

Dr. Edward B. Segel

SR 11456, Oral History,

by Greg Nicosia & Pablo Guzman

Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest (GLAPN)

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SEGEL: Ed Segel

GN: Greg Nicosia

PG: Pablo Guzman

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This oral history interview was conducted as part of the Portland State University LGBT History Capstone course, Winter Term 2010, with Instructor Pat Young.

## Session 1

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GN: This is Greg Nicosia and Pablo Guzman here interviewing Ed Segel for the GLAPN association and we're just here to ask questions about the history of the LGBT community in Portland and Ed's involvement in that.

PG: All right, if you just want to go ahead and introduce yourself Ed.

SEGEL: Where...Where do I start? (laughing)

GN: Just with your name and...the basic. . .

SEGEL: I arrived in Portland... uh summer, early summer of 1973. Oh, yes one question I think you asked was, how did I happen to come to Portland, it's very simple. I was first a graduate student in history at the University of California Berkley and then was appointed

to the faculty. And then, to put it all in one sentence, I didn't publish so I perished. I was turned down for tenure, which is understandable because that's a publishing place...And ...so in 1972-73 I apply for academic jobs wherever there was one in my field. And I was just incredibly lucky and Reed hired me. So I turned up here in I think it was June of 73 and begin teaching at Reed ...uh... with the fall semester of 73 and I've been here ever since. So...uh...and I was very lucky A: to get a job in what was then... an even worse academic job situation then exists now and B: to come to a very good place like Reed which does not emphasize publication as much as it does teaching and C: in as civilized a place as Portland.

That had an active even then and more so now of course an active gay community. So I was really, I was very lucky all the way around, so that's how I...that's how I got here. And then I started...um... just sort of...oh yes looking around for ...um... some sort of entre into the gay community besides just going to the bars. And there then existed and had already existed for a few years a gay men's discussion group at PSU, this is gay men together, GMT. And it met Wednesday evenings I think at seven to seven thirty in ...um...whatever is the student activities building. The white building I think it's called, whatever. Oh the Smith center.

GN: Smith Memorial yeah.

SEGEL: The Smith Center...uh...and I attended that really for a number of years and that's where I met at least at that stage most of my friends in Portland. So that was also a great piece of luck. It was really a very fine group and it. I don't think a group like that has existed for some years...uh, which may be too bad. Cause it was a great place; that's partly for people just coming out but also if um... You wanted a place to meet people wasn't necessarily cruisy in the sense that a bar was, and where you could actually carry on conversations. And talk about gay related topics like coming out, or being gay on the job, or gay politics, or whatever.

GN: So what was the gay community like at that point, like the gay bars and the?

SEGEL: Well there were the bars and there was a gay paper that was very um... What's a good word it wasn't very robust I think it uh... my memory is uncertain because I think there was several gay papers in succession. I think one may have gone bankrupt and one suffered from embezzlement or whatever so uh... it took a while before Just Out appeared which was then sort of consistent steady. And it's hard for me to tell what the community was like cause one sees only a small part of it. Uh there did exist uh the Portland Town Council briefly I think and that was meant to be. A kind of political group though after a couple of years it lost...and sense of its mission. I remember a meeting of oh maybe eight or ten of us in Ben Meryl's apartment. Bens like uh been a gay lawyer in town...and active in gay politics and so on. And we were searching around for a mission and whenever an organization is searching for a mission that's a very bad sign.

So it sort of fell apart then there arose the Right to Privacy pack. That was the first real I think gay um... political action group in town. It eventually after a few years changed its name to...Right to Privacy was adopted because we were very much on the defensive um... to defend just the legitimacy of uh gay lesbians sexuality. Then as things got a little better and more positive we changed it to Right to Pride. And we had an annually fundraising dinner it started relatively small for a couple of years I remember we were in the main ballroom of the um...Benson hotel. And then we needed more space so we moved for a few more years to the uh...larger space the main ballroom of the Hilton. And then we needed more space and we ended up in the convention center and for several years we had enough people there it may have been a thousand to, to...uh fill that space. And I never quite understood what happened whether it was partly financial or personal or what but it the group fell apart and by that time Basic Rights Oregon had begun. And BRO (Basic Rights Oregon) essentially took place took the space that Right to Pride had been in.

Right to Pride was... had made a point of dividing the offices so unevenly between men and women. BRO at that time at least was predominantly lesbian and I think that did lead to some ill feeling on occasion. I do remember I think this may be after this may be after Right to Pride fell apart there was a big battle in the community. I think it was I don't want to swear I've got the year right but I think was in the summer of 1997 and the issue was that many of leaders of BRO wanted to have a ballot measure that would be a proactive gay rights ballot measure. Well there was intense debate about that there was a number of us who thought that was a bad idea because proactive civil rights measures had never actually passed anywhere in the country.

There was one large meeting in what I think it was the auditorium of the um...Northwest natural and a bigger meeting a few weeks later also in the summer in um oh at MCC Metropolitan Community Church. And the leadership at that time I think all lesbian of BRO was strongly in favor. A lot of people spoke against -- Bonnie Tinker from Love Makes a Family was very skeptical. She was afraid she said that such a campaign would take energy and money from smaller groups like hers. Barbara Roberts was there whose very pro gay; uh the former governor and she said that again she didn't believe that proactive civil rights measures were going to pass. Um... among the leaders of the group... opposing the idea was George Eighmey, then openly gay member of the state house of representatives, I think he was member then, he served a number of terms and then was term limited out. And I was George's loyal lieutenant and we both got rather royally abused by the BRO leadership for our pains.

Now at that time as I said the BRO leadership as I remember was all or almost all lesbian and there were both men and women skeptical about the measure but it tended males who sit in opposing it like George and myself. So unfortunately, it ended up at least I one respect looking like a lesbian verses gay male conflict. And I remember after one gathering I took um...I think her name was Genie Harris but don't want a I won't

swear for that because my memory is uncertain. She was the a rather combative executive secretary then of um...executive director of BRO aside and saying; "Look this shaping up unfortunately to look like lesbian versus gay male uh argument. You really have got to take some of your guys and put them out front to uh defend your position." And nothing really happened from that.

One thing that did occur I think it was at the MCC meeting was that a young women from the state of Washington got up and said that the state of Washington or the gay lesbian group had put such measure of on the Washington state ballot for that coming fall. And she was saying she was full of enthusiasm for it and she said, "look if we guys did it you guys can do it". Well as it turned out that uh, ballot measure in Washington State failed sixty to forty percent. So that put end to the movement to have a similar measure on the Oregon ballot. Now I understand BRO is trying to do something perhaps with gay marriage um...on the Oregon Ballot for 2012. We'll see what happens with that but again a lot of us are skeptical that sort of thing is going to is...is going to work. And during the '97, uh, controversy I did heard I hate to say it but I did hear form some gay men that I knew, politically active gay men, um...rather misogynistic remarks. "Oh this is a lesbian thing" and so on and so on. So now and again, you did have that kind of problem.

The guy in um... for a few years in the Right to Pride who was very active was Jerry Weller. I've lost track of what Jerry is doing now. Jerry was a very active had a great deal of energy but didn't get on well with lesbians and that didn't help matters any. So I think that may have um... that may have fuel up the split eventually between the PAC and what became BRO. Uh... lets see. And we there was talk for years... about having a gay lesbian community center and finally we've got one. With its own building yet but it took um... it took a long time to do that. I mean I was always in favor but I never knew where we'd find the money and I still don't know where they found the money. That is I mean they got... this a uh... two years ago already they were in um... rented quarters on water street. Uh... and they got a challenge grant of I think 200,000 dollars from a donor in

California but they only had as I remember I mean you'll have to find this out from them like uh Kendall Clarkson but I think they'd been given only about three months to uh meet the challenge. Uh and they did they more then meet it I think they got something like 215,000 or thereabouts. And I was astonished, well I was very happy but I was astonished. Um... and now there going to have another fund drive to uh so now they have a new building, which is now open and operating, and then they another fund drive just to uh deal with the capital of the mortgage and so on. But I was really very pleasantly surprised that the community could come up with that kind of money. Especially during political campaigns that were drawing money and so on. So I think things are um things are looking up there's a lot going on in town uh and that's a very healthy sign. Yup.

PG: Do we want to move on to one of the questions like uh... there's one that we had both talked about liking and it was: "While at Berkley, you decided to see a therapist for your homosexual desires."

SEGEL: Oh, yes. Oh dear.

PG: We were kind of curious about what prompted that and did work out.

SEGEL: Well I was um... I then believed like practically everybody else outside of the movement itself. That being gay was in some sense abnormal I won't say a disease or a sickness but clearly a at the very least a disability. So... I found and the there were other personal issues I was dealing with aside from that. I remembering finding or I was recommended to one therapist who was very nice, who after a month or two died of a heart attack. So there was a senior psychiatrist I had heard speak who was very, whom impressed me a lot in San Francisco. So I called him up and I explained my situation and I said please recommended somebody in the East Bay and he recommended a psychiatrist in Berkley whom I then saw. And um... in our first conversation I remember...

he said well I have some previous, he was a very nice guy, but he did say in the first conversation, "I do have trouble excepting homosexuality". At which point if I knew then what I know now I would have gotten up and walked out, but because he was then giving me sort of single shot to change but since I wanted to change that seemed at the time O.K.

It was very bad of as I realized afterwards a very bad therapeutic uh...approach he took. Because he should have been neutral rather than cheer me on that way. So the um... positive side of that is that after about three years when I actually changed my mind I thought no I like myself the way I am and that means liking myself as gay. I didn't do that because of his urging if anything I did it the other way around. Uh against his urging um... so in a way that made my own decision more authentic in a way clearly not do to his influence. I have to say I won't mention any names but this was around let me think uh...around '67, 8, 9... '70. Around then I was seeing him finally after a long delays in by the spring of '69 I finished my dissertation and got my Ph-d degree after taking a very long time to finish it. And in a way that was psychologically, that took a lot of burden off and was really within a few months after that I that my mind changed.

Once that burden was gone, I could turn around and say well like I said I like myself the way I am. And, then in '70, '71 I was in England to do research and um... on the one hand found a gay social group to join and then was in a relationship for nine months within the residence hall I was there. I remember writing a letter back to my old therapist about that and he said, well he was a little bit impolite. He actually said that well your getting it looks like your getting a PHD but in the wrong field. I think he latter apologized for that. A couple of years latter around let me think ...around '77 or '78 his son came to Reed a freshmen and purely by chance, I ended up as his son's advisor. Um I didn't know the son very well, I did I actually said to him you know I said I know your father uh you know give my regards to your father. He may have guessed that it was as a patient. Um...he didn't he didn't come back for his sophomore year I gather that he wasn't very

um he wasn't I guess he did well academically but he wasn't very popular among his peers I gathered. So, I did feel a little malicious spite to be perfectly honest that the son didn't last at Reed.

Um...but it shows as I keep telling my students what a very small world it is a really small world. Uh you'll discover that if you live as start doing these as you go on doing these interviews. When I got here I was told that Portland was a big small town and um...there its not as small now as it was then but there's a lot of truth to that. Oh, when I got here in '73 I knew two people in town. One was uh an old student of mine from Berkley in the middle '60's Henry Richmond who became a prominent lawyer and was what some would call the founder of A Thousand Friends of Oregon. And he did that for a long time and now he's involved other similar activities. Now I spent a year in England between college and graduate school...at Oxford '60-'61. In the spring of '61 on the way back to this country by sea on the Ansiatic they are a lot of American students on the boat and I became friends with a young handsome guy. Who was coming back I think from his junior year in Israel Neil Goldschmidt. Uh...he was going back to the U of O and then after a year he graduated and came to Berkley for law school. So I saw him we would have a drink now and again at Berkley.

Well comes very early '73 and Reed calls me up and says well we'd like you to come up to Reed for a job interview. Fine. The same day I'm at a friends place in Berkley he had a copy of Playboy. I don't usually read Playboy but I opened it up in the back they had I don't know if they still do...they had a section of men in the news this month. There was Neil's picture he had just taken office as mayor of Portland. He was then the youngest big city mayor in the country. So I called him up I said I'm coming to Portland oh he says call me up when you get here and, and we'll have a drink or whatever. So one of my then one of my latter colleagues in the history department on the soc committee picked me up at the airport took me for a drink before depositing me at in the motel where I was staying. And I say can I use your phone I have a friend in town, "oh



fine". So I called Neil and we arranged to have dinner the next night. So I come back into the living room and then my host says, "Oh do you know some one in town?" and I says, "Yes Neil Goldschmidt." And the look he gave me who am I, I'm a search candidate a very low form humanity, and I'm having dinner with the mayor.

Now the next day I had the usual routine of a whole long string of interviews and giving a talk and so on in one of the interviews, a couple of interviews were with people outside the history department and one was with then a grand old man of the political science department Morey Goldschmidt, Neil's uncle. I did not have the self-restraint to keep from saying "Oh by the way I'm um having dinner with Neil and Margy tonight." And I could see my stock visibly I did that again with Mel as the forethought and I could see my stock visible rise in Morey's eyes. You know. That's um...one example of what a small town it is. You know one person and then you start to meet others and there's a whole network and that goes so I just. I have one network of gay friends and acquaintances and friends and acquaintances through Reed and through musical activities and so on so um every so often they overlap and bump into each other.

GN: So when you first came in to Portland then, were you, um, an openly gay man? Were you out of the closet then, or...?

SEGEL: More or less. I think that the...uh... the openness, um, increased as the time went on. At first I was a little nervous about being out on the campus, and then I realized that...uh, some gay students at Berkley, whom I knew...uh... had called up gay friends of theirs at Reed, and said there's this young guy, Ed Segel, who's coming up, so could, you know... say hello to him or whatever. So the gay students knew about me before I got here and I kept running into them in some of the bars downtown, so I thought, well I thought...so much for having a cover, you know, there's no point there's just no point...um, so I've been more or less open. Uh, it's been a long time since, uh, I've attended any... uh... uh, gay or lesbian functions on the campus. Once in a while, they'll

do something and I'll turn up. Or I'll help them get a speaker. Uh, uh, oh, its about ten years ago perhaps... the then dean of students, a lesbian, open lesbian, had a reception, uh, in her place for the gay and lesbian faculty, staff, and students so, um, then those students came in too, some faculty and I was there. And then a few years later I thought, well actually, students said to me, "You know, that was actually a good idea, uh... you ought to do something like that."

So I did in my backyard earlier in the fall. Uh... which was, which was ok. And then, being lazy, I haven't repeated it. But... one... se-... I'm on their email list, so; at least know what they're doing. And sometimes, I give them books to fill the library, that sort of thing. So um, I at least keep in touch with what they're doing. And by, but by this time, Reed is, relatively speaking, a very open and tolerant place. Even when I arrived, at that time, there was... let's call it... A faculty executive committee. It was actually called a faculty advisory committee... of ten members, elected every year. That was the committee that made decisions on promotions and tenure... and on educational policy. And as I say, it was elected two colleagues, one in my department and one in French. Uh... oh, actually a third in English. Whom everybody knew were gay were consistently elected! Now they weren't out in the sense of, they didn't talk about gay issues but everybody knew! And they knew that everybody knew!

And, as I say, they were consistently elected by their colleagues. So... um... uh... even, you know, 35 years ago...um... the, the atmosphere was, was quite tolerant, quite accepting. And I, I remember early on saying to, uh, some of the students in the gay and lesbian group that they should let me know if they ever saw... if they ever felt there was ever any homophobia on the campus... and then they never told me anything. Um... now, what goes among the student body, what goes on in the dorms and so on, whether there are homophobic students, that's always possible, but it's very hard for a faculty member to see that. We don't really know what goes on in student's social life. Um. But so far, it's been, on the whole really quite positive. Oh and one of my colleagues I uh ... it's... Darius

Rejali, who's very, uh, who's quite open, in earlier years was quite active in the northwest with um... gay political activities, age related activities. He... I think was the real pioneer in making sure that gay and lesbian couples, got the same benefits, from the college as straight couples. Uh, so he deserves a lot of credit for that. Oh, he came out about a year ago with a book on torture. Boy, I give him a hard time about that. Uh... though he's become sort of a celebrity actually. Uh... because it's so relevant to everything... going on.

GN: So being a professor of history at Reed, and as a gay man, do you, um, believe that sexuality is genetically um, predisposed, or do you believe it's socially constructed?

SEGEL: Oh... well, I think the basic sexuality is probably genetic. There's a Freudian psychoanalytic... uh, explanation which usually comes down to, to oversimplify too much mother, too little father. And I think that's generally been... been exploded. It probably is genetic. The social expression of it is socially constructed, however, that's something else, because as you move from one society to another, or one generation to another. Looking at it as a historian...um... you see that the expression changes. So, clearly what... um... what people think of as... um... um... sort of a permanent or eternal, uh, universal expression is really localized by generation and by place. And as is, as is true of a lot of things, you know. Um, like religion and so on... and civic values. Um, so it's a little... in... in terms of the social and cultural expression, it's um... um, I think it's socially constructed. The basic sexuality is probably genetic. It's hard to imagine if the Ancient Greeks had a lot of homosexuality going on, it's really hard to imagine a gay pride parade in Ancient Athens. I just don't think they did that sort of thing. So, as I say, it's... uh... you have to take account of both.

PG: Uh, let's go ahead and uh...So on your personal page for Reed College you describe yourself as a Jewish Mother.

SEGEL: Ah, yes! I was gonna show you guys something.

[Laughter]

GN: Um, he's showing... Ed's showing us a book called, "How to be a Jewish Mother."

SEGEL: Yes! A very lovely training manual is the subtitle. Well, it's, it's very funny. Around the middle or late '60s, there was a lot of talk in the media... some of it serious, some of it comical, about being a Jewish mother. So... this book came out around the middle of the '60s, and Philip Roth, at the time...a very leading American novelist, who had produced a number of important novels wrote in the, I think it was in '67, what became his most famous novel, Port Noise Complaint. And Port Noise Complaint was a comic, but serious... uh, depiction of the psychodynamics of a Jewish American family. And one of the important themes in it was the Jewish Mother. So everyone was talking about that. So in Berkley on the faculty, I started to talk about myself as a Jewish mother and I just kept on doing that. And that gives me, uh... it gives me a lot of freedom actually... um... to, to uh... have in a way a more personal, not simply formal, relationship with the students I knew well.

A Jewish mother is very maternal...um... but authoritative not out of strength, but in a certain sense out of weakness. There is one passage I will have to read... uh... I don't want to say that I myself do this. Um... but you will get the point. "Underlying all techniques of Jewish motherhood is the ability to plant, cultivate, and harvest guilt. Control guilt and you control your child. Hear your child- let your child hear you sigh everyday. If you don't know what he's done to make you suffer, he will!" Uh... oh, and, and then it says very clearly at the beginning you don't have to be either Jewish or, um, a mother to be a Jewish mother. You can be an Italian barber, uh, or an Irish cop or whatever. Um, but as I say it is partly comical, but also partly shrude. Um, so one example he gives say, at a family dinner. The mother says, "Oh have some more

potatoes. I've already had four helpings. What's the matter, you don't like my potatoes?" That kind of thing. I'm not saying I practice that with the students but, but its, it's a very useful persona to have.

GN: Nice! Let's see... so there seemed to be, like, a lot of tension, obviously, between the lesbians, and the gay men, with the ballot measures, and the PTC. Um, do you notice that, or do you feel that... um, extends beyond those particular venues um, into the community and that it still exists today?

SEGEL: I think it's less today. What I noticed among the students over, uh... some years at Reed, so far as I can tell, of the gay male students and the lesbian students get along perfectly well. Uh, I don't see that among the younger generation, I think that may have been the older generation. The older generation is still around, but is also, partly sort of moving on. One thing that bothers me actually is a different issue, and I don't know much about it, but it's something I noticed, i.e. racial segregation in the gay community. If you go to... I have a couple of, uh, but by lucky acci-... I have a couple of... gay African American friends. A lot of gay men don't. Um... uh... if you go to... uh, I've done things as you can see with the Gay Men's Chorus... if you go to one of their concerts you would see now, that larger than ever, they have maybe about 120 guys, you'll see maybe 2 black faces on the stage out of the 120. And, it's always been really very small that way... and I don't know why, I don't know where the... uh... gay African American community is.

Uh, they may have their own gathering places. Oh, it's like years ago you used to hear, in a Jewish-gentile context, uh... someone would say, "Oh, I don't see any Jewish members of this country club." To which the reply would be, "Oh, they have their own lovely country club." And maybe that's going on in the black community, I don't know enough to say. But, um, and there's been a lot of talk about the down-low phenomenon and so on and so on. Um, things are bet-... well for example, things are better I think. In the Q-Center, Kendall Clawson, the executive director, is African American! Um, I've

gone to a few functions there. I went to more functions in the old center, before they had built... just because it was a lot closer to, to here. Um... but there was a... uh... uh, a better I thought... biracial... uh, mix than one sees, especially among the young people than one sees elsewhere. So that's, that's an issue the community uh, I think still hasn't dealt with. It's been years since I have gone to MCC, so I don't know what the mix is there. And, I don't know what the mix is in B.R.O. but, um... I think that's an issue the community hasn't really tackled directly. The relationship between men and women... uh, I think that's better than it used to be, again because it's better with younger people, and people have gotten over some of the issues and so on. Um, so... uh... um, I think, I'm hoping things are looking up that way.

PG: Let's see, uh... oh, here's an interesting question. You were residing in San Francisco as a gay man during the Stonewall riots. How did that event affect you?

SEGEL: Oh, that's very hard for me to remember. It was 40 years ago after all, and I was just starting... I think, to come out. So... um... I'm not sure... actually... that I did much at all... in the gay scene... at that point. I think I started to... when I, well I started to first in London in 1970, '71, partly by myself, then with my boyfriend, I...we would go to gay bars, I was in the gay social groups and so on. Um... and then when I came back... um... in the spring of '71, then I decided I really did want a gay social life. So I started to go to... to, uh...bars in the East Bay. And then I joined, what was then, and I don't know if it still exists, The Society for Individual Rights in San Francisco, which was partly a political, partly a social organization. Um... and there were... um... uh... gay, um... uh... gay groups of various kinds in San Francisco that I joined. Um, so that's when I developed more of a ... uh, more of a gay consciousness, ya. Uh, I mean... I still... I took account of Stonewall, but I think it took a while for it really to sink in.

SEGEL: Um... let's see... um...

GN: I think we pretty much covered what we were looking for. There is one question that I actually really wanted to ask you and that's, um... The AIDS, the AIDS epidemic has affected the gay community and obviously the whole world in lots of ways. Um... in the beginning of the epidemic the virus was known as GRID, um, what were your experiences of that in the early '80's, as GR-... when it was known as GRID, and did you notice any shift of tolerance?

SEGEL: I really don't remember that earlier name. Um... Oh! Gay Related Immune Deficiency? Ya, ya... um...oh! We all had um, mistaken ideas... uh, I too, about it. Um... it ended up, as has often been said, it ended up fulfilling, uh... some of the worst fears that people had about it. Um... I was lucky, and I was tested several times, I was lucky in never getting... um... uh, never getting infected. Um, but I started to keep a list when one or two friends started to die... I started to keep a list of those whom I knew personally who had died. And the list is uh, now has about 25 names on it, more or less. And in a certain sense I'm lucky, because I... there are friends here, never mind in New York or San Francisco or L.A., who have lost scores. Uh, the chorus I don't think has done this for a year or two, but once a year in their program, uh... they would publish a list of chorus members who had died of AIDS. And the list had over a hundred names. Um... so the um... uh... the toll... um ...the toll was enormous.

Oh, I'll mention one thing... uh, I have forgotten when this was... maybe in the late '80's... I needed some minor dental surgery. So, my regular dentist recommended me to a dental surgeon who had an office in the same professional building downtown. And so when I first went to see the... uh... uh... the dental surgeon, he asked me various questions including whether I had sex with other men. And I said yes, and I said, "why did you ask?" Well if you told me that, then I will, you know, give you... the... uh... we'll do the procedure... um... in hospital conditions and so on. And I said, "Well, you know, I'm being honest. You may well have had patients who have lied to you about that." Well, we had a disagreement. I eventually, uh, wrote him a rather nasty letter. Um... um... I

forget how I put it... um, but I was rather deliberately insulting and then I went back to my own dentist and told him what happened. "Oh," he said, "That guy, he's sort of, he's from the South, he's provincial, he runs scared."

Here's another guy to go to." Well the other guy was a...uh... a senior dental surgeon who taught at uh...OHSU. And um... simply adopted the same... um... uh, hygienic procedures with every single patient. So he didn't... didn't bother asking me anything. He just did the usual thing. Um... so that's, that's... oh, that was the time when there was a lot of the talk about whether dentists would be exposed because of the blood coming from dental work and so on. So some dentists were paranoid, some patients were paranoid...um... ya. A lot of people were paranoid then. Um... uh... I got together...when was this? In the early '80's, maybe '83 or '84, I got together with a woman who was then... uh, dean of students... and... I can't, I won't... I won't coin credit for this, it was her idea, I sort of helped, but it was her idea. She crafted a... uh... AIDS/HIV polic-, policy that essentially said, "Nobody was going to be discriminated against on the campus in any way because of their HIV status." I'm paraphrasing it, but that was what it amounted to, because again, people were getting paranoid on campus, and on a lot of campuses, certainly on our campus, there is a lot of sleeping around among the students.

And I started to worry, thinking that if one student was HIV positive, male or female, and that student started to sleep around, as often happens, it could really spread. Now I know of some Alums, who... have died of AIDS. And uh... in some cases in fact, I had no idea while they were students that they were gay and it turned out that they were gay and unfortunately died. Um, I don't think... I have never heard of anybody... um, who was actually a student or faculty member on the campus who had AIDS while they were here. And I don't know of anyone, but that might be a case of my ignorance, of anyone who was HIV positive while they were here. There may have been, but I have not... I have not heard of anyone. Um, and a couple of years ago, shooting pool with some students...



students that I knew well... I said, "By the way, um, do you guys practice safe sex, or do, do... I don't mean you guys, in particular, students in general." "Oh!" They said, uh, it's a reflex action, "When we went to Catholic prequel school, they told us about it." And you walk into the Reed infirmary, and there will be a big bowl of condoms. So, um, ya, I gather... from what little I've heard, that um... safe sex is taken for granted among the students, which is... which isn't helpful. Um, so... there's been um, helpful attitudes that way. Yep.

PG: I don't know if there was any other questions you particularly wanted to go over...

SEGEL: Uh, I can't think of anything... um, ya, that's okay.

PG: I think we hit all the ones we had...

GN: I think we have covered pretty much...

SEGEL: If I think of anything, I will send you an email...

GN: Nice! Well thank you Ed for your time. We appreciate it!

SEGEL: Yep, my pleasure!

GN: Thanks for uh... donating your knowledge.

SEGEL: Yep! That's fine. Well, I'm a historian, you know. So I know the importance of getting things down. I wish I... I specialized in foreign policy in the 1930's and I wish we had more memoirs, either written, or all, of people then...

GN: Nice! Okay. Well, this has been Greg Nicosia and Pablo Guzman and Ed Segel signing off!

**[End of Session 1]**

**[End of Interview]**

## Keywords

Gay Men's Chorus

George Amy

MCC

Genie Harris

PTC

Jerry Weller

BRO

Kendall Clarkson

Reed College

Henry Richmond

San Francisco Society for Individual  
Rights

A Thousand Friends of Oregon

Neil Goldschmidt

Q-Center

U of O

Kendall Clawson

Morey Goldschmidt

Darius Rejali

AIDS/HIV

Gay Related Immune Deficiency

University of California Berkley

Just Out

Ben Meryl

Right to Privacy/ Right to Pride

Love Makes a Family

Bonnie Tinker

Barbara Roberts