

Book Two Excerpts, Portland Mayor Bud “Whoop, Whoop” Clark

“In November 1984—truth stranger than fiction—a laid-back tavern owner, Bud Clark, won election as mayor of the city of Portland.... Mayor-elect Clark had a merrymaking bent and a nationally noted trademark cry, “Whoop, Whoop!”, attesting to his wild side...

[January 1985] ...after taking office, Mayor Clark appointed his new chief, Penny Harrington... on the surface a smiley round-faced personable cop with a boatload of resume...also a fiery, resolute redhead who had brought forty-two civil actions against the city over twenty years to get to her new position...

[March 1986] ...The mayor had announced complete support for his chief of police and her decisions...” [The Oregonian, March 28, 1986] ‘The City of Portland Police Chief Penny Harrington and her husband, [PPB Officer] Gary, [Harrington] would be served best by an outside, independent review of allegations that Officer Gary Harrington violated Police Bureau general orders ...’

In response to the onslaught, the mayor decided to change tack. He called for a review of... the chief’s management of the police bureau, including her reorganization and her role in her husband’s alleged compromise. [The Oregonian, March 29, 1986] ‘Mayor Clark... directed the commission to investigate aggressively whether Chief Harrington’s reorganization of the bureau last year resulted in increased illegal drug trading and use in the city. Clark said the Chief had been unfairly criticized, largely by the press, for abolishing the Drug and Vice Division...’

Over the next couple of days, the political crisis deepened.

[The Oregonian April 2, 1986] ‘Portland Police Chief Penny E. Harrington acknowledged Tuesday that she divulged police information to a man involved in a shooting before details of the incident were presented to a Multnomah County grand jury.’

In response, Mayor Clark expanded the mission of the Lezak Commission.

[The Oregonian, April 5, 1986] ‘Mayor Clark expanded the review commission’s scope of inquiry as a result of the *Oregonian*’s story about the interview with the Chief, according to Jack McGowan, Clark’s press aid. The mayor’s office did not further describe the allegations. However, McGowan said, “We believe that Penny Harrington and Gary Harrington did nothing wrong. We want a complete public airing.”

[The Oregonian, April 6, 1986] ‘The presiding judge of the Multnomah County Circuit Court says he blames an increase in murder trials on the demise of the Portland Police Bureau’s drug, vice, and intelligence divisions...’. District Attorney Michael D. Schrunk said Thursday that abolition of Portland’s drug and vice Division in April 1985 by Police Chief Penny E. Harrington had contributed to the drug trade in Portland...

...On the same day, Mayor Clark and others took their battle positions. Portland Mayor Bud Clark lashed out at the press, law enforcement officials and his political critics... “I’ve had a great deal of disappointment in the *Oregonian*, as a matter of fact, and I don’t like reading fiction...The things that have been brought up, the things against the Harringtons, for instance, I think are just ridiculous,’ Clark said...”

[May 31, 1987] Mayor Clark’s Commission hearings end. They concluded, ‘...For the reasons stated, this Commission recommends that Chief Harrington be replaced.’

[June 3, 1986] An article in *USA TODAY* said, ‘Police Chief Penny Harrington—first female chief of a major USA city—has resigned after 16 controversial months on the job ... Harrington [says]... “There are some people who just cannot accept the idea of having a woman in charge of anything, especially a paramilitary organization.”

[June 3, 1986] The *New York Times* reported: ‘Penny E. Harrington, the only woman serving as the Police Chief in a major American city, resigned today, a few hours before the release of an investigative report that characterized her administration as a failure...’

[June 3, 1986] According to the *Oregonian*, Chief Harrington and her boss, Mayor Clark, had actually pondered salvaging her position: ‘Harrington said she and Clark initially discussed whether he could discredit and oppose the conclusion of the panel report that she should be replaced ... Clark initially was looking for a way to keep Harrington as chief, she said, but by the second meeting had decided that opposing the report would be too difficult given the stature of the panel members and the damage to her credibility...’

[May 13, 1987] Penny Harrington had just filed a federal civil suit naming as defendants the City of Portland [*her forty-third civil action against the city*], the special review commission members, Mayor Bud Clark, Raymond Tercek, Charles Karl, and Michael McPhee.

[The *Oregonian*, May 13, 1987] “When the commission’s findings led to her resignation, Harrington said Clark promised her an early retirement pension and said the city would pay the attorney’s fee she had incurred during the Lezak hearing. She has not received either, and the suit charges Clark and the city of Portland with breach of contract...”

[*Willamette Week*, May 14, 1987] “Penny Harrington is prepared to charge that the mayor and the commission illegally discriminated against her because of her sex...”

[February 20, 1990] The *Harrington v. City of Portland* trial opened with jury selection.

[The *Oregonian* February 23, 1990] ‘Mayor Bud Clark on Thursday defended his handling of a special 1986 review of then-Police Chief Penny E. Harrington’s job performance. ... He was completely surprised, he said, when the panel recommended that he replace Harrington, the first chief he had appointed, ‘My expectations were that they would confirm my belief and confidence in her ... I did not expect the results I received’...

At the time, Clark had friends and advisers who were telling him to fire Harrington, the mayor testified, ‘and if I didn’t she was going to bring me down with her...I wanted an independent group to validate the chief’s performance,’ Clark said, ‘and what I thought were good decisions by the chief.’

March 16, 1990, it was all finished.

[The *Oregonian* March 20, 1990] “A federal jury deliberated less than five hours before unanimously rejecting [Penny] Harrington’s claims of sex discrimination and denial of due process.... At the conclusion of proceedings, Mayor Bud Clark walked from the federal courthouse toward City Hall with his lawyers.... At the corner of Southwest Sixth Avenue and Main Street, the group stopped, and they congratulated one another again. Clark shook hands with each attorney, clapped them on the back and said, ‘Tits up!’”