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## Interview with Michael Reardon

Michael F. Reardon

Clarence Hein

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Portland State University Archives Oral History Project

Narrator: Dr. Michael Reardon (MR)

Interviewer: Clarence Hein (CH)

Present: Cris Paschild, Carolee Harrison

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CH: Hi, I'm Clarence Hein. Graduated from Portland State College back in the old days, and we're talking today with Dr. Michael Reardon, [who] served in a number of capacities with Portland State, and we are in the Portland State University Library on January 7th, 2016. I had written 19-something on here, because I'm still in the twentieth century, but...

So Michael, thank you for coming.

MR: Clarence.

CH: I want to just talk briefly; I wonder how it is that you ended up here in the fall of 1964. What was your academic specialty? And were they clamoring to bring you here or... ?

MR: Well, it's interesting, because it's so different than hiring became in the few years after that. I had graduated from Georgetown in 1960, and went to Indiana to do my graduate work. And in '63-'64 I was in Boston. I was at Harvard on a doctoral fellowship, finishing my dissertation. And as people did in those years, planning in the winter to go to the American Historical Association convention, which was going to be in Philadelphia. And just before I left Boston I got a letter from Portland State College. Now I had actually heard of Portland State, because a fellow graduate student of mine, Truman Cross, was in the first graduating class at Portland State.

Anyway, I got this letter, and it said they had a one-year appointment, and wanted to know if I'd be interested. And I was not going all the way to the West Coast for a one-year appointment. So I sent the letter to Indiana, because they automatically sent your documents to whoever you wanted to send, and then didn't think anymore about it.

I went to Philadelphia. In those years there were jobs everywhere, and I interviewed with about six schools, fully intending to stay on the East Coast, frankly. And came back to Boston, and I got this telegram from Jesse Gilmore, who was then Chairman, just become Chairman of the History Department, saying they wanted to offer me a job, but I hadn't applied.

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: And I thought, "What? You know, this is strange," so I actually called him. And I said, "Well, I'm not interested in a one-year." "No, no, it's a tenure-track appointment." And I said, "Oh, all right." And I said, "How did you get my name?" Well, as it turns out, and this was the way all of the hiring was done, Jesse and another historian, Basil Dmytryshyn, a very famous Russian historian, had gone to Berkeley, and they were graduate students with the woman that I was a teaching assistant for in Indiana. So they just called her up and said, "Do you have any graduate students?" And that's how that worked.

So I sent in my application, and a week later I got this job offer from Portland State College. And I hadn't heard definitely from any of the schools I interviewed with, and I thought, "Well, okay." You know, I've never been to the West Coast in my life; sounds like it'd be interesting for a while. Right after that I got four job offers [laughing] from schools in the East, but oh well.

So I came to Portland State in 1964. [Voices overlap.] And I'll tell you a funny..

CH: Not fully expecting to be here for the rest of your...

MR: No, not at all. And a very funny story, I came here, and drove and had got into a motel just up the street here, until I can find an apartment, and I walked into what was then the History Department. It was History/Political Science/Geography, and maybe something else, in Cramer Hall. I walked up to the desk. It was also the Dean's Office. And there was a young woman working there, it was just before school started, named Pat Stenaros, who went on to be at Portland State for her whole career. I walked up to the counter, and I said, she said, "Can I help you?" I said, "Well, I thought somebody could show me where my office was?" You have to understand, I was twenty-five years old.

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: And she looked at me, and she turned to her colleague, a woman named Diane, who was there, and said, "Come and look at this." [Laughter.] So after I assured her I was who I said I was, anyway, that's how I got here.

CH: So in those, I know a lot of faculty shared office space.

MR: Yes.

CH: Apparently you must have for the first while there? Because there weren't any buildings here.

MR: No. There were very, no, there was only two parts of Cramer Hall at that point, were the only building, part of that building, and we were all in that. You had a bullpen

office with five other historians. And in fact, it wasn't until they finished Cramer Hall that we got our individual offices, which unfortunately was not a good thing.

CH: Really?

MR: I don't think so, because it—each department became a fortress.

CH: Ah, yes.

MR: And we didn't have the same interaction that we had originally with faculty from other areas. I think that was unfortunate.

CH: But that's the way it remains.

MR: That's the way it remains, and the ultimate effects of that have continued to unfold.

CH: [Laughing.] Yes. We'll get to that later...

MR: Yes.

CH: ...when we talk about University Studies, but you must have wondered what you had gotten yourself into, when you saw Portland in those days.

MR: In those [laughs] days, yes, it was...

CH: It was somewhat different.

MR: A very different place than it is now. I will say, the one thing that was great was it was Portland State College in those years was an incredibly friendly place for young faculty. Everybody was young for the most part.

Faculty was kind of divided. You had all these new people being hired, just out of graduate school, and then we had the older faculty [voices overlap]...

CH: World War II.

MR: ...who were, for the most part, World War II veterans, which within the first year or two, caused some interesting [laughs] frictions that were interesting. But people were really—it was an interesting experience in that regard.

CH: So your first fall was '64.

MR: [Nodding.] '64.

CH: Were people in your department talking about the push for University status at that point?

MR: Oh yes. That was already out there. We, actually History was one of the first to get a Master's degree program in the Social Sciences.

CH: When did that happen?

MR: That happened the year I came, so we—well, no, because it didn't go into effect for another year or two, because Craig Wollner was my first Master's student.

CH: Really?

MR: Yes. When I came here he was...

CH: And did you get an orientation with Bran Millar [Portland State College President]. Did he ever see you?

MR: Oh yes. Yes, yes, I saw...

CH: What was your impression of him?

MR: I came to think that Bran was just one of the greatest people I had ever met. We had difficulties. He called me one time, a “hardened and turbulent young man.”

[Laughter.]

CH: But he spoke beautifully.

MR: What?

CH: He spoke beautifully.

MR: He spoke beautifully...

CH: Yes.

MR: ...but because we got into things, but I thought the world of Bran. He was incredibly gracious, very friendly. Bran would come and have coffee with faculty all the time, and you always saw him.

CH: In your first year here, the spring of '65, we sent four young men to New York City.

MR: It was the year before.

CH: Was it? That was, no, the spring of '65 I think, was the College Bowl.

MR: Was it?

CH: Yes.

MR: I had the sense that I came after the College Bowl.

CH: Boy! Had you heard about that?

MR: Yes. I'd heard about it, but I...

CH: I'll bow to your memory.

MR: I think it was the year before.

CH: I think you're right, because I remember. Yes, it was '64.

[10:00]

MR: Yes. No, I'd heard about it. Absolutely, but not, and some of them were, well, some of them were still here when I got here, but...

CH: Oh, yes.

MR: Yes, it was.

CH: Those early years, after '65, when programs finally, like History got a graduate program, and we were on our way towards University status, when we were talking once before, you'd said, "Remember getting new academic programs in those days, was always a battle."

MR: [Nodding.]

CH: Could you kind of elaborate on that, because...

MR: [Laughing.] Yes. I'll start with that, but let me point out that it *remained* a battle. Right down to the last year I was Provost, so we're talking well into the '90s, it remained a battle. And what the battle was, was the fact that University of Oregon, and to some degree Oregon State, but never as much Oregon State as University of Oregon, simply did not want to have a four-year institution developed in Portland. And the assumption had been there, that when the Extension Center had served its function that it would just go away. So every move that made this institution more permanent and added capacity and potential enrollment was a fight. In those years that kind of development was so controlled and regulated by the Chancellor's Office that to get a new program, you went through unbelievable hoops, in terms of all the things you had to submit and justifications and one and another.

CH: Was that Roy Lieuallen then? Was he later?

MR: Lieuallen was Chancellor when I came, and he was Chancellor for a few years. And [Miles] Romney was the Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

CH: I'd forgotten him.

MR: So everything was a fight. And as I say, it remained that way frankly all the time, because you know the restrictions that were originally there, even once the place was established as a four-year institution. You could not have student housing. You know,

originally you were not going to have graduate programs. That broke down. Interestingly we became departmentalized before Oregon State.

CH: Wow.

MR: And that's kind of important to keep in mind. And by that, I mean when I first, or right after I got here, departments had been set up. Before that, you only had divisions: Social Science, Science, Arts and Letters. And that was true at Oregon State as well, but we departmentalized first. I think that was a significant move, to get that, and so then you built from there.

CH: Well, I know one of the things you said was the degrees we did get were technically in the graduate areas, were interdisciplinary ways that nobody else even really wanted.

MR: And that was another regulation put one. When we were moving towards University status, and would have to have Ph.Ds, the determination was we could only have interdisciplinary Ph.Ds, so...

CH: Systems Science, for example, whatever that is.

MR: ...Systems Science was the first.

CH: Right.

MR: And that's exactly what we said, "What? Whatever this is?"...

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: ...and then Environmental Science, because at those years, nobody wanted it. And of course, that turned out to be an incredible opportunistic move for us, to be able to do that. And that restriction held for a number of years, and then it began to break down. And we were able to get disciplinary Ph.Ds, and so on.

CH: Well, it did lead to some interesting degrees. I mean I had a Bachelor of Science in the Humanities.

MR: Yes. [Coughing.]

CH: Rather odd.

MR: [Coughing.] I don't know how you managed that. [Laughing.]

CH: By not taking... [voices overlap].

MR: [Voices overlap.]...why it was that way.

CH: So when Bran Millar announced that he was leaving in the late '60s, and [PSU President] Gregory Wolfe came along, what was the feeling here about him when he—did people think, "Well, we're moving to a new place," or...?

MR: Well, can I back up a little bit...

CH: You certainly may.

MR: ...to Bran?

CH: Yes.

MR: There are a couple of events in Bran's presidency that I'd like to talk about, if you don't mind.

CH: Oh really, please do.

MR: Largely, because I, that's when I got called a hardened and turbulent young man.

CH: Well, we're in his building after all.

MR: In the spring of 19--, the date's going to escape me. I can't get it. It must've been '65 or '66. As we mentioned before, a group of our senior administrators, deans, many department heads, Bran's Vice-President Swarthout.

CH: Dean Swarthout.

MR: Dean Swarthout—had all been actually very high-ranking officers in the Second World War.

CH: Oh, yes, yes. Yes.

MR: And they were reserve officers. Well, in those years, the Defense Department, National War College, ran these seminars around the country, and would send people out to do defense seminars. And if you were a reserve officer, you attended and you got paid for it, and that. So a group of Bran's administrators negotiated to bring one of those seminars to Portland State, and there were a group of us new faculty who just went berserk about it. Absolutely not! We didn't want that here. And I remember specifically, Truman Cross, my graduate who was teaching here that year, and Colonel Birtwistle, who became, ultimately, General Birtwistle, who was the one who ran the National War College program.

CH: That's a great name.

MR: So they—a brochure came out with Bran's picture on it, saying, you know, the National War College Seminar will be held and sponsored by Portland State, that kind of... Well, the irony of course, of this, it was Bran was a conscientious objector during the Second World War, as was our Dean of Students, Channing Briggs. So you had these



two devoted Quaker pacifists suddenly having to do this. Well, we staged a counter-seminar in the Park Blocks for all of this, and held lectures. And Bran came to all of ours, but we were fairly obstreperous about our objection to having this go on. That's when I got called a "hardened and turbulent young man." So that happened.

A couple of other things that were interesting just sort of at the end of his presidency, about this, because this was a period when the anti-war movement was really building.

Anyway, we got into a hassle with Bran over the *Vanguard*. And I don't know—were you here then, Clarence?

CH: I was editor, '64-'65.

MR: So it was after?

CH: Yes.

MR: Yes.

CH: I got into an argument with him too, but...

MR: Yes. Anyway, there were these issues about the *Vanguard*, and I was on the Pub[lications] Board. And when the *Vanguard*, I forget what it was that it published that set him off. I know there was something about, a number of things, but anyway, when he finally called on the Pub Board to, essentially to censure the editor is what he wanted. And I was on it, and Marjorie, not Marjorie...

CH: Burns?

MR: No. I can't remember her name.

CH: Oh, I know who now.

MR: You know who I mean.

CH: English faculty.

MR: Yes, English—and Wilma [Morrison, professor of journalism] were...

CH: [unintelligible]

MR: Yes. We were all on the Pub Board, and when the Pub Board met, and we made a statement supporting, and—the editor of the *Vanguard* [laughing]. It really was rubbing it in...

20:10

CH: Did he not try to confiscate *the Vanguard*?

MR: He did, because then they published the—it was the Ginsberg photo...

CH: The *Howl*.

MR: ...that started it, the *Howl* piece. But then they published a photo of a play that was put on here, with a young woman bending over a trash can, and her panties were showing, and that's when he seized the *Vanguard* and confiscated it. So anyway, we had those issues, but you know, the thing about Branford, it personally never had any affect on him. He remained always very gracious, very friendly.

We did have another episode, however, that really upset him. There was, in those years, a neo-Nazi group in Portland. And they used to come up into the Park Blocks...

CH: With their trucks.

MR: . ...with their truck and their flags, and start haranguing. I had a colleague in History, named John Stevens. And one spring day the neo-Nazis came, and they were out with the truck, and there was a crowd gathering. And John, I remember it was right at noontime, because a group of us were standing in the Browsing Lounge looking out on the Park. We see John go out, and the next thing we know John is up in the truck, and he's saying, "Let them talk. Let 'em talk. Let 'em talk." And he kept saying this, and the crowd came in, and he kept saying this, and then he turned around and slugged [laughing] the guy.

CH: I remember that.

MR: And of course, Bran was watching. Oh, my lord, that just, you know—but anyway those were pretty interesting experiences.

CH: Didn't he try to take the flag off the truck?

MR: Oh yes. He went for the flag. Yes, but he hit the guy before he went for the flag. And that got, that was a lead photo in the *Oregonian* the next day.

CH: What happened to him later on?

MR: John? Nothing. He left eventually. He actually left here, and went to IU-PUI, Indiana University-Purdue, which was just opening. He was probably [one of] the first faculty members back there.

CH: So then, the late '60s.

MR: Late '60s...

CH: Gregory Wolfe?

MR: ...Gregory Wolfe.

CH: A guy who basically had no teaching experience, and actually no university experience.

MR: Oh, a little bit at Tufts. Yes, but not a lot of academic experience. Yes, Greg was a very close friend of the McCalls, and I think that's the connection that brought him into that pool.

CH: Tom McCall, Governor of Oregon?

MR: Tom, but he was particularly close with Jean Babson, Tom's sister. So you know, I don't remember much about that search process, to tell you the truth.

CH: But what you probably *do* remember is the dual inauguration [of President Wolfe and Reed College President Victor Rosenblum].

MR: I do remember that, because...

CH: And I think, if I just, I don't really understand how that came about...

MR: Well, okay.

CH: ...because it's two really different campuses.

MR: Yes, well, it was that connection with Jean Babson, because Reed had been doing a presidential search, and had selected President Rosenblum, and we did—and Greg, coming here. And so they thought it would be interesting to have a joint inauguration, and get more recognition for the two schools, and they wanted to have a big event. And Jim Hart, who was in the English Department, and Jim was—Jim comes from a very old Portland family, the Labbe family on the right side and the Hart family on the other. Jim was put in charge of our committee to plan it, and asked me to be on that planning committee. So we organized it. It was a huge event. I mean there were—I don't know how many different people were brought in to speak and give lectures and everything. And it became a controversial issue, because this was when the anti-war thing was really building, and both Rosenblum and Greg were very much in—sort of spoken about that, so we selected a group of speakers: William Sloane Coffin, who had become one of the leading anti-war spokesmen; George Wald, who was a very famous biologist out of the Biological... Marine Biology Center in Woods Hole in Massachusetts. Wald had written a very compelling piece in the New York Times, attacking the whole war effort in Vietnam, those two particularly, and I think we had a couple of others. And when it became apparent... So anyway, the event was planned. And it was going to be held at the auditorium. It was held at the auditorium. And Wald was to be the principal speaker at that. And when that came out, Tom McCall, who was also supposed to participate, said he wouldn't. And so suddenly we had a slight crisis with the governor and this and that. And I know, specifically, how what happened—Kay Corbett, who was another sort of Portland State institution, and connected, again, to a number of Portland families, the Corbetts, the Morgans, the...

Kay called Jean Babson, and they got in touch with the governor, and said, "You have to do this. You will do this." And he relented, though all he would do is come in, and read the official statement about Greg's presidency, and then he...

CH: He split.

MR: ...and split. That caused another sort of rift, and in some ways set the tone from then on, for because Greg was running into trouble with those kinds of establishment groups: the governor, certainly the mayor, and his assistant at that time, Mr. Ivancie.

[Laughter.]

And it started his presidency off with some—directly, enemies in Portland city, frankly.

CH: I think that whole business about the atmosphere then is so interesting, because today the image of Portland, of course, is that it's some sort of hippie, left-wing...

MR: Oh yes.

CH: ...art deal, but in the, that's not the way it was in those days.

MR: It wasn't so much. You're right. I mean, there were clearly elements that were not that way, but remember Oregon had already emerged, in terms of its political leadership...

CH: Wayne Morse.

MR: ...as, well, Wayne Morse and Mark Hatfield, as a center of opposition to the war. You remember, Mark Hatfield was the only governor who did not vote for, when the governors voted, for the, essentially the war support amendment. And he didn't, because he had actually been in Vietnam at the end of the war, and it really impressed him, about the people and how desperate that country was, and so on. And set his political views about it, you know, from the very beginning. Oregon had a more of a... But you're right. There certainly wasn't universally the case here. You know.

Cris Paschild: I'm sorry to interject. Could I just, can I ask, at this point what your, has your position shifted from faculty with this period we're talking about, the whole [voices overlap]...

MR: No, no, no, no. I was still a faculty member in the History Department. I, let's see...

CH: Were you head? Were you chair?

MR: I'm trying to remember. I [pause] I think I became Department Head in 19--, when did Greg come?

CH: '69, I believe.

MR: '69, I became Department Head in '70-'71, so yes, just before that, or after that.

CH: So he was president for nearly six years.

MR: [Nodding.] Almost six years.

CH: So that the only thing people today remember was the Park Blocks business.

MR: Well, that like so many university presidents, it's what marked his presidency. Greg, I always liked Greg a great deal, and I think he had very good ideas about what Portland State should be, but he never really had much opportunity to do any of that kind of development. It was sort of a constant political issue with him.

CH: I do remember reading some of his earlier things, like he had in his mind the whole idea of what we now call the urban university.

MR: He did.

CH: But he didn't really get an opportunity [voices overlap]...

MR: He didn't have an opportunity to do it. He also solved something that I give him great credit for, and he was absolutely right about it, and it subsequently developed well, and that's an international focus at Portland State. That was his background, right?

CH: Right.

MR: And that's where, you know, he brought in that guy who was going to be his sort of czar for international...I can't remember his name, but I know Fred Nunn was his assistant, and he referred to Fred as his ramrod. And I still call Fred the ramrod.

[Laughter.]

CH: Is that like the Pacific Rim?

MR: Yes, the Pacific Rim thing.

CH: Which?

MR: Well it was [voices overlap] ahead of its time, and... But everything else overwhelmed him. He couldn't. And in some ways Greg was sometimes his own worst enemy.

CH: Sure.

MR: Yes. You know, but...

CH: And eventually, I guess he must have seen the writing on the wall, because he did resign. He gave a year's notice, but he left after about six months...

MR: Yes.

CH: ...to run for Congress [voices overlap]...

MR: For Congress, which was..

CH: ...it was a quixotic move.

MR: ...well, it was ridiculous. It was in a district he didn't even live in, and but he got talked into that by [pause]... he was great friends, and I can't remember the guy's name, anyway he was given bad advice on that. But yes, Greg got... One, after the Park Blocks thing, it was clear that he wasn't going to last. But you know, he actually tried, he took a really good role in the way he tried to handle all of that.

CH: I think so.

MR: And it's just that the City Hall here and the Governor and all, just didn't. They wanted more, you know, but Greg always said these issues should be litigated. You use the courts. You don't bring in force to do it. And he just, it just ran away with it.

CH: Well, then I guess for, actually the first time in this university's history, somebody from inside became president.

MR: That's true. Yes.

CH: So Joe Blumel came.

MR: Joe had been, was his Vice-President for Academic Affairs.

CH: Oh, he was?

MR: Yes. And so he moved into the Presidency.

CH: What was the feeling among the faculty about things happening at that point in time?

MR: Well...

CH: Everyone knew Joe Blumel.

MR: ...everyone, and Joe was very popular in his role as, he had, I can't remember. I think Joe, before he Vice-President for Academic Affairs was Dean of Undergraduates, or Students, I think we—not Dean of Students; Undergraduate Studies. Then he became Vice-President, and then moved into the Presidency. And he was very well liked, and very popular, so that, people were pretty content with that move.

CH: And—let's do a couple more questions, then we'll take a little break.

MR: Okay.

CH: But he, one of his initiatives was picking up on this connection of the institution with the city, and...

MR: That's right.

CH: ...he and Neil Goldschmidt came to some sort of agreement, and I'm not sure that it amounted to a whole lot, but...

MR: Well, no, because Joe decided, after the great extravaganza of Greg's inauguration, that he would have a very low-key, so we didn't have a formal inauguration. He had a sort of I don't know what you'd call it, a big reception, and he and Neil announced that there was going to be this focus on urban, university-urban connection, and that kind of thing, the urban university. That's a discussion that had been going on for a while. I actually, when we dedicated Hoffmann Hall, I went through a lot of correspondence between George Hoffmann and various people, and even before Joe became President, George had gone to meetings around the country about this, and was in discussions with Joe about making this move, so it was building. And then when Joe brought Nohad Toulan here to, at that time, head up the Urban Studies Department.

CH: That was a department, then?

MR: It was started as a department. Nohad really brought the impetus behind that, and supported that development through the rest of Joe's presidency. Yes.

CH: Why don't we pause for a couple of minutes, and we'll start again.

[36:20 - Note: The recording is paused, and then restarted.]

Carolee: And we're back.

CH: We're back talking with Michael Reardon. Joe Blumel, one of the most visible things that happened was the vacation of the Park Blocks. I was gone from Portland for a dozen years, and when I came back I thought, "Holy cow! There's an actual campus here!"

MR: Yes.

CH: Tell me about how that came about or... ?

MR: Well...

CH: ...and what people felt about it.

MR: ...It was, you know, what really triggered that was the...

CH: Goldschmidt business, no?

MR: ...well, but the barricading of the Park Blocks, and all...

CH: Brilliant.

MR: ...That's what people sort of, well, maybe we ought to, you know [nodding] that, and from then on they just, I don't know who, I wasn't really involved, so I don't know what the negotiations were to negotiate that. And the other thing was, it was getting so difficult down here, because in those years you could park anywhere in the Park Blocks.

CH: Right.

MR: Both sides of the street, it was just kind of chaos for that, so they were able to finally get that, and that was a big boon to this place. I remember we were, when I became Provost, I got very active in what was called the Urban 13. It started out as the Urban 9, because the first requirement was you had to have a major league baseball team to be a member [laughter], and we objected, because we wanted in it. And I can—we would have our annual meetings and our different campuses, and it was University of Cleveland, Milwaukee Wisconsin, schools like that; the University of Illinois, Chicago. And I remember when they came here, how all of them were just really taken by the fact that we were right at the edge of downtown, and we actually had a campus, and particularly the people from Temple. If you've ever been to Temple University, which looks kind of like an armed encampment, so yes. I don't know too much about how that came about.

CH: But we did build parking garages.

MR: We did start the parking garages. Yes.

CH: And was it close to that time when actually the university seriously started thinking about housing [voices overlap]...

MR: Actually it was before that.

CH: Well, Dan Davis built that building [the Ondine, 1966, originally the Viking Residence Hall].

MR: Well he built that. Yes, because I know Bill Lemman was still Vice President when that was built, because he worked with Davis on that, but the big move was when the students formed [Portland Student Services]. It was Stan Amy and...

CH: Yes.

MR: ...and I can't remember who all, but I know Stan was involved in that. And they negotiated that deal with the federal government on the urban renewal area, so you...

CH: Because those apartments, like the Blackstone and some of those others, were just going to be knocked down.



MR: Well the requirement for the urban renewal was you had to knock down a certain amount of what was there. For example, there was a very nice, it was called Young's Gown Shop, you remember.

CH: Oh yes.

40:00

MR: A bridal shop, a very nice, new building, and actually when Greg became president, he [voices overlap]...

CH: He wanted to save it.

MR: ...He wanted to save that, and have the new administration in there. No, you can't. So...

CH: Yes. And the Chocolate Moose.

MR: The Chocolate Moose...

CH: Yes.

MR: ...the Montgomery Garden...

CH: Montgomery Garden.

MR: ...the Red Robin. [nodding] These were taverns.

CH: Well, they were meeting places.

MR: [Laughter.] Meeting places, and what was Bianca's Grocery over here, and there were small grocery shops, stores around here.

CH: Did Papa John's get [voices overlap]...

MR: Papa John's was on Broadway, but yes it got—but you had to destroy a certain percentage of the buildings that were there, and the things that were there, under the urban renewal.

CH: In order to save it?

MR: Yes, in order to save it. Yes.

[Pause.]

CH: During Joe Blumel's time, financial exigency occurred.

MR: [Nodding.]

CH: In fact there was one of his first or second years he was president...

MR: 1980, I believe.

CH: '78. There was one in '78.

MR: '78, okay.

CH: No, no. You're right. '80-'81.

MR: '80, I think was the first big financial crisis here, '80-'81.

CH: So talk us through what was going on.

MR: Well...

CH: I mean, there were major cuts.

MR: Huge. Yes, what had happened back in the state of course, is that the natural resource economy in Oregon just tanked. Lumber and all of that was gone. Georgia Pacific pulled out. All those moves occurred, and consequently the state budget was, and in those years remember, our budget was well over 65-70% was direct state general funds, so that was our major source of support. We were looking at what was done, and in effect, they—I wasn't involved in any of those decisions, but Joe and his administration decided that—I think they had to declare financial exigency.

CH: We were the only campus [voices overlap]...

MR: Remember that before that we had gone into collective bargaining, and unionized. So in order to make any cuts that would affect tenure-track or tenured faculty, they had to declare financial exigency. Otherwise, according to the union contract you couldn't do anything in that regard, so he did. And many people have felt that that was a serious mistake. That somehow they should've just gotten through it, but *not* have declared financial exigency, because the lasting experience... And of course, consequently when they did, I think something like thirty-five, as I recall, tenure or tenure-track faculty were notified that they would not be renewed the next year, and this was causing uproar everywhere. We had a couple of people in History I know got it. Mark Felsman got one of those.

CH: [Voices overlap.] He got one.

MR: Yes. And as it turned out, I think only one person who got one of those, who was a tenure or tenure-track faculty member, actually got let go, and that was a woman in the Art Department who taught ceramics. Because eventually, I mean they somehow or other, they figured out they had enough of a budget to revoke those, but it caused a lot of anxiety and resentment certainly about it.

CH: It was also about that time that the Honors Program got started. Tell me about it.

MR: Well, it got started, actually it got started... I can't remember the exact year. And the people who started the Honors Program were Jim Hart and Judah Bierman, two of the English faculty, and Tom Benson in Geology. Judah and Jim were, but Judah was sort of linked into that, and they wanted to establish it. And Joe [Blumel] supported it, because they had had kind of an Honors thing before that, but not a free-standing program. And I was not involved in how they set that up at all.

CH: But later you were.

MR: Well, later I was. I had become, when it started I had just become Chairman of the History Department. And about three years into it—it was called originally the University Scholars program, and it didn't really have a lot of structured curriculum. It was more what we call or what they call an honors education. There's a term for this—Enrichment Program as opposed to an actual curriculum.

And then Jim applied for an NEH grant to develop curriculum for the program, and asked me to help him with the grant application, and would I be willing to direct the grant, if we got it. And I said yes, I was interested in that. We got that NEH grant, and put together a team of faculty, Hildegard Weiss and Jane Kristof and Art [Emlen] and myself and [pause]... I can't remember a couple of other people were involved to work on the, use the grant, and develop a two-year curriculum for an Honors program.

Then, so I got involved with it that way, and then once we got the program developed, I taught in it. It was a team-taught, five faculty taught program for two years.

CH: See, that's very prescient of University Studies. [Voices overlap.]

MR: Yes. Well, to some degree it was those experiences that led to that. Anyway, and then [pause] by then Jim had become director. Judah had stepped down, and then Tom Benson had kind of withdrawn from it. And Jim was directing the program. Jim developed some serious health problems at that point. And I had been chairman of the History Department then for, I was in my second term, so it would've been like five years, I guess. When it became clear that Jim couldn't continue—he had actually had to go on dialysis, so it was making it impossible for him to do that—Joe asked me if I would take it over. And by then I had been involved. I thought, "Well, okay." So for about four months I did both History and Honors, and I can't... that's too much. I finally said, "Somebody else can be Chairman of the History Department." There were plenty of people to do that, so that's when I took over the Honors Program. And I was Director then for about fifteen years, I guess, up until the time I became—I guess right up until the time I became Provost. Then ran it out of Academic Affairs.

CH: But it's a college now.

MR: So it is. Well, technically—it's an interesting one. Technically it was a college well before, because according to the National Association of Honors Programs, what

designates something as an Honors College was you had to have a defined curriculum, and you had to have resident faculty. Well, we had both.

CH: Sure.

MR: So if you went to the HEGIS code—do you know what the HEGIS is?

CH: No.

MR: The Higher Education [General Information Survey]... it's a national thing that done. It was always designated as a college, but we never called it that.

50:03

CH: So there was, also during that time, a lot of major re-organization of the academic programs.

MR: Right.

CH: The birth of CLAS [College of Liberal Arts and Sciences].

MR: CLAS. [nodding] Yes.

CH: One "S".

MR: Yes.

CH: Tell me about that.

MR: Well...

CH: Because earlier you alluded to how the departments [voices overlap]...

MR: Yes.

CH: ...as segregated...

MR: Once we departmentalized it, and we had three, we had three major schools. We had Science and Engineering. It was [shaking his head]—no. It wasn't Science and Engineering. It was Arts and Letters, Social Science,...

CH: ...and Science.

MR: ...and Science. Yes.

CH: Yes it was.

MR: Yes, but Engineering had already begun to spin off. Yes, I forget when it got separated in there. So we reached a point where George Hoffmann, who had been the Dean of Social Science, long-standing, was going to step down, and Karl Dittmer, who was Dean of Science, was also going to retire from that position, so those two deanships

came open. That was... yes. [pause] And consequently that's when Joe [Blumel] decided, "Well, let's look at putting a..." [gesturing, bringing hands together] ...and that was happening around the country. It wasn't just sui generis, we were doing this in a number of places. It was seen as re-organization and some cost savings. You didn't have to have three separate Dean's Offices and this kind of thing. And since there were going to be two vacancies in those deanships, it was a good time. And by then, actually Karl had already retired I guess, because Bill Paudler had become Dean of Science, and Bill was the last, sort of last Dean standing, at that point in there.

CH: Right.

MR: So the view was that you re-organize, and Bill would become the Dean for that. Yes. Now one of the agreements Joe made was that he cut out—how did that work? Because now for some reason I'm forgetting something about this. Oh! He would not put the Performing Arts in that College.

CH: Right.

MR: That was it. And that had to do with...

CH: Tiny dancer.

[Laughter.]

MR: Yes. It had to do with, to some degree with a personal relationship between Joe [Blumel] and John Trudeau. And John had become Dean of that [School of Performing Arts], and so they carved that out as a separate school, and didn't put Music...

CH: Theater.

MR: Theater...

CH: Dance.

MR: Did we have a Dance program?

[Pause.]

CH: We did. Fancy dancer.

MR: Well we had a dance program, but I don't know that it had become a department at that point, but dance was in there. And Art, I guess.

CH: Yes.

MR: Yes. Those were then linked together in a separate college.

CH: School.

Cris Paschild: At that point where's the Center for the Moving Image?

MR: The Center for the Moving Image was a casualty of one of the budget cuts, and they decided that they were going to have—because I think one of the faculty was leaving, and...

CH: Tom Taylor.

MR: Tom Taylor was leaving, and there were like three faculty. There was Andries, Tom, and...

CH: Andries Deinum.

MR: And there was another one.

CH: Yes. I don't know.

MR: Andries came to the Honors Program. [Laughter.]

CH: Oh good.

MR: We had, by then had acquired Andries and Bill Hamilton, who had been Dean of Arts and Letters until he ran afoul of—well, I'll tell you what did Bill in.

CH: God.

MR: Bill was great. I loved Bill, and he was an incredible—just a fascinating man.

CH: This is Bill Hamilton?

MR: Bill Hamilton, right. Do you know Bill? Bill Hamilton was actually very famous. Bill Hamilton was one of the great Death of God theologians of the sixties. He and Thomas Altizer. And he was brought to Portland State over some wild objections by some of the board members.

CH: Right.

MR: Becky Johnson was it?

CH: Possible.

MR: One of those. And brought in as Dean of Arts and Letters, and brought in some, hired some very good people into that, but Bill never really wanted to be a Dean either. He was sort of casual about how much of a Dean, but what did him in is when we went to collective bargaining. The process was the Labor Bureau, or the Labor Relations Board comes in, and decides what your unit is. And the issue was whether department heads would be in or out of the bargaining unit—whether they'd be management or not. Well, the President, Joe at that time, wanted department heads as management.

CH: Sure.

MR: And so their argument was to the board, the Labor Board, that they were management, they had managerial responsibilities. The truth of the matter is that that really wasn't true. [Laughter.] And essentially the Administration was told, Deans and all, was they testified that's the position we're taking. Everyone did, but Bill. [Laughter.] And when Bill went in to testify he said, "That's nonsense." [Laughing.] That's it. So that was the end of Bill's deanship. He became another refugee into the Honors Program, and stayed there until he left.

CH: And you mentioned George Hoffmann, and his retirement. In '83 the first George and Virginia Hoffmann Awards were presented, and one of those recipients is sitting right across the table.

MR: Yes. I was the first.

CH: Recognized for your work, part of it, for your development of unique and interdisciplinary studies, and undying service to the institution. Were you surprised? Pleased?

MR: Well, I was pleased. Absolutely. Yes.

The way that worked, of course, I don't know how it works now, but people nominated you, and then wrote up things. So anyway, but yes, it was really nice to get that. Particularly something named for George, who I was really close to.

CH: He...

MR: George was a *great* man.

CH: He had the most impressive office on this campus.

MR: Oh, he did.

CH: And on the first...

MR: I can tell you how he got it.

CH: Really? Because it was gorgeous.

MR: [Nodding.]

CH: I mean he had all of his Navy stuff in it [voices overlap]...

MR: Exactly how he got that office. As Cramer was being finished, in those years the President's Office was in Smith. It was in this...

CH: Right. Fourth floor.

MR: ...far corner of Smith. Greg had become President as Cramer was being finished, and Greg decided he wanted to move the Presidency into Cramer Hall, into the new suites in Cramer Hall. Well the suite that was originally set up for the Dean, on the fourth floor of Cramer or the third floor of Cramer—I forget which one...

CH: Third.

MR: ...was the one that Greg said, "No, I want that for the President's office." George said, "Fine, Dr. Wolfe." George called everybody Doctor... "Dr. Wolfe, if that's what you want, take that." So that was all planned, and then suddenly George said, "By the way, there's no office for the Dean here." Oh, they'd forgotten, and there'd have to be [laughing], so they said, "Well, what could we do, George?" He says, "Well, you have that alcove on the first floor," which had the balcony. He said, "Let's just wall that off, and I'll take that as the Dean." So he ended up with clearly the best office on campus. [Laughter.] And got that, and that's why his grandfather's clock... and "The Captain Never Sleeps," and...

CH: Right.

MR: Yes.

CH: Well, he was one of the last, I guess, of those.

MR: Oh yes.

CH: The GIs, the Naval officers who were there.

MR: Yes. Absolutely.

CH: Then we came... We come to another one of those strange interludes about eighteen months of a fellow from southern Oregon named [PSU President] Natale Sicuro.

MR: Natale Sicuro...

CH: ...and I, it was a man named Bud Davis, who was...

MR: There was indeed.

CH: ...Chancellor at the time. He was an ex-football coach.

MR: And he played with toy soldiers.

CH: Yes he did. [Laughter.] And he had, it was talked about at the time, that he had a great deal to do with—because this Sicuro was not on the list of finalists, but suddenly he was.

MR: Well I can tell you *exactly* how that went.



CH: Please do.

MR: I was on the search committee. Rod Diman [Assistant Dean of CLAS] and I were on that committee, and... how it happened. Well, we had the committee, and there were—in those years you had a group of faculty, and then you had board members, and a board member chaired the committee.

CH: State Board.

MR: A State Board member chaired the committee, and we did the regular search process and applicants. And as it turned out, three of the initial applicants were presidents in the state system: Western, Southern, and there was another—maybe Eastern.

CH: Must've been either Eastern or OIT.

MR: OIT. It was OIT. All three were applicants.

CH: Those were colleges in the system.

MR: Those were colleges, yes. And the committee reviewed the applications and that, and I think we did phone interviews through that process. It came time to select a group of finalists, and the Portland State representatives on the committee decided that they did not want any of the three Presidents. And [pause] we... it was, these processes vary and all, but in effect it was considered polite to let people know if they were going to be continued or not, and we did, before any decision was made. And two of the internal Presidents withdrew their candidacy. The third did not, so the committee met. And I think—I can't remember how the vote went, but we—by one vote, because evidently it must've been somebody didn't show up for the meeting or something. We voted, and Natale Sicuro was *not* in our list of finalists. And then we were visit—the committee was called into session, and we are visited by the Chairman of the State Board, not the chairman of the, not the system President, but the Chairman of the State Board, whose name I can't remember, Al—Al something.

CH: Yes, I can't remember it now.

MR: And he was really a close friend of Sicuro's.

CH: Ahh.

MR: And anyway, the board members said to us that Sicuro was to be continued as a finalist, but we said... you know. And they said, "If you don't, we will declare this a failed search."

CH: Geez.

MR: "And someone will be appointed Acting President." Well, the someone, who I'm convinced they had in mind was the Vice-Chancellor, Larry—I can't remember his name [Larry Large]. He was from the University of Oregon, a political scientist from the University of Oregon, and he was Acting Vice-Chancellor, as they were searching for a new Vice-Chancellor. And we sort of caucused and said, "You know, that's what they're going to do, is they're going to put him in." He was—well, I won't, that was just horrifying. So we got told, "You'll do it or we'll declare this." And we said, "Okay," because remember, we'd been without, I mean, we'd been doing an Acting Presidency. It was really—we wanted to get somebody in here.

CH: Was that Dean Anderson?

MR: Yes. Dean was Acting President. So the search went on, and campus interviews were held. The Portland State view was actually—I should also point out that one of the candidates [laughing], at that time, who did not get into the finals—or did she? No. She didn't. She was in the semi-finals—was Judith Ramaley.

CH: Wow.

MR: Who at that time was at Albany, as Vice Chancellor. But the candidate we all really liked was a woman whose name, again I'm not going to remember, but she became President of UC—or the state, Cal State Fullerton, and was there for a number of years. Not at Fullerton. Not at Fullerton. What's the one in Oakland, Cal State?

CH: Not Berkeley?

MR: No. No. In Oakland.

CH: I can't remember the name. University of California?

MR: No, it's a Cal State. Cal State—Hayward.

Carolee: Hayward.

MR: Hayward. She became President of Cal State Hayward. [Norma S. Rees]

CH: That's not a bad gig.

MR: No. She was a very successful President there until she retired. She was really great. We liked her a lot, but, in fact, a horrible situation. She was, they brought all three of the finalists to campus at the same time, for interviews.

CH: Put them up in the same hotel? [Voices overlap.]

MR: There was Nat [Sicuro], there was this woman, and there was another guy, young guy from the New York State system. And I remembered I liked him a lot, as well.

And he told me that he flew in here from New York, got in late at night. [Bud] Davis interviewed him in his hotel room at 12 or 11 o'clock at night.

CH: Which is 3 o'clock [voices overlap]...

MR: Yes. I mean the thing was just, it was, yes. There was nothing about it that was... Anyway, they were all still here, and I remember we were meeting in the Hilton, with this woman, whose name I can't remember. It's terrible. I can't remember. We had a little reception for her, when they announced Sicuro's selection.

CH: [Laughing] That gives you the idea that the fix was in!

MR: And honest to God, he [Sicuro] came in to the Hilton at the same time we were all there, because I remember I saw him coming down the hall, and I got up and closed the door to the room we were in, and went out. But it was just so tacky. The whole thing was just disgraceful.

CH: Well, regardless of the troubles that he had in terms of the finances and those other things, he was never what I would call a popular person among the faculty.

MR: No.

CH: I remember his "magic wand..."

MR: Oh, that...

CH: ...speech...

MR: ...ridiculous, hokey convocation...

CH: ...which I think set a lot of people on edge.

MR: Well it did. Yes. And "your inferiority complex" and all that.

CH: Right.

Cris Paschild: Could you talk a little bit more [voices overlap]...

MR: Well listen, the big convocation, when at the beginning of his presidency he got up, and he said, "Well, I'm going to, you have this inferiority complex, and I'm going to do away with your inferiority. I'm waving my magic wand, and your infer..." You know? "No thank you." Look, from day one, that was him. [Laughing.]

CH: In fact, my feeling was that he never really understood that it was not a—it's not paranoia, if they really are trying to kill you.

MR: That's true. Exactly. Yes.

CH: I don't think he got that.

MR: No. He didn't.

[1:10:01]

MR: It frequently took new people a while. Frankly, Judith [Ramaley] didn't get that for a while, but then she did. [Laughter.]

CH: Well.

MR: [Laughing.] It became very evident that we were not just paranoid.

CH: Just as a final note on Sicuro, in June I think it was, there was a poll among the faculty and it showed an 80% disapproval rating, which...

MR: Oh absolutely.

CH: ...I, that's pretty resounding.

MR: Yes. Well, there was just nothing about his...

CH: But then Bud Davis left the Chancellor's Office. Bill Lemman...

MR: [Nodding.] Yes.

CH: ...became acting Chancellor.

MR: [Nodding.] Yes.

CH: Now my sense is he played a significant role...

MR: He...

CH: ...in getting a system...

MR: He played a *major* role. Contrary to what some people have claimed happened with the Sicuro—the end of the Sicuro presidency in, now in published form. [Laughing.] They're wrong.

CH: Yes, but...

MR: I can tell you *exactly* how it did it. [Pause.] Keep a couple of other things, we also had a Provost here, Frank Martino, and Roger Edgington was Vice President of Finance. Frank was Provost and Academic Vice President. I was Associate Vice President or Provost. I remember... well, let me tell you what happened.

The opposition to this, to Sicuro was just building and building, and the Faculty Senate was getting more and more obstreperous, and there were constant threats, and the vote of no confidence. And the first time it was threatened, Frank Martino fell on his sword, and talked them out of it, which alienated a lot of faculty from Frank as well. And I remember him going to Nat after that, and he said to Nat, "I will never do that for you

again. I've had it with you as well." And so it went on, and there were faculty objections and things going on, and some faculty carrying on in weird ways. [Laughter.] And one of the things that I knew—I was in very close contact with Bill [Lemman] and with Bill's assistant, a man named Joe [unknown—Sycott?] who in those years was the—I didn't know Joe quite well, because he was the guy who did collective bargaining for the system, so I'd worked with him on all of our contracts. Joe would be calling me all the time about things going on there. And I knew a lot of the problems around some of the use of foundation funds, and scholarships, that for various reasons... [laughing] And I had been called a couple of times by Margie Boule. I remember how thrilled my children were...

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: ...when my son picked up the phone, and says, "Dad, it's Margie Boule." [Laughter.] Anyway, wanted to know what I would tell her about this, and I'm not talking about any of that.

CH: That's what she when she was doing the discussion shows probably.

MR: Yes. So things went on, and then it was clear there was going to be another attempt to do a vote of no confidence.

So Rod and I were called, and asked to meet with Bill, who was about to go to China on a trip. We met with Bill, and Bill said, "Look, could you do this?" He said, "First of all, you need to know that some of the board are getting entrenched, because they don't like some of the things that are going on at Portland State, that the faculty are doing. And I'm afraid that they're going to get really hardened, and you aren't... [nodding] ...this guy [Sicuro] isn't going to be gotten rid of, so we want to try and smooth that out. Do something that will deflect from that." Consequently, when you read that *they* [faculty] did it, they're wrong. [Laughter.] Just, that's wrong, and didn't... If anything, that was the biggest danger that was going on in keeping him.

Anyhow, so Bill said, "Do this. Can you get someone in the Senate to make a motion that the Senate requests an early review of Sicuro's presidency?" Because the tradition was that after every three years, you would do a formal review. "And get that passed by the Faculty Senate, and avoid a vote of no confidence?" And we said, "Yes." And in fact, I think I went to David Johnson, and said, "Will you please bring this up?" Then I believe it was David that did it. Don't hold me to that one. I'm not absolutely sure.

CH: That did pass the Faculty Senate?

MR: It passed the Faculty Senate, and then by that point—it was right at the point that Bill was about to become acting Chancellor, Bill Lemman. I will never forget the day that was announced. I was walking down the hall in Cramer, and Nat came out of his office, and said, "Well, it's all over for me." He and Bill, [gesturing] I mean they, from—

Bill didn't want him put in here as President. Never had any use for him at all. So Nat read that one right.

So the request went to the board or to the Chancellor, and the Chancellor agreed that they'd do an early review. They did the board review. They met over here in the old DCE building.

CH: Right.

MR: Right down there [pointing] or somewhere. And a number of us were called in to testify, and did.

CH: I thought that was a very interesting experience, for me personally.

MR: It was. Yes.

CH: I'm sure it was [voices overlap].

MR: Yes, because all of us in Academic Affairs went in there and said, "You got to get this guy out of here." And he was already promising people our jobs... [Laughter] ...on campus

MR: I can assure you, I know a number of people would have gotten [unintelligible]. Anyway, so then the board negotiated that that would be the case.

Then another very interesting thing happened. I've been building to tell you some of these things. An interesting thing happened. We were now there. What were we going to do?

Well, our Provost, Frank [Martino], was very unpopular in the system. And I gave him high points for his unpopularity, because he would be very outspoken about... He brought in some experts to do a review of science education in the state system. [Laughing] And the report was, it isn't any good anywhere. [Laughter] Which did not please...

CH: OSU?

MR: ...OSU and the University of Oregon. They hated him. They just hated Frank.

CH: Well he couldn't have been the acting President.

MR: Well, no. He was not going to be acting President. So Bill called—well, all of this, the end of Sicuro unfolded. Bill came back from China. Rod and I got a call to meet with him at the Benson, where he was going to stay overnight, when he came back. We went out, and had a drink, I remember, in the Benson bar, and Bill said, "This is how it will now unfold from this point on." Anyway, but he also said, "When this announcement is made..." he said to Rod and me, " ...you are to call a meeting of the Deans, and I don't

want it where you usually meet. You find a different room to meet in." And we met here in the library, in fact, in what was once the rare books room. I don't know if that's still it. Yes.

And he said, "I do not want the Provost there." So Rod and I asked the Deans to meet. Bill came, and said, "Alright, here's the situation, and I'm going to ask Roger Edgington to step in and do it." So that's how that happened. And Roger was president for another couple of—or a year and a half, or whatever.

CH: That was a question I had. I remember. I don't remember anything truly outstanding that occurred during those 18 months. I mean, you know, Roger was a very steady guy.

MR: Yes.

CH: But why did it take over a year to begin a significant search for the new president? Was it partly a hangover from... ?

MR: Yes. They wanted things to kind of calm down.

[1:20:01]

And also there were the changes going on at the Chancellor's Office, remember?

CH: Yes.

MR: Bill's appointment was Acting [Chancellor]. Shirley [Clark] was just coming in as Vice Chancellor. I think they wanted to get that settled, and then [Thomas] Bartlett came in, because he was Chancellor when we then started the search.

CH: That's right.

MR: For [PSU President] Judith [Ramaley].

CH: My memories of Tom Bartlett was he was always like this, and talk like this.

MR: [Bows his head, places hands on his head, and rubs his fingers over top front of head.]

CH: Yes.

[Laughter.]

MR: Tom, he had a lot of issues, but I kind of liked him.

CH: So then the search came, and then Judith Ramaley arrives.

MR: Judith rose, and I will tell [pause]. Well, I guess I'll say this. I am certain that Frank [Martino] was told, or that Judith was told...

CH: [Inaudible.]

MR: ...that Frank had to go.

CH: She, when she arrived it was [pause], it was like she got a double whammy. The Governor's—so-called Governor's Commission on Higher...

MR: Commission.

CH: ...Ed...

MR: Yes.

CH: ...and then that same fall, Measure 5...

MR: She got hit right off.

CH: ...right in the beginning, which severely limited the state's flexibility, in terms of finance. And I asked her, "Why did you want to come here?" And she said, "The opportunity was to turn into reality what intrigued me at the time."

MR: Yes.

CH: Which was connecting a community and an institution, and I think she sort of found a soul mate in you...

MR: Oh, yes.

CH: ...as Provost.

MR: It took a while.

CH: Tell me...

MR: [Laughing.]

CH: ...about that.

MR: It took a while. [Laughing.] Okay. I don't think Judith would mind.

CH: I don't think so. She's a very outspoken person.

MR: Yes, we subsequently became very good friends, and still are. Anyway, I'll tell you how that all—because that was kind of interesting. I, as I said, I had been on the search committee originally, the first one that she was a candidate in, where she didn't get anywhere. And actually, as a semi-finalist she did come to Portland. And I was not here. I was on the committee, but I actually was in Hawaii. I remember calling Linda Parshall [CLAS faculty] and Rod [Diman], I guess, who were on the committee, to talk about the semi-finalists, and they were talking about Judith's arrival. Evidently, she did something that just sort of horrified people that first time around.



CH: I understand that.

MR: So anyway, when she was selected—well, I can tell, I remember... In the next round, when she was selected, we were down to two candidates. There was Judith and a woman named Amitra Hill, who was Provost at one of the New York City Colleges. And I remember Frank [Martino] and I got to interview. I remember after the interview, Frank saying—he says, "Well, what do you think?" I said, and I looked at Frank, and I said, "Well, let me ask you this. Do you like this job? Do you want to keep this job?" [Laughter.] And Frank said, "Well, of course." I said, "Then you support Amitra Hill." And he quite correctly said, "Well, she isn't nearly as good as Ramaley." And I said, "That's not the question I asked you." [Laughing.] "Oh, what do you mean?" I said, "If Judith Ramaley becomes President, you're out of here." And Frank said... [grumbling]

Frank and I had a great relationship, but we never really agreed on a lot of things that just... [trails off]

So anyway, so Judith shows up. She gets selected. She shows up. I remember the first meeting she had with the Administration, all the deans, and all of Academic Affairs, and it was in a place down on the waterfront here somewhere. And we were all there, and we were standing in this semi-circle when she came in. She started at the circle and came around, and I was kind of at this end of it. And I had never personally met her before. She asked me [laughing] and I said "I'm Michael Reardon." "Oh," she said, "A name often heard, but I've never seen you before." [Laughter.] And I said, "Well, actually, when you were here the *last time*,"—probably not the best thing to have said—"I was in Hawaii." And she said, "Something that I'm sure was good for both of us." [Laughter.]

So Judith and I did not really get along very well, and of course I was connected back to Frank, and there was all of that issue, and so.

CH: But obviously, you worked very well together in designing University Studies.

MR: Well, once we [pause], it got done, but it was an interesting process to however we got to that.

Judith got rid of four Vice Presidents within six months, a fact that she frequently forgot. I remember once later on, we had this phrase in our letters: "You serve at the pleasure of the President". She says, "Oh, I love that phrase! I wish it were true!" And I looked at her, and I started to laugh. She said, "What are you laughing at?" I said, "You got rid of four Vice Presidents in six months! What are you talking about?" "Oh, I guess I did." Anyway, [laughing] she—so anyhow, and it was clear from the first that she and Frank were not going to work out, and so within the first quarter she had told Frank. And he went off and did something for a while in Washington. I forget what.

And so then she had to bring in a Provost, an acting Provost. Before she had come here, and before Shirley Clark became Vice Chancellor, a really great guy named [pause]—it's terrible to get old—it'll come to me, from Oregon State. He was, had been acting Chancellor... Bob Frank! Bob Frank, a wonderful guy, in English at Oregon State, and had gotten into administration. He was an acting Chancellor. I think they were thinking that he wanted to go on. So in effect, they worked out with Judith that Bob Frank would come in as acting Provost, and see how it went, and ultimately, if that was, that was fine.

Well, Judith at that point was pretty much determined to clear all of us out of Academic Affairs, but unfortunately for her, when she contacted Bob Frank, and asked if he would do this, he said, "well, I'll do it on one condition, and that is if Michael will stay in." Because Bob Frank and I were very old friends, which... anyway.

CH: [Inaudible.]

MR: And we had done a lot of work with NEH together, and the whole thing. So I stayed.

Bob came in. Bob was here about maybe a year... and frankly, this was not what Bob wanted to do. He found it... [pause] Well anyway, he decided not to do it. In the meantime, Judith had had one search for a Provost that was failed search, so he had to continue for a while. She started the other search [pause], and I had been nominated in the first search, and withdrew. The start of the second search, and Bob was nominated, but withdrew. I was nominated, and went to Judith and said, "Look, I've been nominated, and I'm trying to decide whether I want to stay in this search or not." And she said, "Well, yes. Stay in it." So I did. And we had the search, and I can't even remember various candidates came in.

Oh! But before that, Bob was leaving before the search—the selection was made, so she had to get somebody to do it there. And I remember Judith calling me, and saying, "Can we have lunch?" We went to Zefiro's at noon. I was sitting there. I don't know if you've ever been to Zefiro's—the most uncomfortable chairs in the world, and *noisy*.

1:30:02

We were sitting at this table. Judith sat down. And I sat down. She looked at me and she said, "Who would've ever thought that you and I would've come to this." [Laughing.] And I said, "Certainly not me." And so then she said, "Well, will you go in as..." and I said, "Yes." I said, "Now you have to," that's when I said, "Do you want me to stay in the search?" She said, "Yes." So anyway, that's how that happened. So then that's when we sat down, and—can I say a couple of things about working with Judith?

CH: Yes. Absolutely.

MR: One of the things she asked me was, "What is one of the things you want to do? A couple of things you want to do?" I said, "Well, one thing I want to do is I want to have a serious look at general education, because nationally that's going on all over the country, and I think we have an opportunity to do something here that would be interesting." Because she was pushing the urban mission, and wanted that; I said that we could tie that all in together. I wanted to do that. I wanted to do international stuff more. And I said, "The third thing is this," I said, "After all the years I've been here. I've come to this determination," and largely also working over those years with Nohad Toulan, who I have to tell you, was a tremendous asset to this institution. Anyway, I said, "You know, we're never going to get recognition in the system. I don't care what we do. We'll always be looked as somebody that 'we really wish you would go away.'" And I said, "What we need to do is to build our reputation outside of Oregon. And do it through the urban university structure and network," which is what Nohad had put me onto. I said, "There, we can become a significant institution within that networking group, nationally." I said, "But we're going to have to get much more involved in these national associations in that." And the great thing, Judith was absolutely on board with that, because she liked that stuff too.

CH: Sure.

MR: And so we very purposely sort of developed a strategy to move us more into those arenas, where we would interact and operate.

CH: One of the—you guys appointed a couple of committees, I guess you'd call them, one on interdisciplinary studies and the other General Education Committee. And that's Charles White.

MR: [Nodding.] Charlie White.

CH: In Political Science. That's where University Studies came. And I talked with him a while ago, and he was very complimentary to the way you had established that committee. He said, "Well, can I treat it as like a seminar?" And apparently you said, "Go ahead."

MR: Yes. And that's exactly it. We had tried before, to do general education, and it went nowhere. It... [pause] it didn't, because you couldn't—you'd ask faculty, "Well, what should general education [be]?" "Well, it's what I had." You know, well, what you had may have been useful and made sense then. It doesn't make a lot of sense now, and so on.

CH: But then they would say, it's got to be 101, 102, 103?

MR: Yes. Yes.

CH: 201, 202, 203?

MR: Yes. Yes.

CH: That's where we get our money.

MR: Yes. It was based on the way enrollment was used, and you wanted your introductory courses to be—fulfill general education, because that's where you got enrollment, and all of that.

Educationally, it didn't make much sense. And again, you have to understand that nationally this was happening all over. All the major higher ed research centers, the University of Pennsylvania, Penn State, were all addressing this. Harvard was redoing general education. It was—and the big national associations were all in discussion about this. So what I had started, by taking small groups to the American Association of Higher Ed meetings, where it was being discussed, and we got the point where we were ready to do something here. Basically I held a kind of general faculty meeting, talked about it, and talked about it again, what was going on outside of Oregon and outside of our institution, and said that I would like to have a committee, a faculty committee, look into this, and make some recommendations. And I just said that whoever would be interested in being on it, let me know, and we'll select. A lot of people did. Many signed up, as Chuck White will tell you. He said his department said, "You get on that committee, so it doesn't get anything changed." [Laughter.]

CH: Yes.

MR: [Laughing.] We selected a large committee, and then, as it turned out, fortuitously, the meeting for the American Association of Higher Ed was being held in Seattle that year. So I took like twenty faculty to that meeting, who—they'd been to disciplinary meetings, but very few of our faculty had gone to these kinds of higher ed meetings. I took twenty of them up there to—I said, "All I want you to do is go and listen to what people are talking about, and some ideas, and whatnot." And they did.

It was very interesting. One of the speakers was a guy, again, his name again, I'm not going to be able to remember—fairly famous about higher ed stuff, who did a series of studies on student satisfaction in college. He had done—his recent one had just come out. He did a presentation, and all of our faculty went, and he essentially presented the study, and what it concluded about what it is that makes students satisfied with their college education. Every factor he listed was sort of a counter-factor to what Portland State was.

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: Because basically, his claim always was the small liberal arts colleges with a resident student body, and that's what students find satisfactory. Well, we went down the list. We didn't fit any of them.

And I remember meeting with them. I said, "What'd you think?" They said, "Well, it was, on the first reaction, this is very discouraging." And they said, "On the other hand, we've been talking, and actually we think there are things you could do to counter some of those things." Like how do you build more student involvement from the beginning, in their university education? How do you create essentially groups of students, cohorts of students who get to know each other, and that kind of thing. So they said, "We want to do some research on that." They did. I mean, they really researched this whole issue, about general education and all of it quite well.

After that I let them go. I said, "All right, if you have any questions, ask me. If not, see what you come up with." And they did an incredible job. I mean, their report and recommendation is a really superb document to read, about the way they considered... [Voices overlap.]

CH: I remember when, because the actual program was implemented over like a four year period.

MR: Yes.

CH: It was not universally...

MR: Oh, no. It still isn't.

[Laughter.]

Probably it's time to look at it all again. You should do that, in fact, every 15 years, I think, actually, but...

CH: I think students like it.

MR: More and more. Yes. But the other determination then was a strategic one. Once they made their recommendations, in turn, I sent it to the group in Pennsylv... by then we had become part of the Pew Higher Ed roundtables. They had been here twice. We had other groups coming in. We were beginning to make those connections in that. Sent it to [Robert] Zemsky at Penn and to the guy at Penn State for review. They were very laudatory about this, and so on.

So we got the point, I said, "All right, what we're going to do is we'll do a presentation to the [Faculty] Senate, and I'll speak to it in terms of what some of these people have said that they think, and so." Then I said, "I want you to present it to the Senate, but I want you to do it this way: Vote it in or out."

CH: Don't screw them around.

MR: You can't screw around with it. No piecemeal changes and that, because then you'll unravel the whole thing. I said, "Up or down." And that's how we did it.

CH: It's amazing that it passed.

MR: Oh, yes. But we did a lot of background stuff, but it always had a strong group of people who didn't approve of it. Anyway.

1:40:00

MR: But it brought us a lot of recognition nationally.

CH: It did. I remember... and the Pew stuff, all that. Yes.

MR: Yes.

CH: And that probably was one of the more important things from Judith's presidency.

MR: [Nodding.] Yes.

CH: Then she ran into her own [unintelligible] with the attempted takeover by unnamed institutions to the south, of our Engineering and other programs.

MR: Yes.

CH: Were you...

MR: Yes. [Laughing.]

CH: ...I know you weren't surprised at that effort, but were you surprised with the level of public support that Portland State had? I mean, even in the *Oregonian*?

MR: I can tell you a lot about that.

Cris Paschild: Yes.

CH: I don't know how much time...

Cris Paschild: We can keep...

CH: Oh, okay.

[Laughter.]

CH: I mean, I would like to hear your take on that.

MR: Okay. It started out. I'm certain that Joe Cox [Oregon University System Chancellor], God love him, told [Paul] Risser when he was selected as president [of Oregon State University] that he could have our Engineering program.

CH: I think Judith would agree with you, because she, they, someone, said Judith and Risser had been in discussions, and she said, "I don't... "

MR: Yes.

CH: "...recall ever having discussions."

MR: No.

Cris Paschild: So was this at OSU?

MR: Yes.

Cris Paschild: Right.

MR: Anyway, because he [Risser] was new. Remember? He had just come to OSU, and I'm sure that that was one of the things that was—they were telling him. Anyway, when he gets here, we get this.... there was a board meeting in Southern Oregon, Klamath Falls, somewhere down there. Judith couldn't go. I went. And I was hearing all this weird stuff at the board meeting. Joe was being, "Well there's going to have to be some serious re-org consideration, and organization, blah blah blah." And so on. I'm thinking, what in the hell is all this about? He was being very vague and oblique and you know and this. So anyway, I came back and said, "Judith, something's in the works here."

Sure enough, the next thing we hear. Well, they wanted to do a whole look at engineering education. It was being pressured by business and industry and all of that, so wanted to set up a committee. And they asked me to be on it, and the Dean of Engineering at Oregon State—nice man, Englishman, I can't remember his name—Risser, and Bob... our Dean [pause] of Engineering.

CH: Not Chik [Erzurumlu]?

MR: No the new, you know, that came in, Bob [Dryden]... God! I can't remember.

CH: Yes.

MR: Anyway. So we were asked to come to breakfast at the Benson on morning.

CH: We do a lot of business there.

MR: To start out. So we're down there for breakfast, and it was Risser, and the guy from Oregon State, and myself, and our Dean of Engineering, and I guess Joe was there. Maybe Joe wasn't there. I can't remember.

CH: Joe Cox.

MR: Yes. I don't remember. We're sitting there at this table, having breakfast, and they were laying out what they wanted this committee to look at and that. And at a table over here was Neil Goldschmidt and somebody else.

And I remember I said to them when they started this out—to come back to your question. I said, "Look, who is going to do the politics on this?" I said, "Because I can assure you, one thing I've learned is we don't have a lot of active support from our legislative contingent at Portland State, until something looks threatening, and then they come forward. And they will." And Risser, he just sort of... "blah, blah, blah," and I guess Joe was there. Joe says, "We'll handle that. We'll [inaudible]. Okay."

Goldschmidt gets up, comes over, and stops at our table, and he looks down, and he said, "Well, I know what you people are all talking about." And I smiled, and he said, "Just to let you know, I'm not for it." And he turned around and walked away.

[Laughing.] You know, and I looked, and I said, "Um..." [laughing], "My point."

"Oh, well, that's not an issue [grumbling]."

So they go, they start off on this thing. And we had these meetings and all these discussions, and everything, and one thing and another. We get down. Literally, this went on for a year and whatever, we get down to... they're supposed to make a presentation to the board.

CH: Here.

MR: Here. Well, not at Portland State. The board didn't meet at Portland State back then. Well, yes it did. I'm sorry. Back up. They made the presentation to the board. The day before the board meeting, or night before the day before, I get a phone call from Joe and Tom Imeson, who was Chairman of the Board, saying, "We're going to have a meeting at the Howard Johnson's off of I-5 with the Portland metropolitan legislators, and we'd like you to come." And I said, "And do what?" And they said, "Well, present the Portland State plan." And I said, "I beg your pardon?" "Well, the Portland State plan. Risser's going to present the Oregon State plan." I said, "Well, the Portland State is you leave things the way they are, and we try and build support for Engineering." And I said, "I'm not making any presentation. I can assure you." "Well, okay, but we want you to be there." So the next morning, before then, I call Judith, and, or I call Judith, and I said, "Where's Judith?" "Well she's here." And I said, "Let me talk to her." I said, "Judith, were you told about this meeting?" She said, "No." And I said, "Well, what do you want me to do?" She said, "Go to the meeting."

So I got to the meeting, and I asked Joe, I said, "Why is Judith not here?" And he said, "Well, she's out of town." "Okay."

So we go to the meeting. Risser gets up and does this incredible PowerPoint, with gothic, with Corinthian columns, I mean it was... "What in the hell?" [Laughter.] And when this... [when] he stopped, the first person who got up, it was—it may have been Sam Adams, because at that time...



CH: Ron Adams.

MR: ...or no. Wasn't Sam in the legislature?

CH: Well, Ron Adams was.

MR: I don't know it was.

CH: It could have been.

MR: ...He got up and said, "If you try to go forward with this, I will do everything I can to hold the Higher Ed budget hostage in the next legislative session." And then one by one, every legislator in that room said, "No. You will not do this. We do not want this," and so on. The meeting ends. Anyway, Joe turns and says, "Well, Michael, do you have the Portland..." I said, "Uh..." [Laughing.] "We're perfectly happy with the way things are."

The meeting ends. I'm walking out of the meeting. I'm listening to Joe come up to me and say, "Well, can we talk to you a minute?" "Yes," I said. "Well, what should we do?"

I'm not making this up. I mean this is absolutely true. I said, "Well, I think I warned you some time ago that this would happen, and you didn't do anything about it until today. I don't know what you're going to do." Anyway, they went ahead with the board meeting.

CH: I'm remembering that Risser made [voices overlap]...

MR: [Voices overlap.] ...made the presentation, but then they immediately came, and said, "Well, we're going to go in this direction." It was—they put this thing together. I don't know what it was called. You know, out of the Chancellor's office, and Bob Dryden, our Dean of Engineering, became head of it, because the Dean of Engineering at Oregon State had dropped dead. One day he went out to rake his grass, and had a heart attack, shortly before this, and died, so there was no Dean down there.

They asked Bob to do it, and he did that. Then they had this...

CH: It was the Metropolitan Collaborative or...?

MR: Some sort of thing. It never really went anywhere. Then that was it, *but* that was Judith's downfall.

CH: Yes.

MR: Because, and I don't know. I don't think she'd mind my saying this. Judith did one—made one, I think, very tactical error.

1:50:01

And frankly, I blame Debbie...

CH: It's possible.

MR: ...for this.

CH: Murdock.

MR: Murdock. And I didn't know they had done it until afterwards. They... Judith sent a letter to every member of the legislature, directly. That, politically, was not a good move. It really irritated the Chancellor's office, and the Board.

CH: It probably wasn't necessary.

MR: And it probably wasn't necessary. Yes.

Cris Paschild: It irritated them, because she ran around... ?

MR: Yes. Yes. So.

CH: But I think she saw the handwriting on the wall.

MR: Oh, she did. [nodding] Yes.

CH: And the very next president was Dan Bernstine.

MR: [Nodding.]

CH: I'm very prejudiced about him, because I didn't think—I thought they had dealt us a bad hand, and then he became the greatest guy...

MR: [Shaking his head.]

CH: ...I'd ever worked for in my life. [Voices overlap.]

MR: Well, you know...

CH: ...[I don't] think that anything great happened here while he was president.

MR: ...I have a kind of different take on that. I think the world of Dan. I mean, just—Dan Bernstine is the nicest person in the world. That's just... never. And Dan—I was Provost for Dan for two years after he came, and then I came back one year later to be acting Provost.

CH: Just couldn't get away.

MR: Yes, well, that was one mistake he made. He kept the one in-between a little too long. Anyway, Dan [pause]... I can remember when I first interviewed him, when he was here as a finalist. I, of course, was very supportive of Lindsay [Desrochers] becoming the President, because I'd worked with Lindsay, and knew her quite well. The board was not going to do that, because they identified Lindsay with Judith.

CH: Sure.

MR: And felt that it was...

CH: That's Lindsay Desrochers?

MR: Yes.

CH: She was the [Vice President for] Finance...

MR: Finance. She was the VP when I was Provost.

Anyway, [she was] one of the best people in higher ed ever, in terms of higher ed administration. But once I got to know Dan, in a word, I loved Dan. And he was great as a President, because Dan would say right off, "I'm not going to run this place internally." And for a Provost, that's music to your ears, because that was one of the issues about Judith.

Judith would suddenly be telling people things that she wanted them to do, and you wouldn't have known about it. And you think, "Could you kind of keep me up-to-date here?" But Dan: "You people run this. I'll be President. I'll work with the [state higher education] board. I'll do the politics." And he did. And I think that's his greatest contribution. I think he totally turned around the board attitudes about Portland State, and politically it was very effective. And in terms of that skill, he's a master at it. And I think he was—and it was important for us, because you remember we had had two, in some ways, turbulent presidencies.

CH: Yes.

MR: I mean Shirley Clark would say, "Portland State's ungovernable." I used to hear that from the board all the time.

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: And so...

CH: He [Dan] was a very good public face.

MR: He was a public face. He was—everybody—I don't know anybody that didn't like Dan. And that, I think, for us, it was... and things did develop during that, but you don't identify them with him, because that wasn't the way Dan operated. If you wanted to do something, Dan would say, "Just keep me out of jail. And if you think this can be done, well, let's go ahead and try and do it." And so those kinds of things came from the Deans, they came from, you know, as they should, out of the academic areas and those other programs. He was very good on international stuff, though.

CH: Yes. [Voices overlap.]

MR: He really... what?

CH: He loved to travel.

MR: Oh, yes. And he was great to travel with. [Laughter.] There are stories that I *won't* tell you. [Laughing.] He was very helpful for us to build all that up, and did a great job. And saw the value of it, and that was very important.

CH: He was popular with some of the alumni groups that I worked with, because he's a great guy to have in your meeting.

MR: Oh, sure. Yes. I mean all the stuff we did with Waseda University, the beginning of the Intel scholarship program, the connections we have, some of those connections we now have with Vietnam. Dan supported all of that.

CH: He was, from my point of view, it was interesting to watch him develop his public persona. He was, he didn't strike me as a real sure guy at first.

MR: Well, you know...

CH: But he grew very quickly.

MR: ...as Dan would say, "I've never..." I think Dan was as surprised as anybody that he got the presidency.

CH: Because?

MR: He was coming out of a deanship at [University of] Wisconsin [Law School]. It was an important deanship, but yes [pause]...

CH: Then when he left, you just can't stay away.

MR: I couldn't stay away. No. [Voices overlap.]

CH: You came back as...

MR: Came back for a year.

CH: ...Acting President?

MR: Yes. I had a year as Acting President.

CH: Did you issue any pardons to people or? I guess you can't do that anymore.

MR: [Laughing.] I didn't give any pardons. I almost died.

CH: [Laughing.] Oh, great.

MR: Well, just before Thanksgiving, Roy and I had had a trip to China.

Cris Paschild: This was Roy Koch?

MR: Yes. And in Shanghai I got sick, and then it kind of cleared up, and I came home. And I remember it was right around, yes, Thanksgiving. Just after Thanksgiving, and I really was—got sick. I felt terrible. Called doctors, "Well, it sounds like the flu." I said, "I had a flu shot." And they said, "Well, you can get the flu anyway." So I thought, "Okay, it's the flu. Nothing you can do about the flu." Well, it went on and on, and finally I was totally out of it. I mean, Rod [Diman] and Fred [?] saved my life. I was, first of all, living in [unintelligible] which I hated.

CH: [Voices overlap.] ...lived up there.

MR: Yes, in a house. Yes. And they came by. I think Terri Meaney [President's Office administrative assistant] called them, and said, "You better go out there." So they came, and... "You know, you're going to the doctor." And so they did, and they took me to Urgent Care. They took my blood pressure, which was almost non-existent. [laughing] And said—"Get you to Emergency and to a hospital."

It was right after Thanksgiving, and as it turned out, I had one of those gram-negative bacterial infections, and had gone into sepsis.

CH: Jesus.

MR: So they, I was in Intensive Care five days, and then in the hospital for two weeks.

CH: Wow! Who was watching the farm?

MR: I don't know what... fortunately Lindsay was there, and I can't even remember who watched the farm. So yes. I was, it was pretty close on that one. And I had no idea. I was just out of it by then. I got out of the hospital just before Christmas, and then said, "I am not going back to [unknown]." First of all, I couldn't, and Lindsay said, "We'll put you in the President's suite at the University Place." Which sounds horrible, except the President's suite at University Place is really pretty nice.

CH: Must be the only nice room.

MR: [Laughter.] Yes. It's the only nice place there, because those corridors are enough to drive you nuts. But I lived down there, and they, at that time they were just about to open the restaurant.

CH: Oh yes.

MR: And Sean [?], you know, was there, and of course, I had known him for years. He, they brought me all my meals, and I stayed there for...

CH: He catered our wedding.

MR: Yes. A couple of weeks, and he took care of me, and I was able to go home, and...

CH: Someday, someone should do a program about that particular piece of the Portland State University campus.

MR: There is that. Yes. Well, it was all, you know, the whole idea was to get the land. It was never to...

[2:00:02]

CH: Supposedly for faculty and student housing.

MR: Yes. That was the idea. That was Jay's [?] idea. Yes.

CH: So looking back...

Cris: Let's, can we take a...

CH: Yes.

Cris: ...quick break, and then come back, and then... ?

[Note: Recording is stopped, and then restarted.]

Cris: I had a couple kind of bigger questions too, as we finish up. The first one would be very specifically about you and your career, because you started out—your dissertation and your area of focus in history is French?

MR: Yes.

Cris: Revolution, is that right?

MR: No. Nineteenth-century French, basically French intellectual history.

Cris: French intellectual history. Alright, so you came here as a history professor and as an academic, and I am curious to hear kind of the motivation or what brought you from that academic faculty position up into administration. What happened? What drove you that way?

MR: [Laughing.] Yes. That's a big issue. Well... [pause] that's interesting. I never applied. The only administrative job I ever actually applied for was when I became Provost under Judith. Other than that, I was essentially dragooned into administration, by and large. I get—it's a very funny story about becoming Chairman of the History Department. First of all, I was pretty young.

CH: Yes. You had only been here a few years.

MR: Yes. And Jesse [Gilmore] had been Chairman of History for twelve years. In those years, for many of those years, chairs were appointed. Nobody—departments, faculty, didn't elect chairs. The Dean appointed somebody chair. Jesse had been chairman for twelve years, and the faculty had essentially put in new guidelines

requiring election of department heads, and things. We had big fights about who could vote, and this and that. I'll tell you a very funny story, a History Department story.

We had this great guy for a while named Morrie Webb, who was on the—Morrie's a good old boy from Oklahoma, would call you "honey," "sweetie..." and was actually a very bright man. He had a doctoral degree from University of Chicago in Asian Studies; had been in the OSS during the war. Anyway, we were in this meeting, arguing about who could vote. And David Horowitz had his dog with him. So anyway, the question about, "Well, what about part-time faculty? Can they vote?" and that, and that. Finally, somebody said, "Well, what about the dog? Can the dog vote?" Morrie looked up and said, "Won't be the only son-of-a-bitch votin' in this room." [Laughter.]

Anyway, Morrie... anyway, so we were about to elect a new department, or *select* a Department Head. And the guy who was sort of heir apparent was one of our favorite faculty members, a guy by the name of Jim Heath.

CH: Oh, I liked Jim.

MR: Jim was great. Anyway—until he found religion. Of course, he was always a Republican. That was another problem.

CH: Yes, but Jim was a nice guy.

MR: Yes, he was a nice guy. Anyway, he—some things that I am *not* going to talk about happened in the History Department. Departments were much more interesting places in those years too. And so, there had been, a factionalism had entered in, and Jim had a faction that didn't want him to be chair. The great fear was that Basil Dmytryshyn would be chair, and nobody wanted him.

CH: [Laughing.]

MR: So they were going down the line... to Charles LeGuin, but Charles didn't want to do that kind of thing. It was of no interest to him. And I was sitting in my office, which is down at the end of one of those corridors. In there one day, and suddenly these three guys show up at my door, Tom Morris and two or three others, look at me and say, "Well, we've decided. You're the only one that nobody has an objection to." [Laughter.]

CH: Well, that's one way to do it.

MR: You have to..."Great. Wonderful endorsement." Yes. You're the *least* objectionable person here. So that's how I became Chairman of the History Department. Once that started, then it was sort of, as I say—Joe [Blumel] had asked me then to take over the Arts program, and then Margaret Dobson wanted me in Academic Affairs. I turned down an associate deanship with Bill Paudler, because when they put the college [CLAS] together, Bill wanted me to be his Associate Dean. And I said, "I don't think I

want to do that." I liked Bill, and we got along, but I don't think I want to do that. So I didn't do that.

CH: Margaret, Margaret Dobson.

MR: Then Margaret asked me to come in to Academic Affairs.

CH: She's an interesting person...

MR: She was.

CH: ...in the history, in the sense that she...

MR: She sure is.

CH: Unfortunately, we can't interview her.

Cris Paschild: We interviewed Margaret.

CH: Oh, we did?

MR: Did you? Oh good.

CH: Oh good.

Cris Paschild: The year before she passed.

MR: Oh great. You know, it's really... well, did they have a memorial service for Margaret? Or was I gone?

Cris Paschild: A very small one. Very small.

MR: Did they? I was so upset that they didn't do any more, but evidently she didn't want it, from what Alice [Lehman?] told me.

CH: She always impressed me.

MR: Margaret was, Margaret was greatly undervalued.

CH: Oh yes.

MR: You know, and Joe [Blumel] would never give her the permanent appointment.

CH: That...

MR: She was acting...

CH: That burned her up, by the way.

MR: I'm sure. I know it did, because I worked with her for a number of those years, and they were just unfair really, that they wouldn't. But she was, Margaret was great. I, and yes I used to get a kick out of, there was another woman here. [Pause.] Oh, god,



what was her name? You'll know her... that I used to really enjoy, she was in HPE, and she was also very much the jock. She wore sweats...

CH: Glasses?

MR: ...yes, and I used to get a kick out of...

Cris Paschild: Not Alice [Lehman]?

CH: No.

MR: No, not Alice [voices overlap]. Not Alice.

CH: I can't think of her name.

MR: It'll come to me. Anyway, she drove this great old classic Cadillac. And she, I used to love to be on faculty committees with her, because she'd always play this role of you know, HPE Coach. She also had a law degree. And I'd get a—it'd happen every faculty committee meeting. There'd always be some fool who sort of thought, "Well, who are... you know, you're some dumb jock," and they'd go on and be condescending and that. And she'd sit there for a while, and then she would take after them, and just tear them up one side and down the other. [Laughing.] But no, Margaret was really wonderful on all those things.

Cris: Yes, I would hope at some point, maybe, when you have time, that we could maybe do something similar to this, and just throw out some key names...

MR: Oh sure.

Cris: ...and capture. I mean, you know, some of the ones that have come up, like Nohad Toulan, unfortunately, is someone we never... We had always intended to interview, but never got a chance to interview, and feel that that lack very greatly.

MR: I'd be glad to talk about Nohad.

Cris: Yes, and some people like that. That would be really wonderful, if you'd be willing.

MR: Yes, it's funny, when I was Provost one time or in Academic Affairs, somebody came in with a photograph. It was photograph of Jim Hart and Bobby Kennedy and somebody, when Kennedy was running...

CH: Right.

MR: ...and came here. They showed me the photograph. They said, "Can you tell us who this is?" I looked at it and said, "That's Bobby Kennedy." "No, no, no. Who's that?" I said, "What do you mean, you don't know who's that?! That's Jim Hart for god's sake!" Because for us, Jim Hart was far more important than...

CH: Yes. I remember him.

Cris: Well the other question I had wanted to ask, also, is when you've talked about looking back, there's been plenty of turbulence and there's plenty of challenges at Portland State, you know, financial exigency, being "ungovernable," all those things. So what has kept you here for your entire career in higher ed?

MR: Oh, it's a wonderful place. I've just loved it here. I mean, I think Portland State has been such a *remarkable* thing to see. Compared to when I first came here, and see how this place has developed. And frankly, it was two things. Well, one: I got married.

[2:10:00]

My wife is from here, and so we stayed. Or was from here. And I really came to like living in Portland too. And it was a really fun place to be, for many many years. I don't know how much fun it is anymore, but it was at one time. Well, one of the things that's happened is size. I mean, you get to an institution that people forget how big this place is. I mean...

CH: Close to 30 [thousand students].

MR: Yes. When I was, when I left, as interim President, I think—it was then or as Provost, you know, I can't remember which—I did an analysis of higher ed institutions, the just numbers, and would point out to people, by then we were in the top hundred institutions in size, four-year/graduate, in size, in the United States. And you know, people really didn't realize the magnitude of change that that brings about. Clark Kerr [first University of California at Berkeley chancellor] claimed that 25,000 was the maximum number that any institution should be, not that anybody in the Cal system paid attention to that, but...

CH: He may be right.

MR: He may be right, because there is a point, it seems to me, where you leach something. And I saw that when, I know when I came back as Provost and President, that dramatic growth that had occurred just before that. Things were very different, in some ways. The connection between people changed drastically, and between the administration and the faculty. That was a just totally different situation than it used to be.

CH: Well, there was tremendous growth in graduate programs, which also makes a big difference...

MR: Oh yes.

CH: ...on campus.

MR: You know, it's like people would just drop into our offices all the time. I mean, you could just go up, say hello, see what's going on, and talk. It doesn't happen anymore. Well, it's difficult and so on, to do that, but when that happens, you've changed the nature of things quite a bit. It's a different. And I, of course, used to sit in the Park Blocks, because I could smoke all the time.

CH: Not now.

MR: I could see everybody. Yes. Now you can't anymore. [Laughing.]

CH: Not now. I also wonder about the percentage of quote "full-time" versus part-time now...

MR: That's another—and that's a serious problem throughout higher education. The decline in the percentage of tenured faculty is, I think, one of the changes that bugs me. I think one of the worst things that's happened in higher ed. You just... you can't build programs with adjunct faculty. And I see, I'm fighting this battle in Vietnam, interestingly enough, because there the tradition is that people teach in three or four different institutions all the time. First of all, they don't have tenure in Vietnam. And so one of the things we did at EIU, from the very beginning, was to say we want our own full-time faculty. We don't want people who are going to be teaching here, here, and here. And we give them contracts. We can't—there is no such thing as tenure, so you can't do that, but we give them extensive five, six-year contracts.

CH: That's good.

MR: And we've been able to build a very stable faculty, but I see things like in Ho Chi Minh National, that's, it's very bad. And they're just not going to be able to improve higher education there, as long as those situations continue. Part of...

CH: [Voices overlap.] It's happening here too.

MR: It's happening here. Yes. We're going in the same direction. That is not good.

CH: So when you look back... is there, are there certain things that you're most excited or proud of, that happened under your watch?

MR: Yes. The Honors Program we developed, I think, was quite good. Unfortunately, they don't do the same things. I mean, we had a Visiting Scholars Program, that we ran here through Honors, that I thought was just great. And brought all kinds of people in, and helped our students. Any number of them ultimately ended up getting graduate positions and that through the connections they made.

CH: Sure.

MR: The change in General Education. I don't—you know, it would never have been a general education program I would have done, but that's because I'm kind of hide-bound myself.

CH: [Laughing.] You mean more toward the classics.

MR: Yes, but I think it's had a, it was a good move. And I think it did some things that helped a lot. The international, those would be three that I... we did really well for an institution this size, in international activity. And I don't think people really understand or appreciate it that much. But again, if you look at the number of international students we have, compared to institutions throughout the country, we're—for urban institutions, we're in the top fifteen in the number of international students that come here. And it's very popular with international students. Asian students love to come here.

CH: Why do you think that is?

MR: Well I can tell you a number... One is safety, because Portland, you know, from the perspective of—I saw this with the Japanese and I see it with the Vietnamese students—their image of the United States is L.A. and Chicago and that...

CH: Gangsters.

MR: ...and the big concern always of their parents, I hear it all the time, is: "Is it safe?"

That's a big plus. And fortunately we've had really good people working with our international students, and they're really supported well. I'd like to see it, some other support, but it's been pretty well. So it's worked well, and it's got a good reputation among international students. That's helped. But it isn't only that. It's the other things that people don't seem to know. I mean, you can't imagine how involved Portland State is in Vietnam today, in all kinds of ways. I mean, we've got students working on eco-city development in Hoi An, in Da Nang. We've got people developing curriculum at the Ho Chi Minh Academy, which is the training academy for Party officials in Vietnam.

CH: Wow.

MR: We've had community engagement processes, rehabilitating canals in Ho Chi Minh City. I mean, all this kind of stuff going on, that has involved faculty, a lot of graduate students, and we're one of the... if you talk to people, we're one of the American universities they know the best. Now, we need to keep taking advantage of it, because I can tell you that everybody is pouring in there. Arizona State has just opened an office in the Saigon High Tech Park that has fifteen people working in it. And they're, I think Michael Crow [University of Arizona President] is over there every other week, so the competition is building, because you know, for many years, the Vietnamese didn't

have any resources, so you couldn't do anything, but boy that's not true anymore. They spend 3 billion dollars a year educating students abroad, in Vietnam.

CH: Wow. That's more than we do.

MR: Yes. So it's booming, and the middle class is rising, and so it's become a real... but just all of those international programs. I mean, the Waseda Program was phenomenal, and again extended our reputation in Asia immensely, because Waseda is one of the top Asian universities. So as soon as you say we have this program with Waseda, oh well, you know? Because it's still the case that Tokyo University, Beijing, they won't talk to schools like Portland State. No, we don't.

CH: They want to... ? [unintelligible]

MR: We're the sons of heaven, we only talk to... [Laughter.] Yes.

CH: Well?

Cris: Yes. Anything else you want to, on closing?

MR: No. No. I've probably rambled on enough.

Cris: We'll probably hit you up again.

MR: That's fine. I'll be glad to do that.

CH: Good. Well thank you very much, Michael.

MR: Well, that's great. It's fun to go over some of this stuff.

CH: It was for me.

[Recording ends: 2:20:01]