2-15-2011

Logan Martinez interview for a Wright State University History Course

Christopher Erb

Logan Martinez

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Profile

Narrator Name: Logan Martinez
Interviewer: Christopher Erb
Author: Christopher Erb
Date of Interview: 02/15/11

Subject: An interview with an active member of Dayton’s anti-war and human rights movements.

Logan Martinez graduated from high school in 1969, joined the anti-war movement in opposition to the war in Vietnam shortly thereafter, and has been a, self-proclaimed, radical proponent of peace, human rights and social justice ever since. Through his community building efforts and drive to forge a more just society Logan has made lasting contributions in the Dayton area. Always attempting to take the side of the general populace, he has not only marched for peace and human rights, but has also run for office under the auspices of the Green Party on four separate occasions as well as maintaining an active presence within the party at other times.

Logan’s introduction to the anti-war movement was in 1969 as a student at Wright State University and it did not take him long to throw aside his plans for a business degree and fully embrace the radical movements of the next three decades. Living a live deliberately designed to work around the life of an activist, his career as a house painter has allotted him the time to pursue direct actions from the peace movement to protesting utility rate hikes and decreases in unemployment benefits. Logan’s activism on behalf of the community have not only helped to start community services such as Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) and Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) to help those in need of help with their utility bills as well as having helped to earn concessions in unemployment benefits from President Reagan in the 1980s.
Logan’s community building efforts aren’t restricted to protest, as can be seen in his turn to electoral politics in the 1990’s. Working with the Green party he ran for Dayton City Council twice and state representative twice in the late 90s and early 2000s. Though he was not elected to either office, Logan’s organizing efforts were not wasted in creating a network for the Green Party that still exists in the Dayton area today.
Logan talks about getting involved in the anti-Vietnam War movement after high school, and going to hear Nixon speak at Courthouse Square.

Affirmation/Justice/Peace

Interviewers Alarm goes off, break in interview

Logan talks about music and protesting in D.C. with a new acquaintance.

Assessment/Affirmation

Logan talks about his job at McCall’s printing and how he started getting involved on working for the rights of the unemployed as well as leaving that job for to facilitate an activist lifestyle.

Judgment/Revelation

Logan talks about the intense parts of the anti-war movement such as the Kent state shootings, escalation in Vietnam and growing militancy.

Assessment/ Sorrow/ Disenfranchisement

Logan talks about how music and lifestyle were linked in the radical and anti-war movements of the 60s and 70s.
Assessment/ Anti-authoritarianism/ Humor

00:16:56.00
Logan talks about the things he read in the 70s and who he met in the anti-war movement.

Confirmation/ Happiness

00:18:33.21
Militant actions at Wright Patterson Air Force Base and Wright State University and growing distrust of the Administration’s actions.

Sorrow/ Affirmation

00:21:01.17
Transitioning from anti-war into social justice activism in the 70s.

Equality/ Community/

00:24:34.26
Wind down in Vietnam and worldwide networking.

Community/ Anti-Colonialism

00:27:19.25
Working for the rights of the unemployed, locally and nationally, economic collapse and committee work.

Irony/ Humor/ Solidarity

00:30:55.22
Social and peace minded direct actions and the transition to electoral work.

Affirmation/ Progress

00:34:59.15
A career to facilitate activism, knowing people who have been killed and racial or class based injustice

Happiness/ Sorrow/ Affirmation/ Equality

00:38:44.16
Electoral politics, community organizing, and anti-nuclear activism.

Affirmation/ Community
The money issues of two-party politics, and why running is so tough.
[confirm] Community / Anti-Corporatism

Important accomplishments, the tactics of war based administrations, and the current revolutions.
[affirm] Accomplishment / Anti-establishmentarianism

Protesting utility rate-hikes and the progress they made, and transitioning back to anti-war activism.
[affirm] Peacefulness

Getting people to protest, the future of protesting and the Tea Party.
[assessment] Optimism / Conservationism

Slowness of change, the diversity in the radical movement, more about music
[assessment] Confirmation / Humor / Happiness / Community

Radicalism, activism, liberalism and how the two-party system works with fear.
[affirm] Sorrow / Disenfranchisement / Multi-partyism / Optimism

No more politics and why, fiddling with unemployment numbers, and class consciousness.
[assessment] Condemnation / Equality / Populism
Christopher Erb: This is Christopher Erb, I am here with Logan Martinez it is February 15th 2011 and we’re gonna be talking about Logan’s community service and his community activism over the years. Logan how did you get involved with community issues and community service?

Logan Martinez: I got involved in community stuff through the anti-war movement, there is a bridge there, I got involved in peace stuff against the Vietnam war a little bit in high school, not directly against the war but I did some cultural stuff with folk singers coming to one of my classes, and sang anti war songs and I didn’t realize it at the time, but one of the reasons I brought them because I really liked that they had this song about Lyndon Johnson sending boys to die in Vietnam to save Vietnam from the Vietnamese. It’s a classic anti-war song and I liked that, I heard this group sing actually in the gym and I brought them to the class, and that was like the first thing I did that was, I had done other musical stuff but that was the first sort of politically musical thing that I did. I was working at a department store the summer after I graduated in 1968 and there was this guy working there who was going to the university of Chicago. He was from Vandalia. He told me about an anti war demonstration in downtown Dayton that summer and he said we had to go. So I went with him to this peace demonstration downtown in Dayton, there were a couple hundred people there, maybe a hundred and fifty, I don’t know. There was quite a few really and that was my first political activity. At the time I didn’t really think much of it, other than, I was becoming increasingly against the war, as was just about everybody in my age bracket. Not everybody, there were people who were being drafted, people who were joining the military. So, the next thing happened was I was going to Sinclair, I went to Sinclair the fall of 69, and Nixon was coming to speak at the courthouse. At that time the courthouse was, it was before they had Courthouse Square and the back of the courthouse was a parking lot and he spoke in that parking lot. There were some students from Antioch who came to protest Nixon speaking Nixon speaking there, and I got drawn in right away to chanting against Nixon and protesting his take on peace with honor, which we did not believe that was what he was about and certainly wasn’t what he was about.

[alarm goes off]

Logan: Alright we have an alarm system, I already said something that messed somebody up.
Chris: Gonna have to edit that one out.
Logan: I like that, is that a text?

Chris: No, that’s my alarm that I have set for the kids, we do tile time with the kids, to evaluate their days. We have little charts with accomplishments for the day and this is what time we normally do tile time. I certainly apologize for forgetting to turn that alarm off, I got the phone...

Logan: I hope dana is doing that with them without you.

Chris: We did it already actually, we just did it early. I apologize
Logan: Oh that’s ok

Chris: So you got drawn into...

Logan: I got drawn into the peace movement and initially just very peripherally. That was in the fall of ‘69 and then that same fall, no that was the fall of ‘68, let me go back. Nixon spoke he was running for office and that was the fall of ‘68. Then I was going to Sinclair and I made friends with a poet guy down at Sinclair who had been to Vietnam and had actually had a Vietnamese girlfriend while he was in Vietnam, had a very philosophical anti war approach to things. He talked about Nietzsche and a bunch of other stuff like that which I did not know anything about but I liked the guy because he was pretty full of energy. That next, I went to Wright State in the fall of ‘69, but I had gotten a job at McCall’s printing company and I was working there and going to school and he said there was gonna be a big demonstration in Washington in the fall of ‘69. So he said we gotta go to this and so his girlfriend and some other lady friend of theirs, the four of us drove down to DC to the, it was the November, or the October mobilization. There actually was a mobilization the month before all over the country at the local level in which there were activities at Wright State and at UD and literally all over the country, including in the bar scene in Dayton. There were bands singing anti war songs including, I went and saw that same night Sonny Flaherty and I think it was with the Mark Five, but he did a great song, the anti war song version of paint it black by the rolling stones, in which he did a very anti war theme with that. It was very, very nice; I really liked his band, but anyway.

Logan: So when I was at Wright State in 69 I got to know some actual organizers of some of these events and became involved in, actually I was giving this guy a ride, I’d give him a ride home and I would go to McCall’s, that was Mark Miracle. He was one of the editors of the Minority Poor, which was an underground newspaper in Dayton at the time, him and some other folks. I got to know him and a few other activists and started to become more involved in, not planning, but at least publicizing different events that were happening against the war. Taking a more, I was a business major, I’ll say that, I was a business manager major and slowly but surely I became to change my philosophy about business. Started to become more and more into economics of how capitalism works and of what was happening. Like I said I got a job at McCall’s printing, which was the second largest printing company in the world, with about six thousand workers there, they printed McCall’s magazine, Ladies Home Journal, they printed a regional edition of the Readers Digest. Literally they had like sixty publications, thousands of workers in three shifts, seven days a week. I worked in the pattern department and there in the pattern department they moved my department, in 1970 to Manhattan Kansas. Now I was making about three sixty an hour and the people that took our jobs they were making a dollar and a quarter an hour. It was sort of an eye opener to the shit that the economy and the loss of jobs, in the fall of ’69 there was a big boom but starting in 1970 there was the beginning of a recessionary period. Jobs started to dry up a little bit, they had all these guys coming home from Vietnam wanting jobs and people that were here. There were jobs but there was growing unemployment, particularly in the black community there was some high
structural unemployment. It's been ongoing but at that time there was a lot of unemployment in the black community.

Chris: So that was pretty much your start in the fight for the unemployed. Did you end up, did you start becoming, you lost your job entirely?

Logan: I actually quit my job [laughs] at McCall's. I was going to Wright State and I had been going to school full time and working full time, literally working overtime at McCall's, cause they were giving us all kinds of overtime. In part to prepare to move that department out. I mean, it had slown down on the end, but I had just about another six weeks to go and I could've collected unemployment. Instead of waiting for that to happen, I was just burnt out and I just said to heck with it all. And actually a lot of other folks had quit, I wasn't the only one that just, you know, young people, decided to get out. And a lot of them got out and got, actually went to General Motors or some other, NCR or some other, factory here. I sort of changed course and became involved in both the peace movement but also the anti-cultural scene here in Dayton. The Hippie movement

Chris: Ah, the Hippie Movement, nice. So when did you start your, so you started with peace activism then, when did you take up the mantle of activist for the, activism for the unemployed?

Logan: Actually that was later.

Chris: Would you like to keep it chronological then?

Logan: Yeah.

Chris: Then let's do that.

Logan: I got more involved with a group of people that were around Mark Miracle and some other friends of mine. Ted Lowe and Gary Staiger and a bunch of us started an alternative newspaper called Maggie's Farm. I actually was sort of peripherally involved with it but I was involved with selling it and I put a couple of articles in there but I didn't really write. A lot of the other hippies [Logan air quotes] wrote for it and stuff. It was a progressive anti-war, into women's liberation, into black liberation and I think we put out about nine or ten issues every, one about every six weeks there for, starting in about, 1971. The anti-war movement was very intense, starting, you know, here in Ohio, all over the place. In 1970 we had Kent State, we had rebellions on all the campus, or the major campuses. Miami University had a rebellion right before Kent State. Ohio State and Ohio U. had rebellions before Kent State. One of the things that led to Kent State was that, here in the heartland, a large number of the students were becoming increasingly disenfranchised with the way the war was going. The escalation, Nixon had, you know already, there were rumors that he was going to go into Cambodia and it turned out that he had. He wouldn't admit it for several weeks, but people were realizing this escalation was going on. Students took to the streets and the police cracked down very hard on folks. All over Ohio people
were arrested and militancy grew and they had the confrontation at Kent State and people were killed. Then that mushroomed.

Chris: Was there much militancy here in Dayton at all?

Logan: There was a degree, but it was tempered, you know we're kinda the backwater of things, we had some direct actions and stuff that we did. Gary Staiger who had Omega Music here and just passed on, was a good friend of mine. He had just came back from Vietnam and was in the Air Force when I met him. He was working at the base hospital at Wright Patt and was very, militantly anti-war. Him and I worked together, he was involved in the Vietnam Vets Against the War and was a national leader, spoke at national demonstrations. He was into trying to take it to this bigger level and in the spring of 1972 we did a number of militant actions. He got out early, the Air Force decided that him and his friends that were out there, he was almost done with his four years at that point, but they allowed him to get out early with an honorable discharge. He was a medical person working at the hospital and working with wounded GI's and stuff.

[pause]

Chris: There has always been, I mean since then there has been this rich counter-cultural movement in Dayton. And you used the word "backwater" and that's what made me think of this. You used the word 'backwater,' but as far as the counter-cultural movements go it hasn't always been a backwater. There's always been a strong counter-cultural movement here. Do you have any opinion on that at all?

Logan: Well, I mean...

Chris: Having been involved in one of the early ones

Logan: Well, I mean, my friends and my brothers and stuff, we were into music. Music was big here in Dayton, as it was everywhere. So people were really into music and music had a very profound impact on people's views of things after awhile. The music went through stages and by the mid 60's it became much more hard rock, experimental, psychedelic rock. Drugs became in wide use by the early 70's here. The sexual revolution happened and people's view of straight society had changed. You know, it depends, I was a moderate when it came to most of this stuff. [Laughs] You had to admit that the straight culture of American society was pretty screwed up in all kinds of ways. So we were part of that but there were literally on all the campuses and among young people, there was a very large hippie community here in Dayton. It wasn't always conscious of itself as a counter-culture. A lot of people were involved with it and had, there were all kinds of different levels of consciousness we'd call it. My level of consciousness grew as I got, read more and understood more. I appreciate it more now in retrospect, but I enjoyed it while it was happening.

Chris: So who did you read at that time to keep the, to keep the focus where you kept it? What kind of reading and what role models did you have to help you maintain the focus.
Logan: I actually did not read that philosophical stuff very much. Like I was saying earlier I've read a lot of history. I started reading history before then, I read history in high school. I read [unintelligible]'s book on guerilla warfare and that kind of stuff. I read 'Three who made a revolution' about the Russian revolution. I didn't really read philosophical, counter-cultural stuff, my friends were more aware of those people. We brought Jonathan Kozol here for instance, who talked about preschool and had him on the Phil Donohue show and had him speak at Central State. We brought Noam Chomsky here. I drove Noam Chomsky around and Jane Fonda, and Tom Hayden came here. I got to drive them around. Jane Fonda spoke at, we had a booth against the war, out at the fairgrounds at the, what do they call that, the county fair. [Laughs] She came, and then the Victoria Theatre was having, they used to have rock groups there all the time and they had the Eagles that same day. Afterwards was a big anti-war rally at the Victoria Theatre that we organized. The Phil Donohue show being here brought in a lot of these folks, but, that was the summer of '72 which we were talking about there a little bit.

Logan: We had a number of militant actions in the spring of '72. Both at the, out at Wright Patt, Gary wanted to chain the gates closed at Wright Patt and we almost did, but we did close down the gates and was on the front page of the Dayton Daily News. We had a militant action against the recruiter's offices downtown. We had militant actions at the recruiters at Wright State and at U.D. We had militant action out at Wright State against, Henry Kissinger had an assistant on the air war that was going around there on the campus justifying the escalation of the air war in Vietnam. We had a very militant against the guy, Drofe [Dolf?] Droge, they actually shut down his presentation at Wright State and had a big conflict there about that. We tried to; at that point people were being killed by the hundreds in Vietnam, the Vietnamese were being killed by the thousands and had been for years and we felt that just accepting the war and allowing it to go on. People all over the country were stepping forward and putting their bodies between the war machine and the war. We were trying to do our part to, at the same you had Nixon running for re-election and a, very pitiful, that he got re-elected was in part a response that, they were able to pull the wool over peoples eyes. Kissinger came back and he said he had peace in his hand in October of 1972 and that actually swung the election. Then they bombed, carpet bombed parts of Hanoi and parts of Vietnam with B-52s over Christmas. So peace in hand was a manipulation, both of the election and the war.

Chris: Gotta appreciate that irony given his Quaker background.

Logan: Well, it's just you can sell your soul to the devil regardless of your background.

Chris: I like your chronology, I don't even know if I really to dig into these questions at all, I think you are enjoying this.

Logan: [laughs] Well I've talked about this for many years. Then we went into a different phase, they had the peace agreement in 1973. It wasn't the end of the war but it allowed the United States to withdraw and the war went on. There was sort of a beginning shift of focuses. The economy became a big issue and at the same time, I've always believed in and
have been involved in the anti-war movement at the same time drawn a link to economic and social justice. In 1972 we formed a progressive, socialist, democratic organization here called the New American Movement which was, had chapters all over the country which was a new left approach to socialism that said, you can make cultural change and a transformation to the idea of economic transformation. We had a very active chapter with a number of people, Julia Reichart was a part of that, we had people working at WYSO. We had people doing economic justice and we formed a group, part of that, as a sub-project of that called the Miami Valley Power Project. Miami Valley Power Project. I'll say that again, which was to work on energy and utility issues. I think we formed that in either '75 or '74, at the time they had the energy crisis and Dayton Power and Light, utility prices were going up and up and they were shutting off all kinds of people. Back in '72 I was paying like twenty-two dollars, no thirty-two dollars for utilities in the middle of the winter and that was for both gas and electric. Cause at that point Dayton Power and Light was both gas and electric. It went from like thirty-two dollars to over a hundred dollars a month by 1976/1977. You had this, people being squeezed, particularly seniors on fixed incomes, poor people, working people and they were shutting off a hundred people a day at some points. So we were part of a movement to fight that and that was our first sort of move from being just anti-war to being involved in economic and what we called cross-class issues that affect everybody in the population to one degree or another

Chris: More of a social-justice kind of thing?

Logan: Yeah, at the same time I, the Vietnam War was coming to a ending, mainly because the Vietnamese were taking over their own country. The North Vietnamese and also the South Vietnamese and the puppet government that we had there collapsed. At the same time there was crisis in a number of places, in Southern Africa in Angola and Portugal had a colony in Angola. [Dog barking] Mozambique, and you had Rhodesia which was a break away from Great Britain but it was a white-only domination of southern Africa. Then you had South Africa, but we were doing solidarity work with them at the same time we were doing economic justice. Try to make a link to, some people didn't understand why we did both, but we felt like the world needed to be changed and they needed our support. We'd been doing that, we did in Central America, South America, Colombia as part of a group called the Central American Solidarity Committee which Margaret [Knapke] and I worked on together. We tried to draw links to economic justice and what we considered U.S. imperialism, which was to try to dominate the world. Some times with a velvet glove but then also with the iron fist.

Chris: I had a class on Argentina last quarter, learned a lot about the whole economics of, the economic control we had down there, very interesting.

Logan: Well, we still do. So through the 70's we thought change was, [dog barks] I always felt like it was going to be a long haul, but I had no idea how long a haul it was going to be. I had never believed that change, revolution was around the corner. I always thought it was a couple years off and a couple years off and a couple years off and it just keeps going.

Chris: Every year that passes it gets another year further away it seems
Logan: We had a fairly activist core group of people and that were doing all kinds of, everything, cultural media stuff to direct organizing of people. There’s internal conflict with those groups and people ongoing and no sooner did we get sort of, things together, they would fall apart again. We kept being friends but we had disagreements that led people to do different things. The group the New America Movement fell apart here. There were a number of radical groups here, that was just one of three or four major political leftist oriented, radical groups here. They had a combination of students and community people, by that time I had become a community person. [laughs] I was no longer a student and I had given up a business manager and sort of worked odd jobs to support my organizing and that’s pretty much what I’ve done for the last forty years. Thirty years now. The 80’s you saw a transition to more, less militant, more mainstream type of organizing. Though there were times when things would become militant, it was in the 80’s actually, 1978 I formed a group called the Full Employment Committee and that eventually became the Miami Valley Unemployed Council and is now the Miami Valley Full Employment Council. It started, the economy, we had lost so many jobs here, all kinds of manufacturing jobs. All of NCR, McCall’s, G.H. & R. Foundry, DESC, Dayton Tire. Dayton was a huge manufacturing town in which there were factories all over the west side and the east side. Surprisingly, there’s a handful of them left, but most of them are gone. Big foundries and steel mills, we had five divisions of G.M., they’re all gone. It is that economic collapse that hit Dayton very hard, we’d seen a decrease in living standards of people and stuff. We fought for extended unemployment benefits against Reagan in ’84 and ’85. One of the actions I was involved with was, we did civil disobedience in the Capital Rotunda over extended unemployment benefits. We had gone there like five times that year to lobby for it and it finally became a point when it was our last effort and we were able to force like a hundred-million dollar concession from Reagan through that action but also other people’s lobbying efforts.

Chris: A sit-in in the Rotunda?

Logan: Yeah, it was an exciting action. We used non-violent civil disobedience on several occasions. Gary Staiger and Pam Davis and a group of us were arrested at Dayton Power and Light over people being shut off in the middle of wintertime. That was in, I think 78. Then again like said we did direct action around extended unemployment benefits. Then we did some direct actions, Margaret [Knapke] and I did civil disobedience. She did civil disobedience a bunch of different times but her and I did it once at Wright Patt where we attempted to get arrested closing the gate but they just closed the gate and let us sit there. [both laugh] We didn’t get arrested but we did count it as doing civil disobedience but they decided it was easier just to close the gate and reroute traffic.

Chris: Interesting.

[Pause]

Logan: At some point I had been pretty much resistant to do electoral issues. We had done a number of referendums that we had worked on around utilities and other progressive
issues. Bottle bills, you would have this, silly things, they used to have deposits that you
would get for returning glass bottles. We wanted to bring that back, of course, they have it
in Michigan.

Chris: I think they have it in Michigan and California, don't they?

Logan: Yup, and Oregon. If you look on some beer bottles and some stuff, they'll have
listed on the side the states. They are worth like a nickel to a dime. You can get money for
returning the bottles and they just re-use them. Silly idea, but we have a mountain of land
fills of aluminum cans and plastic and we always felt that, there was Earth day the same
time the Vietnam War was going on. There was a link between the environmental and
social justice because it was clear that capitalists didn't care whether they destroyed the
environment and still don't care too much until they get in trouble. They did all kinds of
destructive things to the environment and it was very fairly apparent that conservatives
their initial ideological purpose was to conserve nature and society. They don't care about
that, they want to conserve their profits, that's what it's about.

Chris: I always thought that was a certain irony. You are conservative but you don't want
to conserve.

Logan: Wasteful and inhumane behavior. [pause] Go on, you have a question?

Chris: I don't, I think I'm resigning myself to follow ups, I'm enjoying this. I'm happy with
the follow-ups, and anything else I need to fill in I can fill in at the end.

Logan: I'm just giving you a very quick overview of these years. If you want an in depth
view you'll have to do a few more days.

Chris: Which of, up until this point what was the, which of these different movements that
you hung your hat on did you think affected you the most and affected the way you live
your life the most?

Logan: Well, I don't know if I can answer that. They all affected my life. I had chose a sort
of an alternative lifestyle to live cheaply and not to get hung up on making lots of money
cause well, I couldn't. It was not a, sometimes I made ok money painting, which is a career I
sort of developed, at a certain point I fell into house painting. I used that so I have a lot of
flexibility on my hours and time, so that gave me, I'm self-employed, I could work when I
wanted to and when I needed to and then when I needed to organize I had time to do that.
It meant I didn't make very much money. Over all, that's one of the big impacts, a lot of the
folks I worked with had a situation where they had to make a living in order to survive. I
always got by on my wits of sorts then sometimes I didn't. [both laugh] I'm still working
and it looks like I will until I'm into my eighties. [laughs] I feel that the peace movement,
I'm still, very strongly about, I feel very strong about all this stuff. I've seen people become
homeless, I've seen people loose their family, their possessions and I've known people
who've been killed. In Dayton there's a whole, this country is extremely violent and I've
known a number of people that've been murdered, have paid the ultimate price for living in
this society that is out of touch with real human values and real human caring. The news and the society, we have homicides constantly in the Dayton area and if you are around poor people and working with them, inevitably you’re gonna know some of these folks. I’ve had some friends of mine killed and some people I just met that I know have been killed. I feel that its the consequences of a society that is on, the rat race and is run by a bunch of people who prefer to not talk about the underlying issues that cause crime and violence in our society. They always put it in, incarceration, so we have more people per capital in prison in America than any other country in the world. At the same time we have the poor people and working people being the victims constantly. They resent that for good reason but they don’t, they know that there’s underlying causes but the economy’s a big underlying cause of violence in our society.

Chris: When you look back, you know what I would like to get more, can we get back to the chronology up to the present. You started out, in the ‘80’s you started with some electoral action

Logan: I ran for city council, I’m not sure what year it was, it might’ve been like ninety-one, ninety-two somewhere in there. Then I ran, I think three times for city council. No, twice I think I ran for city council and three times for state Representative as a Green Party person. One of the things I resisted, there was a national movement towards people getting involved in electoral politics, and I knew about the Green Party. I was involved with a group called the Mass Party Organizing Committee which, it was a group that felt there needed to be an alternative to the two-party system. But I always sort of emphasized the organizing, grass roots part of that, versus the electoral part of that. Inevitably it became clear that in order to even present your view you had to put yourself out there and get other people to put themselves out there with you. I was a part of that, then when Ralph Nader decided to run in 2000, I had been involved in, actually with the Green Party a little bit prior to that. In ’92 I worked to help get signatures for Ron Daniels to run, he was a guy from Youngstown who was the presidential candidate in ’92 of the Green Party and tried to get him on here in Ohio. I had met people in Cleveland who were active with the Green Party who were working on, actually one of the issues that they were involved with and actually won, was they wanted to make Ohio a depository for low level radiation stuff. They were doing a regional depository where everything from x-rays to low level radiated stuff would be dumped in Ohio.

Chris: That was out at the Mound right, where they wanted to do it.

Logan: No, no it was down near Zanesville somewhere. I’m not sure exactly where they were gonna do it but there was opposition all over, all the states did not want... And the Green Party was very involved here in Ohio trying to prevent that. We were also against nuclear power when we were doing our utility stuff. We were involved in stopping the Zimmer Nuclear Power Plant down in Moscow Ohio, which was done by DP&L and Cincinnati Gas and Electric, and Columbus. After, I threw this in cause its one of those highlights we just totally skipped right over. We were involved in that and Three Mile Island happened and they backed away from the Zimmer Nuclear Power Plant. One of the electricians or welders down there said that if they ever lit that place up he wanted to be a
hundred miles away from it because it had so many faulty wells. It was designed by the same people who built Three Mile Island and they decided themselves that they didn't wanna be, that maybe it was a little too risky to have nuclear power right on the Ohio River, right near Cincinnati. We had huge demonstrations against that after Three Mile Island in 1980, I think it was, 1979/1980, right there.

Logan: Back to the electoral stuff, we, I wear many hats and one of them was to be involved in the Green Party and be a candidate and help organize that here in Ohio and there's a good group, a network, of people here in Ohio. The big thing about electoral politics, it takes money to run and most of the people that, the Green Party selected a few people here in Ohio, but it takes so much money to run for office that the alternative, third party people don't have it. Until they do something about public funding of elections its only those very wealthy, very middle-class people that are gonna be successful for, and control the process. The Democrats are to the point now that they don't have enough money to run people for all the offices. The Republicans are de facto the only party that's got the real money to fund people to run.

Chris: See, you're getting to all my questions without me even asking them. Its great [both laugh] Cause I, you just answered why 2006 was your last official run for office. Yeah, Do you have one accomplishment that you feel as though is your defining accomplishment? Or even maybe a couple, or maybe even one from each hat.

Logan: Well, I think there were a number of successful things we did, like get extended unemployment benefits from Reagan. We, in our fight against DP&L and the utility shut off policy we won HEAP, and PIPP, those didn't exist at the time. Consumer's Council here in Ohio didn't exist. So there were reforms that were consequences of those struggles. South Africa, I went and saw Nelson Mandela when he spoke at Detroit, it was extremely exciting. I don't always agree with the ANC and what they do in South Africa, but it was a tremendous accomplishment and it took people all over the world to put that pressure on them. The ending of the Vietnam War, people used to say to us, it went on for years and years, it's almost as bad as what people see the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, "It's gonna go on, there's nothing you can do to stop it!"

Chris: There was a similar sentiment?

Logan: Oh there became a predominant view. People were against it, but were unwilling to do anything about it because they felt it was hopeless. Its the same sort of a situation now with these wars. People know they're wrong, at least some people, they don't really understand why, but they have a sense that its gone way beyond the revenge that they used to get us to go there. Which is not what its about. People feel like, like what happened in Egypt just here is so exciting and refreshing. The people in Egypt felt like that, I am sure, themselves. They had an interview with one of the Egyptian students here that said there was no sign that anything was going to happen in Egypt. Well yeah, there's no, people are waiting on the world to change because there's no hope, but then when they realize that there's an opening they'll pour in by the millions to do it. That's what we hope happens
here, that the American people will wake up one day and say "I’m gonna change the world today," and they go out and do it.

<Break>

Chris: So while we were taking that break you were telling me about the utility rights movement all across the state at the time that you were working against DP&L

Logan: Oh yeah, it was all over Ohio, there were groups working on it in Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus. We formed a statewide network that was working on utility issues. That was happening in a number of states all over the country because it was clear that the utilities and energy monopolies were, you know... The government at some point decided that they had to have some kind of relief or else they were just facing a lot of problems. Now, just this last week they proposed major cuts in HEAP and it’s really gonna be a disaster for people.

Chris: Its changed a bit, it’s not nearly as helpful as it used to be.

Logan: Oh yeah, well they’ve changed the PIPP program.

Chris: However they still have to jump through a whole lot of hoops to cut a families electricity off in the middle of winter. Which is something that you were actively against so that's something. It's amazing.

Logan: Right, well I don’t know what they’re gonna do, but its not gonna be pretty in the year after next. Like I said we continued, there was big peace movement against the war in Iraq and Afghanistan. Initially I guess Iraq because there was a residue feeling amongst people that we were justified to go into Afghanistan. I was against going into Afghanistan, I didn’t trust Bush, didn’t trust the government at all that they would be doing the right thing for anybody anywhere. It’s a shame that 9/11 happened, but it happened because we’ve killed literally millions of people, hundreds of thousands of people and our greed for oil and cheap labor and domination. The American people don’t do their homework so they don’t know what they’re doing. If you do your homework and its over a long period of time, that’s part of the way they are able to obscure that. People think what happened twenty years ago doesn’t have an impact. But, you kill a bunch of people in Chile or in Bangladesh or in the Philippines or in Columbia or in El Salvador, people there remember it.

Chris: Can you think of any real obstacles you had to your activism, anything that frustrated you or even disappointed you that you wish you could have had a greater impact on?

Logan: I’m always disappointed in people’s attitudes. I’ve had people that could’ve done things to help themselves to prevent homelessness and they wouldn’t do it because they had too much pride. It’s hard to get people to get to stand up, there’s always a conflict of time and interest. There’s always something else you can do that would be more fun for
Chris: I have to say, having been at some of those early Iraq war protests with you, did you see my jaw drop when you mentioned a hundred and fifty at the early protest in the 60's? I see what you are getting at with the 'its hard to get people out.'

Logan: Oh yeah it was hard against the Vietnam war because at a certain point, like I said, it became so hopeless that people wouldn't participate because they felt like it was a waste of their time. I think were in a lot of that right now, people don't feel that they can hardly change the world. It takes so much work to do just a little bit.

Chris: Do you think that recent government crack downs on protesting and what not have a really big bearing on lowered crowds? Like the herding of people into 'Free Speech' zones. Do you think that's gonna nearly end activism?

Logan: Those events have been at national party conventions in particular, or at, what they tried to do with the economic, I forget what it was called...

Chris: The WTO and the G-8's and the stuff like that?

Logan: Yeah, and the Free Trade. They've decide that the public squares are not longer public and that they can have an event at the public square but you're not allowed to participate with your free speech and your flyers. That's an extreme barrier but it's one we can work around. They've passed this last, just a couple days ago, parts of the Patriot Act. Obama, I guess, wants it so the Republicans and a handful of Blue-Dog Democrats have passed it. I'm not sure what they've passed but its an extremely, the whole piece is extremely repressive and potentially extremely dangerous. The government is involved in every[thing]. The tea party types are always saying they are against big government but they're against it in a way that they don't understand what the government is really doing. The government is, I'm against big government too, I'm for decentralized people's control of society, but what it turns out that they use that to manipulate people. It's a clever way of saying, the Democrats are all into big government and they are, but the fact is that what they use that to do is to rip people of. That's where it becomes 'We're against big government so we're gonna destroy the environment,' cause we're not gonna have safety for the environment, we're not gonna have safety for workers, we're not gonna, we don't wanna have restrictions so if your employer wants you to risk your life for the job, you can quit, but if you want the job you gotta risk your neck.

Chris: Any overarching lessons that you've taken from either social lessons, personal lessons, electoral lessons?

Logan: I wish I'd learned more of them. [both laugh] Like I said earlier, I didn't think change was around the corner but I didn't think I'd be working on it into a new millennium and beyond. One of the things people say "Why do you do it?" I said I have faith in the people, you have to believe that human nature and people themselves will at some point
pick up the challenge in front of them and deal with it. When they're gonna do that, we'll see but hopefully it's not too far away. It might be another couple lifetimes away it looks like.

Chris: Hopefully it happens before there are no Free Speech zones. Before they even take those away from us.

Logan: Have you ever been to any of those?

Chris: No, well, there was on where, weren't you there, there was one for the Iraqi war where they had us out at Wright Patt, you were there. They had us closed off into this one section that was cordoned off with tape.

Logan: I don't know if I was at that one. I think Gary Staiger was there.

Chris: It wasn't like it is now where they've got the riot police on all sides to keep you in. They just funneled us into this one area and they had caution tape around the whole area and we had to stay inside the caution tape.

Logan: I've been to something like that before. It's been going on as long as the Vietnam war so its hard to remember all of them.

Chris: They made us go to one of the least used gates and then closed that gate for the day so there was no base traffic that actually saw us.

Logan: We had a little action up there, the four of us on Hiroshima Day. We didn't even tell them we were coming and they... [laughs]

Chris: This last one?

Logan: No, a couple years ago. Us old fogeys went out there. When I first started going they had these old Quaker [laughter]

Chris: You old fogeys really, I love it. You say that all you want but when I'm out at marches and I see more grey hair than I see non-grey hair I am pleased, it's nice. Being a part of the movement I have to say that it is nice. It's nice to see that it's not just young stupid people doing it. It's not only about young idealism, its about a lasting idealism.

Logan: Well, that's a nice way to look at it, but we need the youth to be involved.

Chris: Agreed.

Logan: I think that brings us pretty much up to the present.

Chris: It does. Were there any of those periods that you would like to specifically revisit to give us a better idea of who Logan is?
Logan: I think the early period; I haven’t been to too many concerts. You used to go to concerts fairly frequently and we saw some great bands.

Chris: Music was a much bigger part of the anti-war movement back in the 60’s and 70’s than it is now. There are people out there making anti-war music, but you don’t see your Dylans at peace rallies any more as much I don’t think.

Logan: Well there are, there’s always some sort of rising progressive start that’s got a hit somewhere. You really didn’t see them at rallies then, Dylan didn’t play, he played some civil rights rallies but he stopped doing it. There was some great music, I saw the Jefferson Airplane and a bunch of great bands played. I enjoyed that part of it.

Logan: I’ll have to think about that over-arching lessons to learn. We can come up with a couple of them.

Chris: You gave us a little bit of talk about capitalism; those are some good lessons to learn in this day and age. I’d like to hear, we started to talk about this a little bit before we turned the tape on. I’d like to hear a little bit on your take on, we were talking about the fragmentation of liberal movements, the lack of cohesion sometimes between the movements and how sometimes they’ll go at each others throats when there’s not a greater goal to accomplish. We were talking about your different take on liberalism than most.

Logan: Well, I’ve pretty much been a radical and believe that radical change happens by radical activism and confronting the society as a whole and its institutions. Liberalism to me, in my experience, has always been willing to compromise and sell change short. Constantly on issues that I, like the whole Green Party and the Democratic Party. I had no problem; my experience with the Democratic Party was Lyndon Johnson. I believed Lyndon Johnson for a while about Vietnam and then realized he was lying. I look back on it now and I can’t believe that for those couple of years I wasn’t really a strong war supporter but I believed what they were saying about it. Then realized that they didn’t care about the freedom of the Vietnamese at all. That just totally turned me against the Democratic Party because they, and all the way up until the very end there was a strong minority within the Democratic Party that supported the Vietnam War. Its the same with these wars right now, there’s a strong minority within the Democratic Party that is very pro-war and they really run the show for the Democratic Party. Obama, it was clear that he was going to continue the war when he was running for office and he’s continued the war, its continued to bankrupt the country and now he wants to cut all kinds of programs so that he can continue to finance it. I just don’t believe in, and I think if you do any kind of research you can see that they have used terrorism to manipulate people. They’re not interested in people being safe or free.

Chris: What’s the correlation to the Vietnam war then, what did they use then? What was their trick up their sleeve, like terrorism is the trick up their sleeve now; we need to be afraid of terrorists. Was it communism, did they use communism?
Logan: They used communism the same way they use terrorism but at that point, you have
to realize we had gone through the McCarthy period and the left had been pretty well
smashed. I had no point of reference to the left, not until I finally met some old timers who
had been in the left here in Dayton. That was true of most of the population; we believed
that the Cold War was good thing and that Communists were dictators and bad. They were
bad to some degree but they took that and magnified it and turned it into a means to cover
their own aggression. We believed that for years, the majority of the people wanted to
believe the United States was about freedom and justice for everybody. They've
maintained that facade still till today, the majority of people that supported Bush and
supported Reagan; they believed this altruism about the United States is what it is really
about. It isn't that they, its only a handful of the real leaders that know that that's just
something you tell people so they will follow you and do stupid stuff. It isn't the people's
fault that they fall for that lie, its just that they've been told that, they want to believe that,
they see certain positive things in American history but they don't realize that everything
from slavery to women being suppressed and the segregation of the races and taking over
the Indian lands, taking land from the Mexicans, that there was always a dark side out
there.

Chris: And economic terrorism against the British. Ultimately that's what the Boston Tea
Party was, it was economic terrorism when it comes right down to it. I find that kind of
entertaining some times.

Logan: It was, they used creative direct action.

Chris: I like that, 'creative direct action,' nice.

Logan: The people in Boston had an economic interest in breaking free from Britain, the
whole triangle of trade, they made a lot of money off slavery and a lot of money off rum. On
the other hand they would have settled for a compromise with Britain but Britain wasn't
going to give any compromise so they had to take things into their own hands. It would be
nice if the system would compromise with us but there's no sign that the system is willing
to end the wars and have justice for people, there's no money in that. They're gonna
continue the wars and continue injustice.

Chris: I don't have, really you have answered all of my question without my asking them
when it comes right down to it.

Logan: Well, this whole debate about liberalism and radicalism. Radicalism is part of you
personally in your life but there's also radical politics where you try to keep moving things
to the cutting edge. That's what I've tried to do to one degree or another; you're tempered
by the fact that you have to have at least some people involved in order to make any
change. Most people are involved because they see there's this injustice and they want to
try to change that part of it. A lot of people involved in economic justice can't believe the
peace part of it, so you have this tension between people who want to support the war but
just think we need to have jobs, well the two are very strongly linked. If you want real jobs
and real change you have to have peace to do it, you have to have peace to pay for it, you
have to have peace to have the space to change things. We don't have it and there's no sign that Obama or the governments gonna change any of that.

Chris: If the system opened up would you run again?

Logan: Probably not, no, I had decided, first of all, it costs so much money to run like I told you, but I'm also getting to an age where I believe in working on the issues so I think my contribution for social change, I'm into supporting people running. I'm not ready to retire but I'm not ready to run for office for sure again. I hope some other people will and some people who really want to make some changes and I'll support them but no, I ran five times for office and I felt like that was my contribution.

Chris: Did you get on the city council? We didn't talk about it.

Logan: No, it was always, I always ran as an educational effort.

Chris: There's nothing wrong with that, I've considered it myself as well. Unless there's anything else you wanna throw out there.

Logan: No, I think that covers most of it up till this latest stuff, but we're facing the state budget crisis, they're working on that. We got a coalition that's meeting on that, we have the whole job situation; I'm working with the National Jobs for All Coalition. We have all these people who have ran out of extended unemployment benefits. Literally all the GM workers and the part plant places, all those workers have ran out of unemployment benefits and we have literally millions of people who are unemployed and no longer have a safety net. The challenge just right in front of us this year is tremendous for people and the government seems willing to totally brush people under the rug.

Chris: On the national level the Democrats traded that recently did they not? Traded the extended unemployment benefits for...

Logan: They did the tax deal. What they did is passed an ongoing extension of unemployment benefits for people who have not been on for the maximum amount of time. If you just got laid off in the end of like 2009 you can still be collecting unemployment, but the majority of the people were laid off prior to that. That extension that they won as part of the tax deal for the billionaires doesn't cover those people, so the people that were laid off at the truck and bus plant here in Dayton and the part plant, all those folks are practically, most all of them now are out of unemployment benefits. They'll say, "We got extension," well they're only good for 99 weeks, after that you're off. That's true all over the country where the majority of the unemployed are no longer receiving unemployment. We have literally hundreds of thousands of people who lost their homes, are gonna lose their.

Chris: And then they go off the roles of the unemployed so they're not in the numbers any more so we can say that our unemployment numbers are going down.
Logan: That's exactly what is happening. They're juggling the numbers and they're saying unemployment is going down, they've said it's gone down every month for the last eleven months. What's clear is, they've reduced the work force, we call that the participatory rate, the number of people that are of the age bracket of working who participate in the labor force. What they do is they say, "You're not looking for a job any more so you're not part of the work force any more so we don't count you as unemployed and we don't count you as part of the work force." It's getting close to just 60%, so you have 40% of the working aged people not working, some of those people are not working because their handicapped or not able to work or they're part of a family in which one of the other persons is a bread winner. The 40% is also a lot of people who would like to have jobs that just aren't, so they're living with their relatives, sleeping in a spare bedroom and watching television waiting for the world to change.

Chris: Is there anything else that you'd like to throw in there?

Logan: Oh there's tons of stuff but we'll have to wait for then next interview.