

An Interview with  
**Betty Duvall**

at *The Historical Society of Missouri* St. Louis  
Research Center, St. Louis, Missouri

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**Oral History Program**

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## PREFACE

The interview was taped on a placed on a tripod. There are periodic background sounds but the recording is of generally high quality.

The following transcript represents a rendering of the oral history interview. Stylistic alterations have been made as part of a general transcription policy. The interviewee offered clarifications and suggestions, which the following transcript reflects. Any use of brackets [ ] indicates editorial insertions not found on the original audio recordings. Physical gestures, certain vocal inflections such as imitation, and/or pauses are designated by a combination of italics and brackets [ ]. Any use of parentheses ( ) indicates a spoken aside evident from the speaker's intonation, or laughter. Quotation marks ["" ] identify speech depicting dialogue, speech patterns, or the initial use of nicknames. Em dashes [—] are used as a stylistic method to show a meaningful pause or an attempt to capture nuances of dialogue or speech patterns. Words are *italicized* when emphasized in speech or when indicating a court case title. Particularly animated speech is identified with **bold** lettering. Underlining [   ] indicates a proper title of a publication. The use of underlining and double question marks in parentheses [   (??) ] denotes unintelligible phrases. Although substantial care has been taken to render this transcript as accurately as possible, any remaining errors are the responsibility of the editor, Josephine Sporleder.

Betty Duvall: ...Betty Duvall, I'm professor emeritus at Oregon State University.

Blanche Touhill: Betty, would you talk about your youth: Talk about your parents; talk about your relatives; the people you played with; where you went to elementary school...not where you went to elementary school but in elementary and secondary school, were there teachers that said, "Betty, you're smart and you should go do what Betty wants to do," or something, enlarged your vision of yourself and gave you some guidance as to where you were going to go and who really said to you maybe you should go to college, or did they say it at all, and were you a leader among your playmates or in elementary or secondary school. Talk about your youth.

Betty Duvall: I was raised on a very small farm in Southwest Missouri. I'm free these days about introducing myself as a "hillbilly" or a Ozarkian. I lived there all my life. I went to school in a very small elementary school and I was the leader there. There were eight people in my 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class and I was the leader. Then, through an accident of timing, I guess, that little community lost their high school and so we had our choice of two high schools that we could go to and fortunately I chose the bigger and the better one. I was the only one from my class who went to that high school. I could tell you that I was lured there because they promised me...it was Buffalo High School...they promised that there was going to be a group called "The Buffalo Gals." It was going to be a drum and bugle corps and I thought, that's for me. There was when I was a senior and not eligible to join.

Blanche Touhill: At that time were you going to blow the bugle or play the drums?

Betty Duvall: I didn't care. I was going to have a cute costume. But in any case, that was maybe, I suppose, one of the best choices I made. My parents, neither of whom had a high school education, always told me that I would go to college. I knew from the get-go that I was going to college. I don't think anyone else in our family had ever gone to college. I should probably say also that I was an only child. I think that made a difference. When I was really young and because I was an only child and because I lived on a farm, I had a lot of time by myself and I am very happy that I did have and I still need a lot of time by myself. I didn't have close cousins; didn't have cousins my own age. If I did, they lived far away. So, in any case, I went to Buffalo High School.

Blanche Touhill: Did you become a reader or what did you do during the period when you were by yourself?

Betty Duvall: I think mainly there were animals. I had free range of the whole farm. I was out and about looking at bugs and looking at birds. I was an early reader but there weren't lots of books in our house but my father always read a lot. My mother was very creative and in a different life, I think that probably...I don't know how her creativity would have expressed itself but something maybe other than quilts and wonderful cooking. But at the high school, there was a combined high school library and public library and when I was a child, we would go to Buffalo to shop on Saturdays and I could go to the library when I got to be a little older. The librarian there, who was also the high school librarian, was a very big influence on my life. She let me read in the adult section. I remember coming home once with the copy of *Gone With the Wind* and my mother was not sure I should be reading that. But I think it was through her that I decided I wanted to be a librarian. She was encouraging and I think proud that I thought I wanted to be a librarian when I was in high school. The other person that really made a difference, one of the other teachers, was my home economics teacher. Now, there were three years of home economics which my parents thought I should take. I took the first year but then I desperately wanted to take biology and algebra the second year. They let me strike a deal with them: I could take biology and mathematics, algebra, if I promised to take the last two courses of home economics. But my home ec teacher was Mrs. Mallory. Her husband was the superintendent of schools, Dillard Mallory and their son, as you know, was superintendent here in St. Louis but also the state superintendent of schools eventually. Some of the things I learned...let me say quickly...in home economics were very useful to me. When I decided to go to college, I went to what was then SMS.

Blanche Touhill: Why did you choose SMS?

Betty Duvall: I had two choices: Southwest Missouri State or University of Missouri. I had a scholarship, a small one, at University of Missouri but you went to the one that was closer. I picked up University of Missouri a little bit later on. But at that time, Missouri offered a scholarship. They were trying to get people into particularly rural libraries and I was encouraged by everybody to take that scholarship and do my graduate degree in Library

Science and then I could come back and be in the library at Buffalo, live at home with my parents and people had a lovely life painted for me. That didn't sound real good to me and my friend, the high school librarian whose name was Mary McAllen, she said, "Don't take that scholarship," and her story was really very important to me. She said, she had two Master's Degrees in this little rural high school, in Library Science and in History and she said, "I always wanted to do a lot of things with my life. I wanted to travel. I wanted to do many different things," and she said, "My father, when he was 80, began to get ill and the family thought I should come home and take care of him because I was single and they all had their families," and so she said, "I did." She said, "I thought he was 80 years old. How long can this be? He lived to over 100. I never got out. I never got to travel." So she said, "Don't do that. You go. You go travel. You go do the things you want to do." So that was a really strong story for me. So then, after I finished at SMS, then I got my first job as a high school librarian in Washington, Missouri. I might as well have been in a different country.

Blanche Touhill:

Why is that?

Betty Duvall:

If you don't know Washington, Missouri, it's a wonderful, wonderful place, a very strong German settlement on the river, very pretty and with a very strong German influence still. I don't know whether that's true or not, 1960 it was, and it was a wonderful experience. Now, have I covered the things you asked me to talk about in this?

Blanche Touhill:

Yes, because what you're saying is you knew you wanted to have a broader world.

Betty Duvall:

That's right.

Blanche Touhill:

You looked at it and you thought, "Maybe I can't" but the librarian said, "Yes, you can."

Betty Duvall:

But I can, yeah. I thought I could. And I would say, too, that during undergraduate school, a person who was very influential with me was the librarian there. Her name was Margaret Crider and she was, again, a single woman but, in retrospect, I realize that she was not at all single. I was just naïve. But she let me work in all parts of the library and really helped me and encouraged me. She would have the student assistants

over to her big, beautiful house every year and she got out the silver tea service and it was, "Oh, people can live like this!"

Blanche Touhill: So you got out of school and you came to Washington, Missouri. Did you have a Master's yet?

Betty Duvall: No, you didn't need a Master's to be a high school librarian. Again, another woman who was very helpful to me in teaching me what a teacher was supposed to be. She really helped guide me and Washington is probably 15 miles or so from St. Louis and we would often get on the bus and come into St. Louis, go to the American Theater, have lunch at one of the big hotels whose names I've forgotten...

Blanche Touhill: Probably the Mayflower or...

Betty Duvall: Probably the Mayflower. I think it was the Mayflower, exactly. She was just a really good friend to me at the beginning.

Blanche Touhill: Did you always like theater?

Betty Duvall: Well, I was a theater major in undergraduate. My undergraduate major was English and Theater and to be an English major, you needed two courses, in speech and communications and Speech Theater. I took those two courses and I was hooked.

Blanche Touhill: I know you performed in theatrical productions or you did the make-up a lot of times for people. Did you then pick up the Library Science courses on the side?

Betty Duvall: Yeah, because you could only do...I think it was probably 15 hours of library science.

Blanche Touhill: So it was like a minor?

Betty Duvall: Yeah, it was like a minor and the theater teacher I had, Dr. Leslie Irene Kroger ...and I remember these people so well...she had that way of, she had a Lauren Bacall voice and she could speak quite softly and you were hers and she could offer the smallest little praise and you floated for the next week. So, I remember floating out of the old administration building one day right down the street.

Blanche Touhill: What plays did you appear in?

Betty Duvall: In college, not that many but I remember one I was in was a one-act play called *The Old Lady Shows Her Medals*. I think it's Jane Barry, opposite the man who played my presume son, had been on Broadway and had come back to Springfield. So it was a very big deal thing.

Blanche Touhill: You were in the big time.

Betty Duvall: But then I worked at Washington High School then for a couple years.

Blanche Touhill: In what, English?

Betty Duvall: No, no, as librarian.

Blanche Touhill: Did you ever think you'd be the head of the library or were you the head of the library?

Betty Duvall: I was THE only person and I was a bit of a bossy person so...

Blanche Touhill: Yeah, but you had to do everything.

Betty Duvall: Yeah, I was doing everything.

Blanche Touhill: You had to manage.

Betty Duvall: Yeah.

Blanche Touhill: And you liked it?

Betty Duvall: Oh, I liked it a lot and I had the budget to deal with and the books to order.

Blanche Touhill: Did you ever order something that the school board said don't?

Betty Duvall: Yes, it's interesting you should say. I was going to say that because I got called into the superintendent's office for two things that I had ordered. One is I ordered a subscription to Seventeen Magazine and he was not sure that was proper for their young women to be aspiring to that kind of clothing and lifestyle. Seventeen then was pretty mild. Then the other book that I ordered was Joseph Conrad's *The Nigger of the Narcissist* and the school was newly integrated and he found that it was probably a very inappropriate book for me to order and when I explained to him what the book was about and who the author was and so on, I got no more problem but it was just the title and it also told me he was looking at

everything I ordered, keep this new young woman on the straight and narrow.

Blanche Touhill: So when did you get the Master's?

Betty Duvall: My first summer of working there, I had started a newspaper, school newspaper. They didn't have one and when I had been in high school, one of my buddies in high school was a gal named Pat Keith. She later became a professor of sociology at Iowa but we were real troublemakers, I guess but we decided we needed a school newspaper and so we went to the superintendent or the principal, I don't remember, and said "We need some courses in journalism and we want a school newspaper," and he said, "Well, I think we have somebody who can teach a journalism course but I don't know about having a school newspaper." So we marched down to the weekly local paper and proposed that we have a page in the local paper and they thought that was a swell plan and so we did that and it was all puffery stuff about the school. But that was okay. So when I went to Washington, didn't have a school newspaper so down to the local paper and they said, "Yes, we would like to do that but we'll have to alternate between the public school and the Catholic school," and I thought, well, that seems fair. So I started the school newspaper. The first summer that I was there, I had gotten in the spring a form letter from the Wall Street Journal offering scholarships to school newspaper sponsors. The requirement was that you have two years of experience. So I wrote the cover letter that said, "If I had two years of experience, I wouldn't need this. I have only one year and I need this." So I got a scholarship from the Wall Street Journal and we could pick any journalism school we wanted to go to. I chose the University of Missouri because it was the best one and spent a marvelous summer in the (Jay?) School there doing everything: writing; reporting; selling ads, print and non-print. They bought us a camera. It was quite lovely. And the other students in the group were, of course, from all over the country. The second summer of my work at Washington, I went to Europe and I went with two other young women that I didn't know but the mother of one of them was my colleague at Washington High School so she had hooked us up. So we did the grand tour.

Blanche Touhill: And that changed your life?

Betty Duvall: Oh, well, I expected it to and it did. Then I moved from Washington into Ferguson-Florissant District, again as a librarian. I was there for a year.

Blanche Touhill: Was the money better?

Betty Duvall: Probably and it was in the city and I wanted to get...

Blanche Touhill: You wanted to get to the city.

Betty Duvall: Closer to the city. That's where the theater was. And it was there that I met my husband, I met Dick, and you've heard that story because I met him when I did his make-up.

Blanche Touhill: For a theatrical production.

Betty Duvall: For a theatrical production.

Blanche Touhill: What was the production?

Betty Duvall: It was *Lieutenant Roberts*.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, and he was Lieutenant Roberts?

Betty Duvall: No, no, he was the captain of the ship.

Blanche Touhill: Oh, he had a big role.

Betty Duvall: Well, no, that was a smaller role but that's okay.

Blanche Touhill: It was an important role.

Betty Duvall: But it was an important role. But in any case, we got married shortly after that, really shortly after that. I always say that he had spent his time and money getting a Master's Degree. I had spent my time and money going to Europe. So, I guess one of the major influences that are men that are in addition to my father, was Dick, who said to me, "It's important that we have an equal formal education," and so he said, "We need to get you started at a library school" so the first summer we were married, off we went to the University of Denver, to library school. But the other thing he said to me is that "we may never be rich but we'll be well traveled." That sounded awfully good to me too. And in addition, he talked about books. I'd not met any men who talked about books before. That was really nice. So, as soon as I finished my Master's Degree, then the next summer we went to Europe. So I guess the bottom line of that part of my story is that

when it was time to get the doctorate...well, we both got a second Master's Degree from New York University in a study abroad program.

Blanche Touhill: How did you do that? Did you go abroad and you got credits?

Betty Duvall: It was kind of by accident. It was one of these things that came in the mail again and it was a dull gray February day in St. Louis and I said, "I think we ought to do this." We thought it was going to be a doctorate but the program required a long residency in New York and we were both working and we didn't want to give up the salary and move to New York. So we converted it to a Master's Degree, but in answer to your question, yes, we did one summer in Kyoto, one summer in Paris and one summer in New York and it was a wonderful program. Then when it was time to do the doctorate, we both have our doctorates from St. Louis University. I actually finished my first but the minute I finished mine, Dick had more credit there when we started than I did but the minute I finished mine, then he finished his.

Blanche Touhill: What was your dissertation topic?

Betty Duvall: My dissertation topic was on accreditation. It was a qualitative research project which was kind of new in education at that time. But they were tolerant of it because I could show them other examples of that kind of research. The question was, is accreditation effective and does it make any difference, the institution, do they pay any attention to what the visiting team says? I found, yes, it made a difference and, yes, they paid attention. And I did that by looking at longitudinal series of accreditation reports, visiting team reports and the self-assessment that the institution does. You could see the changes that were made. They had addressed the questions that were raised.

Blanche Touhill: Because you have to report that when you get the second visit. You have to be able to say, out of the first report, what did they recommend.

Betty Duvall: Or if they say, "We've made progress in..." ...

Blanche Touhill: "...in this way."

Betty Duvall: "...in these things," yeah.

Blanche Touhill: Well, now, you were in the Ferguson-Florissant School District. How long did you stay there?

- Betty Duvall: A year because in the middle of that year...and this is the good part of the story...we started hearing talk about this. There was going to be some kind of...some new college thing that was going to start and they wanted to have classes in the Ferguson-Florissant High School building and nobody knew what it was and I remember in a faculty meeting saying to the principal, "Well, I sure hope they don't think they're going to use our library." And, of course it was the St. Louis Junior College District that was being formed and they hired their first president who came from Santa Barbara, a saintly man, Joe Cosande.
- Blanche Touhill: He was very bright.
- Betty Duvall: He was the best. Talk about somebody that could make you feel special and make you walk on air, ah, he could do that.
- Blanche Touhill: I always thought the fact he had three campuses was brilliant.
- Betty Duvall: It was a good start. If he hadn't started with three campuses, it would have not been the same.
- Blanche Touhill: No, it wouldn't have been the same.
- Betty Duvall: But that was a kind of California idea, I think, the multi-campus. But he brought with him a librarian and the librarian came to see me and said that he was looking for someone to work part-time in the library, keep it up. It was just going to be nights and did I know of anybody and I thought about that for a while and I thought, "Yeah, I think I do." And I have said this before but I was young and needed money as opposed to now being old and needing money but I said, "I would work nights" and so that's how I got started working with the community college. Once I understood the mission and purpose of the community college, the philosophy, I was among the converted.
- Blanche Touhill: What is the philosophy because it's not a junior college idea; it's a community college idea.
- Betty Duvall: Yeah, it was a really different notion. It really always has the transfer component of the first two years of college, like a junior college but in addition to that, it has career and technical training. We used to call it vocational and from that, you can get a certificate or an Associate Degree and go out and get a job. It also has remedial...called developmental

now...remedial education so it's a second chance and it's a strong belief in open access, access by geography so you go out to the communities, access financially, it's cheaper, it provides second chance, third chance, fourth chance, adults, a lot of adult students. We talk about the average age of the community college student being between 25 and 28, somewhere along in there but I always like to point out that the average age doesn't...only takes one of me and five 18-year-olds to get an average age of 25 to 30. So there are probably more young students. It's interesting to me, Blanche, that 50 years ago is when community colleges really started. It's when the St. Louis Community College started. We're still fighting the same battles. There's always this attempt to narrow the mission, sometimes without deliberately doing that but policies that have that effect. We're still trying to explain that we're a real college and I think increasingly that there may be some progress being made there, that we're becoming more and more the college of choice for all the reasons that we said: cost; access; small classes; the faculty there are not expected to do research, to publish; they are expected to be teachers first, foremost, always. It doesn't mean that the community college faculty don't do research, don't publish, but their primary mission is teaching.

Blanche Touhill: I always thought that the St. Louis Community College was also known for standards.

Betty Duvall: Oh, I'm glad to hear that. I'm very glad to hear that because I think they would really...any community college would like to think that. So, yes, I'm very glad to hear that.

Blanche Touhill: Well, I think they chose a good faculty.

Betty Duvall: You know, the faculty at Florissant Valley, when I started there, was amazing, just amazing. When I went to work 25 years later at Portland Community College in Oregon, amazing faculty, amazing faculty, and I think there's always one or two people who are there because they couldn't get the tenured position at the university that they aspired to.

Blanche Touhill: Well, they like to teach more than they like the research.

Betty Duvall: Yeah, so there may be a couple who are a little bitter about that but there are a lot of people who take great pride in "we are teachers" and

take great pride in their students coming back and telling them their many successes and so on.

Blanche Touhill: How did you move from being a librarian to being the executive dean or whatever was the title...president or whatever they called them?

Betty Duvall: Right, a rose by any other name. At St. Louis, I was Associate Dean of Instruction for Instructional Resources, the library and media. I'm sure you knew David Underwood. He was the dean of Instruction there. He was a wonderful man, wonderful man, and he quite unexpectedly and early in his career, it seemed to me, died of a heart attack. So there was a need to fill the job. I thought I ought to have that job.

Blanche Touhill: Why did you think that?

Betty Duvall: I thought I ought to have that job because I know the whole curriculum. I work in the library. I know all the teachers and how they teach. I know all this stuff and if you come out of mathematics or if you come out of English, you don't know that. You only know your small area. So I should have that job, I believe. There were eight division deans plus a staff associate dean at that time. I'd say at least...I can't remember exactly the number but at least half of them thought they ought to have the job too. They were, by the way, all men. "Oh, you're going to apply? Oh, fine"; "Might as well" and so the interviews were held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the library and, honestly, to a man, they would stop in my office which was on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor on their way to the interview and I'd neaten their tie for them and brush off their shoulders and say, "You're going to be great. Go do a good job," and you can imagine how surprised they were when I was selected for that position.

Blanche Touhill: Were you the first woman...what was the title?

Betty Duvall: It was Dean of Instruction.

Blanche Touhill: So you were the first woman of Dean of Instruction at Flo Valley?

Betty Duvall: I was the highest ranking woman administrator in the system, and that, by the way, is when I decided I need a doctorate because I was the highest ranking woman but I was the only woman at that rank or above who didn't have a doctorate and that's no good. But these guys decided to give me grief and, boy, they were really good at it. One of them, the

associate dean, staff associate dean, quit immediately, returned to the faculty briefly and then he quit. He was really, really aggravated that I should have that position. Some years later, he came back to see me in my office, walked in and said, "I shouldn't have left. I did the wrong thing." It took a lot of guts to do that. One guy decided that he would bring me over to his division, science faculty and they would send me out minced meat. It was fun. They had all kinds of questions and I enjoyed the parlay with them, I really did. And so we just had a good time and he was kind of shocked at that, on down the line. But that guy later came back to see me and said...he had had a fellowship or an exchange or something with NSF. He was really smart, really, really good and he came back to see me and he said that staff associate dean position was empty at that time, that he would like to have that position because he needed an administrative title on his resume and there was an opportunity coming up to be the head of the National Science Teachers Association but to do that, he needed an administrative title and he said, "I only want to work there two years but..."...he said, "I'll work real hard for you and I'll give you my all" and I said, "Bill, two years of you is better than five years of somebody that's half as good as you." So we're really good friends now. We're still in touch with each other and what not.

Blanche Touhill: And did he go on and become head of the National...

Betty Duvall: Oh, yeah, and when I went to Washington eventually, I had a friend there but he was leaving by then so I didn't see him very often. He left pretty quickly. So, then, after I was Dean of Instruction for a while, the president got fired and the dean of Student Services came to see me. I hadn't been in that position but probably about two years and he said, "Are you going to apply for the presidency here?" and I said, "I don't think so. It's too soon," and he said, "If you don't apply, I'm going to apply but if you won't apply, I will support you as interim president," and I thought, that's a good deal. I can have that on my resume. So we struck that deal. He didn't get the job. I did get the interim presidency. Then after a while, the presidency became vacant again and this time I really wanted it. I wanted it very, very much. But I didn't get it. I was one of two and I didn't get it. When the new president came, someone advised me this...and I can't remember who it was but they said, "You make sure you're his first appointment and you go in and say to him, 'You know that I applied for this position but I didn't get it. I'm angry and I'm hurt but not at you'" and

so I did that and he was wonderful and I can see why he was chosen, because he had some skills that I didn't have that the college really needed then. I had some skills that he didn't have. We made a good team. He gave me a terrific farewell party when I left. But then I started looking for presidencies and I applied at a number of places in the area.

Blanche Touhill: First of all, how many years were you at Flo Valley?

Betty Duvall: I was there probably close to 25 years.

Blanche Touhill: And how many were you executive...

Betty Duvall: Fifteen years as Dean of Instruction. It was a long run.

Blanche Touhill: So you really saw the place develop.

Betty Duvall: Yeah, it was a long run, yeah, and worked with different presidents, different chancellors.

Blanche Touhill: And there was no woman president, was there, at the system, until after you left?

Betty Duvall: I think after I left, yeah. I think that's right and then, of course, there have been women presidents and women chancellors.

Blanche Touhill: Were there any executive deans at the other campuses who were women?

Betty Duvall: Well, deans of Instruction? No, they were men, too.

Blanche Touhill: So you were, really...

Betty Duvall: I was really the only woman, yeah. But then, as I said, I started applying for these jobs in the area in Missouri and I was number two always. So...you remember Vernon Crawley who was president at Forest Park?

Blanche Touhill: I do...Forest Park.

Betty Duvall: I really think of him as a kind of mentor. We had been on a committee together and I really liked him. I thought he was pretty good and he seemed to like me and I remember he said to me one day...the presidency at East Central was coming up and he said, "Are you going to apply for the job at East Central?" and I said words that I was hearing for the first time. I had never had the thought and I said, "No," and he said,

“Ah, too far away,” and I said, “Not far enough.” I don’t know, it was inside but it had never come out, I guess.

Blanche Touhill: Because East Central was very close to Washington.

Betty Duvall: Very close in, yeah, very close in, and close in to St. Louis. So then I started looking and I had always kind of wanted to go to the West Coast. I had always kind of thought that California would be wonderful, maybe Washington; hadn’t considered Oregon at all. But Vernon said to me, “You should apply for this job at Portland,” and I knew the guy who was the district president there. I had been on committees with him and what not and so I applied. So I got the job, I went there in 1990, January of ’90 and...do you want to hear the rest of this professional story right now?

Blanche Touhill: Yes.

Betty Duvall: And so then I was at one of the smaller campuses. I found out that Oregon has a very unique way of counting numbers of students. It wasn’t quite as large as I thought it was. I had gone from a campus of 10,000 students to a campus that was probably about 5,000 students and was very highly centralized. That was hard for me too. But it was a wonderful campus with wonderful faculty and I always say, I had 5,000 students and I ran a farm...5,000 students, 50 head of cattle, 100 head of sheep and 1 horse.

Blanche Touhill: So you were back on the farm?

Betty Duvall: Back on the farm and it was really fine and a beautiful little campus.

Blanche Touhill: Did that experience of coming from a farm affect their choice of you?

Betty Duvall: I don’t think it affected its choice. I don’t think they even knew.

Blanche Touhill: Why did they choose you?

Betty Duvall: I think I accidentally did a couple of really good things with the faculty and the staff. They were down to two people. There was a man and me and the second round of interviews and we were to come to a meeting. Everybody was invited and we were both the same day. But everybody was invited so faculty were there, the classified staff, students, members of the board, people from the community if they wanted to come. It was come one, come all. It was in late September, I think it was. I didn’t have

any idea what the weather was in Portland, Oregon in September but I had my navy blue interview suit from Saks and my white silk blouse with a silk tie and I thought, well, I'll wear that. Well, who knew September is one of the most beautiful months in Oregon. It's beautiful weather. It's warm, it's sunny, it's bright and it's Oregon. They don't have air conditioning. I walked into this huge room. It was hot. I was told that you have 30 minutes to talk about yourself, your accomplishments and who you are. Apparently the man who had been there before me needed 35 minutes to tell all the wonderful things about him. When I walked into the room, I said, "I probably don't have 30 minutes' worth of Betty Duvall but I'll tell you what I've got and then we'll talk." Well, that sat well with people, I think, and then after that little piece of the interview, I said, "Now, you've all seen the outfit so I'm going to take my coat off." I took my coat off, I rolled up my sleeves and that's the best thing I could have done because that signaled to them that "she can be one of us," that this is not a lot of puffery and what not because that kind of thing doesn't set well with Oregonians.

Blanche Touhill: Were you the only woman in that system that was in administrative...

Betty Duvall: No, not at all. There were, let's see Kaskaskia, Sylvania. There were really kind of four campuses. There are now four campuses but three of the other campuses were headed by women. When I first came, that wasn't the case but shortly thereafter they were. And when I came, I actually came in November, before January of '90. We drove out in Thanksgiving. Dick stayed in Missouri. He had to finish out the school year. But my birthday was November 29<sup>th</sup> and so I figured, well, I'm going to set here by myself and feel sorry for myself but the person who had headed the selection committee was one of the women in this group of three, including me, and she called me and she said, "Because I've had access to your file, I know that you have an important date coming up." It was going to be my 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. And she said, "Alice and I would like to take you out for dinner on your birthday." We did that forever, until...Pamela now is president at Tacoma Community College. Alice has just retired from Sylvania. Every summer we all get together with our partners at the beach and we have a week of eating and laughing and talking and shopping and having a good time together. So we've stayed very good friends.

Blanche Touhill: What did you do for the Oregon Community College while you were there?

Betty Duvall: I think the major thing was Portland Community College had never had any debt. The thinking was, "We save up our money and when we have enough, then we'll go buy this piece of equipment, this building, what it is we want to buy." The district president decided for the first time that they would have a bond issue. My campus was in Washington County. Washington County had never voted for anything that was related to Portland Community College because it was Portland Community College, not Washington County. We had the bond issue. I'm pretty sure that I delivered, I personally delivered the Washington County vote, first time Washington County had ever voted for anything for the college.

Blanche Touhill: So you went out to PTAs or whatever you went to?

Betty Duvall: I was all over the place. The district president didn't bother to come out to Washington County: "That's why they don't support you," but I was all over the place. I really felt like I delivered the vote and then, of course, we built one of the first new buildings on that campus that we'd had. We built a science building and we really created a different view of the campus. We made a front door. There hadn't really been one and made some significant changes. I think that paved the road for the many changes that have happened since then.

Blanche Touhill: Like what?

Betty Duvall: More buildings, more bond issues, more...now they've revamped the old science building and made it a better and newer science building and things of that sort. While I was there...how are we doing on time?

Blanche Touhill: Fine.

Betty Duvall: While I was there, one of the board members of Portland Community College, very active in politics...oh, and I'll have to tell you a quick story from that because in that big interview, one of the women I later found out was a woman faculty member of PE, asked me, "Do you think you could work in an old boys kind of place?" and I said, "Well, you must think there's a problem or you wouldn't have asked the question. What's the problem?" and she said, "I asked you," and I said, "Well..." ...and so we had a little talk and she said, "Women have never found a place in this

state.” Well, this man stood up and he said, “I’ll have you know my wife is the most important woman in Oregon,” and it turned out he was a member of the board and his wife, indeed, was a pretty important person in Oregon because she was judge of the Supreme Court in Oregon. But he had noticed, as a member of the board, that there was no position for community colleges in the U.S. Department of Education and he was close buddies with Senator Hatfield, I’m sure had raised a lot of money for him and so he got Hatfield working on that and they passed a new position, started out as an assistant secretary, I guess, but it wound up in the legislation process as the community college liaison and there was uncertainty whether that should be a part of post-secondary or a part of adult and vocational. It was passed during the first Bush administration. Well, their response was to look around the room and say, “George, you’ll be community college liaison this time.” Well, that didn’t set well with the Portland board member and because it didn’t set well with him, it didn’t set well with the senior senator from Oregon and who was in a very powerful position. He had been there forever and had a great deal of power. So he said, when President Clinton was elected, “You hire a community college liaison or I’m going to hold up your budget.” And so they got cracking on hiring a community college liaison.

Blanche Touhill: And you became that?

Betty Duvall: There was some thought that someone from Oregon might stand a good chance at that position.

Blanche Touhill: And you were it?

Betty Duvall: And no president in Oregon Community College is going to take that kind of job and turn down being a big important person in their own community but I thought, well, I’ll do that.

Blanche Touhill: How many years were you at Portland Community College before you took that?

Betty Duvall: I always say five but it was a little less than five.

Blanche Touhill: So you went off to Washington?

Betty Duvall: I went off to Washington.

Blanche Touhill: Did, did you resign your office in order to take the D.C. job or did you take a leave?

Betty Duvall: I was told I had to resign.

Blanche Touhill: And how many years were you in Washington?

Betty Duvall: Only about two, a little more than that but about two. It was a wonderful learning experience for me because I was really without portfolio. I had really no assigned area to deal with. I really had no money to give anybody and as a result of that, I learned that you can make that work for you. I'd show up at meetings. After you showed up for a meeting two or three times, people think you belong in that group and so they keep inviting you then. I'd go over and see David Logenecker who was the assistant secretary for post-secondary and talk to him. I'd walk the halls. Education Department, as you know, is in many different buildings. I'd walk the halls. The person I reported to was Augusta Capner who came from a community college and she was in Adult and Vocational Education and she was not at all happy to have me there because she thought that she was from community college and she didn't need anybody else there. She was from Bronx Community College. The American Association of Community Colleges didn't want anybody in that job. They wanted to be the chief spokesperson for community colleges. So I knew the guy who was head of ACC then and...

Blanche Touhill: What's ACC?

Betty Duvall: American Association of Community Colleges. And so I said, "Hey, look, you're always going to be the chief advocate for community colleges but you're on the outside. Wouldn't you like to have somebody on the inside kind of feeding you some stuff of what's going on?" So we made that kind of deal. Gussie Capner and I got to be good friends.

Blanche Touhill: Who is Gussie?

Betty Duvall: That was my boss, Augusta Capner, and she actually left before I did and I never knew why she left so soon but we had some good times together. Her first advice to me was, she said, "Now, listen, Washington D.C. is not New York. You can't go out at 2:00 o'clock in the morning and buy a bagel if you want it. You can't do that here." But we got to be good friends and she thought maybe I did have something to offer and I knew she did. But

the first time I met Richard Reilly who is the Secretary of Education, he said to me, "I've never met anyone from Oregon who wasn't trying to get back," and I said, "You're absolutely right." But he was a wonderful, wonderful person to work for, a Southern gentleman.

Blanche Touhill: I noticed that when you were there, that the president of the United States went to many community colleges to make speeches and I always wondered if you hadn't been influential in that?

Betty Duvall: I don't know that I was influential or not because he came from Arkansas that had technical colleges and Dick Rauti came from North Carolina that had technical colleges but I would get calls: "This is the White House calling," and it would be some 25-year-old..."The President would like to give a speech on Saturday, his radio speech at a community college. Can you find one?"; "Oh, sure."

Blanche Touhill: I think that was important.

Betty Duvall: It was important.

Blanche Touhill: It meant that they were able to reach a large percentage of the population in a very easy way.

Betty Duvall: It was very smart, very smart.

Blanche Touhill: Let me change the topic for just a minute: Would you tell me, if you had been born 50 years earlier, what your life would be like?

Betty Duvall: I can tell you exactly what it would have been like: I would have been a farmer's wife, a housewife on a farm probably with children. I don't have children. I doubt that I would have gone to college. I'm certain I wouldn't have gone to college. I sure as heck wouldn't have gone to Europe. I probably wouldn't have left the state. It would have been a very, very different life, a very different life. I like this one much better.

Blanche Touhill: And have you received some award that you really treasure?

Betty Duvall: I don't think there's any one that I really treasure...maybe the Wall Street Journal Award, I don't know but the awards that mean most, I think, to me are the ones that I have received that came from peers, from colleagues. I had worked with the National Association of Instructional Deans in Community Colleges for some time and they gave me a very

important award. After I became the community college liaison, was someone important, I had a little taste of fame there. I decided I didn't like that. But that doesn't answer your question. The other thing that happened when I left Washington, I became a professor at Oregon State in Community College Leadership.

Blanche Touhill: Yes, let's talk about that. Did you get an award there or was it just getting that recognition?

Betty Duvall: Well, it was getting that recognition, was nice because I was hired as a tenured full professor but one of my colleagues there who had come to Oregon from University of Minnesota and was very well known nationally and was excellent, one of the best teachers I ever saw and he nominated me for an award with the...there's a group of community college...university faculty who work with community college programs and put together the most incredible portfolio and support. It was just embarrassing to look at. It was really, really nice. So the rewards from your peers are the ones I think that I like most, yeah.

Blanche Touhill: How did you like teaching on the college level?

Betty Duvall: It was wonderful. Our program was a non-traditional program. Our students were all working community colleges at mid-level management positions.

Blanche Touhill: And that was a new degree, wasn't it? It was a new specialty?

Betty Duvall: It was. It was a new degree that was there before I came. I didn't invent the program. But we met off-campus at a state park one weekend a month and I always said our students had a bigger, better residential experience than the one who were on campus because when we were at the state park, we weren't going anywhere. We were there for the whole weekend. Professors were there. At that time, the cell phone didn't work there. You didn't have access to e-mail. It was focused and it was there. Students loved that because they were away from their institution, from their families. They could focus on the learning activity. So I really liked that. Right now...let me say a couple of words about this. I have lately been on this Oregon...we were reinventing higher education, its structure in Oregon and you don't want to hear all that but part of that reinvention is there is no longer a state-wide system of universities and community colleges were never part of the higher ed because it grew out of

vocational high schools. But there's no longer a system. There's no longer a state-wide chancellor. That's all gone. Now each campus has their own president, their own board and instead of a state of higher education, there is something called...that has the unfortunate acronym of HICC, Higher Education Coordinating Commission and in the first iteration of that, I was appointed to that and was chair of it. That only lasted a year. Then they re-did that in the legislature and made us a far more important group and I was one of the two people who were re-appointed from the old and I am vice chair of this new one and we are finishing our first year in existence and just yesterday, did our first big thing because one of our jobs is to recommend to the governor and the legislature our funding and how it would be allocated for the coming year. When they get done with messing around with it, it will all change a lot but then we'll get it backed when the funding is actually approved and then we allocate to the institutions. I wonder sometimes, to tell you the truth, why I'm there. I'm sure there are people who would be a lot better at this than I am but I'm kind of the community college voice there but I think because I have experience in community college and universities and I feel still a very close tie, especially now, with OSU and the president there and the provost and their lobbyists, so it's really kind of interesting to be at this new beginning. I'm not sure we're on the right track yet at all and funding is one of the major issues like everywhere, we've got to have more money and somebody's got to take on the Oregon tax structure and that's not going to be me.

Blanche Touhill: Well, as you look back over your life, what would you say your contribution was?

Betty Duvall: Well, you like to think there's something but, you know, I don't spend a lot of time thinking about that because it's better to be in the now, it's better to just be here and to think about what the future might bring.

Blanche Touhill: And what is the future going to bring to you in the next year?

Betty Duvall: I'm not sure. I never dreamed I'd be on this commission in retirement.

Blanche Touhill: And are you still traveling?

Betty Duvall: Yes, we will go to France in two weeks.

Blanche Touhill: And did you bring international students to your community colleges when you were there?

Betty Duvall: We had a sister relationship college with...actually, it was a private girls college in Japan and I think that they were happy to have us because it was seen as a very safe place for them to send there and I think it was kind of a business college but it was really, I think, more of [inaudible 58:49] for executives kind of college. But it was a safe place to send their young women and, indeed, it was and I think the president of that institution found it very difficult to work with a woman.

Blanche Touhill: Yes. Well, I want to thank you for doing this interview and is there any closing remark you want to make?

Betty Duvall: I think that for all the progress that women have made professionally, when I had a choice of what profession to be in, it was nurse, secretary, housewife, teacher. I chose teacher. I'm really glad I chose teacher. I used to think maybe I would have chosen something else but I've come to realize, I'm glad I chose teacher. Education is a wonderful thing because you can influence so many people and you have such wonderful colleagues and I'm a pretty happy camper these days.

Blanche Touhill: Well, thank you so much.

Betty Duvall: Thank you for the opportunity.