

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Dean's Executive Leadership Series - Pepperdine University / DELS 2007-2008

Transcript of Interview with Steve Lopez, *L.A. Times* columnist

About DELS: The Dean's Executive Leadership Series at the [Graziadio School of Business and Management](#) features in-depth audio or video interviews with today's top business practitioners and thought leaders. [Listen](#) or [subscribe](#) to the podcast to hear their views and insight on the current challenges and opportunities facing the business community.

Start

Announcer: The Graziadio School of Business and Management at Pepperdine University proudly presents the Dean's Executive Leadership Series. This podcast invites top business practitioners and thought leaders to share their view on the real world of business.

Rick Gibson: Hello and welcome. My name is Rick Gibson, and I'm the Associate Vice President for Public Affairs here at Pepperdine University. And I'm joined today by Dr. Linda Livingstone, who is the Dean of the Graziadio School of Business and Management. Welcome, Linda.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Thank you, Rick. It's good to be here.

Rick Gibson: Well, it's hard to believe but we've come to the last of our guests in the Dean's Executive Leadership Series. Tell us kind of an overview of the series so far.

Dean Linda Livingstone: We've had a really amazing series this year. We actually had six speakers because we expanded our series and went to Orange County, kicking off with Deborah Platt Majoras, the Chair of the Federal Trade Commission. Our last guest was Robert Simpson, the President and Chief Operating Officer of Jelly Belly Candy Company and we hosted that in northern California, and we

- 1 -

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

sandwiched that around speakers from the entertainment and toy industries in Malibu. So, it's been a really interesting and diverse year.

Rick Gibson: And, positively received, I assume.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Very positive. It's probably been one of the strongest series that we've had so far and we've had great response from all of our participants.

Rick Gibson: I'm sure that's right. Well, tell us a little bit about our last guest today.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Well, today, we bring you Steve Lopez who's a columnist with the *L.A. Times*. He is certainly sometimes controversial and always interesting. So I know our listeners will enjoy very much what he has to say today.

Rick Gibson: Well with that, let me invite our listeners just to sit back and relax and to listen to this interview with Steve Lopez who's a columnist with the *Los Angeles Times*.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Welcome to our final podcast of the year and with this podcast, we're featuring Mr. Steve Lopez who is a columnist with the *L.A. Times*. In addition to that, he's an author and actually has a movie coming out based on one of the books he's written that comes from some of his columns that we'll talk a bit about later. But prior to coming to the *L.A. Times*, he was with the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. He's also spent time with *San Jose Mercury News* and the *Oakland Tribune*, and was also with Time Inc. for a number of years just prior to his time here in L.A., but has a wonderful track record, earned many journalistic awards, and is a native of California, which is a bit unusual. So, welcome, Mr. Lopez. It's wonderful to have you with us.

Steve Lopez: Thank you. Yes. I'm from the Bay Area of northern California.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Well, we're glad to have you now in southern California. You might start by giving our readers a little bit of background on your career and kind of how you got started in journalism and then how you sort of evolved into doing the kind of journalism that you focus on now.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Steve Lopez: Well, this probably is not the way that I would advise anybody to do it. I went to high school up in the East Bay, the town which nobody's ever heard of is Pittsburg. And they think, of course, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. No, there is a Pittsburg, California.

Dean Linda Livingstone: West Coast Pittsburg.

Steve Lopez: Yes, I'm sure of it and to distinguish itself, it has no "h" on the end of Pittsburg. And so, that's where I went to high school and I didn't know what I wanted to do. Because I was kind of just uncertain about my future, I enrolled in the local community college. It was called Diablo Valley College in Pleasant Hill, and spent a couple of years there and got my AA degree and it was a counselor who said, "Well, what are you going to do after this?" and I said, "I really don't know."

She said, "Do you have any interests at all?" I said, "My interests are that I'm a sports fan and something of a frustrated jock and I like to write." And she said, "Well, why don't you become a sports writer," and I hadn't really given it any serious consideration and she pulled a catalog off the shelf and flipped through it and said, "It looks like San Jose State University has a good journalism program. Why don't you go there?" So, I did.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Interesting how our career paths are directed by such sort of random events.

Steve Lopez: I'm telling you. You would think that I would have been a little more focused and directed, but I was not.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Not unusual, I don't think, for people that age.

Steve Lopez: Well, maybe not, but I went to San Jose State and immediately fell in love with journalism. I loved the program there and I loved working for the school paper and that became almost a full time thing. Unfortunately, it was because I loved it so much that I didn't pay close enough attention in some of my other classes, and the paper there was a daily paper and we worked on it as if we were professional reporters and editors.

And so, I left San Jose State in 1975 and went to work as a sports writer at a little newspaper in Davis, California, called the *Woodland Daily Democrat*. A few years later and a few newspapers later - Pittsburg

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Post-Dispatch, Concord Transcript, Contra Costa Times - I landed at the *Oakland Tribune* in the news department, not the sports department. I found out that going to a ballgame as work was not as much fun as going to a ballgame to just sit--

Dean Linda Livingstone: Just for the fun.

Steve Lopez: Yes. So, I was offered this job as a news writer. In my six years at the *Oakland Tribune*, I got probably the best education of my life and it was maybe an education I should have gotten while I was back in college and busy with my sports writing career. But the deal was that everyday I'd be off on a different assignment. One day you're at a criminal court case, the next day you're in civil court. Then, you're covering a city council meeting and a school board meeting, and then you're at a homicide investigation, and you just got a little bit of everything.

In six years of that, it was a great foundation for-- I realized in that time that I really wanted to do this and that I wanted to write with a little more voice and kind of break out of the straight jacket that sometimes you have as a reporter and I wanted to write with a little more license. That's something that I, I guess, carried over from my sports writing career where there was a bit more of a flare. The editor of the *Oakland Tribune* was Bob Maynard who ran the Minority Journalism Program at UC Berkeley and he asked if I wanted to try a column and I did and then went to the *San Jose Mercury News* doing it and then the *Philadelphia Inquirer* doing it.

It was in San Jose and in Philadelphia that I really began to learn how to write a column. It's a dream job and I feel privileged even all these years later to have that job where I can drop in on peoples' lives and it's the same variety that I enjoyed so much as a cub reporter at the *Oakland Tribune*. I don't know from one day to the next what I'm going to be working on. I'll be juggling several things at the same time, but there's breaking news and then somebody runs up to me with an idea or somebody calls on the phone or a reader sends an e-mail. So, that's the fun of my job is that I get to discover so many different facets and little corners of southern California. It's always interesting and engaging.

Dean Linda Livingstone: One of the things I wanted to get a bit of an insight from you, and you touched on a little in that, is sort of how you decide what to write your columns about. So, I was reading your article in the paper this morning and you just randomly drew a letter out of your sort of mailbag and it was about a Sprint wireless site and the problems that was causing someone, but that was sort of a random way to pick your column. I expect that you have other ways of doing that. How do you come up with the

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

ideas, decide what are people going to be interested in reading and what am I going to want to write about?

Steve Lopez: Sometimes, there's no other way to describe it than just sheer desperation. I had taken Monday off because it was a holiday and I was traveling up to see family in northern California. So, I walk into the office pretty cold on a Tuesday, and I had one ready to go, but it's more of a Sunday one. It's a longer story and I needed time to do a little more reporting on it. So, when I came in Tuesday morning, I thought, "Okay. What have I got going?" and there were several possibilities.

I listened to the radio on the way to work and one of the school board members in L.A. Unified was talking about a proposal to have students wear uniforms again and I thought, "Okay. Maybe I'll just go to a campus and talk to kids on their way in and on their way out. What do you think about uniforms? Do you think it's going to accomplish the things that this board member is talking about where it takes a little bit of the pressure off kids who are trying to make a fashion statement and kids who can't afford the right gear to take to school?" I thought that might work, but then I got to work and looked at the box under my desk that has unopened letters that have been sent to me and I thought, "Okay. Let me try this."

So, I'll pull one out - I've done this before - and just make it just utterly spontaneous. Whatever comes out of that box is going to be my column, and I think, although that's a gimmicky and desperate thing to do, I like having the pressure on me like that. I mean I like having the deadline clock ticking and you've got to pull this thing together in a hurry, and I think sometimes those kinds of columns have such immediacy that the readers pick up on that - it's something that I did yesterday. It's in the paper today. And although it's not the most pressing issue of our time, there was an opportunity for commentary on our gluttonous addiction to a wireless world and of course, it's about this woman who finds one day that there's a Sprint work crew putting these huge relay antennas outside her house, so close to her bedroom that she can hear this constant noise 24 hours a day.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Right, that horrible noise that drove she and her neighbors crazy.

Steve Lopez: Right, and when she tried to get some relief, she kept getting bounced around at city hall and elsewhere. So I like doing that kind of column because people feel defenseless when they have to take on whatever forces there are out there and they can't get any attention. And so, sometimes the column is just to give voice to the voiceless. When you play consumer advocate in the column, readers really, really love that. So today, a couple dozen more ideas are e-mailed to me from other readers who are frustrated by one thing or another.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Dean Linda Livingstone: And pick up on those ideas.

Steve Lopez: Yes.

Dean Linda Livingstone: I do have an opinion about the school uniforms because my daughter goes to a school with uniforms and she's in middle school and they're fabulous. No worries with middle school girls trying to stress over what they're wearing to school every day.

Steve Lopez: Yeah, I have no problem with it and I'm sure there's going to be some resistance, but it's, I think, possibly a future column for me.

Dean Linda Livingstone: I know it will be interesting. Well, as you kind of look at the things you've written through the years, is there any column in particular, or anything you've written in particular, that when you look back on sort of the body of work that you've done that you're kind of most proud of? Or you think was most impactful in a way that you feel is important?

Steve Lopez: Well, at this point, it's thousands; it's literally thousands of columns. It's kind of frightening to look back through them and one of the first things you realize-- Russell Baker said this once when he was putting together a collection of his *New York Times* columns and was forced to go back through them and he said, "The frightening thing is that you realize that you ran out of things to say after the third or fourth column and the rest is just recycled ideas." And, there's a saying in newsrooms that "there are no new stories; there are only new reporters." So in some ways, it's a recycling of ideas and themes.

I think that very early on when I heard an editor at the *Philadelphia Inquirer* say that H.L. Mencken's mission was to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable. It was the first time in my career, which at that point I was maybe what-- ten or fifteen years into it when I had any idea of what I really wanted to do. And, it seemed to fit perfectly what my instincts were, what my upbringing was-- sort of a blue collar upbringing in the East Bay area up in Oakland, Pittsburg, Contra Costa County; a very industrial place. My dad drove a truck. I think that that was when I realized what I wanted to do for a living, and I think that through the years, the column has pretty much stood for that. I will jump up and speak up for those who are afflicted in one way or another, whether it's a denial of their health insurance claim that makes no sense at all, and those who maybe sometimes get a little too pompous or too giddy with power who need to have their bubble burst; I'm there for that too. So, there's been a lot of that over the years.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

As far as whether any one stands out, I've got to say this column that became ultimately a book and is now being turned into a movie is a rare column for me in that for the most part, I've hit and run as a columnist—do this thing and move on to the next. There are columnists who write about the same subjects on a regular basis. I couldn't do that. I don't know enough about any one subject; I'm sorry to have to admit, but I also thrive on variety and what I think I look to do is to keep readers guessing about what might be next.

And so, here comes this column where I meet a guy playing a violin in downtown Los Angeles and three and a half years later, this guy is a daily part of my life and the column became another column and then it was 12 or 15 columns and then I turned it into a book and the book is now being turned into a movie. They're actually finished with the filming. And so, I'd have to say that that one has impacted me the most and it's the one that readers have connected with the most in over 30 years.

I think the reasons surprised me early on. I didn't see it as that kind of a story. I saw it as an act of desperation, again, with the deadline looming, that a guy playing a violin that was missing two strings and who was standing next to a shopping cart that had all of his belongings might have a story. And, I thought this guy could be a column. And so, the column has turned into a friendship, a really deep and rewarding friendship, one that has taken me into worlds that I knew nothing about—classical music, homelessness, mental illness—and it's been very rich and also very challenging and exhausting. I've, in some ways, you might say adopted Mr. Nathaniel Anthony Ayers as kind of a brother and there's a great deal of responsibility that comes with that, and he has a mental illness that he's struggled with for 35 years. So, it's not always easy to be with him, but I think the challenge is probably what makes it so rewarding.

Dean Linda Livingstone: The book you're referring to is titled, *The Soloist: A Lost Dream and Unlikely Friendship and the Redemptive Power of Music*, which just came out in April of 2008. Talk a little bit more about that because, clearly, as a journalist, you're sort of trained to be an objective observer of what goes on. You talked about kind of wanting to transition, add a little bit more of yourself in being a columnist. But clearly, in this case, there was a huge transition even beyond being a columnist to being an advocate for Mr. Ayers to really being a deep personal friend, as you referred to. How has that experience changed you as a journalist and how has it changed you more personally just in your own life?

Steve Lopez: Well, I've broken a lot of rules on this, and it's exactly what you're referring to—that we are told even as a columnist you keep some distance. You don't get personally involved in the story and if

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

you do, then you can't write about it because you're no longer-- you bring certain biases to it once you're involved in it and you're writing donations to the mental health organization that houses and cares for him.

But, I set some traps for myself that I really didn't see, I didn't anticipate. When I first wrote about Nathaniel, readers responded in ways that overwhelmed me—their generosity and their connection to the story. I knew that it was a good story, but I thought that so many of us just dismiss somebody you see on the street. It's easy to do and it's understandable why somebody would want to just avoid someone. I mean somebody asking you for money and if you give it to them, you feel guilty about what they might spend it on and if you don't give them money, you feel guilty about going off to your nice new car to drive home to your nice house while somebody is panhandling on the street. I didn't realize that people would see, rather than all of that, a story of second chances and human connections, and, ultimately, the power of music and art to heal, to transform, to deliver somebody to a state of peace and sanity, even somebody as sick as Nathaniel Ayers.

And, people right off the bat just bombarded me with-- they sent-- he was missing two strings on the violin and people sent strings, money for the strings, sheet music, new violins, old violins, cellos. When I took all these instruments to Nathaniel, I realized that I had created a problem for him and for myself. He's living on the streets, and now, he has an even bigger target on his back. He's going to be mugged for these instruments. And so, I realized that I had to get him into housing somewhere and hook him up with a mental health agency that knew what it was doing because I had no idea what to do with-- I didn't know what his form of mental illness was-- how to really relate to him and deal with him. I had just written this one column and all of a sudden, I've got this tie to him through these instruments.

So, I was upfront with my editors about it and with my readers about it and they kept saying, "How's he's doing? What next?" And so, I just was very clear with readers that yes, I have become involved in his life and this is going to be a different kind of a journalist journey. I'm going to try to wade through this morass, this mental health industry and figure out how to help him and how to shine a light on some of the issues that he introduces me to, whether it's the unbelievable scenes down on Skid Row and just the massive numbers of homeless people, he's going to be my entrée. And so, the editors knew that and I knew that and I think it's one reason people have really responded to this thing is because I did make a personal and emotional investment, and I think readers have appreciated that.

Dean Linda Livingstone: And I think what it is it's also a wonderful example of how through the work that we do, we can truly impact and change people's lives even though we didn't necessarily expect that

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

to be the outcome of a particular action or a particular experience if we're sort of open to what can come from that.

Steve Lopez: Right, and even more surprisingly is not what I did to change his life, but what he's done to change mine. I mean the soul searching that I've done and find myself coming up with new definitions of success and achievement and happiness, along with the patience that I've had to learn and the introduction he's given me to classical music and all of the friends I've met in the orchestra through him. But I mean many rewards come your way, and I was describing this at All Saints Church in Pasadena a couple of weeks ago and I said without really thinking about it that it's almost been a spiritual experience and you feel as though an act of human kindness and generosity can deliver you to a state of grace, and that's what it is with Nathaniel. In fact, one of the working titles for the book was *Grace Notes*.

Dean Linda Livingstone: I like that title.

Steve Lopez: Yes, and I was overruled on it, but he's been such an inspiration in so many different ways. I, like many people, am prone to bicker and moan about the various little issues that you deal with in a day and when I laid them up against the issues that he deals with, it so put things in perspective for me. I mean this is a man who wakes up each day and is not sure what's real and what's imagined. He hears and sees things that I don't and it's a struggle to get through that and it's terrifying and it makes him angry and it makes him lash out at people. And he, in many ways though, is a lucky man because he had the music going in and the music has delivered him to this place where he's safe and almost even sane. When he disappears into the music, he's a different person.

Dean Linda Livingstone: As you talk about that experience of being deeply involved in service, some people might even use the term-- sort of mission work in doing something like that. I think anybody who does that kind of work at that deep level sort of does realize that they're changed as much through the experience as the person is. The mission of Pepperdine talks about preparing students for lives of service, purpose and leadership, and I think that experience that you've had sort of illustrates how that all fits together and comes together in a very meaningful way.

Steve Lopez: Yeah, that's a good way to describe it. Like I said, it's very challenging. There are days when he's very difficult to be around, but it does make it all the more rewarding. I mean I've made a bigger investment and both the challenges and the rewards are greater when it's a difficult relationship.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Dean Linda Livingstone: Much of what you've written about, including the story of Mr. Ayers, focuses on some really critical social issues that we certainly face in L.A., but that we face around the country and even around the world; things like homelessness, healthcare issues come into that, mental health. You've done a lot on public education and other things. Many of our listeners are people from the business community, graduates of our business programs. What role do you think business plays, or should have in helping address some of these critical social issues?

Steve Lopez: Well, I think that it's understandable that we would look at huge problems in this society like the crisis and the challenge in public education, like poverty, like difficulty adjusting to a service economy in Los Angeles—which has among the highest real estate prices in the country—homelessness, mental illness, and it's easy to look at all that and to decide that they're so overwhelming that you can't make difference. So, why even bother?

I think what the Nathaniel story tells us and reminds us is that there are solutions, and there are ways that each of us can make a difference in someone's life and chip away at whatever problem there might be. Now, you take for instance the issue of homeless on Skid Row in downtown Los Angeles. A good percentage of the people who are sleeping on the pavement at night have a mental illness and we know what works. It's not as if there's a mystery. We know that the kind of permanent, supportive housing where Nathaniel lives—which provides not just a bed, but all of the necessary services for mental health rehab, addiction rehab, job training—we know that that works. It's worked in New York City extremely well. It's worked in San Francisco and where it's applied in L.A., it works. We just don't have enough of it, and the place where Nathaniel sleeps at night, it's called Lamp Community, has a waiting list of 700.

Dean Linda Livingstone: That's amazing.

Steve Lopez: There are 700 people who go for the day services, whether it's psychiatric counseling or job training, who don't have a place to sleep at night. And so, they sleep either on a mission bed, and that's another adventure for anybody who walks into a mission, or they sleep on the pavement. And so, I think there are ways that businesses can work with government to the benefit of each to address these problems. People like Tim Leiweke who works for and shoots downtown and runs the STAPLES Center and they own the Clippers, I guess, and part of the Lakers and the hockey team and the soccer team—I think they own everything except the Catholic Church—has gotten religion on this subject. He speaks out when people want to address the homeless problem only with more police action, and he has said, "Look, you got to go down to these places that are doing this work and see what they're doing and it might help to get out your checkbook and to make a donation to a program that has a proven track record."

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

These folks who end up on the streets, some of them are predators and some of them are just out of prison and some of them are not going to be reformed, but a good number of them have fallen through the cracks in this service economy with outrageous real estate prices and poor public schools and you miss a payment and then another, or you have a family tragedy. I mean it's not uncommon to meet people on Skid Row who have these horrible stories about a loved one died, a child was killed in a traffic accident and they went off the deep end and they became sort of un-tethered and they're out there on the street. So, there's a lot of that too, along with mental illness. There's so many needs down there that I would say that government and with the help of business can find ways to make a difference and like I say, it's not as if we don't know what works.

Dean Linda Livingstone: We're a business school, obviously part of a larger university, but as you think about-- you spend a lot of time thinking about public education. We're obviously a private institution, but as we educate students at the higher education level, at the graduate level, what's your thinking about things we could be doing more effectively, whether it's at Pepperdine or at other institutions of higher education, to better prepare students to be the kinds of leaders that will help address some of these really critical issues that are out there?

Steve Lopez: Well, I think you could get personally involved. I'm surprised, to be honest, that there are not more ways for people who want to get-- to make a difference to do so through organized efforts, whether it's through your parish, your synagogue, some social organization, or through a school, and I know that there is quite a bit of that, but it seems to me that we could use more of a buddy system kind of a thing where somebody, say, who is a student at Pepperdine could visit Step Up on Second, which is one of the very respectable mental health service programs in Santa Monica, which has a huge problem.

And, you don't have to invest hours and hours and hours, but you could make a big difference in someone's life and get many rewards from it. You could, I think, have campuses do things like run models of what L.A. County is doing right now. Supervisor Zeb Yaroslavsky was sold on Philip Mangano's approach to homelessness. Philip Mangano is President Bush's homeless czar. All of the homeless advocates love him because he gets it. He knows what works and he is happy to go to any city in the country and talk about what works, and one of the things that he always stresses is that when we talk about the huge cost of these social problems, we should realize that our approach costs more than a solid investment in something that would work better.

Let me give you a better example of that. If you have somebody who's constantly churned through the system: the police come and pick them up because they've overdosed; they're taken to jail; there's a

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

mental health problem. They go and sit in the psychiatric emergency ward. They end up getting sent to jail or to prison. They're tying up the court's time and they bounce out three months or six months or two years later with none of the issues treated and at a huge public cost. Mangano says, "Don't do it that way. Go out on the street and find the 50 most expensive cases and bring them all in right now. Put them in supportive housing. Give them all of the help that they need, and it's a big initial investment, but you'll save money down the line." And, that's a smart approach.

It's worked in places like Denver and I could see, say, Pepperdine students through the business school or whatever other school getting involved in a model through Zeb Yaroslavsky's office and doing that very thing not on Skid Row, but maybe down in Palisades Park. It would be a great exercise in both at the business end and the social services end, and they'd learn a little bit about politics. I think that there are creative ways for all of us to pool our resources and address these huge social problems, and in fact, they're not going to get addressed otherwise. It's just too much to expect the police to do it or the government or Philip Mangano in the White House to do it. You do need the creativity and compassion from the business community and from universities and I think working together, maybe some of these problems can be addressed much more efficiently than they are today.

Dean Linda Livingstone: And, I don't think we've historically done a very good job of those partnerships and everybody is doing their little piece, but to really address those almost intractable issues is going to take, I think, as you say, a more concerted sort of strategic effort of partnership across those different areas to make it happen.

Steve Lopez: Right.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Well, this has been a fabulous and interesting conversation. I appreciate you sharing kind of your perspective on these things. I kind of want to conclude with just one last question: When you've been extremely successful as a journalist, you are an accomplished author, you now have a movie coming out that will actually feature you in the movie, played, I guess, by Robert Downey, Jr., what's next for you? I mean where do you see your career going? Do you kind of continue down the same path, or do you see yourself kind of transitioning with another focus in the future?

Steve Lopez: Well, what's next is that this is still going to be a pretty busy rest of the year because, in fact, I had a meeting at Paramount yesterday. Paramount owns DreamWorks, which has produced the movie and we're already talking about how to handle the publicity campaign. The movie trailers will be in theaters in mid-August, the movie's being edited right now by Joe Wright, the director, who is in London

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

seeing another screening of it today with the producer, Gary Foster, and my next few months are pretty full with the preparation for all of this along with managing Nathaniel's life.

I'm also trying to go back to my own family because I've taken so much time from my job and my family to do this book and to help manage Nathaniel's life. So, I'm hoping to catch a little bit of breather here before it picks up again later this year with the movie business. And then after that, I want to find another cause, another mission. I'm not going to necessarily look for another Nathaniel, but I want to take on another subject. I don't know if it's education. I don't know if it's-- I'm not sure what it might be, but I want to do one. This has been so different from what I ordinarily do where, like I said, I'm on a different subject every time I write. I want to get one where I string together several columns and learn enough about a subject so that I could write about it with more authority in the future. So, I'm still looking for what that might be.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Well, we will look forward to seeing what that is as you get to the point where you get started working on that. But, thank you so much for being with us. As we focus in the business school on developing values-centered leader, I think what you are doing exemplifies that in maybe a different way than we normally think about it from a business school's perspective, but one that's a very important way.

Steve Lopez: Well, thank you very much.

Rick Gibson: Well, Linda, that interview certainly did not disappoint.

Dean Linda Livingstone: Steve is always interesting to listen to and never fails to challenge us in our thinking about what we're doing and how we function in our organizations.

Rick Gibson: Well, it has been a terrific season. I want to congratulate you on the magnificent line-up that you put together and we look forward to next year.

Dean Linda Livingstone: It has been a great year and we had such a wonderful series of speakers that were very well received by all of our audiences. So, we're very much looking forward to rolling out another series next year.

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graziadio School of Business and Management

Rick Gibson: I look forward to that. Well, let me invite our listeners to give us some feedback and to visit our website both to provide that feedback and also to learn more about the Dean's Executive Leadership Series. Visit us at bschool.pepperdine.edu. Until next time, this is Rick Gibson. Thanks for listening.

Announcer: Why is Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management considered the smart way for working professionals to earn an MBA? Well, first and foremost, *Forbes Magazine* ranks Pepperdine's fully employed MBA program among the top 20 business schools for return on investment. So financially, it's very smart. And, Pepperdine's program is built around real world curriculum, not just theory. So, students can apply what they learn in class at the workplace the next day. So now, does earning an MBA from one of the most highly regarded business schools in the world sound like a smart move to you? Then, call 1-800-933-3333 for more information. That's 1-800-933-3333. Pepperdine University's prestigious Graziadio School of Business and Management; the smart business decision. And Pepperdine also offers a top ranked executive MBA program.

End