Patricia Krafcik

Interviewed by Susan Fiksdal

The Evergreen State College oral history project

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FINAL

Fiksdal: Hi, Pat. This is our second interview on Thursday, September 9, 2021. When we last left off, you were at the University of Pittsburgh, and I was wondering about any jobs in between, and then what attracted you to Evergreen?

Krafcik: The University of Pittsburgh was my first job after graduating from Columbia with my PhD. It was a good place for me to be initially because it was, if we can go back to this term, a Slavic ethnic city. I already had some friends there who were deeply involved in Carpatho-Rusyn culture and the preservation of the culture. For me, a lot of the value of being in Pittsburgh was simply that I could make connections with them. I became good friends with many of them, and those friendships have lasted my whole life. The university was big. I was an assistant professor in the Slavic Language and Literature Department. From the start, I had so much to learn about teaching, creating courses, and so on.

Then I went to Slovakia after the second year of teaching there; we already talked a little bit about that. The opportunity arose because we had a Fulbright language teacher connected with our Slavic department at Pitt, and she and I became friends. She said, "There's this great language program in Bratislava called Studia Academica Slovaca, and you should really think about going because you'd like to explore some of your background." So, I did, and it was during that first trip in the summer of 1981 that I first met Dan.

Fiksdal: And Dan is your husband.

Krafcik: Yes.

Fiksdal: But he didn't become your husband right away.

Krafcik: Not right away, not until summer 1982. We returned to Czechoslovakia to participate in the language program again a second time, and then even a third time after which we stayed during my IREX grant for the academic year 1983-84 and that's where we made our daughter, Sasha. She wasn't born there; I was about seven months pregnant when we returned. The University of Pittsburgh at that time, 1984, was bewildered as to what to do with me. "What? You're pregnant? How are we going to handle this? We're going to have to consider this medical or disability leave because you won't be able to teach right away." So, not maternity leave, but simply medical or disability leave. Our daughter was

born September 12. Particularly in hindsight, but even at the time, it was like, why are we calling this medical or disability leave? It's not. With all the demands at the same time--learning to teach, having a new baby, there was no way that I could satisfy the standards for tenure, so I didn't even go into a tenure review because I knew that it wouldn't fly. I couldn't possibly measure up to what standards they wanted. There were a couple of single women in our department, one that was very much entrenched, married with older children, and then single ones who really were very free and didn't have the same obligations. To make this story short, for all the wonderful things that were connected with living in Pittsburgh for me, we decided to look to another job.

I started my search, and I found a position at Dickinson College in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, so it was going to be in the same state, not too terribly far, a few hours' drive from Pittsburgh. We would be able to move there easily. Here I went from a very large university to a small liberal arts college that had a good reputation. That work started out okay, but within a very short time, it became clear that the chair of the Russian-German Department was not playing with a full deck. She was psychologically unstable, so she perceived a lot of things and people as threats. It became clear to me that there was a trail of destruction behind her that I hadn't known about when I took that job. I found out she was called by others "Dragon Lady."

In any case, I had some good students there, but it was very much a place that attracted upper middle-class, white kids. Again, Susan, being in that situation at the time, I saw it for what it was, but once I came to Evergreen and the whole world opened up to me in a positive way. I look back and I just am horrified at how insular it was to be teaching in an institution with discrete departments, with little to no interaction among faculty, and without the absence of anything like a wider social conscience.

Fiksdal: In the middle of nowhere.

Krafcik: Almost, but not entirely. Carlisle just a couple hours from D.C. and about an hour from the capital Harrisburg. It's an old American city, and you can see traces of that. It also has a reputation of being the place where there was an Indian school, a school where Indian kids were brought in and then beaten up because they were speaking their language. Eventually everything started going bad at Dickinson College, and one particular individual, who is now deceased—the chair of the department—began to display more and more animus toward me. She would play these games; for instance, there was going to be some kind of department party, but I didn't get an invitation. This was a small department. A few German faculty and two Slavic faculty besides myself. Being treated like that was very hard for me.

Fiksdal: You were expecting a community.

Krafcik: Yes. Which, I must say, places Evergreen on an absolute pedestal for me. Because having come from a place like that, I really came to appreciate deeply what Evergreen has been.

The other part of the problem was that Dickinson College was absolutely male-centered. Absolutely. The vast majority of faculty were men. There would be a faculty meeting, and then all the men would go over to a really lovely little Victorian house owned by the college where they would smoke, drink, and play cards. My colleague in the department, Tanya, and I decided to go and see what the after-faculty-meeting gathering was. We went there and all these men were there, again, smoking, drinking, playing cards. We just stood there and knew we were not welcomed. That was another really negative thing for me.

Fiksdal: Yeah, it was an actual club, not just an imagined one that I always imagined when I first got to Evergreen, because everybody was pretty much male back then. I have one comment, and then I'm going to ask a question. My comment is that I had the opposite reaction to my pregnancy when I found out I was pregnant in 1976. I went to my dean, and I remember that the provost at the time made a decision that I would have the entire quarter—three months—off to give birth and then to care for my child. She happened to arrive right smack on the first day of evaluation week. Back then, students would just call you up all the time, and so they heard that I had given birth, and then wanted to know if they were going to get an evaluation. I would just gently say, "I'm not going to answer the phone anymore" to my husband. And, of course, I got those evals done. Anyway, I had the winter quarter off, if you can imagine, and then they realized that they couldn't be doing that all the time—not that we had that many female faculty—but they did institute another policy and it was much less time off. That was naivete. They were all men running the college. But still, I liked being thought of as fragile and having that time. It really helped. I did have a couple of contracts during that time. I didn't completely stop teaching.

My question, considering the times and the majority of faculty being male at Dickinson, and then even at the University of Pittsburgh, were you paid less because you were a woman, or did you know?

Krafcik: I don't know to this day.

Fiksdal: Because that was common practice at the time.

Krafcik: It could well have been. I was very grateful that I did land this Dickinson job at the time so I didn't really ask any questions. The salary at that time must have seemed reasonably okay. I don't think that there was any great increase in my salary. It was probably about the same as at Pitt.

Fiksdal: Because at Evergreen at the time—even now, it is a state college, so it had to go by State laws, which meant that women were paid equally. But at the time, I had a friend at PLU, and she was paid less. PLU—Pacific Lutheran University—at that time and now is private, so they could do what they wanted, and that's why I was wondering.

Krafcik: Interesting.

Fiksdal: Let's go on and talk about how you found Evergreen then.

Krafcik: Needless to say, I was very unhappy at Dickinson College and started looking for another job, and seriously pursued the possibility of FBI or CIA. Both of those institutions were interested in me. The CIA even had me come for an interview to D.C., around which there are a lot of stories to tell, but maybe not really relevant for this situation.

Fiksdal: Oh, at least a little. Tell us a little.

Krafcik: The situation was that I was suffering from something called mitral valve prolapse. This was exacerbated by the terrible stress I was under at Dickinson College, with the chair of the department showing blatant animosity toward me. I found that very difficult to deal with. Dan was a great support through all of that, but I was having, for instance, issues with hyperventilation and panic attacks. These are just crazy, so I really have understood when students have come to me and said, "I have panic attacks." I say, "Honey, I understand what you mean." The problem with panic attacks is that you can't really control them with your mind very easily. It's like a chemical process that occurs, and it proceeds even though you try to control it. It can get out of hand.

Anyway, the CIA was interested in me. Brought me to D.C. for an interview. Dan and I drove down because Carlisle is close to D.C. Sasha was a very little girl—two, three years old maybe. Now I chuckle because all of going to and being involved in this CIA interview was already shrouded in some kind of veil of secrecy. There were other people at the meeting spot. We got on a bus and were taken to someplace in Rosslyn. We were not supposed to eat any breakfast that day. Maybe they drew some blood and did some kind of blood tests.

Fiksdal: Oh, my goodness!

Krafcik: Yes, and there was a vision test. Then the stupid thing is that all they had for us to eat were sweet doughnuts and coffee. That was not good for me. I developed a migraine. But at that time, there was no Sumatriptan or Imitrex or any good meds for migraines. There was something called Ergotamine with a disgusting taste to be dissolved under the tongue, but it didn't help all that much.

Fiksdal: I know all about those medications.

Krafcik: I know, I am sure you do. So, I had this migraine, and the process continued that day, and then they took us for a polygraph test.

Fiksdal: Were you both interviewing?

Krafcik: No.

Fiksdal: So, you were in this group?

Krafcik: Yeah, I was in this large group, and Dan went off with Sasha visiting the D.C. Zoo. They brought us to this waiting room. We were sitting there, and people were going to be going in for polygraphs, and they started that process, and at the same time, I started getting palpitations, and I couldn't make them stop. Maybe this was partly from the morning coffee (caffeine), lack of a good breakfast, and the stress that I and everyone there was feeling. There was a woman sitting at a front desk and I went to her, and I said, "I'm getting palpitations. I don't think I can continue with this part of the interview. I've got to contact my husband." She said, "Just wait."

Then, Susan, they took me back into one of the rooms and they hooked me up to a fricking polygraph machine to find out, I think, whether I was telling the truth! They discovered that I was absolutely telling the truth, and said, "Oh, yeah, your heartbeat is really, really weird." The hilarious thing now when I think about it, is that they called medics, and so can you imagine? All these folks are sitting out in this waiting room—lots of them—waiting for polygraph tests, and the medics come into the back room, and they put me on some kind of a gurney, and they rolled me out. Can you imagine? What were those folks waiting for their tests thinking at that point?!

Fiksdal: I would have left the room immediately.

Krafcik: At the moment, I suppose, I didn't have pain, but the problem is that the palpitations just continued and continued. It was like irregular heartbeat, and it was a bad feeling. As they were rolling me out, I glanced around, and people looked at me in horror, like, what are they doing to them back there? Now I see that as extremely amusing.

They took me to a hospital. I was there for a while. A doctor checked me and decided that there wasn't really anything wrong. I think eventually I was given Valium, and that really, really helped. Then a nurse came in and said, "Oh, your sister is here to visit you." I said, "I don't have a sister." Maybe that was a test, a CIA test. The "sister" was actually somebody from the CIA who came in--a woman along with a man. I guess I was supposed to know to say, "Yeah, yeah, sure. Let my sister in."

Fiksdal: They were not going to stop. They were continuing the interview.

Krafcik: I guess something was continuing. Anyway, the bottom line for all of this is that finally I told them, "I don't want to continue with this." Dan came to pick me up. We went back to the hotel. I lay

down and was glad that I had taken the Valium which helped me relax; the palpitations stopped. Dan got me something to eat, some real food. The next day, we went to the Library of Congress. It was very moving because from that visit I had a moment of epiphany. Have you been to the Library of Congress?

Fiksdal: I never have.

Krafcik: There's this very large and beautiful reading room. You can go up to a balcony and look down at the reading room. We went there, and as I stood there, I thought, this is what I love! This is what I love! The books, the scholarship, the research, the learning… The heck with the CIA. I don't want that life. I don't. That moment was so moving to me, and at that point, I really began to focus on academic jobs. I had interviews at, among other places, a college called Juniata College which was pretty close to Carlisle and was, for sure, in the middle of nowhere. The Appalachian chain comes down in rows of mountains, from the northeast all the way to Georgia, and Juniata College was in one of the deep valleys. Nice people, lovely people, but it was not a place where we wanted to live.

Lehigh University was interviewing me as well, and they were really, really interested. This is where it becomes kind of mysterious. I don't actually know how I found out about Evergreen. It was something mysterious. When I look back, I imagine in my mind only this: that a flier advertising the job came wafting down from the sky and landed on my desk. Honestly, Susan, I don't know how I learned about Evergreen in faraway Washington state. I had been only to California, and never anywhere else out beyond the Mississippi except to a little summer music camp at the University of Kansas once in high school. But the state of Washington? Honestly, I didn't know anything about this, and it seemed very far away. But there was something about the description of Evergreen that really sounded intriguing.

I applied. For the application, I really threw my heart into what I had to write. Even the questions resonated with something deep inside me. To my surprise, Evergreen was interested, so Dan and I went out for the interview which must have been in January perhaps. We were initially really struck by the fact that there were crocuses already coming out!

Fiksdal: Our mild winters.

Krafcik: Mild winters. We couldn't believe that. The interview process was like nothing else I had ever experienced. What stands out to me from that? First of all, the campus. Surrounded by gorgeous forests. When I was first taken to campus, somebody picked me up at the hotel. We got out in the parking lot and I looked around. Which way is the college? I couldn't tell! Just trees all around.

Fiksdal: Yeah, you can't see it.

Krafcik: That was my first moment. But the people I met felt right to me. I felt that there was a kinship here. Among other things, I was sent to experience an Evergreen seminar. It was Gail Tremblay's seminar.

Fiksdal: Wow.

Krafcik: I had never experienced a seminar like that! I was always very quiet in seminar in college and even to an extent in graduate school, somehow. I spoke, but I was very quiet. But I came into Gail's seminar, and it was some hot, relevant topic. I was so intrigued. I was excited to see students speaking out, giving their opinions, really engaging the issues. I couldn't hold back, and so I joined the discussion with vigor. I remember seeing Gail look at me with surprise—maybe delighted surprise—but I felt, this is real conversation. This is discussion that is going somewhere. That was one amazing thing. Then, meeting Tom Rainey, with whom I would teach the Russia Program, from the very start just felt wonderful. We hit it off so well. We were both interested in the same kinds of things. Then I asked Tom to take me on one of the trails because I was thrilled that there were actually trails from campus. He showed me a trail and we walked on it a bit. It was such an extraordinary experience.

Fiksdal: It was two days. Do you remember that? It can be exhausting.

Krafcik: It was a full couple of days. I think Evergreen was really hopping with hires at that time.

Fiksdal: This was 1980 . . .

Krafcik: This was 1989. Early in the spring of 1989. I met others--Chuck Pailthorp, and then the whole group that interviewed me, which included Russ Fox and Carolyn Dobbs. These were people with whom I interacted during the group's interview. I just felt like these people were so different than the faculty people I had known both at Pitt and at Dickinson College. All this felt so right and so good.

Fiksdal: Did it surprise you that you were being interviewed by people in other disciplines?

Krafcik: Yes, but I knew enough about Evergreen to understand that there was interdisciplinary study and programs and team teaching and so on. I had had a little bit of experience with team teaching at the University of Pittsburgh and really liked it.

They asked me good questions, the kind of questions that really were significant to me. "Outside of Slavic studies, what else are you interested in?" I'm interested in many things, and so had a hearty response to that question. The interview was so exhilarating. The whole experience was, in fact.

Then I recall that Dan and I drove around Olympia. At one point, we were up on some hill, and suddenly we saw Mount Rainier, and I screamed. I had never seen anything like that before! There were just extraordinary moments like that. After those couple of days while Dan and I were driving back to SeaTac in a rental car, we thought that this experience had been great, but really, our families are in

Cleveland and Binghamton, New York. We've spent most of our life out East. Can we really make a move like this? As we were driving away, we both were as if in mourning. This is such a good place. This felt so wonderful, but we didn't know that we could make such a big move.

We got back to Carlisle and within a very short time, Lehigh University really pressured me. "We really like you. We really want you." What were we going to do? Evergreen or Lehigh? And then a very peculiar thing happened; this is really weird. This is when you think that the universe must be really a bit more than what we think. We had to go back to Lehigh to do some kind of additional interview or other. We got in our car with little daughter Sasha in the back in a car seat, and we were heading out of Carlisle to make the trip to Allentown and the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania area where Lehigh is located. While we were still in Carlisle, a car pulled out in front of us and across the back window was the sticker, "The Evergreen State College." We just froze! What? Nobody had ever talked about Evergreen in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. It was like, oh, my goodness, what is this? We looked at each other. Is this the universe speaking to us—right in our face!

Only later did I find out that one of my faculty colleagues at Dickinson College had a son who was a student at Evergreen. But I hadn't known that. And that that car pulled out in front of us with the big sticker along the back window, it was just too amazing.

Fiksdal: Yeah, faculty know about Evergreen. They send their kids to Evergreen.

Krafcik: I think it was then Barbara Leigh Smith who called me with the offer, and I accepted the invitation! It was very exciting. When I found out which faculty it was that had a son at Evergreen, they made it clear to me that their son was artistic and was interested in a lot of things, and they had looked for a place that was going to be right for him, and it was Evergreen. I was very happy about that. We then prepared for that move. There was so much extraordinary emotion involved.

Maybe the last thing I can say about this is that we moved from Carlisle to Olympia in June 1989, and the first thing that summer was that Rudy Martin, of blessed memory, recruited me to participate in the National Faculty, which was going to have a session on the campus of Evergreen. There were going to be faculty from different places—teachers—coming to learn and experience Evergreen teaching.

Fiksdal: I did that, too, but I don't think we were in the same year.

Krafcik: Probably not. This was the summer of 1989. Rudy Martin. What can one say about this extraordinary person? He was so warm, so welcoming, so loving. I was just blown away. I gave lectures to the folks and participated joyfully in that session. It was a wonderful way to begin to get involved in teaching here. The atmosphere was the same kind of atmosphere I recalled from my interview visit--charged with extraordinary energy. And the kinship I felt with the people I was meeting was so strong.

Maybe part of it was that I was a child of the late '60s, early '70s, when things were really changing. I was really taken with these issues of social justice and equity, equality, all of the various things we talk about a lot still today. The Vietnam War and all of that was in our life experience—and I think that that kind of feeling of a shared history was the feeling I got when I came to Evergreen. When we started in the fall, our common read was *Black Athena*.

Fiksdal: Oh, I remember that. I think it was right before fall started.

Krafcik: There was a faculty retreat that I went to. I met Martin Bernal who wrote the book. Just the fact that there was all this focus on this issue, and people were reading this book, and people were talking about it! I had never seen anything like that at the University of Pittsburgh or Dickinson College. Nobody talked about these issues. For me it was like the world had opened up.

My first team was a big team: Niels Skov, Richard Alexander, and Argentina Dailey. I was to contribute with Russian literature, but I had to do some real footwork to fill in some other lectures beyond Russian lit.

Fiksdal: And they had planned the program.

Krafcik: They had, but they worked me into it well. Argentina, bless her soul, welcomed me so warmly, saying "Now I have a sister." Nobody talked like that at Dickinson College or at the University of Pittsburgh.

Fiksdal: She was in Latin American Studies and Spanish.

Krafcik: She was mainly actually in American Studies and literature and English. But her background was interesting, her dad was totally Irish. He was, I think, in the Merchant Marine. I really didn't know anything more about him except that, and her mother was Honduran, so Argentina was this really interesting mix of cultures. I was with her, really, through the next few years, taught with her in a Slavic and Celtic folklore program and witnessed the difficulties that she was having which were heartbreaking and eventually led to her leaving Evergreen. But that first year was really extraordinary.

Fiksdal: I think now would be a really good time to talk about interdisciplinary teaching, one lesson maybe that you learned in that program, or more. Then how that helped you in the future. A little bit about how you found your place, like when did you establish the Russian program? Those two things at least.

Fiksdal: Pat, we just had a little break, and I'm going to ask you a little bit about interdisciplinary teaching. I wonder what you learned in that first program that might have served you in the future in planning and teaching at Evergreen.

Krafcik: The first program was Great Books: The Pursuit of Virtue. It was, as I mentioned, along with Richard Alexander, Niels Skov, and Argentina Daily. This was a formidable team, I must say, that I was coming into. But also, a team that, I think, was interested in mentoring me, too. I really appreciate that as I look back.

It was led by Richard. We had a genuine faculty seminar every week, as well as a separate business meeting. That was a good way for me to start because it kept everything in order for me. I think that what was so extraordinary to me was the difference between teaching alone, being, in a sense, very insular—thinking with yourself, speaking with yourself, figuring things out with yourself—and then hoping everything would go well and that you would be able to give students what they need. Working with a team all the time was a new experience now at Evergreen, well beyond my small previous one-time experience team teaching at Pitt. This was great! You taught with other people, they gave you input, you shared with them what you were thinking, you created something with them. In years subsequent to this, I began to think of this process as designing a feast with faculty partners, where you think, what are the hors d'oeuvres, the *zakusk*i as we call them in Russian? What is the main course? What is the dessert? What do we want people to take away from this meal, this feast that we're going to have? Already then, I began to understand that that's what the process was, and that I could contribute something to that, so I began to see myself in a slightly different way. Rather than this insular person who was just working on one little course and trying to broaden out, now, I had other faculty who were interacting with me.

Fiksdal: Did they talk during your lectures? When you lectured, did you all interact?

Krafcik: Yes, I think that they certainly welcomed that, and I welcomed that. Sometimes Richard had a little bit of an edge to him, which we all came to understand was simply Richard's personality. But I think Richard was always kind to me. And Niels was just extraordinary. Such an interesting person with such an extraordinary history! And then Argentina brought in such passion and warmth and love of learning, love of students.

Fiksdal: You all brought these different cultures, except for Richard, who was just a very strongly white, tall, American, arrogant man. He had been on the planning faculty. He was a friend of mine. I would chat with him in the hall a bit, and I was able to interview him for the Oral History Project just before he died. But he was a formidable intellect, so I think teaching with him would be challenging.

Krafcik: Challenging, but I suppose it also gave me a standard that I needed to keep in mind, so I listened with interest to his lectures, to Niels' and Argentina's lectures. Those gave me models of what to do; my colleagues gave me time to get adjusted. I had my own seminar and that was a new experience for me. But it was the beginning of a really wonderful experience that continued throughout all these decades. There were many interesting situations with students. There were, for instance, some personality issues. One student, in particular, told me that she simply could not be in Richard's seminar, and she begged me to be in mine. I talked with Richard, and he seemed to be fine about her coming to me. Subsequently, that particular student got her Ph.D., and she just offered some lectures in my program in spring quarter this past spring.

Fiksdal: That is so great.

Krafcik: Yes, really lovely. Wonderful. I always believed this kind of dictum that the teacher should always rejoice when the student achieves, and maybe achieves more than the teacher. Then you know you've done well.

Fiksdal: And you listened to her, and you welcomed her into your space, and I think that matters so much to students. She felt she couldn't learn in the other seminar, and you clearly helped her on her way.

Krafcik: That was the beginning for me. That program was fall/winter/spring. It was an entire-year program, so I had the chance to follow through all three quarters with that. During that year I was already planning with Tom Rainey the Russia program, which he had initiated with Andrew Hanfman, of blessed memory, whom I was able to meet not long after he retired. Shortly after he retired, he passed away.

Fiksdal: Oh, I'm so pleased to know that you knew him!

Krafcik: I had a whole evening with Andrew over dinner, and it was really wonderful to make that acquaintance.

Tom and I got busy planning the Russia program. We started in '90-'91, my second year at Evergreen. This was an extraordinary year because the Soviet Union was falling apart. There was so much excitement. We had lots of students, including lots of students for language study. Really interested students! That interest and excitement about Russia lasted my whole time at Evergreen. We did the Russia program every other year. I think we tried to coordinate that with other language programs, if you remember, so we would have good language/history/culture programs in alternating years.

Fiksdal: Yes, you worked hard on that.

Krafcik: The Russia program was ’90-’91, then ’92-’93, ’94-’95, and every other year from there. It was an extraordinary program. Tom is an excellent historian, so bright, so well read. He himself, over the decade of the ‘90s, developed even further as a scholar and teacher as we worked together. For him, Russian history was a saga. Teaching wasn’t just giving history lectures. Tom was telling a story, and the students were just riveted. I also then found it very inviting and wonderful to contribute what I could to that program in the same spirit. We were always fully enrolled.

Fiksdal: You must have already known Russian history. You had taken plenty of courses.

Krafcik: Oh, yes. My graduate study was in Russian literature. But it was impossible to study the literature without having a deep understanding of the history. That’s certainly how it works in Russia. I’m sure it works that way elsewhere.

Fiksdal: Everywhere.

Krafcik: You must also have that historical background. But it was the process—the experience of listening to Tom, hearing the arguments, paying attention to how a historian was thinking, I learned even more. I had certainly taken classes in history, even at Indiana University when I was an undergrad. But now, the history was offered as a saga! I have to say, I never got tired of it, Susan, all of these years, because things were happening in Russia. The Soviet Union as we knew it fell apart. Russia was struggling to maintain itself. We were following it, monitoring it. That’s what made that program so exciting for me, for Tom, and for our students.

Fiksdal: In the years that we’ve been colleagues, you would often say that you felt that those programs that you taught with Tom and others—with Rob Smurr later—were transformative for the students. You’ve spoken a little bit about how they were transformative for you. I wonder if you could speak a little to that.

Krafcik: What we did in those programs, and what I think is a basic Evergreen approach, is that you’re not telling students what they should know, but you’re inviting them into the discussion. You are taking them on a journey with you. Every program—I can speak to the Russia program, but this happened elsewhere, too, in other programs—was a journey. We’d begin somewhere, and we’d ask big questions. We’re not here just because “I have to know something about Russian history.” But rather, what drives it, what drove it in the past, what was the fire that made the machine work? Where did it come from? How did this literature get created? What were the historical arguments?

I think that that’s the kind of thing that we focused on, and that’s what could be transformative. It was not just information imparted to students, but it was the kind of critical thinking that we must apply in order to understand ourselves, too, and to understand our own situation. I felt all this strongly

through those early years, but I certainly felt it strongly here, trying to help students nurture the capacity for critical thinking, for reading under the surface. We saw with Trump that there are too many people who stop at the surface and go no further. Critical thinking is probably one of the most important things we can develop with students that can transform their lives.

Fiksdal: You've touched on a point that I did want to raise. We can go back into your teaching history, but since we're here, students have changed quite a lot. In other words, we have been receiving students from under-resourced high schools, students who were never in college prep classes, not tracked that way, and they come with sometimes not having even read an entire book in their lives. That was one of the reasons that I found it so difficult to teach in those last couple of years that I was teaching, where students said my lectures were too involved, too long, too complicated, not on one topic but many. That didn't bother me. I kept teaching the same way, trying to pull them along like I had always done, but I did, with my colleagues, work very hard on building blocks. I'm wondering about your perspective on that.

Krafcik: Those are difficult issues, and I think we did notice some things that were different. For one thing, when we first started in the Russia program, the students who came to us knew what the Soviet Union was, basically. But 20 years later, no; they really had no clue and no strong history preparation from high school, so Rob Smurr and I had to readjust our approach a little bit. The issue of students not being prepared, yes, I think that's difficult. I suppose there are different ways to look at it. One thing that struck me is that even though there were students coming to us who were not really prepared superbly well with skills, nevertheless, I could never talk down to them. What I found was really that given the right approach—and this might have had to do with the subjects I was teaching, too—they were really drawn in in ways that inspired them. They perhaps discovered that they could actually think about things. They inspired themselves!

One of our adjustments might have been that early on we would try to tackle some of the big Russian novels, but later we started backing off from that. I don't think that that was necessarily a lessening of our standards or our desire to go on that journey with our students, but it was more a recognition. What can we do to readjust somewhat so that we can keep them with us on this journey? Reading the big novels was increasingly challenging to the students.

Fiksdal: That was the tradition of book-a-week, and we couldn't continue that.

Krafcik: Yes, that became difficult. And with the Russian novels, as much as we would love to have read *Brothers Karamazov* in every iteration of the program, it didn't work well. Tom and I then tried to read

it over two weeks' time. That was difficult, because it's so hard to break up a novel. It's like listening to part of the symphony one day and then the rest of it later.

Fiksdal: The patterns aren't there.

Krafcik: Yes, you've got to do the whole thing. Given the nature of that, of the big literature, we switched to smaller forms, but forms that were no less impactful. In some of my lectures, I would refer to these bigger novels and I would suggest to the students that in the summer they might want to tackle them, but I never was very thrilled about reading only small sections of books. I just really feel that a book is like a person. It has a personality, and you can't break it up without losing something important.

Among other programs, I also taught six times in a program called Madness and Creativity: The Psychological Link, which Carrie Margolin and I taught together, mainly with an Evergreen faculty as a third partner, and sometimes with visitors. It was a first-year interdisciplinary program, psychology, literature, film/or art. In that program, in the different iterations of it, we tried different things. In all my programs, including Madness and Creativity, I worked very hard on writing with students, and in Madness I had a writing seminar in which we covered certain points of grammar and structure, etc. I found that there were different ways to teach writing, and if I just taught it flat out, it was pretty dull. But I started having some fun with it, and having some fun with the students as a result, and that made the difference. They were willing to go over sentences with me, some silly sentences, but they were still learning. In the past, it might not have been necessary to do that.

Fiksdal: Can I ask a little more detail? I tried putting sentences on the board or projecting them from a projector and going over them. Did you do things like that? What did you do exactly by going over sentences?

Krafcik: Well, for instance, we would do some analysis using the Academic Statement, taking an entire short essay and talking about it. We took the few models that Evergreen had available online and we projected them, and then we took them apart. We tore them apart. That was good because it helped students understand what they themselves might want to write, and what they might not want to write, like staying away from cliches, thinking about how an audience would perceive the writing. What picture or photograph of yourself are you putting forward in the Academic Statement so that others can really understand who you are? There was some of that work, then. There were some instances where I had students correcting mistakes on the board, taking turns doing that. Again, I tried to design sentences that were maybe humorous but still got across certain elements. We would have fun with this. Just hope that they carried away helpful knowledge and skills.

It wasn't easy for me or, I'm sure, for most Evergreen faculty, to deal with writing skills. I still think Evergreen really ought to have some kind of introductory writing for students. It doesn't have to be quite like English 101 or Writing 101, but just to really be able to focus a little bit without taking away from the study of subjects in a program. It's so difficult in programs when you want to work with students on subjects and topics and substantial material, and at the same time, try to keep a focus on their writing skills. It can be daunting for faculty.

Fiksdal: Especially it was the humanities faculty that shouldered that burden for so long.

Krafcik: Many of us were never really taught how to teach writing.

Fiksdal: No, no, we weren't.

Krafcik: That always was an issue.

Fiksdal: That might have freed us, actually.

Krafcik: Yes, indeed, Susan. In the end, when I think back to the evaluations with students and their impressions of our programs, I think many of them felt that I did a good job with feedback on papers. I discovered that many students really, really appreciated the feedback. But I just spent hours of time. Hours of time. And always harbored a concern for being diplomatic. Never mocking students, never denigrating them. I thought it more productive to say things like, "If you avoid passive voice, your own strong voice will come through better." Things like that, really trying to help students the way I felt I was helped by faculty when they did something more than just putting a letter grade on a paper. I tried very hard, and I think, in the end, students really got a lot from the work that I put into the task of reading their papers.

Fiksdal: In those first years when you were teaching Russian language, did you have students who already knew some Russian language so you could have more than one level of language?

Krafcik: Almost never. There were maybe a couple of students who were native speakers, but what was interesting about that—which is very typical—is that those students never were very interested in learning anything about grammar. Of course not, because they were okay about speaking. Why do we need to study grammar when we can speak already? Indeed, I could understand that.

But, no, Russian was already by that time not taught extensively in junior high or high school, unlike what I experienced living in a suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. Students would come in and I would try my best with language to say, "Yeah, guys, this is a very tough language. Six cases, and all the endings keep changing. But let's just do this step by step, and you're going to be okay. You're going to come away with something. "

Fiksdal: What about continuing? They did a first year. Did they want to continue? How were you able to help them?

Krafcik: This was a constant struggle.

Fiksdal: For all of us.

Krafcik: For all of us. There were a few times when we were able to get somebody on board to take a second-year level. Hirsh Diamant gave it a shot. He gave it a fair shot, and he was entertaining with the students. Hirsh is a unique, lovely person.

Fiksdal: He is Russian.

Krafcik: Yes. We also had a woman teach with us in the early 1990s, Lisa Hewitt. She was wonderfully helpful as well, especially because we had lots of language students at that time. Then we brought on Larry Cothren, who taught a little bit with us and even set up a summer language program largely for our students in the city of Pskov in Russia which lasted perhaps three years.

Fiksdal: These are adjuncts who taught in the evening.

Krafcik: Yes, these were adjuncts.

Fiksdal: But then, you're asking students to give up something in their fulltime programs to be able to do this second year of language.

Krafcik: Actually, the Russia program in its basic form was really 12 credits, and language was another four.

Fiksdal: I see, so not everyone did language.

Krafcik: That's right. Some people just took the 12 credits and that was it. But Tom, and then Rob Smurr, began to offer a segment of four credits that would be open to others not in the program, so program people who didn't do language could take that extra seminar and earn 16 credits. Rob Smurr was especially great with that. He focused on Russia and war, and then Central Asia. Rob also had the knowledge and the wherewithal to take a group of students in the summer to exotic places such as Georgia in the Caucasus and the Altai Region in southern Russia.

Fiksdal: That's something that's quite different than many of our other language and culture programs—and now, speaking just to the audience— where we had language as an integral part of our program in the French program, and I know in the Spanish language program, we actually lectured in the language.

Krafcik: Yes.

Fiksdal: Then in the spring, we would go to a country so students could really develop their language skills. But also, we, crucially, could continue to develop our skills and our understanding of the culture.

You didn't have that opportunity. I was wondering what kinds of steps you took to have that opportunity to go back, or to go to one of these Slavic cultures.

Krafcik: The first issue was the language itself and the difficulty. It took really the full year to cover the basic grammar, and that was really learning only the very basics. With six cases, you just work slowly. You see, for every change in a sentence, every time you go to a different case, it's not just the noun that changes but the adjective. There's such complication in those changes that it's just daunting to students to put sentences together. The idea always thrilled me that students could start French or Spanish in fall term and already, maybe by spring, could listen to simple lectures in French or Spanish and could follow them, and in the second year, you could do that even more. With Russian, that was not possible.

Fiksdal: Andrew actually took a group of students to France in '80s because I was gone.

Krafcik: I think that was good. Yes, he could not go to the Soviet Union.

Fiksdal: He could not, but he spoke five languages beautifully.

Krafcik: You know, I started working with Michael Clifthorne and decided that the difficulty of organizing a program out of Evergreen was just not worth it when there were already well-established, reliable programs in place. The University of Arizona has great programs for studying in Russia. Then there is the Council on International Educational Exchange. There's also the American Council of Teachers of Russian. These groups had well-established programs, and Michael and I worked together to get Evergreen hooked up with them in a few consortia. Then we were able to have some of our students go if they wanted to, and they could get Evergreen credit. That was really a much better kind of thing than trying to organize our own program.

Fiksdal: So much easier with a difficult language. I'm wondering if you had any students that you know of that went on and studied Russian in graduate school and/or beyond.

Krafcik: I don't know of any who finally did that, although I have to say that one of our students who was really interesting, an interesting young woman—Gretchen Bakke, who was all tattoos, earrings, and a nose ring—actually went to Russia with us. I think it was during Larry Cothren's program in Pskov. She always wore really funky clothes, and I said, "Gretchen, I don't know how that's going to fly in Russia. I'm not really sure." But she stayed true to herself, even in Russia. And she later went on to Indiana University for anthropology. Just the other day, she was interviewed on NPR. It was the most wonderful thing to hear "Professor Bakke" speaking! She's teaching at the University of Chicago, and was doing a visiting professorship Humboldt University in Berlin at that moment.

Fiksdal: Amazing! You just happened upon her?

Krafcik: Yes, we were listening to NPR, and they said, "We're going to be interviewing Gretchen Bakke," and I thought, Gretchen Bakke. I know that name. Anthropology? Oh, my goodness! I looked her up and indeed that's her. I'm going to write to her and just tell her I was so thrilled to hear that. She spoke so well, so intelligently. She was talking about climate change and how we have to adjust, and how Covid has made us rethink how we work. We have also had students who have gone on to library and information studies, and I know that it was important for them that they had studied Russia and some of them, the language. There may be some that I think Tom knows of who went on in history studies as well. A few went to teach English in Mongolia, Turkey, Georgia.

But I understand. Trying to find a job in teaching Russian literature is very hard. The additional thing is that once the Soviet Union fell, there was free travel, and a lot of Russians emigrated. They came to the States and went on with their educations. They have now become the teachers, especially of language. That was not true when I was studying.

Fiksdal: I hadn't even thought of that. You didn't have native speakers teaching you.

Krafcik: Not very many. I did, though, by the time I went to college. Indiana University had this older generation of people even from pre-Revolution times who had left after the Bolshevik coup. Some had come through China—Harbin—and then through Seattle. That generation was already very elderly, but those were my faculty at Indiana University. After that, there was a lapse, and it was just up to us to get as good in language as we could, as authentic and genuine a command as we could, and to carry that load. But it's changed now. A lot of families came from Russia, and their children, who grew up with language but were American educated could really go into those fields and do a good job.

Fiksdal: You've twice now mentioned to me the demise of the Russian program. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Krafcik: Rob Smurr passed away just on the eve of the new year 2016. We taught together in the Russia Program from 2000-2001 and then every other year after that. For about 10 years before his death Rob struggled with a brain tumor, and finally succumbed to it.

Evergreen was willing to have me teach with visiting faculty for one round of the Russia Program, which ended up being the final round, and that's what happened in 2016-17. I would visit Rob often as he was losing ground, and he was glad to know that the program still went on. We had two really, really wonderful visiting faculty, one in fall, Jennifer Webster from UW who had just gotten her PhD. Then in winter and spring, Jipar Duishembieva, who was from Kyrgystan originally, but also had just received her PhD from UW, taught with me. That year was wonderful. Jipar brought with her an especially interesting cultural background. She spoke Russian natively, as well as Kyrgyz, which is a

Turkic language, and she spoke other Turkic languages, too. She was a great colleague and mentor to students. Just wonderful all the way around.

During the following academic year, 2017-18, when we would have been planning the next Russia program, is when everything hit the fan. Trevor Speller brought me together with Kathleen Eamon and Alice Nelson for a discussion about our language/history/culture programs.

Fiksdal: Not Marianne Bailey?

Krafcik: She may have been invited but she wasn't there, so it was just the three of us faculty. In hindsight, I would say that it was almost like he set up some kind of competition. I didn't like it. I love my colleagues, and I didn't ever think of our programs as being in competition with each other.

Fiksdal: They were not in competition ever.

Krafcik: Well, Trevor may not have seen it that way. We all gave good reasons why our programs were really crucial.

Fiksdal: And longstanding.

Krafcik: Longstanding, but also different because Kathleen, doing German stuff, and Alice doing Spanish stuff, had the spring quarter in Germany or in various Spanish-speaking places, and the Russia program did not. But I made it very clear that we were in consortia with other schools, and that that was a way for students to get language study abroad, and that our program—unlike those others--was very strongly history oriented. Alice is not a historian, Kathleen is not a historian, but I had trained historians teaching with me in this interdisciplinary package of the Russia Program.

Some time passed, and Trevor called me back in and he said, "I'm sorry, but I think the Russia program probably is not going to be allowed to continue." He showed me a chart: "These are the programs that we're going to be able to continue for sure. Then, in this column are three programs we may continue, but the Russia Program is the third and lowest of these three." The two programs above the Russia Program were business programs.

I just couldn't believe it. I said, "Trevor, the Russia program is one of the most rigorous and demanding and popular programs at Evergreen. We teach the highest level of history, literature, culture, language. We've sent students to Russia to study language in these consortia programs. This is a great program. We have excellent enrollment, full enrollment for years." I remember Scott Coleman telling me, "Don't worry. Your program has been full for years. It won't be cancelled."

Fiksdal: Yeah, that's usually the reason to continue it. Besides the fact that it helps balance. You've got history. We need humanities. The language and culture programs have always been an attraction for students to come to Evergreen.

Krafcik: Precisely. That was also the year, 2017-18, of course, when theater was being cut. We were doing Madness and Creativity that fall and winter, and I remember the students being horrified as we learned, bit by bit, what was being cancelled. The costume shop was being cleaned out. The theater program was being shut down. Students started to look for other schools.

Fiksdal: Absolutely.

Krafcik: Then the loss of the Russia program. Trevor summoned me again and informed me, "No, it just didn't make it. Those other two programs that were above you, we're running those, but not the Russia program." I was horrified. I wrote e-mails and letters to the deans, and even spoke personally with George Bridges, clearly explaining what a mistake this was, talking about the value and high quality of the program, the draw that it had for students. The kinds of students that it drew were some of the best students at Evergreen in the humanities. And ours was already a nationally known program. I say that because Rob Smurr and I were asked to write up a description of what we did in this interdisciplinary program for a newsletter that went out to the thousands of members of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies.

Fiksdal: That's really a coup.

Krafcik: Yes. Colleagues that I met at conferences would say, "It's just fantastic what you have there. We can't do that. We give a program in Soviet history, and we give a program in 18th-century literature, and we're all over the map, and students have to somehow put it together. We do literature here and history here. You bring it all together. What you do at Evergreen is extraordinary." I tried to really make that clear.

Fiksdal: Did you try just teaching it yourself? Or that wasn't even possible?

Krafcik: I think the idea was, oh, if we cancel the program, Pat will do something on her own. And yes, I did do the best I could. But we were told, "You will never have it again like you did with a historian. We cannot afford to hire a visiting historian. We can't afford to bring on a visitor." Even though Jipar was willing to travel again from Seattle to do the program with me, we could not hire her. She was a Muslim on top of all else that she had brought to her teaching with me, and she had a wonderful way of teaching history and culture from her personal perspective. She would have contributed such value once again. But the answer was always no.

With regard to subsequent programs on Russian topics, in fall 2018, I taught Flight of the Firebird: What Ignites Russia's Imagination in Literature and Culture. I taught it solo, and it was a wonderful program, although not the full Russia Program by any means. Just one quarter, but with full enrollment and even a small waitlist.

Fiksdal: What a great title.

Krafcik: Then for winter of that year 2018-19, I was welcomed by Brad Proctor and Sean Williams into their program, and then Drew Buchman and Sean in spring to participate in programs they were teaching, programs that I was able to contribute to easily.

Then, In fall-winter 2019-20, we did Madness and Creativity again, so I had a good home in that repeated program. That spring, 2020, I undertook a kind of reiteration of Flight of the Firebird, solo, with some changes, of course. We always make readjustments in repeated programs. Already for that term we were teaching remotely via Zoom.

For my last year, from fall 2020 through spring 2021, I taught three programs, and all three were also focused on Russia. In fall, I offered Stalin: Soviet Russia's Legacy in Stones, Steel and Blood. Winter quarter, Russia's Magnificent Siberia: Shaman, Cossack and Commissar. Then in spring, Search for the Russian Soul: Slavic Mythology, Folktales, and Magic.

Fiksdal: I wish I had known about these. I would have been there!

Krafcik: We had a few other people join us because these were all remote via Zoom because of Covid. For instance, Magda Costantino would visit once in a while. I allowed her to come into the Zoom room. She sat there quietly. But the most beautiful thing about these last programs, besides the fact that they were all completely enrolled, was that Tom Rainey came in to offer guest lectures in relevant topics in Russian history. I was able, thanks to David McAvity's understanding, to get a budget in order to offer Tom a little honorarium. Tom insisted that he would have joined in even without an honorarium.

Fiksdal: Of course, he would.

Krafcik: He was great. The students absolutely loved him, and it was like doing the Russia program again with him, in a way.

Fiksdal: I bet. It's so much easier to have someone like him come in because you had a sense of what he could do, and you didn't have to worry, and you could use that material. One year Tom came up to me and he said, "My program is under-enrolled." It wasn't in a time when we were going to be kicked out of the college. The Legislature wasn't trying to get rid of Evergreen or anything. He said, "I would like to come to your program and give lectures on French history." I just looked at him and I said, "Well, you are very welcome to come in and give lectures." He came in. I don't believe he had notes—perhaps he did—and he gave lectures. I think I must have been teaching alone. I can't remember. What year that was right now, I can't remember. But it was fabulous. It was fabulous. He was the kind of person, such a giving person, that Evergreen helped create.

Krafcik: Yes.

Fiksdal: We all wanted to help each other out. We gave guest lectures in other programs, so I'm really glad you talked about that.

Krafcik: It was a most beautiful gesture on his part.

Fiksdal: How old was he at that time?

Krafcik: Eighty-five.

Fiksdal: And still very sharp.

Krafcik: Very sharp. We would talk via Zoom after class. He would say, "You just can't imagine! This is giving me new life. I love this. You know, Pat, we both love this, don't we?" I would answer, "Yes, Tom, we do. We love it. We love it!" That kind of energy inspired the students, as well. We had—I say "we" even though these were my solo programs—a full class each of those quarters, which, for me, was a kind of indication of the importance and value of teaching about Russia. Yet it made me sad to think that after me there would be nothing remotely like this.

Fiksdal: Yeah, I think it showed the deans the level of interest.

Krafcik: Yeah, there was nothing else like the Russia Program.

Fiksdal: Look at how much literature you were doing, and they loved it.

Krafcik: I feel very bad about the decision to delete the program. I know that there were hard decisions to make then and are now, but not every hard decision leads to a good decision.

Fiksdal: No, that's right.

Krafcik: And some are fatal, and I felt, along with my students, that the deletion of the Russia Program was a fatal mistake. I think somehow, though, that along the way I decided that I can't hold a grudge. Trevor was under a lot of pressure to make these decisions.

Fiksdal: He didn't make them alone. He went to the deans. I was a dean many times, and you talk about these things, or usually you do. I have no idea, but I'm hoping that he talked with the deans.

Krafcik: I don't know how much discussion was held. I don't know with whom. Again, I think there was a lot of pressure in those years being put on the college to really cut down costs and so on, and this continues. I understand all of that. However, I think that it was almost like shooting oneself in the foot to cancel completely a program like the Russia Program.

Fiksdal: Yeah.

Krafcik: It was as if we cut this out, then that program, then another program, and students won't come.

Fiksdal: That's right.

Krafcik: I always felt that that was a mistake. At least in the end, in my last full year—2020-21—I was thrilled to be able to do three programs focusing on Russian material, and students loved the programs. We had great discussions, lots of valuable learning.

Fiksdal: It was a good way to end your career.

Krafcik: It was a good way to end. So, I'm scheduled to teach in spring of 2022, coming up now, with Sean Williams in a program that we've done before. That program is called Slavic and Celtic Folklore: Heroic, Spiritual, Practical. Sean and I really do a great job together. We even had a Fulbright faculty with us from Slovakia the previous time we did that program. It was really, really wonderful. Really fun.

Fiksdal: I'm surprised and pleased that they were able to give you a post-retirement contract because I thought those were gone.

Krafcik: They aren't gone, at least for now, so I think I'll be happy to do that. I'm trying to look at it as two quarters of sabbatical and then a quarter of teaching again. If I were to continue that, which I could for the following four years, one program each year, I will just do something Russian, Slavic. Folklore seems to be something that students really like, as well.

Fiksdal: And it brings you back to your Robin Hood years.

Krafcik: It certainly does, and there's a lot of richness in that.

Fiksdal: Yes.

Krafcik: You can bring in literature, you can bring in psychology, as I did in spring quarter of this year with Search for the Russian Soul. We looked at mythology, we read folk tales, we looked at magic, but also, we had a strong study of archetypes and Jungian archetypes, so the students got a good idea of who Jung was, and what archetypes are.

Fiksdal: And I wonder if anybody's teaching Jungian archetypes anymore, actually, now that you mention that.

Krafcik: I don't know.

Fiksdal: It's been years since I've heard of someone doing that. Good for you.

Krafcik: Yes, it was good. And I was able to have Heather, that student from my first year in Richard Alexander's program. Heather is the one who could not be in his seminar and came to my seminar. It was she who offered three class sessions for my students in my last program, talking about archetypes and searching for our own archetypes. It was wonderful to have her join us for these sessions.

Fiksdal: I just think that's such a fitting conclusion, too, to your last program to have a student from your very first program come back. That must have seemed like a very flourishing flourish.

Krafcik: It was.

Fiksdal: I like that so much. Let's pause.

Fiksdal: After a pause, we're still on September 9, 2021. I wanted to ask you now a little bit about other faculty members that you worked with, or you came in contact with that particularly struck as amazing in one way or another.

Krafcik: This is a difficult question because really, from all the names that I'm looking at now, all the faculty with whom I've taught, all of them gave me something. All of them were interesting people in their own ways. Some eccentric in some ways, beautifully eccentric. Others just on their own journeys but sharing with us. Many of them aren't at Evergreen anymore. I'm thinking, for instance, of people like Michael Pfeifer and Babacar M'Baye.

Fiksdal: I remember them.

Krafcik: In 2003-04, I taught a full-year program—three quarters—with those two guys called The Folk: Power of an Image. It was so fascinating. Michael was this kind of very nice, lovely, proper white guy.

Fiksdal: He was an American historian.

Krafcik: Yes. And Babacar was from Senegal and brought a whole different world with him. He was so lovely, and the two of them got along so well. I loved working with them. They were both so kind and respectful. From people like Babacar, I really was able to understand something from a very different point of view about life.

Then there were people like Lance Laird, who, also like Michael Pfeifer, didn't stay at Evergreen very long. But Lance was strongly interested in Islam, and he had us go on a fieldtrip to Seattle to the Islamic Center. This was in 1999-2000, a long time ago. That was an amazing experience. We spent the day at this Islamic Center. They had a school there. All of us women had to be scarved for the whole day, so we had that experience. We shared food with them. People like Lance really wanted to give us an experience from another point of view, and that stood out to me.

Then I think about other faculty, such as Richard, or Niels, or even Tom Rainey—all of those guys who considered themselves the dinosaurs. I realized only later that, oh, I've also, I guess, become a kind of dinosaur. But they were special dinosaurs. They had a table down somewhere in the CAB where they would meet for lunch, and it was the dinosaur table. David Marr was part of that group as well. I taught with him and Tom in a program in '95-'96 called Literature, Values and Social Change. David was such an interesting lecturer because he would just linger on different ideas. He would have students wrap themselves around an idea for quite a while. It was a different kind approach than even than Tom's, where there were historical arguments in this saga of history.

Then there was Art Mulka. Such a kind person, and a person who really had a very rich life outside of Evergreen. He was very wedded to his Polish identity, and we taught two programs on Eastern Europe together. I was a witness to Art's passing, a long passing from cancer. He was in hospice toward the end of his life, and I visited him and his wife more than once.

What a spectrum of types of people and experiences. From all of them, though, I learned something. I cannot think of one with whom I had a negative relationship ever. These were people who loved what they were doing.

I taught a program with LLyn De Danaan, as well, who was already an emerita faculty. We did a program in fall and winter of 2007-08, which we entitled Gypsy Road: A Study of the Roma. LLyn, as an anthropologist, with a deep, deep interest in Romany culture, was so amazing to teach with, just the way she thought, the way she could find sources that gave the students such insight.

Really, all of these people I remember with great fondness. Or the people who came to help us when we needed help. For instance, when Rob Smurr was not able to teach well anymore, I remember his attempt to give a lecture, and it failed miserably, and he and his wife, Becky, realized, in tears afterwards, that he had to let go. And then, Rob Cole, who I think was already retired at that point, came in to help. This was in spring of 2016. While Rob Smurr was in the process of letting go of his life, Rob Cole came in and taught with me. It was a program on Stalin again. I did a lot of it, and Tom Rainey also joined us with some lectures. But Rob Cole actually took a seminar, reading the material, seminaring with students, helping to write evals. He and Tom helped rescue the program.

Fiksdal: And it was brand-new material for him, I'm sure.

Krafcik: A lot of it was, although Rob Cole was very much involved in things Russian, so quite knowledgeable. Did you know that?

Fiksdal: No, I don't.

Krafcik: Oh, yes. He and Jean MacGregor have been going to—

Fiksdal: Oh, to Lake Baikal, of course.

Krafcik: Yes, to Baikal, so he was interested in the Stalin program and was able to contribute something from his own experience.

And teaching with Sean Williams is just a dream. Absolutely. How kind of Sean and Brad Proctor to welcome me into their program in 2018-2019 winter, which would have been a Russia program year. They welcomed me into their program Not a Melting Pot: American Identities, Migrations and Places. Or Drew Buchman and Sean, who welcomed me into their spring program, Projects in World Musical

Theater. I'm repeating here what I said before, but it's just to underline how strongly I feel about these folks.

Fiksdal: Did you ask to be invited, or did the deans direct you? How did you find all these programs and these people?

Krafcik: I think I had taught with Sean for the second time, Slavic and Celtic Folklore, in spring of 2018, at which time we already knew that the Russia program would not run for the full next year and that I would need to find something else. I was okay with fall, because I said, "I'll do Flight of the Firebird, but I'm not sure about winter and spring." And Sean said, "Why don't you join us?" Brad, who's absolutely a wonderful, great person, also welcomed me, and we found a way to work my input into that program, which I think was very good.

Likewise, in spring, with Drew Buchman and Sean, in the program Projects in World Musical Theater. They had plenty of Broadway, but nothing on Russian musical theater, Soviet musical theater, and I added that. It was a good and valuable contribution to the topic.

Fiksdal: I'm glad it exists. I didn't know anything about Russian musicals either.

Krafcik: During the '30s, when Stalin was beginning his purges, and the camps were filling up—the Gulag was well established by then—with inmates, things were terrible, horrible. These musicals were full of joy. Imagine!

Fiksdal: Terrible conditions. And they would create musicals.

Krafcik: The musicals were *Jolly Fellows* and *Volga! Volga!* They were joyous expressions of the wonderful life in Russia, in the Soviet Union, standing in stark contrast to the actual reality. I was able to talk to that issue.

Fiksdal: Such irony.

Krafcik: I think, in the end, that mine was a really good contribution to the musicals program. But it's the kindness of those faculty, the willingness to be flexible, that was so wonderful, and I really appreciated that.

Fiksdal: That's great, Pat. Now let's turn away from teaching for a moment to governance. I know that you contributed quite a bit, and I remember with great fondness in my heart how you helped me establish a Language Lab at Evergreen. We worked hard on that. It was over years. We just had all these ideas and ways of doing things that were difficult and hard, and we didn't have any money. Then we finally had some ideas, and you and I sat down, and we actually got a place, and we established it, and we fought for that place. It was a great experience. We did it. I don't know whether it's still there in a little corner of the library, but hopefully.

Krafcik: It is, I think. Yes, I was always a pretty good attendee and participant in Culture Text and Language (CTL) work which has evolved further now. But I think it took me a few years to warm up to that. It was daunting at first. CTL was rather large and had all these guys, like Chuck and Kirk and others, who just would spend a lot of time talking to each other about how to define culture. This was an important issue, but after a while I felt somewhat impatient with dragging the conversation on and on when other issues were also important.

Fiksdal: That's probably when we were trying to determine the new name of our cohort.

Krafcik: Yes, yes!

Fiksdal: I couldn't believe that those men came up with "culture first" text and language. We were thrilled at the time, but, yeah, we didn't get to talk too much.

Krafcik: It was a little daunting. But then, in time, I felt more confident, and I think the nature of the membership changed a little bit. CTL was always pretty important, and it was a good place for support and for exchanging ideas, and just helping each other, and also talking about the curriculum. I really felt very much all those years that I really loved teaching. I loved working with students. I was not drawn very much at all to administrative work. I know that some faculty are, and that's great. Thank goodness. But I was always willing to be on, say, Hiring DTFs, and then I found that Admissions really needed faculty support. They always struggled to get faculty to do these Fridays at Evergreen, not to speak of spending almost a whole Saturday at Preview Day. But those events were extremely important. Those events gave students their first impression of Evergreen faculty, and I felt that that was something I could do, so I worked for years with them doing those Fridays, and then the Preview Days, talking about my programs, trying to help people understand what an interdisciplinary program was—what it looked like, what kinds of things we were doing. I tried to infect them with enthusiasm and curiosity about Evergreen. That's really where I put a lot of my time with regard to governance.

Fiksdal: What about any research that you might have done along the way?

Krafcik: During all those years, I continued to do some work on brigand heroes in the Carpathians. Also, every single year I participated in a professional Slavic conference that was held in different cities. It was the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, then changed its name to the Association of Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies. This is an enormous professional organization of historians, political scientists, sociologists, even linguists and literature people. There's a folklore section as well. Huge convention every year.

From my graduate days on, I was very much involved in Carpatho-Rusyn studies. This is my mom's background, in the Carpathian range of Eastern Europe—southeastern Poland, northeastern

Slovakia, western Ukraine, flowing a bit into Romania and Hungary. I did tremendous work in that subject area. I was the editor of a newsletter from 1978 through 1998, for 20 years. I worked on that with a professor at the University of Toronto who is a historian, holder of the Ukrainian Chair at the university, and also of Carpatho-Rusyn background and very much involved in Carpatho-Rusyn studies--the world expert, really. From 1978, when I was just finishing graduate school, over all those years to now, that has been an enormous side preoccupation for me. In conjunction with that, over the past 15 years, that professor and I initiated a program at Prešov University in eastern Slovakia, a summer program, a three-week intensive study of Carpatho-Rusyn language and culture, for which I prepared and gave lectures. I researched, wrote up lectures, produced PowerPoints. With Covid, in the past two years we have not been able to do it, but maybe it will resume now in 2022. I have also given professional presentations, many of them connected with the brigand hero, but also with folktales, and with Carpatho-Rusyn culture. For instance, I did a presentation on memoirs of Carpatho-Rusyn immigrants. Some of my presentations were published.

What I also did, with regard to Slovakia, was to get a Fulbright Senior Specialist grant that I mentioned previously, which permitted me to go three times to Slovakia for about six weeks each time, in which I worked with faculty at Comenius University in Bratislava in the Department of Cultural Anthropology and Museology. I did lectures for students.

Fiksdal: In Slovakian?

Krafcik: No, in English. It really helped enormously that I could handle Slovak, though. But what they wanted, were lectures in English. And I accompanied them on some fieldwork in a Carpatho-Rusyn village. It was just wonderful, a wonderful experience over the course of three years. That's where a lot of my focus has been, not necessarily directly connected with Evergreen, but, as always, the experiences garnered abroad fed into my teaching. I was able to share with students so much that I had experienced that helped to enhance the material I was presenting. You know that as well.

Fiksdal: Yes, absolutely.

Krafcik: Without that kind of experience, it's just not quite as rich.

Fiksdal: You have to tell your own stories about your experiences. Now that you've retired, it sounds like this research will continue on and your love and practice and performance of the violin will go on. It sounds like you're going to be quite busy.

Krafcik: Yes.

Fiksdal: Perhaps you're looking forward a little bit to this time.

Krafcik: The additional factor with Covid is that my daughter and son-in-law and two little grandsons fled to us from Alexandria, Virginia, and lived in our house for some months. They're going through their own life struggles. That has been a great preoccupation for me, a very challenging one, I must say.

Also, in the past five years, I started playing in an orchestra that developed only about five years ago out of SPSCC, an orchestra that is made up of musicians in the Olympia area. Many of them are professional musicians. Many, like me, are really good, but we didn't do music professionally. Also, there are a few Evergreen and SPSCC students in the orchestra, too, which is lovely. This orchestra was just a godsend absolutely, because there are so many of us here who wanted to do music, but there was no way to do it. We've had a Covid break now, but we are resuming in the fall. Also, a year ago, I started playing with the Olympia Chamber Orchestra, which is a smaller group playing very difficult music. Right now, I'm learning some new music, which is very challenging. I have to work very hard. But it's good for our brains to have to work hard, so I'm thankful for that.

Also, I do want to work seriously on the Carpathian brigand tradition. There's nothing in English on this subject at all, and it's extremely interesting, and Sean Williams is breathing down my neck to write this book.

Fiksdal: She is so good at that. I've been to her seminar, and it helped me write my book. I do think she's a good person to be in contact with, and to have at your back.

Krafcik: She's wonderful for that, and for many other reasons. Great friend. I think that's what I will be doing, Susan, now in retirement, and teaching with Sean in spring 2022 Slavic and Celtic Folklore, and then perhaps, if I still have the energy and interest to do it, I will do some more teaching. I'm in contact with Stacey Davis, asking her, what does she think, within the context of CTL offerings, would something on Russia be a good idea? I'll just be flexible with that.

Fiksdal: Sounds great, Pat. Thank you so much for your interview. I really appreciate your time, and I've learned a lot about you that I didn't know, surprisingly. I thought I knew you well. Thanks so much.