ASC Alumni Oral History Project

Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives

University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA

HOWARD BURKAT

interviewed and transcribed by

JEFFERSON POOLEY

recorded by

ANNA GAMARNIK

July 8, 2025

Philadelphia, PA

ABSTRACT

In the interview, Howard Burkat recounts his childhood in Boston, including his exposure through his father's role at the Boston Symphony Orchestra to figures like Aaron Copland and Leonard Bernstein. Burkat recounts his undergraduate years at the University of Michigan, and his serendipitous discovery of the then-new Annenberg School of Communications. He joined the master's program in fall 1964, with the new dean George Gerbner and a large class of master's students. Burkat describes the hybrid, shifting curriculum, a joint degree with the Wharton School, his courses with Charles Siepmann and George Dessart, and his master's project on Philadelphia disc jockeys. Burkat narrates his post-Annenberg career at NBC, CBS, and HBO, where he was a lead in promotions in the network's early years. He describes his post-HBO years, working at nonprofits, for-profits, and as a consultant. The interview concludes with Burkat's retelling of his successful effort to win the Annenberg School's sponsorship of the HBO Oral History Project, which was conducted in the 2010s under Burkat's leadership.

RESTRICTIONS

None

FORMAT

Interview. Video recordings at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, 3620 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104, USA. One mp4 file of one hour twenty-three minutes.

TRANSCRIPT

Transcribed by Jefferson Pooley. Audited for accuracy and edited for clarity by Jefferson Pooley. Transcript reviewed and approved by Howard Burkat, Jefferson Pooley, and Samantha Dodd. Transcript 20 pages.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND CITATION FORMS

Video recording

Bibliography: Burkat, Howard. Interview by Jefferson Pooley. Video recording, July 8, 2025. ASC Alumni Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives, University of Pennsylvania. **Footnote example:** Howard Burkat, interview by Jefferson Pooley, video recording, July 8, 2025, ASC Alumni Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

Transcript

Bibliography: Burkat, Howard. Interview by Jefferson Pooley. Transcript of video recording, July 8, 2025. ASC Alumni Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives, University of Pennsylvania. **Footnote example:** Howard Burkat, interview by Jefferson Pooley, transcript of video recording, July 8, 2025, ASC Alumni Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives, University of Pennsylvania, pp. 17–18.

Transcript of interview conducted July 8, 2025, with HOWARD BURKAT

Philadelphia, PA

Interviewed by Jefferson Pooley

Q: Alright, this is an oral history interview of Howard Burkat, conducted by Jeff Pooley at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Pennsylvania. The interview is part of—in fact, it's the inaugural interview of, the Annenberg School for Communication Alumni Oral History Project of the School's Library Archives. The date is July 8, 2025. Welcome back to Annenberg, Howard.

BURKAT: A fast 60 years and here I am.

Q: Well, it was impressive. 60 years. I wanted to start out asking about your childhood, where you were born, your family history briefly. And if you would then discuss a little bit how you found your way to the University of Michigan.

BURKAT: I was born in Boston. My family history is brief. It's the typical immigrant—let's see, I guess I'm the third generation. My grandparents were all Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe. And why they ended up in Boston, who knows, but they did. And met in the U.S., married. My parents were one—my father was from a family that was sort of in business and had various businesses around Boston of real estate and delicatessens and things and of course it all disappeared in the Depression. My grandfather is the classic successful immigrant story of starting a business. As he always says, I came here with four dollars, and he somehow got into the garment business and ended up having actually a very ritzy dress factory in Boston, which had a busy fashion dress manufacturing trade. I mean literally thousands and thousands of people. The interesting part of it is therefore that both my parents went to Harvard [University]. My mother went to what was then called Radcliffe. My father went to Harvard.

So they went from the shtetl, their grandparents, which was where the Jews lived in Eastern Europe, where they were allowed to live, forced to live, to daughters going to Harvard, to one of the daughters actually married a Harvard professor. So it's, you know, Harvard, who cares about Harvard, but it's a remarkable progression, very typical of the Jews. My father was always one of the music guys, and I'll get to my mother in a minute, but he ended up going to Harvard. Right before the end, he ran out of money and quit. He always positioned it as having to—he knew all they had to teach him, so he thought he might as well quit and save money. But he was always one of the musical guys and ended up being his first job at the music department of the Boston Public Library. And from there was recruited by the Boston Symphony to work in Tanglewood,

stayed with the BSO [Boston Symphony Orchestra] for 17 years, rising to the person who he was called music director or music administrator, I guess. The music director was the person who waved the baton. He was the music administrator, so he programmed all the music that the Boston Symphony played and the Boston Pops and what was played at Tanglewood. And he ran the music school that we now call Tanglewood.

My mother at the time was very progressive, having written about labor unions for her thesis at Radcliffe Harvard. She always was a paid worker for the various Leagues of Women Voters in both Cambridge and in Brookline, where we lived. We led a very kind of artsy life, very, very famous people. We lived quite near Symphony Hall in Boston. And so I would come home from school and there would be this or that great of the classical music world sitting in the living room. We had a big house and lots of space for people to visit only 15 minutes away from Symphony Hall. So there would be, if you know names, you know, Leontyne Price just having finished her *Carmen* broad concert sitting there reading the *New York Times* in our living room or what have you. And I was enlisted as a bartender at about age 12 for all these sorts of things. So I knew what Mr. Copeland, otherwise known as Aaron Copeland, liked in his drink, as opposed to what Mr. Bernstein, Leonard Bernstein, liked in his drink. So that was my growing up, anyway, with all that Tanglewood Boston Symphony and artsy stuff from the shtetl in not many years.

Q: Amazing. Okay.

BURKAT: Now, there was more to that question—there was a second half. Refresh my memory.

Q: Yes, well, how about your memories of your school including high school activities that you're interested in. Were you also musical?

BURKAT: I was in the chorus in high school, the concert choir—the director of the course was the world's—no, not the world's, the high school's most beloved teacher, Mr. Joseph. His wife, also on the same faculty, was probably the least-liked teacher in the school. It was a big high school of about 2,400 people in Brookline, which is very suburban, even though it is literally surrounded on three sides by the city of Boston. Mr. Joseph, and I presume with him Mrs. Joseph, quit my senior year to become a faculty member and doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi, and I think from what I have talked to the various deans and presidents about, actually taught my musical hero who is Jimmy Buffett and so that's my musical background and the usual terrible piano lessons that every kid takes. **MY THERE** was just sort of a guy in the school. Brookline was a very nice place to grow up. It was perfect. I had nothing special.

Everyone went to college, of course, which is probably how I ended up at [University of] Michigan. Or actually, I can tell you exactly how I did. And then later, exactly how I ended up at Annenberg and Penn [University of Pennsylvania]. But I wasn't really active in anything except girls and hanging out and that sort of stuff. I didn't accomplish much. I didn't really do much of anything. I was just a guy. It was demographically an interesting time and place, though,

because Brookline was a town in which a third—it was a town at that time of about 60,000 people. They always called it the largest town in Massachusetts. One third very, very WASP-y, very, very wealthy. One third mostly Catholic, Christian. The Catholics did not go to the public school. The WASPs did not go to the public school. That left the Jewish kids, the last third of the school, to sort of dominate in the large public school and you were very clear who was who.

I ended up going to Michigan because the Boston Symphony, of which you've just heard, played two or three concerts there every year in the '50s and had since the '20s, believe it or not. I mean Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the Bostonians' mind, and to a certain extent, in fact was very, very, very far away, such that the—such it was considered by the BSO as part of their Western Tour—I mean Eastern Michigan was part of the Western Tour—typical Yankee approach to things. And my father got to know a bunch of the people there and did—as all fathers do—and started bringing home, Oh, what do you know, here's some brochures I picked up, here's—well, there's a little thing from Michigan. So when it was my senior year, he said, Well, you've got that Michigan stuff. Why don't you apply? Now, this was in October of my senior year in this high school, when 90-something percent went to college. And I said, Well, I have this thing. Oh, look, here's an early decision blank. My father very cleverly shoved in there too.

And so I filled out the early decision thing. And I was the second person in this class of 615 people to get into college, which meant that—getting back to the rest of the story and closing out here for the moment—I could act up pretty much my senior year and actually got kicked out of class by Mr. Joseph's replacement. He, the beloved music teacher now in Mississippi. And I got kicked out for wising off. But my senior year in high school was pretty much wising off the whole time. Found myself in Ann Arbor, which was very, very different. Suddenly everybody was smart. Maybe all of you find that when you suddenly get to a good educational situation. Everybody was smart. And people from what was, per the previous point, from the East were sort of a special group and I did literally nothing at Michigan. I belonged to no group. I had no extracurricular. I was constantly doing academic work unsuccessfully. I learned an enormous amount, which I speak about daily, I will say to friends and family. Now I had this guy in Michigan who always said, I mean that will come up daily. I learned an enormous amount.

By the middle of my sophomore year I said, I got to get out of here. So I applied to a study abroad program, went away to Sweden for a year, so that's more girls and more goofing off—of all places in the 60s, you know, so you can imagine what that was like. And came back and suddenly, suddenly it is April of my senior year. And I come to visit my friends in 19104, I think I've got the zip code road right at the University of Pennsylvania, 232 South 39th Street, which is now some giant dorm, but then was a very crummy row house where they lived. And someone said—and I'm still familiar and friendly, I should say, with a couple of the guys who lived there, some of whom were from Brookline. Someone said, You know, you've always sort of liked this media stuff.

Now you see where this story is going. You know, they've got this new school just down the street and it studies media. Well, I don't really know what it is. It's the kind of stuff you like. You should really go down there. Now, remember, I'm telling you, this is April of my senior year at

the University of Michigan. I had no plan whatsoever, except I was the kid who was always listening to the distant radio station on the AM at 3 o'clock in the morning when the signal was bouncing into western Massachusetts. I was the one who would go to New York and go to early TV shows and stuff. I did like communication and stuff and media, but I hadn't given any thought to jobs or further education by April of my senior year at Michigan. I come here, these guys say, Go down to Annenberg and see about it. I walk into this building and somehow find my way to the beloved Mrs. Maloney, of which you'll probably hear more, right, Eleanor Maloney, who then, she's sort of like, oh, what is her name now? She's, I think, called VP or director or something like that of administration or—

Q: Could be Jessica?

BURKAT: No, no. It's a Spanish name.

Q: Kelly Fernandez.

BURKAT: Kelly Fernandez. It's Fernandez, yes. So Mrs. Maloney was the mid-'60s Kelly Fernandez. And so she was not only the dean's assistant and secretary and so on, but she was also sort of the recruiter as well. And you'll hear this from my friend who's going to also be talking with you in this history. And she did a wonderful sales job to me on why I should at least apply. She obviously was not going to guarantee any kind of admission or anything, but why I should at least apply. So remember now, I was on vacation from Michigan. I come down here. I'm hanging out with my guys from Brookline. I'm wandering in. They go, Oh, this is for you. Maloney is recruiting me. It's now late April by the time I fill out the forms. And I say, Well, it'll be late May. Then it comes May and there's graduation in Michigan. I still have no plan. I do have a summer job at Tanglewood because virtually every job at Tanglewood is a nepotism job, or was then anyway. And so I have my summer job at Tanglewood all set. And it's June. And remember, I only have applied six or eight weeks ago. It wasn't a long time. But then I get the letter saying, OK, yes, you're in. And boom, the rest is broadcast history.

Q: Wow.

BURKAT: So there, Jeff, was the long answer to a very basic question.

Q: Well, it was beautifully narrated. And so we are actually at that moment then in 1964. You're having your plum nepotistic Tanglewood job over the summer. And you moved to Philadelphia, I presume, for the fall, right?

BURKAT: To also, I should say, I actually bought a guy's furniture at 232 South 39th Street and moved into that very place that got me here. Yes, please go on.

Q: Okay, well, set the scene for us a little bit. I mean, the school is really young. And I'm not sure exactly when in your year George Gerbner would arrive as the new dean. But set the scene for the school and what your first month was like.

BURKAT: Okay. So I believe ’64, ’65 academic year was the third year. Does anybody remember if that was the third year? I think it was.

Q: Of the degree being granted.

BURKAT: Yes. Yes. And it was Gerbner. I’m just going to call him Gerbner with all due respect, not Dr. Gerbner or Professor Gerbner or Dean Gerbner. Gerbner had been recruited from somewhere, Illinois, I think?

Q: University of Illinois.

BURKAT: Gerbner had been recruited from the University of Illinois, so it was his first year, but he was here. He was the man in charge, and I will say that he was definitely in charge. There’s no doubt about that. And he set about to make the school, and I presume this is what the hierarchy at Penn wanted and this is what the Annenberg family gave an awful lot of money to make happen, so on, set about to make this place into something. Because I understand, I really don’t know because there wasn’t, but I understand that the first couple of years were fairly loose and there was no, there must have been some sort of structured curriculum and so on. But by the time the academic year began, I mean it was a proper place.

There were courses, you signed up for things, there were facilities. There was a nice library. It’s not the library such as you guys have today, but there was a library and so on. A lot of the instructors, I’m going to use that as the broad-based term without rank and experience and so on, a lot of the faculty, whatever they were, were sort of purpose-built. So one, I can get specific, but the point being that Joe Blow was brought in to teach this course from wherever, from Yale, and John Smith was brought in from NYU to teach that course, etc. There were some real faculty and the number of technical people, particularly with those of us who are interested in the television ends of things, because that took someone being in residence. But the vast majority of faculty hadn’t really been created.

The student body was diverse in the sense of the time, by which I mean not as we use it today, but they were from all kinds of schools all around the country. But I will say using 60 is the approximate size of the class to give you a sense of that they were—I was trying to put a number on this and I want to say it was—it’s probably 80 to 90 percent male. We had a guy from India. We had one woman of color. We had no one of any Latin or other Asian heritage that I can recall at all. And I’m pretty good at recalling this stuff. So I mean this was—and it wasn’t even thought about at the time, it’s just the way it was, pretty much an all, not all white, that’s wrong, but a virtually all white, mostly male school, as was so much in the world at that time.

So we were perhaps geographically diverse as far as the United States and our education. We had Ivy League people. We had public university people. We had Midwestern people. We had Southern people and Eastern people. We also had a few groups, which were sort of surprising, which my friend and I, with whom you’ll speak later, never quite figured out. There was a group

that was putting together some sort of magazine in Cincinnati. What was that? We never knew. They were the something group. I don't know. Call them the XYZ group, because I don't know what the hell they were. And they all kind of stuck together. And they were with us, but they weren't with us.

Then there was another program at the time, which actually was quite interesting and something that I think Annenberg should somehow get back to, which was various joint stuff with Wharton [School]. So I—and you could do it two ways. There was a very formal Annenberg-Wharton thing, which is probably something that Gerbner put together. But you could also do what I did, which was I took a couple of courses at Wharton. So, I was able to get the benefit of this school and that school almost simultaneously, you might say. And there are different approaches to similar things. There was also—oh, and that program took an extra semester if you wanted to be in the full Wharton-Annenberg program. So there were the regular students, the mystery Cincinnati people, and the Wharton-Annenberg people.

We were just talking this morning about the fact that Larry [Ott], my friend and future interviewee, he says he never worked so hard at his time here. He came here from Fordham [University], where he did very well, classic Jesuit education—right in the heart of New York, etc. I said I learned an enormous amount here, but I didn't work very hard. I worked very hard at Michigan. So it's very interesting to know. You say, well, What was the atmosphere here? Did everyone want to go to be president of NBC [National Broadcasting Company]? Did everyone want to be the dean of a communications college? There, just among two people, have a very different impression of what the place was. So what will be interesting as you go through this to see what emerges as the portrait of the place.

Now, getting back to Gerbner, this is crucial now. This is now the important point. This place for the previous two years had been like many communications schools of the time—very much, I don't say this deprecatingly, only descriptively, a trade school. It taught people the early stages of working in various communications situations, whether it be magazines or journalism or television or book publishing, etc. Gerbner came in and our class, '64-'65 academic year. It was determined there would be a hybrid, my term, I don't know what the official term is, but my term, hybrid. And we had a curriculum of, on the one hand, very, very, I think people called it theory then, communications theory and what it means to communicate and how people communicate and so on. But we also had a lot of very, very practical stuff too.

We had this—there were labs so-called. So I was in the TV lab. There was a photo lab, a photojournalism, I guess perhaps it was, lab, etc. And that took a lot of your time. And for a while the school went on, I think for the first few years of Gerbner's time, went on with this hybrid model. Our perception was that by the late '60s or early '70s, Gerbner had turned it into a much more of an academic pursuit of the discipline of communications—of how people communicate and why and where and when and the effects of it and so on, and had much, much less—I actually don't know if it was a tiny fraction or a medium fraction—but much less of this practical, oh, you want to be in book publishing, we'll teach you about that. Oh, you want to be in television, as I did. Oh, well, we'll put on television programs.

So there was an enormous change in a very short time, let's call it 10 years, which is short by academic world standards, from sort of the first few years of Joel Sayre, I think. No, he was the faculty, not the dean. Gilbert Seldes. Gilbert Seldes, dean of sort of this loosey-goosey thing. Gerbner comes in. It becomes the hybrid. Gerbner moves on and sees his direction as, for want of a better term, a more academic communications school. And I think after that, there's almost been, over many, many years, a moderate return. I could be wrong on this, but that's my vision, as to a sort of hybrid, a sort of hybrid model. I may be right, I may be wrong, but that's my vision. So I've seen that. This is all an answer to your question of what was it like at the time.

Q: Did you have a course with Gerbner? I wondered if the master's students—there was no PhD program yet—and if the master's students engaged in what you called the proseminar room—there was this proseminar later. Was there one for you all in 1964?

BURKAT: Yes. Well, the first thing you have to know, which is still a joke about people who went there at the time, there was the proseminar and there was the colloquium. And one, no one ever knew what a proseminar was. We knew what a seminar was, but we still don't know what a proseminar was. And we never could differentiate between the proseminar and the colloquium. But there was a time twice a week when we gathered in a big room and a distinguished personage would come and talk to us, and the best part, of course, was that that distinguished person—you got to question that distinguished person. The one I remember most—I had no recollection of what he said—but was the president of ABC [American Broadcasting Company] but I said, Well, this is cool. I'm here, I'm at the Annenberg School. I would love to get a job at ABC when I get out of here. And here's the president of ABC talking to us. I found that very useful at the time. Did that answer your question?

Q: Yes. And so the proseminar did it. And not to say that it was easy to distinguish between the colloquium and the proseminar. But did Gerbner, do you have memories of him and how he ran it?

BURKAT: Oh, yes, sure. He did the classic, I think, dean sort of job. He gave a context to the person and to his—and there may have been women, but I don't recall any women speakers. Another important point of the times. And so the context of their career and way they fit into the school and the study of communications. But it was not a teaching atmosphere. It was, this guy's name was [Thomas] Moore, the ABC guy, I forget his first name. You know, it's Moore talking to you about ABC and his thoughts on television of the time and so on. And Gerbner, to his credit, did not dominate the Q&A. It was very much—I mean, you had 60 people in the room, all of whom are very interested, by definition, in media and communications. And there were always lots of questions. It was never one of those embarrassing situations. Anyone have anything else, else, else? Oh, good, Joe, yes. You know, there was none of that.

Q: Okay, great. Well, that fall or it might have been the spring, either way, did you have other classes that you remember or faculty who you recall, even if you don't know their names?

BURKAT: Yes, well, I might even remember names because I have a nutty memory. I just also would just want to add that I don't ever recall—I went to Michigan. I went to Columbia Summer School. I went to school in Sweden and I went someplace else. And I do not recall any female faculty or faculty of color in any of these institutions in two countries and so on. It just staggers me to think. I think that's probably true in high school too, by the way. I'm pretty sure that that was true in high school. It's just amazing to think about. So faculty members, I mean, the people, how—I don't know if Gerbner did it or if his predecessor did it or what—but the faculty was great, which is not to say, and I'll just mention a few names, not to say that everyone was wonderful, but gee, there were some great people.

I'll just mention some names and my thoughts on them with a very important point. I will say it twice. This is not in any order. This is not in any order. It is only in the order that they happen to pop into my mind as we talk. So please. So just starting with the dean, just because we've been talking about him. I mean, he was the dean. He's the man in charge. The boss is always the boss and puts his or her stamp on whatever organization it is. And I think he was in a very difficult situation. He's coming from this big Midwestern university. Suddenly he's here in this Ivy League, smaller place. I know the difference because I went to a big Midwestern university and then came here to this smaller place in the East.

And he had a hard job and he was, as I mentioned, he was trying to change the curriculum. He was not remote, though. He was not a guy who sat in the office and sat in the office. I mean, he was out there among us, perhaps not as much as a modern dean would be, but for the time he was out. And you could meet him and you could talk with him and he would tell you what he thought. He had an impossible job because most of the people in my year were here. We probably wanted 80-20, we probably wanted 80 practical, 20 percent theoretic, and what we got was the opposite with the new dean. So he was in the tough spot for all these changes that were going on.

Probably the most beloved faculty member was a man named Charles Siepmann, a legend, a legend, a legend. I think we called him Dr. Siepmann, even though he wasn't a PhD, just because we had such respect for him. Siepmann was a Brit, later an American, I presume, who helped put together, codify, and organize the BBC [British Broadcasting Corporation], if you can believe it. He was, what's the phrase from *Hamilton*? The man in the room, whatever, the room where it happened. He was in the room where much of this happened and had tales to tell of how and why the BBC operated compared to what was—and there's a second half of what he did too, which I'll tell you about in a minute, which was perhaps even more important. But to me, who was interested in this, it was wonderful, how it was put together and why and how it operated at the BBC compared to those same things here in American television media. And to be in that—to hear from the man, a man who was, if he wasn't at the head of the table, he was very near the head of the table of that historic institution—was a wonderful learning experience. And of course he was very distinguished and had white hair and tweed suits and talked sort of the way I'm trying to talk and we all learned a lot.

Now the course he taught was a course that had somewhere—the key word in the title of the course was propaganda. And that's what he was trying to help us learn or teach us. We talked a lot about Leni Riefenstahl. Remember, now this is an eye blink after World War II when we were in school. It was less—when we started here, the war, World War II, had been over less than 20 years, or fewer than. I'm not sure which would be the right adjective. But 19, roughly, years before. So it was quite a recent thing. And Riefenstahl, you know, was a contemporary character. She was still very much still around. Anyone who's watching this probably knows all about her films, so I'm not going to have to introduce that. But he took us through much of her catalog and used that as a platform to understand the propaganda portion of media studies and of the use of media and so on in his beloved way.

There was another guy, not another guy—now, let me move to another faculty member. Again, no order, it just pops in my mind. Brodbeck, Arthur Brodbeck. He was a faculty member, I don't know, again, the rank or the exact activity and so on, at Yale [University]. And he would come down here all the way from New Haven by train once a week. People thought he was a genius. I had no idea what he was talking about, which is my failing, I'm sure, not his, because many people that I knew thought very highly of him. But I have to say, I had no idea what he was talking about the entire time I was in his classes. So that was Brodbeck.

Television, very, very important to me, because we actually got, and I'm going to put this in temporal context in a minute, we actually got to do television programs and learned how to do that. Now, think of it now. It's 1964. A television camera now, which you can hold in your hand and make a Hollywood picture with, was run by a television camera. It wasn't as big as a house. How big was it? I'm looking around for something to compare it with. I mean, it was bigger than the dining room table. I mean, they were huge things, huge, enormous things. And somebody, I think WCAU in Philadelphia here, had given a bunch of cameras to the Annenberg School and given other equipment. So we actually got to use this stuff.

The person who taught us this was a wonderful man named George Dessart, D-E-S-S-A-R-T. George was actually—his job here was, as mentioned, there's a polite academic word, I forget what it is, but it means you're not a full faculty member, you're an adjunct. That's right, George was an adjunct. [W]CAU was his regular job. He had all the Emmys and so on. And he taught us television, stuff that I still quote today, or quoted when I was working regularly anyway, today. And in fact, George, because I got to call him George after I left here, George recruited me to CBS [Columbia Broadcasting System] in New York and promoted me at CBS in New York. And he ended up having a very, very senior corporate position or two or three.

So he was a guy who, if you had this practical bent and interest in television, couldn't have been better suited. He had a sort of a technical assistant—may have been adjunct, may have not—named Lew [Lewis] Barlow, who was a great guy. Barlow's office is right near where David Eisenhower's office is today, on that corridor there. But not only was Lew a bit less distinguished, or perhaps a lot less distinguished, although a hell of a guy and knew a lot about television, but he had two acolytes always in his office who later became extremely well known. One was from the previous Annenberg class, who became the great photographer Mary Ellen

Mark, whom you may know, who was one of the great 20th- and 21st-century photographers. And so she would be hanging around with Barlow in that office off the, what we now can call the Eisenhower corridor. And the other was Candice Bergen. So the two of them would always be hanging around with Barlow and giggling all the time.

Talk about the atmosphere of the school. That was part of it. So that was television. Then I'm trying to remember some of it. I did—let me talk perhaps finally about a very, very important academic thing that I did—we didn't do what was formerly called—formally, not formerly but formally called a master's dissertation. But we had to do—I think we called it a long paper or some euphemism like that, which really meant investigate something fairly deeply that you find interesting or important or both. So I actually mentioned earlier in this talk that I would listen to distant radio stations. I always loved radio. I always loved radio, so I thought, well, this will be a time to learn something about radio.

I actually gave it some thought. I thought about very little in any of those academic institutions I just mentioned, but I actually thought about this. And I decided, oh, and I had majored in Michigan—I may or may not have said this—in sociology. So I said, well, okay, I know something about groups and group actions and group thinking, and I like radio, and how am I going to turn that into this paper that we all got to do and that was very, very important. It had to be done and done well, and if you didn't reach a certain level, you actually had to come back, I think it was, for another semester. So it was quite important, both learning and just to get your degree on a practical side.

I came up with this idea of a qualitative—because you couldn't do a quantitative study—but a qualitative study of Philadelphia disc jockeys. And to get a sense of what their backgrounds were like, what things they shared, what things they didn't share, what they thought they were doing. What was the problem? Anybody can say, Here's Mary Smith singing *Merry Christmas, I Love You*. But they must feel they're doing more than that. What do they think about their life? And I did a lot of demographic thinking too. Did I see things that entered into it? Well anyway, this was accepted and I went to work on it and eventually completed it. Just like the television cameras, I had the audio. So I wandered around Philadelphia interviewing these guys.

And by the way, there was no such thing as a female disc jockey then, just to be very clear on that. It didn't exist. It wasn't even like, Oh, well, she's very well known because she's one of the few. No, there were none. So I wandered around Philadelphia interviewing these guys. I had a Wollensak tape recorder, which was the technical wonder of the time. Which, now remember, I'm like 22, 23 years old, so I'm young and strong. And you can hardly carry this thing, although it was the smallest and lightest and best of the time. And the Annenberg School also didn't give you any money to do this. So I was on the buses all over to different radio stations in Philadelphia interviewing these fellows. And I always liked to be behind the scenes at radio. I always loved to be hanging around in radio stations. So that was a good thing. So I did this social paper anyway, and that got me my degree, which answers some question that you just asked me.

Q: Yes. And okay, and I guess I'm—to kind of close out the—

BURKAT: —in this dizzying speed that I'm running through this—

Q: I mean, it's been really rich about the year you were there. Were there, you know—you talked about the atmosphere a little bit ago and the building, how much it's changed. You know, were there social events and was the building itself important in any way?

BURKAT: Well, first of all, I would say the building itself is almost unrecognizable once you get in it. The lobby off of Locust Walk, which by the way was only about a hundred yards long at the time. The building off of Locust Walk, when you looked at it, it still looks the same. And you walk into that sort of open hall. But once you're through the door into that hall, even that looks different. And you could hardly recognize, you can barely recognize the building as it is today. The TV lab, which was in the basement, now is, I don't know what. I mean, there's some media services down there. Yes, it was quite a neat little—I mean, remember, I went from here right to NBC, so I saw some pretty good TV studios at NBC. And it was a pretty good studio here, considering that [W]CAU had just donated it and everything, and we're just graduate students, you know, grateful to have whatever we had.

But the building, absolutely both beautiful, thank you, the Annenberg family, and very, very different from the way it is today. Social. There was a lot of sociability. What I realized in retrospect is surprisingly, with 60 young people, there was very little dating. There was no dating, in fact, of any kind, across any gender combinations that I can think of at the time. But there was a lot of beer drinking and talking and hanging out and stuff and parties and that sort of thing. So it was very convivial. It wasn't like this was definitely not a commuter experience. This was definitely, definitely a campus, self-contained, 60 people in your world group, very social, obviously all communicators of one sort or another. So there was that going on. But, you know, no one ever said, Oh, I want to, you know, like—what's my favorite TV show now? *Below Deck*, where they're all on the ship and they're all hanging around with each other and shall we say socializing with each other. Nah, we—it wasn't even close.

Despite the fact that we were very compressed in age and obviously similar in interests and all that sort of thing. But it was, it also was relaxed because I mean we weren't studying to be people who were going to cure cancer or save the world or find a chemical solution or something. I found this in my professional life. Sometimes you'd be in a meeting, there'd be 10 people around a very fancy table with a lot of expensive refreshments. And you'd be yelling at each other about something or other that was the subject of this meeting. And at some point, someone would say, you know, people, we're talking about a TV show here. You know, it's a serious topic that is studied here at the Annenberg School, but it's not saving the world. And so I think that sort of is the way things are, although maybe your cigarette studies that you do will save the world. I don't know. But I think that was the—is there a part of the atmosphere question that I'm not addressing or I'm not understanding?

Q: No, I think that was really a wonderful answer about it. And that's what I had in mind. I was wondering if there was like a party life or not.

BURKAT: There was definitely a party life which consisted of sitting around and drinking beer in someone's ugly apartment.

Q: Okay, very good. Well, let's then move on to what you said was your first job after, which was the NBC job. And I guess asking this question, both about NBC, we'll have to go a little bit quickly through what is a remarkable career, some of which we already have on tape.

BURKAT: Do you want to talk about, though, my first job?

Q: Yes. And in fact, your first job. And then as you talk about it, I'm just curious if Annenberg connections or things you learned in Annenberg were important or not along the way.

BURKAT: Okay, so here I am. I've got this Michigan sociology degree, this Annenberg communications degree, some time spent in Sweden. And with all this wonderfulness, the only job you could get was as a page at NBC, which in itself I only got because my father, who was at Columbia Records running that, or not running Columbia Records, but running Columbia Masterworks, knew his opposite number at RCA [Radio Corporation of America], which owned NBC. So I get this job as a page and that's really an usher. So Annenberg doesn't really give you a lot of training as being an usher. But fairly quickly, I got a job promoting audiences. You know, it's hard to get a couple hundred people in the middle of New York on a cold day to come to see some stupid game show. So I had had this promotion course, as it happened a Wharton course, but I learned about how to promote and get people to come to shows. And then I got a job writing letters for NBC. So I had all this communication—how do you relate to people who have written to NBC? I found that helpful.

And then finally I got into, after about two, three years out of here, I got a job with actual making television, by which I mean I made promos. Now promos have since now turned to be called trailers—they took the movie industry term—but we churned out promos. And so I had been—remember, there I am in the basement of the Annenberg School putting on TV shows, editing them, which was very difficult in those days, etc., and finally now I am actually creating stuff that's seen on television—much of which I learned how to do from doing these TV shows here at Annenberg. Then I'm doing that then, and I do then I move to another channel and do it—then Dessart calls me. Remember Dessart TV Annenberg—he has moved from [W]CAU in Philadelphia to CBS in New York. He says, I have a job that I've been doing sort of part-time. They want to make it a full-time job. Do you want it? It's manager of community affairs of WCBS TV.

Now, this is like an outreach communication job. And I say this, maybe it sounds a little politically incorrect, but it's very simply accurate. I was probably the last male white person to do that job at that company, at that station. And George was probably the next to the last person to do it, because we were the wrong people. I mean, we shouldn't have been doing that

job, but we did it. So my connection with George Dessart from the Annenberg School got me to move from producing promos, which I learned here, to a first real kind of management job there. And remember, I studied a little management across the street at Wharton.

And from then on, I started being a manager. I was a suit. And all these kinds of people, whether it's people producing promos or writing letters or running community affairs or doing publicity, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, all that, it's all communication of one sort or another. It's all communication. The duty may be different yesterday than it was today, but you're trying to get messages to people. You're not inventing a medicine, you're not combining chemical elements, you're messaging people, and communications and messaging is the same thing. So, every single thing that I ever picked up in this building, someday I would use it in all of these obscure and somewhat less obscure ways. So Annenberg was very important to me in that way. Not that I can play back to you exactly what Charles Siepmann said about how the BBC was formed, but in the back of my mind, knowing how the BBC ran helped me to run something at various networks that I worked for.

Q: Okay. That's really helpful. And I'm wondering then, did you go from this CBS role to HBO [Home Box Office], which takes us to the rest of your career? Or did you have a stint somewhere else?

BURKAT: I worked at CBS. I went back to NBC to run their radio promotion division. And I was recruited to HBO from the second stint at NBC by a typical executive recruiter kind of person. Now, HBO I can talk about at great length, but I throw it to you to ask me anything you'd like.

Q: Okay, well, I mean, it can get a little bit meta since you already conducted interviews that were about the HBO history. But I am curious, if you could just tell us about how you were recruited to HBO, which was in its infancy and maybe didn't even have the name HBO at the time. And that story, including the [Charles] Dolan interaction.

BURKAT: Okay, well, the way I got to HBO was through, as I mentioned just in passing, through an executive recruiter who I think somehow had gotten to my wife. And I think that eventuated to me. Now, here's the interesting thing, though. Remember, I am now at this point 12 years out of Annenberg, mid- to late-30s. I'm working at NBC. I'm responsible for the promotion of eight radio stations and two radio networks that they ran. And I get the recruiter call. And I say, well, that's interesting. That's interesting. I then proceed to realize that I don't know what the hell HBO is. No one's ever heard of HBO. It's 1977, just to give an exact year. It's 1977. I ask everyone I work with at NBC, everyone in my department, if I go into a meeting, I say, hey, you know HBO? What is it? The consensus was HBO is dirty movies. That's what pretty much everybody considered the business they were in. And that didn't seem like something I really wanted to do that much, to leave NBC to go to a dirty movies company. Then I found one guy. And he said, well, I have HBO. He lived in Greenwich Village, of course. I have HBO. Why don't you come down and watch it for a couple of nights and you'll get a sense of it and maybe they'll give you a sense of whether this is a job for you or not.

Well, I go down there and I go like, Wait, this is a miracle. This is a miracle. There's no commercials. There's no editing. There's uncensored movies. There's very, very funny comedy shows. It's all that wonderful HBO stuff that went on for 20 years until they added series and then it became even more. So, oh, this is great. This could be something. Now, in retrospect, we all have—well, you know, cable was going to be the future and multi-channel universe and 500 [channels]. But nobody knew that then. Nobody knew that. We were just like this crazy thing that literally no one I knew in the entire NBC world that had ever even heard about, never mind actually was a paying customer and watcher thereof.

So I got there and we started—I can go in deep in this as you have time for, I mean the stuff we started there now is standard operating procedure but then was just, Oh, you crazy kids! And that in itself was a very crazy atmosphere in itself. Socially, it was crazy. Business-wise, it was crazy. It was a world unto itself in many, many ways. But we invented this stuff as we go along. We went along, I should say, that now just seems, yeah. But when you're inventing it, it's a little more complicated than that. What do you got?

Q: Well, I want to know a little bit more about your role.

BURKAT: My role.

Q: As it evolved over those first few years, especially. And then I can't recall if you were actually there with a Dolan meeting and so on. But, you know, that story as well.

BURKAT: Okay, yes. This is an interesting story. Today, HBO literally produces, they've had, in the last year or two, they've had some financial, not problems, but just things that weren't working out because they were bought and sold. They had a similar, but they've contributed billions and millions, and everybody thinks that this is, you know, everything was always great. But HBO almost died on the operating table, is the interesting thing. In the mid-'70s, HBO started earlier than most people think. It started in '73, '72, depending on how you figure it. By '75, business is not good. It's half-owned or portion-owned by a man named Charles Dolan, who was one of the legends of the cable business, and Time Inc., excuse me, correction, then Time Inc. It had not become Time Warner yet.

Their problem is they can't get programs, they can't get movies—movies was then known as the horsepower of the service—they can't buy any, Hollywood doesn't want to sell the movies because Hollywood thinks that HBO and some of its successors like Showtime and so on are going to put them out of business. And they literally are a few months away from dying, so Charles Dolan, who owns a big chunk of the company and who persevered for many years and became a billionaire of billionaires of cable operators, but then has just got a little piece of this horrible thing called HBO, go to Hollywood along with a man named Jerry Levin, Gerald M. Levin, Penn Law, and he is the chairman of this company that isn't doing any business.

So two guys who went on to great things. Jerry went on to be chairman of all of Time, Inc., and created Time Warner and then sold to AOL, and that was a mess. But they go around. They're

there in Hollywood for about a month. Nobody is selling them movies. They go to Disney, they go to Paramount, they go to Fox. There's only, what, at that time, as there still are, Columbia. About six possible people who they can ask, they can beg for product to sell in their store, HBO. No, no, no, no, no. Finally, for no particular reason, they've literally been in residence for a month. I should tell you that the source of all this story is Dolan to me. So I have a feeling it's probably mostly accurate. I can't say that it is accurate.

Finally, Dolan and Levin have their last gasp. They've already been turned down everywhere else that counts, these major studios that we all know. They go to a meeting at Universal, later part of the great Philadelphia company Comcast, as they are today. They go to Universal and for reasons that I'm sure made sense, I don't happen to know them, Universal said, Yes, we'll deign to take your money. And agree to sell them whatever the number of movies, when I say sell them, that means the rights to exhibit on cable television—enough that was able to keep them going until the others decided, you know, the train is leaving the station now without us, because if Universal is getting all this money. We want a part of this money too. So I'm making this up. So Columbia says, You know, we want some money. So Paramount says, Well, we want some of this money too.

Suddenly we got the movies. And the rest is history. Now there's one guy when you mentioned what I've called the missing link. There's one guy who may still be around who actually was present as a young, probably, you know, probably just a guy who went to Hollywood and wanted to work in the movie business as a young man. And it is said was at that table where that decision—that presentation and that decision—was made that meant that HBO lived and therefore changed the entire media planet. I hope someday to be able to find him, hopefully with the help of the Annenberg School of the University of Pennsylvania, and get his story down on some preserving medium, shall we say. But the bottom line here is this thing, which did change the television world, the medium world, everywhere, every place for all time, could have easily died in '74, '75, whichever year it actually was when these meetings were held. It's pretty amazing to think about.

Q: Okay, and so you arrived '77.

BURKAT: Yes.

Q: And what was your role and did it change over those first few years?

BURKAT: My role was sort of lord high everything else of communications. Oh, the Annenberg School for Communications. Hmm, interesting. I was in charge. Now, today, what I'm going to tell you what I was in charge of, which started at about 20 people and ended about 100 people, is today like 300 or 400 people doing more or less the same thing. But you know that's how times change. I was in charge of, in no particular order, all the on-air promos that you see, all the publicity for the company, which means consumer and trade publicity, all the affiliate communications—and even then we had, I think if I remember, we had about 8,000 cable systems that were our customers.

I was in charge of what was called the *Guide*. Believe it or not, cable companies sent out a bill every month. They sent it out in an envelope with a stamp and paper. And there was a bill, just the way you get your MasterCard bill or whatever. And there was also in it an *HBO Guide*. We printed up four versions of this guide every month. It was our own little *TV Guide*. It was said to be the biggest Time Inc. publication. Four versions totaling seven and a half million for color. It was a hell of a job just by itself. But what it allowed us to do, I always said it, and why I was able to make it happen, was it allowed us to position the product to the customer. This is now getting now very into combo Annenberg and Wharton to a certain extent. It allowed us to say, we're going to position this movie as a female-oriented love story, even though maybe it actually was positioned, because that's what works on television. Maybe Hollywood presented it as a travel story to an exotic place where you saw a lovely thing, but we're going to call it a love story. So we were able to communicate. Just like we learned in Siepmann's class, we created a reality about this movie that maybe wasn't a lie, but it wasn't true either. So I don't know what the hell it was.

Q: Propaganda.

BURKAT: Yes, it was, ha, thank you, yes, it was propaganda. But I mean, we're a business, you know, HBO is not a—is not a university, it's not a museum, it's a business for sure, that's fine. And we—our job was to keep business going. So I was in charge of that, I was in charge of letter writing, because I had had that NBC experience, and remember I got the NBC job because I had a bit of Annenberg background and a bit of nepotism. Anything, someone once said, anything that you could sort of see about the company and the product that wasn't the product itself. We spent a lot of time creating reality, propaganda. We had a monthly meeting where we looked at the programming two months ahead and positioned every single thing on the channel the way we wanted it positioned.

Because remember, we're making promos that you're going to see on the air about it, and we're sending out seven and a half million pieces of paper about it, and we're hitting every TV journalist in the country with publicity stuff, etc. Later on, I went to also be in charge of affiliate communications, which is just when you have 8,000 cable systems spread around the country—what do you do, just to tell them what they should do and how they should do it and when they should do it? So I tried to figure that out too. We wanted to do something that now literally a child could do, but then was considered technically impossible, which is interesting.

My idea was that I wanted to create something to talk to these affiliates, but that could not be seen by the press, which would be giving away our business plans and our business secrets, and could also be positioned negatively because they didn't like what we were saying because it was profit-oriented. So I wanted to tell you, who runs the cable system in Fort Wayne, Indiana, I wanted to tell you some business stuff every month on a regular basis via video, closed, but no one else could see it except you in Fort Wayne and the next guy in Indianapolis and the next guy in wherever else is in Indiana, which I don't know much about.

You could not do that technically now. Now what we take for granted sitting at a desk, putting aside the question of stealing people's personal information and so on. We had consultant after consultant and spent, well, we didn't spend millions, but we spent hundreds of thousands in the mid-'70s and early '80s trying to figure out a way to get video information absolutely or as secure as possible. And we couldn't do it. And in the communications world today, all of us sitting in this room and literally children can do it. So think about how that's changed.

Q: Yes, it's amazing. Well, then take us through to the rest of the HBO era and then what you did after you effectively retired. Or did you move on to form your own consultancy?

BURKAT: Humorously, HBO stayed with movie, sports, and specials, and proudly waved the flag of we don't do series for many, many years until they didn't do them until they did them. One of those things. And I had long since left. By the mid-'80s, I had left and went on to a bunch of other networks and some non-profit television and some for-profit. And I did eight years of consulting with people, all this stuff that I talked about. I then went and preached its own gospel.

And I never went back to big organizations. I maybe consulted with big organizations, but it was very interesting because it was almost, you know—you come out of this school, you go to a big leading company, you go then to another big leading company or even to a third big leading company and a fourth. And then suddenly you're on your own. And there I was in my not very—at that time, the home office was just being invented and nobody worked. Well, the present expression is from home. I've always thought it should be at home. Nobody worked at home in those days. But I did.

And somehow I was able to, from my basement in Scarsdale [New York], do eight years of consulting on this very stuff that we've been talking about today. And sometimes in strange ways—for example, I did a project. I mean, I can go on and on with examples, but just one that is consulting on communications. In Fort Lauderdale, Florida, there was a company, I'm not sure I recall the name of it, but what they did was they would make magazines in groups for certain categories of businesses or public institutions. Often, for example, hospitals, they would produce a 12-page magazine, 10 pages of which were the same, but two pages were for this hospital and two pages for that hospital. So they said very smartly, wait a minute, all these 8,000 cable systems that we're talking about show the same programs. But they also, each one has their—one may have a problem with bill payment.

Another may be having a technical problem. Another may be having a legal problem. So why don't we produce a 12-page magazine every month of which we will produce 10 pages and two pages you in Fort Wayne, Indiana, get to put your own cable system stuff down. Well, that's a good idea except for one thing. We don't know anything about the history of television. We don't have any idea how cable works. We don't have any idea how cable television works. But boy, we better know it if we wanted to, one, do it and two, sell it to people. So they hired me to—I called it something like Cable Television University. And they hired me. And for probably six months, I went down to Fort Lauderdale once or twice a month. Starting going back to

Siepmann, I talked about how the FCC [Federal Communications Commission] was started and the laws that it was started and then the litigation that allowed paid television to work and cable television to work and then into some of this other kind of stuff about, well, just the whole world of how it all worked. And it was sort of—it was the kind of thing that you probably, probably half of it I learned here and half of it I learned from out in the business world.

It was—it's a really interesting example of how to use 20 years later something that you sat in this building and learned. And you don't even know that you're doing it, but yet you do know that you're doing it. So it's sort of an interesting thing. So I did that kind of project. I helped launch an Arabic language news network for the EU [European Union] and the UK [United Kingdom]. I guess cross-cultural communication. I helped launch Discovery Kids Channel Latin America. Again, more cross-cultural communication. Stuff that you can't make up. I did some sort of history of the RCA satellites. I forget exactly what they wanted to do, but I had to take all the RCA—which was the leading satellite operator at the time. They wanted some sort of historical perspective, which is, again, the kind of thing you learn to do here. If I had a list of my clients, I'd probably remember all the different ones that I did.

Q: And then you launched, conceived, and ran the HBO Oral History Project.

BURKAT: Yes.

Q: Maybe we can end with that.

BURKAT: Okay. So at some point, I hadn't really retired, but I wasn't doing much of anything. And I happened to be talking to an old friend from HBO, and we said, you know, this thing, as I just mentioned in another context, this thing changed the way the world of communications functions, runs, is, whatever the right verb is. And it's all going to go away because when we're gone, no one's going to know about it. So I'm talking to this guy on the phone and saying, Well, you know, I should do some kind of history of it. So I somehow came across the concept. I didn't really know the concept of oral history very well. I had heard of it, but I didn't really know it very well. Came across it, said, well, I can do that. Read some books on it, etc.

Then I tried to get what, I don't know the proper term, but I'm going to call it sponsorship of it, for want of a better term. And I went to the TV [Television] Academy, and they poo-pooed, oh well, you know, poo-poo-poo, we're not, beneath our dignity. I went to a thing called The Cable Center, which is a very interesting organization, has a connection with the University of Denver, and they study and preserve and so on. But it's not Annenberg. It's a different approach. They weren't interested. Took it to a couple of, oh, I know. I took it to a couple of other communications places. Not to Annenberg, the point of the story. Not to Annenberg.

I think probably one might have been Syracuse [University]. One might have been BU [Boston University]. I can't—I feel this was a bit back and you want to forget the ones where you didn't succeed. But my friend, the guy who I originally got the idea with when I was talking to him on the telephone, said, Wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. He went to BU

communications school, by the way. He said, You went to the Annenberg School, this renowned institution. If nothing else, you're an alumnus of the place. Go talk to the people there.

So I write Dean Michael [Delli Carpini] a note saying, I don't tell him what it is. I just say, I have an idea for something that I think the Annenberg School might be interested in participating in. Now, I'm telling this the way it happened. I don't tell him what it is. I said, but I said, I'd like to come down, I gave him a couple of dates. He writes back and says, Oh, well, that sounds interesting. I guess I told him, Well, look, you can get a sense of my background so you can kind of guess. But I said, We'll talk about when I get there. So I come down here. I go down here. No, I'm here. So I come down here from New York. I meet with Michael. And I have—it's not a presentation. I mean, there's no PowerPoint. There's no handouts. There's no graphs and charts and easels. But I have notes.

And I talked to him about this idea, which I just mentioned, which is HBO changed the world. Nobody is recording this. The first 10 years were the crucial years. I want to go around and do an oral history with all kinds of people who made it up, not only the people who invented it, like Levine and Dolan, but I also want to talk to junior people. I want to talk to middle-level people. I want to just present a portrait of what this world-changing company in the communications world—how it happened, how it came about. This is, Michael immediately says, Yes, let's do it. Now, I hadn't even finished my dog and pony show, and Michael says, Yes, let's do it. This is good. He said, Give me your notes. That'll help me move things. I said, Michael, this is too embarrassing. I'm not going to give you my notes. I said, Give me like a week or something to write up my notes so that I can feel at least comfort. You're the dean of the Annenberg School. I'm not giving you my notes. We chuckled at it, but I was quite determined about that.

But I said, You want to go ahead with this, right? He says, Right, yes, this is right up our alley. We should do this. We can use it in this way and that way and the other way, and that would be a good thing. So long story short, I do go back to New York. I do take a week. I do write up my notes. I send them to him. He says, This is fine. We discussed an arrangement that seemed to be satisfactory to him as head of the school and me as the person doing it. And I just kind of invented this thing from my reading of how to do oral history books or articles or both. And now resident at this school—it's either 39 or 40 or 38, 39 I guess is the number—interviews done on all levels of people who either were at HBO during the first 10 years or who were associated—for example, the man who's the president of Comcast today never worked at HBO, but Comcast was very important to HBO and vice versa. That kind of person. And there they are and they're now being used for a number of different things. Here at the Annenberg School. But that's how it happened. Just popped in my mind and away we go.

Q: Okay, well, thank you very much. You were the perfect interview. The arc from Annenberg '64 to Annenberg 2025. It's the initial alumnus interview. So thank you so much, Howard, for sitting with us today.

BURKAT: Thank you. Glad it's now down for posterity.

Q: Right.

END OF INTERVIEW