The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training
Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

DONNA MARIE OGLESBY

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy
Initial Interview Date: July 1, 2016

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INTERVIEW

Q: Today is the 1st of July 2016. Interview with Donna Oglesby. Being done by telephone and I'm in Arlington and she is on Cape Cod. Okay, Donna. Let's start at the beginning. When and where were you born?

OGLESBY: I was born on October 22, 1946 in Phoenixville, Pennsylvania.

Q: Just to get an idea, first we'll do your father's side and then your mother's side. What was the background of your father's family?

OGLESBY: My father's family is Pennsylvania Dutch. He traces our family back to pre-revolutionary days in Pennsylvania. They were mostly farmers until his father worked for the railroad. My mother's family is largely Irish. Her great-grandfather came from Ireland in the late 1900s as did her great-grandmother; we are a newer immigrant family. Again, her grandfather, I mean most of that side of the family went to New York and to Philadelphia as part of the large Irish potato famine immigration; her father also worked on the railroad.

Q: So, your father's side first. What sort of education did he have?

OGLESBY: My father was caught up in World War II like most people of his age. He didn't go to college initially. He went into the Army and he became a pilot; my father was an Army pilot during World War II. He served in the European theater. He flew artillery spotter planes, small fixed-wing aircraft. When he returned from the war, I was born in the first wave of boomers. My father was in the reserves and returned to the military when the Korean War began. He then had a full Army career until retiring in 1967.

My mother was college-educated during that period. She went to Westchester State College which was a teacher college at that time. During the War, she drove ambulances for Valley Forge

Military Hospital. Phoenixville, her home town, is the little town right outside of Valley Forge. During the whole war period, my mother and my grandmother, actually, were very involved as volunteers with Valley Forge. My father got a college education later. While we were in the military, my father all but finished his BA through the University of Maryland program. They always had large overseas operations that a lot of the military took advantage of.

Q: Did you live the life of an Air Force brat?

OGLESBY: I'm an Army brat. Yes, I certainly did. I was five when my father went back into the military; he was assigned to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma where he learned how to fly helicopters in addition to his fixed-wing certification. He became a flight instructor at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. We lived there until I was seven and then my father was assigned to Korea. He didn't get to Korea. They pulled him off the boat in Japan because they needed a pilot in Japan as part of the occupation forces. And we were able to join him there. Instead of being separated from my father for a tour of duty, we were only separated for about eight months until we could get ourselves on a troop ship to Japan. I lived in Japan from the second grade to the fifth grade.

Q: Where in Japan?

OGLESBY: First we were in Yokohama for several months; then my father was assigned to Camp Zama outside of Tokyo. We lived in a military housing area called Sagamihara.

Q: What were your impressions of being a kid in that environment?

OGLESBY: I think it made a huge impression on me. We knew there was another country on the other side of the fence. We had some interaction with Japanese children through sports. I was also a Brownie then; many of our badges were focused on Japanese arts: making Japanese dolls; working on Bonsai, and Ikebana. I was well aware at a very early age of the differences in people and their cultures and their art forms and I think that made a huge impression on me.

Q: Yeah. It would have been impossible for it not to.

OGLESBY: Absolutely, nothing in my parents' attitudes towards Japan were in any way negative at all. My parents took us on road trips all the time. We went to Mt. Fuji, Kamakura, all the shrines in the vicinity of Tokyo. My mother was a teacher, after all; she saw our time in Japan as a learning experience. I remember my brothers who were toddlers at the time disappearing in Kamakura. We eventually found them surrounded by Japanese who were simply touching their blond hair. Mutual amazement, I think.

Q: That's a great thing. Kamakura, so Daibutsu was there, wasn't it?

OGLESBY: Yes, exactly. I was raised Catholic; my father's family was Baptist. So, early on I knew about religious differences. Buddhism and Shintoism were simply other religions to me.

Q: Was there with your father coming from a farming community how important was religion there? One thinks of the Amish but…

OGLESBY: My father's elder brother could speak Pennsylvania Dutch as did my grandfather. We had family connections to farms around Kutztown and in the Lancaster area. During our summer vacations we visited our farming relatives for summer picnics. The fun part was making ice cream from the milk we'd taken from the cows. A less fun part was plucking chickens; the boys had to learn how to wring their necks and girls did the plucking. I remember going to the farmer's market with my grandfather and he would get in long discussions in Pennsylvania Dutch. I have never thought of it that way before, but even as a kid in Pennsylvania, I was aware that there were different communities with different languages and different ways of living.

Q: How you were you in school?

OGLESBY: How was I in school?

Q: How did you do?

OGLESBY: I was brilliant. Are you kidding? I was very good in school. I was in the honor society. My schooling was here and there and hither and yon. I did first grade in Oklahoma. Part of second grade in Pennsylvania, the rest of second grade, third and fourth grade in Japan. Fifth, six, seventh and eighth grade in Maryland, and then in the middle of my freshman year in high school, we were assigned to Ankara, Turkey. I was in Turkey through my junior year and then we were assigned to New Jersey for my senior year in high school. I then went to Washington College on Eastern shore of Maryland; I spent my junior year abroad in Hawaii learning Japanese. I was awarded an East West Center Fellowship to be able to do that. The following summer I studied in Japan. I returned to Washington College for my senior year. Then on the basis of my Japanese, won a full scholarship to Columbia University for my master's in international affairs. I was a very good student. At Washington College I won the George Washington Medal at graduation for the student most likely to succeed.

Q: I take it you were a reader.

OGLESBY: Yes. I was a big reader; I still am. Because we lived in places without television or even phones sometimes. I remember reading all the time. The only appointment radio hour I ever remember was "Our Miss Brooks" which came on *Armed Forces Radio* at a certain time. I don't even remember when it was, but I remember that was the only thing that I stayed up late to listen to while we were in Japan. There was no television and generally there was nothing on the radio.

Turkey was much the same. I lost years of connection to American popular music. All those years as a teenager in Turkey, I worked part time during the summers in the post library. One summer I recall getting totally into the American Civil War; I read everything on the shelves. I was fascinated by the gritty Civil War photographs, particularly of Lincoln who I adored. I think that immersion in reading was my escape, my fun, and my everything. Perhaps it was a function of being raised abroad in developing countries, where the electronic media weren't on a par even with the United States during that period.

Q: It's sort of intellectual or scholastic achievement, didn't have a very high priority in the military or at least from what I gather, kids who went to those schools…

OGLESBY: Really? That is not my impression. Well, maybe it depends on your parents. If your mother were a teacher and your father thought 97 was a pitiful grade, then you'd probably stretch to get a 100. In my family if I came home with an A-, I heard about it. I also had good teachers. I had a good English teacher I remember in Turkey who corrected me and got me thinking about grammar and structure and I had a very good civics teacher. The school I attended is now called the George Marshall Regional High school. Then, the classes were small and those of us interested in learning had teachers who cared.

When I returned to the States to Morris Hill Regional High School my senior year I wasn't behind in anything. I did well in the classes and was in the honor society and certainly didn't feel that was unprepared for the level of work that they were doing at all.

Q: When I was in Korea, I know there was some dispute between the military and the embassy over standards and all. But that may have been unique to that area.

OGLESBY: It could have been true. I don't know. All I can speak to is my own experience and as I said I came back to the States my senior year in high school I didn't have trouble. I had missed nothing. That high school had more students in my graduating class than the entire school in Turkey. When were you in Korea?

Q: I was in Korea twice. Once as an enlisted man during the War and from 76-79 when I was running a consular section.

OGLESBY: Okay, well that would have been later than I was in Ankara and of course all of the embassy kids were in our school too.

Q: Yeah, that was very much the case. Well, while you were in high school, what was the social life like there in a small school?

OGLESBY: What was what?

Q: The social life.

OGLESBY: Well, what I do remember is our junior prom was held during the middle of the day because there had been an attempted coup and we were under martial law. Much of my social life in Ankara was in the Catholic Youth Group. We had a very active young priest who organized Catholic youth and I did a lot of traveling with him and our Catholic students. We would go on camping trips throughout the country. We went to Ephesus, and crusaders' castles on the southern Turkish coast. We visited Hellenic ruins on the Mediterranean and the Byzantine archeology further inland. I was old enough to be able to go camping with this youth group for weeks on end. When my parents had leave we also took trips. There were parts of Turkey during that time that were not all that easy to get to, but we went.

I was active in sports. I guess I always had been active in sports. You know, playing volleyball and basketball on girls' teams. The social life other than that? Visiting people's houses? I don't know. I don't remember much more.

Q: It sounds like it was a very healthy…

OGLESBY: We had a swimming hole. I don't know what it was; it wasn't a pool; it was like a quarry or something. During the summer there were buses that were organized to take us out there to swim.

Q: Did the embassy play any role your experience?

OGLESBY: Yes, it did. It did through my friends. I had one friend, Jane Barnes, whose father was at that time the deputy chief of mission (DCM) in Ankara. He later went on to be Ambassador to Jordan. We had slumber parties at her huge residence. I was well aware of what the embassy was through her. I also had friends whose parents were with USAID. The last Spring that we were there, I decided to make Lent by going to mass every morning. We lived up on the top of the hill, so that my mother could breathe. My mother was an asthmatic; we needed to be above the coal smog for her sake.

To make mass, I had to leave the house early in the morning. I walked down to the chapel at the Italian Embassy and from there I walked stood on a corner to be picked up by the school bus. On these daily walks in the mornings, I did walk past the American embassy; it has a very austere white marble façade.

Past that building before I got to the Italian Embassy, on the other side of the street was the United States Information Agency (USIS) office. The embassy looked unapproachable, in a way it was kind of cold and a little formal looking; the USIS building had a porch and it had window boxes that had art and book displays in them. Over time I became aware that across the street from USIS was a big park; USIS showed films of the American space program. So, at the age of sixteen I became aware of differentiation in the embassy community.

Q: You got exposure not just military but many Americans' kids when they were _____.

OGLESBY: Well we lived on the economy. We didn't live on a base when we were in Ankara. I remember my mother getting very upset when I would arrive home in a taxi arguing the fare with the driver. Then he'd laugh, and I'd laugh, and it'd be all over. I had to move around the city on my own. I got used to being pinched and bumped into in unpleasant ways. I learned how to say "buzz off" in Turkish.

Q: Yeah, I know my son was a little blond-haired boy and they would pinch his cheeks and he would…

OGLESBY: I was a blond too; and I got pinched often. I learned to do what I had to do. All of it is not pleasant; but I learned how to deal with it.

Q: It's taken in a way, in a spirit of not taking it overly seriously.

OGLESBY: Right. There is a sense of learning how to roll with things that aren't pleasant. I remember when I was a junior in college living with a family in Tokyo; we had gone in a group and were studying together at Sophia University. One day we were waiting for class to begin and one of my friends who was about 5'9" and had very curly light hair, came into the class very upset. She said, that some guy on the subway had grabbed her breast. We spent the rest of the morning learning phrases in Japanese to use in such situations.

Q: Oh yeah.

OGLESBY: Cope or stay home. And when you're young and you feel like exploring, you just have to learn the tricks of the road and how to deal with stuff.

Q: First, let's move to college. You went to George Washington University?

OGLESBY: No. I didn't. I was accepted at George Washington University, but I chose Washington College in Chestertown on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. George Washington University just seemed gigantic to me. The girls were sharing six in a room in the freshmen dormitories then and that blew me away. I didn't want that. Washington College is the oldest college in the United States. It's a small residential college on the Eastern Shore of Maryland and it felt like home. I like interdisciplinary study and at Washington College I was able to take courses across the disciplines. I particularly remember loving a cultural anthropology course and an existential literature course.

Going to Washington College turned out to be a good thing too, because then I was eligible for the East-West Center Fellowship my junior year. I applied for Japanese study and I got it. If I had gone to George Washington University I wouldn't have been eligible; it worked for me because I spent my whole junior year learning Japanese. Of course, we went over in the summer before the junior year and we studied Japanese all day every day, six to eight hours a day the whole summer and then when we started the academic year, we studied Japanese every day for an hour every morning including Saturdays plus lab time. The rest of the courses we took at will, we took whatever we wanted to take from the university catalog.

Those of us who did well enough in Japanese or Chinese, 15 were studying Japanese and 15 were studying Chinese, were awarded a follow-up summer living in either Taipei, which is where the students studying Mandarin went, or in Tokyo where those of us studying Japanese went. We had Japanese host families. We got together for classes every day; we traveled around Japan. Then we went back to our home colleges for our senior year.

Q: Was this the time in your past? What pushed you towards Japanese?

OGLESBY: I think my time in Japan and being seven or eight or a nine-year-old in Japan. That created an affinity. I had Japanese dolls in my room; I had memories of our time there. I had no connection to China. I was able to make a pretty good case for studying Japanese and ended up getting the full scholarship.

Q: Did you have the foreign service in mind at this point?

OGLESBY: Yes. From the time I was sixteen, from that time in Turkey that I told you about. I was always my father's daughter. I'm the eldest. I never could see me as a military officer. I had decided that if I were to be a commissioned officer, I was going to enter the Foreign Service. I was more inclined to USIS intuitively. When I started college, I was definitely, planning to educate myself to go into the Foreign Service."

I majored in political science. My year in Hawaii also gave me the chance to study East Asian Politics, East Asian history, and a number of other regional courses in addition to Japanese. That opportunity set me up for applications to graduate school. I applied to three graduate schools: Harvard, Stanford, and Columbia. I was accepted at Harvard, but they didn't give me money; and I was not accepted at Stanford. I was accepted at Columbia with a full-tuition scholarship to the School of International Affairs at the East Asia Institute. So, that's where I went.

Q: While you were at this point in your education, I won't call it an infatuation, but the intense interest in the Japanese economic system and way of working an all, was that in full flower at that time?

OGLESBY: No, because we're talking about the sixties and fascination with the Japanese economic miracle was later. The family that I had lived with in Japan had a little lens factory. They made precision camera lenses. Their little family factory was next to their completely Japanese house. Everyone in that family from the mother to the father to the three girls worked in their precision lens factory.

The grandmother of the family was an invalid. She had had a connection with the Imperial Court. The eldest daughter in that family was a Black Kimono in Koto, the Japanese string instrument. She was a teacher of that instrument. The father was a singer in the old Japanese theater form called No. I was constantly being taken to Japanese cultural events and that was my immersion into Japanese life and culture. My window on the economic system was through their family business. It was totally integrated in their lives. In my formal studies, my focus was on the broader sweep of history, Japanese sociology and literature. It was still I think the kind of Ruth Benedict approach of *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. Scholarly attention to the Japanese economic miracle came later, I think.

Q: Now which university did you go for graduate?

OGLESBY: Graduate work?

Q: Yeah.

OGLESBY: I went to Columbia University, School of International Affairs and the East Asia Institute.

Q: How did you find that?

OGLESBY: How did I find it? How did I go there? How did I like it?

Q: How did you like it?

OGLESBY: I didn't find it difficult. I found it interesting. Brzezinski was teaching at the School of International Affairs at the time. It was also a politically hot time because I was there in '68 - '70. The year I was finishing up, the SDS occupied the School of International Affairs.

Q: I want to put in here that SDS is Students for a Democratic Society.

OGLESBY: That was the period when the United States was at war in Vietnam; the incursion into Cambodia was in the spring of 1970. SDS -- as a consequence of the incursion into Cambodia -- took over the School of International Affairs. The "Third World Coalition" took over the East Asian Institute. We actually never had a formal graduation that year. It wasn't economics that we were focused on, it was politics. It was the Vietnam War and as a matter of fact, I was a member of the Concerned Asian Scholars Against the War. I went to Washington with other students and faculty to lobby. I actually was in Washington as a student lobbying against the Vietnam War in May and June of 1970 and then I entered the foreign service in August.

Q: One way your feelings force sort of developing, you came out of a military background towards the Vietnam War.

OGLESBY: My life was complicated. When I was an undergraduate, I organized a project called "Dear John." I organized college students to send care packages to the soldiers in Viet Nam. In addition to personal letters, the shoeboxes contained things like soap and magazines, snacks and other reminders of home. I had managed to arrange with the Air Force to fly our boxes of support to the troops to them. I made a distinction between the troops and the policy. And my feeling, my very strong feeling, was that since the draft was clearly in place, it was utterly wrong for us to have any anti-war stance that included an anti-soldier stance. That was not acceptable to me; I argued that you could support the troops without supporting the policy. Fortunately, there was no social media in 1968, but I certainly got a lot of nasty letters and pictures of butchered babies and crap like that from the activists who were more opposed to the war.

On the other hand, I got an award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars honoring my patriotism. They didn't understand my point either. I sort of felt, as I have often felt, that I'm on the edge of the picture. I have a perspective which is not well appreciated by ideologues on either side.

Q: Well what about your family? How did they…

OGLESBY: My father was proud that I was getting awards from the Veterans. My parents also heard from a lot of people who said, "Oh, I heard your daughter on the radio. We were driving in Montana and we're so glad there are people like her in the schools who support the troops." And you know, I did. Soldiers are professional volunteers now but certainly in those days they were drafted. They were serving. They were responsible and dutiful and serving. I took the whole idea

of service very, very seriously and I just didn't think that people were fair in their criticism that went beyond criticism of the policy to criticizing the people who were asked to carry it out.

Q: I was in Vietnam about that time. I was consul general in '69-70 there.

OGLESBY: Okay, that is that time. You know, it was '68 when I was doing the "Dear John" project and then in '69 and '70 while I was at Columbia I was involved in the protests at the time. It never, never occurred to me that citizen activism, like going to Washington and arguing against the incursion into Cambodia, was going to cost me an appointment in the foreign service and it didn't. I just never thought that the service would work that way. It was my dream to come into the foreign service and still I took the steps that I felt obliged to take as a citizen to voice my concern about the widening of the war.

Q: You know being at Columbia, you're really at the eye of the hurricane, weren't you, as far as the protests go?

OGLESBY: Absolutely. There were violent SDS protests. They, and other groups, did shut down the classes. Once they were shut down, I joined with the Asia scholars in a lobby effort in Washington. We were led by John Fairbanks, the great East Asia historian from Harvard. We went down to Washington to try to say to Congress, "Look, we have some expertise. We are studying East Asia and South East Asia. You've got to get a handle on this Administration policy." Making political arguments was what we were trying to do. We weren't closing anything down. I thought we were actually fairly mild given the kind of student activism that was going on from '68 to '70.

Q: Well I got the impression that a good number of the protesters were having a wonderful time showing power. I mean, more than…

OGLESBY: Protesters always do.

Q: You're right but somehow these ones got a lot of traction.

OGLESBY: Well, after Cambodia, it was an unpopular war. When Uncle Walter on CBS news suddenly parted company with the president; and the body bags were coming home in increasing numbers the American public was affected. To the extent that student demonstrators felt power, they felt broader support from society for their perspective. There were many wider protests by students after Kent State. Broader groups of students got involved. I think that the character of the protest movement changed from early SDS extremists to normally apolitical students.

Q: Did this change, did you have a paper that you had to write or a thesis that you were developing?

OGLESBY: At Columbia?

Q: Yeah.

OGLESBY: The School for International Affairs required course work. The East Asia Studies certificate did require a paper which I did not complete because of the turmoil. I did earn my Master of International Affairs which required two years of course work that I completed. My advisor at the time, invited me to stay on to do Ph.D. work on Japanese politics but that's not what I wanted. I wanted to go into the Foreign Service. I had passed the orals by then and I was on the register. I just assumed that I would get a call. I left the university behind and went to wait to be called up by the Foreign Service.

Q: Well tell me about your oral exam? How did that go?

OGLESBY: The oral exam was interesting. I took it down at the old post office in New York. It was in a huge bureaucratic building in lower New York. I remember there were three guys sitting on the panel. I thought they had come out of central casting. One had sort of longish hair and a flowery wide tie, and one guy had a crew cut and a bowtie, and the other guy was forgettable. The whole political spectrum in those days was reflected in your style choice. If you had longish hair and wore flowery ties, you were more liberal than if you had a buzz cut and a bowtie. Anyway, there were three guys and I remember that what they were doing was drilling in why had Japan become a democracy and what was the secret recipe for their economic success that could be applied to any other place in the world?

I took on the assumption that there was a secret recipe that was universally applicable. I talked about Japan specifically and we had a long conversation. I could tell that it went well because we were carried away in conversation. Afterwards, one of them came out and said that I had done well and that I would be hearing from them. I took the written in December and the oral in February, I think.

Q: The first Saturday in December I think.

OGLESBY: Right. I know it was cold when I took the oral and I wore a wool suit. I entered the service in in August of 1970. I think I got my letter sometime in late June or July.

Q: Well, do you recall any set of specific questions you were asked during the orals?

OGLESBY: Just the one about Japan. I remember going on and on about it. I think the oral went about two hours, but it was a conversation and that is the one I remember. I remember having a deep kind of conversation when they were drilling in on that and I don't remember anything else. Other than that, I wore a red suit. I remember that.

Q: I have to laugh because when I took the orals, I had just been getting my master's at Boston University and I had just finished four years in the military including some time in Japan as an enlisted man. And they had asked me about constitutional developments in Japan and boy was I unready for that. I was an ex-GI. I had discovered sex in Japan. I certainly didn't get it up in New England where I was schooled. And I mean I could have talked for hours about my vague experiences in that field but constitutionally, no. I sort of punted it.

OGLESBY: I felt I got a thoughtful question. I was talking to them about the written exam itself and I was giving them a hard time because I remember some of the questions on East Asia were wrong. I sort of challenged them on the questions themselves and that was fun. I actually enjoyed the oral and it seemed like fun to me.

Q: When did you go into the foreign service?

OGLESBY: In August of 1970.

Q: I think this is probably a good place to stop.

OGLESBY: Okay.

Q: Tell me about your A-100 experience.

OGLESBY: There were five USIS officers and the rest were State. We came in in August of 1970. There were four women, two State and two USIS. Three or four of the officers were young, they had just gotten their BAs. Then there were a couple of guys who had been in the military who had been in Viet Nam. A couple of married couples and I guess the majority had just gotten their master's degrees. It was a fairly young class I think.

Q: On the instruction how did you find it was it useful?

OGLESBY: Useful. It was basically the organizational chart of the State Department: talks and exercises pertaining to the various cones. We did have an offsite at Front Royal that was fun and useful because we worked through exercises in teams. We also, on our own, played Diplomacy, the board game. It was a good opportunity for bonding and it was just a good experience, I think. I don't remember that much. I remember we did an economic reporting exercise as part of the A-100 class which I won for some bizarre reason much to the chagrin of my State Department colleagues. I think it was more a function of being able to write well than anything else. I consider it an experience in bonding and developing esprit with other members of the class more than anything else.

Q: Was Viet Nam going on at the time?

OGLESBY: Viet Nam was going on at the time and I remember in a number of the previous classes a lot of people had been assigned to Viet Nam but in our class no one was. Viet Nam wasn't an assignment possibility for anybody in my class, as I recall. As I said, I think there were two people who had just come out of the military and had been in Viet Nam who were in the class.

Q: How did you feel about Viet Nam at the time?

OGLESBY: Well I think I told you in the last session that I had been in Colombia University and after the incursion into Cambodia the university was shut down by the Third World Coalition and the SDS. I was a member of Concerned Asian Scholars Against the War and we went to

Washington to lobby Congress. I wasn't a radical. I just thought the creeping mission of the war was wrong; it was getting too large; and too many people were being killed. I don't know that I was all that sophisticated about it. I'd done some Southeast Asian history class when I was an undergraduate and I had a sense of Southeast Asia history and a broader sense of East Asian history because I spent more time studying that. I wasn't anti-government, or I wouldn't have wanted to join the Foreign Service.

Q: Where did you want to go when you started there?

OGLESBY: Well I wanted to go to Japan. I had come in with Japanese and I had taken all the modern Japanese that was available at Colombia University and had that undergraduate experience in Japan. Unfortunately, there was a Japan assignment opening that went to someone in the July A-100 class. We came in in August; that possibility was gone. I wanted to go to Asia because of my whole academic experience had been focused on Asia. The only assignment available was in Korea and they wouldn't consider me for it because I was a woman and the on-going assignment was upcountry. The junior officer training year would have been in Seoul, but the on-going assignment would have been in one of the branch posts. I don't remember whether it was Taegu or Kwangju, but I do know they wouldn't consider me because they wanted a married couple, which pissed me off. When I couldn't go to Asia where I felt I had some academic background and experience I bid on Rio de Janeiro and that's what I got.

Q: Well that sounds obviously an Asian tie, I can't think of any. But it does sound like the Foreign Service at the time was using all sorts of discriminatory choices in where to send people.

OGLESBY: I don't think there was any question about it. The service was fairly blatant in saying that a woman couldn't do a job in a branch post because country people would not take her seriously. I thought that was stupid then and I think it is stupid now. In most societies, at least in Japan. If you are gaijin (foreigner) then you are a foreigner and that's the most important thing about you. I didn't get the justification for discrimination. I didn't like it and I took it on later in my career when I had an opportunity to get some leverage on the issue. But at that point I just said, "Okay that's not going to happen. Why should I kick myself if I'm not able to study Korean for two years? I thought if that's the way the service feels about my skills then I'm going to Brazil, I want to go to Rio and have fun. I did get that assignment. I have to say I got the assignment I wanted after the assignment I wanted was not available to me. I think the same thing is true pretty much of the others. I remember the other USIS female in my class had a Masters in Russian studies and she wanted to go to Russia or Eastern Europe, and they wouldn't consider her. She went to Argentina. Eventually, of course, we all got to go where we wanted to go when the rules changed. Some of that was under a court challenge and some of it was the changing times and perceptions of managers of the Foreign Service.

Q: You were in Brazil from when to when?

OGLESBY: Well it's another example of what happens if you are a woman I guess. I was in Brazil for a little more than a year. I completed my junior officer training and rotation in the embassy in Rio. The embassy was about to be moved to Brasilia. The people who were assigned

and serving with me in Rio when it was the embassy eventually moved to Brasilia. I was supposed to become the Branch Cultural Affairs Officer in the new configuration. My fiancé was in USAID. He was a USAID Foreign Service Reserve Officer who had come from Guatemala into Brazil. He hadn't been there very long when they started drawing down on USAID. USAID was huge in Brazil, as was USIS; we had seven branch posts. My fiancé and I decided to get married right after the rules on females marrying had changed. The law required female Foreign Service officers to resign once they got married and that didn't change until late '71. When we decided to get married and notified our agencies they decided the only thing that they could do was bring us back to Washington. It was kind of strange but that's what they decided. We left Brazil, we got married in February in 1972 and then we started in on Washington assignments. We were in Washington for almost five years. They could not figure out how to do a tandem assignment during that period or they certainly didn't want to figure it out.

Q: The married couples were acknowledged very grudgingly by personnel.

OGLESBY: Yes, especially if we were in different agencies. It was one thing if you were both in State but when one of us was in USIA and one in USAID it was tough. I have to say USAID was the most reluctant to consider tandem assignments seriously. When we eventually went out it was because I said, "Look, I can't spend my career in Washington I've got to go to the field this was hurting me." I'd joined the Foreign Service to serve abroad and they could not figure out how to assign us together. My husband and I said well if that's the case he would take advantage of the Leave Without Pay opportunity, which was built into the tandem couple regulations. Either of us could take LWOP and still have access to our jobs at a later date. We decided that we'd go someplace where there was no USAID. I was assigned to Vienna in 1977. We were a long-time kind of in a Washington limbo, but I made the most of it.

Q: Before I talk to you about your Washington assignment could you give me a little background of your husband?

OGLESBY: My husband is also an Army brat he had been in Peace Corps in Chile and he was a graduate of Rutgers and had gone to the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown. He is five years older than I am and he had gone into USAID in their Foreign Service Officer Reserve Corps in Guatemala. After finishing his Guatemala tour, he was transferred to Brazil. He was what they called a program officer. He designed the programs and worked with organizations to design the programs and that's what he was doing.

Q: When you went back in Washington what job did they give you?

OGLESBY: Well initially they gave me a special position -- and this is thanks to Tom Tuch who was the CPAO in Brazil. Tom wanted an American entry into the Sao Paulo Biennial. You may know there is an international art exhibition one year in Venice and then one year in Sao Paulo. Tom wanted an American entry into the Sao Paulo Biennial and USIA didn't want that to happen because it was not in the budget from Congress. They didn't have the money for it and they didn't want to get involved with it. Tom convinced the director of the regional office to have me be a deputy desk officer to Brazil and focus my effort on making this happen. The area director was Daryl Carter and he was sympathetic about my personal situation and Tom wanted this. I

worked in the area office and I worked across all kinds of organizational lines to successfully get an American art exhibit in the biennial. It involved working with the States Department, with CU, which was in the State Department at that time and working with exhibits office in USIA. I had to find money independently and find an exhibit independently. We settled on Chicago Art which was pretty funky at the time. The show was called "Made in Chicago." It was a whole lot of work patching the project together because it crossed, as I said, a lot of bureaucratic lines. We did get the show, it went to Sao Paulo and it made a lot of news. It was a pretty wonderful exhibit, it made a lot of news and Tom was very happy.

As it turned out, when the class three desk officer, was assigned abroad, they gave me the desk. I was only a class six at the time. Becoming a desk officer that quickly in my career was a great blessing. It's how the cookie crumbles when you do a job well: you are known ad people say, "Okay." Tom liked me, and he was the major CPAO and Daryl, the area director, had come to appreciate my work; they made me the desk officer at a time when all the desk officers were class three officers. I was promoted to five while I was there. I had a career enhancing chance to advance. As a desk officer you deal with everybody right? It is an opportunity to learn how the whole organization is put together. There is no better place than being on the desk to become known. I did that job for two years and it was terrific.

Q: How did you find the art world? Were they interested in exhibits abroad or did you have trouble?

OGLESBY: We found an existing exhibit that had been in the Chicago Art Institute. We didn't have to put the exhibit together. The art was kind of funky and counter cultural and we did have typical problems in that the artists wanted to decide what should be exhibited. The art should be curated by artists and not by government bureaucrats. One of the canvases had condoms in it as a medium; oil and condoms. When they saw a picture of that in Sao Paulo, our Consul General wanted it removed from the show. He was a typical let's not rock the boat type: "this is offensive, this is a Catholic country, this will never work, blah, blah, blah." We had the whole "you don't have censorship power" conversation with him and the show went as it was organized, everything went. The canvas was not a problem. People who go to the Sao Paulo Biennial in the first place are not the most traditional Brazilians. It was fine. This was a time in the United States ('73, '74) when there was a cultural war going on. It was our cultural war not a Brazilian one. It was a terrific show. We had gotten the sponsorship of the Sears Corporation, which is headquartered in Chicago, and the Chicago establishment had gotten behind it. Chicago and Sao Paulo are Sister Cities; we were able to do a lot with that relationship. It turned out to be a huge success actually.

Q: How did the critics…

OGLESBY: They loved. It was pretty funky, but they loved it and they felt like we had sent a serious show and that they were being taken seriously. Sao Paulo always likes to see itself as an avant-garde world class city. For a long time, I think they suffered under the feeling that the best art went to the Venice Biennial and not Sao Paulo. They felt this time that we took them seriously and put a major effort into a show for them and they responded accordingly; The catalogue was super, and the publicity was as well. Tom Tuch, as Country Public Affairs Officer

was very, very good at drawing on a lot of different resources, strategically to support an effort. It wasn't just an art exhibit for him it was an art exhibit that offered an opportunity to build partnership relationships between institutions and major cities like Chicago or Sao Paulo. It was an opportunity to have Chicago endorse and welcome the international visitors that we had invited to go there. He saw it as an opportunity for building all kinds of programs and giving them importance in a bilateral way. He used it to develop mutual understanding and I think in a very sophisticated way I was very happy to be part of it. I think it went well.

Q: Did you get involved in other exhibits?

OGLESBY: I've never been involved in putting something together like that again that's for sure. There were a few exhibits in Vienna, but they were handled institutionally. In El Salvador, I was quite active in the arts scene but don't recall organizing an exhibit. I did organize major exhibits in Paraguay and Thailand. Both were art from those countries sent to the United States.

Q: How did you find the Sao Paulo authorities were they fully supportive?

OGLESBY: Well I didn't handle that part of it because I was on the Washington end but we didn't have any problem with the Sao Paulo end, as I remember. The branch PAO of Sao Paulo handled that and we had a cultural affairs officer in Rio and then in Brasilia Paul Wheeler who was superbly professional. So, the officers in Brazil who handled the Brazil end did the needful. My job was making sure they had a show and making sure the catalogue was done and making sure it was coming from the Washington end. We had support in Chicago. I didn't handle the Brazil end of things, so I can't speak to that.

Q: Where did you get your money?

OGLESBY: We raised money. Other organizations in Chicago contributed and eventually USIS contributed and Tom Tuch had put in money from his Brazil operational account, the Brazil account. It was pieced together; I think CU put money into it; USIA exhibits, private organizations in Chicago and I think Sao Paulo may have raised some money too from the American Chamber of Commerce there. It was a major effort to get this show down there and since it wasn't officially earmarked, it was patchwork; it was pulled together.

Q: It must have given you a real boost in your personal estimation that you were able to pull this thing together.

OGLESBY: Yes obviously. I couldn't have done it if I didn't have a CPAO the stature of Tom Tuch wanting to have it happen, right? It was very interesting to learn how to play that game. I would do whatever I could get done and if I ran into a road block then I would call him on the phone and say do you have an in with X and if he needed to he'd get on the phone. It was a continuing learning experience for me I have to say. He has been a good mentor to me when I was a junior officer under his care in Rio. I felt in a way that continued and Daryl Carter who was the area director at the time ran all our operations in Latin America was also somebody who was interested in me and he saw I had promise. He was willing to take risks and lots of people

during those periods like through ’72, 1973, ’74 weren’t with young female officers especially newly married ones. I do have to count my blessings from that period.

Q: Were you feeling that at the time that there was a ceiling for women I mean?

OGLESBY: Well I can’t say that I experienced a ceiling in terms of getting promotions but as I said earlier there were areas that were out of bounds for females, right? During the same period when I was having a very good personal experience in the Latin American Area Office where women were welcomed -- deputy director Dorothy Dillon was the first female deputy director in history -- there were no other female desk officers. Women getting opportunities in Latin American assignments, but it was not happening in other areas, East Asia, in particular, I had my eye on East Asia because of my academic background, right?

One of the groups I was involved in during that period was the Women’s Action Organization (WAO). It was a political advocacy group on the part of women in the Foreign Service. I was the vice president of Women’s Action Organization for USIA. During that period, I remember the most important thing that we managed to do was get an audience with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger. I remember going to his office and recall his bemusement at having these four women representing women in the Foreign Service come and talk to him about the organizational barriers that we faced. Even though, for example, a woman could get married and stay in the service, the system still didn’t have a way of assigning tandem couples. That wasn’t happening. Also, the Department had made no effort to recall all the women who had been forced out of the Foreign Service when they got married. There were a lot of very talented women who were serving as secretaries and who felt they could do more as administrative assistants and they needed some way of breaking out of the ceiling that they had as secretaries. In response to our activism, the Mustang Program was created to provide a path for advancement for secretaries.

I also remember challenging the ban on women serving in Japan and elsewhere in Asia. I took that up as a challenge even though I realized that it would keep me from ever getting there. But other women did; other women started going into those positions. The 70s was a period of political advocacy for sure. There were a lot of barriers and they didn’t fall of their own accord they had to be pushed. There were lots of late nights in which women in the State Department and women in USAID and USIA -- secretaries and officers – sat together trying to figure out how to do what we needed to have done which was remove the discriminatory barriers against an individual’s ability to be everything they could be.

Q: How did you find this initial meeting with Henry Kissinger?

OGLESBY: As I said, he was bemused; he could hardly contain his chuckles. I don’t know another word, but he thought the meeting was funny somehow. He was very light hearted about it. I think the meeting must have been fifteen twenty minutes no more than that. I guess none of us felt that he had taken us seriously although we felt that his willingness to see us meant that the State Department was taking the issue seriously. I can’t say that anything magical happened after that, but he did listen to us and we had obviously worked hard on our arguments and what was worth his time. I think at that point I was twenty-seven years old. Most of the other women were quite a bit older and there I was sitting on the sofa of the Secretary of State’s office telling him

how he had to fix things; it was pretty funny in retrospect. I mean we had a lot of brass, but we did it and things started happening. They reached out to women who had been forced out when they got married and some came back in. They began to figure out how to do tandem assignments and develop the rules for that and this was during the period when they started having open assignments and posting the jobs that became worldwide available and that also made it easier. They created the Mustang Program which enabled secretaries to apply and find a process to go through not just secretaries but civil servants too to have a process whereby they could compete and enter into the Foreign Service Reserve. Much happened during that period and I'm sure the meeting with Henry Kissinger was a singular event, even though I don't think when we left he picked up the phone and said make it happen. I don't think he did.

Q: In many ways and it had been quite an exciting time to see barriers…

OGLESBY: Black officers were also organized; that was a period when Black officers were organized to try and reduce the discrimination against them too. It was a period of great change in the service as it was in the country. This was the time when women my age, boomers, who came in the Foreign Service in the '70s were always being the first at something. The first woman ever assigned to this country, or the first female Foreign Service officer in this job. It was path breaking and that was exciting; but we also got bloodied and we got to know how to read the politics of an organization pretty well. We learned who were our friends, who welcomed the change and who didn't. There definitively were people who felt threatened by the organizational culture changing as it did. Then there were other people who worked to make it happen who gave us breaks, who gave us early warning if something was about to.

In USIA, in particular during this period, there was a very active young officer group that was trying to get the agency to see that things were changing in the United States and that needed to be reflected in our program content. The Young Officer Policy Panel (YOPP) that was trying to say, "wake up things are happening in American culture that we have to reflect in our cultural affairs programming overseas." You can't continue to send a conga line of classical pianists around the world when the United States was being defined by pop art and rock and roll and Black Power. We argued that we had to reflect this in our programming or we weren't going to be credible. It made it an intellectually exciting time to be in USIA because we had the feeling that the culture was the frontier and culture was changing. We were inside the foreign affairs establishment, but we were sort of outsiders on the inside because we had one foot in American culture in a way that our State Department colleagues didn't have. Our work meant that we were constantly in touch with a rapidly changing cultural scene.

We had to be aware of the changes in the United States and how commercial media showed the country changing. Similarly, working with artists and universities in places like Brazil, where I had been, or other places in Latin America where the forces for democracy were in the media and in the universities, cultural and informational work felt highly political. We knew we were doing significant work and we had to be thinking about why we were doing what we were doing. Change was so rapid at home and abroad that we could not operate on auto-pilot.

Q: You are right it was quite significantly different. Did you feel that the State Department was somewhat in the vanguard making slow work? It was a bit of big groups such as the military and elsewhere in the government?

OGLESBY: Well I would have to think about that. I think it comes down to individuals and individual leadership in some posts. Let's go back to Brazil where I was as a junior officer. There were young officers in the State Department like Bill Walker who was the political officer and Jim Cheek who was the in economic sections who were very with it and understood what was happening in those countries. They were pushing too, they were pushing at the time I was there, Ambassador Roundtree was quite an establishment "maintain the relationship" guy. But there were younger State Department officers in important jobs in important sections who knew what was going on and thought our policy should evolve. There were astute consuls in branch posts too. I remember Alex Watts in Porto Alegre and I remember him coming in and speaking at a country team meeting. He absolutely knew what was going on in the country. Maybe it was generational, and it was across the board.

I don't fault the military here in the way that I infer your question. In El Salvador for example, I, as Cultural Affairs Officer was dealing with Jesuits and their liberation theology. The one other person from the embassy that I would find on that social circuit was the defense attaché Jerry Walker. He had his contacts; he was out and about, and he knew what was going on. Meanwhile the political officer was sleeping it off on the sofa in his office after a three Martini lunch. So, individuals matter. Some officers were out of the embassies and consulates mixing in the society and they understood what was going on. In other places I felt that they weren't. It came down to individuals, their characters, and how they saw their jobs.

Q: I think also one of the things that always struck me was the caliber of the secretaries that we had. I had a Five Beta Kappa secretary in Belgrade.

OGLESBY: Absolutely.

Q: She later became a Foreign Service officer.

OBLESBY: Well that's what we worked on in those early years we worked on a transition process so that a secretary, like the one you're talking, about had a pathway to becoming an officer. You know from your experience we had high quality secretaries for the same reason that then, we had exceptional school teachers. Many women became secretaries because they couldn't be officers and they wanted to serve abroad. They were superb, and they needed a pathway to be more than secretaries; to give what they could give. A number of those secretaries, who then became officers, were terrific, just terrific officers. Many of them were pushed into admin jobs and consular positions.

Q: Absolutely.

OGLESBY: Funny there were still barriers, and women were still channeled to support work. Nonetheless, they became very good at admin. Thank God for all the former secretaries who became admin officers; we needed better embassy administration and we got it.

Q: I know Larry Eagleburger's wife, Marlene, worked for me as a counselor assistant in Belgrade for a while and she later I think had Henry Kissinger's ear by the time she was getting married to Larry. She took things quite seriously as far as upward and onwards.

OGLESBY: Well good. I think we both know that there is a lot of personal networking that is responsible for our career paths; it's just the case. It works for you and it works against you but even if you get your name on a short list on the basis of merit you may or may not get that job because somebody making the decision, who knows you either favorably or unfavorably, intervenes; that's just how the system works. We have to understand the existence of formal networking, particularly in a small agency like USIA. I think for a long-time woman didn't understand the value of informal connections for advancement. They assumed advancement was purely merit based. Since they didn't hang around in men's rooms, they had no clue about the effective boys' network. There weren't enough women in the institutions to have their own informal networks at that time. Once enough women moved up, we became aware of this informal system within the formal system and were able to advise and mentor younger people to develop their antennae about how personnel decisions are made and how the system operates.

Q: While you were in Washington what were you looking towards?

OGLESBY: What was I looking for? Well, I was looking to get overseas, and it just wasn't happening as a tandem couple. At a certain point -- I guess I'd been the desk officer for two plus years -- I realized I was going to be in Washington forever because they couldn't figure out how to assign us together. I bid on another headquarters job because I knew I wasn't going to be going overseas any time soon. I bid on a job that would give me supervisory experience and I became in charge of in-house Foreign Service training. I managed Room 1100 in USIA. I was in charge of the Foreign Service training in the sense that we did a lot of program training with people who were coming back on home leave.

In those days Stu you might remember that Foreign Service officers were abroad for ten or twelve years, they didn't come back all the time. The United States had changed so completely in that period that we did a lot of remedial cultural training, we did a lot of information training, we taught them how to use video, we took them out in squad cars, we introduced them to grannies who were organized and Black Power people and then we developed a three-week course on American Studies preparing people for programming on the Bicentennial in 1976. We created an American studies module that we required all USIS officers coming back on home leave to take. We wanted them caught up in what was happening in the United States and prepared to do the Bicentennial program that we were sending out. I enjoyed doing that job – the teacher in me I think in retrospect. The position also gave me an opportunity to supervise quite a few people. That's what I got out of that assignment in Washington. USAID was still not playing ball on tandem assignments. I bid on a position in Vienna and went on to German language training and then to Vienna. My husband took leave without pay. He followed me to Vienna; he learned

German at the Goethe Institute. Then, while we were in Vienna, he studied economics at the University of Vienna.

Q: Well it sounds like you took real advantage of the system. How did you find Austria?

OGLESBY: We coped with the disadvantages we were dealt because we were tandem. Austria was comfortable; it was probably the most comfortable position I've ever had. I was the assistant cultural affairs officer for exchanges which was no big job after the jobs that I had already held. It was a bit of a crab walk in career terms; but as I said, my husband and I figured that if we weren't going to be assigned together in a developing country, then we might as well go to Europe. We used the assignment as an opportunity to travel and personally learn a lot. Vienna is such a central location. We went to Prague, Budapest, Paris; we drove everywhere. We went all over Germany and Italy and Spain. In terms of the job, what I learned in Vienna was that all the cultural institutions had their direct links to American institutions. I remember very shortly after arriving that there was a major American art exhibit at the Albertina that we had nothing to do with officially. They completely organized it without any need for official intervention. Similarly, Vienna had a ballet festival, a modern dance festival every year and they invited major American companies; we had nothing to do with it and had to fight to get tickets. Whereas in Latin America, at the time that I served, if we wanted a major American company to come, we had to be in the middle of it. We had to make it happen because the commercial connections were just not there. That wasn't the case in Vienna.

I was doing exchanges in Vienna; I was managing the Fulbright Program and I was managing the international visitor program. What we did was useful, but it wasn't as essential as I felt it had been in Latin America. There was such a natural flow between Austria and the United States established in the post war period that what we did was not as essential to mutual understanding as can be the case in less developed countries.

Q: Well did you sense at the time that Austria was showing a return to the right politically at all?

OGLESBY: Not so much when I was there from '75 -'77. The American Embassy in Vienna was a regional hub at the time. USIS shared a building with the US Mission to the Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). I was well aware of all of that. I do know that we were looking for international visitor invitees from the Austrian provinces because we were aware of pockets of right-wing influence in Linz and Graz. It had been the case historically, and it remained true. We did feel at the time that it was important politically to get out of the capital and get to know provincial leaders. It was always so comfortable to just stay in Vienna and not get out of the capital, but we made sure we did get out and were dealing with influentials in the provinces. In many respects, we had to fight the embassy on that since they were focused on the capital. On the Fulbright Program too. I travelled to all of the regional cities to interview potential candidates for the Fulbright. We had a feeling that things were happening. It was still hard to get across the border into Budapest and hard to get across the border into Prague, yet there was an influx of *gastarbeiters* from those countries and Yugoslavia; In the '75 -'77 period, the economic and political differences between Austria and life on the other side of the borders were quite clear.

Q: Was there a feeling of competition with the Soviets or were the Soviets by this time were they beyond the pale as far as the population was concerned?

OGLESBY: I didn't have the feeling that there was that kind of competition in Austria. One of the bigger political events that occurred while I was there was the first OPEC meeting where oil producers set the price for oil. That caught everybody by surprise and indicated, perhaps, we should be shifting attention from the cold-war. I have to repeat that in Vienna USIS was in a different building across town, we weren't in the embassy. I didn't feel as connected as I have in every other assignment to know what was going on in the embassy. I was pretty far down the pecking order too as an assistant cultural affairs officer for exchanges. I dealt with other people on the country team in terms of international visitor program, but apart from that I saw very little of embassy doings. In Vienna, everybody was spread out all over the city because we had an excess of buildings we had seized during the occupation after the war. The mission didn't come together as other embassies have in my experience. I had the feeling that the embassy in Vienna was mostly a concierge operation for a range of U.S. government entities that might have been based in Vienna but not focused on Austria.

Q: Well, did you have any contact with Eastern Europe or the Russians?

OGLESBY: In Austria I didn't. As I said we went to Budapest for a week of personal vacation. Steve Dachi was the Public Affairs Officer and Anne Sigmund was the CAO. I knew both officers well. I got a good sense of what their lives were like in Hungary by spending time there and talking to them about it. We also traveled on our own to Prague and that was a fascinating experience because I took my mother-in-law and her friend who were visiting us. We had reservations at the Hilton Hotel. When we pulled up guys with machine guns waived us away saying that the Communist Party Meeting was occurring in the hotel and our reservations were not valid. We ended up trying to find the embassy on useless paper maps to find somebody to help us reservations in another hotel. It had taken us six or seven hours to drive to Prague from Vienna because they didn't like the brand-new Bicentennial passports my mother in law and her friend had. Thanks to the embassy duty officer, we ended up in a hotel that westerners weren't usually allowed to stay in. The hotel was full of East German and Eastern European workers; the kinds of people who eat cold cuts and cheese and drink beer at breakfast. We stayed there for a couple of days before we returned to Vienna. Prague was a gorgeous city and we enjoyed it. We had impressions, but they were personal.

Q: I imagine that I'm not sure if you ran across them, but I know when I was in Belgrade I talked to some young Americans who studied opera voice and there was no job in the States, but they were all over Europe.

OGLESBY: Most of the Americans who came to Vienna under the Fulbright Program were studying voice or chamber music. Most of the Austrians who went to the United States were studying the social sciences and the humanities. So, we had a large Fulbright contingent of music students which made for an interesting experience. My husband and I were always going to musical evenings. Americans were coming to Vienna for the music and that is how they thought about Austria; they were good at their art and competitive. The Austrians going to the United

States were not going for the music; they were going for other academic reasons; it made for an interesting and uneven sort of Fulbright Program when you looked at it that way.

Q: Did you feel you wanted to become a Europeanist or were you still looking towards the Far East?

OGLESBY: No, I never thought of becoming a Europeanist because after that tour I guess my feeling was, quite frankly, that the USIS work is more important in developing countries. I'd been in Brazil and as desk officer I traveled to Mexico several times and Brazil several times and I'd been to Argentina, Uruguay by then and I had a strong sense that what USIS was doing in Latin America made a difference in a more significant way. Once in Brazil, when I was a junior officer we managed to get Duke Ellington's Orchestra to Rio and it was the cultural highlight of the decade. It was just a big deal and I remember being part of that and meeting Duke Ellington. He kissed me four times -- one for each cheek. The performance was great, and we had a fabulous reception at the ambassador's residence following the show. Ellington was everything you would want for a cultural presentation. As I said, in Vienna those events happened on their own. I remember when Leonard Bernstein came and performed Mahler with the Vienna Philharmonic. Those arrangements were made between the orchestra and Bernstein directly. We managed to ride what was happening commercially and give a reception at the ambassador's residence for Leonard on his birthday. Nice, but no life changing event.

Work was the same with the Austrian press. It was free and robust. In Latin America, on the other hand, we were working with a press that was censured and constrained. To have contact with the press meant we were finding out what was going on politically even when they weren't allowed to publish what they knew. None of that happened in Vienna and very little in Western Europe. So, my feeling in terms of wanting to make a difference in of the kind of work that I was doing was to get out of Europe. I never bid on another job in Western Europe; I never did. I was happy to work with Europe later in my life and we will talk about it when I was the Director of the International Youth Exchange Initiative under the Reagan administration. I had a wonderful time working with Germany, France, Italy and Great Britain and that was great; but no, I never bid on another job in Europe. A part of that was also I was married to an AID guy, right? For us both to work and to advance our careers we needed to be in developing countries.

Q: What about on the family side any children in the offing in this?

OGLESBY: No, no, we were as they called them at the time DINKS, double income no kids. We were a tandem couple without children.

Q: It made it a little easier to assign you didn't it?

OGLESBY: I would have thought so. Isn't that true of any officer without children? I know of no female officer my age or older who had children. Some came into the service later in life once they had children however. The female officers who were younger than I did come in, get married and have children. It took another decade I think before women or the system thought women could both be married and have children and have a job at the same time.

Q: Well, of course, there are so many of these generational things where progress is slow, but it is progress.

OGLESBY: Progress is slow and then all of a sudden it happens. There is a wall and then the wall crumbles. There is a tipping point. Progress was slow, but it happened. I teach now and have been teaching for twenty years. When I say that Foreign Service women couldn't be married, students look at me like I'm talking about the middle ages. They just have no clue that their mothers had that experience too. They haven't experienced it in their lives and they have no appreciation for what women went through not so long ago when you think about it.

Q: I mean here it looks like we are hopefully on the cusp of having a woman president in 2016 and we are just getting to that point. It seems sort of unbelievable.

OGLESBY: I know what they are saying in Great Britain because the likely candidate for Prime Minister is a female: the men have screwed everything up with Brexit and then they all bailed knowing that they made a mess that they can't manage. Consequently, they have to bring on a woman as prime minister to clean up the mess; I think it is sadly funny. But they at least, have a history with female leaders. Margaret Thatcher was strong PM for a number of years; they also have had a history of consequential Queens.

Q: I must say that with the likes of Trump and all I don't feel that women are as confrontational as men. I mean that in the good sense that there is this sort of challenge that…

OGLESBY: I know what you mean about "confrontational" but women are tough, if you look at Andrea Merkel she may not be confrontational but she certainly is assertive right? She is controlling the politics now in the EU (2016) and we have a feeling that she knows exactly what she wants, and she knows how to get it. She doesn't work by bluster. She is very cautious in what she says and does; but at the end of the day, she seems to get what she wants. A million Syrian refugees have her to thank.

Q: I am impressed. In the end you weren't overly challenged I take it?

OGLESBY: I think that is a fair way to put it. I was not overly challenged, I had big challenges early in my career; I was in bigger jobs in Washington. Even though the job in Vienna was at my grade, I was a five at the time I think it did not pull all that I had to offer out of me. I learned a lot, My German reached 4/4. But, I had the weekends and evenings to myself and that is not normally the case in a Foreign Service post. When we started looking at ongoing assignments, it was my husband's turn to take the lead. He was paying the price for our marriage in his career, big time. So, we said, "Okay you get the job next time and I'll fit myself in." USAID assigned my husband to El Salvador and he left about six months before my tour was over in Vienna. There was a job opening for me out of cycle as cultural affairs officer. I did not have Spanish, I had Portuguese and German, and Japanese at that time but I did not have Spanish. I bid on that job, the CAO job in San Salvador, and they were willing to give me the job, but they wanted me to go back to FSI in Washington to learn Spanish. I convinced them to let me go to San Salvador to learn Spanish. I argued that it would be cheaper, more effective, and I could be with my husband; they agreed.

Q: What was the situation in El Salvador?

OGLESBY: It was rough. It was not as bad as it later got but it was the beginning of the difficult time where foreigners were being kidnapped. We knew the South African ambassador who was kidnapped and held for months. Liberation theology was an important motivator for political action by the Catholic Church which moved into opposition to the government. There were the beginnings of upheaval in the countryside, the very oppressive response of government and of the fourteen families who owned the land. When we first got there, as I said, there wasn't a security issue but by the time we left that post we were receiving full danger pay. We were required to go to the embassy in secure caravans.

Once again, I found myself in a very challenging situation as the CAO. It was a very political situation. The Marxists had closed down the national university. Since it wasn't open, my focus was on The Catholic University (UCA). Our Fulbright program was devoted to exchange with UCA. We also worked with LASPAU to send Salvadoran scholars to the United States to get PhDs. Through my work with UCA, I began networking with the liberal opposition to the government. Guillermo Ungo was the vice rector of UCA. He had just come back from exile in Venezuela just as I became CAO. The rector of the university Roman Mayorga was from a very important family and a moderate. Because this was a Jesuit college with Jesuit faculty essentially from Europe, I came to know them. Through my Jesuit network, I eventually got to know Archbishop Romero. He was obviously a key proponent of liberation of theology and a key figure in the politics of El Salvador during that period. As the CAO, I was in contact with the parts of that society that most of the people in the embassy didn't know and weren't dealing with. It was fascinating.

Q: I wonder if you could…I mean people are going to be reading this in the future and could you explain as you saw it in simple terms the revolutionary, theology?

OGLESBY: The central idea is that you don't have to wait until the hereafter in order to attain justice. Liberation theology is social justice movement that asks us to be concerned about peoples' livelihoods in the here and now. The theology insists that you treat people with the dignity that they deserve as human beings, because they are children of God. There are economic ramifications to the claims made. The movement, at least in El Salvador, was a political movement demanding liberation from poverty and oppression now, not later. In fact, it is interesting because a number of the Jesuits who were involved were theologically very conservative Marianists. Their theology was conservative, but their politics were radical. They wanted to see the economic condition of their parishioners changed. They wanted them to have enough beans and rice on their table; they wanted distributive justice in the here and now.

Archbishop Romero represented and led a human rights movement; it was a liberation movement and it was a movement to bring people out of suffering and equality into some form of justice within the society. His sermons, which were broadcast on radio everywhere in the country, attracted the peasants because he was preaching to their dignity and making demands on their behalf. There were Marxists and others who took advantage of the climate he helped create for a more specific kind of political revolution. There were a number of factions, motivated

differently; or maybe they were rising up for the same reasons, but wanted different outcomes. There were some that were hardcore Marxists and then there were others who were not at all; they were Christian or Social democratic liberals. They wanted to see a more democratic government and more peoples' voices being heard than the oligarchic voices that were in control of the country.

Q: You mentioned the fourteen families would you explain that?

OGLESBY: The oligarchy in El Salvador was referred to as the fourteen families. They were the major land holders. During that period the global price of coffee was skyrocketing. In response, the land owners took more and more of their holdings for coffee. In the past the peasants who lived on the land and worked the coffee plantations also were given access to some land in which they could grow their beans and rice. But as the coffee price went up and the oligarchs wanted more income from coffee, they put more land into coffee production and took it out of beans and rice. So, when the peasants who harvested the coffee couldn't grow their own beans and rice and had to buy their beans and rice on the market, they were put into an economic squeeze. Their traditional way of life was no longer sustainable because they weren't given access to land to grow the food to sustain themselves. They had to go on the market and buy food which was in shorter supply; but they didn't have the income because they weren't being paid well to harvest the coffee. That was essentially the squeeze. The fourteen families had oligarchic control of the land and therefore controlled government for years and years. The Archbishop put pressure on them to change.

Q: Did the embassy take any part in the political situation?

OGLESBY: That's a tough question. I was there under Ford and I was there when the Carter administration came in. When the Carter administration came in, concern for human rights increased and then the embassy focus changed. Essentially in the beginning of my tour, like most embassies, the embassy wanted to sustain a cordial relationship with the government of El Salvador. Certainly, the embassy was aware to a certain degree about what was going in the countryside. But, I was probably one of the only ones in the embassy that knew any of these people and I knew them through my work at the Catholic University. As I said earlier, I would find the Defense Attaché at some of the events I attended. He got out and about and he understood through his contacts in the Salvadorian Army in El Salvador that the situation was heating up.

Frank Devine, who was a lovely, lovely man and a traditional Latin American hand, was the ambassador. He was slow to understand the depth of the challenge to the government. Others in the embassy saw Marxists everywhere and looked at the situation through the prism of the Cold War. They saw outside agitators coming in to provoke revolution. The Salvadorian government did too. They didn't see it as a rising up of Salvadorans; they saw it as outside agitators coming in trying to stir up trouble in Central America.

American civil society, more broadly, looked at events in El Salvador in a different way. For example, the president of Georgetown University, wanted to come down and give an honorary doctorate to Archbishop Romero because I think he understood that Romero's life was in danger

and he might need the protection of international recognition. As CAO, I was in the middle of all that. I arranged the honorary doctorate mass with the archbishop's staff. The archbishop said the mass in the National Cathedral. The ambassador was gone at the time, and the DCM held the reception for attendees at his residence. Again, I was right in the middle of that.

American human rights groups were pushing the embassy to be more aware of what was going on and getting more involved. After the publicity of the Georgetown honorary doctorate, more and more American foreign correspondents started arriving in El Salvador to cover what was going on. Then, there were more stories in Newsweek and the New York Times about the political situation in Salvador. The political unrest in El Salvador began to have visibility in the United States.

I will give you another example of where cultural programming can be politics. As I said earlier, if I wanted major American cultural events at my post in Latin America I had to make it happen. Well, the Salvadorans had taken an old theatre that was in disrepair and they had restored it beautifully. This historical preservation effort was unusual in El Salvador. It meant so much to the artistic community in San Salvador that they had restored this little gem of a theatre; and it became the National Theater. They wanted to mark the reopening with a major event. They came to us and asked us for something. There was nothing in the official CU pipeline. I managed, working with a commercial impresario in Argentina, to include El Salvador on the circuit of a ballet company that was going to perform in Mexico and then in Argentina. I managed to convince them to stop in El Salvador and perform two or three performances for the opening of this new theater. It was a big, big deal and we managed to get money from Washington to support our major event. Ambassador Frank Devine planned a huge reception and the president of the country was coming to the reception. This would have been the cultural event of the year.

Two or three days before the troupe was supposed to arrive, the troupe was in Mexico. There was a shootout at the National Cathedral in San Salvador. The military forces killed dozens of peasants who were seeking sanctuary in the Cathedral. Their bodies were rotting on the steps of the Cathedral. Others were inside the Cathedral; they had entered seeking sanctuary. The Cathedral was located a block from the National Theater in which we were to perform. I felt that I had to convince the ambassador that we could not go ahead with the performance. I argued that we could not go ahead with this cultural performance while Salvadorian bodies were rotting on Cathedral steps just a block away. He was reluctant to cancel because it would mean disinviting the president and reflecting badly on his administration. I managed to convince him that he did not want to read the headlines in the papers that said, "Americans dance while Salvadoran bodies rot in the sun." By then *Newsweek* was there, the *New York Times* was there, and all the reporters had come in for this; he finally agreed. I had to get on the phone and call the whole thing off. I was never able to get another cultural presentation with this impresario. We had to refund the ticket money; we had to call everybody; we had to cancel, and it was totally the right thing to do. The Cathedral shooting was a cover story in *Newsweek.* It marked the real beginning of civil war in El Salvador.

Q: Oh boy.

OGLESBY: Much, much, much later when things had calmed down, we were able to get the Preservation Hall Jazz Band to do a show in the restored theater. It all worked out eventually. People think cultural events are apolitical or rise above politics. That is not true in my experience anyway.

Q: So what was life like for you during this civil war period?

OGLESBY: We had to change our route every time we went to the embassy. We had to switch vehicles. I had a personal vehicle as well access to an official one. We had to change our departure times, change route, and change vehicle; there were always concerns about any predictable behavior. When we went into the countryside there were security concerns; consequently, that travel was curtailed.

One night we hosted a dinner for the minister of education who had just returned from an IV program in the United States. He was a decent man, trying to expand educational opportunity in the countryside. We had the reception at my house; the ambassador attended. It was a lovely evening. The next morning the minister of education was assassinated going to work at seven o'clock in the morning. By that afternoon at five o'clock, I was paying respects to at the wake. I think that is hard. We honored someone in our home one night and not even 24-hours later I was face to face with his corpse. In that emotional sense it was very hard. Eventually the security situation got so bad that they made us go in armed caravans to and from the office. I thought the requirement was utterly stupid because having drawn attention to us with the big cavalcade, they'd then leave us at your home without guards. I just didn't get it.

When our tour was up they wanted us to extend because we were the perfect couple right? No kids in a bad security situation. But the deaths of people I knew, and the strife had taken its toll on me. My husband and I said, "We don't want to extend." I felt I wasn't able to do the kind of work that I wanted to do anymore because I wasn't allowed to move about freely. Fortunately, by that point, we had a USIA personnel officer named Vicky Cordoba who moved heaven and earth to get us an ongoing joint assignment. They found us a joint assignment in Paraguay. My husband and I went to Paraguay. I went as public affairs officer (PAO) which was a good job for me because I was able to run my own show; and he went as a USAID program officer. It was a perfect tandem assignment. We both had Spanish and we could just move right in. I went first this time; it was a short couple months before he came too.

Q: Well I'm following you're going to Paraguay but let's move back to El Salvador. Looking back on it what were the things that you found particularly useful or difficult or outstanding things that you did?

OGLESBY: I considered that the work that I did with the left was important and I was able to use the international visitor program in order to expand the embassy's relationship with a number of people who eventually came into government. I remember sending Napoleon Duarte on an IV program. At the time he was a Christian Democrat in opposition to the government. Later, he became president. We managed to send the director of the Salvadorian human rights office on an IV program too. I felt that my contacts and the work that I was doing on the international visitor's program gave us an opportunity to extend the networking that we were doing in that

society. Sending someone to the United States on an IV program is not a politically in your face statement to the government. It is cultural exchange, after all. But at the same time, it gives you a reason to be talking to somebody and it gives them an opportunity to network in the United States. Napoleon Duarte, for example, became the president of El Salvador later and I feel good about that. I feel good that we were able to see his political promise. Roman Mayorga who was the Rector of the Catholic University was sent on an IV program by my predecessor. Roman Mayorga became the vice president of the country under Napoleon Duarte's administration. It is smart to use cultural programs to extend the threshold of connection that we have in societies abroad. I'm proud that a number of people that went on the international visitor program actually came into government and made a difference in El Salvador. That matters to me. I understand that exchange programs and that academic programs do make political statements and that you can expand the circle of people that the United States has contacts with through a widening of exchange programs. You can widen the circle of people that the embassy has reason to talk to; and I think that is important work. I think that culture is politics. That's important work I think.

Q: Oh yes.

OGLESBY: I felt that we did that well in El Salvador we were expanding the circle of people that the embassy had contact with through cultural exchange programs and that we did it intelligently. When that government changed as we knew it inevitably would, the embassy had contacts with those who came in. I think that is an important part of what cultural programming can do for you.

Q: Did you have much contact with the left?

OGLESBY: Yes. USIS deals with an artistic and intellectual community. USIS deals with a university community including students and faculty, and it works with journalists. All of those populations of people are change agents. I think in a period of rapid change, the work that USIS did was political important to the embassy.

Q: Did you have any problem with contact with the left I mean particularly with our embassy?

OGLESBY: Well there were some games I played. If there was somebody I wanted to go on an IV program, for example, I always made sure to nominate somebody further to the left so that the candidate I wanted to be selected was moderate by comparison. I was engaged in embassy politics in that sense. The junior political officer was very well versed on what was going on. He understood the national political scene. He and I would position the nominee for the international visitor program and say, okay this is who we want to go, who do we have to nominate that's further beyond the pale so that they are going to see this person as a reasonable choice. We had to engage in embassy politics. Others in the embassy had contacts in the business community and were opposed to our working with the opposition. An embassy reflects American domestic politics after all; the culture wars had begun in the United States and we felt conflicting American political pressures.

Q: Did you have problems involving being out in a dangerous situation?

OGLESBY: And that's one way being a woman makes it a little easier. There are ways that being a female officer makes it harder; but if a society doesn't take women seriously, much can be accomplished in a stealth fashion. When we left I felt like I'd run my string of luck. A number of the Jesuits had been killed, people I knew had been picked up and it was a very serious time. When it was time for us to leave we were willing to go.

Q: Yeah, I think this is probably a good place to stop here.

OGLESBY: Okay.

Q: Where did you go after that?

OGLESBY: To Paraguay.

Q: Oh, that's right Paraguay. We will pick this up the next time when you are off to Paraguay.

OGLESBY: Okay.

Q: Today is the 7th of July 2016 with Donna Oglesby and Donna we are off to Paraguay.

OGLESBY: We are off to Paraguay.

Q: Now tell me what was the situation in Paraguay? You were there from when to when?

OGLESBY: I was in Paraguay from 1979 to 1982. Stroessner ruled completely. Paraguay was, at the time, a country lost in time. Decades of the same authoritarian leadership can do that. Alfredo Stroessner was in control of the country and his control was very absolute. Because it was complete it was challenged and not as bloody as El Salvador had been. There was not the same kind of uprising. There were strains of unhappiness with the stifling "peace and progress and order" of Stroessner's regime. Coming into Paraguay after the hot war in El Salvador was stepping into tepid political water. But the political scene was changing; and, it was changing largely because of our human rights emphasis. The Carter administration was focused on human rights abuse in Argentina and by way of extension Paraguay. I believe our human rights focus brought attention to the scale of oppression in Paraguay.

Q: What was your job there?

OGLESBY: I was the public affairs officer, which meant I ran the USIS operation. The post was small, I had two other officers under me, but it was a big breakthrough for me. I don't think there had been a female public affairs officer in a regular post in Latin America ever. I do remember going to a PAO meeting held in Bogotá during that period I was the only female PAO. I have a wonderful picture of me standing among thirty public affairs officers all male. My assignment was a breakthrough in terms of assignments for women. It was an opportunity for me to run an operation to show that there were ways in which cultural and information programs could be used in support of strategic political objectives.

Q: Tell me in the first place we've talked a bit about this but here you were in your second Latin American country how did you find…

OGLESBY: I was in Brazil remember as a junior officer, and then was cultural affairs officer in El Salvador. I had also been Brazil, Mexico and Argentine desk officer. Paraguay was my third field assignment in Latin America, my first as public affairs officer.

Q: Did you find any differences which your male counterparts were encountering in your work?

OGLESBY: How can I answer the question? I don't think so. In my experience in Latin America, class was more important than gender. There were certainly lots of stereotypical images of the Latin male and how he treats females, they are true. But there were important women in the university system, women were important in the arts, and women doing important work in journalism. I didn't have any difficulty working with male contacts in Paraguay. I think it has to do with role. When you represent an embassy abroad, you are the American embassy to them. Your ability to work with contacts on a personal level has a lot to do with personality, but the doors open or close because of what you represent. A female officer may have to perform her function carefully and a bit differently; but I never felt that there wasn't a way to do the job extremely well. Sometimes a female officer can do the job better than her male counterparts because contacts underestimate a woman's abilities. A female officer can run rings around some male interlocutors because they are blinded by their own biases.

Q: In the first place what were you doing on the human rights side in your job?

OGLESBY: My ambassador was Robert White, have you heard of him?

Q: Yes.

OGLESBY: Robert White was my first ambassador in Paraguay; he then went to El Salvador as ambassador. He later made his reputation by disagreeing with the Reagan administration on human rights in El Salvador. Ambassador White was very keen to support President Carter's human rights policies while in Paraguay. USIS was a very important part of his political operation because we had the tools and the contacts to demonstrate our support for human rights. Stroessner's political party, the Colorado Party dominated all forms of high politics. There was no established opposition. The embassy could demonstrate publicly our support for human rights by supporting the freedom of expression in the press and by working with the artistic and cultural communities. I think that what USIS did was significant in terms of the embassy's political strategy. We can talk about that, if you like.

Q: Yes, I would.

OGLESBY: In general, USIS officers work with the societal institutions from which political change often comes. More than their state colleagues they walk a line between those who have power now, and those who might someday. Let me start with the information side of the house. I worked very closely with reporters and owners of the newspapers and radio stations in Paraguay. They were butting heads with the Stroessner regime because they were trying to be objective

journalists, to report freely, and to be able to discuss politics openly in the media. Some of the media owners, the owner of the newspaper *ABC Color,* and the owner of *Radio Nanduti* were powerful enough to challenge Stroessner, to push open the space for freedom of expression. We made sure that significant radio owners, for example, were invited to the United States on an international visitor program and placed in contact with their peers in the United States. We did the same thing in the print media. We worked with *ABC Color* and sent a number of their people to the States on international visitor grants. I remember a star reporter by the name of Alcibiades Gonzalez del Valle. The Stroessner administration didn't like him; they didn't like his journalistic courage and they didn't like his plays. He was fluent in Guarani, which is the native Indian language of Paraguay, he was a playwright in Guarani. Guarani is the language in which Paraguayans expressed love and humor; the language of the soul. Alcibiades was writing popular plays with political content that drew big audiences. At the same time, he was a bold reporter for *ABC Color*. He needled the government. While he was in the United States on an international visitor program, Stroessner announced that they would arrest him if he came back to Paraguay. Stroessner understood the connection between cultural exchange programs and political freedom in Paraguay. Those were the years in which organizations like Journalism Without Borders were developing to support journalism in oppressed countries. Western rooted organizations were working to enhance freedom of the press and in places. They took up the case of Alcibiades.

He came back and was detained for a while. He was released under international pressure. I frequently went to the jail carrying baskets of soap and toilet paper, magazines etc. just to point out that we in the embassy knew where journalists were being detained and we were keeping an eye on them. American rooted organizations concerned with freedom of expression were also aware of what was going on. That's an example of blending information and cultural tools to achieve a political objective.

It matters when an owner of a newspaper under pressure from the government is seen dining in the ambassador's residence; it matters when an editor of that same newspaper is on an international visitor's grant in the United States and he writes stories showing his international links. Our work was certainly appreciated. I remember right before I left after three years in Paraguay late one night, my maid woke me up saying, "Senora, Senora you have to go outside." The *Radio Nanduti* owner, we had sent to the states on an IV grant, had sent musicians to serenade me at my home as a parting gift. I knew I had made a connection, that my work had made a difference.

Because music is the language of the soul in Paraguay we decided to focus our cultural programs on music. We were offered and happily engaged the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra from New York. Orpheus has no orchestra conductor. They perform beautifully without direction. The Paraguayan newspapers understood exactly what that symbolized. They covered the performances in a major way and wrote editorials about how people can get along without strong direction. Orpheus became a lovely metaphor for an alternative to the political situation they were in. Additionally, over the three years I was there, I worked very hard to bring jazz to Paraguay for much the same reason. I think jazz is an expression of freedom because improvisation is key. Musicians have to know their instrument, and they have to know the music, but they also riff. During the three years I was in Paraguay I worked with impresarios in Argentina as well as USIA in Washington to bring a lot of jazz performers. We presented Stan

Getz, the Preservation Hall Band, Phil Woods Quartet, and Dexter Gordon. We were trying to appeal to Paraguayans through music; but we were trying to say something about freedom.

Q: Did Stroessner realize what you all were doing?

OGLESBY: Yes, and I remember once when I had people at my house for a dinner party connected with the return of an IV grantee. I remember the guard on the street whispering that Stroessner wanted to know exactly who was at my dining room table. No doubt he did. When Ronald Reagan was elected president, Stroessner and the Colorado Party were ecstatic; they thought this it would mean the end of embassy attention to human rights. Certainly, major attention to human rights in American foreign policy did change; but the Reagan administration found it convenient to keep up the pressure in Paraguay.

Q: Did you find you were getting much attention from Washington or was this pretty much on your own?

OGLESBY: Well, I was certainly getting good support from the desk; and maybe I was getting attention. The desk officer at the time was Kay Ray and she was wonderful also calling attention to our work. She made sure we were covered in the weekly report to the director. One time I got attention that might not have been a good thing. You may remember that Nicaraguan dictator Somoza was in exile in Paraguay. Once morning he was assassinated and the Stroessner government was so horrified they clammed up. They would not answer any phone calls from the American press. The American press started calling the embassy instead and the Ambassador directed that all calls come to me. I was on the record and got such a profile that I did get a call from Washington saying, "You might want to get out of it, out of the spotlight."

Q: Did you ever meet Stroessner?

OGLESBY: I never had dinner with him, but I did meet him in large gatherings. My contacts with his administration were with the minister of culture and his press spokesman who I saw on a regular basis.

Q: How about the university? Often in Latin America this is the seed of rebellion.

OGLESBY: The regime had such tight control in Paraguay that no rebellion could arise when I was there. It wasn't at all like El Salvador. The students were not on the street in the three years that I was there. I think it happened years later, but at the time I was there that wasn't the case.

Q: Did you have much contact with I hate to use the term the people, but I mean…

OGLESBY: I think that's an important point. Whether USIS should deal with elites or the masses was an ongoing theoretical and practical argument. We had a binational center in Asuncion. My cultural affairs officer was also the binational center director. The institution was important to our program. We did a lot of the jazz programming that I've talked about in the binational center, for example. But a binational center is an institution that people chose to affiliate with and come to be involved. People want to learn English and they chose to enroll.

That makes a BNC a window into a population of people that you might understand as "masses," rather than "elites." Let me give you an example of the programming we did there.

We talked in our last session about the exhibit that I organized for the Sao Paulo Brazil for an exhibit from Chicago coming down for the Sao Paulo Biennale. I was involved in exhibits in Paraguay, but they were completely different. Working though the Partners of America -- the Partner state for Paraguay in the United States was Kansas -- we sponsored artistic exchanges between Kansas and Paraguay. We sent some Paraguayan artists to Kansas and they hosted, and we brought people in from Kansas who were hosted by Paraguayan artists. Additionally, we worked extremely hard to pull together an exhibit of Paraguayan folk art. Folk art was a rich and disappearing tradition in Paraguay. Working with the Paraguayan artist community -- who were very concerned about the disappearance of folk art – we curated an exhibit of all the forms of folk art: pottery, wood, textile art, painting and metal work. Before the show went to Kansas, we exhibited it in the binational center for six weeks. We produced a major catalogue describing these art forms, who the artists were and where they lived in Paraguay. It was such an historic show in Paraguay that school classes came in droves. All these school children were learning about their own folk art; it was like a folk-art festival at the Smithsonian in Washington. They were also learning that we, the United States, appreciated it their artistic expression and them. After we showed the exhibit for six weeks at the binational center in Asuncion, we sent it for exhibition to Kansas along with some of the artists to demonstrate their art.

I think that is a perfect example of honoring a congressional a mandate that calls for mutuality. We demonstrated mutual respect and mutual. It was an example of dealing with masses of people and taking them seriously. We did work with the artistic elite to organize the exhibit and that was highly important too. Similarly, with jazz, we worked with the artistic elite, but we addressed the masses. We reached out beyond those whose names we had recorded in our rolodex. We provided opportunity for people who we did not know to become engaged with America, American culture, American language and American art. I think that outreach is important.

Q: Now were other countries, the British and the French, were they doing similar work or not?

OGLESBY: Because of their history in the Southern Cone, the British had a small British Council operation there. I can't say they were doing similar sorts of things, but they were certainly well established. There was a British expat community in Paraguay much like the larger one in Argentina. I think the British Council's efforts were more traditional and more engaged with their own expats. The Falkland War occurred during this period. Although it didn't involve Paraguay, Paraguayans were very sympathetic to the Argentine cause. The Brits were a bit hunkered down as a consequence.

Q: Now the British had a rather strong influence both positive and negative in the southern part of Latin America didn't they.

OGLESBY: Yes, the British did but as I said earlier, there was a significant German population in Argentina, Paraguay and Chile as well. The German diaspora came before and after WWII. They mostly went to rural areas, created communities, and farmed. The British had been extremely well integrated into society for a long time before the Germans came. They were land

owners, they were ranchers. They were well integrated into the Paraguayan elite, just as they were in Argentina.

You may know that our earliest public diplomacy programs days were in Latin America. Our programs were a reaction to Nazi German inroads in the hemisphere. Cultural and information activities were still in the State Department at the time.

Q: What about was Mengele in the area wasn't he at the time?

OGLESBY: Well the Mengele story burst publicly later. Mengele was reputed to have lived in the triangle area. The discovery of Mengele's corpse the identification by his dental records and teeth came later than my time. The story is wonderful and involves Steve Dachi, a USIA officer serving as the consul general in Sao Paulo.

Q: Yeah, I've interviewed him.

OGLESBY: I love the irony. USIA officers were Jacks and Jills of all trades.

Q: What was life like in Asuncion?

OGLESBY: The city was a quiet place; we had a very good life. My husband had the opportunity to work for USAID on economic development activities. There was also a big Peace Corps operation. We went up country a lot. My husband is an excellent shot and used to go out hunting quail with an embassy friend who had a super bird dog. They went frequently and brought back quail; my cook would clean it of buckshot; cook it; then we would have quail for lunch. Paraguayans are not adventurous foodies. They like barbecued meat and they know how to do it well. You learn pretty quickly that if you want to have a successful meal event with Paraguayans you don't try to introduce them to exotic food. Hire a guy who knows what he is doing with the grill, add a salad selection and sweet deserts and you'll have a wonderful evening.

We entertained at home often and we were invited to Paraguayan homes as well. Most social life was in homes. The pace of life was very slow, and we were able to know people, and have time for one another. It was easy to establish relationships and have repeated contact with the people. It was easy to get around the city, easy to go out and do things, easy to get media attention for events we were hosting; it just was pleasant. I think about that time very fondly because we could slow down and smell the roses, taste the honey, and work in a strategic way on what we were trying to accomplish in the country. The pace was slow enough that we could plan a year ahead or two years ahead to see where we were going, we could pull things together, take time. In some embassies, beset with a parade of official visitors all the time, officers are pulled inwards, constantly reacting to Washington's instructions. That didn't happen in a place like Paraguay. We had the ability to weave the programming together. We could carefully design the support elements. I think that is why I enjoyed my time in Paraguay as much as I did. I did have a chance to reflect and to be conscientious of what we were doing and why we were doing it. We were not reactive. Let me put it that way we didn't need to be reactive to the demand of external events. That was a very, very different situation than we had in El Salvador.

Q: Were you always on the lookout for possibility of a coup or was that considered…

OGLESBY: No. There was just no way during that period. It was years later before politics got to the point where there was any possibility of political change. And that is why people in the media and cultural worlds were important. They were creating the possibility of change; it was a long way out. There was no active political opposition when we were there. Change couldn't come out of the formal political sector because Stroessner had control.

Q: Was there any pressure one way or another on anything from either Brazil or Argentina or Bolivia?

OGLESBY: No. Disagreements with Brazil were all about the exploitation of hydroelectric power on the Iguaçu. Brazil developed the Iguaçu Falls which flooded land in Paraguay; that became a thorny issue. The environment became an issue. Smuggling was an issue. Tons of illicit goods went back and forth across the border in the tri-corner area where Paraguay and Argentina come together with Brazil. Paraguay was a pirate nation in a sense. Paraguay was also a money laundering nation. Drug smuggling became a big issue in Brazil and drugs became an issue in Bolivia and Argentina. At the time I was there narcotic trafficking and narcotic usage in Paraguay were not issues; that changed.

Q: You were talking about people getting together at your home and chatting away was there much in the way of political talk or was that out of the question?

OGLESBY: Oh sure. I mean if people knew one another, of course. When I had a dinner party with the journalists you could be sure there would be a lot of political talk about what was going on. Political officers liked my parties because they learned from journalists. Similarly, with the artistic community, there definitely was plenty of political talk. Representational work was important in a country like Paraguay because that's where we learned how the country ticked. We developed personal relationships that created the comfort and trust required to talk. in talking to one another. I always included political officers or the DCM, at times the ambassador in the work that I was doing. The embassy in Paraguay had a reasonably well functioning country team. The embassy was small enough that we knew one another, we were working together, and we weren't stove piped. I did think it was a good experience in that sense. It was a good experience for me to see how an embassy can come together with strong direction on the part of the ambassador and the DCM. A country team can work strategically on mission objectives. The only organization we had on the embassy compound that was a little less integrated was FBIS. It was regionally focused. They were listening and translating and reporting back Washington. I did know the officers, becoming friends with them. Theirs was only element on the compound that I would say was not integrated into a mission wide strategic effort. Paraguay was a good professional experience for me. I had the time to learn my craft and had the time to learn how embassies can come together and work in support of mission objectives.

Q: I want to point out to somebody reading this that FBIS is a perfectly overt organization that just monitors newspapers and many radio broadcasts…

OGLESBY: It no longer exists but it was completely open and any academic could get a FBIS subscription at any time. They did not conduct operations; they monitored the media to understand what was said. They provided translations so that people in Washington had access. Although FBIS belonged to the Central Intelligence Agency nothing that they produced was ever classified beyond LOU, Limited Official Use.

Q: You mentioned before that there is a significant Indian population with their own language. Did that cause some problem, or could we reach them or what?

OGLESBY: Well we didn't work in Guarani. Some of my FSNs, foreign service nationals, had did speak it well but we did not have the resources to do anything in Guarani. Music was important for that reason; music breaks down language barriers. I think Guarani was difficult for the Peace Corps because volunteers were trained in Spanish. Often, they were sent to villages where only Guarani was spoken. It is hard for people to imagine but I remember going with my husband on a USAID project into the Chaco, a barren area in the middle of Paraguay. There is a sizable Guarani population in the Chaco. There are also European Mennonites. The Mennonites came into Paraguay seeking refuge and relief. The Mennonites came out of Russia into Switzerland and then into Latin America. My husband was working with them on a number of development projects focused on dry land farming. My husband's work was to try and find programmatic ways to make the technologies that the Mennonites had developed to grow crops in the Chaco available to indigenous populations in Paraguay. It's a strange thing to drive all day into the middle of the Chaco to find these blond, blue-eyed people speaking Guarani and low Deutsch. Those were the languages of the Chaco. USIS did not work with these populations but the embassy was dealing with the indigenous population through the Peace Corps and USAID.

Q: Did you get any high-level visits from the States while you were there?

OGLESBY: No. I don't even think we had an assistant secretary visit, but we had a deputy assistant secretary visit in El Salvador. I don't remember that in Paraguay at all. We were off the trail, right?

Q: Well that's kind of fun.

OGLESBY: My area director visited. I recall no such ranking State official. Not at all.

Q: Well actually that from a professional point of view that's a great blessing isn't it?

OGLESBY: Yes. We will talk about the impact of Washington visitors later when I discuss serving in Bangkok. I have to admit a lot of my FSO colleagues thought serving in Paraguay was true exile. I didn't. My husband and I both had good jobs performing our professions. I felt I learned a lot by being there and I learned a lot about embassies and how they functioned and how USIS can be integrated into the mission activities. For me it was professionally rewarding. For my husband, Paraguay was professionally rewarding. We were happy with our three years there; we were. I think if we had spent another year there I might have turned into a turnip; but the three years that we spent there especially after the bloody and nerve-wracking last year in El Salvador were welcomed.

Q: Tell me did you leave after three years?

OGLESBY: It was a three-year tour. For me it was a three-year assignment and for my husband it was a two-year assignment, but he extended so that we would end on the same cycle.

Q: Where did you go after that?

OGLESBY: We went back to Washington. I had been out serving in three field posts sequentially. I had been in Vienna, then to El Salvador and then to Paraguay. Because we were a tandem couple the idea that we were going to get lucky a third time was just not in the cards. We were reassigned to Washington on a regular schedule in 1982. My husband left a few months earlier than I because his father was dying of cancer and he wanted to get back. Being tandem in assignments was never neat: I was in Thailand a couple of months before he got there. He was in El Salvador a few months before I arrived. I was in Paraguay a couple of months before he came. We never arrived or departed posts together.

Q: In Washington you were there from when to when?

OGLESBY: I was in Washington from 1982 when I came back from Paraguay until 1988. I went to Washington for a long period of time again because we were a tandem couple. Part of it was also the accelerated career that I had.

Q: What was your first job with…

OGLESBY: My first job in Washington?

Q: Yeah.

OGLESBY: When I got back to Washington this time I wanted to get more experience on the information side of the house. As you know, women were being pushed in the direction of educational and cultural programming; I wanted to get some information experience. I had bid on the position as Branch Chief of the Latin American Wireless File. Do you remember the Wireless File? It was a daily product containing Agency produced news stories that would be placed in newspapers or radio stations around the world? I succeeded in getting the job as Branch Chief of Latin America Wireless File and I supervised a large number of foreign and civil servants. I had a deputy, a number of reporters and translators and a teletype operator. We would decide early in the morning what stories we were going to cover in Washington and in the United States that would be of use to our posts in the region and which ones of those stories we were going to translate for them into Spanish or Portuguese; sometimes in French for Haiti. Then the reporters would go out and get the write the stories, either my deputy or I would edit them, Then by COB we had a product that had to be sent to the field. They got the file and they would decide how they wanted to use it. Use or not was their call. Sometimes they might try to place a story in their country papers; sometimes they might use it on background.

Q: How did you find that were you…

OGLESBY: There were some Foreign Service Officers working on the file but essentially the Wireless File operation was a civil service. Working there was my first major experience in a Washington office with a civil service professional culture. There is a different office dynamic when people are, more or less, permanently in their positions. With the civil service, one qualifies for a position because of professional expertise and keeps it. The only chance for promotion often is qualifying for another position at a higher grade. Many civil servants from the other branches as well as my branch had been professional journalists before entering government service. I found I liked the rhythm of the day producing a product that had to go out the door at the end of the day. Field posts counted on us to deliver. Every day is like putting a newspaper to bed. In a sense we had a readership, that we were trying to support. Writing stories that they needed to do their jobs. We were in contact with field posts all the time asking how we could help them better. It is a nice feeling to put a product to bed on a daily basis. I could leave at the end of the day in Washington with a feeling that the job was done. It was very different than being the desk officer where there is no line between your time and the government's. A desk officer takes work home all the time. Calls can come anytime. A desk officer is always on call.

Q: Then did you find any particular news sources that you relied on more than others?

OGLESBY: We didn't get our stories from the newspapers if that is what you mean. We were the journalists following the stories that Latin American audiences would be interested in. Ours was primary reporting. If for example, the president of a Latin American country was in the United States we would cover him, his calls on the State Department and his calls on congress. If there were legislation -- and there was during this period, a lot of legislation on Central America – we explained it. Ronald Reagan was the president and he was pursuing a Central American policy that Democrats absolutely abhorred. They had control of the congress. Audiences in Latin America were confused. The president says one thing, but congress passes laws to the contrary. We would have to send reporters up to the Hill to get the stories about the legislation, cover hearings and write explanatory pieces for the field. They needed clarification.

Q: Did you have any qualms about reporting what newspapers were saying which were contrary to American policy?

OGLESBY: Well we used to do a roundup of what was in the American press and made sure the embassies knew how a topic of importance to Latin America was being covered in the United States. I think we performed an important service because Republicans and Democrats – the executive branch and congress were split on foreign policy toward Latin America. Our field officers had to know what was going on to prepare their contacts for surprises. We did survey the American press for their information only. The journalistic ethos was very strong in the USIA. Civil servants who worked on the file or the Voice of America considered themselves to be journalists. Honest, objective reporting was essential if we were going to be credible. An American press attaché in Latin American can't pretend policy shifts aren't happening; can't pretend that there is no difference in opinion between Democrats and Republicans. If you tried to pull that off, you would not be credible; nobody would take your phone call or talk to you Maintaining credibility of our reporting for our people in the field was an important function that we performed.

Q: Yeah. Speaking about personnel I've talked to people who have done some interviews in civil service who worked in one of these offices where they've been doing it for a very long time and it gets to be almost a family affair everybody knows everybody much more so than in the Foreign Service context.

OGLESBY: I think that might be true in State. USIA was smaller and the Foreign Service Officers tended to know one another.

Q: Did you find any problems in supervising a diverse group of people like this?

OGLESBY: Of course, I had to learn pretty quickly where the tensions between people were. We had some differences between people of different national origins. Cuban refugees, for example and Puerto Ricans often did not share the same political perspectives. I had a case of one person who was central to getting out the file who was always out sick. Back then civil service protections were extremely strong and there was little I could do about the absenteeism. I had a couple people who worked on a clock; they weren't going to stay that extra half an hour because something needed to get done. A Foreign Service officer would stay without thinking at least in those days; I hear its different now. Institutional cultures exist. I had to roll with them.

Q: How did you find Washington life?

OGLESBY: I found it politically fraught. This was the period of the Central American Civil War and the Iran – Contra scandal. It was Ollie North of the basement of the Old Executive Office Building. It was politically intense. Bipartisanship did not exist. If there ever had been a period when politics ended at the water's edge, it was no longer true. We had to navigate through these partisan waters in order to do our jobs.

Q: How did you feel firstly about Ronald Reagan's policy toward Elliott Abrams' policy toward Central America, which was really at the top of our list at that point?

OGLESBY: Because of my experience in El Salvador I thought he read the situation incorrectly. My personal opinion, based on my experience in El Salvador you remember, was that this was a home grown uprising of the population; that it was not being controlled by Communists from abroad. I never bought that for a minute. That there might have been some stirring of the pot: sure. Based on my personal experience on the ground in El Salvador I knew that it was not an imported war directed from behind the Iron Curtain. Much of the Reagan administration rhetoric was to show the existence of a monolithic worldwide Communist movement that was coming after us through Central America, for example. I had thought that was a misreading of the situation completely. It was, however, policy.

Q: Was there much sort of discussion in USIS about the policy and so…

OGLESBY: We are skipping to another point. Let me just give you a bigger picture of my time in Washington. At first, I was brought back to do the Latin American Branch Wireless File. and About six months into the job, I was called to the Counselor's office. The Counselor is the

ranking career Foreign Service Officer in USIA. Jock Shirly was Counselor then. He called me in and said that he wanted me to take over President Reagan's International Youth Exchange Initiative and work with Charlie Wick, our new director. I gulped. But, I saluted. And became the Director of the International Youth Exchange Initiative for two years. Following that position I became the Deputy Director for our operations in Latin America. Then I rose to Director of Latin American affairs for two years at the end of the '80s. It was during those years that I attended Elliot Abrams' staff meetings at State. It was then that I had to fend off the brilliant ideas of Otto Reich who wanted to do a lot of public diplomacy stuff in the United States that we were not permitted to do under legislation. That comes later.

Q: Okay, why don't we work with the Charlie Wick issue?

OGLESBY: No, let's talk about the International Youth Exchange Initiative and its importance; it was an important period of my life anyway. I while I was happily doing this Wireless File job, I got a call from Jock Shirley, Agency Counselor. I knew Jock Shirley a bit, but I had not worked for him. He had been press attaché in India when my father-in-law was defense attaché there. We had established a joking rapport at that point; he knew who I was, and he had also been well aware of what I was doing in Paraguay. I remembered he began out meeting saying something like, "well you ripped them to pieces in Paraguay." And then he said, "So, I know you can do this work with Charlie Wick. You can whip the International Youth Exchange Initiative into shape too." Sally Grooms had been the first director of the Youth exchange Initiative. She had promised him one year and she was not going to continue for another year. Sally had her eye on an ambassadorship and was not interested in being parked in exchanges.

Youth Exchange was a three-year initiative and; I signed on for the final two years. The idea had been born with Ambassador Arthur Burns in Bonn. He sold it to Senator Richard Lugar and other Congressional Republicans who were very, very concerned that the successor generations in NATO countries were drifting apart. They feared that the Atlantic relationship was going to dissolve with successor generations not knowing one another, not being in contact with one another; and that we would lose a significant alliance. They had convinced President Reagan that there should be an effort to stimulate exchanges between the United States and core NATO countries at the high school level. They imagined working with traditional youth exchange programs like American Field Service, Experiment in International Living, Youth for Understanding, where a student in high school in the United States goes overseas for a year and lives in Munich with a German family and attends German high school and a student from Munich goes to the United States and lives for a year with an American family and attends American high school. These are the traditionally yearlong high school exchange programs. Our goal was to double the number of young people having this immersive experience at an impressionable age. Senator Lugar sponsored legislation funding the Congress-Bundestag program (CBYX) to provide earmarked funds USIA to send 200 Germans to the United States and 200 Americans to Germany yearly. This particular exchange was funded for several years as the Congress-Bundestag program; but for the most part, we didn't get additional funds and had to raise money in the private sector. We also raised funds for an advertising campaign with the Ad Council.

I teamed with an employee of Equitable Life Insurance in New York to raise the funds. Then we worked with the Ad Council on a series of print, television and radio ads to publicize the exchange opportunities. We awarded grants to organizations, to conduct these exchanges. Our NATO partners funded their commitments in different ways. I made several trips to Germany, for example. They wanted some exchange models that worked for them but not for us. Similarly, we had political needs for kinds of exchange populations that meant nothing to them. Bilateral talks with Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy were all required to sort through our differences. I also went to Spain to initiate exchanges there. The entire point was that the exchange program would be mutual develop in concert with these other countries in a bilateral fashion to cement the Atlantic community.

Q: It sounds like a very good idea.

OGLESBY: It was a very good idea; it was a lot of fun. We ran into some structural problems. One was that the American family structure was changing; more women were working. More households had both parents working making it hard for them to attend to their own families and making them less willing to add a child to the family for a year. With a stay at home parent, there is greater willingness to take in a student from France, Italy, Japan or wherever. Part of the problem we had doubling the numbers was finding host families for yearlong programs. That meant that private sector organizations in conducting these exchanges felt compelled to go to shorter term programs. They had an easier time finding a home for the summer, for example. They also designed programs that did not have a home stay element.

Although we believed, on the basis of research, that the long home stay program has the greatest effect on people's lives, we could not expand those numbers. The increased visibility of the opportunities also attracted new exchange organizations into the field. Some were not for profit and some were for profit. By law, we were required to run open grant competitions. New organizations that had no real track record won grants. Then we had to develop and enforce quality standards. I found it interesting to recognize how the United States was changing; and how the private sector aspects of it were changing; and how the ensuing politics demanded response.

On the other side of the Atlantic, demographic and economic changes were occurring too. American high school systems don't work like the German high school system for example. The Germans constantly wanted to do non-academic kinds of high school exchanges for plumber or a machinist apprentices. Their high schools were tracked that way and they wanted to be inclusive by class. I became aware of our societal differences. We were trying to create a structured exchange program that matched sectors of our high school populations that were structured very differently.

Let me give you another example, we were under a lot of pressure at that time to include disabled students in our exchange programs. Mobility International, which was an organization of physically challenged American young people, wanted access for their members to existing exchange opportunities. They wanted mainstreaming. But in Great Britain, the idea of integrating the physically disabled by mainstreaming them into regular programs was just unheard of at the time. They wanted special programs for the physically challenged; we had to negotiate our

differences. I remember once talking to a group of British exchange organizations in London. You could hear a pin drop when I argued against program segregation. Our disabled population wanted integration: they did not want to be treated as a special group with a special needs and special differences. That argument, then, did not compute in London.

Again, a job that might seem boring, I found fascinating. It got me back into European affairs, because of bilateral negotiations both in the EU and in the US. I also learned about the power of the Israeli lobby in congress. Congressmen called me personally to pressure us to we got calls from Congress that absolutely we had to include Israel in this program. The program was designed to be NATO members only; but we were required to host an Israeli government delegation and try to figure out ways of doing exchanges with them. The politics were fascinating. And, the whole time I was working for Charlie Wick. I'm sure I'm not the first person to tell you that in itself was a challenge. He was a personality and the Youth Exchange Initiative was his baby because it was Ronald Reagan's baby. He had visibility with the president on the program; he cared. Even though I was in CU, exchanges bureau, I reported to Charlie Wick. I had to keep him happy. He arranged events at the White House; we did events in New York and whenever he or the president traveled abroad, he wanted to be sure the Youth Exchange was part of it. Traditional exchange professionals didn't want to be involved in the Youth Exchange Initiative because they thought high school kids were a waste of time and money. At the same time, the program was extremely important to the director of USIA and to the president of the country. It was interesting; it was fun.

Q: Can you give me a description of your dealing with Charlie Wick?

OGLESBY: Charlie Wick. Charlie Wick could be delightful, but he could also be like a raging King Lear. When he got angry, storm clouds rolled over his dark brown eyes. He would just rip into you, rip you shreds; chew you up, and spit you out. I remember people saying that once when he ripped into me, I looked like the carnival doll weighted with beans in her butt. He'd knock me down and I'd come back up. That's what it felt like. Then the storm clouds would part. I just had to be able to withstand the storm. He was also fairly ignorant about world affairs. When I brought important people from abroad to meet I had to spell out their names phonetically and write a background memo in special English. He might read the memo; or, he might not. Sometimes the meetings would be fabulous because he was on; and sometimes they would go wildly off the rails. I would be cleaning up afterwards. Bottom line: a truly temperamental person with a personal connection to the president. Wick and his wife spent every Christmas with Nancy and Ronald Reagan. They were tight, and this was the program they cared about. My program had visibility which was fabulous; and I got the support I needed to do the job, which was terrific. Sadly, it came with full access to his temperament, which sometimes could be a little hard to take.

Q: How long did you do this?

OGLESBY: I did the last two years of the Initiative. Sally got it up and running and I did the last two years. Youth Exchange was then converted to a regular exchange program. The bells and whistles, the special fund-raising campaign with the private sector, doing the Ad Council campaign all disappeared. After completing the two years that I had promised, I went to the area

office as the deputy director of Latin American. Bob Riccio was the area director. I guess the plum was my reward for doing the youth exchange job well. I had served in three posts in the area and had been a desk officer for major countries and Branch Chief of the regional Wireless File; I was qualified. Still, it was a lovely boost to my career.

Q: Okay well you did this big area job from when to when?

OGLESBY: Probably ’85 by the time I got into the area office as deputy director. Not long after that Bob Riccio, who was the area director, decided to retire. I became Area Director and served until 1987.rector and area director from ’84 until ’87; and then I went into Thai language training and to Thailand.

Q: Let’s talk about the area director. When you got there what were your major concerns?

OGLESBY: Central American policy dominated. I had to figure out a way to be supportive of the Reagan administration policies in Latin America and at the same time be true to the agency program ethos. As an example, Otto Reich ran a shop in State called the public diplomacy shop. Nice euphemism, but his target audience was in the United States, not abroad. Not diplomacy and not public diplomacy. He was working in the United States to develop support for the Reagan administration’s policy in Central America. USIA was prohibited from running influence campaigns in the United States. I spent considerable time telling him “no.

He also wanted to personally select speakers to send into Latin or Central America. We had standards and processes that were not easily manipulated. I’m sure he, and others, felt we were obstreperous bureaucrats. We considered ourselves professionals with expertise and mission obligations. We considered them to be unethical politicians, trying to misuse government resources for inappropriate purposes. I remember at one point the Agency deputy director ordered USIA to send some of these speakers abroad. USIA personnel resisted. He called us a whole bunch of “mindless gnomes” – I suppose now we would be “deep state.” Almost overnight, USIA people all started wearing buttons that said, “I’m a Mindless Gnome.” There was a little passive resistance; and at the same time, we did do major things in support of Central American Policies.

Chief among them was an exchange program in response to the Kissinger Commission Report. The report argued that we needed to expand outreach to the masses in Central America and bring more nonelite to United States on exchanges. We developed an exchange program partnering with American community colleges to reach out to a different demographic in Central America. This was a brand-new program with earmarked funding. Linda Jewell, who was the desk officer for Central America at the time, managed the effort. I’m very proud of that program because it was done under enormous political pressure from the Reagan administration and the people who did traditional exchanges in USIA were resistant to doing it. They felt that exchanges should not be politicized by special focus on a region of policy priority. I disagreed and agreed to shepherd it out of the area office, which was unusual. Of course, there were standards and the participants were accepted on the basis of academic criteria by a separate independent exchange entity. The exchanges professionals came around when they saw that the program would honor merit selection. The program was clearly intended to have a political effect: broaden the number of

people from different sectors of Central America society who had an experience and therefore a favorable opinion about the United States. But, we did it in such a way that it met the criteria of academic independence. That's an example of something that I'm proud of. I think it was responsive to the policy and at the same time it met the standards of academic independence.

Q: Were the community colleges in Central America and elsewhere comparable to the ones we have?

OGLESBY: The community colleges were in the United States, not in Central America. We were offering educational opportunities to people for programs that a university might not offer. The program model was not a two-way flow like the Youth Exchange Initiative. This was a one-way flow bringing people from Central America into the United States to study at community colleges. It was a population we had never dealt with before in those countries. The community colleges were not institutions that USIA had traditionally dealt with either. That changed. Community colleges are often the best institutions in the United States to match the needs and program focus that people coming from developing countries have.

Q: The community colleges are extremely valuable.

OGLESBY: Extremely valuable and they have a curriculum which is much wider than the curriculum at a smaller four-year college, for example where I teach. That was important in our design. There was focus on entrepreneurial classes, business development and management. These students weren't coming up to get a PhD in American history; they were coming up to get accounting and business skills that they needed to go back and develop businesses. That's what the Kissinger Commission had in mind: a more practical skill base. The community college fit the need well because a lot of people who go to community colleges are people who are trying to get skills to move up in the world. They are holding down jobs at the same time. They were perfect for the purpose of this Kissinger program. I'm sure I'm not the first person to tell you that the traditional academic community does not want to see Henry Kissinger's name on any program that they are being asked to run. They think directing exchanges to any policy purpose is wrong. We had to fight those battles to be able to be able to get a successful program going.

Q: I'm sure I can imagine the battles you must have been waging with these people.

OGLESBY: It's politics. We were waging battles with people within USIA who didn't want a new exchange program with a specific regional policy purpose. At the same time, we were telling State that we could respond well to the Kissinger Commission Report, but we could not run an influence campaign in the US even if it was called "public diplomacy." I think we pulled it off by being policy responsive and true to our mission. Elliot Abrams, an historical character certainly, respected my positions, I think. He invited me to join him on a military plane to fly to a South Cone ambassador conference he'd called in Montevideo. He included me because he took culture seriously and USIA had the tools and mandate to work the educational and cultural spheres. He knew that we had recourses, connections, throughout Latin America that we could make a political difference in societies. He found ways to include us in State staff meetings, or field conferences where I could talk about USIA and USIS programs and what we could do and what we could not do. I thought we were doing important policy work during those years. I have

a lot of State Department colleagues and even USIA colleagues who thought if you were assigned to the region (the jungle) your career would never go anywhere. That was not my experience.

Q: What were you getting from the Iran-Contra hearings? What was the reaction in your area?

OGLESBY: Everybody was watching the Iran-Contra hearings; TVs were on in all the offices working on the hemisphere. I suppose the shenanigans were a bigger surprise to people outside of Central and Latin America than they were to us. We knew that the Reagan administration was utterly serious about supporting the Contras and we knew from being on the ground in Central American that there were plenty of overt and covert resources coming in to support the Contras. We knew that Contras were being trained in Honduras, we knew these things because we had people on the ground. I think it was a big surprise for many Americans to find out the Reagan administration wasn't accepting the legislative parameters that Democrats had set to control funding the war. The administration went darkly entrepreneurial and that is what Iran-Contra scandal was all about. Iran-Contra was about finding a way around the Congressional restrictions to support the Contras because the Reagan administration was not going to give up on them. They were not going to permit a check on executive authority. We knew what was going on the ground but suddenly it became public knowledge in a very dramatic way. Those hearings were quite something. Were you in Washington at the time? Where were you?

Q: No. I wasn't I don't think I was.

OGLESBY: Ollie North testifying, and his secretary Fawn Hall testifying was great soap opera in the middle of the afternoon. I don't think the revelations had as much of an impact in Latin America as they did in the US and in Europe because Latin Americans all knew the Reagan administration supported the Contras. Of course, that's when Elliott Abrams ran into the buzz saw apparently lying to Congress; it was a pretty critical time.

Q: Did you get caught up in that in anyway?

OGLESBY: No, we didn't. We didn't because we had held the line on ethical activity. We always met our legal restrictions; and there was a fine line we had to walk. USIA did not get caught up in that. There were some USIA Foreign Service officers who had been assigned to Otto Reich's American "public diplomacy" operation. As far as I recall, they were not caught up in it either. We were smart; we had clarity about our mission. I think we had also developed good relationships with Congress, too. We were careful to get legislation if we needed it. We had excellent relations with Senator Lugar who chaired the Senate Foreign Relations Committee then. You recall, we responded to his call for the Congress-Bundestag program effectively. Also, I think the agency did a good job then with the congressional relations and maintaining its relations with the political leadership of the State Department. We were well plugged in; I think it all worked well.

Q: I've gotten very positive reports from people who worked with Wick in that he did produce, he got money.

OGLESBY: He got resources for the agency, he did but he also had weird notions about programs. Early on in his tenure he said, "Let Poland be Poland." It became a major film extravaganza that we were required to show wherever we were around the world. I was still in Paraguay when "Let Poland Be Poland" was released. We were required to show it and we did in the ambassador's residence to a gathering of Paraguayan Military officers. It was absurd. No one was more anti-communist than General Stroessner. There was no policy point to showing that film in Asuncion. I'm one of those FSIOs who believe in field directed programs. Officers in the field understand their psychological and political climate. They understand the context, they understand their audiences. Headquarters should respond to their demands and requests. Wick did not operate that way. He just pushed everything out from Washington; one size fits all. Perfect for Milan, it will work perfectly in New Delhi, and it will work perfectly in Mozambique. That is just not true. But you couldn't tell him that. He would not hear it. For ideologues selling an idea like a product, little attention is paid to the receivers. Wick never wanted to hear that post X didn't need a pineapple peeler because post X had no pineapples.

Q: Is there anything more you think we should cover in this area of assignment?

OGLESBY: No, I don't think so. I think those are the highlights from the time I served as the area director. Do you feel you have a sense of the politics at the time and how we related and how we managed the issues? I felt that we probably covered that.

Q: This is probably a good place to stop. Where did you go next?

OGLESBY: I went to Thai language training for 44-weeks and then we went to Bangkok.

Q: Okay we will talk a bit about the language training per se and then into Thailand.

Today is the 12th of July 2016 with Donna Oglesby and Donna you are off to language training in Thai.

OGLESBY: That's right. I finished up as area director for Latin America and was off to Thailand as minister counselor for public affairs. We wanted that assignment because there was a mission in Thailand and there was the possibility, we thought, of a tandem assignment. I also wanted to get to Asia where I had not served since being in the Foreign Service. Recall that my academic background was in Asian studies. I was assigned to 44-weeks of language training, done at FSI, which was then in Rosalyn. I liked studying language since I'm basically an eternal student. The training period was also a good period of time to unpack my Latin American baggage both mentally and every other way and get into a new region and a new language.

Q: Had you experienced anything like Thai I know you'd taken Japanese, is there any similarity or not?

OGLESBY: No, there is no similarity at all. The similarity lies in the learning of a new written language as well as oral. Thai is not written in Roman letters, but it is phonetic. The grammatical structure is nothing like Japanese which is very complicated; the grammatical structure in Thai is pretty simple. The difficulty for me and for other people learning Thai is that the language is

tonal. In Thai there are five tones and you need to be able to hear and produce them accurately. You have to have an ear for tones.

Q: Oh boy.

OGLESBY: You can make a lot of mistakes if you get a tone all wrong; that's the only difficult part. The difficulty is training your ear to hear the tones and also learning to read a Sanskrit script. It's a 44-week course for a reason. My other language experiences at FSI had been 20 weeks of Portuguese and 24 weeks of German. I didn't do Spanish at FSI, but that too was 20 weeks.

Q: What were you picking up from the Thai teachers about the situation in Thailand that you are going to?

OGLESBY: That's an interesting question. I guess a couple things that you pick up were: the real importance of cultural differences; the tremendous importance of Buddhism; and, the reverence for the king. I remember one muddy, rainy day I came into class wearing rain boots. I hung up my rain coat. I had taken off my boots and there wasn't a place to put them on the ground, there wasn't a shoe rack. There was a rack above the coats and I put my boots above the coats on the rack. I remember this male Thai teacher who quickly came over and reminded me that you never put shoes above clothing. I looked at him totally befuddled and he said, "Nothing above the head. Feet are dirty and shouldn't be put above the head. Hats and coats were on the rack and shoes should be beneath them not above."

That was a small correction with major importance for getting along in Thailand. They still, I'm sure, tell the tale of President Johnson who went to Thailand and patted the queen on the head. You can understand why everybody got bent out of shape. Or, when some American diplomat comes to Thailand and crosses his legs in such a way that the sole of his shoe is pointing at the Thai. That is not done. So, you have to learn that aesthetic and it has to become natural body knowledge. Learning a language means learning the culture from which the language springs. I think that the Thais instructors at FSI did a very good job of that. They were also very soft-spoken and that is an important aspect of being Thai. They were also people value silence in ways that Americans do not. Thais don't have a polite way of saying no. They leave the silence to speak it. Qualified Thai instructors at FSI taught non-verbal language as well as the verbal language; we needed 44-weeks for that.

Q: Well I know I took Serbian for the 44-weeks and we had old line Serbs teaching us; Larry Eagleburger was in my class. I found that I leaned an awful lot from these instructors how they approach things. We would laugh at it but the horrors of later in Srebrenica and all of that were in a way played out in the classroom.

OGLESBY: You were learning the culture. A language is not divorced from the culture; it's part of the culture. I think in the case of Thai there were some generational differences too. But the Thai are happy to be Thai they were bound together through Theravada Buddhism and a reverence for the king that I think is hard for us to actually imagine. Americans are fairly religious people, but for us religion is in private space; it's not in the public square in the same

way as it is in Thailand. The idea of being reverential about the royal family just wouldn't occur to us. I had to learn this cultural material because I was going out to be minister counselor for public affairs. In Bangkok, as in most American embassies, the religion portfolio was tossed to USIS. I welcomed it. Whether dealing with liberation theology in Latin America or Buddhism in Thailand; I considered it important work.

Q: Did you find that the grammar…some of these cultures I know Korean is very situational depends who is speaking and whom you are talking to.

OGLESBY: It's like that in Japanese; the endings of the verbs are different depending on whether you are female or male and who you are talking to. Thai is not that way; there is a very simple grammar. Thai has a very rich vocabulary. If you have conversations with any Thai, they will try to establish if you are older or younger than they. Knowing that does not change their verb form; but they might look at your shoulder rather than your face in deference.

Q: You talk about the difference to the royal family I have oral histories of people who when the queen of Thailand came she visited Houston and…

OGLESBY: She has a daughter living there right?

Q: …and you can imagine in Texas they were all told now doing mention the King and I and all…

OGLESBY: No dancing with the king of Siam.

Q: Of course, everyone said, "Oh I'd just love the movie.

OGLESBY: You couldn't even buy a copy or show a copy of the King and I in Thailand it was just verboten.

Q: Of course, everybody there no matter what they were told immediately said, "Oh we just love that movie.

OGLESBY: Thais aren't going to be rude to you, but they are certainly going to close down any chance of relationship if you make those kinds of mistakes.

Q: Also, you mentioned silence as meaning no. This is often one of the great problems with our people who come over to talk about a situation, this is the country with somebody coming from the Embassy coming out saying, "Well that went very well." The officer would say, "Sir, you were told no."

OGLESBY: Exactly, exactly because you read into the silence what you want to read into it unless you know that there this is actually a cultural expression and it does have a meaning. It's absolutely true. One of the books that I do like to recommend to my students is an old book, E.C. Hall's book on The Silent Language. I don't know if they still use it in Peace Corps training but its valuable still to think about non-verbal communication. What is the silent language? The way

you communicate when your mouth stops flapping. We communicate by where we look, how we use our hands. I had come out of Latin America, where hands are expressive. Thai body language is very restrained. I had to get control of my gestures and pull back into my body. It takes work for me not to talk with my hands. I had to learn that too.

Q: Also, I haven't served in Latin America, but we were all taught in FSI how close the Latin American's get to you talking and that must have been a problem. I assume the Thai's don't like to be that close.

OGLESBY: That's true and Thais want to establish what the hierarchy is very quickly: who's older and who's younger. In this hemisphere there is a fundamental feeling of equality. In Paraguay for example, when we drove into the countryside and stopped to have lunch after a day of driving, the driver sat with us. In that sense of people-to-people equality, everybody sat down and ate together.

In Thailand it was quite different. It took some getting used to meet the household staff the first time. They all dropped to their knees and spoke from a prone position. That's just hard to get used to and that would happen on occasion. The crown princess came to the embassy to inaugurate a Thai pavilion. An FSN employee of USIS, who had been raised in the palace with the royal family, dropped to the ground and prostrated herself in front of the royal visitor. The ambassador's executive assistant was appalled that anybody working for the U.S. government would do that. It was one of those interesting things that happen that you are not fully prepared for.

Let me give you another example. USIS was in a different physical facility down the road about two miles from the embassy. I had been there a couple of years when the USIS family had a string of bad luck: somebody got hit by a car: somebody's house burnt down. There was a chain of bad luck, or a chain of unfortunate incidents that happened to the Thai staff. The staff was depressed and fearful that I had to figure out what was going on and what we could do about it. I was advised that there were bad spirits in the compound and that we had to remove them through blessings. We had to restore the blessed state, the grace, of the compound. What we needed was essentially an exorcism. So, I said, "Okay, if that is what is important let's do it." The FSNs who felt strongly that we needed a blessing, arranged the ceremony. Monks came, and we had a ceremony that involved incense, chanting, running string throughout the compound. Then the monks walked around the whole compound and blessed the spirit house -- every Thai facility had a spirit house -- they blessed and renewed it and they left. Everybody was cheered up and bad luck ended. Nobody ever tells you when you join the Foreign Service that you are going to have to run an exorcism at some point in the compound because your staff is convinced that bad spirits have taken up residence and they have to be gotten rid of.

Q: Well it's one of these things whatever works.

OGLESBY: Well whatever is important to them, right? We depend on our FSNs, our Foreign Service staff. They are essential in many places and Thailand is certainly one of them. They had become dysfunctional because as a group they believed something to be true. I had to attend to that, I had to listen, to try and understand. Respect for their beliefs was essential to our

functioning as a team. I think that's important. It was also important not to spend U.S. government money on an exorcism. We all contributed personally to making it happen.

Q: Okay, sort of on our level not on a spiritual level when you got out there you were there from when to when?

OGLESBY: It was a four-year assignment; I was there from 1988 to 1992.

Q: How stood relations when you got there?

OGLESBY: Well the United States had long term good relations with Thailand. It was a major embassy and a regional hub. There was a large MAG Mission, a large military assistance mission, a sizeable AID mission, and a large station. The US did not have diplomatic relations with Viet Nam or Cambodia then. We had very strained relations with Laos and Myanmar. Bangkok was the South East Asian hub. There were some tensions with the government over democratization. Thailand had a history of military coups; but when I arrived General Chatichai Choonhavan had just been elected and those elections were understood to be relatively fair. There was a feeling that there had been a democratic turn in Thai politics in 1988. Later during my tour, there was a coup and then a counter coup.

Q: Who was your ambassador when you got there?

OGLESBY: Dan O'Donohue was the ambassador when I got there. He was a career FSO and I served with him for more than half the time I was in Thailand.

Q: How did you find him I understand he could be…I've interviewed him and found him to be a nice guy but that was interviewing. I'm told he was difficult and got angry and that sort of thing.

OGLESBY: I developed a good relationship with him. After working for Charlie Wick, O'Donohue's temperament was not unsettling to me. I also could get distance. I started my morning in his staff meeting at the Embassy at 7:30 AM. I would brief him on the news. He did not have Thai, I would brief him and the country team on what was in the Thai press. After the meeting, I'd take care of any other embassy business, get in my car and go down the road to the USIS compound and get on with my work. In many ways, having a separate compound was a blessing. There was a greater distance between USIS and the embassy physically and in program terms than I had experienced in Latin America.

USIS was well resourced then. We had a good Foreign Service complement and excellent FSNs; we had a branch post in Chang Mai, binational centers in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, libraries in both cities too. The ambassador wasn't that involved with us and I can't say he cared about what we were up to. He cared about political situations and he came more and more to care about economic issues. I think that was being pushed at that point from Washington. The State Department was trying to connect better with the business community and push open the trade barriers to help American exports. The ambassador was much more involved in economic and political issues than he was in the economic/political/ cultural/environmental kinds of things that we were doing in USIS.

Q: I would think that American culture is so different than Thai and running cultural affairs was really a two-pronged thing. You had to be doing one and then the other.

OGLESBY: What do you mean by two-pronged?

Q: In other words, you had the American culture side that you were trying to make people know about and then you were working within the Thai culture.

OGLESBY: Alright, yes. How does that work out in practice? I understand what you are saying. We did promote American studies in Thailand. USIS had historically supported the American Studies Association there because these are professors who are teaching about America in the colleges and high schools in Thailand. That would be an example of the promotion of the understanding of American culture. Similarly, we had a binational center in Chiang Mai and a big one in Bangkok where we taught English making a lot of money that went into programs there. We also had a library collocated at the BNC. The library had some shelves on Thailand but fundamentally it was an American library in Thailand. In that sense we were working to promote a better understanding of the United States and its people and its culture. At the same time to work on other policy issues, we had to work through those issues in a cultural context in order to make any connection in Thailand. I can give you an example of that best if I talk about the environmental work we were doing.

This was the first time in my overseas experience that our concerns for the environment had actually climbed up the policy ladder and it was something that the mission on the whole was concerned about. I pretty quickly came to understand that a lot of the grassroots political activism around democracy in Thailand was connected to their grassroots activism on the environmental movement. In other words, the people who were organizing and would eventually organize the democratization of Thailand from the ground up were getting to understand political advocacy and grassroots organization within the environmental movement. So, working with activists was sensitive politically to start with. To change behavior in Thailand with respect to the environment, we had to work through the culture. That meant understanding Theravada Buddhism and working with monks and lay leaders. We worked with forest monks in the north, monks that wound saffron robes around trees to keep them from being cut down. Monks who were going through the communities preaching a sustainable life style. We worked with poets, people who could express environmental values in an aesthetic sense.

We did a week-long seminar on the environment that was completely bilateral in the sense that I worked with one university professor from the United States and one from Thailand, religious from the United States and Thailand, activists from the United States and Thailand, and poets from the United States and Thailand. We all went away to an area up in the north of Thailand for a week. Our sessions were fully translated; we had simultaneous translation which isn't easy as you know. We brought in Bill McKibben who had just written <u>The End of the Earth</u>. He still is a prominent environmental activist in the United States. He recently organized the demonstrations against the Xl pipeline, but at that time he had just written the <u>End of the Earth,</u> which I thought was a powerful book. He came, and he stayed the entire week. Because of him we were able to get the best grassroots activists, in Thailand. We had John Swearer who was professor of religion

at Swarthmore who had for a long time actually lived in a Buddhist monastery in Thailand and who knew Buddhism but had this broader religious background. He came to talk from a comparative religious perspective. We had comparable person from the Thai University community who was the professor of religion at Thammasat University. Then we brought a writer who had spent the previous year as a Fulbrighter in Japan. He was a literature professor at Middlebury. He was a scholar of American nature writing. Our nature writing going back to Theroux is a very specific kind of literature. Anyway, he had edited the Norton Anthology on American Nature Writing. Then on the Thai side we had the president of the Pen Association of Writers. For a week we were offsite, and we had these incredible discussions back and forth. How does a human understand their place in the environment poetically or religiously? People listened to one another. It was quite a wonderful experience. We visited the forest monks and we got a sense of what they were doing, Bill McKenna was very interested in that.

When the workshop ended, we pulled the transcript together and produced a bilingual book. I had one talented and well connected FSN who worked on it for a long period of time. That program demonstrates, I think, my way of recognizing deep cultural differences and yet trying to deal with a similar policy problem, which is degradation of the environment and its effect. I think that is something that USIA did well; and could do whenever we had the resources and the time to focus. It was an example of working biculturally on a common problem. It was a problem that we wanted them to do more about in a policy sense but in the Thai context that was tied up in the politics in the fact that a lot of the environmental activists in Thailand were anti-government they wanted to see more of a democratic government in Thailand. That was the context that we were working in. We had to understanding the aesthetics within the culture to be able to deal with the higher political and the economic issues. Does that make sense?

Q: Yes. Were you up against the Thai real estate developers and others who didn't…

OGLESBY: And the Japanese who came in and cut down all the old growth hardwood. Thailand had fabulous old growth forests and the Japanese needed the hardwood; they cut down the old trees and then they planted eucalyptus, which they then chopped down to make chopsticks or whatever. Eucalyptus does not encourage bio diversity. If you walk through a eucalyptus plantation, you will not hear a cricket, you will not see a bird. It's a monoculture, it's like going through a field of corn, it's a single crop. The Thai at the grassroots level were, of course, very aware of that. Cutting down all the gorgeous hardwood trees also created erosion. Thailand has distinct dry and wet seasons; when you lose the forest, you will also loose what holds your ground and then you have landslides and flooding and flooding was a real problem in Thailand.

To try and get people to understand the connection between all of this it was an effort. We were working with the organizations that cared about it keenly during the four years that I was there. But we also tried to break through and call attention to the issue in a more public mass way. One of the programs that I was able to convince Dan O'Donohue to do -- and it took me quite a while -- was to allow me to bring in young Thai artists to paint an environmental mural on the embassy security walls. I laugh when I think about that and my conversations with Dan; I do have to laugh. But these artists were good, and we got the Bank of Thailand to pay for it. It was a fabulous, and temporary, mural it was on this big security wall that was all around the embassy compound. We got a ton of publicity, which put the American embassy on the side of

environmentalists in Thailand. We got so much publicity that actually the Prime Minister drove across Bangkok, which is not an easy thing to do, to see this wall. He had to see what everybody was talking about.

Q: What was the migration of Thai's to the United States? When I was a kid nobody ever heard of a Thai restaurant or a Thai and then all of a sudden, I take it was the war that started it but was this continuing at this point migration?

OGLESBY: Thailand has significant population growth. Many Thai go abroad for work. Some came to the United States and a lot of them went to the Middle East and that became an issue for us during the Gulf War which we can talk about. Thai emigrated in order to find jobs. They were leaving searching for opportunities and during this period, '88 - '92 when I was there, travel and communications became easier and cheaper. In earlier years, when I'd been abroad in Paraguay for example, or even El Salvador, people just didn't travel back and forth with ease. During this period air travel became cheaper and people started traveling coming to Thailand for vacations, coming to snorkel, coming to see the temples. There was a great increase in tourism and more Thai went abroad. This is the period when I began to notice the effects of globalization: easier, cheaper travel, easier, cheaper communications. Email came to us during this time-frame. Satellite TV also began to have an impact; this made a huge difference to us during the Gulf War.

The US was framing the Gulf War as the world -- the United Nations Security Council, the civilized community of the world -- coming together to repel Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The Thai were extremely interested in the war because they sold a lot of rice to Iraq. Many Thai worked in the Gulf states sending back remittances. All of our efforts to frame the war as a united global front against a rogue state were completely undercut by the fact that satellite television had arrived during this period. The Thai were watching *CNN* and American broadcast news networks. American networks framed the war as the US against Saddam Hussein. As far as American media were concerned with was an American war. Thai homes did not have satellite yet; but they had satellite dishes at the newspapers and government institutions and hotels. The American war frame was reverberating in the Thai media. The visual was George H.W. Bush engaged in a kickboxing match with Saddam Hussein. This was the first time in my USIS experience that we could not influence the narrative abroad because the narrative that was developed in the United States for American audiences washed over borders and defined the way it was seen globally.

Q: Well it is still compelling.

OGLESBY: Oh, it was compelling. But it changed the media game. I know from my readings that the same thing happened in India. Thousands of Indians worked in the Gulf states. They followed the Gulf War closely because of their diaspora there. Our new world order frame could not get traction. It failed because the American satellite broadcasts were being seen abroad and how they framed the issue for American consumption determined the frame internationally. That that was new. If you were involved in USIS press activities, you had to think about that, you had to think about the limitations of your ability to frame an issue in a bilateral context when the borders to communication have just totally evaporated.

Q: Well prior to that basically one of the big services USIS did was to give information for the wire services to the local newspapers. I mean this is how it appears to me but all of a sudden, you've got the new boy on the block who is giving you pictures of what's happening.

OGLESBY: We never gave the foreign press wire service stories. We wrote our own copy. We also talked to them about events and we did try to frame the issue in terms of our policy perspective. We gave them a lot of their information to support that frame. It was honest; but all of a sudden, we had to think the American media perspective that they now had real time access to. It complicated our work. USIS suddenly had to deal with the fact that we were not operating in a contained national media environment. The walls of the national container were suddenly porous; other information was flowing in and flowing out. It changed the nature of our relationship with the press I think quite a bit.

I have to say USIS was not the only institution of the U.S. government to be affected by this change. I remember during the Gulf War in particular, that we had just gotten a commercial satellite dish on the embassy rood and we were able to get CNN. During the Gulf War, I set up monitors in the conference room outside of the ambassador's office to let him know what was being broadcast. The Gulf War was the first real time televised war. Sure, we had powerful images out of Viet Nam; but they were on film that had to be flown out of Viet Nam to Hawaii and then uplinked there, right? The Gulf War was different. This was real time and so I set up monitors to get the news quickly. I distinctly remember one day watching CNN report on SCUDs. Saddam Hussein was said to be sending SCUDs into Israel. I distinctly remember one day seeing the station chief run down the hall carrying a piece of paper into the ambassador. He made this breathless announcement that Iraq had attacked Israel with SCUDS. I had just heard that report corrected on CNN. I followed the station chief into the ambassador's office to correct his message. Hot intelligence was wrong. It was too slow. I said, "Well you know that is dated information, actually that is not the situation and they had just corrected it on CNN." You can imagine why real time news broadcasts change intelligence work too.

Q: Oh God.

OGLESBY: During this period, I think many USIS officers felt the technological ground shifting. We sensed that there would be media effects on our work. How do we have to change, how do we have to look at what we are about. I can give you another example of the effects on Thai politics. This was a very volatile period in Thai politics; and it was made more volatile by the fact that the Thai were able to see democratic changes elsewhere in the world in real time on TV. There weren't satellite broadcasts in Thailand of the fall of the wall of Berlin; but there were satellite broadcasts of the demonstrations that brought down the government of the USSR in '91. These images had a contagion effect. The images of other people doing something so amazing in the USSR inspired activists in Thailand. It came to be called the *CNN* effect. Politics abroad bled into Thai media space; and inspired the democratizers, the grassroots Thai. They reasoned that if the Berlin Wall can come down, and the Soviet Union can be broken up, then we ought to be able to keep the military from controlling our political life. We started to think more deeply about the media and politics in a satellite age. That was in the early '90s. We are going through a

technological effects transition again now with the impact of social media on the politics of our foreign policy.

Q: Did the Thai government whichever one was in power try to control this?

OGLESBY: Yes, absolutely. The Thai government always tried to control the electronic media much more than the print media. The Thai government had for a long time put the electronic media on a much shorter leash. They understood the power of radio and television over the rural population and the illiterate. The Thai government was willing to allow a relatively uncensored press; but they were very strict about what could be broadcast on television. When people started getting their own satellite dishes, when institutions started getting their own satellite dishes to view *CNN, Deutsche Welle* and the on their own, the Thai government lost the ability to control information flow. What the government could control was the rebroadcast that information on national TV stations in Thailand. And, it did. It's not surprising that Erdogan is doing the same thing in Turkey right now. He's trying to control social media by blocking Facebook and Twitter. He understands that his ability to control the narrative and dominate the politics in the country is undercut by forms of media than empower individual citizens to work around the media controls. It was the same in Thailand 25 years ago. The media that they were concerned about at the time was satellite television.

Q: Did you get complaints saying Ted Turner said something on CNN or that sort of thing?

OGLESBY: Did I what?

Q: Did you get complaints from the government about what was going…

OGLESBY: Sure, they would complain to me about American media coverage that was now seen in Thailand. We would get complaints but there was nothing we could do to control it. We could hardly censor American domestic media. Everybody was beginning to understand that new media gremlins had been unleashed. *CNN* wasn't physically in Thailand. The broadcast came across the borders because the Tai were pulling it in. I was thinking about globalization effects earlier when I said that travel had gotten cheaper easier. As a consequence, American interest groups could try to influence discussions abroad in ways that they hadn't before. Debates in the United States, for example on cigarettes, was exported to Thailand. Thailand did not permit American cigarettes to be sold legally in Thailand. They were protecting a Thai monopoly. Most Thai of any elite status smoked American cigarettes anyway. They got them illegally when they were smuggled into Thailand, or they stocked up when they went abroad. The powerful executive secretary to the queen smoked Newports, the ones with the teal blue package. When I noticed her brand, I had a conversation with her about allowing the sale of American cigarettes in Thailand. The U.S. government was pushing for this as a matter of policy.

At the same time, U.S. health advocacy organizations were networking with Thai health advocacy organizations and working against sales there on health grounds. There was lots of media coverage of American health organizations opposing the US government policy. American health organizations argued that the Thai should not change their laws on the importation of American cigarettes because of the health of the Thai. All of a sudden, I realized

again that the world had changed. American non-governmental organizations were operating globally, carrying our domestic policy debate abroad. The issue was transformed from a bilateral trade issue between the United States and Thailand to a global discussion about health and capitalism. This was first time in my Foreign Service experience that I felt our political context shift. Conversations we used to hold bilaterally, were suddenly global. Domestic politics and foreign policy intersected in quite different ways. National containers had been exploded by a change in technology.

Q: Did you find that there was a dialogue going on back in the State Department and USIA about these changes and how we do this or was it left to each of you?

OGLESBY: It finally happened. I do remember picking up the phone and calling my desk officer to say, "Do you understand that the banner that goes across the news on *NBC* or *CNN* says, "America at war." The chyron which was intended for an American audience was being seen around the world and was undercutting U.S. government policy in the world. You are telling us as a matter of policy to promote the Gulf War as a United Nation war and not an American war." There was silence. It hadn't yet occurred to headquarters folks that this had changed. It had come abruptly. Given USIA's authorizing legislation, the idea that we could pick up the phone and try and convince an American broadcaster to change something in their domestic news presentation did not compute. The entire agency is structured on the premise that we conduct information activities abroad for a foreign audience. What does abroad now mean? The political space is no longer contained abroad. I think it took a long time actually for people to understand how things had changed.

Q: Did you find that you were having discussions with your staff about this or was this sort of a mental process as you were going through internally?

OGLESBY: I had a good American staff and I think we talked about it. We talked about how we needed to adapt and modify our information operation. Your question is also fair in that maybe this was an incubation period for me trying to understand what I intuited was happening. The agricultural attaché was a kindred spirit. We had worked together to promote the sale of American apples in Thailand. There was a major flap about alar coating apples. American NGOs argued that the US was exporting alar coated apples that were bad for human health. They networked with their Thai counterparts to keep us from succeeding in opening the market to apples. The Agricultural Attaché got it. He's seen the effects of the changes on his ability to do his job. So, I was able to have that discussion with him and how does it change, and what does this mean. I think it's fair to say that I may have been a bit ahead of the curve thinking about the transformation. I knew I needed to know more; that is why I asked for my follow-on tour to be a year as a diplomat-in-residence at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy.

Q: Well you were in Thailand from when to when again?

OGLESBY: From '88-'92, a four-year tour.

Q: Okay, the Soviet Union was imploding.

OGLESBY: Yes, we were watching it on TV.

Q: How did that work with you?

OGLESBY: Well as I said earlier, in '91, when the USSR was imploding we could see it on TV. There was a democratic contagion that affected and inspired the democracy activists in Thailand. Remember the Thai government was very anti-Communist and continued to be anti-Communist long after the Viet Nam war. During this time the communist Chinese were active in Cambodia. The Thai were working with us, running operations against them. I learned about this because my husband's work in Bangkok was focused on Cambodia. We discussed that I went out to Bangkok first because he was not able to get an assignment in Thailand. This was very disappointing to us. Six months later when he finished up his job in Washington in the science advisor's office he did get another leave without pay to come to Thailand to be with me. Being tandem very negatively affected my husband's career; USAID was unwilling to try and make tandem assignments work. My husband spent the first couple of months learning Thai; he is good with languages. Then fortunately, he was able to get hired first on contract and then actually as an USAID employee on the Khmer Program. My husband was able to finish out his USAID career employed by USAID working on a Cambodian program in Thailand. Large numbers of Cambodian refugees were hosted in Thailand who required humanitarian assistance. There were other classified operations that I never knew that much about. Chinese, the Vietnamese, the Thai and us were all engaged in ongoing operations in Southeast Asia.

My husband finished his career on his 50th birthday. His career had not done well because of his willingness to allow mine to prosper. My husband decided to take advantage of the Foreign Service system of retiring at the age of 50 with twenty years' service. He had more service because of military and Peace Corps time. He treated himself to something he had always wanted to: go to divinity school. He packed up and went off to Yale Divinity School leaving me in Thailand for my last year by myself. My husband was in New Haven at Yale Divinity School and to give you a sense of communication at that time, we had no email availability. We bought matching fax machines and we faxed each other letters every day. That is how we communicated. Anyway, my husband went to New Haven for a two-year Master of Arts in religion at Yale. My goal was to get in that general vicinity; I went to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Boston.

I don't know where we started. But the fall of the Soviet Union was politically very important in Thailand because it made the government afraid that their days were numbered; and it made the democratic activists convinced that they could pull off political change. It gave them heart. When they went out and demonstrated in the public squares, they did not leave. The prime minister resigned, and elections were called.

Q: Well how did you view this you might say the coup culture. Was there sort of a good democratic side and a not democratic side or was this power groups looking for more power?

OGLESBY: I would have to say, in retrospect, that it was the latter. I wouldn't say that on the part of activists. The young people who were involved in the newspapers and the universities wanted a more democratic system. In time it became a case of revolving interest groups. I don't

think most Thai democratic activists would say the so-called democratic governments that they had, have in fact been democratic. That all happened since I left.

Q: Well we seem to be going through a repeat of some horrible things in our political system right now.

OGLESBY: I was thinking when you and I talked last Thursday -- last Thursday was before the Dallas police shootings – that my time in Thailand is light years ago. We'll finish this conversation and then will have some lunch and sit in front of the television and watch President Obama give yet another speech to the nation mourning the unnecessary deaths of people who are simply doing their jobs. The speed of change is just tremendous. I know Obama says there is no giant unraveling; but that is not what my gut tells me. Are you sad? I'm sad.

Q: Well this is a question of Foreign Service we've witnessed this in other countries.

OGLESBY: Right, I don't know if I were a USIS officer today how I would talk about the benefits of the American political system. I would just have a very hard time. All I think you can do, and I remember doing it during Watergate, is to admit that we have blemishes. That we have had hard times. You talk about self-correcting nature in the system and I guess if I were in the Foreign Service today trying to explain what is going on, I'd say remember we have a federal system. Pay attention to the mayor of Dallas who I think was quite wonderful. The chief of police in Dallas is a blessing. The United States is a federal system. It is multilayered. We now know that foreign audiences have great direct access to American news. They go online: they go on Facebook, they follow people on Twitter to get the information they want. They are much less likely to rely on anybody in the embassy telling what's going on in the United States. They are going to let their fingers do the walking and get the information directly. Then our job has got to be how to figure out what they think is going on and try to modify any misunderstandings that they may have developed as a consequence of what they have just chosen to read. For example, If your interlocutors in a certain country are getting all their information from *Russia Today* about what is going on in Europe or what is going on in the United States, you have a problem. What impression are they going to have and how do you correct that? We don't pay attention to the fact that the Chinese are spending multi-billions of dollars on their information efforts abroad and the Russians are too. I think it would be a very, very tough time to be dealing in information work for the United States government abroad.

Q: While you were in Thailand did you find that you were spending a considerable amount of time explaining, I mean people coming to you asking question or were you sensing that they were going elsewhere for their information?

OGLESBY: I think they still wanted to have relationships with people from the embassy, we still had conversations. You know we were very interested in what was going on in Thailand; a lot of my conversations with people in the media and people in the universities where about was going on in Thailand. I did a fair amount of reporting for State as well. During that period, it wasn't that the United States was going through a difficult time. I was in Thailand during the presidency of Bush, the father. That was a unified period in American life. I think it was a good period in terms of the management of our agency. We had Henry Cato as the director; he did a big trip to

Thailand which I managed. It was a good smooth period and I think the State Department was well run during that period too. Baker was an excellent secretary of state. There were some shifts and changes; but awful stuff wasn't happening in the United States that we needed to explain, in other words. That's not what was going on.

Q: The Gulf War this is, of course, you want to call it the First Gulf War, which is in response to an over invasion, which made it easier to sell didn't it?

OGLESBY: The UN Security Council resolution mattered. The Japanese actually did pay for much of the war by taxing themselves. Imagine! The contribution was huge. There was a coalition that bore real costs. The satellite television image was quite different. It looked like the United States as the global cop taking care of all the world's problems. That's not exactly what we were trying to communicate; that wasn't the policy of the Bush administration. That's not why Jim Baker, who was the secretary of State, knocked himself out in negotiations to get the Arab states on board. We may have done the heavy lifting and the fighting, but it was multilateral in a much more significant way than the Second Gulf War ever was.

Q: Yeah. How did you find you were working with other embassies or did you on various projects?

OGLESBY: I didn't. I ran into the Australian ambassador in places, I ran into some other embassy people at the Foreign Press Club, which was an important institution in Thailand because all of the international journalists for their region were based in Bangkok. I can't say, however, that I worked with other embassies at all.

Q: How was Thailand dealing with Viet Nam or was it?

OGLESBY: Well in terms of my work, we had a parade of Congressmen always coming into the region on POW/MIA issues. During that time when we did not yet have restored diplomatic relations with Viet Nam, they were only able to get into Viet Nam on special delegations, and then they would come back out and do their press conferences in Bangkok. We arranged them. Senator John Kerry came in several times because it was an issue he cared about, as did Senator John McCain. The Thai were interested in our coming to terms with Viet Nam because they wanted Vietnamese refugees in Thailand to go home. There were also huge refugee camps of Cambodians in Thailand. In that sense they were affected by the neighborhood conflicts. Thai and Vietnamese have never been buddies; there was historic tension below the radar.

Q: How about with Burma, Myanmar? Was there much going on there?

OGLESBY: I managed to get myself into Myanmar for about a week on a personal trip. I was able to get all over the country. It was quite closed to the world at that time. Burma and Thailand had two large issues: refugees and drugs. We had a significant DEA operation in Bangkok focused on the northern triangle. DEA was very concerned about the porous border between Burma and Thailand in the north and the flow of narcotics into Thailand and then into the world. There was a fair amount of corruption in Thailand with respect to looking the other way when drugs flowed across the border.

At the same time the Chinese were moving into Myanmar in a big way to extract natural resources. I made a road trip from Rangoon up to Mandalay. All the trucks were Chinese. Many carried the lumber from the destruction of the hardwood forests. I saw horrible clear cutting in the north of Myanmar. The environmental destruction was accompanied by ethnic cleansing. Refugee ethnic minorities came across the borders seeking refuge in Thailand. Thailand was a generally calm, prosperous country sitting in the middle of a SEA in turmoil. They were hosting large numbers of refugees from Cambodia, Myanmar and still from Viet Nam.

At the same time the rapid economic and political changes in China were significant from a Thai perspective because there are a lot of Sino-Thai. The Sino-Thai were very involved in the business community; then the Sino-Thai began to become involved in politics. All that came to a head years after I left Thailand. Part of the tension in the political space is between those who are businessmen and not military; are Sino-Thai, not Thai-Thai. There is an ethnic component to the politics in Thailand.

Q: Instead of doing a tour of the horizon how did you feel about the royal family. I'm told that the crown prince is not looked upon with a great deal of favor by many.

OGLESBY: No, he is not he is not respected at all; but the crown princess was very respected when I was there. To the extent that we worked with the royal family, we worked with her office. The queen was not as favorably thought of as the King. The crown prince was not thought of well at all. When seeking royal sponsorship for events, we worked with the female royals. We brought, for example, the New York Philharmonic to Thailand when I was there, and we had the sponsorship of the royal family and that was important to our profile.

I also was again involved with assembling an exhibit; this time it was an exhibit of Thai textiles, which are fabulous. The Thai have a wonderful tradition of textiles. The textile museum in the Washington D.C. was very interested in having an exhibit of Thai textiles. They couldn't get anywhere in Thailand without official support and official recognition. We were able to work the queen and her office to organize the material. I was very proud of or facilitation. It took the queen's patronage to open the doors you had to open in Thailand to borrow textiles that had been in museums or private collections. We were able to organize the exhibit and send it to the textile museum in Washington. I saw it there when I returned. It was beautifully hung. The Thai embassy was involved in the opening and they were very proud of it. Again, we compiled and published a book in celebration of Thai textiles. The American ambassador in Thailand had a statement. When we worked on any large-scale cultural event, we worked with the palace absolutely.

Q: What was the problem with the crown prince?

OGLESBY: The crown prince had a wife and a family; but he had a mistress and a family too. He was indiscreet. He was also hot tempered, they would say he had a hot heart. Lots of stories of temper tantrums. He rarely performed royal duties. He spent a lot of time outside of Thailand. The crown princess would be there to dedicate any new school, to open any temple; she worked diligently representing the royal family. He didn't. Part of his poor reputation owed to the fact

that he wasn't doing the work, that he was a playboy, that he was too selfish. It was never written but everybody always talked about it. I know I was never in any event where he was, I did meet the king, I did meet the queen and I met the crown princess any number of times when we were in places together. I can't give you a personal reading on the crown prince; I can just give you the scuttle butt.

Q: Speaking of the problem of the crown prince I would think that you would have a problem with visitors because of the sex business. I went to a consular conference one time in Bangkok, I was in Seoul. All my colleagues went, and I was the last, the only guy to go back to the hotel by myself. The rest had dropped off although a bunch of us had started off. This is a place of everybody went and looked at the sex business.

OGLESBY: You know Stu I didn't experience that side of Thailand. What can I tell you? But you are right. I never had a speaker that I know of get in trouble; I never had to fish anybody out of jail or anything like that. Patpong is infamous for its sex shows. The issue for me was that many Thai, who were anti-American, would say American GIs on R & R from Viet Nam created the sex trade. They blamed us for the degradation of Thai woman. I would have to deal with that as a public affairs issue. Many people who came to Thailand from the West on vacation were not coming to pray in Thai temples; they were coming to screw around literally with little boys or little girls or anybody else. The Thai's had had a very lenient attitude toward sex long before the Viet Nam War; but the sex trade became an issue in terms of a kind of mutual respect. It was one of those irritants not between the Thai government and the U.S. government, but it in societal terms. It was part of the ugly American syndrome.

Q: Oh yeah. I understand there are special fights from Germany just for the sex business.

OGLESBY: Sure. To lay that at the feet of the ugly American empire always struck me as a stretch.

Q: Yeah. Okay well then when you left Thailand how did you feel were you beginning to feel that you developed a handle on the worldwide net or whatever you want to call it the internet and all?

OGLESBY: That's what I wanted to spend more time thinking about. We produced our own magazine in Thailand. I wondered if we should continue to do magazines. Computers just came into USIS during that period. I wanted to think about that. The agency wanted me to go to Mexico as the PAO. I love Mexico and it was an honor to be asked but I felt I wanted to think about what was going on in terms of communication media and how the world was changing. I wanted a year and I pushed for a diplomat-in-residence assignment and got the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, which put me in the general vicinity of my husband. I was in Boston and he was in New Haven. I had a lot of time to read and think. I also had to teach a course on public diplomacy during the spring.

Q: What were you coming up with?

OGLESBY: While I was at Fletcher?

Q: Yeah.

OGLESBY: I'm having a hard time hearing you because they are mowing our lawn I keep moving around. I think there are a million lawn mowers out there.

Q: It's not bad here.

OGLESBY: The director of the Edward R. Morrow program at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy was a guy named Russ Newman who had come from MIT media lab. While at the MIT media lab he had been working with Nicholas Negroponte (who is the brother of Ambassador Negroponte.) Russ had written a book on the end of mass media. He was prescient. Russ was what is known as a "media affects" guy. That meant he focused on how the change in the technology was going to change the politics as a consequence. I read his book and he put me on to a lot of other people that were exploring this theme. Boston is a terrific educational city; there are lectures everywhere. I had earlier gone to the JFK School at Harvard for a three-week course for senior executives in government. I was comfortable in the Boston area. I went around town all the time. I'd go to Harvard and go to the coop to look at the books that they were using in courses on political communication; buy them and read them. The whole time I was there I was focused on these technological changes and how rapidly they were coming on stream. That year of study made a huge difference in my next and last job in the agency, which was counselor of the agency.

Q: You are talking about the changes. My son is now the head of research for an outfit called Amazon and…

OGLESBY: I've heard of them.

Q: …he is talking about things that are way beyond me it's a wonderful world out there but it is changing so rapidly.

OGLESBY: It absolutely is; and I think a significant chunk of what I was ended up doing as counselor depended on at least my initial understanding of what was going on. Fletcher was a wonderful experience. I also learned that I liked being a teacher. That made a real difference in my next life when I left the agency. I've been teaching for twenty years now and I don't know that I would have walked down that path if I hadn't had that year as diplomat-in-residence.

Q: I know I've talked to people who have been counselor of the State Department, which has always been a rather flexible position. What did this mean?

OGLESBY: I would like to have that conversation at another time is that okay?

Q: Absolutely.

OGLESBY: I will be happy to tell you what it means but the counselor in USIA is a line position; it is not a floating position like in the State Department. The counselor is the ranking

career position with operational responsibility for all field posts. All the area directors' report to the counselor.

Q: Oh yeah well obviously it is a completely different thing. Okay, we will talk the next time and I do want to talk about your experience in teaching too and what you brought to teaching from USIA and your impression of student bodies and developments in teaching too.

OGLESBY: Absolutely I would be happy to talk about that.

Q: Okay, let's look at the calendar.

Today is the 20th of July 2016 with Donna Oglesby and Donna we have reached a point where you had a new job which is counselor of USIA. Could you explain how that job came about and what it entails and then we will talk about it and also the date.

OGLESBY: The Clinton administration entered office in 1992Joe Duffey came in as the director of USIA. While I was at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, they asked me to come down sometime in the spring to meet him. Duffy was the president of American University then. My name was apparently on a list to be considered for the counselor position. They flew me down and I had a chance to meet him at an event at American University. Joe was not quick to make up his mind; nothing was decided. When my tour at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy was finished, I went into Washington D.C without an assignment. Finally, I got the nod. Early in the fall of 1992, I was named to position. A couple of weeks went by before I took the job because the McKinney Russell who had been the counselor in the previous administration was finishing up.

Q: What was the job?

OGLESBY: Well the counselor's position was the ranking career Foreign Service officer position. The first person to hold and mold that position was Jock Shirley. Originally it was advisory to the director. The idea was that Foreign Service officers in the field needed to have somebody with a Foreign Service background in a position to advise the director on the field perspective. Jock was the first one; initially the counselor had no supervisory responsibility. By the time I got the job, the counselor was the direct supervisor of all the area directors. The counselor wrote the efficiency reports on the area directors and deputy directors. She had an operational role in determining the budget, and personnel assignments in the field. As the counselor I was on the senior personnel assignment board making decisions about who was PAO positions and other senior foreign service positions. I also responsibility for budget allocations as related to the field operations. We suffered budget cuts in the early years of the Clinton administration and had to decide how the field would take their share. I met with the area directors every week and saw my job as protecting the field, reporting to the field, giving them room to do their job.

Q: Before we get into the nitty gritty I've talked to a number of people about Joe Duffy and he hasn't come out very well from the professional people. What was your impression of him and how did you find working with him?

OGLESBY: Well, I don't think any of the professional people are going to be happy about a director of an agency that presided over its demise. We went out of business on Joe Duffy's watch. He is always going to be seen in that light. From my perspective, Joe was extremely hardworking and nice guy. He was well connected in the Democratic Party. He believed in cultural exchanges. When he came into the agency, he did not have much appreciation for the information side of the house. He was not a manager in the sense of hands-on operations. He was a political networker. He had previously been assistant secretary for CU in the Department of State. He had been the director of the National Endowment for the Humanities. He was at one time the president of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, and then was president of American University. He came from cultural educational side of the house. That's what he knew and that's what he cared about. The problem for a lot of agency folks then was that half of the business of USIA was the information business. I also don't think he ever understood the importance of field operations. If you are talking to Foreign Service officers, they will certainly reflect that.

Q: What would you say was the state of USIA when you got there at that point?

OGLESBY: The Clinton administration had come in with the idea of reinventing government; you might remember that. Al Gore was in charged with reinventing government and Elaine Kamarck who was on his staff was specifically responsible for foreign affairs agencies. On the one hand the agency was being looked at by the Clinton administration as a resource pool from which to save money. They looked at the reinvention of government as the way to draw down national security expenditures to free up resources for domestic programs. At the same time, we had Jessie Helms who was the chairman of the foreign relations committee who was adamant about drawing down foreign affairs agencies because in his view we had won the Cold War.

There was this kind of pincer movement from the left and from the right on the American political scene that wanted to find a peace dividend. That was the phrase of the day. We won, where is the peace dividend? We should be able to free up resources from cold war agencies because we are not fighting communism anymore. I think the conservatives -- and Jessie Helms kind of represented that -- saw an opportunity to get a smaller government. On the progressive side of the house, I think that what they wanted was to drawdown the expenditure on government programs abroad to make available more resources to address poverty and equality issues within the United States. Their motivation was very, very different; but USIA was under attack. Its existence was under attack and certainly its resources were under attack from early on. In fact, the whole time I was counselor I fought that battle.

Q: Okay, well let's talk about what you were doing and I'm sure we will weave in these attacks and what you did about them and what happened along with the whole narrative.

OGLESBY: The bottom line is that we were able to fend them off while I was counselor. Three years later, the agency went out of existence. The attacks were relentless, and Warren Christopher was replaced my Madeline Albright. Before I was actually in the job, although I had been named, I was sitting in the director's office with Penn Kemble who was the deputy director for the agency. Penn, who has since passed away, was a neo-conservative. He had come out of

the union movement and was well connected within the neo-conservative movement both Republicans and Democrats. Joe was much more a progressive Democrat; they didn't see eye-to-eye on a lot. Penn still believed in the battle of ideas and winning hearts and minds; he did care about information activities; he did care about policy. He thought cultures and democratization mattered. He believed we won the cold war through the power of ideas. Joe didn't necessarily. His great motivator was racial equality. He was a child of the civil rights movement; then the antiwar movement.

We were talking at length about how we were going to deal with the cuts that were coming and what we needed to do about it. Their different priorities surfaced. Mine was different still. I had come, from a year of thinking and teaching at the Fletcher School on Diplomacy. I was very aware of the effects that information technology would likely have on our business. I had read into all of that and felt that we should look at the kind of cuts we would had to take as an opportunity to reorganize the information side of the house and to get ourselves in a position where we had a digital platform rather than having things stove-piped by magazines and radio and television and that sort of thing; I was pushing that. They were listening, but they wanted to see it on paper. I wrote it all out. I wrote kind of a White Paper about what USIA should look like or what foreign affairs, public diplomacy will look like in the internet age. That paper eventually became the blueprint for the reorganization of USIA. After I wrote the first draft, Penn got interested in it and he realized that Joe was going take it seriously. Penn jumped into it becoming the coauthor of the paper. A primary outcome was a complete reorganization of the bureau of policy and plans and the information bureau. It was a major, major restructuring of the information side of the house.

Q: Okay could you go into this? I mean what was in your paper and what was being done, what were the changes?

OGLESBY: Well the paper essentially made a number of points: one was that the boundaries between domestic and foreign affairs were being perforated. Clinton administration knew that coming in. They raised global issues to the fore. They felt that global issues had legs in domestic and international politics. They didn't see a strong separation between foreign affairs and domestic affairs. That was one way of thinking about it. The paper also pointed out that traditional state actors in diplomacy were being increasingly joined on the stage by individuals and non-governmental organizations working across international borders. Penn and Joe That held that point of view strongly. In that meeting that I had told you about Penn sat on the sofa under a map of our field operations. He pointed to it and said, "Why do we need all these people in embassies in the field? A global civil society is being created; we engage the world through our issue specific NGOs. NGOs have experts and these experts are meeting with their counterparts abroad and all these other international meetings are taking place where environmentalists talk to one another; and human rights people are talking to human rights people; so, why do we need people in the field?"

After picking myself up off the floor, I realized just how strong their globalist perspective was held. In fact, and I'm sure you must have talked to State personnel, there was an effort to reorganize the State Department on the basis of global issues, right? Clinton appointees didn't appreciate the need for a regional structuring of the department. They saw a global stew of issues

rather than national interests and perspectives. Jessica Mathews was only in the State Department for one year; but I remember going with Joe to a meeting with Jessica Mathews where she revealed a big sheet of paper on which she had laid out how State would be completely reorganized. The plan was to eliminate the regional bureaus and organize the State Department around global issues. You've talked to people about that right?

Q: Yeah.

OGLESBY: She didn't succeed basically because Secretary Christopher didn't want to use a lot of his political capital on the reorganization of the State Department. Strobe Talbott wasn't interested either. They were interested in policy and not in organization; she left unhappily after a year. The point was that is the new world they saw; we tried to deal with it in USIA by reorganizing the policy and information offices. The new policy and programs bureau was structured in terms of issues – not regions -- and that was the essential restructuring. Barry Fulton did the heavy lifting. Barry Fulton was a career Foreign Service officer who was named associate director for the new bureau. He worked his heart out to make this work. Civil servants were upset because jobs that they had been doing forever were eliminated. The hierarchy of both had been flattened, reducing opportunities for advancement. It was the ending of a lot of the traditional ways USIA went about doing its business. But it was successful in the sense that people ultimately came to love working in the new bureau. They loved the dynamism of working on teams and working in a network fashion and not having this incredible hierarchy of people that had to sign off on everything. They loved being able to generate new ideas and just run with them. It took a while to get there, but I think the people who were part of that ended up being invigorated by the experience and by the newness of what they were working on because this stuff was new. This was the time when the State Department had WANG computers and didn't understand what information technology was going to do to their business. We were ahead of that in USIA and I feel good about that. That was one of the major things that the reorganization accomplished. What is it that you might not understand about that?

Q: I wonder if you could explain I know but I don't know if I could come up with an explanation for myself right now the difference between fighting the Cold War and all of a sudden, the Soviet Union is no longer there and on the information side what is in it for America.

OGLESBY: Why should we be doing anything you mean?

Q: Yes.

OGLESBY: That's Jessie Helm's question, right? We've won. There is no challenge to the American model. History has ended. Capitalism and democracy are triumphant. The arc of the history moves in this direction and we've done it. If you've sold the existence of USIA as a Cold War institution, then why do you continue life? Those same questions were being asked about NATO at exactly the same time, right? But history was not quite over. We were dealing with the dissolution of Yugoslavia then. That was rather a long and bloody war. We were dealing with a coup in Haiti, as I recall. Clinton committed to Aristide that we would return him to power and that happened during this period. Tiananmen Square happened; suggesting that democracy was not around the corner in China. The first attack of the World Trade Center took place during this

period and other attacks took place in the field. We were dealing with terrorism, we were dealing with drugs, and we were dealing increasingly with the environment. This is the period when climate change discussions took off and our concerns about the environment were certainly there. There were a number of global issues including poverty in the third world that the United States had an interest in having resolved.

It certainly wasn't the feeling on the part of embassies abroad or our officers in the field that history had come to an end everybody was lining up in an American parade. There were differences between the United States, its policies and other countries. National aspirations differed. I never have been one who thought that the agency only existed to fight the Cold War. While I was counselor, all institutions of the USG were pressured by the reinventing the government folks to make clear their mission. I wrote a mission statement for USIA that was 52 words long: *USIA's mission is to understand, inform and influence foreign public in pursuit of the national interest; and to broaden the dialogue between Americans, their institutions and their counterparts abroad.* I think of that mission as evergreen. Yes, there is change but it doesn't mean that you don't have to have people in the foreign affairs community of the United States focused on the public dimension of our foreign policies. We need to continue to work to understand how foreign public are shaping the actions of their governments or setting limitations on the abilities of their governments to respond to policy initiatives that we might have. I don't think that goes away ever. We weren't sensing from reporting from the field that the differences between people on irreconcilable values had suddenly gone poof! Those differences were still there, and we felt that it was essential that we needed to demonstrate the relevance of the agency because of that fact. We had to do it within the context of significantly reduced human resources; that is what we did. We did eventually win a reinventing government award from Al Gore. We were recognized to have done a significant and important reinvention of our function given the information and technology changes that were taking place. Ultimately, that didn't prevent the agency from being rolled into the State Department. I don't think that occurred because we were irrelevant. I think we had demonstrated our relevance. I think it occurred for resource reasons.

Q: Yeah, well while you took it over did you have the feeling that the demise of the agency was inevitable?

OGLESBY: No, I didn't. I thought we could fight back, and we did fight back for the three years I was there. First of all, we had to fight back within the Clinton administration because the first effort to eliminate USIA came from Al Gore's office. I remember Rob Nevitt who was a senior foreign service officer whom I had asked to represent the agency on the reinvention task force with the foreign affairs community that Elaine Kamarck was leading. I remember when Rob returned from the first meeting at the State Department. He came into my office and he made it very clear to me that she had her sights on USIA; that they were going to eliminate USIA and roll us into the State Department. Apparently, they just didn't accept the whole information side of the house; they didn't think it was necessary at all. They liked a lot of the institutional culture of USIA: the fact that we more innovative, that we were a little looser, that we worked with people in the private sector, that we had a history with working private sector organizations and exchanges. They wanted to use USIA like an infectious agent jabbed into State. Their thought was that the USIA culture would infect and transform State.

The changes they wanted were the ones I mentioned earlier, the ones that Jessica Mathews was attempting to orchestrate: reorganize the State Department on the basis of global issues. I think if we look at the Obama administration and what the State Department looks like today, you would have to say that the beginnings were in the Clinton administration. Surely, there are an awful lot of special envoys for this, that and the other thing now. Global issues on steroids. The regional offices in State have been starved of resources and pushed out of the way. There are special envoys for women and for Muslims and the environment and for human rights. You name it and there is a special envoy for it. The history of that goes back to this period when people within the Clinton administration were trying to reorganize State. Now, they just built a super structure on top of it.

Q: How did you feel in this atmosphere was it heady, things were influx and you could do something about it?

OGLESBY: I felt that it was a good thing that I had that year at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy to read in. I felt that on the basis of the work I'd done that year that I was able to some extent to shape the agenda. I think the agency reorganization was an example of my influence. I argued that if we continued to take all these cuts across the board, we would be emaciated. We would just have shrunk, shrunk and shrunk our organization doing it the old way. We had to make some lemonade out of the lemons we were given. I felt good about protecting the field. I'm a Foreign Service officer. I believe that the real work is done in the embassies and consulates in the field and that we need to support them. We need to give them what they need to do their job. I felt good that that was the ethos of the reorganized bureau of information. It responded to field requests, it worked on issues that the field wanted to work on and it provided them with what they needed in terms of the embassy mission statement and the embassy strategic plan. I thought that was important and I felt good about it.

You asked me if I thought inevitably we would be eliminated. I said no. We did defeat the resource grab within the administration. Vice President Gore, Joe Duffy and Warren Christopher met alone one. What I know is second hand. The critical decision about whether Warren Christopher was going to agree with Al Gore that USIA should be eliminated and folded into the State Department was made there. There are a couple of different stories that come out of it and one was that Al Gore had mistakenly, in the interest of managing Joe Duffy, he had mistakenly put him down. Joe was born in West Virginia and carried a bit of sensitivity to being dissed. When Gore slighted him, Joe stepped up to the bat and defended the agency convincing Warren Christopher that he didn't want to take this on. Christopher sided with Joe that the elimination of USIA would not be wise and we didn't need to do it at the time. From my perspective as counselor of USIA that was the key meeting. After that the pressure to eliminate the agency didn't come from the Clinton administration. The change came when Warren Christopher was replaced by Madelyn Albright and then pressure picked up again. The efforts of Jesse Helms to eliminate the agency continued unabated.

He got help when Madelyn Albright came in and made her devil's pact with Jesse Helms. She got him to release American dues to the United Nations and lift the hold on the passage of what was the Chemical Test Ban Treaty. In exchange she gave him our head. The agency died in 1999. But from '93 to '96 when I was the counselor, we felt that we had done the needful. We

felt that the more dangerous attempt to eliminate the agency had come from the within the administration and we had fought that back. We did; but some bad ideas never die.

Q: Well let's talk about your work inside the not this mega problem that the agency exists but some of the things that you were doing and some of the personalities. What did you think of the various bureaus? In the Department of State, I've had people more or less rank their effectiveness of some of the bureaus they had very definite ideas.

OGLESBY: About bureaus in USIA?

Q: Yeah but I'm talking about the geographic bureaus in the State Department and I was wondering how you feel about…

OGLESBY: I don't recall a particularly weak bureau. I remember the bureau of European Affairs was under the gun because they had to staff up all these new states of the Newly Independent States. We were taking severe resource cuts at the same time as we were opening posts and opening cultural centers, libraries in these Newly Independent States. Also, for the first time we were able to open up in some branch posts in Russia where we had never been able to do it before. We opened a library in St. Petersburg, for example. I remember traveling myself in Tbilisi, Georgia and to Yerevan as we were opening posts trying to make sure they had the resources they needed to operate in these varied environments. That was taking place within the bureau and the European Affairs had to deal with that and they also had to deal with what was going on in Yugoslavia. The Dayton Accords didn't come until '95. Much of the time that I was counselor I was dealing with the information aspects and the programmatic aspects of the war of dissolution. After it was dissolved, we had new countries to staff up. It was just an enormous amount of work for that bureau. At the same time, I remember that the work then became very, very different from the work done in Western Europe.

The work in the NIS, Central Europe and Russia was quite different than the USIS function in Western Europe. Ultimately, we decided that we needed to divide the bureau in two. We created an area office for East Central Europe and one for Western Europe. The State Department was angry about it because as a matter of policy, they saw Europe as one and whole. We were responding to the operational differences between USIS Tbilisi and USIS Paris. The work was very, very different. We felt that it made more sense in terms of supporting our people in the field if the area office in Washington were listening to their particular needs. That was something that did take place during this period.

Joe Duffy, as I said earlier, did not particularly care about the informational side of the house. He made, in my view, a fairly big mistake early on in letting VOA, Voice of America, go. The VOA was almost a wholly separate organization most of the time that I was counselor. He had not fought to keep it integrated into USIA. The broadcasting board of governors was created, and the television services were rolled into it along with the VOA. I think that was an organizational mistake.

The bureau of educational and cultural affairs was unfortunately under the direction of a self-important political appointee. We tangled often. He was more interested in his own prestige than

he was in the function of his bureau. He was not a good political appointee and I think that bureau paid the price. It was very, very difficult for them to operate with his dysfunctional personality, I think.

Management worked well I worked well with management. Some civil servants in that office who were in resource planning shop worked very closely with us on all the reorganization plans. I didn't feel that there was a problem there. I guess I would have to say the two problems were that the Voice of America and WorldNet were removed from USIA, and the associate director for the bureau of educational and cultural exchanges was a jerk.

Q: On a case like Aristide I mean this man is very controversial and most of the people who dealt with him are not supporters.

OGLESBY: I know that. I remember our area director at the time Don Hamilton often came back from interagency meetings foaming at the mouth at things we were instructed to do. This was coming from the Clinton administration not the career service. Clinton had gone on record even before he was even elected president to restore Aristide to his rightfully elected office in Haiti. We were required to program special broadcasting in Creole for Haiti to lay the groundwork for this. These requirements certainly didn't make my area office happy and they didn't make the use of people in the field all that happy but those were the policy requirements levied on us. We had to be responsive and were.

Q: How about Russia at the time? Were things going pretty well there from our point of view?

OGLESBY: I went to Russia in July '94 maybe, '95; we were opening an information center in the St Petersburg branch. Our battle was a battle with USAID which was then getting involved in democratization activities in Russia and in Central Europe. I remember going to Warsaw and also visiting some other posts there and being surprised at the size of the new USAID missions. USAID had never been in those. We always had. USAID came in with a lot of democratization money, much more money, than USIA had to do that. There were functional battles in terms of whose job it was. USAID had Atwood as director. He had sharp elbows; he knew how to get resources, and he knew how to defend his program. There was the feeling that Atwood was a much savvier, better connected director of USAID than Duffy was of USIA in terms of protecting his turf and expanding it. The expanse of his turf by moving USAID into Eastern Europe and into Russia at that time came at our expense. In other words, those were program areas that we had been working on and we were pushed out of the way because they had many more resources.

Penn Kimble was very, very interested in democratization activities. But he didn't believe that posts had any role in working on the issue. He thought that you worked through civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations that were linking with their counterparts abroad. He wouldn't fight for USIS against USAID dominance on the issue in the field posts. Jessica Mathews -- when she left the State Department and went to the Carnegie Endowment -- wrote a piece for *Foreign Affairs* about power shift. She argued that traditional State actors were being replaced by non-governmental organizations and private actors who had been empowered by information technology to operate globally. They were creating a global civil society within

which all of this democratization and other issues activity was taking place. Not only was USIA not necessary but embassies weren't necessary either. Why do we need embassies in the field she would argue if non-governmental organizations -- who have expertise in the issue areas we're concerned about like: women and girls, democratization, human rights and climate change -- are able now to function on a global basis? She thought that embassies and the people who serve in embassies were an artifact of an earlier age. We don't need them. That was the argument that I sat through at that very first meeting in '93 with Joe Duffy and Penn Kimble. This idea is in full flower now on the left.

Q: How would you respond to embassies aren't necessary?

OGLESBY: I responded then and I responded the same way now that I've had a lot of time to think about it. It's bunk. Information technology does empower a certain group of people around the world who are globalists, to connect to one another. No question. But those people are maybe 20 – 25 % of any national population. They do not represent everybody. They are resented by the people who identify nationally. There are certainly global citizens who move around the world in global connection; they know one another because they've gone to the same schools. They, however, are not in contact with the other 70 percent of the population of their countries who live in "flyover" country. It is that gap between their awareness of what's going on in their countries and their international connection that is creating the politics of reaction that we are dealing with today.

Embassies in the field are necessary because they understand what is happening on the ground. Davos man moves in a global bubble. The politics roiling Western Europe and the United States are in reaction to his very existence. To understand the successful Brexit vote, to understand Donald Trump and his nomination as the Republican candidate for president requires us to understand that there are still national societies. They are not disappearing remnants. 60-70 percent of the populations of nation states do not experience globalism; they are not on that treadmill; they are not going to Davos meetings. They look at "global citizens" as having lost interest and respect in them and their needs. If they are in democratic societies, they are going to pay them back for turning their backs on the nation. That's what we are seeing right now. So, if we didn't have officers in the field, we would not be in touch with people who might come into power.

I think one of the very important duties of field officers is to point out that the issues Washington dwells on are not are not the issues that are of concern over everywhere. I think people in the field do want to talk more about corruption than headquarters does. When you sit in an embassy – if you are good at your job and get out to develop an understanding of what is going on in that country – much of what you are expected to do from Washington doesn't make much sense. You should push back. There is a new book out by a former Foreign Service officer have you read it? Mary Thompson is at Northeastern now. Mary went through all the WikiLeaks cables; she analyzed them. Most of the WikiLeaks cables were cables that had come into State from the field. She argues that they show the disconnect between the field and the issues that they felt were politically salient given their perspective and what Washington was focused on. She makes the argument that I've been making for a long time: it is essential to have people in the field to keep Washington honest. Otherwise hothouse Washington sucks all the oxygen out of foreign

policy work. If all focus is on things that matter within the beltway, that may not matter in Ankara, or matter in Dhaka, or matter anywhere else in the world what is the point? We need field officers to remind ourselves that there is a world out there and there is a world of people who are living different lives according to a different value ranking. We have to understand that.

Q: One of the things that have struck me I've never been involved in the policy field but in these interviews, I've been doing is how an issue begins to really attract attention. All the operators within the Washington complex including the Foreign Service and all but the people I don't want to be too pejorative but the big egos all cluster around and brush the experts out of the way and the issue is often decided in who can shout louder within the Washington circles. The expert is often ignored.

OGLESBY: I think we have to be careful with the term expert; this is what gets back to what I was dealing with as counselor. In the democratic party, perhaps in America more broadly, there is a denigration of regional expertise. There are experts who can tell you based on knowledge, you have the expertise of what we are talking about is well how something will play in Russia; they can predict what Russians might think about an issue. They know how Russian society is organized around issues, what are Russian politics are? The primary expertise we bring as Foreign Service officers is a hands-on experience in the field. It enables us to bring a cultural expertise from the field to any given point of discussion. Some FSOs can say this is how climate change is playing in Cairo; these are the politics of this issue in Egypt because they understand the formation of public opinion in Egypt.

If, however, you take the point of view that we are evolving into one world and that political cultural differences are disappearing because national differences are disappearing, there is no room for Foreign Service expertise. Joe has his PhD in sustainable development that's what counts as expertise. Joe has never set foot in Africa, but he is touted as an expert; the expert. What globalists are saying is that expertise is in the private sector, it is not in government. And, it is issue based. The Foreign Service no longer has the expertise that matters to deal with the issues that have to be dealt with; that's their argument. Where you and I might say, "Wait a minute you have to understand how that issue is seen from a South Africa perspective and how they are dealing with it." They look at you like you are crazy because they don't actually believe that those cultural differences are meaningful.

This same point of view disparages area studies in my new life as an academic. One of the things I've done extensively is study how diplomacy is taught in the United States. Area studies are no longer valued in American institutions of higher learning. If you go to any of the APSIA schools you will find very little attention paid to Russian studies, to Chinese or Japanese studies or any areas of studies. They have disappeared as has language study. All of these schools have been reorganized around issues. Students pursue either a security intelligence track or they are on a sustainable development, public health track. The two tracks flow from whether you view the world as a threat, or whether you want to help the world develop. What is missing is any sense of the physical places in which you are going to do this work. How do you learn enough about the real country, the real places in the world where you are going to do this work to be able to do it effectively? That is what is essentially missing. Be careful about cherishing expertise because in a globalist's world, the Foreign Service has no expertise and that is why it is not of any value.

Q: Well I mean we keep getting things like the departure of Great Britain from the European Union and all I'm sure all the issue people would take the side of course they won't leave.

OGLESBY: I'm sure they were stunned, Stu. I'm sure they were stunned because it just doesn't make any sense given their worldview. I have no access to embassy reporting but I wonder what the embassy was reporting about the Brexit campaign. Who were they talking to, who were they dealing with, was their reporting relevant; did they see what was happening? I do think that is important to know. The British establishment didn't see it coming and they didn't see it coming because it was a reaction to the world they themselves had created. The globalists think their world is inevitable. It is not. They could not see that most of their countrymen live lives in a national space that is meaningful to them. That is the power of nationalism. What globalists could not see is the fact that culture matters to people and what they could not see is this division I mentioned earlier between the globalist and the rest of the country.

In a democracy people matter. Their voices are heard. This is one of the reasons why I thought the elimination of USIA at the point of maximum democratization in the world was absurd. What does democratization mean? Democratization means that the peoples' public opinions matter and if the peoples' public opinions matter then there is a public dimension foreign policy that needs attention. The most bizarre thing is that at a time of democratization, we folded our tents and left. Democracy is rolling the other way now, back to authoritarianism according to Freedom House. Th0se who wanted to eliminate USIA argued that democracy was on a roll; therefore, we don't need USIA. I argued democracy is on a roll, that's exactly why you need people attuned to the public dimension of foreign policy.

You just have to beat your head against the wall sometimes to get people to see the obvious. I still argue with people who think Brexit isn't going to happen; it will happen; it's going to happen. The day after the Brexit vote, the British commissioner, who was responsible for financial institutions in the EU resigned. I saw yesterday that the UK was supposed to serve as the EU president in 2017 and they've sent out a message saying they aren't going to do it because they are withdrawing. Obviously, they are taking the steps to withdraw from the EU. What we are seeing in the politics of a lot of countries, including our own, is that this idea of one world, one global civil society is now in retreat. We need embassies and people who have the depth of understanding because they have the language of the countries in which they serve, they live there, and they get out to understand what is going on, reporting back. Other countries need it in the U.S. too. If they are not out among the people, where are they getting their view of what is going on in the world? I think that's an important question.

Q: Very important. The whole Islamic fundamentalism would have fallen completely off the radar if they hadn't been setting off bombs because we don't have any international organization that really deals with something like that.

OGLESBY: Well that's true and far as IOs are concerned. But, our embassies have not been very good about following religious developments either, right? I've taught the Iranian revolution in 1979 as a case study a number of times. Our embassy just didn't understand the power of Islamism in the Iranian context. We were dealing with "moderates" who were eaten by the

revolution once Khomeini came into power. We have an unfortunate history of not understanding the political power of religion. It is not clear to me that we understood, during the Arab Spring, that the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt were the best organized on the ground and that eventually they would take over the revolution as they did. If you don't take religion seriously, because you don't take the cultures that seriously, you will miss what is happening in many societies. It's almost Marxist to think religion like a snake skin sloughs off from the snake as it evolves. It is odd, given recent history, to contend that religions are artifacts of the past and that they are going to be shed as people progress into the future. What we should understand from our own American history is that is not true and clearly that is not true in Islamic countries. Look at the importance of Hindu nationalism in India now. Globalists who think that the world is coming together as one; and that these differences are historic, and they are disappearing as humans progress; then they are going to be bitten in the butt.

Q: One of the problems, of course, is that most of the people who are recruited into the Foreign Service but also were in many of these international organizations are not religious.

OGLESBY: That is correct and that is my same point; they are globalists, right? They are the elite and they don't take seriously what many people do.

Q: They are killing themselves because…

OBLESBY: The 60 -70 percent of the population who are not sitting in international meetings who are not globalists, who are not travelling hither and yon; these are the people who are staying put somewhere in particular. Their lives have been disrupted in a major way by globalization. They don't have the ability to take advantage of globalization. They don't get the benefits from it. What are they going to turn to, what do they hold on to, what do they grab as their lives are being disrupted by change brought about by globalization? Obama said in a moment of campaign candor that they hold on to guns and religion. Religion morphs and changes in response to peoples' needs. American Protestantism is quite different than it once was. Christianity has new mega churches, and new politics.

In the early '90s we were already becoming much more integrated into the world thru globalization. But we didn't even use the word until the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle when the anti-globalization people flooded the streets. We became aware of globalization because of the push back. Those globalization effects and the revolt against them had begun. I think we are paying the price now. I think we are paying the price for not understanding the disruption and for assuming that religious affiliation would fade, that people's affection for their nations would diminish and that was just not true. We are seeing that sadly day-by-day.

Q: Coming back to the core of what we were doing were there any significant moments or issues other than what we have discussed that came up during the time? In the first place what did you think of the people who were coming in to USIA? Were we doing well?

OGLESBY: I would meet with the incoming classes of junior officers. They were older than my JOT class was; and they all had some professional experience before coming in. It would be interesting to know how many of them of them actually stayed for a whole career. I don't know

when the shift took place but a lot of young people now who think about the Foreign Service don't think in terms of careers. They think about doing something for five years and then doing something else for seven years. They don't trust institutions to be there for the long haul. Maybe they are right. I would be curious to know what people who came in in the early '90s whether they stayed. I know some did and some did beautifully. We weren't bringing all that many people in because of budget cuts.

Q: One of the things about the Foreign Servicer I'd noted is that way back many people came in and said, "Well I'll do this for a while and get a trip abroad and all that and then I will go do something else." The damn thing is so seductive that I think far fewer leave than would have thought they would leave when they came in.

OGLESBY: I don't know Stu; I haven't studied those numbers. Much would depend on the ability of the foreign affairs institutions to support tandem couples. We talked about that in terms of my own personal life. It was difficult for my husband. He paid a career price because of my career. I think some people will leave because their spouses cannot pursue their dreams. Foreign Service families have paid a huge price with deployment to wars in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Many Foreign Service officers have had to serve in greater hardship situations, in expeditionary diplomacy, separated from their families. How much of that do they do? Some do it and they enjoy it. But I'm sure there are other people who say, "I've done it once or twice; I'm not doing it a third time." We always hear about the military on their fourth or fifth tours; we don't hear as much about Foreign Service officers who have had to do the same sort of thing and that takes its toll on families.

Q: Yeah. What year did you leave?

OGLESBY: I left in 1996.

Q: How did you feel about it?

Oglesby: How did I feel about it? Well I felt that I had done my job well, I felt appreciated by my colleagues. I felt that I had received recognition for a job well done on the part of the people I was trying to serve. A number of nice things happened: lovely receptions and awards. I was awarded the Edward R. Morrow Award for public diplomacy from Fletcher. I value that recognition. The International Exchange Alliance gave me an award for my contribution to international exchanges. It was presented by Senator Lugar, which meant a lot to me. That felt good. I felt I'd climbed the career ladder to the top and it was time to go. My husband had prostate cancer during this period; that made us reevaluate what mattered in life. We sold our place in Washington and moved to Florida where my family was. We had bought a house there in 1979 and set about gutting it and renovating it. We were looking forward to getting out of Washington.

Q: Okay, well let's take what you've been up to afterwards.

OGLESBY: Well initially I thought I was going to do something totally different this may surprise you. I had gotten into Jung and psychology and I had imagined myself going off to

Pacifica University in California and learning Jungian psychology. In the year we gutted the house and had it renovated, I took an agriculture extension course to learn how to garden in Florida. Gardening was on my mind. I was also interested in photography. One day, I went to the Foreign Service retirees luncheon up at Chrystal River. They announced that Eckerd College was looking for a diplomat-in-residence. Eckerd College is three miles from my house on St. Pete Beach. I thought the house is ready, and my garden is planted; now, what am I going to do with myself. I had enjoyed teaching at Fletcher; I decided I would throw my hat into the ring. Peter Armacost was the president of Eckerd College at the time and he was Michael Armacost's brother. It was his idea to have diplomats-in-residence and they had one already, Jamsheed Marker who had been a Pakistani ambassador. He had been Pakistan's ambassador to the United States and to Russia and to the UN. He lived in Florida most of the year; he had already been named the diplomat-in-residence and he taught one course per semester.

When Armacost wanted to add another diplomat-in-residence position, the faculty insisted that it be handled by regular order. They wanted to conduct the search. It was advertised as a tenure track position. There was a faculty search committee. I got the nod. I've been told that I was the candidate that the faculty wanted because they had read my student evaluations and the evaluation from the dean of the Fletcher School on my teaching there. I had the practical and the academic experience. I negotiated down the amount of work, because I wasn't interested in a tenure track. Eventually we agreed on what they called continuing part-time. I taught three courses a year. I taught the senior seminar in international relations in the fall; and then in spring I taught two other courses of my choosing. I also managed a speaker program. We had an endowment to bring in speakers on international affairs. I also managed the student internship program helping them find internships dealing with international relations and global affairs

Q: When you first took over in the job what did you think of the students? Did they surprise you?

OGLESBY: I had taught graduate students previously. I had to adjust to teaching undergraduates. I also had to design my own courses. Eckerd is a good school and it attracts some excellent students. I quickly developed a corridor reputation as an excellent, but demanding professor. That kind of reputation combined with teaching electives generally means I got good students. There were enough promising students each year to make me love teaching. Teaching is learning and, in that sense, it's been fun for me.

Q: Did you get any sense of the orientation of the students being in Florida?

OGLESBY: Eckerd draws from students all over the country it's a private college, it's an institution of 1,800 residential students. Eckerd is a liberal arts college. At its creation, about 50 years ago, it was Florida Presbyterian. From its earliest days, the faculty was very active in civil rights. It's quite a liberal school and it attracts very liberal students. Some conservative students come, but by and large the students are quite progressive. They want to save the world starting with the environment.

Q: It's kind of what I did when I joined.

OGLESBY: This generation of students is more interested in joining non-governmental organizations. I have to consider that when teaching. My media and foreign policy course comes closest to what I did professionally in USIA. I explore the relationship between the media and foreign policy or global issues. Over the twenty years I have been teaching the course, information technology has transformed the media ecologies within which politics happen. I continue to read, study and write to come to terms with the political effects of the media transformation.

When I taught the IRGA Senior Seminar, I would pick a case study and take a deep dive. I taught the dissolution of Yugoslavia for a few years; I taught the Arab-Israeli crisis. I taught nationalism.

I've been teaching a national security course for quite a few years. It's an intensive writing course. I ask a single question: Why did the United States invade Iraq in 2003? Then we look through all the various ways academics have answered that question. What are the theories? What hypotheses are offered by political scientists? We spend a whole semester answering that one question.

I teach a course on diplomacy and international relations in which we do simulations of diplomacy. This year we did the East China Sea as a simulation for the final exam. The students were divided into teams representing China, Taiwan, South Korea, Japan and the United States. They grappled with the conflict over the Senkaku Islands. The previous year I did international negotiations on Iran and nuclear proliferation. In previous years, I've done climate change. The idea is to get them to understand how diplomacy and international relations work by applying them to case studies and simulations.

I also teach a globalization debate course. I've been teaching this too for quite a bit of time. I taught it this past spring. The students were totally into it. Much was happening in the world with Brexit and the Syrian refugee crisis. I had a big unit on immigration and why it is difficult to manage.

I keep myself busy teaching. I've been writing too.

Q: I must say you certainly are covering the waterfront there.

OGLESBY: I rotate courses. I teach two a year now. I do cover the waterfront in my teaching. In my scholarly work though, I'm focused on diplomacy. I've been published in the *SAIS Review*. I wrote a chapter on Diplomatic Language for the Sage Handbook on Diplomacy. I have also been researching how diplomacy is taught in the United States. That article will soon be published in the *Hague Journal of Diplomacy*. I wrote up my findings earlier for the *Foreign Service Journal.* My article was called: "Diplomacy Education Unzipped." I have also written for the Center on Public Diplomacy at USC.

Q: One of the things I've heard, I'm not in the academic world but teaching in that area has moved over again sort of like the fight you had in USIA over to issues.

OGLESBY: Absolutely.

Q: The studies are the woman in the world today rather than how different countries...

OGLESBY: There are very few courses on diplomacy. When you talk to people who teach diplomacy courses, they will tell you that the students who take their courses are international students. Large numbers of international students go to these graduate schools like Georgetown or American University or Fletcher, Columbia. More than a third of the student bodies consist of foreign students. Without them, diplomacy courses would not exist. The other students who sign up for diplomacy courses are the Pickering-Rangel students who have a stipend and are intending to come into the Foreign Service. You'd be surprised at how many of the professors of diplomacy I've talked to who specifically mention them and say that they are course stalwarts.

Q: Oh yes, one of the things that we are doing, and I know that it is hard to get what we are doing here in these oral histories to get them to be used.

OGLESBY: Case studies might be more useful.

Q: Oh yes.

OGLESBY: I looked at 75 syllabi and I interviewed more dozens of professors. I found that former Foreign Service officers who teach rarely use academic material on diplomatic studies because they find it too abstract. They prefer case studies. There is a disconnect between the practitioner and the academic when it comes to teaching diplomacy.

Q: Well by the way I don't know if it would be interesting to any of your students but two things. If they are interested in a country, you look on our website ADST.org under oral history interviews there is something called Country Readers and the Country Readers we take everyone who has served or dealt with Indonesia we've taken those excerpts out of our oral histories and put them in rough chronological order. So, for somebody who is interested in a country or an issue can go right to those Country Readers and search through each one on the subject they are interested in. It's a very handy way of getting into it.

OGLESBY: Okay, because I usually read them by a person's name, but you are saying they are organized in a different way too.

Q: Go to the Country Reader and we've been doing this for years now and it's a huge collection. Also, we have an intern program here and we don't pay but we usually have about six or eight interns who work for us and we do put them to work. It's not doing coffee or anything like that, but we turn them loose on our oral histories, for example, right now coups in Turkey. They go in and look and see what they can put together from the oral histories about coups there. Or sometimes it's going into oral histories and take the link serves out and you see this in the section of Moments in Diplomatic History.

OGLESBY: That's interesting, thanks.

Q: I just saw that some of our interns have gone into the Foreign Service and others have come away with a pretty good idea. They are reading these things everyday about what people are saying and all.

OGLESBY: I think it's terrific for people who are already in the Washington area.

Q: It's something for them and they may have ties to Washington.

OGLESBY: We might have some students whose families live in the Washington area.

Q: But I just wanted to throw that out to you.

OGLESBY: Okay, thanks.

Q: Absolutely, we are not trying to boil things down we want them to get the full range and let them use it for whatever they want.

OGLESBY: Well it's been fun Stu I look forward to seeing it and seeing what I ended up saying. It's always interesting right?

Q: Absolutely, you have been very informative, and I appreciate this.

OGLESBY: Thank you very much.

End of interview