

Gazette Project

Interview with

Ken Danforth
Washington, D.C.
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Interviewer: Anne Farris

Anne Farris: This is May twenty-fourth, the year 2000. My name is Anne Farris, and I'm interviewing Ken Danforth for the oral histories of the *Arkansas Gazette* for the Arkansas Center for Oral and Visual History. Let's start. Now, tell me what years you worked there.

Ken Danforth: I didn't work there for years. I worked there for months.

AF: [Laughs]

KD: The *Gazette* was very big in my life because I continued my friendship with people there and my association with the *Gazette* long after I was no longer employed. I started in June 1961, and I quit in January of 1962.

AF: And what was your job there?

KD: I was a copy editor on the rim, the copy desk. I think the word "rim" doesn't have wide currency today. It was a u-shaped desk with the news editor sitting in the slot. He was called the "slot man." He had five copy editors sitting around the rim, editing copy, editing articles that came in either from our own reporters or from the wire services.

AF: And who was the editor, the news editor?

KD: The news editor was Bob Douglas, who now writes a column for the *Arkansas*

Democrat-Gazette from time to time. After he left the *Gazette*, he for a while was chairman of the Journalism department at the University of Arkansas.

AF: And the stories that came through, would these be on every section of the paper or did you just handle local news?

KD: Everything.

AF: Right.

KD: Yes. Police reporting, news out of China, news out of Stuttgart, everything that was done. And even the syndicated columns such as Billy Graham, Dorothy Kilgallen, and Dr. Theodore Van Dellen. Whenever there was a quiet moment, I would have to edit those and write headlines for them. And they ran six days a week, so if you thought you had everything done, there was always Billy Graham waiting for you. [Laughter]

AF: Now did you have a particular time slot in which you worked?

KD: I worked late. My working day usually began no earlier than four o'clock in the afternoon. And since I was the newest person on the staff, I didn't have any choice about when I worked. I think it was Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, with Wednesday and Thursday off. But I do know I had to work weekends. It was a little depressing sometimes as a young bachelor to be going to work when everybody else was going home.

AF: Yes, on a Friday night.

KD: Yes, on a Friday night particularly.

AF: Yes. Can you describe the style or the tenor of Bob Douglas? He's quite an

established figure in the *Arkansas Gazette*.

KD: Yes. He was a gentle, wonderful man. If I had been able to work with Bob every night, I probably would not have quit as soon as I did. Bob had seniority. He got to choose his nights of work. He was the news editor. And we had a guy on the rim named George Stroud, who actually filled in the slot, did Bob's job on the nights Bob was off, and I had a hard time getting along with him.

AF: Oh, really? Why?

KD: I just thought he was a jackass. And he had two faces. He wanted to be nasty to his subordinates, as he thought of us during working hours, and then would invite you to go fishing with him. And I told him that I couldn't separate the two. And I'd rather not have social conversations with him.

AF: But professional conversations I guess you were. . .

KD: . . . professional, I had to.

AF: Right.

KD: Yes.

AF: Did you say anything to Bob Douglas about differences you had with him?

KD: Probably. I said something to A.R. Nelson, who was the managing editor, about it.

AF: Yes.

KD: I don't know that we need to get into the personnel part too much. But one night Stroud had been so vicious during my working hours and I kept working. And I waited until I was off and was no longer on the payroll and I was ready to go

home, and I told him what I just told you: that I would rather not have any social conversations with him, that I didn't consider him a friend, but that I hoped we could have a professional relationship. And he went bawling to A.R. Nelson, and Nelson called me in the next day and told me, he said, "I should fire you for insubordination." And I said, "I wasn't working then. I was off. I just wanted to tell him to leave me alone. I don't want to go fishing with him. I don't want to go to a movie with him because he's a jackass." But I kept working there after that. But it did have something to do with my decision to leave there. Plus the fact that I wanted to be a reporter. I wasn't interested in being an editor. It's amazing to me that now, as well as I know Little Rock, that when I first came down there from the University of Arkansas I actually had trepidations about being able to get around Little Rock physically. As a reporter I thought I needed to know the city. And so the only reason I took a job as a copy editor was that I thought that while I was on the desk, I would be able to use my spare time to learn Little Rock. I know this was an anxiety that wasn't justified. But as soon as I learned, or figured out that I could very easily move around Little Rock and be a reporter, which was what I wanted to be, I started agitating with Nelson. Actually, it wasn't agitating at first. I was asking him to take me off the desk and let me be a general assignment reporter, which was what I wanted to be. And he wouldn't do that.

AF: He needed a copy editor? [Laughs]

KD: He needed a copy editor. He didn't exactly say it. He didn't exactly say that

reporters are a dime-a-dozen, but that's what he meant. He said, "I can hire reporters anytime, but you're a good copy editor and I'm going to keep you there. We can't afford to lose you." And he gave me raises from seventy dollars a week to eighty dollars a week. And later on, when I still showed that I was impatient, he raised me up to ninety dollars a week. So finally, I don't think he thought I was trying to gouge him for one hundred dollars a week, God forbid, but I went in there and told him that I was giving notice. And he opened up the calendar and I said, "Two weeks is standard, but I'll give you a month or six weeks if you want. I don't want to leave you in the lurch." He said, "No, let's see where two weeks will come." I said, "Okay." And so I moved on.

AF: Right. What were your first impressions of the *Arkansas Gazette*? Do you remember?

KD: Oh, yes. I was impressed with it. Been reading it all my reading life and it was just there as an institution. And if you lived in Arkansas and wanted to know what was going on all over the state and the world, you read the *Gazette*. There were some very good local papers and even some very good weeklies, but most of them weren't all that good and it was truly an Arkansas paper. There was the *Democrat*, which was ultra conservative, which also covered the state, but it had another slant on the news. And I didn't think its editorial integrity was as great as the *Gazette's*. So I was very proud to be going down there. I mean, they had great reporters. They had Roy Reed, who I guess was the best reporter at that time, and Ernie Dumas. And then we had a newsroom with really great people.

And I came in there in June of '61, when they were still under the glow of having won two Pulitzer Prizes. One for news coverage during the Central High School crisis and another one for editorials. But during that time Harry Ashmore had been the executive editor. He was considered to have enough stature that he could be head of the editorial page *and* head of the news organization. And after he left, it was divided up, and A.R. Nelson became the managing editor of all the reporting, the news side, and — I can't think of his name right now. We called him "High Pockets" because he wore his pants up about six inches over his navel. — I'm sorry, I'll think of his name later. — Oh, yes, J.O. Powell. He was the editorial page editor. And there was considerable strife and stress between them. Powell was a lofty Olympian-type of person with great thoughts. And Nelson was nitty-gritty and thought it was part of his job to be surly. [Laughter]

AF: Well, I mean he was.

KD: Yes, maybe.

AF: Well, can you talk a moment about what kind of people you found at the *Arkansas Gazette* when you arrived?

KD: Lots and lots of talent. I think the talent is — well, we were proud of the paper, and this was in the Faubus years and it took some courage to dig for stories because the state administration, which had a good bit of scandal going for it, was loathe to cooperate with reporters. And the *Gazette* had just come out of this period in which they had lost hundreds of thousands of dollars of advertising because of their position against the closing of Central High School. But Roy

Reed, he went on to be — he was a top political reporter. He went on to be the top, not the top, one of the best reporters for *The New York Times*. Pat Crow was on the rim with me. Pat became an editor for many years. First, he went to *The New York Times*. Then he became an editor for many years at *The New York Times*. Buddy Portis, whose formal name is Charles Portis, went up to the *Herald Tribune* and did some wonderful things up there. And then, as you know, he wrote *True Grit*, and *Norwood*, and *Dog of the South*, and other wonderful novels. Gene Foreman was state editor at that time, and Gene became managing editor of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. Bill Whitworth wrote the North Little Rock column, and he became editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* and just recently retired from there. In the meantime he had written for the *New Yorker*. And so we had some distinguished alumni there.

AF: And these were all homegrown? They had not come from other parts of the United States to work specifically at the *Arkansas Gazette*?

KD: No, they were all there. The only staff member that I remember who was not from Arkansas was Chris Kazan, who was Elia Kazan's son. You know the movie director, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and wrote *America, America*. Chris came down there, I'm not sure why, and he was on what was genially known as the "crap desk," which meant all the stock market quotes and stuff like that. He had to put that into shape to be published. So he didn't have a high position with us. We had a nice social environment by virtue of the fact that we all worked together and had a camaraderie. But what we had that nobody else in town had

was the handicap of not being able to socialize during regular hours. I got off at around one o'clock in the morning, midnight if I was lucky, when the reporters could go home early. They'd turn in their stories. They had to be available if I had to call one of them or if one of the other copy editors had to call them, but the guys on the desk, we were stuck. So we tended to socialize after midnight. And you had to socialize with people who also worked the late shift. Nurses come to mind. [Laughter] And Pat Crow, who was on the rim, Ernie Dumas, who was one of the best reporters, and Chris Kazan, as I said, was on the crap desk, those three guys had a house that they rented [that was] catty-cornered from Central High School, which at that time was, well, I guess it was barely integrated, but it was still the main high school in Little Rock. They had a big old house there, and we'd often gather over there after the paper closed. I remember one time they made some absolutely abominable beer in the bathtub.

AF: [Laughs] And you drank it?

KD: I tasted it.

AF: You tasted it.

KD: That's as far as I got. [Laughter] But there were a couple of the editors who had wives who were known to have affairs or semi-affairs with other reporters, so there was some tension in that regard. Obviously I'm not going to name them.

AF: Right. [Laughter]

KD: But one thing was — well, you were asking about the social part of it. What we would do after the first edition was put to bed — this was the edition that went to

West Memphis and Springdale . . .

AF: Right. What time would that be?

KD: I think it would be around nine-thirty.

AF: Yes.

KD: Something like that. And the second edition was in the counties a little closer in.

Let's say maybe Forrest City and Malvern. And then there was a city edition which was Little Rock, North Little Rock, and Pulaski County. And so after the first edition was put to bed, that was when after most of the work was done, we would have a break waiting for it. And these days I'm not sure what the rule is in newspapers, but drinking was not only perfectly acceptable, but expected. And there was the Beamis pool hall where we would go and drink beer and shoot pool for forty-five minutes or an hour. And then there was the Capitol Hotel, which is now one of the most expensive hotels in the South. Back then it was very, very decrepit. There was a liquor store there and a kind of a bit of a pool hall, and we played pool around there. There were prostitutes upstairs. The place was totally run down. As you know, I guess, it almost got torn down before the Historical Preservation people came in. And so we would go out, and we would be fairly jolly when we came back facing maybe two-and-a-half or three more hours before we got off to party together. And we were saved in a way by something called the Officers' Club, which was over in a great, big, old warehouse over close to the Arkansas Territorial Restoration. And you went up in a freight elevator to the fourth floor, I guess, and it was a private club that you joined. I never saw an

officer there, but that's what it was called.

AF: But this is where you'd go after midnight or after one o'clock when you got off?

KD: Oh, yes. By any sense this was a private club.

AF: Right.

KD: And mixed drinks were not available in Arkansas at that time, but they could do it because it was a club. It probably cost fifty cents to join it, I don't know. I'm being facetious. It probably cost five dollars. And there was a private club in the basement of the Lafayette Hotel, too, and a couple of others, but this was one that was close to the *Gazette*, so we went there. The drive-ins and the beer joints in Little Rock closed at midnight, but in North Little Rock they stayed open until one o'clock. So there'd often be a mad rush across the bridge [laughs] to go to a drive-in over there and get a couple of beers.

AF: Right.

KD: And around the rim with me, there was a man named Deacon Parker, "Deke." I don't know if Deacon was his real name or if it was a nickname, but Deke had been there years and years before and he was, as I thought of people at that time, he was pretty old. He was probably fifty-five, maybe sixty, but, anyway, they gave him another chance and he came back. He kept a pint of bourbon there at the desk and would swig from it from time to time while we were working. Nothing was thought about it.

AF: Right.

KD: Well, maybe a little was thought about it because none of the rest of us did it. Not

on the job, but that was Deke. And it was a very permissive society there.

AF: And smoking too, I'm sure, which you don't find today.

KD: No. Smoking was particularly perilous because computers hadn't been invented, and we worked purely with paper. And the paper baskets would fill up by 7:30 p.m. After that there was no attempt to throw paper into the paper basket. So you would be wading through paper as you walked through the newsroom. And in addition to editing copy, I had to write headlines and I had a box of continuous copy paper folded in this box, so I didn't keep having to roll paper into my platen. The word "platen" will be sort of archaeological someday maybe.

AF: Spell it for us, please.

KD: P-L-A-T-E-N. That's the roller on a typewriter.

AF: Right.

KD: It's behind the paper. The keys strike against the ribbon and make an impression of one of the letters or numbers on that piece of paper. We had to know how to count headlines. Upper case "W" and "M" was two; upper case "I" was one. All the other upper case letters were one-and-a-half. Lower case "i," "l," "t," and "j" were a half a count. You had to go through there counting them. So you would type it out on one of these rolls of paper and see if it fit. If it didn't, you would rip it off your typewriter and throw it away — after nine o'clock throw it on the floor — and then start over. I envy the people now who write headlines on computers. It does the counting for them.

AF: Right.

KD: And sometimes we tried to have a good time with headlines, tried to put things in that were rather childish. There was a guy with the Employment Security Division, ESD, who had gone around with a sack collecting money from the employees for one of Orville Faibus's campaigns. And a woman named Mrs. Allen refused to give any money to the Faibus campaign, the Faibus reelection campaign. So Mr. Bland, who was head of the Employment Security Division, had her transferred to a broom closet, where she had no duties. It was just pitiful. It was supposed to humiliate her enough that she would quit and leave. This was one way of getting rid of people. He didn't think he could fire her because she wouldn't donate to Faibus. But I had to write the headline for the story. The reporter had approached Mr. Bland, and he said, "No comment." He wasn't going to talk about it. So I had a one column head to write with a, I believe it was, one-thirty "r," anyway, it had a maximum count of twelve on each line. And I wrote, "ESD's Bland Holds Tongue On Mrs. Allen." [Laughter] And I got to feeling bad about it, so after the first edition went out with this on there, I sort of confessed and the newsroom cracked up a bit and I got mildly reprimanded by Douglas. He said, "You have a good sense of humor, but we better not do that again." [Laughter]

AF: Great.

KD: You know, hold his tongue because he won't say anything.

AF: Right. He didn't put you in the broom closet? [Laughs]

KD: [Laughs] No, he didn't put me in the broom closet. I had such fun with it. Ernie

— could I talk about Ernie Deane for a minute?

AF: Oh, yes.

KD: Ernie Deane was just wonderful. He was the “Arkansas Traveler” and had been the editor of *The Arkansas Traveler* at the University of Arkansas many years before I was elected to that. And he sent me my only telegram of congratulations. They had telegrams back then. I mean it actually came with an all caps strip on a yellow piece of paper.

AF: “STOP”?

KD: Yes, “STOP.” And Ernie congratulated me. So we became good friends. We remained very good friends until the day he died. I visited him in the hospital in Fayetteville a few months before he died, but he really traveled. Charlie Allbright, who has the “Arkansas Traveler” column now, never goes anywhere. Nowhere at all. Richard Allen, who has the “Our Town” column, travels more than the “Arkansas Traveler.” Buddy Portis used to write the “Our Town” column. But, anyway, about Ernie Deane, he went on the aircraft carriers, he went all over the place. And he had a folksy style. When Pat Crow was on the rim, he was kind of a snob about the English language and he was offended by Ernie’s folksiness. So he would edit it out. So Ernie went to Nelson, and the word came down that Pat wasn’t to edit Ernie’s copy anymore. I ended up getting it because I understood what he was doing. And he went to the Arkansas Livestock Show, a big state carnival, a big state fair. And there was a hula dancer in there from Hawaii. And he made a pretty good story about her coming to

Arkansas and twisting her hips there. And I wrote a headline. The only reason I remember this was that Ernie Deane, whom I admired so much, told me it was the best headline anybody ever wrote for him. And it was . . . here's the headline, with alliteration. He was the Arkansas Traveler. Okay. So the headline is: "Peregrinator Peeps in on a Poi-Eating Pelvis Pivoter." [Laughter]

KD: He had talked in the story about how she tilted, pivoted her pelvis, how she ate poi, being from Hawaii. So it was "Peregrinator Peeps in on a Poi-Eating Pelvis Pivoter."

AF: [Laughs] That's great. And they let that one run?

KD: Oh, they ran it.

AF: And you weren't reprimanded for that one? [Laughter]

KD: No, no. That one went all right.

AF: That's great. Can you describe to me what the copy looked like when it came in? Because that is almost archaic in a way, you were working on paper. Did you get the copy as reporters had typed it out on typewriters?

KD: Yes.

AF: And then you would go through with pencil and make whatever . . .?

KD: Yes, exactly. The slot man, the news editor of the night — Bob Douglas, if you were lucky — would put at the top — he would look through the story deciding mentally where he might put it, whether it was front page or inside and . . .

AF: Let me interrupt you for just a minute. So there was no meeting of editors, as there is today, to decide what would go on the front page?

KD: No, not at all.

AF: It was all one slot editor who would make the decision?

KD: Yes, that was it.

AF: Right.

KD: Yes. After supper the managing editor would go home. There were no meetings.

AF: Okay. Sorry, I just wanted to clarify that difference.

KD: We had sort of three distinct editors, I mean, desks. We had the state desk with Gene Foreman, who was state editor doing stories out beyond Pulaski County, and he had Leroy Donald as his number two. We had the city desk, and Bill Shelton was the city editor. And Jerry Jones, who is working at the *Democrat-Gazette* today, at the city desk. And then there was what we, this was not official, but we called it the world desk. There was a really good editor named Pat Carithers who ripped off — that's a bad term these days — he ripped the wire copy AP and — I know he didn't take Reuter's. He probably took UPI, if it was UPI by then. I think United Press and International News Service combined in about '57, so it was probably UPI by then. But, anyway, Pat stood up at a big slanted desk, and he was masterful at putting together pieces from the AP and UPI and putting them together into a coherent whole. Cut and paste. It wasn't a term of art then. It was just what you did. And that would be the story he would put in. But the stories from the police beat and from the state desk, they just went into a two-tiered tray in front of the news editor, Bob Douglas. And the honorable thing to do would be to take the top story, not to rifle around in there

looking for something short. Why do it anyway? You're working eight hours. But some guys liked to do that. So you would take the story and go through there with your pencil, a big, black copy pencil, marking paragraphs. Paragraphs might be there, but you still had to mark them. Doing transpositions, maybe moving a paragraph higher. You might see something that wasn't clear and it couldn't be fixed with pencil editing, so you would type it out, cut the story in half, and stick your insertion in there. We had one police reporter. You had to totally rewrite everything he wrote. He was good at getting the cops to talk, but he couldn't have written the legend on a Safeway bag. But the stuff was there, so you had to do that. And then writing the head and then you'd put it in the news editor's "In" basket, and he would go through it and send it to the composing room. What I suppose is lost today is that the composing room — maybe I should say for people who don't know about newspapers, this is where the type is put together and the headlines are assembled. — It was just a few paces away from the copy desk.

AF: It was in the newsroom, the composing room?

KD: Through a big steel door.

AF: Right, but it was right there?

KD: But it was right there. Yes.

AF: Not on another floor?

KD: Oh, no, it was right there. And we had one guy back there who was particularly sharp. He wouldn't worry about minor transgressions. If he saw something he

thought was going to embarrass the paper or something bad, he would come out there. And he would go to Bob, or my initials would be on it, and he would go up and say, “Hey, what about this?” And invariably we were grateful for it. It wasn’t like he was a busybody. He would make good catches. But you could go back there, you could go through this steel door in there and there was all this hot lead back there and the composing tables, and upper case, and lower case display heads being set. It was right there. We really had a community of people putting out the paper. And I liked that a lot.

AF: And I guess you had immediate access to any work you needed to revise or correct because you had this person coming out?

KD: Yes.

AF: That was good.

KD: If you thought of something. Usually when I moved a story, I tried to forget about it.

AF: And how quick a pace did you all have to work? Was it heated?

KD: Very, very, very quick pace, a lot of pressure. We’d work hard and then we’d play hard. As soon as they said the first edition was put to bed, it was out the door.

AF: Yes, until it was ready for the second edition?

KD: Yes. There wasn’t too much to do with the second edition, but we were very careful with the city edition.

AF: How many editions were there?

KD: Three.

AF: Yes. And the last one went out [at] midnight?

KD: Yes, around midnight, maybe 12:30, first edition, second edition, and city.

AF: Was there ever a “Stop the presses!” moment?

KD: Not when I was there. Sorry, I wish there had been. It would have been fun.

AF: [Laughs] What were some of the major stories that you edited or saw the paper publish while you were there?

KD: I honestly don't remember. I would like to go back and see. I know most of the big stories seemed to have to do with Orval Faubus. And Kennedy was the bright and full-of-hope president while I was at the *Gazette*. But I don't remember any big stories. I remember the mechanics of getting out the paper. There again, if I had been a reporter at this time and involved in some big story out at the state capitol, I would, of course, remember it better than I would if I had just gone through somebody else's story with a pencil.

AF: Right. Any memorable reporters that you edited or worked with?

KD: Ernie Dumas and Roy Reed are the ones I mainly remember. Gene Wirges was an elderly man who covered the police beat. He had it for years and years. We almost never saw him. He would come in and drop off his copy and depart. And it was good, solid reporting. He never attempted to “write,” quote marks around the word “write.” I remember Gene and his wife had an interesting hobby for a newsman and his wife. They made afghans. What's the word, knit, crochet? Whatever you do to make an afghan.

AF: Yes, I think you crochet afghans.

KD: That's what they did. And this gruff old guy, usually with a cigarette hanging from his lips, went home and did afghans.

AF: [Laughs] That seems odd.

KD: Yes, but the other police reporter is the one who couldn't write. Pat Crow and I started a style book. We thought we needed a style book there. And we had a good time. On the left side of the page, this loose-leaf thing we were putting together, we had a story that had come in and congratulating ourselves quite heartily. On the right hand side of the page we ran a story as if it had been published. And there was a Grand Canyon between the two in the cases of certain reporters.

AF: So there was no style book?

KD: No style book.

AF: That's surprising.

KD: Yes.

AF: So what did you use as a foundation or a base to write this style book?

KD: We never wrote the style book. We started it.

AF: Well, right.

KD: We got no encouragement from management whatsoever. They didn't think it was necessary. I suppose if there was a question of usage or spelling, we would refer to the AP style book. But I don't remember ever seeing the AP style book.

AF: So what did you use as a guide, the editor?

KD: The dictionary.

AF: The dictionary, yes.

KD: *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. There were a couple of those in the office.

AF: Yes.

KD: One memorable evening was when the *Gazette* signed up with *The New York Times* to get its news wire. You know, a big deal.

AF: That is a big deal.

KD: You had to pay a lot of money. And add that to our other wires and increase the coverage, quite a prestigious thing. And I may have this name wrong, I think the managing editor of *The New York Times* then was Clifton Daniel.

AF: That's right.

KD: Is that right?

AF: Yes.

KD: It's been since '61, so . . . [laughs]

AF: A southerner, too.

KD: Yes.

AF: Carolina.

KD: So, they had a big, the Tower building then, I think it was ten stories high, twelve at the most. The Tower building was the highest building in Little Rock. Hugh Patterson, who was the publisher, and other high muckety mucks had a big reception up there in the private club — I think it was called the Top of the Rock, oddly enough — up there for Clifton Daniel. Big day for him and everything. Of

course, none of us were invited. So about eleven o'clock, or something, we got a call over there from Nelson who had been enjoying the free drinks. . . . He was enjoying the free drinks, so he put a call into the newsroom, and I guess Douglas or somebody answered the phone, and he said, "As soon as you guys individually finish your work for the night, you're invited to come up to the Top of the Rock and drink with the editor of *The New York Times*." So there was a hell of a stampede.

AF: I'm sure.

KD: We charged down Louisiana Street and over to Fourth, or whatever it was, and went up there and guzzled as fast as we could. I mean, we were peasants, peons, and these were the high-ups up there. We'd never gotten a free drink.

AF: Much less with Clifton Daniel.

KD: No. And there was no such thing as anybody entertaining us. I was never entertained and I don't think any other reporters were.

AF: Right. Hang on just a minute.

KD: Let's take a break.

AF: Right.

KD: It's finished.

AF: Well, did you go?

KD: Yes, we went to the party.

AF: Well, tell me about the party though.

KD: We went to the party and our chieftains and top management were in their cups,

and Clifton Daniel was there and having a good time. I suppose he was staying at the Marion, probably, which was . . .

AF: The Marion was still there across from the Capitol Hotel?

KD: Oh, it was definitely still there. The Marion Hotel had a real role in Arkansas history.

AF: Did you all go there? Did the *Arkansas Gazette* staff people go to the Marion? You mentioned going to the Capitol Hotel. I didn't know . . .

KD: Well, we went to the Capitol Hotel to play pool and buy whiskey. Yes, you'd go to the Marion sometimes for supper or a cup of coffee. You'd also go to the Grady Manning Hotel.

AF: Where was that?

KD: It was on the corner of Main Street and Markham.

AF: Oh.

KD: And either we would have — I guess it was an hour, maybe it was less — to have supper every night, and one favorite place was the coffee room of the Blass department store. Main Street in Little Rock, at that time, was really vibrant and exciting. You had all sorts of nice stores up and down there and a real good Chinese restaurant. First Chinese restaurant I'd ever been to. And so egg fu yung I discovered there. We went to places within walking distance. At that time I wasn't a reporter, so I didn't get into this, but I remember Ernie Dumas telling me that if you went out on a story and you had to use a parking meter to go in for an interview, — and it cost you twenty cents or something like that — you'd have to

move heaven and earth to get your twenty cents back. So it just wasn't worth it.

AF: No expense accounts?

KD: No. No expense accounts at all.

AF: Right.

KD: It wasn't like later when I was with *Time* [Magazine]. That was very refreshing. We couldn't spend enough money. We could entertain anybody. Cost didn't matter. But there were no expense accounts at the *Gazette*. A nickel probably got you an hour of parking. I don't remember exactly, but they were tacky about that sort of thing. And, of course, the Speaker of the House, Ernie or Roy Reed, they couldn't have taken them to supper or bought a beer for them or anything.

AF: Let me turn this over and then let me ask you about the competition. Let me just ask you about the competition with the *Democrat*. Was it heated? Did you feel it at all? Was it nonexistent?

KD: Well, you just asked me about the feeling of competition with the *Arkansas Democrat*, which was the other statewide newspaper. I never felt that at all. I think most of us thought the *Democrat* was just — it's too cruel to say beneath our contempt — but it was just an ultraconservative newspaper that was badly edited. And they had — I think Carr Shannon was one of them who sort of impeached his own argument in every column. And at my level, which was copy editor, I wasn't involved in any competition or any feelings of competition. We were the *Arkansas Gazette*. We were an institution. We'd won two Pulitzer Prizes and thought we'd be there forever. And [I] didn't worry about the

Democrat. In El Dorado as a high school kid, I used to deliver the *Democrat* on Sundays and make some money for it, but that didn't mean I had too much to say for them. I had worked as a reporter for the *El Dorado Daily News*, which was a Palmer paper. Mr. Palmer was the father of Walter Hussman who now runs the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*. And, eventually, Mr. Palmer took over the *Democrat*, and one thing lead to another. Now they're, sadly, combined.

AF: I know you weren't there at the time of the demise, but I just wondered what your reaction to the folding of the paper was. I mean here was this sense of invincibility that the *Arkansas Gazette* would always be around.

KD: I was horrified by it. For one thing, I still can't understand how the *Gazette* could have lost that lawsuit. I think they fumbled it. Possibly through bad legal representation, but also perhaps through the head-in-the-sand attitude of the Pattersons, who had a certain sense of entitlement in the community, and they thought they were always going to have it. I remember how offended I was when I was on the *Gazette* that Carrick Patterson, who was a plump adolescent, would come through the newsroom, and we were slaving away, and he would go through there talking about how he was going to own the paper someday. And then I thought Hugh Patterson was pretty much ineffective. He was, of course, at the Top of the Rock that night when Clifton Daniel was there. Hugh Patterson told me one time — this was later at some party. No, it wasn't. It was the night up at the club with Clifton Daniel. Hugh Patterson told me, and he was almost blubbing, he said, "Oh, the great tragedy of my life is that I wasn't able to climb

up through the ranks and become the publisher and editor of a great newspaper just based on my abilities. It will always be said that I married Mr. Heiskell's daughter and that's why I'm running the paper now. And it would have been so much more satisfying to have done it on my own."

AF: That's very interesting.

KD: He had an ego.

AF: Yes.

KD: I later was at an International Press Association meeting in Berlin, West Berlin then, representing National Geographic, and I was on a boat cruise with editors from all over the world, and Hugh Patterson was there. And I went up to greet him, shake his hand, and he didn't remember me at all.

AF: Oh.

KD: Later on when I was, to my eternal shame, working for awhile in Clinton's campaign in Little Rock in the old *Gazette* building, we were a paper clip's throw from my old desk where I was. And one day they brought Hugh Patterson through on a tour, and that was the weirdest out-of-body experience I've ever had. They were showing him how the campaign was operating, and he didn't show any feeling or relationship at all to what was happening. Of course, the *Gazette* building had been shuttered for a couple of years.

AF: Well, this was '92 or '96?

KD: '92.

AF: Right, so just a year.

KD: Yes. I don't think their other campaign was down there in '96.

AF: No, I don't think so. '92 was the War Room.

KD: Yes, the Carville War Room.

AF: That's an interesting experience because he was sort of at the wrong place at the wrong time, too. I mean, you probably still remembered him from the old *Arkansas Gazette* days, and here he was displaced. Suddenly he's in the building, but it's no longer the. . .

KD: Having lost the newspaper.

AF: Right.

KD: Through mismanagement and miscalculation and all around klutziness.

AF: Yes. It must have been eerie for you to go back into that newsroom.

KD: Extremely eerie. Especially around the — I never felt at home — this doesn't have anything to do with the *Arkansas Gazette*, but the people working the Clinton campaign, I was not a part of that at all. Going around barefooted, sending out for pizza, sleeping under their desks and so forth. James Carville raging. [Laughs] And when they would have, I think, three or four meetings a day, early morning, and late at night, the most important people in the world that you've never heard of in your life demanded time to speak.

AF: Yes. Well, how had the newsroom changed physically when you went back in '92?

KD: Well, in '92 it was no longer a newsroom. They'd carved it up a good bit. I think maybe more to the point is how newsrooms have changed since then and now.

AF: Right.

KD: Oh, it's very eerie to me now to go into a newsroom with everybody on a computer terminal and no paper on the floor to wade through.

AF: Yes, and cubicles, too. Blocked off from each other many times.

KD: Yes. I guess everything was open at the *Gazette*, but you would communicate person-to-person. And now I think they just send each other emails, and they move their stories electronically. Back then, if I edited a story, or when I edited a story, I would just put the edited copy and the headline, which I pasted at the top, put it in the slot man's desk, the slot man's "In" box, and we could talk about it right there. He was two-and-a-half to three feet away from me. And now I think a copy editor doesn't even have to be in the same room. They edit copy on the computer. I don't think they use paper in newsrooms these days when they're editing stories. It would seem to me, I may be a troglodyte, but it would seem to me I would want to see a story on paper in two different situations. I would want to see it on paper before I edited it, and have a look at it and go through there and mark it. And I would want to enter those changes into the computer and then I would want to print it out and look at it yet again and see how it comes off the page into the reader's eye.

AF: Yes.

KD: I can't quite conceive of doing something totally electronically and not seeing it on a piece of paper until you read the newspaper the next morning. I think that's a snare and a delusion. The things I write today, I constantly print them out. And

when I think something is just pretty dandy on the computer screen, I print it out and I go through there, and for every two-hundred-and-fifty words, which is about a page double-spaced, I might make twelve or fifteen changes when I see it on paper. And then I go back and I bang those into the computer. I think what else I can say about the newsroom was it was a big, open place. Over in one corner was the sports department, and Orville Henry holding forth over there. I said before that Ernie Deane requested that Pat Crow not edit his “Arkansas Traveler” columns anymore because Pat wanted to make it all according to Strunk and White. And I got taken off the Orville Henry editing because I thought he was an atrocious writer and I tried to fix it in copy. He wanted me to leave his grammatical errors and his flights of fancy in there. I thought we ought to have good writing even in the sports department, and Orville Henry disagreed with that. And he was popular, so we came to an understanding with A.R. Nelson that I wouldn’t edit Orville Henry’s copy anymore. Because I said, “I can’t stand the stuff. I can’t look at it and not want to change it.”

AF: Did anyone edit it?

KD: No. That was the idea. Just leave the junk alone.

AF: Yes. So it wasn’t that he didn’t want you to edit it, he just didn’t want anyone at all to edit it?

KD: He didn’t mind somebody marking paragraphs.

AF: Yes, well.

KD: And the occasional serial comma might be inserted, but that was about it.

AF: But he won out?

KD: Yes. It really wasn't a contest. I was very relieved not to have to read the stuff. I never read the sports page anyway. I was interested in whether the Razorbacks won, but the score was about enough for me. It was not his stories describing the game that were so bad, it was his columns about it.

AF: Right.

KD: As you know, he continued until he was a relic there, a superannuated relic. Long past his time.

AF: Right, like a sports superstar who fell.

KD: Yes. That's right. And, of course, he stayed there long after I was gone from Arkansas. These things with Frank Broyles and the stadium and all that, which I don't know much about, but what I do know is appalling.

AF: Yes. Did anyone else's copy not get edited because he or she objected?

KD: No. No, not really, with the exception of the police reporters, the city reporters — maybe there weren't any city reporters besides the police ones. I don't even remember them. But the state politics like Ernie Dumas and Roy Reed, they didn't need much editing. They turned in such clean copy that you might do one little transposition from time to time. The state desk was good because Gene Foreman edited that before he sent it to us. Pat Carrithers, who was the world editor, did all the wire copy from overseas. The copy came in pretty clean, and he turned it in. Oh, there's one thing that I did learn. When we started getting *The New York Times* wire and I was used to reading the *New York Times* even then, I

saw how raw their copy was that their reporters sent in. They sent it totally unedited and undigested out on their wire. It was a mess. It required extremely heavy editing, a lot more than the AP did.

AF: I'm surprised.

KD: So I would look at *The New York Times* in the morning sometimes just as an exercise after I saw that this vast difference existed. And I would compare what appeared in the *Times*, which was very, very crisp and tight. Paragraphs marched on one after the other, and then I would compare it to what came in over the wire. And I would say, "Man, those reporters really owe a debt to their desk up there in New York."

AF: Yes. Well, it's an editor's paper. I wonder if the *Arkansas Gazette* was an editor's paper or a writer's paper when you were there?

KD: I think it was a happy balance probably. It was an editor's paper when you dealt with some writers. I'd say most of the reporters — again, Roy Reed and Ernie Dumas — it was a writer's paper because the writers were so good they didn't have to — everybody has to be edited. I don't care who it is. — but they were so good that they required a minimum of it. You didn't have to worry about it much. If you had taken a story by Roy or Ernie and just run it without editing it, you wouldn't have been sorry about it.

AF: No. How many reporters were there?

KD: I don't know. I even hate to guess because I might be so wildly wrong.

AF: Right.

KD: I think a dozen or something like that, maybe ten, maybe fifteen. I don't know. See, I wanted to be one of them and wasn't allowed to be. We worked closely with the photographers then, too. Larry Obsitnik was just great. And Rodney Dungan, from El Dorado, was the youngest of the three photographers. Gene Prescott. He was also a good photographer. We could go back and forth between the darkroom where they were and the newsroom.

AF: Was there a photography editor, a photograph editor? Or did you all assume . . . ?

KD: We did. I had to learn how to size photographs. You had a triangle, and you would take the triangle and do some little arithmetic there and figure out how it was going to work out on the page when the page was made up.

AF: Would you choose the photograph?

KD: I don't think I chose the photographs. I think the slot man would hand me the photograph that was going to go with the story. I would write the outline.

AF: Oh.

KD: And then size it and then put the cut-line back with the photo and the dimensions. You'd have to figure out the columns and then the corner of the pictures to know what the depth was going to be. The column width was immutable, two, four, six, you know, but the depth was something that could be changed. So you figured that out according to the paper. No, we did not have a photo editor. I'd be embarrassed to hear that we did, but I never heard of one.

AF: Well, I wouldn't think that there would be, but it's just a change, too.

KD: Yes.

AF: Between the . . .

KD: But the clacking of the typewriters is a big thing. Bang! Bang! Bang! Bang!
Bang! All the time papers being strewn left and right.

AF: With the composing room so close were there smells of ink?

KD: I couldn't say I smelled ink. But we had copy boys. I don't know if they have those anymore. Maybe they don't need them.

AF: Would people actually yell, "Copy!"?

KD: Yes. Yes, if you have copy. And a boy would come by and grab it and he'd run back to the composing room with it. One thing I don't remember is proofreaders. Where were they? I think they must have been back in the back, too, back in the composing room. Now at the *El Dorado Daily News*, — which was my first paper. I started working in high school there. — the proofreader was right there in the room with us. It was a small paper. But I really don't remember anything about proofreading at the *Gazette*. I was a copy reader. Actually, that was a funny thing. I was a copy editor, but they called me a copy reader. I didn't just read it, I edited it, but that was the term.

AF: Oh, because there are content editors and then there are line editors, too. And it sounds like you all did everything.

KD: We did, with a nominal distinction.

AF: Right.

KD: The fact is, even now, I know what line editing is. I've done a lot of it. I understand that in book publishing now and in a lot of magazines they do content

editing. They don't do any line editing. And so, a lot of junk comes through. Well, we did both. We had to. Copy editors had to question a reporter on just what he meant. Like I say, this one guy who was a police reporter, you had to — The problem wasn't bad English. The problem was trying to figure out what the hell he meant. And so, you had to call him at home. And he would quite cheerfully tell you the story, but you would have to write the stories as if he were calling it in on the phone. His written copy was not even quite as good as a guide to what had gone on in the story.

AF: Which is not great for a police report.

KD: No. There were never any real big stories anyway. They were routine stuff.

AF: Right.

KD: The biggest news produced in Arkansas came out of the state capitol.

AF: Right.

KD: Faubus and various shenanigans.

AF: Well, I think this topic of the attitudes toward the people running the paper and toward outsiders that's been suggested is an interesting topic. I don't know if you really have a sense of that, but it would be interesting to hear what you think about that.

KD: I'm not sure exactly what you mean, but we had a reverence for the paper. And yet we knew that some of the people working there had feet of clay. And we thought we were a team. Nelson, the managing editor, I didn't like very much, but I thought he had integrity about the paper. High Pockets . . . Powell. J.O.

Powell.

AF: Oh, yes. He was there.

KD: That's High Pocket's name. He was the editorial page editor and quite an Olympian. But not much to say about him except that I agreed with most of his editorials. There was no communication between the newsroom and editorial. Fact is, I think they were one story up. And there was a wonderful man, the agricultural editor, Leland DuVall.

AF: Yes.

KD: Leland, he'd been there forever, and in a state like Arkansas, an agricultural editor is important to begin with. He wrote with such grace. I never cared to read about soybeans and rice, but Leland would draw you into the story. And he told me a story, which maybe shouldn't be in this oral history, but he said that Mr. Heiskell — let me get back to him in a minute — Mr. Heiskell was very . . .

AF: Yes, that's what I was going to ask you next.

KD: He was very much a presence there. But Leland told me that one time Mr. Heiskell came into his office and said, "I don't like the way you phrase this Mr. DuVall." He was always "Mister." Everybody was Mister to Mr. Heiskell, a very courtly gentleman in his nineties, upper nineties. And he said, "I want you to change this, or quit doing this." Whatever it was. And Leland told Mr. Heiskell, "Mr. Heiskell, if you tell me to spell shit with two t's, I'll do it." And Mr. Heiskell said, "Well, thank you, Mr. DuVall" and walked down, and he came back in about two minutes and poked his head in the door and he said, "By the

way, Mr. DuVall, it used to be spelled with two t's." [Laughter]

AF: That's a great story.

KD: So the best kept secret at the *Arkansas Gazette* was that Mr. Heiskell's obituary had been written many years before. I think when he was just a kid of seventy. And it was kept in the bottom — It was set in type. It was actually in hard type, lead — in the bottom drawer of A.R. Nelson's filing cabinet.

AF: Wow!

KD: And it was always said that if Mr. Heiskell found out that that was in there, there'd be mass firings.

AF: Who wrote it?

KD: I don't know who wrote it, but it was written and set in type.

AF: Yes.

KD: And it was so — I saw it one time. It was covered in dust and everything.

AF: Yuck.

KD: [Laughs] And it was, like I say, it was written in — he still had twenty years to go.

AF: Yes.

KD: And they'd written his obit just to have it ready. And there was a lot of this lore about Woodruff having brought the paper, the press, up the Arkansas River and starting it, the "Oldest Paper West of the Mississippi." You had a feeling you were really into something. I hated to leave. I wanted to be a good reporter there, and I wanted to be contributing to it, but I never thought I was going to

accomplish that editing other people's copy.

AF: Right. Well, tell me more about Mr. Heiskell. I didn't realize that he was alive when you were there.

KD: Oh, he had a long time to go, I think. I was there in '61. I don't know what year he died. I didn't know him except that he came through the newsroom. And he was the father-in-law of Hugh Patterson and the grandfather of Carrick Patterson, who generally made himself pretty obnoxious. But Mr. Heiskell was the — he was the conscience. There were people there who would have bent to the winds of necessity of the Faubus administration. They knew they couldn't do that with Mr. Heiskell, that he would keep them pointed towards the sweet, the straight, and the narrow. And he risked his family's fortune during the boycott by advertisers in '57, and I guess it went on into '58. He would come in there from time to time. I remember one day he came in and — I don't want to try to mimic an octogenarian's voice — but he came in and somebody had used a headline about children, school children, and had used the word "kids." And he said, "Why are we calling the children of Little Rock baby goats?" [Laughter]

AF: Which is technically correct.

KD: [Laughs] I know.

AF: I mean, his version was technically correct. Right.

KD: Yes. That's how closely he read the paper.

AF: Right.

KD: And I think, mostly, he probably wrote little memos to Nelson saying, "I don't

like this,” or “I don’t like this.” Everybody was aware of his presence. Sort of in a cloud, floating above the newsroom.

AF: Right.

KD: And informing us and reminding us that we had a tradition of integrity to uphold.

AF: What did he look like? Did he dress as much of a gentleman and as stately as it sounds like he was?

KD: A coat and tie, very conservative. He wouldn’t be given to sports coats or slapdash ties and all. He was, as I remember, quite erect and he had white hair and was clean-shaven. You see he was not a person I ever sat down with and chatted up, so I didn’t really know him. He just came through there like a demigod. He wasn’t even at this famous party up at the top of the Tower Building.

AF: I was going to ask you that. If he was . . .

KD: Top of the Rock was the name of the club on the top floor of the Tower Building. That’s where it was. Of course, they had booze up there, which we couldn’t buy. No, he didn’t go to things like that. Presumably, he went to bed early. I don’t know. I never saw him in the newsroom late.

AF: Did you ever see him or hear about him interacting with Hugh Patterson, his son-in-law?

KD: No.

AF: Okay. I just wondered what their relationship might have been like, even from a viewer.

KD: I could speculate, but that wouldn’t be valid.

AF: Right.

KD: I don't have anything to go on.

AF: I wondered how much influence he had over the reporters or the editors and the actual content of the paper. Now I know he held these morals to be high in things like the desegregation suit.

KD: Yes.

AF: I wonder, just on a daily basis.

KD: Not with the reporters directly. He would have communicated through editors.

AF: Right.

KD: He never came up to a reporter, as far as I know, and said, "I think this stinks," or something like that. He never approached the copy desk. What I was doing and what my colleagues on the desk were doing, we were just tidying up what other people had done. So we had — other than trying to make the English crisp and correct — we had nothing to do with the quality. Yes, we did actually, the quality of the reporting. We could call a reporter and say, "Look, you haven't really followed through on this story. Give me some more stuff." That was one of our jobs.

AF: Right. Call back to get more information.

KD: Yes. "Call that cop and ask him why he broke the defendant's neck." Stuff like that. [Laughter] That we want to know if that was justified.

AF: Right. Right.

KD: So I don't know if copy desks now have that authority. We had a good bit of

authority because we could tell a reporter, “Look, this story’s not going into print. It’s going to be hell to pay if you don’t fix it up.” And they’d say, “I’m playing bridge.” “I don’t care. Get on the phone, go back. Go back over there.” And we didn’t have to talk tough because they were professionals. In effect, we could say, “In forty-five minutes I’ve got to let this story go.”

AF: Yes.

KD: We had one guy on the rim whose name was Pleasant George. That was his real name.

AF: Pleasant was not a nickname? It was his real name?

KD: It was his name. I don’t remember his last name. But it was Pleasant George something. We also called him “Water Fountain” George. Because, for some reason, I don’t know why, because they say you’re working for your eight hours. Well, some of them liked to get these real long stories. And it seemed like to me that would have been better because the longer stories you have the fewer headlines you’ve got to write. But, anyway, he’d see something coming up there, and he would decide he needed a drink of water, and off to the water fountain he’d go. And Douglas would sometimes take that story and pull it down and hold it there and as soon as George would sit down with nothing to do, he’d put it up there. [Laughter]

AF: And he was forced to take it? [Laughter]

KD: Yes.

AF: Yes, that’s great.

KD: Douglas was very gentle and personable. His wife, Martha, was on the staff, too. I think she was on the society page, society section. And so she was part of the social scene there, too. And Bill Shelton was the city editor who sent out a memo one day saying that he wanted “interpretative journalism.” He said, “Nobody’s doing interpretative journalism. I want to know what the story means as well as what was said.” And his wife, Dixie, was quite a presence. Not in the newsroom, but partying. Dixie was a real good artist. And then Jerry Jones’s wife, Ina Claire, was a sort of a diva of the newsroom, and they would have parties late at night.

AF: So were there many married couples at the paper?

KD: Well, Jerry was married to Ina Claire, Bill Shelton was married to Dixie, and Leroy was married to Jeneene, and Gene Foreman was married and had a little baby boy called Harry Bear. I don’t think Ernie Dumas was married yet. I wasn’t. I don’t know about the other guys. A.R. Nelson was married, but he didn’t socialize with us. He sat from time to time — there was a restaurant down on Markham Street, which even the building down there is called Breyer’s, — B-R-E-Y-E-R-apostrophe-S — which had really wonderful food and was one of the best restaurants in Little Rock at the time. And he ate dinner there, invariably, every night. And we could join him if we wanted to. Dutch treat, of course.

AF: Right. Would this be after the first edition was put to bed?

KD: No, no.

AF: Or before he showed up at work?

KD: It would be seven o'clock or something like that.

AF: Right.

KD: He'd go down there for dinner, and he liked to hold court. And he would go back for maybe twenty minutes in the newsroom and then go home. And we'd call him if there was a problem, if somebody needed him. But people didn't like to call him because he generally made problems bigger than they'd been. [Laughter]

AF: Maybe he did that deliberately so people wouldn't call him after hours. [Laughs]

KD: Could have, could have. Could have been. He didn't come in all that early either. I don't think he worked very hard. He was really a gruff, harsh man.

AF: What about news judgments? Did you see exercising of poor or bad news judgments?

KD: I don't think. As far as I know, A.R. Nelson didn't exercise that much news judgment. I think he just mainly dealt with the people. Bill Shelton, the city editor, had excellent news judgment. Gene Foreman, the state editor, had excellent news judgment. I guess I'd have to check on this — I guess the city editor assigned people to the State House. I really don't know. You would think there'd be a separate desk for state politics, but I don't think there was. — The state editor dealt with stories out in the hinterland, something from England [Arkansas] or Magnolia.

AF: Was the paper delivered all over the state?

KD: Oh, God, yes. Absolutely. Everywhere. That's why we had these three editions, first, second, and city.

AF: Right.

KD: And they had a good bit of competition in northeast Arkansas. The *Commercial Appeal* probably had as big or bigger a readership than the *Gazette*. And in northwest Arkansas, the *Tulsa World* was very big. And in southwest Arkansas, the really conservative *Shreveport Times* was bought by a lot of people. A lot of people in my hometown of El Dorado bought the *Shreveport Times*. And we were ninety miles from Shreveport, but one hundred-and-twenty from Little Rock.

AF: Right. And some of those roads, they're not very good roads. Did they truck these things, the paper, out?

KD: Yes.

AF: Yes.

KD: When I was delivering the *Arkansas Democrat* on Sundays only, — and I got two dollars a day, two dollars per Sunday — they were brought on a Trailways bus from Little Rock to the bus station in El Dorado . . .

AF: Oh.

KD: . . . and dumped off there. And three or four other guys and I would pick up our allotted — first of all, we had to sell the subscriptions and then we would deliver them. I think I had twelve or thirteen papers to deliver every Sunday, and it seemed to be worth it. But that's how they were delivered in general. There were a lot more buses then between cities than there are now.

AF: Yes.

KD: El Dorado had a pretty active bus station, two, actually. It had a Greyhound and a Trailways.

AF: A Greyhound and a Trailways, yes.

KD: And the *Democrat* came into the Trailways station.

AF: Well, what else do I need to know or do we need to know?

KD: I don't know. You could see through the window.

AF: You could see through the window?

KD: Yes. I mean . . .

AF: What do you mean?

KD: I mean, newsrooms now, I picture them as being sort of great interior spaces.

AF: Right, but there were windows?

KD: Even bay windows sort of that you could look through there. So there was daylight there until the sun went down. But it was depressing for me in a way, working only at night when everybody else was having fun.

AF: And maybe being confined to a desk. If you wanted to be a reporter, then being confined to a desk for your work day might have been . . .

KD: Yes. Being a reporter would have been fine. You could go out on the job.

AF: Right.

KD: And have a little freedom. There was no way I could let up even for a minute. As soon as you finished one story and one headline, you had to reach for the next one. That's why we let off steam after the first edition was out.

[End of Interview]