

California Maritime Academy Library

Interview with David Winter

Oral History Project

Interviewee: David Winter
Interviewer: Anthony Davis
Date: October 6, 2012

Place: Unidentified Location
Transcriber: Rev.com

Preface

The following oral history is the result of a recorded interview with David Winter conducted by Anthony Davis on October 6, 2012. This interview is part of the Cal Maritime Oral History Project.

Readers are asked to bear in mind that they are reading a transcript of the spoken word, rather than written prose.

David Winter is a graduate of the class of 1962, Engine.

Abbreviation

DW: David Winter
AD: Anthony Davis
AS: Anthony Soldavini

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Interview Outline

- 00:40 What made you decide to apply to Cal Maritime?
- 01:00 When you got there, what was your first perception of the campus?
- 03:20 When you got here, what was your perception of the campus?
- 06:31 Were there bullies on campus, students who abused their power?
- 07:33 Do you feel like the academy quickened the pace of you growing up? Do you feel that students at other institutions didn't get that experience?
- 10:15 What was your relief for dealing with the day-to-day complications on campus?
- 10:58 Did you feel any effects from outside campus, like the Korean War or the Cold War?
- 14:02 Did you feel a lot of community with all the students helping each other?
- 14:35 When you're in a leadership role. How do you handle working with people who are trying their best but it's not enough?
- 19:21 Where do you believe you got your leadership abilities?
- 20:08 Why didn't you stay in the Coast Guard longer?
- 21:55 Does family mean a lot to you?
- 22:20 Would you recommend your grandchildren to come here?
- 22:53 Do you see a difference in discipline between generations?
- 24:10 Would you like to be a mentor?
- 26:56 What was the magic moment that made you want to be the guy who had the answers?
- 31:16 What advice do you have for the next generation?

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Interview

AD: Well today is October 6, 2012, Saturday and it is approximately 1:30 p.m. and I'm here with Mr. David Winter. And I am Anthony Davis, Cadet Anthony Davis at California Maritime Academy and today we are going to interview this fine gentleman. All right sir. All right, my first question for you today, sir is what made you decide to apply to CMA?

[00:40]

DW: My father said he would send me here or I could go anywhere I could afford.

AD: Okay.

DW: I was 17 years old, I couldn't afford anything.

AD: So why not go into the military or do something like that?

DW: No.

AD: Not for you?

DW: Not then.

AD: Not then of course but later you went into the Coast Guard, correct?

DW: Right.

[01:00]

AD: Yes sir. When you got here, what was your first perception of the campus?

DW: Chaos.

AD: Chaos-- What made it so much chaos, what was so bad about it?

DW: 120 people trying to be in places that probably 3 or 4 of them could handle being all at once at 6:00 a.m. in the morning.

AD: Goodness gracious.

DW: You got up at 5:55 a.m., you had to have your bunk made, be dressed, shaved, in formation on the dock, in uniform at 6:00 a.m.

AD: So, at time they would come and actually do room--

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DW: No, they wouldn't come anything. They rang revelry, you got up, you did your thing, you knew what you had to do, and you went and did it.

AD: So, would they actually come and check your bunks?

DW: Yes!

AD: Wow.

DW: If they didn't like it, they tear 'em up.

AD: And you would have to come back and fix it? It sounds a little like boot camp.

DW: It was like boot camp, that's exactly what it was.

AD: Well sir, it has definitely changed since then.

DW: Yes, it has and a lot of us including me would think not for the good.

AD: Not for the good?

DW: No, I think basically it's very useful. You have to decide who you are. There's a game being played; how much are you gonna play?

AD: Yes sir. I totally understand that. I'm in ROTC, training to be a military officer and they got me doing all that kinda stuff.

DW: Well there's nothing wrong with it, certainly some people really need it, some people benefit from it, some people hate it, some people do all at the same time. I'd already been to military school as a kid, so it was no complete mystery to me but most of us had not. I think the first day, 10 people, 9 or 10 people just, "Screw this," and boogied on. They decided they had not come to go to military school.

AD: They couldn't handle it?

DW: No, they did not want to. It has nothing to do with could or couldn't, it has to do with would or wouldn't and there is a big difference.

AD: I see that today; it does not seem as hard as what you're saying whatsoever the school but some people--

DW: You guys have janitors to clean up the school, we cleaned up the school.

AD: Well maybe we should go back to that maybe.

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DW: Couldn't hurt.

AD: Most definitely teach some discipline, right?

DW: Well not so much discipline as it is pride of place, it's your place. If you got someone coming around cleaning up after you, what the hell, you might as well be at home with mommy.

[03:20]

AD: Understood. Excuse me sir, if I may ask, what was your typical day on campus was like?

DW: Well, you had class, you had formation in the morning, revelry was usually at 6:00 a.m., breakfast formation was at 7:00 a.m., first class got to sleep in until 6:30 a.m., second third class got up at 6:00 a.m., second had to, they got into the heads before the third class did and the third class generally got in last. 7:00 a.m. was formation up in the rec hall, that was just the one, plus there was one division on the ship. Rope formation went down, we got breakfast, 8:00 a.m. formation, colors, class till noon. Lunch after another formation, up to the thing, up to the rec hall or barracks, change into your dungarees and stuff and go do work on the ship, either you went to labs or chipping and painting on the ship or they had electrical lab, they had diesel lab, they had a welding machine shop, they had all these various things that we were doing and those generally came in the afternoon.

Typical work load was 22 units though you got some units for some stuff that I probably wouldn't think was, certainly not college level but it was, there were class... Chipping and painting is not very sexy but it's what keeps the ship going and you gotta do what it takes. Basically, that's pretty much the day. Then usually at 4:00 p.m. you muster on the dock, go wherever you were, go back to the dorm and that was our free time until supper which was 7:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., excuse me 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and then, went to another formation and then study till 10:00 p.m. and lights out unless you asked for late study or whatever then you could stay up till midnight. Then you start all over again the next day.

AD: Did you usually end up taking those late studies or usually got your...

DW: Usually what you did was you read... You're taping this, right?

AD: Yes, sir, feel free to say--

DW: Novels that didn't necessarily have a lot to do with anything until 10:00 p.m. then you studied till midnight then you went to bed.

AD: Understood, got it sir. You talked about your day and I know it's like it just seemed kinda very redundant and whatever to you sir--

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DW: It was. It was repetitive but the classes were, what they were. The line we used was "Cooperation means graduation". You took care of each other, you made sure nobody failed that couldn't be helped. There were people that enjoyed power and enjoyed using it and not necessarily high on my list of people that I would want to do anything more than pour lye down their throat.

[06:31]

AD: Were these the bullies you talked about or?

DW: Yeah, there were some bullies.

AD: Just mostly abusing power or--

DW: - I would say so, yeah. I would say so. They would pick out someone that they found some fault with and ride 'em. That's no different than anywhere else.

AD: I can definitely see that, especially at my unit.

DW: Yeah.

AD: You have these certain people.

DW: Yeah, there are people that should never be given power, people that... But the one thing you did was you learned to lead, you learned to follow, and you had to decide who you were. How much of this game am I going to play? How am I going to play it? And who will I be when I finish? There were people here that would make you crawl if they could and there are people like that everywhere. It's not just here, it wasn't just them, it's all over, it's universal. It's part of growing up.

[07:33]

AD: So, do you feel like this academy quickened the pace of you growing up or...

DW: Yeah.

AD: Okay. Did you notice a lot of individuals didn't really get that experience?

DW: No, I think pretty much all of us that made it or everyone that graduated pretty well had a fairly decent sense of who they were, what they were capable of, what they were willing to do to succeed, if that's any kind of a term at all. But yeah, I would say that you very definitely had to decide how you were going to deal with this. And there were guys that coasted though, walk through a rainstorm, and not get wet. There were others that got busted constantly. You had to learn how to deal with it. Ain't that big thing.

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AD: You had to keep on going on, right?

DW: That's right. Obviously, you have a life outside the academy, you have classes that you go to, you have grades you're trying to achieve, whatever. I didn't find it any place I really wanted to hang out with after I left. I was quite content to get the hell out of Dodge.

AD: That's what most of the students are like. As soon as they graduate, they get out of here. They can't take it.

DW: But over time looking at people from other institutions and seeing what we can do, comparing our graduates to King's Point or Fort Schuyler or a lot of other places, we're pretty near the top, if not the top. You have a good education. The one thing you're not prepared to deal with well when you get out of here is deal with unions. But short of that, and that comes with experience. That just comes with experience, dealing with them. You learn the theory of labor and why there's a labor movement. I don't know if they even offer those classes any longer. But it's much different from having some guy tell you, as he walks into your office for the very first time, "I don't have to climb," and you look at his contract, he doesn't have to climb, you can't make him, you can't fire him for refusing to do so. This is the electrician; how do you deal with the cargo lights? Well, you got a decade to crawl up there and bring the light down to the electrician. Then he carries it back up and remounts it. Just stuff like that, that's the union agreement. There is a reason for union agreements, it's because they were abused. I don't know where the pendulum is at the moment. It swings from one side to the other, it seems to be favoring management at the moment.

AD: Most definitely, can you believe that.

DW: But it's just dealing with the folks.

[10:15]

AD: What was your relief for the day-to-day complications?

DW: I had a girlfriend.

AD: Okay.

DW: I was bad. I was on conduct restriction quite often. So, I think I have the world record for extra duty. I knew how to play the game; I just chose not to play it as hard as would have been desired. That was my choice.

AD: I understand. Where was your girlfriend now? Was she here or...

DW: She was in Mill Valley.

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AD: Okay, where is that at sir? I'm from down south.

DW: It's in Marin county.

[10:58]

AD: Okay, all right sir. During that time period when you graduated, there's like certain movements going on, so it's just like out of the Korean War, then the Cold War came. I would like to discuss those things with you. How did you... Was there any effects of the Cold War there that you felt on campus at all, any drills or anything like that?

DW: No, not really. Yeah, there were some, we had nuclear, biological and I don't know if I had that in the Coast Guard, if I had it here, if I had it at the Marine Engineer School in eastern Maryland but, you know how to rig the hoses and spray the shoot down to keep nuclear fallout from settling on the ship and to wash it overboard and all that crap. Yeah, but in terms of duck and cover and that stuff, no, basically our drill were rig related, nothing specific about having the Japanese or Koreans or the Chinese or the Russians come in and drop the Big One on us. No, that wasn't... The Marin County Nuclear Defense Handbook, everybody was supposed to hide in the Waldo Tunnels and we figured out that, they figured out that a bomb blast with a two-hundred mile an hour initial surge of wind would blow everyone out like BBs out of a shot gun. So, they kinda just dropped it. No, it was an ongoing fact of life except that kids don't think about that. Do you think about it?

AD: No sir.

DW: Well, there you go. Do you?

AS: No.

DW: No, it's just there. You're immortal, you're a kid. Nothing's gonna happen to you. You can drive 900 miles an hour going backwards while your half in the bag, you can do that. You're not gonna knock that gal up, no way that's not gonna happen to you.

AD: I understand, yes sir. So basically, you just blew it over, nobody really--

DW: Well nobody obsessed I wouldn't say, by and large, no one obsessed. There was enough pressure here to do well with all the tests. There were classes that were definite weeders, you probably have them as well. Where the idea was to weed out the unworthy, I suppose or those who couldn't do the work, those who weren't suited for it and they did work. We lost a lot of people. Juist was one, Machine-shop Theory was another, stuff you never heard of in your whole life till you got here. The whole object of the class was to get rid of you. Also, useful information was being vest but if you chose not to get it or your mind didn't work that way, well, see ya. Can I have your Brownie Button?

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[14:02]

AD: I got it. So, you felt a lot of community within all the students? Everyone's helping each other or?

DW: By and large, yeah. Like I said, there were people that were pretty one-way. There were instructors that were pretty one-way, but the idea is somebody... The hardest thing in life is to deal with somebody who's giving it their best and it sucks. What do you do with that person? Leaders, you make 'em as comfortable as possible elsewhere.

[14:35]

AD: So, in your line of working, you have those situations where you're a leader, what do you decide to do? Do you just--

DW: With what?

AD: Those people that are trying their best but it's not enough.

DW: You try and play the hand you're dealt. The crew is who you get and you find out their strengths and weaknesses and try not to let them work where they're weak and try to place them to do stuff where they're strong without insulting their intelligence or them. And if they're really bad and you don't want 'em, you just fire 'em. But there are rules that protect everyone and you gotta do it the right way. It's gotta go in the logbook, it's gotta be a letter of warning, you gotta have two warnings before you can fire 'em, otherwise they will come back and sue the company and win money. And one guy, he sued me because, black guy, engineer, he sued me because I was prejudice. My prejudice with him was that I wanted him to be able to do his job which he couldn't do. Well, he won 100,000 dollars!

AD: Oh, God.

DW: You know, okay.

AD: Well how do you prove that? How do you--

DW: Well, I know what went down, he knows what... How do you defend yourself? "When did you start beating your wife?" "Did you have a drink before you fired Mr. whatever his name was?" Yeah, I'm 63 years old, you bet your ass I had a drink. But not that day. "Did you ever drink on a ship?" Yes, well... But it wasn't illegal then. Alcohol has never affected my performance of my job and has nothing to do with why I got rid of this clown.

AD: But they weren't hearing it?

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DW: It didn't really matter; it was cheaper to settle.

AD: Was this with the advent of the Civil Rights Movement?

DW: No, no, no, no, no. I don't give a damn if you have green spots and your purple skin, I don't care! Can you do the job, can I tell you to do something and you go down there and you give it your best shot and you don't screw it up and you come back at the end of the day or if you run into trouble you ask for help?

AD: Simple as that.

DW: Yeah! You got a job to do. And the Reserve Fleet down in Alameda, I don't know if you ever get down there, there are about six ships that are in the ready reserve force, five-day ships, meaning they got 120 hours from the time the balloon goes up, they get called by the Defense Department. You gotta have a full crew, plants got to be on the line, sea tested, screwed, stored, ready to go and with a larger crew, you can cover for a guy that can't find his butt. With five or six guys you can't. Everybody's gotta pull their weight and if you can't pull your weight, you aint worth shit. If you aint worth shit, be someplace else. I'm a professional, I know what my job is, I know what their job is. All they gotta do is do it. If they can't do it, they need to let me know. If they can't do either, I have a limited tolerance for incompetence. I will teach you; I will show you how I want it, may not be the right way but you'll never get in trouble with me for doing it the way I showed you. Like, Jesus Christ, here's a guy that can listen. But hey, this is what it is, it's unfortunately a part of management. There are people that a, don't care or b, cannot. And they have been coddled and carried. Nobody wants to be an asshole.

AD: But sometimes you need to be, right?

DW: Not really, just need to be able to pull the trigger when the time comes. Just say, "Look, I'm sorry, you gotta go. This is not working," but you gotta be able to document it. There's more than one way to skin a cat, you don't have to make it confrontational. You say, "Look, you can't, I can't do this. You're not cuttin' it," and you give them the option of quitting. Nothing goes in the book, they're welcome back on other ships which may be is the coward's way, but the other side of the coin is that you solved your problem and all your look-out is for the ship. Leader takes care of his troops, he takes care of his ship, you get it in on time, on schedule and try and stay somewhere near the budget. Other than that, it don't mean shit. Could be anybody. If you get it back to the dock, you've done your job.

AD: That's right

DW: That's it.

[19:21]

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AD: Where do you equate your leadership abilities from? Where do you believe you got them?

DW: I decided I would never do it the way I saw it done 'cause I didn't like it. I didn't like being treated that way. When I first went chief, they started calling up, I would answer the phone, "Yeah, Dave," and they would sit there and hum and haw until I said, "Chief!" Then they'd go, "Help!" They didn't want me to be Dave, they wanted me to be Chief, so I was the Chief.

AD: Did the Coast Guard teach you anything about--

DW: Leadership, yeah and how not to do it but also it made me a much better engineer 'cause I saw stuff in a five and a half year period as a marine inspector, that I would maybe have seen some of in a forty-year career.

[20:08]

AD: Sir, why didn't you stay in the Coast Guard longer?

DW: They wanted me to go to sea and the Coast Guard, as a Coast Guard Officer, I didn't want to, I said, "If you're sending me to sea, I'm gonna go someplace I can make some money. "If I'm gonna be away from my family, why should I do it for 700 dollars a month when I could make 5,000 a month?" So, they insisted and I said bye.

AD: Was that done during the Vietnam War, sir?

DW: Yeah.

AD: Where did you end up going?

DW: I was in New York City, Yorktown, New City, San Diego, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

AD: That sounds kinda fun to me. You really didn't care for it or?

DW: No, I liked it fine. I told them if they left me alone, I'd stay for 30 years. If they leave me as a marine inspector, I'll stay for 30 years and I would've and I was good at it but you're in an organization, with the Coast Guard, I specifically heard the Commandant of the Coast Guard say to me, that marine inspection was where they put 50 percent of their officers when they weren't at sea. There was no mission, there was no mission to administer to the maritime industry. There wasn't, it was someplace, it was a warehouse.

AD: I got it, so you felt unuseful?

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DW: Oh no, I was useful I didn't feel like that, I just felt as though the Coast Guard did not honor their own mission and between that and not wanting to go to sea as a military officer, I think they make things way too complicated. I just said, "No, I'm getting out, thank you."

[21:55]

AD: And family obviously is a big meaning to you, right?

DW: Yeah.

AD: Very well. So how is your family doing today?

DW: It's fine, I'm on my third marriage. Grandson, 19 and three granddaughters, 18, 15, and 8 or 9. My daughter lives in Danville, my other daughter's dead. Family, that's what it is.

[22:20]

AD: Would you recommend your grandchildren to come here or you just--

DW: Yeah, I would have. My grandson went to Fort Schuyler for a semester, but he absolutely, totally wasn't prepared for any discipline at all and just basically it was his first time away from his father's influence and he partied. He had a girlfriend that was throwing him some leg that was at Hudson College, which is like 20 minutes away from Fort Schuyler and he let his little head do the thinking.

[22:53]

AD: Do you see a difference as having discipline as generations go on?

DW: I'm not someone who blindly follows, I wanna know why you want what you want. I don't really insist on people blindly following, I will explain myself until your eyes glaze over and I know you're either bored or you got it. But I do think that some discipline training, as in boot camp, is useful so that you understand that there are goals that require you to do stuff that sound stupid at the time, but you better be able to listen and understand. If you've got a better way of doing something, tell me what it is. If I agree with you, you can do it your way. If I don't, you're gonna do it my way. If I'm the Chief 'cause I'm the only engineer on the ship, everybody else is an assistant. People get their licenses, that's what it says. Third Assistant, Second Assistant, First Assistant and Chief Engineer. It's my license, it's my reputation. I'm the one that's gonna get hung and by God, if I'm gonna get hung, you might as well do it my way because otherwise I'm gonna make your life a living heck.

[24:10]

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AD: Understandable, do you think of any way that you would like to mentor?

DW: I already am, to a degree. Vasile Tudoran and Nick Anderson both have been down to the Jeremiah O'Brian. Both have run through the program a number of times. I'm there for them if they need me, they know it. Formally, I'd rather see more kids come down to the ship. Somebody will make themselves known, that they can find their ass, without a hell of a lot of help. They'll ask the right question at the right time. I mean... Donald Rumsfeld said something. "We don't know what we don't know" that sounds stupid but its profound. You don't know what you don't know! You can't imagine what you don't know! It will slap you in the face one day what you don't know but you don't know what it is yet.

AD: That's true.

DW: And when you see something that doesn't make sense to you and you go, and there's a guy over there that will tell you if you just ask him and you don't ask, shame on you. There's no stupid question. Well there's plenty of them but there's no stupid question. Are you an engineer, Anthony?

AS: Yes.

DW: Why do pumps pump? Philosophical question, why do pumps pump? Don't tell me about pistons and centrifugal force. Don't tell me about that, why do pumps pump?

AS: Because they need to move a fluid?

DW: Yes, but why does it move?

AS: Because we energize it.

DW: That's right, how do you do it? You lower the suction pressure and you raise the discharge pressure. So basically, you have created a pressure differential. People don't think about that. It's not rocket science! It's all right there in front of you! And it just takes that switch. I was in my 30's before I decided I wanted to get good at going to sea. I wanted to get good at it, I wanted to be the guy who knew where the magic valve was. Why you fool. And the lights stay lit, and I did. Nobody knows everything, everybody's ignorant about something.

AD: - Most definitely.

DW: There is no shame to it. The shame is not learning from the experience of being ignorant and make a difference. You got guys that rely on you. You put your life in their hands.

[26:56]

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AD: Sir, what was that magic moment that said, "Okay, I wanna be the guy that does everything."?

DW: I don't know. A friend of mine, he got out of here in 1970 or '68 or something like that, he said he was at the hall when I got my first, first job and I said, "I'm tired of working for assholes. From now on, I'm gonna be the asshole." I never took a promotion, I never even sat for the exam until I thought I was ready. But boy, you'll see some of these turkey-necks out there, man I can do that. And you can! You got all the education you need right now when you get outta here to pass your master's Exam, pass your Chief Engineers Exam. You got all the information and it doesn't mean anything to you because you know why? It has no relevance, it hasn't jelled, it's not working knowledge. Working knowledge, we all know why pumps pump. We don't know why that pump doesn't pump, but based on your experience, you're gonna say, "Well, I know this system and I know we did this and we did this and we did this," and it's usually the last thing somebody touched. That's why the world's going to hell in a hand basket. It's gotta become working knowledge, it's background. If you know what it is, it's not a problem. Problems are, you don't know what it is. You know what it isn't, you're not getting this water from here to here, "But I remember that Joe was working on this valve over here. Look at that, it's closed." It's working knowledge.

AD: Do you have like a; it seems like a very simple method of just--

DW: Well it is simple. There's nothing about what we do that's terribly complex, theory, yeah, it's good to know theory. That's why shit happens. But in the heat of the moment, you gotta be able to do something that's gonna make a difference, otherwise, it's all gonna go to hell in a hand basket. You're steaming along at 100 rpm. All a sudden the ship takes a 2 or 3-degree list, water in one boiler goes up and the other goes down. What happened, what are you doing? And the speed drops off, what happened?

AD: I don't know sir.

DW: You're changing course.

AD: Just simple like that, got it.

DW: But because this boiler over here is now full, telling you that it's full, and this one's empty, the feed pump's still putting out. Now this one fills up. How do feed pumps fail? What happens when you have two full boilers? The feed check's closed. What happens when the two boilers' feed checks are closed, where is the feed water gonna go? Not gonna go anywhere, in which case it sits there and churns in the feed pump and gets hot, it flashes into steam, the feed pump over speeds and trips out. Now you level back out again and now you're fucked. So, what's the solution? Could you think of one?

AD: No.

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DW: Slow the feed pump down.

AD: As simple as that?

DW: As simple as that. But it's gotta happen, you gotta see it. It's weird, you're there, you're doing 100 rpm, all of a sudden, you're doing 90 rpm and "enh" you're like this. What the hell just happened? You don't know 'cause you're in the engine room. They don't tell you we're changing course, we just passed you in the back and we're hanging a left. You just gotta think about what, you gotta see what you're looking at. You got this information, you got all this schooling and zero experience and it's a puzzle, it really is, and you just basically look and see, what do I see? What's it mean?

AD: Sir,

DW: Yeah, go ahead.

[31:16]

AD: Sir, what could you tell my generation 'cause you seem like you do have such a wealth of knowledge. It seems like you have all these views and viewpoints. What's your advice to us as we go--

DW: Pay attention. See what you're looking at. Try and relate what you are looking at to the education you're getting. When they said, hmm what's it mean? What's it mean if this, what's it mean if that? You know what normal is, normal is never a problem, it's normal! You're used to it. Seen it, been there, got the t-shirt, got the picture, got the hat, lap robe, whatever. It's when things become problematic it is because you don't know what to do but you've been trained in what to do, you just don't see it happening because maybe it's incremental, maybe it sneaks up on you. All of a sudden, you're pumping oil on deck and you don't know why. What are you doing, my God? Well what you've done is you failed to switch over the discharge from the automatic bilge pump which is a Weldon pump, which is a positive displacement pump, now you've filled up the tank and you're pushing the vent and it's overflowing and it's going on the main deck and you're going up Tokyo Bay and I'm gonna go to jail. Two solutions, a, you should've switched over to another discharge place for your slops and b, shut the air off the pump. It's automatic, it's gonna float. Float goes up, solenoid opens, pump pumps, float goes down. It happened to me; I didn't go to jail 'cause we caught it. Thanks to God, but I mean, you know, see what you're looking at. It always sounds weird, it's not. It's the simplest thing on Earth. See what you are looking at. How come you two guys are here? Besides you've been assigned to grill me, why are you here? Who picked you?

AD: The Navy, the Navy--

DW: Is this a Navy thing?

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AD: No, that's just me personally.

DW: Anthony, what about you? Why are you in this room at this time, taking a video of me? Who told you to do this?

AS: Dr. Lynch.

DW: Okay and what's the point?

AS: To--

DW: Pick my brain, listen, learn?

AS: To--

DW: What have I said, of relevance to you? What have I said? Pay attention, see what you are looking at, try and understand it and relate it back to your training. That's all you got and when you're out there, trust me when I tell you somebody's gonna be looking to you for leadership. "What do I do now, coach?" "Well, fuck I don't know." Let's look at it, what do you think? What'd you see, do you hear anything special? Something weird happen, what was it? Was there a noise? When you're standing a watch in an engine room, you get used to the vibrations and smells and sounds and you can tell when the air compressors starts up, you know why it started up 'cause the air pressure's been dropping off for a while, you start getting alarms, what do you do? It's your training, it's what you're supposed to do. You, you're gonna go in the Navy. You're gonna have a bunch of swavies that are younger than you guys were when you started, that don't know doodley squat, haven't had the training, their training amounts to your grab your opponent by the arm and you throw him down and you apply the devastating death grip.

Basically, you've been trained, you may not be able to recall everything that you have been trained in when the moment strikes but you do have the information. It may come to you after, you might be the one going into your room going, "Holy Christmas, why didn't I think of that?" It's just what it is. Next time you'll know better. Experience is generally the result of bad judgment, good judgment takes your bad judgment from them and does something with it but your job as an engineer is to keep the lights lit, keep the plant moving 'cause that's what it's supposed to or stopped when it was supposed to, not blow up the equipment, that's bad for 'em, not get anybody hurt. That's it. Decades will tell ya, "I'm the captain," and yeah, you are the captain but you're not going to get there if I don't take you there. Your job is to keep us off the horrible rocks and my job is to keep you so you can stay off the horrible rocks. That's about it, there aint no more.

My advice, learn what you can, try and, you see situations developing where somebody else is having a problem? Look at it, see what they did, what were their choices? There's a really good magazine out called the "Professional Mariner" and I like it because it has a

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causality section in there and they report on the casualties and you can look at the casualties that they had and you can relate them to your own discipline and say, "Okay, I see this, I see this developing "and that developing and the other thing." Basically, that's how you stay out of trouble. Let the other guy make the mistakes. Try and help your shipmates out, if that's what it takes, do what you can. Be a good shipmate. Cooperation means graduation, they aint kidding. Then it carries on past that. Those sixty guys up the hill up there, we're close. Fifty years on, we're close. I'm still dealing with half of them on an almost daily basis. You'll never have anything like this again, ever. Maybe your first ship maybe, but not like this. You need each other. There were guys up there I hate, I loathed them, to this day but they're my classmates. That's it, I'm done. Cut.

[End of interview]