

Interviewee: Alesha Daughtrey
Affiliation: Global Trade Watch, Field Organizer
Interviewer: April Eaton
Date of interview: August 17, 2000

Interview Summary:

Alesha Daughtrey, field organizer for Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch (GTW), discusses the importance of the protestors' "win" in Seattle, the role of the Internet in the protests, and the role that GTW played in enabling a standoff of such enormous proportions. Daughtrey delves into the relations between the GTW, labor unions and various non-governmental organizations. She also explains the strategies used to organize protestors in Seattle and why the group wants to transform the role of the WTO from pure corporatism to a judicial agency. Daughtrey feels that international trade is inevitable but that it needs to be organized in a way that is beneficial to human interest and the environment, not purely corporate interest. The goal of the GTW, and protest organizations in general, should be to educate the public and pool the talents of all activists, joining the younger activists' enthusiasm for the high visibility and excitement of direct action with the older activists' knowledge of government and efforts to change laws within the existing framework.



AE	I'm talking with Alesha Daughtrey of Global Trade Watch. How would you describe what you do here?
AD	I came here in February of '99 as a field organizer for Global Trade Watch. That's still most of what I do, although I am now also doing a lot of work as a liaison, essentially, with a lot of our international coalition partners, and I also do some grant writing along the way.
AE	What a great job.
AD	Yeah, it's fantastic.
AE	I wanted to ask you some kind of organizational level questions about the involvement of Global Trade Watch in the protest, and then also some personal questions about how you got to your job and what you think about some of this stuff.
AD	Okay.

AE Starting with the organizational level, I guess the first question is why did Global Trade Watch choose to get involved in the protest?

AD Well, we've been fighting a lot of the more indecent parts of the WTO along the way. We are the only organization in the United States that focuses full-time on international trade and investment issues. There are lots of other organizations that do great work, but we're the only one that is entirely devoted to it. So we've been doing a lot of monitoring, essentially since the GATT became the WTO, and we're involved in the resistance to that metamorphosis and, also, have done a lot of monitoring and research into the WTO's record and following a lot of the dispute resolution and providing, to the extent that one ever can, as much NGO input into the WTO process domestically and internationally as we possibly can. And that involves a lot of international coalition building and outreach, monkey-wrenching of agreements to the extent that you can, and also just sort of keeping tabs on what the scoundrels are really up to.

Toward that end, we put together a book, *Whose Trade Organization?*, last year. It was published a few months before the Seattle Ministerial happened. That book basically documented the five-year record of the WTO. When the Ministerial time and location was announced, about, well not quite a year, I guess, before it actually occurred, we thought, well, nothing like this has ever happened in the United States, and it was too good an opportunity to pass up to really bring a lot of NGO and public pressure to bear on the institution, and also to try and turn the organization around in a way that we had been wanting to do, and it was finally on our turf and we could. So, we immediately jumped in and started working on the organizing and the analysis and the PR war and all that.

AE And how would you describe or summarize the activities of Global Trade Watch at the protest?

AD We provided, I think, a lot of logistical support in general. And then we also did a lot of programming and coalition building for national and international NGOs. Although we definitely had connections with folks at the Direct Action Network who were doing planning for civil disobedience and a lot of those other actions - we did sort of coordinate with them so that no toes would be stepped on and we could do things as harmoniously as possible - we weren't directly involved in that. We did a lot in terms of mobilization with unions and NGOs and through getting the word out there to community groups, including just local DAN affiliates or proto-DAN affiliates at that point, really. And also to fair trade organizations on the state and local level, but had sort of sprung up over the last five to six years of our organizing work.

But, for example, as soon as they announced the location, we reserved a bunch of venues in Seattle. We secured hotel rooms, we secured nearly all of the youth hostel in downtown Seattle, we secured half a dozen other venues - churches and halls and things like that. Not necessarily with any particular program in mind for those, but with the idea that if we weren't going to use them, someone else would, and if we didn't get in immediately, all of these things would get snapped up by the WTO Host Committee.

AE How did that end up? Did you end up on specifically as Global Trade Watch mobilizing those people to come to Seattle, stay in those places and participate in activities that you organized, or was it kind of a mix?

AD A lot of it was coalitional. We do a lot of our field outreach and coalition building through a national fair trade coalition called the Citizens Fair Trade Campaign, which we helped to found a number of years ago. In terms of the mobilization, a lot of that was done through CTC, and the CTC partners include a number of different labor unions, mainly the major industrial unions, like the Teamsters and Steel Workers and UAW, as well as UNITE, but also the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, some additional consumer's organizations, National Family Farm Coalition, the Rural Coalition, some religious groups, including United Methodist Church, Board of Church and Society. So it's fairly broad-based. And they were working with us through the mobilization. In terms of the logistics, that was something we handled solely in-house. We were the ones who were putting up the deposits on the venues. We were the ones who were coordinating home stays and plugging people into hotel rooms and handling all of the paperwork and red tape on that end.

AE That's a lot.

AD Yeah.

AE How would you summarize the message that your organization was trying to get out during the protest? What was your sound bite? If you wanted to make one thing known, what would that be?

AD The WTO is an undemocratic and unaccountable organization that works to promote the profit margin over the interests of the people. We feel that international trade is necessary and inevitable. But the rules by which that trade is governed need to have more to do with the interests of citizens than with the back pockets and cash wads of a couple corporate CEOs. And we want to make sure that there is a balance consideration. Obviously people are always going to be concerned with their profits - it's business, we understand that, we accept that. But we think that needs to be balanced with concern for the rights of workers, basic human rights, protecting the environment.

- AE** Yeah. Was there any discussion about how much effort and how many resources you folks should put into going to Seattle and being a presence there, rather than in all your other activities? Lobbying, more conventional sorts of . . .
- AD** There were lots of discussions about that. Last year was a very hard year for us, because in addition to working on Seattle, we also had a major legislative campaign with the NAFTA for Africa Act, the so-called African Growth and Opportunity Act. And that was our major legislative campaign for last year. So there was a lot of struggle about allocation of internal resources, and we basically, in the end, sort of split fifty-fifty. And then, of course, in the last two months or so prior to Seattle, people were working on that theoretically percent of their time, although in reality, I spent all my time on Seattle and came in on the weekends to handle the other stuff. That was just how we did it.
- AE** So, it sounds to me like once you made the commitment to be there, then you couldn't turn back, it was just this is it, this is what we're doing.
- AD** Yeah.
- AE** You mentioned earlier that you worked in coalition with a lot of different groups. Do you want to talk a little bit about the pros and cons of that?
- AD** Well, the pros are things like Seattle, frankly. I mean, one of the things that I think was really important after the NAFTA fight several years back was that was the first time, I think, that labor and environmentalists had really been able to dedicate themselves to the same project and begin to see eye to eye. But what happened in Seattle was a deepening of that. But also a diversification, not just of the particular interests people had as it related to trade, but also a diversity of tactics, which is part of what I think made Seattle work as well as it did. Because there were NGO programs for the think tanks, engaging in deep thinking and analysis of the problem. And there were street protests, literal, physical shutting down of the WTO. There were also inside activities going on inside the Convention Center, where there were NGO representatives and union leaders literally going around and grabbing WTO delegates and talking to them about various issues and encouraging the developing nations representatives to continue to hold back. And with all of these things combined, you see what can happen, you know? So that, I would say, is the pro.
- The con is that I think, and we've been fortunate in that we have not experienced this, but for coalitions that are very rigid and structured, that sort of operate on the all or nothing model where all coalition partners are in or no one is, that can be difficult in sort of getting an agreement to work on a particular issue. In our case, the way that CTC and its international opposite

number work, it's a little bit looser than that, and there are people who are always in, and there are others sort of on an ad hoc basis. There is some flexibility in the coalition that allows us to do pretty much everything and keep things covered. It's obviously difficult in that there were a lot of discussions about tactics in Seattle.

I think that a lot of the union leadership was a little bit more hesitant about the direct action than say some of us were, because that wasn't something that they'd had a whole lot of exposure to and experience with, and they weren't sure how that would shake out. We weren't sure how it would shake out either, but we knew it was worth a try. So, that was somewhat of a challenge...

AE Yeah, I would imagine.

AD Getting people to sort of sit down and deal on that level. Although, you know, the proof was in the pudding. Later, when there were steel workers running around the Convention Center in Seattle, it was a definite moment.

AE What would you describe as the biggest successes in your experience and the organization's experience in Seattle and, also, things that maybe didn't go so well? Any things that stand out as the really good part and the really bad part?

AD I think the best part about it, frankly, was the fact that this coalition emerged. And it's sort of interesting how, for years people have been talking about the Washington consensus as something that's never going to bend, never going to break. And I think we've found the one thing that can, the Seattle coalition. And people will refer to that now, I see this in news clips, even in the mainstream press where they refer to the post-Seattle coalition, by which they mean faith-based, family farm, laborer, environmentalists, students, all of these movements converging and becoming far greater than the sum of the parts. And I think that's still a coalitional connection that's very much alive and working. I think that's sort of the best gift that Seattle gave to the movement.

Plus I think that it did quite a lot to sort of re-energize the left a little bit. I think it has been really hard over, especially over the last four years, but really over the last eight, because I think a lot of liberal/progressives sort of saw a Democrat in office and after the Reagan-Bush era figured that they're work was done here. And they were willing to sit back, and they figured Clinton was a nice guy, and that was all there was to it. And people got really rather complacent, even though it soon became clear that not that much had changed in the White House or anywhere else. And I think having that magnitude, having a demonstration on that level was something that nobody had really seen in years, in decades actually. And I think it was a big reminder of how much power people actually had. That was good.

I wasn't around for the anti-war demonstrations or for the civil rights demonstrations. And I think a lot of younger activists really sort of saw this as something that became their movement, and I also think that, and this is something that occurred in talking with student and youth activists, since Seattle is, but there are so many young kids, and when I say young, I mean middle-school and high-school aged, that have turned up at protests since then, locally and nationally. What seems to have happened was, they heard about Seattle in the news and they saw the photos from there, and they thought, there really is something wrong with this WTO thing, and there really is something wrong with the global trade and investment system, and it is very unjust, and it's not democratic, and it's not working well for the people. And you know what, there are people who are my age who are doing something about it. And I think that contrary to the myth that a lot of younger people are slackers and not politically connected and disinterested in government, in the way society is headed, I think it has really done a lot to bring the student and youth movement alive in the United States, which is good, because it's been asleep for too long.

AE So that's all the great stuff.

AD Yeah.

AE Were there any disappointments?

AD Sure. The police were, obviously, a huge disappointment. And that was something I think we still don't know how we could have done better, because for months there were lots of meetings with the police, including the chief, and basically they knew everything that was going to happen. We said there will be this many people, this is a rough idea that's being planned, and we're going to tell you everything up front, except there will be a couple of peaceful small surprises, and we're not going to share any mobilization points, but other than that you know it all. And they chose not to prepare appropriately. And I don't know how we could have worked that better, but that was, I think, the most bitter disappointment.

AE Yeah.

AD I think the other thing too, obviously, is that there was not enough outreach done in communities of color, and there was not enough money raised to bring enough people there from the Global South. And those are things, though, that I see as being connected, not so much with Seattle, but really with the movement as a whole. So I don't necessarily ascribe that to Seattle, but that's certainly a place where that showed up.

AE Sure, yeah, that's very important.

AD And there are some things people have done since Seattle, I think, to work on that. And it helped provide a wake-up call. But that's one place where, I think, everyone fell down, and that's something that never should have been an issue to start with. That's something that people should be more aware of and working on consistently. But certainly not having better representation from what democracy really looks like.... It would have been a big plus in Seattle.

AE Yeah. Well, you mentioned earlier among the coalition partners, international organizations. Can you elaborate on that a little bit? You might also connect with future efforts too.

AD Right. Well, one of the things that has sort of carried over from Seattle is that there is an informal international network that includes NGO representatives from about two dozen countries, fairly North-South balanced actually, and this is the group that did a lot of work with international mobilization for Seattle, but is also preparing for the launch of a new WTO campaign on September 7. This was the group that has been instrumental in sort of crafting a lot of message and underlying strategy for what we have done here on the WTO. There was the 'No New Round - Turnaround' statement, which was unveiled internationally last September 15. And it was that group of people who were involved in helping to create that statement and, also, in the new WTO 'shrink or sink' statements. And those groups are, again, also more of them have a fair trade focus, but they also include Friends of the Earth international groups. They include Vandana Shiva's organization in India, the Research Foundation on Science, Technology and Ecology, but largely fair trade and consumer groups.

AE That's exciting. I'm jumping a bit, but it seems really appropriate to interject here. Do you think, well, how much of this would have been possible without the Internet, or how do you, I guess, determine around how did the Internet facilitate what you did?

AD There's been a lot of cry about how great the Internet is and how it revolutionized organizing and how Seattle wouldn't have been possible without it. I think the case for the Internet has been a little overstated. I have really come to the conclusion that the numbers that were generated in Seattle would have been impossible without the Internet. Because there were so many people literally who arrived on November 30, because on November 29 they saw a live stream video of what was going on in Seattle, and they just decided they had to get in the car and drive up from Portland or San Francisco. And people literally got in the car and drove all night to get there.

And it was also really good for sending around calls to action and letting people know what the mobilization points were, what the plans were. So people arrived and they already had some sense of what to expect, what was going on, who to talk to, and how the week would go. I think the level of detail and that information would not have been possible. Ride boards, housing was arranged via the Internet, all of this stuff, it made it logistically a lot easier on that level. But I think what really set the work in Seattle apart from some of the subsequent protests has been that there was a huge amount of local organizing going on and local coalition building and education and outreach.

And I think, I'm not foolish enough to believe that everyone in Seattle was just thrilled to have the WTO there, much less the protest, much less the tear gas. But I think people at least had some understanding of what was going on. They understood, even if they did not agree with the protesters' purpose and reasoning for being there and for choosing the tactics that they did. And I think it made for a much more effective message opportunity, and I think that hopefully it will change the way the Pacific Northwest sees trade. And that's an important reason for doing all of that. And other protests, although I dislike comparing Seattle and Washington, because it's sort of apples and oranges, there was not the same level of on-the-ground community education and outreach. And so I think that the IMF and World Bank issues have remained a little bit more muddled in a lot of minds as a result.

AE Going back to the Internet, is that a big part of facilitating your ongoing connections with partners that you have been partnered with for a long time or that you have reached that you've come into coalition with?

AD Yeah, we operate about a half dozen list serves here. Some of them are very closed strategy lists that are just for key coalition partners that we work with around the country. Others are far more broad and include thousands of subscribers. And they include the action alerts and updates and things like that. Email on the Internet is really important for a lot of the international work that we do. We do try to have some type of conference call every six to eight weeks at least, although we're hoping to go to monthly soon. And we've tried to have physical meetings once a year. But in terms of day-to-day things, checking up on different projects that each of us has agreed to take on or whatever, it's too hard to mess with the time zones, so definitely it's good for that.

AE Did you mention, I think you did, some pretty close relationship with labor unions. Is that long-standing, or new, more recent, Seattle centered?

AD Fairly long-standing. We worked for a lot of unions on the NAFTA campaign, as well as on the Fast Track campaigns of '97 and '98. We are closest with the major industrials.

AE That was already there.

AD Yeah.

AE Shifting a little bit to questions about yourself and your own views, first of all, how did you get here? How did you end up doing what you're doing?

AD By accident. Probably how most good things happen. I was working for the Democratic Party, actually, in Idaho, in 1998, and our deputy director here, Mike Dolan, was taking a leave of absence from Public Citizen and doing some GOTV consulting and spent four days at my campaign, which is where we met. And he said, "So what are you doing after this?" I said, "I don't know, I think I'm moving to Washington. I want to get some NGO experience." And he's like, "Great, I get job announcements all the time. Call me." So I moved to Washington and I called him, and I said, "What do you know about?" And he said, "We have a job here. Why don't you come in and talk to me about it." So I showed up. And my organizing background, I had been organizing for years, since I was 15 or 16, but I had never worked on these issues at all. I had never worked on, in fact, labor issues. I had never worked on any of this. So the learning curve was huge, but I thought that this is something that really affects a lot of things that I care deeply about. I care about workers' rights, I care about the environment, I care about human rights, and this is touching on all of those, so I guess this is where I need to be. And I didn't realize how much it was touching on all those things until I had been here a few months. So I was sort of being educated as I went. And I think one of the things that really changed for me was I very much believed in what I was doing. I was totally dedicated to the cause. And then I went to Seattle. And I sort of knew a little bit of what I should expect. I knew about how many people would be there, I knew how big it would be. I knew what was going to be going on. I knew basically all there was to know about what was going to be going on there, and I figured that it would kind of be a little bit by the book.

AE A lot of people did.

AD A lot of people did. And I also went out there thinking that we wouldn't win. I expected that we wouldn't. I think everyone did.

AE Yeah.

AD I spent the week before the Ministerial and the week of out there. I came away with a very, very different take on all of this, because I had believed in all of these things, like I said, but it wasn't personal. And suddenly, when you're standing in the middle of the street, and you're watching somebody half a block down in a wheelchair be beaten by two police in riot gear, and when

you're washing tear gas out of the eyes of an eight-year-old child, you start to realize that there is obviously something going on in that Convention Center that they're protecting. What is it that they would fight this hard to protect? And I had always had this theory, simple-minded though it was, that the police were there to serve and protect me, since they were my tax dollars at work, right? Wrong. And I just thought, okay, so what is it that's creating this? And, of course, I knew what the answer was. But for the first time, it became a very personal thing, where these were not just being visited on people via a plant closing, or things that do affect real lives in very real ways. You don't get much more real than this is in your face, than physical conflict on the streets.

AE Do you see, I mean, this - you're back, it's been awhile - changed anything just in terms of how you work or perhaps in terms of your goals? Made you more committed to keeping on doing what you're doing?

AD Personally, yes, absolutely. I assume that with most of my professional life ahead of me, I'll leave Public Citizen at some point. But I don't think I'll ever leave this movement. I'll always be involved in some way. Organizationally speaking, I don't know. It's really hard to win one on this, because you're up against so much money, and so much corporate-peddled info. But I think the fact that we did win this one means that so many more people are willing to say, we had a very public win, and they're that much more excited to work on it. So the people who were working on it before are that much more dedicated. And the people who weren't working on it before are now eager to jump in, because they want to be part of the next victory.

AE Yeah. That's really, that's pretty important. Now, you're pretty young. You mentioned earlier your observation of how many really young people are getting out there. And, also, it seems like both in your Seattle experience and in your work here, you have a lot of interaction with older activists. In terms of the WTO and, also, more generally, do you see any differences in the political histories of these folks and/or in their outlooks? I guess that's kind of a broad question. I'm asking both about peoples' pathways to activism, what was it that got them to wake up, and also in their preferences - their ideas about what to do and how to do it. Do you notice any, do you think it's all individual or do you notice any trends?

AD There are some. I think a lot of people, regardless of their age group, come to this for a lot of the same reasons and from a lot of the same places. Many of the older activists arrived here through work and Latin American solidarity projects through the '80s, anti-war work, anti-nuke, some civil rights. But their journeys into activism were not terribly different from a lot of younger activists, who arrived in it through anti-racist networks and still anti-nuke networks and a lot of peace organizations. So it's not really that dissimilar.

AE

Yeah.

AD

But I think the biggest difference probably has to do with tactics. The younger activists are much more ready to take to the streets. You know, sit-ins, blockades, and they take a much more physical approach-not all, but many. Whereas, a lot of the older activists took that approach when they were in their teens and twenties, but now many of them are also really interested in the value of doing legislative work and lobbying. Some are interested, as well, in the electoral piece of it, in making sure that fair trade candidates are supported and elected. Although, I don't really see that as being a big part of the concerns in the movement. Maybe it should be more so.

AE

Well, that actually brings up an interesting question, because as far as we know from good survey research, a lot of say college-aged people don't really believe in the standard paths of politics - voting, working for an interest group, lobbying, etc. - and are much more into direct action, not only with protests, but just like getting out in your community and volunteering. Do you think that perhaps experiences with direct action are giving people a little more interest in, say, getting folks elected that they want elected or maybe just reinforcing their previous view? I mean, you can't speak for everybody.

AD

To be honest, I really think that it's just, direct action is sexier. It's easier to mobilize people, to go out with puppets and banners and drums and stage a sit-in and have a lock down. That's like much more interesting and exciting than it is to get a bunch of people together to put on their hose and their heels or their suits and their ties and go and sit in a congressman's office and talk to him, or go and sit in the City Councilwoman's office and talk to her, and have a discussion about how to change policy. On a personal level, sure, I understand that. I know which one is more fun. But it's not always the most effective - sometimes it is, sometimes it's necessary. But I think a lot of it is just that a lot of younger activists don't know that much about the political and legislative processes, and so they aren't able yet to really weigh tactics and decide when one is appropriate over the other. And some of the older activists, I think, are able to weigh that, but afraid more often to take action-oriented routes.

AE

Well, and in terms of that balance, where do you think all this is going next? I mean, there will obviously be more protests and more conventional type activities directed at significantly changing what's going on with the WTO. But is there a plan? Is there a next, or a set of next steps that you see? If you could engineer it, how would you, what would you say?

AD

Well, the message in Seattle was "no new round." We got that part. The second part was "turn it around." We haven't done that part yet. And that's sort of the next task is, okay, we haven't stopped negotiations entirely, but we at least prevented expansion of negotiations. They don't have an agenda, they

don't really know what they're going to do next, which is good. And now we have to sort of use that political space to create something new. And the answer basically is that the WTO needs to, not even reform itself, but radically transform itself into becoming an agent of justice in the world trade and investment system. And if the WTO isn't going to do it, then maybe the WTO will need to be brought down.

There are some signs that the WTO may actually crack under its own weight. And it's because there are so many spats going on between the US and the EU right now, the entrance of China into the WTO probably doesn't bode well, because China's past record of compliance with trade agreements has been practically nil. So judging from that, they probably won't comply with their WTO obligations either. And I am willing to bet money that the WTO will bend and break before Beijing does.

So I think that's a possibility, we hope for that. But in the absence of it, self-destruction. There's been discussion about moves eventually after a public education campaign and attempts internally within the WTO to try and get them to clean up their messes. Absent that over the next one to two years, I think we'll start seeing campaigns around the world pushing for withdrawals in the WTO or de-funding. And interestingly, this year there was a vote that Ron Paul of Texas brought up, and it was a resolution to withdraw the United States from the WTO. We didn't ever really take a position on that. We did sort of agree with the sentiment. The fact was that the time just isn't right. Members of Congress just aren't there yet. And it was one of those situations where we were actually hoping that the vote would never come up, because it would sort of show our hand in terms of the lack of Congressional support for that right now. But I think two years from now it will be a different story, because there is also a lot going on in the interim with a NAFTA expansion that is being negotiated now. We can expect to see another push for Fast Track here in the States next year. And I think a lot of those kinds of things, in addition to the continued momentum of lots of government and corporate accountability organizing and activism and protests going on all over. I think it will make a difference.

AE

That is pretty much what I have written down here. Is there anything that you would like to add specifically about Global Trade Watch's role in everything that you just described, or about your experience in Seattle, or anything I haven't asked you?

AD

I think actually the biggest challenge that Global Trade Watch faces, and everyone who's involved in this work faces, is that having won that one in Seattle makes it somewhat more difficult to win the next time, because I don't think you can ever put all those pieces together in quite the same way and expect the same results. It won't happen. They've learned too well already. The police have certainly learned, as we saw in Washington and Philadelphia,

and now in Los Angeles. And they've changed their tactics in a way that's much more publicly palatable.

And I think the WTO will be operating differently as well. I think it will either have to become totally secretive again, or it's going to have to gradually pry itself open to the light of day, because right now there are a lot of member countries that are complaining about having too much transparency, at the same time as all of the NGOs are freaking out. And I think public opinion is not really on the side of the WTO in that regard. Because even people who agree with the policies that are put forward by the WTO will admit that it's not the best way to operate, behind closed doors. And a lot of people will give you that, if nothing else, in terms of critiques of the WTO. But information is much harder to get now, much harder.

AE Yeah, really.

AD The United States Trade Representative's office is much less friendly than it used to be. You know, briefings are canceled and never rescheduled. Calls go unreturned. And probably were never really a model of perfect assistance. I have to say that it seems to have lagged a bit over the last year.

AE Yeah, you could hardly call it an accident.

AD Well, you could, but I don't believe it.

AE I don't think so.

AD So that's kind of a challenge, because we basically have to come up with a whole new tool kit to go at it for the next time. Plus, as of right now, we don't really know where the next Ministerial will be. The only place that I know that has even volunteered to host it is Doha, Qatar. And I'm sure that as much as we all hated the police situation in Seattle that in Doha that would be . . .

AE Pretty different.

AD . . . Demonstrably worse. And I think that's another thing - that a lot of these agreements are starting to move out of the WTO. For example, the FTAA is a completely closed process. We can't even get interagency documents going between the USTR and the EPA about environmental reviews or various agreements about the FTAA agreement, which is absurd. And one of the main concerns that I've had and that we've had here has been that whatever they negotiate within that, that covers the entire Western Hemisphere, which could later be inserted into the WTO. So I think we'll probably see a move, at least in the short term, toward more regional and bilateral agreements, because it's easier to sort of cover those up and iron out the details quickly. And then

they'll be expanded. So that's another potential pitfall. But it's also sort of exciting, because it's a cusp time, a lot's changing now.

AE

Yeah, well, it's certainly going to be an interesting story to stay involved with and keep looking at.

End of Interview

WTO History Project
University of Washington
wtohist@u.washington.edu