ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
PAUL ALLEN BECK
MAY 11, 2021

[Archives note: This interview of Paul Beck was conducted by Janet Box-Steffensmeier and Herb Weisberg. To clarify who is speaking, the participants' initials have been included. PB is Paul Beck, JBS is Janet Box-Steffensmeier and HW is Herb Weisberg.]

HW: This is May 11, 2021, and this an interview with Paul Beck. I'm Herb Weisberg. Paul, should we start by asking something about your personal background, where you were born, where you grew up, and so on?

PB: It's been so long ago, I hardly remember, but let me give it a try. I was born and mostly grew up in Logansport, Indiana, a town of about 20,000 at the time. It's now about 15,000, so it's lost population over time. It was my mother's hometown. My father was from Denver, Colorado, and they had met at Hillsdale College back in the late 1930s, early 1940s. For the first couple of years of my life I lived elsewhere, first in Colorado and then later in a small town in Kansas where my dad worked for the Farmers Union. And then moved to Logansport, I guess, in the late 1940's, and spent all the time there through high school graduation.

HW: Were you the first in the family, well you already said your parents met in college, right?

PB: Beyond that, my Beck side grandparents were both college graduates from a little school in Kansas, I think it is Baker University now but it was Baker College in their time. My grandfather, Flanagan, was all set to go to Wabash College in Indiana, but his father died and he had to take over the family business at the ripe age of 18 and did that. He was one of a graduating high school class of 13 students in a town of about 20,000. People had been

pretty much weaned out by that point, and so it was very unusual even to graduate from high school then.

HW: How did you get into Political Science? Was that your goal all along, or was that something you picked up in college?

PB: My goal all along, I think, at least in the college years, was to go to law school after that. I remember taking the law boards and being ready to do that, although I decided, more or less at the last minute, that I really didn't want to do that. I didn't want to be a small-town lawyer doing divorces and wills in some Indiana place. I thought about going to graduate school. My major in college was Political Science. That in some ways was a natural for somebody headed to law school, certainly at that time. It also was a natural in terms of my family background. My grandmother Beck had been a state legislator in Colorado, and I spent almost every summer when I was young, before my teenage years, in Colorado visiting my grandparents there. She would haul me around to various constituency meetings and things. Then my uncle in Logansport, which was the town I grew up in, in Indiana, was a county commissioner. He also was the county treasurer and then I think the auditor at one point. I would go with him, usually on Friday nights, to fish fries, because his daughters didn't want to go, and so he would haul me along with him. In some ways, I got an early introduction to politics. I was always interested in politics and in history, particularly political history. And so, being a Political Science major at Indiana, which is where I went, was a natural.

JBS: It really sounded like you were soaking and poking in the Fenno-style from about as long as you can remember then.

PB: I sure was. I got a real feel for it. The interesting thing is that my Grandmother Beck was ardent feminist and liberal, and ran in a district that is now in the center of Denver, which was a pretty liberal district. But she ended up being defeated in the 1958 elections there. She was very much on the liberal side. She had worked for the League of Nations, by the way. She was somebody who was just very active politically. My uncle, who was my other political mentor, I guess, was very bipartisan. He always ran as somebody who was neither a Democrat nor a Republican, in a town or a county that was probably pretty much divided between Democrats and Republicans. He always won by big margins. And he knew everybody. Even when he was in his 90s and we would visit him, we would go to restaurants and people would come up to him, say hello, shake his hand, reminisce about the good old days, of course. It was very much that way at fish fries as well, that he was very well liked and respected, and really very much nonpartisan.'

HW: You decided to stay in the Big Ten, is that right, when you went to graduate school?

PB: Well, I was undecided, between doing Political Science or sort of Public Affairs/Public Administration. I had had an experience back between my junior and senior years in college, where I got an internship in Cleveland, Ohio, of all places, sponsored by the, I'm not sure what it was called at the time, but it was the public administration association of Cleveland. I spent about 10 weeks in that internship, and it was a really good experience. And my boss and supervisor during the internship was James A. Norton, who became the Ohio Commissioner of Education. He taught Political Science at Case Western, and I learned a lot from him. He didn't quite know what to do with me, and so he sent me off to the library. We read Political Science mainly, and that sort of steered me in the direction of either Public Administration or Political Science. I applied to a whole bunch of different

schools. I remember starting to write the essay for Berkeley and deciding that I really didn't want to do an essay and wasn't all that sure I wanted to go to Berkeley either, so I just didn't do it. I ended up getting accepted at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School, but that was more for Public Affairs/Public Administration. Also, Cornell, a school at the time that was really a Public Administration school, Michigan, and North Carolina in Political Science. I ended up choosing, I think, the best of them, and that was Michigan. My mother was always deeply disappointed that I didn't go to Princeton because Princeton, of course, was the more prestigious place. I almost went there. They provided full-ride scholarships for two years. It was a two-year program and in between the first two years, they would send you to Europe to work on language. And it was very appealing but I decided in the end that Michigan was going to be the place. I went there basically to study Urban Politics, which is what of course I had been introduced to when I worked in that internship in Cleveland. When I arrived at Michigan, my advisor was Norman Thomas, whom Herb will remember from those days. And Thomas said to me: "You don't want to study Urban Politics here. We don't really have anything there. We have this new program in Political Behavior, and you might be interested in that. I noticed you have very high math scores on your GRE, so that would be good also for the Political Behavior program." I thought, "Well, who am I to disagree with my advisor," so I went ahead and did Political Behavior at Michigan, which of course as Herb knows and Jan probably knows from a distance, was really the place to be in the 1960s, early 1970s, if you were studying Political Behavior.

I studied Political Socialization under Kent Jennings, and then under Phil Converse, Don Stokes and Warren Miller, studied Voting Behavior, and it was a wonderful experience. I worked at the Institute for Social Research which was where the Voting

Behavior people were headquartered at the time. I think I only went to the department once during that period of time. It was headquartered in Haven Hall. I went there once because I had to of course meet with my advisor, Norm Thomas, and he was there. Then I remember deciding that I could really take courses that I wanted to take. They needed an advisor signature, so I just forged Harold Jacobson's signature. At one point, I met him for the first time, and he said, "I know exactly who you are. You're the guy who keeps forging my signature on these course forms." He wasn't angry, and we in fact became very close after that, but it was an interesting experience.

JBS: Your mom may have recognized the prestige of Princeton but probably didn't have the detailed knowledge to know Michigan was the place for Political Behavior. And of course, lots of books and articles have been written about the intellectual energy that was coming out of Michigan at exactly that time. That worked out great and launched you onto Ohio State but maybe tell us about your journey between graduate school and coming to us at OSU.

PB: Okay. The journey was a long one. I left Michigan in 1970 and as was true of many people in my cohort, I had not yet finished my dissertation. In fact, I had barely started it actually, but it was a pretty good market in that year. I ended up getting a position at the University of Pittsburgh, my first position. I was hired there at the same time that my good friend, Herb Rockman from Michigan, was hired there. It took us several years to discover that we were actually dividing a salary between the two of us, or at least it seemed like it. And so, I went off to Pittsburgh in 1970. Because I think of my Cleveland experience, I wanted to be in a big city. And so, I didn't even apply for departmental positions in places that weren't big cities. And the Pittsburgh years were very good years for me. I was there until

1979 and still have many good friends who were on the Pitt faculty at the time, many of us coming in together. But I also realized over time that Pittsburgh was not a particularly good place for American politics. It was strong in comparative and international. The best students I got in my classes were in those fields. I realized that if I wanted to teach graduate students, I probably needed to go to a place that had more strength in American politics. And we also had suffered two very harsh winters, as Herb will remember having lived in the Midwest during that time, and I think it must have been '78 and '79 maybe. And my wife said to me, "This Puerto Rican can't really stand the winter in the north." And part of it was the gloom and darkness, as much as the harshness of the winter. And so, I was contacted by Florida State University. They were starting up a new program in Policy Science as they called it. Wanted somebody to come there to run their survey center which was newly developed as a part of that program, and also had the attraction of a halftime teaching load and summer salary, which was important for a young Associate Professor. We were struggling economically, and Pittsburgh by the way was in the doldrums economically. So, there really wasn't much work for Tere [Beck's wife] to do there.

So, we went ahead and moved to Florida State. We were there for eight years. After a couple of years, I realized that it was not a very good place to be. The department was very dysfunctional, had a lot of faculty who were holdovers from the earlier days who did not publish and didn't really have professional aspirations. And there were some very good faculty who did, including Bob Erikson, Jim Stimson, Russ Dalton, good colleagues there, but I realized the department was problematic and had very bad leadership. And so, one day the dean approached me and said, "The Chairman is coming up for renewal and I would like for you to be a candidate for that." I thought, "Well now wait a minute. I'm going to

trade halftime teaching and the directorship of the survey center for these administrative duties." Not that I hadn't done administrative things before. At Pitt, I was the Director of Graduate Studies and then for three years I was the book review editor for the American Political Science Review. I always had a hand in those kinds of things but at Florida State I became chair in 1981 and was chair for six years there. The previous chair had been misusing departmental money. He had been giving cash awards to his students out of the department's development accounts. I remember when the fiscal officer of the department; first meeting with me after I had become chair, she said, "Well, Professor Beck, what I'd like to do is show you the accounts that your predecessor as chair didn't know about because if he knew about them, he would have ransacked them." She was actually right. I was chair for six years.. I developed a reputation, I guess, for being a pretty good chair. It was easy to be a good chair, if you just were normal and professionally oriented.

I remember during that period of time getting a whole bunch of inquiries to go to other departments as chair. My favorite one was the University of Minnesota Duluth because I had an old friend who was the Dean there and she called me one day and said, "Would you be interested?" I said, "I don't really think so but let me talk to my family." When I came home that night, our son, David, must have been seven or eight years old at the time, said: "Dad, I hope you like it there, but we won't be going." I did not respond to that inquiry. I did get an offer a year or two later from Emory University. It was really very attractive, but I realized that the department I was in at Florida State, with Stimson and Dalton and other people there, was a better department than the Emory Department was at that time. (And since then, Emory has become a really good department.) I thought, "Okay, why am I going to trade a really good set of colleagues for what would be a total rebuilding

effort at Emory," and I wasn't sure I wanted to stay in the south. Tere, by that time, had warmed, I guess the term would be, to returning to the cold North.

HW: Did Ohio State have some special attractions to you at that point?

PB: I hadn't really thought about it. The interesting thing about the Emory offer was that Emory, because it didn't really have senior faculty who were well established, brought in two outside advisors, to advise them on the chairman search. One of them was Randall Ripley from Ohio State University. The other one was Phil Shively from the University of Minnesota. I didn't know Rip at all at the time. I knew Phil a bit because we had published some in the same area and I had been at a conference with him. I was invited to interview at Emory, with them and others. That appeared to go very well, and. I got the offer from Emory. I remember agonizing over it, and I ended up turning it down. The day I turned it down by the way, I got a phone call from the Emory Dean of Arts and Sciences saying, "Well, before you make a final decision, we would like to have you come up and meet with the president." I said, "Well, I met with the president." Emory is a small place. I met with the president when I was there before. He said, "No, no, the president." And it turned out to be Jimmy Carter. I thought at the time, "You know, if I fly up there to meet with Jimmy Carter, I would almost have to accept the offer," and I really decided already that I wasn't going to do that. I decided not to go to meet him. Out of that experience came an inquiry, Herb, I think you may have had something to do with this, maybe Herb Asher as well, from Rip saying, "Would you be interested in coming to Ohio State?" Simultaneously, I had gotten an inquiry from an old friend of mine, Gerry Pomper, who was at Rutgers. Their chairmanship was open, and he wondered whether I would be interested in coming to Rutgers to be chair. Though Tere and I visited Rutgers, it never became a full offer because

I had decided I would go to Ohio State. I clearly was ready to leave Florida State and come back north, and come back north of course for the weather. I also knew a lot of people at Ohio State. The two Herbs certainly, Rip I had gotten to know. There were some other people in the department who I had come to know over time as well. It was almost like going to a place that I was familiar with.

HW: Not quite as cold as Duluth.

PB: Certainly not. The pictures of Duluth, I should tell you, were beautiful. It was maybe the one day in July before the black flies came that Duluth had not only good weather but clear skies. But no, I didn't go there.

JBS: I have to circle back to the part about your reputation as a good chair because you are way too modest about that. You have a widespread reputation, which was built up over the years, on being a phenomenal administrator. I would love to hear a little more about your thinking about what your secret sauce was for it, at least a few top things because not everybody can have the grace to be really good at it, be appreciated by colleagues, and to do it for so long.

PB: Thanks, Jan, I appreciate the comments about that. What I always tried to do was run a department professionally, to also be a strong believer in excellence and merit and in rewarding merit. I think I was able to do that but without alienating people who were less meritorious, maybe would be the way to put it. I learned that at Florida State but as I said, half the faculty there really were not research oriented at all. Had not published anything beyond maybe a single article after they got their Ph.D. But I always wanted to treat them as if they were valuable faculty, who were playing an important role in the department. When I left there, I don't think I left any enemies, in a way that I might have done had I

been a different kind of chair. And then coming to Ohio State, I had a great advantage. It was an already well-established department with senior faculty who were very professional and very oriented towards excellence and building excellence. That was important. It meant that I didn't really have to be the primary leader of the department. There were a lot of people who shared that leadership with me. Not so much administratively but just in terms of setting a standard there. That was very helpful. And then I always got along very well with the deans, starting with Joan Huber who was the dean who in effect hired me. And Joan was terrific, and I still see her, although not during the pandemic. I talked to her on the phone occasionally, and she was just a wonderful dean. Very scary, by the way. I understood that when I went to her office, I had to really be on my toes, because she would always press me to really do the right thing.

And then Rip succeeded her as dean of the college. And the great advantage, the thing I always appreciated with Rip, was that as long as I cared about quality and was working to instill quality in the department, he was supportive. Even though he had very clear prejudices, Rip left me alone to be the chair that I wanted to be. The singular example of that was when I became convinced early on that we needed to build a field in Political Theory. Not a large field necessarily but a field nonetheless because we had no presence really in Political Theory. And it was a group, by the way, that he had pretty much banished from the department in one way or another when he was chair. He was bound and determined he wasn't going to hire another political theorist when he was chair. And he fought me a bit when he was dean on that, wasn't convinced that I was right, but I really thought I was. What we did, and Herb played an important role in this as well, was to hire political theorists who were able to speak to the rest of us, who had interest in political

theory or political philosophy that overlapped with things that we were already doing. The first hire there, although he didn't come at the time, was Michael Neblo, who did both Political Psychology and Political Theory. It was really a great combination.

The other thing, by the way, I wanted to do as chair, was to modernize the department in American Politics. We had very much worked, and it was very successful, on sort of a Michigan model in terms of hiring people. We hired people like Herb and Aage Clausen from Michigan, but I wanted to expand beyond that, to hire some people in formal theory and faculty who maybe came from other departments with other kinds of methodological backgrounds. And again, Herb, you were very helpful in that regard. I didn't tell Rip that I was moving in a different direction because it really wasn't a different direction. It was the same direction but a direction that was maybe taking advantage of more recent training. John Kessel was pretty helpful in that respect by the way because John always would come back from professional meetings with his list of people that we should try to recruit. He had good information there, and these were people that we did try to recruit. One of my early recruits, by the way, is on my screen here. And that is Jan [Box-Steffensmeier], who probably, in many ways, and I've told her this, was the best recruit I had during that period of time when I was chair.

JBS: You're much too kind, but am I very grateful that worked out.

HW: I've been nodding my head a lot as you've described the different incidents from the political theory hires, to moving to formal theory and to broadening past the Michigan approach. And all of that sounds very familiar. I remember those moments and your successes there very well. Are there things you look back on you wish had gone differently?

PB: I wish I had been more attentive to quality in terms of department staff. There were some problems there. These were people, however, who had civil service positions. And even though I was urged by the college, particularly Tom Conrad when he became the college fiscal officer, to try to get rid of them. The difficulties were that these were fine people in many ways and seriously doing their jobs, but they also defined their jobs in very narrow ways. I had a Graduate Studies secretary who only wanted to do the graduate program, period. Even though that probably filled half of her time, she wouldn't stretch beyond that in the time when we needed her to. We also had a department administrator I inherited from Rip – and was another issue that I had to deal with when Rip was dean – [the administrator] refused to learn how to use spreadsheets in managing the budget and wanted to control it. He would tell me, for example, if Herb Weisberg approached me for funding to go to a third professional meeting, which at the time wasn't the norm, he would say, "We don't have the money for that. We can't cover the costs to send Herb to Savannah for the Southern meetings." Once I had an opportunity to take a close look at the departmental budget, I realized we had plenty of money to do those kinds of things. So, I remember at the time telling the department administrator that he had to learn how to use spreadsheets and had to share the results with me, so that I could be on top of it. It was something that Rip never really much cared about when he was chair. He didn't want to manage the budget particularly. The other thing I learned about the departmental administrator was he also was advising students, sometimes referring to himself in some cases as the department chair. That led to some really unfortunate incidents with parents of students who had been offended by his imperious manner.

You know, the big category there that I want to come back to, is that I really wish I had been more attentive to building a really good staff. I did end up getting rid of the departmental administrator, and I became the fiscal officer for about a year. And that didn't work out very well because I had plenty of other things to do. And then, I turned it over to one of the other staff, and she wasn't very good at that. So, I was fiscal officer for yet another year. And then I finally hired somebody who was good at doing those kinds of things and proved to be an excellent hire. There always, when you're a department chair, are some faculty hires you wish you hadn't made. There are other hires that you're very proud of. And by and large, most of the hires we made I was very proud of. These were faculty who had a lot of talent and were very promising. Every once in a while, their promise didn't materialize, and I think we were pretty good as a department in deciding we shouldn't tenure that person because the past is prologue to the present and the future -- and they really were not going to develop the way we had hoped they would. Those were always difficult decisions. These were good people, very bright people in every case actually. But we bit the bullet and did the right thing.

The other thing, by the way, that I did during that period and I had done a little bit of this at Pittsburgh and Florida State before that, is that I involved myself far more widely in the University. Particularly when I was chair of Political Science, I served on a series of University committees that I felt were pretty important committees: two provost search committees, one of which brought us Dick Sisson, and I actually chaired that committee. Another one that brought us Barbara Snyder as Provost later on, and that was a good move as well. Then I was on a committee, as my predecessor Randall Ripley had been, to conduct a review of the Graduate School. We recommended among other things that the Graduate

School endow fellowships for the departments that were really successful in building graduate programs so that they didn't have to start from scratch every year. And that was much resisted by weaker departments, but much applauded by departments that were high in quality, most of which were SBS departments by the way. They fared pretty well under that particular change. I was active in trying to be on the University stage as much as I could, including in the University Senate for a couple of tours. I also wanted to maintain a research program, feeling that the department chair really should be somebody who digs down in the trenches, what faculty did. Even though I was told I didn't need to teach every year and should teach maybe only one course a year, I think I always taught two courses, partly because I liked teaching, partly because the phones didn't ring when I was in the classroom. I had a whole bunch of students. Over the years I think I've had 39 Ph.D. students, most of them of course at Ohio State. But overall, as chair, I was trying to strike a balance there between being a department administrator as well as just a regular faculty member.

JBS: I'd like to interject just how important I think the strategic decision to get involved in the University operations more broadly ended up paying dividends for the department. Your report that you talked about at the graduate school is literally known as the Beck Report, and it was brought up time and again when I did my own stint as dean. People would say, we've got to find the Beck Report. We've got to make this into a PDF. We need to send this out, to remind people about the importance of merit and what we're trying to do here with graduate programs. It had a long-lasting, huge impact, I think, on the best departments, to not only get better but stay there too, which is also a challenge. The Beck Report was a wonderful accomplishment and thank you for all of that. On the scholarship side, while

still being chair, I think as a junior faculty member, first we were amazed by how much you supported the faculty in their own research while you were chair. As junior faculty coming in under your chairmanship and being surrounded by amazing colleagues like Herb Weisberg, Herb Asher, Aage Clausen, John Kessel, Pat Patterson, Larry Baum, the list goes on and on, but you as chair would also give comments on these papers. You know, you go to conferences, and I remember talking to junior colleagues at other places, and they would be like, "Oh no, no, no, we don't show our stuff to senior colleagues, certainly not the chair." I remember a direct quote was, "They might use it against us later." Instead, I really felt like I had such a supportive environment, and people are just amazed that the chair would take time to read an article. I always said I got the best reviews before sending it out for a real review, the best reviews from my department. Then you send it to the APSR, AJPS, JOP, and "Well, I've already heard it all from the best colleagues in American Politics and Methods right here." You did a phenomenal job and thank you.

PB: I always wanted to be a faculty-oriented and student-oriented chair. I actually think I got my greatest satisfaction over seeing my colleagues, particularly my younger colleagues, develop over time into the people that we thought they would become as scholars. Because as I said, we always hired really well, people with a lot of promise. And anything I could do to try to further that development, I wanted to be able to do. And as I said, it was something that was very important to me.

HW: Did you have issues navigating between the different fields in the department? The American Politics program clearly was a strong program as you became chair and became even stronger over the years.

PB: I really didn't actually have problems. One of the things that Rip did that I think was very important, was that he moved towards department-wide search committees rather than field specific search committees. And we hired in that period some really, really good faculty, particularly in Comparative Politics. It may have been the case that people in Comparative could appeal beyond the single field. And so, we ended up attracting a whole series of people, many of whom didn't stay at Ohio State and went on to other places, who are today some of the best Comparative Politics faculty and researchers in the country. And then I developed an interest myself in Comparative Politics, through the Comparative National Election Project that I actually was one of the founders of way back in my Florida State days. I have come to be a leader of CNEP along with my colleague Dick Gunther, through the present day. It oriented me to elections in other countries, and I've learned a lot doing that. We now have over 60 country surveys, and I've done some publications that compare countries, particularly in terms of political polarization and populism. So, I've been more of a comparatist myself. The international field was always a strong field at Ohio State, had been for many, many years. And we continued to hire there, and when people showed particular promise, were sure to tenure them and to promote them to Full Professor early, again if they deserved it. I tried to be a chair for all the fields. I'm not sure I was perceived that way necessarily, but I really did try to serve all the fields, feeling really that if political science at Ohio State was to be a top-rated department nationally and internationally, as was my goal, we had to be strong in more than just American Politics, which was clearly a strength of ours, and that included Political Theory. I think we have managed to do that. We also have built up a considerable strength in Political Methodology which is, I think,

something very much connected to American Politics at that time but even more now connected to the other fields as well.

HW: As you talked, you mentioned the Comparative National Election Project, and that made me realize we didn't really have a chance to talk about your earlier research areas. You mentioned you headed up the survey research lab at Florida State, and that was a little on the policy area. And you mentioned Kent Jennings and I think you used the term socialization, but did you want to describe a little your earlier work in terms of socialization or voting and other areas?

PB: Early on, when I came to Michigan in 1966, I think one of the first classes I had was taught by Kent Jennings who at the time had just gotten a big grant to do a study of high school seniors and their parents across the country. And after I had been there for the first semester, trimester as they called them in Michigan, he asked if I would be willing to be a research assistant on the project. At the time I had an NDEA fellowship and had to get special dispensation from the graduate school, to take on any other work. Kent hired me on, mostly covering summers, and maybe a bit of money during the year but it wasn't much. The fellowship, by the way, was for $2,000, which was a princely sum in 1966, although barely enough to live on at the time. And also, in that first trimester I believe it was, I had a methods course from Warren Miller, who turned out to be two people: one was Herb Weisberg and the other was Merrill Shanks, who later went to Berkeley. And they were the ones who taught the Methods course, and I learned a lot from them as well. It was a really good first year but my area, working on Kent's project, was Political Socialization. My first publication with Kent was on how 18-year-olds felt about getting the right to vote.

And this was a simple little piece. Actually, never would be published today, I think. But that was my first publication.

Then I decided later on that I didn't want to do a dissertation on Political Socialization. I always had a strong interest in political parties and had developed that interest even more when I took a course from Sam Eldersveld at Michigan. I decided I would make use of the data that Michigan had collected along with one of its election studies, and that was a survey of county party chairs around the country. I also had an interest in context. I spent a lot of time developing county indicators of partisan competition and a variety of other things that I could then attach to this party chair data. Kent probably was disappointed that I didn't do something on Political Socialization, but I think in retrospect that was a really good move because Political Socialization sort of died as a subfield of Political Science. It died mainly because of lack of access to classrooms when federal regulations prevented scholars from going in and interviewing students without parental permission, which had to be granted ahead of time. Studies of school children had to stay away from political topics because parents often didn't want to agree to that, and it was difficult for schools to try to promote something like that. And so, my first publication out of my dissertation, an article in the APSR, was on the party chairs and their activities.

Then I developed an interest, at the tail end of my time at Michigan, in party realignment. It was spurred by reading a book in manuscript form by Walter Dean Burnham, who Jan knows from her Texas days and then worked with extensively there. And that book really excited me. I did some work over the next decade on political realignment, two of which Herb and Dick Niemi published in books they edited. I published an article in the American Political Science Review called "Partisan Realignment

in the Post War South," that made use of data from the American National Election Studies on the eleven former Confederate states. Its theme was that there was a dealignment there already and probably a realignment in their future in the Republican direction. Of course, I was right on the money with that. And even when I moved to Florida State, I taught a course on southern politics but a lot of it had to do with southern realignment and movement in a Republican direction.

And then while I was still at Florida State, several colleagues -- Russ Dalton, myself, Manfred Küchler (a political methodologist) and Scott Flanagan, who was a specialist on Japan, decided that there really had not been any cross-national election studies that used the same questionnaire, the same variables. There had been some attempts at that but they hadn't really been very successful. So, we launched a project, really starting in Tallahassee, Florida, to try to do some cross-national work there. We were able to get scholars from Germany, Britain, United States, and Japan, to do parallel surveys during their elections. They were the precursors to what became the Comparative National Election Project. One interesting anecdote is that our first conference was at a place outside Tallahassee called Wakulla Springs, where the Tarzan movies were filmed. Herb, you may have been there at one point but may have forgotten that the interesting thing about Wakulla Springs is that it was located in a dry county. When the German colleagues discovered they couldn't get a beer there, they were very upset. It almost sabotaged the whole collaboration. I think our next conference was in Columbus, Ohio, where we were able to get beer. Then it went on from there. In the period since CNEP was first formed, we have had about 25 different conferences, held all around the world, the most recent one being in Bali, Indonesia. (I never talked about it as Bali because that sounded too exotic. And the truth

is, I didn't see much of Bali. I mostly closeted in a room with CNEP colleagues talking about elections.)

JBS: It's hard to overstate the importance of the cross-national election studies but I do want to bump back to realignment because you're also internationally known for your work on realignment. I'm curious, if you would describe the initial work on realignment is like an ah-ha moment, or is this something that, you know, you've mentioned the book by Burnham, that you started to plant a seed and then it evolved. I think people are interested, and students are always interested, in how ideas come about, especially when it's such a big concept, such as realignment that you're associated with.

PB: Burnham's work was very important because it really turned me on to the whole idea about how political change takes place, and how that change is generational. That goes back to my Political Socialization roots. And I remember at the time, I was visiting my uncle in Logansport, Indiana. He was a county clerk at the time. I was telling him about this Burnham work on realignment. Logansport or that area was an area that had been heavily Republican up until the New Deal period. And then almost overnight, became Democratic, and voted Democratic for several decades ever since. I'm telling my uncle this and he said, "You need to come down with me and examine the voting books in the basement of the courthouse." So, we trooped downstairs and he was showing me registration records going block by block in Logansport. He said: "What you'll see here is how John Doe was a registered Republican but John Doe, Jr., his son, registered as a Democrat." And family after family after family had this change. Logansport at the time was ethnically diverse in some ways. Very few Blacks, no Hispanics but a lot of Italians, a lot of Irish there, and of course, a lot of people with German background. It was among the Italians and the Irish

where the changes were most pronounced, some of them registering to vote for the first time in the 1930s and registering as Democrats. That really interested me. And so, I wrote a little piece that came out of my interactions with my uncle of all people, that was called "A Socialization Theory of Partisan Realignment" published in an anthology that Dick Niemi put together. It was really a hypothesis, that the way things changed over time was through conversations at the dinner table, where the kids didn't necessarily pick up a lot of partisan talk, but over the dinner table they would hear: "Oh, there's that Herbert Hoover again. He's preaching all of this nonsense of not wanting to intervene in the Depression. And look at Franklin Roosevelt, look at how he is and what he's doing for us." And the argument that I was making is that that generation of young people picked up these vibes from their parents. It's not as if they were sitting around the TV, watching the same shows. That came later. The argument I was making is that you created the generational change by what was going on, in effect, in the family, in these parent-to-youth conversations, that in some ways were not focused on politics and political choice, but had implications for that. And of course, it was this New Deal generation that was really the generation of people who became Democrats and carried the Democratic party in the majority status for the next 50 years really, certainly outside of the South. The South already was heavily Democratic, but certainly in the rest of the country that happened. My interest in realignment came clearly from Burnham's book, but also from these conversations with my uncle and what I discovered in the bowels of the courthouse in Logansport, Indiana.

JBS: What I love about this, is really your scholarship in Socialization, etc., your background in scholarship set it up, and it was an interaction with practical politics and then really getting

into the empirics, so going to the courthouse and looking at the data. That's a great and memorable story.

PB: Well, the realization was, I knew these people. I knew these families and it was just remarkable, what kind of shift had taken place. And then I remember later on, when we were starting the Comparative National Election Project, I wrote a very long memo that laid out what it was we should be doing in these new cross-national election surveys. We had to do something different than had been done before, and the focus that I wanted to try to put forward, was on intermediation: the notion that much of what we learn about politics is mediated through the media, through professional associations, through interpersonal communications and discussion networks, and to some degree through the political parties. And so, I wrote this up, and I remember Russ Dalton, who by at that point had moved on to Irvine from Florida State, saying: "What you're saying in this is, everything you've done up to this point, you're bringing together in one project." I hadn't really thought of it that way but of course he was absolutely correct.

HW: I've got a feeling we should turn back to the University side and the deanship. Sort of the same questions we did before. You served there quite a long time as well as department chair. What issues did you see when you moved into the deanship? How do you feel you resolved them, and how do you look back on those years?

PB: Again, as dean, what I really wanted to be, was a dean who was oriented towards faculty and particularly chairs, who were my immediate contact group. I remember very early on, when I first was named as dean, going to see each of the chairs in their domain, in their department, to talk to them about their department, to learn from them what they thought the strengths and weaknesses were in their department, and what I could do as a dean to

help. And then I really tried to be helpful in recruiting. I would make sure that I met with all the candidates, particularly for senior positions. Now Rip [Randall Ripley] had done that as my predecessor as dean, and I think it was a very important thing to do. But I remember working particularly on a couple of candidates, one in Psychology, who was an African American, who we very much wanted to be able to recruit. And he and I became really good friends, and I remember talking with him, even before he came here, at length, about his decision and what he was going to do. I think that proved to be a good decision. The other one was an economist who was a major figure at the time in population research, and later became a department chair in Economics. He was somebody, again, who I spent time trying to court as a candidate because I felt that it was very important for those departments to be able to hire people who could improve them. And then there was the Department of Speech and Hearing Science that really needed senior faculty. And so, in one year I think we ended up hiring three people there. They had had some vacancies, and their department chair and I worked really hard to recruit the people we wanted there. And that I think proved to be pretty successful as well. We did it really across the board in the SBS [Social and Behavioral Sciences]. It was true in Anthropology, which was a department that was reborn out of the ashes of a lousy department, that became actually quite good over time, through the efforts largely of its department chair and the support from the dean's office that he received. I wanted to be oriented towards those things. I tried again to be an active player on the University stage, and I was during that period of time. I was dean for four years and was fired by the provost, who I had tangled with before when he was a dean of another college. He had wanted me to try to do some things, particularly in one of my departments, that served the interests of one of his faculty because he had a

spouse in that department. And the chair of the department was dead set against doing that, mainly because he had done that before a few years earlier and felt that it really was unfair to do it. So, I ended up trying to negotiate something that would work out, and I think pretty effectively was able to negotiate some kind of deal where this person received a raise that was paid for largely through an increased appointment in a research center, not through economics.

HW: Were there things at the University level that stymied you when you were dean, or did you feel you had good support upstairs usually?

PB: I think I had good support until the last provost when I was dean. For a variety of reasons, maybe good reasons on his side, he was deeply resentful of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, which I kept telling him was the best college in the University. It was for all kinds of objective measures, but he didn't like that very well. He always felt that SBS was not supportive enough of faculty who were not research oriented, and that again I think reflected his own background. I tangled with him in a variety of ways. And then we had an Executive Dean at the time who I really fought with, more than I should have. Actually, she was a good person in many ways but actually was much more concerned with building up a staff in the Arts and Sciences central office than with building up faculty in Arts and Sciences. And I remember in fact, there was a selective investment program. I'm not sure if it's called that. It was under Provost Barbara Snyder, where the proposal of the Executive Dean was to use all the money that was going to be devoted to that, to building up staff, support staff, in her college, rather than focus on faculty. And we, as divisional deans, opposed that and felt that this was not a good idea and it wasn't going to work, that the provost wasn't going to go for that. So, we fought against that and eventually I think

succeeded in defeating it. But it was a very, very difficult period. And I think I probably tangled too much. I should have been maybe more, how do I want to put it, less confrontational but I just feel I wasn't able to do that, and Provost Snyder understood. Her successor did not and so that presented some real problems.

HW: As you look back in terms of how the University seems to have changed since you retried, whether the department, the college, the University or the University budgeting, do you have any thoughts or reflections?

PB: Maybe a couple of things. One was, I chaired a committee called the Revenue Generation Committee, that was a committee that had been put together to try to transition the budget model, from the old style model where departments and colleges had a budget, a base budget, and there were increments to that almost across the board, to a model in which departments and colleges had to earn their way through tuition and state subsidies and research grants, and things of that sort. And I started out thinking that this new budget model wasn't very attractive. On the other hand, I realized that the old model served the departments that were not of high quality better than it served the high quality departments because it froze in place their existence, their budget base, and if the University was going to be at all nimble in becoming better over time, it had to be able to move money around, to the places that could make the best use of it. Some of that had to do with enrollments, that there were gross disparities in how departments, well, really colleges, were funded based on enrollments. And those had to be rectified in some way. At the time, when I was chair of Political Science, we had built up from about 400 majors to about 1,100 or 1,200 majors. And we were just reeling. Our classes were getting bigger and bigger because we

didn't get new faculty as a result of this growth in majors. And of course, it's majors that take your upper-level courses; it's not non-majors by and large who do that.

I gradually warmed to the idea of this new budgeting model. It proved to be very successful I think to the College of Arts and Sciences for a while, and then things changed. And what really changed was, it was two-fold. One was that the Provost's office had said when it adopted the new budget model, that it would police departments and colleges, to make sure they weren't pirating courses, courses that should be taught in one department but that were money makers, so a different department could take them on. I'll give you an example. The English Department might decide it wanted to do a course on American Political Culture. So, we would develop such a course and get a lot of enrollments there, particularly because it was a required course. It could be a required course for meeting the general education requirement. And so, those were enrollments that were stolen from Political Science. And in fact, one of the battles that I fought and lost, was to allow the Glenn School to become a college and sever its connection with Social and Behavioral Sciences. I thought that was a mistake, mainly because the Glenn School at the time was a very weak school in terms of faculty quality. I felt if it was connected to SBS, we could work very hard to improve the quality, partly through joint hires with SBS departments. Well, that wasn't to be. And the Glenn School finally became a separate college and taking with it, even though they promised not to, an undergraduate major in Public Affairs. Their major does make use of some Political Science courses but there are a lot of other courses that are taught by faculty adjuncts, not faculty, in the Glenn College -- I think has hijacked some enrollments from Political Science. And so, the problem that Political Science had was that it began losing enrollments, and this was true in some of the other social science

departments as well, which meant that it was punished under the budgeting model. Because if you go up, you're getting new revenue; if you go down, you're losing that revenue, and indeed, they were losing it.

And then the University became even more selective over time, and what that meant was, there were many more, I'll use engineering as an example, many more engineering majors who were matriculating to Ohio State and accepting offers here and were not taking Political Science courses or other Social Science courses. And then the GEC [General Education Curriculum] was reformed, so that the number of courses students had to take that were outside of their home college, like Engineering, was dramatically decreased. And some of these home colleges as well would develop courses that basically would satisfy the general education requirement, even though they were in that particular home college. So, there was sort of a, I call it a double attack, but it's almost a triple attack, on SBS, and of course Jan inherited this as an Executive Dean. It really cost Social and Behavioral Sciences in terms of revenue. They didn't have faculty positions to recruit on. They were basically trying to come up with money through savings; and the way you come up with savings, if you lose a faculty member to retirement or somebody goes somewhere else or was turned down for tenure, you often can't fill that position. So, there was attrition just in terms of just the size of the faculty. That was very unfortunate because I always felt that the quality of SBS, which was very high, was going to continue to be high if we could recruit top notch faculty. That just became harder to do over time. And I might add, some of the faculty who were here, who were attracted to other universities, were attracted in part because they didn't see a good future here for their department. I had numerous conversations with people who ended up deciding to go somewhere else because they

thought, well, the state's not really subsidizing the University very well, and what I want to do is go to a private school, for example, that has much better, much more solid base of support, or I want to go to a place, the University of Michigan is one example of this, not so tied to state subsidies as was Ohio State. And so, we lost faculty in that respect as well.

JBS: As always, you've got an amazing ability to grasp the big picture. I think that's one reason it made you such a successful dean and advocate for your faculty and your departments and your college. Do you think that the challenge is to continue that excellence if the budgeting model inhibits faculty recruitment and retention? Every faculty you hire has to do twice as much. If you have a faculty 20 versus a faculty of 40 and that's who you are competing against, or 30, 60. I think that the Social Sciences have continued to be some of our strongest departments, and I think it's really critical what happens the next decade in terms of excellence. But the foundation you built is certainly there, and the desire and the values of excellence and merit is there. Herb, you may have some more questions about Paul as dean but I just want to throw that out there. And I also want to also ask about APSA service.

PB: Yes.

HW: Go ahead.

JBS: Paul has given service to the American Political Science Association which their conferences now have about 12,000 people and in terms of different people who are affiliated at different times is over 50,000 to 60,000, a huge organization. You won the top award, the Frank Goodnow Award, only one per year, for service to that organization. I know part of that was the strategic planning you did for the American Political Science Association at a key time. I was reminded of this when you were talking about what I see

as strategic moves and views on also running a college and being a dean at Ohio State. I'd love to hear you reflect on, first of all, your service at APSA, and what you feel you gave, what you got out of that service, and just more generally on the organization itself and maybe its future.

PB: I always was very active in APSA, the American Political Science Association. I also had some inside connections to APSA. One of my graduate school colleagues, Tom Mann, became the Executive Director of the APSA, and was Executive Director for many years there. Tom was in my class coming into Michigan and I knew him very, very well. And Tom was always suggesting my name for various things, various committees at APSA. His wife, Sheilah, who Herb may remember from Minnesota days, got me involved in a project called SETUPS which was Supplemental Empirical Teaching Units in Political Science. I developed one on political socialization that was to be used in the classroom making use of the Jennings socialization data. And then I rode the circuit, running workshops for faculty on how to work with these SETUPS. Sheilah was the one that got me involved in that. Tom was the one who got me involved in my first overseas experience. The State Department at the time had fellowships for academics to go abroad and give a series of lectures that were basically designed to tie other countries and their people more into the United States. And also, to give the lecturers experience in these other countries. So, I went in 1984 to talk about the American primary elections that year, in Italy, in Germany, and in Turkey. People particularly in Italy were puzzled as to why anybody would ever want to select party candidates through a primary election. That seemed to be a non-sensical thing. I've now come to that position, by the way, but I wasn't there at the time. And in fact, I remember particularly well one of the lectures I gave out of 19 in Europe during my

speaking tour. The first place was in Palermo, Sicily, and there was a Christian Democratic politician in the back of the room who raised his hand and said about the U.S. primaries: "Why would anybody do that? That sounds like foolishness." And then, his other question was, "Why did President Reagan send you here to talk about it?" I said, "I don't think he knows that I'm in Palermo." I have long ties to APSA.

HW: Weren't you involved in chairing the convention one year in which it was particularly controversial issues?

PB: I've repressed the controversial issues, but they may have been there. They probably were. But yes, I was the chair of the program committee. And that was also a very good experience. I think I wouldn't have been able to do it successfully had I not been the chair of a department that had some strong fields because I felt like I had a good feel for rational choice or comparative, less so maybe for political theory, but I put onto the program committee some really good people in political theory. And that was a good experience. Now what were the controversies, Herb?

HW: What year was it?

JBS: '94, right?

PB: I think it was '94. I can tell you actually.

HW: Then I must be wrong. I'm remember a convention where it was issues having to do with the ERA. That was the Midwest and John Kessel, but some comparable set of issues where the convention nearly didn't take place.

PB: I remember being on the Executive Council at APSA when the issue came up of whether we should refuse to go to New Orleans because Louisiana had not ratified the Equal Rights

Amendment. I was all for that, all for not going to New Orleans. And then we brought in the guy who served pro bono as the attorney for the APSA. Max Kampelman, maybe?

HW: Yes.

PB: He said, "The facts of life are that the Hilton chain is going to sue us if we don't go to Louisiana. They're arguing that we are going to damage their standing among professional associations by pulling out, and that they will lose millions and millions of dollars in revenue as a result of that. There are two ways we can handle this. We can either go cold turkey and let them sue us, and empty all of our coffers but they can take what we have which isn't much, or we can simply concede and try to make a deal with them. What I would recommend is that we don't end the APSA as an organization but rather try to strike a deal." And the Hilton chain was actually very open to a deal, and the deal that was struck, it turned out to be a good one for APSA. We said we would go to Hilton Hotels for the next, I don't remember how many, maybe ten years, in exchange for a freezing of room rates in those hotels and discounts for political scientists who went there, in exchange of course for holding meetings where Hilton had a major presence. We did that for many years, and I remember that there was a lot of anguish from people who were supportive of ERA, that we would cave. It was a caving that was done for survival. The desire to survive as an organization. I think it actually proved to be beneficial, not to the ERA obviously, but certainly to APSA.

JBS: I believe you were program chair at MPSA as well and then different leadership positions in APSA sections, which I believe included elections, public opinion, and voting behavior, not surprising given your expertise in those areas.

PB: Yes, I've done all kinds of things, I guess. My wife, Tere, keeps telling me, "Why are you doing all this stuff? You're never home." This was before the days you could work from home. Now, she's telling me, "Your always home. Why don't you go outside somewhere and get out of my hair?"

HW: And those were before the days when you were setting records in terms of how many media interviews you were doing a year on American politics.

PB: Yes, I always did some of that. In fact, I was reminiscing about my first national media interview when NPR celebrated its 50th anniversary. There is a book now out, I believe it's a book, by some of the first four reporters for NPR, all women, who became major figures in the media community. Susan Stanberg being one of them. I'm trying to think of who else was in there. Oh, what's her name, Boggs, and two others. And the first interview I ever did, I did some while I was at Pitt but very minor things. I remember being asked to fly down from Tallahassee to Tampa, to do a recorded session. It was National Public Television. They couldn't do it out of Tallahassee for some reason. And the interviewers were two of these women. And they were really tough. They addressed questions to me that forced me to really think about what was going on in that election. I don't even remember what the year was. It may have been, probably 1984, I'm thinking. But that was one of the first interviews I did. And I would do interviews on occasion since then. Once I retired from the faculty in 2012, I decided I could do more of these interviews. Of course, what happens is, once you agree to do an interview, other reporters read these interviews and pick up your name and put you in their rolodex or in their contact list, and then begin to contact you for other things. At one point, I think in the 2016 election cycle, I did about 300 interviews, which was an incredible amount. By the end of that, I was so tired of doing

interviews and saying the same thing over and over and over again, that I could say almost in my sleep. I was really glad when the election was over with, and I could go back to a more modest set of interviews.

JBS: Another example of service, though. My goodness. And civil engagement, which is a huge topic for political scientists. I mean, you really, you were doing it before it was cool, so to speak.

PB: It's interesting, Jan. I was always telling my junior faculty that they should try to refrain from doing too much of that because they had other things that were more important for them. And in fact, I as chair and Rip before me and Herb after me and Jan, I think you also from the dean's office, tried to protect junior faculty from having to take on so many burdens beyond those of publishing, getting grants, and trying to earn tenure there. I do think by the way it's tougher to earn tenure at Ohio State University today than it was then. Just too many things they have to do. Of all things, they have to show that they are good teachers, which in my day they never had to do; but I cared about that as did others. We, I think, set a good example for the University in that respect. I see that some of my junior colleagues are doing more interviews in some very prominent places, and I'm really proud of them for doing that. And they're really good at it. And of course, the best interviews are those that flow from their own research. They are able to comment with much more expertise than I have on things that they're doing.

HW: Are there other topics you'd like to touch on, Paul?

PB: I'm just looking at my list here, of things to jog my memory. No, I think we've covered actually all. By the way, I say this with regret in some ways, I was the department chair for 19 years and then a dean for four more years. I was a chair for too many years. I should

have stepped down after probably my first two terms and let somebody else take over. But for some reason or another, it was probably the wrong time to do it. I don't recall what it was, but I didn't do that. I think I suffered some in terms of my scholarly productivity. What was particularly hard to do, by the way, was start up new projects because you've got to do a lot of thinking about those new projects. My mind was occupied with budgets and trying to improve the department or the college, and not so much with new projects in Political Science. In that respect, CNEP saved me because we always had new countries in which we were doing surveys, and there would always be new topics we had to address. We developed a battery of questions, which I pretty much developed, on populism, once populism became important beginning in 2016. We developed another battery on protest that we hadn't had before. We've downsized our battery on the role that associations play because it's not membership associations anymore that are playing this role; its associations and blogs on the media, that are the ones that are affecting people. It's not like they're belonging to the American Legion or the Rotary Club; it's that they are paying attention to what's going on in and through the internet, and we're trying to capture that in other ways. We've basically evolved over time in CNEP. That's kept me alive and I'm glad I've done that.

HW: Thank you very much for joining us, Paul, to go through what's really an excellent career, both in terms of research, in terms of service, to this University, to other universities, and national and other associations. Thank you very much. And thank you, Jan, for joining in as well.

JBS: Yes, I really appreciate it. On behalf of all of your colleagues, Paul, thank you so much for your service to Ohio State, the discipline and our department. You really did an amazing

job in all three areas of research, service and teaching as a faculty member and we didn't touch on teaching as much but your passion in that area is well known. When I did serve as dean, we would have students who would always have a favorite professor they would remember, and ask if you know so and so, and your name would come up time and time again as one of those. There are people out there whose lives you've impacted, that you don't even know about. The amazing service, research, and teaching combination that you brought together is remarkable, just it has been a real pleasure to get to talk to you today.

PB: Thanks, Jan and Herb. I appreciate the opportunity to think through my career, and I also appreciate the nice things you said about me. That is deeply appreciated as I sit here in my study at home. I've isolated through the pandemic and from virtually everybody else who used to be around me.