

This interview is part of the **Southern Oral History Program** collection at the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**. Other interviews from this collection are available online through www.sohp.org and in the **Southern Historical Collection** at **Wilson Library**.

N.7 Undergraduate Internship Program: Fall 2015

Interview N-0042

John Sellars

8 November 2015

Abstract – p. 2

Field Notes – p. 4

Transcript – p. 5

ABSTRACT – John Sellars

Interviewee: John Sellars

Interviewer: Alex Ford

Interview Date: November 8, 2015

Location: Lobby of the Sheraton Chapel Hill Hotel in Chapel Hill, NC

Length 2 .wav files, approximately 2 hours & 20 minutes long and 6 minutes long

John Sellars was born in Burlington, North Carolina in 1949. He attended UNC in the earlier years of its integration, and he helped found the Black Student Movement at UNC. Sellars begins the interview by describing how he was born and grew up in Burlington, North Carolina with his family. He describes attending a public, segregated school. He talks about deciding to go to college and selecting UNC. He talks about his desire to avoid being drafted in the Vietnam War. Sellars discusses his academic focuses during his time as an undergraduate at UNC. He talks about his involvement with the Black Student Movement (BSM) and how the BSM developed, replacing the NAACP chapter on campus. He describes his involvement in the Lenoir Foodworkers' Strike. He recounts how his fellow classmates reacted to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. He discusses the BSM's initial demands and focuses and describes new Afro-centric courses that were added and Black faculty members who were hired at UNC. Sellars talks about how attending UNC changed him. He discusses applying for and participating in a graduate program through the UNC School of Education for elementary school counseling. He talks about working for the Orange County court system as a court counselor. Sellars discusses working in the department of human resources at UNC. He then describes his next job working as a department manager at N.C. State as their Veterinary School was being created. He talks about taking a job working in the administration of the court system. Sellars talks about changing career paths to become a mortgage broker, and he was working in the mortgage market when the housing market crashed. Sellars tells Karen Garriss, who had stopped by, a story about Karen's husband, Jim, who was the reason that UNC's pep band stopped playing "Dixie." Sellars then discussed his retirement. He describes his early impressions of UNC and how his views of fraternities changed after coming to college. Sellars describes major influences on the Black Student Movement. Sellars discusses several books that were eye opening and influential. He talks about learning from Black students who had attended UNC before him. Sellars discusses his various living situations while attending UNC as an undergraduate; this includes stories about two of his roommates moving out because he was Black. Sellars explains how and why he became involved in the Black Student movement in more detail and how he decided he needed to start taking a stand. He talked about what it was like to be part of a minority population and how

facing challenges at this point in his life helped him later on. Sellars discusses how the changes for which the BSM fought directly impacted his experience at UNC. He discusses the Silent Sam statue, which commemorates Confederate soldiers on UNC's campus, and the fact that buildings on UNC's campus are named after people associated with racism. Sellars discusses his experiences in UNC's new Afro-centric courses. He talks about his experience being a member of the Black Pioneers. Sellars then discusses the experiences of Black athletes at UNC. He talks about Ricky Lanier, who was the first Black quarterback scholarship football player at UNC. Sellars closes the interview by telling a story about an altercation between some of his friends and some intoxicated white young men at a restaurant called Lum's. This interview is part of the Southern Oral History Program's project to document the life histories of the Black Pioneers of UNC.

FIELD NOTES – John Sellars
(compiled November 16, 2015)

Interviewee: John Sellars

Interviewer: Alex Ford

Interview Date: November 8, 2015

Location: Lobby of the Sheraton Chapel Hill Hotel in Chapel Hill, NC

THE INTERVIEWEE. John Sellars grew up in Burlington, North Carolina. He earned both his bachelor's degree and master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He attended UNC in the early years of its integration, and he helped found the Black Student Movement (BSM) at UNC. The efforts of Sellars and other members of the BSM brought about the introduction of Afro-centric courses to UNC and the hiring of Black faculty members at UNC. Sellars worked in several fields including the court system, higher education at UNC and N.C. State, and the mortgage market.

THE INTERVIEWER. Alex Ford is an undergraduate intern for the Southern Oral History Program at UNC. She is a senior majoring in Middle Grades Education with minors in History and Philosophy, Politics, and Economics from Kernersville, NC.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INTERVIEW. Mr. Sellars and I met for the interview after an event called "A Brunch with Black Pioneers," which included a panel and was part of the 2015 Black Alumni Reunion over Homecoming weekend at UNC. Mr. Sellars was a panelist at this event, and the program was entitled "The Real Nitty Gritty: The Black Experience at UNC a Half Century Ago." We sat in chairs in the hotel lobby after the event to conduct the interview. Because we were in the lobby of the hotel, there was a noticeable amount of background noise including children's voices, a door slamming, tables being moved on a cart, adults' voices, balloons being carried, music playing, cell phones making noise, and videos playing from a computer in another part of the lobby. We had concluded the interview after approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes, and Mr. Sellars thought of a few more stories to tell; that is why there is a second clip, which is approximately six minutes in length.

NOTE ON RECORDING. I used a Zoom H4n Handy recorder. Despite the background noise distractions, the recording is audible and can be understood.

TRANSCRIPT—JOHN SELLARS

Interviewee: JOHN SELLARS
Interviewer: Alex Ford
Interview Date: November 8, 2015
Location: Chapel Hill, NC
Length: 2 files; approximately 2 hours, 25 minutes

START OF FILE 1

ALEX FORD: OK, so, I'm Alex Ford, and I'm here with Mr. John Sellars. It's November 8th, 2015, and we are in the lobby of the Sheraton Chapel Hill hotel in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. To start off, could you tell me a little about your childhood?

JOHN SELLARS: OK, I was born in Burlington, North Carolina, February 14th, 1949. I was born in my mother's bedroom of the house that she lived in with her (). So, I was born into two generations at one time, my parents and my grandparents. From the time I was born up until about four--. After four, I moved to a different place in Burlington, not too far from where I was born, and actually moved onto the land that my father was given from his father, which is part of a larger parcel of land that my grandfather inherited from his father.

So, I grew up around family, both on my father's side and my mother's side. Started public school in 1955, six years old. Went to J.F. Gunn Elementary School first grade through the sixth grade. Seventh grade, I transitioned to the high school, which was named Jordan Sellars Senior High School. So, going to a school that had my namesake was quite interesting. Also, I had people, aunts, who taught school, both at the elementary and the high-school level.

So that was quite interesting, because my classmates were people a bit older than me who did not like my aunts who taught, and took it out on me. Which made me realize that I had to be able to take up for myself, even those situations where I was falsely accused of doing something that somebody else had done.

So, while I was in high school, I participated in a lot of activities. I was in the band, played football. I was in the honor society. I was the president of the student government, drove the bus. I guess those were the major extracurricular activities. I maintained pretty much of an A-B academic average. Let's see. Went to what was then called a segregated black school in North Carolina, and did not really see any disadvantages with that education. In fact, that was probably a better education at the time, because during that period, teachers knew students; students knew the teachers; teachers knew the families of the students that they were teaching. As I mentioned, I had two aunts who taught in school, so not only did I benefit from their experience working in the school, but from the people who they knew and who knew me, who I can say probably gave me encouragement to do more, to achieve, to be successful, and to stay out of trouble. So, that was one of the benefits of going to then-segregated schools, because you had that community involvement. And the school itself, while segregated, was still the center of the community.

Let's see. Upon graduation from high school-- Well, before I graduated, I was definitely motivated to go to college. At the time, the practice was to apply to at least three schools, with the possibility that you would be accepted by one that you could go to. So I applied to North Carolina Central University in Durham, Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, and UNC in Chapel Hill. My aunt had gone to NCCU, so I had a little bit of a connection

there. Wake Forest recruited the first two black football players either in the ACC or at least in our region. And because of that, I thought that Wake Forest would be more congenial, acceptable; that I wouldn't have to cut new ground. However, Wake Forest is a Baptist school, and you have to go to chapel every Sunday. It's mandatory. And I did not like going to chapel every Sunday, because it was mandatory.

So I got accepted at all three schools, and I chose UNC because I had come to UNC to play a fraternity party. I was in a band, and we got booked to play this fraternity party in Frat Court. And when we were playing for the party, the party was so good that I thought, "This is the way people are supposed to party in college." And since I knew what UNC was like, I was going to go to UNC so that I could join a fraternity and have a good time. And that was one of my major motivations for choosing UNC. Of course, the other was, I was trying to avoid the Vietnam War. And one of the ways you do that outside of going to prison or going to Canada was to get a college deferment. And I thought, "Well, if I get a college deferment, I want to keep it. And the best way to keep it is by not being distracted by the social activities that I knew went on at colleges and universities, and I knew that I would not have access to at UNC.

So when I got into UNC that was my major focus. I wanted to major in business administration, and eventually go to law school and become a lawyer. So, I took business administration courses my freshman year, sophomore year. And I didn't like them because I was so far from what a business-administration background was that I didn't succeed. So one of the first choices that a student at UNC has to make is, "Do I switch majors and stay in school, or do I keep this major and risk flunking out?" Well, I couldn't afford to flunk out because flunking out meant going to Vietnam and getting killed. So I decided to change my major from business

administration to, well, actually, a couple. From administration to pre-med, because I thought, even if I got drafted, if I was in medical school, that I would have a better terms of service, less-dangerous terms of service, as a doctor than as a GI. Plus, if you got into medical school, that was three more years of deferment, which meant that you might outlast the war and be able to change your mind later.

But pre-med was not for me. I had difficulty with chemistry. Not the labs, but with the lecture. Labs were hands-on, small groups. You had a lab partner, so you learned more--. I learned more from the hands-on, whereas the lecture part was, you're one student in an auditorium of five hundred other students. And if you don't have that after-class support, practice, cramming, you're pretty much by yourself. So, lab, I did great, got A's in lab, got F's in lecture. So on that, and zoology, with those two courses, I decided to change from pre-med to political science.

And by the time I chose political science, the country, the world, was heavily involved in all rates and gradations of political intrigue, from international with the war in Vietnam, to civil rights, to state politics and local politics. And so, political science was something that interested me and something that I could grasp. And it was, at the time, an easier way to keep my deferment and graduate, as opposed to staying in a major that really was not for me.

Let's see. So, I'm in college, right? So, after I chose political science, I became more active in the BSM. Let me go back to the BSM, which is the Black Student Movement. When I came to Carolina in 1967, the only black student group available was the student chapter of the statewide NAACP. And because that was the only organization, anything that was going on--

confrontational, conflictual--went through the processes that were being used by the state and national NAACP.

Also, at that time, other things were going on outside of Chapel Hill and outside of North Carolina that was affecting how people and organizations dealt with problems. That was a time where things went from civil-rights protests to violent confrontation, and you could start off participating in a protest that could very easily turn to a confrontation. The Vietnam War was going on. There were a lot of student protests going on. Kent State was happening during that time. The Orangeburg, South Carolina, massacre was going on at that time. Black Panthers in California were taking over the California legislature. Other militant--so-called militant black groups--were emerging. So, during that time, there were more influences--good, bad, indifferent--from both inside the university and outside.

So, the BSM--. Getting back to that, the BSM--Black Student Movement--came as an alternative to the black student NAACP operation. I guess my experience began with the cafeteria workers' strike, which was protesting the cafeteria workers who were black, their working conditions. One of the things that we realized was that the workers were not getting any respect. They were being forced to do things because they needed to keep a job, and the university was the biggest employer for non-skilled workers. One of the situations included, instead of giving a person forty hours a week, they would have their shifts split. You'd come in the morning; you'd go home; you'd come in the afternoon. But at the end of the week, you don't have forty hours. And if you don't have forty hours, then you don't have benefits. And it saved the university money, but it was a real detriment to the cafeteria workers. So, in addition to low pay, poor benefits, no benefits, the indignities of the university and the people who managed the

cafeteria--. The Black Student Movement was an organization to support them, and us. But to support them.

One of my more vivid memories is sitting in the cafeteria in Lenoir Hall, eating my dinner, and seeing a group of black students who I didn't know at the time at one end of the cafeteria. And I didn't know what was going on because, again, during that time, I was pretty much by myself. I was a new student. I didn't know many black people. I was just trying to stay in school. So while I'm eating my dinner, they're forming at the end of the hall. Next thing I know, they're coming from one end, going to the other end, throwing over tables, turning over chairs, completely--. I mean, conducting a complete disruption of the cafeteria.

So, realizing that they were coming my way, and that this was the most important meal of my day, I had to either finish eating my food and get up and go out; finish eating my food, get up, and join the protest; or finish eating my food and watch everything going around me. So I did finish eating my food. And by the time they got to me, I got up and turned over tables and threw chairs and disrupted like they were, because I had to make a decision. Do I stand apart, or do I join it? I also should have made a decision, is this going to keep me in school or get me kicked out of school? But when you're caught up in the fray you don't think about things. You have to make a decision.

So, that was in the fall: October, November, of [19]67 and [19]68. Things continued to get tense. Lots of things were going on in Vietnam. Lots of things were going on here as far as civil rights, civil-rights protests. And then, in April of [19]68, Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated. And that ratcheted things up. Once again, I'm in Chapel Hill, in school, trying to keep my college deferment. Yet all these other things were happening as far as riots, protests,

violent confrontations, major cities going up in flames. And yet, you had to keep your composure and keep focus on why you were there.

The night that Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated, I was in Hinton James, in my room, studying for class the next day. And all of a sudden I hear people running up and down the hallways, on the balconies, cheering. And so, I go outside to see what's going on. And somebody says that Martin Luther King, Jr., just got assassinated. And it hit me that the reason for the cheering was because Martin Luther King, Jr., just got assassinated. Again, it gives you an idea of what the mood, what the attitude, what the social and racial structure was at UNC. Again, we're talking about 1968.

So, that changed things quite a bit, coalesced the black students that were on campus. Either you were going to protest; you were going to challenge the system; you were going to be confrontational; or you were going to sit back and go to class and try to keep good grades and graduate, so that you could get a good job. And it really came down to those two groups. The BSM represented the confrontational side, and the NAACP, which was left at that time, represented more of a, "Let's go to class, and keep your GPA up, and you're eventually going to graduate and get a good job."

So, with the conflict, with the cafeteria workers' strike, I'm trying to think. The first group of officers--and we all were either in school at the same time, came at the same time, or there were some people who were ahead of us--but I remember Preston Dobbins was the first president. Jack McLean was the first vice president. And Cureton Johnson was the editor of the newspaper that was created at the time, the BSM newspaper called *Black Ink*. I don't know what it's called now, but it was called *Black Ink* then. And so, with that leadership, we were able to

create, develop demands that would improve life at Carolina for black students, and also expand the university's diversity. And I think, included in those demands, was better treatment for the workers, employees. And we were focusing on the cafeteria workers, but that also included the laundry workers, the janitors and maids, groundskeepers, anyone who was employed by the UNC operations department who wasn't getting treated fairly. And all those operations--cafeteria workers, laundry, grounds, janitorial--that was always predominately populated by black people.

So, we took that and we also incorporated into some of the demands that we had as students. And one of those demands as students was to increase the number of black, Afrocentric courses. That was one. The other was to increase the number of black instructors. And one was related to the other, because if you bring in more black-oriented courses, you want to have black professors who would teach those courses. And actually it took about maybe two years--eighteen months to two years--for that to happen.

Now, after the BSM was established, we were a working group. We had an office on the second floor of the Frank Porter Graham Student Union, the new one, which is the one that exists now. And we were a fully bona-fide student organization, which was good. Because, by having a place that we could sit and talk and meet, that gave us some authority. I mean, we were not student government, the () council, but we were another recognized group, and we knew that we had a purpose.

So, the cafeteria workers' strike was eventually settled by the university deciding to contract instead of to manage the cafeteria directly as a university operation, in order to--how can I say--to change the system but not change the operation. To change the operation but not

change the system. The university contracted the food services to ARA food-service contractors. So it was no longer their problem. As far as the cafeteria workers, they were now working for ARA food services. So that let, I think, all of us know that you can fight the battle, but you may not win the war. They were still in the same situation. It's just, instead of the university taking advantage of them, there was this contract company that was taking advantage of them. So, that didn't work out the way we wanted it to, but I think that the cafeteria workers probably got a little bit better treatment.

The other side of that coin was, we were able to get more courses--Afro-centric courses--developed at the university: African-American courses, African courses, African-history courses, Swahili. I don't know if there's still a Swahili program there, but we brought the Swahili program to UNC, which was actually two people. One guy was from Tanzania, and he was a graduate student. And the professor was from, I want to say, England. But we got the course, Swahili, and me and Preston Dobbins and one other person were the first students to sign up for it, which was great. Because we were just as disadvantaged as anybody else who was taking Swahili. Nobody knew Swahili. But it was a good course, and it also introduced me, introduced us, to East African countries that spoke Swahili.

So we got that course, and then we got a couple of other courses. Dr. Jackson--Blyden Jackson--came into--was recruited into the English department. And I didn't know who Dr. Blyden Jackson was, but he was a very renowned English instructor, English professor. So, when he came as a professor, he added course that needed to be added, that--Black Literature, for example. James Brewer--Dr. Brewer--came from Central--North Carolina Central University. And he taught African-American History. And once again, he was very prominent in that field,

but we didn't know anything about him. Until he was hired, or he and Dr. Jackson were hired, there were no black instructors--full instructors or professors here. So, that was one of the demands that we presented and we were able to accomplish. And it was the beginning of the whole African-American Studies program that's here now.

I'm trying to think of some other things that we did. I--. And, again, this was over a period of time, from [19]67 to [19]68. I think we were all going through a transition, [19]68, [19]69, the BSM really took effect. More students were coming on, coming to campus, and more black students were joining the BSM. And, of course, things mushroomed from there all the way to where they are today. But those are the things I remember the most.

Oh, and really, the thing that the BSM did that was different from the NAACP is that we identified with the people who were being--to use a better word--oppressed by the university. Because the people who--the women, the ladies who came in and cleaned up your rooms in the mornings--they were the people that lived next door to you. People who cleaned the grounds, picked up the track--you knew somebody who was a groundskeeper at home. The people who worked in the laundry--I had an aunt who worked at a laundry in Burlington. So, it wasn't so much. "These people here, they do this, because this is their status. And we're students, and we're a little bit above them because we're students." I think it was, "We can relate, and there's no difference between this woman who serves my food in the afternoons than my aunt who used to feed me in the afternoons." So that was one of the things, was that relational progress that was made between black students on campus and people who lived in town, or people who lived in town and worked for the university.

[Pause] In, I think it was [19]70--[19]69, [19]70--I began to move more into the university. Again, from your freshman year to your senior year, you live four lifetimes. And so, I was getting used to the university. I was able to move around with more confidence as an individual my junior and senior year. I was able to manipulate things to my benefit as opposed to going along with things that were already there. And, of course, the Vietnam War was still going on in the background. That program was running in the background, so it was very important for me to stay in school.

In, I think it was [19]60, [19]70, branched out, got a job working in the poolroom at the Frank Porter Graham--at the Student Union. And that gave me an opportunity to have some income, again, working at the university, interact with people I normally would not have interacted with if--. They were all pool sharks, people who loved to play pool, people who were on campus and needed a place to go do something while they were waiting. The poolroom--if the student union was open, the poolroom was open. So that gave me exposure to people and things that I would not have had exposure to.

My senior year at UNC, again, the war was still going on. So it was like, I'm in school, my fourth year. I came here with the intent to keep this deferment so I wouldn't have to go to war. The war is still going on. I'm about to graduate. When I get out, I'm going to get drafted. And so, everything I'd been fighting against for four years, I would have lost it once graduation took place. But--. So I started looking for maybe anything that can give me that one extra year. One more year of college deferment, I'll take it. It's gold. So, I was walking through Y Court. Do you know where Y Court is? OK, there used to be a YMCA building on campus, right beside the South Building. And it was called Y Court. And people would put notices on the

bulletin boards. I mean, that's the only reason I went, was there was a board--a real bulletin board that you put five-by-eight cards on it, and the information that you wanted to give out, or things that you wanted to get. And people would walk by the bulletin board and actually see it. And it was a way of communicating.

So, one day I was in Y Court, and I was walking by the bulletin board, and I saw this five-by-eight card, index card, and it said, "UNC School of Education recruiting students for an elementary-school-counselor program. "Apply at"--, I forget the name of the hall that the School of Education is in.

AF: Peabody?

JS: Peabody! "Apply at Peabody. See this person, at this particular time." So I had no prospects beyond getting drafted, going into the Army, being sent to Vietnam, and getting killed. So I took the card; wrote the information down; went to Peabody; met with the professor who was over this elementary-school-training program. And he said, "Well, you can always apply. I can't guarantee that you'll get in, but you can apply." So I applied, and I was accepted. And what made it so great was that I still had one course to pass--one political-science course to pass. And I couldn't graduate until I passed that course, but I couldn't pass that course until the end of first semester. So, that was a detriment.

The other was, I wasn't too good on standardized tests. And normally, to get into a graduate program, you had to take the MAT--whatever--Master's Aptitude Test--the MAT. And so, with this particular program, there was no MAT required, no GRE. That's what it was: the GRE. They did not require a GRE. So I applied, and I was accepted. I still had to finish that one course at the end of first semester--undergraduate. But I applied, and was accepted. And I

guess that's when I realized the benefit of a Carolina education. One, because I was an undergraduate here, I knew what Peabody was, because I had gone to school here, because I had been in classes where I was the minority. I wasn't intimidated by, you know, being in a program where I was a minority.

And so, anyway, I applied, got accepted. It was the first elementary-school-counselor program in North Carolina. And the thinking had changed, that you have to get kids at an earlier than high school. Counseling is more than just, "Which college do you want to go to? Here's your application fee. Here are some catalogs." That education-- The affective-- () the feelings that students have, the experiences that they endure during elementary school, are really more important than what they get to in middle or high school, because that's the foundation.

So, North Carolina was trying to get elementary-school counselors prepared to go work in the elementary schools, and provide counseling at that level. So, for me, it was just what I needed. I could get into graduate school; not a whole lot of obstacles and hurdles to pass. I might be able to get one more year deferment if I was in a program, rather than asking for a deferment to get into a program. And there was a stipend involved. So, not only could I get into the program, there was a stipend for living expenses. And part of the program involved a nine-month internship with schools in Cabarrus County--Kannapolis, Concord. And it was-- And we could take courses at UNC-Charlotte.

So it was the best of both worlds. I got some money. I got to be in a graduate school. I got to move to Charlotte. I got to work in Cabarrus County. I got to go to take graduate courses at UNC Charlotte. It was the best of everything I had been looking for. But I still had that draft thing over my head.

So not only did I get into graduate school, moved to Charlotte, but I also got married () time. So I got married in October, and I had already told my father I did not want to go into the service. And so, I had gone through four years of undergraduate, getting ready to do another year as a graduate student. And so, my father--. After I got married, my father picked up the phone one day and called the local draft board and told them that I was in graduate school. Was it possible I could get a one-more-year deferment, complete the program? So the local draft-board person said that he couldn't do anything, but he gave my father the phone number for the state draft board. My father called the number and told them the situation. And they said, "Yeah, we can give him one more year. But at the end of that one year, he's going into the service."

So, I'm looking for--. You give me thirty days and I'm happy. Twelve months, eight months, I'm just delighted. So, after all those years, something changed in 1971. The law changed. So, the law changed that, if you were classified 1-A--healthy, eligible for military service--and you were not drafted, you did not go into the military as of December the 31st, 1971. Then you were put into another category. You didn't have to worry about getting drafted. You were still 1-A, but you didn't have to worry about getting drafted, because if you were 1-A and didn't get drafted by December the 31st, 1971, you were good. And that's what happened to me. And, from a personal standpoint, I always think back to if I had not kept--, Just trying to keep that 2.0 so that I could get that draft deferment from year to year. If, for some reason, I had given up, for some reason something had happened to have to leave school, I wouldn't have been around to benefit from that change in the law.

So that opened up new vistas and panoramas for me, because I was able to finish the graduate program and--. But the problem was, there weren't a lot of elementary schools recruiting for elementary-school counselors. Wake County, Orange County, Mecklenburg County, Forsyth County, they were a little bit more--how can I say?--progressive, and they could see the benefit. But not everybody could. So when I went to apply for jobs, I wanted to stay in North Carolina, but there weren't that many places that were looking for elementary-school counselors.

So I was able to get an offer from Burke County, Morganton, from the Burke County school system. Went up for an interview; met the school counselor who was retiring; and was given all the encouragement to "come and work for us, Burke County. We're going from the previous high school to--." I think it's called Freedom High School in Morganton, I think it's called. So anyway, I would have been the first counselor for that new school. They were expanding some things. But it was just too far from civilization. And I considered civilization between Wake County and Forsyth. Anything west of Forsyth, east of Wake, you've crossed the frontier and gone back into the uncivilized--. Don't put that on there. No, I'm just kidding.

But anyway, I didn't want to be that far away from Chapel Hill, Durham, Burlington, from the Piedmont. So I thought about it real hard, and declined that job offer. But, at the same time, a job offer was coming open in Orange County with the court system--Fifteenth Judicial District, which included Orange, Alamance, and Chatham. And this is how things connect. So, the court counselor-slash-probation officer in Orange County was getting ready to retire so that she could go to law school at UNC. And so, before she retired or left her job, I was hired to replace her. Now, I don't know if that was any coincidence, but she was a UNC graduate. She

had worked, taken the job, and was going back to UNC and law school. The court system-- North Carolina court system--very heavily UNC. I mean, judges, lawyers, district attorneys, a lot of them come through UNC Law School.

So, I didn't really know what I was getting into, but I felt a certain level of comfort because graduating from UNC, as a black student, put me in a position of being a part of a Carolina family. So it didn't matter what you were when you were growing up, what town you left, but it did matter where you went to school. And it mattered to the people that you came in contact with. So, after I did get hired to work as a court counselor in Orange County, I had the opportunity to see the town side of the town and gown. You know, you've got the university. You are familiar with that term? OK. Town and gown--UNC and Chapel Hill--where you've got the town side [and] you've got the gown side. The gown is for the graduates and the processions and the pomp and circumstance. So, I was a student there, so I got to see the gown side. Then I went to work in Orange County with the court system. I got to see the town side.

So, that was very, very beneficial, because although I'm from Burlington, Burlington is only thirty miles from Chapel Hill, physically. Mentally, it's three thousand miles from Burlington. When you-- And I don't know about you, but when you left Kernersville and you came to Chapel Hill, I would assume that you wanted to stay in Chapel Hill more than you wanted to go back to Kernersville. I'm making an assumption. That's what happened to me. Once I left Burlington and went to Chapel Hill, got involved with the student body, got involved with the activities, the BSM, graduate school, I didn't want to go back to Burlington. Because, although it was thirty miles away, the mindset was three thousand miles away.

So anyway, graduating, starting work, coming in contact with a lot of UNC graduates in my work life. I began to see the benefits of having a Carolina education. Growing up in North Carolina, and because I was working with the state, with the court system, I got to travel to a lot of different places: juvenile detention centers, training schools, places in North Carolina I had never even thought about, knew about. I didn't even know what the counties were, but I had to learn that. I mean, it was much easier to learn because, if I was going to Brunswick County, I knew somebody who was from Shallotte, which is not to be confused with Charlotte. Or if I was going to Forsyth, and I knew people in school who were from Forsyth County. So it expanded my breadth and depth of North Carolina, because I knew people. I had met people from those places, and hear about those places growing up, and then visiting and working with those places.

So that was good. After I left the court system, I did get a job working as a school counselor--an elementary-school counselor. And did that for a year. Oh, when I--. While I was in college, I got to--. Became familiar with this East African country called Tanzania. The only reason I did that was because my Swahili assistant professor was from Tanzania. And it's like when you take French you learn about France. When you take German, you learn about German history. Well, I was taking a Swahili course, I'm learning about Tanzania. Well, one of the--in fact, I think it was the first president of Tanzania was a man named Julius Nyerere. And one of the things I learned about Julius Nyerere was that he governed the country on a five-year plan. You make a plan for five years; you carry it out; you execute it. At the end of the five years, you make a new plan or you extend, maybe, some of the things that you have in the first plan.

So when I graduated from college, I said, "I need to make me a five-year plan." And coming out of the school of education and counseling, I said, "Well, you know what? For this

background, I'd like to work with elementary-school students. I'd like to work with teenagers--preteens and teenagers. I'd like to work with young adults and adults." So, when I went to work for the courts, that put me in contact with middle school and teenagers, because they covered from eight to sixteen. When I went to work with the schools as an elementary-school counselor that put me back with elementary-school kids. Then, when I went to work with the community colleges, that put me in contact with young adults and adults.

So, by 1978, I had completed that five-year plan, and I was looking for something else--another five-year plan. So I had a friend who worked at UNC in the training department of human resources. So, one afternoon, I took off work and went to visit her, see how she was doing, also to see if there were any job opportunities outside of where I was. So I went to see her and she said, "Hey, the people upstairs in another section, they're looking to replace one of their employees. Why don't you go upstairs and talk to them?" So I went upstairs and talked to them, told them my background. I was a former student at UNC. And I got the job, I got hired, which was a great job, because I had seen UNC from the gown side, from the town side. And here I have an opportunity to come back as an employee to see the other side of the gown side.

When I was there, I was a student, so you only see things as a student. But when you're there as an employee, you see what goes on behind the frosted window, what goes on behind the closed doors, and what goes on--. Well, the job that I had, it took me over the whole university: the academic side, the health-sciences side, the research side. And that opened up a whole new area for me: "This is what the university is?" When I was there, I was a student trying to stay in school, keep a 2.0., so I could stay out of the war.

And once I was in (), I was an employee, and I got to go all over the university. And I said, "Wow, you mean this school gets this much money from just research? That's all they do, research? I didn't know that. You mean the medical school is tied to the hospital, and the hospital is tied to the state, and there's research? There's money that goes--. I didn't know that. You mean that there is a School of Public Health, and the School of Public Health has international reach into programs in Africa and Asia? I didn't know that. Well, I did know that there was a School of Pharmacy, but I didn't know that you could get a doctorate in pharmacy."

So there were things that opened up to me that second time around at UNC that I would have never known about if I hadn't gone back to work there. But then again, I wouldn't have gotten the job if I hadn't been a student there, to have known that, "Hey, there is UNC. And, oh, Daniels Hall? Yeah, I know where Daniels Hall is. Venable? Isn't that chemistry? Yeah, I know where Venable is. I need to go do an interview at the physical plant. Oh, yeah, I know where the physical plant is." So it was all, like, all of this is coming back. I got the basics. I knew that there is a university. I knew that there are departments. And I know that there are buildings that house those departments. But now I can go in and find out what really goes on in those departments.

So, I worked at UNC for two years, in that job capacity. And then a job--a similar job--at a different university came open. And I moved to Raleigh. So, here it is, I'm coming from UNC to work at NC State. Well, wait a minute. I'm a Carolina fan. What am I doing at NC State? Opportunity. I had an opportunity to get a promotion based on my experience working at UNC. And when the opportunity came open, I said--. Well, that, and plus, there was a job at UNC that I applied for but I didn't get, which brought reality into the picture. That, "Hey, it's just a job.

You may be a Carolina fan, but if you can get a better job making more money at Duke, hide that shade of blue and put on another one.” [Laughter]

For me, it was going to NC State to work. And then, once again, my experience at UNC helped me to get that job, because--. Do you know the competition between Carolina and NC State?

AF: No.

JS: Well, this is a little bit--. OK, so, once I get to NC State, coming from Carolina, working in the capacity that I was working in at Carolina, every place I went, “Oh, where are you from?” “I’m from Raleigh.” “No, what school did you go to?” “Oh, I went to Carolina.” “Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, how long have you been doing this work?” “Well, I’ve been doing it for two years.” “Where were you working at?” “At Carolina.” “So what do you think? Which school is better? Carolina or State?” And of course, my response was, “Well, they’re different. [Laughter] One’s not better than the other. They’re just different.” And so, I was then, once again, able to take that Carolina experience, Carolina education, background in North Carolina, and leverage it for a better situation for me.

Let me go back. So, when I got into the grad program at UNC for the elementary-school counselor, the head of the program was a man by the name of Neill Rosser--Dr. Neil Rosser. And Dr. Rosser had been--. He worked in Wake County as an educator before he came to UNC. And one of the things that he always said, that he made a point to say during lectures or counseling, was that Wake County has the best school system in North Carolina. And so, I think I heard that in probably [19]71, [19]72. But when it came--an opportunity to move from Orange County to Wake County--that was one of the determining factors. Because I knew that by

moving from Orange County to Wake County, I was able to put my children in one of the best school systems in the state. A public education in Wake County would have been equivalent to a private education in Alamance County, because the school systems were so much better.

So that's one of the reasons I moved to Raleigh from Chapel Hill. And then the opportunity to work at NC State, in the capacity I was in, but at a much higher level. So that job went from coming in human resources at NC State to becoming a department manager. And that put me in position to work with the establishment of the NC State vet school--School of Veterinary Science. So once I got to NC State, it was basically a matter of taking that knowledge I had about UNC's operations, departments, structure, organization, and applying it to NC State. So instead of going to see a researcher who was studying cancer, a cure for cancer and other chronic illnesses, I would go to see somebody in crop science who was trying to come up with a new strain of a seed that would be more durable for agriculture. Six in one hand, half a dozen in the other. But again, it was very, very educational to see how NC State operated, to see them--. Of course, I wasn't around whenever UNC's Medical School was created, but I was around to see NC State's Veterinary School created. And was able to work with the deans and the department heads and the researchers in setting up positions, jobs, for them to manage once the school was established. So that was a good experience.

So I was at NC State for maybe eight years--eight years. Then had an opportunity to go back to the court system, but instead of working out in the field, in the counties, I was working for the administration of the administrative office of the courts. And that put me in contact with judges, district attorneys, public defenders, clerks of court, magistrates. Anybody who was involved with the court system, it put me in contact with them. And, again, going back to

growing up in North Carolina, going to school at UNC, working in the state, the court system is involved in all one hundred counties. So you've got one hundred countries; you've got one hundred clerks of court. So that expanded my experience and knowledge as far as the state goes.

"Manteo to Murphy"--are you familiar with that term? OK, Manteo is on the coast, right? Little town on the coast. Murphy is a little town on the North Carolina-Tennessee line. Most extended part of the state--Murphy. Most eastern part--Manteo. So, when people say, "I know this state from Manteo to Murphy," that's what they're talking about, from one end to the other. And working with the courts allowed me to increase my knowledge of the state from one end to the other.

Let's see. After working with the state, with the courts, [I] decided to take another turn. This time I was tired of working with the state. Things were changing politically. So, I decided to end my career with something that was also intriguing: mortgage banking. So I went from the courts to mortgage banking. I was a mortgage sales, mortgage broker. And again, because of my experience in North Carolina and going to UNC, working at UNC, working at NC State, working for the state, it gave me the skills I needed to interact with people for the first time on something very important to them, which is buying a house. On my side, it was getting the financing to buy a house.

So, I did that for six years. And then, as the housing market crumbled, crashed, the mortgage market crumbled and crashed. So I actually wound up my last two years of my career in mortgage banking working with Wells Fargo. Unfortunately, working in their foreclosure department. Well, it wasn't called foreclosure. It was called home preservation, which is actually foreclosure. [Laughter] Wanted to give the people who are out there being foreclosed

that, “We’re not trying to foreclose it. We’re trying to help you preserve your home. But if, for some reason, we can’t do that, we’re going to foreclose on you.”

So, anyway, that gave me an opportunity to deal with people who were going through stressful--very stressful--periods of their life. And because of the size of the company and the size of the problem, that gave me an opportunity to deal with people who were in the state, outside the state. And the biggest thing was, again, that rapport--maybe that’s the word I’m looking for--rapport, instant intimacy. You meet a person. I met you today, right? You know more about me now than I know about myself. [Laughter] But I think it’s because of the intimacy. When a person is going through something tragic and stressful in their life, they don’t mind telling you their life, because they want to give you the full story. They’re, “Just happened because I lost my job,” “my wife died,” “my dog ran away.” That’s not the real reason. You know, this is who I am. This is what I’m all about. And being able to be sympathetic. Being able to (), to reach out to a person. Which gets back to--.

KAREN GARRIS: Excuse me. Thank you for your good words today.

JS: Oh, thank you.

KG: Yeah, Karen Garris. How are you? Thank you for doing this.

JS: Oh, listen, I knew Jim.

KG: Hi.

AF: Hi. [Laughter]

KG: Yeah, yeah.

JS: Let me tell you. I met Jim.

KG: Yeah.

JS: He was in () House.

KG: Yeah.

JS: I would stay (). I'd usually meet Jim walking back and forth.

KG: Yeah.

JS: We would meet each other.

KG: Yeah.

JS: And so, Jim was in the pep band.

KG: Yeah, that's right.

JS: And--

KG: That, for him, was the highlight.

JS: And he played trumpet.

KG: He played trumpet, yes he did.

JS: In the pep band.

KG: Yes.

JS: Now, my experience with the band director started at North Carolina Central.

KG: Uh-huh.

JS: Are you from North Carolina?

KG: No, I'm not.

JS: OK, we used to have band competitions when I was in high school.

KG: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JS: And so, the band arranger, John (), came to one of our band competitions.

KG: Mm-hmm.

JS: I played French horn. And so, he asked, “Well, how many people play--

KG: --anything.

JS: --your instrument for one year?” I said, “Me.” “How many played two? How many played three? Well, anybody who played two or more, you can stay, and I’ll work with you. But anybody who’s played one year, you’ve got to go, because you don’t have enough experience.”

KG: Yes.

JS: Well, I had just learned to play French horn, but ().

KG: Oh, OK.

JS: So I could play.

KG: Yeah.

JS: So anyway, that was my impression about Johnny. So when I met Jim, one of the things that we talked about was my experience with--

KG: Yeah, with the--

JS: --with John ()--

KG: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

JS: --and his experience. And I was telling Jim. I said, “Jim, you know, I remember my first basketball games. We would go. I sat in the student section. And the pep band is playing “Rah, Rah, Carolina.”

KG: Yeah, that’s right.

JS: And then, all of a sudden, they’d modulate into “Dixie.” And do you know what modulate is?

KG: Yeah.

JS: That's when you transfer key and you go into another song.

KG: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Uh-huh. Yeah.

JS: So they would--. You'd get up standing, "rah, rah, rah."

KG: Mm-hmm.

JS: And then, all of a sudden, the band would modulate into "Dixie."

KG: You'd say, "What's that?"

JS: And so I'm standing up, and now that's exactly what I said. "What are you doing? I'm cheering for the basketball team."

KG: "What in the world is this?" [Laughter]

JS: "But now they're playing 'Dixie' and— "So do I stand up and be a Carolina student?"

M: ().

JS: You know.

KG: Yeah, what do you do?

JS: We're a Carolina student. Yeah. And do I continue to clap because they're playing "Dixie," or do I sit down and draw this attention to me? "Why are you sitting down?"

KG: Yeah.

JS: And we were talking about the decision. So I had to make that decision.

KG: Yeah.

JS: I sat down.

KG: Mm-hmm. Hm.

JS: I let them continue to cheer.

KG: Yeah.

JS: But I couldn't cheer for "Dixie."

KG: Uh-uh.

JS: They had no problems in cheering for "Dixie." In fact, "Dixie" and "Rah, Rah" were ().

KG: (), yeah.

JS: But Jim was the first one who asked Dr. (), "Can you stop doing that?"

KG: Yeah.

JS: "It's offensive."

KG: OK.

JS: And I don't think anybody else did that.

KG: Oh.

JS: I don't think anybody else-- Well, Jim was one of the few black members of the band.

KG: Yeah, yes.

JS: At that time.

KG: That's right, yeah.

JS: But he told me, he said, "Yeah, I asked him to stop." And eventually I think they stopped. I stopped going to basketball games before they stopped.

KG: Mm-hmm.

JS: But Jim would have been instrumental in that little thing. You're talking about Willy Cooper.

KG: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

JS: And Jimmy ()?

KG: Yeah.

JS: That's what they were faced with every time they went on campus--

KG: ().

JS: --or off campus.

M: ().

KG: Isn't that amazing?

JS: So that's my Jim Garris story.

KG: Story. Thank you for that. That's amazing.

JS: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

KG: I will tell our kids. Thank you.

JS: Oh, please do. That he stopped "Dixie."

KG: That's great. Isn't that nice? What a story for you. [Laughter]

JS: She's got it.

KG: And for me. [Laughter]

JS: Thank you. Good meeting you.

KG: Yes, thank you. And God bless you.

JS: Oh, OK. [Laughter]

AF: That was good. [Laughter]

JS: So that was my Jim Garris story.

AF: Yeah.

JS: So where was I? Oh, yeah, mortgage banking. And after that, I retired from work. And I've been happy ever since. So, that's my life story, and I'm sticking to it.

[Laughter]

AF: Thank you.

JS: Is there any questions or anything that--?

AF: Yeah, I'd like to ask a couple more--.

JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Go right ahead.

AF: Get into the details. OK, one of them is you mentioned how your first exposure to Carolina was at that fraternity party.

JS: Mm-hmm.

AF: And you wanted to come here for the social life.

JS: Mm-hmm.

AF: But then, later, you decided you wanted to come here because you didn't think you'd have social opportunities to not focus on school. Did I misunderstand?

JS: No, no, no. In fact, you're right. When I--. OK, when I was in high school, I didn't know anything about UNC. I only heard about Duke because Duke had a good basketball team and it was on the radio. But my focus was on the HBUCs. I grew up in Burlington. There was A&T in Greensboro, and Winston-Salem State in Winston-Salem, North Carolina Central in Durham, the school in Charlotte--Johnson C. Smith in Charlotte. So I was brought up in a culture of the HBUCs. I really didn't know anything about Wake Forest, Duke, Carolina, until

maybe my junior year. And that was only because they might have a basketball game or a football game. And I might see Carolina, but I didn't really know what it was.

So when I came-- Well, let me give you some other background. When I was growing up, Chapel Hill was a place that people were sent to die. Let me explain that. If you were in a real bad automobile accident in Burlington and the doctors knew that they couldn't do anything for you there, "send them to Chapel Hill, OK?" There was a sanitarium. Tuberculosis was a really bad disease in the [19]40s and [19]50s. So the sanitarium was in Chapel Hill. That's where you segregated people with tuberculosis from the rest of the population, because it was transmittable through the air. And so, if you knew somebody who had tuberculosis-- And, of course, as a kid you'd know people who knew that they had tuberculosis. You found out, "Well, where are they going?" "They in Chapel Hill, to the sanitarium." Well, I didn't know why there were in Chapel Hill at the sanitarium, but Chapel Hill was like the elephant burying grounds. This is where people go to die.

So, I didn't know anything else about Chapel Hill. When I was in high school, we played, our school, played against the black high school in Chapel Hill, which was called Lincoln High School. Well, we would come to play Lincoln. They would come to play us. That's all we knew about Chapel Hill. So anyway-- So, that's part of it. But the other part is that, when growing up in the higher education of HBUCs, I would go to basketball games, I would go to football games, I would go to some functions, and all that I could see were these guys in these nice () sweaters with these Greek letters on them. I didn't know what they were, but I found out these were fraternities. And I didn't know what fraternities were about. I

knew they had some nice () sweaters and some nice little letters on them. And it stood them apart from everybody else.

So when I came to Carolina-- Well, before I came to Carolina that was my whole mentality: go to college, join a fraternity, party, have a good time. So when I came to that party, when I played for that party, I also had this fraternity mentality already established. So when I was at the party, it was quite a party. I think it was in one of the back frat houses on Frat Court. And a great party. I had a great time. I'm working, but I'm having a great time. That was in January of [19]67. I said, "I'm going to school here." In March, I got accepted to UNC. So I came here the following fall, and I still had this fantasy of, you know, you're a student, and you can join a fraternity, and have this brotherhood, and you can go-- You know, all the things that I thought fraternities did.

So when I got there, and I realized that there is this-- Yeah, it is, but it ain't. Fraternities have rush in the fall, rush in the spring. They send out invitations. They do it based on the major. If you're a farm major, you go to the farm fraternity. Or if you're in a particular ethnic group, you go to that ethnic group fraternity. And Carolina was not. There were no black fraternities. There were no black fraternities, sororities, nothing. So while everybody-- And I had friends who were invited to rush, got invited for the rush parties, but they never got a follow up. I didn't even get an invitation. But at that time, I was beginning to see that fraternities on black campus and fraternities on white campuses--very similar in the sense that they are distinctive; they set themselves apart; they have their status and rank; and if you get into it versus not getting into it, you were somehow higher. But at Carolina, it didn't make any difference, because if you were black, you weren't going to get into a white fraternity.

And so, that changed things. The reality was that I didn't need to do anything to separate myself from the group, from the herd. I did not need to do anything to give myself any special status. And I did not need to do anything as far as wearing a letter or a sweater or a jacket to show that I belonged to a particular group. By being black at UNC I had all those things. I was in a separate group. [Laughter] I had status. Depending on how you looked at status, I had status. And I was identifiable. So, for me, my attitude about fraternities--it changed, because of things that I--. For what I had been looking for to join a fraternity, I already had it by being black. People I associated with outside of class was black. The people I socialized with were black. People I protested with were black. So the BSM would have been my equivalent to a fraternity.

So that's why I changed my mind about fraternities and sororities and the whole Greek life. And then, I found out about the Kappa Alphas. So, you know who the Kappa Alphas are?

AF: I'm not sure.

JS: OK, Kappa Alphas, that is a fraternity, part of the Panhellenic Council. And while I was telling you that--. And, again, this is based on my experience. I never read anything, never written anything, and there's nothing documented. When I was mentioning about fraternities, drawing people to them who were either like them or wanted to become like them, OK? So, there is a fraternity called the Kappa Alphas, known as the KAs. Well, the Kappa Alphas are the--. Excuse this term: the Kappa Alphas are the Ku Klux Klan component of college fraternity life. And I have no documentation to prove this, but it pretty much is. So if you were the Grand Dragon's son in Bertie County and you want your son to go to Carolina, become a doctor, and you wanted him to have a fraternal relationship experience, then you put

him in the Kappa Alphas. Because the Kappa Alphas are composed of other people like that who want to keep that spirit of the Confederacy and the Ku Klux Klan alive.

So, my thing was, well, wait a minute. If I'm going to join a fraternity, and I'm on the Hellenic--. Is that what it's called? Hellenic?

AF: I think so.

JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And you're on the Hellenic group, the fraternity-sorority group, then I've got to call this person--whether he's in my fraternity or not--he's a brother. He's a fraternity brother. And that was, because of the history of the Kappa Alphas, I couldn't do that anyway.

But, again, there were things that you pick up. Let me emphasize this: there are things that you pick up as a black person going to UNC that the general public is not exposed to or apprised of. I'll give you a little anecdote. OK, so, I was playing with this group--a rhythm-and-blues group, eight pieces. We played all the Motown music, the Stax music. It was music that was very popular. So we got requests to play at fraternity parties and parties all over the Southeast. So it was my freshman, sophomore year, I learned about the Kappa Alphas. Knew what they were, knew what they were all about, where they were located. Now, I think I mentioned--you may have been out--but two of my friends actually burned a Confederate flag in front of the Kappa Alpha house to protest that, "Hey, we don't like it, and this is what we think about the flag." So, I learned about the Kappa Alphas in [19]68--yeah, [19]68. So that's [when] I learned about the Kappa Alphas.

So we got a job at a party to play at, in Georgia. So we were used to going to Atlanta, Georgia, to play parties at Georgia Tech. So, our manager gets this contract to go to Georgia to

play this fraternity. So I'm thinking we were going to Atlanta. We were going to play another gig at Georgia Tech. So we're driving down 85 from North Carolina to Georgia. Get to Atlanta, and instead of going to Georgia Tech we take a sharp left and head to Athens, Georgia. So I'm asking, "Well, where are we going? I thought we were going to Georgia Tech." He said, "No, we've got a job at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia." And I didn't know anything about Athens. Going to Atlanta, liked Atlanta--open, diverse. Georgia Tech--in high school, never had any problems playing at Georgia Tech.

So, I said, "Wait a minute. You mean we're going to the University of Georgia to play this fraternity party?" He said, "Yeah, it'll be just like all the others." So we get to Athens. We go into the University of Georgia's campus. And we find this fraternity house that we're supposed to be playing for the fraternity that night. Well, we pull up in the driveway of the fraternity house. You know, there are eight pieces. We have an eight-piece group, two white musicians, six black. So we pull up in front of this fraternity house, and I'm looking at the fraternity house, and it's got the big dome--you know, the big thing. And at the top is KA. Now, you have to put this into perspective. It's 1968, and there's all kinds of unrest across the country. We're in Athens, Georgia, on the University of Georgia campus, playing for the Kappa Alphas. You can't get more intense than that. But when we pulled up, I was the only one in the group, in the van, with the band, who recognized that this is a Kappa Alpha fraternity that we were going to play for tonight. And the only thing I could think of--I didn't say it--"Boys, we're in for some trouble."

But I couldn't say it because I would have had to spend half an hour explaining what Kappa Alphas were and all about, and the fact that we were in Georgia--Athens, Georgia--at the

fraternity of the Kappa Alphas. And that we can't turn around and go back because there's a contract involved. At the same time, nobody except for me knows where we are because nobody had contact with KAs. They didn't have contact. So, let me finish me up. So when we play a show, we have the first set and the second set. The first set is two hours. Take a thirty-minute break. Do the second set. It's two hours. So, by this time, we were set up. We were on the stage. We were getting ready to play. And, again, I'm the only one who knows who we are, where we are, and who we're playing for.

So the first set, the first two hours, goes fine, typical. I mean, you spend--. Usually, the participants, you spend the first hour getting drunk, and you spend the second hour acting like you're drunk, and then you take a break. And whatever the ceremony, the festivities are for your fraternity, you do that during the break. And then, by the time the band comes back on for the second set, you're either so drunk--the participants, not the band--the participants are so drunk that they've fallen out or they're trying to work off that first drunk and get in for the last two hours. Or a lot of people miss the first--the first set--and then come for the second.

So anyway, the first set is good. We're doing two hours. People are coming up. They love the singer. They love the music, trying to get the mic--. Well, this is what-- I know that you don't know this, but sometimes when people get inebriated they think that they're the singer. So we had people trying to come up, and they're hugging the singer. And he's hugging them, and just a real nice party. We'll take a break, intermission. And I know--I know--that this is where they're going to do their thing. And I know that if some of the people in our band hear what they're doing, that they're going to get upset. Now, normally, when you take a break, that's where we would drink, cool off, drink some beer, go back on for the second show. So

during the intermission, we're going outside, sitting. This is in the spring of the year in Georgia--April, May, something like that, before school gets out. Now, spring in Georgia is like summertime in North Carolina. It's hot. It's humid. So you're in there playing-- It's a big room, in their playing, getting hot and humid. You know that you're going to take a break, drink some beers, cool off, come back in and do the second set.

So we go out, take our intermission. We're sitting down on the steps in front of the fraternity. And all of a sudden it starts. And, again, these are Kappa Alphas. It's like a Ku Klux Klan cross burning only without the cross. But everything else is (). So we're sitting down on the steps, and I know, "Oh, man, it's going to get really, really raunchy in there." So they're in there doing their thing, which is all based on the Confederacy and, you know, things that were going on back there, and whatever the feelings were at the present. So my band members, you know how you hear something and your ear perks up, but you don't know whether you heard it or not? But then you hear it. You ask somebody, "Did you hear that?" And so, it was like that. So I could see that things were turning. The singer, our singer, who was on the stage and was doing a great job, and guys were coming up from the fraternity and, you know, wanting to sing and hug. So he's the first one that gets--, he is livid. I mean, he is livid. Every right to be, but we were in Georgia, in Athens, Georgia, on the University of Georgia's campus, at the Kappa Alpha house.

So I'm (), "Look, man, I know that you're upset. I know you may have--. I know you want to fight." But I put it to him just like that. "We're in Georgia. We're in Athens, Georgia. We're on the University of Georgia's campus with the KAs. We could disappear and nobody would know where we were or how we disappeared." [Laughter] So I said, "Chill out.

Let's go back in here and do these last two hours, get paid, and go." Because I don't want to be a cadaver in a pit in Athens, Georgia, right off the University of Georgia's campus, because--.

Anyway, you get my drift, right?

So anyway, we go back in. We do the second set, two more hours. Of course, the mood has changed, and instead of--. Well, they were drunk, so they still wanted to come up on the stage and, you know, put their arms around you and sing. But the singer, well, he had changed his attitude. The band had changed. It was a matter of going through two hours. "Let's just do two hours, do enough songs, and get out of here." And so, we were successful, and we were able to get in the van, leave the Kappa Alpha house, and get off the University of Georgia's campus, get back to Atlanta, get on 85, and come back.

But the reason I say that is that there are things that you learn, that we learned, as students at UNC that we were exposed to, that you wouldn't have been exposed to in the general population. So by me knowing what the Kappa Alphas were, by me recognizing the KA symbol when we pulled up in front of the fraternity house, I was prepared for what was going to come. It put me in a position to calm guys down because (), and to put it into perspective that, "Hey, we've got to get out of here. Let's just get out of here. Let that run off your back. Let's just get out of here and count this as a memory from the past," which--. That's what it is:

[Laughter] a memory from the past.

AF: Oh, and what sort of things were you all hearing and seeing?

JS: Oh, you mean at this particular frat?

AF: Yeah.

JS: The classic, “Nigger this, Jew that.” And, of course, they have songs. OK, let me put it to you this way. Where was it? Oklahoma? University of Oklahoma, this past year, the fraternity that took the charter bus, and this guy was on the bus, and they videotaped him making improper comments about black athletes. It was that type of thing. Really, it was that type of thing. It was stuff that’s () and if you say it, well, you may offend some people. But then again, you might get five claps on the back. It just depends on the situation.

And I guess, for me, knowing what the Kappa Alphas were like at Carolina, in Chapel Hill, McCauley Street. Is that McCauley Street? You know that McCauley Street? Yeah, right there on McCauley Street. Knowing what they were like, prepared me for, “Hey, there’s no difference whether you’re in Georgia, whether you’re in Athens, Georgia, Chapel Hill, Winston-Salem. It doesn’t matter, because there are Kappa Alphas all over, just like any other fraternity. There are Kappa Alphas all over.

But, yeah, it was the routine. The KA message, “niggers this; Jews that; women this.” Whoever was the--what is it?--soup de jour. I’m sorry, who was the soup of the day, who was the person to put down for that particular period of time, that’s who they were putting down. So, women, blacks, Jews, anybody who was not them. But it’s that knowledge of knowing who they were before--. Oh, this is Alpha. So I’m going down the road last week, and I see this car, Explorer, sitting off to the side. And the back is to me, and I’m looking in the back window, and I see KA. So, from 1969 to 2015, KAs are alive and well. [Laughter] On your local college campus, you don’t have to go that far. They’re alive and well. But, again, that’s something that I grew up [with], with my Carolina experience.

You got another question?

AF: Mm-hmm, yeah. So you talked about some of the protest movements that were going on when you all started developing the Black Student Movement. Were you all paying attention to the news, getting inspiration from those movements, influenced by them?

JS: Actually, actually, we didn't watch the news. I don't think we had time to watch the news. The inspiration was coming more from books that we were reading. It seems like everybody was reading the same books at that time. It was from--. OK, I'm in Chapel Hill, but I've got a friend, classmate, high-school classmate, and he's in New Haven and goes to Yale. So we'll talk to him. He would say, "Well, this is what we're doing here because of conditions," or whatever. And so we'd find out what's going on at other places by talking to people who you were friends with before you went to college, or you gravitated to.

Now, other things, again, civil rights--. But just as important, or more important, was the protest against the war. So you--. We went to--. We--I say we--me and three of my friends, we went to DC for the Vietnam War protest. Big event. So there were things like that. Things were happening in Durham at Central. There was a guy named Howard Fuller, Howard Fuller. And Howard Fuller, he was Black Panther, Muslim. Anyway, he was a major figure. And so, you hear-- And he would come on campus to speak.

Yeah, we would also have groups from off campus who would come and speak formally or informally. The largest, probably the largest, Black Panther group was in Winston-Salem. Yeah, in Winston-Salem, they had a guy who was their leader, named Larry Little. Well, Larry-- either he was dating somebody at UNC--. But anyway, he would come to UNC and speak, or we would have a conversation with him.

I remember one of the most poignant, profound interviews or contacts was this black man who had just got out of Penn State. No, not the university. The penitentiary. [Laughter] The Pennsylvania State Penitentiary. And he was making his way south. He was from South Carolina, Georgia, just gotten out of prison. And he was making his way south. Well, one of my classmates, dorm mates, met him down on Franklin Street. Got a conversation, and the guy just needed something to eat. () on his way.

So my friend brought him back to Stacy. I stayed in the Stacy dorms. So he brought him back to Stacy, and this was during the time when the other alternative to a deferment was either to go to Canada or to go to prison. Some people who were conscientious objectors, COs, they decided to go to prison rather than going to Canada or going to the war. So, when this guy came through, I was at that point where I'll either go to Canada--. But I couldn't go to Canada because it's too cold. Or I'll go to jail before I'd go to Vietnam. So this guys is coming. He comes to the dorm. He sits down. We're talking, having a conversation. So with that background, I'm so conscientious that I'm willing to go to jail for my beliefs. When he started telling us about his experiences in the Penn State Penitentiary, I ain't going to jail. [Laughter] I'm not going to prison.

So it was things like that. You meet people. You go places. You hook up with friends from high school. A lot of my friends were veterans. A lot of my friends went to Vietnam when I was at UNC. So you get stories from them. So, TV was really an undependable source of information because it was filtered. Whereas, if there was a protest in DC, go to DC. If there's somebody you want to get the information from, look up that person.

The books--there was a lot of books that were out then. You didn't know the books were out unless you talked to somebody. One of my favorite authors--psychological, political--is Frantz Fanon. I never did know anything about Frantz Fanon until I started talking to people, and they said, "Man, you've got to read this book. It's called *The Wretched of the Earth*. It's by Frantz Fanon. It'll open your mind up." So I read that book. Then I read another book by Fanon, then another book by Fanon. By the time I got through the third book, I had gone completely 360 degrees, because he was presenting something from a broader perspective than I was ever exposed to. And it made sense, and it made sense because he was writing about me and people like me.

Chinua Achebe--he wrote *Things Fall Apart*--great African writer, author. I think he died a few years ago. That was a part-- That was a required reading on one of the courses I took on colonialism. But that was my introduction to Chinua Achebe.

Eldridge Cleaver--now, I've called out names and I'm doing books that you have no knowledge of, but Eldridge Cleaver did a book called *Soul on Ice*. Now, Eldridge Cleaver was one of the founding members of the Black Panthers. But he did a book on them called *Soul on Ice*, and I read that book. And it talked about the black experience, something urban that I was not aware of.

Iceberg Slim [*sic*] *Down These Mean Streets*--great book. It talked about life in the urban environment, growing up on the (). Things that I never would have been exposed to without being at Carolina.

That was a part of that-- The best education I got was not in the classroom, it was outside the classroom. The best contacts I made and remember were not the people who were

instructing the classes. It was the people who had been through those classes and was able to say, "Hey, you got this professor? Well, watch out for this." "You're having an exam? Well, I've still got a copy of that exam."

Jim Barnes. Jim was there when I go there when I got there, and just as he was saying about--. He made a reference to another guy, Melvin Phifer. And Melvin was there when Jim go there. And Jim was saying, "I just watched those guys. I just watched to see what they were doing and how they were doing. I learned from them." Well, by the time I got there, I watched those guys, and I observed what they were doing. And I learned from them. Is this--? Did I answer your question? I think I'm rambling.

AF: No, it's great.

JS: Yeah, people made a couple of remarks about housing at UNC. Well, my friends who came from the same place, and knew each other before they got to UNC--they were able to designate each other as roommates. I didn't even know what UNC was, had no idea about Hinton James. So I put in my name, "Hey, I need a roommate. I don't want to pay a private-room price. I don't want a--. I need a double room." You're assigned a roommate.

So when I go to Carolina, it was a Sunday afternoon. We had orientation, freshman orientation, that night. You move in that afternoon. So when we got--. When I got to Carolina, Hinton James--it was on the sixth floor 638, 636, something like that. So when I got there, I knew I had a roommate, but he wasn't there. So my parents brought me there, and they knew nothing about Carolina. But they knew about George Wallace and Alabama and everything that's going on there. So my mom is--. She sees that I've got a roommate, but he's not there. So my mom is snooping around, and evidently he had an envelope on his desk, his side of the

room. And she sees that he's from Mobile, Alabama. Yeah, because of things that are going on in Alabama, they were petrified. Here's them leaving their only son in a totally different environment, in a minority, and he's got a roommate from Mobile, Alabama. "I'll never see my son again." I mean, that was the attitude that they had, but they did leave me. [Laughter] I didn't leave with them.

And so, when the guy came in--my roommate--he was from Alabama. He had gone to a private Catholic school. His name was Mack (). And although he was from Alabama and I was from Burlington--well, he was from Alabama and I was from Alamance County--we hit it off. I mean, we hit it off. But the thing that I learned from that experience with that randomly chosen roommate--Mack was a genius. I mean, genius. I'm taking Chemistry 101 as a requirement. He's taking advanced chemistry courses because he wants to. I'm trying to work through Latin as an alternative to French. He's taking German Two and Three. I'm trying to make it through General Math. He's taking Calculus. I mean, I'm exaggerating, but he's taking Calculus Four. He knew it. He was gifted and talented. He's taking advanced courses, and I'm trying to get through the introductory courses.

And that was my first experience of being around genius. End of the first semester, he's getting As and A-pluses. I'm trying to maintain a 2.0. I mean, we were academically apart. But because he was a genius, he was so out there, so far, he didn't have any friends. He didn't have the friend-making skills. When people would meet him, the first thing they'd think about--and this wasn't even a word back then--"He's a geek, and he's looking for somebody to relate to, so I'll take advantage of him because he's a geek." We didn't have that relationship. "Hey, I don't

know calculus. You do. But I can introduce you to this person, and we can go here, and we can talk about this, and we're staying together."

So, my Mack () story: so, I'm barely able to get through first semester. I got a 2.0, 1.8, something like that. So, my second semester--freshman year, second semester--I'm struggling, especially with any quantitative course. General Math was a struggle. So I come up to the end of the semester ready to take end-of-the-semester course tests, exams. So I'm struggling with math. So anyway, there's this one concept I can't get. And I go to Mack and say, "Mack, can you explain this to me?" He's taking Calculus Four and I'm taking General Math. In one evening he explains it to me [snaps fingers] so clear. It was profound. It was like I'd been in this class for four months. "I don't understand anything the professor is saying, but you explained it to me so that I wasted four months. I could have been missing class and met with you before the exams and--."

So anyway, to make a long story short, I go into the class with a D. I come out with a B, because I did so well on the exam. Well, Mack had one pleasure: bridge. He loved bridge. He loved bridge. It was his social interaction with people. So at the end of the first semester, he's got As in everything--As in, I mean, everything. I'm struggling. So the second semester, () finals. I need this math course. He helps me out. But Mack is--what do you call it? He had become arrogant. I don't know if you ever met geniuses who become arrogant, I mean, they get really full of themselves.

So, second semester, again, my motivation is if I stay in school, I get a deferment. If I get this deferment, I say alive. Mack's was, "Well, I did so well in the first semester that, instead of going to my finals, I'll stay up and play bridge all night, and he did that. I'm struggling getting

up at 8:00 a.m. and going to class so I can hit the final, so I can get out of this course. He figured he had such as great--what do you call it?--during the semester and his previous semester he didn't have to take finals. And he didn't. And he flunked out. He didn't flunk out. He had to come back for summer school that summer, and that's where I lost track of him.

But even that experience of knowing this guy, knowing how smart he was, genius. But the routine things, the little things about social interaction, about knowing how to read people--he didn't have that. The arrogance about you're so great, you're so smart, you're such a genius you don't have to do this. No, you've got to take exams. You still have to--. And so, that was an educational process. And I never would have had that if I had designated my roommate.

So I'm going to finish Mack and then I'll go take (). So, in summer school, same year--I have to come back for summer school in order to get courses to come back for the fall. So instead of staying on the South Campus in Hinton James, I moved up to North Campus and stayed in Lewis dorm, which is in the (). You know Lewis?

AF: Mm-hmm.

JS: OK, so I'm staying in Lewis. So I'm moving my stuff in and--. So when I get there, same as with Mack, somebody has already moved in. I don't know who they are. They don't know who I am. I'm putting my stuff on my side of the room. They're putting their stuff on their side of the room, or they had put their stuff on their side of the room. So while I'm moving in, my roommate comes in. He looks at me. He goes over to his side of the room, and goes out. And so, I never see him again. I go out, come back. All his stuff is moved out.

Now, of course, you didn't have to be a rocket surgeon to figure out what had happened, because it had happened before. I mean, I'm telling you my story, but Eddie Hoover could tell

you stories. Other people who had been there before could tell you about the roommate story. So, I am looking at the situation. I'm moved in, and this guy's moved out because he doesn't want a black roommate. Wow. But then it hit me. I get a double-room rate for a private room. I'm not worried that he moved out because he didn't want a black roommate. I'm happy because I'm paying a double-room rate for a private room.

So, summer school ends, and of course, you do the same thing. You put into the Housing Department, designate a roommate if you want to. You don't have to, but if you want to room with a person you designate your roommate. So I'm saying, "Oh, my gosh." Now, I'm moving from Hinton James to Lewis in the summer. And I'll be moving into Stacy in the fall. So I'm saying, "I don't think I'm going to designate a roommate." Same thing happens. I move to Stacy. I move in. Somebody's already there. I go out and come back. They're gone. What's the best way to get a single room with a double-room rate? Move in with a white roommate. A day later, six hours, that same evening, you get a private room.

So that was one of the things that I learned, is that sometimes what seems to be bad, it's just the way that you look at it. I think any other person, or many other persons, would have felt slighted, put down, disrespected. "You don't want to--? You're going to move out just because I'm--? You don't know me, but you're going to move--?" But me, it was like, "Double-room rate for a private room." And that's how I got through my sophomore year in Stacy.

AF: Did that same thing happen the next two years?

JS: Oh, well, I moved off campus.

AF: OK, OK.

JS: Oh, and the reason I moved off campus is because, again, all this ties together. It was because when I got there, I didn't know where I was. Hinton James, I didn't even know what Hinton James--. And neither did I know what nor who Hinton James was. [Laughter] It was just a dormitory. First time in my life, a high-rise dormitory. There weren't high-rise apartments in Burlington where I came from, so I'm staying in a high-rise dormitory, with a suite! Two people, four-room suite, shared a bathroom. This is heaven!

So I didn't know anything about Hinton James. By the time I got to Lewis and Stacy, I knew the routine. Well, it was always, once you get there, your golden objective is to move off campus. You don't want to stay in the dormitories. You don't want to be restricted by the dormitory rules. You don't want to have to go to the RA whenever there's a problem. You want to move off campus. So the people who were there before me had already moved off campus, and they had a couple of houses that they were renting. Nice houses for 1967, [19]68, [19]69. So Jim Barnes, the guy who was sitting next to me--he and two other guys had rented a house on Airport Road, which is now Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. But they had rented this house on Airport Road. So we knew they were getting ready to graduate. Oh, we knew that two of the three were getting ready to graduate, so me and my friend said, "Hey, when you all graduate, can we move in?"

So we moved in, and we were off campus for the last two years. Which was great, because it put us--. Remember when I talked about the town and gown? Well, when you were a student, you were on the gown side, so you really don't have any contact with the town, because you're a student. You're from out of town. If you've got free time, you're trying to go to Durham or Greensboro, some other place, but not stay in Chapel Hill. But once you move off

campus and you become a citizen of Chapel Hill and student, you have that opportunity to interact with community activities, with people in the community.

So while you come there, not knowing where you are or what you're going to do or any history before you, again, you eventually say, "Well, you know what? I've got to be on campus for two years. As soon as I get that opportunity to move off campus, I'll move into a residence that I'm familiar with where other people have been.

Anything else? And I'm not rushing you. No, no, keep going.

AF: No, no, OK. Thanks. You told a story about when you were sitting in Lenoir and people were going through. Were you looking for a group like that to join, or did you--?

JS: No.

AF: It was like, you saw it happening and--?

JS: No, this was right or wrong time, at the right or wrong place. My objective that day was to--. Because we had Chase. I don't know if you knew Chase Cafeteria? Chase cafeteria used to be right across between Morrison and Eringhaus. That corner, I think, is a computer building. It's something else now. It might be called Chase Hall, it was called Chase Cafeteria. So if you were on South Campus, you could eat at Chase. And if you're going on your way to class, you get up, you leave Hinton James, you walk up to Chase, you eat your breakfast, go into North Campus. If you were taking a late afternoon class and you were on North Campus, then you had an opportunity to eat at Lenoir before you went back to Chase. Actually, the food in Lenoir was a lot better than the food at Chase.

And then there was the Pan Room. Do you know about the Pan Room?

AF: Uh-uh.

JS: Oh, my gosh. [Laughter] The Pan Room was in that little area underneath Lenoir.

AF: OK.

JS: And they served burgers and French fries and, you know, snack food. Whereas Lenoir, dining was more dining. You'd get a meal. So anyway, before I went back to South Campus, I decided to stop at Lenoir and get some dinner. I mean, food was a major--. Food was major because I was playing in the band. So I'd work on the weekends and get paid on Sunday, and I'd get paid enough money to eat off of until the following Friday when I played with the band again. So food was, when you're coming from home where you don't have--. "How much are the peas, Ma? Is that hamburger? [Laughter] How much is the hamburger, Ma?" Well, you don't have that. You go in and get what you want, and you're trying to stretch your money. So food, breakfast, sometimes you missed lunch in order to stretch it out to dinner. It was very important.

So I was eating there before I went back to Hinton James while I was on the North Campus, before I went back South Campus. So I'm eating. And, again, peas, meatloaf. That's what it was--meatloaf. Peas, meatloaf, and mashed potatoes, which you can pretty much figure out, that's a cheap, blue-plate special. All of that probably cost a dollar back then. But, you know, dollars were valuable. [Laughter]

So anyway, I'm sitting there eating my food, and I didn't know anything about the planning of this. I didn't know who they were. I did recognize Preston. But I didn't know any of the other people who was doing this. And then all of a sudden I'm looking to my left, and people are coming and throwing tables and chairs, and creating havoc. And I'm trying to figure out, do I finish eating this food, which is very valuable because I won't get another meal until

tomorrow. Or do I sit here and then they come over to me, get up and try to fight them and protect my food. Or do I try to eat this down, scarf it down as quickly as possible so that when they get to me I can turn my own table over and go along with the rest of the group.

So it was just place and time, place and time. I mean, and I often think, if I had not been sitting there eating my dinner, I wouldn't have known about that. I would have missed that whole experience. But I think that was one of the first--it wasn't nonviolent--civil disobedient acts of the, then, pre-BSM.

AF: So after that you started hanging out with the guys who organized that, and then all together you formed the BSM?

JS: Well, like I said, it was a transitional period, because the only recognized black student organization was the NAACP. And actually I became very close to the student NAACP chapter on campus. We used to hang out. But then again, things started shifting. And there's a point in your life where you have to make a stand. I didn't want to make a stand. I did not want to be involved in all the turmoil and activity that was going on, but either you make a stand or you don't. You choose--. When you choose to do nothing, that's a choice, OK? When you choose to do something, that's also a choice. Well, I chose to do something, because I could identify with the mentality.

And there's strength in numbers. By 1967, there were more black students on campus than in 1963. I think that the black students who were there, at least this segment, shared a common experience. We all grew up in black schools. We all knew what it was to be discriminated against. So we had that common background, and either you chose to support that or you chose to be, "I'm a student. I'm here for a--. Get my education so that I can move into

the mainstream of life, so that I can distinguish myself from other people.” I mean, that was the mentality. That’s what everybody ran into. Even if you were from Tanzania that was your mentality: “I’m here for a purpose. Get an education. Get a degree. Go back and do whatever you want to do in the community.”

And for me, because a lot of those thing that were going on, not only inside but outside. You had to make decisions. There were no fifty shades of gray. It was really this or that. And if you were this, then you took on all the risks and consequences of being this. Or if you were that, you took on all the risks and consequences of being that. Because you were such a minority--. I read a number that, in my class, it was less than one half of one percent of the student. Less than one half of one percent. When I went there, it was the largest class that Carolina had ever admitted--22,000 students. Students! The town was 10,000, [Laughter] but 22,000 students.

And so, when I read that statistic, which was recently, I said, “Wait a minute. So, if there were 22,000 students, and we were less than one half of one percent, that’s less than 220. So, it may have been a hundred and ten. And this was from graduate school to undergraduate. Those are pretty daunting odds when you look at being in a social situation, not much an academic situation where cooperation and mentoring and being with the right people, wanting to do (). So, yeah, the numbers were definitely against us. But when you started off with five or six and you moved to fifty, and then a hundred. As the numbers increase, strength increases.

So you might walk to class by yourself, but after class, you’re going to be with other people who--. Other people that you, you know, identify with, so there’s no--. You’re not always by yourself. You don’t have to choose to always be by yourself. It’s great to work on that chemistry degree so that, when you go out, you can work for Merck or, you know, a

pharmaceutical company, or whatever. But--. And this is, I think, what really benefited me. Same kinds of challenges that people dealt with after college, in the broader society--the Carolina experience, we dealt with those before we graduated. The advantage is that you know how to deal with situations where your opinion may be the minority opinion, but you still express it because it may have some effect on someone. If you've been--. If you have four years of being intimidated, when you get into the broader world, intimidation doesn't bother you. If you know the difference between discrimination and non-discrimination, if you've felt it, when you're in a work situation, first of all, you know how to identify it. And, two, you know how to deal with it.

And those experiences that we had, dealing with ourselves, dealing with other students, dealing with faculty--. And you have to understand, too, that UNC was the place that black teachers--high-school teachers--aspired to go to, to get their master's degrees. Because a Carolina master's degree in whatever was better than a, I don't know, A&T master's degree, or a Shaw master's degree, because it was Carolina. You could go from Bombay to Brazil and they would know what a Carolina degree is. You could go to South Hill, Virginia, and they may not know what Shaw University is.

So, you know, those kinds of things is that you--. We got exposed to situations and circumstances during our four years there that a lot of other people would not have been exposed to until after they had graduated from school and gone into the work world.

Am I being too verbose?

AF: [Laughter] No, this is great. Thank you.

JS: Oh, OK.

AF: Have you kept up at all with what the Black Student Movement is doing now? Do you follow them at all?

JS: I really began to move on. And I don't want that to sound negative when I say "move on." When the BSM was developed as a means of providing another voice to the administration, to students, to the board of governors, everybody was used to "Go along to get along. Well, you've got a good point, but it's not the right time. Well, we can't change things overnight," which is all saying no, but no in a nice way. Well, I think the BSM's purpose was to talk back.

One of the principals of the Black Student Movement was a guy named Jack McLean. And Jack would actually have confrontational meetings with the chancellor, who was Sitterson at that time. Well, his name was—title--Chancellor Sitterson. And I would see Jack in meetings with the chancellor, and he would call him "Champ" Sitterson. "Champ, how are you doing? Champ, we can't accept that." What's Champ Sitterson going to do? I mean, even in my upbringing, that was pretty--. But, again, it was necessary: disrespectful, but we don't go on titles. This is what needs to be done. This is how we're going to do it.

Oh, there were also some other influences. At the time that we were doing our thing, making our statements, demands, there were people outside who were doing the same thing but on a broader scale. Stokely Carmichael was a major figure during that time, so a lot of people, a lot of us--. A lot of people got their model from Stokely. There was a guy named H. Rap Brown, can't remember his real name. H. Rap Brown. And a lot of us got--. And they would just talk, not to go along to get along. "Well, I hear what you're saying, but this is what we want." And we got inspiration from those guys. So it was like, "No, we don't acknowledge that

you have this title. We acknowledge that you can help make decisions, but we're going to not let your title overcome us in this conversation."

So it was, again, there were forces going on the inside, but then there were forces outside that was influencing us to take some of the chances and the risks, and have the confrontations that we felt were necessary. Again, if it wasn't a confrontation--. If it wasn't for their confrontation, I would have gone through four years and never have taken a Swahili course, because nobody was thinking about Swahili as a foreign language. Never would have had an African-American literature course because nobody was thinking about African-American literature as being an important subject. Never would have had an African-American history course.

So we couldn't wait. It wasn't like, "OK, you hear us, and you say you're going to do it but it might be four or five years before you do it. I'll be gone. We need to do it now so that I can benefit. Yeah, we want our children and brothers and sisters to benefit but, hey, we want it now." And we got it. And it probably kept me in school, because I could switch from taking history of Western civilization to South African history. I could switch from--and I keep coming back to Swahili--I could switch from taking Latin to Swahili. And I could switch from taking political-science courses that related to World War II and the Treaty of Versailles to taking courses on colonialism in Kenya or--

I grew up during the time that Patrice Lumumba--which you probably don't know about--. Patrice Lumumba was the president of the Congo. Well, when I started taking African history courses, I got a whole different side of what had just happened, because I was getting it from another side. I was getting it from the Afro-centric side rather than the European side.

So it was things like that that--, I say you had to be at the right place at the right time. But it wouldn't have happened anyplace else. Oh, I'll give you a good one. I'll give you a good one. There is this statue that exists on Carolina's campus. I think it's called Pope Place. Is that Pope Place? Silent Sam.

AF: Mm-hmm.

JS: OK, so, we didn't know anything about Silent Sam until we found out who Silent Sam was. Silent Sam had been around for eighty-something---let's see--no, no, sixty-something years. I think Silent Sam was put up in the--. Oh, actually, it was almost a hundred years because Silent Sam was put up as a monument to recognize those UNC students who gave their lives in the Civil War. So Silent Sam had been around, but we didn't know who Silent Sam was until we found out who Silent Sam was.

And so, once we found out who Silent Sam was and what he stood for, every time that we went from campus to Franklin Street we would try to do any- and everything we could to show our disrespect for Silent Sam. It was fifty years ago. What's one of the main topics on campus? Silent Sam. What are we going to do with Silent Sam? So it's very interesting that some of the same topics that are being discussed and challenged and confronted with today were topics that we were dealing with back then. People talk about painting Silent Sam, doing all this. That was routine. That was an annual celebration, was to spray paint Silent Sam. But nobody, if you weren't on campus, is going to know who Silent Sam was. "Well, it's just a statue. Why are you getting upset with a statue?" "It's not the statue, it's what he stands for."

The history of UNC is tied so much into the history of North Carolina. They were talking about Saunders Hall, the controversy of Saunders Hall. I don't have a problem with Saunders. I

mean, that's when things were--. That's what things were like back then, and he wasn't by himself. But Daniels Hall--you know where Daniels Hall is?

AF: The student store, a different building?

JS: I think Daniels is up there by--. Where's the math building?

AF: Phillips?

JS: Phillips. I think Daniels was in that area. But anyway, Daniels was named after Josephus Daniels, who was the editor of the *Raleigh News & Observer*. Great. He found and funded the journalism school. That's why you hear so many graduates of UNC journalism school who get their mark, their start, at the *News & Observer*--historic connection. In fact, they named a building after Josephus Daniels--Daniels Hall. But a little known fact is that Josephus Daniels was the prime instigator for the Wilmington race riots in 1910, 1912. I think Wilmington is the only bona fide race riots that have ever been in North Car--. Josephus Daniels was behind that because Josephus Daniels was a very conservative American who knew that he got his support from the Ku Klux Klan. Again, you have to keep it in context that after the Civil War, the Ku Klux Klan pretty much took over North Carolina politics, education, social, everything.

So, Josephus Daniels printed this article that a black man from Pender County had raped a white woman, I want to say from either Pender or New Hanover County, because that's where Wilmington is. So anyway, given the tone, temperament, that led to a race riot because the people in--the conservatives in New Hanover and Pender could not let that go. So they came in, and at that time, Wilmington, as a port city, very prominent for black people. There was a newspaper. In fact, the newspaper editor's newspaper was burned down. People had businesses.

Anyway, make a long story short, a race riot killed black folks and took their businesses, some took their homes. And during that period of chaos, they lost that. They went to some of the people who started the riot, which was--, “There’s one way we can get your property. We can create this havoc and then take it.” And when the state comes in--.

So anyway, that was Josephus Daniels who started that. And we’ve got a Daniels Hall, not to mention Saunders and a few others. So if you connect the history of those buildings to the people that they were named after, it opens your eyes up to, well, this is the other side of Carolina that, hey, I learned about. But again, you don’t learn about these things unless you go there. You don’t--. It doesn’t make any impression on you unless you are impacted by it. So, you know, things have changed. But then again, things have not changed. Same system, different players. So that’s my talk on Josephus Daniels. One of my alumni. [Laughter] Just one of my many alumni.

AF: I wanted to ask, as a point of clarification, you talked about how being able to take classes like Swahili and () politics helped you stay in school. Is that because you were more interested in it, so--?

JS: It was a double thing. I was more interested, and I had a closer relationship with the instructors. When you come to Carolina, when you go to any college, you’re the new kid on the block. But you see that those people in your class who are able to carry on a casual conversation with the instructor--those students who are able to oftentimes meet with the instructor during office hours. If your instructor is from Kernersville, and he finds out you are from Kernersville, “Well, do you know such-and-such?” “Oh, yeah! I know them too!”

Automatically you are a little closer to that person than somebody from Clemmons, OK, because they're not from--. They might hate people from Clemmons. So if you're from Kernersville--.

So you have that. So what happened was, these were new courses. And a lot of people didn't know that there were new and improved courses. The Swahili--there were only three people in that course. What you going to do? Three people. I mean, if you get an F, it's only three people in the course. [Laughter] If you're one of those three, so your opportunity, you're close to an instructor, to learn more than what's in the book, to go outside and do extra. That comes based on a relationship with the instructor.

Dr. Brewer---he taught the first African-American history course. Well, (). He was more enamored by UNC basketball than by the course. Now, we would go into his class, and we happened to have a basketball player who was in the class, (). If this is an African-American history course and I'm African American, that's going to have more interest than the history of the Cossacks in Russia. Do you agree? Because that's something that I can relate to. The subject matter is something is something that I can relate to. Well, if the person teaching that subject is renowned in their own field, I want to get to know them. I want to get closer to them. You don't think about it when you go on in college, but, you know, Jim Brewer--James Brewer--Dr. Brewer. That's forty-something years ago. He died. You know, he's dead. But just by being in his class--.

Like I said, we had a basketball player. So we would go in the class, and it was an hour class. The first thirty minutes, we were talking about W.E.B. Du Bois. The last thirty minutes, we were talking about the game that the basketball player played in that week. “ () for me? I only want a little bit of the history part. I like basketball. So I can--.” So it was that type of

thing. When you were in high school, there were certain teachers that you could relate to better than others, certain teachers who could relate to you better than others. And I think, whether it's in elementary school, high school, college, university, when you learn that, you look for that. The teachers who were more distant, had nothing in common with you, whereas the guy who's sitting next to you is on the football team, OK? So he's going to get a little bit more attention because there's a [coughing] higher purpose in him staying in school, which relates to the football team, and school spirit, and all of that.

That's what you have. So after two years of being in classes where I was the only black, or there might be-- I might have a classmate. We sat together. And half the time you don't know what's going on. He may or may not be keeping up with the readings, but you see students who seem to have a natural affinity, or the instructor has a natural affinity. So you see that. In other words, you see the student who's sitting on the front row who has eye contact with the instructor, and the instructor has eye contact with him, versus the guy who's sitting in the back of the room in the corner hoping that the instructor doesn't call on him because he doesn't feel prepared.

So it was that type of thing. It was a complete turnover. And that didn't begin until [19]69 and [19]70. I don't know. To get back to your question, I moved on because I guess that I had seen so much. I told you about the cafeteria workers. Well, there were people who probably risked their academic careers by participating, because that wasn't something you'd do in class, on class time. You had to make an effort. If you were really, really dedicated, you had to make an effort. And, you know, everybody was not equally academically talented. So I guess in some cases, you know, "I really can't afford to take this time off and go and do this protest,

because I've really got to, you know, focus on what I need to do." Or, it could have been, "Well, you know, that's not me. When I leave here I'm going to go to New York or California. I'll forget all about this." So, again, it's that affiliation. How much, how close, do you feel to something, versus not?

AF: And then I have, maybe, one last question, if that's OK?

JS: Yeah,

AF: OK, so what has your experience been like being part of the Black Pioneers, I guess?

JS: It's been a learning experience. I did not know who Willy Cooper was before I joined the Black Pioneers. I met Karen Parker through an event with the Black Pioneers. I've been able to maintain friendship, affiliation, with one of my classmates who is a member of the Black Pioneers. You learn things. I mean, this morning, that panel, I had no idea of what Willy Cooper's experience had been. But once I listened to him, I said, "Oh, hey, he was experiencing in 1963 what one of my classmates was experiencing in 1967." It wasn't basketball. It was football, but the same tactic, "Yeah, we need to get black students in, black athletes in, but we don't have to play them. Yeah, I hear what you're saying, admissions, that we need to hire, to have more diversity. Yeah, we'll get them in, but--." There were two sides of that. The administrators, the admissions, the people who were trying to () on the Civil Rights mandates, yeah, we got--. They looked at it from numbers, OK? "We've got one black student. We need to get five, so let's recruit four more." OK. But when it came to the athletic side, they were looking at it from the numbers. The coaches and the athletic staff was looking at it from the reality. "You can play basketball or football at Carolina, but when you got to the University

of South Carolina or Clemson, we can't protect you." "But what do you mean, you can't protect us?" "There is an element of racism and discrimination that exists in other Southern schools that we compete against, and we can't protect you from what their fans or followers will do." Willy Cooper was saying, his experience with Dean Smith, "We can't take you to Clemson." Now, you can read that two ways. "We can't take you to Clemson because we don't want Clemson fans to know that we have a black basketball player on our team." That's one way to take it. "We can't take you to Clemson because we can't protect you from what Clemson fans would do or say to you once you get on the basketball court." That was in [19]63.

Charlie Scott was the second basketball player for Carolina, and one of my friends was the trainer on the basketball team. Basically, he was Charlie's designated friend. He was black; Charlie was black. They would go to these places and have to stay in hotels that may not let Charlie stay, so the trainer would stay with him. After a game, after being called every name except "Child of God," "Hey, man, it ain't that bad. Come on back. We're going to go to the next--. Next time we come back, you beat them that much worse." So that was his role, "You're with Charlie." Dean Smith set that up. "You're with Charlie. I want you to stick with Charlie. You'll train on the team, but your main role is to be a support, a pal, for Charlie, because we're going into some situations that--. I don't know what's going to happen." I use Clemson because Clemson was probably the most rabid, rabid school in the ACC who had teams, basketball and football teams, that really did not care anything about diversity or desegregation, anything like that. So--. And this is a part of that, like I said, outside influences that affect you inside. So they would go and play a game away at Clemson, South Carolina, Virginia, and I remember my friend coming. We were just talking. He said, "Man, I don't know how Charlie stands it." I

said, "What?" He said, "At halftime, we would go into the locker rooms, and you have to go under the tunnel." Basketball, you had to go under the tunnel in order to get to the locker rooms. He said, "Man, they were spitting on him. They were calling him all kinds of names. I don't see--." And this is in [19]68. Willy Cooper was in [19]63, so you understand that--, Yeah, we need more athletes, but when we send them to play the University of South Carolina, we can't protect them. When we send them to Clemson, we can't protect them, or--. I'm trying to think. Was Georgia Tech in the ACC? When we send them to Virginia, we can't--. When we send them to Raleigh, NC State, we can't protect them. So (). You need to catch up with the rest of the country. But the realities of living in the South are still there. Yeah, we can recruit them. We can put them on the team, but we can't--we, the university, the coaches--we can't protect them. And, again, a lot of coaches who were coming through were coming from some of these schools, so they had their own attitudes that they bring from Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Alabama to North Carolina, and even back then North Carolina was considered a liberal school, well, "liberal" compared to the University of Mississippi. So does that answer your question?

AF: Yeah. Do you have anything else you'd like to add, any other stories you'd like to ()?

JS: Just that I really appreciate this. This is a catharsis for me. It might sound that I'm easily responding to your questions, but it's actually--. I've had a chance to think about some of the things that you asked, some of the things that came up this morning, so, again, I hope I'm not too verbose or did not digress--

AF: No, it's been great.

JS: --too much. But, hey, I lived--. That's my story, and I'm sticking to it.

AF: Thank you.

JS: Thank you. I really appreciate it, Alex. So when do we get a transcript, or I get a copy?

AF: Yeah, let me turn ().

JS: Yeah, this is a smartphone, right?

AF: Mm-hmm.

JS: I have a dumb phone. It only makes calls and receives calls.

AF: That's what my--.

END OF FILE 1

START OF FILE 2

JS: Oh, OK. Ready?

AF: Yeah.

JS: As another name I would like to add--. It's Ricky Lanier who came in with my class in 1967 and was recruited as the first black quarterback scholarship football player at UNC. Actually, Ricky Lanier played on the same team as John Swofford. Do you know who John Swofford is?

AF: I've heard of him, but I don't--.

JS: You've heard of him? If he was called the ACC commissioner, would you know who I'm talking about?

AF: Oh, yeah, yeah.

JS: OK. So Rick Lanier was quarterback on the same team with John Swofford, [19]67 to [19]70, yeah, [19]71, yeah.

AF: OK, cool. And then, you had one more story that--.

JS: Oh, oh, oh, Donnie Hoover, and this story--how can I say--. This story typifies the--. You don't know what you're going to get into when you go out in Chapel Hill. So the story goes like this. He and about four others guys and I met up at this little restaurant on Rosemary Street called Lums. Lums was famous for selling hot dogs that had been boiled in beer, and I'll leave that to your imagination. So late night, we were going down to Lums for a late dinner, and, like I said, it was about six of us. So the first four of us went in and sat down at this table, and we were ordering our food. And before we sat down, there was another group of guys who were sitting at a table, and they were talking about whatever they were talking about. I assume that they were fraternity guys who had had a little bit too much to drink and were coming to Lums to get that hot dog to soak up some of the alcohol. So, anyway, they're sitting down, and we walk in. And just as we sit down, and this has--. I don't think it had anything to do with us showing up, but, anyway, one of the drunk guys sitting at the other table makes a remark, and it's a remark--. It was a lot of profanity. Well, a little bit of profanity, and I'll paraphrase it, and it went something like this. "African American men do not have members that are 12 inches long." Now, I'm cleaning it up a lot, but you get my drift. So, anyway, we're sitting down, and we hear this, and it was one of those moments where you don't think you heard it, so you look at the other people and, "Did you hear it?" "I heard it." "I heard it too." Well, of course, by the time we had gone through to confirm that we all had heard it, the perpetrator, the guy who said it, had gotten up and paid his bill and was on his way out the door, which was a back door. So there

were six of us. Four of us had come in. The other two, I think they came in through the door just long enough to hear what this guy had said. So, as the perpetrator walks out, I get up. For some reason, we're leaving too. And just as we get to the door, two of the four--. Two of the six of us who had stayed out, when we get to the door, one of those guys has the perpetrators locked up from behind. He's got his arms pulled behind him and locked him so he couldn't move. That's all I saw until I saw the other friend who was with us draw back, and that's where I use the term, put about 260 pounds of torque into his jaw, and that's all I saw. One guy is holding him back; the other guy is knocking him out. About five minutes after that happens, the police, Rosemary Street--. We were on Rosemary and Hargraves, and so the police station is right up the street at Rosemary and Franklin. So the police are there in five minutes, maybe less than that. So they drive up, and so my two friends who had punched the guy, they were standing there, and then four of us who went in the restaurant and came out, we were outside standing around. The police drives up. So the police looks at the guy who's laying down on the floor knocked out--lying on the ground, knocked out--he looks at us, and he asked a question. "What happened?" And so one of my friends who was at the table with me, his response was, "Loose lips sink ships." Everybody knew exactly what he was saying. It was the most appropriate thing to say. The police knew what he was saying. They understood. We knew what he was saying. We understood it. So after laughing, the police arrested the guy who was laid out for public drunkenness and let all of us go. So that's my Donnie Hoover story. He wasn't--. Donnie Hoover was not the guy who got punched, and I'll leave it to people's imagination as to what role Donnie Hoover may have had in that. Actually, that's not his name. Donnie Hoover is not

his name, so--. But it was a person who I would characterize as--. For lack of a better name, I'll call him Donnie Hoover.

JS: Thank you.

AF: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW

Transcribed by Audio Transcription Center

Edited by Lauren Bellard, October 4, 2016.