



Reporting the Oregon Story: How Activists and Visionaries Transformed a State

Floyd J. McKay

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Oregon entered a new era in 1964 with the election of Tom McCall as Secretary of State and Bob Straub as State Treasurer. Their political rivalry formed the backdrop for two of Oregon's most transformative decades, as they successively fought for, lost, and won the governorship. Veteran Oregon journalist Floyd McKay had a front-row seat.

As a political reporter for *The Oregon Statesman* in Salem, and then as news analyst for KGW-TV in Portland, McKay was known for asking tough questions and pulling no punches. His reporting and commentaries ranged from analysis of the "Tom and Bob" rivalry, to the Vietnam War's impact on Senators Wayne Morse and Mark Hatfield and the emergence of a new generation of Portland activists in the 1970s.

McKay and his colleagues were on the beaches as Oregon crafted its landmark Beach Bill, ensuring the protection of beaches for public use. They watched as activists turned back efforts to build a highway on the sand at Pacific City. Pitched battles over Oregon's Bottle Bill, and the panic-inducing excitement of "Vortex"—the nation's only state-sponsored rock festival—characterized the period. Covering the period from 1964-1986, McKay remembers the action, the players and the consequences, in this compelling and personal account.

As major actors fade from the scene and new leaders emerge, McKay casts a backwards glance at enduring Oregon legends. Half a century later, amid today's cynicism and disillusionment with media, politics, and politicians, *Reporting the Oregon Story* serves as a timely reminder that charged politics and bitter rivalries can also come hand-in-hand with lasting social progress.

Reporting the Oregon Story will be relished by those who lived the history, and it will serve as a worthy introduction to Oregonians young and old who want a first-hand account of Oregon's mid- twentieth-century political history and legislative legacy.

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