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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Amanda Taylor Ellertson for a Master of Arts in History presented November 5, 2003.

Title: Striking A Balance: The Unionization of Portland State University's Faculty

American college and university professors joined labor unions as early as 1916. But it was during the 1970s that higher education turned to collective bargaining as a way to raise the voice of the faculty and negotiate a fair and just work environment. Portland State University voted to have the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) represent them in collective bargaining in 1978. The thesis examines the history of PSU's AAUP chapter and how unionization impacted the college campus and faculty life.

Collective bargaining in higher education encompasses more than negotiating salary and benefit packages. Since their inception, higher education unions have bargained for policies and procedures to ensure the faculty's voice is heard on important academic matters. Issues associated with a healthy academic work life include academic freedom, promotion and tenure, grievance processes, professional development, and retrenchment procedures. The professional values of the American college and university faculty insist upon the idea of shared

governance and demand the voice of the faculty receive as much weight as those who administer the institution's business.

Oral history transcripts and the AAUP archives were used to develop this narrative. The author and a research team interviewed twenty-one individuals who served the AAUP during its first 25 years. A few of the interviewees held membership status only. Access to AAUP and PSU archives helped to round the thesis out in addition to a wide array of secondary sources.

STRIKING A BALANCE:
THE UNIONIZATION OF
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY'S FACULTY

by
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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
HISTORY

Portland State University
2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to
Dr. Patricia Schechter for mentoring me through this process
and
Scott Ellertson for keeping our home life together

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Introduction

By exercising a healthy disregard for authority, unions have forced university administrators to continually reexamine their assumptions regarding the priorities set for institutions of higher education. Collective bargaining agreements between university administrations and the faculty allowed a certain amount of protection for academics to put forth dissenting viewpoints. In essence, when there is a union presence on campus, administrators can not escape into an “Ivory Tower”.

American college and university professor’s joined labor unions as early as 1916. But it was during the 1970s that higher education turned to collective bargaining as a way to raise the voice of the faculty and negotiate a fair and just work environment. Collective bargaining in higher education encompasses more than negotiating salary and benefit packages. Since their inception, higher education unions have bargained for policies and procedures to ensure the faculty’s voice is heard on important academic matters. Issues associated with creating a healthy academic work life include academic freedom, promotion and tenure procedures, grievance processes, professional development, and retrenchment procedures. The professional values of American college and university faculty insist upon the idea of shared governance and demand the voice of the faculty receive as much weight as those who administer the institution’s business.

Portland State University voted to have the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) represent them in collective bargaining in 1978.

Sociologists researching the trend of unionizing university and college professors in the 1970's, generalized that faculties who voted for collective bargaining tended to be from low tier, low rank institutions who hope to make economic gains and improve their professional status.¹ Although PSU is not considered an elite university, the faculty who provided the leadership to unionize the academics came to Portland from high status institutions like Stanford, Yale, UCLA, and University of Washington. Their desires to establish a union to PSU were not one-dimensional. Certainly, they hoped to make economic gains, but they also wanted to move PSU toward the ranks of other respected research institutions while continuing to maintain their connection to the urban community. However, the newer hires at PSU discovered colleagues and administrators hanging onto the values of the institution's precursor, the Vanport Extension Center, an educational facility where undergraduate teaching was promoted above graduate work. They also contended with a campus administration that answered to a state board - Oregon's higher education governing body that reluctantly agreed to move PSU in the direction of becoming a research institution.

In addition, the faculty had to confront their own fears about equating their profession with labor. In order for the PSU professors to agree to collective bargaining, they engaged in academic debates and read endless articles about the adversarial nature of negotiations and the need to strike a balance between economic needs with more scholarly ideals such as academic freedom. As a result of their

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¹ Carl Everett Ladd and Seymour Martin Lipsett, *Professors, Unions, and American Higher Education*, (Washington D.C.: American Enterprise for Public Policy Research, 1973). 53.

efforts, PSU faculty chose the AAUP to represent them in collective bargaining because the AAUP was concerned primarily with professional self-control, the education of its members, and its meritocratic values. For some PSU professors, the choice to unionize was easy because they had been raised in union families and received an education through the hard work of parents who labored in America's post war industries. Others believed their faculty position had been earned and saw collective bargaining as a means for PSU to achieve equity with other the two other major universities in the state. Even though the urban campus did eventually evolve to the same academic rank as the University of Oregon and Oregon State University, frustration escalated because PSU professors continued to receive lower salaries than their counterparts.

The unionization of PSU helped professionalize the institution and the faculty. By aligning with labor through collective bargaining, the professor's at PSU established a process for academics to negotiate salaries and benefits. More importantly, they formalized and strengthened policies and procedures impacting faculty life. The grievance and financial exigency procedures provided the full time faculty with recourse and a voice, forcing both the union and the administration to be accountable for decisions. This is especially important in a structure like Oregon's university system in which administrators report to the chancellor and the state board, putting the PSU president in a conflicted position between what is best for the institution versus the state system of higher education. Since the AAUP represents the interests of only PSU academics, the union can fight solely for the

institution's faculty demands without worrying about those of the state system as a whole.

This thesis investigates the issues associated with professors turning to a union to represent their economic and professional interests at the negotiating table. Themes explored include the history of labor in higher education, regional labor, early PSU history, the AAUP chapter foundations, gender equity, and important events related to the collective bargaining and faculty life at PSU.

To write the history about Portland State University's faculty unionization, I used the historical oral transcripts generated by interviews with seventeen full-time faculty who, acting as collective bargaining agents, contributed to the establishment of the PSU AAUP. Four graduate students, one undergraduate and our professor, Patricia Schechter, conducted the interviews to generate a volume of AAUP oral history. PSU and the AAUP archives contained numerous primary sources that helped shape the discussion; sources like the administrative records on collective bargaining, correspondence and files of past presidents, newspaper clippings, and journal articles. Providing a larger context for the basis of this discussion are the vast volumes of literature documenting the unionization of America's colleges and universities, particularly during the 1970s when the movement entered its zenith.

This topic is large and deserves even more investigation. This thesis is the first pass at a subject with a massive amount of evidence. In fact, the evidence raised more questions than I could answer. For example, I wrote a significant amount about gender inequity, but did not touch upon the treatment of professors

within the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Another area in need of attention involves the issue of filling classes with a larger portion of part-time instructors who receive little in terms of pay and benefits. At some point, another historian may take a fresh look at this topic and discover new evidence and answer many more questions.

Chapter One – General Labor History in Higher Education

That all college professors possess sharp and quick minds, work in private studies lined with books in buildings covered with ivy, surrounded by serious-minded students is both a romantic image of the profession and a caricature of it. Critics who perceive higher education as removed from the harsh realities of everyday life have long called it “The Ivory Tower.” French critic Sainte-Beuve coined this phrase in 1837 to describe scholars and artists who separate from the world, which in his time primarily connoted laborers working in the factories of the industrial revolution. The label stuck. It is now “used most often in reference to intellectuals and artists who remain complacently aloof.”¹ Those outside the academic community continue to characterize professors working in America’s “Ivory Towers” as people “sheltered from the harsh realities of life.”²

In the late nineteenth century, college and universities diversified their curricula, creating academic departments with faculties studying subjects like agriculture and commerce. The “Ivory Tower” began taking notice of problems confronting American farmers and factory workers, and began changing degree offerings and course requirements. Higher education experienced tremendous growth spurred by state governments establishing publicly funded universities with federal dollars allocated by the Morrill Act of 1862. Institutions such as Cornell, Iowa State, University of California, Oregon State University and Texas A & M

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¹ Christine Ammer, *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1997), 265.

² Official website for the Oxford English Dictionary, www.oed.com, as seen online September 12, 2003.

provided better educational access to the American population. Ethelbert Warfield, President of Lafayette College declared in 1901 that the “field of education has been so fertile in ideas and undertakings that European critics, and especially English critics, have declared that America is ‘education mad.’”³

Higher education in the West flourished due to state funds, while in the east it grew primarily due to private donations. As the number of universities increased, the curriculum expanded and graduate programs developed, bringing about the specialization of the professoriate. Early American universities maintained four faculties: liberal arts, law, medicine, and theology.⁴ By the end of the nineteenth century, higher education in America included departments with faculty specialists in subjects like commerce, agriculture, social and natural science, engineering, art, and chemistry. Public institutions expressed a new philosophy in education by the close of the nineteenth century. University of California President Elmer E. Brown stated in 1899 that the California education system “will endeavor to continually avoid anything like isolation from the vital interests of the state.”⁵ Universities focused on scholarship within the academic disciplines and gave rewards accordingly. The societies of scholars grew rapidly in size and won the loyalties of

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³ Ethelbert D. Warfield, L.L.D, “The Expansion of Our Great Universities,” *Munsey's Magazine* (August 1901) as reprinted in *Portraits of the American University, 1880 – 1910*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc, Publishers, 1971) 65.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Verne A. Stadtman, *The University of California: 1868 – 1968*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1970), 17.

the faculty, drawing them away from undergraduate teaching and “indeed the old fashioned loyalty toward the college.”⁶

University faculties awarded the governance of higher education to esteemed university professors, like Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson and Stanford’s David Starr Jordan: men who earned the respect of their peers as scholars. Wilson studied history, economics, and law, and Starr conducted scientific research. Both embodied the archetypical college president of the era; a scholar who rose out of the ranks of the academic departments. University faculties expected their college presidents to exhibit a style of leadership that made them educators rather than managers.⁷ As President of Princeton, Wilson envisioned America’s colleges and universities as institutions in the nation’s service that elevated the academic standards to improve the intellectual life of professors and students.⁸ Wilson asked that the university “not hold itself aloof,”⁹ from public affairs and the social problems of the country. In Wilson’s opinion, student and faculty social clubs detracted from intellectual endeavors and the focus on public service, and needed to be scrutinized. However, the aristocrats who provided Princeton’s financial support took exception with Wilson’s vision and resisted any change that might threaten the social networks that sustained their own power structure. In the end, college presidents like Wilson took

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⁶ Algo D. Henderson, *Portraits of the American University, 1890 – 1910*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers, 1971) 5.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Louis Auchincloss, *Woodrow Wilson*, (New York: Putnam Penguin Inc, 1989), 99.

⁹ Jesse Lynch Williams, “Woodrow Wilson : The New President of Princeton”, *Unknown Source*, (October 1902), as quoted in *Portraits of the American University*, 108.

more moderate stances on the role of social clubs serving students, faculty, and alumni in order to appease the powerful men financing the institutions.¹⁰

Faculty members and their spouses often joined collegial organizations associated with the college community to enhance their positions. Groups like the college Town and Gown Clubs, University Clubs, and Faculty Wife's Groups offered social connections to secure tenure positions and a more influential role within their working culture. Town and Gown clubs organized to build relationships between the academic institutions and the local town's people. Faculty wife's clubs formed to provide a role for the women in the campus community, often advocating for female education. Spouses of Harvard faculty members, under the direction of Elizabeth Cary Agassiz, organized the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women to promote the idea of developing a women's educational institution to align with the university. Through the efforts of Agassiz, the widow of the renowned biologist Louis Agassiz, and other faculty wives, one of the original seven sister's colleges opened its doors in 1882. Radcliffe College chartered in 1894 with limited facilities and borrowed Harvard faculty members to teach the courses.¹¹ By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the demographics of higher education changed to reflect a broader scope of the American population. For example, University of Wisconsin boasted that the Madison institution would

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¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Elaine Kendall, *Peculiar Institutions: An Informal History of the Seven Sister Colleges*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's and Sons, 1976) 233.

“teach anybody – anything – anywhere.”¹² Despite the claims of inclusion, in 1909, between five and six thousand people attend the University of Wisconsin in a state with two and quarter million people.¹³

At the turn of the century, the number of American universities expanded and the student population exploded, so too did campus governance. Discontent surfaced in higher education faculties in the second decade of the twentieth century, paralleling a time of labor unrest in the United States when grass roots groups and unions organized to fight for bettering conditions for the working people. In 1918, American college and university faculties began to experience the consequences of bureaucratization in the academe. Economist Thorstein Veblen was the first scholar to label institutions of higher education as “factories of erudition”¹⁴ in his work *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum of the Conduct of Universities by Business Men*. Veblen criticized the executive power and excessive centralization of decision making in American colleges and universities resulting in higher learning becoming “competitors for the traffic in merchantable instruction.”¹⁵ His condemnation of the “functioning, structuring, government, and administration of American colleges and universities”¹⁶ affected scholars working in academic circles throughout the twentieth century. In the early twentieth century, the hierarchical

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¹² Lincoln Steffens, “Sending a State to College: What the University of Wisconsin is Doing for its People,” *American Magazine*, (February 1909), p. 118, as quoted in *Portraits of the American University*.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Joseph Dorfman, *New Light on Veblen: Thorstein Veblen's Essays Reviews and Report*, (Clifton, New Jersey: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1973), 144.

¹⁵ Thorstein Veblen, *The Higher Learning in America: A Memorandum on the Conduct of Universities by Business Men*, *American Culture and Economic Series No. 3*, (Stanford, California: Academic Reprints, 1954), 57.

¹⁶ Ibid.

system of decision making in academia, from the perspective of the faculty, resulted in economic frustrations and violations of academic freedom. The principle of academic freedom rests on the idea that the common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free expression.¹⁷ In 1900, Stanford University fired economist Edward Ross because of his attacks on capitalists who he contended exploited the country. Leland Stanford's widow, Jane Stanford, encouraged the college president and board to dismiss Ross, provoking intense reaction from the academic community. The termination of Ross is a notable violation of academic freedom because it inspired education activist John Dewey to organize members of the profession to join together to "facilitate more effective cooperation among the members of the profession in higher education and research in America and assist in the formation of a larger and more reasoned public opinion."¹⁸ Dewey threw his energy into establishing the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) in 1915, an association dedicated to the protection of academic freedom. The AAUP elected Dewey as its first president.

Dewey's career began as a secondary teacher in Oil City, Pennsylvania. Even though he worked most of his life in higher education, he took note of the working conditions of the cities in which he taught: Chicago, Ann Arbor, New York and Oil City. Dewey not only helped found the AAUP, he also lent his support to the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), an affiliate of the American Federation

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¹⁷ Official website of the American Association of University Professors, www.aaup.com, as seen on September 30, 2003.

¹⁸ Jay Martin, *The Education of John Dewey: A Biography*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 67.

of Labor (AF of L). The mission of both organizations included the promotion of the teaching profession. The AFT, however, acted as a labor union for America's classroom teachers. Dewey's sympathy with labor evolved during his tenure at the University of Chicago, as he witnessed the Haymarket Square riots of 1886 and the Pullman strike of unionized railroad workers in 1894.

In the second decade of the twentieth century, the substandard salaries paid to American teachers and the unsatisfactory working conditions forced upon them caused groups of educators to "take a more militant posture," toward improving their working conditions.¹⁹ As a result, a national teacher's union grew out of large urban locals, like the Chicago Teachers Union, also an affiliate of the AF of L. Teachers in America's largest cities organized in the late nineteenth century; however, the effort to bring educators together on a national scale took time. The AFT achieved success in May of 1916 as the AF of L President Samuel Gompers welcomed the AFT into the fraternity of labor by giving a speech to the membership.

We earnestly hope for a thorough organization of all teachers and progress and success of the new national teachers' federation; that it may bring light and hope in the lives of American educators, and give and receive mutual sympathy and support which can be properly exerted for the betterment of all who toil and give service – Aye, for all humanity.”²⁰

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¹⁹ William Edward Eaton, *The American Federation of Teachers: 1916 – 1966*, (Carbondale, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1975), 14.

²⁰ Quoted in Eaton, 17.

Philosophically, the AFT leadership aligned itself with the more conservative labor principles of the day, including the strict recognition of the eight-hour workday, abolition of all forms of involuntary servitude, protest against the abuse of the labor injunction in the court system and the abolition of the sweatshop system. More radical labor movements like the International Workers of the World (IWW) possessed little appeal for the teachers. People commonly referred to the IWW as the “I Won’t Work” movement. Even though the AFT employed a more moderate position in the labor movement, it progressed slowly as organizers found the smaller cities and rural regions more difficult to unionize, due in part to pressures on teachers from community leaders.²¹ Threats of job termination levied by school boards and administrators weakened the labor movement and kept many teachers off the membership roster. Intimidation of educators who appeared sympathetic to unions helped diminish labor movements in every part of the country, – especially after World War I when wide spread anti-union propaganda littered towns and communities. All through 1919 and 1920 the campaign against the teachers’ union hacked away at the membership. By the end of 1920 the AFT had lost more than half its members.²²

Job security and low pay confronted all levels of education, Public high school and primary teacher’s employment experience mirrored those of American college teachers. But professors had their grievances too, which heightened

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²¹ Ibid.

²² American Federation of Teachers: The Commission on Educational Reconstruction, *Organizing the Teaching Profession*, (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1955), 28.

tensions over governance, economic security, and academic freedom.²³ During the 1920's, abuses and firings reached new levels and the cries from America's professors about bureaucratic administrations inspired AFT organizers to set up a committee charged with organizing college and university faculty.²⁴ Thus began the AFT's long and usually frustrating campaign to organize locals among college teachers.²⁵ Part of the lack of interest in unionization on college campuses can be attributed to the era of relative prosperity in the 1920s. College life placed an emphasis on football games and fraternity gatherings more than the economic and bureaucratic frustrations of the teachers, tutors, and tenured faculty. Union organizations also faced issues of stratification because employment in higher education required more advanced degrees than those of a secondary school teacher. AFT members also felt resistance to organize from workers in higher education because many college educators wanted to distance themselves from the notion of labor union membership. The secretary of the Whitewater, Wisconsin, Local number 80 to AFT headquarters described the professors "afraid to regard themselves [sic] on a plane with labor."²⁶

In 1904, when Dewey resigned his post at the University of Chicago and moved to New York to take a position at Columbia, he became involved in the politics of the New York City AFT. Influenced by his experience with both industrial and teacher's labor unions in Chicago, Dewey volunteered to work on the

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²³ Philo A. Hutcheson, *A Professional Professoriate: Unionization, Bureaucratization, and the AAUP* (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1990), 14.

²⁴ American Federation of Teachers.

²⁵ Eaton, 30.

²⁶ Ibid, 32.

committee charged with introducing collective bargaining to the faculties of higher education. As a supporter of faculty unionization, he encountered resistance from his peers. Publicly, he defended the AFT's mission and goals to his colleagues in academic circles. As a founder and leader of the AAUP, Dewey saw no conflict between the two association purposes and offered no apologies for his connections with rank and file labor because he believed the association not only secured better salaries for the membership, but also "stands constantly, openly, and aggressively for the realization of the social function of the profession."²⁷ Education could help reconstruct society, argued Dewey, awarding the teaching profession with a powerful place in American society.²⁸ Out of respect for the work of the educators in public schools, Dewey became one of the few members from the ranks of the professoriate to join the AFT's New York local in 1925. Nevertheless, the majority of teachers in higher education who joined the AFT held tutorial or non-tenured-track positions.²⁹ By the beginning of the 1930s, only three of the twenty college locals established since 1918 still existed, and membership involved in each local had fallen to only 31% of peak levels.³⁰

Unionization experienced tremendous growth in the 1930s after America began feeling the consequences of the depression and after the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (The Wagner Act) became law. The Wagner Act guaranteed employees working in the private sector the right to join unions without fear of

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²⁷ Quoted in Eaton, 14.

²⁸ Martin, *Education of Dewey*, 73.

²⁹ David R. Holmes, *Stalking the Academic Communist: Intellectual Freedom and the Firing of Alex Novikoff*, (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1989), 56.

³⁰ Ibid, 58.

management reprisal. “It was hailed at the time and for many years after as the Magna Carta of American labor.”³¹ College graduates and faculties felt the sting of both unemployment and underemployment as the US economy struggled to revitalize.

Unionization captured the attention of the lowest ranking teachers at the municipal colleges in the early 1930s. Instructors, like those in New York City experienced low pay, job insecurity, and the indifference of the tenured faculty.³² Communist Party leadership directed their members to join the teacher’s union in order to strengthen the party’s role within the labor movement.³³ By the end of the 1930s AFT claimed over 400 members in NYC and organized locals in Wisconsin, Cambridge, University of Washington, Berkeley, Cornell and Smith.³⁴ Joining the union became a symbolic act for many professors whose romantic view of the working classes was exemplified in the words of the Harvard Teacher’s Union statement of purpose: to “reduce the segregation of teachers from the rest of the workers who constitute the great mass of community.”³⁵

Many academics sought out the Communist Party because of the stance the Soviet Union took against the rise of Fascism and Hitler. The professors who joined with the Communist Party in the 1930s as a consequence of Hitler’s rise and the devastation of the American economy foresaw little of how their association

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³¹ Official Website for Phillips and Fischer, Labor Attorneys, <http://www.laborlawyers.com/FSL5CS/booklets/booklets330.asp>, viewed on August 29, 2003.

³² Ellen Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower: McCarthyism and the Universities*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 33.

³³ Holmes, *Stalking The Communist*, 68.

³⁴ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower*, 34.

³⁵ Ibid.

with the party might affect their future careers. Anti-communist sentiment arose in 1939 when investigations began into people's lives associated with the Communist Party. Under the leadership of Texas senator Martin Dies, the first House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) was established to attack subversives in labor unions. The Dies Committee made inquiries into a variety of public and private sectors, and also paid attention to the activities of college professors even though none of the investigations produced dismissals. Long after professors broke ties with the communist party, they received subpoenas to appear before HUAC investigating committees.

After the conclusion of World War II, professors and students returned to academia to resume their activities in higher education. The wave of repression slowly invaded higher education and became a significant factor in campus culture by 1949 as the cold war heated up. In concert with the anti-communist consensus that the communist party represented an extreme threat to national security, school boards and college presidents clamped down on left wing activity on college campuses. Some institutions even carried out their own investigations claiming that their actions protected academic freedom and free speech.³⁶ In reality most academics distanced themselves from the furor of McCarthyism.

During the cold war era, higher education underwent another change affecting the duties of academics in colleges and universities. A second wave of growth increased the number of higher education facilities, and educators found

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³⁶ Schrecker, *No Ivory Tower*, 48.

themselves being assigned a broad range of responsibilities, ranging from teaching remedial subjects at two-year colleges to conducting research at universities with graduate programs. In 1946, 93 percent of all college faculty members taught at institutions that offered at least a bachelor's degree, making two-year faculty members the minority in higher education.³⁷ Large amounts of money also flowed into universities and colleges from the government and from corporations, most of it earmarked for research aimed at supporting the agendas of government and business. Faculty receiving dollars to conduct research considered their work superior to those teaching in the class room. As a result the stratification in higher education widened, placing remedial teachers on the bottom tier and professors engaged in research on the top. In the 1940s and 1950s, professor's "control of their work, as professionals, was a prominent characteristic of the ideal professor, and they could achieve that control through full participation in institutional decisions."³⁸

During the 1940s and 1950s faculty unionization did not advance for two primary reasons. First, the perception that labor had ties with communist ideology made recruiting more difficult. Second, the faculty stratification made members of the academic community less likely to see their common interests. As the civil rights movement built momentum in the 1960s and captured attention on college campuses, an interest in unions resurfaced as labor found common bonds with the African American community. The black leadership spanning the first half of the

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³⁷ Hutcheson, *Professional Professoriate*, 13.

³⁸ Hutcheson, 17.

twentieth century [people like Phillip Randolph and Dr. Martin Luther King] aligned with the labor movement to address the needs of their constituents. Even though African American labor activists worked to bring attention to the shared needs of working people and their community, their pleas fell largely upon deaf ears until King rose to power. “Our needs are identical with labor’s needs – decent wages, fair working conditions, livable housing, old age security, health and welfare measure.”³⁹ King stated. As the civil rights movement became a political and cultural force demanding change, the connection King made between it and labor possessed power; particularly to educated Americans. His words resonated in America’s colleges and universities. As college students took to the streets fighting for justice and the rights of women and people of color, King’s advocacy for working people cost him his life. He died in 1968 advocating for the rights of Memphis sanitation workers.

Public employees also received help during the civil rights era from President Kennedy’s 1962 Executive Order underscoring the right of federal employees to join unions. Historians of collective bargaining on college campuses agree that “the extension to government workers, particularly at the state level, of the right to organize for collective bargaining is the most important single reason for the present form and growth of academic unions”.⁴⁰ In order to make collective bargaining a reality on many college campuses, state legislation was required. The

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³⁹ National Website for Association of Federal State City Municipal Employees, <http://www.afscme.org/about/mlklabor.htm>, viewed on August 29, 2003

⁴⁰ Ibid.

type of legislation needed to support the right of faculties to negotiate fell into two broad categories, which can be “denoted for convenience as meet-and-confer and as collective bargaining laws.”⁴¹ Meet-and-confer laws recognize the employee’s right to organize and require employers to work with employee organizations on a variety of issues. This way of negotiating did not provide the same kind of mechanisms that collective bargaining laws do, such as exclusive bargaining rights and signed contracts. States that had collective bargaining laws promoted a friendly environment for faculty unionization. Thirty-six of the thirty-seven relationships established by the summer of 1972 in four-year colleges and universities formed in states with collective bargaining laws.⁴²

For example, in Oregon, the 1971 Legislative Assembly amended the "meet and confer" law because a number of local governments bargained with labor organizations representing their employees. When some local governments refused to bargain, it created a potential for serious problems that could have impaired the effective operation of units of government in the state. Tom McCall, the governor of Oregon, helped form a task force at the urging of the Employment Relations Board to develop a framework of law and regulation that would permit orderly collective bargaining. The task force presented a bill to the House Labor Committee on January 31, 1973, and asked the committee to introduce the bill to the state legislature. The collective bargaining bill passed the house, but a group of senators

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⁴¹ ED Duryea, and Robert S. Fisk, *Faculty Unions and Collective Bargaining*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975), 3.

⁴² Ibid, 4.

actively opposed it in the senate. The bill ultimately passed the senate by one vote. The opposing senators used the initiative system in an attempt to nullify the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act. Their efforts failed and the act became effective October 5, 1973.⁴³ Within two months, over 200 representation petitions and unfair labor practice complaints were filed.

The idea to petition for union representation germinated at some of Oregon's colleges and universities. Lower student enrollment and financial crises in the 1970s factored into a rise in the number of college faculty unions across the country. Insecurities about economic stability and the perception that shared governance had eroded in America's higher education institutions also contributed. These perceptions helped establish collective bargaining units on America's college campuses. Student dissent in the middle and late 1960s contributed to the diminished popularity of educational causes within the government and among the general public, creating a lack of financial support for public institutions and, unfortunately, coincided with the beginning of depressed economic conditions.⁴⁴

Nonacademic employees of colleges and universities unionized decades before the faculty. The custodians and groundskeepers working in higher education institutions identified more easily with a collective bargaining agent because their work life did not include the scholarly ideals of academic freedom, tenure, or shared

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⁴³ Oregon's Employee Relation Board Website, <http://www.erb.state.or.us/histry1c.htm>, viewed on August 29, 2003.

⁴⁴ Frank Kremerer and J. Victor Baldrige, *Unions on Campus*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1975), 11.

governance. However, as the academics witnessed the gains union members received during the bad economic times, interest piqued.

Union organizers also began to identify common characteristics of union supporters in higher education. One sociologist observes of this period that, “Faculty unions seemed to appeal to two different faculty groups – those who are ‘preservation’ oriented and those who consider themselves ‘deprived’.”⁴⁵ In order to provide a voice for academics, many institutions formalized a structure for shared governance by establishing a faculty senate. Some high status professors who believed their rights and privileges could no longer be safeguarded by a faculty senate or through collegial relationships with the administration turned to collective bargaining. The second type of professor supporting unionization included those who believed power had been denied them by the internal forces within the collegiate environment. Collective bargaining came slowly to those institutions where administration and board members respected faculty influence and where faculty felt employment security.⁴⁶ The majority of the American professors and teachers who felt powerless and vulnerable worked at community colleges with no tradition of strong faculty participation. Four-year public school professors were also more likely to be open to faculty unionization than those at private institutions because of precedents set by public employees’ unions through state, county and city workers.⁴⁷

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⁴⁵ Kremerer, 3.

⁴⁶ Kremerer, 4.

⁴⁷ Duryea, *Collective Bargaining on Campus*, 15.

At the zenith of faculty unionization approximately 210 new collective bargaining units organized on college campuses in the 1970s.⁴⁸ The profile of a labor sympathizer in academia could be characterized as someone short of a doctorate or non tenured or a faculty member who taught in the humanities or social sciences. Also, the characteristic supporters of unionization could be described as professors age 40 years and above, or younger male professors working at institutions paying lower salaries and requiring heavier teaching loads than their counterparts at similar universities. Faculty members who only participated occasionally in campus senates, who lacked trust in the administration, and who witnessed the benefits of unions on other campuses also found reasons to join.⁴⁹

In Oregon, the main contenders seeking to represent college faculties in the 1970s included the AFT, the OSEA (Oregon State Education Association), and the AAUP. On the national level, NEA and the AAUP decided to pursue unionization in the late 1960's after witnessing the success of the AFT. In the state of Oregon, the AFT secured the role of collective bargaining agent for most of the unionized community colleges, notably the state's largest institution, Portland Community College in 1973. In addition, AAUP and NEA membership pushed for collective bargaining on campus, forcing the two organizations to consider shifting their scope. Prior to bargaining activity of the 1970s, the membership of each of these organizations was strikingly different. The OSEA [a chapter of the National Education Association] traditionally served as the professional association for K-12

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⁴⁸ Hutchenson, *Professional Professoriate*, 98.

⁴⁹ Kremerer, *Unions on Campus*, 45.

educators and higher education administrators. University and college professors played a role in the early organization, but the NEA lost academic memberships once organizations like the AAUP established themselves. However, after committing two million dollars toward organizational efforts in higher education in the 1970s, the NEA found success as a bargaining agent. Between 1973 and 1974, the NEA won eleven out of twenty elections in higher education.⁵⁰ The AFT often won the support of urban colleges and two-year schools. However, the AAUP had the greatest strength in four-year universities. In the 1970s union organizers speculated that the three unions would eventually merge into one academic union;⁵¹ a movement that has not yet transpired.

In 1980, a ruling in the court system brought unionization on America's private colleges and universities to a halt. The *Yeshiva* decision ruled that faculty members at private colleges and universities often held managerial positions, disqualifying them from the protection of any labor laws. "The presence of cooperative activity in the academic sphere led the court to the overly rigid conclusion that professors must be considered managers."⁵² This decision had many effects. It allowed administrators to argue for the decertification of the unions. It also slowed the momentum of the professional associations who hitched their stars to collective bargaining as a bid for power in tough times. In 1974 there were some 30 certified unions in private colleges and universities, and by 1980 that number had

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⁵⁰ Kremerer, 64.

⁵¹ Kremerer, 65.

⁵² Herman M. Levy, "The Yeshiva Case Revisited," *Academe*. (September – October 1987), 36.

grown to more than 90. After the Yeshiva decision, the number dropped to fewer than 70 due to decertification efforts by administrators.⁵³

PSU Professor Duncan Carter, who served as chief negotiator between 1995 and 1997, participated actively in a movement to unionize the faculty at Boston University before coming to PSU in 1987. In light of the Yeshiva case, the BU administration “spent \$3 million to bust the union, which is more than they spent on raises.”⁵⁴ The President of Boston University, John Silber, adamantly opposed unionization to the point that he stated “a university is not a democracy.”⁵⁵ Since 1980, collective bargaining agents like the AAUP, called upon the courts to revisit the Yeshiva decision because it weakened the good faith and collegiality of many campuses in a “win-lose mentality.”⁵⁶ One administrator summed this up nicely, “a counter-trend is developing, toward the growth of increased labor-management cooperation.”⁵⁷

Despite the chilling effects of Yeshiva in the private sector, collective bargaining continued to grow on public university campuses in the 1980s. As of 1981, there were 422 bargaining agents, 136 at four-year institutions and 286 at two-year colleges.⁵⁸ By 1995 there were 504 agents and today the AAUP represents

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⁵³ National AAUP Website, Labor Law Reform: AAUP Position Paper, www.aaup.org/govrel/caphill/2002/02lablaw.htm, viewed on July 29, 2003.

⁵⁴ Duncan Carter, Interview by Gregory Nipper. Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, December 20, 2002).

⁵⁵ Quote comes from Silber’s appearance on 60 minutes and can be found in Howard Zinn’s article “A University should not be a democracy” in the *The Zinn Reader* (New York: The Seven Stories Press, 1997) pp. 543 – 553.

⁵⁶ Levy, 38.

⁵⁷ Ibid, 39.

⁵⁸ Hutcheson, *Professional Professoriate*, 180.

half of its membership as their collective bargaining agent.⁵⁹ In short, the internal forces on college campuses, individual perspectives, and the external pressures of public attitudes and financial crises contributed to the rise in the number of faculty unions on America's college campuses.

Elements that shaped the labor movement within higher education are relevant to the PSU faculty unionization story. Growth, bureaucratization, financial crises, state legislation, public and private sector dynamics shape the culture of the urban campus, a phenomenon of which PSU is a part. During the 1960s, some of PSU's faculty articulated a frustration with administrative power abuses, similar to Veblen's 1918 criticism of administrative power and centralized decision making. In 1968, faculty members publicly charged the PSU administration of abusing power⁶⁰ when the two sides clashed over military recruitment on campus. A group of faculty members petitioned the faculty senate to ban military recruiters on campus and the petition failed. Opponents of the ban believed that keeping out the military recruiters would deny students their right to information.

Even though the attempt to ban military recruiters failed, a conflict arose after the meeting as proponents of the ban objected to President Millar's refusal to step down as chair of the meeting. They argued that President Millar's influence as chairman of the meeting swayed the vote and threw the weight of the administration behind the vote. "The speakers who made the most effective and obviously well-

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⁵⁹ Gail Gottlieb, Interview by author, Telephone call from Portland, Oregon to Washington D.C., May 6, 2003.

⁶⁰ Dennis Stephens, "Faculty Hit Administrative Power Vote," *PSU Vanguard*, February 2, 1968, 2.

prepared statements were members of the administration,” stated history instructor Franklin C. West voicing his concern that important faculty decisions are led by the administration and not from within the ranks.⁶¹

Tension between faculty and administration about shared governance continued during the tumultuous years of the 1970s. Many professors, like Rudi Nussbaum, believed that faculty only had a say in the “unimportant decisions.”⁶² By 1978, the year in which the professors agreed to collective bargaining, the critics of higher education’s bureaucracy included white women, men of color, and individuals who came from labor-oriented backgrounds.

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⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Rudi Nussbaum, Interview with Lew Church, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives, Portland State University, November 2002).

Chapter Two – Local Labor History and PSU’s Beginnings

American cities dominated by industries with a unionized workforce are often described as a “labor towns”. The home of PSU, however, does not fit that description. Portland, Oregon’s labor movement shares some of the same history as a labor town like Chicago, but on a much different level. Portland, and the state of Oregon’s, labor history involves the primary industries of the area – agriculture, timber, fishing, and the shipyards – within the context of a state and city built on the pioneer spirit accentuating rugged individualism, guided by an exclusionary state constitution, and run by a mercantile class of business and political leaders. Portland and Oregon’s government leaders generally came from established families like that of Governor Julius Meier, one of the owners of Meier and Frank department stores. Social connections and informal networks of power and privilege played key roles in determining the codes, laws, and policing activities in the city.¹

According to Oregon’s labor historians, workers’ voices found little outlet in the political system.² Business leaders like Portland’s founding fathers, William S. Ladd, Henry Failing, and [Captain] J.C. Ainsworth strongly influenced the shape of municipal and state laws.³ Portland’s Chamber of Commerce promoted the city to business and industry by emphasizing the city’s scenery and livability. In effect, politicians and city officials exercised considerable control over the labor force. In

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¹E. Kimbark McColl with Harry H. Stein. *Merchants, Money and Power: The Portland Establishment, 1843 – 1913*, (Portland, Oregon: The Georgian Press, 1988), 23.

² Denise E. Hoffman and Vincent J. Webb, “Police Response to Labor Radicalism in Portland and Seattle, 1913 – 1919”, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, (Winter 1986), 340.

³ McColl and Stein, *Merchants, Money and Power*, 275.

a report given to a chemical company evaluating the prospect of locating to Portland in the 1920s, the Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Frank Branch Riley, explained to the business executives that, “Among the important advantages which Portland offers for the development of manufacturing are its sound and stable labor conditions. Portland is an open city. The city has always been free from radical sentiment”.⁴ In the first quarter of the twentieth century, leading citizens in Portland promoted plans and policies benefiting the upper classes – policies they believed would also help the workers. Portland historians viewed the municipal establishment as leaders who “probably wanted the best for the city, and believed the benefits of their good life would trickle down to the working classes, enriching them as well.”⁵

The vigorous labor movement of the progressive era, 1885 – 1917, affected the political and working culture in Oregon. Labor activists, especially those working in the shipbuilding and trade industry, successfully pushed for initiative and referendum provisions in the state constitution, minimum wage and hour laws, child labor and factory inspection laws, workers compensation and employer liability laws, and women’s suffrage.⁶ Even though labor activity helped pass some progressive legislation, most of the employed in Oregon received very low wages, especially in the rural, agricultural communities, when compared to average wages elsewhere in the nation. Successful unions during this era found a home in the

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⁴ As quoted in E. Kimbark McColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon, 1917 – 1950*, (Portland, Oregon: The Georgian Press, 1979), 268.

⁵ McColl and Stein, *Money, Merchants and Power*, 75.

⁶ Portland Community College Faculty Federation Website, www.pccff.org/labor.htm, viewed on June 17, 2003.

state's major metropolitan areas, especially Portland. Skilled machinists, for example, unionized with Machinist Local 63, an organization affiliated with the AFL. Other AFL organized unions in the region included the Carpenter's Union and the Lumber and Sawmill Workers. Teachers also established a union in the latter part of the progressive era. In 1916 local educators founded the Portland Association of Teachers, an affiliate of the AFL. It is now one of the oldest teacher's unions in the country.⁷

Nevertheless, most of Oregon's labor force came from a rural and agricultural workforce that, primarily because of its migratory nature, could not easily be organized. These transitory workers spent their nights sleeping in bunkhouses or cheap city rooming houses in the state.⁸ "There were no labor unions for migratory workers in those days [1924], to demand a minimum standard of decent living and a modicum of justice."⁹ Organizers from the AFL and International World Workers (also known as the Wobblies) attempted to secure better working conditions for the migrant workers of the northwest. Both organizations met with little success in the field and the IWW was especially unpopular. The middle and working classes of the Northwest were put off by the IWW because the Wobblies mocked traditional labor dispute methods like arbitration and collective bargaining in favor of organizing all workers in all industries into "One Big Union." The IWW argued against making contracts with

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⁷ Portland Area Teacher's Union Website, www.pat.edu, as viewed on September 15, 2003.

⁸ Frederick Bracher, "How It Was Then: The Pacific Northwest in the Twenties," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*. (Winter 1983), 359.

⁹ Ibid.

employers and advocated for direct action; action where the worker tells the boss when and where he shall work, how long and for what wages and under what conditions.¹⁰

The power structure in Portland reacted with intolerance when any sort of labor union promotion materialized amongst the membership or from sympathizers. Portland police, the press, and business leaders viewed labor related demonstrations as extreme or aggressive and meted out punishment in the early twentieth century, including squashing the rights of speech for striking workers by arresting protesters. Between 1913 and 1919, police used violent methods to control striking workers and criminalized the migratory labor force by charging the unemployed or striking workers with vagrancy.¹¹ Portland's chief of police acted on behalf of his superiors; businessmen favored the interests of their own class above the interests of the laboring classes.¹² Portland's business-political establishment held to values steeped in Anglo-Saxon bias, a rural orientation, and belief in the sacred nature of personal property rights.¹³ These principles conflicted with radical labor ideas, and with people who frequently saw capitalists as selfish monopolists and the foe of forthright independence and individualism. These rural and individualistic values underwent rapid change at mid-century.

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¹⁰ Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States, 1492 – Present*, (New York: Harper Collins, 1999), 176.

¹¹ Denise E. Hoffman and Vincent J. Webb, "Police Response to Labor Radicalism in Portland and Seattle, 1913 – 1919," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, (Winter 1986), 357.

¹² *Ibid*, p. 355.

¹³ McColl, *Merchants, Money and Power*, 655.

The intense union activity of this period touched Portland directly and markedly in the nation's first successful dock strike, led in 1934 by International Longshoremen Association (ILA locals 38 -3 and 38 -30). The longshoremen were able to rally broad based support as all major west coast ports went out at once. The coast-wide strike created the most devastating work stoppage in Oregon's history. Over 3,000 waterfront workers and at least 50,000 other workers in the state went on strike for a three-month period and millions of dollars of business were lost.¹⁴ Oregon's Governor Julius Meier came close to calling in the National Guard to end the strike, but news of bloody Thursday in San Francisco swayed public opinion in favor of mediation. The strike ended in favor of the union, in part, because President Roosevelt was scheduled to visit Bonneville Dam, and the business community did not want further embarrassment or continuation of the financial hardships that the strike had already brought on Portland's commercial activity.¹⁵

World War II accelerated political, economic and demographic change in the city. Historically, very few people of color lived in Portland, and even fewer lived in other cities in the state. The original constitution of the state forbade the residence of African Americans, and denied property rights and suffrage to all people defined as non-white: Chinese, Japanese, Native Americans, and African Americans. American labor in general was conscious of skin color and practiced discrimination within the ranks. Needless to say, it was particularly felt in Oregon,

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¹⁴ Ibid, 468.

¹⁵ Roger Buchanan, *Dock Strike: History of the 1934 Waterfront Strike in Portland, Oregon*, (Paper Presented at the Oregon History Labor Conference, May 6, 1976), 10.

a state with a tradition of outlawing the inclusion of non-whites in society. But when America entered the Second World War in 1942, able bodies were needed to weld the ships and produce goods and services necessary to win a global battle. Since many of the men left the work force to fight in Europe and Asia, the industry work forces, like Kaiser, had no other option than to employ white women and people of color.

One of the largest employers in Portland in the 1940s was a man named Henry J. Kaiser and his son Edgar. The father and son partnership announced in 1940 that the Kaiser Corporation had purchased 87 acres near St. Johns to begin a ship building company. The Kaisers recruited potential employees from all over the country – an effort that resulted in diversifying a city composed mainly of Caucasians. The influx of migrants into the city of Portland put a strain on the infrastructure creating a number of problems for new residents. It was particularly difficult for them to find quality schools, affordable housing, and accessible municipal services. The city's power structure did not put a high value on alleviating the housing problem - "...business leadership and the city government...showed little interest in the social problems that were rapidly engulfing Portland after World War II, especially those related to minority housing and employment."¹⁶ Portland was unprepared for a mass influx of people, and more particularly for the numbers of black people who came.¹⁷ New options finally

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¹⁶ MacColl, 3.

¹⁷ Elizabeth McLagan, *A Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon, 1788 – 1940*, (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1980), 45.

began to appear in this moral and cultural void, primarily because only novel ideas could begin to alleviate the problems associated with a burgeoning workforce and shifting demographics.

In a response to the need for housing the Kaiser Company and the Federal Housing Authority made plans to build the country's largest public wartime housing project in a new city named Vanport. The construction of this instant city can best be described as a rush job; unskilled labor built it and they used poor materials.¹⁸

Vanport housed both the growing African American population and the white migrants in cinder block housing surrounded by train tracks, the Columbia slough, and a meat packing company.¹⁹ It was in this setting that the precursor to PSU got its start. Vanport was a one-stop-center, – it included a recreation center, public school facility, grocery stores, and a potpourri of spaces to serve as a facility for residents to begin higher education. The Portland Housing Authority, an agency created during the depression years, constructed the buildings on the 648 acres of lowlands for 5,000 men and women. The population increased when the government relocated 3,676 Japanese-Americans to the Portland Stockyards.²⁰

The war generated an incredible need for the rich natural resources found in California, Idaho, Washington, Utah, Nevada, and Oregon. After WWII, the West was in demand and attention paid to the area did much to transform the spirit of the

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¹⁸ Judy Walters, "The Vanport Flood", *Clark County History*, XXXI, (1990), 3.

¹⁹ Gordon Dodds, *The College That Wouldn't Die: The First 50 Years of Portland State University, 1946 – 1996*, (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society in collaboration with Portland State University, 2000), 22.

²⁰ Official website for the University Park Community Center, www.universitypark.org/vanport/, as viewed on September 15, 2003.

region.²¹ By 1945 the self-image of westerners and their perceptions of the future felt appreciably altered. The change in attitude set a stage of transformation, cities like Portland, Oregon. The Western United States entered into a new relationship with the rest of the country after the war. Government and corporate interest brought new business and industry to the west coast, and along with it a fresh group of workers and their families. These people ushered in a new generation of Oregonians and Portlanders who wanted the opportunity to earn a living, purchase a home, and educate their children. Many of the returning soldiers wanted to cash in on the promise of the GI bill and participate in higher education. The 1944 Serviceman's Readjustment Act, better known as the GI Bill, rewarded World War II military personnel with the dollars needed to finance a college education. The Vanport Educational Extension Center became Oregon's answer to the need for affordable higher education in the Portland Metropolitan area.

Amid the high numbers of soldiers wishing to part take in the offerings of the GI Bill and the increased population wanting access to education, PSU found its humble beginnings. In 1944, when the Oregon State legislature and the Federal Housing Authority allocated dollars and space to answer the demands of the public, the vision included a small operation that would meet the needs of the population residing in Vanport. When the Columbia River flooded on May 30, 1948, the center had its doors closed. Charles Belinger, a retiree of the US Army Corps of Engineers attended Vanport College, believes the holiday break saved lives because

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²¹ Gerald Nash, *The American West Transformed: The Impact of the Second World War*, (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1985), 201.

many students had left for a three-day vacation.²² As most of the residents of Vanport city lost all their belongings because of the flood, PSU lost its first home.

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²² Walters, *The Vanport Flood*, 4.

Chapter Three - Early PSU

Twentieth century politicians, in an effort to gain favor of the voters, often espoused the idea that the social and economic progress of the United States stems in large measure from the ideal of universal public education.¹ In June of 1944, the Roosevelt administration and the American Legion ushered in the GI Bill of Rights: legislation providing war veterans with the financial assistance necessary to access higher education. The bill rewarded the efforts of WWII soldiers with tuition assistance, book expenses, and a modest living allowance. Millions of veterans took advantage of the benefits, with substantial effects on the infrastructure and culture of higher education. Federal programs like the GI Bill and the Higher Education Act of 1965 helped make a college education more accessible to a larger spectrum of the population. Because these two pieces of legislation helped war veterans and working class families pay for higher education, enrollment in American colleges and universities increased dramatically, stimulating the need for new academic institutions to open their doors.

American college and university enrollment between 1940 and 1990 increased fivefold and 1,662 colleges were established, doubling the number of higher education institutions in existence before WWII.² In 1948, Oregon's veterans received over \$50,000,000 in benefits, part of which enabled 20,285 people

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¹Lloyd Morey, *The State-Supported University*, (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press, 1961), 71.

²Jennifer Adams, *The GI Bill and the Spatial Diffusion of American Higher Education*, (Master's Thesis, Department of Geology: Pennsylvania State University, 2002), 2.

to attend college or job training schools.³ Private and public institutions welcomed the veterans even though many lacked the facilities to accommodate new students. The flood of veterans came more rapidly than the dollars to construct new facilities, so college officials collaborated with the Federal Works Agency to recycle existing military structures. The Mead-Lanham Act provided two-thirds of the cost to re-erect government owned structures on college property. For example, the WAC Training Center of the Portland Air Base became the new home of the Business Administration department on Portland's Lewis and Clark College.⁴ The Vanport Extension Center (early PSU) converted a deserted WWII housing project into a college campus. Army barracks, infirmaries, and training centers became classrooms and study spaces and abandoned apartments provided the students with convenient places to live.

Veterans and residents wishing to live in Portland had limited options for higher education in the post war era. Reed, Pacific, Lewis and Clark, and the University of Portland – existing institutions of higher education in the Portland area – proved inaccessible for many GI Bill recipients because of the expense of attending a private school. The other western states provided public higher educational opportunities for their residents in the larger cities, a void Vanport Extension Center filled in Portland.⁵ Another reason the Vanport Extension Center

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³ "Oregon's Veterans Received \$50,000,000 in Benefits," *The Oregonian*, (February 1, 1948), 8.

⁴ Martha Frances Montague, *Lewis and Clark College, 1867 – 1967*, (Portland, Oregon: Binforde and Mort, Publishers, 1968), 33.

⁵ John Hakanson, "Portland Needs a State College: Oregon's Higher Education Facilities Must Handle 26,000 Students by 1960, Survey by Vanport Student Reveals", *The Oregonian* (February 1, 1948), 3M.

proved attractive to war veterans stemmed from its close proximity to a large number of employers. Portland business and industry offered more plentiful and lucrative employment opportunities for students who needed to support themselves and/or a family. Eugene and Corvallis, home to the states' two public higher education institutions, simply did not offer the same options.

When the dikes broke on the Columbia River and flooded Vanport City in 1948, the college needed a new facility. College administrators Steven Epler and Phil Putnam believed in the institution and wanted to find a place to continue serving the students. The Oregon State System of Higher Education's (OSSHE) Chancellor, Paul C. Packer, advocated discontinuing the fledgling institution.⁶ Oregon State University administrators like Packer did not originally back the GI Bill because they believed veterans would lower academic standards.⁷ The successful academic record of the many veterans proved them wrong.⁸ Epler, Putnam and other early PSU faculty felt a commitment to their students and, unlike the Oregon chancellor, viewed the future of the college optimistically. Even though the number of student veterans declined in 1949, enrollment continued to climb because more high school graduates attended Oregon's colleges and universities.⁹ College personnel, and many students, fought to find another facility to continue serving Portland's growing student population. Students hoped the new location would remain close to the businesses and industries where they worked, places like

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⁶ Dodds, 101.

⁷ Official website for Veterans Administration, www.gibill.va/history, viewed on September 15, 2003.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ "Junior College for Portland," *The Oregonian*, (January 18, 1949), 12.

the shipyards and steel plants located in North Portland, Vancouver, and St. Johns.¹⁰ Eventually one of Portland's leading employers, the Kaiser Corporation, provided a solution that made a new facility possible. The Kaiser Corporation agreed to lease space to the college in one of its unused facilities in St. Johns. Epler welcomed the new students to campus by telling them that their college experience would entail turning a shipyard into a college.¹¹

PSU had to meet numerous challenges before becoming a permanent institution in the state system. The Oregon State Constitution required the passage of an amendment in order to establish a new higher education institution outside of Marion County, and any change, also required a popular vote. PSU's proponents also had to battle entrenched conservative political attitudes in Oregon, largely interested in protecting the status quo.¹² Legislative leaders looked to University of Oregon and Oregon State University as the place for higher learning in the state, not Portland. Even though smaller numbers of veterans used the GI Bill benefits in the early 50s, the population in Oregon had grown substantially, packing the classrooms. Still, Dr. Packer and the Oregon Board of Higher Education resisted the idea of making Vanport a permanent fixture in the system.¹³ Since UO and OSU also felt the effects of swelling student populations, the southern schools needed more facilities and wanted to offer faculty better salaries; state higher education officials believed establishing a new state university would create more competition

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¹⁰ Hakanson, *Oregonian* Editorial, 3M.

¹¹ Dodds, 102.

¹² Hakanson, *Oregonian* Editorial, 3M.

¹³ Paul C. Packer, "College Enrollment to Continue High, Packer Declares", *The Oregonian* (January 16, 1950), 2M.

for state resources. President Newburn of the University of Oregon maintained that making Portland State a four-year school would also lower the standards.¹⁴ As Political Science Professor Ralph Bunch pointed out, the OSSHE leadership was greatly influenced by the University of Oregon. “And Eugene had a vested interest historically,” he said. They weren’t so unwise as to not recognize that the center of population would grow a bigger university. And that was a direct threat to them.”¹⁵

PSU supporters formed a coalition of organizations to promote establishing a permanent institution of higher learning in Portland. Students and alumni of Vanport’s Extension Center volunteered to help the cause. The college officials created an Advancement Committee to work for Portland State’s permanent status. The committee found backing from groups and organizations outside of the college community as well. After hearing comments made at an Oregon Education Association meeting declaring a Portland area college worthless because only 5 percent of the population was capable of a college education, labor activists took note and began working for the cause.¹⁶ In the past, labor and higher education worked as allies to explore ways to train and educate workers through Adult Basic Education courses, apprenticeships, vocational training, and employer paid

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¹⁴ Dodds, 104.

¹⁵ Rudi Nussbaum, Loren Nussbaum, Mary Constans, Ralph Bunch, Chris Thompson, and Oren Orgle Interviewed by author in a Focus Group. Tape recording (PSU-AAUP Archives: Portland State University. April 14, 2003).

¹⁶ Dodds, 110.

degrees.¹⁷ A public university located in the major metropolitan city – especially one with a history of serving working people - benefited labor.

The Advancement Committee and its allies eventually persuaded the legislature to create an independent educational institution of higher learning in Portland in 1949. Faculty, staff, students and representatives from the AFL, CIO, and the Oregon Education Association spoke in favor of the bill. The coalition continued their work on behalf of Portland State by persuading the legislature to make the institution a four-year college. Governor Paul Patterson signed a bill into law on February 10th, 1955 making the Vanport Extension Center Portland State College, an institutio serving both day and evening students. Mildred Bennett, a Math Instructor hired in 1955 remembers the students as earnest and hardworking, primarily people who balanced work and school and took their education seriously.¹⁸

When Portland, Oregon finally established a four-year university in its city limits, the national mood was upbeat, as the country experienced tremendous economic growth and prosperity. Veterans of World War II and the Korean War took advantage of the educational benefits of the GI Bill. In addition, children born into the baby boom generation of post war America entered public schools. The tremendous growth PSU experienced in its first twenty years reflected the direction of the country to expand and compete globally. Between the years 1946 and 1965,

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¹⁷ Official Website for the Association of Joint/Labor Management Educational Programs, www.workplacelearning.org/hist.htm, Glenn Scott Davis, "Exploring Our Living History," viewed on September 17, 2003.

¹⁸ Mildred Bennett, Interview with the author. Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 25, 2002).

the college's student enrollment increased from 2370 to 7600, academic and administrative staff increased from 120 to 500, facilities enlarged from one high school building to several modern structures, and the curriculum that began with one education and three general degrees expanded to twenty-two bachelor's and four master's degrees.¹⁹ And, as the institution grew and changed, so did the faculty.

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¹⁹ "Precious Maturity", *PSU Vanguard*. February 12, 1965, p. 13.

Chapter Four - Causes of Faculty Unionization at PSU

PSU's evolution from a two-year institution into a four-year, degree-granting college brought academics from all parts of the country to Portland, Oregon in the late 1950's and 1960s. Newly hired faculty came to the college during an era when the general mood of the professoriate [from 1958 through the early 1960s] appears to have been one of strong self-worth in the nation and the society.¹ Higher education's expansion after the second war continued through the fifties and early sixties, opening up numerous teaching positions in America's colleges and universities. Salaries increased substantially for professors during the 1950s. Between 1951 and 1961, salaries at the University of Oregon rose 47 %, on the average.²

At institutions experiencing rapid growth like PSU, faculty possessed the power to make employment demands. For example, in 1955 Mildred Bennett stipulated her teaching schedule fit between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m. to accommodate her family commitments.³ Rudi Nussbaum, arrived in Portland to interview with the Reed College Physics' department in 1959. After receiving an unsatisfactory salary offered from the dean, he made a telephone call to PSU's Physics' department and inquired about open positions. A couple of hours later, PSU made an acceptable offer to Nussbaum and he signed a contract on the Reed campus.⁴

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¹ Hutcheson, *Professional Professoriate*, 67.

² J.F. Wellmeyer, Jr., *Compensation on the Campus: Case Studies of College and University Faculty Compensation Practices*, (Washington D.C.: Association for Higher Education, NEA, 1961), 365.

³ Bennett Interview.

⁴ Rudi Nussbaum, Interview with Lew Church, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 19, 2003).

Professor's satisfaction with their salaries and career during the 1950s and early 1960s appears to have been at a high level.⁵ The mood at PSU echoed that of the country. Gordon Dodds recalled "when I came it was 1966 and it was quite an optimistic period, the last one we ever had at Portland State, was I would say about '66 to '70, because things were looking up, budgets were increasing and everybody seemed very sure that the future would be bright."⁶ By 1970, however, the AAUP's salary survey revealed that professors barely noticed a wage increase and on average, compensation came to a standstill.⁷

As the recession took hold of the nation's economy in the 1970s, the financial stability of public higher education institutions weakened. The rate of student enrollment slowed, and the shift in social priorities signified by the war on poverty of the Johnson Administration began to influence state financing.⁸ In the state of Oregon, resources dried up and the chancellor of Oregon State System of Higher Education (OSSHE) and university and college administrators faced tough financial decisions. Since the majority of a university's budget includes salaries and benefits, faculty found themselves vulnerable to the possibility of dismissals, wage freezes, and higher teaching loads. Voicing their opinions and ideas on budget considerations became a pressing issue for professors.

Professional associations focused energy on the economic status of America's academics – a focus consuming professional organizations like the

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⁵ Wellmeyer, 366.

⁶ Dodds Interview.

⁷ Robert K. Carr and Daniel K Van Eyck, *Collective Bargaining Comes to the Campus*, (Washington D.C.: American Council on Education, 1973), 22.

⁸ Duryea, *Collective Bargaining on College Campuses*, 67.

AAUP.⁹ The AAUP believed that one cause of the break down in the economic status of the profession could be attributed to the “unsatisfactory governance relationships, accentuated by higher education’s rapid growth and bureaucratization in the 1960s between faculties and administrations, board of trustees, and states’ central administrations.”¹⁰ Distance grew between the faculty and administrative agendas regarding expectations for workload, compensation, and tenure and promotion review. Michael Reardon, former Provost, felt that PSU experienced this phenomenon as the institution grew and the administrators no longer came out of the ranks of the faculty – the career path to an administrative position became a profession rather than a place for distinguished faculty to culminate their careers.¹¹ Other faculty members, like Nussbaum, believed that the administration only pretended to give the faculty some say on important decisions. For example, faculty pay and participation issues were not discussed openly.¹² “The faculty only had a say in the non-important decisions.”¹³ Lack of participation in the governance of the college caused frustration for many PSU academics, especially when significant decisions were made during the summer or in exclusive meetings. At PSU, a group of administrators and long-term faculty organized a social group entitled the Ferdinand Club.¹⁴ This club met over lunches and other social occasions.

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⁹ “On The Financial Prospects for High Education,” *Annual Report of Committee Z, 1967 – 1968*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, 1968).

¹⁰ Hutcheson, *Professional Professoriate*, 67.

¹¹ Michael Reardon, Interview by author, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 3, 2003).

¹² Nussbaum interview.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Focus Group.

Before unionization, social connections and the informal networks of power and privilege played key roles in determining policies affecting the work life and careers of PSU's faculty. Often, promotion and hiring decisions weren't made in the offices of the college president or in the faculty senate, but in places like the University Club on Sixth and Jefferson. The University Club, a private organization with a membership open to male college educated professionals offers a place for "fellowship....food and beverage and entertainment"¹⁵ according to the club's mission statement. University administrators and select faculty members at Portland State also formed their own exclusive alliance (Ferdinand Club) that met, on occasion, at the University Club where the city's educated elite congregated.¹⁶ Originally, the Ferdinand Club's membership consisted of a male-only group of administrators and senior members of the academic departments.¹⁷ Female faculty rarely received an invitation during its early years. Those who did had to endure second class status to participate when the group met at the University Club. Chris Thompson from the English department remembers going to the university club and being asked to go through the back door while her host left her to enter in through the front.¹⁸

Networks of power, like the PSU Ferdinand Club, created an informal decision-making process that provoked dissent from many of the faculty. As a group, college and university faculty members are articulate people who place value

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¹⁵ Jerry Banks, *The University Club: A Centennial Autobiography of the University Club of Portland, 1898 – 1998*, (Portland: University Club, 1998), 4.

¹⁶ Focus Group.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

on a working in an environment where their voices are taken seriously. At PSU, several faculty members felt disrespected when administrators circumvented faculty influence by making “momentous decisions during summer vacations when the senate wasn’t meeting.”¹⁹ Morale dipped when new programs or policies became a matter of record without input from the faculty. For example, Oren Ogle returned to campus one fall quarter to discover that his department’s structure in the library had completely changed.²⁰

Faculty at PSU in the 1960s pursued a more collegial approach to decision-making. Whitney Bates, a member of the PSC history department began collecting data in 1966 to document the experience Oregon administrators and department chairs had with “recruitment, resignations, and faculty concern over ‘inequities’ in pay”²¹ so that AAUP State Federation could develop statistical comparisons with universities outside of Oregon.²² Bates encouraged college administrators to seek solutions to recruitment and retention issues in order to maintain a positive environment. As Bates wrote in a memo to the college and university administrators “Include in your responses such other information and statements as you may consider relevant to our *common* purposes of recruiting and retaining a

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¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Whitney Bates to OSSHE College Administrators, *Memorandum*, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, May 12, 1966).

²² Portland State College became Portland State University in 1969. The institution will be identified as PSU throughout this paper.

strong faculty, and maintaining – or perhaps in some instances achieving – high morale.”²³

By 1968 the economic situation for Oregon’s colleges and universities reached crisis level and professor’s salaries took a hit. A report issued by the Oregon State Chapter of the AAUP stated:

Salary levels at institutions of the Oregon State System of Higher Education have continued to decline, relative to academic salaries elsewhere, during the 1967/69 biennium. The deterioration in Oregon’s competitive position in recent years has been severe and steep, threatening Oregon’s ability to compete with other reputable institutions for first-rate teachers. Educational systems in other states typically provide far more in terms of fringe benefits than does OSSHE.²⁴

The report drew its conclusions by utilizing a study that compared the salaries of 20 state universities from American regions including the Pacific Coast, Southern area, and Mountain states, and the Midwest. The study revealed Oregon placed 17th out of 20 universities when ranking those institutions involved in the project.²⁵ Also, the percent increase in appropriation of state tax funds for operating expenses of higher education ranked Oregon at 38 – a major change from the funding levels in the late 1950s and early 60s.²⁶ Since Oregon’s college and university professors’ salaries were well below the national average, the state chapter of the AAUP put out a call for action recommending the members push the legislature for a larger allocation in order to gain a total compensation increase of 13 percent in 1970 and a

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²³ Bates Memo to OSSHE Administrators.

²⁴ “Higher Education Compensation in Oregon: The Need for Action,” *A Report by the Oregon State Federation of the American Association of University Professors*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 1968).

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

6 percent increase in 1971.²⁷ The AAUP's appeal to Oregon's legislators included reminding them that "studies have repeatedly shown that investment in education is the best investment a society, or a State, can make in economic and social development."²⁸

The low salary prospects for Oregon's university professors made recruitment a problem for the administration. The paltry sum of money the legislature offered the state's institutions of higher education was a source of frustration for both the faculty and administration because it "undercut their ability to bring in quality people."²⁹ In order to attract strong candidates to faculty positions, Thomas Bartlett, former OSSHE chancellor remarked that "We've sold Mount Hood more times than they sold the Brooklyn Bridge."³⁰ The inability of the legislature to generate additional revenue or allocate more dollars to higher education, coupled with the decline of support for higher education gave rise to faculty discussions about the necessity for union representation for Oregon's higher education professors.

Debate about bringing collective bargaining units into the state's colleges and universities centered on issues of power. Addressing issues related to governing practices and structures, compensation and tenure procedures proved difficult because institutions did not follow a single method of governing. In the summer of 1966, the AAUP developed a *Statement of Principles on Faculty*

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²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Carter Interview.

³⁰ Ibid.

Participation in College and University Government recommending to the academe that faculty should not only have primary responsibility for determining the educational and research policies of the institution, but should also have an effective voice in appointments, promotion, actions resulting in tenure, and dismissal; selection of chairmen or heads of departments; and budgetary policies concerning the expenditures of funds that are allocated to education and research.³¹ The AAUP's advice to faculty wishing to maintain some semblance of control on campus did not offer encouragement to unionize college and university academics. However, the anti-union sentiment on college and university campuses began to wane as collective bargaining gained momentum through state legislation.

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³¹ "Representation of Economic Interests," *AAUP Bulletin*, (Washington D.C.: Publication of the American Association of University Professors, Summer 1966), 229.

Chapter Five – Debates on Campus, Legislation in Salem

An ideal college or university, from the perspective of the AAUP in the 1960s, used a shared governance model to make decisions and determine a common vision. Creating a balanced power structure between the administrative and academic leaders remained a top priority. As an organization, the AAUP did not promote collective bargaining as way to seize faculty power within individual institutions. Instead, the association encouraged local chapter members to find participatory ways to make decisions. “The Association prefers that all faculty members participate in making decisions and protecting their economic interests through structures of self-government within the institution, with the faculty participating either directly or through faculty-elected councils or senates.”¹ In the AAUP’s 1953 manual for chapter officers, the association asserts that the principal function of the local group is to consider questions of general interest to college and university teachers.² Local chapters, like the one chartered at PSU in 1952, received encouragement from the national office to work collaboratively with university personnel to govern their institutions. Initially, the PSU AAUP leadership employed this approach to resolving issues related to salaries, work load, tenure, and other fringe benefits.

In 1968, PSU AAUP chapter president Hugh Lovell attempted to negotiate a variety of issues with President Branford Millar. In a letter to the president in

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¹ Ibid.

² Francis Tschan, “A Manual for Chapter Officers: The Organization and Functions of Chapters of the American Association of University Professors,” *AAUP Bulletin*, (Washington D.C.: Publication of the American Association of University Professors, Vol. 39, No. 2, Summer, 1953).

January of 1968, Lovell articulated the chapter's "list of goals related to the welfare of the faculty at Portland State," while acknowledging that many of the matters at hand went beyond the institution's control.³ Faculty and administration looked to the Oregon State legislature and the State Board to improve the situation. In the late sixties, the issues most worrisome to the PSU faculty included salary, parking, moving expenses, inequity [compression issues], promotion and tenure, and professional development. Many of the same issues that would be put on the table during collective bargaining sessions over the course of the AAUP's 25 years as the PSU faculty bargaining agent.

Faculty vigorously debated collective bargaining because of the links many of the old guard professors had with unionism; images of picketers marching on campus and contentious discussions between the administration and faculty threatened some scholars who did not relish the idea of working in a rancorous environment. During the 1970s, the AAUP's used their professional journal, *The Bulletin*, as one way to debate the idea of collective bargaining. *The Bulletin* published numerous articles about collective bargaining representation, economic interests of the profession, and the faculty's right to strike. However, the conservative tone of the articles discouraged faculty from considering collective bargaining and suggested to those interested in the idea to proceed very cautiously. The association promoted finding internal options to resolve differences and only turn to unionization if the other plans had been completely exhausted. "The

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³ Hugh Lovell to President Brandford Millar, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 16 1968).

association recommends that faculty members, in decisions relating to the protection of their economic interests, should initially participate through structure of self-government within the institution.”⁴ Furthermore, the AAUP establishment, many of whom served on the national executive board (and taught at ivy-league institutions), believed that a collective bargaining environment would create animosity and demean the profession.⁵ “As integral parts of the institution, such councils or senates can effectively represent the faculty without taking on adversary and sometimes arbitrary attitudes of an outside representative.”⁶

At PSU, many of the faculty who expressed reluctance toward collective bargaining shared the national office’s concern that collective bargaining should stay in the industrial sector. “Persuading people that collective bargaining could be done without the rancor that had been common in collective bargaining in other areas”⁷ was tough, recalled Donald Moor from the Philosophy department. “We couldn’t even persuade the people back east in the AAUP that you didn’t have to be at war with the administration,”⁸ he said. “A lot of the faculty thought ‘we’re all colleagues here. We don’t want this adversarial relationship.’”⁹ The debate to unionize revolved around two central questions: first, will collective bargaining

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⁴ “Policy on Representation of Economic Interests” Policy number 95 -8-68 Adopted by AAUP National Council (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 26, 1968).

⁵ Ann Wiekell, Interview with Heather Reynolds, Tape Recording, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 2002).

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Donald Moor, Interview by Gregory Nipper, Tape Recording. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 16, 2002).

⁸ Moor Interview.

⁹ Ibid.

undercut or promote the collegial atmosphere on campus and secondly, does unionization devalue or bolster the worth of professional scholars?

As smaller community and junior colleges began to seek representation through a bargaining unit, both in Oregon and on the national level, the AAUP began to see their professors association as a viable option to become a collective bargaining agent. Pro-union advocates within the AAUP promoted the idea that if the association acted as a collective bargaining agent, membership might increase and strengthen the financial situation of the organization. In 1972, the AAUP membership voted to pursue collective bargaining as an association. The next year, the organization adopted a “Statement on Collective Bargaining” and instituted a committee to address issues associated with unionizing college and university faculty.

In Oregon, the Interinstitutional Faculty Senate¹⁰ [IFS] sponsored forums for faculty members to discuss matters related to unionization. “It is essential that faculty supporting both sides of this question find opportunities to express opinions to their colleagues and be informed about related experiences at other system institutions.”¹¹ It became clear through these forums and other modes of discussion that the seven state institutions viewed collective bargaining differently. Some, like the UO, resisted the idea completely while Southern Oregon’s faculty began to form an Independent Professors’ Union. “We got into the early ‘70s and there is talk,

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¹⁰ The Interinstitutional Faculty Senate consisted of faculty representatives from all of Oregon’s public four year colleges and universities. The body allowed professors to network.

¹¹ Dale Kirk, Interinstitutional Faculty Senate Annual Report, 1975 – 1976,” (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, 1976).

serious talk around the state about unionization. It manifests itself first at Southern Oregon because they have their own union.”¹² After Southern Oregon College unionized, pro-union faculty members mounted a more organized campaign to pressure on the rest of the state to organize so that “a large number of people could stand up to the legislature and the chancellor.”¹³ The chancellor expressed to union organizers that he wanted a state-wide union, but as Professor Dodds explained “He didn’t want any kind of union....but it would have been preferable for him to have a statewide union because he knew that support would be relatively low at places like Oregon and Oregon State. It wouldn’t be very militant if the big places didn’t have it.”¹⁴

By late 1976, the Oregon IFS minutes reflected that the interest toward collective bargaining on the campuses seemed to be waning. Representatives from University of Oregon suggested in 1977 IFS meeting that “the size of the salary increases this past year and the turnover in leadership of the campus organization which were promoting collective bargaining,”¹⁵ slowed down the movement geared toward unionizing the OSSHE faculties.

The union movement sustained little support on the two large OSSHE campuses in Eugene and Corvallis. However, momentum built on other Oregon university campuses. In addition to Southern Oregon College, Western Oregon

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¹² Gordon Dodds, Interview by Patricia Schechter, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 21, 2002).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Tom Morris, Interview by Patricia Schechter, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 14, 2002).

¹⁵ Kirk, IFS Report.

College and PSU professors sought support from their colleagues to introduce unionization to the campus culture. Even though the majority of the UO and OSU faculties continued to view collective bargaining as a demeaning approach to resolving issues between professors and administrators in the late 1970s, pro-union academics kept up the effort to create a state-wide union. Their efforts met strong resistance from the Oregon Association of Faculties.¹⁶ PSU Historian Tom Morris described the OAF as a conservative and bitterly anti-union group. “These were people who were older and would be more comfortable doing their research grants; they didn’t pay much attention to the rest of the faculties, particularly the younger faculty.”¹⁷ Morris, who was president of Oregon’s state-wide AAUP chapter at the time, thought that in order for collective bargaining to be successful in Oregon, it would require a unified effort on behalf of all OSSHE schools. The statewide coalition of pro-union professors, a loose knit group of men and women aligned with the AAUP, selected OSU as the first place to target. It not only failed, Morris recalled, but “it was a total disaster. It turned out that the Oregon State faculty were more conservative than our own and they took the view that they had worked hard to obtain their very professional individual position at the University level and that unionization would be demeaning.”¹⁸

University of Oregon and Oregon State University’s roots ran deep in the state; in the 1860s, the legislature awarded Salem the capitol, Portland a

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¹⁶ According to a phone call with Tom Morris on September 24, 2003, the Association of Oregon Faculties acted as a social or networking organization for professors.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

penitentiary, and Corvallis the location of the land-grant college.¹⁹ A Lane county delegation convinced the legislature to make Eugene the home of the first public university in the state in 1872. Bunch, a political scientist, thinks the history of the two institutions influenced faculty attitudes toward unionization in the 1970s.

OSU, and especially the University of Oregon, saw themselves in terms of the more academic model of the 1800s, rather than the 1900s. At the time we were unionizing, a great number of people had gotten to the point of being able to be professors by courtesy of the GI Bill of Rights, rather than being the third son of a rich family....[Since PSU is located in] an urban center, and less tied to the traditions and demands of that earlier model, we were willing to look at new options.²⁰

The faculty workload played out markedly different at PSU than oldest public universities in the state. Full-time tenured faculty at UO and OSU taught 6 hours, while the professors of equivalent rank and status at PSU taught 9 hours per quarter.²¹ Oren Ogle, a librarian, attributes the inequities to the difference between the institutional constitutions. University of Oregon faculty play the role of the decision makers and the president of the college “serves at the pleasure of the faculty.”²²

Nussbaum, believed the academic community at UO and OSU saw themselves as superior to the professors at PSU. From Nussbaum’s perspective, the UO looked down on PSU, without basis.²³

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¹⁹ Henry D. Sheldon, *History of the University of Oregon*, (Binford and Mort Publishers: Portland, Oregon, 1940), 109.

²⁰ Ralph Bunch, Focus Group.

²¹ Bunch, focus group.

²² Oren Ogle, Focus Group.

²³ Nussbaum Interview.

I think the faculty at PSU felt particularly sensitive to the fact – that academically you could find a large number of professors at PSU that could measure themselves, in every respect, on equal footing, with either of the two major universities. But, in terms of our ability to participate, even in the government, let alone finances....the way the department heads were appointed and the whole notion that you ‘serve at the pleasure of the dean’ was very objectionable’.²⁴

The differences between the universities provided PSU with a more fertile environment for the idea of collective bargaining to germinate. Portland State faculty felt they had to form an organization that would carry more clout than individuals that could be singled out and separated.²⁵

PSU’s faculty and student population grew more substantially in the 1970s than any of the other institutions in the state. As a result, PSU began hiring more part-time instructors to meet the demand of a growing student body.

Administrators used part-timers to meet the teaching needs for evening students and summer school scheduling options necessary to provide the diverse student population with more flexibility. At the time, PSU faculty earned less than the professors at UO and OSU, so many full-time professors opted to teach overload classes at night.²⁶

As numbers faculty increased in the late 1960s and early 1970s to meet the burgeoning student population, it became difficult for the campus administration – especially the college president – to continue operating like a small collegial family. Time did not allow President Blumel the opportunity to address faculty concerns

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²⁴ Nussbaum, focus Group.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Bunch, Focus Group.

individually. Ogle saw President Blumel's approach to shared governance change as the institution grew. President Blumel wanted to have an open door policy, but the reality of resolving issues on a personal and collegial level was complex. Faculty like Ogle thought access to the people who made the decisions became more difficult and fragmented.²⁷ The growth of the institution resulted in inconsistent policy development across the campus.²⁸ Hiring practices, salary scales, tenure promotion and review practices varied between the departments creating morale problems.

By 1978, the growth of the institution changed the governing practices. Top down decisions by the administration frustrated the faculty who believed in shared governance. The administration's inability to bring PSU salaries in line with UO and OSU created another layer of tension. In addition, the reality that higher education would have to work with diminished state resources, made the divide between administrators and faculty even wider.

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²⁷ Ogle, Focus Group.

²⁸ Ibid.

Chapter Six - Faculty Labor Connections

Competing self interests framed the debate over unionization at PSU. Faculty attitudes toward collective bargaining ranged from acceptance to rejection as individuals contended with a personal sense of self, outlook toward the future, and reaction to changes within the profession and at PSU. While the faculty represented people from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, the people leading PSU's unionization movement, hired in the 1950's and 1960's, understood and appreciated the working class values; values shared with the student population. The faculty pushing for collective bargaining on campus can be characterized as first generation college graduates and, in many cases, brought up in union-friendly households. Sharing some common ethos such as embracing the work-ethic, valuing education, and "not forgetting where you came from" connected PSU students and teachers and reflected a faculty that valued the educational processes in concert with fair and just working environment. Chris Thompson, a member of the English faculty, thought a much wider class representation existed within the PSU faculty than at other universities in the Oregon state system, especially in Eugene. "It struck me that people were like I was...they had come from families that didn't have money, but had come to the university probably, like me, from communities where unionization was very active."¹

Even though a core group of faculty members embraced the union spirit, a communal attitude toward collective bargaining did not exist. Some members of the

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¹ Focus Group.

faculty expressed negative viewpoints about unions and needed concrete reasons to join a labor movement. Psychology professor Barry Anderson grew up in a republican family biased against unionization. His attitude changed in the mid 1970s after he experienced conflict between how administrators and faculty members interpreted college policies.² Anderson decided to support unionization – he likened his choice to “buying insurance”³ in order for the faculty to maintain a voice in the operation of the institution. Security, a middle class value, fit in with the movement as faculty feared that in an economic downturn, or during retrenchment, the administration might get rid of people for other than economic reasons.⁴

The PSU faculty who self define as first generation college students had parents and grandparents connected to labor. Terms like collective bargaining, picket lines, and union meetings evoked more positive images, especially for the group of the PSU academics who participated in the effort to put unionization to vote. On the other hand, the attraction to collective bargaining never blossomed for some of the faculty. Early AAUP leadership sought the support of well respected faculty, like Jim Hart -someone who never openly opposed the union, but did not join either.⁵ Others rejected any union model emphasizing only “bread and butter” issues, as opposed to a union representative interested in balancing negotiating

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² Barry Anderson, Interview by author, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 4, 2003).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Dodds Interview.

⁵ Ibid.

demands of better compensation with professional standards like academic freedom.⁶

Labeling a professor as a “worker” produced strong feelings among the PSU faculty as well as from academics on the national level – both pro and con. History Professor Tom Morris had no problem self-identifying as a worker; his attitude came from deep roots in the North Portland labor community and through his study as a historian. As an academic interested in legal and constitutional history, he was influenced by a statement made by Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter connecting educators with working people. “Faculties and academics in general, which of course he was at the time, they were unaware that they are workers just like anybody else. So in terms of class, we were part of a working class. We worked with better prospects for advancement individually, yes, and all of that, but when push came to shove, the fact of the matter is, we are workers.”⁷ Morris, a member of the national AAUP’s prestigious Committee A [a committee working on issues associated with Academic Freedom] recalled the comparisons Frankfurter made because parallels between workers and professors resulted in passionate debates. The conflict associated with self-identifying as a “worker” and/or a “professional” fueled the emotions of the professors engaged in the debate about collective bargaining at national conferences and in department offices at PSU.⁸ In 1978, the tensions heightened because the possibility of unionization no longer

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⁶ Nussbaum Interview.

⁷ Morris Interview.

⁸ Ibid.

seemed theoretical; the number of collective bargaining chapters had risen dramatically, sharpening the debate.

Not all faculty members, then or now, would agree with the portrait painted by Chief Justice Frankfurter. For example, Nussbaum made a finer distinction than Frankfurter. "I'm for the unions, but workers in an industrial enterprise and faculty in a university aren't the same thing."⁹ Industrial workers, for example, focus on bread and butter issues as opposed to the lofty ideas of academic freedom and curriculum content. Other issues valued by the faculty "such as relationships between faculty and students, the right of students" also distinguished academics from the labor.¹⁰ In essence, the range of perspectives from the PSU faculty filled a broad spectrum of attitudes because each person's experience with and understanding of collective bargaining was unique. Many had no problem associating with the labor movement, while others sought a new paradigm for unions that would bridge the divide the IWW's constitution articulated in the early twentieth century between the employing and working classes.

The people advocating for a collective bargaining unit at PSU "certainly didn't want anything to do with running a union."¹¹ They wanted paid representation to help resolve some of the contentious issues germinating between faculty and administration and a formalized method to sit down and talk with the

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⁹ Nussbaum Interview.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ansel Johnson, Interview by author, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 15, 2002)

administration about all the various things covered under the heading of employment relations.¹²

When momentum grew to unionize educators, many of the PSU faculty already appreciated how collective bargaining's power could improve working conditions. Ansel Johnson in the Geology department also had roots in the labor movement. "My father was a member of a woodworkers' union and I got to picket with him one summer when I was a student. I was always a labor kind of person."¹³ Personal experience with the positive results of collective bargaining framed Chris Thompson's perspective as well.

Thompson first posed the question of collective bargaining to the faculty senate in 1972. Like many of her colleagues, her formative years shaped her appreciation of unions.

My background was being brought up in coal-mining Scotland. I was brought up with radical political discussions. From the time I was a child till the time I was an adult, my Member of Parliament was Communist. Communists were the ones responsible for reasonable working conditions for coal miners - safety precautions, baths from when they came off shift, compensation for black lung disease, and the ongoing attempt to make mines as safe as possible. There are serious accidents periodically. There was no question, unions are a good thing.¹⁴

Discussions about unionization made people reflect upon personal biases and leanings. Anderson remembers his father always talking negatively about unions

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¹² Moor Interview.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Chris Thompson, Interview by Lew Church, tape recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 26, 2002).

which influenced his first reaction to the idea of bringing one to PSU.¹⁵ Even though many of the reasons faculty members wanted union representation on campus revolved around issues of compensation and shared governance, other topics found their way into the discussion. The faculty members who came out of institutions which valued graduate work and research missed the level of support they received during graduate school studies. Academics conducting research in American colleges and universities received increased dollars and professional autonomy for research projects. PSU valued teaching, not research, which frustrated many faculty members.¹⁶ Shifting the focus from a community college approach to higher education (emphasis placed on time in the classroom) to one with a research emphasis proved difficult. A myriad of faculty basically felt that PSU should continue the vision of the Vanport Extension Center and act as a branch of Portland Community College.¹⁷ Those joining the faculty fresh out of graduate school wanted the status and freedom to conduct research in their discipline. A push from within the faculty for university status came from the science and social science departments.¹⁸

The faculty and administration met resistance from OSSHE when PSU sought to become a university, similar to the challenges the institution faced in the 1950s when Portland State fought to receive permanent status. According to Dodds, the challenge included the “combined forces of the Chancellor, the state board, the

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¹⁵ Anderson Interview.

¹⁶ Johnson Interview.

¹⁷ Stan Hillman, Interview by the author, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, December 5, 2002).

¹⁸ Hillman, Johnson, and Anderson’s interviews.

University of Oregon, and Oregon State.”¹⁹ Critics of PSU developing doctorate programs suggested “graduate programs will torpedo the undergraduate students.”²⁰ Allegedly, pursuing graduate programs would diminish the role the college played in offering the citizens of Portland the opportunity to earn a bachelor’s degree. But many of the faculty who graduated from large research institutions wanted the institution to move in the direction of a place where scholars could pursue their master and doctorate degrees. After obtaining a graduate degree from Stanford University in 1973, Johnson felt that it “was very frustrating”²¹ to work for an institution with a limited research emphasis. He remembers how difficult it was to convince college personnel about the importance of helping with the research process.

Unfortunately, it took time to persuade the college administration and the chancellor to grant PSU the opportunity to promote graduate programs. In 1977, when Biologist Stan Hillman joined the PSU faculty, “there was very little graduate vision on their part and that is really what public higher education could bring to the city of Portland uniquely.”²² Anderson paints a picture of a university always going through rapid change creating sort of a geological layer in the faculty. From his perspective, the early PSU hires focused on teaching and nurturing students and those given positions in the 1970s wanted to receive support to incorporate the highest level of academia into their careers.²³

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¹⁹ Dodds.

²⁰ Vicki Cross, “Millar Says Graduate Programs Won’t Torpedo Undergraduate Students.” *PSU Vanguard*. November 6, 1964.

²¹ Johnson Interview.

²² Hillman Interview.

²³ Ibid.

The instability of the Oregon state budget hit the faculty hard as they struggled to build graduate programs and expand their own research options. Between the professional goals of the faculty and the impact of the budget crunch on salaries, tensions mounted between the faculty, administration, and OSSHE. These pressures placed faculty members in a position to look for optional systems to support graduate programs. The combination of forces put union organizers into a place where collective bargaining became a real possibility.

In September of 1977, the AAUP Board of Directors asked Barry Anderson to develop a questionnaire on collective bargaining and administer it to the full-time faculty. Before bringing collective bargaining to a vote, they wanted to know how favorable the faculty viewed the AAUP. The response to the survey included 98% of all full-time faculty members.²⁴ The results of the questionnaire predicted that 67% were in favor of collective bargaining, 6% undecided, and 27% opposed.²⁵ The questionnaire also asked the respondents who they would support to represent the PSU unit. The results of the survey found that the majority favored the AAUP and 53% of the respondents suggested they supported the professor's association. In the survey, 27% liked the OSEA, and only 20% might give the AFT their support.²⁶ Johnson believed the AFT had a reputation as being a bit too radical for Portland State.²⁷ The top five reasons faculty supported unionization included

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²⁴ Anderson.

²⁵ Barry Anderson to PSU Faculty, *Memorandum*, (PSU Archives, Box 492: Portland State University, September 21, 1977).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Johnson Interview.

salary, fringe benefits, due process, job security, and governance.²⁸ Collegiality and the option to strike appeared at the bottom of the list.²⁹ A group representing the independent professor's union also vied for the opportunity to represent the PSU academics, but support for that organization was minimal.

Three organizations dominated the labor movement in higher education during the 1970s. All three of these organizations lobbied the PSU faculty in 1977 and 1978 for the role of representing the professors in the collective bargaining process – the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the Oregon State Education Association (OSEA) and the AAUP. Johnson did not campaign outwardly for any of the organizations, but was wary of the AFT because he agreed with the notion “they were a bit too radical.”³⁰ Others felt that the AFT wasn't radical enough, including Hillman who provided an alternative candidate – the Teamsters. “Well if you are going to have a union, you may as well shut the place down. Otherwise you aren't going to shut it down. If all of sudden the place is surrounded by semi trucks and no traffic gets in and out you are going to get results....obviously a minority opinion.”³¹ Many supported the AAUP because the association had been visible on the PSU campus since 1952 and had promoted the profession since its inception. The image of the AFT and the OSEA characterized an organization more interested in the bread and butter issues with no focus, or very little, on shared governance or academic freedom. Faculty did not believe organizations like the AFT, NEA, and

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²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Johnson Interview.

³¹ Hillman Interview.

OSEA would oppose issues like academic freedom, but they also thought they wouldn't work hard on that front.³² For example, Dodds thought it better to select AAUP because it was important to have a broad-based approach.

Since 1952, the AAUP chapter officers exercised internal, yet informal, leadership among PSU administrators on behalf of the faculty. The professors who advocated for AAUP to represent them as their collective bargaining agent appealed to the AAUP's well-regarded influence over matters like academic freedom and tenure.³³ Ann Wikel from the History Department noted that the "AAUP put on the best campaign in the first place. Second place, I think AAUP fit here better."³⁴ The AAUP had an historic reputation as a white collar organization, distinct from the "hard-hat" labor images of picket lines, adversarial bargaining meetings, and lock outs. Math instructor Mildred Bennett came from a labor background, but she acknowledged her own professional bias concerning the AAUP. She reflected on her decision in favor of the AAUP over another collective bargaining agent with a sense of a humor. "Do you suppose I was part of a general snobbery that would somehow think the AAUP better?"³⁵ The answer, for her, as for the majority of the faculty, was yes!

Faculty supporting collective bargaining collected signatures to put the question to a vote for the faculty. After counting the ballots in 1978, the vote to unionize garnered 59% of the vote and the AAUP was selected as the bargaining

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³² Dodds Interview.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Wikel Interview.

³⁵ Bennett Interview.

agent with 71% of those voting selecting their professional organization.³⁶ By selecting the AAUP as their agent, the PSU academics communicated that their interests consisted of a broad range of issues as opposed to the ones associated only with compensation and fringe benefits.

Only full-time faculty had the option to become a member of the AAUP collective bargaining unit. Excluded from the unit, the part-time group arranged for an election of their own. "AAUP wasn't interested in the plight of the part time faculty," Nussbaum remembered.³⁷ "I was very disappointed with AAUP members. I found this compartmentalization of thinking between us and them unfortunate."³⁸ Nussbaum thought drawing a line between the full and part-timers weakened the idea of a professor's union. He thought the attitude expressed broke common ties amongst the faculty ("them" don't have fulltime positions, they're not professionals).³⁹

As PSU grew, in order to reduce the costs associated with salaries and benefits, the university began employing more part-time instructors to teach their classes. Union advocate and Political Science teacher Ralph Bunch believed the administration's attitude was "to hell with the rights or the future or whatever might happen to the part-timers."⁴⁰ Some of the part-time faculty felt the emphasis on

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³⁶ AAUP Newsletter, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, March 1978).

³⁷ Nussbaum Interview.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Bunch, Focus Group.

full-time positions was so strong that if they joined the bargaining unit they would get the crumbs off the table once AAUP had done its negotiations.⁴¹

The neglect shown toward the rights and status of part-time faculty by the AAUP and the university administration, left the group who fulfilled the university's need to "maintain the flexibility of the University" free to pursue their own collective bargaining agent.⁴² A group representing the part-time teaching faculty organized their own union movement. Part-timers experienced employment very differently at PSU in terms of workload and salary, security, as well as professional respect. Lauren Nussbaum taught in the Foreign Languages department beginning in 1961 and experienced the vulnerability of working as a part-time professor. "I had been a spare wheel since 1961 being hauled out of the garage when they needed me, so I never knew from term to term whether or not I would be teaching. And the salary was nominal."⁴³

At the same time the full-time AAUP leadership worked together to organize itself into a union shop, a large group of part-time faculty in the English department joined forces to promote unionizing through the OFT. "There was not much interaction between the AAUP and OFT,"⁴⁴ claimed Sue Danielson. The part-timers had the difficult job of pushing the administration to provide them with the list of names of the employees who were not fixed-term or on a tenure track. "It took a lot of energy," Danielson recalled and the organizers had to overcome some

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⁴¹ Lauren Nussbaum, Focus Group.

⁴² Sue Danielson, Interview by Patricia Schechter, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, December 27, 2002).

⁴³ Focus Group.

⁴⁴ Danielson Interview.

of the same biases within the ranks of the part-time teaching faculty as the AAUP did with the tenure track professors.⁴⁵ “Whatever trepidation there is about unions among the faculty in general, at least at the time, that was also true for fixed term people.”⁴⁶ Another element in organizing part-time faculty was the broad range of reasons why people accepted part time employment. Some needed the money and pieced jobs together in order to make a living. Others taught on a part-time basis to supplement family income or just from a pure love of their field. Upon investigating these reasons, organizers discovered the myth of part-time faculty. Those not needing the money seemed “shocked that there were people who tried to live on this money and were very sympathetic and signed on.”⁴⁷

By 1978 three unions represented PSU employees. Service Employees International Union (SEIU) represented the classified staff, the AFT stood up for part-time instructors and professors, and the AAUP worked for full-time faculty. The budget crisis in higher education during the 1970s worked together with the professional goals of the faculty to bring unionization into the PSU academe. AAUP won the support of the full-time employees because of the diverse issues it addressed on the national and local levels. The part-timers, ignored by their full time peers, selected the long standing AFT to work on their behalf.

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⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

Chapter Seven - Gender Inequities

Dismal treatment of part time faculty had a gender component. Like many public universities in the 1970's, most of the PSU part-timers were women. "I am not an ardent feminist, but I thought it was pretty unfair that the women in our department were all part time. And somehow, I had almost a full-time work, but part-time salary," Art professor Mary Constans remarked.¹ One of the reasons Constans became involved in the AAUP included working to resolve the issue of gender equity.

Inequity between the sexes was not something unique to PSU. Even though the twentieth century professional labor market included female professors, lawyers, doctors, scientists, publishers, engineers, and executives, in higher education female professionals represented a small portion of the academic work force. As women slowly entered the academic work force - finding role models and female colleagues proved difficult. "One looks in vain for women of high rank and normal academic appointment at major schools," noted author Betty Richardson, "They are not noticed or in trouble because they simply did not exist."²

As women broke into academia, they faced many problems common to women in the learned profession. Empowered to make decisions about salary, workload, and promotion, the administration used or abused these tools to either keep woman subordinate or promote equity. When comparing academia with other

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¹ Mary Constans, Interview by Gregory Nipper, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 8, 2003).

² Betty Richardson, *Sexism in Higher Education*, (New York: A Continuum Book, The Seabury Press, 1975), 140.

professional environments, such as a law firm or business office, the problems of inequity are resolved differently. As one academic observed in 1974, "In business offices, of course, women are often fired. In academia, the vindictiveness may find its way into decisions about tenure and promotion."³

In the mid 1950s, the faculties at Portland State University and other Oregon State institutions changed as the administration and department deans offered more women the opportunity to teach on the college level; not out of respect for their talents, but because large numbers of positions opened up due to increasing enrollment and because some men left PSU in search of better paying jobs. Mildred Bennett remembers that when she started teaching in 1955, the pay was so poor that about half of the men in the college of science left that year.⁴ Sexism manifested itself structurally at PSU as men dominated the power structure and set the tone. The attitude directed toward the newly hired women appears dismissive. Bennett believed the administration, the "deanery", as she referred to them, did not take the initial female teaching faculty seriously.

We were made fun of behind our backs. Not so much behind our backs that we didn't know about it. We were referred to as the 'Housewife's Brigade'. Like, you know we were really not quite worthy, but there we were standing around and they needed to have someone stand in front of their classes.⁵

Mildred Bennett and women in higher education were small in number, and held very little power. Over the course of the second half of the twentieth century,

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³ Ibid.

⁴ Bennett Interview.

⁵ Bennett Interview.

professional employment increased and women's share of managerial and professional jobs more than doubled.⁶ Today there is an increasing presence of women and people of color in professional positions, but racial-ethnic and gender hierarchies still persist in the form of job assignments, treatment, and salary schedules.⁷

At PSU, male administrators and department chairs kept female salaries down and tenure opportunities low by hiring women to teach on a part-time basis. Most of the disciplines on campus in the early 1970s had only part time women “oddly enough with the exception of Physics,”⁸ Constans remembered. Disciplines with limited Phd candidates had to overlook gender stereotypes and biases to fill positions. Part-time workloads were often higher than for the full-time faculty – for example, a tenured professor might be expected to teach two or three courses, while part-time professors taught four classes for a smaller salary. Constans recalls doing the same amount of work as the full-time men, but for part-time pay.⁹ Research dollars were given priority to men and tenured positions often assigned based on gender. “Data on law school faculties shows that women are more likely to be in non-tenure-track jobs or to have achieved tenure at a lower-status law schools.”¹⁰ Women at PSU encountered the same circumstances as the faculty in law schools within their academic disciplines. Elaine Spencer, a chemistry professor asserted

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⁶ Amott, Teresa and Julie Matthaei, *Race, Gender and Work: A Multi-Cultural Economic History of Women in the United States*, (South End Press: Boston, MA.1996), 343.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Constans Interview.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Amott and Matthaei, *Race and Gender*, 345.

that experience limited her research opportunities to one-10th of her time while a male counterpart received one-half research time.¹¹ Mildred Bennett explained:

We expected that people who had more degrees than we had would be compensated better. But what we didn't expect was that people with similar degrees and educational backgrounds and years of teaching would be treated in a different way depending upon whether they were men or women. It wasn't something peculiar to Portland State, it was everywhere.¹²

Salary and workload matters did not improve greatly for women during the volatile years of the 1960s. The unequal treatment triggered the female faculty at higher education institutions, in Oregon and on the national level, to begin looking at gender equity issues. It took until 1979, for the women in Oregon teaching at the major universities to finally combine forces to address the issue.

As a national organization, the AAUP began to act on women's issues in 1970. Female professors, empowered by the momentum of the women's movement, pressured their professional association to begin addressing issues affecting women in higher education. Compensation and workload issues made up only part of the women's agenda. Female faculty and students demanded better representation in the curriculum too. In the late 1960s an "informal, student-run program" began to take shape to develop courses related to women's issues at PSU.¹³ Legitimizing the program required tenacity. It took over six years before the college granted the Women's Studies Program certificate status in September of

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¹¹ Nancy Solomon, "Wage disparity said result of merit pay," *PSU Vanguard*, (January 17, 1984), 2.

¹² Bennett Interview.

¹³ Thompson Interview.

1975, a program that began as an interdisciplinary cohort in 1969.¹⁴ “It (the Women’s Studies Program) had a big market, big registration,” in its’ infancy.¹⁵ Grass roots organizations, like the PSU Women’s Studies Organization, pushed higher education to include broader perspectives in the curriculum like the voices of African Americans, Latino/as, and women of all colors.

Pushed from many campuses across the country, the AAUP convened a special committee to address gender issues. In 1970, AAUP leadership established Committee W to address “women’s issues.” Like most AAUP committees, the committee employed research to better understand the plight of women in higher education. As a committee, they collected data sources on salaries and promotion, pursued women’s issues and developed policy statements and supported legal recourse for faculty. Several of the women professors, like Ann Weikel and Elaine Spencer at PSU, engaged in national Committee W work before AAUP became the collective bargaining unit. An unnamed faculty member connected her interactions with other women on a national level to local concerns.

I talked to women in Houston about woman’s issues, especially the difficulties they had had getting their concerns to the table. It was both disappointing and reassuring to discover that older chapters had had the same problems I was facing here with some of our most liberal faculty men. i.e. the committee can provide valuable support. I returned from Houston determined to get something going around here and on the state level and within our own chapter.¹⁶

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¹⁴ “Women’s Studies Program Obtains Certificate,” *PSU Vanguard*, (December 12, 1974), 4.

¹⁵ Thompson Interview.

¹⁶ Anonymous Notes. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, No date).

The Houston Women's Conference of 1977 was the first meeting of its type since the Women's Right's Conference in Seneca Falls, New York in 1848. Education appeared on the agenda and the most heated discussions centered on lesbian issues and abortion.¹⁷

The Houston Women's Conference, gave women the opportunity to gather and discuss mutual issues. The women teaching in Oregon's colleges and universities began networking through women's caucuses shortly after the PSU faculty voted for collective bargaining. In 1979, the state and chapter leadership supported the female professors as they formed a state and local Committee W. Like most of the AAUP's committees, the agenda of Oregon's Committee W mirrored many of the items on the national committee's agenda. Weikel and Spencer encouraged their colleagues to get involved in the work of the local committee in order to further the interests of women in the profession.

As women who think this action in our Oregon chapters is overdue, we are inviting all of you to participate with us in initiating a special affirmative action push on behalf of women in the State System of Higher Education.... Work such a committee could do to better the lot of faculty women on all of the state campuses.¹⁸

Female faculty from Oregon State University, PSU, University of Oregon, Western Oregon, and Southern Oregon joined forces at a central location - the Golden Pheasant Restaurant in Salem. The women professors of Oregon began building a network to address gender equity issues in the state's system of higher education.

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¹⁷ Official Webstie for Women's Environment and Development Organization, [www.wedo.org/news/Sept. 97/joinin.htm](http://www.wedo.org/news/Sept.97/joinin.htm), as viewed on July 30, 2003.

¹⁸ Ann Weikel and Elaine Spencer to PSU AAUP Members, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 20, 1979).

Ann Weikel remembers the first meeting in Salem as therapeutic because, for the first time, women had gathered and shared their personal struggles and painful professional stories about their work environments.

It was to my knowledge the first time the women had really gotten together on the state level. It was more ‘what is it like down there?’ and ‘what do they do?’ Then suddenly I sort of brought up this Wilma Hine’s case and what did people think about it and was there anything that we could do? Would people be interested in that, not knowing? People said ‘oh yes and well there’s this other person and this other person’ and it was just kinda mind blowing that night because all kinds of things were coming up that people hadn’t had a chance to talk about. I mean there may have been issues down at their campus but I wouldn’t have known as a faculty member here....So we got started and before you knew it our first decision was, well, maybe we could file an amicus brief and then we could do some salary surveys....¹⁹

The first collective meeting of Oregon’s university women’s faculty empowered the group to pressure the board of education to address the issues of pay inequity.

While Weikel explained that her experiences appeared to be not nearly as difficult as those of others – especially at the other Oregon institutions, she did recall PSU’s most notorious case of mistreating a female faculty member. “Elaine Spencer in the Chemistry Department, did have a very rough road over there....”²⁰ The women’s common concerns took only one meeting to galvanize the discontent into action. The problems they shared came into better focus when they gathered together as a whole.

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¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Weikel Interview.

The women believed a class action suit seemed the strongest approach to bring gender equity to the university system. The women believed that after years of unsuccessful attempts to rectify the inequities, litigation became necessary.²¹ They employed attorney Don Willner as their legal counsel. “Don Willner, of course, was the attorney for the women; and he was admired in Portland State because he had been the main legislative figure getting us university status in 1969.”²² The state-level Committee W initially began conducting salary surveys. The research came in handy because it was used by the attorney to help establish a basis for the class action suit – a suit filed on behalf of a group that encompassed 2,200 female teaching faculty in 1980.

A Math Professor at Western Oregon University, named Anna Penk, agreed to be the chief plaintiff for the case. Penk and the rest of the 2,200 plaintiffs discovered that their class action suit posed a challenge because the plaintiffs had the burden of proof. The charges asserted by women faculty member’s of Oregon’s higher education institutions included disparate treatment charges and the class as a whole charged that the institutions engaged in a pattern of discrimination against women faculty. After contacting the national AAUP office, the organizers found out that for legal reasons, the association could not file a class action suit.²³ In order to distance themselves from their institutions and professional associations, the women had to redefine their coalition. In doing so, they became the “Faculty

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²¹ Nancy Solomon, “Faculty women to have their day in court,” *PSU Vanguard*, (January 10, 1984), 1.

²² Dodds Interview.

²³ Weikel Interview.

Women for Equity” (FWE). Leaders of FWE assigned tasks to the members and began conducting research to support their case.

The committee will prepare a state-wide salary study to show the status of women in the state system with respect to that of men in salaries comparable positions, in award of tenure in promotions to highest rank and in award of special opportunities or honors. The problem of “soft money” positions and its impact upon women’s careers will be given special notice.²⁴

In Oregon, other women had sued or threatened to sue their employing institutions.

In 1972, a faculty member from OSU named Sandra Sasson challenge her institution through the judicial process. “The case was settled out of court. She received a \$4,000 annual increase in salary and tenure in the department of English.”²⁵ This was considered, by some Oregonians, a remarkable amount of money at the time, provided the professor a substantial economic gain. In comparison to other national discrimination cases of the era, ATT and other corporate giants settled with multimillion-dollar judgments.²⁶ For some reason, the case did not receive heavy publicity, but word spread through the growing feminist academic grapevine providing the women inspiration to move forward.

The Penk case required a large amount of time and effort be expended on gathering data. The plaintiffs continued to fulfill their faculty responsibilities as well as family obligations while remaining committed to the class action suit. In

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²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Committee W State Conference Meeting Minutes, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 2, 1979).

²⁶ Venus Green, *Race on the Line: Gender, Labor, and Technology in the Bell System*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001), 237.

addition, much needed dollars had to be raised to pay the expenses of researching the class action suit. So women professors and their supporters held fund raisers and organized broadly. Minutes for a FWE meeting in April 1982 emphasized the commitment and enthusiasm FWE members had from the effort.

Twenty four people gathered for the FWE meeting at the Park Plaza Restaurant, Salem 6:30 pm on April 1 – and it was no joke! Several of the members had just attended a wine and cheese benefit given by a group from WOSC for our law suit.²⁷

Attorney Don Willner agreed to take the case on a contingency basis, but on-going expenses still presented themselves to the members of the FWE – often at \$1,000 increments. The FWE consistently reminded members that the costs of trying this case needed payment up front. “Remember, our attorneys receive nothing at this time – their fees are contingent on a successful completion of this case, and will be set by the court.”²⁸ In April of 1982 the FWE had paid out \$6,073.86 in expenses, and still owed a balance of \$1,735.72.²⁹ By the time the Willner finished his closing remarks, the courts expenses for FEW reached \$220,000 as opposed to the \$3 million spent by the state board of education.³⁰

Unlike the deep pockets of the state of Oregon, the FWE needed to find the money to finance the case. The money to try the class action suit came from contributions from the national, state, and local AAUP chapters, personal

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²⁷ *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 1982).

²⁸ “Treasurer’s Report,” *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, November 1982).

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ “US Judge Finds No Bias Pattern in Oregon Case: Women sought \$30 million in damages, vow to appeal,” *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (February 27, 1985, Volume XXIX, Number 24), 1.

contributions, and a whole host of fund raisers. “We need more money raising ideas. Hilda is selling pecans at \$6/lb. We must not forget to solicit the men.”³¹ Since none of the women professors could write a large check, the women utilized informal networks and personal social connections to earn the money. By January of 1983, the FWE was still \$2,100 in debt and the bills continued to mount.³² The women pressed on, drawing on old methods: saving Flav Pac and Santiam labels, even working in retail during peak inventory periods at Meier and Frank to provide the needed labor – literally taking on more wage labor. During the 1970s and 1980s, Meier and Frank employed nonprofit groups do their annual inventory. Instead of a pay roll, the company cut a check to the organization supplying the labor. In addition to the fundraisers, personal contributions were sought on a continual basis. “Hilda Young, treasurer, reported that every time a letter goes out for donations, it pays off.”³³

The FWE and Committee W workers also put pressure on the Oregon legislature by lobbying representatives and senators to advocate for pay equity. However, the Penk case topped their agenda between 1981 and 1983. Pleas continually went out to the membership to motivate the women to remain committed to the class action suit. A list of “if” questions was distributed to FEW supporters with the purpose to inspire more contributions – an especially difficult

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³¹ “Treasurer’s Report,” *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, December 1982).

³² Treasurer’s Report, *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 1983).

³³ “Treasurer’s Report,” *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, June 1983).

request as a recession hit the state and nation in 1981. President Margaret

Lumpkin's list of "if" questions also articulated the principles central to many of the values found in the women's movement – equity, progress, equality, and justice.

The following questions called upon supporters and sympathizers to reflect and act upon their commitment to gender equity within higher education in Oregon.

1. If the principle of equity is more important to you than the potential financial awards.
2. If you want to be a part of the most significant legislation in higher education since WWII.
3. If you want to enjoy equal financial rewards and poverty with our male colleagues.
4. If you want to leave a legacy of equity in higher education to your young female students who aspire to college and university teaching.
5. If you believe that female faculty members, because of the ways in which we were socialized, make unique contributions which should be recognized by comparable pay and promotional opportunities.
6. If you believe that women in higher education carry their full share of the responsibilities and deserve a full share of the financial benefits.
7. If you believe that women (and men!) reach their potential personally and professionally when they know they are treated honestly and fairly in their chosen profession.
8. If you believe that the academic community should be leaders in social reform and civil rights as well as in the military –scientific-industrial complex
9. If you believe the many capable women are unable to challenge the system to secure their individual rights without group support.
10. If you grieve for many of our talented colleagues who have lost their jobs primarily because of their sex.³⁴

Clearly Lumpkin, an education professor at OSU and the FWE chair appealed to her colleague's sense of professionalism and pride in their chosen field. The language used to inspire the devotion of civil rights and women's movement activists, found

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³⁴ "President's Report," *Faculty Women for Equity Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, August 1983).

Page 86 is missing from the original print thesis

there listening to this half-assed attempt to justify what they'd been doing."³⁹ To Thompson's dismay, administrators justified the inequities and defended the system of awarding the extra compensation to men based on their family status.⁴⁰

The Penk case contained 25,000 pages of transcript, 220 witnesses, 10,000 exhibits and the state. The state of Oregon spent an unprecedented \$3 million defending the case. L.Llyod Helikson, of the Oregon Attorney General Office, declared before the trial began that the state would defend the case vigorously.⁴¹ In order to do so, OSSHE retained a Philadelphia defense firm to represent the state. OSSHE's primary reason for putting so much money into defending their position because officials asserted that they had not violated Title VII and could not afford to lose because a judgment might mean ten million dollars.⁴²

The plaintiffs spent roughly \$200,000 – mainly raised by donations from the FWE, AAUP, and AAUW (American Association of University Women), personal donations, wine and cheese parties, and other fund raisers. Despite their efforts, the Judge Frye decided against the women. "The decision was particularly difficult for the plaintiffs to accept because of the massive amount of anecdotal evidence that they had put forth."⁴³ The loss was quite a blow for the people working on the issue because of the intense amount of work, time, and energy expended by the plaintiffs and their supporters. The number of months and years it took to develop

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³⁹ Focus Group.

⁴⁰ Solomon, January 17, 1984.

⁴¹ Solomon, January 10, 1984.

⁴² "Pay Suit Costs," *PSU Vanguard*, (January 13, 1984), 2.

⁴³ Carolyn Buan, *The First Duty: The History of the District Courts of Oregon*, (Portland, OR: US District Court of Oregon Historical Society, 1993), 234.

the case also wore members down. The 487-page opinion passed down by Judge Frye reflected the difficulty of the case and she scolded both sides for not resolving the issue more rapidly and with less cost.⁴⁴ Court Historian Carol Buan analyzed the Penk decision:

The Penk plaintiffs had to prove their case by statistics in order to establish that the institutions had treated women, as a group, differently from men, as a group. The plaintiffs took objective factors such as level of education, years teaching, and age and showed that male faculty members were paid about \$2300 more a year...the state responded that the plaintiffs' statistics were flawed because other factors were used in making salary and promotion decisions, such as teaching ability and scholarship...these latter factors are subjective and the plaintiffs could not refute them.⁴⁵

The Penk case made national education news and professors around the country took note. The case made the front page of the Chronicle of Higher Education after Judge Frye announced her ruling. AAUP members discussed the decision at a national conference. Tom Morris, PSU History Faculty member, and a member of the AAUP leadership supported the women's case and expressed disappointment that a successful outcome was not reached.

I wanted to win and we didn't get it and at that time I was on...about a year later....I was on the Committee A at the National level and Mary Gray who was also on that committee, Committee A, cornered me once and said that we blew it badly here, our statistics weren't persuasive, they were badly done. And that was....that planted a germ in my mind, anyway, at least Mary, who was a mathematician, thought that we really did a bad job. And it was such an important issue; it was statewide. And you don't go back and redo the statistics very effectively.⁴⁶

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⁴⁴ "No Bias Pattern Found at Oregon Colleges," Chronicle.

⁴⁵ Baun.

⁴⁶ Morris Interview.

The core of the case relied heavily on statistical analysis and establishing patterns of bias. Unfortunately, the plaintiffs did not produce solid enough evidence for the judge. Frye threw out 55 of the 58 complaints on the grounds that the plaintiffs presented very little evidence of sex discrimination.

After the decision came down from Judge Frye, the women faculty announced that they intended to appeal the case. However, it does not appear that the Penk case was ever appealed. On the surface the decision seemed unsuccessful. However, according to Loren Nussbaum, a part-time faculty member who became full time in 1978 remembers that department heads [after the Penk decision] became “much more careful with the way they treated women”⁴⁷ As she observed, “we were promoted to associate and full professor and were treated better after we lost. We lost the battle, but won the war.”⁴⁸ Thompson concurred “I think what it did was force people to clean up their act.”⁴⁹

In 1985, the OSSHE Fact Book (a statistical analysis of the Oregon University System) did not include a gender component in the report on faculty. By 1987, a headcount of faculty by rank and gender became standard. Women made up 22.1% of the full time faculty unit in 1987: the numbers increased to 28.2% in 1993.⁵⁰ Currently women make up 40.5% of full-time faculty members at PSU as

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⁴⁷ Focus Group.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ *Oregon State System of Higher Education Fact Book: 1987 – 1988*, (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Office of Administration, January 1989) and *Oregon State System of Higher Education Fact Book: 1992 - 1993*, (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Office of Administration, January 1994).

compared to UO at 36.45% and OSU at 28.2%.⁵¹ There is a long history of empirical investigation into gender equity for women faculty and, in general, studies have shown there is still the unexplained wage gap in academia.⁵² Women of color face an even more complex situation as they face double discrimination and on the whole earn a smaller salary than their white counterparts in higher education.⁵³

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, women's groups organized on the national, regional, and local level to promote the gender equality and equity in the work environment. The women professors of Oregon used the court system to try to mandate that salary and promotion practices work equally for men and women. Even though the women lost their case in the US District Court of Oregon, they raised awareness about the issue. The awareness eventually caused some glacial change. In the 1980s, union leadership and student activists at PSU supported the women's demand for pay equity. At the same time, the AAUP and other activists continued fighting another battle: stable funding for education.⁵⁴

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⁵¹ *Oregon State System of Higher Education Fact Book: 2001 -2002*, (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Office of Administration, January 2003).

⁵² Robert K. Toutkoushian, "Addressing Gender Equity in Non faculty Salaries," *Research in Higher Education*, (August 2002, Vol. 41, no. 4), 417.

⁵³ Patricia Bassett, "The Minority Female in Postsecondary Education: Challenges and Strategies," *Women in Higher Education*, edited by Lynne B. Welch, (New York, New York: Praeger, 1990), 238.

⁵⁴ Editorials in both the PSU Vanguard (February 10, 1984) and The Chronicle of Higher Education (February 1985) urged OSSHE to make changes for a more just and equitable salary and promotion system.

Chapter Eight – First Negotiations

Activists involved in the Penk case, also played a role in bringing the union to PSU. Weikel, Spencer, and Morris, people who supported the push for gender equity at PSU, also put their efforts into establishing collective bargaining on campus in the late 1970's. After successfully campaigning for the AAUP to serve as the collective bargaining agent for PSU's full-time faculty, the chapter began reorganizing to incorporate union business into their association. AAUP officers Barney Burke and David Newhall assumed the leadership as the organization transitioned from a professors' association to a collective bargaining unit. The work of the AAUP involved hiring an office administrator, reorganizing the leadership structure, securing office space, conducting a membership drive and collecting documents to help prepare for the first negotiations. The PSU-AAUP Executive Council portrayed a positive outlook toward their new situation by pronouncing a new era, to deal "openly and democratically in our business."¹ The union intended to be upfront with the administration, and not operate secretly. Both the PSU administration and faculty prepared for negotiations by researching the tactics of more seasoned colleagues. While caution was felt on both sides, the faculty looked to the future optimistically and management eyed the change with skepticism.²

In March of 1978, President Blumel and the AAUP Vice President, David Newhall, began identifying matters for resolution during the pre-contract period.

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¹ *Newsletter of the PSU Chapter of the AAUP*, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, (April 1978).

² Joseph Blumel to David Newhall, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, (April 11, 1978) and newsletter reference above.

Initially, the union leadership and the administration worked to reach agreements on correct legal, and appropriate practices necessary in a unionized institution. For example, since the law did not permit the use of college mail or duplicating facilities to promote union activity, AAUP representatives had to either outsource services or make arrangements for payment through college channels. Issues such as mailing, telephone costs, and rent were not divisive because the Oregon Administrative Rules clearly defined collective bargaining laws.

According to Donald Moor, Newhall, the individual selected to lead the organization in its first round of negotiations, was “solid and an old timer, highly regarded and a friend of the president [Blumel]. He helped quite a lot to keep things calm and avoid animosity.”³ Newhall and the rest of the council wanted to keep down the level of conflict in order to maintain a stable relationship with the administration so that negotiations would be less contentious.⁴ Faculty and administrators who opposed unionization often cited the possibility of acrimony as a reason not to bring collective bargaining to PSU, so AAUP leadership tried to suppress any rancorous interactions. Newhall equated the process to competitive sports⁵ - an analogy President Blumel appreciated and took to heart. Blumel choose to interact with union representatives in a formal manner and documented informal conversations in a memo or letter after they occurred. Blumel believed in following the law rigidly. Soon after the vote to unionize, he communicated to Newhall his

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³ Moor.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Joseph C. Blumel to Professor David Newhall. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 11, 1978).

perceived obligation to “consider carefully the implications of any agreements made or services provided which are not required of management prior to the conclusion of the contract.”⁶ Informal agreements, made over lunch at the University Club or around the water cooler, became a relic of the past when it came to labor relations. In the future, professors’ salaries would be determined at the negotiation table, not through a personal conversation with a dean as Ralph Bunch experienced before unionization.⁷

Process was one matter, substance and power proved to be quite another. By the end of March 1978, a disagreement arose between the administration and the AAUP over the determination of department chair status as either management or faculty. The administration defined department chairs as historically management and placed them on the excluded list of represented employees. The AAUP, however, considered them part of the faculty and argued that they belonged in the bargaining unit. The AFT, OSEA, and the AAUP fought with OSSHE administrators [prior to the PSU vote for collective bargaining] on this issue. OSEA took the matter up with the Oregon Employees Relations Board in 1975, a move that delayed union elections on Oregon’s college campuses.⁸ AFT and AAUP organizers believed the OSEA pushed for the hearing in 1975 order to secure more time to gain support among the faculty for their organization.⁹

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⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Focus Group.

⁸ Ed Uecker, “OSEA delays PSU Collective Bargaining,” *PSU Vanguard*, (July 7, 1975), 1.

⁹ Ibid.

Oregon was not the only state debating this issue of the status of department chairs. National higher education organizations, like the College and University Personnel Association, debated the notion of how to classify department chairs in the 1970s as either management or employees. One scholar expressed the problems with the issue by stating “the leadership role of the department heads in large universities is vague and enigmatic.”¹⁰ An inherent tension existed in the role of the department chair because many administrators and professors agreed that department chairs represented the needs and aspirations of the faculty, but also represented the values and goals of the administration.¹¹ Collective bargaining sharpened the dichotomy because traditionally department heads remained classified as faculty. Determining a department chair’s status in an education institutional depended upon the tasks assigned to the individual. The Employee Relation’s Board interpreted the law to read that department chairs who possessed the authority to hire and fire and made the decisions about tenure and promotion acted as supervisors.

PSU’s administration considered department chairs to be managers even though they had some teaching responsibilities and benefited directly from any agreements made between the administration and the AAUP. The PSU administration argued that department chairs within the institution derive “substantial discretion and authority of day to day operations. If department heads

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¹⁰ Frank W. Lutz and Margaret Ramsey Gaberina, “The Role of the University Department Head,” *Journal of the College and University Personnel Association*, (NASPA Publication, Volume 30, No. 2. (Summer 1979), 67.

¹¹ Ibid.

were included in the bargaining unit, another level of supervisory employee would be required.”¹² The union disagreed with this stance and challenged management by stating “authority of department heads flows from the faculty. Many department heads appear to administer on the basis of faculty consensus and that departments’ heads represent faculty, rather than administration.”¹³

The issue came to a head in April of 1978 when AAUP’s Executive Council attempted to institute an AAUP Liaison Committee as a communication device between the departments and the union. In an attempt to better organize the unit and spread the power to the rank and file, Gordon Dodds, David Newhall, and Elaine Spencer made a request to department chairs on behalf of the council. Department chairs received a memo asking them to “arrange for the selection” of a faculty member from each department to serve on a liaison committee between union leadership and departments.¹⁴ The administration strongly objected to this way of organizing the unit. Blumel was “astounded” that such a request was made by the AAUP leadership and instructed department heads not to respond to the request.¹⁵ PSU administrators insisted that the fulfillment of the union’s request would put the University in a position of committing an unfair labor practice of interference or assistance in the administration of an employee organization.¹⁶ Blumel asked the AAUP to observe the fact that there must be “consistency and accountability in

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¹² PSU AAUP v. State of Oregon, Case No C181, Oregon Employment Relations Board, (PSU Archives, Box 373: Portland State University).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Joseph C. Blumel to Gordon Dodds, David Newhall, and Elaine Spencer, Memorandum, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, March 31, 1978).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

managerial functions of the University, including those performed by department heads. This requires that administrative direction come from management alone.”¹⁷

The exclusion of department chairs from the bargaining unit was the most contentious part of the union’s beginning and faculty viewed the administration’s resistance as an attempt to weaken the unit.¹⁸

Past practices of the Oregon Employment Relations Board had allowed department chairs to be included in the bargaining unit, so it was a surprise to the AAUP leadership when they were treated differently than Southern Oregon College’s (SOC) independent professor’s union. The reason lay in the difference between the tasks assigned to a department chairs at SOC and PSU. The Employee Relation’s Board (ERB) interpreted SOC’s department chair duties as ones where they represent their colleagues to administration rather than act as supervisors.¹⁹ The ERB disagreed with AAUP’s position and ruled that after “careful examination of testimony reveals that the answers [AAUP’s] were beliefs or perceptions of witness rather than facts.”²⁰ The union emphasized that by operating on a consensus model, department chairs did not act as managers, rather as facilitators. The ERB dismissed this argument because “consensus management did not result in abdication of authority.”²¹ In other words, department chairs acted as supervisors within the department, a task that would exclude an employee from being a part of a bargaining unit. The AAUP swallowed the ruling and agreed to exclude department

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¹⁷ Joseph Blumel to David Newhall, (April 11, 1978).

¹⁸ Moor Interview.

¹⁹ PSU AAUP vs. State of Oregon, Case No C181, 5.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

chairs, but voiced opposition to the ruling because higher education was not an industrial business where “there has to be an administrator....on the shop floor.”²²

Faculty members, like Ansel Johnson, Barry Anderson, and Stan Hillman chose to pay union dues even though they were “technically” classified management by the institution. Ansel Johnson in the Geology department served as department chair 13 of his 25 years at PSU and “maintained full membership the whole time through” because his “salary was fixed by” the bargaining process.²³ Other active union members acted similarly.

PSU’s administration carefully set authoritative boundaries with the union and at the same time issued statements depicting a spirit of cooperation with union representatives in university memos. The college president made it clear to the AAUP that the Executive Council should not “take for granted any service which is not legally required.”²⁴ Office space was one such issue. An area was offered to the AAUP in sub basement of Smith Center which would be rented to the union on a month-to-month basis at the market rate. Administration warned the union not to get too comfortable because once renovation began in June of 1978, they might lose their space. Blumel made it clear that “accommodations are outside of the bargaining process” and should not enter into negotiations.²⁵ Office space, a trivial matter compared to salary packages and retrenchment procedures, was an area the

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²² Moor Interview.

²³ Johnson Interview.

²⁴ Blumel to Newhall.

²⁵ Ibid.

administration had control over, not the union. In the end, the AAUP remained in Smith Center and retained a campus presence.

Membership numbers are a large component of a union's perceived strength.²⁶ So, increased membership became one of the first actions of the AAUP collective bargaining unit. The union leadership asserted in a newsletter that "our bargaining position will be strengthened by a large membership, and final bargaining positions will be more democratically representative of the view of the majority of the bargaining unit."²⁷ The Executive Council's initial strategy involved one-on-one conversations; discussions where union advocates encouraged their colleagues to join. Ann Weikel remembers a tremendous effort to get key faculty members in departments first to talk to their colleagues.²⁸ Friendships brought people like Don Moor, into the union. Moor joined the AAUP after receiving a home visit from AAUP chapter president, Bob Stanley, in 1972. Moor joined the list of department chairs who retained AAUP membership during his tenure as a supervisor.²⁹

Friendly persuasion supplied only one tactic to increase membership. Union leaders also communicated to the PSU faculty that "members only" would receive the opportunity to provide input into important decisions like the chapter's constitution and any other special AAUP committee related to bargaining. Many of the issues discussed in special committees directly affected faculty life and careers;

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²⁶ Howard B. Means and Philip W. Semas, *A Chronicle of Higher Education Handbook: Faculty Collective Bargaining*. (Washington D.C.: Editorial Projects for Education, 1976), 25.

²⁷ *PSU AAUP Newsletter* (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 1978).

²⁸ Weikel Interview.

²⁹ Moor Interview.

issues like promotion, tenure, and shared governance. The AAUP also acknowledged that increased membership meant increased dollars for the union to better serve the faculty in a collective bargaining situation. The council kept dues “deliberately low” the first year in order to entice new members.³⁰ However, without a Fair Share agreement, an agreement where all faculty would pay membership dues, professors could choose to opt out of assisting with the financial burden of running a union while enjoying the benefits of any successes.

The negotiating team placed an emphasis on including a process to hold a Fair Share election in 1979 agreement. A Fair Share employee is someone who makes a payment in lieu of dues to a union, normally equivalent to the dues paid by voluntary members.³¹ (ORS 243.650(10)) An employee who strongly objected to union activity was allowed to contribute their Fair Share to a charitable organization mutually agreed to by the employee and the union (ORS 243.666). The first contract between management and faculty at PSU included Article 8, Section 1 allowing for the association to “conduct a secret mail ballot election among members of the bargaining unit to determine if members of the bargaining unit who are not members of the Association shall make a Fair Share payment to the Association.”³²

In order to prepare for the first collective bargaining session, the AAUP leadership created Special Service Committees to formulate bargaining positions on

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³⁰ Weikel Interview.

³¹ Larry Filsinger, “Legislative Analysis,” *Oregon Legislative Policy, Research, and Committee Services Publication*, (Salem, Oregon: Oregon State Legislature, October 1978), 3.

³² *Agreement Between Portland State University and AAUP-PSU 1979 – 1981*, (PSU Archives, Box 383: Portland State University).

special issues.³³ They requested information like budget summaries from the college and OSSHE, and asked the national AAUP organization for materials designed to help them develop a sound strategy for negotiations. David Newhall asked an OSSHE representative to place the AAUP on their mailing list to receive meeting agendas and minutes from the Chancellor's office. In a letter to an OSSHE administrator he wrote, "collective bargaining in the academic world should be conducted with a sense of responsibility and respect for factual information that is characteristic of research in the academic world" and argued that OSSHE and the AAUP share the same values "even though in other ways we have taken on adversary roles."³⁴ Similar requests were made to collect financial, tenure and promotion guidelines, departmental rules for setting policy and legal documents – all necessary information for the faculty to enter negotiations well informed and prepared. The negotiating team received the AAUP's Statement on Collective Bargaining which asks chapter negotiating teams to first "protect and promote the professional and economic interests of the faculty as a whole" and after that "maintain and enhance within the institution structures of representative governance" and followed by the instruction to "obtain explicit guarantees of academic freedom and tenure."³⁵

At first, administrators were reluctant to fulfill the AAUP's requests.

Blumel asked the administrators to "not to give any information to AAUP people"

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³³ *PSU AAUP Chapter Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 3, 1978).

³⁴ David Newhall to Ms. Wilma Foster, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, May 5, 1978).

³⁵ *Ibid.*

unless it was required by law.³⁶ However, that level of animosity ceased once negotiations began and the tension associated with the first round of negotiations minimized. PSU and OSSHE representatives complied with AAUP requests as long as they were within the scope of the law. While the AAUP national office was relatively new to collective bargaining, the organization had developed materials and principles local chapters needed like the *AAUP Red Book* and the *Primer on Collective Bargaining for College and University Faculty*. The national office developed these resources for collective bargaining teams in an effort to aid faculty negotiators with strategy, data collection, and mediation techniques.

When negotiations began in August of 1978, university administrators wrestled with the ongoing financial crisis hampering Oregon's higher education system. The legislature, unable to come to any sort of agreement, could not supply the chancellor and college administrators with budget figures for the coming biennium. This reality contributed to some of the tensions at the bargaining table. The chapter council appointed David Newhall to chair the negotiations; Barry Anderson (Psychology), John Erdman (Mathematics), Ansel Johnson (Geology), Donald Moor (Philosophy), and Ann Weikel (History) rounded out the faculty collective bargaining team.³⁷ Members were keenly aware of the financial stress associated with decreased funding levels for higher education and strongly believed that faculty input would be essential in any future decision relating to budget cuts and retrenchment. The administration appointed Bill Lemman as chief negotiator

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³⁶ Moor Interview.

³⁷ Dodds, 388.

(OSSHE); Michael Corn (Assistant to the President on Legal Affairs), Kenneth Harris (PSU Budget Officer), Leon Richelle, and James Todd served as the university's bargaining team.³⁸ "Very gingerly," the two negotiating teams got into the issues, and probably because of their lack of experience, the first collective bargaining session lasted over a year.³⁹ In comparison to collective bargaining sessions conducted on other college campuses in the 1970s, the first PSU negotiations are considered lengthy.⁴⁰ St. John's University completed their first negotiations in five months in 1970 and Temple University ratified their first contract nine months after selecting the AAUP as their bargaining unit.⁴¹

The PSU faculty put forth numerous proposals, but the administration rarely contributed ideas on their own.⁴² Johnson perceived the administration to be unwilling to talk about the issues the union brought to the table – issues that ranged from retrenchment and exigency procedures to salary scales – which slowed down the negotiating process and made the situation more adversarial.⁴³

Lengthy negotiations disrupted the consistency of the negotiating teams as well. Johnson left to become faculty chair and Ralph Bunch, newly elected AAUP President, replaced him. Moor also thought rancor was introduced into the bargaining process when Vice Chancellor Bill Lemman left the process and turned it

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³⁸ Joseph C. Blumel to Ralph Bunch, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, August 24 1978).

³⁹ Dodd Interview.

⁴⁰ Matthew W. Finkin, Robert A. Goldstein, Woodley B. Osborne, *A Primer on Collective Bargaining for College and University Faculty*, (Washington D.C.: Publication of the American Association of University Professors, 1979).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Johnson Interview.

⁴³ Ibid.

over to a professional negotiator from the east coast who was “contentious to put it mildly. He regarded this as combat.”⁴⁴ Faculty members held little respect for the administration’s negotiators during the beginning of the process. Even Lemman, a PSU alum , was not highly regarded because the faculty saw the entire administrative negotiating team as unreasonable. However, according to Anderson, Lemman’s demeanor changed at the end and he acted reasonably and provided leadership for the administrative team to work on the issues and complete the bargaining on August 3, 1979.⁴⁵ In September of 1979, the union informed the faculty that an accord had been reached on a two-year agreement and asked the membership to ratify the document.

PSU’s AAUP President Ralph Bunch communicated to the faculty that the “chief strength of the first contract lies in the articles which preserve past practices and provide for improved procedures with respect to grievances, retrenchment, and hearings with respect to retrenchment.”⁴⁶ Bunch considered the new contract to contain the best exigency provision of any university in the AAUP.⁴⁷ In the 1970’s, at least half of the unionized campuses represented by the AAUP did not include financial exigency procedures in their agreements. For example, Central Michigan, Oakland, and CUNY contracts contained no mention of retrenchment procedures

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⁴⁴ Moor Interview.

⁴⁵ Anderson Interview.

⁴⁶ Ralph Bunch to AAUP-PSU Membership, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 4, 1979).

⁴⁷ “Faculty Ratifies Union Contract,” *PSU Vanguard*, Vol. 35, Number 9, (September, 25, 1979), p. 7.

while St. Johns and Rutgers provided for faculty involvement.⁴⁸ Faculty negotiators felt like they achieved something beneficial through the establishment of procedures for the protection of professors in layoffs in financial emergencies.⁴⁹ PSU's retrenchment agreement did go further than some of other chapters, like Wayne State, who negotiated for reductions in staff to be made in inverse order of seniority, but had not pushed for provision for faculty involvement in the process.⁵⁰

Bunch also wrote that the salary achievement is comparable to many of the more established public universities who had enjoyed better compensation for the same work in the past. The 1979 contract brought PSU's professor's salaries within \$7,000 per year (on the average) of their UO and OSU equivalents, narrowing the gap.⁵¹ He also pointed out that collective bargaining gave the faculty three benefits not available before: specified amounts for promotion were provided and were higher; promotion money would not come from general pay dollars, rather from other sources, and merit pay was restricted to 1% during the biennium.⁵² While the AAUP collective bargaining team experienced relief to have completed the process, they also held a realistic understanding about the financial future of the institution and potential problems. As Bunch wrote in the union newsletter, "all indicators point toward serious financial strains for public higher education over the next few years with political pressures growing out of financial problems."⁵³ Unfortunately

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⁴⁸ Joseph Garbarino, *Faculty Bargaining*, (New York: McGraw Hill, 1975).

⁴⁹ Moor Interview.

⁵⁰ Garbarino.

⁵¹ OUS Fact Book.

⁵² Bunch to Membership Letter.

⁵³ Ibid.

recurring Oregon's financial crises have continued to impact interactions negatively between the union and management.

PSU's first collective bargaining experience between administration and the academics consumed more time than most other negotiation sessions in higher education. Salary and promotion are key factors in negotiations for all college professors, but PSU differed in that the collective bargaining team focused on bringing their unit's salaries on par with the two major universities in Oregon. The AAUP's objectives also went beyond protecting the economic interests of the faculty: their job also entailed enhancing structures of representative governance and guarantees of academic freedom. In 1979, at the conclusion of the first negotiation session, the PSU AAUP made gains to secure procedures to allow for the voice of professors to be heard on matters related to their work place and careers. The first collective bargaining agreement between PSU and the AAUP set a solid foundation for future interactions between the administration and the faculty. Strengthening faculty participation in governance through collective bargaining proved a crowning achievement at PSU, a top priority for many faculty union negotiation sessions in higher education during the 1980's.⁵⁴

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⁵⁴ Irving J. Spitzberg, "Report of the General Secretary: Governing the Futures of Higher Education," *Academe*, (September – October 1984), 19a.

Chapter Nine – Retrenchment – The Ugly Eighties

PSU AAUP leadership took pride in the accomplishments of the 1979 agreement between the college and the faculty – especially the formalization of the procedures related to financial emergencies. “Successfully implementing procedures that made it more difficult for administrators to exercise their will and fire at will”¹ was something History Professor Tom Morris reflects as one of the reasons he takes pride in his association with the AAUP. Article 18 of the 1979 contract proved to be especially important as the state budget crisis heightened in the 1980s, threatening faculty positions. Article 18 required the University to provide for full disclosure of all relevant budgetary information on which action must be based for financial exigency. Also, a series of clearly defined steps would need to be followed to insure full faculty involvement in the formulation of policies designed to meet the financial crunch. As AAUP President Rudi Nussbaum pointed out, “The extreme importance to the faculty and the institution as a whole of Article 18 should now be evident to all PSU faculty, in particularly those who remember the horrors of the last financial crisis in 1974.”²

In 1980, the AAUP’s constitution called for new leadership, and the faculty elected Rudi Nussbaum from the Physics’ department to fulfill the position. He served as the liaison between the union and the college administration during a contentious period of PSU’s history, an era when the administration declared

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¹ Morris Interview.

² Rudi Nussbaum to the PSU Faculty, *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, July 14, 1980).

financial exigency, putting faculty jobs at risk. Nussbaum joined the AAUP after being recruited by Newhall in the early seventies. He slowly involved himself in the politics of the union because he approved of the AAUP's focus on faculty life. Nussbaum recalled as a professional association in the early 1970s, the AAUP focused on participation in faculty governance. However, he described the administration role as a benevolent dictatorship, with a friendly face.³ As an avid proponent of a student-centered approach to higher education, Nussbaum challenged his colleagues to keep the students in mind when working on issues associated with the union. Nussbaum felt like the PSU AAUP put too little emphasis on matters related to promoting a more student-friendly faculty. Because Nussbaum viewed union issues more broadly than those associated with "bread and butter," he challenged his colleagues to recognize issues such as "relationships between faculty and students, the rights of students and unregulated faculty privileges."⁴ Faculty privileges, he claimed, hampered student's rights. For example, he believed a professor's right to check out library books all year infringed on student's rights because that privilege denied student access to academic resources. He also railed against faculty who chose not to be accountable for the responsibility a teacher had to return papers and examinations.

Despite Nussbaum's strong belief that the union should address issues like keeping office hours and providing feedback to students, the budget took precedence. Student activists also supported the union's focus on resolving the

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³ Nussbaum Interview.

⁴ Ibid.

budget crisis because the problem affected the students through shrinking course options and crowded classrooms. Student activists worked within the PSU chapter of OSPIRG (Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group) and a newly formed organization called Students for Effective Politics (SFEP) to promote a political response from the student population about the dwindling financial support of higher education in the state of Oregon. Registering student voters and voicing concerns about access to education became a primary focus for both OSPIRG and SFEP.⁵

The budget crisis consumed the PSU community. When the AAUP was about to begin the second round of collective bargaining, the budget crisis intensified and engrossed the governor, legislature, chancellor's office, college administrators, the faculty, and the students. President Blumel "feared that it [the budget crisis] would result in the need to declare a state of financial exigency and thereby result in layoffs or terminations of academic and classified staff."⁶ During the summer of 1980, the PSU AAUP, AAUP State Federation, and the Association of Faculties (AOF) kept abreast of the events developing and decisions being made in the governor's, Chancellors, and college President's offices. The faculty and administration met throughout the summer seeking a "joint administration-faculty responsibility toward seeking the least damaging course of action."⁷ The AAUP leadership welcomed back new and returning colleagues to the 1980 – 81 academic

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⁵ Jeff Strange, "Vote or don't bitch: Groups Fight Voter Apathy," *PSU Vanguard*, Volume 36, No. 12. (October 10, 1980), 1.

⁶ Joseph Blumel to Colleagues, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, August 19, 1980).

⁷ Rudi Nussbaum to the PSU Faculty, *Memorandum*, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 26, 1980).

year with good news – all who were promised positions in the spring received “Notices of Appointment” in September. College officials filled the budget holes by making reductions in library and equipment acquisitions, and placing a freeze on hiring both classified and unclassified staff.⁸ Both administration and faculty members expressed hope that “problems were transitory and longer term prospects for this University” are promising as the institution looked forward to celebrating its 25th year anniversary.⁹

Blumel’s prediction of a brighter budget forecast did not transpire in 1980. In fact, colleges and universities all over the United States experienced financial challenges. Higher education researchers examined how, “in a world of declining enrollments and tight budgets, university administrators will be hard-pressed to maintain the quality of teaching and research in their institutions.”¹⁰ Despite the dismal financial outlook, another round of collective bargaining was scheduled to begin at PSU in February of 1980. Nussbaum informed the administration of the union’s intent to open negotiations on Fair Share, salary, fringe benefits, and negotiation of a successor agreement.¹¹ Nussbaum also wanted another item added to the agenda. In January of 1980, he asked the council to endorse a proposal for

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⁸ Joseph C. Blumel to PSU Colleagues, August 19, 1980).

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Edward A. Bruss and Kenneth L. Kutina, “Faculty Vitality Given Retrenchment: A Policy Analysis,” *Research in Higher Education: Journal of The Association for Institutional Research*, (November 1981, Volume 14, Number 1), 19.

¹¹ Rudi Nussbaum to Joseph Blumel, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, December 30, 1980).

Institutional Career Support and Post-Tenure Peer Review.¹² The principles of the proposal revolved around providing faculty with budgetary support to provide a vehicle for increased realization of faculty potential by committing the institution to career development support.¹³ In the end, many of the agenda items for the upcoming negotiations would involve issues central to nurturing a strong faculty – issues that required dollars in a time when financial matters appeared precarious at best. The team taking on these challenges included Gordon Dodds, Vivienne Olson, Christine Thompson, and Donald Moor. Moor also added retirement and a stronger sabbatical leave proposals to the agenda.¹⁴

Nussbaum and Blumel communicated frequently about how the state budget would impact PSU – especially as the 1981 State Legislative session unfolded, revealing a dreadful financial picture. Reacting to the budget forecast, the PSU administration began talking about exigency again in February 1981. President Blumel informed the college community that he had “concluded that the University’s financial condition is such that a declaration of financial exigency or of department reduction or elimination may become unavoidable.”¹⁵ Shortly after the President’s letter was received, the union acknowledged Blumel’s dismal forecast, but encouraged an environment of cooperation. “While the atmosphere at PSU is one of pending crisis, with the general level of anxiety rising more rapidly than the

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¹² Rudi Nussbaum to the AAUP Executive Council, *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 23, 1980).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Donald Moor to Bill Lemman, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 21, 1981).

¹⁵ Joseph Blumel to the PSU Faculty, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, February 17, 1981).

CPI, it behooves all of us at this institution to take note of some realities which should help us maintain a calmer sense of perspective.”¹⁶

The administration announced, in May of 1981, that the joint subcommittee [composed of faculty and administrators] working to develop a Career Support and Peer Review Plan for faculty would dissolve. Administrators could not support plans that would cost the college much needed dollars. The announcement created an intense response from the union which asked Nussbaum to send a memo to the administration in response to their independent decision. He expressed disappointment in management because they “Unilaterally decided that further negotiations within the collegial mode about a constructive and effective career Support and Peer Review Plan” would be dropped from the table.¹⁷ The decision to cease negotiations on the topic came from the administration who claimed that the topic did not fall within the realm of the collective bargaining agreement. Union members saw it as a slap in the face because both sides had been “working with each other for many, many hours” to develop a proposal.¹⁸ Nussbaum felt “insulted” by the announcement when considering the number of hours dedicated to the issue by both sides of the table. He thought the administrative move sent a message that the efforts of the collective bargaining teams were an “exercise in

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¹⁶ Rudi Nussbaum to PSU Colleagues, PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, February 27, 1980).

¹⁷ Rudi Nussbaum to John Gruber and George Hoffman, *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, May 25, 1981).

¹⁸ Ibid

futility ever since the month of February when within the committee we had reached a full agreement.”¹⁹

Negotiations drug on through the summer, while the state legislature continued debating the higher education budget. Since no agreement had been reached between the AAUP and the faculty by mid summer, a mediator was called in the help resolve some of the more controversial issues. In July of 1981, Dr. Alton Smedstad, a mediator for the state was employed to help the two sides find resolution. The AAUP’s chief negotiator, David Newhall, wrote to Smedstad informing him that the two most important subjects of outstanding disagreement are salary and disciplinary action against faculty members.²⁰ Salary was the most adversarial because the administration “indicated their unwillingness to agree to any part” of the AAUP’s proposal, but had not submitted a counter offer.²¹ He also communicated that the two sides were close on many of the other issues and that there was “no prospect of agreement on post tenure review”.²² By the time the 1981 –82 academic year was underway, Dr. Smedstad, the mediator, helped the two sides come to an agreement. The bargaining team “with considerable reluctance” agreed to offer the tentative agreement to the membership for ratification.²³

The dissatisfaction with the agreement stemmed from compensation shortfalls; the “salary gains are less than we need or have earned,” stated AAUP

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¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Donald Moor to Dr. Alton Smedstad. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, July 28, 1981).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ PSU AAUP Executive Council to PSU-AAUP Membership, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 8, 1981).

President Nussbaum.²⁴ However, with respect to the decisions being made in the state legislature, the salary gains exceeded the impending legislature's allocation. The contention with the disciplinary action issue was resolved by eliminating the progressive sanction's article in the contract. [The union sought to replace the bureaucratic process with the right to arbitration.] The union felt like the administration gave the "impression that appropriate faculty conduct is more effectively elicited by threats of punishment than by maintaining appropriate incentives and working conditions."²⁵ In the end, the AAUP negotiating team questioned the good faith of the administration and felt disappointment that the collective bargaining process, "in light of common commitments and responsibilities to our institution" [the administration] lacked "serious problem-solving discussion" and was not "carried out in the spirit of mutual respect."²⁶ Although the contract was ratified by the AAUP membership by a vote concluded on September 18th, many members expressed strong dissatisfaction with the contract because the compensation package fell short and the hopes of establishing a career support and review program ended.²⁷

Two days after the new contract was signed, the administration announced their proposals for a 4% budget reduction. Immediately, the union came out publicly against the budget reduction choices made by management. "Considering its responsibilities toward the faculty, the students and the viability of Portland State

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²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Gordon Dodds, "Exigency: Initial Council Response," *AAUP PSU Newsletter*, Volume 5, Number 1, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 29, 1981).

University, PSU- AAUP rejects President Blumel's proposed plan for reduction and elimination of academic programs as a means to meet the drastic reductions in the budget;" a plan resulting in the elimination of 77 FTE in the biennium.²⁸ The union announced that, "We consider the proposed self-mutilation of our university to be lacking in justification and thus to be premature."²⁹ The AAUP council asked the administration to rescind the declaration of exigency because the Department of Education had not complied with the directive from the Legislature to base a long range plan for retrenchment on a thorough system wide analysis of the educational resources, demographic distribution of needs and fiscal constraints.³⁰ The union promoted the idea of making budget cut decisions based on a variety of factors as opposed to across the board cuts. AAUP went public with their opposition to the proposed budget cuts in a press release stating that the AAUP, "which is the bargaining agent for the 650 PSU faculty members, has unanimously rejected President Blumel's plan for firing faculty and eliminating programs under the recent declaration of financial exigency."³¹

The AAUP urged the administration to "resist making irreversible program eliminations until a more equitable plan for system-wide (the entire Oregon university system) retrenchment has been formulated and presented to the

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²⁸ PSU AAUP Executive Council, *Press Release*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 28, 1981).

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

faculty.”³² President Blumel and other PSU administrators had devised a plan for budget cuts which would eliminate several programs unique in the state of Oregon like Middle Eastern Studies. Letters to the editor, newspaper articles and an editorial by the *The Oregonian* fueled the debate. The lead editorial in *The Oregonian* on October 14th, urged the chancellor and state board of education to “examine the priorities within the state to make sure that, in trying to be fair to each school, they don’t cheat Oregon students out of academic excellence and opportunity to take those specialized programs.”³³ The elimination of programs like Middle Eastern Studies was viewed as especially short sighted in light of the volatile relationship between Arab nations and Israel. Faculty members argued that cutting this unique program that had been responsible for “training many Arabic, Farzi, Turkish, and Hebrew-speaking Americans” essential for communication between American, Arabs, and Israelis would be a loss to the state.³⁴

It was the AAUP’s contention that PSU administrators, faculty, and students needed to work together diligently to resolve the issues of financial exigency. In 1981, PSU was the only university in the state system to declare financial exigency and the faculty claimed that the Portland school was hurt more severely by higher education’s financial crisis than the state’s two older universities.³⁵ Nussbaum

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³² Rudi Nussbaum to Joesph Blumel, *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 11, 1981).

³³ Editorial Board, “PSU Surgery Needs Second Opinion,” *The Oregonian*, (Wednesday, October 14, 1981), B6.

³⁴ Randy Thompson, “Save Mideast Study,” *The Oregonian*. (Wednesday, October 21, 1981), editorial section.

³⁵ Carol Rubenstein, “Fiscal cuts tighten stranglehold on PSU,” *The Oregonian*, (February 26, 1984), 3M.

urged Blumel to work with the union to convince the Board of Education to take a course that would be the “least damaging to PSU and would in the long run also seem to be the most productive for the State System as a whole.”³⁶ The AAUP argued that it was in the best interests of the Oregon university system to keep PSU strong as an institution. Initially, the union sought to work with the administration to fight for more dollars to keep PSU healthy. In 1981, enrollment levels at PSU nearly equaled those of UO and OSU.³⁷ At the time, PSU served a larger proportion of part-time students, a factor that worked against the institution because part time students did not receive the same weight as full time students in the state’s funding formula.

After the barrage of media coverage, the administration revised their budget reduction plan. On November 3, 1981, a new plan was revealed. The *PSU Vanguard* characterized the administration’s action to a “quivering guillotine” where the full effect of the sharp blade was spared from several programs, namely the Women’s Studies Program and the Center for Moving Image.”³⁸ In response to the fuss made over Middle Eastern studies, a decision was made to incorporate the program into the international education office. An assortment of other departments received word that their discipline would lose 1 – 2 FTE. The new plan was not acceptable to the union and the student newspaper objected to the manner in which

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³⁶ Rudi Nussbaum to President Joseph Blumel, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 25, 1981).

³⁷ Official website for The Oregon University System, www.ous.edu/irs/factbook, as viewed on October 2, 2003.

³⁸ Pamela G. Reamer, “Blumel Outlines Final Program Reductions,” *PSU Vanguard*, (November 11, 1981), 1.

it was delivered. “Blumel showed a callous lack of consideration for faculty and staff members who are the victims of the program eliminations and reductions”, the editorial charged.³⁹ Administrator George Hoffman answered back by stating, “Critics are always in an enviable position since they have no responsibility for much of anything.”⁴⁰

Because the union perceived the chancellor’s office as dismissive regarding their concerns about the budget reductions, and the PSU administration acted on behalf of their superiors, the AAUP petitioned Multnomah County Circuit Court, for a review of a university plan to eliminate 40 full-time faculty positions during the 1982 – 83 academic year. The petition contended that PSU President Blumel’s declaration of financial exigency violated administration rules and the terms of the labor agreement between the college and the union.⁴¹ The AAUP claimed PSU was forced to absorb the \$1.4 million in cuts that were “not shared by other institutions.”⁴² It was argued that PSU’s large part-time student population caused the university to suffer disproportionately because the OSSHE funding formula awarded institutions like OSU and UO with more dollars. “PSU’s unique composition of students is creating even more economic hardship for the urban

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³⁹ “Say Something,” *PSU Vanguard*, (November 7, 1981), editorial section 1.

⁴⁰ George C Hoffman, “Paying the Bill,” *PSU Vanguard*, (November 20, 1981), editorial section 6.

⁴¹ David Whitney, “Professors Seek Review of PSU Cuts,” *The Oregonian*, (Wednesday, December 9, 1981), 3M.

⁴² *Ibid.*

university.”⁴³ The Oregon System of Higher education responded to the AAUP’s petition for judicial review with a motion to dismiss on March 19, 1982.⁴⁴

During this contentious time period the leadership of the AAUP changed and members elected History Professor Ann Weikel chapter President. Through the winter and spring of 1982, the AAUP negotiated with the administration about how the budget reductions would be implemented. Weikel believed one of the functions of the AAUP was to come up with different ideas. “The administration can get trapped; anybody can get trapped into doing things the same old way. And one of the things we [AAUP] could provide was these off the wall, (and random) ideas.”⁴⁵ Under the direction from the President, each department needed to decide how to enact reductions within their discipline.

The Philosophy department proposed a plan to avoid indefinite layoffs by “buying time” until the two most senior members retire, which meant sabbatical leaves without replacement and borrowing fractional FTE from elsewhere in the college.⁴⁶ In the end, with the support of the AAUP, each full-time faculty member took a term off without pay so they could preserve the numbers of people in the department.⁴⁷

In February of 1982, in an effort to gain a fresh perspective, PSU and the State AAUP jointly sponsored a visit by nationally renowned economist Mordechai

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⁴³ Pamela Reamer, “PSU Penalized for Part-Timers,” *PSU Vanguard*, (January 5, 1982), 5.

⁴⁴ James W. Kasameyer to Rudi Nussbaum, (PSU AAUP Archives, Kasameyer Box: Portland State University, April 22, 1982).

⁴⁵ Weikel Interview.

⁴⁶ “Plan Offers Alternative to Indefinite Layoff,” *AAUP PSU Newsletter*, (February 17, 1982), 3.

⁴⁷ Weikel Interview.

E. Kreinin, a professor who authored a plan for reducing and eliminating programs without resorting to dismissals for Michigan State University in 1980. His ideas helped administrators and faculty fuel new proposals for budget reductions. The attempts to find creative solutions to the problems met with disaster as the financial struggle in Salem spiraled downward. By March of 1982, the state board asked PSU to cut another \$155,000 and Blumel responded in April by asking the AAUP to delay the salary increases provided by the 1982 – 1983 contract.⁴⁸ After exhausting all options, the worn out academics reluctantly agreed on partially deferring the 1982 – 83 faculty salary increases.⁴⁹

By the end of the academic year, the sad reality hit the faculty and students that people would lose their jobs. The state's financial problems and the higher education funding formula hit PSU's budget hard which affected faculty life. As Rudi Nussbaum expressed in the organization's newsletter, "Many faculty members have experienced in recent years a painful erosion of their personal professional dreams and of their hopes for the University's evolution."⁵⁰ Weikel remembers the era with great sadness, "It was an awful time to be president. It wasn't fun, it was a sad and hard time."⁵¹

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⁴⁸ AAUP Executive Council to PSU AAUP Membership. "President Blumel Seeks Revision of Salary Contract Terms," *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 2, 1982).

⁴⁹ "82-83 Salary Plan Gets 'Tentative' OK," *AAUP PSU Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 24, 1982).

⁵⁰ Rudi Nussbaum, "From Past Presidents: Refreshing Wind from Down The-Valley." *PSU AAUP Newsletter*. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 12, 1982), 2.

⁵¹ Weikel Interview.

Chapter Ten – Survival

Between 1980 and 1985, enrollment shrank by 13% at Oregon's universities while the legislature decreased general fund dollars allocated to higher education by 2%.¹ Despite the shrinking budget and the depressing federal educational policies of the 1980s, the AAUP continued to fight for financial equity for PSU's professors and aid the victims of PSU's budgetary problems.

Economic hardships at PSU resulted in decreased numbers of tenure-track faculty, fewer services, and higher tuition. AAUP leadership understood the hardships imposed upon the terminated faculty in 1982, so the council voted to set up a faculty support fund to assist those laid off with needed travel dollars to interview for jobs. In honor of the chapter's diligence in working through the tough issues associated with financial exigency, the national AAUP, at its 68th Annual Meeting, awarded PSU the Konheim Award in 1982. Beginning in 1975, the AAUP awarded the Beatrice G. Konheim Award for Outstanding Chapter Achievement to locals advancing the association's objectives in academic freedom, student rights and freedoms, the status of academic women, the elimination of discrimination, and the establishment of equal opportunity for members of university faculties. The national AAUP selection committee was "particularly impressed by the strong and positive role of the Chapter in adhering to the basic AAUP principles in the context of collective bargaining negotiations and in dealing with a developing financial

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¹ *Oregon State System of Higher Education Fact Book 1986 – 1987*, (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Office of Administration, January 1987).

crisis necessitating faculty lay offs.”² The council voted unanimously to allocate the \$500 prize money to the PSU Foundation Faculty Support Fund.

Financial threats did not lessen during the 1980s. In 1983, Blumel again asked the faculty to cut costs. AAUP responded with creative solutions like suggesting the college “seek permission from the State Board of Higher Education to sell or dispose of certain properties.”³ The faculty also proposed that the university close while classes were not in session to save the dollars. Administration countered the suggestions with rationales explaining the sale of property would not help PSU, but would help OSSHE and that student opinion opposed PSU closing its doors.⁴ By December 1983, PSU announced that the university would save 1.7 million dollars by cutting 45 jobs and shut down the university’s Public Health Studies Center.⁵ By the beginning of 1984, the AAUP felt “clobbered” by the demands of the administration to continuously respond to requests for budget reductions that resulted in the loss of jobs and full time appointments.⁶

Despite the low morale, the association still had the responsibility to represent the faculty in negotiations. Barry Anderson acted as the chief negotiator for the AAUP and used a new method to work through the issues. “He tried to get

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² “Chapter Konheim Award Donated to Faculty Support Fund.” *PSU AAUP Newsletter*. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 12, 1982).

³ Douglas Pyle, “AAUP Against Financial Retrenchment.” *PSU Vanguard*, Vol. 39, No. 14, (October 14, 1983), 1.

⁴ Douglas Pyle, “Close School, Save Public Health Say Faculty.” *PSU Vanguard*. Vol 39, No. 21. (November 8, 1983), p. 1.

⁵ Scotta Callister, “PSU Reveals Plan to Cut Budget.” *The Oregonian*. (November 22, 1983), p. 3m.

⁶ Weikel Interview.

[find] win-win situations...the national thought he was crazy (for using an unorthodox approach to collective bargaining). They thought we were just out of our minds because the traditional is confrontational.”⁷ Anderson had an academic interest in conflict resolution and consensus decision-making and used his role as chief negotiator to practice his techniques.⁸ He was pleased with his results even though the 1983 – 85 agreement did not produce salary increases; the looming budget crisis hampered negotiations on salary.

Negotiations for the 1983 – 1985 contract lasted almost a year with the contract ratification taking place in the fall of 1984. Both contracts offered little in terms of salary increases because of the severe constraints under which the state operated in the 1980s.⁹ The omission of salary increases was in line with the rest of the state employees as no one earning a state paycheck received an increase in the biennium, including university professors at any of the Oregon state institutions of higher education.¹⁰ One of the greatest concerns of the faculty involved salary increases. Because the negotiating team was unable to secure a salary increase, the AAUP announced the key achievement in the contract as the establishment of a joint faculty and administrative committee to work for salary equity between PSU, UO and OSU. In order to accomplish this goal, the AAUP pushed the Oregon higher education board to institute a policy requiring that PSU be compared to the

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⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Anderson Interview.

⁹ Ann Weikel, Barry Anderson and Marv Beeson to AAUP Membership. (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, February 8, 1984).

¹⁰ Ibid.

UO and OSU in comparative salary studies.¹¹ In February of 1986, the board agreed to the demand: by 1988, PSU ranked higher than the UO on AAUP's *Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession*.

After the completion of the 1983 -85 collective bargaining agreement, the union leadership decided to exercise Article 8 of the contract and hold a Fair Share election. Even though most state laws allowed public employee unions to institute Fair Share into their agreements, Fair Share was a rarity in higher education in 1985. But the PSU AAUP thought that bringing "Fair Share" to PSU would boost the union's coffers and give them needed resources to hire a lobbyist in Salem to make the association a more viable political force. Since exclusive bargaining representatives, like the AAUP, must, by law, provide equal representation to all members of the bargaining unit in contract negotiations, grievances, and arbitration, before the Oregon Employment Relations Board, then every member of the unit "should pay their Fair Share of the real costs of representation," union leadership reasoned.¹² In the spring of 1985, the AAUP decided to hold a special "Fair Share" election. AAUP President Jack Finley urged the membership to answer yes to both questions and return ballots in before 4 p.m. on June 13, 1985.¹³ The results of the election proved positive, but short lived.

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¹¹ *Oregon State System of Higher Education Fact Book 1986 – 1987*, (Eugene, Oregon: Oregon State System of Higher Education, Office of Administration, February 1987).

¹² Jack Finley to the AAUP Membership, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, May 23, 1985).

¹³ Ibid.

Language in the agreement spelled out the procedure for holding a Fair Share election, including a time line where “the Association shall give the President of the University at least thirty (30) days notices of its intention to conduct a Fair Share election.”¹⁴ Unfortunately, the union leadership did not follow the timeline stated in the contract. “The administration just smiled and kept their mouths shut. They [the AAUP] got a majority votes and then the administration said, ‘well, this is an illegal Fair Share election’ and they were forced to swallow it”, Stan Hillman remembered.¹⁵ AAUP officials spent a great deal of time and energy and had not read the contract, which proved embarrassing on campus.¹⁶

The botched Fair Share election in June of 1985 fueled a movement on campus to decertify the union. The Yeshiva decision in 1980 led to the decertification of unions at private colleges and universities, but the few attempts to nullify public university collective bargaining agents had proved difficult.¹⁷ A group of professors joined forces to decertify the union because they believed collective bargaining had not improved faculty life at PSU and thought positive sentiment toward collective bargaining had eroded. The anti-union faculty called upon their colleagues to end the union experiment at PSU because the union did not negotiate better salaries for PSU faculty than what UO and OSU academics earned

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¹⁴ Agreement between Portland State University and the AAUP-PSU: 1983 – 1985, Article 8, Section 1 (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, 1981), 5.

¹⁵ Hillman Interview.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Levy, Yeshiva Revisted, *Academe*, 36.

without collective bargaining and that AAUP membership is the minority of eligible faculty members, not the majority.¹⁸

When the group of anti-union professors began meeting in the fall of 1985, they decided to pose the question to the entire faculty: should collective bargaining continue at PSU? However, a decertification election, according to the ERB, may occur only when there is no valid contract in existence or one month before one expires.¹⁹ The opportunity to put decertification before the faculty presented itself in December of 1985 when negotiations came to a stand still because the AAUP filed an unfair practice complaint with the state Employee Relations Board. The complaint alleged that both the OSSHE and PSU had unlawfully refused to bargain with the AAUP on the matter for a retroactive wage increase.²⁰ Until the complaint was resolved, it was unlawful for negotiations to proceed.

The chief critics of the AAUP included Alan Cabelly and Stan Hillman. They asserted that the union's failure to conclude a contract "can only be regarded as catastrophic," and encouraged their colleagues to support their efforts to decertify the PSU union.²¹ The group maintained that a stronger faculty senate would best serve the need at PSU for shared governance and that it would be better to approach issues between administration and faculty through a collegial rather than adversarial relationship. "Many academic employees have been concerned about the

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¹⁸ Alan Cabelly to the Faculty, "Portland State University Without a Bargaining Agent: A Bright Future," *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University).

¹⁹ Cabelly Memorandum.

²⁰ Kasameyer, James. Unfair Labor Practice Complaint, Case No. UP-9-86, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 29, 1986).

²¹ *Ibid.*

adversarial relationship that has been created between the union, attempting to represent the faculty, and the administration at PSU.”²² They also made pocketbook arguments informing the faculty of a salary deduction for union dues in the neighborhood of \$150 - \$300 annually if Fair Share was ever achieved.²³

The administration scheduled the vote for decertification to begin on February 7, 1986 [it was a 3 week process through mail-in ballots]. The threat made against the PSU AAUP chapter caught the attention of the national AAUP’s Washington DC based headquarters. The national AAUP sent the Ernst Benjamin, the Secretary General, to Portland to rally support for the union. He assessed the situation as one where groups of faculty members blame each other for a situation they have very little control over.²⁴ He urged the PSU faculty to act as a unit rather than splinter. Without a union fighting for faculty interests it is left to “the president, who is an employee of the State Board and the chancellor. He is not in a position to take a strong stand,” Benjamin asserted.²⁵ Stan Hillman called Benjamin’s perspective “illogical” because his colleagues at UO and OSU had done fine without collective bargaining.²⁶ Hillman also recalls that AAUP did little to resolve issues involving merit pay at PSU, which he thought was detrimental to the long term growth of the institution.²⁷ From the perspective of the anti-union

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²² “Portland State University Without Union Representation: A Collegial Rather Than Adversarial Approach,” (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University).

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ McCarthy.

²⁵ RJ Kasameyer, James. Unfair Labor Practice Compliant, Case No. UP-9-86, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 29, 1986).

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Hillman Interview.

professors, merit pay was fine as long as everyone held an equivalent work load. However, some faculty carried heavier teaching loads and received additional responsibilities, something Hillman attributed to mismanagement and resulted in morale problems.

Under attack by their colleagues, the AAUP leadership fought back. Reluctantly, the PSU-AAUP President Jack Finley responded to the decertification movement by defending the work of the negotiating team and its effort to fight the state board on a number of issues including an attempt to create a two-tier system among the three major universities in Oregon with PSU the lower status tier. In an effort to keep costs lower at PSU, the state board attempted to introduce a salary scale placing UO and OSU at the top and PSU at a lower level. As a collective bargaining unit, AAUP had been working to bring the salaries of the professors at the urban university in line with their colleagues to the south. "AAUP is the only organized body resisting that two-tier effort," Finley wrote in response to material found in his faculty mailbox advocating for decertification of the collective bargaining unit.²⁸ Finley acknowledged that the Fair Share election stimulated the movement to dismantle the union, but he stood by the principle that an equitable distribution of the cost to operate a collective bargaining unit should be shared by all who benefit.

Political Science professor Ralph Bunch attacked the anti-unionist position that "directed attention to our differences, rather than to how we could work

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²⁸ Jack Finley to PSU Faculty, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, October 30, 1985).

together to solve common problems.”²⁹ Bunch disagreed with the idea that an education environment without conflict eliminates problems. “Those in charge always decry conflict and prefer polite peaceful decision making; that puts them in the catbird seat. Doctors prefer meek nurses; principals prefer acquiescent teachers; bosses prefer docile secretaries.”³⁰ In Bunch’s opinion, faculties maximize their potential through collective bargaining by a unified, professional, self-reliant and determined unit.³¹

On February 7, 1986, all PSU faculty members received the decertification ballots at home. The anti-unionists failed to garner enough support to derail the AAUP as the collective bargaining unit for the PSU faculty. They did not lose by a large margin, but the decertification failed in a 260 – 211 faculty vote.³² Finely summed up the election results by stating the election “indicates that we need to find ways to meet the needs of the other 211 people in the unit.”³³ In retrospect, Mary Constans from the Art department remarked, “I think one of the general indications of what AAUP is worth, was the time when there were a group of faculty members who wanted to get rid of it. So there was a campus wide election for members and non members of the AAUP. And more people wanted to keep the union than actually belonged.”³⁴ One of the chief engineers of the decertification process also

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²⁹ “A Collegial Rather Than Adversarial Relationship” *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University).

³⁰ Ralph Bunch, “Collective Bargaining Only Path to Power,” *PSU Vanguard*, (February 6, 1986), 2.

³¹ Ibid.

³² RJ Obritschkewitsch, “AAUP decertification rails in 260 – to – 211 faculty vote,” *PSU Vanguard*, Vol 31, No. 43. (February 28, 1986), 1.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Constans Interview.

eventually changed his mind about the value of the AAUP. When his wife, Dr. Deborah Duffield, a fellow biologist, was treated unfairly by an administrator by “attempting to cow members of the biology department,” Hillman discovered that the “only people that really stood up for her was the AAUP.”³⁵

After the AAUP won the decertification process, they dropped the Unfair Labor Complaint and both parties “resolved their differences” and agreed to proceed with arbitration.³⁶ On June 4, 1986, after 10 months of negotiations, the AAUP recommended a contract to the membership. After working almost a year without a contract, the AAUP “ended its long and grueling struggle to successfully promote the interests of PSU to the State Board level.”³⁷ The AAUP executive council also announced at the same time that another Fair Share election would take place. The Fair Share election was defeated for the second time in 1986.

The PSU AAUP fought for survival in the 1980s. Budget reductions resulting in job losses and a decertification effort hampered union leadership and affected morale. The decertification election tested the faculty’s commitment to collective bargaining. Despite the fact that the union lost two Fair Share elections, the majority of PSU’s academics chose to keep a union presence on campus.

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³⁵ Hillman Interview.

³⁶ Kasameyer to Thomas F. Levak, Arbitrator, (PSU AAUP Archives, ULP File: Portland State University, May 7, 1986).

³⁷ Editorial. “Unions Fight Pays Off,” *PSU Vanguard*, (May 6, 1986), 2.

Chapter Eleven –New Beginnings

Recovery from the bleak financial situations in the 1980s took its toll on higher education in Oregon. In a 1993 survey, college faculty members nationwide ranked programs in Oregon schools in the bottom half.¹ OSSHE Vice Chancellor Tim Griffin responded to the report with disappointment, but was not terribly surprised “in a time when schools are cutting back.”² Oregon institutions and programs supported by state dollars felt the weight of a series of initiatives and referendums passed by the voters to lower property taxes; measures that left legislators and higher education administrators scrambling to balance the books. In an attempt to bring needed dollars into Oregon’s higher education institutions, the cost of attending universities climbed. In 1995, tuition jumped an average of 5% in the state’s seven public colleges and universities.³ By 1997, with the picture still bleak, tuition increased another 5% in order to offer faculty and administrators salary increases.⁴ While tuition soared since 1991, faculty salaries climbed modestly by about 3 percent a year, leaving Oregon professors among the lowest-paid instructors in the nation’s public universities.⁵ College Presidents received a raise too, bringing their salaries up from \$104,000 to \$130,000, or 25%. OSSHE

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¹ Romel Hernandez, “Oregon Grad Schools Get a Bad Report Card,” *The Oregonian*, (September 21, 1995), C03.

² Ibid.

³ Romel Hernandez, “State Board Boosts College Tuitions,” *The Oregonian*, (July 22, 1995).

⁴ Bill Graves, “Professor’s pay will rise; so will tuition,” *The Oregonian*, (July 19, 1996), C01.

⁵ Ibid.

Chancellor Joe Cox remarked, “it [the mid-nineties] was a make-it or break-it biennium for higher education.”⁶

During this decade of increased tuition dollars and shrinking taxes, PSU faculty salaries slowly increased to a point where a professor’s annual income in Portland reached the level of their counterparts in Eugene and Corvallis. The 1986 AAUP negotiating team’s demand to bring PSU’s professors’ salaries in line with OSU and UO eventually paid off. In 1996, a PSU professor made an average salary of \$47,000; OSU’s average amounted to \$48,900; UO academics averaged \$46,800.⁷ Equity between the three institutions remains an issue today. Current AAUP president Gary Brodowicz wrote that the “gains we make at PSU are usually ‘copied’ at UO and OSU. My feeling is that if PSU ever got more than the two other schools, they might want to unionize, and OUS [Oregon University System] wouldn’t like that.”⁸

In 1989 the AAUP responded to the desperate financial situation in Oregon by organizing politically. The national office of the AAUP sent an experienced political organizer to PSU to guide the council in political strategies.⁹ In April of 1989, the AAUP entered into an agreement with Stephen Kafoury, to provide the

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⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Romel Hernandez, “Ramely declares PSU still on course: The President focuses on the institutions own efforts at reform in address to faculty,” *The Oregonian: Special Report on Education*, (September 25, 1996).

⁸ Gary Brodowicz, Email correspondence with author, August 29, 2003.

⁹ Sy Adler, Interview with author, tape recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, September 6, 2003).

union with government relation services.¹⁰ The AAUP's move to become more politically active fulfilled the forecast of many academics who studied the rise of higher education unions in the 1970s.¹¹

The AAUP also decided to hold another Fair Share election in the 1990s. Craig Wollner, the union's president between 1990 and 1998, worked to increase enrollment in the union as well as to back the Fair Share election in 1995.¹² "Fair Share helped create the sense that the AAUP is there to work for everyone and not just the members," Wollner stated.¹³

In May of 1995, the AAUP executive council decided to attempt a third Fair Share election. One of the members of the executive council, Stan Hillman, also served as one of the key architects to decertify the union in 1985. After experiencing a consequences of a power play between the biology faculty and Dean Poddler, Hillman decided to run for grievance officer. "One of my major reasons for running was essentially that Poddler was going to go down or I was going down."¹⁴ Despite Hillman's 1985 – 86 confrontation with the union over decertification, he won the election, "Much to the chagrin of Wollner and those guys [the other members of the executive council] because I won the election over their candidate."¹⁵

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¹⁰ Agreement Between AAUP and Stephen Kafoury, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, April 26, 1989).

¹¹ Garbino, Duryea, and Carr.

¹² Alexis, Wollner Biography, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University).

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Hillman interview.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Past experiences with Fair Share elections made the leadership cautious about pursuing the matter. Hillman pushed the issue because he got “tired of us sitting around the table saying we didn’t have any money.”¹⁶ So the union mounted an aggressive campaign to pass a fair share election. The AAUP Unit-ties publication asserted that “if a fair contract is to be negotiated, all members of the bargaining unit will have to pay their Fair Share” and reminded faculty “in these times of unrelenting attacks on public employees’ pay and bargaining rights this voluntary and inequitable support is no longer adequate.”¹⁷ On May 19, 1995, the AAUP Fair Share election resulted in success; 240 voted in favor and 128 against.¹⁸ “The ratification of Fair Share clearly signals that PSU faculty wish AAUP to take a more vigorous posture in collective bargaining to compensate for the chronic and , lately, accelerating decline in the economic position of the professoriate and higher education in Oregon,” wrote Wollner.¹⁹

Hillman believes that a successful Fair Share election was possible because the council combed over the agreement and understood the rules and procedures.²⁰ Hillman remembers the national AAUP offered the PSU chapter little support. In fact, he remarked that the whole time, the national was on our back saying this was the “stupidest thing we could have done, there was no way to win it.”²¹ The AAUP

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¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Barbara Winter, “Fair Share Agreement the Key to a Fair Contract,” *Unit-Ties: PSU AAUP Newsletter*, (PSU AAUP Archives, Fair Share File: Portland State University, May 1995), 1.

¹⁸ Craig Wollner to Colleagues, *Memorandum*, (PSU AAUP Archives, File -Fair Share: Portland State University, May 23, 1995).

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Hillman interview.

²¹ Ibid.

used every advantage to secure positive results. For example, they tracked who turned in their ballots and encouraged pro-union professors to vote. Hillman remembers assuring his colleagues that the election would succeed, because “people against the union won’t even bother to vote – there is such apathy. Look around. The business school people don’t vote.”²²

In August of 1993, the AAUP added another dimension to its focus. Union leadership decided to incorporate Academic professionals (APs) into the bargaining unit. Bringing a group of employees into the union with varying job titles, responsibilities, and educational backgrounds challenged the association. Although both AP’s and faculty worked in a higher education environment, they had distinct interests and needs. Most AP’s worked year round, eight hours a day, and reported directly to a supervisor. In Duncan Carter’s opinion, the academic professionals, fixed-term instructors, and the tenure track professors shared a symbiotic relationship, making a group of employees who shared many mutual issues, yet had different job descriptions with varying work-loads and requirements.²³

Even though the AAUP originated as a professor’s organization, many of the AP’s, like Maria Alanis Ruiz, welcomed the opportunity to join the union. She started at PSU in 1980 on a fixed-term contract as an Admission’s Counselor for Minority Students; belonging to the union gave her a sense of security as an employee.²⁴ The AAUP advocated for Ruiz after she received a positive evaluation

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²² Ibid.

²³ Carter Interview.

²⁴ Maria Alanis Ruiz, Interview with the author, Tape Recording, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, January 9, 2003).

from her supervisor with an unusual stipulation. Her supervisor required that Ruiz go through an evaluation process every six months [at the time, Ruiz had been an employee of the college for almost 10 years]. Her administrator, Janine Allen, requested that Ruiz endure biannual evaluations; an action Ruiz felt was unfair. She went to the AAUP office for help. In retrospect, Ruiz believes the AAUP handled her complaint with positive results because Allen dropped her demand for biannual evaluations and wrote a letter of apology to Ruiz.²⁵

The student service management staff proved to be formidable opponents for the AAUP in relation to the treatment of academic professionals. Several new professionals left student services because of management's efforts to keep activists quiet – especially those advocating for more inclusion of people of color. “A group of us from the OSU's Student Personnel Master's degree program found jobs at PSU in the 1990s. Many of us are people of color, who were hired to bolster minority recruitment and retention. Most of us left because of a hostile working environment,”²⁶ Narce Rodriguez, stated. Rodriguez and her colleagues battled with administration over minority recruitment plans and the treatment of students in programs designed to integrate people of color into the university. “Anglo allies were also put down,” Rodriguez claimed, “People like Laura Mannen were smashed because she wanted under represented students to be treated equally. She was asked to not speak on behalf of people of color.”²⁷

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²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Narce Rordiguez, telephone conversation with the author (notes on file in PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, August 20, 2003).

²⁷ Ibid.

Sharon Brabenac, a student activity advisor, asked for the support of the AAUP when she was confronted with a supervisor who requested that she tone down her activism. According to Carter, Brabenac's situation typified the problems with the status of working at PSU as an academic professional.²⁸ Brabenac received positive evaluations from Allen, but was terminated without just cause because of her activism. "No professor would have that kind of treatment,"²⁹ Carter asserted. Rodriguez remembers Brabenac's moving into the sub-basement of Smith Center before termination. "I think it was to distance her from the students she tried to empower."³⁰

Job security and working conditions for the academic professionals at PSU became a priority for the AAUP during the 1990s. The new dimension broke new ground in education-labor relations because most universities did not include anyone outside of the faculty in their collective bargaining unit.³¹ When the university announced, in 1996, that forty-three academic professionals would be taken out of the bargaining unit because they had supervisory responsibilities, the AAUP fought back. The union responded by comparing the supervisory responsibilities of an AP with faculty managerial duties in relation to teaching assistants. The AAUP's challenge reduced the number of APs slotted to be removed from the bargaining unit. But, from Duncan Carter perspective, it still seemed like it was open season on academic professionals because the procedures

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²⁸ Carter interview.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Rodriguez interview.

³¹ Carter Interview.

that applied to the promotion of APs appeared to be misunderstood and misapplied; resulting in virtually all promotion's being denied during the time the administrators attempted to remove the forty-three APs out of the unit.³² In Carter's opinion, the academic professionals experienced extreme vulnerability and the AAUP needed to protect their interests. A university isn't just about professors, there are a lot of support people from librarians to student services people who work in financial aid, admissions, human resources and facilities that are responsible for making this institution function, Carter remarked.³³

In the 1990s, higher education witnessed a growing problem as universities began to fill tenured faculty positions with part-timers. At PSU, the number of fixed-term faculty slowly increased to match the number of tenured professors. In 1997, 37 % of the PSU faculty received fixed-term appointments; the number is currently close to 50 %.³⁴ The AAUP leadership began to resemble this shift in the number of faculty with tenure status. The tenured-track professors still joined the union, but the AAUP executive council's leadership drew from the fixed-term teaching classification. Fixed-term appointments did not offer the same security to faculty members that tenured professors enjoyed. Fixed-term faculty members became more common in Oregon's higher education institutions during the 1990s, but PSU employed a larger percentage than UO and OSU.³⁵ "I think, if the state

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³² Ibid.

³³ Carter Interview.

³⁴ A study conducted by the PSU Office of Institutional Research and Planning as referred to by Duncan Carter in his interview.

³⁵ OUS Fact Book 2002.

legislature thought for a minute that we could get by with fixed-term faculty, that's all they would hire and this would be a different place,"³⁶ Carter emphasized.

Employment status at PSU shaped the approach the union took to resolve issues. Hillman, a tenure-track professor, wrote that AAUP President Craig Wollner certainly "worried more about what Reardon and Ramaley [PSU administrators] thought than I felt totally comfortable with. But it was a difficult situation for him as he was a fixed-term faculty member, who, in major part, relied on their goodwill toward him for continued employment. To his credit, he never simply backed an administrative view, the effect was more subtle in what we did not challenge."³⁷

In the 1990s, AAUP chief negotiators like Martha Hickey embraced a strategy often referred to as "mutual gains bargaining," which encouraged friendly associations between the two parties at the table, an approach current AAUP President Gary Brodowicz thinks did not work well.³⁸ Brodowicz does not encourage confrontation when both sides respect each other, but believes adversity is necessary when one side is disrespectful to the other. During Brodowicz's tenure as chief negotiator in 1999, union members marched through the park blocks with picket signs and through Smith Center with bullhorns, because "a lot of the PSU faculty were dismayed at what [the negotiation process] was going on for over a year."³⁹

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³⁶ Carter Interview.

³⁷ Stan Hillman to Mandy Ellertson, Email correspondence with author, August 15, 2003.

³⁸ Gary Brodowicz to Mandy Ellertson, Email correspondence with author. August 16, 2003.

³⁹ Ibid.

During the last decade of the twentieth century, the PSU AAUP broadened the scope of representation to include academic professionals in the bargaining unit. The inclusion of APs coincided with the phenomenon of American college and universities turning to fixed term faculty hires instead of making tenured appointments. This occurrence added another dimension to the bargaining process. Sy Adler believes that in the 1990s, the AAUP confronted the financial struggles facing higher education with a renewed resolve by establishing a political presence in Salem to advocate for PSU academics. In addition, Fair Share provided additional funds to help the PSU faculty raise their voice in the state legislature and hire legal consultation, especially when the actions of administrators and the state legislature threatened the strength of labor.⁴⁰

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⁴⁰ Adler Interview.

Conclusion

Since beginning this research project in the fall of 2002, two major figures in AAUP's history passed away. Oma Blankenship and Gordon Dodds died in the summer of 2003. Fortunately, the research team interviewed Professor Dodds and recorded his perspective on the history of the AAUP. Dodds and other professors who volunteered to share their personal experiences and viewpoints on PSU and collective bargaining, enriched and sharpened this project. *The Oregonian* featured the two professors in the "Life Stories" obituary section of *The Oregonian*. Reporters wrote both people's significant contributions to PSU and their academic disciplines.

Dodds and other professors who volunteered to share their personal experiences and viewpoints on PSU and collective bargaining, enriched and sharpened this project. Through the oral history transcripts, I discovered gems such as the "Ferdinand Club" and the "House Wife's Brigade"; pieces of history that provided insight into power structures and gender inequities within the professoriate at PSU.

Life histories of the PSU faculty contributed to PSU's unionization story. When American college and university faculty turned in force to collective bargaining in the 1970's, the reaction of the academe ranged and emotions ran high. The trepidation of academics to align with a union was fueled by social constructs that placed labor on a lower tier than professional workers. Faculty across the country debated the idea of collective bargaining in academic journals, on college

campuses, and in faculty associations. Much of the discussion centered on issues related to professional status and how to achieve shared governance in higher education. PSU's faculty resolved some of these class tensions by voting for the AAUP rather than the AFT or OSEA to represent them as their collective bargaining unit. The AAUP's history and focus as an association devoted to academic freedom and the advancement of the profession appealed to faculty members who had worked hard to earn their status as a university professor.

PSU's collective bargaining agent, the AAUP, holds academic freedom as one of its core values. In 1940, the association adopted a Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. The statement asserts the ideal that "Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free expression."¹ In light of importance the association places on the topic, some discussion about academic freedom at PSU is in order to complete this thesis.

Evidence suggests that academic freedom is not an issue at PSU and alleged violations only surfaced on a few occasions. After reviewing the research, there are three events that warrant mention: faculty engagement and response to war protests in the 1970s, the libel suit Darrell Millner filed against Susan Karat-Nunn, and the unfair treatment and termination of academic professionals who attempted to empower students of color. In chapter eleven, I described some of the problems

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¹ Official website for the AAUP, www.aaup.com, as seen on September 30, 2003.

academic professionals faced. The two other incidents are not direct violations of academic freedom, but are related to the subject.

Faculty involvement during the Vietnam War protests appears marginal. According to Gordon Dodds, the anti-war protests at PSU involved a minority of students and faculty until the Nixon administration, in May 1970, ordered attacks on North Vietnam via a neutral Cambodia.² This event mobilized a group of student's who formed a strike committee to advocate closing the university in protest of invasion of Cambodia by the US. Some faculty members supported the strike and cancelled classes. Others carried on with teaching their regular subject while some used class time to discuss the issue. Don Moor remembers a vice president proposing to find out who had missed classes and dock the appropriate amount from their salaries.³ An AAUP officer confronted the administrator and encouraged him to back off by saying "You don't want to do that. You'll have us liberals against you."⁴ Tom Morris, new to the faculty in 1967, described the time period as one where a sharp ideological divide existed between the professors on a variety of contentious issues.⁵ However, none of the debates during the 1970s escalated into violations of academic freedom principles.

The most interesting situation attached to academic freedom involved a dispute between two professors - Susan Karat-Nunn in History and Darrell Millner in the Black Studies department. The dispute began in July of 1983 when Karat-

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² Dodds.

³ Moor Interview.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Morris Interview.

Nunn wrote a letter to *The Oregonian* in which she challenged some recommendations made to the Portland School District by Millner. Millner had encouraged the district to offer a balance in the social studies curriculum by providing a more diverse perspective. He noted that cultures other than European ones had contributed to society's history and should thus be recognized.⁶ In response to the proposed curricular changes, Karat-Nunn wrote a letter-to-the-editor as a private citizen asking Oregonians to be skeptical of Millner's recommendations. In her opinion, the proposed curriculum would "further the falsification of the past" and continued to writing that she hoped the committee include more qualified individuals who knew "whether the proposed curricular changes would convey something nearer the truth."⁷ Millner reacted by suing Karat-Nunn for \$100,000 in libel damages.

The PSU academic community responded to the libel suit by asserting that Millner's actions ran "contrary to the civil liberty of free expression and thus threatens, through intimidation," the teaching profession.⁸ Virtually the entire history department defended Karat-Nunn's right to challenge Millner's scholarship. Rudi Nussbaum supported Millner vocally and viewed the history department's

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⁶ Keene, Linda, "Libel Suit: Teachers Battle," *The Willamette Weekly*, (Week of June 11 – 17, 1984), 4.

⁷ Susan C. Karat-Nunn, "Be skeptical," *The Oregonian*, (July 28, 1983), p B6.

⁸ Whitney Bates, Elliot Benowitz, Bernard Burke, George Carbone, Victor Dahl, Gordon Dodds, G. Bernhard Fedde, Jesse Gilmore, Jim Heath, George Hoffman, David Horowitz, David Johnson, Geza Komorczy, Charles LeGuin, Jon Mandaville, Thomas Morris, Michael Reardon, Caroline Stoel, Linda Walton, Morris Webb, Ann Weikel, and Franklin West, "Suit Threatens educational liberty," *PSU Vanguard*, (May 18, 1984), 2.

solidarity as grandstanding and a display of academic arrogance.⁹ “I was in meetings with Darrell and Susan together. I grew up under Nazi Germany in the occupied Netherlands. I know what happens to minorities. Saying that Darrell was unprofessional was a poorly defined qualification. It is often a shield. Professionals get shielded from outside criticism when they are narrow-minded.”¹⁰

In the end, AAUP leaders Mary Constans and Rudi Nussbaum stepped in and helped the two professors resolve their differences. After mediation, the two professors signed an agreement in which they affirmed the importance of multicultural education and committed to academic dialogue as an appropriate means of resolving misunderstandings and differences of opinion.”¹¹

In light of the evidence presented, more questions are raised than I have answers. I am left wondering why Karat-Nunn chose to air her thoughts publicly rather than engage in academic discourse with Miller. I also question the history department’s strong stance equating Karat-Nunn’s personal actions as a citizen with principles of academic freedom. Why did the history professors rally for Karat-Nunn and against Millner? Was it because she was one of them or was Karat-Nunn’s right to expression violated? Finally, I want to know if Millner approached the AAUP before seeking legal recourse. If he did not, I want to know why. Without having the opportunity to interview Millner or Karat-Nunn, it is hard to draw conclusions. However, the evidence suggests there is a racially prejudice

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⁹ Nussbaum Interview.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ “Suit Triggered by letter to editor settled at PSU,” *The Oregonian*, (May 12, 1984).

overtone to the whole situation.¹² Karat-Nunn's personal thank you note to Rudi Nussbaum suggests that she did not regret her public statements. She wrote, "I remain deeply concerned about racist falsehoods being introduced into the public school history curriculum and I believe all citizens must share that concern."¹³

Cries of academic freedom violations or threats to scholarly discourse erupted over contentious issues. At PSU, the issues generated from this country's actions in South East Asia during the late 1960s and early 1970s and the inclusion of people of color and their history in higher education. The issues raised stirred emotions and fueled debate.

In addition, through the efforts of the PSU AAUP and their leadership, the university moved in a direction that formalized procedures and policies affecting faculty life on the urban campus. Administrators and faculty agreed to a set of established rules to conduct affairs associated with grievances, financial exigency, promotion and tenure, and salary levels. The union also placed priority on bringing equity in the salary scales between the three major universities in the state of Oregon. Even though the AAUP continues to face the challenges of financial crises, diminishing numbers of tenured track professors, and an unresponsive state legislature, the association takes pride in their history. By exercising a healthy disregard for authority, the PSU AAUP challenged the administration to make decisions to advance the universities by including the strong voice of the faculty.

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¹² Millner refused an interview and no effort was made to contact Karat-Nunn.

¹³ Susan Karat-Nunn, Thank you note to Rudi Nussbaum, (PSU AAUP Archives: Portland State University, August 25, 1984).

Although surrounded by skyscrapers and as Oregon's most urban campus, the AAUP helped PSU stay grounded by challenging decisions, processes and structures that would build an "Ivory Tower".

Timeline

- 1915 American Association of University Professors Founded
- 1916 American Federation of Teachers aligns with the American Federation of Labor
- 1916 Portland Association of Teachers aligns with the AF of L.
- 1919 University of Illinois becomes the first large university to unionize and select AFT to represent their interests.
- 1935 Wagner Act, also known as the National Labor Relations Act gives employees in the private sector the right to union representation.
- 1940 AAUP adopts Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure
- 1944 Congress passes the Serviceman's Adjustment Act or the GI Bill
- 1946 Vanport Extension Center established by the State Board of Higher Education
- 1948 In May, the Columbia River flood destroys the Vanport Extension Center facilities
- 1948 In July, the Vanport Extension Center reopens in the Oregon Shipyard
- 1949 Governor signs a bill authorizing a permanent higher education center in Portland.
- 1952 Portland State AAUP Chapter Established
- 1955 Portland State becomes a four-year college
- 1962 President Kennedy signs Executive Order giving federal workers the right to engage in collective bargaining
- 1968 First collective bargaining unit established at PSU – Service Employees International Union represents classified employees
- 1969 NLRB assumes jurisdiction for private colleges.
- 1969 University status granted to Portland State.

1970	NLRB rules that private, nonprofit educational institutions could bargain with their employees under federal law.
1972	AAUP memberships votes at the annual meeting to pursue collective bargaining
1973	AAUP adopts first "Statement on Collective Bargaining"
1973	Oregon legislature passes the Public Employee Collective Bargaining Act.
1973	Portland Community College faculty vote to have the AFT as agent in collective bargaining.
1978	PSU full-time faculty vote to have AAUP as agent in collective bargaining
1979	First collective bargaining contract signed between PSU AAUP and the Oregon System of Higher Education
1979	Part-time faculty selects the AFT as collective bargaining agent
1980	Supreme Court decision, NLRB v. Yeshiva University, held that the faculty acted as "managerial employees".
1981	Financial exigency declared at PSU
1982	PSU AAUP receives the Konheim Award
1985	First unsuccessful Fair Share election at PSU
1986	Union decertification vote (unsuccessful)
1986	Second unsuccessful Fair Share election at PSU
1989	AAUP contracts with lobbyist Stephan Kaufory to represent faculty interests in Salem
1993	Academic Professionals join the AAUP bargaining unit
1995	Successful Fair Share election
2003	AAUP 25 th Anniversary Celebration

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