Dotty Griffith

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Interviewer: Annemarie Nichols Anderson
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[00:00:00.00]

Annemarie N.: Ready?

[00:00:02.00]

Dotty G.: I'm ready.

[00:00:03.14]

Annemarie N.: All right. Let's see. Think I can hear, yeah. Okay.

[00:00:16.04]

Elaine C.: Turn off the cell phones, so there's no ringing and dinging and pinging.

[*START INTERVIEW]*

[00:00:19.24]

Annemarie N.: Good afternoon. Today is July 11, 2018, and I'm at the home of Ms. Dotty Griffith in Dallas, Texas. Let's get started. Could you introduce yourself and give us your birthdate, for the record, please?

[00:00:33.04]

Dotty G.: Happy to. This is Dotty Griffith. My birthdate is 11-4-1949.

[00:00:40.12]

Annemarie N.: Great. What do you do? What did you do?

[00:00:45.00]

Dotty G.: Well, I worked at the *Dallas Morning News* for a mere thirty-four years. Twenty-six years of that time, I was either the food editor or the restaurant critic.

[00:00:58.12]

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Annemarie N.: Awesome. Let's get started and talk a little bit about your early life. Where'd you grow up?

[00:01:06.04]

Dotty G.: I grew up in Terrell, Texas, which is about thirty miles east of Dallas. It's almost a suburb now. It's, like, one of the last few rural outposts this close to Dallas, but becoming suburban pretty quickly. But way back then, it was just one of many small towns, you know, outside Dallas.

[00:01:29.16]

Annemarie N.: That's awesome. Could you talk a little bit about what it was like to grow up there in Terrell?

[00:01:34.22]

Dotty G.: Oh, it was a very small-town life. I had a horse and I'd ride around town on my horse, you know, with friends. Actually, we'd go through the drive thru window at the Dairy Queen on our horses. [Laughter] In a food context, it was very traditional. That part of East Texas is probably more Southern in terms of culture and food than many other areas of Texas. All of East Texas is very Southern. So, I grew up with . . . pretty much fried anything, everything. Fry that sucker, the basic recipe. But also, you know, a lot of steaks and pot roast, and it was pretty much . . . a beef with some chicken existence, you know? And some barbecue and that kind of thing. But I was blessed to have a mother who, for her time, was quite adventurous about food. She loved to collect recipes—out of the *Dallas Morning News*, 'cause that was our, you know, paper of record. She loved to try new things. I remember one of the things that blew me away was when she had—we did what were called, the recipe was called Hawaiian meatballs, but it was basically beef meatballs in a sweet/sour sauce, and it had green peppers and pineapple and a little pineapple juice and some soy sauce and probably a little bit of garlic, and I thought that was pretty exotic. And, frankly, it was exotic for the time and the place. Only my mother, among our peers, would have ever tried that recipe and served it. She was the first person in our neighborhood to put spinach in a salad. It was very daring.

[00:03:56.02]

Annemarie N.: That's great. So, your mom's really adventurous and you lived in this pretty regular Southern town. What was your interest in food?

[00:04:10.00]

Dotty G.: You know, I just always was interested—obviously, I was a good eater, but I was interested in the fact that my mother did things that other women didn't necessarily do. I'm more interested in it with hindsight than I was at the time, but when—went to the University of Texas at Austin, after, for college, really got fascinated by Adelle Davis and what she was doing with food. And started cooking, had a boyfriend who had a house with a kitchen and a stove, and so I could cook over there as much as I wanted to. Started cooking and getting just more and more interested. And of course, Austin—compared to Terrell, Texas—had way more interesting, different kinds of food than I had certainly grown up with. Of course, we did live close enough to Dallas that, as I was growing up, you could come to Dallas and you could find things that weren't just meat and three at the local cafe or whatever. You know, I remember the first time I had pizza at Shakey's Pizza, it was wonderfully earth-shattering as a, I guess, junior high or high school kid in Dallas. So, I wasn't unexposed. I guess I just always had this innate interest in trying things that were outside my basic experience. Best way to say it.

[00:05:48.26]

Annemarie N.: That sounds great. Can you tell me a little bit about your interest in journalism? How did you decide to follow that as a career?

[00:05:57.19]

Dotty G.: I knew that I was going to write something, and . . . I just gravitated to journalism because I liked the immediacy of it. I liked the living history, the excuse to be in the middle of something. You know? Something happens, you get to go and watch it unfold and talk to people about what's happening. I loved that immediacy of it. That was my main draw to journalism, because I wasn't, certainly, shy, but I never would have gone up

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to people and asked 'em the questions that I asked them without the excuse, the entre, of saying, "I'm a reporter for." And especially once I got to the University of Texas and started taking journalism classes and started working for the *Daily Texan*, which is the student newspaper at the University of Texas, I really loved that part of it and became very much more aware. And I was always into current events. I read news magazines even in high school and newspapers. I, you know, was interested. And of course, I was in college from 1968 to [19]72, which we know what kind of years those were in the history of the United States. So many changes. Although I hadn't lived much of it, I was profoundly emotionally and intellectually impacted by the civil rights movement. I knew that the kind of place that I lived in was very racist, I knew it was wrong. Wasn't much I could or even tried to do about it at the time, but I was very anxious to break out of that. So, University of Texas, the anti-war movement was just a great intellectual time for me. I loved it. Part of that curiosity was about food that I didn't know about. I lived about three different lives while I was at the University of Texas. I had my sorority life, and I had my sort of my student politico life, which was being active on the Texan, and then I had my hardcore protest life. I'd go hang out in an anti-war commune in Houston, and we'd take trips up to Ann Arbor. It was great. And that was fascinating to me because people really were trying to do organic food then before it was cool. So, I got to explore those kinds of foods through that activism of the time. Then I'd go back to the University of Texas, shave my legs, and we'd all be fine again. [Laughter] You know, go back to the sorority house.

[00:09:03.06]

Annemarie N.: Could you talk a little bit about your experiences in the anti-war movement? Any particular situations that might stand out to you and how that kind of impacted you intellectually? And then, I guess, that intellectual impact—how that impacted your work at the *Daily Texan*?

[00:09:21.27]

Dotty G.: Well, at the *Daily Texan*, I did try to be a good journalist and not be involved in the movement on campus, because I was, quote, an objective journalist. But then when I

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would go off to my hippie commune in Houston, you know, I really got to know a lot more of the language and certainly that movement was known for not being particularly welcoming to women. It was very male-dominated, and women were kind of cute, fluffy things that hung around on the edges. In general. But I did learn a lot of the language, and just sort of how it worked. So, it did empower me when I got back to UT to just have a more insider understanding of what was going on campus, and how it worked and who was in charge, how to navigate that and what to expect, because the University of Texas was a little late to the party, but we did eventually get there.

[00:10:37.11]

Annemarie N.: Could you talk a little bit about some of the responsibilities you had working at the *Daily Texan* at the time?

[00:10:43.25]

Dotty G.: I was, variously, a general assignments reporter. I did a lot of coverage of the Texas legislature and Texas elections during my time at the Texan. I was an op-ed page editor for a while. But the political area was the thing that fascinated me the most and, of course, that was in the context—became in the context of Woodward and Bernstein, and so that's what I thought I wanted to be when I grew up, was a political writer. When I graduated, I really wanted to get on with a newspaper and cover the Texas legislature. I had great clips, I had sources, I knew the other reporters, and I kept trying to get on at the *Morning News*. And they kept . . . sort of making me interested, wanting me to be more interested in Dallas. At that point, I was mostly interested in getting a job. What I found out many, many, many years later, was that the head of the Austin bureau thought I was would have been a fine employee, except he thought I would have been a troublemaker. [Laughter] I was too radical. So, they shipped me to the mothership in Dallas to kind of break me in, which I thought that was hysterical, that they thought I was too radical. [Laughter] But that's how I ended up in Dallas. I got a job in Dallas and worked my way through what used to be the protocol for baby reporters. Back then, you could get a job at a newspaper like the *Dallas Morning News* fresh out of college, which don't think happens much anymore. Of course, they'd sit you down on the rewrite desk and start you

out writing obituaries. My favorite guy was this guy who used to come in from Restland Funeral Home and bring in the paper obituaries, you know, with the hand-scrawled notes from the loved ones of the deceased. This guy was hysterical, because he had a shovel lapel pin.

[00:13:17.05]

Annemarie N.: [Laughter] Oh, wow.

[00:13:17.29]

Dotty G.: It was classic old newspaper world. You know, it was great. So from there, I went to one of the suburban bureaus for a little while. Then they brought me back in and I did various beats, elections, schools, city hall, urban affairs, which was a beat at the time. Some general assignments. After about—well, and then I got to do some political reporting. After I'd been there for about six years, part of the time that I was there—although she retired not soon after I arrived—a woman named Julie Bunnell was the food editor. She was a legend in her own right. I mean, she was one of the early food editors who put food sections on the map. I mean, she was the first food editor at the *Dallas Morning News*. *Dallas Morning News* had never had a food section. Julie was a old vaudeville actress.

[00:14:24.10]

Annemarie N.: Oh, wow.

[00:14:24.10]

Dotty G.: And she had been hired by the television station, which was owned by the same family has owned the *Dallas Morning News*, to do a food cooking show. It was a cooking show on, you know—I think it was noon, around the noon hour she did her cooking show. When newspapers began to realize—and this was in the [19]50s—that all these food companies were turning out all these convenience foods and, from cake mixes, eventually frozen dinners, and they wanted an advertising vehicle. That's really how food sections got started, as an advertising vehicle for national food companies as well as then

local supermarkets. And all of that. Julie was the natural hire for that kind of gig, since she was already doing it at the sister television station. Julie was not a journalist by training, but you didn't really have to be when it started because this was back in the days when all the food manufacturers would provide these gorgeous slides of dishes, recipes, and you could just take verbatim what they printed you and put your byline on it. "There are so many wonderful things to do with cottage cheese. Here are ten of them." And there'd be this picture of ten different recipes using cottage cheese in some way, and brief intro, and then all these recipes using cottage cheese. Well, you can imagine that they probably sold a lot of cottage cheese on that week. That was what food sections did. But Julie was very good at it, especially the television part. She could put together a recipe on T.V. with the best of 'em. And that's what food sections were in most places during the—[coughs] pardon me—during the [19]50s, [19]60s. When Julie retired, the *Morning News*—as were many newspapers thinkin'—you know, we can probably do a little more journalism than this, and suddenly, newspapers were really more interested in journalists writing stories about more about what was happening in their communities. And actually, there were two food editors before I became the food editor in 1976. But they didn't adore it. And I was asked to do it. The reason I got asked to do it was because I loved to bring food to the newsroom on the weekends when I had to work, 'cause it was fun. [Laughter] So, they decided I could combine journalism and cooking, which, you know, is typical newspaper mentality. So, I took the job as food editor and just—I was just a sponge for any and everything about food. A cookbook came in to review, I actually read it and learned. Releases came in, I actually read them and learned. Like most beats in the newspaper business, if you do it long enough, you actually start to know a little bit about what you're doin'. That's how I got into food. I just discovered it really was something that I loved and wanted to write about and wanted to share information about it, and wanted to take it from just being reprinting recipes that somebody had sent you to developing recipes. And, eventually, we started doing our own photography at the news. We weren't just doing handout stuff. And we weren't unique; we were all writing the same sort of development arc in the industry. But, so I was very fortunate to end up in that position when the industry wanted to professionalize. Then, from a personal standpoint, covering food at a time in Dallas when, suddenly, there started to be a food

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scene here, as there were in cities—not just New York, San Francisco, but cities all over in the country. Regional chefs began discovering regional cuisines and regional ingredients, and food started to become a thing beyond three meals a day and using food coverage to push a product, or using food coverage to tell people the right way to eat. You know, you have to remember there wasn't a lot of information about nutrition even into the [19]40s. But food sections became the best way to get out solid information about nutrition. But it was also a way to combine information about food commodities that the government was subsidizing to promote, whether it was cheese or whatever, with some good information, because a lot of people in the United States didn't eat very well or very smartly. It wasn't known how to. In that way, food sections have always served a dual purpose: one, very informational and community-based, but also, there was a pretty serious commercial aspect to them, both for the newspapers as far as ad revenue, and for the community to provide advertising and sell products. I mean, this was the time when supermarkets started to grow. So, supermarkets were very happy to have a section of the local newspaper devoted to their products. They would buy two, three, four pages of ads per week to promote their specials and what was going on. I mean, around Thanksgiving, I used to have thirty-page food sections, which is unbelievable now. Unbelievable. That was a lot of copy to fill. Now, thank goodness for me, because I was a one-person band and, you know, you could fill around the edges with wire copy and stuff. But most of it was full-page ads from supermarkets for Thanksgiving or around the holidays. We would have these huge food sections. It was a wonderful thing, especially in light of what's happened to newspapers in general today and food sections in particular. I mean, there just aren't food sections anymore. Newspaper feature sections usually have one day a week devoted to food, and then if there's something else that comes up food-related, it gets covered.

[00:21:46.16]
Annemarie N.: That's great. I have lots of things to ask you now. [Laughter]

[00:21:49.22]
Dotty G.: Okay, good.

[00:21:51.20]

Annemarie N.: I want to ask you, you mentioned the Dallas food scene and kind of how it changed. Could you talk a little bit about that evolution during your time?

[00:22:03.14]

Dotty G.: An amazing thing happened, and I think it was 1977. I'd have to really go back and check. But around 1977, the great state of Texas decided that it was going to be okay for restaurants to sell beer and wine and alcohol. Until then, the only way you could drink in a restaurant was to take your own brown bag in, whether it was, you know, a bottle of Scotch or bourbon, which is going to be what it usually was. Some people would actually take in a bottle of wine, although you really had to fancy to know about wine. Some places were, quote, private clubs, and a private club could sell liquor by the drink, as the law was known. But, in general, it was a B.Y.O.B., and the conservative folks in this state were very slow to come around to it. So, it took—the legislature really needed some money. It wasn't any great progressive thought, but they figured out there was a huge revenue stream if they authorized liquor by the drink. So they did. It became legal to do statewide, but each precinct by precinct all over the state had to vote to approve it. So, you had local option—once the state approved the umbrella law, you had local option elections precinct by precinct to allow sales of liquor by the drink. But when that happened, it suddenly made restaurants a much more profitable operation, as we know. Restaurants, they sell one glass of wine for about what the bottle costs, at their cost. So, they sell four glasses of wine out of a bottle; they've well covered it. So, and that really brought the restaurant industry to life in Dallas. And at a time when Dallas itself was sort of coming awake. It wasn't the powerhouse economically that it was now, but it was starting to grow up in that whole postwar boom that all the country was experiencing. So, liquor by the drink suddenly made restaurants way more important than they ever had been before. And that, in the late [19]70s, coincided then with the regional chef thing that was going on all over the country. So, suddenly you had Southwestern cuisine, which originated in Dallas with Dean Fearing and Stephen Pyles and some other chefs that pioneered it. And, you know, Dallas was a big part—was one of the serious players in the

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regional cuisine movement in the United States at that time. Obviously, Alice Waters on the Bay, much bigger, Jeremiah Tower, New York, much bigger—no, Tower was on the West Coast, but anyway, somebody on the East Coast. There were lots of people that were doin' it, but these guys here, you know, the way chefs do. They connect, they talk, they share, and so suddenly, Dallas and Houston were players on that stage.

[00:25:51.16]

Annemarie N.: That's great. How did you cover that?

[00:25:55.21]

Dotty G.: Mostly from a local standpoint. You know, they were celebrity chefs, so we wrote about celebrity chefs. But also, that was at a time when there would be conferences. American Institute of Wine and Food came up about this time, and they would have conferences in different cities around the country. There was a huge one here in Dallas that really showcased Southwestern cuisine, and it brought in a lot of imported chefs and foodies that would not otherwise have come to Dallas. So, you would cover those kind of events. There was actually a travel budget. I could actually go to other cities and cover those kinds of things in other cities, especially if one of my local chefs was one of the guest celebrities that was brought in. And there was a hill country wine and food festival that started out of Austin, and was aimed to really sell some of the wines that were being grown in Austin, but they loved to bring in the Dean Fearings and the Stephen Pyles from Dallas and the Robert Del Grandes from Houston to Austin, big party scene. There was budget to go and cover all of those things. So, that was really the way it evolved as far as the coverage that I was a part of. Eventually, I mean, you used to . . . interview home cooks about how to cook or home economists, and then quickly, with that movement, chefs became the people you want to interview about how to cook and what to do. The home cook took a backseat to that kind of star power.

[00:27:47.29]

Annemarie N.: That's great. What are some of the other things that you would cover typically, or some significant columns that you—or somebody that you hired to write as a columnist—produced?

[00:28:02.12]

Dotty G.: One of the big areas during that time, people suddenly became much more aware of their diet and cholesterol. You know, the relationship between health and food. And the revisionist approach, which was a traditional diet is not very healthy for you. So, covering those areas of nutrition; those kind of nutrition battles about what really was healthy and what wasn't healthy to eat, what not to eat, and how diet and nutrition impacted one's health. So, that was a huge area to cover. We also got into some economic issues around food. When there would be economic downturn, suddenly it mattered more what food cost and how to write about food substitutes. One of the only story things that I ever wanted to do that just got killed was—and some newspapers were able to pull it off, I was never able to pull it off against my management here—was to try to do a supermarket price comparison. There was always a reason that the methodology I wanted to work on was just not quite valid enough to do, so. But that was, in a long career, that was one of the only censorships that I ever experienced, relating to food, for obvious reasons, because we didn't want to piss off all those supermarkets that bought big ads. Simple.

[00:29:42.10]

Annemarie N.: Yeah, it makes sense. I want to ask, too—so, what was the, this is kind of going back a little bit. You were mentioning about working at the city desk and doing more general reporting, just in Dallas, and then going to a features section like the food section. How were you treated as a woman? Did your gender impact the way you were treated in the newsroom? And then, how were you seen as, I guess, a features editor?

[00:30:15.12]

Dotty G.: In the newsroom, when I came to work at the morning news, there were three or four women, I think. I think, in general, we were given less—at least initially—less meaty

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assignments. And they tried to make sure that a photographer always went out with us on an assignment, because, you know, something might happen to us. [Laughter] You know. But, in the grand scheme of things . . . I didn't feel a whole lot of discrimination. I felt we got good assignments; if you produced, you did okay. Now, once I went into what was then even maybe the women's section, you just had much less contact with the news-side people. I was aware that I'd probably sacrificed some credibility, but it just seemed like it was going to work out. By then, they had changed the name of the section. It wasn't the Women's Section anymore, it was Trends or whatever. And they'd actually started to hire a male or two feature writer in that section. So, that helped. I do remember, when I was trying to get the price comparison story through, they were having this meeting and they brought in the investigative team to talk about it. And some of these people were younger and didn't know that I'd ever had spent much time on the city desk, the metro desk. And so we were talkin', talkin', talkin'. Afterwards, this one guy comes up to me and says, "God, you're really pretty smart. I didn't know that you knew that much about reporting." I said—we still never made it in the paper with the price comparison, but at least it was recognized that I wasn't just a recipe idiot. So, I felt really good about that. "Well, maybe somebody'll go talk about me in the newsroom." [Laughter]

[00:32:36.19]

Annemarie N.: Could you talk about, you mentioned that you were a department of one. Could you talk about that, the task, and I guess the specific things that you had to do as a food editor?

[00:32:49.02]

Dotty G.: At that time, when I was a department of one, I was tasked with coming up with the main story. And then, most news, most covers were a photograph or several photographs or an illustration, we did some illustrations. And then the main story. And then what went inside, sometimes you could hire—you could use a syndicated piece or have a local column or two, and then the rest of it would be wire filler. And I usually would be in charge of—I was always in charge of the cover. Most of the time, I wrote it, and then . . . if there were syndicated pieces, I would select the syndicates. Then the copy would go

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over to the universal desk for the women's department. They would lay it out, put headlines on it, maybe select some of the other inside copy and that was that. So I was really a reporter editor, not so much a line editor. But I went out and did most of the coverage. Later on, I did end up having a staff. At one point, there were actually two food sections a week at the *Dallas Morning News*. We had the regular Wednesday food section, and then we had a Sunday food section. The Wednesday was geared much more towards sort of everyday kind of cooking and nutrition coverage, and then the Sunday one would be way more geared towards dining, chefs, fancy kind of stuff. So, at that point, I had three—I had an assistant food editor and two employees, other employees, one of whom was a writer, one of whom was kind of a clerk helper. And had a fairly large freelance budget, and I would oversee all the freelance writers and pull it—we had real staff meetings and come up with what the theme of that week's edition was going to be. It was like a real newspaper operation. That lasted . . . that was [19]80s, early [19]90s, during the boom years. And eventually, it went away. They killed the Sunday one first, and then the Wednesday section became the food-related cover of the regular feature section. We all know the rise and fall that newspapers have experienced.

[00:35:33.11]

Annemarie N.: Can you talk about that, those boom years kind of period? What caused that?

[00:35:41.02]

Dotty G.: [Coughs] Excuse me. Well, Dallas was just very hot in the early [19]80s. It was a huge real estate market. There was a huge finance market. Houston—I mean Dallas, Houston, Atlanta are some of the boom towns. It was like a lot of industry in the North was starting to collapse. A lot of people were moving to more Southern areas because labor was cheaper, real estate was cheaper. There were all these, there was an educated population that wanted to work. So they just, those demographic shifts that we do know Dallas was part of that, and Dallas was growing. Dallas had its own cachet. Remember the old show *Dallas*? That was very important to Dallas image at the time, and seen as go-go-go. Those were also the years, one of the periods when the Dallas Cowboys are a championship time. All that brought a lot of attention to Dallas, and it meant that Dallas

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was a hot place. We had our regional cuisine movement. As it impacted food, all of that money and attention also brought attention to the food scene. The food scene lived off of it and those star people loved the food scene, the food scene loved them. It was, you know, very typical cultural explosion that happened in Dallas. Happened in lots of other places, too. Not unique, but still great to be a part of it.

[00:37:30.16]

Annemarie N.: I bet. I'll bet. How—this is another question I have. So, Dallas is a big place, obviously, but as far as the *Morning News*, you were talkin' about how, as a child and as a young woman, that the *Dallas Morning News* was your newspaper, too, and so it obviously has this kind of regional importance. How did you cultivate a relationship with your audience, and how did you kind of communicate with them?

[00:38:02.00]

Dotty G.: Well, you didn't really use the first person. That was not a way to write back then. But still, they felt—readers felt a connection with food editors maybe rivaled only by the way some felt about their sports columnists. Part of that's the Betty Crocker legacy, of being in communication. People actually wrote letters and asked questions, and they called and wanted to talk to the food editor and ask questions. So, there was just that level of communication. And then, I—as did most food editors—started having a question and answer column, which invited even more of that. So, it was very—for the time—one of the more interactive beats and sections of a newspaper. It was very interactive. The food section in the *Dallas Morning News* was where the school lunch menus ran, back when Dallas Independent School District was the main school district, and people wanted to know what their kids were going to be eating the next week, so they could decide whether to make 'em bologna sandwiches on Wednesday when the school cafeteria was serving something their kids hated. But I mean, it was that real ground-level, that grainy, granular level of interaction between readers and a food section that probably kept food sections alive for as long as they remained alive. It was very . . . very of the people and for the people and by the people.

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[00:39:50.17]

Annemarie N.: That's great . . . forgot what I was going to ask you, the question. Just totally forgot. [Laughter] Oh, well, we can maybe talk about this, too, because you were not only the food editor but you were also the food critic.

[00:40:10.06]

Dotty G.: Yeah, I became the restaurant critic. I had been the food editor for, like, sixteen years, and we had a new assistant managing editor for features, and she wanted me to be like a graphics editor for the feature department, which I said, "Sure," I was ready to do something else. But I still kept my hand in the food section and continued to do my column, a column. I couldn't go cold turkey on my food, which I'm glad I didn't. [Laughter] But anyway, after a couple years as features editor, I realized, "You know, this is a whole lot like just generic newspaper work." And then the woman who was the restaurant critic retired, and so I applied for that job and got it, which I was thrilled. So I then spent ten years as a restaurant critic. I wasn't affiliated with the food section anymore, but it was just was a different way of covering and writing about food, which for me was—you know, just another way to grow and understand more about the industry.

[00:41:20.24]

Annemarie N.: What was the learning curve, going from more general food writing to a more critical lens?

[00:41:27.29]

Dotty G.: That's probably it, to go from a, quote, reporter, to having an opinion. It took me a little while to get a voice, but I did. It was just . . . for so many years, I had been trained and the ethic was, you don't have so much of an opinion as you show both sides and let the reader decide. [Laughter] Gosh, what a strange way to cover the news. Doesn't happen that way anymore. But that was the ethic. Then, as a critic, I never had been one short of opinions, I just hadn't had an outlet for them. [Laughter] Suddenly, I had an outlet.

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[00:42:17.04]

Annemarie N.: Could you talk a little bit about that process? How did you go about doing the research and then writing that?

[00:42:26.00]

Dotty G.: For restaurant criticism?

[00:42:26.22]

Annemarie N.: Yeah, for restaurant writing—and I use research loosely. [Laughter]

[00:42:32.13]

Dotty G.: There is some real research, but yeah, it is mostly eating. The fun part was always trying to figure out what restaurants to review. I wanted to, obviously, cover the restaurants that were opening, that had big name chefs associated with them or whatever. But then, I also loved to discover holes in the wall, ethnic cuisines that maybe were new to Dallas. So, I did spend time trying to—head to the ground, hearing about new places. Most press releases were actually on paper then, so you would open the mail, read a press release, and figure out, you know, if this place was going to be worth it and put it in the file, the manila folder that said, "Restaurants to Cover." [Laughter] So, a lot of that was just the news judgment part of deciding what to cover, when to cover it, what to do with it. If a place was opening or you knew of a place that was a cuisine that I didn't know anything about, then it certainly behooved me to do research about Thai cuisine if I didn't know anything about Thai cuisine, and I'm sure I didn't when I first started writing about Thai restaurants. So, you read it, there wasn't a lot to evaluate. I'd never had good or bad Thai food, but you could read about what it was supposed to be like. So, you know, able to make some judgments. Plus, very important to becoming a restaurant critic was all those years as a food editor, I had done a lot of cooking—a lot of recipe testing, a lot of recipe development, and taken a whole lot of classes, either as a reporter covering the class or took it to learn. So, I had some basic knowledge of how food was supposed to be. You know. I knew if it was, say, burned. I could taste scorch. So, armed with some of

that basic culinary knowledge and reading about food is, what makes Thai cuisine Thai cuisine and what it's supposed to be like, I had some basis of knowledge. I certainly knew more about it than most of the people reading my copy. But so, that's kind of how I learned. I've always been asked, "Are you a chef?" or "Are you a home economist?" No, I'm a journalist, I just learned my beat really well.

[00:45:24.04]

Annemarie N.: That's great. Did you ever come up against any pushback from any of the criticisms that you—any negative criticism, or anything? How did you deal with those kinds of situations?

[00:45:37.21]

Dotty G.: You know, I did have some of that. I had one guy call and threaten to kill me. We knew that wasn't really goin' to happen. And people always threaten to sue, but we knew that wasn't goin' to happen. Except one time, someone did. This guy named Phil Romano, who had developed concepts for . . . Brinker? I may be incorrect about that. But anyway, big deal, big force, and had gone out on his own and had brought a big-name Italian restaurant to Dallas. Of course, I knew Phil from just bein', you know, in the business. When I went to cover this particular restaurant, we had a five-star system, I think I gave it four, which I thought was pretty good and had a couple of criticisms. Well, he sues and says—what I heard later, what he thought is that he, quote, had me in his pocket and he was going to get five stars. He was very, apparently, very upset that he didn't, and accused me of taking people in who were in the restaurant business and didn't like. It was all BS, but he filed a lawsuit. So, you know, it certainly never went to trial, it was a settlement. But I actually did get sued, and you can Google around for that one. It got a fair amount of attention at the time.

[00:47:30.13]

Annemarie N.: That's crazy.

[00:47:31.14]

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Dotty G.: I was one of the only food editors, or restaurant critics, to ever be sued for criticism, which you can't really sue over—opinion.

[00:47:41.05]

Annemarie N.: What was your kind of, like, initial response to that?

[00:47:44.04]

Dotty G.: Well, it was, "What?" But getting sued is never fun. The *Morning News* was great. They backed me. But I didn't, certainly, like feeling of being sued. [Laughter] It came out, it worked itself out, but I found it pretty terrifying. Also made me very angry, especially when I heard through the grapevine what the real backstory was. But whatcha gonna do? I was just glad that the *Morning News* backed me.

[00:48:26.13]

Annemarie N.: That's great. Can you talk a little bit, too, about . . . you were talkin' about, you knew your beat really well. That's one of the important things that a lot of people have brought up who maybe were not necessarily writing for food journalism at first, but to learn. Learning more about food helped them to learn how to do their beat well. Can you talk a little bit, too, about the relationship you have maybe with certain organizations or other food journalists in Texas or just the United States as a whole that kind of helped you?

[00:49:05.11]

Dotty G.: Well, okay. Back to the good old day. [Laughter] Even before I was a food editor, there were these annual food editors' trips that were sponsored by the food industry, and they would take food editors to, usually, a pretty lovely place and expose, give them great meals. It was the way business was done at the time. It was sponsored by the Newspaper Advertising Association or something. Anyway, food editors from all over the country would go on these trips, and they would learn a lot about new products and meet chefs and stuff and come home and write about it in some way. In the [19]70s, this became not so copacetic a practice, and the alternate group, the Newspaper Food Editors and Writers

Association, grew out of that. And I'm actually a past president of that organization. It was devoted to, also, providing developmental travel for food editors, but it was not sponsored by commercial interests. We were an organization. We put together the program, we paid for it ourselves. That was one of the best ways for food editors to get to know each other around the country and share what we discovered, as many of us had the same problems, whether it was the shrinking news hole or advertiser interference. Of course, those were just part of the drill, but it was great to know that you weren't alone out there.

[00:51:00.01]

Annemarie N.: That's great.

[00:51:01.01]

Dotty G.: Okay, are you aware of a book, *The Food Section*?

[00:51:03.18]

Annemarie N.: Yeah.

[00:51:03.18]

Dotty G.: Okay. She explains it very well. I use that book in my—I teach a culinary journalism class at University of North Texas, so I use that book in the section about food sections and food journalism history.

[00:51:21.14]

Annemarie N.: Yeah, she's . . . Dr. Voss is really good.

[00:51:24.28]

Dotty G.: Yeah, I love her. I haven't, I don't really know her. We've communicated a lot by e-mail and phone. [Laughter] But at some point, I hope to meet Kim.

[00:51:35.13]

Annemarie N.: Me, too. Can you talk a little bit, too, about—you were mentioning your recipe testing and your development, recipe development. Could you talk a little bit about, did you have a test kitchen at the *Morning News*?

[00:51:50.18]

Dotty G.: We did. And it wasn't so much a test kitchen. I mean, when I tested recipes, I'd usually do it at home. But the kitchen was used for—it was adjacent to the photo studio, so we used it to stage the food photos, and if anything needed to be prepared or finished off, we had a stove, an oven, a microwave, and some workspace, a refrigerator. So, it was called the test kitchen, but it wasn't so much a test kitchen as it was just a staging kitchen for food photography. But we were very—that was pretty forward at the time. Not many newspapers actually got to the point of installing kitchens in their photo departments.

[00:52:37.04]

Annemarie N.: Yeah, that's pretty awesome. Did you . . . what's the process like of tryin' to learn how to, I guess, develop recipes as well?

[00:52:48.13]

Dotty G.: When you have read and edited so many recipes, you get the style, and you've cooked from 'em, you have an idea what works, what doesn't work. Plus, there was AP style for how recipes how should be written: you spelled out tablespoon, you spelled out teaspoon, you didn't use a capital T or a small t. So, within the parameters of style, and just experience. Plus, what I discovered as I started writing cookbooks—which, you know, written a dozen cookbooks—one of the things that I do pretty well is create a recipe. And some people do it, some people come at writing recipes, they create the dish and then write the recipe to fit it. And some people like me, especially because I'm more of a word person than I am, you know, I write the recipe, test it, did it work, what do I need to change in the written copy? So that's that process for me. But yeah, I learned to be able to read a recipe and tell whether or not it was going to work, or at least, what was written incorrectly or that wasn't clear that could cause a failure. That's just editing a recipe. That's the basics of how you edit recipes, as well as making sure that every ingredient

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listed gets used in the method, and that there isn't a divergence of—there isn't some awful amount that looks really fishy. Something that says 1 cup when it should be a fourth a cup. Maybe the /4 got dropped, so the fraction got messed up somehow in the translation. But . . .

[00:54:48.22]

Annemarie N.: That sounds like very tedious work, but essential.

[00:54:53.17]

Dotty G.: Well, back in the day when we had two food sections, yeah, really, we would read—on proof—we would read the recipe back to somebody proofing that page so that there was a reading. It's so much easier to check a recipe if one person reads the master and one person's reading what's on the page. You just catch errors much better. So, we had two people proofing every section that ever came out. I mean, that was the final proof. It was always had been proofed and edited before then, but the final proofing was a two-person job, to read those recipes that way.

[00:55:33.20]

Annemarie N.: That's great. Could you talk a little bit about how you got involved in writing cookbooks?

[00:55:40.06]

Dotty G.: [Laughter] Another instance of serendipity. I can't remember how long I'd been a food editor; probably four or five years, and we always got a lot of cookbooks to review. So, you'd sort of get to know the editors who sent you these books to review, or at least the P.R. people who sent the books. One day, I got a call at the office asking me if I knew anyone that could write a cookbook on chili. I said, "Yeah, I can do that." [Laughter] And I was right. The good news is, I was right. I could do that. But that's how I got my first cookbook. It's just they were looking for somebody, and I decided to say I could do it and I was right. I did it.

[00:56:32.25]

Annemarie N.: How is that different, writing a cookbook—or similar—from writing just a regular recipe article?

[00:56:43.02]

Dotty G.: Well, it's a bigger feature story. In this case, what I did, there were chili, two big chili cook-offs in Texas. Texas has always had this chili cook-off circuit, and there are these two big championships that happened in November, way out in the West Texas desert, Terlingua. And so, I use those things, that is my framework for the narrative of the book. You know, I explored the history of chili and the San Antonio chili queens, and then came up through the history of modern chili contests in Texas. I had interviews with people who had cooked. A lot of the recipes— or some of the recipes in the book— were recipes that had won big-time prizes, because regional cuisine was important at the time. I also explored the ways chili are made in other parts of the country, Cincinnati chili being a very big deal in Cincinnati, very different from Texas chili, but got some good narrative out of it, and a recipe. I had those three hooks in the text of the book, and that gave me however many recipes I was required to have for the book, I had 'em.

[00:58:10.29]

Annemarie N.: That's great. And you've also kind of co-written cookbooks, too. What's it like to work a chef, like Chef Sylvia Casares? I hear that it can be challenging to work with a chef and try to pin down specific details.

[00:58:28.21]

Dotty G.: Yes. [Laughter] Yes, it is. 'Cause chefs think about food way differently than we do. I wrote a book with Dean Fearing, also, his first cookbook, and even though they try to break 'em down into doable parts, the way they're used to cooking and organizing a kitchen is different than the way home cooks cook. So, you have to translate that assembly line of a commercial kitchen into a method and technique that works for a home cook. Like Dean, the big challenge: every one of quote, his recipes, was about three or four, because he would call it "Southwest Salmon with a Tortilla" or something, for

lack of a better—but what is always turned out to be was, the salmon would be grilled, there would be a vegetable component which, for most home cooks would be a side dish, but for him it was sort of an underlying bed for the, and then there would be usually a starch component in some way, and that might be either be a heavy garnish or another bed of something, plus then a relish and/or a sauce. So, for him, that was one dish. For the home cook, that's three or four. So, writing recipes that make that approachable for a home person requires some dexterity. [Laughter] And working with a chef. Once you say, "Okay, I understand that you have a line cook and you have a saucier, and you have somebody preppin' vegetables, think about it. If you were doin' this at home, let's talk about—" and generally, I'd try to write it, kick it back to him, and go back and forth until it got right. Sylvia, she does teach a lot of classes. Because what she does, Tex-Mex, much less complex than five-star cuisine at the Mansion on Turtle Creek. Still, there were always some challenges, 'cause she would refer to ingredients the way the kitchen, she and her kitchen crew, would refer to 'em, and that wasn't what I was used to. Sometimes, we had—"What is that?" Goin' back and forth, tryin' to figure that out. But in general, both of 'em were great to work with. I learned a lot. Hopefully they maybe even learned something. And both just brilliant food people; I mean Dean totally, so, was such a tastemaker in the first part of his career and remains a force. Sylvia has just done an incredible job of taking the flavors of border cuisine in Texas to her restaurant in Houston and to the book. It doesn't taste like North Texas-Tex-Mex cuisine, it tastes like the region she grew up in.

[01:01:49.28]

Annemarie N.: That's really cool. It sounds like a very worthwhile challenge. [Laughter]

[01:01:53.22]

Dotty G.: Yeah. I've always loved doing my cookbooks. They're great, until you get to the end and you're just down to the wire and you're tryin' to get everything, and you're goin', "Why did I do this?" [Laughter] But eventually, there's a deadline and you have to turn the manuscript loose. It's like anything. Eventually there's a deadline and you've done

your best and you just hope you've got good editors that have your back. If there's somethin' that fell through the cracks, they'll catch it.

[01:02:20.05]

Annemarie N.: That's great. Could you talk a little bit, I guess this is one of my last big question about your career as a food journalist at the *Dallas Morning News*, what do you think is one of your most important—it can be personal, or it can be something that you did that's kind of like a thing that you have produced, whether external or internal—what's one of the most . . . what's your most important achievement? Sorry. As a food editor or as a restaurant critic? Sorry, that took a long time.

[01:03:08.19]

Dotty G.: [Coughs] Goodness, I've got to take a big sip of water on that one.

[01:03:12.21]

Annemarie N.: I did not mean for that to come out that way.

[01:03:15.04]

Dotty G.: No. I'm tryin' . . . I think, both as a food editor and as the restaurant critic, I did a lot to illuminate the culture of food in Dallas. What makes food in Dallas, the food of Dallas, different than Houston? I learned a lot about Texas cuisine in general and Dallas food in particular. So, I think that was an element of understanding and sensitivity that I had, that I always tried to bring to what I wrote, so that I reflected the taste and understanding of my community and applied that to what I was writing about. It could be in critical terms or complimentary terms, but I tried to see through those lens. I think I was a community journalism before everybody was into community journalism, and tried to bring a much broader understanding of what I was writing about, but through those lens. So I think that's kind of . . . and it formed a lot of what I did.

[01:04:38.16]

Annemarie N.: That's great. I have one more question that I remembered.

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[01:04:42.12]

Dotty G.: Okay.

[01:04:44.01]

Annemarie N.: You were talking about the idea of ethnic restaurants and covering them as well. How did immigration kind of shape or impact Dallas, whether it be immigration from Latin American countries or Mexico, or Asian immigration?

[01:05:06.00]

Dotty G.: 'Course, Hispanic immigration to Texas is not new.

[01:05:17.07]

Annemarie N.: Yeah.

[01:05:18.25]

Dotty G.: And for many years, pre-9/11, the border was pretty fluid. But in the [19]80s, when restaurants really started to boom, the influx of immigrants from Mexico and Latin America, also with some of their drug problems, meant that kitchens in Dallas were largely populated by people of Hispanic background. Suddenly, as a restaurant manager or chef, you needed to start knowin' some Spanish. So, you had largely Hispanic kitchens cooking Italian food, or Chinese. [Laughter] Whatever. And there was this sort of side community, 'cause like in all restaurants, the people cook what they know when they're just eatin' their own food. There was this undercurrent of great Mexican and Latin American food that you could eat in restaurants that wasn't on the menu. So, that was really the first manifestation, that kitchens—restaurant kitchens—became very much Hispanic-run. Pretty soon, eventually, there came to be Hispanic sushi chefs, because they learned the trade. They learned how to do it, and they were sushi chefs. Then we also had a big influx of Indian population, especially with the tech industry, and that was mostly in Irving and North Dallas and Richardson, so there came about this large community and that had really good Indian restaurants. Still not maybe as vast a

community as in other places, but suddenly we had Indian food. Asian, Vietnamese, certainly there were a lot of Vietnamese, and besides nail salons, suddenly you had a lot of pho restaurants. Those imports, especially refugee populations that have come to the United States seeking safe harbor and that got dispersed, of course those communities brought their food traditions with them and brought them up. Restaurants are one of the easiest ways to start gettin' your little chunk of the American dream. If you can get some money, you can open a restaurant. So many people have done that. That was one of the main ways. Of course, Mexican restaurants have always been here. But suddenly, then we started to have more Latin American restaurants, whether it's Salvadoran or Guatemalan, so these waves of immigrants, especially refugee immigrants, have influenced Dallas as they have most other cities. But those are some of the main ethnicities that I think that impacted us.

[01:08:30.12]

Annemarie N.: That's great. You mentioned, too, that after you retired—you're now a professor at University of North Texas. Can you talk a little bit about teaching and what you teach?

[01:08:46.22]

Dotty G.: I teach a course in culinary journalism, how to write about food, which of course takes in more than just writing. So many of my students are multi-disciplinary, and some are in film; some are in TV. So, their final projects—I always get 'em to do something. Sometimes it's a video, sometimes it's a blog, but it's all developed about writing about food or communicating about food in some way. The first semester that I taught, I mean, the class, it's only twenty students, so it's pretty hands-on. You have to be a communications, journalism major. You have to be at least a junior or a senior. The first semester that I taught, some of my students were really disappointed at the end of the semester that they hadn't learned how to cook. I'm goin, "No one's told you this was a cooking class. It's called Journalism 1401." And I guess word got out, 'cause the expectations the next semester were a little less on that. What I have found out, and I've begun to concentrate more and more on this, is that teaching this— regardless of how they're goin' to communicate about food, whether it's video, blog, print— teaching them

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the language of how to write about food is what they need to learn. And teaching them that words like delicious and yucky and gross are meaningless in terms of food. You know, tastes sweet as honey is trite, but at least it tells you something. So, teaching them ways to use the language that are impactful and provide meaning and definition. And, more than anything, evoke a sensory response in the reader or the listener or the viewer, whether it's just a gorgeous picture or words that tell you what this tastes like, whether it's briny like the ocean, something that is—what often works is, you compare the taste of a food to something that isn't the taste of a food, and that clicks. So, just teaching them some of those real, for want of a better term, tricks of the trade, how to really communicate about food in ways that aren't trite and are informed. Then the other thing that I've experienced a challenge with is trying to get them to go out and interview people. They think you can be a food writer by eating something and explaining your experience, or interviewing the internet. [Laughter] No, no. It's like, no, you've got to go out and interview and talk to a chef or talk to eaters or . . . you've got to get out of your comfort zone and your bubble and go eat, taste, meet, experience, feel, smell, hear those experiences and then to be able to write about it. Otherwise, you don't have anything to write about. There is nothing to say if you don't go really experience it. I think that's true in all kinds of journalism, but nowhere more than food, because it is so experiential and sensual.

[01:12:41.21]

Annemarie N.: Definitely. How has social media played into your teaching method and, I guess, way to write?

[01:12:54.11]

Dotty G.: It's definitely a new way to write, and I'd love to tell you I'm really good at it. I'm not. I don't have . . . but I know it when I see it. [Laughter] So, we explore good writing. We read some of the good blogs. I try to have a lot of guests into my classroom, and I get chefs and I get PR people in who talk about the impact of social media on what they do. We talk a lot about the ethics of blogging and social media, because the old journalism rules, they may still apply in journalism, but they don't necessarily apply for the

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individual who's just trying to build up a blog with a lot of hits. So, it's . . . you know, my job is to tell them the pitfalls. I'm not the journalism police, but to make sure that they understand what the ethics of the profession are, so that they're at least making an informed choice about how they choose to operate if they don't go to work for a publication that has its own set of ethics that they must adhere to. But, you know, the whole ethics of—I used to laugh when a restaurateur would say, "Oh, somebody came in today and said that you'd sent 'em in to do a review and I knew that was BS" And I go, "Yeah, you sure did know it." 'Cause we at the *Morning News* and no respectable newspaper ever operated that way, where you'd go in and ask for free food. But a lot of bloggers, social media people who do write about food, that is their expectation. And it's a different way of operating. They don't answer to anybody but themselves and maybe the people that sponsor their site. But I feel it's my obligation to point out to my students that there used to be a rigid world about it. It's not so rigid, but here are the implications one way or another.

[01:15:05.23]

Annemarie N.: That's really interesting. I never really thought about that, but that's important.

[01:15:12.13]

Dotty G.: It's very important.

[01:15:15.10]

Annemarie N.: Can you talk a little, too . . . let's see. What is that kind of like, to interact with a new wave of journalism? [Laughter] Or journalists, people who are coming into profession?

[01:15:29.13]

Dotty G.: It's interesting. It's challenging. Each class, I usually have two or three really gifted, motivated students. And most of 'em, not so much, which isn't to say that—my class is an elective, so some people take it as an elective thinking it just sounds fun, and some of 'em are very disturbed when they find out they're actually going to have to work in my class.

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[Laughter] So, I'm thrilled when I experience and get to work with and help shape and motivate a student who is a very good and really interested and wants to add food communication to his or her portfolio. At University of North Texas, where I teach, there is a student newspaper. And, of course, I challenge them all the time to try to get something published or get on the student radio station. And some of 'em, it's like that never dawned on them that that was a possibility. I'm goin, well, working for the *Daily Texan* was my life, a big chunk of my life. So it astonishes me when I see journalism students that aren't highly motivated to be involved in a student publication or the student radio station, whereas the students—the two or three per semester that are usually gifted, most of 'em already do work for a student media outlet. Half of 'em also are stringers for the *Dallas Morning News* and/or the *Denton Record Chronicle*. Some have even gotten stringer jobs for the *New York Times*. The ones that are good and hustle, they'll probably make a living. Maybe not writing about food per se, but as a communicator in some way. Of course, those are the ones that are best at writing about food, because they're not afraid to go out and talk to people and not afraid to put something down on paper that uses a word beyond delicious.

[01:17:57.28]

Annemarie N.: That's great. I have a last question for you, and this one is a big one, too. What do you hope is the future of food journalism? What do you hope for?

[01:18:13.20]

Dotty G.: Whoever knew that there would be a Food Network? Much less big, ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN all have shows related to food, whether they're talk shows like *The Chew* or an Anthony Bourdain traveling the world, experiencing food. I think what I hope, really, for food journalism is that it continues to grow and be entertaining, but that some of it become more substantive and really teach about cuisines and cultures and be less focused on a stupid contest. I get that people love contests, but I just think that is just silly. At the same time, you can learn a lot from some of those, especially when the chefs tell you what they're doing and how they're doing it. But I think I want to see it become more

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substantive, and I love the fact that people see food as a lifestyle; they're interested in what they eat and where it comes from and how to cook it. I think that's a great thing.

[01:19:42.25]

Annemarie N.: Awesome. Do you have anything else that you want to add?

[01:19:46.18]

Dotty G.: Have I missed anything, Elaine?

[01:19:53.07]

Elaine C.: I'm glad you got Phil Romano in there.

[01:19:56.00]

Dotty G.: Huh?

[01:19:56.00]

Elaine C.: I'm glad you got Phil Romano in there. Dotty's my idol.

[01:20:03.11]

Dotty G.: [Laughter] Not really.

[01:20:04.12]

Elaine C.: Yeah, [inaudible 1:20:05]. Teaching the food writing was something that I've done a million years prior.

[01:20:15.25]

Dotty G.: Yeah, Elaine's been a guest lecturer in my class. [Laughter]

[01:20:18.17]

Elaine C.: I take my notes. [Laughter]

[01:20:22.24]

Dotty G.: That's right.

[01:20:24.28]

Elaine C.: We can talk about that tomorrow.

[01:20:26.25]

Annemarie N.: Well—

[01:20:27.15]

Elaine C.: I don't know about her students, but the students that I had at the time had this romantic idea about the memoir they were going to write or the food critic they were going to become or they think about the mechanics, but it's really just writing. But the understanding of food has been a very, very big part of that research, and I made it very clear that you're not the first one—and I hold up this book by Platina, who wrote a cookbook in Italy before Columbus sailed to America. So, don't think you invented this.

[01:21:18.05]

Dotty G.: Yeah. [Laughter]

[01:21:18.05]

Elaine C.: It's been going on for a long, long—

[01:21:18.12]

Dotty G.: I guess the only thing that we did—at one point, I had a radio, food call-in radio show.

[01:21:25.04]

Annemarie N.: Oh, that's fun.

[01:21:25.14]

Dotty G.: I've done a lot of television. I never had my own television show, but I've done a lot of food television. Now, I even do some food styling for other people besides the cookbooks. So that's . . . I've had a very wide-ranging food communications career. There's hardly a platform that I haven't used. [Laughter]

[01:21:49.20]

Annemarie N.: That's pretty neat. Thank you so much for doin' this.

[01:21:52.13]

Dotty G.: Been such a pleasure.

[01:21:51.02]

Elaine: Another thing, that I think Dotty's a very informed person, 'cause she's fast and she gets things very quickly. She's a great cook. And she's just a really, really good writer and communicator. I think when we were at the paper together, she would write about education. When they sent you out to talk to the dog at the cemetery and came back with, the dog wouldn't talk to you. [Laughter] Weird assignment.

[01:22:30.25]

Dotty G.: I still have a mouth on me. What can I say? [Laughter]

[01:22:34.09]

Elaine: But I think, within the realm of food, it's very important to be talking with the female food journalists within a field.

[01:22:46.16]

Dotty G.: Well, the arc of our career is so similar. I mean, Elaine's first job was at the *Morning News*. That was before I was writing about food or she was writing about food, but then she went on to the *Austin American Statesman*, and about the same time, she and I both became food editors. That wasn't what I thought I'd do when I grew up, and it wasn't

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what she thought she'd do when she grew up. So, yeah, it was just a very similar arc, and we've only been friends since then.

[01:23:16.28]

Annemarie N.: [Laughter] That's great.

[01:23:21.18]

Dotty G.: Thank you so much.

[01:23:21.18]

Annemarie N.: Thank you!

[01:23:22.24]

Dotty G.: I'm so honored to be in the club.

[01:23:25.25]

Annemarie N.: Well, I'm glad you're in it.
[*End of interview*]

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