

# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Rick Harmon

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



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Compiled by Sara Paulson

Tape 1, Side 1

1985 August 19

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Introduction and Parents' Upbringing	Skopil states his full name, Otto Richard Skopil, Jr.; he was born on June 3, 1919. His mother was Freda Martha Boetticher and his father was Otto Richard Skopil. Both were born in Germany and came to the United States when they were under age ten. Skopil describes the circumstances of both family's immigration, his father through the Midwest and his mother to Salem, Oregon through Canada. He talks about his mother's upbringing in Salem. Her family were farmers. She worked at the telephone company when she was about fifteen.	Extended family	Immigration	Salem, Oregon
00:03:00	Parents' Upbringing: Fathers' Family	Skopil's father's family (Skopil's grandmother and nine children) immigrated to Kansas from Germany. Skopil's grandmother married John Flaxel; they moved to Salem when Skopil's father was about age eleven. His mother and Flaxel had another child, Ben Skopil, who later practiced law in Coos Bay and became a district attorney. His father's older brother, Ralph Skopil, lost an eye while working at Valley Packing Company in Salem; in compensation, the meat packing company arranged for him to attend law school, and he practiced law in Salem until his retirement	Extended family	Labor issues	Careers - Legal
00:05:06	Parents' Early Relationship	Skopil's parents' families had farms close to one another; they met one another at an early age. Skopil discusses his maternal grandfather's cantankerous personality and his disapproval of his parents' relationship. His parents eloped and lived in Portland the first couple years of marriage. Skopil was born during this time. His father found work as a delivery driver for a laundry. The family worked out their differences and were later very close on both sides.	Extended family	Family life	
00:08:33	Parents' Influence on Skopil	Skopil speaks of his parents as the biggest influence on his life. They both were very kind and bright. His father was good with people and sensitive to their needs; this helped with his profession in sales in the laundry business. His mother was more reserved. She thought an educational foundation was essential; she wanted Skopil and his brother to have a college education.	Education - Attitudes	Family life	Extended family
00:10:56	Father's Professional Pursuits	When his parents moved back to Salem with Skopil as an infant, his parents pursued dairy farming; they had a milk herd and his father went into the wholesale milk business. Skopil describes his father's reason for returning to laundry work—his father-in-law, one of his suppliers, was watering down the milk. His father found work with a laundry owner named Weider, with whom he worked for about twenty-seven years. His father's large family lived on various farms in Salem within a five mile radius of one another; they provided one another with food.	Careers - Service	Farming	Extended family

00:12:58	Skopil's Childhood Residences	Skopil describes three neighborhoods he lived in as a youth in Salem, Oregon. The moves came as a result of his father's work in the laundry business—a more urban profession; successive moves reflected an income increase. Skopil mentions his grammar schools—Richmond Grade School, Lincoln Grade School, and McKinley Grade School, where Mrs. Ray was a notable principal. He describes his neighbors, including one that owned Browning Amusement Company, who introduced him to amusement rides. He talks about neighborhood friends.	Salem, Oregon	Primary school	Childhood
00:18:19	Salem, Oregon Upbringing: Attitudes about Ethnic Diversity	Skopil comments on the ethnic makeup of his childhood neighborhoods. The immediate area was principally populated by white, Caucasian people. Skopil notes a Japanese friend he met in junior high; they remain close. He remembers when a black family moved to the area while he was in high school. Skopil states that his parents had no biases or prejudices that he was aware of; there was no mention of ethnic differences. Skopil notes that his parents may have felt that they were members of a minority group, as people of German descent having lived through World War I.	Salem, Oregon	Diversity	Racial issues
00:21:32	Family Life: Work and Recreation	Skopil notes that while his father's side of the family was large, his mother had only one sibling. Skopil's parents planned to keep their family small, due to economics. His father left for work at six in the morning and returned at six or seven in the evening; he worked Saturdays. He came home during his lunch break and played catch with the boys during this time. On Sundays both sides of the family came together at family picnics, where they played baseball. Skopil's Uncle Amos coached them in baseball and boxing.	Leisure activities	Farm life	Extended family
00:24:41	Family Life: Chores	Skopil comments on the work ethic of both of his parents; he notes that they were both perfectionists. His father was a great believer in assigning responsibility and both parents made sure the boys followed through. Skopil talks about household chores assigned by his mother by age eight. He recalls his mother checking his vacuuming work.	Family life	Chores	
00:26:52	Family Life: Summer Harvest Work	Skopil's mother did not work outside the home when they were kids, except to "follow the harvest." Both boys worked alongside their mother harvesting prunes, hops, and strawberries during the summers. Skopil talks about the locations of various farms in proximity to present-day (1985) Salem neighborhoods and landmarks, like Illahe Hills Country Club. He describes difficulties of hop harvesting; prunes were easier to harvest.	Farm life	Salem, Oregon	Agriculture

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## Tape 1, Side 2

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Mother's Household Management	Skopil talks about his mother's running of the household, commenting that she taught him and his brother good habits and that everything had a place. She canned items from the family garden, such as strawberries and dill pickles. He describes the meat and potato diet she prepared for the family. He recalls the potato soup she make every Saturday for lunch and the sauerkraut and weenies that always brought his neighborhood friend, George Gutekunst, to visit, earning him the nickname, Sauerkraut.	Homemaking	Chores	Friendships
00:04:20	Relationship with Brother, Robert Skopil	Skopil comments that due to the seven years' difference in age between him and his brother, the two were not close when they were young. He remembers the turning point as when R. Skopil received an appointment to the Naval Academy through Wayne Morse; R. Skopil came to stay with O. Skopil in Washington, D.C. at the end of O. Skopil's military service. The two families are now very close, including the cousins.	World War II - Military service	Extended family	Family life
00:06:16	Family Life: Activities	Skopil comments that his family did very little traveling for recreation. He visited his grandparents on his mother's side in the Seaside-Astoria; it was a long trip at the time. He describes going crawfishing in the Amity area and relates a story about chasing escaped crawfish around his neighborhood; crawfish and beer was a German delicacy. He comments on the likelihood of someone in the family brewing beer for the family's consumption during prohibition, because there always seemed to be beer around. The extended family would get together at least once a month.	Travels	Leisure activities	Prohibition
00:09:52	Religious Upbringing	Skopil's father's side of the family was Catholic and his mother's was Lutheran. His mother was a believer in prayer. They did not attend church often; when they did, they went to the Methodist church in Salem because his mother thought it had a good youth program. His father instilled in them that their relationship with God was personal and his religiousness was a personal choice. Infrequently they attended St. Joseph's Catholic Church. R. Skopil is now a Catholic; O. Skopil leans Baptist.	Family life	Religion	
00:12:43	Englewood Grade School, ca. 1930	Skopil talks about grammar school after he moved to 19th Street in Salem, noting that it was an important time. Bruce Williams was a close friend; later they practiced law together in Salem. Two influential teachers were Mrs. Anderson and Mrs. [Stadler ?]. He discovered he had some athletic ability at this time, but broke his collarbone and could not play. This taught him that if he applied himself to studying, he could get better grades.	Education	Primary School	
00:14:45	Parrish Junior High School, 1930s	Skopil comments that his time at Parrish Junior High School was important because it was his first exposure to basketball. Skopil considers Coach Frank Brown to be one of the finest fundamentalist coaches; his coaching helped Skopil become proficient in basketball and this ability enabled him and his family financially later, in college. Skopil was active in school affairs; in seventh grade he was student body president.	Education - Sports	Education - Scholarships	Salem, Oregon

00:18:09	Salem High School, 1930s	Skopil outlines his time at Salem High School, noting that at the time it was located at what is now (1985) the Meier & Frank store in Salem. He talks about his athletic regimen of running between his home and campus. He talks about influential teachers, including Merle Holt, Olga Clark, and Leah Holtz. He also notes the coach, Hollis Huntington, who Skopil deems a very fine person.	Education - Sports	Education - Teachers	Salem, Oregon
00:21:00	Transfer to Corvallis High School	Skopil explains the circumstances of his move to Corvallis High School. He was banned from participating in sports at Salem High School as a consequence for telling the truth when the principal asked about his involvement in a secret society. Truthfulness was an important value in his family. The basketball coach at Corvallis High School, [James] "Mush" Torson, and [Amory Tingle] "Slats" Gill from Oregon State came to his home and spoke to his father, who agreed to move the family to Corvallis for the remainder of the school year in order for Skopil to play at Corvallis High School and potentially later for Oregon State.	Education - Sports	Education - Scholarships	Salem High School
00:27:34	High School Secret Societies, 1930s	Skopil describes secret societies. He notes why some considered them a problem; before his time the initiation process could be violent. He describes his secret society as more of a social club. They had a secret password and held an annual dance at Hazel Green; most of the members were good students. Three Salem High School students who went on to become prominent basketball coaches founded his club/literary society. They were [Amory Tingle] "Slats" Gill (Oregon State), [William J.] Bill Reinhart (University of Oregon) and [Roy Servais] "Spec" Keene (Willamette University).	Education - Sports	Salem High School	Social life, 1930s

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**Tape 2, Side 1**

*1985 August 19*

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Secret Societies: Salem High School, Part I	Hansen and Skopil compare the secret society to which Skopil belonged to fraternities on college campuses. He describes the principal of Salem High School and notes that he had been brought in to terminate secret societies in the Salem school system; he was doing his job. Skopil had discussed his membership with his parents. His father advised him that it was his choice to join, but warned him of the potential consequences; his father instructed Skopil to be truthful if asked about it.	Family life	Education	High school
00:03:02	Secret Societies: Salem High School, Part II	Skopil names three secret societies: Knights of Oratory, Friars, and Julius Caesars. He belonged to the Julius Caesars. It began as a literary society in about the early 1920s. It was predominantly made up of athletes. When Skopil was a member, it had evolved into a social club. Skopil comments on the legitimacy of the ban. Nothing went on that was overtly concerning; however, the fact that they were secret made them contrary to the Oregon statute and therefore there were legal implications. Skopil would now object to the fact that they were exclusive.	Education	Social life, 1930s	High school
00:07:29	High School Education: Influence on Skopil's Legal Career	Skopil notes his special interest at the time was physical education; he might have considered coaching athletics as a career path. Skopil draws a coloration between influential academic teachers at Salem High School and the influence on his later legal career. Mathematics prepared him to approach problems with a step-by-step logic. His English preparation helped with writing, a skill he deems important because legal analysis should be easily understandable.	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal	Education
00:09:57	High School Basketball and College Decision	Skopil confirms that during high school his basketball abilities matured enough to warrant college attention. He reiterates that [Amory Tingle] "Slats" Gill, the basketball coach at Oregon State, accompanied the Corvallis High School coach on a visit to his home to discuss his high school transfer. Skopil recalls training with Oregon State freshman while a high school senior at Corvallis. He discusses influential uncles who were lawyers, his interest in law as a major, and how this factored into his decision to attend Willamette University. He relates a conversation with Gill regarding his decision, noting his admiration for Gill.	Education - Sports	Education - Universities	Law school
00:12:52	High School Student Body Activities and Dating, 1930s	Skopil describes his involvement in student government and student body activities. He names girlfriends, beginning in the eighth grade. He started dating June Johnson when he was a sophomore in high school; she was a senior. Johnson went to Willamette University, one reason that he may have leaned toward going to Willamette. He and June Johnson were later married; they divorced after fifteen years.	Marriage	Divorce	Education

00:15:00	High School: Influential People	Skopil names two people he became acquainted with in high school that may have had an impact on his decision to pursue law. His father delivered laundry to [Everil] Max Page, an attorney who later served on the Oregon Supreme Court. Skopil talked to Page about being banned from athletics at Salem High School. Skopil became acquainted with Arlie [G.] Walker because he attended basketball games. Walker, a Willamette graduate and a state circuit court judge from Yamhill County, made an impression on Skopil.	Careers - Judicial	Walker, Arlie G.	Page, Everil Max
00:18:41	Great Depression: Experience as a Youth	Skopil comments on his awareness of the Great Depression and the experience of his family. His father and almost all of his family members remained employed. Skopil recalls his mother supporting people in need with canned goods. Skopil comments on local evidence of the [Franklin D.] Roosevelt administration's recovery programs. Many students at Willamette University benefited from federal aid programs; Skopil did not because he had a job, help from his parents, and help from the school itself.	Economics	Roosevelt, Franklin D.	

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Tape 2, Side 2

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Willamette University, 1930s: Skopil's Financial Situation	Skopil's finances in college were supported by scholarships that paid for tuition and books, a part time job at gas stations, and supplemental support from his parents. Skopil talks about the effort by [Roy Servais] "Spec" Keene, the basketball coach, in reaching out to the business community in Salem in order for Willamette to finance Skopil's scholarship. Skopil lived at home. Income from his part-time job went into his cars, first a Model T, and then a Model A.	Education - Affordability	Education - Sports	Salem, Oregon
00:04:59	Willamette University, 1930s: Undergraduate Professors	Skopil comments on memorable professors and administrators while an Economics major. Classes were small, allowing students close contact with professors. He mentions Professor Jones, who spoke German with Skopil, Professor [Lebis ?], who was more liberal than Skopil but was bright and enjoyable. Skopil recounts Ivan Lovell's pipe smoking and described him as a renegade. Skopil recalls admiring Professor Thompson, who taught western civilization, for his practice of sending letters to those serving overseas; Skopil received a letter and kept in contact with him as a result. Skopil notes his respect for the university's president, Bruce Baxter.	Education - Professors	World War II - Military service	Political views
00:08:52	Skopil's Views on the Role of Government	Skopil notes that he was attracted to people who were sensitive to the needs of others. He felt that individuals are obligated to one another. This responsibility falls on individuals, not the government. He credits his parents, specifically his mother, for instilling this value. He recalls discussing this with his friend, George Gudekunst, who had different political views from his own.	Friendships	Role of government	Political views
00:11:36	Willamette University, 1930s: Professors' Political Leanings	Skopil describes the education he received at Willamette as ideologically balanced. He notes that his professors did not try to impose their political beliefs as might happen more today (1986); professors left it to the students to make their own decisions. He describes further the Economics professors, Jones and [Lebis ?], noting the balance that resulted because Jones was conservative and [Lebis ?] was liberal. His political science professor, [Robert M.] Gatke was conservative, but a sociology professor, [McLoughlin ?], was liberal.	Education - Professors	Political views	
00:15:33	Willamette University, 1930s: Basketball	Skopil talks about his basketball career at Willamette; it was fun, he made lifelong friends, he won accolades, including the Ross McIntyre scholarship his junior year. He comments on Spec's [Keene] ability as a recruiter; Willamette was more formidable in athletics at that time. Basketball taught him to work with others.	Education - Sports		
00:18:50	Willamette University, 1940s: Reputation in Washington, D.C.	Skopil talks about his time in the navy, working in Washington, D.C. He notes that of the top seven positions in the navy at the time, two were occupied by Willamette University graduates, Ross McIntyre and Admiral [Thomas Leigh] Gatch.	Education - Universities	World War II - Military service	

00:19:50	Willamette University, 1930s: Ethnic Diversity	Skopil responds to questions about ethnic diversity at Willamette and talks about people he knew as a youth who were black. The basketball team at Willamette had no black players during the years he was there. The football team had multiple players who were black. Skopil talks about being in junior high school and impressed with the athletic ability of a Willamette football player, George [Canady?], who was black. Skopil talks about a family in Salem with twin boys; they were the only black students in his school.	Education - Sports	Diversity	
00:22:08	Willamette University, 1930s: Student Leadership	Skopil talks about his student government participation; he was president of his first year's class. He supported his friend, Bill Thomas, in his campaign for student body president.	Education - Undergraduate	Willamette University	
00:23:13	Willamette University, 1930s: Bruce Baxter's Administration	Skopil talks about the construction of new buildings during Bruce Baxter's administration. He also notes an increase in enrollment. He describes Baxter as an administrator—he was outgoing and a great PR man. His area of scholarship was in religion, although he did not teach; he was a bishop of the Methodist Church.	Baxter, Bruce	Education - Universities	Religion - Methodist
00:26:43	Willamette University, 1930s: Religious Affiliation	Skopil talks about the influence of Christianity at Willamette during his time there. Dan Schultze taught all religion classes. Chapel was compulsory, which the students resented. The rules were very strict—there was a ban on dancing, smoking, and drinking. One could be kicked out of school for drinking. The ban on dancing lifted during his senior year.	Religion	Education - Universities	



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Tape 3, Side 1

1986 July 14

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Taul Watanabe: Japanese-American Experience during World War II, Part I	Skopil talks about the experience of his friend, Taul Watanabe, as a Japanese-American student at Willamette University at the time of the Pearl Harbor military attack. Watanabe was a close childhood friend. Skopil recalls being insensitive (having a lack of awareness) to his friend's situation as a Japanese-American; he did not anticipate others treating Watanabe differently. University President Bruce Baxter helped Watanabe continue his law school education at the University of Denver Law School in Denver, Colorado while Watanabe's family was interned in the Ontario area of Oregon.	World War II: Attack on Pearl Harbor	Watanabe, Taul	Baxter, Bruce
00:03:57	Taul Watanabe: Japanese-American Experience during World War II, Part II	Skopil outlines the events of Watanabe's life after Japanese internment ended. He became wealthy in Los Angeles, dealing in real estate. He later moved to the Seattle area and had some health issues. Skopil has remained close with Watanabe. Skopil reiterates Baxter's efforts in helping Watanabe take advantage of opportunities during Watanabe's time in law school. He notes a feeling of guilt over not recognizing that Watanabe's personal security could be in danger at the time of the Pearl Harbor attack.	Watanabe, Taul	World War II: Attack on Pearl Harbor	Baxter, Bruce
00:06:51	Japanese-American Community in Salem, Oregon 1920s, 1930s	Skopil describes his associations with and impressions of the Japanese Americans who lived in the Lake Labish area near Salem. Many Japanese-American students from this area attended Salem public schools. He comments that his friendship with Watanabe was a motivating factor in his own schoolwork and self-discipline, because he wanted to keep up with his friend. He comments that the Japanese-American youths were dedicated and hard working in academics and athletics. Skopil was not witness to racism or prejudice against Japanese-Americans; he thinks that the larger Salem community was started by internment.	Watanabe, Taul	Salem, Oregon	Education - Attitudes
00:11:01	Taul Watanabe: Details on Japanese-American Experience during World War II	Skopil clarifies that Baxter was not university president at the time of Pearl Harbor when he aided Watanabe. Skopil provides more details about the Watanabe's experience during internment and that of his family. He provides more details about the events of Watanabe's life and career after internment ended.	Watanabe, Taul	Baxter, Bruce	Willamette University
00:16:31	Willamette University President Bruce Baxter's Resignation, 1940	Skopil remarks that that Baxter's resignation to become a Methodist bishop was a surprise to the students; they felt it was a great loss. Skopil talks about Baxter's love of people and his unique ability to remember each student's name and be personable with them.	Baxter, Bruce	Religion - Methodist	Education - Universities
00:17:50	Willamette University, 1941-1942: President Carl [Sumner] Knopf	Skopil notes that because he was away from campus during the war years, he did not have personal contact with the new university president. With some prompting from Harmon, Skopil recalls Knopf's short tenure due to pressures from the Salem community who reacted to comments by Knopf that they deemed pacifist. Skopil notes that the manner in which the nation was attacked immediately generated enormous loyalty and patriotism. Upon reflection, some townspeople might have agreed with Knopf; but at that time some people in Salem did not appreciate his comments.	World War II: Attack on Pearl Harbor	Salem, Oregon	Education - Universities

00:20:41	Willamette University: Centenary Celebration, 1942	Skopil shares what he remembers about the events commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the school; it did not factor in much to his experience. He recalls being asked to dance around the maypole on May Day and getting some friendly ribbing as a result. He also remembers the expectation of community members to grow a beard, a light-hearted harkening back to pioneer days; his father, who normally had a mustache, grew a beard.	Education - Universities	Salem, Oregon	
00:21:58	Acquaintanceship with Mark [O.] Hatfield	Skopil notes that he was first acquainted with Hatfield at Salem High School. Hatfield was two years behind Skopil; as a result they had very little contact in high school and also at Willamette University.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Education	Salem High School
00:23:03	Willamette University: Skopil Receives Bachelor Degree	Skopil describes a program he went through at Willamette in which he was awarded his bachelor's degree in Economics after completing three undergraduate years and one year of law school; the program existed to compact the amount of time in school. Due to his participation in this program, he abandoned his athletics after his third year; he was awarded his bachelor degree before his World War II service. Skopil talks about the influence of his lawyer uncles in his decision to study law, as well as the insistence of his mother that he pursue an education.	Education - Attitudes	Education - Universities	Education - Sports
00:26:20	World War II: Enlisting in the U.S. Navy, 1942	Skopil describes his reaction to the attack on Pearl Harbor and his actions afterwards. He was not particularly excited about becoming involved in the war, but he recognized that there was an obligation to fulfill. Rather than be drafted, he traveled to Seattle to enlist in the navy. His intention was to become involved in naval intelligence; he reasoned that being a second-year law student qualified him. After getting the run-around, he settled on becoming a supply corps officer like the friend who traveled with him, who also had an Economics degree.	World War II: Attack on Pearl Harbor	World War II: Military service	World War II: Draft

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	World War II Service: Initial Thoughts and Overall Significance	Skopil says more about his own attitude and that of those around him about the United States entering World War II, before and after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. It was his sense that others around him agreed that entering the war was unnecessary; Pearl Harbor changed this. He states that his service was significant for him because it taught him about relationships with other people. It exposed him to different communities of people that he otherwise would not have access to in Salem.	World War II - Attack on Pearl Harbor	World War II - Military service	
00:03:53	World War II Service: Sand Point [Naval] Air Station, 1942	Skopil was accepted into the Navy Supply Corps and reported to Sand Point [Naval] Air Station in June of 1942, where he stayed three months. He remarks on the strangeness of the lack of indoctrination; once he donned a uniform, civilians suddenly saluted him. He initially disliked the naval protocol of respecting others for their rank not their ability, but learned to appreciate it. He describes his discomfort and inexperience with his firearm during duty watch on Pier 91. Due to his legal background, he spent most of his time reviewing navy contracts.	World War II - Military service	Military - Education and training	United States Navy
00:06:50	Navy Supply Corps and Disbursing School, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1942	Skopil trained for three and a half months at a military facility located on the campus of the Harvard Graduate School of Business. Skopil's wife lived off-campus with his friend's wife and child; the men worked hard to gain privileges to visit their wives on the weekends. Skopil describes this first exposure to the East Coast. He enjoyed the historical sites and other sightseeing. He notes cultural differences between himself and the Harvard students. He describes his school schedule, which began with calisthenics at 5:30 a.m. and continued until the evening.	World War II - Military service	Military - Education and training	United States Navy
00:10:08	World War II Service: Eleventh Special Construction Battalion, 1943	After about three months as a distributing instructor to storekeepers at Camp Magruder in Williamsburg, Virginia, Skopil arranged to switch to a stevedore construction battalion. He sought this opportunity because he wanted to serve overseas. Skopil describes his new roommate, Robert Wolff, who became a close friend. Wolff had an idea to create a photo documentary report about logistics and problems they encountered as they did their work, as the use of stevedore battalions was new. They began this document as soon as they left Providence, Rhode Island until they set up on Russell Islands.	World War II - Military service	Friendship	United States Navy
00:13:54	World War II Service: Travel to Russell Islands, 1943	Skopil describes the fifty-seven-day trip to the Russell Islands, through the Panama Canal. It was a good trip with few alerts. Skopil describes one of the logistics problems he wrote about in his report—his lack of a safe in which to carry the money to pay the troops. He relates an experience that impressed on him what war was really like—he witnessed the explosion that resulted from a Japanese plane that made a kamikaze approach into the troop ship, [U.S.S.] <i>William Penn</i> [Indexer's note: Skopil may have confused U.S.S. <i>William Penn</i> with U.S.S. <i>John Penn</i> .].	World War II - Military service	United States Navy	World War II - Pacific theater

00:17:00	World War II Service: Russell Islands	Skopil begins to describe his experience while serving on the Russell Islands. The islands were primarily a cultivated coconut plantation owned by the Lever Brothers, the Palmolive people. Animals roamed the plantation, which the troops eventually ate. Skopil notes feeling bothered by the orders to make sure that nothing happened to the coconut trees, otherwise the government would have to reimburse the Palmolive people. This felt unjust, because they were saving the plantation.	World War II - Military service	United States Navy	World War II - Pacific theater
00:18:37	World War II Service: Discrimination	Skopil recounts witnessing discrimination and differential treatment while serving on the Russell Islands with the Eleventh Special Construction Battalion. He notes feeling disturbed by officers' treatment of troops in the all-black Fourteenth Special Battalion, which also served on the islands; he noted that the officers were primarily southern. A doctor from his unit pulled him aside and questioned him about his friendship with Bob Wolff, who was Jewish. These experiences were revealing; he was thankful for this exposure because these experiences contributed to his awareness later in his life.	World War II - Military service	Racial issues	Jews
00:22:23	World War II Service: Questionnaire Work in Washington, D.C., ca. 1945	Skopil speaks of Wolff's knowledge of military bureaucracy. Wolff convinced Skopil to turn their photo documentary report in to the bureau of supplies and accounts rather than through standard channels. As a result, they received orders to return to Washington, D.C. after twenty-one months. Skopil describes a rushed trip home during the forty-eight hours he had to report. Those in charge did not have work waiting for them in Washington, D.C. They created a responsibility for themselves, sending questionnaires to supply corps officers. Eventually they successfully requested some of their buddies join them to process the questionnaires. They were discharged October, 1945.	World War II - Military service	United States Navy	
00:26:55	Willamette University: Final Year of Law School, 1945-1946	Skopil describes the special law school class of three students that Willamette University arranged for law students returning from military service. Skopil felt the university went out of their way to help these students. He names his fellow students. He took the bar in 1946.	Willamette University	Law school	World War II - Military service
00:28:02	World War II Service: Photo Documentary Report	Skopil adds details to the report writing he conducted with Wolff while a dispersing officer with Eleventh Special Construction Battalion. He describes the types of things they wrote about. He notes the surplus that was supplied to them, and how this excess equipment was later useful to them as bartering material.	United States Navy	World War II - Military service	World War II - Pacific theater

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	World War II Service, 1943-1945: Eleventh Special Construction Battalion, Russell Islands	Skopil provides details about day-to-day life while serving on the Russell Islands. They were not actively involved in warfare. The Japanese would occasionally bomb the neighboring island; Skopil recalls one occasion when his island was bombed. He lightheartedly describes accidents involving his friend, Robert Wolff—he fell into a foxhole; a coconut fell on his head in the shower. Skopil describes the troops' shenanigans with surplus supplies—some harmless (like exploding dynamite underwater) and some harmful (like drinking methyl alcohol).	Friendship	World War II - Military service	Military - Service
00:04:13	Reflections on World War II Service: Equal Treatment as a Lifelong Value	Skopil came away from his military experience with a strong sense that people should be treated uniformly, fairly and equally. He witnessed things that taught him that this was not always the case. Skopil provides examples, reiterating the exchange he had with the doctor who questioned his friendship with a Jewish person. He also talks about special treatment given to friends of people in the bureau of naval personnel. Skopil reflects on these experiences as influences on his later legal and judicial career.	World War II - Military service	Discrimination	Careers - Judicial
00:07:11	Salem, Oregon Upbringing: Reflections on Diversity and Equality	Skopil notes that as a youth his social circle revolved around his family, who were German immigrants. He was not aware of the attitudes of Salem's business community with respect to diversity. He talks about the Jewish families he knew. He notes that the Watanabes, the family of his close Japanese friend, lived in Salem and participated in all community activities. This differed from the Japanese families from the agricultural area. Skopil assumed these students did not participate as much because they had chores and other responsibilities at home.	Jews	Racial issues	Salem, Oregon
00:11:47	World War II Service: Stevedore Construction Battalion Photo Documentary Report	Skopil provides more details about the photo documentary report he created while serving with the Eleventh Special Construction Battalion. The motivating factor was to find a way to get themselves home from the South Pacific; a secondary factor was to keep a history of their work. The report was Wolff's idea; it was influenced by his knowledge about the inner workings of bureaucracies, on account of his father working in Washington, D.C. Skopil talks about how it was curious that the report had obviously caught someone's eye, but there was no specific work waiting for them when they returned.	United States Navy	World War II - Military service	World War II - Pacific theater
00:13:43	Skopil's Wife, née June Johnson: Whereabouts during World War II	Skopil notes that he had known his first wife, née June Johnson, when they were in preschool; they were reintroduced in high school. They married when Skopil was twenty-one years old, just as Skopil was starting law school. June remained in Salem during Skopil's military service, except for a six-month period, first in Cambridge, Massachusetts, followed by three months in Williamsburg, Virginia.	Marriage	World War II - Military service	Military - Education and Training

00:16:27	Willamette University Law School: Returning to School after World War II	Skopil provides details about his transition back to law school. He describes writing to the school and learning that they were willing to create a special graduating class for those returning from the war. This was the determining factor in his decision to return; he did not contemplate other schools. Skopil explains the reasons he was eager to find the most expeditious way to finish—he was married and wanted to get going with his career.	Willamette University	Law school	World War II - Military service
00:17:58	Willamette University: University Presidents	Skopil comments that the former university president, Bruce Baxter, was unique with his personable, outgoing nature. George Herbert Smith was president when Skopil returned. Skopil did not know Smith as well; his marriage and part-time job prevented him from being on campus much. Skopil respected Smith's leadership during a difficult time for the law school; Smith was adept at gaining support from the Salem community. At one time during the war, the university had only one student. Skopil comments on the dedication Willamette University had to its students.	Marriage	Law school - Faculty	World War II
00:21:54	Willamette University Law School: Program and Faculty upon Skopil's Return	Skopil describes the small faculty; it consisted principally of two instructors, [Roy] Lockenour (who was dean) and Ray Smith. Skopil clarifies that his law school program consisted of three full years.	Willamette University	Lockenour, Roy	Smith, Ray
00:23:57	Willamette University Law School: Reflections	Skopil reflects on the quality of law school education that he received at Willamette. He comments that the instructors taught the students to be inquisitive; he notes that if one applies oneself, the school itself makes little difference. Skopil describes the different teaching approaches of Claire Inman and Ray Smith. He speaks of Smith as someone willing to assist students with any need. He describes the tedious work briefing cases for Inman's class.	Law school - Faculty	Inman, Claire	Willamette University

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## Tape 4, Side 2

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Willamette University Law School: Faculty, Part I	Skopil finishes talking about the faculty. Roy Lockenour was the dean during Skopil's last two years of law school. He taught contracts, domestic relations, and negotiable instruments. Skopil shares a story of Lockenour's absentminded character. He was a good instructor with a unique ability to organize material; an outline Lockenour prepared for his contracts class was useful to Skopil when he took the bar exam. Skopil notes that he came to appreciate Lockenour as an instructor more in retrospect. Skopil also talks about George [M.] McLeod, who was dean during his 1940-1941 year.	Law school - Faculty	Lockenour, Roy	McLeod, George M.
00:05:17	Willamette University Law School: Faculty, Part II	Skopil talks about contact he had with faculty members after he completed law school. Lockenour lived in Salem; he had greater contact with his students who practiced law in Salem. Ray Smith and Claire Inman did not live long after Skopil graduated. McLeod wrote to Skopil when he was appointed to the district court bench, but otherwise did not keep in touch.	Law school - Faculty	Lockenour, Roy	
00:06:44	Practicing Law, 1946: Shared Office with Uncle Ralph Skopil, Part I	O. Skopil shares the circumstances that led to sharing an office with his lawyer-uncle, Ralph Skopil. He speaks about his uncle's foresight in suggesting that they share an office space but practice independently. This arrangement turned out to be a blessing for O. Skopil; he later joined forces with his friend, Bruce [Williams]. O. Skopil talks about his uncle's life history and the circumstances that allowed R. Skopil to enter Willamette University Law School as a special student later in life, when he was in his forties.	Extended family	Careers - Legal	Labor issues
00:11:08	Practicing Law, 1946: Shared Office with Uncle Ralph Skopil, Part II	O. Skopil goes into greater detail about the foresight his uncle had with his suggestion they practice independently. At first, O. Skopil was disappointed because of the up-front office expenses. He soon understood the wisdom in the arrangement, from a financial and professional standpoint.	Extended family	Careers - Legal	
00:14:36	Bar Exam: Preparation and Test	Skopil describes studying for the bar exam with Gordon Wilson and Cecil Quesseth; the time lapse due to their military service caused them to study diligently. Wilson originally did not pass, which surprised Skopil; ultimately he passed when the Supreme Court reviewed his paper (and others). Skopil briefly describes Quesseth's career and education. Skopil comments on the dual purpose of the bar exam—to assess academic qualifications and to prepare students for the strain of practicing law. He talks about changes to the exam since he took it, like the introduction of the multi-state bar questions.	Bar exam	Friendship	World War II - Military service

00:19:55	Skopil & Skopil, 1946-1951: Part I	Skopil talks about his first years practicing law, noting that although they were known as Skopil & Skopil, he and his uncle practiced independently. His uncle, R. Skopil, had more of a business practice. O. Skopil talks about how he originally got work. In these days before the Criminal Justice Act, he let judges know that he would be willing to do work on criminal cases. He sought out relationships with doctors, who could notify Skopil of potential clients who might have been injured in automobile accidents. Skopil describes the challenges of trying to establish yourself in the community where you were raised.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts	
00:25:20	Skopil & Skopil, 1946-1951: Part II	Skopil describes two clients that he had throughout his entire practice. One was a family that had several manufacturing operations throughout the state. The second was Frank Ward, the owner of Salem Auto Parts; the two became good friends.	Careers - Legal		
00:27:52	Forming a Partnership with Bruce [W.] Williams, 1951	Skopil describes the circumstances that led him to form a partnership with his friend, Bruce [W.] Williams. Williams started practicing two years after Skopil; each wanted to become established before they joined together. An opportunity presented itself when Bruce Spaulding, a prominent Salem lawyer who Skopil occasionally helped, left Salem to join the law firm that later became the Schwabe Williamson firm. Spaulding asked Skopil if he would like to take over his space; Spaulding referred some of his clients to them.	Careers - Legal	Spaulding, Bruce	Williams, Bruce W.



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## Tape 5, Side 1

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Skopil's Law Partner, Bruce [W.] Williams: Professional Background	Skopil discusses what Bruce [W.] Williams did between the time he graduated law school and the two became partners. His law work was principally trial work, same as Skopil. He supplemented his income by writing for local newspapers. He became the radio announcer for Salem's professional baseball team; he benefitted from some name familiarity from this work. The two of them worked hard at trial work and became good at it.	Careers - Legal	Williams, Bruce W.	
00:01:58	Bruce Spaulding: Professional Background	Skopil talks about Spaulding's legal career prior to his move to Portland, ca. 1951. He was district attorney in Polk County and practiced law in his spare time. While living in Dallas, Oregon, he gained prominence as the result of working on a case that involved a Salem box company and goon violence in West Salem; he moved to Salem shortly after. Spaulding did defense work for multiple insurance companies.	Careers - Legal	Spaulding, Bruce	
00:03:32	Partnership with Bruce [W.] Williams: Summary of Legal Work	Skopil and Williams inherited two of Spaulding's insurance company clients. They agreed not to take plaintiff's work against these companies. Skopil and Williams gradually built up their insurance clientele, including plaintiff's work. Skopil became known as a trial lawyer as opposed to an office lawyer. He remarks that office practice takes considerably longer to establish; closer to the end of his practice he had developed some estate work.	Careers - Legal	Spaulding, Bruce	Williams, Bruce W.
00:05:33	Ralph Skopil's Practice after Otto Skopil Left	O. Skopil talks about the career of his uncle, Ralph Skopil, after O. Skopil left to form a partnership with Williams. While R. Skopil continued to do legal work for a few long-established clients, he referred most work to Dale Pearson, with whom he shared an office. R. Skopil studied investments and was knowledgeable about the stock market and real property.	Careers - Legal	Extended family	
00:07:57	Partnership with Bruce [W.] Williams: Casper Oveross Case, 1950s	When Skopil and Williams first started together as partners they tried large cases together due to insecurity and inexperience. Skopil talks about the publicity they gained from a murder case involving a Silverton man, Casper Oveross. It was a long, widely publicized case with daily press releases. It established them in the community. Skopil and Williams needed additional help in their practice after this case.	Careers - Legal	Williams, Bruce W.	Homicide
00:10:55	Law Firm Expansion: Early Hires	Skopil begins to talk about people that he and Williams hired as their workload increased. They hired George Jones, who was later appointed to the circuit bench in Marion County. Almost immediately after Jones left, Skopil and Williams hired Keith Evans and Al [J.] Laue. He notes that eventually the firm grew to include eight people.	Careers - Legal	Laue, Al J.	Evans, Keith

00:11:45	Law Firm Expansion: Secretaries and Physical Space	Skopil briefly talks about remodeling the space they took over from Spaulding at the Pioneer Trust Company due to their expansion. He discusses the firm's competent and knowledgeable secretaries, noting that the way they relied on them was unique for the time. The secretaries did the work that present-day (1986) paralegals typically did. The firm had six support people for four lawyers. They attracted good people because they paid them well. Helen [L.] Petre was Spaulding's secretary when he left; she stayed and worked for Skopil and Williams.	Careers - Legal	Secretaries	
00:15:23	Law Firm Expansion: Associates and Partners	Skopil comments that he and Williams hired lawyers as a way to cope with the expansion in their workload. He gives some background information on Keith Evans, who left to practice on his own. He describes Al [J.] Laue, who had great writing skills and an analytical mind; he wrote briefs for the firm's appellate work. Laue left for the Attorney General's office. Rodney Miller was the first to join in the partnership.	Careers - Legal	Laue, Al J.	Evans, Keith
00:18:10	Law Firm Expansion: Livesley Building Purchase	Skopil talks about the circumstances of going in with his partner and two other attorneys to purchase the Livesley Building in Salem. They converted the building to be a lawyers' building.	Careers - Legal	Salem, Oregon	
00:20:03	Law Firm Expansion: Partners	Skopil continues to talk about partners that came to the firm. He notes that Rodney [W.] Miller later became a circuit judge. The firm's second partner, Tom Beck, became a circuit judge in Marion County. Skopil describes Beck's insurance industry work for the firm. Skopil describes William Wyllie's professional background and the primarily office work he did for the firm. Later partners included Phil Parks and Harry [Coolidge ?].	Careers - Legal	Miller, Rodney [W.]	
00:23:04	Law Firm: Closure	Skopil discusses what happened as the firm split up. When Skopil was in Washington, D.C., for the process of judge selection, he received phone calls from Williams, Miller, Beck, and Wyllie; it was evident that the firm was not going to stick together. Skopil notes that Williams was a talented, but impatient person. The two had grown up together and were like brothers; they understood one another and did not have differences during their partnership. The firm had eleven secretaries when it broke up; Betty Brown, Skopil's secretary, came with Skopil when he became a judge.	Careers - Legal	Secretaries	Williams, Bruce W.
00:24:52	Word Processing	Skopil states his belief that his firm of attorneys was the first in the state to purchase word processors. They purchased the equipment from a friend who worked for IBM. Skopil describes how his firm used them. After a learning curve, they were a great time saving device.	Technology	Careers - Legal	Secretaries
00:27:07	State Farm Mutual Case	Skopil begins to describe the State Farm Mutual case that his firm worked on. It was the only time Skopil appeared before the United States Supreme Court. He describes the facts of the case and that it involved federal statutory interpleader, which he describes.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	U.S. Supreme Court cases

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## Tape 5, Side 2

1986 July 21

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	State Farm Mutual Case: Interpleader Actions	Skopil continues to talk about the case he argued before the United States Supreme Court. He describes the principals that caused it to become a landmark case that continues to be discussed in law schools. He describes the path the case underwent in appellate courts, noting the opinions of various judges. Skopil explains why he thought that the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Oregon was the best prepared appellate court he had ever argued before, including the United States Supreme Court.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	U.S. Supreme Court cases
00:04:13	Duane Anders Murder Case, 1960s: Part I	Skopil begins to describe working on a case in which he represented a sixteen-year-old boy, Duane Anders, who had been charged with murder for killing his father and setting a barn on fire to cover up the evidence. He describes the events of the case in detail.	Careers - Legal	Homicide	Firearms
00:08:18	Duane Anders Murder Case, 1960s: Part II	Skopil continues to describe the case; he ultimately won a "not guilty" verdict. He talks about gathering evidence. Anders was evaluated by a psychiatrist. The case was the first time Skopil made use of sodium pentothal. Skopil talks about Anders' accomplishments after the case, noting what a fine person he is; they continue to keep in touch. Anders' family believed his innocence. Skopil talks about his mother's visible relief in the courtroom when the verdict was read. The case received some publicity, but not as much as the earlier Oveross murder case; Skopil attributes this to more violence expressing itself in society.	Careers - Legal	Homicide	Firearms

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**Tape 6, Side 1**

*1986 July 28*

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Introduction	Skopil introduces a murder case he worked on, defending a sixteen-year-old named Duane Little on a rape-murder charge. Skopil talks about becoming involved in the case at the request of Little's church after Little's original attorney, Ed [Edward N.] Fadeley, unsuccessfully tried to appeal the transfer of the case to an adult court. Skopil notes that the case was significant because of the extensive use of scientific evidence, including blood, saliva, and hair samples.	Careers - Legal	Fadeley, Edward N.	Homicide
00:04:11	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Consent to Obtain Evidence	Skopil contends that Little should not have been convicted because the evidence against him was obtained through the consent of his parents, not Little himself. This was a violation of his constitutional rights, thought Skopil. Skopil notes that it has been held many times since that a parent cannot waive a child's constitutional rights. Little's parents were so convinced of his innocence that they thought this would prove it. Skopil comments that under our system, guilt must be proven, not one's innocence.	Constitutional law	Homicide	Sexual assault
00:06:17	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Details about the Littles	Skopil talks about Little's father, who had been acquitted of a murder charge on an insanity plea. Afterward he changed his name from Hardin to Little. Skopil notes a psychological examination and the use of sodium pentothal in D. Little's case. They did not bring D. Little to the witness stand because he processed information slowly on account of earlier brain damage from an unintentional hit to the head by a baseball bat. Skopil talks about visiting D. Little in prison and learning about his experience there. Skopil describes D. Little's experiences after prison.	Homicide	Disability	Careers - Legal
00:11:48	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Presumption of Innocence	Skopil talks about cases involving moral decisions and his thoughts about his constitutional obligation as a member of the legal profession. It is the state's duty to prove guilt beyond a questionable doubt. Skopil thought that Little was guilty. He talks about his obligation to represent Little as an individual in order to ensure that the state proved his guilt. Skopil describes difficulty he had with these moral questions earlier in his career. The Bible helped him resolve his thoughts. Skopil notes that the Casper Oveross case was the only time he thinks he represented a guilty defendant who was acquitted.	Careers - Legal	Homicide	Sexual assault
00:15:18	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Circumstances of the Case	Skopil talks about the circumstances of the case. He notes that Little never admitted to the crime. He relays Little's description of what happened the day of the crime. He shares his own assumptions about what likely happened. Skopil thinks that Little was fearful of his father. Hanson notes, and Skopil agrees, that Little was forced to be tried as an adult, but his parents were allowed to make decisions for him regarding his constitutional rights.	Homicide	Sexual assault	Careers - Legal

00:18:57	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Sodium Pentothal	The use of sodium pentothal requires the permission of the person you are administering it to. Skopil describes what they sought to gain from its use. He compares its usefulness in the Little case and the Duane Anders case. Skopil did not allow the psychologist administering the drug to ask Little whether he committed the crime. They used it to be as prepared as they could in the short time that they had to prepare for the trial.	Careers - Legal	Homicide	Sexual assault
00:21:21	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Collecting Circumstantial Evidence	Skopil notes that he was aware of the blood, saliva, and hair samples taken from Little, but he did not fully realize the consequences of them until later. He describes the investigation undertaken by the state police and comments that he had been impressed with the job that they did.	Homicide	Sexual assault	Careers - Legal
00:23:08	Duane Little Rape-Murder Case, 1960s: Attorneys	Skopil describes the people from his office who worked on the case with him; they included his partner, Bruce Williams, and a young lawyer named Eric [Lindauer?]. Skopil states that Little's church hired them for the case; the church likely learned of them from publicity from previous cases. Skopil notes that he did not work with Fadeley on the case; supposedly Fadeley was dismissed. Fadeley continued to attend the trial and sat close behind the counsel table. Skopil agrees when Hanson remarks that Fadeley maintained visibility in connection with the trial.	Careers - Legal	Fadeley, Edward N.	Williams, Bruce W.
00:27:25	State Farm Mutual Case: Follow Up Question	Hanson begins to ask a follow up question about the State Farm Mutual case.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	State Farm Mutual Case: Interpleader Action	Skopil describes what he was trying to accomplish for his client, State Farm Mutual. He was trying to limit the insurance company's exposure by depositing the money with the court up to the policy limit, in order for the court to decide which claimants were going to be entitled to the money. This was done because there were multiple claimants who would be entitled to the money—but only if the policy covered the type of accident that occurred. State Farm Mutual asserted, and they turned out to be correct, that they had no exposure because the insurance policy did not cover the type of accident.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	
00:03:18	State Farm Mutual Case: Unique Feature of this Interpleader Action	Skopil clarifies what made this interpleader action different from others. In this case, the insurance company claimed that they did not have any exposure at all. They were depositing the money with the court on the condition that they were found by a court decision to have their policy cover the accident. Skopil states that he believes this case was the first in the country where an insurance company sought to keep a string attached to the money deposited with the court because they felt they weren't required to pay the money out at all.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	
00:05:10	State Farm Mutual Case: Typical Uses for Interpleader Actions, Part I	Skopil further explains interpleader actions. They are commonly used in, and perhaps originated from, life insurance policy cases, where the named beneficiary under the policy had predeceased the decedent and there were a number of other claimants who claimed they were entitled to the money. Skopil summarizes State Farm Mutual's argument as, "We really don't owe it, but if someone says we do, here it is."	Careers - Legal	Insurance	
00:09:55	State Farm Mutual Case: Typical Uses for Interpleader Actions, Part II	Skopil states that in most cases insurance companies acknowledge that they owe the money; they are trying to avoid paying the wrong person. He notes that the insurance company's obligation is determined by a contract that factors in premium and exposure levels.	Careers - Legal	Insurance	
00:13:39	State Farm Mutual Case: Accident and Insurance Details	Skopil states that he is unaware of the outcome of lawsuits related to the accident involved in the case; he notes his sympathy toward those who were injured. He describes the terms of the policy that the liable person had that relieved the company from the obligation.	Insurance		
00:16:29	State Farm Mutual Case: Significance	Skopil describes that a federal statute applied to the situation. He notes that it was a relatively new statute at the time of the case; it had probably been introduced in the 1950s. He suspects that insurance company lobbyists had worked on it. His firm happened to have the first factual situation to which the statute applied.	Insurance	Lobbyists	Careers - Legal

00:18:16	Breakup of Skopil's Law Firm, Part I	Skopil adds details about the circumstances that led to the breakup of his law firm when he left to become a judge on the district court. He was in Washington, D.C., attending a seminar for newly appointed judges. He received separate phone calls from his partners indicating that they were having serious difficulties at the office with reference to the bank account. One partner had withdrawn all of the partnership funds, leaving the others with no means for paying filing fees. Skopil returned after his seminar and resolved their differences.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial	
00:20:58	Breakup of Skopil's Law Firm, Part II	Skopil notes that there had been no prior hint of bank account problems, specifically. He talks about Bruce William's personality traits, implying that they may have contributed to his troubles with others; the two valued their relationship and were like brothers, so personality differences did not affect their relationship. After an initial emotional reaction to disbursing, everyone was much happier. He notes his own disappointment because he and Williams had built the firm. He describes how the partners regrouped and what their careers entailed afterward.	Careers - Legal	Friendship	Careers - Judicial
00:24:13	Skopil's Law Firm: Use of Word Processors, 1960s	After conferring off tape with his secretary, Betty Brown, Skopil places the timeframe of the addition of word processors to his law firm as the mid-1960s.	Careers - Legal	Technology	
00:25:37	Post World War II: Marriage and Family Life	Skopil adds details to his discussion of his personal life during the postwar period. He notes that his wife worked as a biology lab assistant at Willamette University. He discusses two houses they built in the Salem area. His son was born in September of 1946.	Marriage	Family life	Salem, Oregon

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1986 July 28

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Divorce from First Wife (née June Johnson): Reasons for Breakup	Skopil talks about the circumstances that led to his divorce. He assumes responsibility and expresses regret. He describes a gap in communication that formed as a result of his time being consumed by the law practice. He learned his priorities were not right, and notes that this is a mistake that young people make frequently. It was a traumatic time; he developed ulcers and his wife suffered emotionally. She developed her own interests (bridge and painting), but they were not enjoying things together.	Divorce	Careers - legal	
00:04:29	Divorce from First Wife (née June Patterson): June's Move to Coos Bay	Skopil talks about his wife's feelings with respect to the closeness of Skopil's family as compared to her own. Skopil speaks of his wife's fondness for his Uncle Ben and Aunt Agnes in Coos Bay. She moved to Coos Bay after the divorce, probably because she felt they would be of some emotional assistance. Their son, Rik [Otto R. Skopil, III], was seven or eight years old when they divorced.	Extended family	Divorce	
00:07:48	Divorce from First Wife (née June Patterson): Son, Rik [Otto R. Skopil, III]	O. Skopil describes June's two subsequent marriages. He talks about the relationships that his son, Rik, has with family members and how they have cemented over time. Rik Skopil came to live with O. Skopil and his second wife when Rik Skopil was sixteen. Rik Skopil is close with his stepmother and stepsiblings.	Extended family	Divorce	
00:10:58	Skopil's Second Wife (née Jan Lundy): Meeting	Skopil married his present wife, Jan, about two years after his divorce from June. He talks about the circumstances of their meeting. His law firm needed secretarial help. He learned about Jan's experience as a legal secretary from one of his clients, the Gerlingers. The firm interviewed and hired Jan, and she worked primarily with George Jones. Jan and Skopil started dating. He notes that they have (as of 1986) enjoyed thirty years of happiness and three great children.	Career - Legal	Secretaries	Marriage
00:15:10	Skopil's Second Wife (née Jan Lundy): Early Relationship	Skopil states that June's family name was Lundy. She started at the law firm about the same time that Skopil was divorced. After they began dating, Jan worked for a different law firm; she left the firm when they were married. Jan had not finished her undergraduate degree at Lewis and Clark College; she enrolled at Willamette University after their marriage, but did not finish. Jan was interested in starting a family immediately. Their son, Casey, was born a year after their marriage. Skopil describes their mutual commitment to open communication and his intention to balance his time.	Dating	Family life	Secretaries
00:19:57	Parental Roles, Part I	Skopil talks about the division of labor within his household in terms of the roles he and his wife took on as they raised their children. He describes Jan as "a terrific mother, a tremendous wife, and a great housekeeper." She encouraged him to take the time for himself—to play golf, for instance. As an example Skopil notes that he never once got up with the kids at night. Skopil notes that his responsibilities included doing yardwork and earning money.	Gender roles	Social life, 1950s	Family life



00:23:17	Parental Roles, Part II	Another role Skopii played in his family life was to give the harsh discipline, which he defined as having stern discussions and administering consequences. He notes that he often had the children participate in coming up with what the discipline should be; they were reasonable and fair. He notes a difference between his boys and his girls with how they responded to discipline. He stresses that his children have been great kids throughout their life. Crediting Jan, he notes they are loving and sensitive toward one another and other human beings.	Family life	Gender roles	Social life, 1950s
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1986 December 19

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Community Involvement, 1950s: Youth Organizations, Part I	Skopil introduces his involvement with two youth organizations, Hi-Y and Girl Scouts. For each, he discusses how he got involved and the role that he played. Skopil was an advisor to a group of high school males for a Salem Hi-Y group. Two youths in his group went on to have prominent legal careers: Justice Wally [Wallace P.] Carson, [Jr.] (Oregon Supreme Court) and David [A.] Rhoten (practicing attorney). He served on the Mid-Willamette Valley board of directors for the Girl Scouts. Whereas he had direct contact with young people in the Hi-Y group, his work with the Girl Scouts was largely administrative.	Civic engagement	Carson, Wallace P., Jr.	
00:05:39	Community Involvement, 1950s: Youth Organizations, Part II	Skopil notes that his work with the Hi-Y was meaningful to him because he had been a part of a Hi-Y group when he was a high school youth. As someone in his late twenties, he felt that his life was not that far removed from the group's members. Skopil adds details to how he became involved with the Hi-Ys—he took over for Bruce Spaulding, a prominent Salem lawyer, when Spaulding left Salem to join a Portland firm. He adds details to the work that he did as an advisor to the Hi-Y youths.	Civic engagement	Spaulding, Bruce	
00:10:48	Religious Upbringing	Skopil summarizes his religious upbringing and the views of his parents on religion. His father had been raised a Catholic and his mother a German Lutheran. As he was growing up he notes that he was not a great student of the Bible, but his family members were great believers in prayer. His parents viewed religion as a personal decision; they were there to help, but not want to coerce their children into a particular religious view.	Family life	Religion - Catholic	Religion - Lutheran
00:13:29	Finding Religion as an Adult, Part I	Skopil tells the story about how he came to practice religion as an adult. He recalls the circumstances of meeting Doug [Douglas E.] Coe, who served as a chaperone at a Hi-Y barn dance that Skopil helped organize. Coe came to Skopil's house and was persistent but gentle in his attempt to talk to Skopil about his spiritual life. Coe arranged for a Bible teacher to come to Skopil's home for a Bible group, which eventually grew large. Skopil talks about Coe's involvement with Young Life in Salem and his later move to Washington, D.C. and his work with the national prayer breakfast concept.	Religion	Coe, Douglas E.	
00:19:02	Finding Religion as an Adult, Part II	Skopil talks about the role of his second wife and his children with respect to developing his spiritual life. His wife had come from a spiritual family. Their children attended church program at the Baptist church in Salem. Skopil says more about Coe's influence in his religious life. Coe did not represent any particular denomination. Skopil notes Coe's open and uncritical manner.	Religion	Coe, Douglas E.	Family life
00:23:06	Community Involvement: Service Organizations and Health Associations	Skopil talks about his longstanding commitment to community involvement. He discusses getting together with others after returning from his military service and forming what later became the Exchange Club, a service club of Salem. He also became involved in the Marion County Tuberculosis and Health Association; he was on the governor's committee to examine the structure of mental health institutions.	Civic engagement	Healthcare issues	

00:24:53	Board of Governors for the Oregon State Bar	Skopii talks about the selection process for the board of governors for the Oregon State Bar. He was relatively young when he served. He speaks of the various ways he served, noting that it was a very worthwhile experience and one that makes his proud to be a member of the legal profession. He was involved in continuing legal education programs and a disciplinary panel.	Careers - Legal	Professional associations	
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# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Rick Harmon

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



Compiled by Sara Paulson

**Tape 8, Side 1**

*1986 December 19*

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Board of Governors for the Oregon State Bar	Skopil continues to talk about his work on the board of governors, specifically regarding the disciplinary panel. He comments that some lawyers may warrant the critical jokes made of them, but the work that the board did ensured that people in the legal profession were competent and dealt with clients in a fair and honest way. Skopil describes the time commitment involved, which was extensive due to the meeting themselves and also the voluminous documents they read.	Careers - Legal	Professional associations	
00:03:10	Formation of Political Views: Upbringing and Willamette University	Skopil begins talking about experiences that were formative influences on his political ideas. He starts with his upbringing as a son of parents who had been raised in Germany. This upbringing encouraged a respect for the military and a resistance to questioning authority, at least early in life. Willamette University gave him an opportunity to question things. He was exposed to people on the far left; he became aware that his viewpoint differed from theirs. After the depression there was much talk about socialism. His parents were against these concepts because of where they came from; they felt a competitive democratic system was best.	Political views	Political awareness	Germans
00:07:12	Formation of Political Views: World War II Service	Skopil comments how his military service affected the formation of his awareness. As a result of observing destruction to property and person, he came away with a new understanding that there had to be better ways to resolve conflict. He became more conscious of political influence on the nation's life and the individual's life.	Political views	Political awareness	World War II - Military service
00:09:12	Formation of Political Views: Roosevelt Era	Skopil comments on how the politics of the Roosevelt Era, which coincided with his time at Willamette University, gave him some concern. He started to feel that the government was becoming too involved in the individual lives of people. He began forming his ideological conviction that the government should be of service to the people, the people should not be serving the government. Skopil notes that most members of his family were registered Democrats.	Role of government	Political views	Roosevelt, Franklin D.
00:10:54	Political Involvement	Skopil comments that his interest in politics was only as an interested voter. He made a definite choice to stay out of direct political activity. He discusses the influence of his uncle, who was a district attorney in the North Bend-Marshfield area. The uncle indicated to Skopil his distaste for political life. Skopil notes that he returned from his World War II military service with the awareness that the voters needed to express themselves in order to make changes. He registered as a Republican after the war.	Political participation	Extended family	World War II - Military service

00:14:32	Political Views: Korean War	The Korean War reaffirmed Skopil's beliefs against war and increased his inclination to support people politically who were against the Korean conflict. He notes similarities between his views and that of [Mark O.] Hatfield. Skopil comments on his support and political campaign work for Hatfield and Bob [Robert B.] Duncan. Even though Duncan was a Democrat, Skopil was fond of him. During the senate race between Hatfield and Duncan, Skopil felt good that there were two competent people—but he ultimately supported Hatfield. Skopil has maintained a close relationship with Duncan over the years.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Duncan, Robert B.	Political participation
00:16:53	Political Views: Presidential Elections, 1948, 1950s	Skopil talks about his support of various presidential candidates. For presidential elections, Skopil states that he voted for the Republican candidates each time; this was not necessarily true for local political offices. The Korean situation was disturbing to him. He comments on the alignment of his republican principals with his pacifist leanings. He talks about his thoughts about an individual's obligation to take care of one another, as opposed to a government's.	Role of government	Political views	Korean War
00:20:01	Political Views: Presidential Politics, 1960s	Skopil shares his thoughts about the Kennedy administration, specifically with respect to military conflicts and the Cuban Missile Crisis. He talks about concerns he has about attempting to resolve problems with violence. He notes that the 1964 presidential campaign was a difficult one for him and became even more so after Senator [Mark O.] Hatfield's principal message at the convention. He was not enthusiastic about either Lyndon [B.] Johnson or Barry Goldwater.	Political views	Pacifism	
00:24:57	Political Views: Vietnam War	Skopil talks about his opinions and that of his family members regarding the involvement of the United States in the Vietnam War; they agreed the United States should not be there. One of his sons attended University of Oregon and was almost ready for the draft; the son was considering leaving for Canada—an action that Skopil did not approve of and thought his son would later regret. Skopil recommended that his son talk to other family members before he made a decision.	Political views	Vietnam War	Extended family

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1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



THE OREGON  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
FOUNDED 1896

Compiled by Sara Paulson

## Tape 8, Side 2

1986 December 19

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Presidential Elections, 1968, 1972: Part I	Skopil thought that Nixon was the better choice against Hubert Humphrey and George McGovern. When asked, he conceded that Nixon was not necessarily committed to peace in a way that he could identify with. Skopil characterizes Nixon as a skillful politician who was motivated by what was good for him politically. Skopil notes that he had some hesitation in saying this, because Nixon appointed him.	Political views	Careers - Judicial	Nixon, Richard M.
00:03:19	Presidential Elections, 1968, 1972: Part II	In retrospect, Skopil can see that, perhaps because of his political abilities, Nixon ended up successfully building international relationships; he created meaningful relationships with foreign nations, like China. After the fact Skopil was pleased with this. Skopil comments on Nixon's sincerity.	Political views	Careers - Judicial	Nixon, Richard M.
00:06:26	Presidential Elections, 1972: Family Opinions	Skopil describes the way his family carried out political discussions. He states his belief that one's political views are a personal choice. He had discussions with his wife and son about politics, but they did not try to influence one another. He states that party loyalty may have figured into his vote for Nixon. His oldest son voted for McGovern; the son was influenced by issues involving the draft and pacifism. Skopil states that this son went through boot camp. Hansen comments that Skopil's appointment to the U.S. District Court occurred soon after this election.	Political views	Careers - Judicial	
00:11:21	Career Transition to Judgeship: First Thoughts	Skopil begins to describe his first thoughts about becoming a judge. From time to time Governor [Mark O. Hatfield] or his administrative assistant, Travis Cross, contacted Skopil regarding his opinion about state judgeship appointments. Skopil notes Hatfield's desire to appoint qualified people; Skopil thinks Hatfield made good choices. During one of these conversations, Hatfield inquired about Skopil's interest in a state judgeship. Skopil outlines the reasons he was not interested: he was content doing what he was doing, he felt he was of service to people, his financial return was good.	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection	Hatfield, Mark O.
00:13:43	Career Transition to Judgeship: Burgeoning Interest	Skopil describes that his thoughts about a judgeship began to change sometime between Judge [Alfred T.] Goodwin's appointment to the federal bench, when he was still was emphatically against the idea, and his 1972 appointment about two years later. Skopil describes beginning to feel a sense of obligation—the idea that the profession had been good to him and perhaps he needed to give back. He talked with his wife, particularly about the impact to their finances. Hatfield suggested that he should not wait too long due to his age. Skopil comments on being influenced by religion.	Religion	Careers - Judicial	Finance - Personal

00:17:18	Career Transition to Judgeship: Initial Expression of Interest	Skopil states that when he opened up to the possibility of becoming a judge, Senator [Hatfield] is the only person told. He comments that his chances may have been helped by the fact that there were two appointments at that time; this allowed each senator to have some individual choice—Senator [Robert W.] Packwood was close to [James M.] Burns, the other district court judge appointed that year. Both senators requested a bar poll. Skopil notes that he did little groundwork prior to the poll; some of his acquaintances may have been conflicted between him and Judge [Val D.] Sloper.	Careers - Judicial	Hatfield, Mark O.	Packwood, Robert W.
00:20:51	Expression of Interest in the Judgeship: Help from Wendell Wyatt, Part I	Skopil talks about actions he took once Hatfield submitted his name to the White House for consideration. The only thing he did was contact Wendell Wyatt, with whom he had a long acquaintanceship. Skopil felt comfortable asking Wyatt for advice. Wyatt was well respected among the Republican Party. Wyatt suggested that he would talk to people he knew at the White House. Skopil did very little advocacy work himself; he left it to Wyatt and some local prominent attorneys.	Careers - Judicial	Wyatt, Wendell	Political network
00:24:26	Expression of Interest in the Judgeship: Help from Wendell Wyatt, Part II	Skopil is unaware of the specific actions taken by Wendell Wyatt, other than contact people in the White House. Wyatt flew out to Oregon with Attorney General [John N.] Mitchell to attend the Oregon State Bar Convention; introductions were made. Skopil clarifies that he reached out to Wyatt after Senator Hatfield submitted his name to the White House for consideration, not after he was nominated by the White House. It was this point that his indifference ended and he was willing to advance his cause with the Nixon administration.	Careers - Judicial	Wyatt, Wendell	Judicial selection
00:27:05	Judge Selection: Oregon State Bar Poll	Skopil restates that at the time of the bar poll, he did not have a strong feeling one way or another about being nominated for the judgeship. Skopil comments that he is uncertain how the rankings of the bar polls get translated into the choices that the senators make, but suggests that geographical assignment may have a role. He points out that over half of the members of the Oregon State bar were in Multnomah County; there had not been a judge from Salem appointed for some time.	Careers - Judicial	Professional associations	Judicial selection

# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

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United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



Compiled by Sara Paulson

Tape 9, Side 1

1987 April 28

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: American Bar Association, Summary, Part I	Skopil summarizes the American Bar Association's (ABA) process in determining a rating system to support the nomination process for federal judges. He describes a lengthy questionnaire that candidates complete about their personal and professional backgrounds; Skopil explains being bothered by a request to list his ten most important cases. From the questionnaire, the ABA initiates an investigation and interviews people about the candidate. He recounts a conversation with Frank Marsh, an attorney from McMinnville, who lightheartedly suggested that Skopil warn him next time the FBI might call him.	Federal courts	Judicial selection	Professional associations
00:04:24	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: American Bar Association, Summary, Part II	Skopil continues to summarize the ABA's process in determining a rating system to support the nomination process for federal judges. He notes that there are two investigations, one conducted by the FBI, and the other by a member of the ABA. The candidates get evaluated on their qualifications and ranked into one of four categories. Only about five percent of candidates receive the highest category, "exceptionally well qualified." The results go to the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Attorney General's office.	Professional associations	Federal courts	Judicial selection
00:07:10	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: ABA Interview	The member of the ABA who investigated and interviewed Skopil was John Sutro of the Madison, Pillsbury, and Sutro firm. He describes the interview, which took place in the Hilton Hotel lobby. There were inquiries about his professional experience, but also health issues; there was an emphasis on hearing.	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection	Federal courts
00:08:51	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: ABA Ranking Categories	Only five percent of the candidates receive the highest qualification category. Skopil does not know what the percentages are for the other three categories. Skopil notes that there may have been some judges who were ultimately appointed that received a "not qualified" ranking, noting that the president has a great role in the selection process.	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection	Federal courts
00:10:16	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: ABA Investigators	Skopil explains that ABA investigators serve for an extended period of time and are leaders within the ABA. Skopil thinks that the investigator who conducts the face-to-face interview with the candidate is the same person as the one who conducts the investigation and interviews of friends and colleagues—not separate, private investigators. They conduct interviews in person and by phone.	Professional associations	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection
00:13:46	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: ABA Ranking Publicity	Skopil considers whether the ranking by the ABA is ever challenged by the candidates. He believes that the ranking is typically not general public information. He assumes that he learned that he was ranked "exceptionally well qualified" during his appointment to the circuit court because he was unlikely to challenge that ranking. Skopil and Hanson comment on a recent (1986) appointment to a circuit court by President Ronald Reagan; much was made in the news that the nominee was only ranked "qualified." Skopil speculates that the information was not always held in absolute confidence.	Professional associations	Judicial selection	Careers - Judicial



00:17:41	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Follow-Up Questions about ABA Ranking Process	Skopil clarifies that the ABA sometimes investigates more candidates than just the finalist; it may investigate a few that the president is considering as a part of an elimination process. Generally speaking, though, by the time of the ABA investigation, there is often only one person of interest. In Skopil's case, the ABA investigated more candidates than he and [James M.] Burns. With respect to the questionnaire the candidates fill out, candidates who are judges comment on the top ten cases that they tried as a judge.	Professional associations	Judicial selection	Careers - Judicial
00:20:32	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: ABA and FBI Investigations	Skopil compares the ABA and FBI investigations. The ABA investigation focuses on legal ability as evaluated within the profession. The FBI investigation focuses on integrity and background as being a law-abiding citizen. Skopil describes his experience with the FBI investigation.	Federal courts	Judicial selection	Careers - Judicial
00:23:49	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Becoming the Nominee	Skopil discusses the process for finding out that your name had been sent on to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Both Oregon senators and the U.S. Attorney General called to inform him of his nomination. In later years to different candidates, President Ronald Reagan made the phone call himself. Skopil describes what happens next in terms of scheduling a hearing date with the Senate Judiciary Committee. His hearing was somewhat delayed due to the [William H.] Rehnquist inquiry.	Judicial selection	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:27:38	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Confirmation Process	Skopil begins to talk about his confirmation hearing. He was apprehensive beforehand. The U.S. Attorney General's office coached him and Burns prior to the hearing, which was comforting. It turned out to be a very simple confirmation hearing. Skopil discusses who was present. Senator [Roman]Hruska was the only one to make inquiries; he was very personable.	Hruska, Roman	Judicial selection	Federal courts

# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Rick Harmon

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



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Tape 9, Side 2

1987 April 28

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Role of Senators	Skopil compares the district court and the circuit court with respect to the role senators play in helping to name acceptable judge nominees. He explains why, at the district court level, senators play a more important and active role; the executive branch exercises more power at circuit court level. He describes a formerly common practice involving blue slips that functioned as a way for the White House to learn about the senators' preferences. Skopil comments on how politics factors in, warning not to underestimate the role of the senators—even when they are from a different party than the president.	Judicial selection	Carter, James E.	Panner, Owen M.
00:05:56	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Receiving News of his Confirmation	Skopil adds details to describe his preparation and confirmation hearing for his district court appointment. The questions at the confirmation were general in nature. He clarifies what he meant when he previously talked about the coaching he received from the justice department days prior to the hearing. He was informed as to what types of questions might be asked. The process gave him a feeling of comfort and security because he knew a little more about what to expect.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Judicial selection
00:10:44	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Induction Ceremony	Skopil talks about receiving the official word that he had been confirmed as a district judge. After the hearing, the Senate Judiciary Committee reports to the floor of the Senate. In most situations the Senate relies on the committee's recommendation and it goes on the Senate's consent calendar for a quick vote. Skopil received word from the senators' office within two weeks; a week later he received the commission—the official document signed by the president.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Judicial selection
00:13:47	Seminar for New Judges: Apprehension about Attending	Skopil talks about the happiness, satisfaction, and relief he felt at his induction ceremony. He comments on the effect of the waiting process on his practice. He reiterates the support he received from his family and notes the satisfaction he felt that he was able to recognize them as a part of the ceremony. He describes who spoke—John Sutro of the American Bar Association, the judges, and Governor Tom [Thomas L.] McCall. He describes the location of the ceremony and reception, in the 6th floor courtrooms.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	
00:18:46	Seminar for New Judges: Description	Before he was actually confirmed as a district judge, Skopil attended an orientation for new judges in Washington, D.C., at the Dolley Madison House. Skopil was concerned that it would be inappropriate to attend. He checked with Senator Mark [O.] Hatfield and Senator [Robert W.] Packwood, who got the go-ahead from Senator [James] Eastland, the chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee. Despite this permission, Skopil remained apprehensive while he attended.	Careers - Judicial	Education	Federal courts
00:21:12	Skopil's Initial Months on U.S. District Court of Oregon	Skopil describes the seminar as useful because it helped him understand his work from the vantage point of a judge. He found the information about approaching the sentencing process especially helpful; this is an area he has always found difficult. Having a little prior experience as a judge may have been helpful; Skopil explains why. He describes the instructors.	Careers - Judicial	Education	Federal courts

00:24:36	U.S. District Court of Oregon, 1972: Skopil's First Months	Skopil began as a district court judge on June 12, 1972. He describes his initial months as a difficult time for the district court in Oregon because just prior, Judge [Robert C.] Belloni was the only judge—Judge [Gus J.] Solomon and Judge [John] Kilkenney had taken senior status and Judge [Alfred] Goodwin had been elevated to the circuit court. He describes how Judge Belloni managed his workload with Judge [George E.] Juba, a magistrate judge. There was a backlog of longer cases. Skopil's first case involved Glenn Turner and pyramid contracts; it was a long, difficult case.	Careers - Judicial	Economics	Belloni, Robert C.
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# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Rick Harmon

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



Compiled by Sara Paulson

Tape 10, Side 1

1987 April 28

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon, 1970s: Skopil's First Years	Skopil talks about his workload during the first years of his work as district court judge. There were a lot of securities cases that needed to be tried. He describes why the judges decided that one judge, Skopil, should handle all of the securities cases. Judge [James M.] Burns handled the criminal cases due to his expertise in the area, especially with sentencing. Space was at a premium because Pioneer Courthouse had not yet been renovated; Skopil describes running from his chambers on the fourth floor to the courtrooms. They worked hard and tried many cases.	Careers - Judicial	Burns, James M.	Federal courts
00:03:06	U.S. District Court of Oregon, 1970s: Use of Magistrate Judges	Skopil describes how Ed [Edward] Leavy became the second full-time magistrate judge for the district court. Skopil describes why he believes Leavy and Judge [George M.] Juba to be among the finest magistrates in the country. In the beginning Leavy and Juba handled all matters except for the actual trials; later, they tried cases with the consent of the parties. Oregon's use of magistrate judges was used as an example when the Magistrates Act was amended in 1976 and 1979; Skopil was on the magistrates committee at the time of the amendments.	Careers - Judicial	Leavy, Edward	Juba, George M.
00:08:20	U.S. District Court of Oregon, 1970s: Judicial Colleagues	Skopil starts by characterizing Judge [Robert C.] Belloni as very efficient and productive. He then notes that although Judge [Gus J.] Solomon had taken senior status, it was generally acknowledged that it was his court. Skopil describes his initial feelings of apprehension toward Solomon—principally because of Skopil's experiences as an attorney; Skopil admits that he went to the district court unsure if he would stay. Solomon became a true colleague and friend. Solomon called Skopil first thing in the morning each day during Skopil's first six months; Solomon always asked for ways that he could help Skopil.	Careers - Judicial	Belloni, Robert C.	Solomon, Gus J.
00:12:36	Oregon District Court and the Oregon Bar: Relations	Skopil talks about an attitude he shared with Judge Burns to improve the attitude of the bar toward the federal bench. He describes the pros and cons of Judge Solomon's use of ridicule in the courtroom. Skopil tried to improve communication between the bench and the bar. When he became chief judge, he visited the major law firms to open lines of communication. He believed that although they had differing roles, judges and attorneys were members of the same profession who shared the same objectives—to see that the judicial process worked in an efficient manner.	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial
00:17:24	Oregon District Court, 1970s: Judge Gus [J.] Solomon's Third Monday Calendar, Part I	After Skopil came to the district court in 1972, Solomon did not try very many cases. Solomon carried out the third Monday calendar; this was Solomon's platform to educate the seventy-five to one hundred and twenty five attorneys that were present. Skopil describes the dedicated, committed, and industrial way Solomon prepared for the Monday calendar; he ended up knowing more about the cases than the lawyers themselves—and he let them know it. Eventually Solomon's wife asked that he stop doing them because they became a real burden.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial

00:21:28	Oregon District Court, 1970s: Judge Gus [J.] Solomon's Third Monday Calendar, Part II	Skopil describes the purpose of the third Monday calendar. In federal court, the judges controlled the manner in which cases proceeded through the judicial process. The purpose of the Monday calendar was to make sure that the cases were progressing in a manner that was expeditious, efficient, and fair to the litigant. Solomon required the lawyers to be accountable if their cases were held up. Skopil describes the method Solomon carried out the calendar.	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial
00:24:39	Judge Gus [J.] Solomon: Education Efforts	The third Monday calendar gave Solomon a stage for his educational purposes. Skopil affirms Hanson's characterization of it as a sacrificial lamb situation, but notes that he rarely picked on the same lawyer twice in a row. Skopil states that Solomon was very concerned about educating the bar; he was critical of the bar because he was a perfectionist himself. Skopil comments on Solomon's use of intimidation. Skopil notes that it was sad that many lawyers had respect for Solomon intellectually but not personally; they were unaware of his sensitivity and his actions against discrimination. Skopil calls Solomon a tremendous man.	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts

# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Jim Strassmaier

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



Compiled by Sara Paulson

Tape 11, Side 1

1989 March 22

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Mark [O.] Hatfield: Personal Relationship	Skopil talks about the development of his personal relationship with Mark [O.] Hatfield. They were acquaintances while attending Salem High School in Salem, Oregon, but they were not close. They did not have much contact until Skopil assisted Hatfield with a legal question related to a personal matter while Hatfield was governor. From that point their personal relationship developed; they became close on a social and spiritual basis. Hatfield was governor at the time of the state's first Governor's Prayer Breakfast, which Skopil helped organize with Doug [Douglas E.] Coe.	Coe, Douglas E.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Political network
00:04:07	Mark [O.] Hatfield: Influence on Skopil's Professional Life	While Hatfield was governor, he periodically consulted with Skopil about judicial appointments. During those conversations Hatfield would ask Skopil about his interest in becoming a judge; Skopil was emphatic that he was not interested. These conversations continued in the same manner once Hatfield became a senator. Skopil talks about when his mind began to change; factors included a conversation with Hatfield regarding Skopil's age and prayers and reflections about Skopil's obligation to the profession. Skopil points to Hatfield's support and loyal friendship during his candidacy.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Judicial selection	Oregon courts
00:07:10	Skopil's U.S. Circuit Court Appointment	Skopil describes the process President [James Earl] Carter took for determining the circuit court appointment. He notes that Hatfield and Carter had been close friends, and remarks that it is unknown to him the extent of Hatfield's influence on his appointment. Skopil was honored by the nomination; he thought that there was little chance that he would be considered because the other candidates were very qualified and he was a Republican.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Carter, James Earl	Political network
00:09:49	Mark [O.] Hatfield: Judicial Appointments	Skopil comments on Hatfield's special interest in judicial appointments; he was very conscious about appointing qualified people. Skopil speculates that the interest was the result of his interest in the law and his awareness of the importance of the judiciary. Skopil remarks that prior to Hatfield's time, political favors played into the process more; Hatfield ignored these motives and was interested in people who would be accepted by the profession and by the public.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Judicial selection	
00:14:45	Douglas E. Coe: Initial Acquaintanceship	Skopil summarizes his earlier account of how he first became acquainted with Doug Coe. Skopil had been practicing law for about five years when Bruce Spaulding left his law practice in Salem to join the firm that became Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt. In addition to taking over some of Spaulding's clients, Skopil took over Spaulding's responsibilities as a Hi-Y club advisor. In this role, Skopil helped organize a barn dance for the youth of the club. Unable to chaperone, Skopil sought out Coe who became distressed by the behavior of youth at the dance. Coe complained to the YMCA board of directors.	Coe, Douglas E.	Spaulding, Bruce	Careers - Legal

00:18:00	Douglas E. Coe: Influence on Skopil's Religious Views	Skopil continues to summarize how his relationship with Coe developed. After the barn dance, Coe repeatedly came to Skopil's house to talk about religion. Skopil wanted to learn more before he made a religious commitment. Coe arranged for a Bible teacher to come to his home; these sessions turned into large a large Bible study group of forty to fifty people; one regular attendee was Malcolm [F.] Marsh, who later became a U.S. district judge. Skopil notes that he made a commitment to religion after sensing the presence of the Lord in his bedroom one evening.	Coe, Douglas E.	Religion	Marsh, Malcolm F.
00:22:49	Douglas E. Coe: Social Circle with Mark [O.] Hatfield	Skopil talks about Bible study prayer breakfast groups in Salem and the surrounding area that he helped arrange with Coe; they met on a frequent basis with Hatfield. Skopil talks about Coe's move to Washington, D.C. He remarks that his relationship with Coe helped cement the friendship that already existed with Hatfield. Skopil describes Coe as a unique, exceptional, powerful person.	Coe, Douglas E.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Religion
00:25:41	Meeting Attorney General John [N.] Mitchell	Skopil describes the circumstances of meeting Attorney General John [N.] Mitchell, who was the principal speaker at the Oregon State Bar Convention in Seaside, Oregon, about the time that Skopil was a possible nominee for the U.S. district court position. Skopil was introduced to Mitchell by Wendell Wyatt. Strassmaier and Skopil discuss Mitchell—he was a non-ideological person, loyal toward Richard [M.] Nixon, and a scapegoat.	Mitchell, John N.	Nixon, Richard M.	Political network
00:29:17	U.S. District Court Nomination Process: Coaching for Confirmation Hearing	Skopil summarizes the coaching that he received from a member of the Department of Justice prior to his confirmation hearing for his appointment to the district court. He states that he received no coaching from Hatfield.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection

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Tape 11, Side 2

1989 March 22

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Confirmations Hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee, 1972, 1979	Skopil reviews his earlier account of the confirmation hearing for his district court appointment. For his circuit court appointment, he describes drama that occurred at the confirmation hearing for Cornelia Kennedy, immediately before his. A member of her congressional delegation appeared in opposition; most of the Senate Judiciary Committee members made an appearance. After a recess the committee chair, Senator [Howard] Metzenbaum, told Skopil that he was familiar with Skopil's philosophy from Skopil's prior appearances during amendments to the Magistrates Act. Metzenbaum asked if his staff could ask him a few questions in lieu of questioning from the senators because there was a call on the Senate floor.	Careers - Judicial	Kennedy, Cornelia	Judicial selection
00:05:06	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, 1938: Acceptance by Oregon State Bar	Skopil states that the rules of civil procedure were very specific and had to be complied with completely. To a great degree they eliminated incompetency within the federal court. The rules encouraged discovery and a full disclosure of facts and legal theories upon which a case would be tried. The rules were not readily accepted by the Oregon State Bar, especially by its oldest members, who resisted change.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal
00:10:41	Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, 1938: Judges' Application	Skopil talks about the application of the rules by judges of the district court. Judge [Gus J.] Solomon, who came to the court in 1948, and Judge [James Alger] Fee, who was on the court before him, applied the rules strictly. Judge Fee was a large and intimidating man; Skopil recounts a first-hand experience in his courtroom. Skopil describes Solomon's insistence on perfection; he frequently quizzed lawyers on specific rules. Skopil comments that his colleagues on the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed that lawyers from Oregon were the best prepared. Skopil attributes this to the legacy of Fee and Solomon.	Fee, James Alger	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts
00:14:43	Unique Features of the Oregon District Court: Master Calendar	Skopil describes the difference between an individual calendar and a master calendar. Judge Solomon was committed to the master calendar because he believed it provided greater flexibility. Individual calendars did not take into consideration the complexity of cases; each judge was assigned the same quantity. With a master calendar, judges with lighter caseloads were called upon to assist those with heavier and more complex caseloads.	Federal courts	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Judicial
00:17:04	Unique Features of the Oregon District Court: Use of Magistrates and Third Monday Call Calendar	Skopil notes that Oregon used magistrate judges in a broader way than other states. He describes amendments to the Magistrates Act in 1976 and 1979; the amendments were based off the system in Oregon. The third Monday call calendar, presided over by Judge Solomon, was another unique feature. Skopil describes the manner in which Solomon carried out these assemblies. Their purpose was to keep cases moving expeditiously through the system, thereby making cases less expensive for the litigants. Skopil comments on the extent to which he thought this was true in practice.	Federal courts	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Legal



00:20:59	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Judge Solomon and Changes over Time, Part I	Skopil notes that despite his initial reservations, Judge Solomon became a close friend; Solomon was kind, concerned about causes, and saw to it that everyone was represented in a competent way. Skopil describes the Oregon District Court as a close-knit family, with Judge Solomon as a leader. Over a long period of time, Skopil and the other judges changed some of his procedures. He describes the circumstances under which, as chief judge, Skopil changed Solomon's third Monday call calendar. He describes the changes—they staggered the calendar and eventually only made attorneys appear in court if there was a request to change the schedule.	Federal courts	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Judicial
00:24:38	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Judge Solomon and Changes over Time, Part II	Skopil describes Judge Solomon's inflexibility and unwillingness to make changes to the schedule, noting that sometimes it felt arbitrary to attorneys. Skopil recounts details of one case he tried before Judge Solomon where he thought this was the case. The case involved the Federal Tort Claims Act and it arose due to a Texas City explosion.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Legal
00:27:15	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Judge Solomon and Changes over Time, Part III	Skopil talks about changes he made to the district court's procedures after he became chief judge in 1976. He describes his motivations and methods for improving communication between the bench and bar. He outlines why he believes that communication is often limited between judges and attorneys; to protect judges from accusations of inappropriate conduct there exists a sensitivity toward communicating with them. As a result, Skopil created opportunities for attorneys to gather and have candid discussions about their joint responsibilities to maintain an efficient and economical legal process.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial

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Tape 12, Side 1

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Judge [Robert C.] Belloni	Skopil discusses contributions Judge Bob [Robert C.] Belloni made to the district court. Belloni was capable of handling a large volume of work. Skopil describes how Belloni acquired these skills as a state trial judge in Coos Bay. Vacancies on the court created a large volume of work for Belloni. Judge [George E.] Juba, a magistrate judge, helped Belloni manage his workload; Skopil discusses how the way Belloni used magistrate judges was the forerunner of what later became standard, through congressional amendment. Skopil notes that the volume of cases increased between 1972 and 1976.	Belloni, Robert C.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:04:30	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Changes Skopil Made as Chief Judge, 1976, Part I	Skopil describes his reasoning for the changes he implemented. His experience as a lawyer created a sensitivity about the trial process from the point of view of lawyers. Skopil stresses the admiration that existed for Judge Gus [J.] Solomon, who was on senior status. Changes were made gradually and tactfully. Solomon was known for his commitment to efficiency and speed in the trial process. Skopil's changes were attempts to build on Solomon's accomplishments; he notes that he is unsure if Solomon appreciated what they were trying to do—Solomon remained committed to his way of doing things.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:07:16	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Changes Skopil Made as Chief Judge, 1976, Part II	Skopil notes a level of fearfulness among judges on the district court over the reaction Solomon would have to changes. Discussions with Solomon's wife, Libby, helped the judges decide that Solomon should take less work home. Skopil and Jim [James M.] Burns agreed that the attitude the bar had toward the federal court should be changed; Belloni went along with this idea. Skopil discusses Judge Ed [Edward] Leavy's arrival as a magistrate judge; he was an asset because he had not previously worked with Solomon and therefore was not fearful. Skopil discusses Leavy's credentials and career with praise.	Solomon, Gus J.	Leavy, Edward	Federal courts
00:11:01	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Discontinuance of Solomon's Third Monday Calendar	Skopil describes the reaction of Solomon and the bar to the news of the discontinuance of the third Monday calendar system developed and championed by Solomon. The official announcement occurred at a continuing legal education session at Lewis and Clark.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:13:43	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Chief Judge Role	Skopil discusses the role of chief judge and its effect on the court. He describes the personalities of particular judges (Judge Owen M. Panner, Belloni). Belloni voluntarily created the five-year term limit and rotation procedure, even before there was a statute. Skopil describes the job as a hassle because of administrative work from Washington, D.C. He clarifies that when changes are made to the local rules at the district court level, the chief judge of the circuit court does not need to be involved, although circuit court judges were free to make comments. A committee of the local bar also gave input.	Belloni, Robert C.	Panner, Owen M.	Federal courts

00:17:34	Gus [J.] Solomon: Consideration for Circuit Court Judge	Skopil comments on the reasons Solomon was not seriously considered for circuit court judge. Age may have been one factor. Skopil notes that Solomon was a remarkable man and agrees with Strassmaier that he had a favorable national reputation. Skopil notes that Solomon perhaps would have experienced opposition among members of the local bar.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:20:34	U.S. District Court of Oregon, 1970s: Personalities and Relationships	Skopil describes the judges' relationships with Solomon; he and Belloni were close with him, Burns was less so. Skopil describes frequent lunches (four times a week) with Solomon, Belloni, and sometimes [John] Kilkenny and [Alfred] Goodwin. As a matter of personal preference, Burns found it more beneficial to him to relax by himself in his chambers; Skopil speculates that this bothered Solomon. Skopil describes Solomon as a mentor to all of the judges. He describes the respectful relationship between Kilkenny and Solomon, each leaders in their respective courts.	Solomon, Gus J.	Burns, James M.	Kilkenny, John
00:26:17	[Oregon] Journal Bar Poll, 1978	Skopil comments on a bar poll published by the [Oregon] Journal in 1978 regarding the district court; he calls the poll "destructive." Skopil thinks that it was unfair that Belloni was treated so poorly in the poll; he considers Belloni to be a valuable asset to the federal court. Skopil comments on Belloni's reserved personality; he did not waste words and sometimes appeared to be harsh and abrupt. Belloni was competent and strove for perfection. The poll bothered Belloni. Skopil comments that federal judges are generally very dedicated, committed people; they have to be because the compensation is not attractive.	Belloni, Robert C.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Bar Polls: Opinions of Oregon District Court Judges	Skopil gives his opinion about the usefulness and legitimacy of bar polls; he explains why he is not in favor of them. Skopil recalls conversations with Judge [Robert C.] Belloni, who was discouraged by his poor poll results in 1978; Skopil supported Belloni by stressing to him that his peers understood his competency and knew he was an asset to the court. Skopil talks about Judge [Gus J.] Solomon's indifference to his poor poll results—Solomon stated that he was not interested in "popularity polls." Skopil states that, to a degree, such independence is necessary.	Belloni, Robert C.	Judicial selection	Solomon, Gus J.
00:04:46	Political Climate at Willamette University, 1930s	Skopil notes that he started Willamette University in 1937, when FDR [Franklin D. Roosevelt] was in office. He states that Willamette was a conservative school, generally speaking. He explains that the law lends itself to a conservative approach because it is based on precedent and interpretation of statute. He considers himself to be a conservative; his strong feelings about the right to privacy in the home and personal privacy may have contributed to his being classified as a moderate in the evaluation of circuit court judges. Strassmaier and Skopil comment on the changing definitions for "liberal" and "conservative."	Willamette University	Political views	Law school
00:08:32	Political Climate at Willamette University Law School, 1940s	Skopil talks about the approach to the study of law at Willamette University in the 1940s. The faculty at Willamette was older; most had been practicing attorneys. The education was based on case study; students studied cases for the precedent they created. Skopil comments that this approach lends itself to conservatism. Skopil explains why he likes to have different law clerks who had been educated at schools with different approaches. Skopil notes that he is a great believer in precedent. If social needs require a shift from the precedent, all of the members of the court should consider it.	Law school - Faculty	Education	Willamette University
00:12:10	Law Clerks: Political Views and Education	Skopil notes general differences in political thinking between his law clerks based on where they were educated. Law clerks from eastern schools like Yale, Harvard, or Virginia are more liberal upon arrival. Skopil talks about the open communication he has with his law clerks; the communication can open his mind. Noting that he is not being critical of this, Skopil notes that people who come from the academic world are generally more liberal when they arrive than they will be seven years down the road, once they get into practice. He explains potential reasons for this.	Careers - Legal	Law school	Political views
00:15:43	Skopil's Procedural Approach as a Judge	Strassmaier asks Skopil to comment on procedures he has developed as a judge to keep things moving correctly and efficiently. Skopil notes differences between his work as a judge at the district court level (trial court situation) and the circuit court (appellate) level.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	

00:17:34	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Skopil's Procedural Approach, Part I	Skopil states that his constant motivating factor was to make sure that everyone was treated fairly and equally. He typically sought input from the attorneys when setting the schedule; he expected the attorneys to keep the schedule or else make a strong argument as to why the original time was incorrect. Skopil referred to his "three P's," with regard to expectations: Promptness, preparation, and politeness. He talks about a time when he told an attorney that he needed help because he was not prepared.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Careers - Legal
00:23:05	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Skopil's Procedural Approach, Part II	Skopil adds details to the description of his "three P's," his expectations. He recalls his time as an attorney and his distaste for having to wait for trials that started late. He discussed his use of pretrial conferences. His trials had few side-bar conferences; he sought to have all legal questions discussed beforehand. He had a rule against letting an attorney approach the witness bench or chair; he thought their closeness might intimidate the witness.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Careers - Legal
00:25:47	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Problems with Attorneys	Skopil talks about how he handled difficulties that arose with attorneys in certain trials. He talks about the advantage his twenty-five years' experience trying cases gave him; he knew most of the trial lawyers in the state of Oregon and could sense what some of the problems in terms of proper demeanor might be. He gave two examples of times he handled difficult attorneys or a misstep in proper court decorum.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Careers - Legal

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Tape 13, Side 1

1989 March 22

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Attorneys and Courtroom Atmosphere	A good trial lawyer will learn something about the presiding judge before the trial begins, either by sitting in on a different trial or by talking to another attorney who has appeared before that judge. Skopil comments that attitude and atmosphere in a courtroom is created early in a judge's career. Attorneys come to learn what to expect in a particular judge's courtroom; he recalls that as an attorney, he would do some things before one judge that he never would do before someone else.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Careers - Legal

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Tape 13, Side 2

1989 April 10

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	[Oregon] Journal Bar Poll, 1978: Gus J. Solomon	Skopil comments on the extremely low rating Judge Gus [J.] Solomon received in the bar poll published by the [Oregon] Journal in 1978—eighty percent suggested that he showed favoritism. Skopil states that he thinks this is unfair; he does not agree that Solomon showed favoritism. Skopil explains why some attorneys may have interpreted Solomon's behavior that way. Solomon insisted that attorneys be prepared. There were some attorneys who had earned Solomon's respect. Skopil describes the methods Solomon used to educate attorneys who were not prepared in a way that met his expectations.	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts
00:06:05	Judge Gus J. Solomon and Federal Rules	Skopil responds to a question about potential resistance attorneys may have had to Solomon's strict observance of the federal rules. Skopil comments that when he began practicing law, the federal rules were largely accepted; some older attorneys did not appreciate them, but they were not necessarily the same people who Solomon aggravated.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Legal
00:08:28	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Judge Gus J. Solomon	Skopil underscores previously discussed aspects of his characterization of Solomon as a district court judge. Solomon's intention was to educate lawyers on how to perform and assume their responsibilities in a professional way. Skopil did not always agree with Solomon's methods because they were abrasive and invoked fear and embarrassment in the lawyers. Skopil was fond of Solomon and does not think he was unfair. Skopil notes that Solomon was sensitive, kind, and concerned about people, especially those who were deprived. Skopil characterizes Solomon as a liberal thinker; because the environment of the times changed, he was later viewed as more conservative.	Solomon, Gus J.	Political views	Careers - Legal
00:14:09	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Approach toward Setting Expectations of Preparedness	Skopil comments that it is well understood that Solomon's teaching methods and insistence on preparation caused Oregon attorneys to be among the best prepared of any that tried cases in the Ninth Circuit. He talks about his own interest in teaching attorneys to value preparation. Skopil's approach was one that valued communication. If he objected to something an attorney did in his courtroom, he would call a recess to discuss the matter. He also visited law firms to improve the lines of communication between the bar and bench.	Solomon, Gus J.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts
00:16:14	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Use of Witnesses and Oral Testimony, Part I	Skopil talks about the pros and cons of a paper proceeding verses allowing witnesses and oral testimony. He describes how his opinion changed from when he practiced law to becoming a judge. He begins to explain the differences with court trials verses jury trials. Time could be saved by requiring written statements beforehand in court trials, especially with the task of qualifying an expert witness. Written statements allowed cross examinations to be more meaningful. In cases where there were many expert witnesses, written statements made it much easier and faster to evaluate the testimony.	Federal courts	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial

00:20:54	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Use of Witnesses and Oral Testimony, Part II	Skopil explains why he did not limit the use of witnesses and oral testimony in jury trials. In jury trials the jury is evaluating not only the testimony, but the credibility of the witness. He notes that this evaluation process can cut both ways—things other than credibility can affect how comfortable a witness appears. With expert witnesses, an evaluation of scientific difference, not credibility, is what is at issue. Skopil notes that Solomon was not unique with his goal to make the system work efficiently.	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:24:03	Federal Procedure: Jury Selection	Skopil talks about the evolution of his thinking regarding the fact that the judge selects the jury according to federal procedure. He did not like it as an attorney because it did not give him an opportunity to develop a relationship with the prospective jurors. As a judge he realized that the one purpose of jury selection is to get a fair and impartial jury panel. It is more efficient for the court to complete this task. Skopil talks about how attorneys like to use the jury selection process; they seek to find jurors with whom they can work.	Federal courts	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial
00:28:24	From Bar to Bench: Social Factors	Skopil begins to talk about the experience of moving from the attorney profession to the role of a judge with respect to social life. He talks about the social relationships among lawyers and their willingness to work together to improve the image of the profession and the skills of colleagues. He notes that there is a great amount of communication and socialization among lawyers.	Careers - Legal	Social life - 1960s	Social life - 1970s



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Tape 14, Side 1

1989 April 10

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	From Bar to Bench: Social Factors	Skopil continues to describe social life among attorneys, including playing golf. Skopil talks about the reasons this changes once an attorney becomes a judge; it is sad, but necessary. The lack of social contact protects a judge from the appearance of favoritism. A judge's social life becomes concentrated among members of the court. One drawback is that judges need to be in tune with society; isolation can have a detrimental effect on the judging process. Judge [Gus J.] Solomon combatted this by inviting members of the community to luncheons. Skopil notes that he would never take a case in which his former partner, Bruce [W.] Williams, was involved.	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal	Solomon, Gus J.
00:05:49	From Bar to Bench: Social Factors, Wife's Perspective	Skopil talks about the impact of these social changes on his wife, Jan. Some wives may have found it difficult. Because Jan was an outgoing person who made friends easily, the change did not impact her greatly. Skopil comments that attorneys tend to talk about legal matters almost all of the time. Jan grew tired of the law talk. Skopil mentions that members of his family are now lawyers and in the real estate business; at family get-togethers there is talk other than legal talk, which makes Jan more comfortable.	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal	Social life
00:07:21	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Accomplishments as Chief Judge, 1978-1979	Skopil summarizes his accomplishments as chief judge. He sought to change the attitude of the bar toward the court; with the other judges, he accomplished this. He remarks that the federal court under Solomon was so efficient and effective, there was not much that required changing. For Solomon's benefit and at the request of his wife, Skopil eliminated the third Monday call calendar practice. Skopil and his wife were close socially with the Solomons; this provided him the opportunity to learn how Solomon's wife felt. Skopil remarks feeling blessed and privileged to have had time with Solomon.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Solomon, Gus J.
00:11:28	History of Changes to Magistrates System, 1960s-1980s: Magistrate Act 1968	Skopil talks about [Warren Earl] Burger's role in the creation of the Magistrate Act of 1968. Burger formed a group of people, including Judge [Charles M.] Metzner of New York, to travel to England and study their magistrate system. Judge [George E.] Juba was among the original magistrates that came aboard as a part of the first group.	Burger, Warren Earl	Juba, George E.	Metzner, Charles M.
00:13:08	History of Changes to Magistrates System, 1960s-1980s: Amendments, 1976, 1979	Chief Justice Burger appointed Skopil to the magistrates committee of the United States Judicial Conference. Therefore, Skopil was directly involved in the 1976 amendments to the Magistrates Act. The amendments removed the obstacles in the statutory provisions that were preventing magistrates to increase their duties and jurisdiction in certain areas. Skopil was the chairman of the committee from 1979 through about 1986. Additional amendments were made in 1979 that again increased jurisdiction. Skopil describes the changes and notes that they allowed the magistrates to become a valuable and flexible tool.	Burger, Warren Earl	Federal courts	Laws and legislation

00:15:58	History of the Magistrates System, 1980s	After the 1979 amendments, the next step was to attract competent people with a sufficient salary and retirement. Skopil testified before the House and Senate Judiciary Committee multiple times as a part of accomplishing this. Skopil remarks that the present (1989) magistrate system is probably one of the most progressive things that has happened in the judiciary since its origin. He feels privileged to be a part of its formative stages. He notes his concern about protecting the system; there was some criticism from the state system and the state supreme courts. Skopil comments that the system is accepted by many, principally Congress.	Federal courts	Laws and legislation	Careers - Judicial
00:19:19	History of the Magistrates System: Resistance to the System	Skopil mentions initial resentment toward magistrates by the Article III judges, particularly on the East Coast. Some were very vocal in their resentment at panels that Skopil moderated. Skopil talks about regional differences with respect to how magistrates were used. Education, through the Judicial Center, was the approach they used to try to combat this resentment. Skopil notes that as some older judges have gone to senior status they are replaced by judges who are more open to the magistrate system.	Federal courts	Education	Laws and legislation
00:21:33	Chief Justice Warren Earl Burger	Skopil talks about his personal association with Chief Justice Burger, who Skopil calls one of his favorite people. Skopil considered Burger to be one of the best administrators in the system. He was loyal and available to judges, interested and knowledgeable, and constantly worked to improve efficiency. Burger appointed Skopil to the board of the Judicial Center, the educational arm of the court. Skopil liked working with him and for him.	Burger, Warren Earl	Education	Federal courts
00:25:04	History of the Magistrates System: Oregon	Skopil talks about Oregon's part in the history of the magistrates system. He reiterates what he said previously about the circumstances that led Judge [Robert C.] Belloni to be alone on the court. Out of necessity Belloni relied on the work of Judge Juba, a magistrate judge. Testimony about how magistrates were used in Oregon was a part of the amendment process in 1976 and 1979. Skopil calls Oregon the "father of the modern day use of magistrates." When Skopil and Judge [James M.] Burns arrived on the court, they continued using magistrates, including Judge [Edward] Leavy and Judge Mike [Michael] Hogan.	Belloni, Robert C.	Juba, George E.	Leavy, Edward
00:28:53	East Coast Article III Judges: Cultural Difference	Skopil begins to comment on the cultural differences between Article III judges in Oregon versus those on the East Coast; there were no differences regarding ability. East Coast judges have an image and attitude that they are on top of the profession and something special as such. The comparative salaries of some New York lawyers may not continue to make them feel this way. Some East Coast judges would have a license plate that would indicate they were a judge, for instance.	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal	Federal courts

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	East Coast Article III Judges: Cultural Difference	Skopil gives an example of a time he perceived a cultural difference between West Coast and East Coast Article III judges. It was common for visiting judges to come to Oregon to help with their caseload. The Oregon district court make it a point to thank the visiting judge with a dinner. On one occasion, a visiting judge from New York balked at the presence of magistrate judges at dinner. Skopil notes that the visiting judge came from the same court as Judge Charlie [Charles M.] Metzner, one of the original developers of the magistrate system.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Metzner, Charles M.
00:01:48	Use of Visiting Judges, Part I	Skopil talks about how when he first began on the district court, he traveled to Arizona twice at the request of Chief Judge [Richard H.] Chambers. The caseload in Arizona was heavy due to border crossing cases, which involved both immigration issues and drug issues. He describes Judge Chambers. He remarks that the flexibility that the use of visiting judges provided was a great asset to all of the districts in the Ninth Circuit. He states that it was one reason that the Ninth Circuit has never split.	Chambers, Richard H.	Federal courts	Immigration
00:04:04	Use of Visiting Judges, Part II	Judge Chambers was a believer in having trial judges sit on the circuit court because it not only helped with the circuit court's caseload, it provided an education to the district judges about the circuit court. Skopil believes that more circuit court judges should have tried cases in district court; he offers reasons why he thinks it did not happen at the time. He describes how it happens more now (1989), on a voluntary basis.	Chambers, Richard H.	Federal courts	
00:07:06	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Securities Cases	Noting that the law is "a living thing" and shifts according to the economic environment, Skopil talks about the tremendous number of security cases as a result of the stock market downturn from about 1972 to 1975. During this time security cases were becoming a specialized field, with new law being developed constantly. The court decided that it would be easier if one person took the security cases; Skopil was that person. After 1975 the number of security cases declined.	Economics	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:11:22	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Environmental Cases	Keeping with the idea that the law is a "living thing" that adjusts to certain aspects of society, Skopil notes that there has been a keen interest in the environment in Oregon; environmental cases are constant in Oregon. Skopil states his belief that the Oregon district has been the one with the most environmental cases in the Ninth Circuit, with the exception of Alaska.	Laws and legislation	Federal courts	Environmental issues
00:12:31	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Variety of Cases	Skopil remarks on the vast variety of cases that the district court handles, including cases involving sex discrimination, age discrimination, environment, security, and bank mergers. He notes changes in the types of cases over time. There are more criminal cases now (1989), for example illegal drug cases. He notes that while the civil rights acts are old acts, they came into their prominence in the last twenty or twenty-five years. He clarifies that he took all of the securities cases for a limited amount of time, early-on, when the situation was new. He does not recall ever having a draft case.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	

00:16:19	Chuck Armsbury Case: Introduction to Chuck Armsbury and Carl Cletus Bowles	Skopil begins to describe the circumstances of a case in which a man named Chuck Armsbury was charged with conspiracy to harbor and conceal Carl Cletus Bowles, a fugitive who did not return to prison after a social furlough. Skopil gives background information for Armsbury. He was a bright and interesting man and a graduate of University of Oregon. He was an activist who served time in federal prison for participating in an armory explosion in Eugene, Oregon. This is where Armsbury met Bowles. Armsbury was critical of the penal system.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Court cases
00:19:57	Chuck Armsbury Case: Carl Cletus Bowles' Time Away from Prison	Skopil continues to describe the circumstances of the case against Chuck Armsbury. He describes Bowles' attempts to evade capture during the time he was away from prison. Skopil describes the various people who harbored and concealed Bowles and talks about Armsbury's specific role. He describes how Bowles was ultimately caught in Idaho after a failed attempt by the FBI to apprehend him in Eugene.	Court cases	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:25:19	Chuck Armsbury Case: Trial	Skopil describes presiding over the trial against Armsbury. Skopil notes that Armsbury was married to a black woman; his tremendous following included members of the black community. Skopil describes a confrontation with Armsbury over his failure to stand as the trial came to order. Skopil appointed a legal advisor to help Armsbury, granting him his constitutional right to counsel while he chose to represent himself. Skopil describes becoming intrigued with Armsbury. He could be difficult, but Armsbury had excellent writing and speaking ability. Skopil notes developing a personal relationship with Armsbury.	Court cases	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon, Chuck Armsbury Case: Trial	Skopil continues to talk about Chuck Armsbury's trial. Ultimately Armsbury was convicted on two counts: conspiracy and a substantive count. Armsbury's children from his first marriage attended the trial; Skopil comments on their relationship and recalls setting time aside afterward for them to visit. The trial was political. Armsbury subpoenaed Governor Tom [Thomas L.] McCall, who testified. Skopil comments on Armsbury's demeanor and skill during the trial; he was well-behaved and knew what he was doing. On record, Armsbury stated that his trial had been fair and expressed appreciation for time with his family.	McCall, Thomas L.	Armsbury, Chuck	Federal courts
00:03:23	Chuck Armsbury Case: Immediate Post-Trial Conversations with Defendants	Skopil describes a desire, perhaps spiritually inspired, to see Armsbury after the trial—he wanted to thank Armsbury for his conduct and explain that he forgave him, personally, but had a responsibility as a judge. Skopil initially resisted this desire, as it would have been unusual. Later, Skopil attempted to find Armsbury's legal advisor in Armsbury's holding cell, to return a raincoat; as a result, Skopil talked to Armsbury. Skopil also describes being confronted on his way out of the courthouse by a different defendant, Ray Eaglin, and a group of young people; he was a bit apprehensive, but it was a short exchange.	Careers - Judicial	Armsbury, Chuck	Federal courts
00:05:52	Chuck Armsbury Case: Sentencing	Skopil asked Armsbury to write him a letter indicating what sentence Armsbury thought would be appropriate. Skopil notes Armsbury's lack of consideration for his children in his response; this offended Skopil. Skopil gave Armsbury the maximum sentence; he elaborates on his reasoning. Skopil visited Armsbury approximately ten times during his sentence. Armsbury got out after about four and a half years. Skopil notes feeling that Armsbury could be a productive member of society.	Sentencing	Careers - Judicial	Incarceration
00:08:24	Chuck Armsbury, Life after Prison: Professional Life and Relationship with Skopil	Armsbury kept in touch with Skopil after his release. They visited in Skopil's chambers; Skopil invited him and his children to his home for dinner with his family. Skopil describes the relationship as beneficial to them both—Skopil encourages Armsbury to object to the penal system through legal means, while acknowledging that there are improvements that could be made. Skopil describes aspects of Armsbury's professional and personal life.	Armsbury, Chuck	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:11:26	Other Defendants Convicted of Helping Carl Cletus Bowles: Ray Eaglin and Eva Kutas	Ray Eaglin and Eva Kuta's trial was separate from Armsbury's. Skopil talks about his interactions with them. They intrigued him; he thought their intent to help people was admirable. Kutas was pregnant with Eaglin's baby; Skopil arranged to have Eaglin serve time first to allow Kutas to spend time with the newborn. Skopil talks about visiting Eaglin at McNeil Island prison. He tried to convince them to support the system or oppose it in a legal way. Skopil remarks about young people involved in criminal activities, like drugs; some were suffering and were the victims of their circumstances.	Incarceration	Crime	Federal courts

00:16:13	Chuck Armsbury: What Drew Skopil to Armsbury	Skopil talks more about what drew him to Armsbury. Skopil considered Armsbury to be a challenge. He wanted to show Armsbury that the system worked. He wanted Armsbury to know about him and learn that the people who administered the system shared similarities, but had different responsibilities. Skopil comments that Armsbury had some fine ideas, but sometimes poor judgement. Skopil comments that some of Armsbury's ideas may have enlightened him, to an extent. Skopil shares his approach to the sentencing process; it has the power to help or to destroy a person. He acknowledges that he became involved personally in Armsbury's case.	Armsbury, Chuck	Sentencing	Careers - Judicial
00:19:34	Chuck Armsbury Case: Continued Reflections on Approach to Sentencing	Skopil confirms that he gave Armsbury the maximum sentence. He gives an example of the only time he altered a standard sentence. A young, black bank robber talked with Skopil about his drug problem, peer pressure, and his desire for help; Skopil had him carry out his sentence in a halfway house with a drug program. Skopil comments on the reactions other judges may have to his sentencing approach in the Armsbury case. He notes the amount of personal contact he had and the use of his own sensitivity. He compares his comfort level and concerns about physical violence with Armsbury, Eaglin, and Kutas.	Sentencing	Crime	Incarceration
00:24:47	Anarchism, War Resistance, and Fear: Cultural Climate of the late 1960s and Early 1970s	Skopil comments on the national scene with respect to anarchism, war resistance, and fear. The situation in Watts and explosions at armories personally disturbed him; he felt they should have been controlled better. The Watts situation, "the forerunner of it all," probably created a feeling among people that violence was a way to accomplish things. He notes that it took the violence for society to become cognizant and acknowledge problems. Skopil shares his thoughts about the remedies that came as a result, such as affirmative action and money grants.	Racial issues	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:27:42	Socio-Economic Advancement for People of Color	Skopil shares his thoughts about opportunities for socio-economic advancement for ethnic minorities. He suggests that conversations with Marshal Bagley and Skopil's colleague, Jerry [Joseph Jerome] Farris, informed his perspective that people of color generally feel that there are greater opportunities than there had been in the 1960s; he points to lack of motivation among some. He recalls, again, the young bank robber who was influenced by peer pressure and could not pull himself from his surroundings. Skopil suggests that intermarriage might ultimately be the solution, but notes that it would be hard for most people, including himself, to accept.	Racial issues	Socio-economic status	Farris, Joseph Jerome

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THE OREGON  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
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**Tape 15, Side 2**

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Thoughts about Interracial Marriage	Skopil continues to talk about difficult race relations and the idea that intermarriage would be the solution. He notes a conversation with Derrick [A.] Bell, the dean of the law school at University of Oregon. It surprised Skopil to learn that Bell would not be comfortable if his children married partners who were not black.	Racial issues	Bell, Derrick A.	

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing, Part I	Skopil talks about the ways that sentencing was difficult for judges. It concerned Skopil to think about the effects a sentence could have on the lives of people, especially young people. Skopil would visit with Chief Probation Officer Walter Evans, who had a lot of common sense and good judgement—Skopil calls Evans one of the best probation officers in the country. It bothered Skopil that each of the district court judges sentenced separately from one another. One of the principal criticisms against judges was the lack of uniformity in sentencing.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Sentencing
00:02:56	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing, Part II	Skopil suggested to Evans that there ought to be a process for correlating sentencing among judges. They came up with the presentence report summary form, which Skopil describes. Among the things it included were the average sentence for a particular crime, both in the United States and in the District of Oregon. They initiated sentencing conferences with the judges every Monday. This practice still (1989) continues, and Skopil considers it a big innovation. Skopil notes the comfort it gave him to know what other judges were sentencing. He points to the ingenuity and experience of Evans.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Sentencing
00:06:13	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing, Part III	Skopil clarifies that Evans was the chief probation officer before Frank Gilbert. He comments that the district court has been blessed with outstanding chief probation officers; he explains their input and role during the sentencing conferences. He describes the presentence report summary form. Skopil notes that not all districts conducted sentence conferences; many judges feel that sentencing is their prerogative. Skopil comments that disparity in sentencing wasn't necessarily bad; he felt it should be explained, however. Skopil comments on the greater feeling of security the sentencing conference gave him; he benefitted from input by those who had more experience. Skopil defines the meaning of "sentencing judge."	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Sentencing
00:11:39	Federal Judiciary Education Program	Skopil describes the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, D.C. set up by Tom [C.] Clark, a former justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Skopil talks about the concentrated two-week program during the initial stages of assuming responsibility as a federal judge. He mentions the schedule, the faculty, and the curriculum. Skopil served on the board for a short time, before being elevated to the circuit court. Skopil speaks favorably about the program.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Education
00:15:57	Penal Institutions: Lessons Learned from Visits	Skopil talks about his practice of visiting penal institutions and meeting with the head of the institution and also with Norm Carlson, the head of the bureau of prisons. He relates that the one thing he learned over a period of time was that penal institutions did not rehabilitate anyone. Rehabilitation happens out of the personal efforts of an individual, not by anything the institution provides. The reason for this is the associations that are made with people who will be a bad influence. He suggests that the segregation of inmates into security categories can be helpful.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Incarceration



00:18:33	Penal Institutions: Visits to Inmates, Part I	Skopil talks about a specific time he visited a drug offender who he sentenced. He discusses what he learned about penal institutions from the experience. Shortly after the visit, the inmate was in Eugene on a furlough, visiting his mother. The inmate also visited Skopil and asked him to never visit him again because the inmate thought the visit drew attention to him that was not welcomed.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Incarceration
00:22:32	Penal Institutions: Visits to Inmates, Part II	Skopil clarifies that the inmate was concerned about his physical wellbeing. Noting that this inmate was slight-built and had some feminine characteristics, Skopil states that someone's physical characteristics can have an effect on the way other inmates treat them. Not all inmates felt the same way about visits; Skopil would continue to do them, but would perhaps write ahead of time if he intended to visit a particular inmate. It was more common for judges to make surprise visits to institutions as a way to see how things functioned there; in these situations he would not announce himself ahead of time.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Incarceration
00:26:09	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Court Cases	Skopil begins to talk about cases he tried as a district court judge. He notes that it is difficult to answer what cases were important because they are all important. The Armsbury case was interesting because of the personalities involved, not necessarily the legal principals. Skopil decides to discuss a white collar crime case involving Edward Browder. The case involved reviewing one of Judge [Gus J.] Solomon's sentences. Skopil begins to describe the case. Browder's main concern was that he thought there had been a plea bargain, but the record did not support this.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Browder, Edward

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon Cases: Edward Browder	Skopil continues talking about the facts in the Edward Browder case. He explains the reasons why he upheld Judge [Gus J.] Solomon's original sentence.	Solomon, Gus J.	Browder, Edward	Federal courts
00:02:55	Edward Browder Case: Variation in Sentences Given to White Collar Criminals	Skopil talks about refuting Browder's argument that there had been a great disparity between Solomon's sentence and that of other white collar criminals who committed similar crimes. In his decision he devoted time to analyze and be critical of the way that the system deals with white collar criminals differently than other criminals. Skopil believes that the decision was unique because not many had addressed the lack of sensitivity to the monetary and personal effects on society that white collar criminals were capable of.	Court cases	Sentencing	Federal courts
00:04:52	U.S. District Court of Oregon Sentencing: Parole verses Probation	Skopil describes the difference between parole and probation. He describes the various options that a judge has when sentencing; they can chose to sentence someone to terms that run concurrently or consecutively. If there are more than one count against someone, the judge could sentence someone to terms that run consecutively but have one term be sentenced as probation. He explains how this differs from parole. Skopil notes that Solomon's sentence in the Browder case reflected Solomon's belief that the amount of money involved and the effect on other people was substantial.	Browder, Edward	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:08:35	Edward Browder Case: Sentencing White Collar Criminals	Skopil clarifies that in the Browder case he was not the sentencing judge; he was reviewing a sentence imposed by another judge. His role was to decide if the sentence was legally justified or if there was an error of law with respect to the sentence. He clarifies that his response on white collar crimes came about because it was an issue raised by Browder in this case.	Browder, Edward	Solomon, Gus J.	Federal courts
00:10:41	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing Discretion, Part I	Skopil comments on the factors that judges use to determine sentences and whether or not the category of white collar criminals factors into that determination. He states his belief that there are certain people with much greater possibility for rehabilitation. He notes what he might look for in such an individual, including family background, prior lifestyle, or circumstances that precipitated the crime, like family illness. He notes the reasons why Browder did not fall into that category—he had been involved in prior criminal activity and connected with organized crime.	Crime	Federal courts	Browder, Edward
00:12:57	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing Discretion, Part II	Skopil responds to a question about being wary of strategies people may use to appear morally interested in changing their lives. Skopil emphatically agrees that this is something to watch for. Skopil states that in most cases judges are able to sense if a person is being sincere or if they are attempting to con the judge. Skopil talks about the role families play in this process. He talks about balancing concern for the suffering of the individual and his/her family with concern for other individuals in society that have a right to be protected from criminal activity.	Crime	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial

00:17:18	U.S. District Court of Oregon Sentencing: Differences among Judges	Skopil responds to questions about the differences among judges with respect to how tough they are during sentencing. Skopil notes that some judges are tougher than others in general, but he has not observed judges who were particularly strong on white collar crimes as contrasted to others. Skopil notes that sometimes people try to select the judge based on a perception of leniency. Skopil comments on the difficulty of speaking generally about white collar crimes because each case has particular facts; there are different circumstances surrounding the commission of the crimes. This is partially what makes sentencing so difficult.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Crime
00:20:42	U.S. District Court of Oregon: Sentencing Guidelines	Skopil talks about reasons he objects to the present sentencing guidelines; they destroy individual treatment to a degree. He discusses the two reasons for the guidelines. With the sentencing guidelines the person is supposed to serve the time the judge has imposed. Under the old system, the parole commission could parole the person, undermining input from the judge. Skopil uses an example to explain why the judge's discretion would sometimes make sense. The second reason for the guidelines was that society questioned why someone might be released much earlier than their sentence.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Incarceration
00:24:05	U.S. District Court of Oregon Sentencing: Deterrents and Crime Prevention	Skopil speaks about the deterrent factor as an important facet of the sentencing procedure. The sentence is designed to be a deterrent to the individual but also to others. Skopil talks about the practice that some judges use in cases with wide publicity—they use harsh sentences as a way to inform the public and to accomplish the deterrent factor but, within a ninety-day period, use their authority to modify the sentence. Skopil notes that he has modified sentences, but never on his own motion.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Incarceration
00:26:30	U.S. District Court of Oregon Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner	Skopil begins to talk about the "Dare to be Great" Glenn [W.] Turner case. The issue in the case was deciding whether or not the pyramid-type operation that Turner was marketing and selling was a security under the definition of the nation's securities laws. The Securities and Exchange Commission contended that it was. Skopil begins to explain the program that Turner claimed to be selling.	Finance - Business	Federal courts	Turner, Glenn W.

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00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner, Overview	Skopil continues to talk about the "Dare to be Great" Glenn [W.] Turner case and the program that Turner claimed to be selling. Skopil explains why he held that the program was a security.	Finance - Business	Federal courts	Turner, Glenn W.
00:02:02	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner, People	Skopil notes that the people involved in the Turner case (spectators and attorneys on both sides) made the case interesting. Skopil describes the spectators; in keeping with the recommendations of the "Dare to be Great Program, they presented a successful appearance. Skopil notes being impressed by the legal talent of the attorneys who represented the defendant; they were outstanding lawyers, principally from the East Coast. Skopil was not as impressed with the lawyers representing the government. The attorney in charge of the investigation became ill shortly before the trial; preparation suffered.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts	Finance - Business
00:05:21	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner, Ruling	Skopil explains in greater detail the reasons why he decided that the program was a security under the definition of the nation's security laws, as the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) contended.	Finance - Business	Federal courts	Turner, Glenn W.
00:07:26	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner, Case Location	Skopil explains the circumstances that led to this case being tried in Oregon. The case was the result of complaints from citizens of Oregon. Skopil notes that there was other litigation by the SEC; he thinks that perhaps this was the only case that went through a complete trial filed by the SEC.	Finance - Business	Federal courts	Turner, Glenn W.
00:08:33	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Glenn [W.] Turner, Attorneys for the Government	Skopil talks about the legal representation provided by the government. Skopil thought the attorneys lacked preparation, perhaps for a valid reason—the lead attorney was not present due to a physical disability. Skopil comments that he interceded more than other cases. He remembers questions that occurred to him as the case progressed that were not answered to his satisfaction. Skopil notes that this case was one of his earliest on the bench and suggests that perhaps he was not accustomed to his new role as the decision maker and fell back on his prior experience.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:10:45	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: <i>Verla R. Woods v. Beneficial Finance</i> , 1975, Part I	Skopil describes the case, which dealt with multiple issues related to the failure of a financial institution to reveal pertinent information to the borrower of funds—a requirement under the federal statute as a part of the consumer legislation. Skopil held that the finance company did not comply with the requirements of the disclosure act. Skopil comments that it was interesting case because it indicated to small loans operations, like Beneficial Finance, that they needed to comply. He notes that it was an important case in the financial world; the economic consequences probably were not that great.	Finance - Business	Finance - Personal	Federal courts

00:15:19	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: <i>Verla R. Woods v. Beneficial Finance</i> , 1975, Part II	Skopil states that some small loans operations tend to take advantage of people like Woods, the plaintiff—those who are in need of immediate financial assistance and may lack experience in the financial world; they need to know exactly what their payment requirements are and what will happen if they do not pay. Skopil and Strassmaier discuss a sophisticated term that the financial institution used to explain a method of computing interest. Skopil talks about the origin of the case as a trial balloon; Beneficial Finance wanted to find out what their obligations were under amendments to the congressional act requiring disclosure.	Finance - Business	Finance - Personal	Federal courts
00:20:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Siuslaw National Forest and Herbicides, Introduction	Skopil and Strassmaier contemplate which environmental case to discuss first. Skopil decides against the Bonneville Power Administration with Don Hodel; it was a complex case with technical matters. Skopil begins talking about a case involving spraying herbicides in Siuslaw National Forest. Skopil describes that although it was a complex case, with approximately forty experts who testified on each side, it only took two days to try. Skopil asked for written statements from the experts who testified. Skopil comments that it was a difficult case for a judicial person because it involved making decisions on scientific matter.	Environmental Issues	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:23:27	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Siuslaw National Forest and Herbicides, Environmental Impact Statement	Skopil continues talking about an environmental case involving the use of herbicides in Siuslaw National Forest. He states the chemicals that were in question. The case required Skopil to evaluate the sufficiency of the Environmental Impact Statement that was filed under the National Environmental Protection Act. He talks about the purpose of the impact statement and comments that it has difficult language for the courts—they are to evaluate if the action is a “major federal action,” and if the impact “has a substantial effect on the human environment.”	Environmental Issues	Federal courts	Court cases
00:25:57	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Siuslaw National Forest and Herbicides, Ruling	Skopil talks about his decision in the case; he closed down the spraying of two of the three chemicals. He notes that the attorneys in the case performed well. Dow Chemical was involved. Skopil talks about the reasons that environmental cases were difficult for him. He notes that the forests are a principal part of the economy in Oregon and Washington. He comments about the balancing act between economics on one side and human detriment on the other.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Environmental Issues

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00:00:00	U.S. District Court of Oregon Court Cases: Siuslaw National Forest and Herbicides, Miscarriages	Skopil continues to talk about an environmental case involving the use of herbicides in the Siuslaw National Forest. Skopil discusses the extent of the known scientific evidence about a correlation between herbicides and miscarriages. He notes that the particular herbicide in question is no longer sprayed in forests. Skopil ruled that the Environmental Impact Statement in the case was deficient because it did not present the current scientific knowledge about known alternatives to the particular herbicides in question nor did it fully reveal the current knowledge as to the possible effects of the herbicides.	Environmental issues	Healthcare issues	Federal courts
00:02:37	National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)	Skopil points to a reason why environmental cases were so difficult for him—the congressional act was so general that it was hard to interpret what was meant by key phrases, such as “major federal action” and “substantial effect on the human environment.” He suggests that the language of the act may have been a result of a compromise by the legislative branch of government. He notes that other judges may have had less of a difficult time. He discusses difficulties balancing the concern for the natural beauty of Oregon and Washington with the lumber industry, an important part of the economy.	Environmental issues	Oregon outdoors	Industry - Timber
00:05:44	Environmental Court Cases: Siuslaw National Forest and Herbicides—A Scattering of Focus	Strassmaier and Skopil comment on the broad issues that were raised in the Siuslaw National Forest case with respect to the potential effect on the human environment. Strassmaier suggests, and Skopil agrees, that they represented a scattering of focus. The issues included the plight of eagles, the virtues of the Red Alder, nitrogen generation in the forest, human miscarriage, and disappearing animal species. He reiterates that the presence of two conflicting desires—to maintain strong economic progress without jeopardizing the survival of plant life, animal life, and fish life—presented a balancing situation that made environmental cases difficult for him.	Federal courts	Wildlife conservation	Environmental issues
00:09:40	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Relationship, Part I	Skopil comments that in many situations (like environmental issues) Congress enacts something that accomplishes a major objective but compromises on other matters with the thought that the courts will decide on it later. He suggests that perhaps the system is right to do that, but suggests that one way Congress could have helped the courts with respect to environmental law was to be more detailed in the congressional history so that the courts could better interpret the legislation. He concedes that Congress cannot foresee every situation.	Federal courts	Branches of U.S. Government	Environmental issues

00:13:18	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Relationship, Part II	Responding to a question from Strassmaier, Skopil stresses that judges are fearful about involving themselves in the legislative process because of the idea of checks and balances. He states that the legislative process is the responsibility of the legislative branch and the courts' responsibility is to interpret laws. He suggests that the canon of judicial ethics may prohibit the initiation of such a conversation; he notes that he has testified on legislation when he has been requested to do so. Skopil talks about the importance of input from judges regarding their compensation.	Federal courts	Branches of U.S. Government	Environmental issues
00:17:09	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Personal Relationships	Skopil talks about personal relationships judges may have with members of the legislative branch; specifically, he talks about his friendship with Senator [Mark O.] Hatfield. Since the time Hatfield was governor of Oregon, Skopil has had conversations about matters in social settings. Skopil has never corresponded with Hatfield about anything unless the inquiry came first from Hatfield's office. Skopil acknowledges that Hatfield would consider anything that Skopil might tell him, and vice versa; they have mutual respect and admiration for one another and their individual responsibilities. Skopil states that Hatfield knows better than he about what the legislative responsibility is.	Hatfield, Mark O.	Federal courts	Branches of U.S. Government
00:20:17	Environmental Court Cases: BPA and Northwest Power Planning—Introduction	Skopil begins to talk about a case involving Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and a plan [Northwest Regional Pact ?] designed to anticipate future power needs for the region. Don Hodel was head of the BPA at the time. Skopil remarks that it was his most complex case, from a scientific standpoint. Questions that the case dealt with included what the energy needs were going to be, whether they would be filled with thermal and/or hydro energy, how to allocate the energy according to everyday needs and needs during peak times, how to generate and transmit more power if the supply was insufficient.	Federal courts	Energy	Environmental issues
00:22:56	Environmental Court Cases: BPA and Northwest Power Planning—Environmental Impact Statement, Part I	BPA had not prepared an Environmental Impact Statement that covered Phase II of their plan. BPA contended that they need not prepare one because it did not involve a major federal action as required by the Environmental Protection Act; they contended that it involved private utilities and not governmental action. Skopil describes why he rejected this contention.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Energy
00:26:17	Environmental Court Cases: BPA and Northwest Power Planning—Environmental Impact Statement, Part II	Skopil notes that the BPA case was not as hard for him to decide as the herbicide case because the first step was to require an Environmental Impact Statement. He notes the involvement of the aluminum industry. Skopil comments on Don Hodel as a fine administrator; he considered it great planning on Hodel's part for BPA to start thinking about future power needs. Skopil states that he thinks BPA was sincere in their position that Phase II of the plan did not involve a major federal action because BPA was only a part of the situation.	Federal courts	Energy	Environmental issues

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Court Reporter Dale [A.] Ray: Introduction	Skopil speaks fondly of his court reporter, Dale [A.] Ray; he states Ray was one of his favorite people. Ray was very dedicated to his profession and did outstanding work; he was committed to getting the transcript exactly right. He had certain rules and principals he worked by and was not very flexible. He had an uncanny sense of hearing and would sometimes stop proceedings if the clock was ticking too loudly, for instance. He would also stop the proceedings if an attorney was not speaking clearly or was going too fast; in these cases he would scold attorneys.	Ray, Dale A.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts
00:03:11	Court Reporter Dale [A.] Ray: Travels	Skopil describes trips he took with Ray to work in Medford, Pendleton, Eugene, and as a visiting judge outside the district, in Arizona. On these trips he got to know Ray more personally, more like family than fellow employees. Skopil recounts memorable interactions early in Skopil's judicial career. Ray abruptly told Skopil that he would never change a transcript. When Skopil expressed surprise at the suggestion that he would make such a request, Ray informed him that several judges have asked him to. On a different occasion, Ray balked outspokenly about the long hours Skopil and he worked.	Ray, Dale A.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial
00:06:34	Court Reporter Dale [A.] Ray: Personal Profile, Part I	Skopil remarks that Ray had definite opinions about many things. He explains his impression that Ray resented insurance companies and people who had been convicted of crimes—Ray felt that the criminal process was far too slow and doubted the possibility of rehabilitation. Skopil describes Ray as a religious man; Skopil notes conversations with Ray about religion and sensitivity to people in certain positions. Skopil notes Ray's devotion to his family and describes how Ray became a court reporter.	Ray, Dale A.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts
00:09:17	Court Reporter Dale [A.] Ray: Personal Profile, Part II	Skopil notes that he knew Ray for nearly thirty years and has many cherished memories; he reiterates that Ray was a fine man and a joy to work with. Skopil comments on the benefits of Ray's outspoken nature. He reiterates Ray's professionalism and commitment to a transcript that is exactly correct. Skopil comments on the dynamic between Ray and his secretary and law clerks. Skopil mentions that some of his law clerks were very liberal in their thinking. Ray was not a liberal thinker; this caused some arguments. Skopil remarks that Ray was fun to be around.	Ray, Dale A.	Careers - Legal	Political views
00:12:29	Appointment to the U.S. District Court of Oregon: Summary	Skopil summarizes what he has said on previous tapes about his thought process and the steps that preceded him becoming a district court judge. He talks about support from Mark [O.] Hatfield, first as governor, then as senator. Skopil begins to talk about the appointment process and the two-tiered investigation by the FBI and the American Bar Association; Strassmaier interrupts to remind Skopil that they have already covered this topic.	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts	Hatfield, Mark O.



00:19:10	Appointment to U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Comparison to District Court Appointment	Skopil talks about his appointment process to the circuit court and notes how it differed from the district court process. He notes that senators have some influence in circuit court appointments, but not as much as for district court appointments. Skopil talks about the Carter Administration's approach to the process; President [James Earl] Carter favored having a commission appointed to select names for circuit court vacancies. Skopil names members who were on the commission who interviewed him at the Standard Plaza Building. Skopil notes there were about sixty applicants for three positions.	Carter, James Earl	Careers - Judicial	Judicial selection
00:23:41	Appointment to U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Acquaintanceship with Attorney General Griffin Bell	Skopil backtracks to explain the circumstances that led to an acquaintanceship with Attorney General Griffin Bell. Skopil served on the Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate System at the time when it was considering an amendment; Skopil was asked to testify before both the Senate and House judiciary committees. Bell asked Skopil back to discuss and resolve a difference they had regarding one aspect of the bill. Skopil comments on his admiration for Bell. He notes that the acquaintanceship and name familiarity likely helped him with the circuit court appointment. Skopil states that he has already discussed his Senate confirmation hearing.	Judicial selection	Federal courts	Bell, Griffin
00:28:11	Subsequent Chance Meeting with President [James Earl] Carter	Skopil talks about running into President Carter on an airplane, after Carter was no longer president. Skopil found him to be very personable with a very good memory. Skopil recalls an unexpected remark from Carter when Skopil told him he was enjoying his work on the Ninth Circuit. Carter asked, "Are you doing a good job for me?"	Carter, James Earl	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:29:29	Appointment to U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Summary Comparison to District Court Appointment	Skopil summarizes the differences in his appointments to the district and circuit courts. The main difference was the senators were very involved with the district court appointment and less so with the circuit court appointment, mainly because of President Carter's commission approach. The commission approach is no longer used for the circuit court appointment process, but was a part of the amendment that governs the magistrate appointment process.	Carter, James Earl	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts

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by Jim Strassmaier

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



Compiled by Sara Paulson

Tape 18, Side 2

1989 May 15

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate System: Skopil's Input	Skopil summarizes his work as a member of the magistrates committee of the United States Judicial Conference. He stresses that judge selection was a key factor in the success of the magistrates system. Skopil describes the process of selecting magistrates in Oregon; this experience caused Oregon district judges to favor the commission approach. They recognized that, in the past, politics had entered into the judge selection process; as a result the judges were not as competent as they should be. Skopil states that his input on the committee was limited to the support of the legislation being enacted at the time.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:03:41	Committee on the Administration of the Magistrate System: Opposition	Skopil explores areas where there was some opposition to aspects of the magistrate system. Some Article III judges on the East Coast did not want duties assigned to a magistrate. Judges in Oregon pushed the aspect of allowing magistrates to try cases with the consent of the parties; Attorney General Griffin Bell did not object to this. Skopil discusses the danger of magistrate appointments becoming political; he states that it has not been a factor. The only real opposition they have had to the Magistrates Act amendments centered on the authority and jurisdiction magistrates had to review decisions made by the Supreme Courts of the states.	Bell, Griffin	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:08:14	Magistrates Act Amendment: Disagreement between Skopil and Attorney General Griffin Bell	Skopil talks about the specific aspect of the 1979 amendment to the Magistrates Act that Skopil and Bell differed on. Included in the bill was the right to have the magistrate try a case with the consent of the parties. The question arose, to which body does an appeal go? Bell thought appeals should go to the district court. Skopil outlines the reasons he thinks they should go to the circuit court. Bell came up with a compromise—to give the parties an option at the time they consent. Skopil notes that most appeals go to the circuit court.	Bell, Griffin	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:12:42	Magistrates Act Amendments: Cases that are Remanded to the District Court	Skopil talks about what happens when a case is remanded back to the district court; it usually goes to the same judge or magistrate that had it initially. He discusses exceptions to this, which are rare; he gives an example from personal experience with a case involving Sears Roebuck. He notes that this situation is more frequent in the sentencing process, if, for example, the judge that imposed the original sentence made an inappropriate remark on the record.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Sentencing
00:16:41	Magistrates Act Amendments: Jurisdiction and Authority	Skopil states that magistrate judges basically do the same type of work as district judges, with two exceptions. Magistrate judges cannot try criminal cases, even with the consent of the parties. Dispositive motions are another exception. Skopil explains the difference between dispositive and nondispositive motions.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	

00:19:17	Magistrates Act Amendments: Successes	Skopil comments on the high number of magistrates that have been elevated to an Article III position; this shows the importance of the selection of magistrates. He talks about the magistrate position as a stepping stone in the system, calling attention to Judge [Edward] Leavy's path. He talks about salaries and other compensation, like retirement. Magistrate's salaries are set by the U.S. Judicial Conference; Skopil remarks that they would like to keep that decision out of the legislative branch. Skopil reiterates his contention that the magistrates system is a tremendous asset to the judicial process.	Federal courts	Leavy, Edward	Branches of U.S. Government
00:22:56	Attorney General Griffin Bell	Skopil goes into greater detail about how he developed a high regard for Bell. Skopil points to opportunities he has had to hear Bell speak at U.S. Judicial Conference meetings. Skopil comments on Bell's work recognizing and attempting to resolve problems within the judiciary and his attempts to improve its efficiency. He notes that Bell is bright and has a lot of common sense. He compares him to other attorneys general.	Bell, Griffin	Careers - Judicial	
00:25:27	Skopil's Appointment to U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals: Final Thoughts	Skopil makes a few remarks about his own appointment process. He was privileged to be assigned the highest rating from the American Bar Association—exceptionally well qualified. He notes that the whole process was remarkably smooth.	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Judicial	Professional associations

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Tape 19, Side 1

1989 May 15

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Transition to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1979: Introduction	Skopil talks about his transition to the circuit court from the district court. He continued on the district court until September, finishing up complex cases. Each year the chief judge of the circuit court renewed his annual designation to sit as a district judge in Oregon, allowing him to resolve cases if needed. He understood the work of a circuit judge because he had sat on circuit court panels prior to his appointment at the request of the chief judge. He knew the judges personally. Skopil compares the approaches of Chief Judge [James R.] Browning and Chief Judge [Richard H.] Chambers.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Browning, James R.
00:03:53	Transition to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1979: Differences from Work at District Court Level	Skopil calls attention to two ways his work as a circuit court judge differed from his work as a district court judge. Skopil missed seeing and forming relationships with the individuals involved in the cases; at the circuit court level, judges did not meet the people—they just read about them. Skopil recalls initially having a hard time adjusting to sharing the decision making process with other judges who did not share his basic philosophic principals.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:06:45	Transition to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1979: Personal Relationships with other Judges	Skopil talks about the close, personal relationships he formed with judges on the circuit court, despite philosophical differences. He notes his relationship with Judge Warren [J.] Ferguson as an example. Skopil describes Ferguson as an industrious, very liberal thinker. He describes the heated, serious difficulties he had with Ferguson on occasion while trying to reach decisions; after the deposition was filed, the difficulties went away. Skopil remarks that it was the same way with all of the judges.	Ferguson, Warren J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:08:43	Transition to U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, 1979: Relationships with other Judges and Compromise	Skopil continues to talk about the difficulties of working on a panel with judges who have different philosophical principals. He notes that sometimes, when “outnumbered” on a panel, judges make compromises. Skopil describes that when judges know they will be on a panel with someone with different philosophical thinking, it can become competitive to be the most persuasive; often this produces the best end result. After these conflicts Skopil notes that he tries to be open minded. He suggests that when judges first arrive on the circuit court, they can be more rigid and emotional about their way of thinking.	Ferguson, Warren J.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:13:14	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Decision Making with other Judges	Skopil continues to talk about philosophical differences among the judges along the political spectrum from liberal to conservative and how these differences affect their work on the court. He discusses mutual respect between himself and Warren. He comments that Warren would more likely concede to his way of thinking than Judge Joe [Joseph T.] Sneed [III], who he calls ultra conservative. He notes that attorneys, by nature, are competitive; they fight hard for what they think is right.	Ferguson, Warren J.	Political views	Careers - Judicial

00:17:12	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Privacy Issues	Skopil continues to compare the philosophical differences among judges who served with him (Joe Sneed, Cliff [John Clifford] Wallace, Tony [Anthony] Kennedy, Warren [J.] Ferguson). He considers his philosophical thinking to be aligned with Sneed's, except for cases involving search and seizure by police. Skopil stresses the importance of protecting privacy and property rights; he believes this issue is why many consider him a moderate rather than a conservative. He comments on balancing between the rights of the individual and society. He notes that the Warren court over the years has emphasized the individual's rights.	Law enforcement	Political views	Federal courts
00:21:06	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Perception as Liberal	Skopil comments on the perception that the Ninth Circuit was too liberal and therefore had many cases reversed by the Supreme Court. Skopil explains why he thinks this has been exaggerated statistically. He points to the court appointments made by the Carter administration, noting that he was one of them; there were many new appointments and in general they were liberal people.	Political views	Federal courts	Carter, James Earl
00:25:19	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Changes to the Makeup of the Court	Skopil continues talking about the ways the court changed during the Carter administration, focusing on the reactions to the changes by exiting judges, the more liberal-thinking judges, and himself. He notes that the Ninth Circuit experienced these changes uniquely because of its size increase.	Carter, James Earl	Chambers, Richard H.	Federal courts

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Tape 19, Side 2

1989 May 15

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Splitting the Circuit, Part I	The Ninth Circuit is large, geographically and in number of judges. Skopil continues a discussion he started on the previous tape side about the pros and cons of splitting the circuit. He describes why he thinks that that splitting the circuit makes more work for the Supreme Court; each circuit would have its own set of laws. He thinks that administration problems were no longer an issue and that the court could run efficiently; therefore, there is no need to split it.	Browning, James R.	Federal courts	
00:03:29	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Splitting the Circuit, Part II	Skopil talks about the Judicial Improvement Act, passed in 1979; in it, the decision was made to keep the Ninth Circuit intact while the Fifth Circuit split. Judge [Richard H.] Chambers was against the split. The Ninth Circuit occupied a unique position as a sort of pilot program to test keeping the circuit intact. Skopil does not think they will ever combine circuits. Pointing to the situation at the district court level, Skopil thinks that Congress now realizes that a split is not necessary. Skopil notes the drawbacks of multiple districts in states like California.	Federal courts	Chambers, Richard H.	Careers - Judicial
00:06:45	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Perception as Liberal, Part I	Skopil and Strassmaier revisit the topic of philosophical leanings of the courts. Skopil states that he does not know how the [U.S.] Supreme Court selects its cases, nor does he know statistics about how many cases it took from the Ninth Circuit in 1984 relative to other years or other districts. Skopil states that the addition of new judges to the Ninth Circuit was a large influence on Ninth Circuit decisions. He notes that while the Ninth Circuit was becoming more liberal, the [U.S.] Supreme Court was becoming more conservative. He considers the U.S. Supreme Court as it was led by [Earl] Warren, [Warren] Burger, and [William] Rehnquist.	Liberalism	Federal courts	U.S. Supreme Court Cases
00:10:47	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit: Perception as Liberal, Part II	Skopil stresses that because their work as judges is based on precedent, they are all guided by the same underlying principles. The new influx of judges to the Ninth Circuit caused that court to apply the principals in a more liberal manner.	Liberalism	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:12:11	1980 Presidential Election between [James Earl] Carter and [Ronald] Reagan	Skopil points to two things leading up to the election between Carter and Reagan that led people to think in a more conservative way—the hostage situation and deficit situation. Skopil describes frustration about the deficit, noting that some people were getting tired of the constant governmental financial assistance. He notes the need for social benefits, but suggests that Americans did not appreciate the consequences of spending without the income.	Role of government	Economics	Conservatism
00:16:38	[Ronald] Reagan and Economics	Skopil describes what was attractive about Reagan's desire to balance the budget, but noted that it never happened. Reagan stressed that we needed to eliminate deficiency spending and that individuals and families should do more on their own rather than rely on the government. Skopil talks about the difficulties of putting this plan into practice.	Role of government	Economics	Reagan, Ronald

00:19:10	Skopil Comments on Politics	When Strassmaier asks Skopil to comment on what he thought about Reagan's handling of the deficit and news involving [Senator Daniel] Patrick Moynihan and David [A.] Stockton, Skopil states that he had not formed an evaluation. He notes that the political arena is foreign to him. He talks about the problems that our human selfish desires pose within the political system; politicians are constantly thinking about getting reelected. He notes that he does not know of a solution, aside from perhaps limiting the time in which a person can serve in Congress.	Political views		
00:21:42	U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and [James Earl] Carter: Leadership Abilities	Skopil comments on the differences between the leadership abilities between Carter and Reagan. He expresses that Reagan tried to work within the framework of the system, reducing bureaucracy, while Carter tried to fight the system. Skopil talks about the drawbacks and inefficiencies of bureaucracies. He gives an example from his own experience on the Ninth Circuit; Judge [Diarmuid] O'Scannlain had administrative difficulties when trying to increase space in his office.	Carter, James Earl	Reagan, Ronald	
00:25:30	Dangers of Bureaucracy: Personal Example from Skopil's U.S. Navy Experience	Skopil describes an experience while serving in the U.S. Navy that illustrates the pitfalls of bureaucracy. He was selected to be a part of a logistics planning division, but when he was ordered back to Washington, D.C. he found there was nothing set up for him to do. He was required to create work for himself to justify his existence. Once he did, the division soon grew in size.	World War II - Military service	United States Navy	
00:28:11	President Ronald Reagan: Foreign Policy	Skopil comments on the complexity of the present [1989] military situation. He notes that it is difficult to assess whether it is a result of Reagan's leadership, the change in leadership in the Soviet Union, or a combination of both. Skopil comments that Reagan's foreign policy has probably been beneficial; he certainly opened up means of communication that the country did not have before.	Reagan, Ronald	Military	

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Tape 20, Side 1

1989 March 22

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	The Judicial Branch of Government: Politics	Skopil explains the ways that the Ninth Circuit would and would not talk about politics; there is no political discussion of substance, only discussion that might indicate a general attitude. There is political discussion of what individuals want for the court. He talks about ways that the court has become a part of the political arena; the court has a lobbyist and might engage in a letter writing campaign, for instance. Skopil suggests that this is a result of a legislative branch that is constantly putting the judicial branch down. He expresses that this political activity is contrary to what the system of checks and balances demands.	Lobbyists	Branches of U.S. Government	Political views
00:03:23	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Relationship, Part I	Skopil talks about things that members of the legislative branch resent about the judicial branch of government. First, they resent that judges' salaries cannot be diminished; members of the legislative branch have to pay into their retirements. Second, they resent that judges are called on to rule upon some of their congressional acts—sometimes the acts are ruled unconstitutional.	Branches of U.S. Government	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:05:58	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Relationship, Part II	Skopil expresses his view that the present (1989) attempt to split the Ninth Circuit is politically motivated. He believes that the attempt to split the circuit is the result of a dislike for the decisions coming out of the circuit. He explains why he also believes the issue of judicial pay increases is political. He expresses that Congress uses judicial pay increases as justification to raise their own salaries. He refers to a court case about the salaries of federal judges, <i>United States v. Will</i> .	Political views	Branches of U.S. Government	Careers - Judicial
00:09:34	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government: Relationship, Part III	Skopil points to the spotted owl case as an example of a ruling that Congress objected to. Skopil predicts that the issue will be the cause for the split of the Ninth Circuit. Skopil stresses that the Ninth Circuit were not trying to create problems for the economy of Oregon; their decision was made based on case precedent. Skopil notes that had he been on the panel, he probably would have decided the case differently, but he would have been in the minority. Skopil considers the forest as a crop. Nevertheless, he asserts that there was a logical basis for the spotted owl decisions considering other cases rendered under the National Environmental Protection Act.	Environmental issues	Wildlife conservation	Federal courts



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Tape 21, Side 1

1989 October 30

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court Cases: Water Rights within the Truckee Water District, 1981	Skopil begins to talk about a water rights case involving the Paiute Indian Tribe; Pyramid Lake's water supply had diminished to a point that brought into question the tribe's fishing rights. Skopil talks about the early origins of the case, which dated to 1906-1913. Skopil explains the key issue; the tribe's rights were being affected, but they were not being represented. Skopil held that the case should be reversed and tried again because the government had not acted in good faith as the trustee for the tribe. The U.S. Supreme Court reversed the Ninth Circuit Court's decision.	Native Americans	U.S. Supreme Court cases	Federal courts
00:05:14	Treaties between Native Americans and the United States	Skopil notes the failure of the government to deal with the treaties. He acknowledges that there are political aspects that he is not fully aware of. He expresses that Congress is going to have to address the problem because Indian litigation has increased tremendously and water is a limited resource. He explains the U.S. Supreme Court's reasoning and suggests that their decision was unfair to the Paiute Indians. He notes that some Native American tribes may be overstepping the intent of the treaties; nevertheless, the treaties are contractual relationships and need to be dealt with.	Native Americans	Supreme Court cases	Federal courts
00:09:13	Native Americans and Assimilation	Skopil states that the U.S. government has dealt with the treaties in some areas; he asserts that the Klamath tribe in Oregon was compensated substantially for the timber interests they gave up. Skopil points to "good faith efforts" to handle the "Indian problem," noting attempts to assimilate Native Americans, "perhaps unduly so." Skopil mentions the goals of educational institutions like Chemawa Indian School. He asserts that tribal culture is influential and notes that after their education, many return to the reservations. Skopil agrees with Strassmaier that the philosophy of the people within the Bureau of Indian Affairs continues to change.	Native Americans	Cultural values	Education
00:11:27	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court Cases: Water Rights within the Truckee Water District, 1981, Revisited	Skopil revisits some details of the case involving the Paiute Indians. A part of the case involved reviewing a settlement from 1944. Skopil explains the difficulties of the case; it involved variables that shift over time, like water supply and demand.	Federal courts	Native Americans	Conservation
00:13:47	Mental Health Cases: <i>Chavez v. United States</i> , 1980, Part I	Skopil begins to describe the difficulty with cases involving the mental health of defendants, like <i>Chavez v. United States</i> . Specifically, Skopil discusses the tests to apply to cases to determine if a waiver of rights is appropriate. He considers if the same test should be used for constitutional rights, which involve very serious decisions on the part of the defendant, as for rights due process rights, like the right to represent yourself. Skopil thought that different situations demand different degrees of mental competency because of the seriousness of the decisions.	Federal courts	Disability	

00:17:52	Mental Health Cases: <i>Chavez v. United States</i> , 1980, Part II	Skopil talks about reasons the case was difficult for him. His experience on a trial bench made him aware of issues that would concern trial judges. Questions of competency arise frequently in trial courts; he acknowledges the concern about defendants who take advantage of the protection. Skopil states his strong belief about the importance of protecting a defendant's rights and operating on a good general principal, even though it may be abused at times. Sometimes operating on a general principal makes things inefficient, but the inefficiency is a small debt for the protection of an individual's rights.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Disability
00:23:41	Mental Health Cases: <i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> , 1987, Part I	Skopil begins to describe the key issues in this capital punishment case. Skopil wrote the majority opinion. He focused not on whether capital punishment was right or wrong, noting that was a legislative prerogative. He focused on whether the state of Washington had the right, constitutionally, to enact the statute which provided for capital punishment. His task was to review legal matters, not factual matters. He found that there was nothing wrong with the statute. The case was difficult because a human life was involved; nevertheless, he had to divorce himself from his individual thoughts about capital punishment.	Capital punishment	Sentencing	Careers - Judicial
00:26:16	Mental Health Cases: <i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> , 1987, Part II	Skopil goes into greater detail describing <i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> . He describes the two phases of capital punishment trials. The first phase is about whether the person is guilty of the murder. The second phase involves whether the death penalty should be imposed; in this phase, mitigating circumstances, like mental illness, can be explored. Skopil describes the second phase of <i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> . The defendant's attorney elected not to provide mitigating evidence as a trial tactic; he felt such evidence would open the door to the defendant's prior criminal record.	Sentencing	Capital punishment	Federal courts

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Tape 21, Side 2

1989 October 30

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit Court Cases: <i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> , 1987	Continuing his discussion from the previous tape side, Skopil gives some factual details of the <i>Campbell</i> case. After Campbell had served several years for rape, he returned to the scene of the crime while on a furlough and murdered the victims for testifying against him. During the trial phase to determine whether the death penalty should be applied, Campbell told his attorney that he did not want mitigating evidence introduced; Skopil thinks the attorney evaluated this independently and arrived at the conclusion that the evidence introduced on cross examination would be detrimental.	Federal courts	Capital punishment	Sexual assault
00:05:23	Court Appointed Attorneys	Skopil thinks that the federal courts, under the Criminal Justice Act, are doing an outstanding selecting attorneys for court appointments who are experts in their fields. This was true in the <i>Campbell</i> case, he states. Skopil notes that their compensation is far below what they would receive in the marketplace; Skopil views the appointments as a public service and a responsibility one has as a part of the profession. He recalls being called upon and not getting any compensation. Skopil states that an attorney in Oregon raised the issue of no compensation in court; Strassmaier thinks Manley Strayer was involved in the case, comparing the situation to indenture servitude.	Federal courts	Careers - Legal	Strayer, Manley B.
00:09:36	Defending Capital Punishment Defendants	Skopil talks about how emotionally draining it is to work as an attorney (or juror) on a capital punishment case. He mentions that he had sleepless nights. He notes that when you are retained as an attorney, you have the ability to decline becoming involved. Skopil explains why he believes it is neglecting the profession if one has competency but chooses not to get involved out of fear of adverse publicity. He stresses that in our system, defendants are entitled to the best representation; the burden is upon the state to prove the guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.	Federal courts	Capital punishment	Careers - Legal
00:13:02	Skopil's Personal View on Capital Punishment	Skopil notes that he has never been confronted with the decision to sentence somebody to death; he feels fortunate for this. He believes if were confronted with the decision, he probably would not; although, he does not rule it out. He expresses thankfulness that capital punishment is a legislative not a judicial decision.	Federal courts	Capital punishment	Careers - Judicial
00:14:12	<i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> , 1987: Case Details, Part I	Skopil and Strassmaier discuss details in the <i>Campbell</i> case. When reviewing the court case, Strassmaier was surprised to learn that the prosecutor ignored a judge's instruction to not use as an argument the threat that Campbell would pose to others in prison. Skopil explains why he disagrees with the trial judge's instruction. On the other hand, he notes, evidence to support that argument might prejudice the defendant. Skopil outlines the two central issues in the case: whether a defense counsel is mandated by mitigation statutes to offer mitigating evidence and an analysis of the individual state statute which provides for capital punishment.	Federal courts	Capital punishment	Careers - Judicial

00:17:55	<i>Campbell v. Kincheloe</i> , 1987: Case Details, Part II	Skopil is aware that there was an additional petition filed on the basis of ineffective assistance of counsel; he is not sure about the present status of the case. Skopil talks about the ineffective assistance of counsel argument in similar cases.	Federal courts	Capital punishment	Court cases
00:20:50	<i>Nancy Bradshaw v. Southern District</i> , 1984: Part I	This was a civil rights case involving sex discrimination in employment at the San Diego Zoo. Skopil explain that a provision of the Civil Rights Act governs the appointment of counsel, but unlike in criminal cases, there is no provision for payment. This was the main issue in the Bradshaw case. Bradshaw had tried to obtain counsel on her own. Skopil states that the trial court felt that because Bradshaw was a demanding, obnoxious individual, it was excused from the responsibility of trying to get an attorney for her; the circuit court determined that this was not sufficient.	Federal courts	Gender issues	Civil rights
00:25:43	<i>Nancy Bradshaw v. Southern District</i> , 1984: Part II	Skopil comments that this situation would not have happened in Oregon because the Oregon bar accepts its responsibility to serve the public; its members are not solely focused on financial returns. Skopil acknowledges that Bradshaw was not an easy person to represent; she had a history of suing, or threatening to sue, people who represented her. The district judge was unable to find an attorney who was willing to represent her, despite that the case had merits. Skopil stated that the circuit court required the district court to make a "diligent inquiry," but it declined Bradshaw's request that they mandamus the district judge to appoint an attorney.	Federal courts	Gender issues	Civil rights
00:29:16	<i>Nancy Bradshaw v. Southern District</i> , 1984: Part III	The Bradshaw case subsequently died. Skopil comments on Bradshaw's ability to represent herself. He states that while she was articulate and expressed herself well, but she was an emotional person and was very mad. The circuit court felt that an attorney would be better able to represent her; they did not think that she would be able to present herself in a successful manner.	Federal courts	Gender issues	Civil rights

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Tape 22, Side 1

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Oregon Bar and California Bar: Comparison	Skopil notes the large size of the California bar; this allows for less personal contact with the board of governors. If he had a case like <i>Nancy Bradshaw v. Southern District</i> , he would have lunch with five or six lawyers; he thinks some of them would agree to it. Skopil might assign three lawyers to minimize the suing situation. Skopil expresses pride for the Oregon bar; its members feel more professional responsibility to the public than in California. Skopil comments on the reasons the bar tends to divorce itself from the courts; he notes the drawbacks. He describes the common objectives shared by the bar and the courts.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial	Professional associations
00:05:09	<i>Chavez v. United States</i> , 1980: Interpreting Judge [Anthony] Kennedy	Strassmaier asks what Judge Tony [Anthony] Kennedy meant when he stated, "I concur with the result." Skopil suspects that the comment was intended to suggest that Kennedy concurred with the result in the case, but his analysis may have been different than the other judges. Skopil briefly describes the case.	Kennedy, Anthony	Federal courts	
00:08:24	United States District Court of Oregon Case: <i>Hallmark v. Reynolds and Harvey Aluminum</i> , 1974	Skopil describes this case from his time on the U.S. District Court of Oregon. The defendants were aluminum contractors who were bidding on the same job at Hallmark, a manufacturer of prefab buildings who accused Reynolds and Harvey of conspiring to monopolize the field. The key legal principle was whether or not one had to show that they controlled the relevant market in order to show that there was an attempt to monopolize. Skopil upheld the existing decision, one did not have to show control of the relevant market.	Economics	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:13:09	Judicial Considerations: Case Selection and Use of Law Clerks for Complex Areas of Law	Skopil talks about factors to consider when selecting cases; cases that established a new precedent were interesting to him. He talks about areas of law that were more complex than others and required law clerks to conduct research into the historical development of cases. He notes that the law is a living matter; the next step in the process is to determine if there are additional factors or modifications that would be required to bring the law up to date. He notes the difficulty of antitrust cases.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial	Federal courts
00:16:37	The Law as a Living Thing: Changes over Time to the Body of Court Cases	Skopil comments on changes to the types of cases prevalent over time. He notes that the changes are attributable to the environment of that particular time. He asserts that the law is a living thing. Beginning in about 1972 through the 1970s, security cases were abundant; the economy was the root cause. He points to the emphasis people placed on the drug problem in the 1980s; this led to volumes of criminal cases involving the drug industry.	Economics	Crime	Federal courts

00:21:16	Case Volume Increase over Time: Role of Legislative Branch	Skopil talks about the increase in the volume of cases since the 1950s; he remarks that the unbelievable rate of increase cannot be attributed to population increase alone. He attributes it to congressional acts creating new remedies, from 1968 onward. He notes that the courts have encouraged the increase and the public is more conscious of litigating things. Congress may be responding to a need that is brought to their attention by certain groups; new legislation on consumer protection is an example. Skopil notes that there may be political aspects to the situation. He talks about his dislike of the honorariums that members of Congress receive.	Branches of U.S. Government	Federal courts	Laws and legislation
00:26:17	Alternatives to Litigation	Skopil and Strassmaier talk about alternatives to litigation as a means for resolving differences between people. He talks about advances to that end through mediation, arbitration, and settlement conferences. Academia is looking at these alternatives; Skopil notes that Willamette University was one of the first to offer courses in those areas. He talks about inefficiencies in reviewing disability claims, bureau decisions, and the Health and Occupational Safety Act.	Law school	Federal courts	Laws and legislation

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Duties of Judicial and Legislative Branches of Government	Skopil finishes his point from the previous tape side, that Congress should be more conscious of the consequences of their congressional acts. He responds to Strassmaier's question about how the courts go about determining when to address a justice need in the country, especially considering the burdens they are under. Skopil comments that he mostly deals with day-to-day problems, but if he were to step back and consider, he thinks that the courts have become too involved in social questions; he considers this action to be overstepping the bounds of the courts into the responsibilities of the legislative branch.	Branches of U.S. Government	Federal courts	Laws and legislation
00:03:52	Involvement of the Courts in Social Questions	Skopil considers that a part of the problem is that the general public is asking the judicial branch to get involved more. Citizens expect more of government now, notes Skopil. Skopil talks about the complexities of the situation. Courts see problems, but are they judicial problems to solve? Skopil considers the role of individuals resolving things person-to-person. It pleases Skopil that judges have great feelings towards other humans. But he wonders if judicial involvement in social questions places a burden on the courts that was not intended by the forefathers.	Branches of U.S. Government	Role of government	Federal courts
00:07:29	Executive Branch and Judicial Appointments, Part I	Skopil responds to a question regarding the effects to the courts of the "conservative revolution" brought on by the change in administrations, starting with President Ronald Reagan. Skopil notes that the constitution protects the independence of judges. Administrations cannot always predict how judges will rule; Skopil points to [Anthony] Kennedy and a case involving flag burning as an example. Skopil concedes that generally the selected judges share a common philosophy with the administration who appointed them. He considers that this might not be a bad thing because a change in the governing party might be sufficient to assure a mixture on the court.	Branches of U.S. Government	Kennedy, Anthony	Judicial selection
00:13:00	Executive Branch and Judicial Appointments, Part II	Skopil continues to talk about judicial appointments. He notes that he was appointed first by Republican president to the district court and then by Democrat to the circuit court. He asserts that he is not among those who are very concerned about a particular administration's political philosophy influencing the courts. In the short term you may get some bad decisions, but in the long run you get a fair result. He points to the restrictions on law enforcement imposed during the Warren Court; he explains that this is presently (1989) being corrected.	Branches of U.S. Government	Warren, Earl	Judicial selection
00:16:05	Reagan Administration: Judicial Appointments, Part I	Skopil affirms that he sees a need for change that was being addressed by the transition to the Reagan administration; in his opinion they [appointed judges] went too far, but Skopil questions whether the appointing authority can control that. Skopil disagrees with the approach of the Reagan administration in practically questioning judicial candidates on how they stood on certain issues; instead, focus should remain on integrity and competency. He notes that this approach is not unique to that administration, pointing to the way Franklin [D.] Roosevelt packed the courts. Skopil comments on Reagan's attempt to appoint Bob [Robert] Bork.	Bork, Robert	Reagan, Ronald	Judicial selection

00:21:13	Reagan Administration: Judicial Appointments, Part II	Strassmaier continues to question Skopil on his thoughts about the change to the composition of the courts during the Reagan administration. Strassmaier points to the Fifth Circuit; he notes Edith Jones' interest in reducing complications that hold up capital sentences. Skopil states that the change is visible in the Ninth Circuit as well; one can still see President [James Earl] Carter's influence, but the new appointments have a more conservative approach. He stresses that he does not like to classify judges along philosophical lines because they are independent. Skopil expresses doubt about the need to worry about an administration's influence on court appointments.	Judicial selection	Federal courts	Jones, Edith H.
00:24:33	Capital Punishment Cases: Inefficiencies	Skopil interprets Fifth Circuit Judge Edith Jones' position on the capital punishment process; she points to the inefficient use of the courts and the time lapse before decisions. He notes that addressing inefficiencies is something everyone wants to accomplish; any judge, regardless of who appointed them, will acknowledge that the capital punishment situation needs addressing. In both criminal areas and civil areas, people come to the courts to resolve their differences; it is unfair to make them wait. He stresses that judges do not want to eliminate any right that the individual has; they want a rapid resolution of those rights.	Capital Punishment	Jones, Edith, H.	Federal courts
00:28:06	U.S. Supreme Court Cases: <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i>	Skopil comments on issues raised in the U.S. Supreme Court case, <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> . He talks about repeat offenders of criminal activities; he notes that one can almost tell ahead of time that the repeat offenders will be back. He questions if limitations to the appointment of counsel should be considered. Being mindful of the taxpayer, he notes his objection to "picking up the tab" for the offender on his/her third or fourth offense.	U.S. Supreme Court cases	Crime	Federal courts



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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. Supreme Court Cases: <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i>	Skopil resumes talking about this case; he considers limits to court appointed lawyers on capital offenses. Strassmaier suggests that lawyers are not attracted to those stressful cases. Skopil suggests the solution of allowing the defendant to raise all issues at once. He notes that some courts are doing this on their own. He recognizes that approach will run into serious constitutional questions about the segregation of the right to counsel; he notes that it may be possible, with ramifications.	U.S. Supreme Court cases	Capital punishment	Federal courts
00:02:10	Bill to Split the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals	Skopil initiates a discussion on the recent (1989) timber-environment controversy and its impact on the Ninth Circuit. Skopil relates the issue to the court packing situation; the same thing is accomplished. He refers to a bill that has been introduced to split the circuit; the Northwest senators largely support it. Skopil emphatically expresses that the reason behind the bill is absolutely wrong. He states that the timber-environment controversy was decided by court panels with competent judges and sound rationale. He states that [legislators] should not be controlling the decisions of the court and using it as a threat over the court.	Federal courts	Laws and legislation	Branches of U.S. Government
00:07:12	Legislative and Judicial Branches of Government	Strassmaier notes that Chief Judge [Alfred] Goodwin spoke out about this issue. Skopil comments on levels of independency and communication between the judicial and legislative branches of government over time. He expresses that greater communication is a good trend. He suggests that the branches can work independently without destroying communication between the two. He shares his approach to maintaining independence from the legislative branch—he does not share opinions about legislation unless he is called upon; he believes in checks and balances. Skopil comments on his closeness with Senator [Mark O.] Hatfield.	Branches of U.S. Government	Hatfield, Mark O.	Federal courts
00:11:10	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: More on Bill to Split	Skopil speculates on the success of attempts to split the Ninth Circuit. He explains why he sees no legitimate reason for splitting the court. Skopil and Strassmaier comment on compromises in process. Skopil notes that the timber-environment situation is touchy politically because of economics. He expresses that it is incorrect for politicians threaten to change the circuit and, by inference, say that they will get the judges or the decisions they want; Skopil remarks that he keeps getting that message. Skopil and Strassmaier talk about the potential composition of the circuits, should a split occur.	Branches of U.S. Government	Environmental issues	Federal courts
00:16:43	U.S. Attorney Sidney [I.] Lezak, Part I	Skopil begins by stating that Lezak was an exceptionally fine U.S. Attorney. Skopil points to Lezak's ability to assess his own strengths and weaknesses and act on them. He was a tremendous administrator; Skopil notes his skill dealing with various agencies and bureaus. By his own calculated decision, he tried very few cases; Lezak understood that perhaps there were others who could do that work better and he did not insist on the publicity. Skopil comments on the great competency of those he selected to work with, namely Charles Turner and Jack Collins.	Lezak, Sidney I.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial

00:20:34	U.S. Attorney Sidney [I.] Lezak, Part II	Skopil talks about the open lines of communication between himself and Lezak.	Lezak, Sidney I.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial
00:23:12	U.S. Attorney Charles [H.] Turner	Skopil discusses Charles Turner's abilities as Lezak's chief deputies. He asserts that Turner was a tough prosecutor. He notes Turner's sensitivity in making discerned judgements in his own mind about certain people who might appropriately be afforded a second chance. Skopil states that he knows nothing of Turner's administrative abilities; he assumed the U.S. Attorney's role after Skopil left the bench.	Turner, Charles H.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Description of Routine Work as District Court Judge	Skopil begins to describe the daily work of a federal judge, beginning with his time on the district court. Initially he didn't realize that the workload would be as heavy, for less pay, compared to private practice. Skopil describes the lengthy work hours as a trial judge. He was impressed by the great amount of reading and writing they did, on first impression matters and summary judgement motions. He found trial court work interesting.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal
00:03:18	Description of Routine Work as Circuit Court Judge: Overview	Skopil begins to describe the routine work of a circuit judge. The work entailed a demanding amount of reading, which was time consuming. He describes differences from district court work—he did not work with people as much (which he lamented) and he took more work home. Skopil comments on the demanding responsibility of the workload as he outlines the monthly and weekly routine.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:05:32	Description of Routine Work as Circuit Court Judge: Use of Law Clerks, Part I	Skopil goes into detail about how he handles the workload with the help of his three law clerks. In addition to the requirement that the law clerks be law school graduates, Skopil requires them to be members of a bar. He describes how the work is divided among them and the tasks they each perform at each step, through the hearing of oral arguments. Skopil remarks on the importance he places on communication between himself and his clerks.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal
00:09:49	Description of Routine Work as Circuit Court Judge: Use of Law Clerks, Part II	Skopil continues to describe how he divides the workload between himself and his law clerks. After oral arguments, three panel judges decide the case outcome and the issues to be covered in the deposition. Next a judge is assigned to write the deposition. Due to volume increases, in later years he had his clerks prepare rough drafts of cases assigned to him. Skopil reiterates that it is laborious work and different from work at the trial court level, where you enjoyed exposure to the people's appearance, mannerisms, and credibility. He notes that judges are not concerned with factual situations, only the law.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal
00:12:42	Description of Routine Work as Circuit Court Judge: Use of Law Clerks, Part III	Skopil describes the writing style that he requires from his law clerks. He is a strong believer in concise writing. He feels it is important for opinions to be written in a manner that can be easily understood by the average person.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal
00:14:51	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Panel Discussions	Skopil describes working with other judges on a panel. He concludes that the decision-making process is adequate as far as communication between panel members is concerned. The greatest percentage of cases are clear cut with easy agreement. Sometimes it is not the initial conference that is time consuming, but the reevaluation that occurs after a proposed deposition has been prepared. Skopil notes that he is not a frequent dissenter. He explains why he thinks the Ninth Circuit to be the best prepared appellate court. If anything, Skopil argues, out of a feeling of conscientiousness, they spend too much time on cases that do not warrant it.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Careers - Legal

00:19:19	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Determining who Writes the Opinion	Skopil talks about the process of deciding who will write the opinion. He notes that there is not a select formula. The main goal is to apportion the caseload, so attention is paid to distributing complex cases evenly. Skopil describes that the presiding judge sends a memo out indicating the matters that were discussed between the judges, such as the issues that should be covered in the disposition and what the outcome should be on each issue should be.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:20:44	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: En Banc Cases	Skopil describes the process involved in en banc cases; it is slightly different in the Ninth Circuit because only eleven judges, selected randomly, participate initially. After the decision, again there is the opportunity for the court to determine to involve the whole court. This happens infrequently. Skopil describes that generally the cases are initial impression cases or those in which the majority of the court feels they should reevaluate a position they have taken because the precedent is so important. Generally they are complex, far-reaching cases; they add to the workload substantially because they can start from scratch. En banc cases are argued in San Francisco.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:25:19	Senior Status: Workload	Skopil talks about the changes to his workload when he went on senior status in 1986 or 1987. He notes that he has the luxury of time. He spends his time reviewing the decisions of the panel more carefully. One suggestion that he has made, that has not been particularly well-received by his colleagues, is that the dispositions and memorandums are far too long; for the sake of efficiency he recommends they be shortened substantially. He explains his reasoning. Skopil notes that he feels productive in his senior status.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:28:37	Senior Status: Administrative Duties	Skopil notes that when talking about the work of an active circuit judge, he did not talk about their administrative responsibilities, which can be time consuming. Judges on senior status do not vote; they get out of serving on the executive committee and circuit council. They are free to attend, but not required to attend, court meetings in San Francisco. Skopil notes that he will participate in administrative tasks, like studies and reports to the judicial conference, at the request of the chief judge. Skopil suggests that judges on senior status may not be used to the most beneficial extent; experience is important.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Personal Reflections on Senior Status	Skopil talks about what it was like for him to go on senior status. He expresses that he had been looking forward to taking three to four months to do nothing, but found after about two weeks that he did not want to do nothing; he wanted to get back. He talks about how senior status changes one's mental attitude. He feels secure in his work and that he is wanting to do it.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:01:33	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Borrowing Judges from other Circuits	Skopil clarifies that he has never sat on another circuit. As long as the Ninth Circuit is borrowing judges, he has trouble with the idea of traveling elsewhere. He explains that this is a personal decision guided by his determination to have the court run efficiently and inexpensively. When Strassmaier raises the question of expertise, Skopil notes that he is not critical when others do it, but as taxpayer, he chooses not to.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:03:38	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: San Francisco Earthquake, 1989	Skopil explains his reasoning for turning down his last request to sit on another circuit court. He is concerned about the increased burden faced by the Ninth Circuit brought on by the recent earthquake [in San Francisco]. He talks about the ramifications of the earthquake and speculates what it will mean for the backlog and schedule. He notes that presently (1989) the judges only sit eight months out of the year, to improve the backlog situation. Personally, he never took time off, except to prepare for and attend the United States Judicial Conference twice a year.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:05:47	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Changes to Workload over Time	Skopil describes changes to the workload of the Ninth Circuit court over time; the court increased the number of days a week it heard cases and the number of cases heard each day. Skopil talks about innovations utilized in the Ninth Circuit to deal with the increased workload, like creating the screening calendar. He describes this practice and compares it to a summary judgement. He describes the way the Ninth Circuit uses the screening calendar format compared to other districts; some districts use it more often. He talks about techniques used by other courts; the Third Circuit uses order dispositions, for example.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:08:33	Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Case Duration	Skopil considers cases that are lengthy; some go on too long, but they are the exception. He notes types of cases that tend to be lengthy and complicated, like environmental and capital punishment cases. The guiding principal in capital punishment cases is to be sure that everyone has an opportunity to exert their constitutional rights in order to protect the system and the individual. He considers the movement to cut down the process in capital punishment cases, noting that it is not all bad, but calling it a "tough problem" due to the need to protect the rights of the individual.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	

00:10:57	Federal Judicial Center: Description and Importance	Skopil mentions that one of his administrative duties was being a board member of the Federal Judicial Center. He describes the composition of the board and the work of the center. He discusses the importance of the center as the educational arm of the court and a way to stay current on new areas of litigation and sentencing guidelines, from both a theoretical and practical point of view.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Education
00:14:32	Federal Judicial Center: Board Member	He describes being a member of the board as an honor. He describes why his tenure was short. He reiterates that the center represents the effort the judiciary is making to ensure judges are knowledgeable and current on congressional acts. Another function of the board is to experiment with modern technique and technology to improve efficiency. During his time on the board they were concerned about nationwide word processing and electronic mail advancement. He notes that when he first came to the court they did not have IBM electric typewriters like he had in his modern law practice.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Education
00:17:30	Federal Judicial Center: Curriculum Decisions	Skopil clarifies that the Federal Judiciary Center board is more of a policy-making body; it has very little voice with respect to curriculum guidance. The director of the center makes those decisions. Skopil talks more about the subjects taken up by the center. He notes that judges often look to the congressional history to help understand new laws; the center might invite the sponsor of a particular statute to help interpret what the statute was intended to do. Skopil explains why antitrust law was the subject of many workshops and describes how the center approached the subject matter.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Education
00:21:18	Administrative Work: Magistrates Committee	Skopil describes his work on the magistrate's committee, noting that he participated in the 1976 and 1979 amendments to the magistrates act. He was the chairman of the committee for eight years. He briefly discusses the role that Judge [Robert C.] Belloni played in strengthening the magistrate system and why it made sense for there to be a representative from Oregon on the national committee. Skopil notes that many of the administrative responsibilities that he has had on the circuit court flows from his experience on the magistrates committee.			
00:24:28	Administrative Work: Judicial Liaison Committee	Skopil outlines his responsibilities as a member of the Judicial Liaison Committee. His responsibility was to expedite the appointment process of new judges to the court. He did not get involved until after the President sent his choice to the Senate for confirmation. At that point, Skopil "pestered" the justice department, judiciary staff, and ABA representative. He comments on the political aspects of the process, but notes he did not get involved with that aspect of it. He notes that it was interesting work because it gave him some familiarity with the people who came to the court after he did.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	
00:29:55	Administrative Work: Committee on Judicial Tenure	Skopil begins to describe the purpose of his work on this committee. There was a concern that the country was going to be losing judges because of the pay and benefits situation. He describes his work to generate interest among the judges to talk about these issues.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	

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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	Federal Judges: Disciplinary Procedures	Skopil continues describing the work of the Committee on Judicial Tenure. A part of the function of the committee was to discuss disciplinary procedure methods to address complaints. Skopil describes the system favored by Chief Justice Warren Earl Burger that was not adopted; it comprised an in-house process to evaluate complaints. Skopil describes that the disciplinary process was transferred to the chief judge of the circuit court; he discusses the procedure. The same mechanism handles competency issues that can arise on account of aging judges.	Federal courts	Burger, Warren Earl	
00:03:57	Federal Circuit Courts: Office of Chief Judge	Skopil states that the chief judge of the circuit is a very powerful and influential person. Skopil describes the responsibilities of the chief judge. They make the assignments of judges within the circuit, they determine a lot of the policy matters of the circuit, and they are the representative at the United States Judicial Conference for the circuit.	Federal courts		
00:05:24	Chief Judges of the Federal Circuit Court: [Richard H.] Chambers and [James R.] Browning, Part I	Skopil talks about the chief judges that he has served under. He gives details to support his assertion that Judge [Richard H.] Chambers and Judge [James R.] Browning both were effective, but in entirely different ways. Skopil describes Chambers as a "control person" with a dominating personality who solved problems in very direct and straightforward ways. Skopil describes Browning's democratic approach, including his reliance on committees to solve problems. Skopil notes the ways Browning gained the respect of judges under him through patient listening. Skopil notes Chambers' ability to know the "skeletons in everybody's closet;" this served him while handling bureaucracy.	Chambers, Richard H.	Browning, James R.	Federal courts
00:10:30	Chief Judges of the Federal Circuit Court: [Richard H.] Chambers and [James R.] Browning, Part II	Skopil describes a situation that highlights differences between Judge Chambers and Judge Browning; the situation caused some turmoil as Browning took over the office of chief judge from Chambers. Chambers evaluated space and cost constraints and guided the court's decision to relocate their facility from the civic center in Los Angeles to a government-owned building in Pasadena. As Browning came on board, he heard strenuous objections from people in the Los Angeles area; this caused Browning to reconsider this decision that had already been made.	Chambers, Richard H.	Browning, James R.	Federal courts
00:13:24	Chief Judges of the Federal Circuit Court: [Alfred T.] Goodwin	Skopil describes his impression of how Ted [Alfred T.] Goodwin came to be chief judge. He describes that the chief judge vacancy is automatically filled by the judge with the most time in service, as long as they are under the age of sixty-five. Noting the respect the other judges had for Goodwin, Skopil suggests that they demanded Goodwin over the judge who was next in line, causing Browning to step down before Goodwin turned sixty-five. Skopil notes that the next in line was also a close friend, who Skopil describes as competent, a conservative, and not as tactful or diplomatic as Judge Goodwin or Judge Browning.	Goodwin, Alfred T.	Federal courts	

00:18:56	Colleagues on U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Anthony Kennedy	Skopil notes the family-like closeness of the circuit court. He considers Justice [Anthony] Kennedy to be a close friend and an outstanding appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court. Stressing that he does not like to classify people, Skopil notes that Kennedy leans conservative. He points out the his position on flag burning may have been a surprise to some. Skopil comments that Kennedy is patient and sensitive to others. Skopil did not see Kennedy aggressively seeking the Supreme Court nomination. Skopil states that he was surprised that the nomination did not happen sooner, considering the relationship Kennedy had with the White House.	Kennedy, Anthony	Wallace, John Clifford	Federal courts
00:23:37	Colleagues on U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: [John] Clifford Wallace	Skopil states that he feels close to [John] Clifford Wallace; he notes that there is a bond among those judges that came to the circuit court from the district court. Skopil calls Wallace an outstanding jurist. Skopil notes his conservatism and his competency. Wallace was active nationally, making great contributions with the organization of the Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference. Skopil notes that his personality was more aloof than others, although he is warm when one gets to know him.	Wallace, John Clifford	Federal courts	
00:25:57	Colleagues on U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Others	Skopil tries to recall the Reagan appointees to the Ninth Circuit. Skopil knew Cynthia [H.] Hall from before; she was bright and opinionated. Skopil comments that Alex Kozinski is aggressive, industrious, and vocal. When asked about the contingent of liberal people on the court, Skopil comments that everyone has something to contribute to the court; he names some he considers the brightest liberal thinkers, including Steve [Stephen R.] Reinhardt, Bill [William A.] Norris, Betty [B.] Fletcher, and Mary M. Schroeder. Skopil comments on the necessary compromise between the judges with differing philosophical approaches; he believes this can lead to the best result.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	



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Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
00:00:00	U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals: Administrative Successes	Skopil highlights the administrative methods developed by Judge [James R.] Browning that cause the Ninth Circuit to succeed in terms of productivity and efficiency, despite its size; this has been proven statistically. Browning established three administrative regions within the circuit; Skopil describes how they operate. Given this success, Skopil asserts perhaps the conversation should shift from splitting circuits to increasing their size, because conflicts between circuits creates more work for the U.S. Supreme Court.	Browning, James R.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:04:23	Federal Circuit Courts: Reasons for Splitting Circuits	Skopil questions Strassmaier's assessment that the Fifth Circuit split in 1981 due to issues involving racial segregation. Skopil suggests why the circuit split; his reasons focused more on inner-workings of the court and an agreement among judges regarding the split. Skopil notes the desire among the Ninth Circuit judges to keep the circuit intact; he notes the reports that Congress required of the Ninth Circuit in order for it to remain intact. Skopil predicts that the Ninth Circuit will split eventually; if it does, it will have more to do with in-house dynamics between judges rather than an improvement in the judicial process.	Racial issues	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:09:15	Law Clerks, Part I	Skopil asserts that law clerks are essential to the judicial process; he relies on them heavily for research and for their thoughts on particular cases. He notes the universities that his law clerks come from; they include large and prominent universities as well as small schools. Skopil gives a particular tribute to Tom Carter, who has been his law clerk for nine years.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts	Law school
00:12:36	Law Clerks, Part II	Skopil talks about the selection process he uses when selecting law clerks. He pays particular attention to writing skills and broader life experiences that would suggest an ability to help people resolve differences. Skopil discusses the extent to which the law clerks work together and comments on the congeniality between them. He talks about the role Tom Carter plays in providing an orientation for new law clerks.	Careers - Legal	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial
00:16:42	Lawyers and Ethics, Part I	Skopil responds as Strassmaier raises questions about ethics in law practice; Strassmaier uses as a prompt an article in which [Justice] William Rehnquist makes a statement about basic societal bulwarks breaking down, including the practice of law. Skopil notes that malpractice cases have a function. He shares his view that there has been a shift in the profession from a focus on service to a focus on monetary return. This greed and desire for material things, he asserts, is at the heart of the ethics problems, when they arise.	Careers - Legal	Rehnquist, William	

00:20:24	Lawyers and Ethics, Part II	Skopil continues his discussion about the law profession and its focus on monetary return. He notes that these attitudes that prize material possessions may stem from family values. He compares the legal profession to when he started practicing law; he notes that there was an expectation for some charity work, and lawyers assumed that responsibility without the Criminal Justice Act. Skopil states that, like Rehnquist, Chief Justice [Warren Earl] Burger felt the same way. Skopil points to the way some lawyers go through an elaborate discovery process, building up billable hours, knowing that they do not intend to try the case.	Cultural values	Careers - Legal	Burger, Earl Warren
00:23:49	Sentencing Guidelines	Skopil suggests that society loses financially from white collar crime and perpetrators are not held accountable proportionately; he questions that sentencing guidelines are the solution, noting the problems that they generate outweigh the benefits. Skopil discusses a method established by the parole commission—the salient factor score. Skopil suggests that the method undermines a judge’s discretion. Using examples from his own sentencing experiences, Skopil illustrates his point about the inadequacies of the salient factor score method. He discusses the inefficiencies of the system in place to work around the sentencing guidelines.	Federal courts	Careers - Judicial	Crime
00:29:38	Family Life: As a Youth	Skopil begins to talk about the importance of family in his life, beginning with his mother and father and his extended family when he was young. He notes the size of his father’s side of the family; they all lived in the Salem, Oregon area. Their social life centered around family life.	Family life	Extended family	

# SR 1225 Oral History Interview with Otto R. Skopil, Jr.

by Jim Strassmaier

United States District Court Oral History Project

1985 August 19 - 1989 November 27



THE OREGON  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
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Compiled by Sara Paulson

## Tape 26, Side 1 - Missing Tape

1989 November 27

Time Stamp	Title	Synopsis	Keyword	Keyword	Keyword
		Note: Audio for Tape 26, Side 1 is missing. Index created from an incomplete transcript, which is available for in-person use at the Oregon Historical Society Davies Family Research Library.			
	Family Life: Importance of Family	Skopil continues to talk about the importance of family in his life, first discussing his extended family and then turning to his own nuclear family. He mentions family picnics that served as his family's social life as a youth. His extended family was a support system. He expresses pride in his children and appreciation for his loving and loyal wife.	Family life	Extended family	
	Family Life: Raising Children	Skopil discusses certain household rules his children observed as they were growing up and the consequences they faced when the rules were not met. He notes that he has tried to teach his children the importance of truth, honesty, and integrity. He talks about the work his children do as adults.	Family life		
	Family Life: Wife's Financial Contributions	Skopil talks about his wife, Jan, and her role in the family. He describes her as a great partner. While they never discussed individual cases, they discussed general principals; she contributes constructive ideas. Her work in the real estate business has been helpful financially to get the four kids through college. Skopil discusses the financial sacrifices his family endured because of their decision for Skopil to leave private practice and become a judge.	Careers - Legal	Careers - Judicial	Family life