

2020

Interview with Marvin Kaiser

Marvin Kaiser

Oona Fisher Campbell

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Recommended Citation

Kaiser, Marvin and Fisher Campbell, Oona, "Interview with Marvin Kaiser" (2020). *Conflict Resolution Oral Histories*. 9.

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Project: Oral Interview for Portland State University as part of HST595 (Spring 2020)

Interviewer: Oona Fisher Campbell

Narrator: Marvin Kaiser

Other Speaking Participants: Patricia Schechter, Liza Schade, Cleophas Chambliss

Date and Location of Interview: May 15, 2020, Video call (Zoom)

Transcriber: Oona Fisher Campbell

Length of Interview: 57:56

Audited by: Carolee Harrison

Date of audit: October 2020

Project Keywords: Conflict Resolution, Peace Studies, Vietnam War, Portland State University, higher education, urban campus, social work, professionalization

Interview Summary:

This interview took place on May 15, 2020 over a video call (Zoom), in which the interviewer, Oona Fisher Campbell (a student), interviewed the former dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Marvin Kaiser. This interview was conducted for the HST595 public history lab course at Portland State University as part of an ongoing project with Portland State University Archives regarding the origins of PSU's Conflict Resolution program.

Those present during the interview other than the interviewer and the narrator include Professor Patricia Schechter; students (Liza Schade, Stephanie Vallance, Alexandra Ibarra, Alexandra Berg, and Jake Hutchins); and Cleophas Chambliss and Lady J, the Conflict Resolution program's artist in residence and marketing creative, respectively.

Marvin Kaiser was the dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for Portland State University from 1993 to 2010. During this time, he oversaw the creation of the Conflict Resolution program, which aims to teach skills related to mediation and identify the personal and political reasons behind conflict in order to foster peace-building. In the interview, Kaiser, who has a background in social work, discusses the structural obstacles in society that create conflict, and emphasizes the role that the university and higher education in general can play as a public service to the community.

Oral Interview with Marvin Kaiser
May 15, 2020

OONA FISHER CAMPBELL (OFC): My name is Oona Fisher Campbell; we're interviewing Marvin Kaiser for the Public History Lab. Marvin, are you ready?

MARVIN KAISER (MK): I am.

OFC: My first question is just kind of a background question. Could you provide us with a bit of your professional background leading up to accepting a position at PSU, and what interested you in the university?

MK: Yes, thank you for the question. My background has mostly been in education. I was teaching at Kansas State University where I was the director first of the social work program, and then the department chair for sociology, anthropology, and social work at Kansas State. A kind of an important piece of this is that Kansas State University, as is Oregon State, is a land grant university. So built into the educational institution is the commitment to broaden education as a means to serve those communities. So this notion of service is an important piece of that. And that's part of the tie to Portland State, but just to say in my years there, which came after I taught in a small Catholic college—that meant both of these were obviously in Kansas—but then what was happening was that we really did, in those eras, if you look back to the late 1960s and 1970s, we were coming out of periods of change and the Vietnam War issues, the issues around civil rights, women's rights... very much part of the mix, and I think that's an important context, because it was... it certainly influenced me; but also it was part of the responsibility of institutions to address some of those issues, or explore how they were dealing with the societal responsibilities that we had.

I became involved because of the Kellogg Foundation. I was a Kellogg fellow during some of those years, and part of the responsibilities of the Kellogg fellowship indeed was to carry out in a broader sense the mission of the Kellogg Foundation, which was around community development and community building. And one of the programs that we initiated, another colleague and myself, was built around—and if some of you go back, before Americorps was here, was what was called the Points of Light Foundation. That was started during the elder Bush years, and the purpose of it was to bring young people into service for communities. We did a lot of work bringing teams of students for this kind of thing, particularly into rural Kansas communities, as part of their education. So we now talk about those kinds of things, but it was the predecessor to this kind of thing.

And one of the persons I really want to acknowledge, because he had pretty profound influence on my life and was part of why I was interested in Portland State University, which led to coming here, and that was—and Patricia will know him—John Gardner, who was then the head of what was then called the H.E.W., Health, Education, and Welfare. He started this wonderful organization called Common Cause. But he made a statement when they started the public service center at Stanford University which really echoed with me, and programmatically was really important. It's a nine-word statement; he says: "If you live in a democracy"—and this is what it means to be an American; I'm just going to quote his words—"Freedom and responsibility, liberty and duty: that's the deal." And so when we talk about the notion—and if you look at mission statements of almost any institution of higher education—we talk about [how] one of our roles is to build citizens. So those words about freedom and responsibility really are part of that, but then the question is: how do you build that into an institution? So that's part of the background that I worked on at Kansas State, but also that's what led me to Portland State University.

OFC: Thank you for that; that was extremely detailed. So you saw Portland State as embodying a lot of the same ideas of community and education.

MK: That's correct, and, well, Portland State, if I may—at that moment when I came here in 1993—Judith Ramaley was [among the] the Kansas folks who came here, but she was working on creating a vision of this urban university [that] somehow or other made it kind of unique, in that urban universities had a particularly unique role in the higher education framework.

OFC: Right.

MK: And that in this process... and you see evidence of it around now. The one that most people know about—well, there are two—one of them is University Studies. And so there was a lot of interdisciplinary work [inaudible] ...part of your senior year using your knowledge connected to the urban environment here in some organizations, within the organization. Of course the other one (on the footbridge) really is a personification of that saying that we adopted, called "Let knowledge serve the city," [inaudible]... so it was a privilege to come here, and [inaudible]... that was being talked about, being developed, that notion that education and educational institutions are not simply about my own personal growth, intellectual or otherwise, but it was about how I take that responsibility into the broader community.

OFC: Thank you. My next question is: at what point in the formation of the Conflict Resolution program did you arrive at PSU and—because we talked yesterday about how it was in talks when you got there, but it wasn't quite off the ground—if you could elaborate on that a little bit more, and, as the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, to what extent were you involved in the program?

MK: Well, [inaudible] ...as you probably can surmise, there were other conversations that went on back in the 1980s, actually. But also Elizabeth Furse, who was our representative, U.S. Representative here, was very much interested in peace studies and that was sort of the background. As I came to the university those conversations were still taking place. There had been—and I'm relying on Rob [Gould] reminding me—there had been some discussion around 1990 of a program... it didn't occur; it didn't happen here, actually there was kind of a summer program, as sort of the seeds at the beginning, at the University of Portland. But it was after I came here in 1993, then, I think it must have been later, half a year later, that I had some conversations in earnest about creating an academic program both in peace studies and conflict resolution. [pause]

OFC: Are you still there?

MK: Do you want me to go into further detail about that?

OFC: No, sorry, I was still having a little bit of technical problem.

MK: Oh, sorry.

OFC: No, it's no one's fault. All right, so could you repeat your last sentence? Sorry.

MK: Yeah, I believe what I said was it was about that year 1993 and 1994 that I met Rob Gould... [inaudible] the program, although there was some... I guess I would say... I wasn't particularly aware of it, but a little bit of competition with the university as to where such a program might be, whether it would better serve in Urban Studies' internal organizational structure or if it would be better if it was in the College of Arts and Sciences. And so that was the conversation at that point.

OFC: OK. Could you tell us a little bit more about the conversations around the competition of which of the colleges it should be in?

MK: Well, part of it was if we go back and look at where a lot of the interest was... [inaudible] related more to peace studies at that point, and that came out of the history that started in the 70s. Portland State was an important part of that; there were a lot of people in the university and the community who were really committed to the notion of peace studies. Where does peace studies—as an interdisciplinary program, if you think about it that way—where does that belong? Is it part of government, in one sense, or is it really peace... as what I would describe as liberal learning? This notion of critical thinking and ethical behavior; looking at structures from kind of that critical thinking perspective. Does that fit in liberal studies? That certainly was my view that we could draw upon, therefore, the programs that were across the college that would have some bearing on peace studies. But along with that, I think, there was this kind of notion that conflict resolution could be—and I'm going to use the word—"professionalized." In other

words, it would be akin to a social work degree in one sense. You want to have a skill set that you can bring to building peace, whether that's between two individuals, a local community, or much more broadly. And so it kind of fit that peace studies was a liberal learning kind of thing, along with the professional [skill] you needed to become skilled at conflict resolution, and that a good home for it could be in Arts and Sciences. And what happened as the result of that, I think, is that we had people in the college then for whom... [inaudible] ...I mean, students who were interested were coming from various departments.

And so, interestingly enough, in some of those early days as the program was sort of organizing itself and finally became an established program—I believe it was in 1996, so it took those two to three years—but in the interim, there was interest in communication studies. The stronger home, the thinking... and I think part of that was that Rob Gould was a philosopher himself and was doing some adjunct teaching in that department, that the department of philosophy became the original home for that. And there was support there, intellectual support and professional support, in that program.

OFC: All right, thank you. So I'm going to ask you another question, let's see... What were your initial thoughts when you got there? What were your initial thoughts of the intent of the program? Did that intent change over time, and the goals, and how it was initially structured?

MK: Well, as I said, my recollection is that at first [we] got much more focused on what might be called peace studies, and that there was a background for that with Elizabeth Furse and Rob, who, himself, with a number of individuals—Mel Gurtov, among others at the university—for whom peace studies was a touch point, one might say. But in the transition, I think it was [determined] that conflict resolution might provide a better framework for identifying the program, including a commitment to peace studies, however one would define that. So what emerged out of this was, in my understanding, kind of a [inaudible] ...what we now call conflict resolution, but creating a curriculum and professionalizing it so that you would bring some of the concepts of peace studies into it. But you would also create what I would call professionalizing as a skill base... that students would bring out with them when they graduated from that program. That was also, in a way, what led us to start with a graduate program. When I went back and looked, I think it was 1997 when the graduate program was initially approved, and we moved forward with this. So professionalizing it would be like a graduate... in some ways one could describe it as a graduate professional program.

OFC: So it became less... not necessarily less theoretical, but it moved from... putting it into practice?

MK: Yes, right. And there was some demand for that, because around Oregon and Portland there were a number of contracts. They were engaged with, as I understand it, some county governments.

OFC: Oh, so there was a demand?

MK: There was a home for this; you know, when you graduate, one of the questions is: are there places that I can carry out my academic program that I believe in and care about? And so that was an important issue also.

OFC: All right, great; thank you. You kind of touched on this before, but one of the questions I keep having when thinking about this program and how this program emerged... there's so much overlap—and I think that comes from it being a very interdisciplinary subject—but there's so much overlap between already established fields at PSU like sociology, psychology, communication, etc. So what I've been asking myself is: what were the academic needs that the Conflict Resolution program addressed that these already established programs at PSU were lacking... ? If that makes sense.

MK: Yes, and it's an important question, it seems to me. It builds off of a couple of things, at least, maybe some more. In this transition, I think of Portland State to this kind of... What does it mean to be an urban university? That was part of the background in a lot of this. And included in this is very much what I describe as the academic [inaudible] of the university. How do we bring that knowledge to bear on the community in which we reside and which we serve? So academic programs can stand alone, sometimes, in a way, as an intellectual body of knowledge, and the focus is on that intellectual body. That's an important issue, but if you are also going to build into it... How do you bring that knowledge together for an application that I could take with me, and use that application on behalf of my own... what I want to do with my life, but also in the community? So you take sociology, and you take concepts out of social work, and you take it out of political science and economics and you draw upon those, but in trying to direct this into kind of like a [inaudible] as I could visualize this and which you say: okay I need to know those concepts, understand those concepts, but if I'm going to go out and apply these on behalf of resolving conflicts, resolving disparities among individuals. If I going to create peace, what's the skill set that I know," and to repeat myself I'm drawing on these knowledge sources, that are important to me, that I really can be a peace builder, contract resolver [inaudible], the statement and different kind of statement about what we are engaged with.. so you package those together, but build onto it a skillset.

In my own background I happen to be... I have an M.S.W., a master's degree in social work, among my higher education degrees. But what social work is, it draws upon a range of disciplines: political science and economics, sociology, psychology, you think of those kinds of things, but then you say: with this knowledge, here's a skill set; I'm going to use that in my life, under the rubric of social work. So it's this kind of combination.

OFC: Yeah, so...

MK: And... excuse me, go ahead.

OFC: Oh, I was just going to say: so you classify it as being not necessarily a lack of... anything missing from the other programs, it's just pulling from a lot of different other programs to put something in practice.

MK: That's correct. I think one thing I should say is, I think this was part of what was happening in higher education during this period, and certainly was happening at Portland State. Because Conflict Resolution wasn't stand-alone in some of these transitions that were happening. I was delighted that in my years that we were able to build a Chicano-Latino Studies program... the Women's Studies program was already there, but it was moving in a direction where we were able to support it and did a great job. Black Studies was already there, but it was taking on [inaudible], but drawing and all of those; environmental studies, drawing on a range of

[27:45]

disciplines out there, but to focus them around a kind of goal or a vision about what we wanted to do with this on behalf of whether different populations, or certain groups, or certain policies, that kind of thing. So you want to build those kind of skill sets along with the academic background. I might say, in a way, what I understand, and thank you all of you so much for being in this public history program, so in a way it carries some of that kind of framing. You know, we expect you to be great historians, those of you that are in the history department, but public history draws upon principles of history. Patricia, you tell me if I'm speaking out of turn here, but you're building lot of skills around communication and research that when you walk and graduate from the university with a degree like this, you have a firm knowledge base grounded in history in many ways, but also with a lot of other kinds of academic [inaudible] that you have drawn from other programs.

PATRICIA A. SCHECHTER (PAS): That's extremely well said, Marvin. Excellent.

MK: Thank you. [inaudible] I was afraid I was getting into some deep water here.

PAS: Nope, nope, I'm giving you a big high five over the internet.

OFC: Yeah, I mean that's probably exactly what... from my limited experience so far with public history, I would say that's pretty similar. That leads into my final question. So, and I think you were talking about Conflict Resolution along with these other programs that were established while you were dean, that were Chicano History and Black Studies...Black History and Women's History... well, studies. And taking almost kind of an active approach to these, and almost what I would consider is taking all this knowledge that you get in higher education and kind of almost taking an activist approach to it and what are we going to do with this knowledge. Do you think

the time, you know the 90s, when these programs were established, do you think that the political climate at the time, it was established... I mean, they were forming it right as the Gulf War was going on and then ended, do you think that that had an impact?

MK: Well, that's an interesting question, my sense is that it did have an impact, although I come from an earlier era, obviously, and I want to say for someone of my age to be growing up and be around universities and that whole environment was so exciting if you can imagine what was going on in the 60s and 70s. And it wasn't just the music, of those eras, but this kind of notion of questioning and saying we have a responsibility to take the gifts that we have been given of education, and we need to be doing something about it. And this sort of willingness to address some of the issues that our generation didn't see as appropriate to where we should be as a democracy and the leadership of the United States. I think one of the things on the peace movement, in many ways, the Vietnam War had a profound impact on that, and that was still in the midst I think, of folks who were faculty know, of older students at the university. I think that's one of the issues, the other issue though, that I think is really important is this notion: What is the particular role and vision of an urban university? Are we just a replication of the University of Oregon? We know that there is some distinction between here, but what is it about urban universities that ought to be distinctive? And I think that was also in that mix at that point. Is there kind of a sense of responsibility that they have for the environment in which they draw their students, the majority of their students, and how they're supported and which we all live. And so a program like this, and some of the other programs that we talked about, these interdisciplinary programs, also came out of that mix I think as well. But the peace movement had a lot to do with Vietnam and post-Vietnam. And one person that I should mention, who I think had a significant influence on us during that period, was a gentleman by the name of Al Jubitz, and I hope you've heard of him during the course of...

OFC: Ha, we talked to him on Wednesday.

MK: Oh, good. Well, Al is a remarkable guy, as you know. And I always remember so well in all these discussions that were going on, and he was very supportive of Conflict Resolution. Literally, I mean in terms of his dollars as well. Which was wonderful, but he was so committed to the notion of peace-building. And then, he was willing to give his dollars, but his ideas, And I trust he talked to you about his role with Rotary, in which he said if Rotary had a role in stopping polio because of the work they did around the globe, his parallel to that, and he traveled all around the place, we had meetings in various places that Al would call together, if what happened with polio that could happen with peace. And that's why the peace studies program, or the peace component of Conflict Resolution was so important to individuals like him. Elizabeth Furse, along with Al, but there were people out there in this community, and again this wasn't far-fetched for Portland State given something we just celebrated—well, I don't know if we “celebrated” the other day about the Park Blocks issues in the 70s—so it was in the DNA, in a way, of Portland State.

OFC: Yeah, thank you. Yeah, I guess I'm thinking of it as a thing of... in this class, we've been thinking of it as almost a continuation of the Vietnam War, in that there was this general idea of anti-war sentiment and this continuation of people who grew up and would have been drafted in the Vietnam War, staying in their community and doing anti-war work in the 90s then.

MK: That's correct. I think you're onto something important there, but that was there. And if you think of the life cycle—Patricia, I'm going to use that terminology here—of faculty members, they came out of that experience of Vietnam and the protests, and they were in their mid-career of their own lives, and the memory and the importance of that in their lives. I mean, one of the great blessings of that, it seems to me, is that—it's easy to forget, talking particularly about the Civil Rights Movement of the 60s and the importance of that—how do we keep that alive? Because so many of the people, and I'm pleased to say that people like me and a lot of my friends, we marched in those days and we were part of that... How do you bring that then into your lives as you go forward? Particularly given the privilege of an education, and what the responsibility is that that carries with us.

And that's an important part of the structure of a university. That it isn't just about what it does for me, it's what I bring with it when I go out into my life. I mean, I like to use the example that we used a lot in those days when service learning was really a big deal, and this kind of notion of universities, and Portland State was part of that national movement of universities around these centers for public service. The concept that [service] is part of our responsibility, and we always... as I started saying, as we say in our mission statement, [like] every university, we are building citizens of the future. And it's interesting, from my perspective, if we say we are creating people who are enlightened, literary folks, or enlightened mathematicians, we want people to practice that during their time at the university so that we don't just say, well, they'll get to that later. Programs like this, and many interdisciplinary programs that were created along with the strength of the disciplinary programs, including history and philosophy and anthropology and the sciences at Portland State... here was a program that created ways and opportunities along with the University Studies program. This was the university at work in terms of preparing students for what their lives as citizens would be, as well as economists or social workers or teachers for that matter.

OFC: Thank you.

MK: Sorry to be too evangelical about it. [laughs]

OFC: [laughs] No, I think it's great. So, we're almost at 1:50. If anyone in this class has to go, feel free to clock out, but I did want to give an opportunity for people in the class (who are not me) to ask questions, if they have them, for Marvin. So yeah, feel free to just turn your mic on and ask any questions, if you would like.

[41:37 (75%)]

LIZA SCHADE (LS): I don't have any questions, I just wanted to come back on camera.

OFC: Oh, okay.

LS: Thank you so much, that was a great talk, I really enjoyed what you had to say.

PAS: Cleophas, did you have a question?

CLEOPHAS CHAMBLISS (CC): I do! So what do you think the future of conflict resolution should look like? And peace studies?

PAS: Oh! Wonderful.

MK: Well, a good question. I'm pleased now, let me say, that it has an undergraduate component to it. I think what that does is open the values that are there, and I think that's important. I do think, though, that I would want to speak for the graduate program as when I... I keep using that term about being "professionalized," but what we need with a program like that, it seems to me, is that we're developing opportunities to become reflective [inaudible] in peace studies and conflict resolution. Because so much of the debates that seem to me are going on—disparities in this country and divisions which lend themselves to disputes and all the physical things that are going on to people—that we have to pay attention to structural variables that are out there, that are the creators and continuers of disputes. Or more importantly, people are being left out, and if all we do is individualize this stuff: "If we could just have better conversations, and learn to have better conversations and listeners, along with being talkers..." The sense is that we kind of leave it at some of this, and some of it is at a personal level, but so much of what is going on in our society today, in this democracy, is that these structural components are creating a lack of peace. How you do this... [inaudible], but also, really importantly, how one understands what we would refer to as the structural variables and how it is that we are going to become practitioners to address those. And the interesting thing is that that was really the origins of social work. It wasn't so much about being a therapist, it was about addressing issues of poverty and the frameworks around poverty.

CC: And something else.

MK: Wages, and I mean what was happening with labor unions. Or wasn't happening with labor unions; that whole range of kinds of things. And that's where I think the graduate program helped take what we do as practitioners and created a broader look at personal interactions and also about the variables that are... [inaudible] ...to say that one of the wonderful faculty members in the program, I don't know if he's still there; he worked for the Catholic worker

house here... [inaudible] ...and Harry was in Cyprus; was a citizen peace activist. They had a [inaudible] to it. That you're skilled, but you understand kind of the larger framework. Thank you for the question.

CC: Well, my goal is to be a future peace studies master's student.

MK: Wonderful.

CC: My life goal is to dismantle systemic racism that is in all these different systems of government and private sectors.

MK: Remarkable.

CC: At least shine a light on it.

MK: Well, you know if you can take away—if you would—John Gardner's thing, which I think is really kind of at the heart of education, this kind of notion that he said of freedom and responsibility. We've been given a lot, we also... a lot is being required of us. And how do we create our educational institutions to support that? So education doesn't just turn into a private good.

CS: Yes, amen.

MK: Amen.

PAS: What a wonderful near wrap-up, I wonder if you all would allow me to jump in? Marvin, you give such a compelling narrative about how CR fit into the kind of vision that you and Judith were working on in the 90s. And it's very compelling and has to do with ingraining the university within the fiber of the city and within the life of the city and its citizens. And it's very convincing and it's very compelling. It's when I joined the faculty, and it was brand shiny new and very exciting. But I wanted to ask, was there opposition to CR? I mean, just to be a little cheeky here. Who were the naysayers? Who were the obstacles? You don't have to name names per se.

MK: Yeah, I won't name any names. [laughs]

PAS: Or you can if you want to! It's when you're emeritus that you can do these things. But give us a sense of how hard... I mean on the one hand, it sounds so exciting to hatch this vision, but of course there is always opposition; there's always navigation to undertake. So bring us back to a little bit of that.

MK: Well, I think there are maybe two things that I think about... oh, I'm sure there were more than that. One of them is: what business does an adjunct faculty member like Rob Gould have coming to us and wanting to develop a program? I mean he has no standing, essentially, if you think about it. I mean, if you think about class differences; an adjunct faculty member, you know. That was number one. But thank god for him and his resilience and vision about this, that it happened, I think. The second one was around the structures of the university. About for people to rise up and think: "We ought to be talking about... and I think we ought to think about... could we build a program like this? Not unlike some of our other interdisciplinary programs on the campus. You know, the criticism and the critique of some of those. But the structures of established organizations, often times—and academia is no different and even worse in a lot of ways—that we kind of get locked into pathways for new ideas. He reminded me a while back—and I remember that too—we turned the first run of the graduate program in, and I won't say exactly where in the university, but it took a year to get a response. I mean, it's a great way to kill things, I guess, in that sense. But it didn't kill it there. So, those are the couple of things.

PAS: That's very interesting, because we can tell the story, let's say, of Black Studies as very much a grassroots demand by students, by community members, that "we must have this." You know, in terms of keeping the movement going. It must happen. And one of the things we're struggling with as historians of Portland State is to hear the student voices in this particular chapter.

MK: Yes, well it's interesting about the student voice. The reality is, I remember way back—this must have been a 1995 conversation with Rob—saying: "Why don't you bring the students, so we can see the students that are interested in this. And let's make the case that there is student demand for this." Then they would have to deal with who in the world would want to take this kind of program. Because of his work, we gathered a group of students. We took those into one of those [inaudible] groups, who had power over whether a program could be initiated or not. And when you get a group of students like that... so there is power that's for sure, but it isn't just individual power, it takes organizing. And so many of these programs, as you say, Patricia, really did come out of that. And the other wonderful thing about that, I would hope, is that students really feel empowered through that kind of process, that's a thing that they will take with them for the rest of their lives. Whatever their passion is. It's about self-actualization in one sense, but it's around issues that really matter, issues of justice. So, thank you for asking that question. I tend to forget that once you feel like, well, we worked through that kind of stuff... but that's one of the issues today with the arts and sciences, obviously. How do we keep that kind of intellectual tradition? All that background leads us to become people of responsibility. How do we keep that alive and appreciate it? Thank you.

PAS: Thank you, my goodness, thank you.

MK: Well, I want to say, you, Patricia, are one of the great models. I'll never forget our first conversation about Ida B. Wells. And I've never forgotten... thank you for bringing her and all that she has stood for in life, and then of course with Nick [Fish]—all that he gave and what he modeled out here is what a public servant is about.

PAS: Thank you, Marvin. You know May is an important month: Ida B. Wells was just awarded the Pulitzer Prize posthumously.

MK: Is that right?

PAS: Yes, and it's another cause for celebration. I'm actually kind of-sort of besties with her great-granddaughter, Michelle Duster, and so she and I see each other at conferences and we are Facebook buddies, and I just posted some stuff on my Facebook about her work in Chicago where she is based. But yeah, history is a gift that keeps on giving, and these heroes and sheroes are our inspiration.

MK: Wonderful. Well, thank you for what you brought of her to Portland State and to this community.

PAS: It's an honor to do this work; it's an honor. So I think Oona is going to close our meeting today. Oh, you are muted.

OFC: Oh. [laughs] That might have been why I wasn't talking before. Thank you so much for being here today. You are a very interesting person to talk to; I could listen to you talk for a long time after this, but we are going to have to close out. Okay... I think I am going to stop the recording now.¹

[55:31 (100%)]

[video resumes] MK: Sorry.

OFC: There we go.

MK: It's a story about exactly what you were just talking about, and it's about legacies, I think, and about memory. I had a friend who grew up here in Estacada, and he became the president of Kent State University. The guy started at the University of Alaska... knew everyone in the world, I swear to god. But we became very close friends when he retired back here, but those of you who know John Prine... I hope you listened to his song "See Me"... "See Me Now."² Sorry, it's a wonderful song about age. But he came back here and no one paid attention to him. He's such a very bright guy, so one day I invited him to a seminar. It was a three-hour seminar, and I said, well, given his history and stuff... the content we were working on was

around aging-related stuff, I thought it would be really important. And he was so hungry to have someone listen to him that he talked for three hours solid in the seminar. Didn't take a question, nothing. [laughs] But it was wonderful what he said. I was so saddened by that experience because he had such a need to talk about his life, and what he had experienced was incredible—what he had lived through and everything—but no one cared. That was the message. So I'm sorry to add this on, but it was a lesson for me.

OFC: [interrupting] No, I mean, we've been doing...

MK: [wrapping up] So, thank you.

OFC: [continuing] ...a ton of stuff specifically about oral interviews and the importance of hearing from people themselves.

MK: Yes, so that's why a program like this really is important. Okay! Thank you for turning the recorder back on. [laughs]

OFC: Oh, okay!

1 Interviewer prematurely ended the recording, but turned the recording back on to include the narrator's closing point.

2 Most likely a reference to John Prine's 1971 song, "Hello In There."

