanted to do that. I said, "I really feel like I'm not there. [Laughs] I don't think you're doing me a favor, Larry." And he said, "No, you have a role." And so he and I taught the class. It went very well.

JD: It's nice to hear it's still continuing, or at least on a limited basis.

DW: Well, I don't know what Larry's going to do now. We will, if he—depends on what he's going to do, now that he's not vice-provost anymore.

JD: Well, if we do our interview in November, I'll ask him. [Laughs]

DW: Okay. Do, directly. November?

JD: Well, he's on sabbatical right now.

DW: Yeah, he's still on sabbatical until June—until June, so he won't, yeah.

JD: I think he's going to make some time.

DW: Well, we're very good friends, and we see one another not as much now, because he's always away somewhere, but less away now. We met his son, Ellis, who is now a junior—was in one of these WinCo shopping carts, and my wife and I, we would always meet Larry and Ellis on Saturday morning. Now, Ellis is ready to go to college.

Well, that's "Ism's." And I did play a role in the internship program here, too, an early on role. I don't want to say "the starting role," but a developing role. There was a university internship program. I think it was handled by a man named Charles Cormack in the Anthro Department; had an office in the administration building, maybe. And I hooked into that, and created a broadcasting internship, and it was done very seriously, with a whole curriculum worked out, and whole concept worked out. It was a full-credit, full-term internship in place, in a broadcasting station or related—a mass medium. I would visit the—it's not done like that at all, nowadays. I would visit the interns every once in a while—more than every once in a while—on specific times, and meet with them, meet with their managers—ways get taken out to lunch, and amazed at how much they drank at those times, then went back to work.

JD: Back in the three-martini lunch days.

DW: Oh, yes, it was, really, yeah. And that sort of strengthened the ties between Oregon State University and the stations. [1:50:00] As a matter of fact, from that internship program and the minority internship programs, the manager of KATU, Tom Dargen, created, and I think still—it's the same still—the Tom Dargen Minority Scholarship in Broadcasting. And that was completely business-centered on his own. But he did have a regular OSU intern, and he did have a minority intern, so he put that together. So I played an instrumental role in the creation of an internship program.

JD: Well, it seems like the fact that you received the L.L. Stewart Faculty Achievement Award, and some other kind of regular—

DW: Oh, I don't think I received it. Did I?

JD: Well, I believe—

DW: [Laughs] If you say so.

JD: [Laughs]

DW: I know I applied for one award. Maybe that was the service award.

JD: Well, and it seemed like there were some student accolades that came your way, the students that you worked with, whether in internship programs, or in your coursework, or at the stations. Talk a little about kind of how you felt about students, and they clearly reciprocated some—well, I was going to say "affection." That's probably not the right word, clearly respect and—

DW: No, "affection" is a good word, just like Becky, who is going to read tonight. I mean, she produced—I don't know if I sent you a copy of the letter I wrote to her. She produced some of the early KBVR productions, and we just—I just followed her career, from when she left the university. And there is an affectionate bond there. I think Kevin Costello is another student—don't go away without taking the documentary that they made of Mommy.

JD: Okay.

DW: I had asked him to speak at my memorial service when I die, and he said he would—so that, yeah, there is affection between students. And I guess one thing they tell me—I know I did—and one was that what I call "tough." I had high standards of perfection. But I was always supportive, which is hard role for a teacher to begin with, and it's very hard in this kind of field, in writing. I used to teach acting, also—in writing and acting and media aesthetics, you have to be critical. You have to create a bar that students try to reach, but you can't be critical so that they say, "Oh, shit. I'll never reach that bar." So I'd pride myself—I don't know. I think I did that. I always tried to do that, to be supportive. And I think I was fair, too, so that a student can say, "I'm working on crap now, but I remember what you taught me, and I wasn't a very good student." I think that carries over, too.

And I think if I show you that when you—if you look at this so-called "Doc"—I was called "Doc," I mean, throughout, and the one who was calling me "Doc," his name was A. James Shea, a young black man—went on to direct Los Angeles Sports and Fox Sports, and he was also an intern at KATU, in that program. He got hired at KATU. And one of his big fears was he couldn't spell very well, and he was responsible for the Teleprompter, and so he was very worried that he was going to misspell a word on the Teleprompter. And he did, and he got chewed out for doing that. But he went on to bigger and better things. And he was in the first workshop, and he called me "Doc." And that was in '70-something, you said [1:55:00], and ever since I have been called "Doc," even by these 55-year-old guys and girls coming in. I had a picture of my 80th—no, I don't have it up there—my 80th birthday, surrounded by three—Mary Fitch. She was the TriMet's—oh, you know TriMet—TriMet's Media director.

JD: I recognize Mary's name.

DW: Okay. Boy, did she curse! [Laughs] She was a news producer. And Mary was in the group, and Casey Callan is in the group. You remember? You know who Casey is, no?

JD: Sure.

DW: Untimely fired from OPB. Oh, and Liz; I forget Liz's last name. Anyhow, I was surrounded by these three ladies from the past, and they were all blonde, and then I was surrounded by three guys from the past. They had no hair, or were gray. I guess that was a gender difference. So anyhow, those are some of the students, okay, and I named them there. And there was Frank Taylor, who headed, and maybe still heads, the mobile television system that travels the north—Northwest Mobile. Comes down to Corvallis and OSU, does all the games. And we have students who are working there, also. The vice-president of Blazer Broadcasting, Dick Bodonaga. Is he somewhere? And he wrote a real nice thing. It's on my Google collection there. Yes, he's vice-president of Blazer Broadcasting, now in charge of new media. Before, it used to be just the television.

JD: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So your students, your former students, cast a wide net?

DW: Yeah.

JD: Or they're spread widely.

DW: They're spread widely. Well, yes and no. Mostly spread in Oregon. Not exclusively in Oregon; a number nationally. Oh, and there was another African American young man, one of the very early majors. He had nothing to do with any of our workshops. Carl—anyhow, he became an anchor at KVAL, in Eugene, went on to Fox in New York—or New Jersey, New York. I can't remember his name. Anne Robinson would know his name. Really good-looking guy.

JD: So you talked just briefly about your time at KOAC as the on-air host, and maybe you could just expand a little on what your role was there. And it also is perhaps emblematic of the fact that you did do a lot of voiceover work. You had kind of this multilayered career that expanded outside the bounds of OSU.

DW: Well, I did the news on OPB, and then it was an early-morning newscast. There was a team of reporters, a couple of whom were my students at the time, and Doug Barry, who now is a producer somewhere by now. I was part of a team of news people in the morning hours, and I also did the noontime news. I did that with Anne Robinson [1:59:01], who also worked for KOAC for a while, as well, before she got her advisor job at KBVR. And Lynn Clendenin—oh, she came later. Lynn is now—oh, there's a student you might talk to. Do you know who she is?

JD: Okay. Yeah, I do.

DW: Okay. What do you know?

JD: Well, I know her from *Art Beat* on OPB.

DW: Oh. Yeah, well, she's the vice-president of programming.

JD: Yes, I realize she has—that's where I was introduced to her, was—

DW: Yeah, okay. Yeah, she's not that—she wasn't that good on *Art Beat*. I guess she's not on it anymore, is she? I don't think so. She said those duties were reduced.

JD: Oh. Maybe I haven't seen her recently.

DW: But she was one of the co-producers, yes, and she was also—produced several radio programs that I did at OPB, at the noon hour, I think, and her first job there was she was behind the window of the booth. I was in the newsroom reading the news, talking. She was on the other side, working the equipment, turning the microphones on, putting the network in, cueing me when to begin as I listened to Carl Kasell and Bob Edwards in one ear. And she had some station breaks that she could give, too. "This is KOAC." And you don't say that anymore; now you go through the whole range. So that's when Lynn and I first met, and she is still a friend, good friend. In fact, one of my current friends said, "When is *Think Out Loud*?" Is that the program?

JD: Mm-hm.

DW: "When is *Think Out Loud* going to get Dick Weinman's voice on there? How do we go about doing that?" I said, "I don't know. Why don't you try writing to"—I gave them Lynn's address, so.

JD: So stay tuned.

DW: We'll see. Yeah. Well, it was on elder care, which we didn't touch on, but then *Morning Edition* was created, and that was my job thereafter. I was the Oregon producer for *Morning Edition*, and when Washington left and they came to Oregon, I was on, and I would do five minutes of news on the hour. I would do news headlines on the half-hour. I would give weather forecasts, sports information. And now all they do, I understand, is do station—all the stations that are part of OPB, plus, "This program is brought to you by the"—and the endorsements.

JD: There is still some short local news.

DW: Oh, local news. Oh, I know that. I was being sarcastic. But that's what I did for most of my time there, and that's what most people around here know me for, because they listen. This is the kind of community where you listen to NPR.

JD: It's true. I listened to your voice for a long time.

DW: I did have another job I just fairly mentioned briefly.

JD: Sure.

DW: I was asked to recommend somebody, a student, who could work for Trial—a consulting company in Portland, and her brother was the senator from Massachusetts. What is her name? Joyce—

JD: Dukakis?

DW: No. Maybe it was from Maine. He set up the Alaskan no-forestry bill. Joan or Joyce. And her assistant was a very liberal, active man. Anyhow, they sent this—they had a firm, Joyce So-and-So and Associates. She was one of the first trial consultants in the country. Now, everybody has a trial—have you have to have a trial consultant. But back then, no one really knew what a trial consultant was. So she wanted to know if I would send the name of a person, and a recommendation. So being where I was in Snell Hall, it sounded like a great job. You would moderate mock-jury deliberations, you would interview potential witnesses, you would consult with scripts for the trial—I mean, for the program of the trial. So I said, "I would like to do that."

And so I got Rick Brandt, now the engineer—oh, much more than that—to shoot me doing an interview, to do on-camera. "Hello, I'm Dick Weinman. I would like to recommend myself for the job of" whatever it was with Joyce and Associates. And I sent that to them, and I got the job. [Laughs] Turned out they were listeners of *Morning Edition*, and so my name was not unfamiliar to them. They didn't know I was teaching at OSU. And so I got the job. So I worked for them, mostly on the weekends—yeah, exclusively on the weekends. [2:05:00] It was a travel job. They had clients in Minnesota. They had clients in New York. I mean, these were big clients, big cases, and very confidential, highly secretive work. And my job was to run the mock jury. And the attorneys would appear on television, give their spiels, and whoever their client was was watching the jury at work, to see where they were strong and where they were weak. I didn't advise any of their clients, but they were told to—I attended the lawyer advisements on what they should wear, what color tie—red tie is the power tie—and their suits and their shirts. This is what a trial consultant did. Now, they help pick out the jurors, I understand. Tsongas, Joyce Tsongas, T-S-O-N-G-A-S. And Associates. I worked for her for probably two, three years. And her brother was the one who—

JD: Paul Tsongas.

DW: Paul Tsongas, yes. Okay. So that was another interlude of using my university abilities, knowledge, and skill to do outside-the-university work. And I guess, like an athlete, wherever I go, "Oh, you're Oregon State University." So you're there for, yeah, your school.

[2:06:27]