As an undergraduate at Caltech, I spent much of my time playing intercollegiate football and indulging in student body politics. However, in my senior year, I was fortunate to take a seminar reading course in geophysics from Don Anderson, who introduced me to studies of the deep interior of the Earth.

When I applied for graduate school at Columbia University, my candidacy was in the discard pile due to a 2.7 cumulative GPa, until Stewart Smith of Caltech called George Sutton at the Lamont Geological Observatory and convinced him to resurrect my application. Sutton had been impressed by the performance of Art McGarr, who preceded me to Columbia, and not only sponsored my admission but offered me a summer job working with Gary Latham on the adaptation of a lunar [never deployed] seismometer to the ocean bottom.

While Stewart Smith was lobbying Columbia on my behalf, Gerry Wasserburg was offering me some sage advice: He told me that I was crazy to make the two biggest decisions of my life in the same year:
"Marrying your high school sweetheart and Commencing graduate study."

As it turned out, Gerry was proved wrong, as I married Barbara Ann Nichols two weeks after graduation and she [Phi Beta Kappa from Elmira College] taught me how to be a serious student again. Last year, we celebrated 60 years together.

I spent six years from 1964 to 1970 as a graduate student at Columbia working in the mineral physics laboratory of Orson Anderson at the Lamont Geological Observatory, and then departed for Australia with our family of three and worked for six years to establish a mineral physics laboratory in the Research School of Earth Sciences of the Australian National University in Canberra.

In 1976, our expanded family of five [including two Aussies] moved back to the U.S. to Long Island, New York, where I became a faculty member of the Department of Geosciences at Stony Brook University for the next 38 years. In 2014, I formally retired and am now a Research Professor. I spend my days informally advising graduate students of my colleagues in mineral physics and writing papers on the history of science; attached are references to several of these recent endeavors.

The first 3 of these papers were later published in a book volume of this Special Issue entitled:
Mineral Physics—In Memory of Orson Anderson, R. C. Liebermann Guest Editor,
Special Issue of MINERALS, 628 pp., mdpi, 2020.

[1] Liebermann, R.C. (2019) The Orson Anderson Era of Mineral Physics at Lamont in the 1960s. Minerals, 9, 342-360. https://doi.org/10.3390/min9060342

[2] Liebermann, R.C. (2020) The Birth of Mineral Physics at the ANU in the 1970s. Minerals, 10, 163. https://doi.org/10.3390/min10020163

[3] Liebermann, R.C. (2019) My Career as a Mineral Physicist at Stony Brook: 1976-2019. Minerals, 9, 761. https://doi.org/10.3390/min9120761