

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW  
MICHELE MIHALJEVICH  
MARCH 17, 2017

Q. Hello, my name is Kevlin Haire. I'm here at the Ohio State University Archives on March 17, 2017. I am interviewing Michele Mihaljevich. Thank you for being here.

A. You're welcome, my pleasure.

Q. Not in person, by phone, but I appreciate it. Okay, we're going to start the interview. Please tell me your date of birth and where you were born.

A. February 3, 1961, in Columbus.

Q. Okay. And tell me a little bit about your family background. Where in Columbus did you grow up? How big was your family? Had anyone gone to college before you?

A. I grew up in northeast Columbus, so I lived in Columbus until I graduated, and then moved away for my first job. I have an older brother. Neither of our parents did go to college, but we think they both would have, were it not for some unforeseen circumstances. My father was the oldest of three brothers. He grew up in Nebraska on a farm. And his father died when he was still in high school. So my dad had to leave school early to help take care of the farm. And my mother was from southeastern Ohio and was the youngest of eight. And I did some counting and six of her older siblings either graduated from or attended Ohio State. And mom would have, too. She wanted to study to be a music teacher, but her plans changed after her mother died when my mom was a junior in high school. So the family decided that she needed to start supporting herself more quickly. So she attended a business school in Columbus instead.

Q. Is that where they met? Your parents?

A. They met in Columbus but not in school. They both worked for a company called, and I don't believe it's around anymore, called Tracy Wells, in probably the '40s, I would think.

Q. Okay. That's interesting. So how did you end up coming to Ohio State?

A. My brother also graduated from Ohio State. He graduated in Business Administration. And we never seriously considered attending any other school but Ohio State. I'm sure that it being a home town school had a great deal to do with that. But we just both assumed that was where we would go after high school.

Q. Oh really? I grew up in Columbus as well. And that was sort of the prevailing attitude – that you just went to Ohio State. You would get in because you were an Ohio resident. You could do whatever you wanted there.

A. And in those days, the best I can remember, it was sort of first-come, first-served. So if you got your application in in time, you were accepted. I think that's changed over the years but that's the way it was when I applied in 1979. My brother would have applied in 1977 I think.

Q. You arrived then in the fall of '80?

A. Fall of 1979.

Q. Fall of 1979, okay. And as a freshman what were your first impressions, or maybe you had been down on campus before?

A. I had been down on campus maybe a time or so. I remember my brother took me, he had to meet someone on campus, so he brought me along, just so I could see a little bit of the campus. And I remember walking across the Oval. But I really didn't spend very much time on campus until freshman orientation. But growing up in Columbus you sort of had

the general feel for how big the campus was and where it was and all that sort of thing. So while it was certainly a very big campus, I knew the gist of the size of it and so on.

But I do have a funny memory from freshman orientation. We were over on west campus and there was a guy from some small town, I can't remember which town, and he had his back to main campus and he's looking at the west campus buildings, and he said, "This really isn't as big as I thought it was going to be." And someone gently took him by the shoulders and turned him around and sort of waved their hand in the general direction of main campus. He didn't say anything but his eyes got really big, like, "Oh, there's more." And I'm sure for people who maybe didn't grow up in Columbus – especially in those days without the Internet where you couldn't just get online and look at eight bazillion pictures of campus – for people, especially from smaller areas, it probably was a big shock to see a campus that size.

- Q. Oh, right. Well, you were over on west campus I believe because freshmen had to have all their classes over there. Is that correct?
- A. My memory is that the only class I had over there was University College. I don't remember having any other classes over there. But that could be, it's been 30 odd years ago, but I just remember going over for UVC.
- Q. That's right. And I'll go ahead and ask about that because the UVC had a lot of – there were a lot of detractors but also supporters – we have a lot of administrative material about it but as a student, what was that like?
- A. Well, truthfully, I remember very little about it. No offense to the creators of UVC. My memory is that its goal was to help students maybe adjust to campus life, develop good study habits, and focus in on a major area of study if they weren't sure where they wanted

to head once they got to campus. And I'm sure it was a big help to those students who might not have known what they wanted to do. But I knew I wanted to go into journalism. So I was ready to declare my major and get into that major and start taking classes that you would only take once you declared your major.

Q. Now, where did you live when you were a freshman? Or did you live at home?

A. I lived at home because we were 20-25 minutes away. I don't recall ever considering the possibility of living on campus, because I got along with my parents. They got along with me. And it was nice to be able to, at the end of the day – especially when I started working on The Lantern – to be able to get away from campus and just go home.

Q. Did you feel like you missed out on a college experience? Although maybe you didn't since you did work for The Lantern?

A. I've been thinking about that since we've been talking about doing this interview. And I probably did miss out on some things, the campus-oriented activities, especially that they have these days, that we may or may not have even had back then, but I still would rather have gone home at the end of the day and spend time with my family and be able to do homework in peace and quiet and all that kind of stuff.

Q. Yeah, I hear you. When did you decide you wanted to be a journalist?

A. That's one of those questions that I don't know the answer to. I just know, as long as I can remember, I wanted to be a journalist. But I can't pinpoint one specific event or thing that happened, to cause me to take that path. As long as I can remember that's what I wanted to do. I knew when I was in high school I wanted to be a journalist, and that was my goal when I applied to Ohio State.

Q. Did your school have a newspaper and did you work on it?

A. We did in high school, and yes I did.

Q. And I assume you knew that OSU had a student newspaper?

A. I don't remember if I did or didn't. I'm sure that I did. But I certainly found it very quickly once I got on campus.

Q. Okay, gotcha. Tell me about that. Tell me about how you got yourself to The Lantern, not necessarily physically but do you remember the first day you showed up or anything like that?

A. I have a story about that and I'll tell you that story, then go back and explain some of the other things in regard to that. There were a couple of different levels of courses you took back then. One was sort of a beginning writing class. And you submitted stories and if they were approved, and I think I'm remembering this correctly, by your teacher, then you could submit them to The Lantern. So they might or might not have appeared in the paper. And then there was an advanced reporting/copy editing/photography sequence. You would take either reporting, copy editing or photography and those were a class. And you were supposed to spend so much time in the newsroom and either write stories for publication, take photos for publication or copy-edit and write headlines for the stories. And my first day in the advanced editing class was the day that President Reagan was shot.

Q. Oh my gosh.

A. That was March 30, 1981, and it was the second full day of the quarter. And I was impressed as a would-be journalist that everybody, they were still new and learning their jobs and everything, and they all got themselves in gear and came up with a lot of good local copy to go with the national wire service stories. And even though it was a sad and

scary day for the nation, because we didn't know then what the President's condition was and so on, it was very exciting for me as that would-be journalist to be introduced to a working newsroom setting in that way. And the excitement of a newsroom in the midst of that breaking news story, whether it was a good or bad story, just confirmed that was where I wanted to be. I hate to say it was a nice introduction because it wasn't a pleasant story at all, but it was a good introduction to me thinking, yeah, this is what I wanted to do.

Q. Right, yeah. Because you could feel the adrenaline going and all of the great things about working in that kind of environment.

A. Yes.

Q. Gotcha. And that was what year? Which year?

A. That was 1981. Or did you mean what year in my sequence?

Q. You would have been a sophomore?

A. Let me think. Probably the end of my sophomore year.

Q. Yes, because it was in the spring. Gotcha. How did you start working on The Lantern on a regular basis?

A. After I did the editing class that spring quarter, and the fall quarter I did the reporting class. And then after that, depending on which quarter, I served as I think as an Assistant Arts Editor. At various times I was Assistant Campus or City Editor, and then eventually I was a Campus Editor, then City Editor, then Managing Editor, and then I was the Editor-in-Chief winter quarter of '84.

Q. And you were in each of those roles only a quarter. Is that right?

A. I may have been an Assistant Campus or City Editor more than once, because sometimes if you had a friend who happened to have that position and they might have needed help, they might have asked me or I volunteered, or whichever. But as far as being a paid Editor, which would have been the City, Campus, Managing and Editor-in-Chief only once.

Q. And what were your first impressions of the newsroom?

A. Well, it didn't take me long to realize that that was where I wanted to be, as I mentioned earlier. And it was the venue for lack of a better word, where I could find out that that's where I wanted to be. And it was. And I remember walking into the newsroom, maybe not the first time, but early on, and in those days there were typewriters. We had IBM Selectric typewriters. And maybe a few video display terminals. But they certainly didn't take up the whole newsroom at all. And so you'd hear the clickety clack of people typing and everybody had a phone on their desk because there were no cell phones then. So phones ringing and I think even in those days you could still smoke in the newsroom, so probably smoking going on. But it was a very – for someone who finally got to do something approaching what I wanted to do, working in a newsroom – it was very exciting. It was fun. And when I got into the newsroom and started making friends- if this makes sense – it made the rest of the campus seem smaller because I had a home away from home, for lack of a better way to say it. And probably spent way too much time there after I got in there and got settled. Because once I got in there and realized this is what I want to do, sometimes it was hard to pry me out of the seat for other classes and so on. But I just can't emphasize enough how fun it was to be in there and even on the

frustrating days, when maybe a story didn't come out right or editing didn't come out right or whatever, I never questioned that that was what I wanted to do. Never at all.

Q. Did you find it – because The Lantern is a student newspaper but it's also a class, which is kind of unusual for college newspapers – did you find it, and you can talk about this maybe from both ends, a welcoming atmosphere? Because the editors have to deal with people who have not only not written a lot before necessary, but don't want to be there. But they have to be there.

A. The editors – that was not a class. You were paid to be an arts editor, sports editor, whatever. So those folks wanted to be there or they wouldn't have applied. But as far as, you're right, the copy editors, the photographers, the reporters – that was part of a class. So even if some of them maybe wanted to be in say public relations, and they may or may not have wondered, why do I need to take a reporting class, or the photographers who maybe wanted to go into photography, still had to take, I believe, either editing or reporting. And I think I'm correct in that. I don't remember because I wasn't a photographer. So there probably was a little bit of "I don't really want to be here but I have to take it," grumble, grumble, grumble. But I don't remember that much of that because I think most of us in the newsroom would have been in the news editorial sequence. And I don't even know if they have that sequence anymore. So most of us, I think, wanted to be there. And enjoyed the experience of working on the paper and learning as you went along, because even though it was a student newspaper and was published and 30,000 some people read it each day, it was still a learning experience. So we learned what went right, what to do right, and learned, oops we shouldn't have done that. If that makes sense.

Q. No, it does. You eventually became editor-in-chief. Was that what you wanted? Was that your goal all along, or it just kind of evolved?

A. I think it kind of evolved. I don't know that I thought, I can't remember when I decided, at this point, when I get far enough along, that I will decide to apply to be editor. But I don't think that was my goal when I first got there. I probably wouldn't have even thought that I could do that, when I started. But by the time I applied for editor, which would have been the fall quarter before my winter quarter, I had done all those other editor jobs, and it gave me a pretty decent idea of what the roles of the various editors were. And what would be expected from them and what would be expected from me. And looking back, there's probably, I don't know, 100-200 things I would do differently. But again, The Lantern was a learning experience and in using Ohio State's Lantern Archive, I was able to look at some of the papers from my quarter as editor, which as an aside, it's really wonderful that you folks have all the stuff online for people to look at and refresh their memories. But for every, gee that still looks good as far as the layout or story or headline, there's quite a few, did we really do that? Did I really do that? And there were a couple of stories that I just noticed as I was looking through. During my quarter as editor we had a pretty bad snow storm that they actually closed the University down, which didn't happen very often in those days. And so we did several stories about all the snow and what was closed down. But we never mentioned how much snow we had, which seems like a pretty obvious thing to include in your story. And I don't know why we didn't. That's a little thing, but it's the idea of, what were we thinking? To not call the Weather Service and ask how much snow we had, or at least take a ruler and go outside and measure. In also looking at some of the stories, I also think as a whole, we

probably could have done a better job maybe of explaining to students why we were covering off-campus stories, maybe in relation to what was going on with Columbus government or Ohio government. And maybe explaining why those were important to the students just in general. I don't have any specific examples.

Q. No, I know what you mean. Because I've seen [issues of] The Lanterns, where I'm glad that they do report that, but I have wondered, will students really care about this, and if there was just some explanation, they might. Although students don't read The Lantern paper anymore, because there's no paper anymore.

A. I think it comes out just a couple days a week, as far as the paper.

Q. I don't know if it even does that anymore. I don't think it does, unfortunately.

A. That's too bad.

Q. It is. You became editor and I know you weren't the first female editor, but you were a female editor. Do you remember that having any kind of effect on your leadership or how it affected people who worked with you?

A. I've been thinking about that and I don't recall ever feeling that I was treated different because I was a woman. You might talk to 10 other women from that time frame and they would have a different perspective. But it just wasn't an issue as far as I was concerned. In looking through the papers online, I was able to refresh my memory on who the various editors were during my time in the newsroom. And I counted 12 quarters. I'm sure I was there longer but I just used 12 quarters. And there were 6 female editors-in-chief and 6 males during that time frame. And most of the staffs were pretty evenly divided I think between male and female. And again, I think if something had happened, that I would remember if something had happened that I really thought, "Boy, they're

treating me differently because I was a woman.” But I just don’t remember and don’t think there was.

Q. Well, that’s good. I don’t know if you were editor-in-chief at the time or one of the other editors, but you had mentioned in an earlier conversation, the transition from [writing and editing articles on] paper [using typewriters] to [creating them using video display terminals] PC’s. What was that like?

A. My first quarter, first full-time quarter in the newsroom, was spring quarter of 1981, when President Reagan was shot. And in those days stories were written on those IBM Selectrics and submitted to the editors who would edit them by hand, using markings on the paper that we would have been taught in previous journalism classes. So a mark to change a word, fix a word, all that kind of thing. Those were done by hand. And then once the stories were edited, either the reporter or copy editor would type the stories into one of the video display terminals that we had at the time. And those were from a company called Hendrix. And the copy editors would also edit the stories on paper, and they would write the headlines on paper. And so once those were edited, those stories were probably also typed in and then they were coded on the video display terminals to be typeset. And then they were sent to the typesetter and they were printed out to be pasted up. And paste-up was also done by hand. The page layouts were done by hand. It was a paper-oriented newsroom in those days in terms of everything being on paper, of course.

Q. And do you remember which quarter you made the transition? I’m assuming it would be summer.

A. My thinking is that it was the summer of 1981. Because when I came back fall quarter to do my reporting, we had the Micro-Comp video display terminals. I don't remember but maybe about a dozen or so of those. Some in the newsroom and then there was a classroom down the hall where they put a few extra of those display terminals. And at first the stories were still typed on the typewriter and submitted by hand. But as we all sort of got used to the video display terminals, I think more and more of the reporters just would have typed their stories directly onto to those. Copy editors certainly used them to edit copy and write headlines which made it so much easier. And we could get wire service stories over those, so that you could edit those from the terminals rather than trying to do that on paper as well. So it just made everything faster and smoother.

Q. Did it go smoothly that first quarter? Do you remember?

A. I know sometimes we would have a problem with the system as a whole and maybe you'd lose a story or the computers would freeze or something. I keep saying computers, they really weren't computers. But video display terminals would freeze or you might lose a story or something. But I don't recall any major problems. But time has probably caused me to forget some of those things. I just remember the good things. But I just don't recall any serious problems.

Q. What was your deadline each evening?

A. We had to have the newspaper pasted up and to the folks in what we called the graphics lab, which was sort of in the corner. If you walked out of the newsroom and headed north, it was in the corner of the Journalism building. I don't know what they use that for now. So we had to have the paper pasted up and the negatives photographed to be taken

to the press shop by midnight, I think. For my quarter (as editor-in-chief) I think it was midnight.

Q. So each day you were publishing Monday through Friday, correct?

A. In the summer quarter we only published two days a week. I think it was Tuesday and Friday. But during the rest of the other three quarters, anytime that there wasn't a holiday I believe we published.

Q. So you were there on Sundays, too?

A. Yes.

Q. And typically what time would you get to the newsroom? I assume you would leave after midnight.

A. It would depend on which job I did. The Campus Editor in those days had to be there to open the newsroom at 8:00 in the morning.

Q. Oh, good Lord.

A. But I'm not a morning person. That was not an easy quarter. But then you didn't stay. You stayed maybe until, sort of almost like a normal job, like an 8-5 kind of thing. The city editor, I don't remember what my hours were. But I would say probably came in 10-11:00, maybe left at 7-8:00, again depending on what was going on. But I don't remember my hours as managing editor. But for editor-in-chief I would get there probably a little before noon, because we always had a noon budget meeting, where you would discuss the day's stories and what might be on the front page, and looked over the editorials to make sure that everyone approved of them. And then would leave when the paper got done. So if we got done at midnight, we left at midnight. If we got done before then, then we could leave early for a change. So that's why we were talking earlier about

extra-curricular activities and so on, when I got into The Lantern and really started focusing on that, I wouldn't have had time. Even if I lived on campus, I probably wouldn't have had time to do many other things besides The Lantern.

Q. Did you even have time to go to class?

A. Well, I had the time to go to class. My problem was, some of the time I would think, "Oh, it's much more fun to be in the newsroom" than go to something that I probably, you had to take a certain amount of electives, and some of those I enjoyed more than others. But that's my fault. If I didn't go to class that was not the fault of the paper. That was my fault, for just not going.

Q. Even though you talked earlier about how you liked being home with your family and it was quieter, you still had that commute after the paper went out to the press. You still had that whole commute to do.

A. Well, the nice thing is, at midnight there's not very much traffic. But you're right. I may be remembering wrong; it may not have taken quite 20 minutes. I don't remember. But it was nice, sort of by the time you got home, all of that excitement of the day, if you will, from putting the paper out, you could sort of get that out of your system. So by the time I got home, then I was relaxed a little bit. And my parents were very good about not saying, "Well, why weren't you home by a certain time?" So they were really good about understanding that that was what I wanted to do, and there was never any, "Boy, you got home awfully late," or anything like that. Because they understood that that's where I was and that's what I was doing.

Q. Gotcha. You started off your career at The Lantern with a pretty significant story, when President Reagan was shot. Do you remember any other significant stories during your period there that really stand out?

A. I'm probably forgetting something really obvious, that if you were to interview 10 other editors from my time frame, they would say, "Well, Michele, you forgot about this." But there's a couple of stories that, sort of bad stories that come to mind, and then one lighter-side story that came to mind. So I'll sort of start with the two negative stories. In winter quarter of 1983, and I don't remember how many, but several members of the football team and a player or two from the basketball team, were accused in February of that year of raping a woman in Steeb Hall. And we did several stories over the course of winter quarter and into spring quarter, which was my quarter as city editor, and eventually a grand jury declined to issue any indictments. But that was a big deal because football and basketball ruled at Ohio State then and do now. And there were several stories that we did. And I'm sure, obviously, we covered the Grand Jury declining to issue indictments. And then I think it sort of went off the radar. But it was a big deal for those couple of months.

Q. I'm sure, yeah.

A. And then the second story that we covered, and this began when I was city editor in spring quarter of 1983, and it was the admittance by former OSU quarterback Art Schlichter, that he had placed bets on sporting events. And for those folks who don't remember, Art seemingly spent the first few weeks of each football season, as Heisman trophy hopeful Art Schlichter, it seems that that was just part of his name. And I think it was really a shock and surprise to most of the public that he had a problem with

gambling. And the story broke that he had admitted to gambling after four alleged book makers from Baltimore were indicted. And Art was playing then with the Baltimore Colts. And to my knowledge, that was the first time that most of us became aware of his gambling issues.

Q. Yes, I think so.

A. And we know unfortunately what's happened to him since. But at the time, that was just a really big deal as well.

Q. Right, because it was so shocking. You couldn't imagine that would happen.

A. And then on the lighter note story, spring quarter, actually this probably would have been winter and spring quarter of '84, campus and some of the surrounding neighborhoods were used during the filming of a movie about Jesse Owens. And I know there's been more than one movie made about him. This one starred Dorian Harewood as Jesse. I think it was called The Jesse Owens Story. But they filmed on the Oval. They filmed in Pomerene Hall. And then some of us went to watch some of the filming in the neighborhood. The best I can remember was east of campus, but I couldn't tell you what street. But I remember doing a lot of stories about that, where they were filming, the need for extras, all that sort of thing. And when I watched the movie, which pops up on television every so often still, I think, I was there when they were doing that. I certainly was not an extra or anything but it was just sort of fun to see the process of making a movie and all that sort of thing.

Q. Right. We have some of those materials because we have the Jesse Owens Collection. We have a copy of the script and some other things. I do know what you're talking about. That would have been fun actually, especially to cover something like that.

- A. And in looking through The Lanterns on the Archive, I knew we had done several stories. I didn't realize we had done quite as many as we did. But I'm sure the students were interested. And we certainly were interested as staff, just to follow the progress of filming the movie.
- Q. Oh yeah, sure. Would those also be your best and worst memories? Or can you think of a really positive memory? And it doesn't have to be a story. But just of being on The Lantern staff?
- A. I'm sure that time has diminished most of my bad moments from The Lantern, because I only have good memories. Working in the newsroom definitely reinforced that that was what I wanted to do. And when I graduated, my first job was in Fort Wayne, Indiana, at the morning paper here. And I realized that a lot of what I had learned at The Lantern applied to my new job. Working at The Lantern just made my transition a little bit easier. I came in with an understanding about the importance of accuracy, deadlines, confirming everything you're told, things like that, that had I not worked on a student newspaper or maybe worked on one that wasn't quite as good as ours, for lack of a better way to say it, I think it really did help make that transition a bit easier.
- Q. Right. Well, with The Lantern, like you said, you're covering, essentially a small city. So it's like being a city newspaper. So there was a lot of, I'm assuming there were a lot of expectations, a lot of response, too, to whatever you wrote.
- A. And just to follow up on that, it was strange, when I first started working on The Lantern, it was strange to realize that your homework was out there for thousands of people to see, because if you make a mistake in math class or science class, you know, the instructor knows, but nobody else really knows. But if you made a mistake in The Lantern,

everybody knew. And obviously we always wanted to get things right, but it was a learning experience. It was a laboratory newspaper. And that should never be an excuse for a mistake, but that's what it was. The learning experience and a lot of the mistakes we made were probably more in story placement or what we should or shouldn't cover. But I know there were mistakes and errors in fact and so on that got into the paper, regardless of our best attempts otherwise.

Q. Do you remember fielding calls from irate sources who said, "I didn't say that," or criticized your story or demanded a retraction or anything?

A. I'm sure that that happened. I hate to keep saying, "I don't remember," but a lot of that stuff has just faded away. I'm sure that I did because every quarter there was someone who would have an issue with something. I'm sure some of the time they were accurate in whatever their issue was. At some point while I was on The Lantern staff, they developed a new position called, depending on the quarter, either The Reader Representative or an Ombudsman. And they wrote a weekly column and it was their job to sort of explain how the paper works, critique the paper if we messed up, that sort of thing. And I think some of the calls eventually got directed toward them. And then they would come to us and say that somebody called about the story you ran on page one. And they would ask us what we thought about it, and that sort of thing. So that helped a little bit with some of the calls. But like you said, you're covering a small city, and you're either, every once in a while either going to get something wrong or it may not be wrong but it may not be what the source thought was going to be in the paper or not covered the way they wanted it to be covered. You didn't cover a meeting. You didn't cover a protest. You didn't cover this or that. And when people, there's usually not too much you can say

to people when they're upset about things like that, because they have their views and you have your views, and it doesn't mean that they're wrong and we were right. It's just differences of opinion.

Q. Right. Do you feel that the newspaper, there was a certain perception about the newspaper, because it was a student newspaper?

A. Oh, I'm sure there was. I always took it very seriously because, again, it was the outlet for me to first do what I wanted to do. But I'm sure a lot of people thought of it as a joke or thought of it as not worth reading except maybe for the ads or looking at the comics or something. I'm sure that that was the case, but anybody who knew that I was in journalism, my friends outside of journalism probably wouldn't have said anything to me because they knew that I worked there. And for most of us working on the paper, I think we did take it seriously. We wanted to put the best product out as possible. And sometimes we succeeded very well and sometimes we fell short of that. But again, and I don't want to use it as a crutch, but that is a part of the learning experience. And you were asking about good or bad memories. One of the frustrating things about working for the paper back then, is we were on the quarter system. So we had 10 weeks to figure things out. I'm not sure how long a semester is, but it's certainly longer than 10 weeks. So I kind of envy the staff on the paper today because they have that first few weeks to figure it out, but then they have another few weeks to apply that. And hopefully see improvement from beginning of the semester to the end of the semester.

Q. I can see that definitely. The semester is 1 ½ times the quarter length. So I bet that does happen actually. Having been the Editor-in-Chief, did you feel like when you graduated

you could go anywhere, or how did you get your first job and what were your expectations for getting a job?

A. Well, to answer the first part of your question, I remember applying way over my experience level. I applied to The Baltimore Sun, all these papers, and I can't remember the others, but papers of that size, who never would have hired anybody fresh out of school. I didn't know that then; I just thought, well, I'll apply there. Fort Wayne had then and still has two papers. One of the few towns left with two papers. So I applied to both the morning paper and the evening paper. And one reason I applied here, is I had an aunt and uncle who lived here and cousins who lived here. So I had visited Fort Wayne. So I was somewhat familiar with it, not terribly, but a little familiar. And the morning paper contacted me and wanted me to be a copy editor. So I did that for a few months and then I think we all realized that, while I might be a halfway decent copy editor, I wasn't that great. So I moved over to reporting, which is what I really wanted to do. And I was a general assignment reporter, then I covered agriculture in this area. I worked at the paper from fall of 1984 to winter of 1989. Then I left the paper and I've been free-lancing ever since.

Q. Have you really? Wow, that's a long free-lancing career.

A. I mainly focus on agriculture writing. And I've also done a few stories on antiques, because the paper that I write for also has a sister publication that covers antiques. And then I've also written a book on one line of my family history, genealogy.

Q. So do you write just for one publication?

A. Pretty much.

Q. Now, I also wanted to ask you, because you mentioned your colleagues at the paper, can you give me a sense of how many of them went into journalism, and whether you know if they stayed with journalism?

A. I think quite a few of them did go into journalism. I know several worked at least for a time at The Dispatch. But I think a lot of them, either because of the way the industry has changed, or maybe they just decided they wanted to do something else, are no longer in journalism. They are doing other things, maybe in communications, such as public relations, or something like that. But in terms of working for a daily or even a weekly paper, I don't think that many of them are doing that anymore, unfortunately.

Q. Again, that is also partly because of the nature of the industry changing like that. What has your connection to OSU been since you graduated, if you have any?

A. Actually, that's a little bit of a sore spot. I graduated in '84. And in the summer of '96, the School of Journalism was merged with the then-Department of Communication. And for a time after the merger I think the new unit was called The School of Journalism and Communication, but today I believe it's just the School of Communication. And it was then and still is today, very disappointing to me to have the school I graduated from vanish into thin air. And I believe budget reasons were a factor in the merger. But for me, there was really no reason good enough to eliminate my School of Journalism. They took away my program and truthfully, it still angers me today. I'm very proud to have gone to Ohio State and very proud my diploma says the School of Journalism, but after that happened my interest in what is happening at Ohio State did drop. I still love my Buckeyes and I still root for them, but my interest in the academic side really has just dwindled. I'm a life member of the Alumni Association but I did that before they shut

down the Journalism school. And I'm not sure if I would have if I had known that's what they were going to do.

Q. That's interesting. I think that was a sore spot for a lot of people. That was very controversial.

A. And as I said, I understand they probably had maybe some very logical and good reasons but from purely from just my standpoint and because I want to be able to say, I can still say I went to the School of Journalism, but I want it to still be there and still be active.

Q. Also, OSU has a very good academic history related to journalism. It's always been considered a very good school and it is a shame that that happened.

A. Yeah, and it's nothing against anybody in the School of Communication; it's just I would still rather there be a School of Communication and a School of Journalism, and they not be the same school.

Q. Exactly. Do you have any other thoughts or memories that you haven't talked about yet?

A. Not that I can think of. I think we've pretty much covered everything I can remember. It's been 30-odd years ago since I was on campus regularly, and sometimes it's hard to believe it's been that long since I graduated. But it has been.

Q. We try to get as many student interviews as we can because that's a great perspective, that we don't really have much of up to now. We've never talked to anyone who has worked for The Lantern, so this is a great opportunity for us. So I appreciate you doing this.

A. Well, I appreciate you asking me. It's been fun and it's caused me to really think about things that I haven't thought about for a while and there's nothing wrong with that. Just

to refresh my memory on my time there and everything. I enjoyed the preparation and enjoyed the interview.

Q. I'm going to keep you on the phone for a moment after this but I just wanted to say thank you again.

A. Thank you.