

Humphreys College

NEWSLETTER SUPPLEMENT

FALL QUARTER

DECEMBER 2012

MEET YOUR TEACHER

FORTY YEARS IN EDUCATION

PART II: AT CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE (1972-1990)

This year coincides with three anniversaries: forty years of his teaching - the first half in former Czechoslovakia, the second half in the United States, and the last decade at Humphreys College. Those 40/20/10 anniversaries inspired the following Q & A exchange between Dean Jess Bonds and Humphreys' Librarian Stanislav Perkner.

The previous part of the interview is available in the Summer 2012 Newsletter Supplement:

http://www.humphreys.edu/pdf/newsletter/newsletter_2012_summer_supplement.pdf

Q: In Fall 1972, you joined the faculty of your alma mater – Charles University in Prague.

A: Yes, it was the university I attended after high-school graduation in 1964. On the surface, everything was the same. My first Charles University office was in one of the original buildings owned by the school since 1348. However, during the four years after the national trauma of 1968, the pro-Soviet government decided to reform the school, one of the 13 colleges belonging to Charles University. My employer, known as the School of Social Sciences and Journalism, became simply the School of Journalism. The point was to weaken the non-journalistic disciplines, especially sociology and psychology that frequently defied official ideology. I was lucky that my Department of Radio Broadcasting remained almost intact. Along with the departments of television and periodical press, it represented the main media outlets. Students chose their special course of training after the initial two years of general education in the history and theory of mass communication.

Q: Do you recall your first lectures?

A: During the initial year, I was assisting my senior colleagues and completing a doctoral program. Under the gentle pressure of my mentor Vladimír Kovářik, who became my first boss, I started lecturing immediately after my graduation in 1971. My dissertation traced the origins of Czechoslovak radio criticism in the 1930s. My first lectures related to that topic; I taught Czech and Slovak media history classes. Gradually, and from scratch, I built a new course, the World of Radio/Radio in the World.



Charles IV established the first university in Prague in 1348.

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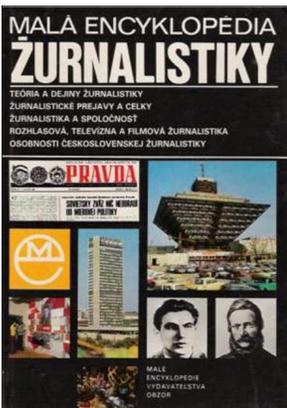
Q: What was the basic design of the journalism program at Charles University?

A: To complete this master's program took ten semesters in five years. Unlike in the U.S., each major lecture at Charles University is accompanied with a discussion seminar. At the end of each course, students took exams; prior to that, they must earn seminar credits. Each specialized program included workshops and labs, for example, the Techniques of Radio/TV Reporting, Media Rhetoric, Screenwriting or the Elements of Creative Writing for the Media, Literary Criticism or Print Media Design. Besides my major lectures and the seminars I was in charge of two radio-reporting workshops. Each student, regardless of the media choice, had to pass the exams in three disciplines offered by the university-wide Institute of Marxism-Leninism: Philosophy, Political Economy, and the so-called Scientific Communism. The first of them was, in essence, a valuable course in the history of world philosophy. The other two courses were difficult because the realities of everyday life in Soviet-bloc countries contradicted the 19th-century theories of Karl Marx and other dictatorship-of-the-proletariat visionaries. I recall that my late daughter Eva, then a student of the School of Medicine at Charles University, barely passed the Scientific Communism exam with the only "C" on her transcript. Any student with free spirit tended to argue every point, naturally not endearing himself or herself to the professor. The journalism program included two foreign languages. Russian was compulsory; English, French, Spanish, and German were the electives; each student was obliged to choose one of those "Western languages" and pass a set of comprehensive exams by the end of the fourth semester.



The original seal of Charles University

Q: When you applied in 1964, the study of journalism grew popular due to the political thaw in Czechoslovakia. How was it after the Soviet-led occupation of your country in August 1968?



A: For several years, the popularity had declined. By the mid-1970s, the school application ratio was 4:1. About 25% of applicants were admitted. Each of them had to pass comprehensive entrance exams. The written part included a Czech grammar test and several essays. Those who succeeded were invited to proceed to the oral part. The entrance-exam committee would ask questions from high-school history and literature. Another purpose of the entrance exams was to determine the prospective student's general motivation. Most of them claimed literary ambitions in the fields of culture and arts. Many wished to travel the world as sportscasters. The overall interest in writing was understandable; the creative writing could be studied in the School of Journalism or at the Academy of Arts, especially its renowned Prague Film School. The School of Journalism offered both regular and evening programs of study. The former served mostly freshly minted high school graduates; the latter was for working professionals. Unfortunately, some applicants were undeservedly punished for a variety of reasons: the defection of their relatives to the West, including the

United States; their parents' opposition to the Soviet-led invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968; their entrepreneurial past; or public display of religious faith. Some other admission criteria applied, for example, gender or Prague-countryside ratio.

Q: How would you describe general conditions of university education in the 1970s-1980s Czechoslovakia?

A: First of all, the entire educational system was free of charge. It was covered by the government from the tax-based national budget. There were no private schools in the Soviet-bloc. In return, the government kept the education under strict control—from student and instructor selection to accreditation and school budgeting. With the exception of a few electives, all students took the same courses within their chosen programs. Marxism-Leninism and the Russian language—alongside with one "Western language"—was a part of the general education requirements in all academic programs—including math, business, medicine, engineering, and other non-ideological fields.

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Q: How much money did a typical university student of that era need per month?

A: In general, the government generously subsidized dormitory accommodations, food in student cafeterias, and public transportation. In the early 1970s, the dormitory rent was about 50 Czechoslovak Crowns (Kcs) per month; a lunch or dinner, Kcs 2.60; a monthly public transportation pass, Kcs 30. The student had to buy textbooks that were reasonably priced. Obviously, inflation of the 1980s made everything more expensive. When I studied, in the 1960s, my parents would give me Kcs 500 each month; it was about 15% of their blue collar railroad worker earnings. Very few students needed the so-called social scholarship; most of the recipients were married with children. It happened to be my case: Eva was born in 1967, in the third year of mine and my wife's study. Both of us were above-average students earning some additional governmental cash for good grades, which was a special scholarship.

Q: How would you characterize the income structure in light of educational achievement?

A: Under the general income conditions of the Soviet-bloc countries, a higher education was not a pass to prosperity. The communist ideology was preoccupied with the welfare of the industrial working class, a "proletariat," in the 1848 *Communist Manifesto* language. The "intelligentsia" was considered a wavering servant of the bourgeois capitalist class. In practical terms, my entry to university professional pay was about 80% of my father's monthly salary; his blue-collar job did not require any higher education. My personal income was for a while lower than my married-with-children student income. It took a great deal of family sacrifice to pursue my academic career.

Q: So far, you explained the entrance exams procedure and the general progress of the course of study. How would you describe the culminating experience of the journalism program?



A: As it applied to the entrance testing, the final exams took both written and oral forms. At the end of the fourth semester, all budding journalists had to take their first complex exam focused on the history of Czechoslovakia and the rest of the world with a special emphasis on the mass media. To qualify, they had to take a set of lectures and seminars. A regular part of the seminar work was a research paper accompanied by several oral presentations. All of that was reviewed by the comprehensive exam committee. Two year later, at the beginning of the eighth semester, each student submitted a diploma work topic—an equivalent of an American master thesis or project. The completed diploma work had between 60 and 100 typewritten pages. After the advisor's approval, the text was sent to a reviewer. Then came a big day: the "governmental exams." The committee heard the defense of the diploma work first—mostly the candidate's responses to the reviewer's remarks. If all went well, the exam continued with its comprehensive oral part. Each student would randomly choose five from several hundred questions that were publicly available in advance. The entire

process took about sixty minutes. In the meantime, the next student had a chance to prepare his answers in the same room. It took care about any attempt to cheat. The committee had between seven and nine members. Except for the closed-door grading conferences, the whole procedure was open to the public. Such has been a university tradition practiced for more than 600 years.

Q: How many graduates earned their terminal degrees?

A: Historically, the selectivity of the doctoral program access was determined by its cost with the exception of the theological studies, sponsored by the Catholic Church. To earn a doctorate at one of the oldest universities was not cheap. The post-WWII nationalization of the educational system lifted the cost limitation. Therefore, the university leadership made it hard to be admitted to the Philosophy Doctorate program. I considered it a privilege to pass the master's degree at the beginning of my Charles University career; it took ten semesters. The partial doctoral exams and the defense of the

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dissertation were based on a pass/fail basis, all done before the expert committees comprised of not too friendly administrators. When I joined the faculty of the School of Journalism at Charles University, the overall access to doctoral programs in humanities and social sciences was very selective, at least in the 1970s. Towards the end of the 1980s, which ended the Soviet dominance of Czechoslovakia, the government partially eased the admittance rules.

Q: Why did you decide to undergo the Ph.D. process again at the beginning of the 1980s?

A: It was partly motivated financially and partly by my genuine interest in the history of the world. To extend the scope of my research qualification, I decided to apply for the Ph.D. program in general history at Comenius University in Bratislava. It turned out to be a slow and painstaking process. In the course of those endless seven years, I was unexpectedly asked to chair the Department of Radio Journalism, when my mentor and first boss had to retire. Ultimately, I managed to complete the program and defend my second dissertation in 1982. It was a prescient step: Upon arrival in California—ten years later—my employment prospects turned to be brighter with a Ph.D. in World History, rather than in History of Czechoslovakia.

Q: Did the rule “publish or perish” apply to your Charles University career?

A: For more than six hundred centuries, Charles University in Prague has been a research institution of higher learning. In practical terms, my contract required that I’d spend two-thirds of my time teaching and the rest researching. It took about five years before I dared to publish in professional journals. I started with book reviews and gradually presented my research results of the history of radio: news reporting, radio art, especially drama, and radio programming. In the 1980s, I was ready for more complex book projects, e.g., a two-volume *Language of Drama* or a university textbook on the theory and practice of radio journalism.

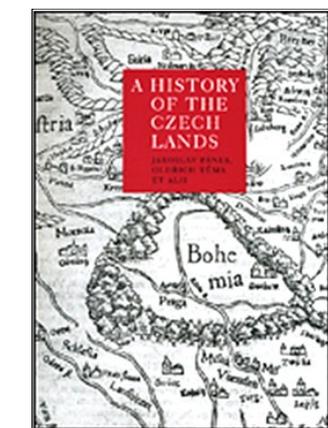


Prague: St. Vitus Cathedral

Q: Why did you specialize in radio?

A: I grew up in a small town of 5,000 inhabitants in Central Bohemia: one movie theater and a public library. My parents could not afford a television set. Instead, I would listen to the radio and read. Through radio, I was reaching the world. Through books, I was trying to understand it.

Q: The world... I’m sure it was easier to read about it than to break the Iron Curtain and see it.



A: One of the reasons the Soviet bloc ultimately collapsed was the severe limitation on the freedom to travel abroad. Czechs and Slovaks were permitted to travel within the bloc, including Castro’s Cuba. Yet, thousands of people tried to defect Czechoslovakia illegally by leaving the plane during the refueling stop in Canada’s Gander, Newfoundland Airport or even swimming from a Yugoslav beach to Italy. There they applied for political asylum.

The Czechoslovak regime then confiscated the private property they left behind and made the life of their relatives miserable. The sanctions included restrictions in workplace and limited access to higher education. Mail was censored and phone calls screened by state authorities.

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Q: Why was the Czechoslovak government so paranoid?

A: After the 1950s nationalization of private enterprise, the standard of living in the Soviet-bloc countries stagnated or declined. The welfare state undermined a sense of competitiveness. Another threat was a brain drain; most defectors were professionals—doctors, nurses, construction and electronics engineers, and so on. With the exception of diplomats, nobody was allowed to stay “in the West” for an extended period of time. After the 1968 invasion and subsequent military occupation of Czechoslovakia, each potential tourist had to apply for a special permit affixed to his or her passport and for a purchase of hard currency—German marks, British pounds, American dollars, and even Yugoslav dinars. Paradoxically, each Czechoslovak passport bore an inscription: “Valid for all countries of the world.” Some individuals – especially political dissidents – never received their passport. In some cases, the authorities decided to enforce the immigration by a systematic harassment of the governmental critics and their families. It applied mostly to dissident writers; once they left the country, their voice lost its appeal. It was the way the Soviet authorities dealt with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: In 1974, Solzhenitsyn was deported from the Soviet Union to West Germany and stripped of his citizenship. Ultimately, he settled in the United States.



Q: Did all of that paranoid insulation apply to international conferences and congresses in academia?

A: It all depended on the field of research. University experts in medicine or mathematics enjoyed a greater freedom of “congressional tourism,” especially after 1975, when the Czechoslovak government signed the Helsinki Agreement in the European Security and Cooperation. Its third section included a commitment to academic and research exchanges among the signatories—all European countries, the U.S., and Canada. As a rule, however, the Soviet-bloc governments signed the Helsinki Agreement and generally ignored it. The grip eased a bit after 1985. The signatories met in London to review the Helsinki process ten years after its acceptance. Czechoslovakia was criticized and its government had to show some serious effort. My first professional stay in the U.S., in 1986, was a direct result of that international pressure.

Q: In the meantime, before you peeked from behind the Iron Curtain in 1986, you had a chance to travel to several Soviet-friendly parts of the world.

A: As a Charles University professor, I could travel freely to the Soviet Union and its satellites: e.g., East Germany, Bulgaria, Hungary, or Poland. In the School of Journalism, I taught a course on international broadcasting. I had the go-ahead as a researcher and visiting lecturer. For example, for a decade, I would spend a couple of weeks in Sofia, Bulgaria, to teach a regular summer course at Ochridsky University. Frequently, my family would join me, and all of us would spend my earnings on the Black Sea beaches of Eastern Bulgaria. I maintained close contacts with my colleagues at the Karl-Marx-Universität in Leipzig, Germany, a half-day drive from Prague.

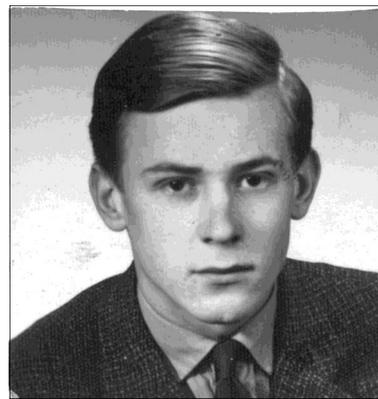
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Q: Under which conditions would you travel to the Soviet Union?

A: For obvious reasons, Prague and Moscow were well connected. To travel, it took about two hours by plane or two days by comfortable train. I used train just once to see the vast lands of Ukraine, the second largest contiguous country on the European continent, and Russia that turned fatal to both Napoleon and Hitler. I would visit the Moscow State University every second year or so for a specific reason. As a teacher of international communications, I suffered from the lack of Western research literature. Czechoslovak libraries were purged after 1968; many British, German, French, and American books and journals were removed or stored in warehouses as politically unsuitable for scholars and especially students.

Q: Are you saying that the Moscow University provided access to those Western resources?

A: For me, as a foreigner, such an access would be unthinkable. In the 1970s-1980s Soviet Union, each stranger had to register in the place of residence, for example, in a university hotel, as in my case. To leave the city was not permitted without official authorization. If I visited friends to have dinner with them, they were supposed to report me to an apartment complex caretaker. By the end of the 1980s, with the emergence of Gorbachev's reforms, many of those Cold-War restrictions were lifted. Paradoxically, however, the Moscow State University would grant me almost unrestricted access to its library system. Still, I had to show my passport every time I entered the library premises. I needed a special permission signed by the dean to gain access to the Ph.D. Dissertations Reading Room of the University Library. It turned to be "my place." I'd spend long days there to make detailed notes from invaluable doctoral works about the history and programming of American, British, German, and French broadcasting. Those notes turned out to be one of the main sources for my Prague lectures and seminars. It was also good practice for perfecting the command of my Russian language.



Q: Your today's students at Humphreys might criticize you for use of the secondary research sources rather than the primary ones.

A: They would be right. Unfortunately, the first-hand, or primary, sources were out of my reach—since I lived at that time behind the Iron Curtain.

Q: Ultimately, though, you made it to the United States.

A: Before I landed in New York City for the first time, in 1986, I had to work on it for about ten years. Between 1970 and 1985, prior to Gorbachev's era, a Czech social science professor of Charles University had practically zero chance to see America, with the exception of Castro's Cuba. My private strategic plan consisted of two parts: keep working on my English, especially my conversational skills, and try to travel as often as possible to the English-speaking developing countries.

Q: I am almost sure that it applied to your 1981 lecture tour around India.

A: It took me several years of applying. Finally, the Ministry of Education dispatched me to lecture about the Czechoslovak mass media in several Indian universities. The Prime Minister Indira Gandhi supported all forms of Czechoslovak-Indian cooperation in order to strengthen the Soviet support. My base was in the government-sponsored Indian Institute

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for Mass Communication Research in New Delhi. From there, I'd travel for a week-long lecture and study expeditions to in Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai (Madras), and Chandigarh.

Q: India seems to be your first truly long-distance—overseas—trip.

A: My Indian colleagues made fun of me when I confessed that India is my first “Western” country. They pointed out that I had to fly some four thousand miles east to reach their peninsula.... For me as a historian and educator, India was a unique destination. Its Nalanda University was the most developed learning center between the 5th and 12th centuries. It hosted students from India, China, Tibet, Persia, Korea, and even Europe. Moreover, India is the land of contrasts: the country with a great part of its population still illiterate has a complex system of mostly state-run colleges and universities. That system trails just the United States and China.

Q: How do you remember your Indian students?

A: Soon upon arrival, I understood that my meticulously prepared lectures—approved by the Czech Ministry of Education—would not work. Indian students preferred a Q+A format. Most of them were surprisingly well prepared for an exotic visitor from the Far West. Regularly, after my presentation, they would invite me to a potluck served in a student center or cafeteria – a British style. Prospective journalists and public-relations professionals saw it as a chance to hone their interviewing skills in both formal and informal settings. As I told them many times, I learned from them – and not only English.

Q: What brought you to Yemen? Was it another opportunity to practice your English conversation skills?

A: I visited Yemen in 1984-1985. As far as I was informed, the Czechoslovak government equipped several Yemeni publishers with printing equipment. My task was to train young journalists for the newly established state-run local media. It was not easy: daily morning lectures in English or Russian, interpreted into Arabic; long afternoon siestas; evening dinners with Yemeni media and education dignitaries—all of that within the perimeter of the Aden city limits. Only once I managed to escape my Yemeni governmental “minders” and see the old town and the port of Aden. To take pictures was prohibited: a Soviet flotilla on the left, Soviet radar installations on the hills to the right. From my hotel-room window, I saw the complex of the Yemeni Radio and Television Headquarters, another strategic object. After a while, I felt like a prisoner in a gilded cage.

Q: In other words, the Czechoslovak authorities allowed you to travel to the East (India) and to the South (Yemen), but not to the West.

A: It was a part of the Soviet-style “absurdistan.” I saw the Red Fort of Delhi, the Elephanta Caves in Mumbai, the palaces of Punjabi Patiala, and the Adenese Cisterns of Tawila but not the Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna, Paris’s Eiffel Tower, or London’s Big Ben. The only exceptions were a brief lecture trip to Soviet-friendly Finland and a congressional week in Barcelona, Spain.

Q: However, all of that changed in 1986: you went from India to Indiana...

A: By the mid-1980s, my spoken English was improving. Moreover, the Czechoslovak authorities might have felt assured that I was not about to escape “the socialist camp” while changing planes in Frankfurt, Rome or Zurich. To secure my return, they never let my family accompany me. In 1985, I served as a program coordinator and press secretary of the Czechoslovak delegation during the Prague Congress of the International Association for the Mass Communication Research, a UNESCO related organization. A part of the 50-member U.S. delegation was Professor Owen Johnson, of Indiana University in Bloomington.

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Q: Did you know one another?

A: Yes and no. I was aware of his name because his Ph.D. dissertation covered the development of Slovak education. He might have been aware of me as a researcher. I recall that he reviewed my radio journalism textbook in an obscure American peer-reviewed journal. Owen and I met by coincidence in a Prague Congressional Center restaurant. Because I was in charge of the congressional newsletter, I arrived there to eat my lunch rather late. A lovely afternoon, a gorgeous panorama of Prague Castle behind the large windows, and there was a bearded guy drinking his coffee, admiring the view, a congressional name tag hanging from his neck. I joined him to wait for my lunch. Surprisingly, he spoke Czech, despite his American affiliation. “My wife Marta grew up over there,” pointed Owen to the Smíchov District, a few miles from us, just across the Moldau River....”



*Twenty-three years ago, the Americans were already word-processing; in Prague, we were still typewriting.
Photo Alena Lábová, 1989*

Q: A life-changing moment?

A: Within a few minutes we found a common language stemming from common interests in history and mass communication. Besides, we found out that we were born in the same year and liked the same brand of Czech beer. Before we parted, Owen told me that Indiana University had an opening for a yearlong study stay of an Eastern-European scholar. In his view, I'd be a good fit: still relatively young with manageable English.

Q: Did you make a deal on the spot?

A: I wish we had! However, as I told you, after the 1968 occupation of Czechoslovakia, social-science specialists did not do any long-term East-West traveling. In other words, I turned Owen's informal offer into a bitter joke.

Will be continued in Winter 2013: Before I reach the American shores...

CSR CERTIFICATION - A LICENSE TO LEARN

By Desiree Winn, CSR #13645



They say that court reporting is like wind surfing. Okay, “they” don’t really say that, but I do. Recently, a friend of mine was telling me about how she was certified in windsurfing. Before I could

congratulate her on her achievement and become too impressed with her athletic prowess at the age of 50, she was quick to inform me that all they require for the certification is that you actually get up to a standing position on the board. Because I was having this conversation about nine months into my very first year as a CSR, all I could think was that my first year of working has sort of felt like Janie must feel when she goes out on her board without her instructor – just her, her board, and the sea. And all because a piece of paper says that she actually stood up one time.

I am the Court Reporter...

I passed a couple of multiple-choice tests and a 10-minute skills test one day, and they sent me a certificate that I immediately mounted on the wall above my desk. And now, when I get a job assignment, because of that piece of paper, I show up and have the audacity to look people in the eye and say, “I’m the court reporter for...” And from there, it’s all about figuring out what that actually means.

As a Terminal Perfectionist—because it *is* a disease, and I *will* die with it, if not from it—the prospect of “figuring it out” is, at best, extremely uncomfortable. At its worst, it’s absolutely terrifying. But so goes the first year as an actual working CSR. I have to say, though, that as first years go, mine has been pretty awesome. And I’m using that word not as a throwback to my ‘80s heyday, but in every sense of its literal definition straight out of, of course, Merriam-Webster.

My First Job

From the very first job, which came with only 30 minutes’ notice and sent me rushing out the door without any time to actually think, right up to the moment I took my first job as an Aiken Welch court reporter in the firm that, as an intern, I just *knew* employment there would signify I had made it, it’s been a year of figuring it out—certainly not without mistakes, but with some victories as well. I am truly amazed at not only the amount of work opportunities that have come my way but also, quite honestly, at my ability to do them.

Nobody is Perfect

In sharing the experiences of my first year, I could focus on the mistakes I’ve made: the blank-outs while administering the oath, the stumbles and stutters through absolutely illegible notes for read back, or the Absolute Biggest Mistake of Them All – arriving at a job without my writer. Or I could talk about the inevitable panic-stricken moments: the first rough-draft request (“oh, just some time tonight is fine”); or the first time to hear the words, “Ms. Reporter, can you scroll back to the beginning of today’s proceedings...”; or pulling the car over on the way to a job to check to see if I remembered my writer.

But it’s better for my morale, I think, and hopefully more inspiring for the reader if I just focus on one of the few things that I actually did right in my first year and the pleasantly surprising perks that I’ve experienced as a result.

Opportunities Come from your Availability

The first big lesson I learned about court reporting is that what you think you might lack in experience can be compensated for in availability. And then the more work you’re given as a result of your ability, the more experience you have. See how that works? I honestly believe that I got as much work as I did in this first year simply because I was available. I was available to drive long distances, so I got my

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first court trial in Sonora in my second week of work. From that one job, I got the experience of typing up a trial transcript from beginning to end. Then, later in the year, it was appealed, and I got to experience the appeal process, which is definitely something to learn. And then later in the year, when I wanted to branch out into the Bay Area and went to update my resume to send off to a firm that I *really* desired to work for, it was nice to be able to include that in the list of accomplishments. And the icing was when a court trial became available in Napa. Since I had done the one in Sonora, it was offered to me, and I took it. And I was able to thoroughly enjoy just being there that day, without the stress of wondering what it was going to be like, which is one of the perks that I have come to love in this job – exploring the different towns and locations I find myself in.

The one bit of advice I would give to a student who is wondering how to prepare for their first year of work is to open up your availability. If you have small children at home, I would look around for childcare options as if you were starting an 8:00-5:00 full-time position. I know that you became a court reporter because of the flexible hours it affords, and you will get that. But in the beginning, opportunities come from your availability.

It's All about that Transcript

Part of what makes you available is also how efficiently you can produce a transcript. While our focus in school tends to be on our writing, in the world of being a deposition reporter, it's all about that transcript. I mean, what else does a firm owner or client have to assess our abilities? And, honestly, we can be personable, professional, and the fastest writers in the world, but if our transcripts aren't easy to read, the rest of our skills begin to pale. Firms do hire brand-new reporters, but they know that in doing that, they will have to spend a lot of time with them, showing them the ropes. The more you know about how to produce a transcript, the less they will have to teach you, and the more jobs they will send your way, simply because they can assign it out and move on. I can't tell you what a relief it was after taking that first job and feeling like a novice, to know that

when the firm asked for an ASCII, I could send one over right away and that the transcript would make sense. When I started working with a proofreader, knowing how to produce the PDF she required, gave me a much-needed moment of good feeling. I actually knew what I was doing in a sea of moments that made me feel otherwise.

To students, I would advise that if you are not currently spending time in the lab on a consistent basis, do what you can to make that change. There are so many unknown factors of any job we take that play into our writing – how fast the speakers will talk, how many speakers there will be, subject matter, etc. But the one constant part of every job, and of every test that we take to become certified, is what it takes to edit a transcript. If that skill can be mastered in school, the transition into working will be a smoother one.

I've Caught a Wave and Enjoy the Ride

Because I was available for every opportunity that was presented to me, I have had a very enjoyable first year. In this year, I have reported and transcribed depositions, court trials and an assortment of different court hearings, Examinations Under Oath (EUOs), expert witness depositions, medical depositions, city council meetings, arbitration hearings, focus groups, and probably some others that I've forgotten. I've learned from my mistakes. My victories have increased my confidence to branch out to working in the Bay Area, which is really where I always envisioned myself to be but assumed it would come after about three years of reporting. I've been pleasantly surprised at how much fun I've had being in different cities and towns and exploring when I've had the chance. In recent weeks, I've been thrust into the commuter world, and I am learning about the different modes of public transportation – and, again, I'm surprised at how a simple change of scenery, a train ride, and discovering a yummy new bistro can make going to work feel a little like a mini-vacation. I think I've caught a wave and am beginning to enjoy the ride.

Happy Holidays

To Our Students, Alumni, and Friends of the College:

Season's Greetings! Once again it is Christmas time, a wonderful moment for us to pause for a second to celebrate with our friends, and an opportunity for us to express our gratitude for your warm and continuing friendship.

Our traditional Christmas Reunion Buffet Luncheon will be held on **Thursday, December 13th at 12 noon** on the Stockton campus. You are invited to bring your spouse and, certainly, your children are also welcome. This is a special opportunity to visit with your friends, former classmates, and teachers. If you know of alumni or friends of the College who did not receive this invitation, please invite them on our behalf.

Best Wishes for a Wonderful
Holiday Season,

*Humphreys College Trustees,
Faculty, and Staff*

Remember to come early to purchase tickets for our annual raffle of over 25 holiday gift baskets and the grand prize of \$100 cash!

Raffle will be held at 1:00 p.m.

(All proceeds will benefit the Gregory Vaughn Memorial Scholarship)



⇒ *Humphreys College is on **facebook**—check it out at*
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