

ACC-2025-003-002_Walkinshaw.mp4

Jean Walkinshaw [00:00:00] [Unintelligible] on both sides of paper no less.

Carol Doig [00:00:03] Jean, I've seen you more than once come prepared to do an interview with someone else.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:00:12] Yes. You're going to ask me the questions?

David Laskin [00:00:14] I am. So, first of all, thank you, Jean, for being here. We're at Carol Doig's beautiful house in Shoreline. It's September 4th, 2024. We're here with Carol and Meg, one of Jean's daughters. And we're here to talk about you and your knowledge of Ivan and Carol and your work making movies about Ivan and his books. So I think I'd like to start with a kind of an open ended question about your friendship with Ivan and Carol so that the viewers have some context. So tell us how and when you met and how the friendship evolved over the years.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:00:54] Okay. I first met Carol when we were seated at a table at the I think it was the Women's University Club, which was a very unlikely place to see Carol and Ivan. But there was a good lecture going on so I looked over and I thought, oh my gosh, there are the Doigs. How amazing. And and so I waited at the door as they came out. And I had the audacity to introduce myself. And they didn't know who Jean Walkinshaw was at that point. Nobody did. And and so that was the origins of my going up. And say hello to them and I'm sure Carol probably remembers it quite differently. Do you, Carol?

Carol Doig [00:01:46] Yes. Quite differently. I can't bring back that particular occasion. You know, my memory really starts up when you started in on Winter Brothers.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:02:06] In the meantime, my husband read Winter Brothers and said Jean here's a show that maybe you would be interested in doing. It was his idea, but he left all decisions, and if you know me well, left them to me. Then it came to my own business of interviewing so that Walt didn't have any part of any of the questioning that I did.

David Laskin [00:02:37] And what was it about Winter Brothers that grabbed you that made you think, hey, this could be a really good movie?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:02:43] I think it was the Olympic Peninsula because I've had a lot of experience in the Olympic Peninsula. My father having one of them, my father having a built road around the Olympic Peninsula. He was an engineer and very, very early on was building roads and he built the first road around the peninsula.

David Laskin [00:03:04] So you had an attachment to the peninsula that predated the book.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:03:08] Way, way long.

David Laskin [00:03:09] Okay. So the book grabbed you, you clearly saw that it had cinematic possibilities.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:03:19] Yeah.

David Laskin [00:03:20] And at what point? Let's talk a little bit about how it came to be. At what point did you contact Ivan and get him involved and how? Just talk about that process.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:03:32] Well, I involve my subjects in the creative process as much as possible because I want to do them, not what they think I want. So I never will tell them what to say or what to do or anything else. I just asked them if they would please let me interview them. And I try to keep, I always would keep my voice out of it completely. So you did not hear me. And then I work into a long kind of monologue that they were thinking. And then I would have to figure out film to go over that and show that they were not part of the bunch. They put themselves in my hands. That was it honey. And they never saw it. They never had anything to do with it. It was my baby. And it sounds kind of strange, but I felt that I just had to have it be my vision rather than, you know, in the creative process, I don't think you can have a lot of people creating something.

David Laskin [00:04:48] Well, let's talk about Ivan's role. There are passages in the book that in the film he's reading aloud or referring to. Did he say, Hey, Jean, I really want to concentrate on this diary entry or when Swan gets drunk or when Swan has run-ins with the natives or how did that happen?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:05:09] He totally respected my judgment and stayed out of it completely. And that was a joy for me for him to understand it. And some of the things ended up that I kind of wish he had been a part of it when we blew the county court house electric system.

David Laskin [00:05:30] I didn't know about that.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:05:31] Yes, Yes. Well, we had tons of funny, funny adventures together. And Carol was part of them, too. When we were out on the Olympic Peninsula shooting and she greeted us at the end of the trail and I hadn't really met Carol before. And she brought us some, what was it, Carol, the rum?

David Laskin [00:05:58] The rum!

Carol Doig [00:06:00] Well, around the rum was black cherry jello, which had been heated so it was a liquid form.

David Laskin [00:06:11] And that was to revive you after a long day?

Carol Doig [00:06:13] Yes it was raining.

David Laskin [00:06:14] It was raining, of course.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:06:15] Pouring rain.

David Laskin [00:06:18] Pouring rain? Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:06:18] And Ivan was such a good sport. He really was a good sport and funny. I hadn't realized he was funny before. And even standing in the middle of the street, my trying to interview him, he was funny.

David Laskin [00:06:35] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:06:38] So that was great.

David Laskin [00:06:40] Good. So that brings me to my next question, which is really about your impressions of Ivan. Aside from him being funny, was he what you expected or not? And if not, how did the real life Ivan differ from what you expected him to be?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:06:57] What I expected him to be.

David Laskin [00:06:59] Did you have any expectations?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:01] Yeah, yeah. Well, I drew a picture here of how he looked to me and there it is.

David Laskin [00:07:12] I'm going to hold this up to the camera.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:14] His hair stuck straight up like this, didn't it Carol for a while?

Carol Doig [00:07:19] Oh yes.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:20] Yes, so his hair was sticking straight up and he was...

Carol Doig [00:07:23] It was a bush.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:25] A bush effect, yeah.

David Laskin [00:07:26] Okay. Oh that's right, kind of like a brush cut.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:29] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

David Laskin [00:07:30] When he had more hair.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:07:31] And he was very interesting looking. And and I, of course, was so intrigued with him because he could use the language in such an incredible way that I just sort of ran with his language.

David Laskin [00:07:53] So what about in the filmed interviews? You know, I've seen him now in three of your films, and he just seems like a natural. He seems very himself. But he projects really well. He speaks clearly. But, you know, his language is somewhat complicated. Did you have to coach him or instruct him, or did you just plunk him down in front of a camera and he just took off and was that polished, articulate, eloquent person?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:08:24] I think with anybody I filmed, the main thing I would do is to get them to forget there's a camera. And so they just talked to me. And I would have questions in the back of my mind that I might want to cover in the interview, but in the end, I always used what they wanted to talk about.

David Laskin [00:08:48] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:08:48] What was important to them. So I would go into an interview sometime coming out with not one answer to anything I had in my mind, but let them run

with it. And I got a lot more interesting stuff that way, I think, because they just forgot they were being interviewed and they got to be interested in just talking. And I'd hide the camera as much as I could and so that they weren't aware of a camera staring at them. And so is this right, Meg? Do you think from what... well of course you weren't around when I was doing that, were you, no.

David Laskin [00:09:30] It sounds right to me.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:09:31] Yeah.

David Laskin [00:09:33] So how did Ivan compare with other subjects of yours? Did you find that he was easier to work with? Harder to work with?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:09:40] He was a little harder in that he's stubborn, and I couldn't just do what I wanted.

David Laskin [00:09:45] Yeah. Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:09:46] He'd dig his heels in!

David Laskin [00:09:49] Do you remember anything...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:09:50] I'd hear him say No, Jean! He got quite testy with me sometimes. Yes, a bit testy. And I get testy back with him. And when I was trying to plan the trip up in Port Townsend to do Swan when he came back to the town, I had Ivan out in the middle of the street and I usually would let him say when he wanted to, but in this case I picked a passage that I wanted him to recite. So I asked him to stand in the middle of the street, and at one point he was stiff as he could be. And I said, Ivan, just relax. Just pretend I'm not here. He said, he retorted. Well, how could I relax when you have me walking my lines and doing my thing in the middle of the street of Port Townsend? So he was testy and I was testy back with him, but it never came to a point of... I always found it very amusing after I did an interview with him thinking, Oh my God. He really did me one better on that one because he was aware of being interviewed. Always. Always. And so he protected himself and wouldn't tell you just something off the top of his head easily. But he always felt he was great, he had won a battle if you got him to say something that was, yeah, very very natural for him.

David Laskin [00:11:36] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:11:37] But he was really fun to be with. Just being with him was fun. And he had such a good sense of humor. Yeah, he and Carol both of them.

David Laskin [00:11:47] Yeah. Did you in the interviews with him, did you have to do a lot of takes, a lot of shots or did they kind of come out right the first time?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:11:58] You only use your first stuff. I didn't stop him. I didn't ever have him stop the camera and say take that again.

David Laskin [00:12:07] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:12:08] Never. Never. I would find another way if I liked what they said, I'd find another way of getting them to say it again. So it was exhausting being an

interviewer because you had to listen so totally and listen to them and take your cue from what they were saying rather than what you in your head had originally thought the interview should be. And I think that was what made my work, if anything, a little different from theirs.

David Laskin [00:12:39] Okay. So when by the time you started working with Ivan and made the Winter Brothers film, you were in mid-career, right? You'd already had a lot of experience making other films, is that correct?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:12:54] Yes. Where did it come? Yeah, I think he wasn't one of my first, thank goodness.

David Laskin [00:13:03] Yeah. So you were approached.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:13:07] He was a challenge.

David Laskin [00:13:08] And what was the biggest challenge about working with Ivan.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:13:12] For working with Ivan? Well, he was smarter than I was. And I couldn't fool him! And he was kind of marvelous in that he felt he was being so totally honest and fresh in what he said. And he was the one who said, you know Jean, you shouldn't be giving your interviews away. You should be charging people to do the interviews. And he's always felt that people should be paid for what you did up until that point. It was really early on in my career when this happened. I was so thrilled that anybody wanted to pay any attention to my work that I would not expect to be paid at all. But then afterwards, and it did add a certain type of seriousness and a market for it because gee, if somebody paid to have this done, well, that lady must know something. And so I found that Ivan was totally right on that. And I regretted it sometimes when it came back to bite me because other people got the idea and they'd say they wanted to be paid and I couldn't get my freebies anymore. And also, I think when you're being paid, you can be suspected of trying more to please what the interviewer wants you to say if they're paying you. And I agree that is a problem with that because you don't want to say something that's going to bang your contributor in the face with something that's not very complimentary to them then. Yeah. Yeah. So you are limited. And I found that contradictory in my what I was doing.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:15:20] And bothersome because I didn't like to have to not be just totally honest with them.

David Laskin [00:15:29] Okay, good. So let's come back to Winter Brothers for a minute. It has some beautiful footage of the peninsula, Port Townsend, Neah Bay. I'd like to hear about your memories of traveling and shooting with Ivan and Carol. And let's get to specifics. Did you stay in the same motel? Did you go over together? After the day of shooting was over, did you go out to eat? How much kind of fraternizing was there and just some of your adventures together?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:16:01] Yeah. Well, actually, we weren't fast and we did not take this, take one, take over again.

David Laskin [00:16:10] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:16:11] That was totally out of our style. We either cut it or we didn't. And sometimes it was mistakes that were wonderful. And so that Christmas, when they tripped and fell or something that was not supposed to be funny, but it was funny. And so that we used to be, and we worked very fast and we did not set it up. Our whole idea was to catch it as it happened. And it really did happen. And so we try to set up situations where things really happened, like he would really go out to the end of the trail and look at the waves and be in a dangerous spot.

David Laskin [00:16:59] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:00] Just like this picture shows.

David Laskin [00:17:01] Yeah

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:01] That you [Carol] took, I think. Yeah. That was taken out in the field.

David Laskin [00:17:08] Let me put this on the camera for a minute.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:08] And you see that we're... And that was after we came back from the trail.

David Laskin [00:17:15] So this picture shows you and Ivan and who's in the middle, it looks like your cameraman?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:21] He was the cameraman. Wayne Sourbeer. Our names were Sourbeer and Walkinshaw. People thought we were kidding them when we'd go and introduce ourselves.

David Laskin [00:17:31] And do you remember? So this is taken on the peninsula, this picture? And do you remember what, was this winter? I mean, obviously the Winter Brothers, yeah, pouring rain, okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:42] I think it was winter. It was very much a Winter Brother.

David Laskin [00:17:44] And it says in the background, something rugged, high cliffs, extremely dangerous area, enter at your own risk. Cape H.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:17:56] Yes. Doesn't it sound very adventuresome.

David Laskin [00:17:58] And you all..

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:00] And we went and did it!

David Laskin [00:18:01] I'll put it back in once more. And you all like, I'll put it even closer. As happy as can be.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:06] It actually says Carol's rum.

David Laskin [00:18:10] Carol's rum! Okay. That's the secret to everything. Good. So how many days do you remember, approximately, were you on the peninsula with Ivan and your photographer?

Carol Doig [00:18:24] I think we spent two overnights.

David Laskin [00:18:26] Okay.

Carol Doig [00:18:27] For travel and two cars.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:28] Yes. Right.

Carol Doig [00:18:30] And we spent two nights and three days.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:36] Yeah.

David Laskin [00:18:37] Amazing. Because having seen the film, it looks so polished that I thought, oh they spent a month there, you know, going back and doin...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:46] Editor comes in, you know that. The editing is where it all happens. I spend much more time editing something than it took me to shoot it.

David Laskin [00:18:56] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:18:56] Because I catch things as they happen and then I go back and need to put them all together and put audio in, music, which is very important that I'd add that all later.

David Laskin [00:19:09] And you did your own editing?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:19:12] Yes.

David Laskin [00:19:14] Wow. Very impressive. Okay. So I think we may come back to Winter Brothers, but I'm going to shift gears a little bit and ask you a different kind of question. Ivan has a wonderful line in the film about mountains and oceans being the last pieces of earth that humans have not transformed. And I feel like this sense of wildness and being untouched...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:19:38] Yes.

David Laskin [00:19:38] Is present in both of your work. Obviously in different ways, different media. And I'd like to hear your thoughts about capturing the untamed, untouched wildness of the West.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:19:51] Yeah. Well, I am a Westerner through and through and sometimes obnoxiously so. And my roots go way, way, way back to the West. And I've always had a resentment about people who thought that the East Coast intellectually was the place where it all happens. And it's so fascinating to see in this last year or two how it shifted to California and our political interests and our art. I never thought Los Angeles Art Museum would be quoted as [Unintelligible]. So much, I think has shifted to actually the West and to be from Yale and Harvard and so forth is not that great anymore. It's the University of California and Stanford and U Cal, University of California. And University of Washington.

David Laskin [00:20:53] I was going to say, let's not forget U W.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:20:55] No, they're very important in a lot of fields. So I was always very resentful about... and I used to work in the east at Yale, as a matter of fact. And people would say, oh you're from the West, as though, my God, she can speak English! You know, I was just shocked at how people... And of course, I'm old. I mean, I'm 97 years old, so that, aren't I? No. I'm 98 years old. I always forget. So I've seen a lot in this world. And for them to think I didn't know. It is always kind of an insult to me. And so I used to play the role sometimes just to be fun.

David Laskin [00:21:57] Play the role of the Western ingenue or you know.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:22:01] Oh yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. You got it.

David Laskin [00:22:07] Okay. So at one point in the film and again I'm talking about Winter Brothers, Ivan says rivers are as holy to me as anything I know. And I was kind of surprised by this since in my relationship with Ivan I never heard him speak about anything spiritual. We talked about a lot of things, but God and holiness was not one of them. I'd like to hear your memories of this and whether you and he discussed spiritual matters further in any way or whether this was just somewhat phenomenal.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:22:42] Well actually, I didn't take that seriously. That he was suddenly a born again Christian.

David Laskin [00:22:50] No, I didn't take it that way either.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:22:52] No.

David Laskin [00:22:53] It almost sounds more chauvinistic.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:22:55] Oh I know those words do, they have so much meaning that I took them for representing how he felt about how those words, like something has a holy feel to it as not necessarily meaning that he felt religious about it, but that he just felt that it was a marvelous place. And I don't know, Carol, you know better than I do. Was he interested in Christianity and being?

Carol Doig [00:23:39] Well, if he was very far into it I didn't hear about it in a fifty year marriage.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:23:46] Yeah, right.

Carol Doig [00:23:47] But he felt that with, you know, the world we live in, in a more secular way, was a holy place. And it should not be abused.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:24:00] Yeah. Yes, exactly.

Carol Doig [00:24:01] That makes sense. Okay. Yeah. I think that fits it really. Really captures my memory of Ivan's approach.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:24:08] Right. No, he wasn't.

David Laskin [00:24:09] Once when he told me that he was sick with cancer and I said, I have a really religious friend and I mentioned something about prayer and he said, There'll be none of that. He was, you know.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:24:20] Exactly.

David Laskin [00:24:20] That was not his style.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:24:22] Right. Right.

David Laskin [00:24:24] Good, okay. So again, a little bit of a different tack. I've done a lot of interviewing of my own, not for films, obviously, but for books and articles.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:24:33] Yes.

David Laskin [00:24:33] And I find that sometimes the people I'm talking to, we just hit it off. We're just a good fit from the get go and sometimes have actually become friends with the people I interview and we remain in touch. Others, you know, there's just it's more stiff and formal. We'll get a good interview. But it's, you know, there's barriers. How would you kind of put Ivan on that spectrum? Did you feel an instant rapport with him or was there some ice that you needed to break?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:25:05] None.

David Laskin [00:25:05] No ice. Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:25:07] I just loved him from the very beginning. You know of course I've read his books, some of his books. But I was so excited to be able to interview him. And then immediately as I interviewed him, I was thinking how visually I could put it over his interview to make it richer, showing me his natural expression. But putting pictures over it. And I tried to think of a bar and how I'd have him sit and so forth and so that we did find a bar where we could shoot him. And it was. Yeah, there it was.

David Laskin [00:25:51] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:25:51] There's some funny thing that did happen.

David Laskin [00:25:54] Bars were important to Ivan and his...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:25:56] Oh my, yes.

David Laskin [00:25:56] Is it that the scene in This House of Sky where he talks about going with his father to all the bars in White Sulfur Spring? Yeah, I think he was, what, 7 or 8 years old? So what about when Winter Brothers aired? What were Ivan's reactions and did you celebrate together or was he crochety about it or how did he respond?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:26:21] That's such a good question. I, of course, just anguish until I find out how the person is reacting. And he was very kind to me and said, Jean, that was a good job. You know, oh Ivan, say that again. Can I use it in quotes about you? And so I was thrilled that he seemed to go along with it. And I was also thrilled that he had the understanding of the creative process. Never, never to tell me what to do. He left it up to me completely and got himself out of there. And I so appreciated that to his understanding

that you've got to leave it to the artist. Just like I learned that I used to start telling my fellow photographers what to get. I mean, I certainly they knew in general what I wanted. But then I found that I just wasn't going to tell him. Now, you put your camera here. Get that shot for me. I got a good cameraman and let him go and get the shots he wanted. And then it was up to me to use his video over. And I think that's why so much of it was. And that's why it was fun for me in that, actually, it was in the... And I don't that I ever told you this, Carol, when we were with some friends in we were in Colorado or Wyoming, but it was just wild expanse of land. Nothing on it at all except a one old fallen down cabin that was down. And so I took a lot of pictures there that thinking, I'll use that someday. And indeed with the show on Ivan where I have him out in the wild talking about the there's this ain't no low populated country. And his were really, well I was able to use that [Unintelligible] so that I pulled. And by then I hadn't done a lot of film but I really had a stock of film that I could use that would interpret what the person was saying. It was interpretive rather than describing what they were talking about. It was all kind of double thing. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:29:11] Interesting. So let's pause for a minute and kind of talk about...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:29:17] Incidentally, you're doing a marvelous job.

David Laskin [00:29:19] Good. Well, thank you.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:29:20] You're very good. I'm having fun.

David Laskin [00:29:22] Good. Well, that's. Yeah. And you seem like you've forgotten about the camera, which is great. So, Jean, if you could kind of give me a little bit of, let's say, the chronology or history of your friendship with Ivan and Carol. Winter Brothers, I guess, was the first time you really worked with him and when you first got to know him. Then how did things evolve and how involved was Walt with you? Did you see the Doig's together where they're kind of friends and you went to dinner or did you travel? Just kind of tell me about your friendship and how it evolved.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:29:54] Well, we, of course, cherished the friendship, Walt and I did, but we didn't get to see them that much, really, because it was a time when Ivan was busy. I mean, he was writing so so much and when you realized what he was writing through, they didn't have much time to just go socialize. So we, as a matter of fact, it kind of hurt my feelings sometimes that I couldn't get them to go do something with us. And I began to thinking, Well is something wrong? Maybe they'd prefer just not to know us. But I didn't, you see, I didn't know this, that was that Ivan was, because he was so incredibly gallant about his illness that you would never know, the outside person. And so that we didn't do that much buddy buddying until later. And whenever we did, it was just a cherished time for us. But Walt had a driving sense of humor, too. And so they used to kid each other and loved to laugh together. But it was not as many times what I would have liked to be able to be with them. And and I began wondering, well, I wonder if they just would prefer not to see us, you know, and so that maybe that was shortsighted on my part. But see we didn't know. We didn't know. And they were so incredibly great about pushing through no matter what.

David Laskin [00:31:56] Do you remember when your film of Winter Brothers came out? What year?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:03] Gosh. How could we tell [Unintelligible]?

David Laskin [00:32:11] Yea, we'll keep moving.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:12] We'll find out.

David Laskin [00:32:13] Okay. But, so Winter Brothers was your first work with Ivan and then was WestWords the second? Was that the second movie you made with him?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:23] Yes.

David Laskin [00:32:24] So let's talk about that. I guess my first question is, so that's kind of a group portrait to different writers. Ivan is one of them. How did you make the choice of who to include? And at what point did you think, I got to have Ivan in this movie?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:40] Ivan was the one who helped me formulate the idea. And I don't usually tell people because I don't want to get Ivan in bad. But he's the one who suggested whom I do. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:32:55] So? So he...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:56] I didn't know of a lot of these authors.

David Laskin [00:32:59] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:32:59] And he did. And so he said, well, he didn't tell me what I needed to do, who I needed. But he said, Jean, I think you would find so and so interesting. Why don't you try them out?

David Laskin [00:33:12] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:33:12] And so he was really what was behind that film.

David Laskin [00:33:18] Yeah, oh I didn't realize that. So he was the one, I think for me, the Ivan segments obviously are the most interesting because I knew Ivan, but I also really liked the Terry Tempest Williams clips. So it was Ivan's idea to put her in? I didn't even realize he was a fan of hers.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:33:36] No, Terry Tempest Williams was somebody I put in there.

David Laskin [00:33:41] Okay. Because I don't think of her as being with Ivan's...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:33:43] I don't think Ivan cared that much for Terry Tempest.

Carol Doig [00:33:47] Well, she was the leading author of the West and we did know her. We weren't best friends but we enjoyed seeing her when we could.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:33:57] Yeah. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:33:59] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:33:59] And she was a difficult person for me.

David Laskin [00:34:06] Really? In what way? Well, I guess we shouldn't get too sidetracked, but I'm just curious because in the film, she seems so eloquent and relaxed.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:15] Yes.

David Laskin [00:34:16] Kind of serene and a little bit floating. But, so she was difficult underneath that seeming?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:23] Not really, I mean, that really was her persona.

David Laskin [00:34:27] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:27] Yeah. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:34:28] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:29] Yeah.

David Laskin [00:34:30] Interesting. So still sticking with WestWords, how involved was Ivan in the choice of which questions and passages from Rascal Fair and Winter Brothers? Because I think you have him say, Oh Ivan, would you read this passage from Rascal Fair? Did he choose those or did you choose those or did you talk about it or?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:55] I chose them.

David Laskin [00:34:56] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:34:56] But of course Ivan had already chosen by writing about them so I knew that he liked them, so I felt okay going ahead and just choosing anything.

David Laskin [00:35:06] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:06] Because it was all his writing.

David Laskin [00:35:08] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:08] Yeah. I didn't ask him to suggest which passage.

David Laskin [00:35:13] So you just kind of went through and marked, Ooh, this is a good one. This will work well.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:17] Yeah. Exactly. And those feet of the Indians dancing.

David Laskin [00:35:23] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:24] In that last scene. Of course, I don't think... That was the book you've finished, isn't it?

David Laskin [00:35:29] That was Last Bus, I think, has the Crow fair in it?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:34] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

David Laskin [00:35:35] I don't think that was mentioned in there. The other thing that I loved about WestWords, as Carol knows, I actually visited Ringling not too many years ago and I thought, Wow, is this ever a bleak, you know, small...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:50] You know, that was an area I talked about.

David Laskin [00:35:53] Right. And it's in the book. I mean, it's in the movie.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:35:57] Yeah it was that exact area where I was researching another book.

David Laskin [00:36:01] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:36:01] Another thing I came across this and I thought, Oh my God, this should work for Ivan.

David Laskin [00:36:06] Yeah. So do you remember when you first got to Ringling, what your impressions were? Can you describe that a little bit?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:36:15] Oh my gosh. I thought, Wow, this really is kind of a podunk little tiny place.

David Laskin [00:36:23] Podunk, yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:36:25] And it was, I thought, Oh how amazing that Carol would come up as a sophisticated woman. Not that Ivan wasn't sophisticated, but from New Jersey to come and live in that I thought, What? I wonder what she thought when she walked in and saw it, what was going to be her life.

David Laskin [00:36:52] Yeah.

Carol Doig [00:36:53] Well, we were simply paying a ritual visit a few months after we were married and so, as usual, Grandma Ringer gave us her room that was really hardly a house. She made it a home, but it was hardly a house. The next morning, there were high windows, and I heard a tinkle of a bell and I lifted myself up to the windowsill to see what it was and there was a goat running down the dirt road. And I was charmed.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:37:32] Yeah. Well, you would be but that took an unusual person.

David Laskin [00:37:35] Yeah. Takes an unusual person. So I heard Ivan read in public on numerous occasions and I was always struck by what a showman he was. I mean, he didn't just read, he kind of put on a performance. He was a little bit larger than life and he had a great, great reading voice. And you captured that on film so well, that quality of his voice and his timing and the intonation. I'm curious about how you captured that. I know from my own work I've done a little bit of film stuff and a little bit of radio and they're always like, Put more expression, you know, kind of amp it up. You're too flat. Did you have to say things like that with Ivan or did he just take off and he knew what to do?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:38:22] No, no. I would never tell people how to do it. My job, I felt, was to be there with a camera to catch how they did it rather than how I thought they should do it or how I wanted them to do it. Sometimes I've been disappointed in people in that I want them to be a certain way, but damn it all, they're not. So then I go a different

route with them and follow what they are. And I've gotten some of my best interviews have ones when I thought we're going to be, Oh dear, oh my. Why did I choose them? And they turned out to be by far the most interesting and wise and so forth. So it was very humbling to me that I had so little idea of how incredibly, and I know this sounds kind of namby pamby, but really, really, really how interesting people are if you give them a chance. Yeah, and listen to them.

David Laskin [00:39:27] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:39:28] You know that. You're such a good listener.

David Laskin [00:39:31] Thanks. So there's an outtake from WestWords of Ivan chopping wood in his backyard. Not at this house, but when they lived down the hill. And I've often chuckled over that scene because Ivan is so careful, you know, he puts on his gloves and, you know it's just wailing away. He's very precise.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:39:56] That honestly happened.

David Laskin [00:39:56] Oh I bet.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:39:57] I didn't ask him, I said, we kind of Carol and I, we put our heads together and said, We need some action in this thing. We need Ivan to be doing something, and she suggested the wood.

David Laskin [00:40:10] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:40:11] And so we set up the camera, and that's the way he did it. He really did it that way carefully with his gloves on. And he got his axe out and sharpened it. That was not prompted. That was Ivan. True, true Ivan.

David Laskin [00:40:30] Well, that captured to me something essential about Ivan, which was the precision. And, you know, he took everything very seriously. And yet this great force and passion and imagination, it was a very interesting, to me, unique combination. Can you talk about that a little bit, those dual aspects of Ivan's temperament?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:40:56] Yeah. Well, to look at Ivan, you would think that he would be quite different from what he was, I thought. And, well, he had a great sense of humor and everything. He was very, very careful about everything he did. I mean, he needed his pencil in one place, his computer just right. And it turned down this way and so forth. And then he'd get to work and so that he, and I kind of find myself the same way. I like to have my desk very, very clean before I could work and that I put the inkwell here or whatever it might be and the pen here in it, so I could understand that it's a neurotic kind of need for order around you in order to work it seemed to me. And Ivan wouldn't waste time on it, but he'd just be sure that his computer was where he wanted. And I think a lot of us do that. We can before we go out, we like to have things. And then there are others like my daughter, who wade through pages that she has to get off her desk before she finds it. Just everybody's a little different yeah.

David Laskin [00:42:22] Yeah, yeah. Ivan once shared one of his files with me. I was working on The Children's Blizzard, and there was a mention of a fort in Montana that where the storm was first recorded. And I said, Oh Ivan, do you have anything about Fort Assiniboine? Oh yeah, so he dropped off this file, perfectly organized, chronologies,

photographs, notes. Everything in order. And I was just laughing because my files are exploding and chaotic. And so I think Ivan did have a well, you know, he had a Ph.D. and I think he brought that, you know, kind of thoroughness to his work. But still, then his imagination would run wild.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:43:08] That's the thing that's so amazing to me. Usually that very orderly person is so orderly that they have no flights away from where they're ordering is in, they can't get away from it.

David Laskin [00:43:21] Yeah. I agree that Ivan was unique in that. So let's talk a little bit about Ivan Doig Among Friends, which Carol has said to me in an email, is still her favorite of your movies. And of course, it has a special place in my heart since I appear in it. But I can't, even though I was in it, I can't remember how that film came about. And whose idea was it? And if you can just kind of reconstruct the genesis of that and how it all came together. I think maybe there are some outtakes from other movies that you put together. Just kind of fill me in on the history of that.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:44:00] Golly, let me, I myself am drawing a blank.

David Laskin [00:44:05] Okay.

Carol Doig [00:44:06] Well, I can help a little bit on that. You had done a lot of filming, I believe it was before the Winter Brothers film. But you brought up one of your photographers who took a lot of extra film.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:44:22] Right.

Carol Doig [00:44:23] And so you walked away with this wonderful set of...

Jean Walkinshaw [00:44:30] Library.

Carol Doig [00:44:32] Of films about Ivan, and you have him talking at some length to know how he worked. And I know that that existed. And then you showed me after he died and you made that available to us. And then we sort of as a small group and Betty Mayfield was involved in that, too, you said, We ought to make a film because that was so good. Plus we could get all the friends together.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:45:11] Yeah.

Carol Doig [00:45:12] Shortly after his death.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:45:13] Yes.

Carol Doig [00:45:15] And then you went and did your many questions.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:45:18] Yeah.

Carol Doig [00:45:19] And we shot it.

David Laskin [00:45:23] Yeah. Well, I had a great time doing my bit on that.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:45:26] Aw.

David Laskin [00:45:28] So, Jean, you are in a unique position of knowing Ivan as a friend, as a writer, and also as the subject of one of your films. Nobody else can claim all three of those. Can you pinpoint or describe a memorable event from each of those, something from your friendship, something from his books or something from the films that you felt really captured Ivan or comes back to you? It could be something little. Whatever pops into your mind.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:45:59] Yeah, Yeah. Golly, there were so many. I guess, at Port Townsend when we blew the lights out of the, look at Carol.

David Laskin [00:46:16] Tell me about that. How did that happen? How did you blow the lights and what was the story on that.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:46:23] Well I had arranged with the courthouse to let us film because I wanted to go down to the archives and show Ivan getting his source material.

David Laskin [00:46:35] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:46:36] And I needed some visuals to go over that. And so I called the courthouse to ask them if we could go downstairs in the courthouse and look in their archives. And so I'd have a visual thing of him going into a place where there are archived material. And so they said, That would be fine. And so I went down and we needed lighting quite a bit because it was in a dark basement. And the minute we did that, court was in session, all their lights went out.

David Laskin [00:47:21] So you blew the fuse.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:47:24] And then we apologized profusely. And if you can believe it, we did it again! We plugged in another plug that apparently was too much for the system. So not once did we blow the light but twice we blew the light.

Carol Doig [00:47:44] It said something about Jean and how she works. She can blow the lights in the court house on a day when they were having court and without any hesitation, she went back and did it again until she got the pictures.

David Laskin [00:48:00] Right, of course. Yeah. Kate always says to me that I'm a different person when I'm writing an article or researching because I'm usually very retiring and somewhat shy. But when I'm on assignment, I knock on every door, and if nobody answers, I open the door and just walk right in.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:48:20] Absolutely, I'm like a dog after a bone.

David Laskin [00:48:21] Exactly.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:48:22] I've got to get that. I said I was going to get it, and by gum, I'm going to get it. And my poor kids know that one.

David Laskin [00:48:31] How did Ivan react? Was he just kind of along for the ride with Jean or did he kind of go, Wait a minute, we can't do this, we're gonna get in trouble.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:48:41] He disappeared quickly.

Carol Doig [00:48:43] He was amused.

David Laskin [00:48:45] Okay. Yeah, I can see that.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:48:49] Yeah. And right after that, it was when I had him in the middle of the street, and he wanted to know how he could feel natural.

David Laskin [00:48:56] Right, in the middle of the street.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:48:58] I asked him act very natural. So we were in a tense situation with each other by then.

David Laskin [00:49:05] Okay. It had been a long day. Yeah. So, Jean, do you have any regrets about your time with Ivan? Questions you never asked, things you never told him or things you wish you'd been able to do that you never did?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:49:20] Oh boy, yes.

David Laskin [00:49:21] Talk about some of those.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:49:23] You just can't live with those regrets, though, because there's so many people who I regret, and I think, Why didn't you ask them that, you idiot? Or why did you take time on that topic when they were so much more alive with other company? Yeah, I live in constant regret.

David Laskin [00:49:45] I do, too. So this brings up another question about Ivan's illness. There were, you know, Ivan was very private about the cancer. He told me and Kate at some point. But he basically said, I don't want this to be talked about. I don't want it. And it wasn't like it was a secret, but he just didn't want it to be the defining thing. And he, of course, went on and wrote wonderful books during that illness. Do you remember when he told you and how and what your reaction was?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:50:19] Well, we didn't hear from the Doigs for almost I think it was almost a year.

David Laskin [00:50:24] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:50:25] And I began thinking we had offended them or we kind of talked about it and thought, Oh my God. What did we say? What did we do that was so wrong? And so I was really, really, I shouldn't say thrilled, but we were at the restaurant out at [Unintelligible], the restaurant there. And we had asked them to join us. And so we went in and at that point, they told us why they hadn't been in touch with us. And we were about to feel that they really didn't want to see us. And consequently, thank goodness we didn't. But we nearly thought, Well, we're certainly going to stop imposing ourselves on and calling them and all.

David Laskin [00:51:20] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:51:22] If they don't want to see us. And so that it happened that way. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:51:30] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:51:31] Yeah. No, they didn't tell us the way they did you.

David Laskin [00:51:34] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:51:35] We were on the, still, on the wondering what had happened to them. And so it was a tough time for everybody.

David Laskin [00:51:46] Yeah. I remember Ivan, I was surprised by this, but Ivan seemed to be pretty open with me, at least, about his treatments. Once he told me he would describe, Okay, well, I had to do this kind of transfusion and I'm reacting this way to this drug or I'm really tired or so on and so forth. Did he open up with you about any of his physical?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:52:09] No.

David Laskin [00:52:09] Okay. So it was not part of your relationship?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:52:12] No.

David Laskin [00:52:12] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:52:13] And actually, until I got cancer myself, I wasn't particularly interested either, though. And I had no background on it.

David Laskin [00:52:21] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:52:21] But now I certainly would, yeah.

David Laskin [00:52:25] Yeah, okay. Okay, so now we're going to switch gears again and talk about, you know, regional writers, which I know is a label that Ivan hated.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:52:34] Yes.

David Laskin [00:52:35] And, you know, being lumped in, Oh he's a writer of the West. I just you know, I can still hear Ivan bristling about that. But on the other hand, there's no question that his work does capture something essential about the West. The people, the land, the people and the land together. So I'd like to hear you talk about Ivan as a writer who is rooted in the American West, but who was not really limited by that. And maybe about the conflict or, you know, you were talking about before about how people from the East kind of go, you know, slotting people from the West. Talk about that vis a vis your work with Ivan.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:53:20] With Ivan? Well, I think that I can't speak for Ivan, but for I myself, it's always infuriated me, the critics so much have criticized the West and they never even been here. They don't even know what it is. And yet their reaction is, Well, Yale, Harvard and so forth. And thank goodness. And maybe it's happened more even more recently but this matter of, Oh you mean Stanford University, is it? And University of California or known university? Well, isn't that interesting. And it used to be that they'd ask me, people would ask me when I worked at Yale University for a while, and people would ask me, Well, where are you from? And I'd say, and they immediately thought, wondered

where my feathers were in my hair. And so it always was. It made me mad. It just made me mad and so that I felt that Stanford, it is so interesting now to see the way it has turned around. But that's only been in the last three, three, four years that the whole thing has turned around and people are looking to the West for new ideas.

David Laskin [00:54:59] Right, yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:54:59] And actually, it always was interesting to me that so much of the press was Europe, everything was Europe and the whole incredible world of Asia and the Orient were, they weren't interested in it.

David Laskin [00:55:24] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:55:24] And it was just absolutely staggering to me how now people want to know and are interested. I mean, it used to be that I'd talk about the West to somebody, you know, their mind would go someplace else. So that I think that there is, at least on my part because I've been just such a Westerner.

David Laskin [00:55:52] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:55:53] Such a total Westerner that I always am looking. I look forward to people not to be up on and pretending they know our West.

David Laskin [00:56:08] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:56:08] And then they really don't know our West at all.

David Laskin [00:56:11] Right. So on that subject, Ivan, this is from WestWords, Ivan says about the West, the themes are a lot bigger. The consequences are a lot bigger out here. Do you agree? And if so, bigger in what way would you say?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:56:28] I think there's a West and there's the West. There's the Northwest is smaller and the consequence, but from what I thought he was talking about there, and that's where that filming of the broad expanse that I had worked so well. I think that there's the Pacific Northwest and then the West is thought of by a lot of people, western Colorado and they're so different. Montana, the mentality is different, the background. And then you get out here to the Northwest, you've got Seattle and all that is very different again. So that they're West and there are West. Yeah. And it's too bad that it hasn't been very defined.

David Laskin [00:57:22] Yeah. I do think one of the amazing things about Ivan was how he straddled the West and the West. I mean, he was rooted in Montana, but he lived here. He wrote to some extent about the Pacific Northwest, Mountain Time, you know, is set here. And I think that was really unusual for me at least, that he, you know, it's hard to think of Ivan without thinking Montana. But then he lived so much of his life here and seemed to get something. And this is very a very different West, as you just said, from, say, Montana or Colorado or so on. But Ivan seemed very at home in both in a way.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:58:05] He did, yes.

David Laskin [00:58:07] I always loved how he talked about New York. I'm from New York originally, but Ivan was always like, Well, in New York, well, back in New York, they say, or they do. Did you get any of that? And if so could you talk about that?

Jean Walkinshaw [00:58:23] Oh yeah. We used to wink at each other. Yeah. And no, I think he wanted to be considered, from my understanding, an author that rises above place or environment. That he wanted to be and should be considered a great writer. Period. And not tie him to being a regional writer. And I think that happens to an awful lot of wonderful writers. They get bogged down because they're thought of only as able to write about their own region.

David Laskin [00:59:09] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:59:09] And they're not great writers, as I feel, Ivan was, who is incredible, the way he got inside the head of himself and those kids. I mean, that's universal. You could apply that to Dickens, you know. And so that, I think his skill, yeah, he's above the West as a Western writer. I think he should be.

David Laskin [00:59:39] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [00:59:40] And it'll be interesting to see what happens in history. Yeah.

David Laskin [00:59:44] Yeah. I'm glad you brought up the kids because I feel like Ivan wrote about kids better than I think anybody else that I can think of. And I was thinking about this the other day, there's something I think that Ivan does that Willa Cather did in *My Ántonia*, where she starts with an adult, he's on a train and he's thinking, I'm going back to Nebraska. I'm thinking back to when I first met Ántonia. And then he takes you back to the point of view of a ten year old or 11 year old boy. But there's always the grown man in the background. I felt like Ivan did that, too.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:00:23] Yeah.

David Laskin [01:00:24] Did that strike you? And if so, you know, what did you make of that? His ability to do that adult and child's perspectives.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:00:34] Well, I think just, Wow.

David Laskin [01:00:37] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:00:38] This guy can write. He's not tied to a place or even topic. He could write about it. So I guess I just thought of him as a writer above all else. A writer who did a beautiful job on the West and because he did. And when he wrote about the way it was right on so often. But I don't think that, yeah.

David Laskin [01:01:16] So I find one of the most inspiring things to me about Ivan's work is that while he never cast a blind eye to trouble, crime, evil, bad actors, nonetheless, I think what lit him up most was the goodness that people carry within them and sometimes have trouble expressing. And often it's squashed by hardship or bad luck or circumstance. But there is that sense of humanity usually linked with hardship but not destroyed by hardship.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:02:01] Yeah.

David Laskin [01:02:01] I'd like you to talk, Jean, about when you think about Ivan's work or his character or his impact on you and your work, what are some of the nuggets that you come back to or things that you found inspiring about him?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:02:18] Well. I don't know. I think people are people, period. Whereas I think it's incredible when somebody can pinpoint a place. But it all boils down to the fact that we're all humans and that's above all else. And so I think there's a different level if you talk to about people, there are people who are very much so influenced by their environment and where they grew up. I feel I certainly have been. And yet when I think about other people being so defined by where they came from, it's too bad to put them in a box like that and define them. Like, I think it's wrong or it's fine to define Ivan as a great writer with Montana as a background, but he's so much farther than that, more than that, that I guess I feel that there are certain writers, certain people who can find empathy with people no matter what their background. And I hate more than anything else, though, people who kind of, I know I found this in the South, they kind of, when you met somebody, kind of wiggled themselves around to want to find out, well, now where are you from and what was your family status in the community? And that used to really, really bug me that I found in among certain Southern people. Now here I am stereotyping them. So, you know, turning a table. But if you can rise above that and think about the human values that we all have, it's so important yeah.

David Laskin [01:04:41] I traveled a little bit with Ivan. We went to South Dakota to do a book thing together in Deadwood, and we went to Nebraska once, Carol was on that trip to the Homestead National Monument. So I saw Ivan a little bit interact with some very distinguished people, like the poet Ted Kooser and then, you know, with waiters in the restaurant, or, you know, the clerk at a desk in a motel. And I thought Ivan treated everybody the same.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:05:09] Yes, yes.

David Laskin [01:05:10] He didn't talk up or talk down. I'm curious whether that struck you, too, in his comportment.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:05:17] Yeah. Yeah. Actually, you were talking about waiters in the restaurant, we have a British friend who comes and visits us, and I will go to dinner with him because he treats the waiters with such arrogance. And it makes me so mad that I just can't stand to go out to dinner with him. Yeah. And he's British. From the British aristocracy. This is Theodore Roethke's wife, Bea, and she married a...

David Laskin [01:05:56] I know Theodore Roethke's work quite well.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:00] Oh you do.

David Laskin [01:06:00] He was one of the first poets I ever really liked.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:02] Oh really? Really? Oh my God. That's a whole other subject we should talk about.

David Laskin [01:06:06] I know, right?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:07] Because I was just very, very close. In fact, Meg's his goddaughter. He dedicated a book to Meg. Yeah.

David Laskin [01:06:20] Yeah, he was my first poet.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:25] Isn't that interesting. In a Dark Time. That's one of the great poems.

David Laskin [01:06:27] Yeah, and The Awakening, I think is one of his books.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:30] Yeah, "I wake to sleep and take my waking slow. I learn by going where I have to go." I love it.

David Laskin [01:06:37] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:06:38] And I don't memorize many things.

David Laskin [01:06:42] I had that poem by memory too once, I can't remember any of it. So have I left anything out, Jean? Anything that you think, man, if I don't say this about Ivan I've left out something critical. It could be, you know, trivial or important or whatever. Anything that pops into mind that you think, wait a minute, there's this one story that I have to tell.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:07:06] Yeah. Well, I don't think you can underplay the extent to which he's not laughing at people. The extent at which he found amusement in life and don't we all. And he would write things that were a lot of people plotting they took seriously, and you knew he was just having fun with it.

David Laskin [01:07:37] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:07:38] And so that I found that is interesting. And Carol, his wife, has a great sense of humor, too, you know. And she is a damn good writer. And I think their relationship was so interesting how you can be married to a man who goes down in the basement, spends all his time, and not interfere with him. And I think that was the ultimate wife to have for Ivan Doig. So that I think of them as a twosome more so than I do of... And there aren't many people are that way.

David Laskin [01:08:24] Yeah I agree.

Carol Doig [01:08:26] I agree too.

David Laskin [01:08:29] Yeah. I, you know, I had this fantasy Kate retired several years ago. I thought, Maybe she would enjoy helping me in the research for my books or keeping track of things or, you know. No. Kate was like, No, I'm not. You know, it's just not. And she didn't say it in a mean way. It was just clear she didn't, it just doesn't sit well with her. Whereas you, Carol, I felt like you and, well, as Jean said, you were a team. You traveled together. You, Ivan, you were his first reader of everything. And so I think he was very lucky. And you were very lucky, I mean.

Carol Doig [01:09:08] I agree. We were both lucky. We were a damn good team.

David Laskin [01:09:15] You were a damn good team, yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:09:17] But I remember you said you had never touched any of his pearls as far as criticizing them. And in detail. Is that right?

Carol Doig [01:09:29] Not really. I mean, he would have me read, and he really wanted to know what I thought.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:09:35] Yeah.

Carol Doig [01:09:36] And very often I was to see whether the pace of the thing was right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:09:40] Yeah.

Carol Doig [01:09:42] But, no, he would specifically tell me, would you please check this chunk and see if it moves quickly enough? Would you please check, you know, this character and see if he's lifelike. Yeah. So I would sort of cue off what it was he wanted me to do with that chunk, but I never.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:10:08] But you never stepped in.

Carol Doig [01:10:10] Yeah, mostly I would say, That's nice dear keep going.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:10:13] Yes.

David Laskin [01:10:14] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:10:15] Yeah. And you never step in and suggest that he write about so and so or would you?

Carol Doig [01:10:22] Even his editor didn't do that.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:10:25] That's what I mean and she knew enough to have hand off.

David Laskin [01:10:29] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:10:29] Yeah. And those editors did, too, thank goodness.

David Laskin [01:10:32] Yeah. So, you know, in having read not all of Ivan's books, but many of Ivan's books, I would say the one that to me is most visual and most cinematic is The Whistling Season. And I know there was, you know, a movie option and so on and so forth. What about you, Jean? Are there books of his or scenes of his that you think, That would make such a damn good film sequence or I wish we could have worked with Ivan on, you know, projects that you that never got done. Are there any that you feel like you wished you...

Jean Walkinshaw [01:11:10] Well I [Unintelligible] seen him write more about this Northwest area, about this, I wish he'd had time to do that.

David Laskin [01:11:22] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:11:22] And his, of course, his story about the pilots, the women pilots touched upon that, I'd love to have seen him tackle some other people. And thank God he did what he did. Yeah. Period.

David Laskin [01:11:44] Oh yeah, it's amazing.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:11:45] If anybody has more time to do something, I'd love to have read his take on some people living in this area, for instance. Of suburbia and what he saw out of his front door every day as he walked. I'd love to see him write about some of the people that we know that are familiar to us.

David Laskin [01:12:16] You do capture a little bit of that in WestWords when you talk. He talks about being in the suburbs and he said, People go off to work.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:12:22] Yes.

David Laskin [01:12:23] And it's very quiet. And I just, you know, and it's kind of you get this feeling that, you know, the world kind of empties and then it's Ivan's world.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:12:33] Exactly.

David Laskin [01:12:34] Which he loved.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:12:35] Yeah.

David Laskin [01:12:35] Yeah. It always bugged me when people teased me about, Why do you live in Shoreline? Shoreline's so dowdy, you know, why don't you live in Capitol Hill or whatever cool neighborhood? And I said, Well, Ivan Doig, it's good enough for Ivan Doig.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:12:49] Yeah.

David Laskin [01:12:50] So it's good enough for me.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:12:51] Well, it is interesting how we get stereotyped of what we want our authors to be.

David Laskin [01:12:59] Right. Bohemian or whatever.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:13:02] And Eccentric. Yeah. Yeah.

David Laskin [01:13:03] Ivan was eccentric, but not in a flamboyant way, I thought. I mean, and not in an erratic way. He wasn't tortured, but gosh, you know the right word. The right scene. It's not good enough. You know, all this stuff that I think for many writers. I think Ivan, and I'm curious about your impression about this Jean, I think Ivan really knew, had a very strong sense of his talent, his gift, his voice without being overbearing or full of himself. I mean, it was.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:13:37] Absolutely. Oh, I know.

David Laskin [01:13:37] He didn't sell himself short, but he wasn't, you know, full of hot air.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:13:44] He was the opposite.

David Laskin [01:13:45] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:13:46] Yeah. Yeah. And so I think he was kind of surprised when people wrote certain things about him. Oh, is that me? You know. But then he, I think he'd accept it too.

David Laskin [01:14:02] So here's another question. I once, you know, writers are notoriously jealous. They go so-and-so's on the best seller's list or so-and-so got such-and-such award. And I was always trying to get Ivan to express some writerly jealousy, like Doesn't it bug you when somebody who's lived in Montana for three months is like the new Montana writer? And I never, he never rose to the bait. He never said, Yeah, so and so's just full of crap or whatever.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:14:31] Yeah.

David Laskin [01:14:32] What about with you? Did you ever get him to or did he ever, you know, gripe about awards he didn't win or speaking engagements he didn't get or what have you, or do you feel like he just kind of kept that inside or maybe even didn't feel it?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:14:50] Well, I'll start seeing him kind of roll his eyes when you mention something. And I can see him doing that. But not badmouthing.

David Laskin [01:15:00] Yeah, yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:15:01] Yeah. He was very careful not to do that.

David Laskin [01:15:03] Yeah, I agree.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:15:04] And which of his rivals, I think that he was I think happy that they were achieving also. There's enough room in this world. In fact, we need more. And consequently, I think he would, contrary to a lot of people who want to step on their rivals, would encourage their rivals.

David Laskin [01:15:34] Yeah. Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:15:35] Although I myself was always very aware of people breathing down my back.

David Laskin [01:15:42] In what way?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:15:42] Because it was such a, in my day.

David Laskin [01:15:44] Because you got a lot of plum assignments and people wanted them or?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:15:48] Yeah, because I got jobs that they wanted and they wanted my job and I had to straddle it and be better than everybody. In order to justify my existence as a television producer in those days. Yeah, yeah.

David Laskin [01:16:06] What about, was it a handicap for you, being a woman in that world?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:16:13] What a good question, oh my. I can go on and on and on about that.

David Laskin [01:16:17] Go for it. We have two hours and 16 minutes of film left.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:16:21] I always liked men. And so I was never a woman's libber. And that kind of infuriated some of the women who expected me and wanted me to express more of myself about women doing this, being allowed to do that. And I would say they should be allowed but they have to compete no matter what the sex is they just have to be damn good. And so I would never, never go along and I used to really I think lose some publicity. Because I was that way. I mean I wouldn't fall into the trap of being a women's libber. And I just enjoyed most of the people I worked with, and enjoyed, were men.

David Laskin [01:17:24] Yeah.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:17:25] And I adored my husband and he was one of my main advisors. And in fact, I couldn't not like men. And I always thought it was too bad when people got angry. I mean, I think you can be angry over the circumstances.

David Laskin [01:17:48] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:17:49] Of being replaced by a man. Just like I was angry when I was doing a show on the book called Indians that an Indian came along and said she wanted my job because she was Injun, she understood them better. And I mean that certainly was difficult for me. But then when the chief said I want Mrs. Walkinshaw to do it, I couldn't have been, I could have kissed that chief because he didn't think that it mattered whether I was Indian or not, if I was a good producer, I do a good job. And so that I've never fallen in to, I mean, I sympathize and understand thoroughly why women got so fed up with their treatment by men.

David Laskin [01:18:42] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:18:43] Always expecting sexual overtones. Yeah. And I just hate that. That as far as myself, I think more men helped make my career for me than did women.

David Laskin [01:18:59] Interesting. What about with Ivan? Was there any, was there ever any sense of if I had been a man, he would have opened up to me more or maybe he's opening up more to me because I'm a woman? Do you feel like gender was there, was present?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:13] I just didn't. I didn't even think that way.

David Laskin [01:19:16] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:17] Yeah. I just thought, Golly, is this guy interesting? I could hardly. In a way, if I knew that Ivan was very much a man. But it didn't make any different.

David Laskin [01:19:32] Okay.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:33] Whether it was man or female.

David Laskin [01:19:35] You didn't feel that it was a barrier to...

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:37] Gay or whatever.

David Laskin [01:19:37] To your understanding.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:38] I can understand, though, the women who find it hard.

David Laskin [01:19:42] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:43] I mean, I'm in sympathy with that, too.

David Laskin [01:19:45] Right.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:46] But particularly this day and age, with all the different genders all getting mixed up together.

David Laskin [01:19:56] Yeah, well.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:19:56] Oh wow.

David Laskin [01:19:57] Yeah, that's a new thing for all of us. So, Jean, we've got an hour and 20 minutes that flew by. Do you want a break? I'm kind of out of questions, but if you, do you want to have a break?

Jean Walkinshaw [01:20:09] No. You got it. You got it. I'm pleased.

David Laskin [01:20:11] Yeah. So I think we can wrap it up.

Jean Walkinshaw [01:20:14] Make it, okay.

David Laskin [01:20:15] Okay, I'm going to turn...