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WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY
Retirees Association Oral History Project
Interview with Donna Schlagheck

Interview Information

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Interviewer: Dan Abrahamowicz (DA), Former Vice President for Student Affairs

Interviewee: Donna Schlagheck (DS), Professor Emeritus, Dept of Political Science

Interview Transcript

DA: Hello, this is Dan Abrahamowicz, former Vice President for Student Affairs, and current member of the Wright State University Retiree's Association. Today is Friday, September 21st, 2018 and I am pleased to be interviewing Donna Schlagheck, Dr. Donna Schlagheck, Professor Emerita from the Department of Political Science, and this is for the WSU Retiree Association's Oral History Project. Dr. Schlagheck, Donna, thank you for being with us today. Why don't we start off by telling us a little bit about your background, where you're from, where you went to high school, and how you got to Wright State?

DS: I grew up in Cincinnati so a local girl and I graduated high school and went abroad for a year of study. I had an interest in languages and world affairs.

DA: Where did you go abroad?

DS: Antwerp and Brussels, Belgium. While I was there-

DA: That sounds like fun!

DS: -the Munich Olympic Games were taking place.

DA: Oh.

DS: A group of friends said "It's a short drive, let's go to Germany." We got to Germany and a rather rude border guard told us that Germany is closed, go back where you came from. Thankfully the BBC informed us on the way back what had happened at the Munich Olympic Games, the terrorist attack, and that changed my thinking about politics and world affairs. I started my undergrad at the University of Cincinnati-

DA: How did it form your perspective on those things?

DS: I began to appreciate that conflicts are about people and cultures and history, not just about armies. That was probably a good beginning for someone who would study terrorism. I would write my undergrad honors thesis on why the Palestinians had changed from a rather conventional guerilla struggle with Israel, to the use of terrorism and elevating it to the international stage. So that was part of my undergrad emphasis, and at Minnesota, after a year in law school, which was just not the right place for me.

DA: You went to law school, where?

DS: At Minnesota, I switched to the PhD program in International Relations and Political Science.

DA: Did you get your Bachelor's Degree in Political Science?

DS: Yes. Part abroad, part at UC, and finished up in Minnesota in enough time to decide about law school. This is... I am starting the PhD program in about 1980 and of course in the 1980's terrorism rears its head again. Literally while I was proposing the topic on terrorism to my dissertation committee, my brother, who was a Marine at the time, was hiking in Tanzania and was planning to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, and his beeper went off. You remember beeper tech?

DA: Oh, yes!

DS: It's 1983.

DA: So he wasn't out doing military things there, this was a sort of vacation for him?

DS: No, he was there on shore leave on U.S.S [?], and his beeper went off and his ship was one of the first to be dispatched to Beirut to help in the evacuation of the marines who had been wounded or killed in the Marine Corps barracks bombing. My dissertation committee said "You know, terrorism is just not important enough of a problem really for us to let someone go forward with a PhD thesis on it. So, find a more interesting topic with better data." was the answer, But it was such an important thing, Dan, because in the fall of 84' I went to the American Political Science Association Convention in Washington DC that year, the Vietnam War Veterans Memorial was opening, and I also met a group of faculty from Wright State University who were there interviewing candidates for a positioning

DA: All be darn! Do you remember who they were?

DS: Oh, yeah. Jim Walker, Jim Jacob, Charlie Funderburk, and Bob Adams. A couple had given papers, but they were all doing the interviews, and the comradery of that group of people and the intelligence and the humor was such an important selling point. So, when I came to Wright state later- actually early in 85'- to do the interview, you know what I gave my class lecture on. It was a lecture on what is terrorism and how do we define it, and why is it a threat.

DA: What did you finally do your dissertation on?

DS: It was about foreign policy decision making and what is the better way to understand and predict how leaders make decisions. So I was studying Henry Kissinger and different psychological models, I used a new content analysis program there to decide which ones better captured and then could be used to predict how leaders will behave, and that was useful training up to this day when we look at how a president behaves and how he decides, we wonder how he perceives not just the values, but how he actually engages in perception as well as decision making.

DA: And what would you say about Donald Trump? No, I'm just kidding.

DS: Interestingly, Dr. Kissinger's wife, his second wife- I'm losing the thread of how they were related, but an outside member of my committee had a good inside connection with Dr. Kissinger as well- so I gave this lecture on terrorism and the class was terrific, maybe five or six young people in the class, they were either active duty or very recently discharged members of the military. Very interested in terrorism as a result of what had happened in Beirut and elsewhere. By the end of the day, Jim Walker had offered me the job. Which was wonderful. When you're on the national job market you never know where things will work out.

DA: Well, it was in your home area, too.

DS: Less than an hour from my family and it turned out to be the best offer and I was very happy to start here in the fall of 85' which also just so happened to be the year Paige Mulhollan started as President.

DA: Wow.

DS: So lots of new things, and then of course he would trigger a lot of changes as well. But I grew up in the area, but I'm convinced, though, that meeting those four faculty at the conference, just that sense of what they were like in a more informal setting than actually being on the job.

DA: So you were struck by the comradery amongst the four, and did you find that to be the case when you actually got here?

DS: Oh, absolutely. It would turn out to be an incredibly active department in terms of scholarship, they really cared about quality teaching and respect for the students, engaged in the community. I was surprised that such a young university could provide faculty that steeped in all aspects of the academy which you would expect in a long established university in the community.

DA: How big was the department? How many faculty in the department? You mentioned the four.

DS: I believe there were 8 all together at the time.

DA: And was that a good size department compared to other universities would you say, or-

DS: Given the number of majors, it had room for a lot of growth and the dean at the time, Perry Moore, also a political scientist, also usually showed his love by giving Political Science appointments last. We were not overstaffed in that sense.

DA: He didn't want to show favors?

DS: There was no favors, there was clearly no favoritism. As time would go by, one of the real opportunities I enjoyed was to build the department by a way of building a Master's program. After years of hearing-

DA: So there was no Master's Program?

DS: There were no Master's. There was in Urban Affairs, a Masters in Urban Administration, the MUA, which would later become the MBA. All three aspects, engaged in the community, scholarly activity, and teaching.

DA: So you found the department very attractive, what would you say about the entire campus at the time?

DS: The campus, the description I gave of it was characterized by early Stalinist architecture, but the fact that it had that huge wooded preserve. They took me on a walk, we took a break from all the interviews and presentations and just took a walk in the woods, which if you know me personally, that's the best therapy possible. But that undeveloped aspect of it, one dorm on campus, Hamilton Hall. One dorm. And the townhouses, usually for international visitors.

DA: Forest Lane.

DS: We were still planning basketball in the Student Union, and it was modest. It just struck me as modest utilitarian and no ivy on the walls, but the people were all about teaching. In the department they were all about politics and how it affects the community, how to engage our students, how to write about it, and it would sustain, Dan. After serving them as chair, building the department's Master program, all the student activities were a success. One of my real points of pride was how many books were written by the authors in collaborations of two or three or four.

DA: And what's the department?

DS: It was within the department, my last project was on comparative corruption. I did a chapter on corruption in UN food for oil program. We had chapters on Russia, the United States, China, India, Brazil-

DA: You mean corruption in each of the different countries?

DS: Yes! Yes, and then what governmental organizations do to try and combat corruption- in collaboration with a person from the Dayton- I'm sorry, the Kettering Foundation- the development of democracy in other countries, so corruption is a real problem there. So, I saw that comradery and collaboration and it was such a rich resource, such a rewarding cohort of faculty, but the shared values of inquiry and teaching were evident from day one.

DA: What was the relationship with the Administration? Perry Moore, and the President, or I guess whoever was provost then?

DS: I think Brage Golding had just left, a new president had come in, and faculty governance was very strong. We still had an Academic Council at that point between faculty and staff, and when I entered faculty governance that was the point where it was clear the faculty wanted a faculty senate.

DA: Even that early?

DS: Even that early. Little did we know-

DA: In 85'?

DS: Well, 90's I guess. But little did we know it would actually move to complete unionization. But the impulse was there. So, faculty had had a long tradition of collaboration, an administration that wanted to reward the really productive faculty, and the budget review council. The university budget review council, the UBRC. Faculty had a very, very emphatic voice in where the money hits the bottom line. It was remarkable how engaged and how non-combative that engagement was. It was truly, Dan.

DA: Not combative with the administration

DS: Was non combative. Obviously not agreeing all the time, but it was not an adversarial relationship. It truly was what we used to think of in terms of shared governance.

DA: Wow. So, we talk about your trajectory. So you come in at 85', you were I assume an assistant professor on a tenure track. Talk about what happened with you then, for awhile.

DS: I was very fortunate to meet the director of the university honors program. You probably have heard these stories before, Professor Jacob Dorn did two... an American historian did two

really important things for me and for Wright State. He asked me to design a seminar for senior honors students on international terrorism.

DA: He had a broader vision in international reports of terrorism than your Minnesota committee.

DS: Jake was at the time the president of the Dayton Council on World Affairs, and would invite me into the council and would invite me to serve as president. But he had this love- his heart was with the honors program, and in designing that honors seminar, that's when I decided to write my first book. Because there was no textbook!

DA: For an honors seminar?

DS: On terrorism. There were no textbooks on terrorism in 85' and 86', so it was a wonderful seminar to teach, but in the back of your head you're thinking "What I need is a book that does." So, by the end of the seminar, I had a book proposal ready for a publisher and the first textbook on international terrorism designed for undergraduates was published in 1988, as a result of Professor Dorn and that wonderful seminar. Political Science was of a mind that if you wanted to pioneer a new course, we loved collaborating with the honors department. We never asked for a course release, you would just teach it, cross-list it with students who were honors eligible, and so there was always a rich development of the curriculum, making it available to honors sometimes first, and sometimes modifying it for honors. Charlie Funderburk and I for years worked on a corruption class in the honors program which would later yield fruit a book as well.

DA: This is what strikes me, though. Even ten years later, things were so much easier to do back then it seemed like.

DS: The institution was young, it was flexible. You could try stuff. A dean would never say "No, you may not teach for the honors seminar without honors sending money back to your department." Which, at later points... it was, it was flexible. We weren't so entrenched. A lot more willing to experiment.

DA: Let me take a step back in your trajectory. So, did you ever consider a foreign service? Or was being a professor at a university always something you wanted to do after the law school experiment?

DS: Experiment being a good word. Many political science students do the experiment. My other tracks of interest were in the intelligence community. I interviewed with the CIA, they recruited quite heavily in Minnesota, both for analysts and people in field work. Women, interestingly, for those positions. I was also interested and got a job offer from the foreign service. It was just finishing up my Master's at that critical point, "Do I stay? Do I go?" I got the Master's and foreign services offered me a job.

DA: You got your Master's in Minnesota as well, right?

DS: Yes, because they had a program where you could track- if your grades were such, you skip that Master's and you save maybe six months in the long process, but they called it tracking directly into the doctoral program. Since they were going to track me directly in, it was a hard decision. Because Foreign Service officers offers don't come up very often and one of my real joys was seeing students of mine enter the Foreign Service and enter the intelligence community. Here at the National Air and Space Intelligence Center the skills that they've got here at Wright State are doing really meaningful and really important work.

DA: But you decided?

DS: I decided the academy was the place for me.

DA: Because of the experience you had with your professors or-

DS: Very much, and you don't even realize that they're role modeling for you at the time. You're very grateful to have had that many options and it really helped me know how to advise students in terms of, you've got certain skill sets and interests and how you want to work, particularly in the public work sector you've got so many options: Law, diplomacy, intelligence, teaching, related fields. Many people, I think, younger than me will have worked in multiple of those fields before they're done. I had the joy of a 30 year career in the academy.

DA: Well, you picked the right profession.

DS: I think so too this day, absolutely!

DA: So looking back at Wright State, one of the first dynamic changes in your time here was that honors seminar. What else was going on? Talk a little bit more about what else was going on with you and how you ended up being the head of the department.

DS: Okay, it's the late 80's and early 90's. I've become involved with the Dayton Council on World Affairs and will become president and will have this incredible opportunity. Jake Dorn is involved again, and Bishop Desmond Tutu was coming to the area. I think the Presbyterian Church was-

DA: So the university wasn't bringing in, it was someone in the area.

DS: He was there to speak at UD and the Dayton Council on World Affairs decided that we had many educational missions, raising public awareness about public affairs, but we wanted to do something special, so we created- and I had the chance to personally award- the first Dayton peace prize for Desmond Tutu.

DA: Wow!

DS: Before the Dayton Accords settled the Bosnian conflict, I got a kiss on both cheeks, you know, and in this small community of Dayton, Ohio right here and I'm working with Desmond Tutu. This is just a year after Nelson Mandela has been released from prison. Now the transformation from Apartheid into a more just South Africa just has happened. I begun giving briefings at the Defense Institute for Security Systems Management.

DA: Where is the Defense Institution?

DS: It's at Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

DA: Here at Patterson Air Force Base?

DS: Mm hmm, and it's modified its name, it's now the Defense Institute for Security Cooperation Studies. It's not DISCS, and I think they're considering another name change, but the function of this Institute on the base is to provide briefings to officers and other personnel going to assignments overseas that somehow bear upon the Military Assistance Program. This could be training you on how you maintain your tanks. You could be one of the Defense attaches, you could be an intelligence officer, but they were looking for someone to come in and speak on a regional basis about some of the terrorism threats.

DA: I see

DS: We were beginning to see- in Germany, for example, where at the time we had over 300,000 Americans deployed in West Germany. Three hundred thousand.

DA: Wow.

DS: We've drawn down our forces in Europe significantly, so I began doing some briefings there and to this day I continue briefing officers primarily heading to Middle East destinations.

DA: Who was head of the department in those years?

DS: Bob Adams for the most part, and then starting about 1989 or 90' it was Jim Jacob, and then in the mid-90's, Charlie Funderburk. Then I would succeed Charlie in the year 2000.

DA: And what were your offices?

DS: When I was hired we were up on the fourth floor of Millett and except for the arts, the whole college was on the fourth floor of Millett. Dan, it was a typical thing that Wright State would do. Instead of segregating you by department, I had Charles Berry, Latin American historian, next to me, Tsing Yuan, Chinese historian, across the hall, and faculty members from Modern Languages just across the hallway. Which meant that when Charles Berry wanted to design a course for the honors students on authoritarianism in Latin American- He did a piece on history,

I did a piece on politics, and David Peterman did a piece of literature, how people in poetry and literature had spoken about the dirty war in Argentina, or in Chile, for example.

DA: So it was a sense of community then, wasn't it?

DS: Without the divisions that departments can create, and it produced collaborations. Tsing Yuan in 1990 stopped by my office one day, and he tried off a flyer and said "Donna, I know you basically do Cold War- U.S/ Soviet, but here's a program from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. I really would like to recommend you to go out to San Diego for a summer and study China or Japan." Sure enough, I had it in my own mind and had been thinking, "I'd like to build beyond the Cold War- U.S/ Soviet, and Japan was my first choice." It's Asian, we had a very clear military relationship there, China was just coming out of the Cultural Revolution, and I applied and thanks to Perry Moore and the AASCU, I spent a summer in San Diego. All the faculty coming down from University of California at San Diego, Chalmers Johnson and other very prominent people briefing us. A year after that I would take a group of Wright State students to Japan for what the time was about a four and a half week trip.

DA: Was that part of the annual trip that they had to Japan, and Brazil?

DS: Yes it was, and Brazil. So it was a three way exchange. Brazilians would meet Americans in Japan and experience this remarkable little journey.

DA: A double culture dose.

DS: I recall asking the students, "So who do you think we're more alike, the Brazilians or the Japanese?"

DA: What did they say?

DS: "Oh, professor. No question, we're more like the Japanese."

DA: Compared to Brazilians?

DS: I truly did not know what they would say and it's that other sort of opportunity a young Wright State would provide to a professor, so of course another course on U.S-Japan foreign relations would come out of that.

DA: Of course, why not?

DS: Then I would go onto becoming the director of the International Studies major.

DA: Was that a new slot?

DS: It was a new major that had just been designed in the late 80's.

DA: So it was a sub major in the major of Political Science?

DS: Well it was a sub-major in Liberal Arts. The courses came from history, politics, and many of the comparative cultural courses.

DA: But you were still part of the department under Political Science?

DS: Right.

DA: What were the students like in general? And did you notice- we're kind of in the 90's now- did you notice a type of change in the students that were coming in?

DS: Some of my very first students- one is now a vice president for a company in Mesa, Arizona, many are lawyers- that first cohort of students, particularly in those early honors seminars, was the eagerness, Dan. Particularly for some of the young women who in many cases were getting their first female professors. Who- we just engaged.

DA: In the department, how many other female professors were there?

DS: None.

DA: You were the only one?

DS: Mary Ellen Mazey was a geographer. Urban Affairs had been sort of parked with Political Science for a while, but she took it separate and built the urban affairs program, and that happened very shortly after I came, so there had never been a full professor, there'd never been a woman tenured in Political Science. I was she, I was it, and the students were eager to engage. The strong presence of military veterans in the classroom as well which makes courses on war and terrorism, and foreign policy, and alliances, and national interest, they had a lot of personal wherewithal with which to engage in those conversations. One young woman I'm thinking of in that very first year or two of cohorts was from an Appalachian family, sitting in my office saying "Professor, I love class but I'm still having trouble explaining to my family why I want to be in college." We smiled and talked and talked about jobs and careers, and then came the time for the law school application. "Professor, can you help me explain to my family why I want to go to law school?" Which she did, and to her great credit without the family support, she got that at Wright State as well. So Dan, I think the continuities persist. They tend to be first generation, so role models- whether it's your gender, your race, whatever that might be- is so important for those first generation college students to have role models and faculty who have the time and opportunity to engage with them. These were young women who joined the Model UN team as well, and Jim Jacob said "I want you to co-advise, half the team are women." So I came- without a course reduction- I became a co-adviser to the Model UN team.

DA: Let's go to the Model UN and talk about that for a while, because one of the great points of pride for the university is the Model UN involvement, and the honors and awards it received over I don't know how many years. So, talk about that, and I don't even know when it was started. It was here already when you got here?

DS: Ken Kotecha, an Indian professor by way of South Africa, who taught International law and was the lawyer for the university administration for a long time, had gone to a few conferences. Byron Weng, another professor, had been interested. But this year, in 2018, this will be the 40th consecutive year of a team being organized and trained and going to a national level competition.

DA: So, 1978?

DS: Yes, so it's a long track record. Almost as long as Wright State is old.

DA: Then talk about the Model UN. Who it is and who is attracted to it, and how you got involved and where it went after you got involved and so on. Let's talk about that for a while.

DS: Model UN, Model United Nations, is a form of active learning. You are simulating the United Nations. I'll just describe the way the year works. The students that were on the year before who were returning, propose what country they would like to represent at the next year's conference. And when you represent a country, you get a number of committees that you have to be prepared to do work on. So let's say you represent Canada, and you may sit on security council, general assembly, you may sit on the human rights commission, maybe an environmental committee, and probably an arms control committee, or something on public health. So every year, students would get a country, and a committee, and three research topics.

DA: And how many students would it be?

DS: It depends on the size of your country. Because you have to have at least one student per committee, and no more than two.

DA: How many students overall on the Model UN team?

DS: In a year it would range from say twenty to forty, depending on the country that you got.

DA: And how are they picked?

DS: By an interview.

DA: And you as an involved professor would interview all of them?

DS: Oh, I would observe the interview.

DA: Observe the interview?

DS: Many students told me that going into that interview, and then later returning and being on the team conducting the interview, taught them more about how to prepare for a job interview than anything else. So, no, the team would do the interviews, and we would ask you to "Please come prepared to be the Russian ambassador, and we've got some questions for you about chemical weapons in London and campaign interference." I'm not serious, but you would get a research question, and so part of it was, can you do a little roleplay? Will you try?

DA: And you have to prepare.

DS: Well, you do some research. You cannot wing this sort of an interview so there's a test of seriousness of purpose, a little artistic ability, perhaps. One student came in to see me and said, "Professor, you know my family is all Greek, I can't possibly represent Turkey in this interview. What am I going to do?" I said "Try", and of course he did, and he made the team, and he is now an intelligence officer. But that lesson of preparing, but also having to adopt someone else's perspective. We talk a lot about international education and broadening our students' awareness. This is hands on. Wright State began to run a small regional conference to help us prepare, and we still do that jointly with Sinclair Community College. So, Dan, we would run a seminar, it would meet two to three days a week with long hours to prepare to stand up and publicly talk about your committee, and what you're working on, and what the problems are, and what we want to do, and how to write resolutions, how to caucus and work in small groups to negotiate the language, how to learn the rules of procedure to run a meeting. When one of my head delegates first went to work for the mayor of Dayton, he discovered on his first day in the office-

DA: Mayor Leonard?

DS: No, it was... who was the mayor then? It was Michael Turner.

DA: Oh, okay.

DS: -that no one else on staff knew how to prepare a draft resolution for City Council, but the Model UN student knew.

DA: So your first step in involvement of that was what?

DS: The faculty member advising the team, Jim Jacob, said, "I see that you're teaching a course in the winter of 86' on American foreign policy. We just got assigned the United States at the United Nations. Congratulations, you're now a co-advisor to the Model UN team."

DA: Wow, and Jim Jacob was THE advisor.

DS: He was the advisor. He was running it then.

DA: So, that was your first involvement, and what year was that, would you say?

DS: That would have been the winter of '86.

DA: Oh, okay. Just shortly after you got here.

DS: Right.

DA: Then eventually you became the advisor, and when did that happen?

DS: Yes, Jim Jacob in 94' or 95' went on to the University of California- I'm sorry, Cal State-Chico, became a dean out there, left the university, and went on to greater things in administration.

DA: And that's when you took over.

DS: Yes.

DA: So many things are interesting about this. First of all, it's a remarkable subculture, and in a university students are made up of subcultures. Theatre students, athletes, ROTC people, engineers, and then you have this Model UN group. Very bright, very hard working students, it seems like, all of them.

DS: Not necessarily driven or derived from-

DA: And not necessarily political science majors, right?

DS: Oh no. We had pre-med, engineers, computer science majors, historians.

DA: And why do you think they got involved?

DS: I think sometimes it is- do you remember October Days and May Days?

DA: I surely do.

DS: The famous October Days. We would set up a table and talk to people. You know, students, new students, were looking for something to join.

DA: A form of inclusion.

DS: Absolutely.

DA: In the same sense that when a young man or young woman would join a fraternity or sorority.

DS: Exactly. We would ask faculty members to let us make presentations to class the first month or so of class and announce the opportunity, and if you earn your way, the ultimate reward is a college supported trip for a week to New York. It was a big incentive. Then they would slowly begin to unpack how much work would go into earning that, and that of course was where the wonderful learning took place.

DA: And when that started, in '78 or whenever, has it always been a very successful team in the competition?

DS: As far as I can track the records back, yes. Now, consistent years of very top or the top two awards, not necessarily. But given the depth that we now have in terms of faculty and student experience, the team even grew beyond that. In 19--, sorry, in 2007 when I was sitting on the board of directors of the national association, the board decided to start allowing other countries to run simulations that we would have control over, and they were running one in X'ian in China. Sure enough, my Model UN students showed up and said, "Professor, if we can raise the money, can we go to X'ian as part of the Model UN?"

DA: I mean, in preparation for Model UN?

DS As another conference to attend.

DA: Wow.

DS: In the fall, while they were still waiting for their country assignment for the subsequent year. Self-starters, Dan. A lot of business students, political science, history, a lot of econ majors. Education majors, we had quite a few education majors, and I'm so proud to say many of them communicate to me today that they are running Model UN-like simulations in their classrooms.

DA: In your description, there's a strong hint at why the program was successful, but why the success at Wright State University in Model UN? I mean, you talked about the students-

DS: I think it is... we had a good system in place to recruit and really train hard. When things were not online, we had to go out to Bloomington, Indiana, because it was the closest depository library to look at original UN documents. The motivation to learn.

DA: And to succeed.

DS: And the work ethic, I would say, of the student population, they confirmed to me in my first quarter of teaching at Wright State what I'd been taught as a grad student. Which is students

will tend to rise to your level of expectation, wherever you set them. Set them high was what I learned from the Model UN program. Ask more, and some will exit, but those who would stay were so struck by, you know, how much capacity for hard work and dedication, and then the rewards that were shown at the conference. And the conference was assessing how accurately are you representing a country's policy, how accurately are you using the rules of procedure to run a committee, and how effectively are you moving forward in whatever this problem was in your committee.

DA: So there's a strong expectation as to expertise in content, but also in the process, of how the UN is run.

DS: The people skills, the research, the interpersonal skills, and the public speaking, which just as a confidence-building, and an icebreaker, but as a great confidence builder. We worked so hard on public speaking, into which you have to put your content. The first night of the conference in New York, the remarks will always be the same. "The other delegations don't seem to be quite as effectively prepared." So-

DA: Oh, is that right? The students observed that?

DS: Now, the top teams would always be prepared, but not across the board. So, preparation, work ethic, diligence and then the mutual support for each other, the way it builds camaraderie and mutual support. Someone is sick and has gotten ill in the committee and people were just clustered there. So, the camaraderie, the team-building, the hard work, but I mean it proved to me as a professor they really will rise to your expectations beyond anything they thought themselves capable of.

DA: We can talk about the Model UN for a long time. Any one thing, any one story or anything that's happened over the years that stands out in your mind?

DS: Oh, there are so many. There really are so many. Some faculty- and I worked with many advisers- were not equipped for it, either. Some are more research-oriented, some are more teaching. But I work with several, and so on the faculty side, the joy of hands-on active teaching and learning was affirmed. On the student side, I have students who've gone on to the top job in the conference, go on to jobs at the UN, in public affairs. Many of them are teaching and the way it enriched their lives and the friendships that I see that have continued over time. We have a cohort in Columbus now who meet regularly. The connection- and it's something we want to build on further with Alumni Affairs- but I think it's the work ethic here, and it's a work ethic indigenous to that first generation of college students. That's my own opinion, I can't give you data for that.

DA: That's a good theory, and it seems to make sense.

DS: But there is one story I'd share-

DA: Okay.

DS: -which is perhaps an unexpected one, but we are part of the world. One year on the team, it turned out that one of the people we had recruited to the team, she was being victimized in human trafficking. And the team came together, you know, sitting around my kitchen, having to reach out to Katie- here, as you know- staff at Student Affairs and Wright State Police Department saved that girl's life. That's how much they cared.

DA: Wow, that's a good story. That's a wonderful story.

DS: Obviously, I won't share names, it's private still in that regard, and the way everyone from the police department, to Student Affairs support for her, the departments, the dean's office at the time. I mean, we saved a life. It not only helped people make their lives richer, but in this case we literally saved someone's life and it was because the team knew something was wrong and they cared.

DA: Well, you know, and that underscores the value of that experience to students, the value of that entire model to this university, right? I mean, it's one of the great stories of Wright State University, the Model UN program.

DS: On my last year, before I retired and leaving the Board of Directors, I stood at the podium and the general assembly hall at the UN and shared a few parting thoughts, and it was mostly about learning also involves learning together, and taking care of each other, and that's that little subset part of trying to make the world just a slightly better place every day, whether you're a teacher or whether you're a bureaucrat in the United Nations or a human rights observer. But looking down at those smiling faces and my delegation, and just feeling the mutual pride and support and happiness, even though I was exiting, knowing that the team has continued, absolutely unmitigated in their success and their preparation.

DA: You know, and occasionally it seemed like every student we hired in my office was Model UN [*laughs*]. Because we wanted the best and brightest students who would be sitting up front in the vice president's office, and they were all Model UN people.

DS: They could all look you in the eye and shake your hand, and were well-spoken and diligent. But you know, Dan-

DA: And smart!

DS: When 9/11 happened- we've just had the anniversary, 18 years ago- as a faculty member who just joined the board of directors, we did not know if we could even have a conference the next year.

DA: When is the conference held?

DS: The conference is usually between Palm and Easter Sundays, so it's in the spring. So, in 2002, I mean we had a conference scheduled, but we didn't know if anyone would come, and it turned out to be the biggest conference that we had yet offered. Because people wanted to be there and come to the UN and learn about managing conflict in a better way.

DA: So you started in '85, and when did you retire?

DS: 2015.

DA: 2015. So, that's I think 30 years, if I add correctly. So talk about the university and your sense of the university from a macro perspective. What's your sense of how it changed, and better or worse, talk about that for a minute.

DS: In '85, not very many doctoral programs at all, just a couple. Very few masters programs, almost none in the College of Liberal Arts, but there was there was a master's in history and I believe the archives program, the Public History Program existed even then, but almost no masters programs. Urban Affairs would come along. Visually, you might have gotten a sense in '85 that this was more of a "Polytech". And I had an experience as a graduate student in Minnesota. I'd been offered- the Dean of the Graduate School was in the Political Science Department, Robert Holt, very famous comparative politics person, and he gave me an opportunity to sit on a committee that was looking at how to make that university a world-class institution, and do you know what our first recommendation to the president of the university was? Strengthen the humanities and the social sciences. You know, it's wonderful to have the Mayo Clinic and to have the medical facilities up in Minneapolis. It's marvelous, this, 3M, and the engineering school, but the heart of the learning enterprise has to be the humanities and the social sciences.

DA: Doesn't it drive you crazy, all of this emphasis on STEM?

DS: On STEM, and concerns, when times are difficult, that some board members might want to go back to become a Polytech. I knew then that the social sciences were not large, they were not dominant, and the technical fields were, and I think that's still-

DA: Dominant in opinion, not dominant in practice, not dominant in reality. Political Science was one of the finest program, most reputable programs, attracted the best students. It wasn't a STEM thing, right?

DS: No it wasn't.

DA: And then you've got Theatre. Not a STEM thing.

DS: And Theatre and the Model UN program I think were those two bright-

DA: And they're pounding and harping on STEM and engineering. Oh, it drives me crazy.

DS: And as you and I know, there are sometimes clearer job paths in STEM, but in terms of ultimate learning capacity, liberal arts students do extremely well. And it's that writing and speaking and communication, you know, as well as in-depth knowledge. But my impression was leans toward Polytech, and those of us who were quiet-

DA: When you first got here? You felt that?

DS: Oh, yes.

DA: Even then?

DS: Even then. You look at, you know, where is a doctoral program being offered? Biomedical research or engineering. No other PhD programs, and to this day, except through the Dayton Area Graduate Studies Institute. No other PhD programs. Very few, I mean, just on one hand the number of masters programs in all of the liberal arts departments. But you quietly build a really, really, really good- with the cooperation of Perry Moore and Mary Ellen Mazey- a really great Model UN program, and lots of internships. Not everyone wants to do Model UN, but lots of internships as well. The International Studies major, the Criminal Justice Studies major, were all advised out of Political Science for a long time, so lots of cross-disciplinary work. So even though we were small as a college, there was a lot of cooperation across the little silos that often appear in some of the colleges.

DA: So you worked for a Paige- in terms of presidents- Paige, Harley?

DS: Harley.

DA: Then Goldenberg and Hopkins.

DS: I was President of the Faculty under Harley Flack.

DA: Talk about that.

DS: And because of that, and he was so new, I was talking to each of the colleges about how we might proceed to create a Faculty Senate, and that was my agenda. I was going to meet with every college, give them two or three reasons why we wanted to proceed, but get input. I was on what Hillary Clinton would later call “a listening tour”. Well, Harley Flack learned about this and said, “I'd like to accompany you on a few of them”, and we would we drive up to the Lake Campus to talk to the faculty there. You'd get the president alone in a car for a while-

DA: Did he go because he was interested, or did he have some ulterior motive?

DS: He was interested just to learn. Plus, I'd get Harley Flack for an hour and a half sometimes, you know, maybe a coffee before or after, depending on which college. Harley Flack said one interesting thing to me. I know because his health declined not that long into his presidency that he really felt he'd been most effective as a Provost when he was at Rowen. He had struggled with some of the racism in the culture here. But he was from Zanesville, I believe, so it was not a big surprise. But, you know, the most complicated thing with Harley Flack- I liked Harley- he said “So, why shared governance? Why tenure?” We would talk it out, and he would go, “Alright.” I'm at his home one evening for- I forget the event I think we had an educational speaker on campus- and the OJ verdict came out, the first OJ Simpson trial.

DA: Was that '91? 92?

DS: I think it was '92 or '93. Whenever the OJ trial came out and he was acquitted. Violence against women, race relations, you know, police violence, it's all right there. But these were faculty dean's community members, over at the old residence- before it was crashed upon by a tree- and people stood up and cheered, or heads bowed, when that verdict was announced. I thought this sort of captures the Harley Flack administration. The first black president on campus, he's personally struggled with some racism in the way he's been treated, I mean, he's tried to be a change agent, but when his health began to decline- and I would in later years lose a very dear friend, the chair of Modern Languages, who would contract pancreatic cancer.

DA: And who was that?

DS: Stefan Pugh.

DA: Joe Coleman had that. Do you remember Joe Coleman, in business?

DS: [*Nodding*], and there was a nursing faculty-

DA: A nursing dean, maybe?

DS: It was curious. So, I saw Harley when he was vibrant, but also close enough- even when you're president, president-elect, past president, and, you know, you're busy with all of these committees- and often with the president, in his decline, it was evident and heart breaking.

DA: Harley was the only president- this might sound bad for the others- who was intrinsically interested in what was going on with students. He'd be in his office, and he'd take his shoes off, and he'd like to stretch out on his couch and say, "Talk to me about what's going on with the students." And it wasn't because he needed something or was worried about something. He was just interested in what's going on with students. No other president ever talk to me or wanted to hear from me about students in that way that he did.

DS: He was intellectually curious, and had his health not failed him, one wonders.

DA: At the same time, when I got here it was so tumultuous. Everyone was... I couldn't figure out what was going on.

DS: There was a vacuum in leadership. I think coming to grips with one's own mortality is very difficult. In retrospect, might he have resigned and enjoyed his last few months of life? It was very difficult. At that time, the legislature decided that they would ask all of the member state universities to show how we would increase by ten percent our efficiency and productivity. Which gave me my first chance- he was then Dean of the School of Medicine- to work with Kim Goldenberg. And, you know, Kim's humor and joy and his laugh. Just a joy to work with. I thought his work, when he was president and Perry Moore was provost, might have been one of the highlights, maybe one of the high points of Wright State. We had the difficulties of unionization, that was all unfolded, and yet growth was happening.

DA: When did the Faculty Senate become reality? It must have been '95' or '96?

DS: Yeah, thereabouts. '94' or '95.

DA: But then about the same time, the union came.

DS: The vote would happen in '97. The union would actually be organized and in place about '99. So, lots of turmoil and churning there on the faculty side. But despite collective bargaining, you had two faculty who had emerged, you know, through the ranks and knew Wright State, knew the community, worked really effectively together. I had become chair in the year 2000, so I had to work with the union in my own way, you know, at the departmental level, and yet the circumstances were such, growth was such, that we were growing a really good department. Criminal Justice Studies were so strong, I mean, we hired more faculty.

DA: Yes! When was that created?

DS: That was created, let's see, Mary Ellen Mazey wanted that, so that would have come along around 2002-2003, and she said, "Who wants to administer this?" And of course the Political Science Department said "Well, we can go first."

DA: Is there still an International Studies program?

DA: There is a major. There's a BA in International Studies, in Criminal Justice Studies, there's a BA in Liberal Studies, which was also advised by Mark Sirkin, out of the Political Science department for a long time. So lots of cross-disciplinary working going on.

DA: And you became chair of the political science department in?

DS: In 2000.

DA: In 2000. So, that was with Goldenberg.

DS: [*Nodding.*] First woman to chair the department. I had become full professor in '97-

DA: It took 12... oh, you got tenured when, then?

DS: '91.

DA: Yeah, so pretty quickly.

DS: Jim Walker said, "Isn't that a little early to go up for full?" and I said, "Well, Jim, I don't have forever", and my second or third book had come out, so he figured he could support that. It was a good time building the department, the programs, all those associated majors. I was chair for fifteen years and had a lot of union leadership among the faculty, but it was such hard working and collaborative faculty. Now I have to confess that there were pretty regular quarterly and sometimes more than once quarterly cocktail parties at my house for team-building and processing!

DA: Of course, of course!

DS: Which usually happens better off campus anyway.

DA: Yes, absolutely. Would you say that the trajectory of the university was upward in most of the time you were here?

DS: Absolutely upward. A big international component. I think the exciting thing when I think about each president, certainly one has to say under Paige Mulhollan's leadership, the

expansion of the number of students able to have dorm space on campus changed this university maybe more than anything. And the inventive way-

DA: I mean, and that continued through Harley, and even Goldenberg.

DS: Absolutely, in fact that model of contracting out the building of the dorms is one that I use when I was working with one of the strategic planning groups and we proposed retiree housing on campus, which the university would not have to pay to build up front, it wouldn't come out of the capital budget. That model worked so effectively bringing residential students to campus. Maybe bringing some retirees, staff and faculty to live on campus, a little more inclusiveness across the age groups, a lot more expertise on campus, and the depth of how long and how many staff and faculty have lived and worked here, and how fondly attached they are to the university is very clear, and the organization that we are a part of, the Retirees' Association.

DA: Sure, absolutely. So, it's funny, Perry and Goldenberg didn't end well. Don't know why, and maybe we don't need to get into that, but it didn't.

DS: You know, like marriages, some just run their course.

DA: Yeah. I wonder if that signaled something there. That was near the end of Goldenberg's tenure, Hopkins started in 2006, roughly, I would say. Do you have any thoughts on that?

DS: From the perspective where I worked, I was working on growing faculty, growing programs, growing enrollment. Those three things.

DA: And you were successful at it.

DS: I was never an enrollment manager or management expert, but I knew how those three pieces were connected, and then, you know, it's sort of the less visible piece, how it's connected into the community as well, with internationally related organizations, etc. Kim and Perry gave us the space in which- I don't know if you knew this- but we started the first master's class in comparative politics and international relations the same fall that 9/11 happened.

DA: No, I didn't know that. You were ahead of the curve.

DS: Well timing, timing, timing. Real estate and politics, apparently it's true. So, I mean we had the ability to trial run the program, and then 9/11 happens, and we didn't have to convince anyone further that we would be able to fill the modest ten or twelve slots that we were able to take on at that point. After that, David Hopkins, struck me as a faculty that- from first as obviously a provost, and then as a president- he too had the interest in students, although his people skills were... whether it was a legislator, a parent, a student-

DA: Absolutely. An extrovert, gregarious, funny-

DS: All of it. He joined me and my students in New York on more than one occasion.

DA: I always thought-

DS: He came to the United Nations, and came to the mission briefings.

DA: What a perk for a president, to get to go to New York- A, just to get to go to New York, B, to get to hang out with the Model UN team, right?

DS: Well I'm sure the better parties were with the theatre students working on Broadway [laughs]. But, I mean, he was keenly interested, and then to watch our students going in the back and forth with an ambassador doing the briefing, and the staff that he or she might have brought with him. They usually would join us at the awards ceremony as well. No pressure, mind you, no pressure when your president is there. It was, you know, having worked with Dr. Hopkins in the Model UN, when I had the opportunity to propose to him that we bring a campaign debate to campus... I had been in faculty governance, I had traveled -

DA: So, that was your idea!

DS: You know, in thinking about the great successes, but some of the disappointments, it was just terribly, terribly disappointing, and I think that revealed the larger financial problems that there were at the university, they were revealed in that process. A big disappointment, but you know, an anonymous donor- I think I still have to call him that- an anonymous donor insisted that at least 20 Wright State students be able to go to the debate when it took place at Hofstra. He asked me to lead them, which I thought was interesting, and I was very happy to do it, and horrified at what happened Hofstra University, not with the Wright State students but in the debate, and I realized we'd entered a brave new world. But it was because of that relationship over the years many of my students went into politics, one of them would become Speaker of the House of Representatives in Ohio. So, I had many occasions to, you know, work with Dr. Hopkins and his wife, and broached the idea, along with someone with whom I had worked on the Dayton Peace Accords conferences. It was Colonel John McCants, and it was such a great opportunity, the Presidential Debate Commission was so eager to come here. They loved the community, the proximity to the base, the fact that we were a public university, as they'd been going to private, private, private university. Under better circumstances, I do believe they would come back to Wright State if we're ever in a position to be able to apply for that opportunity again.

DA: You know, he was probably right, and it certainly underscored the financial difficulty at the university, but probably more fundamental stuff than that. So, 2015, you're a young woman, talk about retirement.

DS: My father retired early, and that was at 55, which was very good because heart disease took them from us very young.

DA: I'm sorry to hear that.

DS: So, from family experience, I knew that retirement was underrated, and I've proven that.

DA: You're probably just as busy now as you were unretired, not retired.

DS: Just as busy, but much more of the work has to do with things that I love. Working with the retirees, I do a lot of radio, and I continue to brief over at Wright Patterson Air Force Base.

DA: And now because terrorism is a subject worthy of study at many other universities, I assume.

DS: And I've advised many master's theses. One of the continuing contacts with students, you know, master's theses take a while to finish up, so that connection is there, some of them go on to doctoral programs, some of them teach, but yes. And terrorism runs hot and cold. But here is a course- there are two courses in the curriculum, actually. We do one on Terrorism in America, and I don't know if you've seen Spike Lee's latest movie, BlackKkKlansman.

DA: No, I haven't.

DS: A lot of Americans are discovering, you know, the Klan, militias, white supremacy-

DA: Oklahoma City.

DS: Oklahoma City, the white supremacist movement, white supremacy and the way it's regained a voice in American politics and Western European politics. Partly it's a result, a reaction, to globalization. It's reaction to all of the change in society.

DA: Well, our president is a reaction to all of that, too, right?

DS: The demographic changes in our country, like the demographic changes in Ohio that have hit Wright State in terms of enrollment as well. Where are those 18-year-olds, and, you know, the difficulty now in reaching out and acquiring the international student population, which brings so much to a campus. And I don't just mean in tuition, I mean in the classroom, on campus, it just is such an enrichment, and when so many of your students are first-generation who don't have a passport, it's so important to try to internationalize them in terms of culture and politics and history. That's been a real loss, I think particularly to students. Not just at the university at large, but really to the student population, not having that component present in the classroom.

DA: So, a 30 year career at Wright State University, really your whole career spent at Wright State University, your academic career anyway. What stands out?

DS: [*Pauses*] You ask that question, and my first reaction is I am so grateful to have found a place where I fit in so well. Particularly as a young female professor in a department with no other female faculty, in a department that allowed you to- you could write books, you could teach well, you could focus on service, and if you wanted to be a double or a triple threat, you were given the opportunity to do that. The rewards of my work in the classroom and writing and service to the community. Everything connected, you know, and enriched the other parts in such a meaningful way. It really gave value, it gave meaning to that desire to make it a little bit better, the world, and a little bit better every day in the ways that you know. The opportunities that are put in front of you. It all fit together as a piece, Dan, of a puzzle I could never have anticipated.

DA: Well, you were highly successful, and it does so much for this university, and so much for the students, that you should be very proud of your years here. You have been a real pioneer of the university.

DS: And so grateful. Very, very grateful to have worked with the staff, the faculty, and the students here and the community at large. It remains a treasure, and when the times get a little better, I look forward to revisiting it more often.

DA: Anything else you wanted to say, anything else we missed in the conversation today?

DS: I think the only piece I didn't talk much about was being able to participate with the Dayton Peace Accords.

DA: Spend a few minutes on that, that's important stuff.

DS: A lot of wars end badly. This one happened to end at a conference at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base because-

DA: Talk about the year of- Clinton was president, what went down then?

DS: It's 1991, The Soviet Union collapses, and countries in Eastern Europe began breaking away-

DA: Then Yugoslavia chunked up into seven different countries or something like that.

DS: And civil wars resulted. A million people are- they become refugees, they flood into Germany for the most part. Our NATO allies were unable to effectively stop them, and it took American intervention under the auspices of President Bill Clinton. The negotiator-in-chief was a longtime Vietnam diplomat-foreign service officer, Richard Holbrooke, who knew- he said, "Oh,

you know, peace conferences they go to Geneva to die. We don't want to go there, and we might do a formal signing in Paris, but I want to do it in the United States.” He wanted to get the Serbs, the Croats, and the Bosniaks- Muslim Catholic Orthodox- out of that setting in a place where he could control them and encourage them to try to hammer out their differences. So, they were housed in the visiting officer quarters, very humble facilities. Slobodan Milosevic- later convicted as a war criminal- the president of Serbia at the time, would complain that he couldn't get a decent cup of coffee or be allowed to smoke a cigarette over at the new mall that had been built over at the Fairfield Mall. But they would be rewarded. In fact, I was at a meeting one night in the Kettering Tower, and just car after car, limousine after limousine, driving through downtown Dayton late at night, they were coming to the Racquet Club for dinner, because if they have had a good day of negotiating, Holbrooke would let them off base, or they could go to the mall where they would do a lot of shopping, or they would go down to L'Auberge. These were the three places you might see the limousines if they had a good day. It sounds funny in retrospect, but it's a classic negotiating tactic when you've got parties that you've got to force them to reconcile some their differences. The thing almost fell apart at the end.

DA: Talk about your involvement.

DS: Well, I'm on the sidelines at that point.

DA: You're on the sidelines, but you're front row observer at this point.

DS: They've sealed it up. I get to watch. You know, the media are here, American foreign policy is leading this, what the heck is going on? So, lots of media work, and we of course would do some honors seminars about the war there as well, plus the Soviet Union has collapsed. I mean, the amount of change is just remarkable. So, when the Peace Accords were signed, a group of people in the community led by the Dayton Council on World Affairs felt it was important to continue conferences. There was a professor at the University of Dayton who led this effort- academic conferences. How do you rebuild a country when it has literally torn itself apart? The civil wars being the worst and the bloodiest. So, representatives from Washington DC and Bosnia, Croatia, Serbia would convene here for four or five years consistently after the Peace Accords were hammered out, to try to figure out how to implement it, then we would have a ten year anniversary. On the running up to the 15th anniversary, I would have the opportunity to go to Bosnia and Croatia with the Friendship Force and to live in, you know, an apartment for a week with two Sarajevan sisters- Muslim women, one married to a Catholic and one married to an Orthodox man, who had hunkered down in that city for three years of shelling and lived to tell the tale. I had the remarkable experience of seeing a synagogue in Sarajevo whose mission they made to help shelter Muslims in Sarajevo, and now they have a big operation in Sarajevo for other people tracking down their legacies. So, that came into the classroom part, as president of the Dayton Council on World Affairs, we would convert that first peace prize given to Desmond Tutu, the first one would go to George Soros, and then one would go to Secretary of State Colin Powell, and eventually Bill Clinton. So, I had the opportunity to meet all of these leaders-

DA: George Soros got it?

DS: Oh yes, because of his support for democratization, and nonprofits all over the world. But these were conferences organized by this community. Washington loved it, because they weren't doing it in Washington DC, where this thing dies anyway. It wasn't in Sarajevo, but Dayton acquired a place of fondness, almost a legacy, in the hearts of people in Sarajevo. You say "Dayton", "You're from Dayton?", it's like they come up and they want to shake your hand. You're in the old marketplace and there are pictures of Bill Clinton up there. There's lipstick kisses on the picture of Bill Clinton.

DA: And Dayton, because of the Air Force base here?

DS: Holbrooke told his staff, "I need a big place, a big base. Not too far from DC, one hour. Not too far, but one that we can seal up tighter than a drum". This one came on the list, they had VOQ facilities, it was as far as Slobodan Milosovic was concerned, in the middle of nowhere-

DA: You said what kind of facility? VOQ?

DS: VOQ. The visiting officer's quarters, which were very humble for heads of state.

DAL: I remember you saying that, right. It was like a dorm, or something like that?

DS: Exactly. Very 1950s dorm-like facilities, but the community embraced the peace prize- now the Dayton Literary Peace Prize continues as well, and it's about to be awarded again as a result of the conference, the community embrace, and these nonprofit organizations just taking ownership.

DA: You know, none of that was mentioned in the PBS program the other night, by the way. Did you happen to see that?

DS: About? No.

DA: The PBS program about Dayton and how dreadful it is to be here these days, and how the opioid crisis has taken over? The Frontline program.

DS: What do they know.

DA: What else would you like to say?

DS: Like you, the thing I miss the most is the students, the work with the students. Teaching is rewarding, and it's very demanding. Leading a department, it was a labor of love, but I'm

probably the last of a generation of people who had an opportunity to spend that much of a career invested in one place, and I'm so happy and proud of the investment.

DA: The day-to-day experience of working with students, doing good things on a day to day basis, suddenly magnifies the kind of impact that you've had. And you enjoyed it, too.

DS: Loved it. Loved it. Had a great time.

DA: That's good. It's good to see you. Thanks for doing this!

DS: You're welcome!