

2020

## Interview with Rob Gould

Robert Gould  
*Portland State University, gouldr@pdx.edu*

Alexandra Ibarra  
*Portland State University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/conflict\\_oralhist](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/conflict_oralhist)



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Peace and Conflict Studies Commons](#)

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

### Recommended Citation

Gould, Robert and Ibarra, Alexandra, "Interview with Rob Gould" (2020). *Conflict Resolution Oral Histories*.  
6.  
[https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/conflict\\_oralhist/6](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/conflict_oralhist/6)

This Interview is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Conflict Resolution Oral Histories by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: [pdxscholar@pdx.edu](mailto:pdxscholar@pdx.edu).

Name of Narrator	Robert Gould (RG)
Name of Interviewer	Alexandra Ibarra (AI)
Date and Location of Interview	May 18, 2020, Portland, OR
Date range of events described in Interview	1950-2010
Length of Interview	57:22
Name of Transcriber	Alexandra Ibarra
Date of Transcription	May 20, 2020
Also participating in interview	Patricia Schechter (PAS); Liza Schade (LS); Lady J (LJ); two unidentified speakers
Audited by/audit date	Carolee Harrison, October 2020
Project key words	peace; war; conflict; anti-war; nonviolence; resolution; activism; Persian Gulf War; Iraq War; Vietnam War
Specific key words	draft resistance, Vietnam War, education, peace studies, anti-war movement
Proper names mentioned	Elizabeth Furse; Mel Gurtov; Tom Hastings; Tom Hicks; Al Jubitz; Marvin Kaiser; Judith Ramaley; Cheyney Ryan; Leslie Scott; Anya Spielberg; Steven Spielberg; Mary Zinkin
Headnote	<p>Rob Gould is the co-founder of the Conflict Resolution program at Portland State University, which began as a master's program in 1996.</p> <p>In this interview, Gould recalls the origins of Conflict Resolution and peace studies at Portland State going back to the 1970s, relating its development to changing cultural and political currents locally and nationally during the Vietnam War era. He discusses the challenges that the graduate program has faced as it has grown, involving relationships with local agencies, funding, collaboration with UO and with peace organizations, and cultural perceptions of peace studies during and after the Gulf War; and he celebrates the</p>

	program's successes, integrity, and durability.
--	---

AI: It is May 18, it's 1 pm, and I am interviewing Rob Gould. Let's just jump right in.

RG: Okay.

AI: So, Rob, can you tell me a little bit about yourself from sort of your early years.

RG: (laughs) My early years?

AI: Yeah, regarding maybe peace activism? Kind of just laying out the context...

RG: Oh, okay. I guess my entry to activism probably began in elementary school, because my father said it would be a good idea for me to go to Shattuck Elementary School, which is now Shattuck Hall on campus. You can see I'm very, very local. So that was... the whole campus around the neighborhood was a very low-income, multicultural neighborhood. And so, my father wanted me to have that experience, that diversity, and that of course was the early 1950s.

But there was an interesting spirit in the United States in the early 1950's coming out of World War II. A lot of veterans were pretty disillusioned by the sort of impending empire that the United States was creating, and just the whole massive destruction that was a part of WWII which was very sobering for a lot of people.

So anyways, I think that I kind of got that in my system. My father was the air raid director for what is now OHSU. And he came to the understanding that actually, you know, that taking shelter or the air raid shelter movement was absurd, because no one would survive in an air raid shelter, and so he resigned that position. So that kind of... my eyebrows went up around that.

The sixties of course, led to civil rights and the Vietnam War, and eventually the Cold War. So, all three of those things had a big impact on me. I would say that by the time that I came to Portland State in 1966, I was already feeling fairly political, but that this thing that was hanging over my head was the draft. So a friend of mine—a very close friend of mine and I—took a term off from Portland State, and just read everything that we could get our hands on about Vietnam. We soon realized that the mainstream media, at that point, was against the war. So, I was kind of going like, "Mainstream media is against the war? And we're still being drafted into that?"

So, I think you know that made a big difference in my journey into the resistance around that.

My friend and I were both lettermen at Portland State, and we both played football. So, we took our letterman jackets down to the induction center where people were being drafted downtown. We got there early in the morning to greet the people that are coming to be inducted or to be have physicals. We handed literature about the... war is wrong and there's things they could do to resist. And so uhm, that was fun. [chuckling] I think that led to my doing draft counselling, which then morphed into draft, military, and veterans' counselling. That was in the Koinonia House which is now the campus police... station?

I did that for several years, and again working with people who were facing the draft and trying to get them deferments. Explaining how people were resisting, going to Canada, and were also trying to get people out of the military who wanted to get out of the military. A lot of veterans got less than honorable discharges for their anti-war work within the military, so I wanted to help them get their discharges upgraded.

So we had the support of the campus ministers, and we lived on next to nothing because it was pretty hard to make money. We couldn't actually charge the people who came there for counselling because our non-profit status kind of wouldn't allow it at that point.

So anyways, that kind of got to go on. I moved—went through there—worked with the American Friends Service Committee, which is a Quaker organization, on various peace and justice projects.

[05:00]

The third thing was to help start this program in Conflict Resolution.

AI: Wow, so you really—you got started early from elementary school up to your early twenties. You were working with a lot of different people. I'm wondering, was there some pushback when you were visiting with the draft?

RG: Pushback from where now?

AI: From possibly... just the draftees themselves, when you were handing out literature...

RG: Oh that, the drama? You know they were all sleepy. I don't think they knew quite what to make of us, especially since we had our letterman jackets. We weren't coming across typical anti-war people at the time. The sergeant who was sort of running the show at the top of the steps—there was a long flight of steps, after going through the doors. He pulled out a... put out

a garbage can and so, as we were handing out this literature out to these people he was saying, "You have to put it into this garbage can now." [chuckling] Before he did that, we got some, you know, some sympathy from the people coming into there. It was hard to say—it was more of a symbolic statement than a practical...

AI: Yeah—wow. [chuckling] So, you were talking about how you were working at a non-profit from the Vietnam War to the Cold War. In what sort of space did you work with the Oregon Peace Institute and start to get into Conflict Resolution? How did you sort of have that shift?

RG: Well, I've been interested in a lot of social change organizations. So, I would kind of invent them periodically. Most of them just sort of died on the vine. We had a Middle East Research Institute for a while; invited both Jews and Palestinians to work together. Well, they didn't work together very well. The whole topic resigned (?), and we kind of split that whole organization in half. So that didn't really get off the ground.

There was a neighbor care organization where we actually got a health clinic, a free health clinic, started. What's interesting about that is that the woman who was the director and the main organizer was Steven Spielberg's cousin. Anya Spielberg was her name.

So she said, you know, to get some funding I'm gonna see my cousin down at the family get-together. I guess it was one summer, and so then she came back and reported to us that she asked him, Steven, if he would give some seed money for this neighbor care program. He said, "Oh no, I never give money to charity [at all?]." It wasn't really until he made *Schindler's List* that he started giving money to charity. So that's interesting. He gives a lot, so he gets a lot of credit.

So, I started... was kind of in the formative stages to a number of different organizations. Again, a couple of successes, and, you know, mostly failures. What I finally at one point... Elizabeth Furse, former congresswoman Elizabeth Furse and I were both working with the American Friends Service Committee at the same time. She was working out of the Seattle office and I was working the Portland office. So we got to be friends by going to some meetings. We had sort of cooked up this idea, the Oregon Peace Institute. She had moved back to, you know, down to Portland and so we were living in the same town. That's sort of how that got started.

Now, in all fairness, Elizabeth is a majorly charismatic person. She immediately attracted a lot of people's interest in this. She was another director and she got it going.

I was kind of responsible for some the educational aspects of the institute. She created this store in what used to be the Galleria, which was the first peace store in the United States.

Actually kind of a mini-mall. She did a lot of stuff including organizing a huge demonstration at the big festival in the park after the end of the Cold War. So she gets all the credit for all that.

I was gonna do it, some educational aspects of it, and I thought, well... I hadn't finished... I had barely maybe finished my undergraduate program. Took me twenty years, '66 to '86.

[10:00]

And so, we... I guess, yeah it was actually... I hadn't even finished my undergraduate program. So, I thought maybe I should get a degree, if I'm to be responsible for education. So, then I got three degrees quickly. That degree in philosophy at Portland State, a master's degree in teaching at Lewis and Clark, and then a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Oregon. So, during that time, especially when I was in Eugene, I was barely connected to the Oregon Peace Institute. But after I came back to Portland to teach in the philosophy department at Portland State, then I kind of helped revive that organization a little bit.

Elizabeth was often in Congress at that point and so her leadership was missing. It was a pretty big void to try to fill. And we sort of kept the organization alive, barely with a heartbeat. But then we decided that... and particularly I guess when I was in Eugene, I was working with Cheyney Ryan, who was a philosophy professor at U of O. Then Leslie Scott who is actually a long-time director of the... what's that festival down in... it's a little hippy festival down there, it's slipping my mind...

LS: Country Fair?

[11:19]

RG: Country Fair! There we go. The Country Fair. So, at the Country Fair, so the three of us kind of wanted to start some peace studies programs that were more significant than they had been at the U of O. They have a Peace Studies minor. In fact, I staffed that for a while when I was down there. But we wanted to get actual curriculum, expanded curriculum.

So when I came to Portland State, I started working with Mel Gurtov. I think I told you my story last time, when I called him up from the U of O and said that I am coming up to Portland State to teach a class, and wondered if we could start some programming in conflict resolution and peace studies. He said, "Who are *you*?", you know? I had to actually meet him face to face before he realized, "Oh well, maybe this guy is serious enough to work with." So we formed this organization that we eventually named Catalyst, which then again helped design the graduate program in Conflict Resolution.

AI: So, to just go back a little bit, the minor program at U of O, that was established before

RG: Yes.

AI: ... The Oregon Peace institute and Catalyst?

RG: Yes, and again I think the context here is important that during the eighties, the 1980s, there was a lot of academic response to the Cold War. So you had Peace Studies programs literally all over the country. The U of O had one, so did OSU—they still have one—but there were a lot of minor programs in particular. But they were different kinds, sometimes undergraduate and a few graduate programs. Graduate programs were a little harder to come by. So those existed, and actually it was odd that Portland State didn't have that, and the efforts to start something like that were met with a lot of resistance. Now, any academic community is gonna have a spectrum of beliefs around activism and change. Sort of theory of change here. But no matter what the theory of change is amongst the faculty, it's basically the administration that makes a lot of decisions. They make things happen or they don't make things happen.

In my experience as a draft counsellor which tried to... we actually got the students, the student union, to vote to give us maybe five bucks per Portland State student that we counselled. But the president of the university overruled that, wouldn't let them do it. The president, of course, of the university continues to have that kind of power. As you may know that the Faculty Senate voted to not allow guns on campus and not allow the campus police to carry weapons that could kill people. Yet the president just overruled that and that's what happened. So no matter what the theory of change might be amongst faculty, the administration really controls how things happen.

When I came to Portland State, Judith Ramaley was president—and she is still working on campus here—and she is a Quaker, and she was very much encouraging people to help this to happen. So we had some administrative support; the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Marvin Kaiser, was very progressive himself, and was very interested and very supportive.

So the theory of change is, you have to have things line up all the way through the administration for it to actually happen, and we just sort of lucked out. Mel Gurtov and some other faculty had had a survey on campus before I came up from Eugene, where there was a lot of interest amongst faculty for having some kind of peace studies program. When I arrived and we started the small group which became Catalyst, we a lot of support, a lot of support from faculty, we had the support of the administration. We were in a very good place to be able to start something in peace studies and conflict resolution. But the word "peace" had to be taken out of the proposal, as I've told you before, because the Gulf War, at that point, was being championed by people who said that people who were against it, or for peace, were not supporting the troops. So the legislature in Salem... the people who were in the know said that a proposal with the word "peace" in it would never fly through the legislature. So that had to be taken out. But we have essentially been a peace and conflict resolution program the whole time. It's just kind of that the "peace" part has been more stealth. [laughing] I think people are happy it's there, but for getting it through and approved, you have to do some little tweaks.

AI: So it was mostly political to take out the word “peace.”

RG: 100% political. Yeah. I think, just as a little sidebar, for me, conflict resolution is distinctive because we focus on conflict. Conflict wherever it happens, whether it's in your head, or between people, or in big groups, or nations. We focus on conflict and the dynamics of conflict, and try to resolve that conflict for peace and justice. So, obviously, no peace without justice. We believe in that as well. So again, you'll find other disciplines, sociology particularly, interested in social conflict; psychology is interested in psychological conflict. But we're interested in conflict wherever it comes from. We're less interested in social structures that sociology is interested in, we're less interested in a lot of psychological pathology that psychology is interested in. But we really are a distinctive academic area. You can see that peace and justice and conflict studies all sort of focus in on “How can we work with the conflict here? How can we help move it along in a positive direction?” It's not only just about the *mechanics* of conflict, it's also the sensibility that we can live a better world. We can live a more moral world, can create a moral world, if we find out how to engage in conflict with less violence, with less fury, with less anger. Anger's a good thing, but when it becomes abusive, then conflicts really become harmful. We want to take the harm and the suffering out of conflict. That's who we are; that's my sidebar on what we essentially do.

AI: That was the spirit in which you structured your program; do you feel that it has survived until now?

RG: Yeah, I think so. I think so. I should run it by the faculty and see if they still think that would be the best way of describing things! I never know. You take any five academics and put them in a room and try to get them to agree on anything, you're going to have a job on your hands. But it would be an interesting conversation.

AI: I want to shift back a little bit. You said that you kind of lucked out; you were in this moment where the administration was sort of primed for you to push this program through, and that you had done a survey that the faculty wanted this program?

RG: Yes.



AI: I'm wondering, how did Catalyst fit, in terms of pushing the CR program? Who was making that up—was that solely faculty, were you getting people from the community, students, to...

RG: Yeah. Because there was this sort of... it was kind of a project of the Oregon Peace Institute, as well as a project of the faculty of Portland State. So the final document that was approved by the legislature has the two organizations as co-sponsors. In some ways, the Oregon Peace Institute was written into the document for the whole graduate program in Conflict Resolution. So there was that, and therefore Catalyst had members of the community who were associated with OPI on it. So there was a kind of partnership from the very beginning, and of course OPI is still associated with our program. We've got a couple other non-profits over time who are also associated with our program, but that was sort of the founding organization. It's nice to have that kind of connection with the community, I think. It means that we're responsible not just to the university, but we're responsible to the community as well.

[21:05]

AI: That's a great thing to have for your program, to have that structure there. In terms of students, though, how was the student body receiving the CR program? Was there an atmosphere with... I know that there were a lot of protests going on during the 90s regarding the Gulf War; did you feel that that changed how students were being receptive to Conflict Resolution?

RG: Well, this kind of happened in the tail end of the Gulf War. I think that there certainly was a lot of interest. We had a community meeting both in Eugene and in Portland, because I was trying to start a graduate program at both University of Oregon and Portland State at the same time. So I put a lot of miles between—in my little Volkswagen bug! These community meetings were basically trying to get an assessment of how enthusiastic people were who were potential students. We had very successful community meetings at both ends; we were able to actually start a graduate program earlier at the University of Oregon because they had an interdisciplinary graduate studies program out of their graduate office, so we could just slip into that. That went for little over a year with a dozen students. I would go down and teach classes in that, make sure they were supervised for their practicums, and they would take other classes at UO.

That actually happened before the graduate program was approved at Portland State, because we had to go through a lot more bureaucratic process at Portland State; because there was

going to be an entity, its own, as a graduate program. But yes, we had a very successful community meeting at Portland State, and really the only person who came who was opposed to it was the director of a very large mediation organization at that point, and they were trying to figure out how to navigate the non-profit world; they've got a public agency. I think they were nervous that we were going to be credentialing people without being tied much to the mediation community at that point. My co-founder, Mary Zinkin, has been a long-time mediator, and very connected to the mediation community, but that particular director was a little skeptical that we had the credibility to produce a graduate degree. Everyone else thought we were, and eventually we won her over and she ended up hiring our students. She was just worried that our young students were going to come in and take jobs away from other people who were doing the same work without a graduate degree. People really wanted a graduate degree; a lot of students. We had a pretty big mailing list of potential students, and people agreed that the graduate degree was what they wanted, because most of them already had undergraduate degrees.

So the first group of people, the first couple of years, we were dealing with students who were pretty old. I mean, they were in their forties and sometimes fifties.

AI: This argument about credentials, could you elaborate a little bit on that?

RG: There used to be, for a long time during that period, there was a government agency that would credential people for mediation, in any case. But all you really had to have was a forty-hour training for that particular credential to be able to be a mediator. That agency actually got defunded after a while, so it doesn't exist anymore; there's no government body which is sort of credentialing. Right now we are in a place where people have a general agreement that an entry-level mediator should have at least a forty-hour training. We felt that people needed more education; conflict resolution is not just mediation. It's facilitation, it's negotiation, it's all these peace processes, it's restorative justice; it goes a lot of different directions. It needed something that was more sophisticated.

AI: Did the CR program at UO last as long as the CR program at Portland State?

RG: If I wasn't down there running it—and eventually I had to put more of my energies at Portland State, I was living in Portland—my priorities sort of switched, because of the need here in Portland, so I ramped this thing up; it was going to take a while to work. So I personally just had to let that go [at UO], and when I let that go, nobody else took it up. So it disappeared.

AI: Wow.

RG: Yeah. We had some great students. I still keep in touch with one of the students down there from that program, during that particular time.

AI: That was in the 90s or the 2000s, that it sort of dissolved?

RG: I probably taught... let's see. I wonder. I probably taught in that—looking at my CV, I here—I came up here in 1992 from Eugene to teach a class, and then started working on this. I'm not sure exactly what year that was. It should be on my CV, but it's not even there! [laughing] That's embarrassing! It was the early 90s, it was probably '94, '95, somewhere in there was the time when we had that one going. I have to really check on that, though.

AI: Sort of the beginning of when the PSU CR program was really taking off was the mid-90s, I remember. So having this shift to where you were focusing on PSU centrally... were there a lot of difficulties that made you shift to focus on PSU, in terms of running the program, establishing it?

RG: As I said before, you have a spectrum of people, academics. Now, there was an interesting change in the 1960s. Before the 1960s, higher education was pretty split between liberals and conservatives. But after the sixties or even during the sixties, there was really a sea change where most universities were dominated by liberal professors. So that kind of balance turned into an imbalance in some people's minds, but to me it reflects the change that we call the "culture wars." There's always been dissent, all the way back to the priest who was on board with Christopher Columbus and was outraged about how brutal he could be with the Natives. So there has been a long history of dissent in this country, but dissent hadn't become a major force in politics until the fifties and into the sixties, particularly in the sixties. You find that getting right into mainstream politics: the Democrats keep getting pushed further and further to the left, and there's really a culture war. A culture war, simply, is that we stop being an unquestioningly white supremacist country; we stop being mindlessly imperialist to the rest of the world; there's enough of a movement to question the empire the United States has become, and to question white supremacy, sexism, and on and on. So all of this diversity and inclusivity is really a product of the sixties and seventies. So you have on campus, again, liberal professors and radical professors; so the liberals are kind of more traditional, and they're sort

of happy with male supremacy, white supremacy—they feel like it's always been that way. There was one professor at Portland State—who will go unnamed—who I really liked a lot, but he said that “a woman could never write a great novel.” He lost his job for that, actually, because he stuck to that so much, they finally fired him; a full professor. So you have vestiges of conservatism even among the liberals. And then you have the very left-wing radicals as well. That's the climate we're in. There are conservatives in terms of structure and status.

I was an adjunct professor. I was starting... basically, I was the core person, the key director who was making stuff happen. Some people thought, “That's great! He's clearly capable of doing this stuff; more power to him, we need this kind of thing...” They really welcomed and admired the fact that I was stubborn enough to make this thing happen. But there were conservative people, more conservative—Sy, one of the more traditionalist, I guess, was like *what the hell? He's not a tenure-line person, he's not a professor, not on the tenure track at all, he's just an adjunct? Running a graduate program?*—so there was a lot of pushback from all levels of administration and faculty about me being in the leadership of this. Also, the way we were structured was without tenure lines and self-support, so we had to raise all of our own money for all of our expenses. To pay our faculty, we had to raise tuition. Luckily, so many students were interested in this and we filled up our classes so well that... ten years ago we had up to 14 adjuncts working with us, with our core faculty, and we were able to get our core faculty up to six or seven positions; we now have eight. We grew very fast out of that model.

That created resentment, too. Not only is this guy not on the tenure line, they don't even have tenure lines! That's a threat to tenure, at least in some people's minds—a threat to tenure and academic freedom—although academic freedom is not really an issue, because you can't fire a person for what they say in their class unless it's extremely outrageous. In any case, we got pushback from a number of different angles. The self-support thing was a threat, too, because departments didn't want to feel like they had to raise their own money to pay their faculty. We moved more and more to that model anyway; student credit hours are very very seriously part of the budget.

So, in any case, yeah. We had resistance, and I don't blame the resistance. We were something oddball; we were trying to take a square peg and pound it into a round hole. We kept on chipping away until that little triangle would fit in there! It was quite an experience, I have to say. It's kind of amazing that it worked as well as it has.

AI: Just hearing it, how you got from that point to this point now, it's really an amazing story. In terms of selecting the faculty, you kind of mentioned a little bit about how the interdisciplinary nature of the graduate program in UO... and then you were talking about trying

to fit a square peg into a circle hole here... how did that work out for you, creating this from the ground up, with that opposition, trying to create a syllabus for this?

RG: Well, I think it's kind of hit and miss. It would have been nice to actually have a mentor, somebody who had been a chair of another department, particularly the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences; it would have been nice to have somebody I could have met with and say, "This is how you build a program. This is how you build a department. These are all the things you have to keep in mind... and these are how you set priorities, and here's how you hire people..." All these basic questions. It would have been nice to have a mentor. Marvin Kaiser tried the best he could, actually, but he was not a department chair, and he was building the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences across a whole lot of disciplines. There was a lot of growth during the time that he was dean. So he had his hands full, really. I used to try to meet with him every week, and then he said, "How about every two weeks?" "How about once a month?" [laughing] So I didn't really have a lot of guidance; I had to kind of invent it.

The other aspect of it is that I think the group of people that I got together were pretty much on the left side of the political spectrum—maybe way left—and so we were kind of collectivists in a way. We thought that we should be pretty equal. The first budget that I created for the program had everybody paid the same, including the office coordinator. We were all paid the same. Marvin Kaiser looked at my budget and said, "What are you doing?!" [AI laughing] "You can't pay your office coordinator the same as your faculty." Well, we've got the money; I'd like to spread it evenly. He just kind of laughed me out of the office. Some things we just couldn't do, although actually we got our first office coordinator paid more than most office coordinators... unfortunately, more than our current office coordinator, who is spectacularly good. It made for kind of an island in our program. I think people felt that we were doing something unique and special in a lot of different ways. But, back to the theory of change: if you try to change too much, they you get too much resistance. So we had to always kind of moderate the amount of change just to manage the resistance we might get from it. We had to follow a path that was taking risks, but being pretty sensible about the extent of the risks. We were all kind of risk-takers at that point. [laughing] I still can't believe I had the energy to welcome in the first cohort and tell them that I was sabbatical replacement faculty in the philosophy department at Lewis & Clark. I look back and think, you know, I had a lot of energy then. I wish I had some of that energy now! [laughing]

AI: Wow. [laughing] So, knowing that the first students that you were admitting into this new program were older, and you had a large, I'm assuming, entry class, did that stabilize, or did you see that go down a little bit, or were there bumps and waves in terms of attendance for your program?

RG: We had about a dozen people in the first cohort and I think I we had around a dozen the second year, too. That was a nice manageable size. Of course, at that point we really just had two faculty, Mary Zinkin and myself. She taught the mediation-related courses and she was at .5 [FTE], and I was at full-time and basically taught the rest of the courses. We had a very small budget, and it was pretty workable with a dozen students. It was cozy—we have fond memories of that time—sort of like a very small liberal arts college somewhere, like Lewis & Clark. In order to hire more faculty and to get more diversity in terms of what we could do, the different parts of conflict resolution and peace studies, we had to attract more students. That was pretty easy; we just offered more courses, slowly, and more people came, and that built up more money and then we could hire more people. Over the next maybe five years, we grew and grew and grew, until we were admitting about forty-five students a year. Now that was ridiculous. We really overdid it, in a way, for a fairly small faculty to have that many graduate students. The chumminess of the program kind of got lost, too. We used to have these potlucks during the year, all the students and faculty, but boy, when it got to be 45 students, we could hardly get four or five people together in a meeting, because they didn't know each other very well. We realized that that was a mistake, to get that big that fast. Things sort of leveled off after a while to a more reasonable amount.

Of course, the whole graduate tuition disaster that we have now was kind of beginning to loom. Tuition was going up and up and up, even at Portland State, and we had to do it in order to meet the budget, we had all kinds of drivers on this... graduate student or just any student tuition crisis. That kicked in more and more, and graduate programs started disappearing in all fields across the country, because they couldn't attract enough students, they couldn't pay their bills and they had to close their shops; law schools closed down. With that, we had the shrinking effect on the graduate population, so over time we got smaller again. We formed an undergraduate program; we now have an undergraduate major/minor, we've got a proposal for a certificate in, and of course the graduate program has been overhauled so that it looks different, and we have two certificates, too, which we give a year, so we've kind of changed what we are offering to fit what students need and what students can afford.

[41:37]

AI: What year did these changes take place?

RG: It's been over time. It kind of evolved more than it happened. We should have a timeline of every year—the highlights—but even though I have a history degree, and I love history, I read history stuff; but we've sort of been in emergency mode the whole time. The previous office coordinator, Stephanie Janecki, we had a... every Monday, the two of us would

get together first thing in the morning and we'd talk about "What is the crisis of the day?" We'd go through the week with a new crisis every day. With all that sort of crisis mentality, with all of the problems that we had to deal with, it's a little hard keeping the file in a decent order. That's why the whole history of the project is in the boxes, right, just sort of thrown in. I made a few manuals that have some sequences in them, respectable enough... but most of it is kind of lost in big piles of paper. This is what's exciting about this history project; we really need people to look at this and to even tell us what our own history is, because it's hard for us to know other than the drama of the whole thing, it's harder for us to know year by year what has happened. That's my excuse. [laughing]

AI: That is definitely a highlight point for us as historians, figuring out that timeline and going through those boxes. So you're in luck there!

RG: If I ever had the time to do it... I have gone over there, and every once in a while I would actually go through a box. I would find that 90% of the stuff is just—recycle it, immediately—and maybe five of the ten percent that is left is questionable, but I'm not an archivist, I don't know exactly what things to save.

PAS: No shredding allowed, Rob.

RG: Pardon me?

PAS: No shredding allowed!

RG: Yeah... [smiling] No shredding allowed.

PAS: Not until later; not until much later.

RG: Yeah. Anyway, I did a little bit of it. I can guarantee you you'll probably find that 90% of it is like, "Why did he save *this*?"

PAS: I'll tip my hand, if I could jump in here; I processed two boxes, and that is not at all what I found. What I found is what one always finds in institutional records: duplicates. That's been the only thing that I would remind you. The other thing, there are some things in what we are going to call the archive that won't make it to the PSU Library because it wouldn't make it from any department; you can't have any... there are certain rules at the state level that regulate it. You can't have anything that has a person's social security number on it, you can't have certain student information in files. So, *au contraire*, believe you me, I've seen my share as have many of the students in this class, and it's very typical... what you've saved is great, and, in terms of its condition, very typical and nothing to be embarrassed about.

RG: [laughing]

PAS: Not at all. Now, it's 1:45, so I just wanted to make sure Alex has a chance to open up for other questions from the students, and then we'll start to wind up.

RG: OK, great. Thanks so much.

AI: Absolutely. If anybody has anything that they want to ask, right now would be a wonderful moment. You can turn your video on...

LJ: I don't have a question, but I just wanted to chime in...

LS: Hi, I have a question: I would ask you to elaborate a little bit more on the partnership between PSU and UO. What was that collaboration like, and what were some of the challenges involved in that?

[46:11]

RG: I stayed in touch with UO, and Jane Gordon, who is now the vice-provost in charge of the Portland center of UO, she was the director of the law school at UO, and eventually their graduate program in conflict resolution got started, really restarted, in the law school. It's a wonderful program; it combines a law school education with conflict resolution; you can get a master's degree in dispute resolution—that's what they call it down there—and a law degree at the same time. So you can be equipped to either go adversarial or go into the conflict resolution mode, which a lot of law... a lot of decisions, a lot of cases get mediated. It's a great



program. They patterned their program after ours; they had a similar array of classes, they just kind of duplicated what we had done, so that was kind of a compliment. The program really did evolve in a great direction down there, and I'm really happy that happened. We had an organization, the Northwest Institute for Conflict Resolution, which sort of married the two programs together for some common projects, so that was going as well.

We were asked by... our funder, one of our major funders, is Al Jubitz, from the Jubitz truck stop heritage—his father started the Jubitz truck stop and he created a big empire of his own, a dial-a-truck business, kind of a computerized way of getting trucks hooked up with loads—so he is a very liberal Rotarian. There is a Rotarian peace organization, a world peace organization that the Rotarians run, and there are campuses which become Rotary peace centers. Al said, "Why don't you try to do that?" and I said, "Yeah, let's do that, and let's do it in conjunction with the UO." So they were excited to do that down there; the director of that program, Tim Hicks, and I formed this big proposal; they had a lot of staff down there who did a lot of the assembly of parts, so they certainly did their share. So we submitted it, and didn't get it! It was a lot of work to try to get it, and in the process of doing that, the... Portland State—actually Marvin Kaiser—but Portland State, there were some faculty members involved who were very angry that we were collaborating with UO. There's this competition between Portland State and UO that's gone on forever... there's competition between every university and pretty much every other university, so it's a very competitive atmosphere. So the idea that we would collaborate with them... and that Portland State could have done that proposal all by themselves, we had sufficient resources to make a good proposal. I disagreed, so I really got sideways with some of the faculty and administration. It got a little angry, I've got to say. Then afterwards when we didn't get the proposal, then they kind of said, "Well, that just shows you made a stupid mistake." Then Al came and met with Tim Hicks and myself and said, "Listen. I really appreciate how strong a proposal you gave, so I'm going to give each one of you a half million dollars." Then they said, "Well, that's not a bad consolation prize." [laughing] We needed another faculty member in order to have enough faculty to have an undergraduate program, so that... if we didn't have a vital undergraduate program, we probably wouldn't exist today, because most of our students are undergraduates, and it's a great program, I think. Tom Hastings really designed a good program. So this collaboration thing is an interesting point, because it can be... and people who have tried to collaborate with UO on other things will use us as an example, saying "We've done this before."

LS: Thank you so much for that awesome answer!

RG: It's a funny story, anyway.

AI: Did anybody else have a question to ask, or something? No?

PAS: If I could just chime in, first of all, to say thank you, Rob, and thank you, Alex, for such a... it's a gift to hear this story roll out in its fullness. It's wonderful. I was very intrigued when Rob mentioned that you somehow got the student governments to give the early CR enabling committee some dollars? And then you got pushed down by the administration? Take me back to that story, because I know that students do not let go of money easily, and of course that's also where veterans' voices might be quite official and prominent in the student government. If you could just tell a little bit more detail, that would be great.

RG: Yeah, you know, I've got the *Vanguard* news article about that, with me with hair down to here... that was mid-1970s, early to mid-1970s when that happened.

LS: We have to see that picture!

PAS: We have to! That is a must.

[UNKNOWN]: And that article.

PAS: Yes, indeed, thank you. We're so deprived of our documents, Rob. It's like you have these people who need their fix from their documents. But please tell the story.

RG: I kind of tell the story in that article. That was sort of fun. Anyway, at that point, the president overruled the students. They had made a full decision to pay us per counselee, and it got overruled. Hopefully they've learned... I assume they've learned the lesson that students are not going to let go of their money that easily anymore. I just want to emphasize that the politics was not conducive. Since this is the... what is it, the anniversary of the May Day demonstrations at Portland State? And every year this rolls around, particularly the important anniversary dates; we have to remember that Portland State was, like the Kent State shootings, there was a very violent confrontation between the police and students. So the administration wasn't really even very behind the students at that point. I guess when you talk about the theory of change, you have to really talk about narrative, and that's where history... the best history really can tap into the narrative of the times, and there are narratives and counter-

narratives. The narrative that Portland State was kind of the “underdog,” and they wanted to kind of bend over backwards to be more traditional, because they felt like they couldn’t, in the early days... that they were just trying to have any credibility at all. That’s a sympathetic view of that particular narrative. With the narratives of the sixties, you can see how those things would collide. It’s a very interesting story in itself.

PAS: All right, Alex.

[UNKNOWN]: It’s especially interesting to see how it’s being written in the *PSU Magazine*, in contrast to what you are saying. Thank you, Rob.

PAS: I was looking at it again too. It skates completely over any sense of that depth of engagement with the time, and much more... can we rush to think of the good things that came out of it. Which is fine—that’s not a sin—there’s not something wrong with that. But it’s very very interesting how these narratives... how these events, which are complicated and messy, become a story.

RG: Yes. And again, back to the culture war—which I’m pushing because I’m teaching a class on that soon—the culture war is a war of narratives. If you have a dominant narrative for a long time and the counter-narrative is small, people don’t notice the counter-narrative. I mean, Greenwich Village has been an alternative community for four hundred years, but the message didn’t get out to the rest of the United States until it snuck out over time. The sixties and seventies were a time when the counter-narrative really gets to be threatening to the narrative, the traditional narrative, and we’re still living that whole epoch.

PAS: Do you want to close us for the day, Alex?

AI: Absolutely. Thank you so much for coming here and taking the time to talk with us, Rob. Was there anything that you wanted to share with us or tell us before I close us out and end the recording?

RG: No, I’m sure I’ll think of five things as soon as the recording stops! That’s just the way that’s going to go. There’s so many things. What’s been fun about this for me is that so much

percolates when people are interested! It just stimulates that. I think memories are so important, because they can inform aspects of the present that you kind of forget about; you don't realize what power and what longevity some of the things going on now... the deep roots of some of the things going on now. It's always a great experience to have people interested in hearing these stories, and they're just fun to tell, too, because they were amusing to live through! You can laugh about some of the stuff that you would have cried through before...  
[laughing]

PAS: Thank you, everybody.

AI: Yes, thank you for being here. I'm going to end the recording now.