

Tape Index, Dr. Charles Rivers Interview, February, 17, 2001

SOHP Series: Desegregation in Chapel Hill Schools

TAPE INDEX – CHARLES RIVERS

Interviewee: Charles Rivers, Assistant Superintendent 1973-1979

Interviewer: Jenny Matthews

Interview Date: Saturday, February, 17, 2001

Location: Rivers' home in Chapel Hill

Tape No.: 4007. SOHP

Topic: An oral history of Dr. Charles Rivers. Rivers was the Assistant Superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro schools from 1973-1979. He was born in Martins Ferry, Ohio on April 8, 1932. He was educated at non-segregated schools in Bridgeport, Ohio and played football at West Virginia State College, Cedarville College, and Findley College, Ohio. Rivers taught in the public schools of Dayton, Ohio and he graduated from the University of Miami of Ohio in 1968 with his Masters in Public School Administration. He worked as an assistant principal, principal, and director in Dayton Public Schools, and later, under the guidance of Dr. Charles Glatt, he earned his doctorate from Ohio State University. Dr. Robert Hanes was the Superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools, and recruited Dr. Rivers to be the first African-American Assistant Superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools. While in Chapel Hill, he was in charge of curriculum and the Wisconsin Reading Design that was aimed at improving the achievement of African-Americans.

The interview is a life history interview, with an emphasis on his experiences with desegregation and Chapel Hill. It addresses the racial achievement gap in Chapel Hill, the experiences of growing up in the de facto segregation of Ohio, and his various challenges and achievements as an African-American.

TAPE INDEX

[Cassette 1 of 1, Side A –Tape No.]

- 001 Opening announcement: Jenny Matthews interviewing Charles Rivers on February 17, 2001 at 1:00. We will be discussing desegregation in Chapel Hill public schools and his experiences as Assistant Superintendent from 1973-1979.

- 006 His birthplace, family of origin, early experiences in a one-room integrated school in Kirkwood Heights, Ohio. His experiences as an athlete in high school in Bridgeport, Ohio.
- 062 His family was from Wilmington, North Carolina. He went to West Virginia State College and played football. Worked in Dayton, Ohio during summers with Dayton Power and Light. Talks about scarce jobs for African-Americans. Considered enlistment in the Air Force.
- 130 Football scholarship to Cedarville College. Cedarville closed. Played football for Findley College, Ohio. Talks about limited career opportunities and his decision to major in education.
- 170 Assignment to student-teach at all black school in Dayton, Ohio, because he was black. A friend who was a Marine talks him into making his own arrangements at Findley High School to do his student-teaching. Graduated from Findley without playing football his last year of eligibility.
- 218 First teaching job interview. De facto segregation in Dayton, Ohio. West side of Dayton. Offered a job in an elementary school, but his certification was in high school. Worked in factory as receiving clerk, and became postal clerk.
- 254 Quit working as a receiving clerk and started substitute teaching. Started back taking extension courses to secure an elementary school certificate. Taught sixth and eighth grade.
- 292 In 1964, decided to get Masters in Public School Administration. In 1968, graduated from University of Miami of Ohio with Masters degree. Became assistant principal of largest elementary school in Ohio—Westwood Elementary School in Dayton, Ohio—a “red-lined” school district—blacks moving in, whites moving out.
- 328 Started working towards doctorate. Four years later, became principal in a black school on west side of Dayton. After a year and a half, the board of education asked him to be the project director of a drop-out prevention program that was funded by the federal government. Programs dealt with health, remedial math, and staff-development activities for teachers.
- 370 Dr. Charles Glatt, a consultant from Ohio State University, urged him to work on his doctorate, and arranged an assistantship with him to work on desegregation of schools. He traveled all over eastern United States and worked with desegregation. At the same time, Dayton Public Schools was going through desegregation, and Dr. Robert Hanes, Superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Public Schools did a workshop for the Dayton schools. Dr. Hanes mentioned to Dr. Glatt that Chapel Hill Schools were ready for an African-American Assistant Superintendent.

- 442 Dr. Hanes approached Mr. Rivers about visiting Chapel Hill to see if he was interested in being his Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Rivers was unsure if he wanted to go to Chapel Hill, because he was interested in a job in Baltimore, Maryland.
- 477 He visits Chapel Hill schools, and meets with R.D. Smith, an African-American assistant principal, and Ed Caldwell, a school board member. He was a little disappointed when he visited the schools because they were not as modern as the Ohio schools. Dr. Hanes tries to convince Mr. Rivers to come to Chapel Hill schools, but Mr. Rivers is hesitant. Dr. Glatt convinces Mr. Rivers to accept the Assistant Superintendent job in Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools and starts work in July of 1973.
- 532 He was the Assistant Superintendent in charge of curriculum. In North Carolina, curriculum had to follow the standard course of study. The problem of achievement gaps was prevalent at this time. White students were achieving beyond grade-level, and black students were not achieving on a comparable level. Dr. Hanes and Mr. River's predecessor had implemented the Wisconsin Reading Design to overcome achievement gaps. Mr. Rivers worked on the reading design because he felt the most basic thing to improving achievement was the ability to read and interpret. It did not prove to be all that successful, and today achievement gaps still persist.
- 584 Discussion of de facto segregation in Ohio. They were reasonably equal, in terms of textbooks, teachers, and facilities; but, they were not desegregated. The communities were separated. There was a domino effect of white flight.
- 672 There was no place in Findley that would cut an African-American's hair. One of his friends took Mr. Rivers into a white barber shop and they cut his hair.

[Cassette 1 of 1, Side B – Tape No.]

- 004 After going with his white friend to the barber shop, he went by himself and did not have any problems. He noticed self-segregation and subtle discriminatory practices in movie theaters and in his high school pictures. The most discriminatory practices were in applying for jobs, but there were no blatant signs like in the South.
- 040 The regional basketball championship was played in Muskingum, Ohio. The team stayed after the ball game for a late supper. He was the manager of the basketball team, and there were no black players. He could not eat dinner in the restaurant with the team, but he did not know it at the time because his coach did not eat and invited him to go back with him.

- 065 Chapel Hill was a whole lot different from the average southern town. Once Chapel Hill community made up its mind that it was going to desegregate, everything went very well. It was prior to them making the final decision to desegregate that the problems came in.
- 077 There was a subtle negativism about African-American students in Ohio. His high school principal told his mother that he would never amount to anything. White people did not mind talking down to black people, but they could eat at most of the restaurants. Because there were not many African-Americans in his high school, they did not participate in the social activities including the prom.
- 108 He was the manager of the high school basketball team, under a coach, Jim Wade, from Texas that had played football with Charlie Justice. The coach gave him the job of opening and closing the gym. The fact that his coach trusted him, a young African-American, was very meaningful to Mr. Rivers. He also went along with the team to the coach's house and played with his young daughter.
- 170 There was a willingness in the Chapel Hill community to work with the children. The board of education was open and willing to do whatever it could to help the black children achieve, but for some reason it was not taking place. Ed Caldwell, Dr. Mary Scroggs, Dr. Marvin Silver, Dr. Sam Holton, and Norman Whetherly were on the board. All of the members were well educated and open to doing whatever they could to make progress and seeing that the African-American children could achieve. For some reason, they were not able to bridge that gap.
- 210 The ability grouping was not a factor in the Chapel Hill schools, because they tried to do away with ability grouping during the time that he was here. However, the children would group themselves, and most African-Americans would not choose to be in the more advanced classes. When you have a self-selecting system, it is hard to encourage children to get into the programs. He says that one of his downfalls while he was here was that he was not able to bridge the gap and get more African-Americans into the higher-level courses.
- 234 His older son was in high school when they moved here and his younger son was in middle school. His children took the advanced courses and went onto college. They were average students, but they were decent enough to get into college. The move to Chapel Hill was difficult for his older son, because he was a budding basketball star in Ohio, but did not make the team in Chapel Hill. He was very unhappy in Chapel Hill, and did not make the football or basketball team. Mr. Rivers does not know if he would make the same decision to move his son during his sophomore year. It was one of the low points of moving to Chapel Hill. His younger son fit in very well because he was interested in the cultural arts, music in particular.
- 278 He was shocked at the expensive property values in Chapel Hill. Most of the communities around Chapel Hill did not have African-Americans in them,

because the indigenous African-Americans had service roles within the community. He moved into a new house in Chapel Hill township and was the first individual to move into the community of Robinswood. Today, black and white people live in this community. Moses Carey lived across the street. He did not have any problems blending into the community.

- 327 The teachers' relationship with the students was very good. The teachers were doing all that they could to see that the children would succeed. The minority students' did not avail themselves of the opportunity to take higher-level courses. There was no move to keep the minority students out of the higher-level courses, and teachers encouraged them to take the classes. He does not know why the minority children are not achieving. He thinks part of it is peer pressure, part of it is a psychological pressure not to be white. The answer may lie in working with the children earlier in the primary grades and middle school. Perhaps if African-American students had confidence in themselves and expected to achieve, and were constantly mentored from birth to age 18, then they could achieve.
- 394 Suggests that the Jewish kibbutz may be a good model for improving African-American achievement.
- 396 Class may have a little to do with the achievement. The working class has high goals for their children. He does not know why the achievement of African-Americans in Chapel Hill is so low. He thinks part of it is a lack of application by the students themselves, a lack of good goal setting, and a poor choice in role models.
- 435 He thinks integration still needs improvement. Schools are becoming more segregated than they were before. He does not have a personal experience with a black school, and cannot attest to the role of a black community school, but in the schools he went to, the opportunities were there, and he just took advantage of them. There may have been subtle racism, but it was not blatant, and would not keep you from achieving. As a country, integration was the way to go, but as far as the public schools are concerned, from what his associates say, it was better for the black child in an all-black school than what it is now.
- 486 He discusses the notion that minority children tend to be ignored in public schools today. When the schools desegregated, they moved the children around, but they did not integrate. He thinks that we never achieved the step of integration. Some schools have put both cultures together in all activities, such as plays and sports, but never achieved a seamless, totally integrated, school system.
- 525 He talks about the "pioneers" of desegregation. Dr. Charles Glatt was killed trying to desegregate the public schools of the United States. Dr. Glatt was from Frost, Louisiana and was very racist when he was growing up. However, he realized that African-Americans were people and recognized injustices. He worked with desegregating schools in Detroit, Ohio, and Charlotte-Mecklenberg.

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Dr. Glatt grew to be a close and dear friend and helped Mr. Rivers professionally as well.

660 Mr. Rivers offers a follow-up interview.

665 [End of Side B. End of interview.]

START OF TAPE, SIDE A

CHARLES RIVERS

FEBRUARY 17, 2001

[277] CHARLES RIVERS: ...And moved into a principalship four years later, and this was a school that, again on the West Side of Dayton, reserved for African Americans, and took over the principalship there for year and a half to be exact. Then the Board of Education asked if I would take over a program that was called--. A drop-out prevention program, which was funded by the federal government, it was under Title 7, and I went to work as the Project Director for this drop-out prevention program. There were, I guess, eight drop-out prevention programs across the entire United States, and we were one of those eight. And we brought in a lot of innovative strategies for keeping kids in school, and in particular in this high school where I was moved to as the director of the program. We had programs that dealt with the students' health, we had programs dealing with remedial mathematics, remedial English, anything that the youngster needed in order to keep him in school, we were prepared to provide that. And we also had staff development activities for the teachers that were working with them.

And during that time I had, with the program, brought in some people from Miami University as well as from Ohio State University, as consultants, and they were working with the people who were working with the drop-out prevention program. The drop-out prevention encompassed, I guess, again a school that was a K-8 school, but we only worked with the kids that I guess would be called junior high school, because you drop out of school way before you get in to high school, if you will. So we were working with students in the seventh and eighth grades, and then they moved to this particular high school, and we continued working with them. In the meantime, as I said, we were

bringing in staff development programs for the teachers who were working with the students, and I got to work with an individual from Ohio State University. In the meantime, I was still taking courses at Miami University and we were working with some of those professors. But, Dr....lost my train of thought right there.

But anyway, while working with the consultants, Dr. Charles Glatt from the Ohio State University, says, "Well, you know, you've come this far, why don't you think about coming to Ohio State and working on your doctorate?" I said, "Well, I guess I could do that, but, you know, it is kind of hard right through here for me to do that," because I was married and had a family and everything, and "I just can't afford to take the time off without having some compensation." He said, "Well, I'll tell you what, if you come to Ohio State, I'll have you work as my assistant in a program"--which again was working with desegregation of public schools of Ohio, Michigan, and all around, even down in this area, neck of the woods. But they were funded by the federal government at the institutions of higher education to work with districts that were going through the process of desegregation. So, I got to do a lot of traveling while working at Ohio State as well work on my doctorate, or at least some additional hours on my doctorate, because, as I said, I'd done my preliminary work at Miami University of Ohio. And, while working with Dr. Glatt I got to travel all over these United States, and did a little public speaking and working with teachers, and doing some work in the area of desegregation.

In the meantime, the Dayton Public Schools were going through the same thing. A suit had been brought against them about they needed to desegregate or to integrate, or to move students around and get them mixed better than what they were. And Dr. Glatt, again with his project there at Ohio State University was part of that. And he brought in

from Chapel Hill, Dr. Robert Hanes, who was the Superintendent of the Chapel-Hill Carrboro public schools. And he came out and did a workshop for the administrators in the Dayton Ohio Public schools at that time. And he was talking with Dr. Glatt, or matter of fact Dr. Glatt brought him there. And he told Dr. Glatt that he had moved from the Charlotte-Mecklenberg schools where he was the Associate Superintendent there, and of course, they were one of the leading lights, if you will in terms of desegregating the schools here in North Carolina. And he was part of that, and after getting his job here in the Chapel Hill Carrboro School district, he found that this community, being a college town, was very open, once they made the decision to desegregate, to move forward with integrating the schools. Which I guess some of the other folk that you will interview will be able to give you a better picture of that than what I am able to do, because, as I said, I was here for about six and a half years. But, getting back to the story, he came and he talked to the administrators there in Dayton, Ohio. And he mentioned to Dr. Glatt that the Chapel Hill Carrboro schools had lost an Assistant Superintendent, and that he felt that the community was ready to have an African-American or a black as Assistant Superintendent, and if he knew anybody who was qualified.

Well, in that room at that particular time, there were three African-Americans who had recently received their doctorates from Ohio State University. There was-- matter of fact, his daughter is sitting in there talking right now--a young man by the name of David Carter, who, he was one of, he was the first one to finish Ohio State. He came back and was working in Dayton Public Schools. And then there was a young man by the name of Raleigh Jackson, who was the second one to get his doctorate and come back and work for the Dayton schools. And then there was myself. I was the third one to have

attended Ohio State University and received by doctorate, and I was working there in the public schools. And we were all three there in the room in Dayton, Ohio that night, having, getting ready for supper. So during the course of the evening, I found myself talking with Dr. Hanes, or at least he worked his way over to where I was and began a conversation. And explained to me that he was looking for an African-American to be his assistant, and how would I like to come to Chapel Hill for a visit to look at the schools to see how they were, see if I would have an interest in joining him and his staff here in Chapel Hill.

And, so I said, "Well, I'm not sure if I want to do that or not," because at the same time, I had an interest in going to Baltimore, Maryland. Because they had just named there first African-American Superintendent, and he was looking for some administrators to come there. And, I also felt that I had a leg-up because he was an Assistant Superintendent in the Seattle Public Schools, which was one of the eight school districts working with the drop-out prevention, and I had gotten to know him through my association with the drop-out prevention program. And so, I had gone to--he was traveling across the country looking for administrators--and I had gone to Detroit, met him in Detroit to talk to him about a job in Baltimore, Maryland. And they were looking, at that time, they were interested in a program that was called districts, where they would have district superintendents that would report to the head man who was the overall superintendent of district, of an entire school district. So, I talked to him and felt I had a chance to go up to Baltimore, Maryland as an area superintendent, if you will.

But I told him I would come down and talk with him, and I came to Chapel Hill and visited the schools and met with R.D. Smith, who I think is on you list there to be

interviewed later. He was an assistant principal out at the high school and met with Ed Caldwell, who was one of the members of the board of education, and some other distinguished African Americans here in Chapel Hill. And talked with them, as I said visited the schools and talked to some of the school people. And was somewhat a little disappointed when I looked at the schools because in Ohio, the schools were rather modern, if you will, and updated. And here they weren't too bad, but it just was, there was just something lacking about the schools that we had that didn't stand up to what I thought were the best schools in Ohio. Of course I didn't know at that time, well I did know too, but that Chapel Hill was the leading light of North Carolina in terms of student achievement, you know. But, talked with the folk and went back home, and sort of made up my mind that "Hey, you are leaving home and it will be your first full time experience in the South," and you know, "I don't know if that's for me or not."

So, when I got back on the job for about a week and I told Dr. Hanes that I would call him. But I didn't call him, so he ended up calling me and asked me what I thought. And I told him, well, I thought maybe that I would not take him up on his offer. He said, "Well, I wish you would reconsider. We would love to have you, I've gone to the board and I've talked to them and told them about you, and I don't think it would be any problem in having you appointed to the position." "Dr. Hanes, I don't think I want to do that at this point." So he got in touch with my mentor, Dr. Charles Glatt of Ohio State again. And Dr. Glatt came down. He spent the night at my house with my wife and folk, and he says that, "You know that would be an excellent experience for you, so why don't you take this job? It will start you on another leg in your career. And it's a leading school district in North Carolina and you will be able to learn a lot." So, I called up Dr.

Hanes and I told him, "Okay, I would come." So in July of 1973, that began my tenure here in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro School District.

And as the Assistant Superintendent, there wasn't a whole lot you had to do in the area and, well let me back up. I was the Assistant Superintendent in charge of curriculum. And as you know, in North Carolina that they have what they call the Standard Course of Study, so there wasn't a whole lot you had to do with the curriculum, because the curriculum is already mandated by the state. And you had to follow the standard course of study, because that is the way that you received your funding for teachers and everything, based on you teaching the Standard Course of Study.

So, the problem that you are researching was prevalent even at that time. That there was a bimodal distribution in the student population, that being that the white students were achieving way up here. They were achieving at grade level and beyond. And you can imagine that would be true, given the community and the make-up of this community where the student population comes from, as far as the Caucasian youngster was concerned. But, when it came down to the African-American youngster, that their achievement was not comparable to what was being done with the Caucasian youngster.

So during that time, one of the programs that was here, even prior to my coming here, was called the Wisconsin Reading Design. And this was a program that my predecessor and Dr. Hanes had put in place to try to overcome that gap between the minority youngster and the majority youngster. So, during that six years that I was here, we were working on the reading design, which was--. We felt that in order for the youngster to achieve we've got to start with the basic, and the most basic thing that would help that youngster is to be able to read and interpret. And so, that was the

program that was put in place to help us at that particular point to move the African-American youngster ahead. Did not prove to be all that much successful. As you can see, even today, the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools was still fighting this stigma of the African-American youngster under-achieving, where as the majority culture is achieving at maximal capability. So, that was--. It may have been a quick and dirty over-view of my coming to Chapel Hill, so if there are any particular questions you want me to answer, I'll be happy to do that. [486]

SIDE B

[078] JENNY MATTHEWS: And how did those experiences compare to when you got here, in Chapel Hill?

CR: Well, as I said this was a college town and was a whole lot different than your average Southern town, if you will. Because again, once the Chapel Hill-Carrboro community made up its mind it was going to desegregate, well, everything went very well. It was prior to them making that final decision to, you know to desegregate, I guess where the problems came in. Because it was just as bad here as it was any place else in the South as I understand it, in terms of going into restaurants and eating and being accommodated and in the public service arenas around town, and anywhere else in North Carolina at that particular time. (pause)

JM: Was there any hostility towards you from teachers or principals?

CR: No, I didn't notice anything. But, there again was this subtle, what I would call negativism, about African-American students. Because I can remember that the high school principal told my mother that -- she had to come up to school for something, I had misbehaved or something, you know-- and he told her that I would never amount to

anything. You know, that I was not going to be any good and so forth [095]... [170] Gee, what other questions you got?

JM: Getting back to the Chapel Hill schools, what was it like, your impression, while you were here, for the students and the teachers?

CR: Well, I guess I was struck by the fact that, again being from Ohio or up north, that in this community there was a, there appeared, in my view to be a willingness to work with the youngsters, and the opportunities were here for them to gain whatever else could be gotten by any other student. But yet, for some reason that was not taking place. And that the Board of Education was open and willing to do whatever it could at that, even back in the early 1970s, to make provisions, to help the black youngster to achieve. And for some reason, it just was not taking place.

When I first came, we had Ed Caldwell, who was a scientist. We had Dr. Mary Scroggs, was on the board. Dr. Marvin Silver, again from, he was on the board. He was part of the university structure. Dr. Sam Holton, was also part, or used to be part, of the University structure. Let me see, who else was on there? [pause] I am trying to think who was here when I originally came, part of that board structure-- [pause] Caldwell, Scroggs, Norm Weatherly. Dr. Norman Weatherly, also from the University. And let's see, how many is that? Caldwell, Weatherly, Scroggs-- It may have only been a five member board at that time, I'm not sure. But anyway, all of the board members were well educated, and were open to doing whatever they could to make progress in seeing that the African-American youngster was able to achieve. And, for some reason though, when it came down to test scores, during that period of time they were not, still not able

to bridge that gap. And () is evidenced by the fact that you are here and writing about the desegregation of it.

And about the ability grouping and what not, that (pause) was not a factor, because they tried to do away with ability grouping here in the Chapel Hill schools, at least during the period of time that I was here. However, youngsters would group themselves, and of course, again, if you look at the higher level courses or the real academic courses--when I say real academic, I'm talking about chemistry and the advanced placement courses, if you will, the high levels of foreign language , what not--you didn't find many African-Americans in those particular classes. They would not opt to be in them. They would opt out of them, if you will, by taking the courses that were not as demanding. So, when you have a self-selecting system, it is kind of hard to, to you know, unless you are going to--and which I guess we did a little bit of that too--try to promote youngsters or encourage youngsters to get in to those programs. But for some reason, they were reluctant to do that. That was one of the, I guess my downfalls during the period of time I was here, that I was not able to bridge that gap and get more youngsters into those higher level courses, and such that they would at least have an opportunity to achieve at a higher level. But, it just did not occur. And that is part of the problem I think, because the minority youngster would run away from those tough courses and just deal with the basic courses. And as you know, and I know, there are no basic jobs out there any more. And that where they really had to put forth effort and struggle, they would not take those courses.

JM: How about your kids? They went to school here?

CR: Yes, I had two youngsters. When I came my older son was in the high school, and then I had a younger son who was in the middle schools. And they took courses that--again the courses were open--so they would take college level courses and they did go on to college. They didn't do any great shakes with the curriculum, if you will, they were average students, but they were decent enough to get into college with. () I will share with you another incident, it's part of my history, if you will. And that is my older youngster, who was a sophomore in college--in college, I'm sorry-- was a sophomore in high school when I moved to North Carolina, and he was-- He was really deflated when we moved here because he was beginning to be a budding basketball star in Ohio at the school where he was going to high school [247]...

[307] JM: [pause] How was the teachers' relationship with the students?

CR: As I said, I felt that the relationship with them was very good. They were, again when the school system made the decision to desegregate, they desegregated. And they took the youngsters in, and they were doing all that they could to see that youngsters would achieve. But again, if you don't avail yourselves of the opportunities, then that is just the way it is. And I felt that most of the minority students did not avail themselves of the opportunity to get into those higher courses and to take risks, if you will, by taking them. There was no move to keep them out, and matter of fact, there were teachers that would encourage youngsters to come and get into her classes, but at that point they would not do it. And...

JM: Why do you think that is?

CR: If I had the answer to that I'd be on Wall Street, because I could work out a solution to the same problem they are having today. () The youngsters are still not

achieving. And why? I, I don't know. Part of it is peer pressure, I think part of it may be psychological in that, this bit about "I don't want to be like whitey," you know, "That's a white thing, I'm going to do my black thing." And, it's a false notion, but I don't know how to overcome it. And matter of fact, as I said, it's a problem throughout North Carolina, as well as throughout the country, is getting minority youngsters at the same level as the majority culture in terms of their achievement. So, I just don't have a ready answer as to why it does not happen.

I think part of the problem, the answer may lie in working with the youngsters earlier in the primary grades, and in the middle schools, and saying to them, "Yes, you can do it. Yes, you can do it." And that "I can is equal to IQ." That is, if you believe you can do it, you can do it. And, you know, nobody comes here, and they have all the answers. You get it through assimilation, and growing, and developing and exposing yourselves to opportunities, and to avail yourselves of those opportunities to gain skills, if you will. I mean it's not going to just fall off to you. You know, roll off this table to you, and you are going to pick it up and run with it. You've got to put forth some effort on your own part. So, I think maybe if we start instilling that in our young folk, because you've got some African-American students that achieve, and they do very well. And, if we could just capture that, if you will, and put it in some type of a pill and just hand it out to all the students, as I said, I'd be a millionaire.

I think part of it lies in building that platform in those early grades and saying to those youngsters, "This I believe, and this I expect." And they'd constantly be mentored, if you will, from I guess birth to age eighteen. That probably would make a difference. () If you recall, back they used to talk about kibbutz, where they would take the Jewish

children and they would put them in these camps and they would I guess provide them with rich experiences and what not. And perhaps, if we did that with the African-American youngster, that might be part of the answer to getting them to the level of being able to achieve. Just enriching their lives from the time that they are born until, again, they begin school and also throughout their school experiences, to continue doing that.

JM: Do you think race or class is more important? Now, and which do you think was more important then?

CR: I think class may have a little bit to do with it. But yet, I know that even--if you are talking about class in terms of monetary advantages--that in the working class, they had high goals for their children. They still have high goals for them. And, because I come out of a working class family to get where I am, so I know that for a fact. And I know, that in talking with, through my experiences in talking with parents or what not, they don't want their children to be less successful than any other child that's in this community or any community throughout America. It, it just--. I guess it's befuddling to me to reason out just why the achievement of African-Americans in this particular community is at the level where it is. I just think it is probably a lack of application on the part of the students themselves. And, a lack of goal setting, and having a vision of what they want to be, or the vision that they set is so high that they lose sight of what it takes to get there. Or their role models are such that they are looking at the Michael Jordans, and the Rasheeds, and the Fortes, and them. Rather than looking at, you know, George Washington Carver, the people that really hit the books to, to make a difference in their lives and in society, if you will. It is just hard to put an answer on it because it is so endemic within the culture itself, that I just don't have the answer to it.