Interview with Robert Hartley

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Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Wednesday, September 29th, 2010. My name is Mark DePue, Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm starting a series of interviews with Robert Hartley. You go by Bob most of the time, don't you?

Hartley: I do.

DePue: Good morning, Bob.

Hartley: Good morning, Mark. Good to see you.

DePue: It's great to have you here. Bob has flown in, all the way from Colorado, to spend some time talking to us about the multitude of books that you've written about Illinois history and especially about Illinois politics. But we're going to start with a healthy dose of discussion about your career as a journalist in Illinois, and other places around the country as well, before you transition into writing stories about Illinois politicians. And, by golly, there's no shortage of material there, is there?

Hartley: No, there isn't. There's a lot of material. How important it is, is another question.

DePue: Well, it's always fun to listen to the stories though. So, let's start with where and when you were born.

Hartley: On August 30th, 1936 in Winfield, Kansas.

DePue: What was the family doing out in Winfield, Kansas?

Hartley: Been there a good long time. My grandfather Hartley started an independent insurance agency, and my father joined him in business. So, the two of them had been around, by the time I showed up, a good forty years together and fairly well planted in Winfield.

My grandfather actually was born in Indianola, Illinois in 1877. His father was a teacher in Illinois and ran a mercantile business in Fowler, Indiana. And he, through a series of political connections, actually ended up being a trader with the Osage Indians in Oklahoma Territory. That's how the Hartley's came to that part of the country. So, my great-grandfather then—after he had spent about eight years with the Osages—went to Arkansas City, Kansas, as a banker, and then my grandfather. Winfield and Arkansas City are just separated by about thirteen miles. So, the family had been in that vicinity a good, long while before I showed up.

DePue: Was there any money to be made in insurance business in the height of the depression?

Hartley: You know, it was steady. My grandfather had a lot of investments. He had some oil investments and some other investments in town. So, I think he had some other independent sources of income. But the insurance business…my dad went into the insurance business with him in 1935, right in the middle of all of that, and they seemed to do just fine. I think, just simply, people knew him. If he couldn't get money out of them, he managed some other way of getting paid or paid for it himself, until they could pay him.

On the other hand, I don't know that Winfield was characteristic of the Depression times. It was a farm community, for the most part, but it had a pretty strong commercial base and center, not far from Wichita, about fifty mile. So, I don't know that Winfield was hit as severely in the Depression years as some other communities were.

DePue: You remember growing up hearing the stories about the Dust Bowl era, because I would think that's right in the heart of it.

Hartley: You know, I did. Actually, it was my mother's family that I heard more of that from. They settled in a town called Turon, Kansas. That's west of Wichita, about forty miles from Hutchinson, out in the middle of Kansas. And they probably had more experience with the Dust Bowl and its ramification there than Winfield did. It was a little west of Winfield that it really was severe.

DePue: Tell us a little bit more about your mother, then, her maiden name. Let's start with that.

Hartley: Geesling. The family came from Ohio to central Kansas, with a stop in Iowa for a short while. They were farmers. They homesteaded in the area of Turon. My grandfather was the oldest of five children in the family, and he is the only one who

chose not to farm. He convinced his father, my great-grandfather, that he should help him buy a local telephone company in Turon. So, my great- grandfather loaned him half of the money.

DePue: This would be when telephones were still much a novelty, I would think.

Hartley: Absolutely. This was before 1920. So, they were working with the very primitive telephone arrangements. My great-grandfather loaned him the money. The total amount of buying it was $26,000. My great-grandfather loaned him thirteen, and he borrowed the other thirteen—this is my grandfather—to buy what already had begun as the telephone company. Then he built it from there. He paid my great-grandfather back every dime of the $13,000 in five years.

DePue: That's serious money, back then.

Hartley: It was indeed serious money. Now, my grandfather had essentially an eighth grade education. His wife, my grandmother, was a school teacher and a bit better educated, so she was the bookkeeper for the company. My mother and her older sister worked at the plant and answered the phone all night long. They ran that part of it. So, there were lots of stories about that.

And then, my grandfather, because he had the farming background and all, during the Depression, an opportunity arose to buy two farms, one north and one south of Turon, that he bought for taxes. So, he kept those until he died and all. That provided some income as well.

But my grandfather Hartley, my grandfather Geesling, were both small businessmen. I think that had an impact on me. I admired them both for what they built, what they did, for their independence. I think that had a real impact on me, watching them, listening to them. They were entirely different kinds of people, in other respects, but they had that small business background in common. So, I benefitted from that.

DePue: Well, you're still really young when the Second World War begins. What did your parents end up doing during the Second World War?

Hartley: My father went to work at Boeing in Wichita and, as a result, had a deferment. I don't really know how he acquired this knowledge, but he was a blueprint expert, turned out and developed mostly by Boeing, He worked during the entire war at Boeing and quit there, when the war was over, and went back to the insurance company.

Of course, in World War Two, on the Geesling side, there were no men, so the impact was strictly on the family and the circumstances in town.

DePue: Do you remember anything about the Second World War? Did you follow the news at all?

Hartley: You know, I don't remember much of that. I remember celebrating VJ Day (chuckles) and VE Day and those kinds of things—

DePue: You must have been nine at the time, sounds like.

Hartley: Yeah, and I remember, you know, the so-called hardships of the war, the rationing and so on, were simply things that happened that I didn't, you know… My mother, when they had meat at the local grocery store, when they had a supply of meat come in, and they announced that they were going to have various cuts of meat that they hadn't had for some time, she would send me down and put me in line. Then when the line got shorter, and so on, then she would come and get in line. So, I'd stand in line for her. I stood in line for her for stockings, when they showed up. So, she was sort of—

DePue: Stockings, nylon stockings?

Hartley: Yeah, right, nylon stockings. So, they sort of dispatched me to stand in line. Well, I didn't know what that was all about. I mean, I just thought that was normal, you know. And rationing of gasoline, it didn't mean anything. We still went out to see my grandparents in Turon and still drove out there, because my dad had an A-card, because he was working in a defense plant. So, he could still drive, like farmers could, almost anywhere they wanted to.

So, the impact on me was in retrospect, rather than feeling it at the time. Now, my wife, for example, her brother was in the Army and fought in Europe. So, they had an entirely different family feel for the war. My uncle, my dad's brother, was in the Coast Guard, spent the entire war in Seattle. So, it really was quite different.

DePue: Do you have any other memories that really stay with you, about growing up in Winfield? I would think most of this is now beyond the Second World War era.

Hartley: Well, you know, Winfield was a town of about ten thousand people, and so it was a small town, and still is a small town. You walked everywhere, or you took a bus. They did have bus service, and, if you wanted to go up to the college for some reason, you could take the bus up there. Or you rode your bike.

I remember there were very few restrictions on where my parents would let me go in town. There was a certain part of town, you know, probably every town, that they didn't want you to go there, and they warned you about, that that wasn't a good place to go. But generally speaking, you could come and go anywhere, as long as you had a bicycle or were willing to walk. So, it was a real free kind of existence.

You could do things that…you know. Today, and even in with our children, there were restrictions on how far you could walk and when you could be out and so on. My goodness, I could do almost anything, as long as my folks knew where I was or where they could get a hold of me. So, that's one of the things that I remember about that sort of freeing, of the feeling of living in a small town and knowing a lot of people. My dad being in business and all, a lot of people knew

who I was by sight. I'd walk downtown for some reason, why I'd see a lot of people. They'd know me by name and all. It's a real friendly sort of atmosphere as well. So, I remember that probably more strongly than anything.

DePue: Did you have some brothers and sisters?

Hartley: I have a sister, nine years younger than I am, so I'm almost an only child. I remember her mostly as a pest, (both chuckle) as she reminds me of that.

DePue: How does she remember you?

Hartley: Oh, of course, she thought I was wonderful, you know. She thought, look at all the things he gets to do that I can't. I looked at it just the opposite. But we have been close, in spite of the years, and I really operated at a different level. She came along, and she was sort of over here in her life, and I was over there in my life. We crossed over at home and so on, but we were doing entirely different things. So, it really was like being an only child.

DePue: But I get the impression that, otherwise, the family stayed pretty close-knit with other relatives around the area.

Hartley: They did. There weren't many of them, actually. These were not large families. These were relatively small families, my mother, one of two children; my dad, one of two children; I'm one of two children, and pretty close.

We had relatives in other parts of Kansas that were part of the Hartley relatives, yeah. But we kept track of each other. The Geeslings, especially, were all over western and central Kansas.

DePue: Did you go to public schools?

Hartley: I did. I went to Winfield public schools, all the way through, graduated from high school in 1954.

DePue: What's the ethnic mix that you had in Winfield, growing up?

Hartley: You know, it was white, mostly. There were a few African-American families in town. They were in a certain part of town, the southwest part of town. That's where most of them lived. In school, we knew them well, and they were great athletes. We enjoyed them and, you know, I don't remember, I don't have any recollection of incidents of racism.

Of course, I'm sure it was there. This was a small town in southern Kansas. At one time, had a Ku Klux Klan organization in town and had a Negro swimming pool, separate from the one where the Whites went, for years, until surprisingly recent time. And so, those factors were there. But growing up in Winfield, sort of unaware of…

The first Jew that I knew was a fraternity brother of mine in college. I don't believe there were any Jews in town. There were Catholics. We knew the Catholics went to a different church, but we played ball with them and so on. It was not anything that we thought about, particularly. So, there were Lutherans too, Missouri Synod Lutherans, and they kept to themselves, too, religiously.

DePue: What was your religious background?

Hartley: Presbyterian. All the way through. My mother and my father, who had lived there all of his life, I think he was a seventy-five year member of the First Presbyterian Church. And my mother, when she came to town and married my father in 1935, then, from that point on, she was a member, until 1998. So they were long-time—and my grandfather as well—long-time members of the Presbyterian Church there. And, you know, I can go back and visit in Winfield today and, you know, there are lots of people in that church still, who remember Mother and Dad, who died about twelve years ago, each of them. So, I hear all the old stories again. It's good, really.

DePue: With Lutherans in town, I'm making an assumption here that there must have been a lot of German immigrants. What was the area originally settled by?

Hartley: It was originally settled, largely from Illinois, which was strongly German at that time, Illinois and Indiana. There was a real estate man in Winfield, in the late 1800s, who was a real hustler. He would go to Illinois and talk to people there and convince them they ought to come and look the town over. He would praise it, and they published materials and so on. Then, they would come and visit, and he'd take them in a touring car—as soon as they had touring cars—take them around. If they didn't, it was a horse-drawn, touring carriage, and show them the town and everything.

So, that's the way a lot of people came to Winfield that way, early on. He touted it as a healthy place to live, you see. So, get away from Illinois; and Indiana was not healthy; come to Kansas, live better and be healthy. (both chuckle) He was quite a huckster. But that was the way and awful lot of people came to Winfield.

My grandmother's family was from Illinois. Nickel was their name, or Neechol. They were from Germany. They were immigrants, directly from Germany to Illinois. Aside from my name, Hartley, which is English, I'm probably 90% German, because Indiana and Illinois where various parts of my family, came together, they were Germans and immigrants. So that influenced. And that, I think, is fairly typical then of the influence in Winfield.

DePue: Well, this is taking us a little bit away from your family, and certainly from growing up, but did Winfield have any history that dated back to the pre-Civil War era, to the Bleeding Kansas era?

Hartley: No, it didn't. (coughed) Excuse me. Some of the southern part of Kansas, probably the eastern half of the southern part of Kansas, was Osage Indian country. By virtue of treaty, they had certain rights to the land, until about 1870. So, when Winfield

was incorporated, in 1870, as were most of the communities along…you know, there were lots of people living there, illegally and everything, before they could incorporate.

But that's when Winfield incorporated, and they pushed the Osage Indians off into the Oklahoma Territory at that point. So, the history of that area, the organized settlement history, really begins around 1870.

DePue: Let's get you into the high school years and into considering what you might want to be doing for the rest of your life. What were your activities in high school?

Hartley: Well, you know, I thought I was an athlete…

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: …but, I learned pretty quickly that I wasn't, as much as I enjoyed sand-lot baseball and junior high school basketball and things like that. Played a little tennis; I was never skillful enough to rise to perfection or anything close to it. But I generated, or developed, quite an interest in sports. And my father, who also was interested in sports, he taught me how to keep score, keep an official scorebook for baseball. And I would listen to the radio games on weekends and when I was at home, summertime. And I would score the games.

DePue: What teams were you listening to?

Hartley: Oh, these were network broadcasts, so it could have been anybody…

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: …any major league team. And so, I developed sort of an interest in baseball. I guess that was the appropriate term. A lot of these things happened without my knowledge of how they happened, so I really don't know this, the details. When I was in the seventh grade, the man who ran the summer recreation program in Winfield was planning a baseball tournament, bringing in teams from all over the state. These were high school age kids and junior high school. And he needed someone to keep an official scorebook of that tournament. Now, how he found out…he must have found out from my father. I can't imagine any other way, and Dad never…I don't think I ever asked him. I should have. But, at any rate, through some arrangement with my folks, they said Bobby can keep score. So, I went out and for this week of baseball, and kept the scorebook; stayed out there all day and all evening and kept the scorebook, and got to go to all the social functions that they held for all of the team members and so on.

And the next year, when I was in the eighth grade, this man who was the head of the recreation program, was the manager of the American Legion baseball team in Winfield. So, I think must have come again to my dad and said, "This summer, we need Bobby to keep the scorebook for us when we play." They usually played games on Saturdays and Sundays, during the summer. So, I kept the official

scorebook. They made one trip out of town, and my dad and mother gave me permission to stay overnight with the team, and I went with them. That was in the eighth grade.

Well, at the end of the eighth grade summer, and I was about to go into the ninth grade, there was an ice cream social (chuckles)—this is all small town stuff—an ice cream social at the First Presbyterian Church. I was there with my folks, and a fellow came up to me, who had been a free-lance sports writer for the local newspaper, who was a student at Southwestern College there. He had just graduated and was going off to work. I knew him because I gave him scores and box score information for the paper. Anyway, so, he walks up to me at this ice cream social and says, "Bob, you know Harry Hart, don't you?" And I said, "Sure." Harry was the sports editor/managing editor of the daily newspaper there. He said, "You know, Harry would like to talk to you about something. If you've got a few minutes next week, why don't you go by and see him." I knew Harry, and that didn't strike me as anything unusual. So, I went down to call on Mr. Hart at the newspaper…cigar-smoking guy with suspenders. He was so typical, for me, of newspaper people.

DePue: This is right out of central casting, it sounds like.

Hartley: Yes, he was. He was, in so many ways. So, Harry said, "I need somebody to cover junior high school sports for *The Courier* for the next school year. Are you interested?" (both chuckle)

What am I supposed to say? I was still only thirteen years old. What am I supposed to say? Well, gee, it sounds great, or something like that. I don't remember what my response was. I didn't say "No." I'd never written anything close to a newspaper story, at that point. So, Harry said, "Well," he said, "I'll help you. I'll help you get started." And so, we talked about this.

Well, I wasn't of age. Under the law, when you work for a company with interstate commerce, you had to be fourteen years old, or they needed your father's permission to work. So, I go home, you know, and explode. My dad knew all about this. I mean, he knew all about this. And so, he said, "Well, you know, we have to go down and sign some papers." So, we went down to the newspaper, and he signs his permission to let me… Actually, I was just a couple of weeks before I was going to be fourteen, but they had to do that anyway.

So, that fall, as the junior high school football team started practice and training and got ready for games, I started writing stories about them. And, oh, they were just dreadful stories. I mean, you know, I remember going down to the library. I thought, well, there'll be some books down at the library that'll tell me how to write these sports stories. Well, the only books they had of that kind down there were published in the 1920s, you know, so they were not really much help. At any rate, I fumbled along, and Harry did help me and so on. But that began my journalism career.

I loved it. I got $2.00 a story. And I had some change in my pocket. My parents never gave me another allowance after that time. I always had money that I had earned in sports writing or something close to it. So, anyway, that's how I got turned on to newspaper work. I didn't think of it in terms of journalism, because I wasn't that sophisticated about all of it. It was newspaper work.

DePue: Well, were there situations where, hey, the team didn't play very well at all, and you had to write critical stories, and you got to hear about it at school from your buddies?

Hartley: Not really in that first year, when I was doing junior high school stuff. They got more coverage than they ever had before.

DePue: They probably liked that.

Hartley: And they liked that. You know, aside from just giving the account of who scored and who didn't and so on. Frankly, I don't think I knew enough about football, let's say, or even basketball, to be critical. I doubt if Harry Hart would have allowed me to say it. The word to describe Harry was avuncular. He was more of an uncle than anything else with me. So, whatever he said, I really took to heart, pardon the expression.

At any rate, it was the next year when I branched out to cover all high school sports: senior, junior, all sports. I was very busy. So, I felt really smart. And so, I began to offer a little more critical commentary in the stories. Harry let it go through, for the most part. He'd change some words here and there and make sure I had the right pronoun antecedents and things like that, but he sort of let that…Well, I did hear from people, and I heard from adults. That was what was interesting.

Of course, my name was Bob Hartley; my father's name was Bob Hartley, and the byline that I would get in the paper…for a while there were a lot of people thought my dad was moonlighting—the insurance business was bad, and he was moonlighting. (both laughing).

Well, we got that squared away. But all of that time was a really eye-opening experience for me. And I don't know how well I learned, but I learned a lot.

DePue: By the time you were a senior in high school, what did you think your career was going to be?

Hartley: Well, I never wanted to do anything but work for a newspaper. I mean, in terms of adult activity. I don't recall…my father wanted me, I think… You know, I don't think there was any question, he hoped that I would go into the insurance business and be the third generation in the insurance business in town.

DePue: Well, you're not unusual in terms of journalists who got bit by the journalism bug first because of sports.

Hartley: Absolutely.

DePue: Was politics on the horizon at all? Were you interested in it at all?

Hartley: Not in the slightest. But I announced to my parents, when the subject of college arose, that I intended to study journalism. That was what I wanted to do.

DePue: Did politics ever come up as a subject of discussion in the household? Did you know where your parents fell on the political spectrum?

Hartley: You know, it was almost a non-political household. I don't recall political discussions around the dinner table or anything, none of it. Even my grandfather, who was still alive and well during those years, who I think was much more political, frankly, probably because of his father and so on. I think they were old time Democrats. They were old Stephen Douglas Democrats, you know. (chuckle)

DePue: That is old time.

Hartley: Yeah. Well, in terms of, say, contemporary Democrats. But, you know, those conversations never came up, or if they did, I forgot them, or I didn't pay any attention to them. You know, young kids, teenagers, got lots of other subjects they want to talk about.

DePue: Was it possible that you could have graduated from high school and gone right into the newspaper business, or was college always in the equation?

Hartley: I never thought of it that way. I think my folks always intended for me to go to college, and I sort of accepted that. So, I figured I would study journalism. I know there was some guidance in high school. I had a senior English teacher who seemed to be very interested in me—not sure why, but she was—and that I enjoy writing and so on, even though not in formal English style. She gave me some help in that regard.

Also, there was a printing and journalism teacher, at that time, who I had lots of help and guidance from. I said, "Well, I think I want to go to the University of Kansas to study journalism." In fact, he was the one who said, "Well, think about Missouri, the University of Missouri. They have a fine journalism school there."

So, there were some people there who were sort of aiming me and so on. I ended up going to Kansas, but the point is that there was some discussion there. So, the assumption was that I was going to college, A. And B, I was going to study journalism. I think that fell in place, and I don't recall really ever thinking about any alternative. Except my father. Now the only thing he said when they sent me off to college was, "I'd like for you to take some business courses. You never know. You might need those." He said, "They offer courses in insurance at the University of Kansas, and you should consider it."

I took three courses in insurance, various kinds of insurance, in the business school, while I was in college. I worked two summers for him in the insurance agency when I was in college. But it never changed my mind, my opinion, my approach or anything. And he finally came to accept that, and there was never any real serious, further discussion of the insurance business.

DePue: But it sounds like journalism wasn't his idea of what his son ought to be doing.

Hartley: He was a great sports fan, and he enjoyed… I think he liked it when I was writing for the newspaper and so on. But I don't think my dad had any feelings about the newspaper business. If he did, he kept them to himself. So, he was always very supportive, as my mother was, very supportive of what I wanted to do as a career. So, I never felt that there was any feelings that they had about what I chose to do, anything other than enthusiasm. I was very fortunate in that regard.

DePue: Most people who reach college go through four or five different career thoughts before they settle down on something.

Hartley: I was very impatient in college. Mostly I wanted to get on with it. I made great, good grades, fine grades, outstanding grades in journalism, you know, and sort of okay grades in everything else, because I wanted to get on with it.

DePue: Was there any thought about broadcast journalism?

Hartley: No, not really. In those days, they had a radio sequence there in the journalism school, and we thought mostly that they were kind of strange people. (laughs)

DePue: Well, this is in the early days of TV, as well.

Hartley: Yes, but there was no activity on the TV level when I was in college. They didn't have any program there.

DePue: So, the message you're getting from your journalism professors, from the journalism program, is that serious journalists do print journalism?

Hartley: Oh, absolutely. There was never any question about that. That was the whole emphasis of the journalism school there that it was print journalism; it was newspaper work.

We were living with the William Allen White aspect of newspaper, down the road in Emporia, Kansas. Of course, he was long dead, but his son was still running the *Emporia Gazette*, and there were many people on the faculty who had worked at the *Gazette*. So, the community journalism, newspaper aspect of life was very strong at KU.

DePue: How about sports journalism versus getting into other aspects of journalism?

Hartley: Well, you know—

DePue: You smile a little bit.

Hartley: As much sports writing as I did through high school and all, I did very little. When I went to journalism school, it was news journalism. And, if you wanted to go into sports, they had a daily student newspaper; lots of people did sports and wrote sports and so on. I never did. I never wrote a sports story in my college career for a newspaper. It was all straight news, and I loved it. You know, I loved the news part of it, the straight news part of it. And while I was interested in sports and all of that, at that point, the only thing I wanted to do was be a reporter on a newspaper.

DePue: Well, let's take some of the other things that might help you prepare to do that: history, political science, maybe economics. Were you taking some of these classes?

Hartley: I took those classes. As a matter of fact, my American History teacher was Dr. Johannsen, who ended up at the University of Illinois and wrote the definitive biography of Stephen A. Douglas and so on. So, I had some outstanding teachers. I took the courses, but I have to be frank about it, they didn't influence me much at that stage. I think, subsequently, they may have. I was really—I can't emphasize it too much—I really had a single focus here and that was being a reporter, and it was being a news reporter; it was covering news events.

The political aspect of it or any kind of historic…that was simply not part of the picture, as I began my newspaper career and finished up with college. So, it was very narrowly focused. In fact, my wife says—We were married while we were both still in college—

DePue: What was her name?

Hartley: Mary. Last name was Carttar, C-a-r-t-t-a-r. Almost all of her family came to Kansas from Illinois, from the Effingham area.

DePue: I love talking to journalists because they always spell these things out for us.

Hartley: (laughs) That just didn't resonate. My wife says that, when she married me, I was really pretty dull and that I was so single focused. She said the thing that amazed her the most about me, over the years, is my acquired interest in history and politics and all. She said, "When I married you, those subjects never came up." So, those were things that all developed later.

DePue: Now, you probably have already answered this, but where would you place yourself on the political spectrum at that time?

Hartley: Well, I suppose I was sort of apolitical. I don't know; nonpolitical probably isn't the case. My first newspaper job, outside, after the Army, was in Twin Falls, Idaho. Of course, there's a story on how I ended up in Twin Falls, but the point of this is, in that community, my first contact, my first experience, with politics as a newspaper subject. So, I met political people.

That southern part of Idaho was, and still is, very Republican. Even though, during the time that I worked in Idaho, the Congressman from that part was a Democrat for four years. But it was the experience of the political people and recognizing the aspect of political news coverage for the first time. So, my own feeling about politics… You know, my first presidential vote was in 1960.

DePue: So, you missed a couple of elections in there?

Hartley: Well, no, that was the first one I was eligible to vote for.

DePue: Nineteen sixty? You were twenty-four at the time?

Hartley: Um-huh. You didn't vote at eighteen in those days. So, I was involved in the political coverage of that newspaper area in 1960.

I (chuckles) remember discussing the presidential politics with my mother-in-law, who was a devout Democrat. She was as dedicated a Democrat as I ever met in my life. And we're from Winfield, Kansas. She used to say that there were so few Democrats in Winfield, they had trouble finding enough people to work the elections. So, she always worked the elections. But anyway, I remember debating by letter, back and forth. We saved all of these letters. They're wonderful reading. I wouldn't want anybody to read them, but… So, we were debating the election. And that's the first time I remember that.

I remember when Eisenhower was elected. I remember all of that. I was in school and so on. But it wasn't part of my brain, at the time. So, that was sort of the beginning of it. And, at that stage, I think I was probably a Democrat, but I don't think of it in terms of a life-long Democrat or that it was something that I had from my family, let's say, that it was something I picked up from them. It wasn't that way. So, at that point, I was never doctrinaire about it. The politics part of it, I enjoyed from a newspaper standpoint.

DePue: Because it's good story?

Hartley: Good stories, and they were good contacts, and they were interesting people. The candidates and the people who worked for them and ran their campaigns and so on, I was interested in those people. And the wire service people, who covered politics in that part of state and all, were good friends of mine. You know, the old stuff. We sat around shot the breeze about all of that.

But that was sort of the introduction to the political part of it, for me personally came from the work that I was doing. It wasn't the other way around. I didn't seek to cover politics because I had a strong feeling or experience with politics before that. It didn't work that way.

DePue: What was it about journalism, then, that you loved so much, that you found and said, This is what I want to do for the rest of my life?

Hartley: Well, the answer to that is probably pretty complicated. But I always had that desire to be a newspaper person that I talked about before. I never lost that. If anything, the experience that I had, experiences with newspaper people and the workings of a newspaper, always fascinated me. I mean, I don't remember ever losing any enthusiasm in the entire time that I spent—almost thirty years—in the newspaper business.

I had different jobs. I had different responsibilities, but I was always fascinated by, and interested in, the newspaper business. And every job I had, I thought was the greatest job I'd ever had. You know, that sounds pretty simple and maybe even a bit naïve, but that was the way it developed for me. I don't remember having—that doesn't mean I didn't, but I don't remember having—a single thought about leaving the newspaper business, until the time that I did leave it. And so…when I was fifty years old.

Before that, it didn't dawn on me that there was anything else I would do or want to do or could do, for that matter. So, in that regard, I really enjoy that. It was a good time to be in the newspaper business. Sure, television was coming on big and strong, and there were other forms of journalism and so on, but newspapers were, you know, in the '50s and '60s and even in the '70s, were still very strong. It was still the place to be. Journalism schools were essentially still turning out people for that kind of work.

If I had to live in a time that fit what I wanted to do, that was it, you know? Subsequently, I don't know. Before that, I don't know. But, in that time period of thirty years, that was what was important to me, and it was an important job to have in a community and with other people, the non-newspaper people and so on. So, all of those things, I think, came together to make it the place I wanted to be.

DePue: You graduated from college in 1958, I believe. And there's another reality that faces young men in 1958—at least young men in the United States at that time—and that's the draft.

Hartley: Yes. I was married, and the only way that you could beat the draft, as we used to say, was to have a child or to be physically unable to serve. Well, I wasn't physically unable to serve. My wife and I decided that that was not—we did; we did decide—that that was not the reason to have children. We wanted to have children, but it wasn't to beat the draft.

We were still in Lawrence, Kansas, in the summer of 1958, and I said, "I think I'll go down to the National Guard." They had a program, what they called a six month program, in which you could serve six months of active duty and five and a half years of reserve duty. So, I went down to the National Guard unit down there, and they had two openings for recruits.

DePue: Do you remember what the unit was?

Hartley: It was an infantry unit. Do you mean in that regard?

DePue: Yes.

Hartley: It was an infantry company.

DePue: But what the company and regiment designation was?

Hartley: No, I don't. I thought it was in the old 35th Army.

DePue: 35th Division, yeah.

Hartley: Division. And I probably ought to remember that unit designation, but I don't.

DePue: See, that's the kind of thing people like myself, who spent their career in the military, keep track of.

Hartley: I know. I know you would ask that question. I remember the interview with the first sergeant about this; we got down to the point with filling out the paperwork, and he said, "Well, I have to assign you an MOS number." And I said, "What's that?" And so, he said, "Well, it's an occupation number. When you're in the Army, you have to have an occupation number. See, because you get three numbers, so that, if the first choice doesn't work out, then they go to the second or the third." He said, "We're an infantry unit, so all of our MOS's have an infantry designation, with one exception." And I said, "What's that?" And he said, "A company clerk." He said, "Can you type?"

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: I said, "You ought to see me type." And so, my first MOS was company clerk, and the others were infantry. So, I signed up. I beat the two-year draft business, but I've spent six years in the combination of active duty and National Guard duty.

DePue: So, the six months was going through basic training then advanced individual training and then—

Hartley: You did eight weeks of basic. You did eight weeks of advanced basic, and you did eight weeks of something, I mean, work. And that was his six months and then—

DePue: Where did you go for basic and AIT then?

Hartley: Fort Leonard Wood.

DePue: For both of those?

Hartley: Yes. Basic, and then I was in Basic Army Administration School. I want you to know, I had the highest score in typing for the eight weeks. (laughs)

DePue: So, you weren't joshing the first sergeant when you told him that.

Hartley: No, that's right. And then, I have to tell you this story because it has an application to the newspaper business.

During the second eight weeks, I had a telephone call. And, you know, I don't get many telephone calls there. So, I went over to take the telephone call, and it was an old friend of mine from journalism school, a fellow who had graduated a year ahead of me in journalism school. He said, "I came across your name the other day. I thought I'd call you." I said, "Well, okay, I'm here. What's going on?"

He said, "Well," (Dick Walt was one of them) he said, "These two guys, we're here together. We happen to be here. We're both journalism grads at KU, same year. We were drafted, and we were both sent to Fort Leonard Wood, and we're working on the base newspaper. That's our job here, on the base newspaper at Fort Leonard Wood." He said, "We noticed that you're going to be coming up for assignment for the last eight weeks of your tour of duty and wondered if you thought you might want to come over and work with us on the base newspaper."

Give me a break. (both laugh) So, of course, I said, "I don't know what I have to do." He said, "Don't worry about it. We'll take care of it at this end." Anyway, so I met with them then, of course. So, I ended up going to work on the base newspaper at Fort Leonard Wood, with these two college chums and so on.

And I learned, maybe, one of the most valuable lessons in my journalism/writing career. And that is, that almost everybody in the Army, above the grade of major, wanted to have their picture taken and be mentioned in the base newspaper. (both laugh) Every week—this was a weekly paper—every week we went over to the commanding general's office, on some trumped up news story or something, took his picture and interviewed him about something. It was always on the front page of the *Fort Leonard Wood Weekly*. (laughs) I remember that, when I was in the National Guard and I was doing PR [public relations] for National Guard units and everything, and it worked like a gem, all the way through. (laughs)

DePue: So, it has direct correlation to politicians and other people in power, once you got out of the military?

Hartley: That's right, absolutely.

DePue: Okay. So, now you got done with the active duty phase of your military training, and it sounds like you need to get yourself a job and then continue the rest of the five and one-half years in the military, as well.

Hartley: That's right. My wife was teaching school in Winfield when I got out of the Army, in May of '59. And about a month before that, it dawned on me that I didn't have a job when I got out, work. I had two, sort of, standing offers, one at the Kansas City Star, where I had worked when I was in college. I had worked for them as their correspondent at University of Kansas and in Lawrence. I had that offer, and I had one with UPI [United Press International] in Kansas City through some friends. So, at least, I knew I could go to work. But, I didn't want to work in either place.

DePue: Why not?

Hartley: My wife and I had concluded that we wanted to move west. I mean, talk about making a decision based on almost nothing. I used to vacation with my parents in Colorado, and my wife once took a trip west with her parents and so on. But we wanted to go west. So, I got the copy of the *Editor and Publisher Yearbook*, that we had there at the newspaper. I went through, and I wrote a letter to two newspapers in eleven states west of the Mississippi and two newspapers east of the Mississippi, one in Springfield, Illinois, and one in Indiana. I wrote them, and I sent my resume. And I said, "Here I am. I'm ready to come to work." And I ended up with four offers, out of all those.

Most of the responses I got were when I sent letters to the *Denver Post* and the *Rocky Mountain News*. They weren't hiring anybody straight out of college. They wrote back nice letters and said, "Get some experience and come back." You know how that goes.

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: And so, I had a job offer from the *Springfield State Journal*, the morning newspaper, and I had one from Valparaiso, Indiana, and I had one from a little, small daily in Utah. Who was that? I can't remember off-hand. Maybe it was Logan. And then, Twin Falls, Idaho.

At Twin Falls, Idaho, there was a KU journalism buddy of mine, who was working there as a feature writer on the daily newspaper. I'd lost track of him. But, when I made contact with the managing editor there, after he'd responded, then he told me my friend, John Eaton, was there and that John had felt well of me and all of that kind of stuff. So, I called John on the phone and told him he was a liar—

DePue: (laughs)

Hartley: And so on. But anyway…those were the offers. I turned down the Springfield newspaper. It was the second best pay offer: $85 a week. I turned them down because I didn't want to work mornings. I don't…a morning newspaper…Don't ask me why. I made up my mind. I thought that that would interfere with my family life, if I had to—

DePue: If you're working a morning paper, that means you're burning the midnight oil to get ready for it?

Hartley: Yeah, I was going to have to work nights, and I didn't want to work nights. I guess that was my reasoning. Otherwise, it was exactly the kind of job I wanted. It was a reporter/copy editor job that they had. So, I turned them down.

DePue: Pardon me for saying this, but you turned down some assignments that sounded to me like much more on the fast track in the world of journalism than maybe the *Twin Falls Times News* would have been?

Hartley: Absolutely. Absolutely and I must have been insensitive to that or…I'm not sure. If I wanted to go to work, why didn't I go to the *Kansas City Star*? I mean, I had a reporter's job waiting for me there. But we wanted to go west, (chuckles) and so we did. I went to this little 20,000 circulation…actually there were a morning and evening paper in Twin Falls, Idaho. And, I have to tell you, that in at least one respect, maybe two, I could not have chosen a better place to go in terms of my career and in terms of my interests.

Could I say that that wouldn't have happened in Springfield? No, I can't say that, because Springfield might have…in fact both of those might have been the case there. But I know they were the case in Twin Falls. And, they weren't the reasons I went there. I mean, these things happened, while I was there for four years. So, that's how we ended up at the end of my training.

So, we go out there. I had to sign up for National Guard duty. The headquarters company of the Standing Armored Cav [Cavalry] Regiment, that covered the state of Idaho, was in Twin Falls. So, I go down to sign up with them. A fellow who was the adjutant there was Larry Laughridge, and Larry was a…let's see, what did he do? He was a businessman in Twin Falls. I think he was a retailer. He was a major. And Larry signed me up for duty. He said, "We have just the job for you." I said, "What's that?" He said, "This regiment needs a PR guy." And, I said, "Have you ever had one?" He said, "No." So, he installed me. As you know from your Army duty, I had to have a designation. They didn't have a designation for a PR person. So, I think I was assigned to the S-3 Division.

DePue: Well, that would have been the operations…my guess would have been the personnel office.

Hartley: No, it was either… Two is intelligence, wasn't it?

DePue: Right.

Hartley: Actually, it was S-2. I was just assigned to it, you know. I never did anything with them, but I suppose I had to be on the roster in some capacity. But, everybody knew what my real job was, and that was to get publicity for the National Guard units, throughout the state of Idaho, in all of these little dusty, dingy places in Idaho. (both laugh) Most of which I had never heard of, but anyway…So, for the first two to three years, before we moved back to Illinois, that's what I did.

We'd go to summer camp and, while everybody else was out in the desert getting dirty and running tanks and everything out there, I had a dark room and a place where I could sleep and take a shower every day, back at the barracks.(laughs) And I cranked out news stories.

I had one of those old four by five cameras that they bought. They bought lab equipment. I did all of my own photo lab work and so on. I ground out pictures of generals and colonels and majors (both laugh) and articles every day. I did that for

two weeks. I did it for the time before we went, and I did it while I was there for two weeks. I never worked so hard, and I'm honest about that. I worked hard.

I wasn't out there toting a rifle or anything, but I worked night and day to do this job, because I loved it. I got the biggest kick out of doing it because everybody ran the story. They didn't care what they were. They ran them because they'd never had them before. All these little towns had a company in the regiment, and these folks would go off to camp every summer, and nobody would ever hear from them. Now, all of a sudden, they were getting pictures and everything. They loved it. The local newspapers ate it up, so I had a great time. That was my first experience.

Then we moved to Illinois, and I had to sign up—this was in '62—I had to sign up for National Guard duty. We were living in Belleville. The unit in East St. Louis was an infantry unit. I didn't want to join an infantry unit, not after what I'd been doing. So, I looked around to see what they had on the St. Louis side, the Missouri side, for the National Guard unit. They were all infantry units, except for one.

At Jefferson Barracks, they had a standing battalion, a construction battalion.

That's a stand-alone construction battalion down there. So, I went down to see what

it was all about. Went down to talk to the permanent person there and just so happens that the CO, [commanding officer] who lived in Edwardsville, Illinois, happened to be down there doing something. He was a teacher at SIU-Edwardsville, and so I met him. So, we were standing there. We were talking, and he was asking me about what I had done and what I'd done in this unit in Idaho. They said, "Well, that sounds like something we need." (both chuckle) So, I joined the battalion in Jefferson Barracks, and they made me their public information guy, you know, again. By that time, I think I was an E3; I was a sergeant. And the only slot that they had for a sergeant was…I don't know, was some battalion job. I don't even remember now what it was. They may have stuck me. Still in intelligence or something. But anyway, it didn't make any difference, because I never did that job. They bought me all the equipment I needed, the photo equipment, and everything else. I went two years there, two summers, to camp. And both of those, they had a special assignment, because of what they were as a construction battalion.

They were assigned to rehab an old World War II base, over near Nevada,

Missouri, called Camp Clark, which hadn't been active since, I suppose, the late 1940's. And they wanted to make it into a Missouri National Guard training camp. So, for two years, the two summers, that's where this unit trained. What they were doing was that they were putting up buildings. They were building, doing construction work.

DePue: Which is great photographic—

Hartley: Great stories, great stories. *The Kansas City Star* and the Joplin and Springfield papers in Missouri, they sent staffers down. They sent photographers down, you know. So, it was a replay of all of that stuff that had happened. So, I did that for two summer camps. Then I got out of the National Guard. That was my military.

I know, as a military person you hate to hear that, but I just was flat out lucky. I got to do things that were related to the newspaper business, whereas I would have been bored to tears having to go drill every weekend or whenever we did, like everybody else did. So, I was very fortunate.

DePue: But still, as a National Guardsman, that's just two weeks in the summer and one weekend a month. So, that leaves plenty more time, getting back to Twin Falls, Idaho, for the rest of your journalism career. So let's talk a little bit more about that, in terms of what you learned there and the early development of your career.

Hartley: Good. I mentioned there were really two things that happened to me there that were significant then and later on. It was a small paper, 20,000 combined circulation, morning and evening. It had a small news staff; it was independently owned, locally owned, and there were a lot of turnovers. The editors-type jobs, the managing editor, news editor, night editor were more stable. But at the reporting level, they came in and went out the door, almost as fast as they came in. So, I got to work every job in the shop as a fill-in and special assignment, I mean, nights, days. I did work nights, by the way. I got to every job in the shop.

And one day, the fellow who had been, what they call the news editor—which in terms out there, really it was just a copy editor—worked on the desk, quit and left. The managing editor came to me and asked me if I'd like to try out for that job. I don't know if try-out was the right word. He wanted to know if I knew how to edit copy, I guess. I said, "I'd love to; I'd like to try it." Because, no matter what job you had in that shop, you did a little of everything, even what title you had. So, I moved to the desk. I was probably in that job for a year. When they needed a special assignment thing, I did reporting. But every day, I came in to edit copy.

The city editor sat over here and fed me the copy to write headlines and edit. The wire editor sat to my right. And the three of us are the ones that essentially put the paper out every day. That turned me on, then, to the rest of the newspaper office. I liked the reporting, and I was challenged by that. Even in Twin Falls, they had some pretty good stories there.

But working on the desk, working with reporters, giving assignment, editing copy, seeing what you did at the end of the day, even if you didn't write a story, you knew the ones you edited; you knew the headlines you'd written. It changed my life in terms of a newspaper career. It turned me on to a part of the business that I really had not thought much about.

Then, before much longer, the city editor left. He'd been there a number of years. He went to Napa, California. So, the managing editor asked me if I wanted to

be the city editor. As the city editor, then, I really ran the newspaper. The managing editor was off doing other things. So, I ran the whole newsroom. And I ran the daily paper. I just…I was really happy with that. It was such a challenge.

And even though that may not have been the ideal learning environment, out there in Twin Falls, Idaho, with the people I worked with. Actually, the long-time editors there were very skillful and very good. I learned a lot from them. They taught me a lot. They helped me learn about editing a paper and how to get it out, what to put in it and everything else. You know, I had done all of that in college, but it just didn't ring a bell with me like this did.

So, that was the first thing. Twin Falls, Idaho, of all places on the map, sort of opened by eyes to the opportunities that existed beyond being a reporter, as much as I enjoyed reporting.

DePue: If you'd stuck with Kansas City, you would have been doing reporting work, I would assume, for your first two or three years.

Hartley: Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely. Now Springfield, I don't know what would have happened. I had no sense of the staff arrangement. While it was not a really small paper, I suspect it had some of those characteristics, and so, maybe opportunities came along. But these opportunities were really bang, bang, bang. We got a new publisher during the time that I was there, a new owner and publisher, and they liked me and I liked them. So, I got to do things that I was really fortunate to do. So, that's number one.

The Twin Falls Times News was really a back-woodsy operation, in a lot of ways. For example, political coverage: the only political coverage they did, outside of the local community, was wire service. This was the second largest newspaper in Idaho; the first was in Boise. They did no coverage; they sent no staff coverage outside of the county Twin Falls was in. So, they used wire service stuff. I mean, if it happened in Boise or Pocatello or Idaho Falls, they'd used wire service, no matter what it was, politics.

When it came to the local, the managing editor was so afraid that he would be co-opted by political people that he set up a rule. First of all, there was no staff coverage of partisan politics. Local politics was different; county attorney race or something like that, we wrote about that. But if it was a congressional race or even a legislative race, we'd note, "no staff coverage."

When the U.S. Senator came to campaign, Henry Dworshak was his name, a Republican. He would come to town, and Henry would come to the office. He'd meet with the managing editor, and he'd meet with the publisher. Then he'd issue a press statement. He'd issue a written statement, and we'd run the statement in total. We'd run the whole thing. It was never edited for anything; we'd run it. That's the way they covered politics. Well, talk about a static kind of approach. Well, the

political people in town were laughing at us all the time, and they had for years. So, nobody at the paper worried about that.

Got a new publisher and a new owner in 1961, and the new publisher came from Minneapolis. He had never worked for a newspaper before. His career had been at the Green Giant Pea Company in LeSeuer, Minnesota. But he was a good friend of the new owner, who lived in Minnesota and did not intend to move to Twin Falls, Idaho. So, he hired him as the publisher. So, he came to town. Well, he had been reading the *Minneapolis Star-Tribune* all of his life, and that was his concept of what a newspaper was like, even if you were in Twin Falls, Idaho. So, one of the things he noticed first of all was this sort of cockamamie approach to local political coverage.

So, in the fall of 1961, the Western Republican Conference was held at Sun Valley, which was about eighty miles north of us. And, of course, Barry Goldwater was going to be there; Richard Nixon was going to be there; all of western type Republicans were going to be there. It was a big deal. So, the new publisher came to the managing editor, who he didn't like—they didn't like each other, was really the case—but anyway, he went to the managing editor. He said, "How are we going to cover this conference up there?" And they said, "AP [Associated Press] will be there, and we'll run the AP story." He said, "No we won't. We're going to send somebody up there. They're going to cover that. "So," he said, "who's your political reporter?" (both laugh) The managing editor said, "We don't have one." The publisher told me about this conversation. That's why I know how it went. He said, "We don't have one." So he said, "Well, do we have a reporter who you can trust, that you can send up there to cover this?" And the managing editor said, "Well, maybe." So, he goes to the city editor, the managing editor does, and he said, "What do you think about sending Hartley up to cover this political convention up there?" And the guy is a good friend of mine, and he said, "Are we going to do that?" (both laugh) The managing editor said, "Yes, we're going to." He said, "Why shit, Hartley can do it." He said, "I don't have any problem with that." Anyway, so I'm the news editor; that was my title. So, the managing editor comes to me and says, "Ya-da-da-da-da- You're going to be covering this conference. You'd better start preparing yourself. We'll send you up there, and you'll be up there the whole week, filing stories for both morning and evening papers, while you're up there."

I'd never done anything like that. I mean, I never, I never, I'd never been away from the newspaper office, covering an event for a week-long, covering a subject that I didn't know anything about, to speak of. I mean, I knew something about it, but I'd never covered it. Well, anyway, so that's what happened. They sent me up to cover this.

Well, of course, Life Magazine was there; all the big city newspapers were there and all of their press guys. It was a fascinating, fascinating environment. The best time was at the lodge bar every evening, where the newspaper people gathered and told stories. But, anyway, so I covered this.

The other aspect of this, just to show you how sort of backwards they were at the paper, they didn't give bylines to anybody. In the entire time that I worked there, up to that moment, I'd never seen a byline in that newspaper by any of the staff people. The managing editor believed that, if you started giving bylines out, that the reporters would think they were good, and they'd leave.

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: They left anyway. They didn't need an excuse like that. So, we didn't have any bylines. The other editors complained about this all the time and tried to lobby to get it. They wouldn't do it. Well, the new publisher said, "Oh, and by the way, Hartley gets a byline on every story he writes from Sun Valley." So, (laughs) he didn't tell me then. I mean, they didn't tell me this. So, I just assumed that I was going to be filing stories, and you know, wouldn't have any name on them or anything. But, my wife says, she picked up the paper the first morning, and there was a byline, "Robert Hartley, News Editor" byline. So, that was my introduction to political coverage. And, again, just a case of being in the right place at the right time and not, apparently, needing any experience.

So, those things happened to me there, which I tell people, I worked at the *Twin Falls Times-News,* and they sort of blink a couple of times. And they say, "Well, what happened after that?" But there were things that did happen when I was there that influenced my work later and what I was interested in. That was sort of an incubation place for me, in that regard.

DePue: I wonder if you could take just a couple of minutes to tell us about the hierarchy of the newspaper business, in the news room perhaps, because you mention copy editor, city editor, managing editor, publisher. What's the steps from the ground up, if you will?

Hartley: The reporters, obviously. Usually, most papers then had copy editors who handled copy and wrote headlines and so on. But the main next step was city editor, in almost every newsroom. I used to say that it was the most important job in a newspaper of any size, because that's where the action was. Everything happened around the city editor. The city editor made it happen. He either handed out assignments through other people or…but he talked directly to the reporters. So, the city editor then, was at the center of the newsroom activity. They have a sports editor and they had, in those days, a women's editor and things like that. But, still, the real action was at the city editor level. They had the power. In fact, they could influence those other editors and what they wrote and everything else. Everybody looked to that person for guidance and everything. So, the newspaper was really the result of that person's influence, every day.

DePue: Was that, in part, a function of what the public wanted to be reading about? Obviously, you mentioned already, that people wanted to see their own names and stories they could directly relate to?

Hartley: Well, you know, in those days, I have to say that there wasn't much concern for what people wanted. The newspaper people decided what was going to go in the paper, and they made decisions based on what they thought was best and was public information and so on. And, I have to tell you that there was a lot that was never reported in those days, as a result of that. That would probably have been in the public interest, in the reader's interest to have.

It was a real arbitrary operation, and almost every newspaper functioned that way at that time. So, it wasn't something that just a single newspaper did. And so, the people who made the decisions about what is news were the editors. And there used to be an old saying that said "What's news is what happens when the editor is around." And he—and almost all the editors in those days were men—the editors would come in, in the morning, and say, Well, I saw this happen, or so and so said this to me at breakfast or something. That's what became news.

DePue: We had talked before about the stereotype of the editor that you get by watching the movies of the time period—

Hartley: Yeah.

DePue: Did that work for you?

Hartley: (chuckles) I didn't think I was that way, but maybe I was. I ran into a lot of them. I worked for a lot of them.

DePue: Tell us about the personality that goes along with that.

Hartley: The personality is actually—on the paper size that I worked on—the personality reflected from the editor down. Some editors were that way; some city editors were that way. But almost every paper I worked for had someone in that, sort of, crusty editor mold that we think of from those days. And so, when I worked in East St. Louis, there, the city editor—his name was Ed Belz, B-e-l-z. Ed was as close to that as anyone there. He had worked for Tom Duffy.

Tom Duffy was the long time editor of the *East St. Louis Journal*, which later became the *Metro-East Journal*. And Tom Duffy, he was so typical. Everybody who ever worked for him described in the same manner, with the hard-bitten approach to the news, and the determination to get the bad guys, and hard drinking. You know, one of them described him as…when he was gone for a couple of days, they knew he was off on a bender some place. But when he showed up, he acted like he'd been there all along. And that was Tom, who later went on to be a journalism professor at the University of Missouri and simply carried on what he'd been doing. He was this hard-bitten journalism professor, just like he had been an editor. So, it was part of his DNA I think.

So, there were sort of hard-bitten types that I encountered, even in Twin Falls, but certainly at the *Journal*. The attitude was that we know best. We know what is our paper; we know what we should be covering. And anybody who really wanted

to do anything different from that really didn't hang around very long. They got rid of them, so that there was sort of a meeting of the minds, led by these tough guys.

DePue: How much was that driven by the brutal fact that there's a deadline to meet every day?

Hartley: That's right. And we have a purpose here. Let's use the *Journal* as an example. I worked there for four years. The purpose of the *Journal* was to expose the underside—the dark side, the gangster-ridden side—of the region and drive them out and expose them. They didn't expose a lot of other things that were going on (chuckles) that we might think of today, but that was what drove that newspaper for many years down there.

Editors and reporters at the Metro-East Journal go over 1964 election results in the newsroom. Bob Hartley, assistant city editor, is second from left.

Oh sure, they ran lots of other news, but the real intense feeling, from the editor on down, was that we're going to expose these bad guys, show what they do and how they do it and the corruption that goes along with it and all. So, they had a crime reporter. In those days, most metropolitan papers had a crime reporter. But this was a thirty-five thousand circulation daily in East St. Louis. They had a crime reporter. And that's all he did. The editor made all of the assignments to him and read all of his copy first and assigned him to do things because that's what the editor wanted to have on the front page every day.

DePue: Because it sold copy or because he had a saving spirit?

Hartley: He certainly thought it sold copy. He thought that's why people wanted to read that paper and that they had to do that. They were under the shadow of the *Post-Dispatch* and the *Globe Democrat*, who were doing all kinds of that coverage in Illinois for their readers. He believed that, in order to compete and sell papers and be profitable and prosperous, that that's what they had to do.

DePue: I wanted to complete the progression here. You talked a lot about city editor… managing editor?

Hartley: Then there was usually a news editor. In most places, the news editor was sort of the chief production person. These were all men. In that time period, the only women were in the women's section of the paper; that was the only women reporters. The news editor was the guy who sort of brought everything together and worked with the composing room, with the printers and the composing room and sort of brought it all together and got it out on time. That was his job.

DePue: Laid out the pages?

Hartley: Yeah, he laid out most of the pages. The city editor fed the stuff to him, the local pages and so on. And they usually had a wire editor, someone who worked the AP and UPI wires. All of that came in to the news editor, and he fit it in. He didn't make so many decisions, but he fit it into the paper, according to the instructions of wire editor and the city editor and folks like that.

So, those were the operational people. Those people, those editors, are the ones who made it happen every day. They had strict deadlines; they had strict policies; they used the same approach every day. It was a regimented operation to a great extent, mostly because of the deadline.

And that was true at the *Post- Dispatch*, for example. What complicated that was, they had five editions every day. So, they had five different deadlines, and they were all working on that kind of a schedule. But that's what drove the newsroom, and those were sort of the hierarchy of it.

The news editor could overrule the city editor on the placement of news and maybe even whether it got this headline or that headline or something. So, he had that authority. Or he could say, that story's too late. We can't get it in, deadline's past. So, he had that kind of operational responsibility and authority.

Then the editor, in most cases, at least in my experience, the editor was not participant in the daily happenings in the newsroom. He knew what was happening. They told him; they briefed him; they kept him informed. If he had some particular direction that he wanted something to go, or emphasis or something, he made that known. But sometimes, you know, editor wasn't even there all day. He was off doing something else, meetings or something like that.

I use East St. Louis as an example, primarily because I thought that that was probably as typical a news operation for that size paper in an urban area as I ever encountered. The editor there, his name was Bill Boyne, B-o-y-n-e. Bill was a Phi Beta Kappa from Princeton. He was a smart guy. But, he was an East St. Louis native, and he knew every nook and cranny and corrupt person. His dad was a former coroner in that town, and he knew it all. (both chuckle) But Bill was a great editor. In fact, I used to say that he could have edited any newspaper in this country, any size. He was dynamic. I really learned a lot from him. He wrote editorials, and he laid out the editorial page for this sized paper. On a larger paper, they had an editorial page editor who did that. But that was kind of his responsibility. He

oversaw that. And then, again, if there was a major assignment going on or a major campaign of some sort, news campaign, he was in that up to his eyeballs. And then, at the end of a day and after the deadlines, there was usually a meeting or some sort of a conference about the next day's paper. And he was involved in that.

But, in terms of the operation of getting that day's paper out, the editor was off to the side. Even Tom Duffy—that I mentioned before, who was very much involved in what was going on—Tom was only involved in that one aspect of it, that crime aspect of it. He still did the editorial page, just like Bill Boyne did. So, each editor had their own interest areas and emphasis areas, but the role they played was similar.

DePue: When you say editor, is that the same thing as managing editor?

Hartley: No, the managing editor really had a total picture, a paper picture. The editors all reported to the managing editor, so that he knew what was happening in the women's section; he knew what was happening in sports, if there was a sports trip that somebody was going to take, that had to go get the authority to do that from him.

He was an administrative/operations person. So that, if the editor was off making a speech somewhere, the managing editor was in charge and did whatever was necessary to move things along, make the decisions necessary. He was just kind of a step down from the editor, and he was a little more related to the operations than the editor was, but not as much as the news editor and city editor. News editor, city editor, sports editor, women's editor, all reported to the managing editor, so that he knew what was going on everywhere.

DePue: Okay, and then the publisher.

Hartley: Well, the publisher had responsibility for everything. That job varied in a lot of different places. Sometimes the editor had as much responsibility, almost, as the publisher did. It depended on the ownership and how they ran that.

DePue: Well, I guess most people—at least my perception is—publisher is almost synonymous with owner.

Hartley: It was the case for many years as newspapers groups changed, developed and grew, then publishers became, essentially, hired managers. And the owner/publisher was off somewhere in some town, and maybe had both jobs in the home town. But, as they had other newspapers, they simply hired.

Bill Boyne was, later, a hired editor and publisher. He later became a publisher in East St. Louis. That was because the owners weren't there. But he had every responsibility and authority that an owner would have, if he lived there, perhaps, in the absence of that final authority of financial investment of buying a press or something like that, that an owner would be really involved in.

So, the publishers, for the most part, were business people. They oftentimes had some editorial or news background. In some cases, they wanted to be involved in editorial policy. But most strong, good editors didn't like that much—

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: —and didn't allow it to happen. So, publishers, on a lot of papers, were business people. They came up from the advertising side or the circulation side or just business, like the guy from the Green Giant Pea Company, and that tended to reflect the ownership.

I worked as a publisher later in life for a man who owned the newspaper and was a newsman. He wanted people with a news background to be publisher. That was rare to that specific outline.

DePue: Would the publishers, typically, be the people who would do the hiring and the firing?

Hartley: Mostly, that was delegated to individual managers at various levels. The publisher would be involved in the hiring of the editor, certainly, and maybe a managing editor. But below that, no.

DePue: I appreciate your taking the time to lay out the terrain for us here, so to speak. It's valuable because you've already said yourself, you lived the heyday of the newspaper business in the United States. It's a changing world out there now, which hopefully, we'll get to towards the end of this whole conversation, several hours from now, probably.

But let's go back to the chronology and get you from Idaho back to East St. Louis.

Hartley: I was getting restless in Idaho. I had a good job. I was essentially running the newsroom. The managing editor-: they'd kind of put him on a shelf. So, the new publisher was letting me run the place, and I was enjoying that. But, I think I knew my shortcomings and knew my lack of experience in a lot of things. I wasn't going to get it there.

So, I contacted an old professor of mine at the University of Kansas, Elmer Beth, B-e-t-h. Elmer was an old… Speak of curmudgeons, he was a curmudgeon. But he was a great professor, mostly of newspaper law and management. I contacted him. Oh, when people wanted to know where they could get in touch with the alums, he kind of ran that operation. Anyway, so, I got a hold of Elmer, said what I was looking for and, if he heard of anything, let me know.

Well, shortly thereafter, the personnel manager for Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers in Illinois, who had been doing recruiting at KU, contacted Elmer and said they had several jobs open throughout the organization, and were looking for this and this and this, and, if he knew of anybody who was available, let him know.

So, Elmer said, "Well, let me put this name in. I know this guy's looking, Bob Hartley, and he may fit in there in some of those jobs. I don't know which ones he might, but you might want to contact him." So he did.

So, he wrote me a letter. In those days, that's what they did, no email or anything. He wrote me a letter and said that they had these jobs. He listed the jobs. There were a couple of them over in Decatur, one in Carbondale, as I recall, and then, there were two jobs open in East St. Louis. One of them was a suburban editor. I didn't know what that was. The other was a feature editor. I didn't think I was interested in being a feature editor. I wanted to be a newsperson, not features. Anyway, so one thing led to another, and they discovered that my salary level in Twin Falls didn't sort of eliminated all of the other newspapers except East St. Louis, which had a higher pay scale because of its location in the urban area. That was the only one that would fit.

So, at the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver, I met the editor, Bill Boyne; flew there on my day off from Idaho. We talked about these two jobs that he had and what my qualifications for them might be and so on, so forth. It ended up that Bill offered me a job as the suburban editor. I subsequently discovered that they wanted to expand coverage of news outside of East St. Louis more than they were doing because they thought that was where the future was—

DePue: Is this strictly on the Illinois side?

Hartley: Yes. Anyway, so he made me an offer, which was a little bit more money than I was making. In those days, for the kinds of jobs that I was taking, they didn't pay any… I didn't even go to the town and interview where the newspaper was. I met him in Denver. And, in those days, they didn't pay travel expenses, unless you were the editor or something like that or an executive. They didn't pay any travel expenses. So, the deal was that, if you want this job, it's there; it's your job. You show up. I don't care how you get there. I don't care where you live when you get here or how much it costs or anything else. There'll be a job here for you.

I really liked Boyne, and I thought this was a new job at the *Journal*. They'd never had a suburban editor before. It sounded to me like it was an opportunity to introduce different kinds of coverage there that they hadn't done before. I told him, I didn't want to be a feature editor. He can hire somebody else for that. So, Boyne offered me the job.

So we packed up the two kids that were born in Twin Falls, Idaho, and we moved to a house we rented in Belleville. I went to work in November of 1962 at what was then called the *East St. Louis Daily and Sunday Journal; t*hat was the whole name. Everybody called it the *Journal* and the *East St. Louis Journal*, but that was the official title of it. So, I went to work there. Essentially, I went there to build a suburban staff and cover news in Madison and St. Clair counties, that they had never covered before.

DePue: I wanted to ask you… Let me just put it this way: Today East St. Louis has a reputation of being, perhaps, the most dysfunctional city, community, in Illinois. What was the community like—and not just East St. Louis, but the suburban area as well—like when you were there in the sixties?

Hartley: It was deteriorating. It had not reached, really, anywhere close to what it is now, or for that matter, what it became while I was still working in newspapers in Illinois in the '70s. It was, essentially, a city run by white people. The mayor was white and all the people who held the commission jobs were white. In the time that I was there, I think they had one African-American commissioner and, of course, a lot of employees.

It was a city that was corrupt. It was tied in closely with the organized crime operation that covered St. Clair and Madison Counties—mostly gambling and prostitution and corruption—as a result of law enforcement people and the judges, for that matter. This was an operation, a city operation, a county operation, that took things for themselves. They took things out of the community. You do that long enough, and the communities die. I mean, if those people stay in business long enough, they drain the energy and the money and what makes a community thrive. They drain all of those for their own use and benefit.

That's what was happening when I went there. It hadn't completed, it hadn't finished, but that's what was happening. And that was a lot, frankly, a lot of what the news was, were the things that the city council was doing that were blatantly corrupt. So, that was the environment. It was like nothing I had ever experienced before, personally, in terms of what went on in a community. I mean, stop and think for a minute. I started out in Winfield, Kansas; I went to Lawrence, Kansas to school; I went to Twin Falls, Idaho, to work. I mean, this was about as foreign a territory as you could imagine for anyone.

It was exciting from a newsperson's point of view, because there was a lot going on, a lot to cover. But what was happening there was simply—as I look back at it now—was simply the prelude to the dysfunction of East St. Louis that occurred. Because, once that spiral began, they didn't want to stop it. Very shortly after I left there, African-Americans took over everything. They took over the mayor's job; they took over the commissioner jobs; they got rid of the white guys.

DePue: You were there from '62 to '66?

Hartley: Um-huh.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: And so what happened was, this was not a reform movement. This was, "It's our turn" movement. These white guys kept us from running these things and doing these things for all these years, and now it's our turn.

DePue: I'm assuming that that was also a reflection of white flight that had been going on for many years.

Hartley: Absolutely. Absolutely, the white flight had been occurring for many years. So, the anomaly was that city was run by white people, when I was there. And many of the white people had moved to Belleville or Madison County or something, had gotten away from East St. Louis. Absolutely, that preceded the political takeover by African-Americans.

What they inherited was a system that people had been taking things out of all this time. So, they said, "It's our turn, and we're going run it the same way. We may not say the same things or do it quite the same way." So, it was a spiral the city was in that it could never recover from.

DePue: You're there at the very same time that the civil rights movement, across the entire country, is really starting to develop. You're there during the time Johnson came in, and you've got the Voting Rights Act and you've got civil rights legislation. You've got the Freedom Rides going on in the south. Was that very much part of the mix of what you guys were reporting on as well?

Hartley: It was. Although I have to say that the civil rights action in that metropolitan area was really in St. Louis. So, the bank demonstrations and the things that took place and the fiery speeches by the black leaders and all were mostly in St. Louis. They mostly ignored East St. Louis. We covered a lot of those things in St. Louis.

And when things happened, when they did come to East St. Louis, occasionally, or there was some activity there, of course we covered it. But it was almost like it was a kind of an island. I mean, I suppose, when I moved there, probably, certainly, 40%, maybe 50%, of the population was black. You would have thought that there would have been a more of an activist movement there. But it wasn't. We didn't have daily civil rights protests and activity going. They were going in the area, but they were mostly fed out of St. Louis and kind of slopped over, as it were, into East St. Louis, periodically.

So, we were aware of it, and we were covering things. But I have to say that the crime piece of the coverage there was still very strong in the time that I was there. It didn't get quite the headlines that it had in the Duffy years.

But Boyne was a little more of a socially aware person, and the paper's coverage changed somewhat under him to coverage of how things were operating, some efforts to do things better, to get good people in office and so on—really really more emphasis in his years.

DePue: Was there an element of organized crime that you guys were reporting on?

Hartley: Oh, yes. Oh, my goodness, the Buster Wortman gang there, W-o-r-t-m-a-n. Buster had come off of the old Shelton gang in southern Illinois; he'd been one of their people. He served a term in Alcatraz. He came back to East St. Louis and took over

the gambling—in the wake of the Sheltons—took over the gambling and organized crime. He had a connection to the Capone remnants out of Chicago. He was the crime lord there from, probably, '45 to '65.

DePue: Did that make it rather dicey to be reporting on a lot of these things?

Hartley: Only if you were the crime reporter, because you were more visible; you knew all of the hoods; you knew all of the bad guys and good guys and everybody else. And the guy who was there for that time period that I just mentioned—that twenty year time period—the guy who was the crime reporter there was Charles Stewart. Charlie Stewart was a World War II hero who came back, never worked as a newspaper reporter. Tom Duffy met him and thought he had just the right bravado and hero background that he needed. He said, "I'll teach him how to be a reporter." And that's exactly what he did.

And Charlie was on the frontlines of the war against crime and corruption for twenty years. He got banged up and shot at and slugged. I'll never forget the time, while I was there, that Charlie came to work—he was an assistant city editor, that was his official title. So, he came into work one morning, and his face was all bloody. Gosh, everybody ran up to him and said, "What happened?" "Oh," he said, "I ran into so and so. (I don't remember the name.) I ran into so and so in the alley back there, and he started beating on me." He was one of the hoods in town.

Charlie, later, was stabbed at an incident in the early morning, near a gambling joint. He was stabbed very seriously two or three times, almost died. That put an end to his activity. But, in that twenty year period, he was in danger. The feeling was, they didn't want to kill him. If they wanted to kill him, they would have killed him. I mean, you couldn't protect him. But they wanted to warn him, so they'd hit him up the side of the head, or they'd fire a gun through his window at home or something, in order to kind of keep him at bay.

DePue: Did that sour you on the idea of being in the newspaper business in East St. Louis, or did you thrive on that?

Hartley: God, no, that turned me on. It did. I loved Charlie. I've written about him many times. He was a throw-back to Ted Link at the *Post-Dispatch* and all of those guys who spent their careers as crime reporters. He was a character. But he was a great guy, a decent guy.

It was a crusade for him, and it was a crusade for Tom Duffy and others that I worked with at the *Journal*. They had lived with this for so long, in their work there and everything, that they still believed in it when I was there.

DePue: Tell us about what you're reporting on then, because you're the suburban editor at the time.

Hartley: Yeah. I had four staff people, one in Belleville, one in Edwardsville and two others that I used to fan out and cover city council stories and stories that were going on in

all these communities that were near in St. Clair and Madison County. And I did some writing projects. I did some feature stories. (laughs) I did a couple of series of stories that were suburban subject matter. If there was a really wild city council meeting going on some night, and I had everybody else busy, I might cover it—some place outside of East St. Louis.

But as the time went on, I did less and less reporting in that job. I was a fill-in for the city editor when he was off, and so on. So, I became much more involved in the editing side of things there, than when I first went there. Then, I hired a feature editor; actually I hired two of them. So, I ended up with a staff of six on this paper; I was really swimming upstream.

The people who had worked there for as long as they had, they thought this was silly stuff that we were doing, this suburban stuff. We ought to be sticking to our meat there in East St. Louis and cover that stuff. So, I was really—with many people in that newsroom—I was swimming upstream. They thought what I was doing was insignificant stuff. But we had a good staff and good people, and we extended the coverage a lot in that four year period.

DePue: Okay. What I would recommend we do, is to take a quick break here. Then we'll talk about your next move to Decatur.

Hartley: Good.

DePue: We took just a very quick break here, and we're back with Bob. Tell us about the move from East St. Louis to Decatur in '66.

Hartley: Yes. I was again feeling anxious about promotions and moving ahead from where I was, and an opportunity arose with the managing editor's job in Decatur. Decatur was the home office of the organization, Lindsay-Schaub. That's where the corporate headquarters were, as well. The owners lived there.

The Herald Morning paper was the long-time paper, run by the Lindsay family before the consolidation of the two. It had many of the physical characteristics, appearance, of the old *Herald* that the Lindsay's had put together. So, it's a morning paper, and I went there as the managing editor. In that arrangement there, I was in charge of the *Herald*. There was an executive editor there, who was really the editor. The editor was about to retire. In fact, he became the editor. That job was posted—as all the jobs were internally in those days—and I was chosen to take over the *Herald*.

So, I went from being in charge of the suburban news in East St. Louis to running a newsroom of probably twenty-five people or so, maybe thirty; 35,000 circulation morning paper; covering much of central Illinois, in addition to Decatur.

DePue: How much did you get into the business of covering Illinois politics in general?

Hartley: In that job, almost none.

DePue: So, your focus was similar to what you had already experienced in East St. Louis and in Idaho?

Hartley: It was quite familiar, in that regard, as to what I was supposed to do. The environment was quite different, because I had gone from what sounded perhaps like kind of a chaotic situation in East St. Louis, to a sort of calm, quiet Decatur—at least they thought it was—situation, with the ownership sort of hovering over the two newspapers. It was quite a different…a much more, internally political situation, than I had encountered anywhere.

DePue: Just the newspapers' own politics, you mean?

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: How was that different?

Hartley: Well, the owners had ideas, very specific ideas, about what they wanted to appear in their papers. The Lindsays, who were still around, although in the minority, they knew what they wanted in the *Herald.* And the Schaubs knew how they wanted *The Review* to be done. The Schaubs had some habits and some approaches to coverage of local news there that fit their lifestyle and the fact that they were well-known, wealthy people in town. And I found that a challenge.

DePue: I know, at least from our previous conversation, that you were managing editor at the *Decatur Herald,* '66 to '67, and then, '67, '68, editor of the *Decatur Herald and Review.*

Hartley: That's right. The man who was, essentially, the editor when I went there, who hired me, announced his departure from the *Herald and Review* in February, after I came there in November. I thought they would fill that job, editor's job, over both papers. I figured they'd fill that with somebody else, and I was happy to be the managing editor of the morning paper there. I went along, and, all of a sudden, in April of that year—

DePue: April of '67?

Hartley: Sixty-seven. I got offered the job as editor of both papers.

A meeting of department heads at the Decatur Herald and Review *in 1967. Bob Hartley, editor, is third from the left.*

DePue: So *Herald* is the morning paper, and *Review* is the evening paper, or what?

Hartley: That's right.

DePue: In the olden days—we're talking about the late nineteenth early twentieth century—newspapers had a particular political bent or philosophy, as well. Did they represent different political persuasions?

Hartley: If you went back far enough, they did. Not at the time I was there. But the merged papers, the owners had buried their partisan feelings, for the most part, and, while the papers, editorially speaking, were probably mostly Republican. The *Herald* had a strong Democratic history, and in central Illinois, was known as the Democratic newspaper. I bet if you went there today and talked to older people living in central Illinois, they'd say that now, because the *Herald* was their paper, and that was Democratic territory. And Macon County and Decatur was Democratic territory.

In spite of that, the papers were generally speaking, on a partisan basis, Republican editorial. And there was no difference in the editorial policy of the two papers, the morning and evening. They were the same.

DePue: Well, maybe you can educate us a little bit on this one, as well. Talking about the turn of the century newspapers in the United States tended to be much more clearly partisan one way or another. What had happened in the journalism profession, from the turn of the century up to about 1950, 1960, 1970 time frame?

Hartley: If you got back—as you did in your preliminary there—to when papers were more political, it was financial. I mean, one of the reasons that they were so partisan was that the political money flowed, and it's part of what kept newspapers alive and kept them from failing in the 1800's, let's say, and up into the early 1900's.

So, you'd have two newspapers in a town, let's say the size of Decatur. One was a Democrat and one was a Republican, and that was also a source of revenue. It may have been the feelings of the publisher, the owner, or the family, whoever owned it, was driven by the fact that, as a Democratic paper let's say—the Democratic Party and the candidates for Democratic positions and all—they bought advertising in the newspaper. That's the way people ran for office. There wasn't any radio or television. So, it was a business arrangement as well as a philosophical arrangement. And family history played a part in that too.

When they merged in the early '30s in Decatur, these two papers merged; the financial situation was such that is didn't make any difference. They had both papers, and so they were going to get the Democratic money and the Republican money, just like they always had before, only they got it more evenly distributed. They still got this flow. And so it no longer was as important to the owners to be partisan, or to be as overtly partisan as they had been before. When they merged their financial interests and ownership interests, they merged their political interests as well.

And so, on a local basis, for example, it became important to make sure that the mayor or the county officials or whatever in Macon County, it didn't make any difference whether they were Republican or Democrat. They wanted to make sure that they kept the position of legal newspaper, so that they got the legal advertising. They didn't want to show favoritism, unless they had to at a point where they were running for election, because they wanted things to keep running smoothly.

The financial aspect of that, for the two newspapers, was greater than the division when they were one, single. So, I always thought it was an economic issues as much as anything, in those sized communities, that drove newspapers to be less partisan than they had been a century or half a century before, because their financial interests were different.

So then, the publisher could still be an active Republican, let's say, or something like that. It didn't make any difference financially. As long as they kept stability in the community environment, the political environment, and didn't have any eruption of that, it worked to the benefit of the local paper.

DePue: How much of that was a function of what was being taught in journalism schools across the country, especially at the undergraduate level, where they're teaching not just how to be a good reporter, but, I would assume, there is such a thing as journalistic ethics as well?

Hartley: I don't remember having anything taught along that line.

DePue: (laughs)

Hartley: I don't. I don't remember anything like that. We had a management course. Mostly it was the functions of management in the newspaper business and circulation and advertising and what they did. They had some case studies and some things like that, but we didn't get into ethics.

We didn't get into the real financial issues involving newspapers or the ownership interests. We didn't touch on that at all. You experienced that, brother, when you went to work. That's where you got your education in that regard.

DePue: So, was it, once you got to the job, that you have these crusty old editors to teach you now, okay, here's an objective story; here's a story that's much too biased?

Hartley: Well, these crusty old editors and everything were also driven by the financial part of it. They wanted the paper to succeed. That aspect of the newspaper business, you learned that as you worked there. You didn't learn that from any other source.

Now today, you get into a lot of that stuff in graduate school and so on. But you didn't get into that stuff at all when I was going through. It may have looked to me like this was hard-bitten news; it was the thing to do, to get in there and root out the evil and everything.

The fact that the editor and the publisher wanted to sell newspapers and make money, I didn't even think about that, until I was in that kind of position and, suddenly, was made aware of that by the owners and by the people above me and so on, and I could see how the newspapers were different. It was different. Decatur from East St. Louis was as different as night and day in newspaper terms. I went from being the guy who didn't have any experience in East St. Louis to the guy who had experience in Decatur, because they were all young people who worked there. They turned over and went beyond, and I was the stability there. I'd never worn that hat before. (both chuckle)

DePue: Other than the difference in the communities and the management of the newspapers, what was different about those two newspaper experiences for you?

Hartley: Well, in East St. Louis, the arrangement there was that the publisher really had nothing to say about news side, so the editor was completely in charge. You know, the advertising people and the circulation people would come up to complain to the editorial people about the stories that run, and it was hurting them, and it would hurt their advertising revenue. They didn't pay much attention to that, didn't pay any attention to that, to speak of. And that was still a carryover from the Tom Duffy days, I think. Duffy said we're going to do it that way; we're going to do it that way. If he couldn't sell cars, that's too bad.

In Decatur, it was an entirely different picture there. The people who owned the newspaper and were very visible in the community were part of the establishment there. You know, they belonged to the Decatur Club. To say that they ran the town is probably an exaggeration, but they were certainly part of the group of people who ran that community.

So, if you're sitting here trying to edit a newspaper, and you see a story, like you say. Let's say you have a strike at one of the plants in Decatur, as we did when I was there, and it gets nasty. The union people will talk to the newspaper because they want to get their story out. You go to the company people, and they won't talk to you at all. They call the owners, and they say, "Listen, you can't give those union people all the space in the paper. We can't say anything because of this, this, this and that. You understand that, so you've got to keep them from doing the story."

This is what happened. It's really very subtle. It sounds kind of overt, but it's really very subtle. So, one of the owners of the newspaper would show up in the office some morning and have the current story about the strike, and they'd say, "How come we're not getting anything in here about what the company thinks here?" "We go to them and they stonewall us. We can't get anything." "Well, we've got to show more balance." It took me a while to figure out what was going on (chuckles) because I didn't have any of that where I worked before, really.

But that's of the subtle aspects; sounds terrible, but that's what you live with there, because of the arrangement of the ownership and the community and so on.

And we had some civil rights issues—when I was the editor of the papers—there in the community. The newspaper had barely ever covered any civil…They'd had civil rights problems there before and everything, but they couldn't get the story in the paper. They couldn't get the story in the paper because that wasn't the Decatur that the people who owned the paper wanted to project.

I went there, and we started covering that stuff. We started it with the *Herald* and then with the *Herald and Review*, because it was going on. It was it tough stuff. You know, they don't like that at all. I mean, they didn't know what they could do about it, but they didn't like it. They wanted me to do something. They wanted me to ignore it. They didn't say that to me, but that's what they wanted.

So, it was breaking a lot of new ground for me in that. In East St. Louis, we ran whatever we wanted to. We didn't care what anybody said or thought or anything else.

DePue: It doesn't sound, though, like that you're… I was thinking it would be this timeframe in your career where you got more into reporting on the political news.

Hartley: That was. It was, as a result of being the editor of both papers.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: And I started writing a weekly, Sunday column. It was a public affairs column. It was political. It was local. It was not state or national; it was local. But, it was very political. Integration, school integration, was a big issue then. I wrote about that extensively, in columns and editorials. I wrote all the local editorials.

DePue: Did you stay there through most of 1968, then?

Hartley: Yeah. I was in the editor's job. I was there a year.

DePue: Okay. (Hartley laughs) '68 is—

Hartley: It was a great time. I mean, there were things going on there. I tell you, my juices were flowing every day.

DePue: At the national level, you can't find many more tumultuous years than 1968. I mean, everything was popping by that time.

Hartley: Absolutely.

DePue: You've got the civil rights movement, which you just talked about; the anti-war movement was really heating up. At the national level, for politics, things are going a little bit strange—

Hartley: And in Decatur, and in Decatur, too. We were feeling all of those things, and we started covering them. I remember the night that Lyndon Johnson announced he

wasn't going to run for president. I heard it on television. I got in the car, drove down to the office and sat there. We covered that as a local story, and I directed the whole thing, while I was down there. I mean, that was big stuff.

I remember the next day, having a caller in my office. There was a copy of the morning *Herald* and it said…Well, they could understand that it was a big national story, but they didn't think that was much of a local story. That was just the mentality that was there. So, I dealt with it as best I could.

DePue: How about the '68 convention in Chicago? Did you have a reporter there?

Hartley: Well, here's how that happened. Historically, the national conventions were covered for all of our papers by Ed Lindsay, who was the corporate editor of Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers. He was the family representative. Ed was a great guy, and he covered all of those conventions.

When I became the editor of Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers—took his job—in the spring of 1968, the plan was that the editorial page editor, who covered all of state and federal issues, who operated in Decatur, that he was going to cover the two conventions, the Republican and the Democratic conventions in '68.

So, I came rolling in to town, and he took an instant dislike to me, which is all right. I'd know him for years. So, I said, "You go ahead and cover the Republican convention, because you've already got your credentials and it was first," and so on. But, I said, "We'll share the coverage of the '68 convention in Chicago. And we'll write for all of our papers. They'll still run wire stories for the big things, but we'll write about the Illinois delegation, and we'll write editorials and so on."

DePue: Did you think, at that time, that this is just going to be your normal, typical convention?

Hartley: Absolutely. You know, I thought it was just going to be my introduction to all of that. Well, of course, it didn't turn out to be that way at all. But that was the way we… Then, in that role that I had, I covered both '72 conventions, both '76 conventions. Then, I was gone for '80. But, I covered those.

And I covered those primarily as a reporter. I covered the delegation: the people in the delegation; how they were voting, and the committees they were on. So, I was writing stories for Carbondale and Champaign-Urbana and everything, every day, and editorials. So I did that for all of those.

DePue: We probably ought to interject here, real quickly: the Lindsay-Schaub papers—what actual papers did that encompass?

Hartley: *The Southern Illinoisan* in Carbondale, the East St. Louis *Metro-East Journal*, the *Edwardsville Intelligencer*, Champaign-Urbana *Courier*, and the Decatur *Herald And Review.*

DePue: A big chunk of the state.

Hartley: Yeah, if you took the Sunday circulation, it had about two hundred thousand circulation.

DePue: Okay. So, let's go back to the story of the '68 convention.

Hartley: So, to the other guy, I said, "I'll cover the preamble to it and do the advance stories, then I'll be there all week. You come up for a couple of days, and go back to the office. And that was the way we did it.

He mostly wrote editorials. That was his job, editorial writing. And so I wrote news stories about the Illinois delegation. Oh my god, they were the center… I mean, the business with the mayor and everything else was some great stuff for Illinois readers. And they had the delegation and the splits in the delegation over various things. So, I covered all of those—

DePue: From inside the convention hall?

Hartley: Inside the convention hall. And then, after Wednesday night—which was the night of all of the downtown stuff—after the convention was over, and I'd filed all my stories and everything, I was staying in a hotel downtown, Sherman House. I went down, and I walked through that downtown and out into Grant Park. I then wrote a column for the next day's papers about what Chicago looked like in the aftermath of all of that. That was something that I— I'd never done anything like that before. It was an experience, along with an opportunity.

I had already, as the overall editor, one of the changes in my job then, was the insertion into the state political picture, because that's what that job was. That's what it'd always been.

We had a group of people in Decatur, separate from the Decatur paper, that covered state affairs and wrote editorials for the newspapers. I was in charge of all that. So, that was really my introduction to the political part of it. Now, when I was editor of the *Herald and Review*, you know, Paul Simon would show up, and other people would show up, and we'd have a little meeting or something. But I didn't really have a lot to say, any more than any one editor of our papers. But it was when I got the top job that the political coverage picture changed.

DePue: Going back to the '68 convention, the topic that fascinates me—I guess I'd have to admit—if you watch the chants in the old news reels, the chant that raised up from the kids who were there protesting: "The whole world is watching. The whole world is watching." Well, for a life-long journalist, this must be a dream assignment for you.

Hartley: Well, it was. It was. Yet, I have to say that, until it happened, if you worked in Chicago and all, you had an entirely different picture of this, because it had been building for some time, and you could see it coming. For those of us who were only

going to Chicago for the convention, well, we could see something was happening; and the mayor was putting up fences all along the route to the convention hall and so on.

These things were happening, but I still didn't have the feeling that I was there at one of the grand events, whether you liked it or not, in politics and many other ways. It really wasn't until it was over that you really began to reflect on that. You got thrown into it. You got swallowed up by it while you were there. So, you acted instinctively. What looked like a good story, or sounded like one, or, if you were downtown when some of the marching was going on, or the aftermath at the hotels that were trashed and so on. Those were the parts of it that you had no idea of, until it happened.

DePue: Any particular anecdotes that you remember?

Hartley: Oh, not really. I remember walking through Grant Park with all the hippies and everybody there. I'd never seen anything like that in my life, anywhere. And I didn't know quite how to digest that. I was struck, really, by the destruction downtown, the streets and everything. But I remember, when I went there, the first days that I was there, as you went about your business in downtown, in the Loop and downtown Chicago, you'd look on the street and look at an alley, and there would be National Guardsman, armed soldiers, with rifles standing there.

After you'd been there a little while, and you made a run or two out to the convention hall and back, your feelings changed tremendously—at least mine did—as to what was going on here. You began to see the signs of it and feel it and sense that something was going on here that you had no idea about before you got there, or not much of an idea. That was sort of the prelude to the, really, open warfare that took place.

DePue: We'll finish with this, because I know you've got to head to lunch pretty soon. Tell us where you were at this moment in your life, in your own particular political views.

Hartley: Well, you know, as editor of the paper in '67 and '68, I had become involved community affairs that had a very political—not partisan, so much—but had very political aspects to it. The school integration plan was probably at the top of the list.

DePue: For Decatur.

Hartley: For Decatur. And I had very strong feelings about the need to integrate the schools in Decatur, personal feelings. In retrospect, I think they influenced what I wrote and what I covered and what I argued for. I know the people in Decatur would have agreed with that. I went to meetings, pro-integration meetings, groups. I knew all those people. The people who were opposed didn't invite me to their meetings, because they knew where I stood.

It's hard to say that I was standing on principle all of the time. It was a political issue, and it was going to be voted on by the school board. I knew the chairman and president of the school board very well. Still, to this day, a very good friend of mine. I'm having dinner with him tonight, as a matter of fact. So, I couldn't help but get involved. I think that probably was something of the prelude to the more partisan aspect of it, with the job, that I took after that.

But I was at a much heightened sense of the political nature, the local political nature, of things than I had ever before when I was in Decatur. I felt I had to. I felt I had to do that. Well, I don't think the owners agreed with that.

DePue: It might be that this issue you saw as kind of out of your universe, but almost everybody had an opinion at that time about the Vietnam War and why we were there. Where were you with that one?

Hartley: You know, our editorial department that wrote the national and state editorials was decidedly anti-war. It was, I think, suppressed a bit because the editors of the papers, who had some influence in that regard, for the most part, were not anti-war. They weren't pro-war, but they were not sympathetic.

We had three universities represented in our newspapers: in Carbondale and Edwardsville and Champaign-Urbana. And these guys were on the firing line. They were not sympathetic to the anti-war movement. I wouldn't put them in the hard core…the guy in Champaign-Urbana was. So, they had some influence on that, and they tapped that. They got an editorial sent from Decatur on that subject, and they didn't like it, They didn't run it; or, you know, they didn't have to run it. They ran most of them, but they began to exercise some real decision-making in that regard, because it was an emotional issue for them. It was a local issue, they thought, as much as anything.

DePue: Well, it was happening on the campuses.

Hartley: Right. I think I probably was in that category, of where I wasn't especially sympathetic to the disruption of life by anti-war protests and so on. I was not sympathetic. So, when I became the editor of the papers and had more dealings with that, I probably rode herd on that subject more than they liked.

DePue: Last question before we break for lunch, then. You're what, thirty-two at this time? That seems to me to be pretty young in—

Hartley: Yeah, it was.

DePue: —trying to ride herd over all of this operation you had.

Hartley: It was, and in lots of ways, I was green as a gourd, you know. I was fresh in the stuff. I've thought about it and gone back and looked at those things that I wrote during that time. I thought they were pretty darn good. I don't have any regrets about getting involved in some of those things. I may have been… If I were to do it

today, I don't know that I'd do it the same way, but I think I'd say the same thing, if you know what I mean. I belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Decatur, and they had a young pastor there. He was just a couple of years older than I was. And he had some real strong opinions about things that were happening in Decatur, particularly on the civil rights front and everything. We were good friends, and I remember, we went to coffee one morning, and I said, "Boy, I'm really…" I've forgotten even what the real issue was. I said, "I'm really struggling with this thing." I said, "I just see so many different sides to it, and I want to keep my emotions out of it." He looked at me over the coffee, and he said, "You're the editor of the local newspaper?" I said, "Yes, I am." He said, "Well, you're supposed to do what's right." (both laugh) I've reminded him of that sometimes over the years, but I think that was my feeling. Now, maybe I was full of myself. I know that I was not sensitive to the feelings of the owners on a lot of these issues. But, interestingly enough, they were not inclined to come and stomp on me or to say, "You can't say that," or "We don't want you to write on that subject," or anything. They did it more subtlety, which is their prerogative. They could do it anyway they want to. I wouldn't have listened to them if they'd tried to stomp on me. But they weren't those kind of people. They thought that they could reason with me, you know, and that I'd come around to their approach. I suspect I did on some things. But there was lots of stuff in that newspaper, during '67 and '68, in both of those papers, that would—I'm convinced of this—would never had been in those papers if somebody else had been the editor.

DePue: Okay. Well, we're in an important transition and point in your life. So we're going to stop for now, take a lunch break and then come back this afternoon.

Hartley: It's a deal.

(End of interview #1, #2 continues)

Interview with Robert Hartley

HIS-A-L-2010-043

Interview # 2: September 29, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Wednesday, the twenty-ninth of September, 2010. This is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This is my second session with Robert Hartley. Good afternoon.

Hartley: Good afternoon.

DePue: Both of us had good lunches, so we're ready to take off again with, I would assume, rather late in1968, when you took over as editor of the Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers. Tell us how that move came about.

Hartley: I was the editor of both papers in the newsroom, and the man who had succeeded Ed Lindsay as the corporate editor resigned. This was February, '68. The job was open, as I knew, and the personnel person came to me and said to me, "Are you interested in applying for this job?" I said, "No. I was enjoying myself and having a good time being the editor of the papers and that didn't look to me like a job I'd thrive in," something like that. He seemed to be surprised, because I think he thought that I was an ambitious person and that I would naturally want that job. I said, "No, it's not a newsroom job, and so that's what I want to be." So, I heard nothing more, not even any good gossip about what they were going to do with this job.

In May, the executive vice president of Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers asked me to go to lunch. To my knowledge, he had never asked me to go to lunch before. So, I figured he wanted to talk about something, but I didn't have a clue what it was. He offered me the corporate editor's job. I told him that I was really inclined to turn it down, but that I'd think about it overnight and get back to him. His comment to me—and I remember it well—was, "I don't think you want to turn it down." So, I don't know what that meant, really. Maybe that meant, if you turn it down, you're not going to hang around

here very much longer or whatever. But anyway, I did take the job, after talking to some people.

Bob Hartley,
Editor of Lindsay-Schaub
1978

And, again, I have to say that that chapter of my newspaper life prepared me for general management work in newspapers in a manner I never could have obtained, being the editor of the two papers or by going to school. It was on-the-job training, at the highest level of the corporation, dealing with all manner of finance and investment, as well as coordination of the newsrooms, budgeting and so on.

One of the first things they did, they sent me for two years to two weeks seminar, workshop, at Ohio State University for businesspeople. I was the only newspaper person there, in a group of about fifty. We were exposed to marketing, finance and everything. It was a wonderful experience. So, that sort of launched me in that direction.

DePue: That this is taking you away from your newsroom position and from the news business to a certain extent?

Hartley: Here's what my responsibilities were as the editor of Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers, which was the title. I was a corporate staff person. And so, in the eyes of the owners and the officers of the company, I was a representative to them of the newsroom people and editors of all of the papers. Their theory was that they didn't have the time or the inclination, or maybe even some of the other things, required to talk with and deal with the editors. So, they wanted a representative, as it were, of the ownership as sort of a gatekeeper communicator, back and forth. So, that was the first job.

So, I was involved in personnel decisions. We replaced some editors; a change came along. I was involved in that, with the publishers of the paper. I approved all newsroom budgets at budget time. They submitted them to me, and I put a stamp of approval on them, which got back into the cycle of the individual papers. I met frequently with the editors on editorial policy related to state and national issues. I held their hand; I listened to them, sympathized with them—

DePue: Them being the owners?

Hartley: The editors. No, I didn't do any hand-holding with the owners.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: I found very quickly that they trusted me, the owners did. I'm not sure why. I mean, I didn't do anything—that I know of—to that. But, they trusted me. So, I had very little, what I would call interference or problems, with the owners or officers, as it related to the newspapers, the individual newspapers.

Then, there was always corporate newspaper business. At the table with the executive vice for planning and things like that, I was the newsroom representative, because whatever went on there affected the newsrooms. There was a director of advertising and a director of circulation and a director of production. We all formed the corporate staff. So, I worked with them. I was amazed at how many issues came up, and how often. I'd get a call from the director of advertising, down the hall two offices. He'd say, "We've got a newsroom advertising issue at the *Champaign-Urbana Courier*. We need to talk about it." Those kinds of things were… I was always surprised at how we were dealing remotely, but dealing with some internal conflicts that were there.

Then, I had the responsibility for the home office editorial office. This was a beast that was created by Ed Lindsay. He wanted to cover some state issues that he thought were of burning interest to the newspapers, mainly higher education and transportation. So, he just decided he would create an editorial office that could cover the legislature when it was in session: focus on the issues that were of interest to the newspapers and write editorials on a daily basis, on state and international issues. His idea was to hire a group of people who could do their research and keep up with what was going on at those levels, didn't have to integrate that with the local issues and editorial policy, which the editors took care of.

So, I inherited that when I took the job. That was the creation of Ed. It was a relatively small group. We had an editorial page editor. We had a news wire that connected all the papers, so we could send editorials and columns and things to the newspapers. So, we had two people who worked in the wire room. We had about three additional editorial writers, one of whom was, when the legislature was in session, in residence in Springfield and covered the legislature for all of our papers.

DePue: Who was that?

Hartley: Dick Icen, I-c-e-n. He was the legislative guy, for as long as I was connected with the operation. So, that operation was there, and I was responsible for that. In other words, if an editorial went out on a particular policy, the assumption was that I approved that editorial. So, I spent, maybe 25% of my time—that's an estimate, some weeks more—monitoring that, keeping in touch with what

was going on. The editorial page editor was critical to how it worked, because I had to trust him. Whenever he encountered a subject that he knew was sensitive, why, we discussed it.

At endorsement time, election time, we held meetings of our editors. Really it became kind of an editorial board, although we didn't call it that at the time; we called them editor's meetings. We met with the state candidates, all of them, at various times. Then the editors expressed their opinion to me as to who they thought we ought to endorse. And I talked with the owners about that subject, and then I made a recommendation to the owners, based on that, which they always approved, never had a discouraging word. Then, I wrote the endorsement editorials.

So, that was my job, and it was an unusual job. There weren't many of those around. There were a few in newspaper organizations with corporate structures. Gannett had somebody in that role and some others. But, you didn't find a corporate editor on the street very often. It was an unusual operation, that required a lot of communication in order to make sure it didn't erupt into working with five or six strong editors—independent people, not used to having somebody tell them what they ought to say and think—and, at the same time, keeping the owners at bay, actually, keeping them from calling up the editors.

DePue: Were the local editors free to take an endorsement position that might be independent from others in the system?

Hartley: No, they were not. And that was a source of some irritation. But that had been the case long before I came. Only when we appointed a new editor, did I have to re-invent that system for them. But most of the editors had been in the organization a long time. They knew they had a voice; they knew they had some influence. Did they end up running some endorsements that they might not have done themselves, personally? Yes. No question about that. And they let me know about it. I knew who was on board and who wasn't.

Generally speaking, we had a consensus of the editors for every endorsement. We might have had one who preferred somebody else, but we had a consensus.

DePue: Generally, Republicans or Democrats or a mixture?

Hartley: Well, it was a mixture. The tendency of the organization—again, before I had anything to do with this, mainly as a result of Ed Lindsay—was to endorse incumbents, unless they had some grievous damage somewhere along the line or gotten themselves into a mess. That regardless of how good the opponent might have appeared, they tended to endorse incumbents. I knew that from the beginning. This was especially true for governor and president and congress,

senators. The lower state offices, they didn't care much about. And they had some personal relationships in there, too. I mean, that was part of it.

So, I decided I needed to clean that up real fast. I don't remember exactly which…I think maybe it wasn't until, maybe, '72 or somewhere along the line, it was clear that the owners would probably have supported an incumbent, and I recommended not supporting the incumbent. And they said nothing. So, I think we just broke it up. But that had been such a habit, that I don't even think they gave it a second thought until I raised the issue by doing something else.

DePue: Up to this point in your career—correct me if I got this wrong—your focus had been on local issues, local news, crime beat, the suburban news, those kinds of things. Is this your real foray into state and national level politics?

Hartley: Yeah, that was how I got into it, yeah. No, I had no…oh, other than I kept track of things, as I moved along. And certainly, in that year that I was an editor, at the meetings with the corporate editor and everything, we talked about those things, and I formed some opinions. And, as I mentioned, because the home office was in Decatur, and we had two papers there, the politicians came by and stopped to see me for whatever reason. So, I had the beginnings of it. But in terms of writing editorials and columns—I wrote a weekly, public affairs column in that job, too, on state and national issues—it was new territory.

DePue: How was that different from what you had been doing before?

Hartley: Well, it was entirely different. You know, I mean, I'd written editorials, and I'd written columns. It wasn't the form of writing those things that was different. The subject matter was quite different and, in some respects, totally different. I had minimal experience with state issues. So, I had a real fast learning curve.

Fortunately, because I had this office of people down there, working on issues and covering the legislature and all, I had a resource. I could go down to the third floor, as it were, sit down with any one of them and ask for some background on an issue or a person or something. It was a great help to have that, and I leaned on that quite a bit.

DePue: Did the newspaper have any bureaus, like in Chicago or Washington, D.C. or in New York?

Hartley: No, they didn't. If there was something that was going on in Chicago, we just sent somebody there. Eventually, this group became much more than what Ed Lindsay had started out with. When we closed up shop, when the paper was sold in '79, I think we had two strictly investigative reporters, who were working on state issues. We had five editorial writers. We had the editor and the two people in the wire room. We had expanded quite a bit, and we were

covering much more of the state issues than originally was the case. We expanded into all of the major issues of state government, revenue, finance, taxation, everything. So, were covering those, and then, when we got around to the election time, we assigned our writers to certain candidates. They followed them, and they traveled with them and then wrote background stories, as well as editorials.

I felt we were ignoring the members of Congress from our area and that the local newspapers weren't really focusing much on them. So, I went to a group in D.C. called the States News Service. It was kind of a cooperative. They had a group of young reporters, didn't pay them much there, that worked for states and worked for clients in states, covering members of Congress.

So, we contracted with them for one of their writers to cover the members of Congress from the districts where we had newspapers. They would follow their votes, and they'd follow their public statements, and so on, doing things that we just didn't have time to do, and the local papers didn't either. This was a great help to us. I think we provided more really enlightened commentary and background about congressional candidates than anybody else in the state, including the Chicago papers.

DePue: Did you find this experience led you to evolve your own political views on things? I would think, to a certain extent, because you're having these discussions, you're involved with the discussions, the newspaper comes down on one side or another on an issue, [it] kind of forces you to think through the whole process, yourself.

Hartley: Well, it does. I don't think there was any question about that. It forced me to think about more than, Do I like this guy or don't I? Or, does he seem like he's done a decent job, or hasn't he? By having this group of people that I mentioned out there working with these subjects and with these candidates and office holders and, again, as a resource for me, I was able to get past the, sort of, superficial look at candidates and political issues that, at least, when I formed an opinion, or I may have helped form it, with some other people, with some input from some other people.

But I had to make the decision at some point. I always felt like I was doing something other than expressing my own point of view, that I was doing this for the organization. I was doing it for all the papers, different kinds of papers in East St. Louis and Carbondale and everything, different constituencies. I think I took that pretty seriously.

And the editors, because they were not allowed (chuckles) to write about state or national subjects, editorials, they were free to express themselves to me. You know, I mean, that phone would ring off the wall some days, with a complaint or a cry about one of the editorials, or why didn't you say this, or why didn't you do that. So, I had plenty background noise to all of

that. I realized, early on, that this was not a case of what I wanted to say or I wanted to do, that I had to figure out what was the best thing, given the context of what we were doing on issues and candidates.

So, we didn't always make the most popular decision. A good example, I think, was when Paul Simon ran for governor in '72, against Dan Walker.

DePue: In the Democratic primary.

Hartley: In the Democratic primary. Of course, Paul knew all of our editors, personally. That's just was the kind of a guy he was. He knew them all personally. He knew me.

DePue: Well, heck, Troy isn't that far away from the east Metro area.

Hartley: Absolutely. He knew them all. And he knew me well. I think if you had Paul Simon sitting here today, or certainly his right hand man, Gene Callahan, who's still around, they would say that they expected us to endorse Paul in the primary. They just expected it. They figured he knew everybody; he'd done things for southern Illinois, as lieutenant governor and everything. So, they thought it was just a formality that we were going to endorse him.

Well, as we got down to the wire, and we had an editor's meeting, and Paul came, as did Dan, and we interviewed them. We really rode Paul hard. We thought he'd made some serious mistakes in the campaign: supporting a tax increase, said some dumb things, we thought. It was not the Paul Simon, quite frankly—who most of us had seen at work as lieutenant governor—in that campaign, that he had done for obvious political reasons. We understood why he did them; we just didn't like it. And, to this day, when I see Gene Callahan—and I see him a lot—he always reminds me of that meeting and how hard we rode Paul and how Paul felt about it, how bad he felt after the meeting was over. And I simply said, "Whose fault was that?" That wasn't our fault, that we asked those questions. Paul didn't answer them. If he laid an egg in that meeting, it wasn't our fault.

Well, we did endorse him, mainly because we really couldn't handle Dan Walker. But we did not give him a ringing endorsement. And we said some things, some criticisms of Paul. And I'm telling you, they didn't like that; they didn't like it one bit.

So, that's kind of how this dynamic worked. Some of our editors who, you know, had Paul in their homes, and they'd done things together with him, and everything, they were all on board on this thing. They didn't like the campaign. I think, if it had been somebody besides Dan Walker, we might not have endorsed Paul.

DePue: How would you describe your own personal, political views at that time?

Hartley: I think they paralleled the conclusions I reached in the work. That doesn't mean that I voted for everybody we endorsed, but darn near everybody.

DePue: Well, were you pulling the Democratic or the Republican lever more often?

Hartley: You know, I think we probably pulled the Republican more than the Democrat. But I'm not sure that that says that I was a Republican more than I was a Democrat.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: I just don't think that was the case. You know, there wasn't a guy in the world that I didn't like more than Mike Howlett. He was a great guy. I had great time with him. He was an interesting guy. He did some good things in government work, but there was no way in the world that we were going to endorse him for governor in 1976. I mean, he just wasn't our guy for governor. I don't care whether Jim Thompson, or who it was that was running against him, we were not going to endorse him.

DePue: I wonder if I can go through the elections while you were there with Lindsay-Schaub—this was '68 to '79, an interesting period of time in itself—

Hartley: Yeah, it was.

DePue: —and ask you, just very quickly, if you can remember who the papers did end up endorsing. So, let's start with the '72 election for president.

Hartley: We endorsed Richard Nixon in '72. We endorsed Jimmy Carter in '76.

DePue: Okay. And it sounds like you didn't make it to the 1980 race.

Hartley: No, I was in Toledo then.

DePue: Okay. Let's go back to '72. You've already talked about that. You endorsed Paul Simon in the primary. Then you get to this incredible upset that Walker pulled off, beating Simon, who up to that point, everybody thought Simon was the logical candidate. He was certainly the machine's candidate.

Hartley: Yeah, he was.

DePue: Walker versus Ogilvie.

Hartley: Ogilvie. We had come to appreciate Dick Ogilvie. We did not endorse him in '68. We endorsed Shapiro in '68. I think that was on the strength of our reading of Dick Ogilvie as a Cook County politician, and we didn't like it.

DePue: But it changed in four years, then.

Hartley: It did. In fact, I have said before, and I'll say it here. I'm glad you didn't have to choose between Dick Ogilvie and Paul Simon. I think it would have been a toss-up, because we had seen a lot of what we liked in Dick Ogilvie, and, after the primary, we saw nothing in Dan Walker that we liked any better than we did before the primary. So, it was no difficult decision to endorse Ogilvie.

DePue: Okay. Then you get to the '76 election.

Hartley: In '76, we endorsed Jim Thompson.

DePue: In '78?

Hartley: And Jim Thompson in'78.

DePue: I can't even remember who he ran against in '78. (both chuckle) I didn't mean to put you on the spot.

Hartley: That's not fair. Oh, he ran against Bakalis.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: That's right. We liked Bakalis, but not for governor.

DePue: How about some of the senatorial campaigns during that timeframe?

Hartley: Let's see. We endorsed Dirksen in '68.

DePue: Everett Dirksen: toward the end of his career one of the lions of the senate by that time, but also a pretty conservative guy.

Hartley: Yeah, and not in good health and didn't campaign much. But we weren't impressed with Clark, who was the candidate, Democrat. I suspect we more or less said, "Why not Dirksen?" I guess, maybe. Of course, he didn't live very much longer.

We endorsed Adlai [Stevenson] in'70, against Smith. That was not a hard decision. Smith didn't impress us much.

DePue: This, of course, is Adlai the third.

Hartley: Yes, this is Ad three. And, quite frankly, in private conversations with our editors and so on, Ad always came across much better than he did publicly. He was more decisive; he spoke to the issues unrelentingly, and he was probably more of a traditional senator, in many respects, than people thought he was. I think they thought he was more of a rebel than he was. I liked Ad, and, I think, as I have reviewed his ten years in the senate, I think he did some fine things. So, we endorsed him.

We endorsed Percy in '72, and that wasn't a tough choice. Roman Pucinski was the opponent, and he was just the mayor's guy. Let's see, who would we have? So, we had Percy and Stevenson. Then Percy in '78. We endorsed him, although Chuck had gotten himself into a jam in '78, and he almost lost. But I think we, again, felt that he was more moderate and more to our liking than the Democrat.

And then…so that was it. We didn't endorse again.'80, was the next senator race.

DePue Because of the geographical spread of the newspapers, did you ever weigh in on the Chicago races?

Hartley No, we didn't.

DePue (Laughter) You were better off not to?

Hartley Yeah. No, we really didn't. We pretty much stuck to our bailiwick.

DePue Well, I am thinking of some of the congressional leaders that would have been in your area, and Bob Michael, I would think, would be the preeminent one.

Hartley Yeah, Bob was a little north of us, but we always supported him. Of course, Paul Simon ran in '74, and we didn't write the editorial for it.

When it was a congressional race, if there was one newspaper…and let's say it was Mel Price in East St. Louis, a long time congressman there. We left that up to the East St. Louis paper to decide what they wanted to do. Sometimes they'd endorse him, and sometimes they wouldn't. We sort of let that go that way.

We did weigh in with Simon in Carbondale, but we happened to see the same during Paul's Congress years. We had Madigan, Ed Madigan, in central Illinois. Because it was Decatur and Champaign, we wrote the editorial locally with our group. Ed, whenever he ran, he was always the class of that.

So, you know, again, it wasn't a partisan kind of a thing. We were kind of looking at the people that we knew something about.

DePue: Well, this is the same timeframe that, on the national level, you have the Watergate scandal, very much defined by the media because of the investigative reporting that was going on at the Washington Post. How did that impact on what you guys were doing in your central Illinois papers?

Hartley: (chuckles) I remember, we had a man on our home office editorial staff who was decidedly liberal. His name was Walt Wolf. Walt was a great guy, a little older than the crowd down there, and I had a lot of respect for him. He was a good editorial writer. In September of '72, he came to me, asked to meet with

me. He said that he wanted to point out that Richard Nixon was responsible for the break-in at the Watergate and that we should endorse the Democrat for president. He argued in every meeting that we ever had on that subject, he was really the only person who ever argued hard and fast for—

DePue: George McGovern.

Hartley: —that Richard Nixon shouldn't have been elected. Well, he was swimming upstream, and we were not buying all of that. It was still very early in the revelations of Watergate. This became something of a question for us. Editorially speaking, how much did we buy into what was being written. We took the *New York Times* wire for our papers. So, we got a pretty steady diet of what the *Times* was writing and doing about all of that. We watched the Watergate thing.

I think we were timid. I think we were timid as this thing developed a little bit. But I think, for us, the real issue was when the tapes were made public. The *Chicago Tribune* was one of the first newspapers to publish all of those tapes, and they were made public. They were one of the few Republican newspapers to condemn Nixon. I think that made quite a difference for us. Not so much for me, but I think it did for our editors. I think they were really persuaded by that.

DePue: To a certain extent, you've got a stalwart Republican, traditional newspaper like the *Trib,* that's providing them with a little bit of cover then?

Hartley: Yeah, it was. I think it legitimized some of what we were having some concerns about. I don't think there was a group of us who were adamant about Richard Nixon: We wanted him in there, and we thought he was getting a raw deal—None of that. We could see where this was heading—you had to be pretty numb if you didn't—that it was heading toward a court case with Congress. So, I think we were being very cautious.

We didn't quite know what, how the impeachment thing might unfurl and what might be there and what might not in the Senate hearings and so on. So, I think we were just flat out cautious. But the *Trib* thing kind of pushed us, I thought. And after that, I felt that the owners—we had talked about that a fair amount at the ownership level—I thought that, really, they respected the *Trib*; they liked the *Trib's* editorial position (both chuckle). I think that really loosened them up on this thing. So, I didn't feel that we had any backroom efforts going on.

DePue: A lot of journalists today look back at that time period and they say, "Boy, those were the days for print journalism." That was kind of the high water mark. They had really done something significant, and circulation was going strong, and the profession was going strong. Do you see it in that same light?

Hartley: Well, I think we did at the time. I think we probably joined the gang at the time of riding roughshod, almost. Certainly, part of that was whatever respect anybody had for Nixon, at least in our organization, was gone. I think we jumped on. You know, I think we were feeling our oats. I don't know though that it had any particular impact on what we were doing in Illinois, the way we covered issues or candidates. Before Watergate there had been a lot of other things at work to free up what you wrote about candidates for public office.

I remember some really scurrilous stories about some candidates before, in the '60s, particularly. And, as far as I know, they were true. But nobody wrote about them. These were personal issues, and if it didn't seem to have some sort of play-out in public policy or how a guy did his job, or we thought he did it, people just ignored those things. But, I don't think it was Watergate that opened that up.

I think that, by the time we moved into the '70s, at least in our coverage of things, we were looking at things differently. I remember in the 1976 race of Howlett and Thompson, one of our reporters who had been with Mike Howlett on a plane campaign trip, came back and said, " I'm going to write a story about the campaign. But I've got a tough issue for you." He said, "As we were flying along, Mike Howlett turned to me—I was the only reporter on the plane—turned to me, and he said, 'Of course, you know that Jim Thompson is a homosexual.' He didn't say, 'This is off the record.' He didn't say, 'You can't print that, or anything else.'" And so, the reporter said, "What do I do with this? What do I do with it?" And we said, "Well, have you heard anything? You've been covering the Thompson race and Howlett." I said, "Is that the first time you've heard this come up?" And he said, "As a matter of fact it is. I haven't heard that before. It really stunned me. I asked Mike what evidence he had of it. I mean, had people told him this was the case, or something?" And he said, "He wouldn't answer the question."

DePue: At this time, Thompson had just recently gotten married, or is he not married yet?

Hartley: No, he was married. So, we decided not to run it. But I don't think the reason was that we wanted to protect Jim Thompson. I think that, when we talked with all the editors and our editorial writers and everybody else, they all agreed that, without some basis for the comment, we had to treat it strictly as a last gasp shot by Howlett, and that, if we had done something, we simply would have been playing into his hands. So, we didn't do it.

But, I think, if that would have happened six years earlier or even eight years earlier, we wouldn't even have gone through the motions of whether we ought to do it or what evidence there might be. We would have just said, "Aw, that's Mike, and that's talk, that's political talk; we're not even going to get excited about it."

So, I think the attitudes were already changing. Did Watergate accelerate that? Maybe a little bit. But, as we covered the state issues that were going on then and in Dan Walker's time and then in Thompson's time, I didn't feel like the open gates of Watergate, as it were, affected what we did.

DePue: Well, the parallel, on the national level, happened back in the 1960s, when Kennedy was president. There was plenty evidence that he was messing around quite a bit, but the news media never released that.

Hartley: That's right.

DePue: Why do you think that was the case?

Hartley: I think they thought that was beyond the limits of—

DePue: It's his personal life; it's nobody else's business?

Hartley: Personal life, that's right. Nobody could say that it affected what kind of president he was, or anything else. To have dredged that up, would have, maybe, ruined a perfectly good presidency. And then, let's face it, the fact that some of these people were good personal friends of John Kennedy and knew about it and so on, and they just simply chose to say, "I'm not going to be the one to blow this whistle."

DePue: Was there an element of that when, many years later, it was Thompson and the allegation is about homosexuality? Or was it just a matter of, We don't have any other evidence to back that up?

Hartley: Well, as I remember reading about some of the stuff with Kennedy, there wasn't any discussion about whether to even consider running it. No, I think we gave it a fair hearing with Thompson.

DePue: Let's back up just a little bit here. I wanted to ask your impressions of the 1972 Democratic convention down in Miami. Were you there?

Hartley: Yes. Um-hmm.

DePue: Another lively convention. In this case, you've got the Daley delegation that's locked out of the convention hall.

Hartley: (chuckles) You know, I showed up on the day before the convention—or two days before, I've forgotten what it was—and went to the convention hotel where the Illinois Democrats were staying. And as I was checking in, the Democrats were checking out. And I said, you know, of course, I knew several of them, and I said, "Where are you going?" And they said, "Why, haven't you heard? You know, we've been thrown out, and we went…" And it was really the news. Jim Wall, who was the statewide coordinator for McGovern.

DePue: That was the McGovern year.

Hartley: Yeah, McGovern. He was the McGovern guy, organize guy, and Jim Wall was for McGovern. I knew him pretty well. He had made a lot of trips downstate, and he was an interesting guy. He was the editor of *Christian Century Magazine.* So, he was very much in the mix of all of that. So, he was a great source of information and inside information and all. So, those of us who knew him certainly wrote a lot about it.

Otherwise, there wasn't much. I mean, you know, McGovern gave his acceptance speech at 2:00 in the morning, or something. I've forgotten whenever that was. It wasn't much, from that standpoint. But from a political story, an Illinois political story, we had plenty to write about for the whole convention.

DePue: Well, I probably should give a little background, for our listeners here, in terms of what in the world happened to the Daley delegation. You can correct this story when I get it wrong.

In part of the primary process for that year, they're selecting the delegates to go to the national convention. And in the primary, the normal slate of candidates that were backed by the Chicago machine won. Back in 1968, the Democratic Party had re-written the rules for the kinds of people who are supposed to be representing them at the national convention, so that there were quotas, as I understand—racial quotas, age quotas, sex quotas—that you have this mixture of people who would now be representing the party.

So, the delegation from Chicago that was elected because the primary, was challenged by independent Democrats, at that time, led by Bill Singer and Jesse Jackson, I believe. It went through the courts in lightning speed. So this counter-delegation of people, who met this right mix of youth and African-Americans and women, were the ones that eventually were seated in the convention.

Hartley: That's right. Mayor Daley, quite frankly, just chose to ignore the new rules. As far as he was concerned, the new party rules didn't apply to him, and so he created his own problem there.

DePue: But I think the courts ruled that the Democratic Party can make their own rules.

Hartley: Yeah, that's right. And it happened fast. It happened, really, just before the convention was to be held that the decision came down. It was like passing in the night, with the new folks coming in, almost none of whom anybody knew, and the old folks going out the door, and almost everybody knew them.

I remember talking to Howlett as I was coming in. And he was cracking jokes and telling stories about how he was going to go home and enjoy himself and so on. I noticed, I think it was a day later, some of those reporters were just showing up, (laughs) and they had missed twenty-four hours of some great stuff. (laughs) But the Daley folks thumbed their nose at those rules, and they lost.

DePue: But, see, this is all of the stuff that, for me, makes Illinois politics so fascinating.

Hartley: It is.

DePue: This state is replete with those kinds of stories.

Hartley: All over the place.

DePue: That takes us through 1979. What happens in 1979?

Hartley: Well, Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers was sold to Lee Enterprises. As a part of that purchase arrangement, Lee Enterprises said, "We don't need Lindsay-Schaub corporate headquarters anymore, so everybody is out of work that was connected with that operation. If you want to interview with us for positions that we have open, we'll be glad to consider you. But otherwise, as of the effective date of the sale, there is no Lindsay-Schaub organization and certainly no corporate headquarters."

DePue: So, you must be in your mid-forties by that time. That's not the timeframe in your life when you want to find yourself in this position.

Hartley: Well, you know, I didn't think of it so much in those terms, I don't believe. I mean, you're right about that, to a certain stage, you get kind of settled into your ways. Actually, the reigning Schaub member—the Schaubs had control of the company—the reigning Schaub member had proposed, rather seriously, before this negotiation began, of rearranging the home office, corporate offices. According to his plan, at least, I was scheduled to become the publisher of the paper in Decatur. They were going to move people out of the home office jobs into other line jobs. That never happened, of course.

So, there were two jobs that were open with Lee that I interviewed for. One was an editor's job in Madison, Wisconsin. The other was a general manager's job in Billings, Montana. I knew the guy who was the publisher in Billings and interviewed with him. It was my understanding that he recommended me for the job, and it got turned down at the headquarters. That was what he told me.

The job in Madison: I met with the Madison people, and then I met with the guy who was the president of Lee Enterprises about that job. He told me that, if I took that job, I would have to decide whether I was an editor or a

member of management, that I couldn't be both. I mean, I couldn't be an editor and be a member of management. I had to take the business approach as editor, or, if I wanted to write a column or worry about the editorial policy of the paper, it wouldn't work. So, I withdrew, said I wasn't interested in the job. That was it with Lee Enterprises. (laughs) So, I went to work for the *Toledo Blade* in October of 1979.

DePue: What was your title there?

Hartley: Executive editor, which was an interesting job.

DePue: In the universe of the Toledo, Ohio *Blade*, what was the executive editor?

Hartley: The executive editor had been, originally with the publisher, his pet. He really didn't have a job. He was sort of a stooge. He sort of made public appearances and went to journalism schools and wrote the applications for the Pulitzer Prize, that they never got. He was a stooge.

But the publisher took a dislike to the managing editor there. He didn't fire him, left him in his job, but he just didn't like him. And so, this executive editor's job had been vacant for some years. This other guy had retired. And the publisher decided he wanted somebody to run the newsroom, because he didn't like what this other fellow was doing. So that's what he hired me to do. He hired me to come in as the executive editor and run the newsroom.

Well, what he really wanted was a stooge. He wanted to run the newsroom. He just wanted someone to do his bidding in the newsroom. That's why it didn't last more than two years.

DePue: Got fed up and moved where?

Hartley: I moved to Bellevue, Washington. And I have to say, that some of the best newspaper people I have encountered in my entire career worked at the *Blade*. They had terrific reporters and lower level editors.

DePue: Now, we're talking about back in Toledo again.

Hartley: Yeah. The boobs were at the higher levels, because that's what the publisher wanted in those jobs. So, it wasn't without some disappointment that I left there, because I enjoyed working with the people.

I had been attending national editors' organization jobs, positions, ever since I was the editor of Lindsay-Schaub, annual editors meetings we go to. And there were two guys there who I got acquainted with who were editors of newspapers in the west. We would sit around, after a drink or two, at these meetings, and they would tell me about how wonderful it was to work and live in the west. And I said well, "Well, I worked in the west: Twin Falls, Idaho." They all laughed.

DePue: Why, that wasn't the west? (laughs)

Hartley: That was the west, but not their west. (laughs) So, Bob Chandler—a friend of Bill Hornby—who was the owner, publisher and editor of the Bend, Oregon *Bulletin* at the time, said, "You know, if things go bad or something in Toledo, you need to just give me a call, you know, see if we can't find something out in the west for you. We want you to come back."

So, when the thing blew up in Toledo, I picked up the telephone and called Bob. He said, "I'll call you back." And so, he did. He called back a day later, and said, "Send me your resume, and, at the beginning of it, highlight your general management experience, and send it to me as quickly as you can get it to me." Well, in those days, that was by fax. So I faxed it to him. And so, he got it and he called. He said, "Somebody will call you in a couple of days to talk about a job." I said, "Who and where?" He said, "I can't tell you, but they'll identify themselves, and you'll know."

So, a couple of days later, I got this telephone call from a man named John McClelland, who was the owner and publisher of the *Bellevue Journal-American* in Bellevue, Washington. John and his family had owned the paper in Longview, Washington and Port Angeles, Washington, for years. John had started this daily newspaper in the suburbs of Seattle. He had been the publisher for five years, and he wanted to do other things. He wanted a new publisher.

So, the long and short of it was that we got together and liked each other. I had the right background, because he wanted a publisher with a news background, because that's what he was. And so, he hired me as the publisher in Bellevue.

DePue: What was the circulation?

Hartley: Thirty-five thousand, very much like the other papers that I had worked for.

DePue: I would imagine, though, Toledo had a bigger circulation.

Hartley: It did. The *Blade* was almost two hundred thousand.

DePue: So, here's a brutal question for you. You go from Lindsay-Schaub, and you're the editor for the entire chain of newspapers. Then you go to Toledo as the executive editor, and now you're publisher at Bellevue. Are you moving backwards or upwards?

Hartley: (laughs). Well, I thought it was upwards, because now, at that point, I was going to run a whole newspaper. I was going to be in charge of everything, and my ego was sufficient that I thought I could do that. I thought that everything that I had done prior to that had prepared me for that job. And so, I was excited about it. The line authority was so clear, and the people who I

reported to were not hovering over me. They made it clear what they expected from me in running that paper. I had plenty of opportunity to do what I wanted or thought needed to be done there. So, I thought it was a great step forward.

It was a little bit like regaining my comfort zone of the single newspaper, smaller and, like in East St. Louis, competitive with the metros in Seattle. It was about the same size, although a larger staff than there and in Decatur. But the relationship with the people in the office and all was much like I had in those locations. I never had that in Toledo. So, I just felt like that's where I ought to be.

And I liked the fight. We were in a knock-down, drag-out brawl with the two Seattle newspapers for circulation and advertising revenue. We were never going to win that fight, but we had to survive. I loved that competitive fight. And, again, I had an incredibly good staff, particularly on the news side, some really fine people, people who ultimately went to work for all the Seattle papers, (laughs) because they could get more money.

But anyway, it was just right for me, I think. And so, I suppose, maybe at some point… I guess I don't want to say that I would have thought of it as a step down or two steps down, even, because I don't think that was the case. I was delighted to get into general management work. I thought I was ready.

DePue: The way you say that, though, makes me think that, in retrospect, you have some questions or reservations about it.

Hartley: Well, actually, I don't think so. It took me away from the newsroom, as such, but I was a publisher who dabbled in the newsroom, and I dabbled in the editorial department. So, I think some of the newsroom people thought there were getting a guy who would leave them alone, but I didn't. So, I was very much involved and that. But, at the same time, the challenges were really on the business side, in advertising, particularly. So, I spent an inordinate amount of time doing that.

But I'd spent all those years at Lindsay-Schaub in the corporate offices, two doors from the director of advertising, who I thought was just downright brilliant. I learned more from him about advertising than I would ever have learned anywhere else. I didn't feel unfamiliar in that. It was a different step for me.

And, I tell you what I quickly discovered was, that I enjoyed. This was a very political arena. Toledo was too, but the publisher did not allow any political activity by anybody but him.

DePue: When you say political arena, do you mean outside the world of the newspaper, or the newspaper itself?

Hartley: Oh, yeah. It was in the community, in the community and local politics. It was a suburban community, very Republican. The politics was very Republican. The congressperson was Republican, but the county was Democratic, mainly because of Seattle. And there was lots of tension, a lot of political tension, across the Lake Washington between the two areas. And, invariably, because it was big Republican stronghold, the suburbs, it had played out significantly at the state level and gubernatorial politics and legislative politics.

I simply got drawn into that because we were… I didn't get drawn into it; I wanted into it. I welcomed it, in all facets. So, that kept me active, sort of, in the political piece of it, from that standpoint. The the editorial policy of the newspaper was kind of like it was in some of the Lindsay-Schaub places, sort of a Democrat here and a Republican there and so on. But, in the community and with community people and people of influence and so on and so forth, it was pretty Republican. You know, they were decent people. In fact, I found them rather naïve compared to some of the people that I had known in Illinois and so on.

But it was a part of a job. Now, I don't know that it was on other papers out there owned by this company, but it was a very political environment. And so, I didn't feel that I could operate as the publisher there, and sort of the public person for the paper, and not be aware of it and figure out what was happening. It had a lot to do with town politics, development, business, those kinds of things that affected our operation.

DePue: Do you count your five years there as a success?

Hartley: I do. It was also an anomaly. The people who owned the paper and started it five years before I went there had no debt. They had paid cash for everything. They had no bankers hovering over them. They had no debt service they had to pay. So, I came there; that paper was making 5% profit after taxes, and that was plenty for them. They didn't care. They had plenty of money anyway, and they didn't have to go to the bank.

So, when I left there, we were making 20% after taxes. That didn't make any difference to them either. (both laugh) It really didn't. It really didn't. I mean, they were pleased, and I got a nice bonus when those things happened and everything.

But John McClelland, the guy who owned it all, what he wanted to do, he wanted to win prizes for news content. That's what he wanted to win. He was the proudest whenever somebody said, "That's a really great newspaper you have there, and we think you ought to get an award for the best sports section of the year" or whatever it was—which they did. They won a lot of awards. And John, that thrilled him more than anything else. That was because of who he was and because the money didn't mean that much to him. He wanted to make money. He didn't want to lose money.

So, I felt good about that, even if John was sort of indifferent to it. His second in command there, who was the business man, he thought it was wonderful. He was shocked that we were able to make that much money, given the market we were in and so on. And we did it without suffering in any way at the paper. We just simply did more business. So, I felt really good about that.

We started a Sunday paper there. We bought a new color press and paid cash for that. And then, because we had a good solid news product, I had great pride. I only worked there five years before they sold that paper. But I took great pride at what we had accomplished there.

I also knew that the minute that paper was sold, that it wouldn't be the case, because whomever bought it was going to leverage it to the absolute maximum with the banks. They were not going to pay any more cash for that than they had to. Immediately, they would have a debt service load tacked onto that newspaper that would force the newspaper to cut back in the areas that we were able to spend to make it a good newspaper. That's exactly what happened.

DePue: Why did they sell in the first place?

Hartley: They wanted out.

DePue: McClelland wanted out?

Hartley: McClelland wanted out. He also had some internal family issues, but I think he could have solved those if he'd wanted to. I think he was worn out; he was tired. He may have been able to see some other things coming. There were the joint operating agreement in Seattle that was going to change the advertising picture pretty significantly. But, I think we accomplished a lot. But they proved it. Within another five years, that newspaper was a shadow of its former self.

DePue: Let's get caught up on your own personal life. We don't need to spend too much time here, but were you married at the time?

Hartley: Yes. I married when I was in college.

DePue: Well, I know that, somewhere in the process, you got divorced?

Hartley: No.

DePue: Okay. Sorry about that.

Hartley: Same wife today I started out with.

DePue: Okay, and how many kids by this time?

Hartley: Two children: a boy and a girl—a man and a woman. Our son was a journalism graduate from the University of Kansas. Is now the assistant managing editor for technology at the *Detroit Free Press*. And our daughter married a dentist in the Army; he is about to retire after twenty-five years in the Army.

DePue: Well, time does move on, doesn't it?

Hartley: It does, indeed.

DePue: What's your thought about your son going into the family business?

Hartley: Oh, I was really pleased. I tell you what, he told me: he discovered technology on his own. At one time he said, "Dad, I know that you're disappointed that I didn't become an editor or a reporter and that I went in the direction that I did." And I said, "What made you say that? Why would you say that?" He said, "I know you. I know how much you felt about what it was to be in the newspaper business, producing a newspaper. And so I just figured you were disappointed." And I said, "I'm not disappointed in what you do. I'm delighted you're in the newspaper business."

That's really the way I think that I looked at it. He has to use his journalism news background every day, because he's running the technology for a newsroom. So, I think he gets a full dose of all of it.

DePue: Well, this is the kind of question I really love to mine. You spent a lot of years in Illinois, a couple of years in Ohio and then several years in Washington State. The question is, how do they play the game of politics different in those three states.

Hartley: Well, there are some similarities; that's for sure. Ohio politics certainly had its corruption, had its quality issues, over the years. I don't know that it got quite the reputation that Illinois did, but it may have deserved it in some respects. They used to say in Ohio, that if your last name was Brown, you could get elected to anything. And if you go back in political history in Ohio, it's replete with people named Brown that won elective office, from governor to senator to… I mean, all levels. They weren't all related either, that was the other part of it; it was because it was machine driven.

So, Ohio was a machine-driven state. I don't know what it is now. Probably not so much so, but, when I was there it was. We had a publisher who was very political. Northwest Ohio was Democratic. So everything that you wanted in northwest Ohio—if you wanted a medical school or something else—you had to play the Democratic card.

That's what he did, and he was very successful at it. He didn't do anything wrong, I don't think, but it was very political. It was who you knew. I put a statehouse reporter in at that paper while I was there who decided he

wanted to be a real reporter down there in Columbus at the state capitol. And the publisher let me know, right off the bat, that he had the agenda for that.

DePue: When I think of Ohio politics, I think of Cleveland—I could be dead wrong in this, especially back in that timeframe—Cleveland, Democrat, Cincinnati more Republican. You've got these competing centers of power, versus what you got in Illinois with—

Hartley: That's right—

DePue: —Chicago dominating.

Hartley: You did. And you had, as a result, a mix of Democrats and Republicans. But, they all had their own machine. On some things they all worked together, no matter whether they were Democrats or Republicans, to get what they wanted. That was, I think, a factor there. So, different in some respects, but still extremely political.

In Washington State, they had their own brand of corruption out there. They tended to be Democrats; they tended to be state legislators. In fact, one of them got to be speaker of the house. They were essentially bribes and pay-offs. Though it wasn't a political organization situation. These were individuals, and they just happened to be operating at the same time, or almost the same time. And they got caught. But, I used to say that the people in Washington state were too naïve, politically, to indulge in the things that went on in Illinois and Ohio.

They had a history of oddballs in politics, but they didn't have a history of corruption. In fact, they had some real Boy Scouts in Washington politics. Dan Evans is probably the one person who comes to mind. He served three terms as governor, one term as a U.S. Senator, and he's still very active in environmental activities out there and things. He's, sort of, still the fair-haired Boy Scout, even though I think he's in his eighties now.

They had, you know, some rough and tumble senators and so on, but they weren't evil people, and they weren't corrupt. You know, they were political, but not in the hard ball sense, at all. When I was out there, you know, they'd lock horns on some issues; it got pretty tough down at the legislature, particularly, and all. But it wasn't an organization issue. It tended to be more issues than not. I think, since I left there, the Democrats have dominated politics in the state much more than they did when I was there. It was still pretty much balanced and even-handed.

The other part of it was that, in those days, Seattle, they couldn't put together a good political team if they tried. They couldn't dominate anything, unlike Chicago or even Cleveland. They just couldn't make it work. They couldn't get everybody on the same page. Down in Olympia, at the state capitol, Seattle couldn't get anything done. It was really strange to see that.

But I think that's changed in recent time—judging from what my friends tell me out there—that Seattle has much more clout, and the Democrats control almost everything. So, it has changed significantly back there. But I think it's still the same sort of pattern of politics there. I don't want to say it's cleaner. I don't think that's the right word, but the traditions there are not the traditions of Ohio and Illinois. So, they're not living with the traditions and sort of furthering the traditions. They get some bums, just like everybody does and so on. Let me go down to Olympia, for whatever reason, I always felt a little cleaner when I came home than I did when I went to Springfield. (both laugh)

DePue: Okay. Let's move on to the next position then. This is a significant career change for you in 1986. What did you end up doing?

Hartley: (chuckles) They brought in a new team at the newspaper, a new publisher. I had an eighteen month employment contract that the former publisher had worked into the agreement for the purchase, the sale. So, I knew I had a job for eighteen months after the change. I mean, I had a salary. I didn't have a job. The publisher was somebody else, and they weren't going to make up things for me to do. I had an office, and I came to work every day, but I didn't do anything.

So, immediately, they wanted me to start looking for a job, and I did too. My wife and I decided we were not going to jump the next train for the next newspaper. We weren't going to leave there. We were going to stay there.

DePue: Because of the area?

Hartley: Yeah. So, I started thinking about, well maybe I ought to be a consultant of some kind, PR work. You know, I grew up in the era of when newspaper people looked down their nose at public relations people and hated them, mostly because they made more money than they did. And so, it was a real cultural change for me to even think about public relations.

But inevitably, after a summer of working and talking and listening and so on, a man who ran a PR agency in Seattle and was a revered professional and human being in the Seattle area—everybody loved him. His name was Jay Rockey, R-o-c-k-e-y. Jay ran this public relations outfit, and we started talking and talking and talking. We held several meetings. We'd known each other beforehand, and finally, he made me an offer to come to the PR business in Seattle.

I had not a clue what that meant. That was the biggest shift in my thinking, my work habits that I ever went through. I remember, I used to pick up the telephone, and I could call Slade Gorton, a senator from Washington, and get him on the phone in Washington and browbeat him over some issue.

He'd return my call and everything. I called him after I went in the PR business; I never heard from him. You know, the people that I related to and worked with and all in the newspaper business, I was in the PR business; I wasn't in the newspaper business any more. I wasn't the publisher of the local newspaper any more. I was just another consultant, sitting over here. So, I noticed they wouldn't return my phone calls (chuckles).

DePue: Well, isn't this, to a certain extent, still back into the Army days? I got to figure out how to get the General's picture in the paper all the time?

Hartley: That's exactly right. So, anyway, I didn't just start at ground zero; I started below ground in this job. And Jay, bless his heart, he worked. He didn't hire me to teach me how to be a PR guy, you know. This was not on-the-job training for the kind of salary he was paying me. So, I had to do something in a hurry, and I got lucky with a couple of clients.

About three, four, five years later, he decided he wanted to sell out. I was one of the group of five that bought him out, eventually became the CEO of the company. I had a grand time. I had more fun doing that, because what I did was, I did public affairs work. I did governmental affairs; I did lobbying; I did the political side of the business. I grew that part of our agency bigger than it had ever been before, because I loved it.

You know, there was nothing greater than to hop the plane and go back to Washington, D.C. and lobby somebody back there for some client or something. I really enjoyed it. So I had a grand time. I didn't think I could ever do anything that would equal the newspaper business in enjoyment, from a work standpoint. But this did. I did not have a down day in that business; I loved every minute of it. So, again, I just got flat-out lucky, and it worked out great.

DePue: Who were some of your clients?

Hartley: Nordstrom, Microsoft, Boeing. We did a lot of work for local businesses and some businesses that had some problems. Well, I did a lot of business for United Airlines. They used to have a resident lobbyist in Washington state, and they shut down that job. When they shut that down, they hired me. You know, I worked probably 25% of my time for United Airlines.

Then, in 1992, I got a job to help a bunch of local people buy the Seattle Mariners. I went to work for the Mariners doing mostly political work for them to help them build a new ball park. I worked from '92 to '99 for them, almost half-time for them as a consultant. Talk about loving your work. I never had so much fun doing that. But it was all political, local and state, and so anyway—

DePue: Were you keeping scores for the games then? (both laugh)

Hartley: Well, I did, when I was at the game, I always kept score. But things just worked out beautifully. You know, you always have some clients you like better than others and so on. Microsoft was very difficult to work with. They were a tough bunch. Boeing was a tough client.

DePue: Tough because they were demanding, or?

Hartley: Yeah, really demanding and never satisfied, you know. You could bring home the bacon for them, but they didn't say, "Thank you." They said, "Here's your next assignment." But they always paid their bills, and they paid their bills on time. So, you know, we had some deadbeat clients—always have some of those. But the big guys always paid their bills on time.

DePue: Looking at the list here, you've got some heavy hitters here for the northwest.

Hartley: Yeah, and they had the big bank, Washington Mutual, which is no longer existent. Washington Mutual is a big, home-grown bank in Seattle. Our agency had been their outside consultants, PR firm, for years. During the time that I was there, it was always the at least the number two income for our agency. I never worked on that. Other people worked on it.

DePue: Aren't you glad, though, that they weren't your client the last couple years?

Hartley: Yes, my goodness. And it turned out that, about the time that I left there Kerry Killinger—I think his name was, the CEO—dropped the firm as an outside PR company. As much as it hurt at the time, I think they were glad when other things happened.

DePue: Okay. Let's get up to 2000. What happens in 2000?

Hartley: In 2000?

DePue: Maybe it was in 1999.

Hartley: I retired.

DePue: Okay. Was that in conjunction or anything with the business?

Hartley: Well—

DePue: By that time you're a shareholder.

Hartley: I was a shareholder, and I was the CEO. A couple of years before that—actually in '97, I think—I had indicated that, when I was sixty-two, that I intended to step down as the CEO. I had a guy who was really kind of a Co-CEO, who was ready, ten years younger than I and was ready to step in.

I think the assumption was that I would stay there and that I would continue to have clients and work part-time and so on. But I didn't want to do that. I wanted a clean break. I enjoyed the PR business, but I wanted a clean break. So, when I retired we left town, moved to Colorado. So, I never worked a part-time gig. I never did anything after I quit.

DePue: Why did you want to move from the Seattle area?

Hartley: It's a wonderful, wonderful area. In retirement, it would have been not so wonderful. It costs money to live there; there's no question. But the traffic is just terrible. It just stinks there.

DePue: Worse than Chicago and DC?

Hartley: Oh, equal, equal. And, in addition to that, our children and grandchildren were mostly in the Midwest. We always had a devil of a time getting them to come out. They didn't know anybody out there. So, except to come and see us, there was not much incentive for them. So, we wanted to be closer to them. We didn't want to be in their backyard, but we wanted to be closer. That was a major factor, I think, in leaving out there.

So, we decided we wanted to go some place, if it wasn't the Northwest, that it was at least a desirable place. We had spent a lot of time in Colorado on vacations and all. So, it was a natural for us to go there. It was a great decision. We never regretted it. I just knew, you know, that if I stayed there I would be tempted to cling to the PR business. It would be almost impossible to say no and be there physically. I just don't think I could do that, and I didn't want to do that. I didn't want to have to do that. So that's one of the reasons we moved.

And my wife, as much as she loved the northwest, the winters there are pretty grim, and she'd had some difficulty with that. I think she wanted more sunshine. So, that's another reason why we left.

DePue: A little bit more snow, but some more sunshine, too.

Hartley: Yeah, but we don't worry much about that. It melts fast.

DePue: Where in Colorado did you move?

Hartley: Westminster, which is a suburb of Denver, kind of half-way between Boulder and Denver.

DePue: Is the traffic in Denver better than it is in Seattle?

Hartley: Yeah, it's better, but not much. The rush hour doesn't last as long. Rush hour in the Seattle area lasts all day. There's no let up.

DePue: And, as a retired guy, you can avoid the rush hour, I would assume.

Hartley: Yes. (both laugh)

DePue: Well, the other part about moving at that stage in a person's life is you're breaking all those friendship ties that you have in certain communities, as well. Did you find that tough?

Hartley: Yes, I did. We lived almost twenty years in the Seattle area, had a lot of good friends. It was more of an issue for me than it was for my wife. A lot of the friends that we had were friends I made in business, couples, you know. And my wife was part of that. They weren't the kind of friends that she made. I don't know how to explain that. I don't know if that makes any sense. She wasn't unhappy, but a lot of the friends that we had were not close friends of hers. They were my close friends or associates. So, it was tougher for me, I think, to break off that than for her.

But, quite frankly, we knew some people in the Denver area, some old classmates from high school and things like that. So, we picked up with some of them, and then we just made the commitment, from the very beginning, that we were going to work at developing friendships, through a church membership and some things like that. We knew that we were breaking off a lot, and we felt we had to go well more than halfway to create a new social fabric. I think we've succeeded in that, but it didn't happen overnight either.

DePue: Did you join a Presbyterian church, then, in the area?

Hartley: No, through our lives, my wife was Methodist, born [into a] Methodist family. So, when we started out together in Twin Falls, we went to the Methodist church and joined that. Then we moved to Belleville, Illinois, and we joined the Presbyterian Church. And then we moved to Decatur, and we belonged to the Presbyterian Church there, and we moved to Ohio, and we belonged to the Presbyterian Church in Toledo. And we moved to the Seattle area. We didn't join any church there, but we went to a Methodist church because we liked the preacher. Then we moved to Westminster; we shopped all kinds of churches in the suburbs, and we hated them all. I mean, we didn't hate them all, but we were discouraged. I think we spent most of our lives in inner-city churches and all, urban churches. We didn't like suburbs.

We met some friends who introduced us to the Methodist Church, called Trinity United Methodist Church in downtown Denver, and we joined. And that's where we are now.

DePue: So, you do have to do a little bit of commuting on Sunday mornings.

Hartley: Yes. And, you know, we both have held office in the Presbyterian church, both elders in the Presbyterian church. And we've held offices in the

Methodist church wherever we've been. You know, the church structures are different, but the people are pretty much the same.

DePue: Well, your move into Colorado in the 2000 timeframe, it's in connection with your "retirement."

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: Put in quotation marks, because you hardly retired, did you?

Hartley: Well, you know, I did. I retired from my day job—you know, the routine and discipline of work, as such—I retired from that.

DePue: From the 9:00 to 5:00 routine.

Hartley: Yes. So, whatever I did, I did voluntarily and I did because I wanted to do it, and I did it when I wanted to do it.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: That's the difference.

DePue: Well, this might be a good time to take a break, if you need one. If you want to keep plowing on, we certainly can do that.

Hartley: In about an hour I need to retrieve my cell phone and turn it on.

DePue: Okay. Well, let's keep moving then.

Hartley: Good, no problem.

DePue: We are at a different point, even though we've gone through your entire life. We need to back-track now, significantly, because the other parallel career that you've had is as a writer: a writer of books on political history, on the history of Illinois and the history of some other important aspects of the United States. So, we're going to jump way back and talk through your progression in these books.

This is going to take us equally as long to go through this, I think. But let's go back and ask you—now that we're getting into your writing career—in the midst of your career as a journalist, you decided you wanted to write a book on Charles Percy. How did that come about?

Hartley: Chuck, from the time that he went in to the U.S. Senate in '67, was promoted by various interests as a presidential candidate or a vice-presidential candidate. Usually he shot himself in the foot or with some constituency group, and those rumors and gossips came and went and so on. But, by 1972, when he was running for re-election, he looked pretty good. His opponent was

a Chicago congressman who was a friend of the mayor and wasn't going to win, unless Percy keeled over dead.

So, Chuck had the wind at his back and looked pretty decent. He decided, in that timeframe, that he wanted to run for president. I didn't know that, immediately. You know, you kind of, if you're around them long enough, you sort of sense it. He went to the Republican Convention in '72. He was on the Rules Committee, and he was active in some of the stuff going on there. So, I spent quite a bit of time with him. I began to sort of get the feel—you can tell when they're smelling at the White House. He won by more than a million votes in the election, big headwind. He was an anti-Nixon guy; Nixon didn't like him, and he didn't care much for Nixon. So, as Nixon's problems increased, Chuck looked pretty good for not having been a Nixon person.

After that—this was after the election—he told me he was going to form an exploratory committee for the presidency. This was in early '73. And he did. I began to say, I can't remember what the motivation was. I had plenty of work to do. But, I began to think that, if he's going to run for the presidency, I wonder what's been written about him that would tell people what he'd done, where he'd been.

There had been two books written about Chuck: before he was elected to the Senate, one after he lost to Otto Kerner for the governorship in '64 and another one while he was running against Paul Douglas in '66. So, there hadn't been anything written about him of consequence about the time that he'd spent in the Senate and his issues and what he'd done.

So, I thought, well gee, I know a lot about Chuck Percy, interviewed him a lot and so on. Maybe I ought to consider a book. So, I thought, who do I know that has written books? I'll talk to them about it. So, I said, well, Paul Simon has written a lot of books, and he's out of work right now. At that time, he was teaching and living in Springfield.

The other guy that I thought of was Bob Howard, who was, for gosh knows how many years, the Springfield correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*. After that, he was president of the Historical Society, and he wrote, I think still, the best one-volume history of Illinois. And, I got to know Bob in his retirement. [I] didn't know him as a newspaper guy.

So, I went to both of these guys, and I said, "Here's what I'm thinking about; what do you think?" Howard was always encouraging. He thought that journalists were the best writers of history. If they learned how to do it, do it right, they could write history better than historians.

DePue: What does that mean: to do it and to do it right? His perspective?

Hartley: If you learn how to use your sources and how to use end notes and how to document things and you learn that, then the writing of political history comes easy to a journalist. And, it's more readable. This was his idea.

DePue: By definition then, you're going to be writing things that are covering very contemporary issues.

Hartley: Correct. Correct. Although, I think he had gained some major respect for the historian's efforts when he did his history of Illinois. So, I think maybe he had changed his attitude a little bit. But he was always encouraging people, journalists, to write history. Tom Littlewood, who was with the *Sun-Times* for many years in Springfield, then ran the journalism program at the U of I, was one. And Tom wrote some histories. Taylor Pensoneau, was another one that Bob Howard knew and encouraged and others. This was sort of Howard's life pursuit, I think, was to enlarge the group of journalists writing history. It didn't have to be political history, but it had to be Illinois history. So, I got a lot of encouragement from him. He felt that it was a good idea, that it was needed.

Then I went to Paul, who was really in depression after he lost. A year after he had lost that race he was still…

DePue: Paul Simon we're talking about.

Hartley: He was, yeah, he was really still quite depressed at the loss. But he always put on a good face. So, we had a long talk about this. And he essentially agreed with Bob, on a little different tact and so on. But he'd been a practical book writer, and he knew about having to find the publisher and that it was more than just sitting down and writing a book. He said, "I tell you what. You should write a sample chapter or two of what you think this book should be." And he said, "If you do that, I'll read it then critique it and help you with it."

So, I did. I wrote two chapters, or what I thought were two chapters. I sent them over to Paul, and he absolutely ripped it to pieces. He tore it from one end to the other. Of all the editors I'd worked for and edited my stuff, he was the toughest one of the bunch. And he was right on everything. It was a shabby job. But what he did was, he turned in the right direction. He didn't just say, this is dumb, or you shouldn't have said this. He said, "Here's what you should be saying about this." He really helped.

DePue: Were these substantive or stylistic things?

Hartley: These were a combination. He thought I missed the boat on some substance with Chuck, some things that needed to be said. I'm talking to a Democrat. I'm talking to a guy that, ten years later, beat Chuck Percy, you know. But he wasn't running against him then. I never knew—this is the honest truth—I never knew how Paul Simon felt about Charles Percy as a public servant. I never knew that. You know, Chuck had beaten his mentor Paul Douglas. You

know, he had beaten him. And I don't think Paul ever got over that in his life. So, he had some feelings about Percy, but, to my knowledge, it never influenced anything that I was working on. So, it became kind of a working relationship. When on those two chapters—we worked on those—and we got them to the point where he felt that they were good, then he started helping me find a publisher.

It was at that time, Rand McNally was doing more than maps. You know, we think of Rand as a map maker, publisher. But in those days, they had a rather lengthy list of trade publications, trade books: every year, a variety of subject matter, from politics, public policy, but a lot of others, as well. So, you didn't think of them in quite the same way I think we do now. At any rate, he's the one who suggested Rand McNally. I ended up then, convincing them that this was a good book for them to do.

Of course, I hadn't written anything more than just those two sample chapters, and I had a lot of work to do. This was early '74, I guess, or maybe late '73, when I was doing all this. So I still had quite a ways to go. And it was before the Nixon thing blew up completely. So, I dived into that. I went to my boss at Lindsay-Schaub, and I said, "Here's a project that I want to do." I said, "It will not interfere with my day work here. I'm going to work on it on weekends and vacation, at night and whatever. If you think that it would compromise my work, editorially speaking, or writing columns about Chuck or something, I want you to say so now, so that we can make sure the air is clear." And he said, "I don't have any problem with that." So I did it.

DePue: Going into the process, what was your general assessment of the man?

Hartley: Of Chuck?

DePue: Um-hum.

Hartley: For a guy who had been so successful in business and appeared to know how to legislate, for the most part, he was something of an enigma to me. At times, he seemed so naïve. He really seemed just downright naïve. He had political people around him who were smart people and experienced people, but, you know, he kind of struck me as sort of given to fancy, sort of coming up with something and saying something or coming up with an idea that was so off the wall, that it just didn't make any sense at all. It just didn't come together with some other things that I knew about him.

And so, I felt that part of what this book had to do was to paint an accurate picture of him. I mean, if there were contradictions, it had to say what they were. If he got involved in some issues, as he did with public housing, when he running against Paul Douglas and then with Dirksen later, and so on, then you had to spell it out as to why he took some of the positions he did, so that you'd try to clarify what this person was. I found out the

toughest task. You know, I could sit down and write politics, political stuff forever, but that wasn't the whole story. That was the difficulty in his image and actions and so on, was that you couldn't simply apply strict politics to Chuck Percy.

DePue: As we go through these various books, since there's a collection of your books that deal with these major political figures—I don't know if this is going to be useful—but I decided to break this up and have you talk about the man and the politician and the statesman in each one of these. I'm sure, in most cases, you can't really divide those things up. But let's start with Percy here and ask about some of the things in the background and whether or not, or how much you think these things affected who he was, the politician that you knew in the '60s and '70s.

So, he grows up in the Depression and, like almost everybody in the Depression, things aren't easy. His father's business goes bankrupt. He's unemployed for a while. They're certainly not destitute; they're not unlike tens of millions of other Americans. But do you do think that experience affected him?

Hartley: Absolutely. I think it produced a level of drive in Chuck, to not let something like that happen to him, that it made him the CEO of Bell & Howell. It made him the heir apparent of the founder of Bell & Howell. It pushed him into an environment where he was the youngest, least experienced person, but maybe the brightest person.

DePue: He was this wonder kid in the American business community.

Hartley: He was. And he was good at it. I always felt this was not a phony situation. This wasn't a case of elevating someone because you liked them. They elevated him to this job because he was good and because he was going to make him some money, the owner. I think this came out of his background, out of his experiences with his family. You know, this kid had businesses going on the side when he was teenager. You know, one of those stories that, I wanted to sit down and find out they were false. I wanted to prove that somebody made up these stories, his PR guy or something. And they were all true. They were all true.

So, he was an incredible businessman and an achiever, just amazing achiever, focused. He tried to bring all of that to politics, and it took awhile for him to learn that he couldn't do all of that in politics, that he couldn't snow everybody with his smartness and brilliance. They weren't just going to keel over and kiss his feet because they thought he was the next coming. It doesn't work that way, and he had to learn that the hard way. I think he learned it, in part, he became friendly with Dwight Eisenhower toward the end of Eisenhower's presidency.

DePue: Eisenhower liked to surround himself with these successful businessmen.

Hartley: He did, absolutely did. And he encouraged Chuck. Yet, the people around Eisenhower, who were political people, I think, began to educate Percy, tried to educate him, tried to break down some of this wonder kid thing. I'm not sure they succeeded.

Then he ran for governor, and he got clobbered. He didn't get clobbered, but he lost. I think he thought he was going to win. I don't think there's any doubt; he was totally confident of his ability on a personal level, not any other level.

DePue: Well, you mentioned the naïveté. You get into the running for governor in Illinois in the mid-'60s, you're running straight into the Chicago Democratic machine. Was that part of his naïveté? He didn't understand how that worked?

Hartley: Yes, that and the other part of it was that he thought, because he was a Republican and a business Republican, that everybody downstate was going to think he was wonderful. You know, the downstate Republicans were split, and always were split over Chuck Percy. You know, they thought he was too snooty. They thought he thought he was better than they were. When he came to campaign, that he didn't talk about the issues they were interested in. So, there was always this feeling about… But I don't think Percy expected that. He didn't expect that. He thought he'd make them swoon, just like he had the people in the board room. This is a man who, if he had a doubt in the world about his own ability, nobody knew about it, because he was supremely confident.

DePue: Was there some resentment among some Republican circles that he wasn't Everett Dirksen, this classic politician?

Hartley: There may have been some of that, but I think it was more that he had never worked at the grassroots. I think it was more that he doesn't know how we feel in Macon County or Jackson County or wherever. He doesn't know what it's like to live in Carbondale or rural Illinois or something. He comes in here with all this high faluting business experience. I think that hurt him more than the Dirksen comparison.

DePue: Let's talk a little bit then, about his political philosophy.

Hartley: I think it was a philosophy in movement. He ran again, when he ran in the primary in '64 against Bill Scott. Bill Scott was the hard core conservative, so Percy had to be something else. He tried to come across as a moderate guy, a reasonable guy. And, of course, Bill got dirty and tried to…I like Bill Scott, but he really turned…I think Percy really found out what it's like to run in a party primary, against somebody who really doesn't like you and wants to beat you. I think he learned a lot of lessons in the Bill Scott thing.

DePue: That suggests that Percy, at that point in his development, wasn't necessarily philosophically motivated as much as he was ambitious and wanted to move up. And the Republican Party was the avenue for him to do that.

Hartley: Absolutely correct. I think he considered himself a progressive businessman. In business, applying a business, not progressive politically, but progressive business, that was part of his reputation that he made. So, I think he wanted to apply that as a Republican candidate for office, and it didn't work. (chuckle)

DePue: Let me read a quote I got from the book. This is a quote from Colonel Robert Ingersoll, and it's describing how he thinks Percy sees himself. I think this is what it is. "I am a Republican, I tell you. There is room in the Republican air for every wing. There is room on the Republican sea for every sail. Republicanism says to every man, let your soul be like an eagle; fly out into the great dome of thought, and question the stars for yourself." Now having read that, I'm thinking, well, how is that going to sell in southern Illinois?

Hartley: (laughs) Well, I think you've nailed it. You know, Chuck was in a different world, and it took him quite a while to figure that out or figure out what to do about it. I mean, he had advisers who were telling him what he had to do. But Chuck Percy had a personal habit that really irritated people. If he was seated here today as a candidate for public office, and you asked him a question about an issue, he would start responding, and before he was done, he would have his eyeballs focused on the ceiling. His head would go back, and you'd feel like that Chuck was in a different world, that he didn't know where he was and so on. And it really angered people.

I remember that from when I interviewed him for the book. I spent many hours with him, taped interviews with him, and I found him doing that. I finally just realized that that was the way he did it. It didn't affect what he had to say, you know; he said something. But, if you got to watching his eyeballs or his head tilt or something, you had the feeling that he really wanted to be somewhere else. I think that was a feeling a lot of people had throughout his political career, that he was disconnected from them. I don't think he was. I asked his aides, his political people, I said, "What is he doing here? Can't you get him to stop that?" And they said, "No, we can't." (both chuckle) They said, "We tried. We tried some hand signals and some things like that with him."

DePue: Would he do that on the stump, as well, when he was out there campaigning?

Hartley: Well, if he gave a speech, no. But the minute that somebody started asking him questions, or the conversation got into a smaller group or something, then…

DePue: Or in debate, perhaps?

Hartley: Yes, he had a tendency to sort of fade in and out in debates. But, you know, I remember some of those debates that he did with Douglas in '66, and they were some of the best debates I have ever heard. Those two guys tackled real issues, and Percy was very good. He was as good in those debates as I saw him anywhere in a debate format. I mean, that was his toughest race up until Paul Simon. But he rose to that occasion. That was the focused Chuck Percy, the guy who had conquered the politics, or at least to the extent that he had. But it took him a while to get there.

And he was still, until the last time I saw him, which was in Seattle many years ago, after he was out of office, he was still the same Chuck Percy. He was still the same individual. He still had the same characteristics of talking, of speaking, of speaking off the cuff at a meeting, still looked at the ceiling. (chuckle) He was the same person. I never felt that the man, Chuck Percy, the person, changed all that much, throughout the political time and after.

He changed politically, and he changed in some other ways, but not as a human being. He was always a sympathetic, interested human being. I never spent a conversation with him that he didn't ask about my family; he didn't ask about my wife; he always seemed to be interested in… The same characteristic, by the way, that Paul Simon had. When I was going to be out of a job with Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers, Chuck called me up on the phone when he heard it, and he said, "I know you're going to be looking for work, and maybe in something that isn't newspapers. If I can give you a recommendation, do anything to help you out, let me know." I wasn't writing editorials anymore about him. I don't think that was gratuitous at all. I think that was Chuck Percy.

DePue: Well, let's break down his political positions to a certain extent. Where would you put him in social issues?

Hartley: I think he was left of center, socially. He was a Christian Scientist. I think that that had an impact on his look at social issues and concern for people and so on and so forth. I don't there's any doubt about that. I think it was when he ran into the political pieces of some of that, that he sort of appeared to be wishy-washy, or he appeared to, maybe, have backed off an issue. But, at the core level, I think he was left of center. I think he was not a social conservative, by any means. I don't think he was even close.

DePue: Where would he have been on abortion?

Hartley: Well, my feeling is that Chuck was probably a live and let live kind of person on abortion. I don't know that he ever had a hard core position, or if he did, I don't remember it or don't recall it. It wasn't an issue. I think he didn't look at it as a—what do I want to call it? I think he saw that, if that were necessary to happen for somebody's quality of life and so on and so forth, that that was

okay. I suspect that he would not have wanted his children, his daughters, to have abortions, but I don't think he was the kind of person to make that a public issue.

DePue: I know you address this in the book: his positions in a couple of the appointees for the Supreme Court that Nixon made, and he had two that were challenged.

Hartley: Yeah. He was against Haynsworth, and he was, you know—

DePue: Carswell

Hartley: Carswell, yeah.

DePue: Both of them, he was against?

Hartley: Yeah, he was against Carswell. And Percy, on a lot of those issues instigated by Nixon and all… You know, Percy did not like Nixon. He did not like him. I think it was hard for Charles Percy to not like somebody. I think he was…

DePue: I'm assuming this is more personal than political.

Hartley: I think it's a combination. I think that he just didn't respect him. I think that that may have even dated back to the Eisenhower relationship, and he saw what Nixon was like in that environment. I don't think… He was never a Nixon person, ever. And I think that Nixon was never a Percy person, either. So, it was mutual; I don't think there is any question about that. But there were a lot of things that I think Republican conservatives—in those days and all—went along with Nixon on that Chuck just didn't. It just wasn't his thing.

The other thing that I would say about his, sort of, position on issues and all, he wasn't bombastic. As he got on the foreign relations committee and so on, he got into some foreign situations, where he stuck his neck out more than he ever stuck his neck out on domestic things. He was never a kind of person who went looking for a fight on domestic issues. He'd take a position.

He and Adlai Stevenson got along amazingly well. I say amazingly, because they're different people. They may have had personal wealth and things like that, but they were really different personalities. And to get them together—as I often did when I was in Washington—in the same room together and talking about things, you know, I was amazed at how compatible they were. They took different approaches to analysis and all of that, but they often came out the same place.

DePue: Well, when he first got to the Senate, the issue on foreign affairs was very much Vietnam, and he was at odds with both Johnson and Nixon on that, was he not?

Hartley: Yes, he was. Again, he wanted out of that. I think he wanted us to be out of Vietnam. That didn't mean that he blessed or embraced the protests. I think he tried to put it on a more intellectual level than that. But I never doubted that he wanted out of Vietnam, and that he thought he could reason with people. This is another aspect of Percy.

You know, I think he thought he was smart enough and bright enough and aware enough that he ought to be able to talk people out of trouble. He ought to be able to reason with them, and it got him in a lot of trouble. (laughs) Many people wouldn't listen to him.

DePue: The other area would be fiscal issues.

Hartley: Well, you know, I think one of the issues that really made Illinois Republicans unhappy with him was, when he first went to the Senate he was on the Appropriations Committee—which was a real plum to get on—and he dropped it. He changed it. He went to the Foreign Relations Committee, which didn't exactly ring bells in southern Illinois. And the old practical Republican pols [politicians] thought, god damn, here's our chance to get some real stuff from Washington—

DePue: Bring home some bacon.

Hartley: Bring home some bacon. And then this guy turns around and goes over to the Foreign Relations Committee, you know. I just think didn't interest him. That did not interest him. He may have understood that it was important, but it didn't interest him. So, if something didn't interest him, he didn't mess with it much. While he had to take some positions on some finance issues over time—had to vote, and so on—those were not his gut issues. When he was on the stump, he sort of talked in platitudes about inflation and things like that. You didn't get a fiscal plan from Chuck Percy. Even though he was a businessman and certainly had done plenty of business plans and everything, at the government level, that just wasn't his thing.

DePue: Was that, in part, because he saw being on the Foreign Relations Committee as a better place to be, if you had national ambitions?

Hartley: Well, you know, he never said that. I suppose that could have been part of it. But he was interested in it. He was interested in foreign affairs. And, when he dabbled in it, he didn't always do very well, but that didn't stop him. He did have some real thoughts about foreign relations and foreign affairs. I think it was a prestige thing to begin with, with him. The Appropriations Committee was slogging dog work, you know. I mean, you had to get in there and mix it up with all these people and figure out who is going to get this money and so on. Chuck Percy wanted to be above that. That was okay for some other people, but not for him. So, the Foreign Relations Committee was a prestige committee. This was high level stuff, you know. The fact that they didn't have

any influence over much was beside the point. At the outset, I think that's where he was going.

DePue: Well, my guess is that the general public really couldn't care much which particular committee he ended up in, but the party regulars in the Republican Party cared a lot.

Hartley: Yeah, they did. I remember a guy in Decatur by the name of Skinny Taylor. Skinny was not skinny, but that's what they called him; apparently he had been at one time. Skinny was the Republican Party head in Macon County forever. He was a personal friend of Percy's, and he was the person who urged Percy—one of them—who urged him to get in to politics. He campaigned throughout downstate for him. He was a real Percy believer. He knew all of Percy's problems. He heard all of them. He heard all the pols take him aside and say, "Why are you supporting this guy? He doesn't know how we feel, He doesn't know what our problems are." He confronted all that, and he never flagged a bit when it came to support of Chuck Percy. He thought he was good, a good man and good for the job and good for the party. But the local pols didn't.

(left-right), Sen. Charles Percy talks with Decatur Herald and Review *editor, Bob Hartley and H. G. "Skinny" Taylor, Macon County Republican Party*

I remember Skinny telling me, when he switched this committee assignment he didn't tell Skinny that he was going to do it. And Taylor was really mad at him for doing it. But he said, "That's Chuck. That doesn't surprise me." He said, "It was stupid; he should have kept the assignment. He said it would have made a lot of things easier for him with the party people and so on." But it wasn't Chuck.

And he said, "If he'd kept in that job, he'd have been unhappy, and he wouldn't have done a very good job with it. And so, we probably are better off that he didn't take it. But it killed him with a lot of people."

DePue: Let's go back. There's one aspect of Senator Charles Percy that you can't not talk about, and its—

Hartley: (chuckles)

DePue: You know what I'm going to get to here. It's the murder of his daughter at the very eve of that first election that he wins.

Hartley: Right.

DePue: In '66.

Hartley: His daughter, Valerie, yes. You know, a lot of people and a lot of analysts and all have thrashed that over and over and over, as to what affect that had on the campaign.

As I recall, prior to the murder, they were about even, Douglas and Percy. Percy was running a good race against the incumbent.

DePue: This would have been Douglas' fourth term, if he won?

Hartley: He was running for a fourth term, yeah. Douglas was still a good campaigner and well known and so on. I think that the folks who were putting down their bets and all were still betting on Douglas pulling it out. It changed the whole dynamic of the election.

First of all, Douglas, out of respect for Chuck—and I think there was no question about that—quit campaigning. I think he quit for almost a month. I mean, it was several weeks that he said, "I'm not going to campaign. I'm not going to run against this guy." Of course, he had his ads out there and everything, but I think it was a sincere gesture by Douglas. And, of course, Percy wasn't campaigning either. But the grieving was very public. So every time Percy showed up there was a photographer to take a picture of the grieving candidate father.

DePue: When you say it was very public, it wasn't that he was being blatant about making it public; it's just, that's the way it worked out?

Hartley: No. As a matter of fact, I think there were some people that accused him of doing just that, of making it public. But, as I reviewed all of that and looked at it, his public appearances were related to public aspects of the case. There may have been some hyping of it, but I think it was the natural… He was a public person. He was a candidate for office. He didn't go into hiding. When he met with public officials, law enforcement officials, there was always a photographer there, when he came out after a meeting with the sheriff or something like that. Of course, Chuck looked like he was grieving.

But I think it's tough for people to conclude absolutely, in any absolute way, that this turned the election to Chuck. They still campaigned. There was still campaign time, after the moratorium. So, I suppose there might have been some people who felt sorry for him and voted for him, but that doesn't strike me as Illinois politics much. I mean, there may be a sympathy vote out there, but I would say it doesn't amount to much.

DePue: You mean Illinois voters tend to be more pragmatic than that?

Hartley: Yeah. I mean, they may have felt bad for him and so on, but I think it's pretty hard to translate that into votes. Nobody has been able to do it. You know, it's always good stuff to write about and talk about, but he won. So, as a consequence, the conclusion was, in a lot of circles, that he won because of the episode. Nobody can prove it one way or another, so it just sort of hangs there.

But I don't think there is any question that the family went through some tough times as a result of that, as a family and all. But politically, I guess I'm sort of one who's sort of disinclined to give that a lot of weight in the final vote.

DePue: You published this book in 1975, in the midst of his senatorial career. At that point in time, did you think that there is a chance in 1976?

Hartley: No, it was over for him. The minute that Nixon resigned and Jerry Ford was put in as president—

DePue: Strictly a matter of timing then, in that respect.

Hartley: Yeah. You know, it was over for Chuck. They all knew that Jerry was going to run in '76. So, whatever support Chuck thought he had or maybe had had, it went away. Well, first of all, Jerry Ford was…although a conservative guy, he appeared more moderate, I think, than not, in many respects. In that time, when he was the president, I think he did appear more moderate. Chuck had no illusions about that. He acknowledged that he'd disbanded his committee very shortly after Nixon left.

DePue: What I gather, he had a great respect for Gerald Ford.

Hartley: He was a believer in Jerry and campaigned hard for him and worked hard to get the delegate votes for him, along with Dick Ogilvie. The two of them, Ogilvie and Percy, were really the ones who set Ford up for the Illinois delegation vote.

Otherwise, Reagan would have taken the Illinois votes. They beat Reagan to the punch, frankly. Ogilvie was really the one who did it, but Percy was with him. I think one of the reasons why Ford won the nomination was because he was able to get the Illinois votes.

DePue: Well, the first couple of that you wrote, you wrote in the midst of the individual's political careers, Percy, and then, we'll talk about Jim Thompson here, probably tomorrow.

But that's certainly not the end of Percy. I'm sure that you were watching his career very closely, and you probably had plenty of opportunities to interview him and to analyze what was going on.

Talk about what happened then to Chuck Percy's political career, post 1976. Well, when was the second election that he won, '72 or '78?

Hartley: '78.

DePue: Post '78.

Hartley: Well, two things happened, at least two, to Chuck. One was his relationship with Ronald Reagan, which, of course, Reagan wasn't the president until '81. But nonetheless, the campaign and all, Percy was not a Reagan person. He may have chosen badly in that respect—

DePue: But, even though he's not a Reagan person, he's in the majority party now.

Hartley: That's true. And that may have influenced him somewhat, but he made no bones about it, that he wasn't in agreement with a lot of Regan's approach.

He had come out of that '78 election by the skin of his teeth, so he wanted to exercise his independence. I think that was really important, that he didn't look like he was anybody's pet. So, he took on some issues—not the least of which was the Middle East—and said some things that got him in some trouble with the Jewish population, particularly in Chicago.

So, I think he was going to replay the Nixon years. I think he was, by god, going to be Chuck Percy. And even if Ronald Reagan was the president, it didn't make any difference. He was going to be Chuck Percy, just like he was with Richard Nixon, not that they compared the two that way. But, I just think that was the template for him.

The second thing that happened was, after Reagan was elected, Percy then became the chair of the Foreign Relations Committee. The expectation was that he would adopt most of the Reagan—

DePue: He's going to be the cold war warrior?

Hartley: Yeah. He was going to be Reagan's guy out there, as the head of… Well, that was not Chuck Percy's idea, at all. In fact—

DePue: Could he ever have forced himself to say the phrase, "the evil empire"?

Hartley: (chuckling) No, I don't think so. I don't think so. So Chuck, as he had done before, he just charted his own course. He went to Russia, and he went to the Mideast. You don't see much of that these days, the chairman of that committee doing that. But he did that, because he thought he was the leader of the Republican Party. I think Chuck really believed this. And this was his chance; this was his opportunity to really influence something, and that foreign affairs was his game. He had played that game then for ten years or so in the Senate. Of course, behind that were all of these Reagan people, running

around, undercutting him and trying to make him look silly and stupid, because he wasn't doing what the president, or the president's people, wanted him to do.

That came back to bite him in '84 election, big time, because Paul Simon wanted to paint Percy as this Reagan guy. That was part of it. He was the Reagan guy. So, Percy had to figure out how to keep some distance with Reagan and, at the same time, appear to be a team player. So, he makes the statement that Ronald Reagan is my president—something like that—he made in the campaign. And, you know, Simon made him eat those words before the campaign was over.

Chuck couldn't figure out how to appear loyal, be a loyal Republican in the Reagan years, and, at the same time, be Chuck Percy. He couldn't do it.

DePue: There are a couple of things I don't understand. And we're getting close to the time we need to finish this off. But, 1984 is a landslide year for Ronald Reagan. He wins the state of Illinois and top of almost every other state in the country, except one, I believe, Massachusetts.

Hartley: Absolutely.

DePue: So, why does that not play to Chuck Percy's benefit?

Hartley: Well, I think that, up until that election, Chuck had always done fairly well with the Jewish people in Chicago.

DePue: A traditionally Democratic voting block, was it not?

Hartley: That's right. But he had some strong business associates and former business associates in that community. There was a woman that I met who lived on the north part of the city, in that essentially Jewish area, who is Jewish. She was very close to Chuck. She worked with her people, with her friends and her associates and neighbors and everything for Chuck, and was very effective, because she had figured out some things that meant a lot to those people, that he had supported.

Well, you know, then he shot his mouth off about…that the Jews weren't always right and that, maybe the Palestinians had something that they ought to be considering. And it just killed him with those people.

So, Simon benefitted, not just from that, but he benefitted from the Jewish money. So the money that had gone from the Jewish people to Percy, switched over and went to Simon. And the national Jewish organizations really came out against Percy, I mean big time, publicly. So, Paul benefitted from all of that. Chuck, then, with the business about Reagan, and not good standing with Reagan and the Reagan supporters, and his long, long history

with the Republican workers and doers, who always had second thoughts about him…

DePue: Were lukewarm about him—

Hartley: …all played into that. The Reagan presidential thing, I say, just had nothing to do with that election, I think. It was amazing that Simon was able to pull it off, but Chuck made so many mistakes. He acted like he was brain dead. He didn't act like he'd learned anything in politics, and he knew how to handle anything. Simon had some smart guys working for him, and they cleaned his clock.

DePue: Well, the conventional wisdom, I believe, about that particular election, was—and when you're looking for conventional wisdom, you're looking for that one thing that changed everything for the politician—it was AWACS [Airborne Warning And Control System]. It was Percy coming out in favor of the sale of AWACS to Saudi Arabia.

Hartley: Yeah, that was part of it, yeah. As I say, there was a string of things that… You know, Chuck saw himself as a reasonable person. You know, he thought he could see the complexities of the Middle East, simply, easier than other people. He simply was not able to absorb that as part of the political picture for him. He just couldn't do it.

DePue: I want to read a couple of quotes here, in finishing up on Chuck Percy. One is out of the book, *Charles H. Percy, a Political Perspective*. The other one is from your book on all of the senators of Illinois.

So, here's the first quote. This is what critics thought of him: "that he had a self-serving agenda that did not include the interests that he represented in Illinois." Do you think he saw himself in that respect?

Hartley: No, no. I think he thought he could convince people that he was working for them.

DePue: Do you think, personally, that was an accurate statement, that he was self-serving, that he wasn't serving the interests of Illinois?

Hartley: No, I don't; I don't. I didn't come away from my contact with him that way at all. I think, unfortunately, he left that impression, and his opponents made the most of it. But I don't think that was Chuck Percy.

DePue: Okay. Here's how you summed it up in 2003. So, you had, well, three decades, practically, to reflect on his career, after that time. "Percy fought for acceptance, understanding and even sympathy. He wanted to be remembered as a political leader at the highest levels of the federal government. Colleagues, enemies, friends and helpful critics have denied him the full

measure of his wishes, and instead, have pronounced his period in the Senate serving as disappointing."

Hartley: Yeah. I think that's true. I think it's a lasting legacy or condemnation or whatever you want to say about Charles Percy. If you believe at all in that there is something to be said for a moderation in politics and reason and trying to find a way to get something done and a good head, a good thought per person, it's hard to beat Charles Percy.

Unfortunately, I think the conclusion about him is dead wrong. I mean, I don't think that that's right. He made a lot of mistakes, and he was insensitive to some things, politically, that he shouldn't have been, and he tried, but didn't fix them. But, in terms of his service and the service in his time in the U.S. Senate and the issues that he tackled and all, as I have reviewed those, as I have in recent years, I come away with a much stronger feeling about him than I did at the time.

Senator Charles Percy, second from left, visited with newspaper editors while on a campaign swing in 1972. Ralph Johnson, left, was editorial page editor for Lindsay-Schaub. Bob Hartley, to Percy's left, was editor of the Decatur papers at the time.

DePue: Well, that might be a real good place. Any final words on Chuck Percy?

Hartley: No, not really. I'm distressed to hear that he's not well and all of that, because he was such a physical specimen and, you know, swam every day and so on. I'm saddened that, mentally, he's not well.

DePue: Tomorrow, then, we get to pick up a quite different kind of political personality, in the person of Jim Thompson. So, I'm looking forward to that.

Hartley: (Laughs)

DePue: There's some colorful politicians to be talking about tomorrow.

Hartley: Yes, we will.

DePue: Okay. Thank you, Bob.

Hartley: Yes.

(End of interview #2, #3 continues)

Interview with Robert Hartley

HIS-A-L-2010-043

Interview # 3: September 30, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Thursday, September 30th, 2010. My name is Mark DePue, Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. This is the beginning of the third session with Bob Hartley. How are you this afternoon, Bob?

Hartley: I'm well. Thank you, Mark.

DePue: Both Bob and I have presented this morning at the Conference on Illinois History. So, we already have a good start for this morning. You gave an excellent presentation, a paper that you presented on John Stelle.

Hartley: Thank you very much. I resurrected John Stelle for the program, and I enjoyed every minute of it.

DePue: Well, he's one of the more obscure governors that Illinois has had in the last century, and I don't know that he should be. So, why don't you take about two minutes to tell us about John Stelle's career.

Hartley: I think the lasting reputation of John Stelle—who served ninety-nine days as governor after the death of Henry Horner, in 1940—I think his lasting reputation is framed by those ninety-nine days, plus oh, maybe two years of serving as lieutenant governor to Horner.

They were antagonists, politically and personally. They fought openly and didn't like each other very much. When Horner died and Stelle became the governor, the first thing he did was to wipe out all that he could of the memory of Henry Horner and the people who worked there. I think that is his lasting legacy in Illinois history. What he did for the next twenty years is really lost in the dust bin of Illinois history. I think the historians have sort of

scratched him off as a poor governor of a political operative and not worth spending any time on. So, I spent some time on him.

DePue: Well, the thing that I was really surprised at, when you were discussing him, is his central role in what became known as the GI bill. There's few pieces of legislation in the last half century that are more important than that.

Hartley: It is well documented in the archives of the American Legion in Indianapolis, in newspaper articles that were written by William Randolph Hearst's reporters that he assigned. He was a supporter of the legislation, and he assigned them. And he paid all of the expenses of everybody who had to go to Washington to work on this legislation, including John Stelle. For that, they let his reporters have access to all of their meetings and sessions. Then those were published in the Legionnaires' Magazine. So, the documentation of John Stelle's role in all of that is well documented. It just hasn't been widely circulated.

DePue: Well, that's the role of the historian, to expand our knowledge and give us insights in things that we otherwise would be missing. Again, that is a hugely important piece of legislation.

But where we left off yesterday, we had gotten you through your journalistic career and now are talking about your career as an author. Those two careers are kind of paralleling each other for the first few books that you've written. We talked, last time, about your book on Charles Percy. So today, let's start off with Big Jim Thompson of Illinois.

Hartley: Yes. Well, I used to tell people who said, "Why did you write a book about Jim Thompson?" I told them that I wrote a second book to prove that the first one wasn't a fluke.

DePue: (laughs) And here's one that you published in 1979. So, in the midst of his career as governor.

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: In fact, towards the beginning of it.

Hartley: Yes. The similarity in that and the Percy book is that the word was out and around in those days, after Thompson had won reelection, particularly in'78, that he wanted to be president, or he wanted to be considered for it, or he wanted to run for it, or whatever. He was getting the great mention, as they used to call it. So, that being one of the reasons why I was interested in Charles Percy before his failed run, that was one of the reasons I wanted to write about Thompson. Again, no one had written anything about Thompson or about his…even about his legal career in newspaper…nothing lengthy.

So, I tried it out with my publisher at Rand McNally who had done the Percy book, and the editor there, who became a great friend of mine, Steve Sutton. He tried it out with his people, and they said, "Let's go for it." So, I thought, well, now let's see; where do I start with Jim Thompson?

Well, a colleague of mine, who had for many years been the editor of the *Champaign Urbana Courier*—Bob Sink was his name—Bob had stepped down as editor over there and had gone to work for me as a sort of investigative/feature writer for all of the Lindsay-Schaub newspapers. He went up and, for example, he covered the Otto Kerner trial for us, for our papers. He had been interested in Thompson, and he had created generated a huge newspaper clipping file on Thompson, dating back to when he was a U.S. Attorney.

So, when I was talking to him about doing something about Thompson, he said, "Here, let me go get my file for you." So, he turned all of those newspaper clippings that he had taken, over to me. That sort of was a jump starter for getting into this. The problem with contemporary writing of that nature is that, first of all, the subject is living and, secondly, the subject is in office and, thirdly, the subject is watching very carefully what gets written about him. That was true with Charles Percy, and it was true with Jim Thompson.

DePue: As I know as an historian—as an oral historian, interviewing people—one of our rules is that we generally wait until a politician's career is over, because other people that you talk to about them will be guarded and rather jaded in their comments.

Hartley: Absolutely. Absolutely. I had learned that lesson, if that's what it was, with the Percy book. And I knew this would be the case with Thompson.

DePue: We have a little bit of housekeeping that I forgot. So, this is going to be very disruptive, but I know you wanted to make a couple of comments about yesterday's discussion.

Hartley: I did. When I was talking about how I happened to end up moving from Toledo to Bellevue, Washington, to work in 1980, I said that the tip I got about the job that was available was from Bill Hornby, the editor of the *Denver Post*. Actually, it was Bob Chandler, who was a friend of Bill Hornby's and a friend of mine, who was then the owner and publisher and editor of the Bend, Oregon *Bulletin*. The reason why that is important, other than being correct, is that Chandler was a very close friend of the man who hired me, John McClellan. So, his reference to John, of me and all, helped that come about. And Bill Hornby—Bill is still living; Bob is not—they were both very helpful to me though my newspaper career. So, it was easy to get the names mixed up.

DePue: Okay. Well, I'm glad you did that. Being the true journalist that you are, you always have to go back and correct the record, if there's been an error made.

Hartley: That's right. I erased that. (both laugh)

DePue: Okay. In the transcript, we'll be able to go back and get that corrected at the first point in time, so that's part of it.

Let's get back to Big Jim Thompson. How well did you know him when you were writing this book?

Hartley: Well, I knew him as well as I suppose any editor in Illinois, not better. Thompson, as a candidate, was a very open and forthcoming person. He didn't have much to say, because he hadn't been elected to anything before. But, when he would come to Decatur or come for our editor's meetings or as a candidate and so on, you know, he was just talkative. He liked to talk. He was very friendly, so everybody sort of felt like they knew him, whether they did or not.

I think, when I really sat down and started looking at this book possibility, I realized that I had an awful lot of work to do, because, while I knew something of his campaigns and what he had done, very briefly, in two years in government, I had very little knowledge and background on all of the time, from his graduation from law school, up until he ran for office.

You know, it was newspaper stuff, and it was always a lot of commentary about his prosecution of Otto Kerner, former governor, and things like that. But I just didn't feel good about that section. So, I knew I was going to have to dig into his past. And the only way I knew how to do that, was to talk to his friends and his colleagues, former colleagues, and so on. Knowing just what you said a minute ago, that that's full of danger in doing that; I didn't really have much choice.

I, fortunately, came across some people, including a mentor of Thompson's, a legal mentor, when he was an assistant state attorney and so on. And he was very willing to talk about, and I thought openly, about Thompson's beginnings in law and how he got interested in federal law and how he was recommended for the U.S. Attorney job and by whom—Chuck Percy was one of them; there were others—why they chose him and did not choose certain other people.

So, I began to piece together the background that I felt was necessary as a prelude to the public part of it. So, when I finally ended up—and that included spending a lot of time in Chicago—talking to his former colleagues there, and so on, some of whom I felt were pretty candid, I knew the limits; I knew how far I could take them, without getting a recorded announcement from them. But they were very helpful. So, at the time that I was ready to write this story, I felt pretty confident of that.

There was a missing piece, though, and the missing piece was Thompson, his own words for how things were done and why and when and so on. So, I told him what I was doing. I told him I was writing a book about him. I said I would like to sit down and tape record some conversation about his background and past, not so much about two years as governor, but before that. He said, "Okay." I remember it; there wasn't a hesitation. He didn't say, "Well, let me think about it" or "I need to ask somebody" or anything. He said, "Okay, when do you want to do it?"

So, I gave him a proposed schedule. He wanted to do it at night in the mansion in the evening, two-hour sessions. He said, "Propose a schedule." So, I proposed a schedule for, I believe, five sessions. He cut that back to four and agreed to the schedule and the timing and everything.

We met in a very small room in the mansion, almost kind of a…Well, it wasn't the library; it wasn't the library room. It was just a small room. It looked like a place that the governor went off to scratch his head or something. He talked for the tape recorder, for what amounted to about eight hours.

DePue: Where are those tapes now?

Hartley: They are a part of a collection for that book that I gave to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

DePue: So, they are upstairs.

Hartley: They are.

DePue: Excellent. We need to get them digitized then.

Hartley: They are up there. It was also very difficult to transcribe. It was a voice thing on the recording, but I had to have that. I mean, I really don't know what I would have done without it. Of course, I would have gone ahead. But that sort of filled in then for me the last piece of it before I started writing.

DePue: This is the kind of question that journalists don't like to get. But, going into this project, did you have a generally sympathetic view of the man?

Hartley: Actually, I thought he was something of a clown. On the campaign trail, he was given to quirky stuff and sort of off the top stuff, with tee shirts and what have you and having beers with the boys. And I thought, what a pretender he was. I never really got over that in the first two years, even though, in the first two years as governor, he seemed to be a serious guy. But whenever he went out somewhere, or he went to the State Fair or something like that, he'd pull these sort of clumsy PR things. I thought, Does this guy really have a serious bone in his body?

He was a great U.S. Attorney in Chicago and, obviously, knew the law and everything, but he seemed to be wanting everybody to love him and that that was the way to do it. So, when I started into this, I really didn't have a particularly good feel for the man, and I don't know that I ever did get that. I mean, he's a smart guy, and he talked openly about the prosecution of Kerner, for example, and things like that.

But I never knew how deep we were getting. Maybe that was just the good politician in him, and he wasn't going to go too deep. But this wasn't a warm, comfortable, friendly feeling that I had when we started into this.

DePue: Okay. You used the word "clumsy" for some of the things that he did on the campaign trail. Was he effective? Did it work?

Hartley: Sure it worked. People thought he was one of them, you know. Some of those sort of dorky things that he pulled, I think it endeared him to a lot of people; I really do.

I mean, you know, he could have come across as a stuffed shirt lawyer out of Chicago and all, but he didn't. He wanted to look like one of the boys, one of the gang in southern Illinois or central Illinois. I think he got away with it. (laughs)

DePue: Well, at this point in our conversation, you can't help but do some comparisons between the previous book and the previous individual you wrote about.

Hartley: Well, (laughs) well, of course, Charles Percy was a very serious man. If there was a jocular side to Charles Percy, I didn't find much of it. I think he was a business guy. He was serious; he was always wrestling with deep problems.

The first time you met Thompson, you felt like you were talking to your next door neighbor. I think that's what he wanted to come across as.

DePue: You've already mentioned that he…in part it was that states attorney position, in building his career and things, like going after Otto Kerner. He also went after, as I understand, the Chicago machine, with a certain amount of vengeance, as well.

Hartley: Oh, he did. He sent a number of them, including Eddie Barrett, who was a longtime office-holder in Illinois and a close associate of Mayor Daley's. He was his city clerk for many years. And he went to jail. There were several of those Daley people that Thompson sent off to jail.

DePue: Do you think that was a sincere disdain for Chicago machine politics and all that represented, or was that a vehicle for Thompson to get to higher office?

Hartley: Yes. (both laugh) I don't think this was fun and games for Thompson, and I don't think he would have done any of it, if he wasn't pretty sure he could put them in jail. I don't think he had any hesitation. Once he felt like he had the case put together for what he was going to say and do, he was then convinced he could convince a jury that they had done what he said he had done. And he was very good in front of a jury. I think that it was calculated to that extent. He believed that these people had done wrong. I don't think there's any question about that. Did he also begin to see that the more of these you do, the more headlines you get, the more editorials you get? Sure, I don't think there's any question, because I think that was his nature, as well.

DePue: Did you get a sense of what the source of his political ambitions were?

Hartley: You know, I don't think it began with his family. His father was a doctor, and they were a fairly traditional family. I don't think it started there.

As a young attorney in Chicago, I think he fell in with a crowd that was on the cutting edge of—particularly at the federal level—reform of criminal law. And I think he got fascinated with that no matter what his job was. On the side, he wrote articles, and he lectured on these subjects. He became a student of it. This man that I mentioned, Imbau was his last name, Fred Imbau, I-m-b-a-u, was his legal mentor. And Imbau was a proponent of reforming federal law, criminal law. So, he worked with Thompson on this. I think the fervor, the passion for the law, that I don't believe there's any question Thomson had—maybe still does—came from those associations early on, when he was a young lawyer. They recognized in him some intellectual smarts and all,

I think that began this sort of ambitious quest of his. The one thing sort of lead to another, and pretty soon…you know, if you get to be U.S. Attorney, you're dealing with federal law. You're not dealing with local law, state law. So, I think his background in that, made him then a natural for appointment to that position.

DePue: Well, we're going to jump up to 1976, when Thompson is running for office. I'm going to frame this a little bit and let you flesh it out, because this is going to be an important story, when we get to Paul Simon, as well, because he's part of this also.

So, here you've got Dan Walker, who propelled himself into the governorship because of his overt disdain for the Daley machine. I think that's fair to say. He manages to get in office, and then can't manage to get much done at all, because, in the process of getting there, he's antagonized most of the legislature, certainly the Democrats who were beholden to the Daley administration, and the Republicans aren't much fans either in it. So, he's vulnerable when you get into 1976. And you get to the Daley machine that

puts up, in the primary, a candidate, in the person of Michael Howlett. I'll let you pick it up from there.

Hartley: Well, Mike Howlett had done good work as auditor of public accounts, and he was an honorable, decent guy. He was also one of the boys. He used to claim that he really wasn't that close to the mayor, but he was close to the mayor. The mayor trusted him and so on. I never felt that. I think the main thing was that the mayor wanted to beat Dan Walker.

I don't think he necessarily wanted Mike Howlett as the governor. I don't know whether that makes sense or not, but I mean, he would have taken him as governor. But I don't think that's why he thrust him into this thing. He thrust him into it because he could see that Howlett united all of the anti-Walker forces in the Democratic Party and maybe some in the Republican Party and because he was sort of a nice guy and was no threat to anybody. They wanted to get even with this guy, Walker.

So, he [Howlett] became the tool of that, and really what opened the door for Thompson was the fact that Mike Howlett was a terrible candidate for governor. I mean he wanted people to love him, too, but he didn't quite know how to do that. Thompson danced rings around him in the campaign. But there were lots of motives going on in this '76 campaign with Walker and Howlett and then Thompson. I don't really think that the mayor was worried about Thompson. I mean, he may have been unhappy that some of his buddies were sent to jail or something like that.

But, you know, Thompson was smart enough that he did not make this an anti-Daley campaign. He didn't do that. This was his job. His job as U.S. Attorney was to put bad guys, people that had broken the law, in jail. It had nothing to do—he would say—nothing to do with Daley. They may have worked for him and so on; this wasn't an anti-Daley thing. So, Thompson was very careful not to upset the mayor, particularly in that '76 campaign. So, there was a lot going on there that had to get sorted out in that election.

DePue: At the national level it's a Democratic year. That's the year that Jimmy Carter comes in. So, we're washing out the Republicans that were tied with the Nixon administration because of Watergate. But you've expressed already that Thompson was a skilled politician, even at that stage in his career. What were the issues that he was pushing?

Hartley: You know, he was pushing an openness. He was pushing an, I can get things done. With his law enforcement background, you know, he was going to be tough on anybody that was breaking the law. He was going to have a strong law enforcement program and so on.

He came into southern Illinois and central Illinois and promised to take a look at the highway situation. Every governor had tried to do that. Some had

succeeded, and some hadn't. So as he came into every part of the state to campaign, Thompson had a local agenda. He was really pretty smart about that. The only way you could trip him up was to ask him enough questions to find out that it didn't go too deep. But that's the way he put it together, and I think he also presented himself as non-political. He may have been a Republican, but I don't think he presented himself as a Republican. He presented himself as a public servant who had done his duty as U.S. Attorney and would do his duty as the governor. So, I think it sounds kind of mushy, but I think that's… Then his personality, and I think that's what got him in.

DePue: This was probably one of those things that you couldn't dwell on much then, and it's a delicate subject now. But, he got married shortly before this campaign. What do you think that marriage was about?

Hartley: Oh. Well, the conventional wisdom was that this was a marriage to put to rest the question of homosexuality that was running around in rumor and gossip that he was gay, and that then say, oh, well, he got married to show that he wasn't gay, that he was heterosexual, so on and so forth. So, that was the conventional wisdom. I don't know what the real answer was. It certainly, if you don't believe in coincidences in politics, then you don't believe in that as anything other than determined to put out the word. It didn't bother him. I mean, it didn't affect him. I think the folks who were into state government and so on were talking about it a lot and so on. But it presented something of an issue for me, as the writer of the book, because I knew that I could not write the book without mentioning this subject. And, even if I couldn't answer the question, at least acknowledge that there was a question there.

I did not ask him personally in the interviews about it. I decided what I would do is that, as I went to Chicago, to all of his colleagues and friends and those who had known him from law school and so on and so forth, I would simply ask them the question: any indication, any hint, any question in your mind, how do you feel about it? And, if you feel that there is nothing to it, why do you feel that way? So, I went through that with everybody that I met. He heard about that pretty fast, as you might imagine, because I think all of those people were reporting to him about our conversation, and they probably had that as the top of the list and so on. But I did that.

I talked then to some people that I guess I would describe as not Thompson friends, but familiar with Thompson, having either worked with him or been around him or so on. So, I asked them the questions. I don't know what I was looking for. To be perfectly honest, I don't know what I was looking for. I didn't expect any of his friends to say, "Oh, yeah, he's gay." Not that, but I was looking. I just was wanting to get enough… I wanted to treat it as a factor in the political scheme, and then, that I could find no evidence or no history to doubt his heterosexuality.

So, I dealt with it in the book. He didn't like that. There was no question about that. And I think, it and some other things that I wrote in the book, led to sort of a stand-off between the two of us when it was over.

DePue: How was the book received, beyond the administration?

Hartley: Well, I remember I got a review. There was a *Chicago Tribune* editorial writer, a columnist, who was very conservative. I can't think of his name, but I may. He wrote a review of the book, and his comment was that it looked like I had simply pasted together some newspaper clippings and used that as the book. So, that was one. My feeling about that was that this fellow had covered the trials in Chicago that Kerner and so on and that he thought that he knew more about Thompson than I did. I think that was the feeling of the Chicago people, that whatever I had written, they already knew all of that and probably more. So, tell me something I don't already know. That was some of the response.

Now, my friend, Bob Howard, who encouraged me to write these books and all, thought enough of it to present it for an award from the Illinois State Historical Society for the book, which I got. He always said—even in his subsequent book about governors, that he wrote—he always said that this is, first of all, the only political biography of Jim Thompson, and secondly, it will be the basis for every other book that is written about him. Well, that was awfully nice of Bob to say that. So, it was kind of a mixed reception at that level.

There were lots of skeptics in the Republican Party about Jim Thompson. You know, he wasn't conservative enough. He wasn't worried enough about the jobs of patronage and so on. They didn't like it. They thought I was too easy on him. I heard about that.

DePue: That's interesting because, at the end of his administration in 1990, there's the Rutan decision, where it's all about patronage and the Republican party— the evil Republican party—actually filling all of these patronage positions.

Hartley: That's right. That's right. Well, Jim turned out to be a fairly traditional and classic governor, I think, when it was all said and done. (laughs)

DePue: Let me take you through some of the relationships that he had. Let's start with his work with the legislature. Was he successful in that respect, in an area where Walker was judged by almost everybody to be a dismal failure?

Hartley: I think Thompson had to prove himself with the legislature. I think what he proved with the legislature was that he was a hard bargainer, that he didn't quit when he got some opposition. I think he went to the mat with the legislative leaders. I think he turned out to be more, tougher. I think he turned out to be tougher, in that respect, than they expected him to be. I think they

thought he was going to be a pushover. I think maybe they had some of that feeling, that he was sort of giggly and fun and games and so on.

He proved to be none of that. So, I think he got a lot of stuff out of the legislature, simply because he wrestled them to the ground. And he could do that. He was a negotiator. He was a trial lawyer, and I think he pulled out all of those things when he was working with the legislature.

So, I think, at least in this time period that I knew of him, in the early period, I think he came to be thought of with new respect by the legislature. They might not have liked him; they didn't like his programs, but I think they respected him for his tenacity.

DePue: Whenever I hear some of the stories about him, in the legislature in particular, I always think about the reputation that Lyndon Johnson had. Here's this big guy…I mean Thompson's six-six?

Hartley: Yeah, he was a tall fellow. I don't know how tall he is now, but he was then.

DePue: And Thompson would go down to the floor of the legislature. He'd go into the offices; he'd kick up his heels, put his feet on the desk and—

Hartley: That's right. That's right. I think that was the one side of it. Then, I think, when the door was closed, and we were cutting the deals and working out the final analysis, I think he was tough as nails. He may have walked out the door with his arm around them after it was over with, but, at the beginning, he had a lot to prove, that he wasn't just another lawyer who happened to get lucky. And I think he did. I mean, I think he did it.

DePue: One of the first initiatives, I believe—I might get this wrong—is it Class X felonies, or is it Class Ten felonies?

Hartley: Yes, Class X.

DePue: Class X felonies. So, he campaigned on crime, and now we're going to get tough on crime and issues like the Class X felonies and, I believe, three strikes was part of it, as well?

Hartley: Absolutely, yeah. I think he followed through on that, and as a result, he had a way of taking away issues from others who might have challenged him or who might have become a… You know, the campaign with Michael Bakalis in '78. Thompson just blew him away.

I mean, Michael's a nice guy, and he had the education background and so on and so forth and some, but Thompson just cleaned his clock every debate they had. I attended two or three of them and was the moderator of a couple of them. Thompson just creamed him. I think, what he did in there, was to show he knew state government, and he knew what he was doing. He

came across as a very determined person, unlike some of the appearances in the campaign.

DePue: We probably should, as a footnote in this discussion, because you mentioned the '78 campaign. Well, he was elected in '76. He's elected in '78. This is a function of the new 1970 Illinois Constitution, which got out of cycle with the national presidential elections, with the Illinois governors.

Hartley: That's right. They had to do the two-year, and then they went back to the four-year, after that.

DePue: Okay. Let's go to working with Chicago, with the mayor. That equation is changed, right at the beginning of the legislative session.

Hartley: Absolutely. I think it worked to Thompson's advantage…maybe. It was hard to figure out who you were negotiating with, up there.

DePue: When did Daley pass away? Was it December of '76?

Hartley: Yeah, he died in November or December. And, you know, they had a series of mayors up there that may or may not have known what they were doing either. It may have cost Thompson. He may have been able to negotiate with the mayor. You know, when it comes right down to it, the mayor was a deal maker, and he was the boss. So, Thompson might well have worked something out with him.

I think it got a little mixed up, because the folks up there, the new folks, didn't know what they were doing. They didn't have the political standing. I got the impression, early on, that Thompson was reluctant to make a hero out of anybody in Chicago. He pulled back a little bit on some things that he might have tried to negotiate with the mayor, simply because he didn't know just how far he could trust the new gang. I mean, you know, governors always like their independence and being able to do everything, but you had to be able to work with Chicago at some level. And Thompson knew that as well as anyone.

DePue: The next group is the press. I will quote you, right from the book. You described him as a "master manipulator of the media."

Hartley: Oh, he was.

DePue: You were a member of the media at the time.

Hartley: Oh, yeah, yeah. He did. He had—the legislative correspondents and the campaign writers and so on—he had them eating out of his hand. That was in '76, but I think it carried over to '78, as well. I think that he wasn't maybe quite as loosey-goosey in '78 as he had been. But still, he always talked to the press. He always went to the press room in the Capitol. He never turned his

back on them. He may have had some skirmishes with some of the reporters, but he never let it get to be public. I just think that, compared to the four years with Walker, I think the press would have taken anything instead of Walker. They were so fed up with him and his arrogance and his lack of communicating, except what he wanted to communicate, and so on. They were done with him.

So, Thompson was kind of a breath of fresh air. You know, the press gets…after a while of that, they began to look for the beef. So, Thompson was able to take care of that for a while. I think, later on, he may not have had quite the warm relationship with some of the press that he did early. But, I think it was a combination of his personality, his approach to the press and the fact that he was not Dan Walker. (laughs)

DePue: Well, there's an advantage to come in after a guy who is very unpopular, huh?

Hartley: Yeah, absolutely.

DePue: Okay. Did he use the mansion to good effect?

Hartley: Yeah, he did. You know, he started showing up more in Chicago, I think, later in his tenure. But early on, he was in the mansion. He was there, and they had parties and guests and so on. I think, early on, he wanted to be seen and viewed as the governor and as the chief executive. He was a very social person. So, I think that worked for him.

DePue: At the time you published this book, was it your thought that, oh, this is going to be an important book, because this guy is going to be running for president?

Hartley: Well, I think I started in with that concept. But, by the time it was published, Ronald Reagan had squeezed out everybody in the Republican Party. And moderates—as Jim Thompson was viewed by many, and so on—he didn't have a chance, with the increased, growing influence of conservatives in the party. Thompson was always just "disinterested" enough—I put that in quotes—so that it didn't look like it was a big disappointment to him, when he didn't get anything.

DePue: Beyond that point, there's still lots of interesting terrain that Thompson is going to cover, because he served right up to the end of 1990. So, I'm going to hit just a couple, three of these. One of them, we kind of alluded to today in your questions you got in your presentations on Stelle, and that deals with cumulative voting.

Well, let's talk about what happened there. I think, right after the '78 election—where Thompson had run and promised that there wouldn't be a legislative or a gubernatorial pay increase—that the legislature came back into session and immediately passed the pay increase. Thompson immediately signed it with his autopen, while he was down in South Carolina, I believe.

And it was obvious to almost everybody that, ooh, there was something going on here; that the legislature and Thompson were in cahoots. He had agreed to automatically sign it to give them time to override his veto and huge dust-up, right after he is re-elected in 1978, which led to this upstart guy, by the name of Pat Quinn, to push for a cutback amendment. So, we cut back the size of the legislature. I apologize for taking so much time to lay this out, but to me this is fascinating insight into Illinois politics.

Hartley: Well, it is. It is. And think about it, too, in these terms. This was the prelude to Adlai Stevenson deciding he wanted to run for governor and darn near winning it the first time.

DePue: That would have been in ’82.

Hartley: Yeah. I think it stunned Thompson. I wasn’t here at the time, but I was certainly talking to people. Thompson, I think, was really stunned by how close that was. I think he, like a lot of people…like a lot of people sold Adlai short almost to the end.

So, a lot of the things that played into that, I think, came out of that second term, when Thompson looked like a bunch of other governors or a bunch of other wheeler-dealers and so on. So, that attitude, that feeling before that, I think there was a setback for Thompson, in a public sense.

DePue: Did you understand, at the time, the outcry of protest against what had happened with that pay increase?

Hartley: Yes, yes, absolutely. You know, I came to believe—and I may be wrong about this—but, I came to believe that Jim Thompson did very little that he didn’t already know what was going to happen. He was a lawyer. You know, a trial lawyer’s the old business about, you know, they don’t ever ask a question they don’t know the answer to. I think Jim Thompson operated that way. I don’t think he did anything that he didn’t know he was doing or that he didn’t know what the outcome would be, or he did it for a reason. I think he was a very calculated guy, in that sense. And I think that came out of his legal background and training. You know, once a lawyer, always a lawyer. And I think that was true with Jim Thompson.

DePue: Well, I talked about the cutback amendment. I wonder if you can explain for us how cumulative voting worked, because the cutback amendment changed that. And a lot of people say it changed the nature of Illinois politics afterwards.

Hartley: Well, you know, the cumulative voting, which was part of the 1870 Constitution, was essentially designed to take care of the rural people by giving, in the state house of representatives, from every district, electing three members. The majority party in the district elected two, and the minority party elected one. That was always the case. There were three, and there was always

one from the minority party, two from the majority party. That was the way it was set up.

DePue: Because, on the ballot, there would be two of each.

Hartley: That's right. That's right. My example of how that worked is Paul Powell, who came from Johnson County, which was heavily Republican. Paul Powell was always the third guy. He never won outright, a legislative seat, over the two other candidates. He was always the third guy who won. So, he had a safe seat. Nobody could beat him; no Democrats could beat him. He co-existed with these two Republicans from his district, who were good friends of his and boyhood friends of his. You know, they voted together in the legislature. I think there was a lot of that that took place with this cumulative voting.

The good government people hated it. They wanted to change that. They'd want to change that forever. Single member districts just had to be the thing. That was the American way. This wasn't the American way to do it.

So, when they changed it, it did change the nature of a) selecting members, b) protecting a minority in the house, a guaranteed minority in the house. And, I think, it probably affected the cooperation among legislators, whether they were Democrats or Republicans. If they were from the same district, from the same area, from the same towns, from the same county, they had similar interests, no matter whether they were Democrats or Republicans. So, they could work together on stuff that you just don't do now. It just doesn't work now. So, I don't think there is any question that it changed the face of the selection of the House of Representatives.

Now, is that good? Is that bad? You know, I suspect political scientists debate that all the time. I don't know whether it was, but it did change it; there's no question.

DePue: I can tell you, the good government kinds of people who remember those days, generally regret seeing the cumulative voting process having gone.

Hartley: Well, I'm not surprised to hear that. And—

DePue: Because they lost some of the collegiality of the house at the time.

Hartley: That's exactly right. And, you know, as it stands now, with the Democrats so dominant in the House of Representatives. In another time, that wouldn't have made quite the difference. I mean, the Democrats are in the majority, and they did a lot of things they could do. But a lot of things happened that crossed the lines of the parties in those days. Nobody thought anything about it. They weren't trying to write history in the political science literature. They were trying to get things done, trying get their projects done. One of the ways to do that was to cross the aisle.

DePue: I'm going to jump ahead to the election in 1986. You'd been out of the state for a while by that time. But I imagine, no matter wherever you were… Were you in Ohio, or were you already out west by then?

Hartley: Oh, I was out in Washington state by '86.

DePue: By '86, you're paying a little bit of attention to what's going on in Illinois. You had to either be shaking your head or chuckling or a little bit of both to hear about this LaRouche candidate that snuck in on the ballots.

Hartley: I know it. I thought that that whole business—and the Stevenson business and so on and so forth—I thought that was…incredible.

DePue: Can you lay that out real quick for us?

Hartley: I wasn't close enough to it to really have had the kinds of conversations to try to sort it out at the time. I was busy running a newspaper. But I watched and listened and everything. It was another one of those situations that you could only explain as Illinois. That's right. There are a number of those. (laughs)

DePue: Where you got people in the primary election who happen to sneak in, not on the gubernatorial primary—I think it was lieutenant governor and secretary of state—where you get done with the election, and suddenly the whole political community realizes, this person isn't a Democrat! They're associated with Lyndon LaRouche, this kook.

Hartley: Yeah, that's right.

DePue: So, the end result is, Stevenson feels he has no choice but to disassociate himself with those two people and runs as an Independent, with his own slate of candidates.

Hartley: He should have known it wouldn't work. It was a shame. I always thought a lot of Adlai Stevenson the third, and I think it was a shame for him to sort of end his political career that way.

DePue: I don't know if you want to address this one or not, the taxpayer revolt. That is something that you talk about in the book, because I believe that's going on, Proposition 13 in California, at the time. Early on in his administration, he had to deal with a taxpayer revolt.

Hartley: Now, who's this now?

DePue: Thompson.

Hartley: Oh, Thompson. Yeah, I didn't deal with that very much, so I really don't feel comfortable talking about that.

DePue: Well, let's get toward the end. I think you did end up getting a chance to write about the man in Bob Howard's book on the governors. Did you not? Were you the one who contributed the chapter to Thompson in Bob Howard's book?

Hartley: Ah, no.

DePue: Okay. Well, I got that entirely wrong.

Hartley: I mean, I'm not sure what—

DePue: No, I'm confusing a lot of things here. I was looking at 1980 and thinking 1990, at the end of his administration.

Here's what you wrote in 1980, that "Thompson was an astute politician with a careful eye for public opinion. His insistence on austere budgets ignored the cracks caused by several years of neglect in such areas as mental health, public aid, children and family services and fair employment." And perhaps why I'm confused is, by 1990, there's a near crisis in things like child and family services and mental health, that's led to a severe budget deficit by the time he leaves office, that Governor Edgar now is going to have to deal with. Any reflections now, in looking back? You say that's still pretty accurate?

Hartley: I think Thompson's reactions and so on, in the early part of his tenure, reflected the consensus of a lot of people, that Richard Ogilvie had spent too much; that all of a sudden, he had all this money coming in from the state income tax. And the first thing you knew, after a couple of years, he had a deficit again. So, I think there was a lot of residual feeling, certainly in the Republican party, that they needed to tighten down on some of these things and needed to get tough on them and so on. And I think Thompson was probably feeling the wind blow. I think he did that very well.

DePue: One of his big initiatives later on in his administration was Build Illinois, where they got two billion dollar bonding authority to do those things in places like southern Illinois, like build roads and build buildings on college campuses and stuff.

Hartley: Yeah, right. He fell into the trap. He fell into the gubernatorial trap that says, my legacy is going to be how many things I can build with bonds. Ogilvie did it, and they all got to that point, that if we're really going to have the James R. Thompson Building in Springfield or Chicago, I'm going to have to build it. And people who live for another thirty years are going to have to pay for it. I think that's a lot of what, you know… You can cut a lot of ribbons to start the project and get it going, but nobody has to pay for it for several years to go down the road.

DePue: Any last assessment, twenty years past the time he got out of office?

Hartley: You know, Thompson and I, I suppose, had to no reason to communicate over many of those years. I wasn't one to sort of gratuitously write him a letter or something like that. I always felt that he really was unhappy with the book. And I never knew quite what it was, but I guess he didn't think it was glowing enough. I don't know. Frankly, I didn't care much, why he felt that way.

I had, over the years, when I was working in Illinois, with each Governor who came and I worked with when he was in, I asked him to write a letter to my daughter and address what was going on in the state at that time, to her. And they did—Shapiro, Ogilvie and even Dan Walker did it, and Thompson did it. So, for our fiftieth wedding anniversary, in 2006, our daughter was putting together a book of letters and stuff for us. She decided to write Jim Thompson. She did not know about this feeling about this book. She decided to write Jim Thompson and see if he'd write a letter. And he did. He wrote a letter. I mean, it was written to me—wasn't written to her—about me. It was so genuinely political (chuckles). I mean, he said all the right things and how much respect he had for me and everything. Well, she didn't think anything about it, you know. She sticks it in the scrapbook for me, and when I saw that, I said, "I'm glad I didn't tell you that story, because you probably would never have contacted him if you thought there was some lingering problem between us. But," I said, "maybe you cleared the air, and at some point, I'll write Jim a note." But I haven't done it yet.

DePue: Is it time for a reassessment of Jim Thompson then?

Hartley: You know, there's so much of him to assess and re-assess. I think he was a different governor at different times. I think it's going to be real tough for somebody to fall in and pick up the whole Thompson years and write about it, and do it in a way that tells us, maybe, some things we don't know. So, I think it's too early to try to sort him out. He's still a pretty young guy; he was elected young. So, I don't think anybody will tackle him until he's dead, and I think there'll be a reassessment of him. But I have no idea, at this stage, what direction that will take.

DePue: Would you count him as one of the more complex personalities that you dealt with in your life?

Hartley: He was, and I think part of it was that I couldn't get through to him. You know, there was a wall there. It was a laugh and a kick and a slap-you-on-the-back and so on and so forth, but he was very close to the vest about a lot of things. I never felt that I knew him or that I could predict what he would do. You know, a lot of people are very predictable when they get to be governor in office, but Thompson was not, in my mind. So, I never felt comfortable sort of saying, "Well, I know what Jim Thompson thinks," or "I know what Jim Thompson will do." I never did.

DePue: Well, let's get to the next book that you wrote, and this was some time later. In fact, twenty years later, that you wrote your next book on Paul Powell. Another—I think you would agree—pretty complex character, and maybe it's very sad that, when we think of Paul Powell today, we think of one word: shoebox.

Hartley: That's right. You can't ignore that aspect of Paul Powell. One of the things that I found in researching this book… I went down to Vienna, in southern Illinois, and spent several days down there talking to his old buddies and friends.

DePue: Let's back up just a little bit.

Hartley: Oh.

DePue: Why did you write the book, to begin with?

Hartley: I was looking for the subject to write a paper for the Illinois State Historical Society's history symposium in 1995. I usually had a list of subjects that I would try to write about for that program and subsequently for Historic Preservation Agency. I don't know why Powell was on the list. Part of it was, I think it was… You know, I just don't know. Somebody may have said something to me. Anyway, I put it on the list, and I ended up doing the paper on Powell.

I discovered, at that time, the collection of Paul Powell documents and all that the State Library had, now the Abraham Lincoln [Presidential] Library. I discovered the inventory, and I came here, specifically to do the research for this paper. I wanted to do it on the $800,000 in the shoebox; that was the subject. Well, I discovered this trove of information, this massive, several boxes of stuff that John Rendleman, his executor of his estate, had given to the Historical Society or to the state, because he had to collect all that stuff for the IRS and everything. It was terrific stuff. So, I did the paper.

I sent a copy of the paper to Paul Simon. Simon called me up on the phone. He said, "You've got to do a book on Paul Powell." I was running a PR agency; I didn't have time to do that. I said, "Paul, thank you very much. I appreciate that, but I'd have to go back and do a lot of research. I just don't have the time to do that."

So, about a month later, I get this telephone call from somebody at the Southern Illinois University Press who said he was the editor. He said, "I understand you've written a paper about Paul Powell, and it might make a good book." I said, "Who have you been talking to?" He laughed at the other end of the line, and he said, "Well that doesn't make any difference. I've read the paper, and I think I agree." I said, "Well, I can't do it. I don't have time," ya-da-da, da-da-da.

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: So, a little bit more time goes by, and I hear from Paul Simon again, pleading with me to do something. So, I thought—

DePue: Let me interject here. Paul Simon is not a huge champion of the career and life of Paul Powell, is he?

Hartley: No, but he wanted the story told. He wanted somebody to dig into Paul Powell's stuff. I think he hoped that maybe some of the mythology of Powell would get washed away in all of this. No, he was no fan of Powell, at all. So, I finally gave in and said that I would put together a manuscript.

I came to Illinois; I went through all of his papers. I found some wonderful things there. His tax returns had more information in them than you could imagine, than he would ever had said himself.

I go to southern Illinois. People down there wanted to talk about him. What I found was, that they wanted to talk about him because they loved him, because of the things he did for them, because in Vienna and places like that he was seen as the hero. He got them jobs; he built roads and bridges, and, you know, this was their guy. So, that was a whole different view of him that I hadn't had before.

They were very sincere, but they were very distrustful of me. They thought I had just come down to make Powell look bad and so on. Then, the SIU people, former trustees and everything, I mean, they had nothing but glowing things to say about him, because he got the money for them. He was responsible, in large part, for the growth of SIU. So, I began to get a more complex picture of Powell than I had from anything else. I began to see that part of him that wasn't connected to the shoebox.

So once that started to happen, I couldn't put it down. I mean, I couldn't quit, and got it out and got it published. What they did was, they sent a copy of the manuscript out for reading to David Kenney, who at that time was at SIU as a professor of political science. David read the manuscript. He later told me that he had always thought he would write a book about Powell, but he realized he knew him too well.

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: So, David said, in his critique of the manuscript, "This needs much more about the SIU connection." I had not done much with it. So, he set up a bunch of interviews for me in Carbondale and down there, with people who knew Powell as part of that picture. So, I was able to flesh that out much better and realized that I had missed a big piece of the story. For a guy who never went to college and all, to have done the things he did for SIU.

So, anyway, I don't think of him as complex, as I think of him as a being, many aspects to this guy. And, yes, he talked a good game, and he cut a lot of deals. He brushed the law pretty close and everything.

But, if you go down to southern Illinois, they have a different picture of this guy, down there. They think he was God's heaven-sent, to take care of them. So, you can't ignore that when you're writing about somebody. The danger is, you make more of it than it deserves, but you can't ignore that. I mean, there's no way, at that point, that I could go with what I had. So, I found this thing sort of developed—much more than almost any book that I have written—it developed as I went. I sat down one night with Paul Simon and Jeanne, his wife, who was a seatmate in the legislature with Paul Powell. We tape recorded almost four hours of their storytelling, about Paul Powell.

I tell you, it was one of the great moments of my book writing. All I had to do was just get them started, then the two of them traded off stories about Powell that were just sensational, some of them serious and some of them funny and so on. But they just unloaded on me, bless their hearts.

Those kinds of things helped me flesh out a guy who I barely knew when I was in the newspaper business in Illinois. So, it proved to me, over many times in writing books, that, without other people, I never would have written a book.

DePue: Well, I've got to ask you, what happened to those interviews, those taped interviews you had with Paul and Jean Simon?

Hartley: I still have them at home.

DePue: We sure would like to get those donated, as well. Have they been transcribed?

Hartley: No, they have not.

DePue: We might be able to help you with that, if you are inclined to do that.

Hartley: Well, I have no reason not to. You know, I used them for the Paul Simon book. I went back to those again and so on. Yeah, I'll do that.

DePue: Okay. We haven't, up to this point, talked about exactly who Paul Powell is, in terms of what he accomplished. So, why don't you just, very quickly, cover the terrain of his political life. If you could do that in about a minute or two.

Hartley: Yeah. He was elected to the State House of Representatives in 1934. He served until 1965, when he had been elected secretary of state in '64. Then, he served a full term, was re-elected in '68, and then died, after serving two years of that second term in 1970.

During the time that he was in the House of Representatives, he served as Speaker of the house three times. The first time, in 1949, and then twice, ten years or more later than that, in a couple of wonderful political stories.

He served as minority leader of the Democrats on several occasions during that time period. Even in the time when he was in neither of leadership positions—there were only two or three years after '49 that he wasn't—he was still the leader of the Democrats in the house. I mean, they still looked to him. He was still the legislative hound. He was still the guy who made or broke people, depending on how they voted. He was still the leader, even when he had no official position.

So, if you look at his career, he started in the leadership, I believe, with the election of '44, and he held that position, or held a leadership position with a couple of exceptions, until he went out. He was a force in the legislature, and he was able to bring the Republicans on board. They passed all kinds of stuff. Higher education was a big beneficiary during that time.

DePue: Maybe we can unlock some of the mystique of the guy. Can you remember the details of how he managed to be elected as Speaker of the House, even when the Democrats were in the minority?

Hartley: Oh, no, that was the third time, I believe.

DePue: But that's quite a trick. I mean, you get to the majority so you can elect your own speaker, not the other guys'.

Hartley: That's right. The second time, actually, that he was elected speaker, he was elected with the votes of Republicans. The Chicago Democrats wanted someone else as speaker. So, he split the downstate Chicago Democratic vote. And Bill Stratton, who was then still the governor, wanted Powell as the speaker. He'd worked very well with him, up to that point. So, he got the Republicans, then in the house, to vote for Powell as speaker. So, Powell, actually, the second time was elected. It was a clean election. He just got elected, thanks to the Republicans. But the third time, the vote in the house was so close, between Democrats and Republicans, that by just a vote or two, the Republicans could name the speaker. And a deal was cut with some Republicans from Chicago who were always suspected of being close to the mob. They were Republicans in name only, but they weren't Democrats either. But they held the balance. To make a long story short: he ended up getting those votes, or getting some of those votes, and by doing that, it put him over the top. That's how he got the third time around.

The Democrats were actually in the minority, and he got all of those Democratic votes. But he ended up getting these Republicans that almost… It's hard to say, Republicans from Chicago, but they were Republicans and

voted with the Republicans. That's the way he got it. He cut a deal with them. There's no doubt about that.

Oh, excuse me. I think that part of the deal that he cut with them had to do with legislation that dealt with crime fighting in the state. These guys were against that, and I think Powell put it off. It later got approved, after he was no longer in the house. But, I think that was the trade-off with those guys.

DePue: How do you explain, then, the source of Powell's power? Here's the part that intrigues me about the whole thing. You'd already mentioned, he's from Vienna. Well, okay, this is Johnson County; you can't get any farther south in Illinois than Johnson County. It's not a rich state at all. It's poor farmland. There's no mining there. He's only there because of cumulative voting, as you've already illustrated. They can't even pronounce Vienna correctly. (both chuckle) [long i: Vie-**e**nna]

Hartley: That's true. The Democratic Party in the house, when he was elected, was in control during the thirties. The Democrats controlled the house, controlled the Senate too, for two or three terms there. So, he came in, riding high with the Democrats, and by 1940, the Republicans were back in control of the house. Throughout the war the Democrats peeled away. The Republicans just overwhelmed them in the house, and he survived. He survived because of cumulative voting. But he survived, as well, as a guy who seemed to be relatively smart about legislation.

He became a student of the legislative process and how it worked and how to work it. He devoted enormous amounts of time to doing that, and he played the game. He came in when they were depleted in the house. He came in as assistant minority leader, worked his way up to minority leader. They were looking for somebody who could lead them out of the forest, out of the wilderness as it was, legislatively. He was able to work deals with Republicans to get laws passed. People noticed that. Democrats noticed that. So that, when it finally came time, when the Democrats were back in power after the '48 elections, who else was there? There wasn't anybody else. I mean Paul Powell had risen, without those slim ranks. He had risen to be the guy.

So, when they had all these new Democrats in there, they all voted for him for speaker. Adlai Stevenson didn't want him as speaker: the new governor, lots of people who didn't want him as speaker. But the Democrats did. It was because he was a smart guy, and he knew how to keep people on board and get things passed. I think that there wasn't anybody else who could challenge him. There wasn't anybody who was smarter than he was. There wasn't anybody who had a grasp of what was going on or who had money.

You know, in those days, there was no financial disclosure for campaigns and everything. He began to generate money from outside, so that lobbyists and businesses and other people could see that he was the guy to go

to. So, he accumulated money that he spread out with other Democrats for election campaigns. He just stayed at the top.

The only thing that brought him down, eventually, was the reapportionment in the 1950's, when the Democrats and the Chicago Democrats, increased their power in the legislature. He was smart enough to know he couldn't beat them, and that's one of the reasons why he ran for secretary of state.

DePue: And that happened in '64.

Hartley: '64.

DePue: Before that time, before reapportionment even, the Chicago Democrats couldn't muster enough, or they were content with the kind of leadership he was giving them?

Hartley: They were content before Daley came in, in '55. It took Daley two or three years to sort things out, and then reapportionment came along. They began to get the numbers, and they had their guys that had been hanging around and so on. They were associates of Powell, but they didn't want Powell in there. They didn't want him making the decisions to affect Chicago. He could see that coming, and there wasn't anything he could do about that.

He just got flat out lucky on those last two terms as Speaker of the House. He just saw an opportunity to make it work, against the numbers. The numbers were against him, in both cases. He knew that that was reality, and he wasn't about to sit in the legislature and not have the authority of leadership.

DePue: Was patronage, and the skillful use of patronage, part of the source of his power?

Hartley: Oh, absolutely. He knew how to get the jobs around. He knew how to pay off with jobs. He knew how to get votes with jobs, you bet. And he had the knack of bringing it all to him. He didn't share that with very many people, so they had to come to him if they wanted jobs. They had to come to him if they wanted a new road, or they wanted a new bridge, or they wanted a mental health clinic or something. So, he always got something for that. He didn't do anything for free. I think that's what kept him at the peak as long as he did stay at the peak, because other people benefitted from it. If you didn't benefit from the speaker, or the guy who was the minority leader, then you didn't want him in there. So, you benefitted from Paul Powell, if you played ball with him. That was the way it worked.

For that book, I interviewed Ab Mikva and Tony Scariano and Paul Simon, all of whom thoroughly disagreed with almost everything Paul Powell did. But, when it came down to assessing his skill as a legislator and a leader

of the party, they were all in agreement that he was one of the most brilliant that they encountered. They didn't like what he did, and they didn't like the way he did it, but they said there just wasn't anybody who was his match in knowing the legislative system and working it.

DePue: Well, there might be a couple today that would disagree, but it would be bringing up Russell Arrington in the Illinois Senate, at the time, as another master of it.

Hartley: He was. He was, but I don't think Arrington played the game in the same way that Powell did. He played a game, but not that game.

DePue: You've already led us to the point of asking all kinds of questions about money. He profited from these things, and this gets us to the point of the shoebox. He dies 1970, and by 1971 Rendleman asked to release this information, "Oh, by the way, when we were looking through his apartment that he had in the St. Nicholas Hotel in Springfield, Illinois, well, we kind of ran across $800,000 in cash. And, oh, by the way, that is only part of his estate." It ran into the millions. So, where was he getting this money?

Hartley: Well, it's all speculation. I mean, there's still guesswork. Nobody really knows. There's lots of consensus: payoffs, lobbyists, people wanting to influence him as secretary of state, and that this money was actually collected over a considerable period of time.

He had a way of doling out money for campaigns for other people, to help them with campaigns. So, if you look at it that way, he probably had a lot more than $800,000 in a cumulative sense, because he'd used some of that money as he went along.

There was some funny business with the state licensing and the highway business while he was Secretary of State, and there's always been a feeling that there was some pretty big payoffs in that. Maybe those were the ones that really were the big ones.

But nobody really knows how he accumulated that money. And, if there was ever anyone who did, they're dead, and they never talked.

DePue: Tell us about his association with racing and race tracks, because that seems to be, at least part of the explanation.

Hartley: Well, it's part of it, except that there wasn't anything illegal about what he did. Unethical maybe or bending the process or something. But, from the time he was Speaker of the House, in 1949, he and his cronies and buddies in the race track business passed all kinds of legislation expanding race tracks, making them more profitable than they had been, taxing them less. Their argument always was—when people like Paul Simon would argue with them about that—they would say, look at the money that's going to the state from

race tracks and horse racing and the things that it's paying for, that we'd have to find money for from somebody else to do, if we did that. That was always their argument.

And Powell became the beneficiary, then, of passing this legislation. So, Chicago Downs and places like that, they made it easy for him to buy stock in the race tracks, at a dollar a share, and immediately paid a dividend of a dollar a share for all of his shares. He just—

DePue: But nothing was illegal about that?

Hartley: Nothing illegal about that. They could issue stock and issue it at any level they wanted to. There wasn't any Securities and Exchange Commission or anything like that.

DePue: And he wasn't trying to hide any of that?

Hartley: No. Well, you know, it all became public eventually. Then, he took money from race tracks for consulting: $20,000 a year for consulting with Chicago race tracks. Well, they didn't consult. That wasn't a consulting job. They were simply paying him off for legislation that he either stopped or he passed. He controlled that with his friends, like Clyde Lee and people like that, who were his race track cronies and also were in the legislature. He made them all well. I mean, they all made money. Some made more than others. But he made them all money. Again, they got something by working with him to pass the legislation.

As nearly as I could tell when I was researching this book, he paid taxes on every dollar that he got from horse racing. Now, that doesn't mean that somebody didn't hand him an envelope full of money at some point. But anything that was recorded, anything that was on the record, of dividend money, anything like that, he always declared it. He was not going to be caught for not paying taxes. So, that all appeared in it.

By the time that he went to the secretary of state's office, in probably the mid-60's, he was receiving, in dividends and pay and paybacks and interests in things from horse racing, somewhere around a $150,000 a year. Now, that was big money in those days. And it was all legal. There wasn't anything illegal about that. But I'm telling you…what I'm saying is, that doesn't mean that there wasn't some money that changed hands, otherwise, in that business or got some help from race track owner or something like that, and suddenly you got a Christmas present.

DePue: And dividends from the race track: you don't receive in stacks of $100 bills, I don't think.

Hartley: No. No, you don't.

DePue: The vast majority of the $800,000 found in his apartment and other places is in $100 bills.

Hartley: Yeah. You know, I guess that just made it more convenient. He didn't have a big pile of money. There will always be unanswered questions about that stuff, because the people who were involved, at the last minute, in the quote-unquote "discovery of the money" and accountability for it and so on, never changed their stories, and they're all dead.

DePue: I put down a couple of quotes when I was reading your book. This one I love. He gets selected as Speaker of the House—one of the several times—in 1949. At the time, he's overheard, to be quoted as saying. "I smell the meat a-cookin'."

Hartley: Yes. That's right. That has followed his reputation all the way through. And apparently, there was a meeting. After the election, but before the legislature met, there was a meeting with Democrats to sort of celebrate the victory of taking over the house. And, by all measures, he said, "I smell the meat a-cookin'." The columnists and everybody else ate that up. (laughs)

DePue: There's tons of colorful quotes in Illinois politics.

Hartley: Oh, that's right. Well, Powell is responsible for a lot of them. He had a bag full.

DePue: This gets to what I was asking about where he got all of his money. Paul O'Neal was quoted—again, this is from your book—[O'Neal] saw him in Johnson County working the crowd, and says this of Powell: "I was with him when he'd go into places, and people would be putting $100 bills in his pocket. But he was a good man and a savior to southern Illinois. He was our Mayor Daley."

Hartley: I think that's a most accurate statement of the feeling about him. I think that also is true of how he accumulated money. I mean, people wanted to give him money. They wanted to make it. They wanted to, because they figured they'd get something for it. They'd either get more jobs in southern Illinois, or they'd get a favorable bill out of the legislature or something. Because there was no accountability for that, we have no way of knowing how much money really flowed to him and where it came from.

DePue: The picture that's painted here, with O'Neal's comment, is people sticking $100 bills in your pocket. You think, Okay, he's the mob boss, and you're doing that to make sure you're protected, and he doesn't crush you somewhere along the line. But I don't get that impression from listening to you.

Hartley: There could have been some of that; although, nowhere really, in looking at Powell, did I come away feeling that Powell had a bunch of thugs running

around with bags to fill up, or they were going to break some knees or something like that. I never had any—nobody, even his worst enemies or biggest enemies—nobody would go that far.

DePue: Well, here's what Anthony Scariano—you called him Tony—one of those good governance guys—

Hartley: That's right.

DePue: Here's what he said about Powell. "Paul Powell was for Paul Powell. I don't think he was a competent legislator that some people say he is. Everything he got in the legislature was through either ill-gotten power or ill-gotten gains."

Hartley: Well, Tony always had a way of expressing his personal feelings. I don't know that he… For the record, I think that's Tony. But Tony was a good legislator himself, and I think he was willing to give grudging credit to Powell. As I say, he didn't like what he did, and he didn't like how he did it, but he did it.

DePue: Here's a couple more quotes. This guy is very quotable on both sides of the equation. This is Powell talking about Adlai Stevenson. Apparently there wasn't much love lost there…

Hartley: No, there wasn't.

DePue: …fellow Democrats, but that's about the extent of it.

Hartley: No, there wasn't.

DePue: He said, "If he was going to write a book about Stevenson, it would have been entitled, 'Hypocrites I have known.'"

Hartley: (chuckles) There was no love lost there. Interestingly enough, the big horse racing bill that came out of the legislature in '49, Stevenson signed, without question, without any question at all. It was a pure gift to Powell. So, strange things happen. But Powell still didn't like him. (chuckles)

DePue: Let's flip the coin over and see what Stevenson thought about Powell. Here's his quote, "He knew the shortest distance between two points as a curve." (both chuckle)

Hartley: Well, Adlai had a good mind for those, too. I think they didn't trust each other, but they didn't bring government to a standstill. When Bill Stratton was in there for eight years—the Republicans and all, I mean—they worked with the Democrats. They didn't bring it to deadlock in the legislature. It didn't work that way. There may have been some things that passed that shouldn't have, or they got laid over to another session, but they dealt with it. They weren't afraid to deal with it, across the aisle.

DePue: Well, Otto Kerner is governor from 1961 to ’68, so part of that time, Powell was in the legislature, and part of the time, he’s secretary of state. Did they have a good working relationship?

Hartley: You know, the impression I had was that Powell thought that (chuckles) Otto sort of had the same attitude and sort of arrogance about him that Stevenson did. I don’t think he felt quite the way about Otto, but he didn’t care much for him. And I don’t think Kerner did him any favors. I just think that Powell had his own fiefdom during much of that time and ran his own game and didn’t pay much attention to Otto—and maybe vice versa. Well, the only game that Otto played was the Chicago game, and so, that was obvious.

DePue: Let’s get to the last governor he dealt with. Now he is secretary of state during Richard Ogilvie’s term. But Ogilvie is a different kind of political beast than Powell is, entirely. And I would assume you would agree that he’s a different kind of political beast than somebody like Otto Kerner, coming out of that Democratic machine tradition.

Hartley: Yes, absolutely. And your question is, so how did they get along?

DePue: Yes.

Hartley: I think Ogilvie kept his distance from Powell. I think he felt he was tainted, and he didn’t want to be seen with Powell too much. I don’t remember Ogilvie criticizing Powell verbally or taking him on. There wasn’t any reason to—I mean, that I could see.

DePue: They’re both constitutional officers, with their own source of power.

Hartley: Yeah, that’s right. But I think that Ogilvie was really nervous around him and just simply didn’t want to be seen in the same light at all.

And Powell, again, was riding his own crest. He was his own boss, and he didn’t have to pay any attention to Ogilvie, at all. He didn’t need Ogilvie for anything.

The relationships, back before he was secretary of state, were different, because he did need governors to work with and to bargain with and so on. But, when he was secretary of state, he didn’t need them.

DePue: We’ve talked already a lot about the thing that he is most remembered for now. When you hear people just kind of casually throwing names around, and they get to Powell, and they get to the shoebox. One of the list of many scandals in Illinois politics that’s been brought up here, in the era of Blagojevich, I guess.

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: Anything else you want to say about that?

Hartley: No, except that I think we'll always have that with us, because we don't know exactly what happened. So, there's always a level of mystery and mythology with something like that. Everybody makes up their own story about how they think it happened and so on. As long as that's the case, it will be with us.

DePue: Here's the quote that most struck me when I was reading the book. Again, this is your quote about Powell. "There was and still is an amazing tolerance for his behavior, even to the graft that seemed to be part of his method of operating." Still think you want to stay with that quote today?

Hartley: Yes, I think it's true. I think that he lives in southern Illinois, and I think, for example, and maybe even in some parts of central Illinois, particularly. He had friends and associates all over the place in positions of authority and responsibility who admired him greatly and wouldn't let anybody say a damaging or discouraging word about him. There were some people who were quick to run and say, "Well, I knew he was a crook all along." But quite frankly, not many.

DePue: Just to cap this one up then, do you think the Powell scandal that hit in '71, did that have anything to do with Dan Walker winning in '72? I mean, there's no direct correlation there. Walker's going after the machine, but it's part of the Illinois corruption at the time.

Hartley: Well, there may have been some. I don't recall—it's been a long time ago—I don't recall Dan's campaign focusing on the Powell mistreatment or anything else. I don't think he had to. There was probably some residual feeling about Powell being a crook and so on that might have helped Dan. But, to my knowledge, I don't remember him using that on the campaign trail.

DePue: I don't believe so either. I've had a chance to interview Walker. Powell didn't even come up in the process.

Hartley: Yeah.

Depue: Let's change gears just a little bit. You'd written your first two books while you were still a journalist. You wrote this book after you have been removed from journalism for a while, and you wrote this book after the guy died; he was out of office. Did you take a different approach? Were you a different person by this time in your career?

Hartley: I hope so. I probably wasn't nearly as naïve, I hope. I probably was able to…I certainly had learned…You know, I'm unschooled in doing research. I didn't take any graduate courses at all, so I learned how to do research from other people, essentially.

Dave Kenney was one who was a terrific guide for me in that I learned; he was a scholar and a good one. And I learned from him in doing research. What I learned, actually, was that, if you want to get your book published—particularly doing the kinds of books that I do and have done in Illinois—you're probably going to get them published by university presses. For better or for worse or whatever, university presses have certain standards. This was something that Bob Howard, back in the seventies and all, stressed to me; he said, "You've got to learn to present what you've written in a way that the publisher will accept it." What he meant was that you had to show you'd done some research, and you had to have some notes, some source notes, and a bibliography and so on. I learned that early, and it was underscored for me by Dave Kenney on the one hand, and also when I submitted manuscripts, like the Paul Powell book and all.

The expectation was that I was going to provide documentation for what I had written. There's some leeway when you're writing about politics, and you can take some things for granted. You can leap to some conclusions very carefully. But there are some limits to that when it comes to publishing in that venue. I had learned all of that, and it was reinforced by the Powell book. So that everything that came after that, I was applying a different approach. I knew what I had to do in order to tell the story. I had great respect for being able to document what I found, rather than just say it happened. So, yes, I changed in that respect.

If I had remained a journalist and had written those books, I don't know how I would have approached it. But I wasn't a journalist anymore. And, while I wrote as a journalist in many ways—my writing style and so on—nonetheless I knew, if I was going to be able to tell a good story and have it published and stand up, I had to be able to defend it. I had to be able to say, "Well, look here are the documents." The Powell book is not a bad example. In the end, I present what I think happened with the money. I got most of that information from the widow of one of the principles in the finding of the money at the end. Her husband was dead, and everybody else was dead who had anything to do with it. Off the record, she told me what she thought happened, and what he had told her.

DePue: That was something you would not have been willing to do as a journalist?

Hartley: I would have had qualms about that. I'd have said, "Well, let's get it all out there," or something like that.

DePue: Because you didn't have the second source and the third source to verify the first source?

Hartley: I had a strong feeling from the interview with her, personal interview. And then there were some political people in Springfield who knew her, who vouched for her. They didn't know what she told me, but they vouched for her

as a person. I thought it also sounded logical. You know, I pulled the punch on it a little bit at the end, but the point is that I felt it was important to be able to do that. I let her look at what I had written.

That's another thing I would never have done as a journalist and say to somebody in the book, "Here are the quotes I'm using. Make sure they're okay." I do that all the time now when I write books. If I quote somebody at great length, I say, "Look, I'll let you look at the quotes. I'm not going to let you do anything with anything else. You can look at what I'm saying you said, and if we want to talk about that, we can. I want you to know what I'm saying." I don't have any qualms about that at all, because I want it to stand up. I want it to hold up. I don't want to run a quote that somebody's going to say, "I didn't say that. Where did that guy get that quote? He must have made it up." They might say that anyway, but, if I've got a written letter from there or comment that says, "I read the notes, and they look okay to me," then I'm not going to have that happen.

So, you change the techniques a little bit and the approaches a little bit to accomplish what you want. Would I prefer to write a book without having to do those darn notes at the end and follow the style for all of that—takes forever to do them and everything?—the The answer is no. I wouldn't want to do them without those notes, because that's what it stands on. When you're pretending, sometimes, to do history, you want to stand on something. You don't want to just stand on gibberish and talk. I think that's where I'm different than what I used to be.

DePue: So you see this book on Powell as a work of history and not a work of journalism.

Hartley: Oh, yeah, absolutely.

DePue: In talking to Dr. Tom Schwartz, who's the current state historian—we were just kind of talking about things in general—he made the comment, "All good journalists…" putting your journalist hat on, "All good journalists know a lot more about their subjects than they end up writing about."

Hartley: (both chuckle)

DePue: True for Powell?

Hartley: Oh, I think so. In fact, as I did a book tour for the Powell book, I ran into some people who tried to get me to say some things that they thought I knew, that I hadn't written or hadn't talked about. Sure, probably every book I've written has some things that I didn't put in it.

DePue: Is it fair to say you had fun writing this book?

Hartley: You know, it was… it came… this was… the answer is yes. But, it so happened, as I finished up that book I had a deadline of June 1, 1968 to get everything to the publisher.

DePue: Nineteen ninety-eight?

Hartley: Nineteen ninety-eight, I'm sorry. Nineteen ninety-eight. We were in Washington. We had sold our house. We were building a house in Colorado. We were in the process of moving there. My mother had Alzheimer's. My father had heart trouble and was in the same facility with her. They died within a month of each other, one on the twenty-first of May and the other on the second of June. And I still met the deadline with the manuscript.

Now, I guess what I have to say is, that I must have just been brain dead at some point with all of that going on, because I don't think I handled it all that well. So, when it was done, I didn't know whether I'd done a decent job or not, or I'm not so sure that I cared, at that point, because of all the other things that were going on.

But subsequently, I've always felt good about the Powell book. I'm always still surprised that nobody else wrote about him. Nobody did a book before I did it. I couldn't believe that nobody did, because he was a terrific subject. So, I was just lucky.

DePue: We're at the point where we need to move on to your next book, and you start getting more serious about writing, but also, we're more serious, about this time, about being retired, too. Maybe there's a correlation there.

Hartley: (laughs) Maybe so.

DePue: Maybe this is a good time to take a quick break, before we move on.

Hartley: It's a deal. (Pause)

(recording resumes)

DePue: We're ready for Lewis and Clark here. We took a very quick break. Now we're back and ready to pick up the next book, Bob, that you wrote in 2002, *Lewis and Clark in Illinois Country: The Little Told Story.* What I'd like to have you do first, is just give us a real thumbnail sketch of the book and then why you wrote it when you wrote it.

Hartley: Lewis and Clark, on the beginning of their trek to the west coast and back, in 1902 and 1903, if I can remember the dates, they stopped for six months in Illinois country. They were preparing for their trip up the Missouri River.

DePue: So, it's obviously 1802, 1803 timeframe.

Hartley: Yeah. And everybody who had written about Lewis and Clark had spent very little time on that part of it, because that wasn't the thrilling part of the trip. The rest of the trip was what all the writers and historians wrote about. I wanted to plumb that, to get more out of it, because I thought it had a significant history piece for Illinois. Yet, at the same time, I knew that that wasn't the whole of the story that I had to integrate into this. So, what I developed, at the same time, was what it was like along the Mississippi River in Illinois country, where they passed through, and with the people that they had relationships with during the six months that they were camped there in Illinois.

So, that essentially became the story. There's a little bit about the trip west, and there's a little bit about the forerunner of the trip. But mostly, it deals with this time period and earlier time, because of Clark's history with Illinois, as to this area from Kaskaskia to what's now Alton or in that general area. So, that's what I wanted to do. I wanted to tell a story that I thought was of significance to Illinois history, and no one had framed it that way.

DePue: You were living where at this time?

Hartley: I was living in Colorado.

DePue: This is your fourth book. You wrote on Percy while you're a journalist in Illinois, wrote on Thompson while you're a journalist in Illinois, wrote on Paul Powell while you're a public relations guy in Washington State, wrote on Illinois' early history when you're in Colorado. What keeps bringing you back to Illinois?

Hartley: Oh, first of all, I'm familiar with Illinois. I mean, I'm familiar with the geography. I'm familiar with the history, whether I wrote it or not. I have all kinds of people, friends here who I talk about Illinois with, whether I'm here or wherever I am. It's a part of me. I'm hung up on Illinois history, and I admit it. I love it. So, that's what keeps bringing me back. And the stories are so good; there are an unlimited number of good stories here, and I feel comfortable doing it.

You know, when I was in Washington State, almost twenty years out there, I tried to write some history when I was out there. I just didn't have whatever it took. I didn't have the background or the stimulus or whatever it was. So, I dropped the idea and came back to Illinois. I feel like that, because there is an unlimited supply of good stories. They need to be told. Many of them will be, but a lot of them won't if I don't tell them.

DePue: Maybe this is one of those that might not have been told otherwise. Lewis and Clark has been well-mined territory, because it such an essential piece of American history. But what did you discover in the process of writing, and was it truly an important piece to the overall story?

Hartley: You mean, discovered in this story? I think that, in addition to just what they did when they were in Illinois country, what I discovered was the history of the people that they had contact with, what they brought to Illinois country. There were all migrants to Illinois country and came from a variety of places and did a variety of things. I was amazed with their stories and how that sort of blended with Lewis and Clark and George Rogers Clark, Clark's brother, and his connection with Illinois and with that area, with the Cahokia area, for example.

I found that it dovetailed with Lewis and Clark. You could have looked at it as separate, but the more you looked at it, that was who they talked to. That was who Lewis and Clark bought from. That's who they traded with. That's where they got their gun and their gun powder. They dealt with all of these people who had these interesting backgrounds and were the beginning of that region of Illinois.

DePue: Is that where a lot of the stories and the information they got about the Missouri country came from?

Hartley: Absolutely. So, they mined the information. There'd been some people who had gone up the Missouri a ways. They met them, and they talked to them. So, they picked their brain in all of that. So, it was what they did in this five or six month period and who they did it with and what that tells us about the people who were there. They didn't just land there and go out and build a boat or two and go up the river.

But I have to tell you, Mark, that this was, in some respects, the most difficult book for me to write, ever. I certainly was not a Lewis and Clark scholar. I had no credentials in writing about Lewis and Clark, and I found that I couldn't get it published. So, I self-published the book, and of all the books I have written, published by regular publishers, and that I published myself, this book sold more copies than any other—by a bunch.

Part of it was that it resonated with librarians and people in Illinois who were in the midst of celebrating the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. They didn't know about this connection to Illinois. So, the Illinois State Library picked this book up and bought copies of it and sent them out to all of their libraries all over the state of Illinois, with a program for teaching and everything. And I sold a bunch of books.

It was hard work, because marketing a book on your own is no fun at all. I knew that I couldn't get that published. I knew it got rejected twice by publishers, and I think the only reason that it did was that, when they sent it out to the scholars of Lewis and Clark, they said, "Who is this guy? Who is this guy, Hartley? What are his credentials to write about Lewis and Clark? Why should we let him in the door?" That sounds paranoid, but I really

believe that that's what was going on, because the turndowns from the publishers were all very polite. You know, they said—

DePue: Were these academic presses though?

Hartley: Yeah, they were. Well, as a matter of fact, my friend Taylor Pensoneau had most recently self-published his first book, and it was very successful. He gave me some guidance about how to do that.

DePue: But I bet you he was writing on Illinois gangsters.

Hartley: Yeah, he was. (both laugh) So, I said, "Well, why not? I'll self-publish this sucker." But writing it to my satisfaction, then, and pulling it together—to take these pieces and these parts and making something cohesive out of it—was very difficult and a real test for me. I was pleased with the result, but it was not an easy book to do.

DePue: Again, you've written an awful lot on some of the central characters in Illinois history. How much has financial consideration ever been a part of the equation for you, that you're going to make money off of these things?

Hartley: You always want to make enough money; you always want to break even. But I think what I learned was that, if you do things the way you want to do them—if you want to put together a book tour on your own, if you want to do some marketing on your own—you're going to have to pay for it. The publisher is not going to pay for it. I suspect, in all honesty—and that's certainly the way I ought to look at it—is, at the very best, maybe two or three of the books that I've done, I've made money on. The rest of them, I've been lucky to break even.

Lewis and Clark: I made money on Lewis and Clark because I sold so many books. It was a popular book. It's just simply in volume. You sell enough copies, and you finally pay for the thing. I would tell anybody—and I have told them, anybody who wants to sell published books—that it is a costly experience. Unless you can afford to put the money into it upfront and maybe not get anything back, you really shouldn't do it.

DePue: Let's go back to the book itself. Getting back in the historical relevance of it, how many of the members of the expedition came from Illinois country?

Hartley: That's a great question. I'm not sure I can answer it specifically. They came down the Ohio River to Illinois country, with a dozen or so men that Clark had recruited at his home. And Lewis had two or three others. So they, maybe, had fifteen of the group.

They then stopped at Fort Massac. That was their first stop in Illinois country. And they recruited a handful more. They thought they were going to recruit some from Tennessee, so they went on down the river, and they got to

Kaskaskia. There was a fort there, Fort Kaskaskia. They had already gotten an agreement from the federal government people in Washington that they could co-opt people at Fort Kaskaskia and at Cahokia. So they stopped, and they filled out a lot of the openings at Fort Kaskaskia. I suppose they probably recruited maybe twenty people there.

These were soldiers. So, maybe by the time they got up to where they stayed the winter, they had picked up some loose folks along the way. They might have had thirty-five, forty people. Then they trickled in from contacts they had made at the various forts. The word got around, and some volunteers showed up to kind of fill out the rest of them while they were in Illinois country.

So, I think the answer, the best answer I can give to your question, is the bulk of the group came, with a very few exceptions, came from Illinois country.

DePue: But would it be fair to say, also, that most of those hadn't been born and raised in Illinois.

Hartley: Oh, absolutely. The soldiers came from the eastern states largely, nothing west of there. Oh, absolutely. They were not Illinois people that they recruited, because they were drifters. A lot of them were drifters, and they came from a variety of locations and so on. They might have been around for a while in Illinois country, but they weren't native to it or hadn't lived there long.

DePue: Having written a story about Lewis and Clark that hadn't been covered before—this is kind of a grander question, I guess, grander scale—what do you think it is about the Lewis and Clark story that still holds the fascination of the American people?

Hartley: I think that the two captains have been relatively untarnished by history. Lewis kind of had a bad ending and so on, but they were good people, good guys. They were brave. They were courageous, and they brought this band together of different kinds of people and made it work. They faced the wilderness and faced the unknown and won, as it were. Winning is very big in American history. So that, when they returned, they had all of these artifacts that they had collected, and they had a story they told.

I just think that you can't break it down. You can't make it sound like it didn't happen. You can't make it cheap in any way. It's a one-of-a-kind trip, a one-of-a-kind exploration. There have been similar kinds, but not like that one.

So I just think that people love it. They love the story, and you live sort of vicariously: Gosh, I wonder what I would have done on that trip, if I'd have met the grizzly bear in the water and so on and so forth. So I think you try to put yourself there. I think Americans do that a lot. So it almost has some

of the resonance of fiction, in a way. You can almost make that story anyway you want to make it. You can read it anyway you want to read it. You can apply yourself to it anyway you want to. So it has a lot of excellent qualities.

DePue: For students of American history, is that one of the essential stories if you're truly to understand who we are as Americans today?

Hartley: I would think so. I mean, I would think it would be important. There are always people, particularly maybe and even in academic life, of who the longer something goes, the longer a story gets told, the more fault they find with it. Who is to say that Lewis and Clark were perfect or that their dealings with Indians along the way were all that you would have expected it to be in light of today's concerns and so on? I think there's always a way to kind of pick at it. But there's not a way to tear it down.

I just think that, as a result, it is a truly American story. And, as a result of that, there are so many aspects of it that affected later events and history of the country and the expansion and so on, that I think it's essential to the teaching of American history.

DePue: Very good. Well, pretty close on the heels of your self-publishing this book, comes out, *An Uncertain Tradition, U.S. Senators from Illinois, 1818-2003*. Two thousand three, being the year you published the book, I suspect.

Hartley: Right.

DePue: And you co-published this with David Kenney. How did that book come about?

Hartley: (laughs) As a result of Kenney helping me with the Paul Powell book, we rekindled, not a friendship, so much as an awareness of each other that dated back to my days at Lindsay-Schaub newspapers and his days in the Thompson administration, as the head of the wildlife operation and so on, for Thompson. We knew each other then, not well. So, we sort of rekindled that, with him helping me with Powell.

One day—I think I was still working on the Lewis and Clark book—I get this phone call from him. He says, "I've got an idea for us to do a book together." I don't remember ever suggesting that we do a book together. We never talked about it before that.

I was sort of stunned. I said, "Well, David, I'm in the middle of cranking out this Lewis and Clark thing." And I said, "I'm not going to stop because of the timing of that, that's necessary. He said, "Well, I think we can work around that." And he said, "Let me write down an idea for how this thing works." And I said, "Okay."

I can remember saying to my wife, "You know, I'm already up to my eyeballs in this Lewis and Clark. I'm not going to stop and do another book right now."

David persisted, and we divided the book up in halfsies. I wrote half of the biographies, and he wrote half of them, of the senators. We divided that up, and we set some ground rules for how we would work together. But we didn't have to be in the same town with each other, and we could work sort of independently.

DePue: I'm going to interrupt you here. Going through this, it's not apparent who took who.

Hartley: Yeah, well, David always said—and he's the one who said it--that he was amazed at how similar our writing styles were. My take on that is that our writing styles were different, but we could make it work in the editing. He edited this book. We did another book together later, and I edited it. So, we sort of traded off those responsibilities with the two books.

But everybody I talk to, I said, "I'm going to do a book with another author." They said, "Holy cow, don't do that. It will ruin whatever friendship you have. You won't be speaking to each other. You'll argue all the time. You'll probably be lucky to ever get it finished." These were even people who knew Dave, and they knew me. I said, "Well, so far, it's been okay." "Oh," they said, "wait 'til you get to editing each other. Wait till you get to criticize. It'll fall apart. I guarantee you; it'll fall apart."

Well, it didn't fall apart. David is a gentleman and has an approach to working with people that is unique and very complementary and easy to do. I'm not as easy to work with, I suspect. But, be that as it may, we worked it out together, and we wanted to do the book.

His model for this was Bob Howard's book on the governors. He felt there needed to be one on the senators. And he sold the idea to the SIU Press. I didn't have any dealings with them on that at all. So, in large part, this was David's book, I think. I helped him with it, and we worked together on it, but it was really David's book. I'm glad we did it.

I'm getting ready to do an update of it, a second edition of it, because so much has happened since 2003 in the senate situation in Illinois. David, unfortunately, is not well and won't be able to help. But the book is going to endure. It's not going to be a best-seller, but it's going to endure.

DePue: It's an essential book for somebody like myself who's talking to people who know these folks, at least the contemporary figures. So, it's extremely important for me to be able to pull it off the shelf and read the particular chapter. I mean, I'm just going to read the Everett Dirksen chapter.

Here's what I would think, in terms of the early negotiations between the two of you, it would go something like this: "Well, I want to do the Stephen Douglas chapter, and I want to do the Everett Dirksen chapter, and I'll give you the Paul Douglas chapter." "No, I want Stephen Douglas and—"

Hartley: That's why we divided it up according to the way the seats were arranged. If you look at the way they are divided, there's an A-list and a B-list of senators. So there are seats: like the Paul Douglas seat is the Chuck Percy seat; it's the Paul Simon seat; it's the Dick Durbin seat, as you go through. On the other hand, Adlai Stevenson's seat is the Al Dixon seat, and it follows a different track. So, if you start out in the beginning, in 1818, and you work from the two senators in that, you have two tracks—

DePue: And you laid that out in the beginning of the book.

Hartley: That's right. So, Dave took one track, and I took the other, regardless of who was in that track.

DePue: So, when you first started to talk about this, I was envisioning seats in the floor of the U.S. Senate, but no, it's the particular track, the sequence, is how you describe it in the book.

Hartley: That's right.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: So, there were never any quarrels over that, and we didn't do any trading. We didn't say, "I really would like to do Chuck Percy." It turned out that I ended up with Percy. I ended up with Simon, because they were in the line-up that I did. And I ended up with Paul Douglas. He ended up with Dirksen. That's the way we did it, and I don't remember ever being unhappy with that and saying, "Gee, I wish we'd have done that differently." That saved a lot of discussion.

DePue: If you're doing the update to the book, then by necessity, you have to include Barack Obama.

Hartley: Absolutely.

DePue: Whose sequence would that be falling to?

Hartley: Well, Obama…You see, Durbin was the sequence that goes back through Simon and so on, and Obama goes back to Fitzgerald and—

DePue: Braun

Hartley: And, who?

DePue: Carol Mosley-Braun?

Hartley: Yes, that's right, Carol Mosley-Braun. It goes back to Al Dixon and Adlai Stevenson and goes back that way. So, that's the seat that Obama ends up on.

DePue: So, is that yours or—

Hartley: Well, David is not going to be working on this. I'm going to consult him and so on, but I'm going to do the writing.

DePue: Okay. Going back to what we talked about when you wrote the Percy book, when you wrote the Thompson book, how in god's name are you going to write an objective assessment of a sitting U.S. president.

Hartley: Oh, I think it's impossible to assess it. First of all, this will not deal with his presidency. It will deal with the record that exists of his state and U.S. Senate experience, and there's plenty on the record. I mean there was plenty of analysis of that. Actually, his two books are helpful, that Obama wrote. The 2008 campaign books that have come out have had a fair amount of that history of the senate time. The Michael Barone book, that he does every two years on the history of politics in the U.S., is a god-send for contemporary work, because he does absolutely perfect research.

There's a lot on the record. So, you can say, "Well, this guy, he was elected to the U.S. Senate. He only served four years before he became President. He really only served two years in the U.S. Senate from Illinois, because he was campaigning for two years." You draw the picture of that by showing his voting record and the fact that he was in the ninetieth percentile of being absent from Washington during those two years, because he wasn't there to vote. And when he did, what did he vote for? Well, he voted against two members of the Supreme Court.

So, you can do those kinds of things and show what he was doing and what committees he got on and how he was treated by the senators, how they treated his ideas and so on. That's about all you can do.

DePue: Let me ask you this. If I can peek into the future a little bit here, what are you going to say about his relationship with Emil Jones, who is senate president for quite a few of those years?

Hartley: Oh, I think you have to deal with that. I mean, you deal with sort of how he got where he got, and particularly in the state senate.

DePue: Well, see, I've heard lots of speculation of whether or not Emil Jones truly was **a** mentor or **the** mentor for Barack Obama.

Hartley: Well, I don't think **the** mentor stands up. I think there were two. I'll tell who was a mentor of sorts for Obama during that time, and that's Ab Mikva. Mikva was responsible, in large part, for getting him to Chicago and getting him into the legal situation there. When the story is finally really told, I think

you'll find Mikva at the creation of Obama, much more so than anyone has, so far, written it.

DePue: Well, if I can tweak the public, who might be listening to this down the road, one of my volunteers is in the beginning stages of interviewing Abner Mikva about his political career.

Hartley: Yeah. Well, I think it's going to be fascinating. I think, if you can get the right questions to him about the Obama period, I think you're going to be surprised with the stuff you get.

DePue: Okay. Why the title? Why, *Uncertain Tradition*?

Hartley: Well, that was David's title. I give him credit for that. I think what he sort of concluded after we did this was, you couldn't draw too many generalizations about how these people served and how good they were or how bad they were, because events and history and time are so different and changes so much. So, I think, instead of saying, a grand group of folks—we couldn't say that—or saying that they all served their state well—we couldn't say that. So, it was an **uncertain** tradition. I think that's where David came from.

DePue: Okay. In the process of writing the books and taking these senators one at a time, and understanding how they knit together and knit with all these other political characters, what's the story that really surprised you?

Hartley: Oh, my goodness. Now, David and I come at this history thing differently. I'm more familiar from the thirties, on. He's not unfamiliar with that, but he has a great sense of earlier time.

I think what I learned from that was that, from 1913, when they started electing senators in statewide elections, that for probably twenty years, maybe even more than that, they elected some real mediocre people. They weren't really well served until you got to the tail end of the Depression and you got guys like Scott Lucas and Paul Douglas and some others like that. There's almost a gap—you almost have a sense of a quality gap—in that time period. There just weren't very many good senators. A bunch of them served only one term, and there were some deaths in there and so on. So there was not much continuity.

The Republicans dominated it, of course, in the twenties, and the Democrats in the thirties. So, I guess I was surprised at that. I guess I don't know what I expected, but I didn't expect what I would call that, sort of, dead period. You go back beyond that, earlier than that, and periodically there were some pretty dynamic people serving in the senate and doing some interesting things. But there's no way you could sugar coat this period of almost two decades or maybe even more. I think that really surprised me. It wasn't so much the people, that I discovered something I didn't know about somebody, and I was surprised. It was more the case of the continuity, or the lack of it

and the quality aspect of it. That, I think, also probably played into the title a little bit.

David and I, when we talked about this book, we didn't talk about specific people. We talked about the trends that took place over the years and that the early senators didn't come from Illinois. They came from other places. They were new to Illinois. We talked about that, and David did a good job, I thought, of tying the transition together. He did all of the transitional work, and I thought he did an excellent job of that. So, that was part of how we made this thing work. It was his strength, and that was the way we did it. But, in terms of discovering something that I hadn't thought about, it was that time period.

DePue: How do you explain—this, I think, is relating to the last sixty some years, seventy years, maybe—why there were so many Illinois senators who ended up being leaders in the senate? You got Lucas. Was Douglas a leader?

Hartley: No, Douglas was never in the leadership.

DePue: But you got Dirksen and Durbin.

Hartley: Dirksen was. Durbin was and is, and who knows, he may end up being the majority leader before it's all over.

DePue: You mean minority leader?

Hartley: Well, it could be the minority leader, too, but he—

DePue: Oh, yeah, majority leader, if Harry Reid loses.

Hartley: But being the number one at some point, I think he stands a good chance of that. You know, I don't know that there is anything more than circumstances involved with that. I've studied all those guys. I haven't written at length about Lucas or Dirksen, but I've studied them a lot. Why they ended up where they did were the circumstances of the make-up of the senate and the people and the issues and their own skills, then, at filling the leadership position. So, I think it's more that, than it is—

DePue: That Illinois produces an especially skillful politician?

Hartley: I don't want to go there. I don't think that's it, no.

DePue: Well, this one will put you on the spot, too. Looking back on all of these senators—and I assume you're going to have a more contemporary bias—but give me the top five.

Hartley: (laughs) Oh, I was afraid you'd ask something like that. You know, I think Douglas has to be in there for his impact on—

DePue: Stephen?

Hartley: Stephen, Stephen A. Douglas, for the breadth of his service in the senate. I don't know that he'd be number one, but he certainly, I think, has to be in there.

I think, I would include Dirksen, not solely for his senate time, but I think his combination of house and senate and, again, the span of his influence and all and his impact on major issues of his time. I would have to put him in that.

I don't think anybody after Dirksen that I would put in that category. Let's see, was it Turnbull? I'd have to think about it. Let me see this. Sometimes the names escape me, but yes, Trumbull, Lyndon Trumbull, was an extraordinary senator, and he came during the testy time of slavery and the Civil War and so on. David and I, both of us always admired his work, so I think Trumbull would be a third.

Some people might put John Logan in there, but I don't think I would. I've done quite a bit of study of Logan. Although I think he has some characteristics, he was certainly a man of his time in many ways.

DePue: He has the distinction in many military history circles as being considered the best of political generals of the Civil War.

Hartley: That's right. That's right. And, then, in the Senate, he was in the thick of a lot of things that I don't believe his biographers have really fully explored—Indian affairs for one and so on. But I might put him on a secondary list, kind of like David Davis. He wasn't a great senator, but he did so many other things.

But I think Shelby Cullom has to be among the five. First of all, he served the longest in public office, in high public office, of anybody in the history of the state. He was governor and, the senator and in the congress, and so on, and he was a leader in legislation. He was a legislative leader, as such. So, I would put Shelby Cullom in that group. That's about five, isn't it?

DePue: Yeah.

Hartley: You know, there were some good folks who did some good things . The early guys are kind of hard to pick out for stardom, anyway. They weren't all bad, but they weren't, as a rule… Until you got to Douglas, they were pretty slim pickings, I think, in that regard. Gosh, we had drunks, and we had philanderers, and we had all kinds of folk in there as senators.

It could be that Durbin could—kind of depending on how it works out—that Durbin fit in that. I wouldn't put him there yet. But again, if you look at his total career in congress, I think fourteen years in the house and now

in his, what, third term as a senator, and the leadership and so on, you're going to be pretty hard pressed, I think, to not, at some point, consider him one of the top senators.

DePue: Looking back at the Civil War era, I'm always amazed that the two top political figures of the pre-Civil War era are two Illinoisans. Then, you've got Grant, who's got Illinois connections.

Hartley: Yeah, that's exactly right. And they had long-term effects. You know, I have relatives that—again, Illinois relatives, for that matter—who were Democrats. Well, they were Douglas Democrats. I mean, that's the kind of Democrat. They weren't like a contemporary Democrat now. They were Douglas Democrats as long as they lived. Their attitudes and all, about a lot of things, were influenced by him and what he said and what came after him and so on.

I'm always inclined to give Stephen Douglas, a little more credit than some people are, because I think they denigrate his service because of the slavery issue and so on. But, when you look at the whole picture, I think he's a great guy.

DePue: That gets us to the next book. There's a couple years there and a little bit of change in direction, because your next book is *Death Underground, the Centralia and West Frankfort Mine Disasters* with David Kenney, another collaboration. But, again, what I'd like to have you do in this case is start us off with a little bit of a thumbnail discussion of what those two incidents, what the book is about. Then, we'll get to the whys of writing.

Hartley: In the history of mine disasters in Illinois—of which there have been quite a number—up until the time of the Centralia disaster, which was in 1947, it was the first of the two covered in the book, and then, the one in West Frankfort was in '51. The Centralia disaster, which killed one hundred and eleven men, was, I believe, the second largest in the history, in Illinois history. It was one—

DePue: After the Cherry mine disaster?

Hartley: The what?

DePue: The Cherry mine, which was—

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: …at the turn of the century, around—

Hartley: Yes, that was the one. Nothing much had been written about either one of these. More had been written about Centralia because it played into the 1948 gubernatorial election. There was a major magazine, *Harper's Magazine*, article about it. The *Post-Dispatch* won a Pulitzer Prize for its coverage of the

disaster. There was just a lot more stuff on the record. So, it was tougher, actually, to do the other one, the West Frankfort.

I think both David and I felt that, after we had looked at these two, that they were significant impacts on the culture and the immediate history of the region. They were more than just a bunch of folks getting killed in a mine disaster. There was a great deal more, and the more we explored it, I think we agreed that that was true, particularly in Centralia. But I think it was true in West Frankfort too.

DePue: Why don't you tell us the region that we're talking about, of Illinois, that's the coal mining region.

Hartley: Yeah, it's the southern half of Illinois. So, not only were they the bigger, where there were a lot of people killed in both of them—they were big disasters—they had important community fallout and significance on generations of people. I think that's what interested us.

It wasn't just that we wanted to do, or that we even felt the need to do a disaster book. You know, disaster books sell, and people like to read about disasters. But I think we wanted to do more with it. I think we did, but I think there was a gap there. I think you probably could have written a book about each of them.

We decided to combine them and put them into one book. One critic of that felt like we shortchanged the telling of the disaster more than anything else, that we should have told more about that. Well, I think that was a reflection that we didn't want to make it strictly a disaster book. Maybe that was a legitimate criticism. I don't know. But we didn't feel that way about it. We agreed, this was another book; that's essentially why we felt that we should do it.

David grew up and lived in southern Illinois and was familiar with the coal mining culture there, originally had a much better feel for this idea than I did. And, quite frankly, I didn't know zilch about coal mining.

DePue: Was he the one who talked you into it?

Hartley: Yeah, well, he claims I came up with the idea, but I didn't, in all honesty. That's generous of him to say that. But, he called me after we'd done this other book and said, "I've got another idea for another book for us." That's sort of how that came up.

But he had a reason for doing it, and I think we followed through on that, pretty much. While we wrote separate accounts and separate disasters, we were trying to deal with this impact issue and to bring into this the history of coal mining and how it affected people in that region. So, we did some history with it, as well as the disaster.

DePue: If I may here…in reading the book, especially—You wrote the portion on Centralia, and Kenny wrote the portions on West Frankfort?

Hartley: Yeah.

DePue: The thing that surprised me: you spent a lot of time laying out the safety challenges, the relationship between the state and the mine owners and the mines themselves and safety inspections and persistent failures in following the safety. Maybe the danger of that is, it's a little bit dryer than going into the explosion portion of the book.

Hartley: (laughs) You know, I thought it was fascinating. (both laugh) It was because of the political part of it.

DePue: Yeah, yeah.

Hartley: I thought it was fascinating. You know, I thought the Dwight Green administration and the mining department and everything, and then, this one guy, who tried to fight it all and couldn't win and didn't prevent the disaster. You're right. You're right.

DePue: The general reader picks it up, and they're thinking they're going to get into the explosions right away.

Hartley: Yes, that's exactly right. I acknowledge that that's the way it reads.

DePue: But that gets back to what both you and Kenny said, when you wanted to do more with it?

Hartley: Yes, it does. We felt that way. You know, when you get into it, why you always learn a little bit of something. But we just didn't feel like that page after page after page of gory details was going to do the job.

DePue: Tell us little bit then about the psychological impact of these disasters afterwards. You talked about the impact on the community.

Hartley: It wiped out a hundred and eleven men in Centralia. Some of them were from the suburbs of Centralia, but it was from that area. So, it left all of these widows, and it left fatherless children. The impact on the women, I think, is most significant.

In those days women stayed home, and they raised the kids. The father went to the coal mines. They didn't have other jobs. So, when they lost their husband—and their husband was the person who brought home the money for them—they lost the money. They had to do something. They either had to find another husband, or they had to go to work, and they weren't trained to do anything.

So, for a generation, these people struggled. To listen to their sons and daughters talk about it—that'd be probably the second or third generation after the explosion—to listen to them talk about how their mothers and their grandmothers struggled with this thing, to put food on the table, to learn how to do something, other than do the wash at home and fix meals and all, that's so different from today, where women have so much more training and experience and education and opportunities.

So, the effects of this lasted for maybe two or three generations after that explosion, because that's what people remembered. Now, things were changing, and they were able to find jobs. Some left Centralia and so on, but they always remembered how their mothers and grandmothers struggled and how some of them really couldn't cope with it, really didn't cope with it very well.

There were very few, apparently, who remarried immediately. There were some who remarried eventually, but not very many, because a lot of these men who were killed were in their fifties and sixties. Miners were older, so the women were older. Some of them had a few dollars. I know there was one woman who started a women's store in Centralia with her daughter. I think the story was that her daughter had some money and helped get it going and that they made it work.

But, anyway, I think that's what I think about. You take away an employment center, not replaced by anything. Now, fortunately, Centralia had railroads, and they had oil, and they had some things like that. But, at the time of this, those things were in decline. This took away a serious source of the economy and employment that was never replaced. So, there's that impact as well.

There were a few survivors, but not enough to make any difference in terms of impact. So, the community struggled, as well, with this. Other people couldn't get back on their feet. The retail business was slack because of this. So, when you start peeling back the pieces of this onion and look at the impacts of that, it's more than just an explosion.

You look at the church services that were held and how they did them, one after another, for days. This has an impact. When you go there, as I did, and interview people who were children at that time, that's what they remember. You know, you want to ask them what they remember. They say, they remember waiting for the church service. They remember how they went in after one family, and another family came in after they did. So, you get that. I think that's, in part, what we wanted to get to from this. So we emphasized that.

DePue: You've convinced me that that's an important story to tell.

Hartley: (laughs)

DePue: When you talk about the story of coal mining in Illinois at the turn of the nineteenth to the twentieth century, so much of the story deals with the immigrants who were doing this hard work.

Hartley: That's right.

DePue: Was that still a factor?

Hartley: Absolutely. You can go through the phone book; today, you can go through the phone book in Centralia and come across the German names and the Eastern European names that are still there. You can trace them back to their ancestors, who came in the late 1800's. Absolutely. I found that to be fascinating. At the time of the disaster, if you look at the casualty list, and look at the people who were killed, and look at their names, they're all ethnic names, from Eastern Europe and England and so on. And their descendants are still there.

So, that whole cultural aspect of it still exists at Centralia. Centralia is a fascinating town to go to and dig around in the aftermath of this explosion. I met some wonderful people who became very good friends of mine.

DePue: Any final words on this particular book?

Hartley: No, David and I were still good friends when we finished this book.

DePue: (laughs)

Hartley: Because he did one, and I did the other. You see? And that was a formula that worked.

DePue: Okay. Very good. The next book, following shortly thereafter, just one year—You're really cranking them out by this time in your career—is a book, again, on a different topic. And this one doesn't deal with Illinois.

Hartley: It doesn't, directly. You're right.

DePue: *Saving Yellowstone, the President Arthur Expedition of 1883.* Okay, so the obvious question there is, why?

Hartley: In 1995 I went to Jackson, Wyoming to flyfish with the best man in our wedding, a longtime friend. We went out on the Gros Ventre River, out in Jackson Hole, out toward the eastern mountain range. We were out there fishing. My friend was a geography teacher in high school. He said, "You know the history of where we're standing today?" And I said, "No, what is it?" He said, "Well, over that mountain pass and down here to this river, in 1883, came the President of the United States on a trek across country to

Yellowstone Park." I said, "You're kidding me. I never heard of it." He said, "That's exactly right."

So, I was curious about it. I began to sort of collect information about it and found out that nobody had written much about it. Chester Arthur, who was, therefore, the first President of the United States to visit Yellowstone Park; everybody thought that Theodore Roosevelt was the first one who did it.

DePue: (laughs)

Hartley: Anyway, I sort of had this as an interest, a curiosity. I never really thought about doing a book, quite frankly. I did a magazine article for it, but I was always intrigued by it.

One day, I looked, and coming up was the hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of this journey by the president. I said, "By God, I'm going to write a book about this thing and bring it out. I'm going to self-publish it. I'm going to bring it out in time for the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of this story." And that's what I did.

I wrote it in record time, I think. I don't remember exactly how long I worked on it, but I dropped everything else that I was working on—which included at least two other books—and dove into this and ended up getting some help, big help, from the Library of Congress and places like that, to flesh out the business of the trek.

But, what I discovered was that it was part of a much bigger picture, which was the effort to save Yellowstone Park in the early 1880s. It was in danger of dissolving, and this was a strategic trip, put together by some people in Washington. They convinced the president to go along. The story of the trek, I think, is fascinating. This was still wilderness out there. There were very few people of any kind out there, Indians or otherwise.

DePue: Not an easy place to get to?

Hartley: No. It was an overland trip. They did it by horseback; they were on horseback. This included Lincoln's son, who was the secretary of war at the time—

DePue: Robert Lincoln.

Hartley: Yeah, Robert Todd Lincoln; he was along on the trip. He was one of the instigators of putting it together. So it's an interesting story. But my feeling was that, pulling it into the effort to save Yellowstone, is really what gave it some significance, other than just a vacation trip for the president, which I think history had always considered it. That this was just kind of a lark, that the president wanted to get out of Washington and wanted to go out and fish on the rivers, and they put together this thing, and he went. But that's not what it was all about.

So, it was a discovery that I felt good about. I thought, well, Hartley, you may not be as smart as you think you are. So, I took the manuscript, and I called Yellowstone National Park, the archives there. I talked to the park historian. I said, "Would you read my manuscript to check for its legitimacy, and if I've got it right or wrong?" He said, "I'd be glad to." So, I sent it to him. He read it, sent back the comment that he thought it was right on target, gave me a quote that I could use on the jacket of the book, and offered some excellent comments for additional information about it.

So, I felt that the effort was justified. I felt that I had accomplished something by bringing together the trek, the journey, and the history of the park itself. That's what made the story. It was a book. I hate to say this. I should be careful I don't misstate it. It is a book that I enjoyed doing as much as I enjoyed doing any book. I really got into it, and I loved it. And it was because my good friend tipped me off on it, who's now dead, unfortunately. So, it had a personal flavor to it.

DePue: Did you give us his name?

Hartley: He was A-r-w-i-n Grant; Arwin Grant is who it was.

DePue: Arwin Grant.

Hartley: Yeah.

DePue: I'll let you take a look at the spelling here, once we get done. Okay, very good. I didn't ask you about the books on *Death Underground* and *Saving Yellowstone*. I can lump them together here. How were these books received?

Hartley: *Death Underground* did very well. You know, there was kind of a built-in market for it in the southern half of Illinois. I was disappointed that we weren't able to sell it more widely, but that's another story that I don't have to get into. It did well. I believe it probably was the second best seller I was involved with.

The *Yellowstone* book: you know, one of the problems with it, there isn't much of a market out there in Wyoming and Montana and Idaho, in terms of bookstores and things like that. Although I made two different tours of bookstores out there and sold fairly well. But, I knew when I did it that this was not going to set any records.

DePue: But can't it be a permanent place in the Yellowstone National Park bookstore?

Hartley: Well, this is interesting. There are two sources of book sales in the park. One of them accepted the book. The other one didn't. They bought a lot of copies of it, and, as far as I know, it sold pretty well. They sold out, but they didn't order any more. I was always kind of baffled by that. I was baffled by the fact

that the first group wouldn't accept it, particularly after the park service historian had put his label on it. So, anyway—

DePue: Who did you get to publish this one?

Hartley: I published it.

DePue: That's what I figured you were going to say.

Hartley: Yeah. (laughs)

DePue: And did you breakeven on it? You said it sold well. Or your West Frankfort sold well.

Hartley: I have come close to that on breakeven. Yes, I have come close.

DePue: Any final words on *Saving Yellowstone*, then?

Hartley: No.

DePue: Okay. We've been at it close to three hours this afternoon. And, gosh, I don't think either one of us has quite enough energy to jump into the next book, which is on Paul Simon, because he deserved some worthy attention, I think, as we go through that.

Hartley: I would agree with that. Let me just say, about Paul Simon, I had a long experience with Paul Simon. Friendship, I don't know. I'm not sure how many real friends Paul had. He had a lot of acquaintances, and knew a lot of people. I never felt that we were bosom buddies. It was not that.

It started in journalism, but we kept in touch. He became the man who probably nurtured my book writing more than anyone over a period of time. I could go to him and say, "I've got an idea. What do you think?" Or I could go to him, and I could say, "I've got a manuscript that I want you to look at. Would you do it?" "Send it to me."

So, the background of doing this book has to take into account this sort of off and on, journalism-personal, books, relationship, which developed with Simon. It is that relationship that kept me from writing a book about him. Until I actually did it and sat down and said, "I'm going to do it," I had convinced myself that I would never write a book about Paul Simon, that it was going to be done by somebody else, maybe Steve Neal, from the *Sun Times*, who is now dead, or somebody like that. But it wasn't going to be me. I'm not sure why that is, except that I felt that I, maybe, carried too much baggage from this—

DePue: That the old journalist wouldn't be able to be objective enough about Paul Simon?

Hartley: Well, quite frankly, that was part of it. That was part of it. So, I dilly-dallied and fiddled, and I can tell you later why I finally decided to do it. But the point is, as background, that I was almost… I don't think I was intimidated by the idea. I didn't think I could do it justice. I didn't think that I could do it justice and fairness and still come away from it, feeling that I had done a journalistic job, that I had looked at it; I'd told it like it was, that I hadn't colored it or shaded it or anything else, based on any experience I had. So, I really wrestled with that, in getting that far. And, quite frankly, it was his death, untimely as it was, that kind of pushed me over the edge.

DePue: Let's take one step back from that experience of getting into writing the book on Paul Simon and finish off with this question for today—*Saving Yellowstone, Death Underground, Uncertain Tradition,* the book on Paul Powell. By the time you're done with these books, did you feel that you had completed that transition from journalist to historian?

Hartley: Yes, I had. The journalist in me was to get a good story and be able to justify it and confirm it and have it be solid material. That was the journalist in me. But, at that point, it stopped, then the historian took over at that point.

DePue: Tell us again what you see the difference between the two?

Hartley: Well, the difference, I think, can be in the writing of it. I think, I rarely will start a book before I have finished the research. Maybe start it a little bit, but I want all the facts there. I want all the information that I can get my hands on. I may still come across something later. And I want all of the justification and all the documents and everything in place. Now, that's not the journalist in me.

You know, the journalist in me is, I got this story; it's a good story; I believe in it, and damn it I'm going to write it right now.

DePue: Well, because you have a deadline to meet.

Hartley: That's exactly right, self-imposed as it may be. So, that's the journalist, and that's why I stop short of that. I don't do a draft without research. I don't blurt out my original thoughts. I maybe make an outline, but I never follow it. (both laugh) So, the order of doing the book and how it comes together is, I think, more of the historian's approach than it is the journalist's.

But I will tell you this: whenever I write a book or a history article, the editor almost always says to me, "I can tell that you're a journalist by reading the first page." And I said, "Well, how can you do that?" He said, "Because your conclusion is in the first page." He said, "Historians leave the conclusion to the last page." And he said, "I like it the way you do it, because you state it, and then you develop it" and so on.

I've had more people tell me that when I've submitted stuff to them. So, there's still a journalist in me that says, maybe I get something close to the four or five "W's" in that first page. I back off of that a little bit, but I still do that.

DePue: Is part of the historian's side of the equation that you're willing to do more analysis and willing to do a little bit more reflection on what you've been writing?

Hartley: Yes, I think there is. When we talk about the Simon book, I think that's a part of that as well. It wasn't enough, and isn't enough anymore, to just simply write a story, and let it hang there. I have to be able to put in some perspective or be able to offer a thought or a thoughtful statement about it or its significance. I don't know whether that's the historian, but I certainly feel that way. And I have come to the conclusion that that's what I'm going to do.

DePue: Okay. Well, I think we're about to be evicted, but this is a great place to stop. It's been a fascinating, Bob. Thank you very much.

Hartley: You're welcome. I enjoyed it.

(end of Interview #3, #4 continues)

Interview with Robert Hartley

HIS-A-L-2010-043

Interview # 4: November 2, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

DePue: Today is Tuesday, November 2nd, 2010. My name is Mark DePue, the Director of Oral History with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I'm excited to have the opportunity to talk to Robert Hartley. Good morning, Bob.

Hartley: Good morning, Mark. Good to be with you.

DePue: Why don't you tell us where you are today, Bob.

Hartley: Well, I'm hanging out in my den in a house in Surprise, Arizona, where my wife and I spend some winter time. The desert is a place we enjoy immensely, except in the summertime when it's outrageously hot. But we enjoy our time down here, and we keep working on our projects, including mine on various writing assignments.

DePue: What's the project you're working on right now?

Hartley: The publisher of the senators' book that I was a co-author of in 2003 has asked for a revision of that book, to bring it up to date with the election today, as a matter of fact. So, I have been doing that, working on it, getting it ready, bringing the book up to date with people like Barrack Obama and others and the business of the governor and the appointment of Obama's successor and so on and so forth. So, it's been kind of interesting to delve into those subjects from the state standpoint. I don't get involved in Obama's presidential terms, other than his campaigning for it, so we're doing that revision.

Then, of course, I have a variety of other writing projects that I'm working on, most of them related to Illinois, as a matter of fact.

DePue: You mentioned it yourself. Today's November 2nd, an important day because we've got national elections. So, as you mentioned, we have the race in Illinois for the Illinois Senate, a pretty tight race, and one for the governorship of Illinois. Any predictions for the election?

Hartley: Oh, I wouldn't dare do it.

DePue: (laughs)

Hartley: But, until the votes are counted, you never know. I think, there's a tremendous dependence by political junkies and other interested people in the polling that takes place during a campaign like this. While I think the polling is much more refined these days than in the past, I can never forget the business in 1948, and particularly in Illinois at that time, when the pollsters were so sure that Harry Truman was going to lose that they quit polling a month before election day. They just decided it wasn't worth spending the time and the money to do it. Well, we know how that turned out. So, from that point on, I think I've always had a great respect for waiting for the votes are counted.

DePue: Well, let's get to a different politician. When we finished off last time, we were just at the cusp of beginning a discussion on your book on Paul Simon.

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: So, let's start this way. Why did you write a book on Paul Simon?

Hartley: Well, I think I have to say at the beginning that I had a long and friendly relationship, generally speaking, with Paul, over many years. He was always very encouraging to me and nurturing in my book writing efforts. So, even after his retirement from active politics, we had a considerable correspondence on various subjects. I always felt I would never write a book about Paul Simon. I figured that it was going to be such a laborious effort to try to do his life as a politician in writing, that I figured I really had some concerns about how close I might have been to him, that I thought somebody else would probably write a political biography. So, I never really gave it serious thought.

You know, every once in a while, someone in Illinois would say to me, "Well, when are you going to write a book about Paul Simon?" And I'd say, "I don't think it's going to happen." And that was while Paul was still living. So, I didn't give it a thought. I thought he was going to live a good many more years, as a matter of fact.

After he died in 2003 I decided I would do an article for the *Journal of Illinois History* about his journalistic days. I did do that, and it was published. But, the more that I got into that subject and the more that I began thinking about Simon and his political life, the closer I came to making a decision to write.

I made sure, though, before I ever decided to do it or got involved deeply in it, I talked with a number of Simon's friends. I wanted to make sure that nobody else was thinking of doing the same thing. I thought it would be fruitless, frankly, to be in some sort of competitive battle to write about Simon. Well, they assured me that they knew of no one who had contacted them, at least about writing a book about Paul.

So, I think it was a couple of years later, I did a history paper for the Illinois History Program on Simon and his friendship with Alan Dixon. I think that that pushed me further down the line toward a book about Paul. It indicated to me that there was some good stuff there that needed to be written.

I think, probably in about 2005 or something—you know, I never mark those things down; I never write down when I start getting serious about something—that I did my first outline on a book idea. Of course, those outlines are never completed. I usually throw them away as soon as I've done them. In that case I did keep it, just to see how it would compare with what I finally ended up doing, and there wasn't comparison at all. But it got my juices going and got me thinking about a book about Paul. I think that's sort of the preamble.

DePue: You've written books about Paul Powell and Jim Thompson, of course. We talked about those quite a bit last time. Paul Simon is quite a different kind of personality.

Hartley: Well, he is. And he had—when I started writing the book, and I think it still is the case—a strong, strong, positive feeling among many people in Illinois, even perhaps those who were not favorites of his, or he was not a favorite of theirs or even some of his political opponents. I think he had great respect among the general public. So, I was dealing here with an image that, while I was fairly familiar with it, just simply because I had started writing about him when I was working in Illinois and all, I wasn't sure that that was going to hold up.

So, when I began looking into the subject with some depth, I said to myself, the first thing you want to do is look for the bad stuff. Let's find out what's behind all of the happy talk about Paul Simon. And I did do that. I went about that, at least in the back of my mind, as I started doing the research. I had to convince myself that I was going to do as objective a book as possible, about someone I knew a fair amount about.

Now, I don't want to characterize our relationship as friendly, particularly. We were not good friends. In fact, I'm not so sure how many really close, good friends Paul Simon had. He had a lot of acquaintances, and he had a lot of people who believed in him, but Paul and I had a somewhat arms-length relationship, I suppose, while I was still a working journalist. We

had our ups and downs. He was not always happy with what I wrote or what our newspaper said about him and so on and so forth.

So, I wanted to do as clean a job—if that's the right word—with Simon, and so I fought that as I started this project. I had some conversations with some people about how I would get over and past the relationship, to be able to write a book that I would feel did justice to him and did justice to me.

DePue: I'd like to have you just take a little bit of time for a thumbnail sketch of Paul Simon's life and career, because it's very lengthy. I think today, people know him as the U.S. Senator and the candidate for the presidency, in the primary campaign, but they don't realize just how long a career he had before that time.

Hartley: Well, I think that's very true. As I got into this writing this book, Mark, I finally decided that the bulk of the book, the thrust of the book, would concentrate on the early years of Paul Simon's political career, which I felt were basically unknown by an awful lot of people. But I also felt that that's the basis for his longevity and his terms in Congress, which most people are more likely to remember, as you said.

But Paul Simon really began his political career as a journalist, as a weekly newspaper owner and editor in Troy, Illinois. He was not a native of Illinois. He came to Illinois at the age of nineteen and took over the *Troy Tribune*, bought it for a song, as it were, about $3,500 or $3,600. And he began publishing this small weekly.

He was interested in, I think, a voice that extended well beyond the one thousand circulation of Troy, Illinois. As a result, he wrote about all sorts of things in a more regional sense and got quite interested in the criminal activity that was so obvious and so apparent in Madison and St. Clair Counties.

It was really in this environment, when he started writing about what he believed was a corrupt governmental state of affairs, particularly in Madison County and all, that he got his voice, as they say. People outside of Troy, began reading what he had to say and listening to him. So, in addition to building a prosperous, relatively speaking, and thriving business in the weekly newspaper business, it very quickly became profitable for him.

He was interested in public affairs that were going on outside of his newspaper office. I think it was during this period, from about 1949 to maybe 1951 or 2, that he really began thinking beyond the newspaper business and thinking that maybe he could make a greater impact as a politician, as a legislator. It was then, in 1954—really a very short period after he had taken over the newspaper—that he decided to run for the legislature from Madison County.

Simon was, if nothing else, full of energy, a young man, single at that time. His whole life was whatever he decided he wanted to do at the moment. And when he decided to run for the legislature, then every bone in his body, every moment in his life, was devoted to that effort.

That was how he was able to win his first election to state legislator, defeating two incumbent Democratic members of the state house of representatives, who had been in office for many years. He just did it on sheer energy and spark and work and volunteers who were willing to go to bat for him. In sort of winning that first race he went from getting headlines in newspapers of the time for his efforts in fighting crime, to his brilliant effort to move into the political realm.

The book reflects this, but it also reflects my personal feeling that the time period, from when Paul took over the newspaper until he ran for public office, was really the prelude to his political career. It provided the base point; it provided his voice on public affairs and public matters, and if he was nothing else in his entire career, he was the consummate writer.

He wrote columns; he wrote articles; he wrote books; he wrote magazine articles; he wrote speeches. And all of those, or many of those, are in his papers at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. It was in those papers of his, that I really found the beginning of the book for me.

I knew about the journalistic effort and that, but how it blended in with the political, came to light for me in working with his papers that he had donated to the library for the period up to when he went to congress.

In fact, people who are still active, politically, and worked with Paul Simon and were friends with him and knew him in his later career, they were astonished when I told them what I had found and how I had put together this early period. I mean, I was astonished at their lack of knowledge of that early period and how it made him what he was politically.

So, I quickly decided that this was what much of emphasis of the book would be: on his time in public office in Illinois. Sure, he was an Illinois Senator and a Congressman, but I wanted to concentrate on his time in the state legislature and when he was lieutenant governor and so on, because I felt that that was the basis for what he became.

In his writings in the *Troy Tribune* and other newspapers across the state and all, he provided the material: what he was interested in, what he was working on, what he thought the state should be doing. You know, you stop and think about today's politicians, and it's a badge of courage for political people not to put things in writing. You don't want to get caught saying something in writing, because you have to pay the price for.

That made no difference to Paul Simon. The more he could write, the more he could say, the better. He put it all on the record. So, you got a picture of those years of the legislature, as a member of the house, until ’62, when he went to the state senate, and then when he became lieutenant governor in ’68, and all. You began to see how he matured politically, how his attitudes developed, how his principles went to work. All of that, stemming from his writings and his work as a journalist, and launched out, then, as a public official.

That’s what Paul Simon was, with a few differences and changes, when he spent twenty-two years in congress. The emphasis I wanted to put on this was to reveal how Simon developed, how he got to be what most of us think of him as in his later political life. It wasn’t something that he just suddenly decided to jump from one position to congress. It didn’t work that way.

DePue: One of the things that struck me: he’s part of this group of people, when he gets to the Illinois Legislature to begin with, who, shall we say, deliberately decided to not be part of that inner circle, the power elites of the Democratic Party, in either the legislature or in Chicago politics. Talk a little bit about him as an independent Democrat, what that meant.

Hartley: It launched him. It gave him a political signature. That is so important in any politician’s life. What do you stand for? What do people remember you for? Simon established, in those years in the legislature particularly, a certain level of independent thinking, which he expressed liberally in his newspaper columns.

By the way, that’s a factor that most people don’t understand. At one time, there were as many as three hundred newspapers in the state of Illinois that ran his columns that he wrote when he was in the legislature. He didn’t charge them a dime. He sent it to them whenever he wrote them, every week or every week or two. Some ran them, and some ran some of them. But he had tremendous exposure across the state, in his columns in which he was commenting on what was happening in the legislature.

It established him, then, as an independent voice, even though he was a Democrat. He never denied being a Democrat. He was a loyal Democrat. He supported Democrats for office, even some of them he didn’t care for. So, there was never any doubt as to what his partisanship was. But he left an impression, from the beginning of his career in public office, of an independent voice, of somebody who was willing to say the tough things, and it cost him.

I think the important thing is that it may have helped him on the one hand, politically, in terms of establishing his voice, his signature, his image and all. But, within the Democratic Party, and within the legislature, it had a

different affect. It meant the further he took this independent streak, the more he talked about and criticized some of the things that were going on among his colleagues in the legislature, he was reducing any opportunity he was going to have to be on the inside and really have a major impact on how the state was governed.

He finally got so far into that, that he couldn't back out of it. And I don't think he wanted to. I mean, I don't think that Simon wanted to be on the inside, because he was smart enough to figure out what that would mean. He couldn't, then, suddenly be criticizing in public his colleagues and calling them to account for their votes and their attitudes, as he did. So, he cut off any opportunity to be an insider.

Now, that sort of goes along with the fact that, did he really want to be an insider? I don't think he did. He wanted to be influential, but he realized that, if he had to play the political game inside, that he wouldn't have his own independent streak. He wouldn't have his own voice. He'd have to blend that in with whatever impressions you had of the party as a whole and their work in the legislature. This was another example, I think, of how the image we have of him really also had consequences for his participation in legislation and in governing.

DePue: He did share one trait with most of the politicians that he was encountering at that time, and maybe even stronger than most of them. That's his ambition. What were his ambitions in the '50s and '60s, when he's moving himself up through the ranks?

Hartley: I didn't pick up all of that question, Mark. Could you repeat that for me?

DePue: What were his ambitions at that time, when he's early into his political career?

Hartley: Oh, I think he was always looking for the next step. What we kind of tend to think is that, again, the image of Simon is of this almost pure political person, clean, honest, decent and all. And we forget that he was a consummate ambitious individual. He was not willing to compromise his principles and his ideas to move ahead, but he was always looking for the next step. He wanted to have his voice out there, and he wanted to reach as many people as possible with what he thought was important. The only way to do that was to keep advancing in the political line-up.

So, as soon as there was an opportunity to move from the State House of Representatives to run for State Senate in 1962, he jumped at it, and again had a tough race for that. But he won rather handedly. Then, he found himself in the State Senate, where he had to pay the price for what he had said and written about in the house.

In the State Senate they didn't think much of that. They didn't like what he had done or what he had said, or his attitudes about the party and so

on. It was a tough go for him in the State Senate. He probably had less impact as a State Senator, from '63 to '69, than he had as a lonesome member of the house, because he was a fresh face and idea at that point. When he was in the senate, he had to carry his own load, and nobody else was doing much for him. It was probably not the most productive period of his political life. But he kept wanting to run for something better. I think that's, again, a part of the image that we just don't recognize when we look at what he was later.

In 1962, he made quite an effort to be nominated by the party to run against Everett Dirksen. I mean, it was a wild chance. He didn't have a hope in the world of doing it. But he gathered some support, and he made some speeches. He never liked Dirksen, by the way. And then, again, when Dirksen came up in '68 to run again, Simon put his name out there to be nominated to run against Dirksen in'68. Well, he wasn't going to get that either. I mean, that was just not in the cards.

So, they gave him this small opportunity to run for lieutenant governor in 1968. Frankly, I think, most of them thought he would be buried, and that would be the end of Paul Simon politically. But we know that that didn't happen. So, what did Simon do? He took something that was small, small business, small political business, the job of lieutenant governor, and he built it into something bigger and louder and smarter and more political.

He launched, then, his next step, which was to run for governor. But every step along the way, he was looking to the next level. While he was, again, not willing to compromise to get to the next level, he was always working at it. And the more people who liked him and liked what he said and did, newspaper people, media people, helped build this idea that he was the right guy for the right time.

DePue: Well, let me interject here and ask a couple of questions, because he is a Democrat in Illinois in the mid-sixties, and he's written this article in 1964, that appears in the *Harper's Magazine*, made a name for himself. The title of that article, The Illinois Legislature: a Study in Corruption. Well, he's a Democrat, and one of the ways you get to positions in the Democratic Party in Illinois, at the time, was, you had to go before the slate makers, and they had to decide if you were worthy to be running for these offices that he so much wanted to find himself in.

So, let's go back, if you will, and spend a little bit of time of his wanting to run as lieutenant governor—because, I guess, doors closed on other things—and how he ended up getting the party's nod to do that and then ending up being Ogilvie's lieutenant governor, and Ogilvie is a Republican.

Hartley: First of all, he presented himself in '68 as wanting to be slated for another position, a higher position, an executive position. He made speeches and

wrote columns to get the attention of the party people who would make that decision.

Well, the party people included some of his legislative enemies, some people who thought he was a trouble maker. One of them, particularly, made the statement, in a discussion with the mayor of Chicago, Mayor Daley, when they were talking about various slating people, that if he got slated for lieutenant governor, then he would only be a step away from being governor, and that that would be a terrible thing for the party and for the state. These were people who were in a position to, presumably, have some influence, either to keep him off the ballot, or, if they put him on the ballot, to put him at the bottom, where he wouldn't be a threat.

The mayor was not a dumb guy, here. He listened. He'd encountered Simon before. He probably worried about him a bit. But it was apparently his decision. In spite of what everybody else had to say, it was his decision to slate him for public office. So, he did. It was really the mayor who did it.

If it had been up to the State Central Committee—which it never was—if it'd been up to them, to a vote, Simon probably wouldn't have gotten on the ballot at all. Simon paid the price. He overcame it in certain ways, but he always paid the price for the article in 1964, when he accused his fellow legislators of being corrupt. They never forgave him for it. They never forgot. I don't care how many offices he won, how successful he was, within the party there was always a group of people who thought he was a traitor, that he had betrayed the party and the people. And they never let that go away.

So he always had to contend with this, no matter what he ran for or tried to run for. And it was, I think, really, simply the mayor who decided. Nobody knows why, because he never explained himself, that he was really the reason he put Simon on the ticket, not because any of the other guys wanted him on there.

DePue: But the position of lieutenant governor is a great place to bury somebody, if you don't have too much thought for him.

Hartley: Oh, absolutely. I mean, under the constitution, it only had two jobs. That was, to preside over the senate. You never had any power, but you just presided over the senate. And when the governor was out of the state, you were, technically, the governor. Those were the only jobs. There was no budget. There was no staff.

So, Simon comes into this job, and the first thing he does is, he announces he's going to be the state ombudsman. He's going to take complaints, and he's going to act on concerns that people have about state government. Well, can you imagine how the people in the legislature, who

already didn't like him, for obvious reasons now saw him as an additional threat?

Now he was going start dealing with complaints about individual legislators and officials. I think it scared them to death that he was in it. But it didn't slow him down any, because he had this image. First of all, he won the lieutenant governor's race purely on his own merits. Then, the press loved him. He always had a strong support base in the media.

So, anything he said, anything he did as a lieutenant governor, got ink. It got press. And this Ombudsman idea, which he developed on his own and proceeded to get a staff and a budget, which a lieutenant governor had never had before. Of course, it helped that the governor was a Republican. If the lieutenant governor had to have some staff, so they gave him some staff.

He proceeded, then, to parlay that into this job as the spokesperson, in essence, for the people who had concerns and complaints and so on about how they were treated by state government. On the one hand, it built his image. On the other hand, it continued to aggravate a number of people in important positions in, particularly, the Democratic Party.

But it was this job, and it was his approach to the job, that he was a trouble shooter. He was going to go where others feared to go. He was going to go down to SIU, when the student riots were taking place. He made an appearance there. He went to Cairo in the racial fights when he was lieutenant governor, where other people stayed as far away from it as they could.

So, he was sort of the visual eyes that's seen as this noble, courageous guy, even if he didn't get much done, or even if he didn't make much of a difference, he at least was doing something that nobody else dared to do. He had nothing to lose. He had everything to gain and nothing to lose, because otherwise there wasn't anything to do as a lieutenant governor.

So, he built his own agenda, and he did it. I think, probably, the greatest job he did of pure development of a position that he fit perfectly. He took advantage of it, and he did it. And it catapulted him into the prospect, then, of being the candidate for governor in 1972.

He and Ogilvie had a gentlemanly relationship, but they were of different parties and different thinking. And Ogilvie knew that Simon was going to be a threat to run against him, so they jockeyed with each other for several years through that time period.

They never got personal. They never got nasty. That was sort of a characteristic of those two men, frankly, as they were tough, aggressive, ambitious politicians, but they drew a certain line when it came to personal attacks.

So, Simon gets to be the talk of the party and the press as the prospective Democratic governor's candidate in 1972. I think that chatter began early in his term as lieutenant governor; there was no doubt in anybody's mind that he was going to be nominated, and the race in 1972 would be between Simon and Ogilvie. There probably was only one person in the state of Illinois who didn't buy that, and we know who that was.

So, Simon was on the road to running for governor, and I think it was his own momentum that got him there. It was his own personality and approach that got him there, which I think is, in many ways, an exceptional road traveled by Simon.

We know that several things happened along the way, including Dan Walker and the campaign itself, the primary campaign and so on, which Simon lost. But up to that point, what we saw, I think, in his career, up to that point, was that he took charge of it in a way that was not dependent totally on his colleagues, his friendships in the party and so on. He made his own case. I think it's amazing that he was able to do it.

DePue: Dan Walker is one of the fascinating personalities of Illinois politics at the time. That was an amazing campaign that he ran. He basically walked—he did walk the entire length of the state—in his campaign during the primary season. You always get the sense that Paul Simon was kind of taking things for granted. But Walker's message was, Simon was way too cozy with Daley and the Democratic machine.

Hartley: Yeah, that was the irony of that campaign. There was a lot of irony there. But a big piece of it was that Simon had spoken for years, had been critical, not overtly, didn't seem to go out of this way to fight with the mayor, but he was viewed as a sort of always running against the organization, always running against the outfit that ran everything. To be characterized, then, as a friend and a partner with the mayor and all was difficult for Simon to swallow. And he didn't think it would go down; he didn't think it would carry.

I think Simon and his team simply underestimated Dan Walker, as many people did. Then, when they finally caught up to it and realized what was happening, they didn't respond particularly well. I think that, what Walker stuck on Simon about his relationship with the mayor and so on—whether true or not—Simon never was able to shake it, in that campaign.

You're absolutely right, Dan Walker was a phenomenon. Not only did he defeat the guy who everybody thought was going to be the nominee, Paul Simon, but he turns around and defeats the incumbent governor in the same year. Really one of the great political stories of Illinois political history. It didn't all turn out that well, but the point is that those two contests were really quite extraordinary.

Simon simply didn't know how to deal with it. He didn't say the right things. I remember that campaign very well. I was the editor of Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers at the time. Our editors, generally speaking, of the individual newspapers, were quite sympathetic to Simon. They liked Ogilvie. They'd come to like him, but they had a soft spot for Simon, a southern Illinois guy and so on and so forth. And they were disappointed; we were all just as disappointed as we could be in the way he ran the race. When he came to speak to the editorial board of Lindsay-Schaub before that primary election, Simon equivocated. He didn't strike us as being the old Paul Simon. He was dodging the business about whether he was going to raise taxes or not, and he did not seem to be very strong on that. I remember, when that meeting was over, the editors all sort of sat there and looked at each other and said, "What's happened to Paul Simon? Where's the Paul Simon that we came to know?" And we did endorse him, in the primary.

I will say this in going back and looking at that editorial that I wrote endorsing him, we hedged. We didn't care much for Dan Walker. We didn't care anything for Dan Walker. But we were not enthusiastic about the campaign that Paul had done, and we said so. Paul Simon never forgot that. And his friends and his associates, Gene Callahan and all, to this day, when the subject of that race comes up, they will talk about how Lindsay-Schaub Newspapers pulled the rug on Paul Simon. We didn't do that, but the point is that people have long memories (chuckles) in Illinois politics. But that was our feeling, and I think, in the end, that's what a lot of people felt about the way Paul ran the race.

In fact, after he lost, he admitted that he had not run an effective campaign. I think that was hard for him to say. But I think it was true, and I think he realized it. And he would have been a fool not to say it.

DePue: One of the things that, in studying about that particular race and from the perspective of having to get ready to interview Dan Walker, the line at the time, the conventional wisdom, was that Paul Simon was something of a miracle worker when it came to political campaigns. He always managed to elevate himself to the point where he could win. This is kind of a round-about way to getting to his public persona, the image that he projected, because, otherwise, you look at it from a different perspective today and say, I don't get it.

Hartley: Well, yeah. I do think that he thought that the way to run this contest and to win was to be himself and was to be true to his principles and his approach. While he eventually took Walker seriously, to attack Walker or to go on the offensive was just not Paul Simon. I mean, that wasn't the way he operated before. He won on ideas and thoughts and approaches and his own image and so on. He thought that that would prevail. The loss, I think, woke him up politically and for the rest of his career, in many respects. He was certainly no pushover in any race after that. But he became a pushover for Dan Walker. I

don't think there was an inevitability in that race at all. I don't think it was inevitable that Dan Walker was going to win. I think Paul Simon lost that election by the way that he campaigned and his attitude toward it. And I think that he thought, just being a doggone good guy and a swell fellow and a decent individual, that the people were going to continue to believe that as they went through that campaign.

You know, that is not an attitude that prevails today in politics. You don't let your opponent determine your public image for you. And if your opponent attacks you, you don't wait to attack him back. That's just the way politics has developed. In those days, it wasn't the Dan Walker approach, which was to take on the mayor, and by that, taking on Simon and talking about it across the state. That just wasn't done. I mean, Dan did something that nobody had really tried to do before. And Simon didn't know how to deal with it, or he thought he knew how to deal with, and it didn't work.

DePue: I wanted to ask you, or maybe quote Dick Durbin in his comment about the race. Of course, Durbin was one of Simon's chief lieutenants, I believe, at the time. Here's Durbin's quote: "That he, he being Simon, ran more as a preacher's son." In terms of the public persona, the other part of putting those two things together, he ran as a preacher's son, and here's a preacher's son who's wearing a bow tie."

Hartley: (laughs)

DePue: Did Simon see the bow tie as being as asset?

Hartley: Oh, yes. Oh, it was part of his image. I mean, the bow tie, that wasn't an issue for him; that was Paul Simon. And, while I think that Durbin's comment—which I think is right, to a point--comes long after the fact. At the same time, I think Durbin, and those who were close to Simon in that race, eventually, before the vote was taken, came to realize that they had dropped the ball. That Paul had dropped the ball, but they had as well.

In talking to people who were involved with Simon in that race, what I discovered was that the staff people, who were urging Paul to do some things differently and to be more aggressive and to fight back against Dan Walker and all, didn't do it until late in the campaign. So as far as I'm concerned, they were as much the problem as Paul was. They were not urging this more determined, aggressive approach against Dan Walker when it would have counted, which was earlier in the campaign. It was too late when they finally waked up and started urging Paul to change his approach. And Simon was not going to change his approach at that point. That wasn't the way he operated. He wasn't just going to change his approach because the circumstances looked grim. He was going to be Paul Simon, and he was. And he lost.

DePue: For the first time in a long time, in two decades maybe, Simon finds himself outside the political arena. But Dan Walker does not fare well in his one term as governor. He had managed to antagonize just about everybody, certainly in the legislature;, certainly, as you mentioned, in the press as well. He proved to be pretty ineffective in getting any of his agenda through, and, not surprisingly, the Democratic machine was able to run a candidate against him in the next election, in '76

in the primary, and Dan Walker goes down to defeat.

But let's go back to Simon. How did Simon manage to resurrect his career?

Hartley: First of all, he had to get a job. He had to have some income. He had to make a living. He didn't have any political position after he lost and after he was out as lieutenant governor. So, he kind of went back to his journalistic roots and ended up starting and running a public affairs program at Sangamon State University, which became the University of Illinois - Springfield there. And he did some stuff back in DC, at the Kennedy Institute there. So he was sort of doing some patchwork to try to build a life, as it were.

He had a wife and family, so he had to provide. He was never a wealthy individual, so he didn't have a lot of money to lean back on for a period of time and, sort of contemplate what he might do. I think that there may have been a feeling by Simon—although we don't really know—that there might be some eventual, political opening for him. But the one that came along eventually, for the race in '74, was not something that was on the agenda, was on anybody's mind, when Simon lost.

It was really when Kenny Gray, the longtime congressman from deep southern Illinois, decided not to run for re-election, that it was Simon's friends who really put the pressure on Paul to jump into that race. Now Simon may have thought all along that there was an opportunity there, but it was pretty clear that Gene Callahan and Alan Dixon and Durbin, and those folks who were still hanging around and interested in Simon, that were the ones who said, "We'll go to work for you. You get into this thing. This is your opportunity." I don't know that it took a lot of persuasion to get him there, but they were the first ones to jump on it.

I was always amused at Alan Dixon's comment about Kenny Gray. He said Kenny Gray had threatened to retire and not run again several times, but he always changed his mind at the last minute and ended up running, and nobody would run against him. He said there were a lot of people, when Kenny said, "Well, I don't think I'm going to run," that thought, well, this is just another one of Kenny Gray's idle threats, and Dixon didn't think so. He thought also, I think, that somebody had to jump into that situation so that Kenny could back out.

So, as it developed then, in, particularly '73, Simon had his opportunity again to get back in the swim of things. Now, you can say, well, gee, was this a step up from where he was or where he had been at the state level and so on. You know, I don't think that that was a concern for Simon.

DePue: Was he comfortable, then, going from the state level to the national arena?

Hartley: Well, yes. I think part of the reason for that was that this was an opportunity to extend his voice and his thinking and his ideas on subject matter that was applicable to his district, but also applicable, in a broader sense, at a congressional level. I think he thought that his image, that he had carefully developed in Illinois, would serve him well as a member of congress.

I think, in addition to that, what also happened was that the loss to Dan Walker, I believe, built under Simon a determination that he wasn't going to let that happen again. He wasn't going to lose that way again. He was going to fight and make it his strong effort to win every chance he got. So, as a result, he was a different person, a different campaign person, I think, when he ran for congress. But, I think he very quickly saw that there was an opportunity, he thought, for him at a congressional level.

He also kept his connections in Illinois. He wrote a column, often weekly, for the constituents, allegedly for constituents of his district, about things that were going on in Washington and all and that he was involved in. But, he also was still sending that column across the state of Illinois. It was running in places outside of his congressional district. His subject matter that he commented on in these columns was probably 25% local, and the rest of it was at a national level.

So, he was working. I don't know how quickly he began to see that there was going to be an opportunity beyond that congressional district. But Simon, again I think, was always looking for the next step. As a result, there was always a dissatisfaction, at some point, with where he was. It wasn't quite what he thought it should be or wasn't working quite like he hoped. So he was looking for something that would make it better.

DePue: Well, I guess that kind of answers the question I was going to come at you with next. Was he able to really carve out any kind of a significant role in the U.S. Congress, while he was there?

Hartley: Well, I think it was a tough go. I think most of his good friends and all recognized that the playing field was entirely different, that he had risen to a certain extent in Illinois because there were an awful lot of Bozos who were in state government. He always looked better and sounded better than many of them. So, he looked to be head and shoulders above the crowd.

But in Washington, with four hundred and twenty-five or whatever it is, thirty-five, members of the house, he was just another voice. He was just

another vote. He was from a rural district, which he recognized very quickly was a disadvantage in the weight of his vote and how he could impress people in Washington. When he was championing his own district, a rural district, he had to find other rural congressional members to support him and vote with him. And they, generally, were outvoted by the urban vote.

And he recognized, again, I think, very quickly that he didn't have a lot of leverage in that job in congress, in terms of his own voice. So his record in ten years in the House of Representatives was pretty spotty, in terms of legislation. He got into some education things and apparently had some impact there, but it was very indirect and with enough competition, nobody was willing to give him much credit for what he was accomplishing, sort of, behind the scenes.

He made a couple of moves to try to get leadership positions in the party, in the house, that didn't work out. He couldn't get the votes to get the positions. Why that was is a little hard to figure out, whether it was a reflection of things from Illinois or whether he just wasn't a very good insider. He did a lot of legislative activity. He was an active legislator, when you look at amendments that he provided, bills that he submitted and so on. But, not much of it got through. When you're in congress, the test is, can you get something passed? You put together whatever is necessary, in terms of a coalition or votes or whatever, to get something with your name on it, to get credit for something. I think it was a real struggle for him in those ten years in those terms. It wasn't quite the opportunity to get that Paul Simon voice out there that he wanted so badly.

DePue: It sounds like the other legislators did not take him seriously.

Hartley: My own feeling is that, when you're operating in congress, you have to prove yourself. You have to, first of all, prove that you know what you're doing. You have to prove that you are there to help other people, too, that you need the coalition; you need associates; you need them—certainly in those days—on both sides of the partisan aisle. While there were some indications he was willing to work with Republicans on things that he was interested in, the point is, you have to prove yourself. You have to play the game to a certain extent, in order to have that opportunity to step outside and have somebody listen to what you're saying. I just don't think he was able to do that.

He was an independent guy, and he still was independent when he was in congress. He spoke on issues that were, sort of, national issues, in a position where he was not a national figure, or he was not viewed as a national figure. But, he wanted to comment on weapons and defense spending. He had no position on any committees to vote on those things. So, he was talking at a level where he wasn't operating. It doesn't take much, in congress, for people to see that.

I don't think they took him seriously, outside of a few people who liked him or agreed with him or so on. He couldn't bring the votes together, himself, to help somebody else. That's the way legislation is passed and, to a great extent, in congress if you can attract votes; if you can bring people in and say, "We're going to help this person, and if we help you, you'll help me." I don't Simon was very good at that. I don't think he was very good at it, particularly, in the house. He may have improved some in the senate, but not in the house.

DePue: Let me interject here, then. You do a really good job in the book of explaining one of the things he did do well, and that was to communicate to his constituents back home, especially through his regular columns. And he was a prolific author, so he was writing books through all of this time period, as well.

Hartley: Yes. Simon continued the pattern of communicating and writing. That was one of the ways that he got his word out and his opinion and his ideas. If he had just simply hoped to get that all done as a member of congress, it wouldn't have worked. So, Simon, unlike a lot of members of congress, he was a writer. He was a prolific writer, so he wrote these columns, and he wrote books, and he wrote magazine articles, and he made a lot of speeches.

He was attempting to project himself into the discussion of national affairs by his own ability to write and communicate, and, to a certain degree, that helped. That certainly helped keep his name before the people of Illinois.

DePue: Well, that gets to the point, now, he's going to be running for the U.S. Senate in 1984 against Charles Percy. Of course, you've written a book on Charles Percy, so I'm sure you have some interesting things to say about that campaign. But, apparently, Simon did not start out as the logical candidate, even on the Democratic side.

Hartley: Oh, I think he was far enough out of that state-wide picture that he wasn't taken entirely seriously by the traditional Democratic Party apparatus in the state. And there was still, I think, some lingering feelings about Simon, even at that stage, even all those years after he left state office and everything. People just didn't forget those things.

So, I think, when he started out to run in that primary, he was not the favorite. He didn't get the endorsement of the state central committee. I think that, again, there was another case of, if Simon was going to survive and prevail, he was going to have to do it on his own. He was going to have to figure out a way to do it his own way, because nobody was going to do it for him.

DePue: Was it Phil Rock who got the nod from the central committee?

Hartley: Yeah, that's right. And so, I think that they thought that he had become a sort of local guy in southern Illinois, and I think they forgot, or they didn't realize, that he had been communicating at this state level with people and so on, even when he was a congressman from southern Illinois, keeping his name in front of people, keeping the coalition, the support level that he had. All of that was something that Simon did very well when he was in the house. It wasn't satisfying for him, in terms of his own ego and ambitions, in those terms. But he never gave up.

So, when he wrote those books and everything else. If you look at what he was writing in those days, he wasn't speaking and writing as a member of the house, he was writing as a member of the senate. (chuckles) He was already talking at a level, like he was in a position in the senate to really influence the major issues of our time. So, if you look at that, it was more than just writing a communication to folks in the district. Much of what he wrote was, probably, of very little interest to the people of that district.

DePue: Tell us a little bit about the campaign, then. Again, being the biographer of both of these gentlemen, was it Simon who flat out won, or did Percy do things that beat himself?

Hartley: You know, I think these people who win elections at this level convince themselves that probably nobody's going to beat them. You would have thought, after the '78 election that Percy very nearly lost to Alex Seith, you would have thought that that would have waked up Percy sufficiently, that he wasn't going to let some other person come along six years later and bump him off.

But Percy was deeply involved in his own image, and after the election of Reagan and the control of the senate by the Republicans, he became the foreign relations committee chair. In terms of policy, that was not much. But, in terms of publicity and all, it was his moment. It was Percy's moment. And then, he had a primary race against a conservative who never was going to beat him. But he antagonized Percy a lot and spent some money. Percy beat him in that primary, but I think it damaged Percy. I think he never quite recovered from it and some of the stuff that that conservative used effectively against Percy, Simon used, as well.

They both had primary races, so you can't very well say that either one of them had an easy go in the primaries. Certainly Simon was scrambling up-hill all the way to win that primary. I think, maybe Percy thought that this was the Simon of old; that this was the nice guy, Simon; this was the preacher's son, Simon. I can't imagine that Percy's people would have believed that at that point, but you just never know. Images do last for some time, and I think, as a result, Percy got off the ground slowly against Simon.

And Simon was much more aggressive. He had David Axelrod doing his media work, the Axelrod fame of Barack Obama. Axelrod, I think, developed a media campaign that, in another time, would not have been Paul Simon's thing. But he knew that he had to get tough if he was going to win. He had to appear to be tough, if he was going to win.

And I think it surprised Percy. I think he stumbled in trying to come back, and so he was on the defensive. You know, Percy had him. I thought this was an interesting race. Here were two guys who never had much standing in their own parties in Illinois. You know, Chuck Percy was always seen by the hard core Republican workers in the state as too snooty and egotistical and out of touch with the grassroots and so on. And then Simon had his own history and problems with the party. So, these two guys were really independents—independent of a lot of the apparatus that runs politics—running against each other. I thought it made for a fascinating, fascinating race.

When Paul Simon told me—I happened to be in Washington just before he announced that he was going to run against Percy—I said, "Paul, you helped me get started in writing books by editing my manuscript on Chuck Percy and helping me, in 1972, to put together this book." I said, "You never indicated that you had particular feelings about Percy in all of that." Paul laughed and said, "Well, I never forgave him for beating Paul Douglas." So, that's part of the emotion of that race. I don't think there was any question about it.

DePue: Well, one thing you haven't mentioned here, yet, is the role that the Jewish lobby played. It's maybe another irony: here's this preacher's son, good Lutheran boy from southern Illinois, who suddenly finds great allies in the Jewish lobby up in Chicago.

Hartley: That was a major factor in that race, and I thought that Jim Wall's comments to me—he was Simon's campaign manager in the primary—I thought that Jim Wall's explanation of how that came about, how Paul worked with the Jewish lobby, nationally as well as in Chicago, to get money and to get support to beat Percy, was fascinating. I thought that, by having somebody who was there when that was all happening, and who had his own opinions about that lobby—not favorable, I might say—that Jim, I think, added some flavor to what was going on behind the scenes.

But the fact of the matter was that Percy had lost the Jewish vote. He had the Jewish vote in Chicago. He was well thought of by the Jewish leaders and all in Chicago. He had strong support at the grassroots, among Jews in Chicago, and he lost that by making some statements that made him appear to the Jewish partisans to be too sympathetic to the Arabs. Even though, if you go back and look at what Percy said, it wasn't as bad as they made it. But, by the time they got to the re-election of Percy in '84, he had lost the money, and

he had lost the support. They were looking for anybody to beat Percy, and Simon opened the door.

When he won the primary, particularly, he was the boy for them. He welcomed them, and he worked with them. And it paid off big time for him, with campaign money and with support, particularly in Chicago. Well, I mean, he didn't win by all that much of a margin over Percy. I think that could very well have been the reason he was able to defeat Chuck.

DePue: Well, of course, he did win that election by a pretty thin margin. Give me your assessment of Simon, then, as a senator. Did he find greater prominence than he had when he was a congressman?

Hartley: I think he thought he did. Certainly his voice carried further, because there were only ninety-nine others that he was dealing with, instead of all those congressmen. There was much more attention. I think the people have wondered why it was that, shortly after he won the senate race, he turned around and ran for president, when he had never really expressed any particular interest in running for president or being the president.

It was the issues. It was the opportunity to express his ideas. I don't know whether he thought he could win that nomination or not. You know, people who run for the presidency, generally speaking, are convinced they can win and that they can govern. They convince themselves, before they put their energy and money and time into running. So, I'm assuming that Paul had concluded that he could do this.

I think other people thought, my gosh, he's just barely in the senate, and now he's running for president. What is it? Where's the appeal? Why does this make any sense? Well, it made sense to Paul Simon, because there was no incumbent president that year, and so, there was going to be an open race. He was going to have a national platform to speak to and talk about his ideas and his thoughts about how things should run. This was tailor-made for Simon. He didn't have to depend on the party to get him to run for the nomination. He decided that himself, and his personal support level. So, this was another example, I think, of Simon sort of grabbing the opportunity to be heard and to express his approach to governing. And he was able to do it now at a level higher than he had ever been before.

Once he got into it, I think he really wanted to win. I think it became important to win that nomination. And he did rather well in the early primary races, states. But, I think this was a case of, I think he always thought, just because he won that election as a senator, I don't think that that suddenly made him, in his own mind, capable of being a candidate at the national level. I think he always thought he was.

But this was the opportunity, and Paul took the opportunity. It didn't work out particularly well. He was unable to come across nationally as he did in the state of Illinois. He was not seen in the same way. He was not able to make that image from Illinois work at the national level. I think that, probably, was his downfall, as much as anything. But still, he wanted the platform. He wanted the pulpit. He wanted to talk about the issues, the things that he thought were important to be considered in governing of the United States.

You can say, gee, it was a bad decision, and he let his ambition get away from him. But I don't see it that way. I think it's in perfect character for him to have done that.

DePue: You had mentioned in the book, the importance of, again, one of the many books that he wrote; in 1982, he comes out with, *The Once and Future Democrats: Strategies for Change*. Can you see in that book, laying out his national ambitions?

Hartley: Oh, yeah. He had a national agenda. From those years in the house, he developed a national agenda. He voted against all the tax cuts, the Reagan tax cuts. He wanted to reduce military spending and use that money in education and other social areas. This was Paul Simon, pure and simple. And he carried it; he just simply carried it to another level.

This was not a new Paul Simon. This was not a Paul Simon that suddenly materialized. This was just a continuation of Paul Simon that we knew from his days in the state house of representatives, in terms of his feeling for needy people and social issues and the spending issues that he felt were important. He was very careful not to be supportive of increasing taxes at the national level. He just wanted to take the money from other places and apply it where he thought it needed to be done. And this was his approach, frankly, in Illinois as well.

DePue: Looking back at the model that he knew very well: Jimmy Carter running for president in 1976. Certainly Jimmy Carter, when he started, was far less than a household name. But Carter got his start really in the Iowa caucuses, where it's retail politics. Do you think that Simon saw his same opportunities there, that he might play very well at the retail level?

Hartley: Oh yeah, I think so. I think he was confident of his ability to win people over at the state level and other states and so on, and in that caucus environment, for example. There's nothing on the record anywhere, and nothing that I can find, that would indicate any self-doubts on his part that he could play at that level.

DePue: Yeah, and he did pretty well there. He came in second, I understand, to Dick Gephardt. Gephardt pulled 31%, and Simon pulled a very respectable 26.7%.

Hartley: Then he ran out of money. That was his biggest issue. You know, you can have all the great ideas in the world and even communicate them well at the national level. But, if you don't have money, you can't run. I mean, you got to have the money, and he didn't have it. He spent a lot of money in Iowa, and he just didn't have it. It wasn't rolling in. So, by the time he got to New Hampshire and beyond that, he just ran out of money. You run out of money, you can't run. Even if he had some level of support to keep him going, he didn't have the money, and, consequently he had to drop out.

DePue: Of course, it was Michael Dukakis who won that nomination and ends up being beaten by Bush in the general election. Do you think, looking back, that Simon had any regrets in making that run?

Hartley: No. I don't think he had any at all. If he had them, he certainly didn't indicate that he did. He continued to pursue the ideas and his thoughts that he had brought forth as a candidate when he went back to the senate and when he ran in 1990 for re-election.

I think, Mark, this is the thing about Simon. He was pretty much the same person, everywhere in every circumstance. Now, he may have done some things tactically different when he was running for certain things, but, in terms of issues, approaches, ideas, principles, this was Paul Simon, the Paul Simon that we knew when he was a young guy. And he was still pushing the same approaches and ideas and outcomes as a senator, up to the last.

DePue: I wanted to quote something you wrote in your own conclusion in the book and it basically sums up what you just mentioned here. "Many do not survive the public glare and slip into arrogance. Simon remained self-effacing and genuine. Among colleagues, friends and associates, his word was golden, a trait uncommon in politics."

Hartley: That's absolutely true, and I found that to be the case. Alan Simpson: I had a fascinating interview set with the former senator from Wyoming, Republican, an outspoken guy, if there ever was one and not given to polite conversation, particularly, about his colleagues, former colleagues. He had nothing but good things to say about Simon. And the principle on which he operated, Simpson, was that you could take Simon's word to the bank. He said, this is why he, as a Republican, was willing to work with Simon, a Democrat, when the Republicans had all the votes in the senate. He was willing to work with Simon because he trusted him, because his word was good, and he was a decent guy to boot. And that counted with Simpson, who was a hard-knuckled fighter, a political fighter, whether he was in Wyoming or in Washington.

And there were others, I think, who were willing to work with Simon and help him and all, because of that. Now, it may not have gotten him at the upper echelon of movers and shakers in the senate, but I think that it is a

statement, a statement about Simon, that you could apply throughout his political life. And I thought Simpson captured it especially well.

DePue: Let's finish up our discussion with Paul Simon this way then. Why do you think—being his biographer, you obviously have a bias here—but, why do you think it's worth our effort to get to know Paul Simon better? What's his legacy for us today?

Hartley: I think that you could rise politically and be true to your beliefs and principles. That, yes, you had to compromise to get some things done, but you didn't have to compromise your principles. You compromised on specific portions of legislation or something like that. I think that was his legacy.

His legacy wasn't a long list of legislative achievements. It was the kind of person he was in a position of trust and responsibility and in a position that people put him in. People trusted him, and that's how he got where he got. He knew that, and he was not going to give up on that.

He was always in favor of a balanced budget and a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. It wasn't going to go anywhere. The practical politicians in the senate were never going to adopt that, and they still haven't. But that was something that he based his financing of other programs and policies that he believed in. It was a piece of the work, a piece of the agenda he had. He wasn't going to back off of it, and he didn't back off of it. I just think that that is so unusual. It's unusual in political life, whether you're looking back thirty to forty years or whether you're looking right now. It is so unusual that that is really his legacy, that it could be done, and it could be done decently and honestly and, even with the contradictions of political life and all of that, he was true to who he really was.

DePue: That's a great way to finish up Simon's discussion. I wanted to change the subject now and ask you this question to begin with. You spent the last many years as a historian, writing about these major political figures, but your early life was as a journalist. Looking back through your life in totality, how would you identify yourself? Are you more the historian or more the journalist?

Hartley: You know, I think they work together rather well. That's sort of an evasive answer, isn't it? But I had a grand time as a journalist. It was a highlight of my life. I enjoyed virtually every minute of it. It was rewarding; it was fascinating. I just never felt for a minute that I made a wrong turn when I went into newspaper journalism. I still feel that way about it. I still consider myself a journalist in many ways, my sort of thinking today.

The book writing and the historian efforts after that, I felt were something of an extension of that. So, I didn't believe that it was really two different approaches or required two different approaches. I had to change my thinking about some things when I took up the mantle of historian or writer of

history. I did some things and took some approaches that I wouldn't have done as a journalist. But they were not the key elements; they were not the principles of the work.

For example, in writing books, when I'm going to quote somebody directly, I almost always go back to that individual, after I've finished the manuscript, and provide them with the quotes, the direct quotes, to see if that indeed is the way they want it to appear, that they said it that way, when they said it to me.

I did that with Alan Simpson. I did that with any number of people. I did it with Alan Dixon. I did it with any number of people, because I believe that it is important. This is not an investigative reporting job here, in terms of trying to unearth and write about somebody's dirty deeds. So, I wanted to make sure that these people said what they said. And, if they came back and they said, "No, I didn't say it that way. I said it this way." Then I might argue with them about it and say, "Well that's not what my notes say," or something like it. But it almost never works that way. I would never have done that as a journalist. I would never have bothered to go back to somebody when I was writing a column or something, "I'm going to quote you here. What do you think about this?" I wouldn't do that. So, there were some techniques and so on that were quite different and approaches are different. I guess I just look at that as more of a maturity on my part.

DePue: I want to spend these last few minutes, then, talking to you about how the profession of journalism has changed over the time you've been practicing, up to today, because I think almost everybody would say, "Yeah, it's changed a lot." So, let's talk about when you first got into it. In the late 50's into the 1960s, what was journalism like?

Hartley: (chuckles) Well, it was…I don't want to say, it was the good old days, because there were some bad old days in that time, too. It was quite different, because newspaper people at that time, editors and reporters, really didn't worry much about what readers thought about them, and really made decisions about what they were going to say editorially, really to express their own opinions and not be concerned about what other people thought.

It was a self-contained kind of work, and you lived the life in a newsroom. You lived the life of a newsroom. You didn't live the life of the community or live the life of the state. At that stage, you were thriving—if you did thrive—you were thriving with people who thought much the same way you did, much the same approach to what news was. I think that's, you know, the old editor that we talked about, before, of the East St. Louis *Journal*, Tom Duffy. The people would say, "Well, what's news?" And he said, "I'm the person who determines the news, what news is." That was an attitude that prevailed in newsrooms everywhere.

We didn't think that was bad. We thought that was the way it should be done. But it was a life that was built around the newsroom and the newsroom people wherever you were, because the approach to local news changed with every newspaper. It was a local decision. So, you sort of got in the swing of that and got in the swim of it. That's the way it developed. That's the way you moved along and moved up in the newspaper business. You tended to reflect the people that you worked for and the people you admired along the way, to the extent that you could be like them or operate in the same way.

I don't think that, the way it's done today…it may be a departure from what it was in those days. It may not be a bad departure, in some respects, but I think it's more evolutionary than most people think of it, the attitudes in the newsroom.

I remember, up until, oh, the Ogilvie administration, Ogilvie made revenue and money big subjects at the state level. He had the state income tax for the first time. He was doing some things, spending money, expanding government to a great extent, that had never been done before. I remember how we struggled in trying to cover the issues of state government at that time. It wasn't just politics. It wasn't just, were you in favor of this policy or that policy, or whether this was a good idea or that was? It suddenly expanded into an area that we had very little experience in. We had to learn the code. We had to learn the subject matter. We had to figure out the importance of revenue and money and expansion of government and all, which we never had considered much before. We dealt with specific subjects. We dealt with transportation or higher education or something like that. But the picture became much broader, and so we had to deal with that, or we couldn't deal with what government was going through at that time.

I think that's, in part, how journalism has changed. It has changed over the years, because the subject has changed—a lot of it—the approach, the business of government. It's more than just politics. That's a part of it, obviously. Politics has always been an issue to cover, but, if you can't talk about some of the more significant, overall, overarching issues in government, you can't talk to readers today. I think that just evolved over time. Then, that changes some ways that you go about things, and the way you do things.

Now you could have access to documents and all that you never could get in the time that we were starting out in newspaper work. And it changed how you did reporting, how you reported things. If you couldn't get your hands on the documents, you did the best you could. And maybe those investigative reports of all those years ago were not as well founded as they should have been. But that was the way you had to deal with it.

Now, you deal with an entirely different set of approaches to gathering information, the documents, the availability, the laws that allow you to get

certain documents to use. So, it changes the way you report. It changes the subject matter of what you report about. That's not bad. I think that, if journalism and media can't keep up with that—and there's some question about that in my mind, because it is so complex in many respects—if you can't at least make an effort to keep up with it and all, then you become absolutely out of the picture and of no value at all.

I don't think that journalism has reached that point at all. What has happened to journalism today is more the result of the dramatic change in resources available and the finances. The revenues, the profits and all, of the media business, have had a dramatic effect on news coverage and approaches, and a lot of it has been very negative. So, if you don't have the horses, and you can't get the horses, you can't do the work.

My son happened to be in Washington, D.C. last week. He works for the Gannett Company, and they were touring the *USA Today* offices in the Washington area. He was astonished. He was struck by the fact of all of the empty offices there at *USA Today*, that the reduction in the personnel has depleted the resources that are available for coverage of news. And that's happened all across the country. I think that that has had an effect on how things get done. But that has not had an effect, in my mind, on the determination of those who remain to do the right job.

DePue: Well, you've touched on a lot of things. I can go in a lot of different directions. I'd just like to pick up on something you were just mentioning here, and that's the reduction in staff, and especially—I would think—in the print media. So, how has that changed the nature of the reporting and the ability to do detailed, in depth, investigations of certain issues?

Hartley: Well, I think—if you just talk about newspapers, and actually it applies across the board, in all media—it is a sorry state of affairs. The ability to report the news—as we might define what that was at the local level, at the national level, and all—is dramatically diminished. It is, because of the financial situation, with newspapers, to a large part. But I also think that they've not been able to make the adjustment well. You know, they thought it would always come back; it always did come back. I lived through some recessions in the newspaper business, and, you know, a couple of years of poor advertising revenue and, all of a sudden, it was back again. This is just not the case currently. And it's not going to be the case, I don't believe.

So, the question is, how do you adjust to that, and what can you do when you do adjust to it? I think that some people, the longer this goes on, the more adjustments that take place, and we get a dramatically diminished effort, in terms of news coverage. A lot of things just simply don't get done. And while some of them may not have been all that important to begin with, some of them were important.

For example, many of the large newspaper in this country have historically had large bureaus in Washington, D.C. that reported. The *Chicago Tribune* is a good example and the *Sun Times,* and so on, in Illinois. What has happened is that many of these newspapers have cancelled out their Washington bureaus. They've dropped them entirely, or they've reduced them to such an extent that it's almost not worth having anybody there. If you only have one or two people trying to cover national subjects for a newspaper the size of the *Tribune*, for example, it's ridiculous.

I think that the same has happened at the state level. The state news has gone out of style. The coverage of state news, to begin with. Many editors got to the point where they didn't think that was all important, to cover the legislature and get that stuff from the wire services. So, they dropped their bureaus in the state house, or they reduced them to a ridiculous level. I think that many of them, in the state of Illinois—the Rockfords and the Peorias and the others who staffed the legislature with one or more people—don't even bother now. So, part of that is attitude. Part of that is, sort of, the value of that news. But the most serious aspect of it is, I think, the recession and the reduction of revenues for newspapers.

So, they're still trying to figure out what a newspaper should be, under these circumstances. As I've traveled around the country quite a bit this year, at various cities and so on, I always read the newspaper, you know. I'm stunned. I'm shocked at what they are providing on a daily basis that is supposed to pass for news. It tells me that they don't what to do. They don't know how to deal with it. They are so concerned that there may be another layoff coming next week, and they may have to reduce the staff even further, that they can't concentrate on what they should be doing. Some of them are only now reacting, when two or three, four, five years ago they should have been worried about some of that. So, the newspaper business and news business has never operated with great foresight, as they've always dealt with things that are going on right now. And right now, things are pretty bad.

DePue: Well, this is a little bit of a different tack on this discussion, but so much of the debate about the national media, journalism, today is about the existence or the lack of bias in the media. I want to take this back to the early days and to quote something from the book, in reference to Simon's position in this. Of course, here's Paul Simon, who gets into journalism without the kind of professional training or background that you had at the college level, but he enters journalism with this perspective, "A newspaper can be a powerful force for good, even when operated by someone with almost no experience." The motto of his paper, I think, speaks quite a bit, as well. This is the *Troy Tribune,* I think?

Hartley: Yes.

DePue: The motto is, *A progressive newspaper in a progressive town*. So, was there an objectivity at the time that you began in journalism? Was that necessarily a good or bad thing, to have quotes like Simon's, that would suggest that he definitely has an agenda that he's pursuing?

Hartley: I think we always had an agenda in those days. And I think that it was an agenda that was developed in the newsroom, without any outside—maybe with the publisher's involvement—but without any outside comment or suggestions or ideas or anything else. I don't remember the word *objectivity* being used in journalism school, when I was there or even in the conversation in newsrooms or at editorial discussions, let's say conventions and so on. That was a word that came up long after I had started in the newspaper business, and so on. We weren't concerned with being objective. We did what we thought was right, and that's what Simon did. He believed that you covered the hospitals and the deaths and the so-called trivia of weekly newspaper, but he wanted to also use it for his own agenda, which was to clean up county government and make it operate more efficiently and so on and so forth. Yeah. I don't think Simon was concerned about *objectively* reporting what was going on in local government when he was there. He believed that it was corrupt. He thought there was evidence of that. He thought that the people who were running it, shouldn't have been there, shouldn't have been running it. So, that's the way he approached it in his own writing and in the paper. And that was the way most papers operated in those times.

The *East St. Louis Journal* was an excellent example of that, I think. Its agenda against the crime and corruption checkmated everything else in that paper for twenty years or more. But that was an agenda that was developed by the editor, and he did it; he pushed that himself. That was the way it was really done, gosh, for much of my early career. I worked in that environment, probably, most of my career as an editor.

DePue: During those days, if you were to take a poll of the people you worked with in the newsroom, would it come out skewed more Democrat than Republican? more liberal than conservative?

Hartley: You know, again, we tended to… Maybe I was naïve; that's entirely possible, in those early years. That didn't mean that I didn't vote or I didn't have an opinion about who should be in office or what some of the issues were or something, but I don't think that the partisan aspect of politics influenced what we did in my time in the newsroom.

Now, I would say that, when I went to Toledo as executive editor, there, the news was very much framed and approached as part of the editorial agenda of the publisher. I think that was probably my first experience with that, as almost an everyday event. Prior to that, I don't think that it had… It didn't make so much difference whether somebody was a liberal or a conservative.

Now, Bill Boyne, who was the editor in East St. Louis when I went there, I think was really a truly great editor. Bill was, I don't think there's any question, a more progressive, maybe even liberal person, individually. But that was not the way he ran the newsroom. That was not the way he ran the editorial page. It was much more issue-oriented, much more oriented to efficiencies in government and getting things done and meeting the needs of the people who lived there and so on and so forth. You can interpret that as, say, a more liberal approach than a conservative approach. But I didn't look at it that way then. I look back on it now, and I don't think that Bill Boyne was driving a liberal agenda, as the editor. That isn't the way we operated then.

DePue: Okay.

Hartley: Now, that may have been operating some other places, but, where I was at least, we weren't. I think that was even true at Lindsay-Schaub when I was in Decatur. Part of that was that Ed Lindsay, who had been sort of a family news guy, editorial and news guy, had every reason to be a conservative, I think. He was an owner, made lots of money and so on and so forth, but I think Ed was oriented more toward issues, and issues may have been Democratic or Republican in some respects, but they didn't have that feel and look, as it was part of a philosophical agenda.

DePue: This is probably a good point, then, to bring up the emergence of talk radio in the mid-1980s and Rush Limbaugh being one of the earliest and the most prominent practitioners of talk radio. His challenge was, no, the conservative message was never coming across. That's why talk radio ended up tapping into that need that the American public had, of hearing stories from a different perspective.

Hartley: Yeah. Well, that was a great marketing ploy, and it has worked very well for him and for others that share his philosophical approach. I think that newspapers were somewhat tone deaf to that thinking, to that approach. We thought—many of us did—that we were in a noble (chuckles) business, and whatever we did was okay. We weren't anybody's handmaidens. We weren't working for anybody. We were calling the shots as they should be called. We were probably, fundamentally, basically, insensitive to how anybody out there felt about what we were doing or felt about what their interests were.

I remember, when I went to work as an editor in Decatur, the man who was nominally called the editor of the papers there, but really only had responsibility for the editorial page. They ran a few letters to the editor, but not very many, and, certainly, none of them took issue with anything.

I remember, I was sitting in his office one day, and I was asking him about how he made the decisions on what letters to run and so on. He opened the bottom drawer of his desk, and it was jammed with paper. And he said, "Well, that's where most of the letters to the editor go, right there." He said,

"They're just too controversial for us to run them." I think that was an attitude that…he was a guy that was about ready to retire; he was sixty-five or something by that time. I just think that that was an attitude that prevailed, that said, you know, we own this paper, and we run it the way we want to run it. The unwashed folks out there, their attitudes and their ideas, we don't really care for them. I think that prevailed in a lot of newspaper offices. I think, when people like Limbaugh and others began to do what they did, then, they began to raise the questions and the doubts in the minds of a lot of people.

DePue: Was there an adjustment in the print media in response to the conservative talk message? Did it become more liberal?

Hartley: Yeah, I think there was a response in the editorial presentation, an effort to find columnists that sort of balanced out the left and the right, to sort of present more opinions than just the editorial opinions.

I don't think that, fundamentally, editorial policies and editorials have changed all that much. If they've changed at all, they've been watered down, I think, considerably, so they, maybe, don't offend too much. But it's hard not to offend somebody.

I think that they began to feel that more letters to the editor and things like that, had to give voice to or give some space to other opinions, or to a variety of opinions. I think many papers have tried to do that. Some of them have succeeded and others, I think, have pretty much failed to do it. They just didn't know what to do, in making that happen.

But, I think there's been an effort to deal with that, whether it has really accomplished anything, other than to make newspaper people feel good, that they're doing something appropriately. I don't know that it's worked particularly well because I think they sort of felt that they were forced into doing it.

DePue: Um-hmm. Let's turn our attention then, to television journalism. I think you've expressed, long ago when we first started this series, that, when you entered journalism as a profession, the place to be was the newspapers. Would you still say that today?

Hartley: Well, I'd like to be able to say that. (chuckles) But, let's just take a look at what faces journalism schools these days in trying to prepare people for work. I think they're struggling, and I think they don't really know what the combination is. If they try to just continue cranking out print news people, there aren't jobs out there, and there aren't going to be jobs. I think that's going to catch up with journalism schools and may already be happening.

So, they are expanding, and they're trying to say, "Well, we want to graduate someone who can work anywhere." You know, they can work in TV or radio or magazines or on the Internet or newspapers. So, newspapers

become a small piece of a bigger picture. The consequence of that is that they're not training or preparing anybody for anything in particular, but for something. I'm not sure that's working very well, either.

So, I guess if I thought that newspapers were going to make a big comeback and were suddenly going to be the media of greatest importance again, or something like then, then I might think that the University of Maryland concept journalism school should prevail. They are almost strictly a journalism school. They're cranking out people. They may be cranking them out for television and for newspapers, but that's about it. That's their attitude, and, by god, they are not going to change it, I think that's the impression I get.

But I don't think that that's realistic. It may very well be, in all honesty, that, in times of reduced higher education resources and everything, that journalism schools are going to be reduced as well, in some places, maybe even done away with.

You can go to some universities and take a communications course. I used to think that that was the worst possible thing you could do, because it didn't seem to prepare you for much of anything. But you can take a communications course now; you can get enough communications background that you can go, take it with you into business and law and things like that, and you don't have to go to a journalism school to do that.

So, the landscape is not just changing in terms of the media we receive and the media we get, it's changing in the whole picture of people working in the various fields and what their principles are and what their approaches are and so on. Newspapers like to think that they're clinging to a principled approach to handling news and everything. The fact of the matter is that they've had to reduce resources so much at newspapers that they don't have the people there who are doing the editing that needs to be done. So, the stuff that's getting in the papers, it may not be as bad as the Internet, but compared to what they should be doing and how they should be handling it, is pretty bad.

So, it's a deteriorating picture, Mark, that is hard for someone in my shoes, or maybe even anywhere, to get a fix on it and say, This is the way that we think we should be preparing for the future. They don't know what the future holds.

I happened to be at a social event this last summer with a dean of a journalism school and some other journalism people, just listening to the conversation. I was amazed at the impression that I got, that they were floundering. They were guessing. They didn't know what to do. They didn't know how to prepare somebody for a job.

Anymore, you go into television news, you may be doing the photographic work as well as the news gathering. You may be the camera person. So, how do you train somebody for that in the old journalism school configuration and so on? They're changing a lot, but I'm not sure they know what they're changing to.

DePue: There are so many going on in journalism for the last twenty years, but one of them certainly is the emergence of cable TV and cable news. Right at the top of the list was, first, CNN, and then, FOX News.

Hartley: Well, yeah. That's (chuckles)—

DePue: You had the three big, old networks, ABC, NBC, CBS, and, all of a sudden, all of these upstarts come along. Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

Hartley: Well, you know, instinctively, I say, the more the better. That means that you've got more opportunities to get the dope. I guess I really don't think that that's what happens. I don't think that's really how people, most people, go about trying to find out what's going on.

They may use a cable channel for something, and they may use another channel, a network, for something else. But, to suggest that they are sampling five or six different reports on the same event so that they can get a picture of it, I just don't think people have the time, the inclination or anything else to do that.

That's one of the reasons why, on the cable end of things, that the feeling is that your news and commentary should have a philosophical, partisan leaning, in order to get an audience, and because that audience isn't going to stray from you if you provide what it is they want.

So, you get the FOX and the MSNBC and CNN and all of them, shading things toward a philosophical approach because they think that's where their audience is. Now, the tendency is to think that the networks don't really do that. But they do, because they have to. They're in the audience search business as well. So, I think NBC and CBS, ABC have all done more of that leaning in the direction of the cable networks, because their own viewership is diminishing to such an extent. You can't just present yourself as being the know all, see all, view all of the news that day. I just don't think that works any more. So, they go these other directions, and if you want to be a participant in the news as it's presented at CNN or FOX or any of those cable places or any of the networks, for that matter, you better buy into what they're doing. I mean, you may be able to still use your journalist instincts and so on and so forth, but sooner or later you got to buy into what's happening and what's being presented and what's being done. Sometimes that requires some major adjustments in the way you would go about your business.

DePue: Well, doesn't that take us back, to a certain extent, to the nineteenth century print media, where you had…

Hartley: (chuckles)

DePue: …words like Republican and Democrat very proudly displayed on the masthead of the newspapers?

Hartley: Well, you know, you have to think about that, don't you? You have to remember that the birth of news and news presentation came from that partisan divide. That's the way newspapers developed. They changed some, but maybe they are swinging back, and maybe they're swinging back more in the terms of the other media. But the result is somewhat the same. I think that it's difficult for someone in my position, retired journalist, who did things at a different time and a different way, to fully understand what's going on and what the demands are currently. But I figure, if I can't figure it out, there are a lot of people who can't figure it out.

DePue: (chuckles)

Hartley: If you look at what's going on in newsroom, whether it's cable TV or newspapers, I think they're really struggling.

Just recently, in the past year, the editor of the *Denver Post* established an internal newsroom committee to develop ideas for how to change their news coverage. I thought to myself, Where was he five years ago? Where was he ten years ago? Why did he just suddenly now decide that they needed to think about it, just because he's had to reduce his newsroom or what? I thought, that's not leadership; that's followership. So, I think that's happening in a lot of places. I think they want to cling to something that just doesn't work anymore.

DePue: Well, here's the other thing that's really changed the dynamics for journalism in America—and you've mentioned it already—but the Internet. Has that impact been positive or negative or both?

Hartley: (chuckles) Well, if you want to try to find an opinion that conforms with your own, the Internet is a great place to go, because you can search long and hard enough, and you can find somebody, something, that will confirm your brilliance on a particular subject. And you don't have to listen to or read or consider any other thought. So, to the extent that people's need for confirmation of their own brilliance, the Internet certainly provides it. It also provides a tremendous amount of information, some of which is just plain wrong, some of which is poorly done and some of which is very helpful.

If you're writing and researching for books and even for news articles, background and so on, there's a wealth of information on the Internet to help you, at least to lead you to finding the information and accepting it as being

appropriate; you still don't take it as an act of faith and so on. So, it has that element in it.

As a news source, I think it is a failure as a news source in the terms that we think of it today. A newspaper will have a website. My hometown newspaper in Winfield, Kansas, has a website, just like most newspapers do. If you go to that website, you'll get a capsule of what appeared in the paper today. You'll get two paragraphs on a story that maybe went ten paragraphs in the real newspaper. That's, I think, supposed to make you go get the real newspaper to get the real story. But that's really not how people operate. Some do, but not most people.

So, you end up with an abstract of news. You end up with an abstract of what that newspaper has done that day, whatever they've gathered. As far as I'm concerned, that's not a big help, nor is that a substitute for the full story and the real story. But people are willing to accept that, and that is, I think, not forwarding, not pushing forward, the idea of gathering news and keeping people informed as to what's happening. The internet is not doing that. It's not doing that even if there are people using it. To my way of thinking, that means that you can't count on that being the same a year from now, that it is now, because they will change it to accommodate what they think people want, and that won't work.

DePue: Well, in the old school—back in the good old days, if I use that phrase—of print journalism, one of the strengths of all these newspapers--you talked about it yourself—was you had depth in the staff, so that when you got to the reporting, it was in-depth investigations of particular subjects. But I've heard your critique about the Internet. It sounds like you're no fan of the accuracy of the things that you find on the Internet, but, theoretically, one of the things the Internet was supposed to be able to do was to do that in-depth kind of an analysis, as well.

Hartley: I don't think it's worked that way. I don't think it's providing a complement to what should be done in any way, shape or form. I think it's a failure as a communicating device of significant events.

I came across a newspaper website recently—and maybe I'm just behind the eight ball here—but I noticed, at the end of the article that has appeared on the web from that newspaper, it said that this article has not been edited. I thought to myself, why would you put it on there if it hasn't been edited? And what is that supposed to… You have to read through the whole article to get to that last line to tell you that nobody has checked this thing out to see if it's accurate or not. I just think that's a killer, and it's not a keeper. I don't think it's a keeper, but I may be an old fossil.

DePue: Well, you're probably in good company in that respect, though I would—

Hartley: (chuckles) Well, you know, I've got lots of opinions and thoughts about it, but I really don't have the answer or one that I'm confident in. I think that's what is plaguing the news business today, is that they don't have the answer. They're not confident in what they're doing. They're guessing, and they're jumping at whatever they think might work. Maybe I would be doing the same thing if I were actively involved, but it is not a pretty picture at all.

DePue: Well, let me put you in the awkward position of guessing on the future of journalism, and especially of newspapers in the United States.

Hartley: I think that the fact is that you can't look at them as all the same. I think the major city and regional newspapers are probably, simply a shell of what they have been, and it may get even worse, because I think the financial picture is, they burn money at a much higher rate in those environments, and they're not getting a lot of additional revenue.

I think papers are going to become even less significant than they are now, and I think they're pretty insignificant now. I don't think there are any exceptions. I think the business about the national newspapers, like the *Wall Street Journal* and *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* and the *LA Times*, the big ones like that, I think they're all struggling, and they are going to continue to struggle, and they're never going to be able to sufficiently inform people of what's going on.

Then there are the papers, the dailies and weeklies, that I call community newspapers. I happen to have much more confidence in the future of those entities than I do in their bigger cousins. I think that, while they have been struck as well by reduced revenues and circulation, they seem to be handling it better. They're still doing the local. They're running some wire service stuff to kind of catch the other information, but I think the local coverage is what's going to prevail. While there may be changes in that too, I don't think they're going to be as dramatic as they will be, even at the bigger papers.

We're not, frankly, as dependent upon those bigger papers as we might have been in another time. So, their value to a readership is, I think, diminishing, as well. But, the value of the local community newspaper is still pretty strong, and, I think, holding up fairly well, and, I think, will rebound more quickly. I think that those little papers, the smaller papers, for example, the dailies and all, don't have big staffs, and they never have had big staffs. So, they've always had a fairly continuous level of local coverage. Some may be good. Some may be bad. Some may be okay. But, they haven't changed dramatically.

I think they're going to continue to try to keep that niche that they have. If they don't, they're silly; they're foolish. And I don't think they are foolish. So, my feeling about the future is that we're still going to have some

pretty substantial and useful and valuable information coming in these smaller environments.

Now, the problem with that is that, in urban centers, that is more difficult. There are more people all the time living in urban centers. So, when I talk about smaller papers, I'm sitting here in the Phoenix metropolitan area. The Phoenix *Arizona Republic* puts out a pretty good, regional weekly edition a couple of times a week. It's not too bad. It carries some local stuff pretty well. But, there is a local daily, as well, competing in this suburban town that I am living in. So, we have a variety of coverage of the local affairs, but it doesn't come in the regular edition of the *Arizona Republic*. They're meeting that need as best they can, and so I feel fairly well served when it comes to what's going on right here in my own backyard, even though I am in an urban center.

I think that my hometown newspaper in Winfield, Kansas, is doing pretty well, and, while I read it every day, I get it, and I say, well, they could have covered this better, and they obviously didn't go to the city council meeting that time and things like that. But that's always been the case there. I think, generally speaking, they do a pretty decent job of telling people what's going on in their own backyard. And I think that will continue.

So, I have some hope and some optimism when it comes to that aspect of it. I think the dismal science is going to be at the levels that we have, in the past, thought were really providing us with great stuff.

DePue: Um-hmm.

Hartley: You know, I think, as I do research and have been in the Illinois newspapers of 1948 and reading the *Chicago Tribune*, even with its bias on the editorial page and some of it in the news column, they did an incredible job of covering the news throughout the Midwest. I mean, just frankly, incredible, every day. There's nothing like that now, and there won't ever be anything like it again.

DePue: Let me ask you one question that I'll admit is very unfair…

Hartley: (chuckles)

DePue: …but today is the election day, and, at least it's being touted as a watershed election day, with a possible Republican sweep here. The big question is whether or not the Republicans at the national level will take control of the senate. Most seem to think that it won't. Here's my question for you, Bob. How are you going to get that news? What network or what source of news are you going to be paying attention to?

Hartley: Well, I'll tell you. That's a really, very good question. I will get my instant news from the television networks that will be covering it.

DePue: Any particular network?

Hartley: I'll probably try a sample of many of them, but I'll get it mostly from CNN and FOX, probably, those two. On elections I think they do a really good job, and I think they keep you informed. But they're getting their results from the Associated Press.

There's no independent vote counting going on at these media centers. They're all getting the same information, and they're all getting it from the AP. So, when you just want results, and you want to know what's going in your old home state of Kansas or Colorado or Illinois or something, you sit around, and you wait until they talk about them. Then, when the show is over on television tonight, tomorrow, I'll probably—well certainly—look at the *Arizona Republic* to see what details they've had. But, if there's a close race going on, they won't have it, because they had to go to press too early. So, I'll probably go to their website, just to see if there's anything that I need to check there.

I'm working on updating the senate race in Illinois for a revised edition of the book on senators. So, I'm very much interested in the senate race there. I'll keep track of that during the evening. Then, I'll watch the web, especially to look at the *Tribune* and the Springfield paper and so on and so forth. I'll probably print out some accounts of what happened, if the decision is actually made and everything, because I have to work that into a book. Then, I'll probably…You know, some of these newsstands—these Barnes and Nobles and things like that—they end up with metropolitan papers for sale. So, I'll probably wait until the Sunday *Tribune* comes out, or something like that, to kind of get their retrospective on what happened.

So, I'm going to be working every outlet I can tonight, tomorrow and probably for the rest of week, to get the information that I want and that I need.

DePue: Very good. And it's going to be a fun week.

Hartley: I think it will be exciting. Watershed, I'm not sure. We've had a lot of watersheds in the history of this country. This may not be a real watershed, but it's going to be interesting.

DePue: We're getting close to the time we're going to have to finish up.

Hartley: Okay.

DePue: What's the current project you are working on? You mentioned the update of *The Senate for Illinois Senators.* What's the project after that, then?

Hartley: I am doing a comprehensive look at the 1948 elections in Illinois. No one has done that. There are pieces of it that have been done, in biographies about

Stevenson and Paul Douglas and things like that, but nobody that I know of has tried to put together the story of how that election developed all across the board and the history of the background for it and then, a month by month rundown of how that election developed in the state and the influences,--at the last minute there were several—that I think had a dramatic effect on the outcome. So, that's my current project.

DePue: What would your response be, if a publisher came to you and said, "Hey, we need to have you write a book on Edgar or on Blagojevich."

Hartley: Well, I don't like to write about people who are still alive, but I think Edgar would be a fascinating study, quite frankly. I really think that it's difficult to do a really decent job when they are still living, because people will simply not be truthful. There's too much still at stake for people to be honest in their assessment and evaluation of somebody that they may like or have worked for or what have you. It's very difficult to get past that. I found it even difficult to get past on the Simon book, even after Paul was dead. Certainly, even when I did thirty years after Paul Powell had died, there were still people who wouldn't talk about him, for fear that there might be some sort of retribution of some kind. So, this is part of our political picture whenever you try to write something in depth.

I've talked with Mike Lawrence often about his ideal position to write a book about Edgar. He's not interested in it. He doesn't want to do it, and he's told Edgar that he doesn't want to do it. I think he feels he's just too close to it. He may not feel that way several years down the line. So, he might change his mind. But that's a perfect example of the difficulty of writing about contemporary, political people. You're dependent on sources that, frankly, sometimes are suspect.

DePue: You, yourself have had a long career, and a very successful career, chronicalling the story of a lot of Illinois politicians, especially, but also some of these others subjects that we've discussed in previous sessions. What's your contribution that you're most proud of?

Hartley: Well, you know, I used to say this about newspaper articles that we did, that went beyond just what was happening that day or that week. And I think it has been true for me. That is, I ask myself, "If I don't write this, who will? If I don't put this together, will anybody put it together? Will anybody be able to pick up an account this that, at least has been researched and an attempt made to find out what really happened?"

I guess I'd like to be able to say that I looked back over the various subjects that I've written, books and magazine articles. I guess I'd like to be able to say that I performed a service in providing information, comprehensive information, about an important subject that might not otherwise have caught somebody's fancy.

DePue: How would you like to finish this up, then for us, Bob?

Hartley: Well, you finish. (laughs) I've enjoyed this effort. It really hasn't been an effort on my part; it's more of an effort for you, I think. I've enjoyed our conversations immensely, and I have to tell you that it has caused me to think about some things that I haven't thought about for a long time. That doesn't necessarily mean that's good. It just means that, on a personal level, there are a lot of things I don't want to forget, and I don't want to put so far in the background that I can't depend on them for perspective, as I even grow older. So, this has been a wake-up for me, Mark, that I certainly didn't anticipate when we started into this. But I treasure the time that we've spent. I think you are a consummate professional oral history person. You ask the right questions; you approach things in a very professional way. I have great respect for that and for you. It made it easier for me to talk with you.

DePue: It's been nothing but a pleasure for me to hear these stories firsthand, to have the experience of getting to know you much better. I know this is going to be a valuable addition to our collection. I certainly hope and think that lots of people are going to want to pay attention to what we've said here, especially what you've said, in the years to come. So, thank you very much, Bob.

Hartley: Well, thank you, Mark. While I hate to leave this sort of an open invitation, if you have any questions as you wrestle with all of this down the road, don't hesitate to call.

DePue: I might very well take you up on that.

Hartley: Okay. (laughs)

DePue: Thank you.

Hartley: Enjoy. Enjoy the rest of election day.

DePue: (laughs) I certainly will.

Hartley: Okay, Mark.

Hartley addresses the newspaper staff of the Journal-American *in Bellevue, WA for a 1982 Sunday edition.*