

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

LUCY LEWIS
FEBRUARY 19, 2001

LILI LAI: Today is February 19; I'm interviewing Ms. Lucy Lewis.

Were you born in Chapel Hill, here?

LUCY LEWIS: No, I was born in Durham. When I was born there didn't have maternity ward in the hospital, so babies usually were born in somewhere outside Chapel Hill.

LAI: But actually you are from Chapel Hill.

LEWIS: My parents lived in Chapel Hill, yes.

LAI: Are your grandparents also from Chapel Hill?

LEWIS: No, I'm a first-generation Chapel Hill resident. My grandparents are from mid-west, and my mother's from Ohio originally, and my father's from Indiana.

LAI: How long have your family been here?

LEWIS: They moved here in 1950.

LAI: When were you in the middle and high school, how was the situation at that time, and which school in Chapel Hill?

LEWIS: I went to a private school in first grade, called Durham Academy in Durham. And then second through sixth grade I went to Estes Hills Elementary School. And then in seventh through ninth grade I went to Phillips Junior High School, next to Estes Elementary. And then I went to Chapel Hill High School.

LAI: When did you go to the High School?

LEWIS: What years? In 1966 through 69.

LAI: Could you describe at that time the situation in the school, in terms of this race

issue in that high school?

LEWIS: Well, as what I mentioned before, a lot was clearer a couple of years ago, I think I get older, I think (my memory) get fuzzier. So if you can think of some good questions that pump to me that would be helpful. But in general the thing that was most significant probably was that I went to Chapel Hill High the first year that was one unified high school. Before that the integration had gradually taken place in the school system.

LAI: So, you mean when you went to Chapel Hill High it's already integrated.

LEWIS: No, that was the first year. Before that there had been two high schools. There was Lincoln High School for the black students and Chapel Hill High was for the white students. And Integration had been done gradually in other grades. The school didn't integrate all at one time. So that gradually integrated year by year.

By 1966 actually it wasn't year by year but I'm not sure exactly what the pace was, but it was not all at once. So, before that, all the black high school students had gone to Lincoln and all the white students had gone to Chapel Hill High. And they [white students] had gone to school on Franklin Street in downtown Chapel Hill. That's where the Chapel Hill High had been, and Lincoln had been in-- the-- just off the Franklin Street, on Marriott Mill Road.

So there was discussion about merging the two schools. And the decision was made to start a new school instead of staying at either of those schools, just starting a new school – Chapel Hill High, out where it is now on Homestead Road. But when the school systems were brought together, it wasn't to create a “new school” where was really

everything that Lincoln had was taken away and all the Chapel Hill High School had was continued.

That I think many of the liberals and white community were just glad to see the integration was taking place and had a little bit appreciation on the tremendous tradition and history of Lincoln. They paid very little attention to it. So Lincoln lost the name of their football team, they lost the name for their basketball team, they lost most of their-- the teachers and administrators were placed by Chapel Hill High. So people who used to be principals became assistant principals, and people who used to be-- have other administrative position had lesser positions, black faculty. There was a-- Well, I stop there.

LAI: Okay. So the school you went, the Chapel Hill High, was already the new one, or still the old one on the Franklin Street?

LEWIS: No, the year that I started was the first year of the NEW high school. That was the first time the black and white students went together to high school. But even though there was a new building, almost all of the traditions and teaching positions that Chapel Hill High had found on the Franklin Street was continued to the new school, there was basically all of the history, traditions and culture of Lincoln was ignored.

LAI: But your grade had not been unified when you were there first year?

LEWIS: All of the school, all of the grades were, that year. For tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades were all integrated that year, for the first time.

LAI: I see. So, before what you mean it's not all together "unified", it means before it had not create this new school, but gradually unified-- Sorry, I'm not very clear about this.

LEWIS: I don't remember the years. But historically in the South there was segregated schools, you know that's right. Then after the Brown vs. the Board of Education ruling, that began to change.

And in North Carolina, I can't remember the year, but the schools began to be integrated. They used to be separate school for white students and separate school for black students. But once the laws changed, that didn't mean the school systems were brought together over night. In fact that was quite the opposite: it took a long time.

So when I started school all the students in the schools that I went to were white. And gradually I believe starting in-- I think in 1963 was the first year that I went to school with black students. And each year more of the schools were integrated, more different grades were integrated. But the high schools weren't integrated until 1966. So before that they had been completely separated and after that they were brought together. Does that make sense?

LAI: Yes. What I'm not clear is about-- you said it was in 1963 you saw black students in your school, but for Chapel Hill High it was not like this until 1966, So that means different happening in different school, but for one school it's like unified at once?

LEWIS: I'm not sure what happened in other places. But it was mostly that different grades were integrated: all the seventh grades in the different schools were brought together, all the eighth grades all the ninth grades. I think that's how it happened. But somebody else could probably say this is really how it happened. That was only my memory: starting in Junior High, the classes began to be integrated.

But the most jolting change came in 1966, when the 10th, 11th, and 12th who would be 16, 17, and 18 years old were brought together. And another thing that made it unusual

was that they were brought together in a new school. But it wasn't an opportunity that it could have been to figure out how to bring together the two different schools' traditions, or could have been to create brand new traditions. And neither of these approaches was chosen. Instead, the emphasis was just on integration, on bringing black students into an existing white tradition and culture.

So there were many different ways that could have been handled that would have been very positive for black and white students. And instead, I think for most black students, it was a very negative experience. And there was a lot of racial tension and I think most of the liberal white students saw as a positive thing that integration has taken place and had a very little awareness about the issues of what it meant to truly bring together two different traditions and histories. I think many of us were very naïve, and had very little appreciation of what the impact of the approach that was chosen would have on all of us. [Stop]

LAI: So, you have this impression because you saw these when you were in this new school, can you say something specifically, like, according to your memory, you saw some white students just have this "naïve" attitude or something else?

LEWIS: Well, for example in this sports area, all the Lincoln students had strong, tremendous accomplishments in basketball and football. They had trophies, the team name and team colors. And that fall the name that was chosen was Chapel Hill, I think it was Chapel Hill Tigers; the colors were black and gold.

And there just wasn't any discussion that I know of about the fact that Lincoln had its own team mascots and team colors wasn't talked about, might even not talked about in the school board level, I mean people who are interviewing the school board might say

they talked about it and decided the best thing to do was just to get rid of the black school traditions.

So I remember that there was a lot of-- [pause] I don't remember the discussion that led to, saying keep the Chapel Hill High School colors, I don't remember the discussion as a student. But I do know that among the students there was a discussion among the black students about losing their team name, losing their-- their trophies were left behind.

That was true for homecoming. Homecoming is an annual celebration during one of the football games. Homecoming Queen will be named, chosen because usually she was beautiful and popular. Again there was discussion about whether there should be a black or white homecoming queen, feeling that if it was just chosen based on numbers, that probably it will just be a white girl. So instead, by the time I was a junior and senior in high school, there were black and white students being chosen, but I don't know if that was true the first year, so there was a discussion about that.

And that was true pretty much throughout my high school years is that-- what I remember-- is there was some event that had been important that was going to take place, there would be discussion, angry discussion among the black students, about what they had done in the past, and if enough people got angry, they would protest to the principal, or protest to the teachers, then there would be discussion about how to do in a way that would provide some kind of equality among black and white students.

But it wasn't just if the administration, the principal or the teachers all think about these things, usually decisions were made of reaction to the protest, rather than being thought out, so that was true for homecoming queen, that was true for the junior marshals: at end of the year the people that will go to graduation usually are a black and a

white was chosen. But otherwise if that hadn't happened, since the school's majority white, they probably would only be white representation. So I remember throughout the three years when I was in high school, there was a lot of anger shown among the black students about the fact that all their history and tradition was being ignored and wiped out.

Among some of the white students what I remember is some white students would still oppose to integration, would make racist comments. And then among students who saw themselves as more liberal, the emphasis was more on a-- emphasizing how we only to get along together, instead of some of the things that began to be talked about the last two years when I was in high school.

During that time we began to move from a context of the civil rights movement ~~wasn't~~^{with} emphasis on integration and equality, towards a recognition of black power, and appreciation and recognition of the African American tradition and cultures that integration made more than just bringing people together.

There were/was racial () in high school in 1968 when Dr. Martin Luther King was murdered. But I can't remember the particulars in terms of the exactly what that looked like, I know that some students went home I think that's school may have been laid out early, [pause] there were fights at school between white and black students. And-- what I remember is the response of the school administration was not to address that many kind of way that could have been in a very thoughtful way, in terms of talking about the importance of Dr. King, and what he meant to the students in our school, but instead the focus was on keeping the peace and trying to keep things quiet. ...

LAI: You mentioned the fights even before this, Martin Luther King's murder. Did it

happen a lot?

LEWIS: I think there was fair amount of, you know, fighting in the halls, or pushing and shoving and name-calling. Those were the more overt, more obvious forms that had been took. I think the more subtle, the more insidious forms were the fact that all the institutions that were put for the school were the ones that have been there for traditions of white school. So there were different ways of racism took place and the tension showed itself like the fighting and the name-calling was one form but the other form again was just the fact that the school itself was so white, that there was nothing there of the old Lincoln school. And, I'm going to say something else.

I think even then we began seek to the roots of what we see now, and the school systems in terms of the gap, and academic scores between black and white students. [pause] I was looking through old year books before you got here, trying to just remember some different names and faces, and the pictures of all the National Merit Scholars who are the students at the highest academic scores and who had scores highest on the national test were all white. The national honor society, which is the students who had the highest grade, were all white. So, academically, my guess is that means students at Chapel Hill High came from more wealthy families in the main, and also there were more resources available to them in growing up in white schools than there were for the black schools. And those issues have never been addressed. So I think it-- [pause]

So it's another example, in terms of socially how the students interacted, it was people tended to be in colleagues like they do in high schools but they were very much segregated: black students would hang out with black students, white students would hang out with white students. There were, I mean that's not a hundred percent the way of

situation was, but I remember, for example that, a good friend of mine was dating a African American and that was considered unusual, there wasn't much inter-racial dating.

[pause]

LAI: Do you mean the black students in Chapel Hill High also from wealthy family?

LEWIS: No. And again that's not-- there were exceptions to that-- there were some black students who came from middle-income families, I don't know any, as what I remember, coming from wealthy families, but there were some coming from middle-income families.

But more blacks in Chapel Hill tended to come from working-class families, families who worked in the university but not in faculty position who worked in service jobs, or who worked in businesses in the community, where is a lot of people in Chapel Hill are white—a lot of them came from the university faculty positions and of course UNC itself wasn't integrated as a university until-- When was that?

LAI: I heard of it's quite close, like, in the 70s?

LEWIS: Yes, I think so. So there weren't black students coming to the university and stay in the community as has been true for many white students that their parents had gone to school and stayed. Or like my father who came here as a faculty member, and stayed. That wasn't true for the African American community.

So black students who lived here and grew up here had more in common maybe with people-- a lot of the white families who used to live in Carrboro which was more the working class community then than Chapel Hill. There was a small community when I grew up in Chapel Hill. There was 7,000 people and at Chapel Hill High there were 500

students when I went there. Now it's 2,000, I think, and that's one of these schools that's East Chapel Hill High. That's a much smaller community then.

LAI: Also you mentioned this segregation inside this integrated high school, can you, like yourself, did you have any black student as friend?

LEWIS: When I was in high school? Yes, but not close friends. I wasn't very popular in high school anyway, I didn't have a lot of friends, and my close friends were all white students. And this school was very much set up along academic tracking lines.

Do you understand that concept? So there were classes that were considered college preparatory classes – advanced classes, and then there were the majority that were not probably college preparatory and there were some for students who did very poor academically. And most of the classes for advanced college preparatory students, between 66 and 69, were majority white. Almost all white, they weren't completely white, I can even now think of the few African Americans were in those classes, but that was less than five. I would say.

That tracking had begun early, probably in 2nd or 3rd grade, they started to have advanced classes in math, advanced classes in English and the people who were in advanced class one year would go to the advanced class the next year, and so on and so on. So about that time you were in high school, you would go in your English and your math classes with the same people you've been with for a long time, and I don't know if Lincoln had the same college preparatory classes, but definitely when the schools were merged, there were only a small number of African American students who were in the classes that were considered the advanced classes. So there was academic segregation, and social segregation.

LAI: Actually the academic segregation is rooted in this social segregation, can I say this?

LEWIS: No, I think academic segregation is more rooted in class, because when I was a-- going to all white schools, the poor students, again not all but almost all, were not in the advanced classes. The advanced classes were the students of faculty members, or-- wealthier members of the community. And students, white students whose parents worked in service jobs, or who were farmers, were not very often in the academic classes.

And, [pause] I don't think we will test that much from year to year, a sort of like once you've got good grades when you were young, you'll stay in the top classes, even if you were making good grades later if you hadn't started it out in the classes you probably wouldn't get in. Because they didn't test you again. So, even if you've made an A, which is the highest grade, but you weren't in an academically advanced class, they may consider you to make an A at a middle level class, so you just keep moving on like this. So it was set up to-- And it's still true today, is that in Chapel Hill, if you do very well in your earliest grades or now probably a standardized test, you could enter into the advanced college preparatory classes, and if you don't do it well, then you'll continue to be in the none-prep classes. And usually the smartest, many of the smartest teachers, many of the most interesting teachers, many of the most creative teachers go and work with the college-prep students.

LAI: This is not very encouraging for students in the less advanced levels.

LEWIS: No.

LAI: How about -- Do you know -- Like, so few black students in Chapel Hill High

and Lincoln High was also not there, where did they go, they didn't go to the high school? I'm just curious.

LEWIS: All those students in Lincoln high went to the Chapel Hill high after 1966.

LAI: But still the number was quite lower than the white students.

LEWIS: It's lower but I'm not sure what's the percentage. I know that today African Americans in Chapel Hill and Carrboro are 13% of the population. I'm sure there was a larger percentage then because it was smaller but I don't know what the percentage was. [pick up the yearbook] Let's look. This is 1969, --so we're looking at--

LAI: We are looking at some students (pictures).

It's amazing, are they all your classmates? You printed out this book?

LEWIS: Yes. Here you see, you know, some black students on this page, but it's mostly white. And then, these are the 16 and 17 year-olds, this is the senior class, this was my class. This was the group that went through the integration together, we have 4 out of 12, [next page] 2 black students out of 10, 2 out of 10, on one page; [next page] 3 out of 12, this is the senior year for all the students. Nate Davis, who is now the director of the (high grade) community center in Carrboro, or Chapel Hill. I guess. And one student in that page. This page has 6, this [another] page all white students, [pause]

LAI: So, 6 out of 20.

LEWIS: Yes. This is me [picture]. But again the only black student on these two pages is Sherry (Tarr).

LAI: It's one out of 20.

LEWIS: So it was a very much majority of white group. But by 69-- I was looking at

this before you came, and I thought of things we had done. For example, I think this was arranged unusual for the first time there was an African American who was the homecoming queen, but they had added extra queen so that they would try to have more blacks and whites: so they had a senior queen, football queen, [looking at the pictures] beauty court queen, how many about them [pause] black and whites.

So, but they-- I think that there was a moment that there had to be a certain word about black and white students because lots of students were protesting because of the majority white, and less than there was further action all whites would be most different leadership positions.

LAI: I was intrigue in this class and race interaction, and the segregation. And how's the-- do you feel also the community, do you have any impression about the community's reaction to this?

LEWIS: Well, I think when you saw the school was clearly a reflection of what was going on in the community. What I remember growing up here was that, was very segregated system and my parents were not activists, but they, coming from the Midwest, felt a lot of concerns about the segregated South. And they opposed segregation in terms of their attitudes and practices, but they weren't activists.

So for example, we didn't go to the movies when I was growing up, because the movie theatres were segregated. And we wouldn't go to the segregated restaurants. My grandmother who was also from Ohio, moved from here when my parents moved here-- my mother's mother. She was a little bit of the activist, she went to Durham, to participate and protest there when they were trying to integrate the Carolina Movie

Theatre. And they were trying to integrate Howard John's which was the restaurant between Chapel Hill and Durham.

So I remember a little bit of discussion on the dinner table, for example, but again I think that my parents and probably most of their liberal friends, most saw segregation as a terrible evil and were very opposed to it, but have a little, given a little thought to what integration would mean.

And that didn't just mean that it would be wonderful for blacks to become part of whites' structures, that was pretty much how they thought about it, I think, versus thinking about it the way we do now, to say that's not really what anybody, what the African Americans were ever struggling for, was not just to give up their own history, identity, and culture to be part of white culture. What they want was equal rights and equal opportunity use and equal acceptance and equal access, but not at the expense of their own traditions.

So I think the schools were reflection of what we saw in the community, we saw highly segregated society, that struggled for integration, and was violently put down in 1963 and 1964. So by the time 1966 came the schools were integrated, I think a lot of practices has changed-- if not attitudes in the community.

So I remember much more discussion in my family about changing the laws, once the laws changed and the schools were integrated, my parents didn't talk about it very much. I was aware of it mostly through going to school and seeing the anger of many black students at the majority white customs and--

For example, the principal at the high school was Ms. Marshbanks, and she had been the principal when the Chapel Hill High was on Franklin Street. But the principal of

Lincoln High had been, I think it might have been R.D. Smith, I'm not sure, but he was no longer principal. And there were other people like that, who used to be in positions of authority no longer work.

But again, I'm sure that if you are interviewing a black student from that time, from Nate Davis, he would know who was the principal, who had been there at Lincoln. I don't remember that's part of -- what happened was the-- [pause]

I knew very little bit about Lincoln before the schools were integrated and paid very little attention to what that school had meant to the black community. Until black students were angry who started protesting around the name of year book or the teams or --

LAI: The name of yearbook? What do you mean?

LEWIS: That's called "Hill Life", that was the name that used to be for the white school: Chapel Hill High. The Lincoln High's yearbook had a different name, I don't remember what it was, but it's gone.

So they didn't come up with the new name, which they could have. It would be a very good time to say we have a new school coming up with the new name. But most of the traditions was just carried over from Chapel Hill High and those from Lincoln wasn't there any more.

LAI: How did you become a community activist? If you remember-- it's my definition, maybe it's wrong, like, if you have some year in study to do this, what's the reason? I believe you got some influence from your parents' liberal thoughts. But I'm not very clear about activist.

LEWIS: I think it's graduated. I think it's just different things happened. I certainly

think growing up in a segregated community that was struggling with integration and civil rights had impact-- that I grew up in a home where my parents were very opposed to segregation even though they weren't active. They talked about it and would not let us to attend segregated activities.

I did my first work, my anti-poverty work when I was eleven. I worked and had started which was a program for children who are academically disadvantaged. And that was the first I had a work with probably poor kids who were from poor family. And then the year after that-- no, two years after that, I went to Panama.

I was an exchange student from my church and so I went and spent two months in Panama, and I lived with a Panamanian family and they worked in the Panama Canal Zone but they lived in Panama City.

And there was a poor community with () in the streets and I could see the contrast between the Panama City and the life of Panamanians in the Panama Canal Zone, which was own by the Americans-- have beautiful green grass and flowers, everything was very beautiful. So that began to make me think about the difference between how wealthy Americans lived and how poor countries lived.

LAI: Are they white or--

LEWIS: A lot, mostly the Canal Zone had soldiers and wealthy white Americans. And Panama was people of color, with many different races, many different nationalities. But primarily Spanish speaking people are of color.

LAI: About your "anti-poverty", are the poor people also of different colors?

LEWIS: They were poor. The main thing was that there were poor children, some are black, and some are white. But it was an experience working with children from poverty.

And during this time the Vietnam War was developing, particularly around 1963 and 1964. Very early on, my parents became opposed to the Vietnam War before many people did. And we would argue a lot with -- I would argue about with people in school.

And at first I thought there was a mistake, I thought that the United States government have made bad mistake. That took me a long time before I began to understand that it wasn't a mistake that United States get involved in Vietnam because they wanted to destroy the North Vietnamese political and economical system. It wasn't a mistake. They did it on purpose.

But I participated in that activities in Chapel Hill, there was a vigil on Franklin Street where people would stand there every week on Wednesday from 12pm to 1pm carrying signs to protest the war. And that group had the longest protest against the Vietnam War of anywhere in United States. And people would be afterwards-- they would talk.

So I was very influenced by the discussion I did there when I was in high school, by going to the vigil and talking to people and hearing about what the United States was doing around the world. And then the 60s overall in United States were times of a lot of change: the civil rights movement, the anti-war movement, and then the women's movement more often affected me, but--

LAI: Does this experience make you in the high school see more or care about black students, the situation of them?

LEWIS: I was-- very aware of the racial tension. I was very concerned about what I saw as racism among white teachers and white administrators and white students. What I don't think I understood very well at that time was [Interruption]

END OF TAPE 1, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 1, SIDE B

LAI: You said when you were in high school, you ...

LEWIS: Oh, I think relatively clear about the most obvious problems. I knew that black students were concerned and angry about some issues. I could appreciate that and support it. But I think I didn't have a very deep understanding what was creating so much anger, and how white students were in a very privileged position, and that we were not-- I was certain not-- very thoughtful in terms of trying to think about how things could be done differently.

If issue was raised by the black students I would be supported and sympathetic, but I don't think I had a very deep understanding of what we really could have done as students, particularly as white students. As for the change and challenge, we are pretty very much reacted and responded to black protest, rather than very ...

LAI: Clear idea?

LEWIS: Haven't a clear idea of the tremendous problems that were created by the way integration was done. And how here we are, forty years later, dealing with the fruits of that and still not panning that well. And that is the--

LAI: What do you mean now dealing with it-- looking back, still not dealing with it well? Still not fully understand?

LEWIS: Not just having difficulty looking back, but that today we still have the community that are majority white and-- has never acknowledged what happened when the black schools were destroyed. The lack of pride, the black community has taken as their schools was just destroyed because they can no longer feel pride in the high schools

and elementary schools and junior highs. The number of teachers who were all respected and looked up to in the black community who no longer had the same relationship to the community as they had before. The colors, the -- all the things that were obvious examples were lost so the black community no longer really found that this was their school, has never been acknowledged or dealt with in the same way.

I think that is because the majority of students in the high school or in all the Chapel Hill schools are still majority white that there hasn't been an appreciation of what it would mean to really try to develop education institutions that supported all of our children: that made all of our children feel that they were expected to do well, that they were encouraged to do well.

I think you have -- until white teachers and white administrators understand and acknowledge their own racism is products of the racist society, they will continue to carry out patterns that would make students, or students of colors, and particularly African American students feel that they are less respected, that there are low expectations for their progress, that there are teachers who don't know how to really look at them as people.

So, not only that we had the segregated educational system within an integrated facility then, but I think now it's still true. And I think it's even less excusable today.

LAI: In your class, the teachers' attitude to different color was different?

LEWIS: That's true everywhere in this country, I think. I think it's true almost everywhere. White people in this country still have not acknowledged the privileged has become being white. And until they do that, it's not because they are bad people but they have not been willing to really look deeply at the system they live in, and to change their

own attitudes and practices. So even if they are not trying to be racist, and they think of themselves as looking at everybody in a color-blind way that color doesn't matter. That's really not what people are asking, not that color doesn't matter, because it does. That's part of who people are, that's part of their ethnic heritage in tradition, and -- I think there is an ethic of saying that-- the moral approach is to say that color doesn't matter. But we are so far from that.

That's a way of not acknowledging what has been impact of racism in our society. So we have teachers who-- have never-- never had black friends, living in black communities themselves, being self-critical. And we have a school board that's predominantly white, school superintendent who's white, principals who are predominantly white, and then there was a larger North Carolina school systems and the national systems.

So I think that, you know there's certainly problems here because of Chapel Hill's own history that it's itself the liberal community but hasn't really grappled with what that means. But it's not outside of the society that we lived in overall, there's Chapel Hills all over this country, people who are meaning to do well but not willing to really struggle with the hard questions.

LAI: Yes. Because our concentration is on the segregation and desegregation in the high school, how did you get engaged in activists in this issue? And what kind of issue really intrigued you to get in?

LEWIS: Most of my activism is not around the segregation issue at high school. I was activist more as an anti-war activist and I didn't get involved with black liberation struggles until after I left high school.

LAI: So after you left, you really engaged in this?

LEWIS: [Showing agreement]

LAI: At that time, was that during all your study life or it's already, after leaving high school, you started to anti-segregation?

LEWIS: I'm sorry, can you explain again? You lost me. [Laughter]

LAI: I'm sorry. I want to know, in high school you'd already had this experience that you noticed these issues and then-- I'm curious about your engaging in this issue as an activist.

LEWIS: After I left high school?

LAI: Yes.

LEWIS: I went to Duke for a year. And during that year the United States had intensified its war in Vietnam. And in the Spring of 1970 President Nixon had invaded Cambodia. And four students were killed in the Kent State University, shot by the national guard they were protesting the war. And black students were killed in the Jackson State, although most people talked about the white students, they forget about the black students were killed in Jackson State.

And so I dropped out of the school. And so I wouldn't go back till the war was over. And the first year that I was out, I worked with children from the city of Philadelphia, at a camp for poor children from the city. And when that was over, I was activism in the anti-war ward for a small time. The next summer I went to Mississippi to work on a campaign of Charles Evers, he was the first black man to run for governor in Mississippi. And his brother, Medgar Evers, had been assassinated by white racists in Mississippi. When I was

in Mississippi, I was working with mostly the black community to organize for the governor's campaign. But I was also working for the white people who supported it.

And during that time, I began to see that the Vietnam war was not just the question like I said earlier of mistaken policy, but it was part of the economic and political system in United States. And I began to see that people in this country who supported the war were usually doing it not because they didn't like Vietnamese people but because our government had lied to them and that most of the people that were dying in Vietnam were not-- many of them were poor Americans who were drafted and that other wealthy Americans could get out of the army because they would be in school, they would have student deferment.

That wasn't completely the situation, but I began to see that -- I began to develop class analysis. I began to study Marxism. And to understand the relationship between much more so, in terms of race and class in this country, and the relationship between racism and capitalism, and that how working people had historically been divided in this country by race-- what was the roots of slavery and how racism helped to continue to keep people divided in this country.

So, then I went to work, I did some more organizing work. But then I went to work in Durham at Duke Hospital as a ward secretary, someone who in a hospital ward deal with patients' charts. And most of them when I was working with came from working class families. They didn't-- you didn't have to have a college degree to have that job and I didn't. And so, the reason I got the job there was because there was an effort to try to organize Duke Hospital. There was an attempt to build a union there, so I left the job that I had when I was working in a bookstore-- to get a job in the hospital. So I could be part

of the tribe to organize the hospital. But I also was part of the group of young Marxists who were trying to work and organizing at Duke and the other work places. And-- I don't think you need the whole story, long story. [Laughter]

But I was working with black and white workers, much more on the daily bases that I had been in the past. And the union drive itself was strongly influenced by race, the union drive was led by a radical black man, Aruso Sudako, who are-- [Pause] And there was another organizing tribe among white hospital workers led by Claber and Alice. And Alice used to be a head of the Ku Klux Klan. So you had Duke Hospital which was then the largest employer in Durham which had two union efforts to try to organize workers: one was hospital service workers led by Aruso, and one was white hospital heating and air-conditioning workers led by C.P. Alice.

So for the year that I was there, there was a lot of discussion about race and its impact on working people and -- [Pause] The job that I haven't () since then continue to look for very closely the issues of working people in this country and impact of race had on them. And I went from a-- I think a liberal perspective about race. This integration is basically-- as long as people weren't segregated that solved the problem of racism. To understand that racism was much broader and more -- multifaceted, many different aspects to it -- and just legal equality -- and even legal equality could be defined in different ways.

LAI: When is that union quite active?

LEWIS: 1974 to 1978, I was there from 1974 to 1977.

LAI: During that time, how was the school situation, do you know?

LEWIS: What was going on?

No, I don't. I have brothers and sisters who were in school. I was the second oldest of six children. But I wasn't paying much attention to what was going on with them during those years, you know. I would visit them on the holidays, but all of my thoughts and all of my time were on the organizing drive. I think-- my general memories -- my brothers and sisters said things are pretty much the same. There was a lot of racial tension. But I don't know whether it took any organizing forms or it was just black students hanging out with black students, white students hanging out with white students. And the school systems overall were just taken the problems go away-- if nobody talked about it, you know, sooner or later it would just go away.

LAI: How about your daughter?

LEWIS: I saw her last night. And I said I'm going to be interviewed today, that is a project, do you have anything to say about your experience in relationship to the racism in these schools. And she said I couldn't give that to you in a few minutes, that was my whole school experience, which was dealing with that. So she said there is no way I could sum that for you over dinner--we were having dinner at the "Diversity"-- dinner at Carrboro. She said that was my entire school experience--

When she started school, she was in Kindergarten in Durham, then she spent her first three years of school in New York City-- all we moved. So Grade One to Three she lived in Brooklyn. And one of the concerns that I had when we moved to New York was I was afraid whether the public schools would be good schools. I was afraid about her safety, and what the schools would be like.

LAI: What time?

LEWIS: 1985 to 1988.

LAI: You are still afraid of this in that time?

LEWIS: I was afraid of the city overall-- just, would it be safe? Would the city be safe? Would our neighborhood be safe? Would her school be safe? And would it be a good school? Because as what I always heard was that New York City schools weren't any good. The public schools weren't any good. So when we went to New York, she went to a very old school, it was as old as the Statue of Liberty, so that's a hundred and fifty years old or something. And from 1985 to 1988 they were doing repairs on it, they had scaffolds running around the whole school. So it was very old, the playground was just a pavement, you know there weren't any swings, there weren't any -- games, there was not football field or anything, e.g. leaky pipes.

And that was wonderful. The building was old, the facilities were poor but it was a wonderful school. We lived in a very, truly integrated neighborhood, it was Irish, Italian, Port Rican, Hispanic, Latino. I think those were main things, main groups, and then there was Eastern European, and so my daughter Jennifer was a minority. She was one of, there were fewer white children than there were children of color, or if there were -- other white children were English speaking. They came from families who were the first generation in this country.

So it's a big culture shock for her, although her school in Durham had been probably 50 to 50 black and white. But here she was in a very different situation and there was a different neighborhood. But the parents were very involved in the school and felt a lot of pride in it. It was their neighborhood school. And the Principal of the school, Ms. Harper, was a black woman. She would stand at the door every morning and greeted every child

by name-- she knew all the children. And Jennifer would remember this is a wonderful experience.

They didn't have money for special things like the Chapel Hill schools do. They didn't have special people come in to do music and do art. They didn't have any money that was budget for that. The parents would come in and do it. The parents would come in paying mirrors on the walls. The after-school program, they would go to one of the old women in the neighborhood who taught her how to knit. And another old women in the neighborhood, they would go to her house after school. And the school's after-school program-- when I was still at work, and her father was still at work-- she would teach her how to cook. And the PTA meetings where we were really talking about important issues and they really want the parents' involvement and the parents would have bake sales and street sales to raise money for the school. And everybody love it and feel very proud of it.

So when we moved back here in her Fourth Grade to the school systems I had graduated from and all my brothers and sisters graduated from-- We moved to-- She started in Carrboro Elementary School in 1989, and then she went through Carrboro Elementary School to Carrboro Middle School and then she went to Chapel Hill High School. Those were all bad experiences for her.

LAI: Are these bad experiences in terms of race issue?

LEWIS: That was part of it. Part of it was that she had grown up from the time she was a baby with lots of black and white people who were our friends. For example, her best friend when she was growing up, one was white one was black, those were still-- the two people that she considered as her best friends in the world, you know. And she had

been in a very, truly integrated social system. You know that was limited when she went to school she had been in a very multi-racial environment.

In fact, when we went to New York, we were very poor and we didn't -- we moved there in summer and we didn't have any money to send her to camp. But I was working and her father was working. The only thing that we knew was the Asian children's Underground, which was the name of a school program for children at China Town. And we have friends who have children there, so Jennifer went there for summer and she was the only girl who didn't speak Chinese. But she said it was a good experience. I think it probably was very hard to move to New York and have her first experience be not to know the language at all, but she's just okay. And next summer we have a little bit more money so we sent her to a camp again with friends had told us about-- first full of Jewish children. So she's had a lot of different experiences.

And she came back here and felt that-- the tracking system was in place. And she didn't make good grades for the first year so she never got advanced classes until a little bit in high school. But she could see that there was a lot of racism on that part of teachers and on the students.

And that people in their neighborhoods were segregated too. You know, Chapel Hill has certain neighborhoods that are predominantly black. That was true then and that was true now, except those neighborhoods are shrinking, because developers were gone in, those were the only places where the land left on the community. So they are trying to build new houses in the areas of traditionally black in the community so those houses were threatened.

And, so I think that she felt very uncomfortable, she didn't feel that there was multi-culture community any more, was pretty much black and white. And, -- that wasn't the only reason she was never happy in school but I think it was a big change to go from a neighborhood and community that had pride in that school, and where the contributions are all the different: races and ethnicities were really valued to one here which was predominantly white model.

LAI: What's the model?

LEWIS: Model is in the sense that the majority of students were white, so the majority of traditions and majority of thinking were white.

LAI: How do you think-- I heard another interview done in Charlotte, it's a white teacher. He said when people now think about the integration, they don't feel it's a thing worth being proud of. How do you think about this?

LEWIS: He said people don't -- aren't proud of integration, is that what you were saying?

I'm not sure what he was referring to. I think it's definitely true that when I look back,

I am outraged the adults in the white community, many of them even didn't think of those things or they didn't care about preserving the best of the African American schools, about preserving and listening to, and finding out what do people want to the new school, and talking to the parents-- not just the white parents, but the black parents-- that what do we want to create with the school. We have an opportunity to start something new and wonderful.

And instead the emphasis was only on how we can make sure the school is integrated. And that is not something is being proud of. And it was done in a way that was very destructive of black schools and created lots of tension. There was very low attention to how do we talked to the students, what new models do we want to create, what new traditions do we want to create, how would we make sure that black faculties don't lose their positions, how do we create a fair process for determining Principals and Superintendents, how do we -- [Pause] What do our PTA meetings talk about, a parent-teacher-meeting talks about. How do we talk to our students -- There was just assumed that this was what happened, that there would be no problems, no issues to deal with, and --

But I don't think it's that different today, in terms of thinking, about creating a system that truly serves its children. I know that there wasn't a good attention to people who had thought about the issue. I know that for example when the Blue Even Task Force was created, they tried to address the gap in the school scores between black and white students. Some people tried very hard to make that pass has worked. I know that one of the problems was never adequately funded -- that a lot of recommendations were put in place, but only part of the funding that they need to be very successful.

Last night at the dinner, Joe Heres was talking. Joe is the person who is in charge of ensuring diversity in the school curriculum for all the Chapel Hill schools. She's a wonderful person but -- She's just one person, she doesn't have the resource she needs, or the tool she needs, or the support she needs to make big changes happen. She just can do little things here and there. And there hasn't been any really well funded long-term approached issue. And it still comes up. Something people still talk about, but in terms of the community wide effort, to take responsibility for that, which we haven't seen it.

LAI: No community wide effort? You mean.

LEWIS: It's not something that is seen as responsibility facing community in the Churches. It's not thing there is responsibility of the business community. It's only thing that the school was problem, but it's not as the parents were talking about it where they work, where they go to church, or where they play. It's not something that specific groups are talking about. It's not something that-- People as community just don't deal with. Some of the black community deals with it, through the NAACP, although that has been a very weak institution for some years now, because it has changed some of its leadership-- has been so forth.

But education is still talked about there. Education is still talked about, I think, in many of the black churches, but in the white community. By and large in this community, fears that what we do have a problem-- there is a gap, wish things were better, but don't treat it that seriously to really put time and money, thinking what we are going to do about it.

LAI: Now, do you feel any improvement of this integration?

LEWIS: Improvement, since when? Since 1966?

I think in some ways things are getting better-- in the schools. I think there are probably a more black students that are doing better than there were then. I think there is probably a deep understanding among some of the majority white-- students and parents-- about they need to look at not just the fact that there's integration occurred and the black and white students go to school together, but there are other issues need to look at.

I think something -- I think part of what probably is gotten worse is -- I think is hopefulness in the black community then, because-- I think the black community too

probably didn't fully appreciate it. The limitations of the approach that was adopted-- That's my guess. I'm not sure. My guess is that some people, even though they were really dismayed or outraged -- depending on how integration occurred -- I think people still may have been hopeful and are recognized the scope of what real equality looks like. And now understanding better, I think, probably a lot of people are more frustrated and less hopeful than they were in the 60s.

So something that's probably gotten better it's probably the better appreciation of some of the problem that we need to address, but they've also become harder to deal with because we've done it so poorly.

LAI: Are you engaged now in this issue in school, high school?

LEWIS: No, I did some when my daughter was in school. I attended her parent-teacher-meetings in the earlier grades. And they rarely dealt, I thought, with these deep issues. And I think it would have taken a lot of time to push them in a different direction and I really didn't give it to that.

I was at that time going back to school to complete my degree that I had stopped then -- in 1969. And I was a single parent at that point. And when I finished my work in UNC I got a job as director of the county's Human Relations Commission, which was dealing with these issues but not in schools as much. And that job unfortunately took most of my time and that I'm just taking care of Jennifer so I wasn't an activist in the schools. I would come and talk to her teachers and I would go to meetings but in terms of rarely trying to turn them in different direction. I didn't do that.

One of the other things that I did while Jennifer was in school as director of Human Relations Commission, was to work very closely with Quentin Baker, and Quentin was

one of the leaders of the civil rights struggle in Chapel Hill in 1960s. He was on the Human Relations Commission () with (). I was the () of support what I was trying to do when he was on the commission from 1993, I think, to 1998 when I left. And Quentin had been one of the people who had been demonstrating in Chapel Hill against segregation when he was a student in the North Carolina Central University -- he came over to Chapel Hill and he was arrested in 1963 and as one of the leaders of struggle, he was jailed and -- I think -- most of the students expected at that time that they would be given a fine or a light prison sentence and then let free -- which was what had happened at that time -- but there was a lot of history to what happened: But he was sentenced to a chain gang. [Pause] Do you know "chain gang"? People wearing chains and they are working on the roads in the state. He and other 4 or 5 leaders were told that they could leave jail if they would leave North Carolina and promise not to come for 10 years.

[Pause]

So I talked to Quentin a lot, while we were on the Human Relations Commission, about what was going on in the schools. And one of the things that the Human Relations Commission did was to establish a set of community dialogues, to talk to communities about some of the problems that we saw. And we had a series of discussions of the Chapel Hill libraries that Human Relations Commission hosted. One of them was on the civil rights for gays and lesbians, and one was called integrating new populations that was talking about Hispanic, Latino community. But the one that got the most intense response of the community was one that we called "unseen racism in our schools", and it became very controversial. We got phone calls, and the newspaper called up and wanted to know why we felt that there was racism in the schools. And no matter gays, lesbians,

would be more controversial, but the one that really upset people was talking about “unseen racism in the schools”.

LAI: And you did not expect that either?

LEWIS: No, just -- I mean, I was okay that there was that response, but I had just thought nobody was really paying much attention to these discussions that was going on. We had small groups of people meeting and coming-- mostly community activists -- we were trying to reach the broad community, but mostly we got people who were already active. But this one -- I think the school superintendent came, some teachers came, some parents came. But they didn't make as lasting impact -- we didn't have a long-term plan to follow up, and I left the Human Relations Commission shortly after that, to work at the literacy council.

But it was just indicted to me of how that discussion became such a hot topic. And to me that indicted the depth of unresolved concerns on racism around our schools and it may not be a hot issue all the time, but if everybody starts talking about it reactively, that's -- then people become very, very controversial.

I've done some work with NAACP. Education has been a focus for at least the last couple of years: there was a focus of the March -- it was held on Dr. King's birthday two or three years ago -- every year there was a focus, this year was Hugh, last year was Housing-- every year for that education. But that's just-- sort of comes and goes in terms of community concerns on the issue. And there's a lot of work we've done on that. So I was not as early as an active parent that I should have been -- in terms of direct involve of Jennifer's school, I was dealing with more in terms of my job.

LAI: And at that time -- your daughter's time when she was in high school -- you

noticed all these issue still there.

LEWIS: Yes. To go to several summer camps were addressing issues of racism. She went to "peace camps" that were held by the center for peace education. And part of what they tried to do with young people was to talk about issues of -- particularly race. And another was very intensive experience for her that would stay unlike talking and that was black and white kids coming together and talking about how they see each other's cultures: what is the life in school. I think she probably had more intensive discussion on that setting, not in school but in camp.

LAI: For the camp, students are not from the same school?

LEWIS: Some of them were from the same school, it was mostly from the Chapel Hill community, but they might have been -- she was going to Cald Breath, there might have been students from Phillips Junior High or some other place. But they were all in the Chapel Hill school system. And I think sometimes she knew some other kids that were there, but mostly there was a chance that atoned to her appeals.

LAI: This question may be a little bit -- Because you are white, do you think you have a perspective from white? How do you think if you were a black activist, would you have a different perspective? Or you feel it's quite similar for these issues?

LEWIS: I think they would probably have a different perspective. Not in terms of the fact that integration was a failure, largely, or the fact that it was done very superficially, and the damage that was never been acknowledged or addressed adequately and continues today, I think those things would be the same. But I think that there are limitations in terms of how much I can really understand what it means. I think the limitations in terms of how well I understand what it means to be black students in

schools today. So I imagine that there would be similarities in terms of the broad perspective, but in terms of a deep understanding I think we would probably have -- I think there are a lot of things I probably don't really know.

LAI: Do you have any friend who is black with the similar experience, so that I could find a black perspective about this?

LEWIS: I think probably those students that I know are all on the list for the Oral History Project. I think so. I mean, the folks that I know-- a lot of people don't live in Chapel Hill any more. And I think for example Nate Davis-- the student that I went to high school with -- but I'm pretty sure he's on your list. Because he's been active in the NAACP. There are a couple of African American women still on the area but I don't see them any more -- don't know them, haven't talked to them for years. So in terms of who would give the other perspective, you would have to talk, maybe to people who -- see who else is on your list, probably in the same year of graduating from high school in 1969.

LAI: I came up with another question: are there many black people like you as activist? Maybe it's a subtle question -- also I feel in my class of oral history, this is very important of the segregation, desegregation issue, but most students are white, only two are black. So I feel that, still I can feel something like -- like this, for activists, how do you describe this?

LEWIS: There are very few politically active groups that are really integrated in Chapel Hill. For example, I do -- some of my activism to my church, the community church. And the church is predominantly white, but it's not all white: we have some African American members. So I'm the coach here of the Peace and Justice Community,

but the church was founded out of racism. That, in 1950s, Charles Jones who is a white minister was kicked out of the priest between church and Chapel Hill who was the national -- the North Carolina church kicked him out of the priest between minister, because he had let blacks who had been stayed at his house who were going through the freedom rights. And he had appealed that to either the North Carolina or the National Protestant Church, but they had kicked him out.

So then he started another church which is community church just where I've gone now. And what I started that had more black members that were seen as a very radical church because he had lost his position in the church, because his stand is against racism. But then it went through a long period by then -- I think it was all white, and after he died, actually he didn't die long ago. But after he stopped preaching, and then in the last couple of years it is worked hard to try to become more multi-racial-- but the main way we know that we will as a church be involved in a black community.

It's not by asking the blacks come to our church, which would be the same thing of the Lincoln becoming part of Chapel Hill High, although it is a little bit more multi-culture. But by the church trying to partner with other African American congregations, as well as we are not trying to do some partnering with the Hispanic, Latino, congregations area. Our church is engaged in the process called "journey towards homeless". It's a Unitarian Church, a community church is a Unitarian church. And the National Unitarian Church is dealing with a process called "journey towards homeless" where churches can go through training to be an anti-racist church. It's not enough to say that we respect the dignity of each person, but we know that as white people living in the American society that we are racists, but even people who had been intentions would be

racists because you bring all that baggage with you. You know, how you've been brought up, how you've been thought, and the privilege that you have -- so you must be explicitly anti-racist, or else you will be racist on how you do things. So the church is engaged in the process that is going through training, there will be training for all the church in the fall. So the Peace and Justice Committee that I'm on is encouraging and supporting that.

But again the church is mostly white, with some members there from different countries and some African American members. I work there with a woman from the national league for "peace and freedom", a wonderful organization of women who work on peace and justice issues, but it's all white. And probably the other place what I put my organizing energies is with the NAACP, which is a traditionally black organization. It has a lot of white members, which is good but there isn't a lot of black leadership to the NAACP, so there is a question there about needing to include more black members.

Quentin Baker that I mentioned earlier who was arrested and thrown out of the state came back to North Carolina because of his friend James Briton. And James Briton was a young person during the civil rights struggle who was the president of NAACP in Chapel Hill and he died in 1992. Since then there has been a consistent change in the NAACP leadership. But there is only few places where black and white activists come together in this community.

And the other groups are trying to address or deal with racism, the church I mentioned "through journey to homeless" -- the women that I mentioned from "peace and freedom" as () some of the members would be going through a study group on racism led by Yani Chapman, who's one of the people I think he's talked to the oral

history people about his studies of the civil rights movements in Chapel Hill and the role of black view.

But it's () all () pretty indicative of the world around us. Many communities have not found good ways to really comprehensively address the issues of racism. What activists tend to be -- a lot of issues, peace movement or international support efforts and Chapel Hill's struggle around the rock -- it's primarily white; struggle around Central America was traditionally white; and African American community has dealt with the issues of education and housing.

LAI: Final question. We also have another concern about the "resegregation". How do you think about it? Because I feel, again, what I heard the interview in Charlotte, he said even now people think before the integration was due to the black school's poor condition -- didn't get same support to them, so desegregation is better than segregation. Do you think now there is really such concern about the resegregation? Or, maybe my understanding of the term of resegregation is wrong -- it means people are still kept segregated?

LEWIS: Would I advocate for separate schools if they have equal resources and order to be more supportive of black leadership in the schools?

LAI: Like, now we rebuild the Lincoln High School, and give it the same support like Chapel Hill High, how do you think about this idea?

LEWIS: I think it's worth thinking about. I don't think probably, -- what I would like to say, in terms of -- I think primarily that would be, because we had failed to really adequately address racism, but I think that racism is really significant questions, if the black community feels that they are, [Pause] discriminated against in the Chapel Hill

High, are we going to take that responsibility seriously to change things? I know that in the Charter School Movement, which I think it's fundamentally reactionary right wing racist movement, there are people within the Charter School Movement who see it's an opportunity for people of color and black kids to get better education. And support predominantly black schools were in the charter school movement. [Pause]

Resegregation implies that integration really happened. Also a lot of people now looking back realize that the demand from the black community was never so much just bringing people together. There wasn't integration, there wasn't quality. And it's difficult to have a quality, true quality, if there still isn't this level of playing field, if there still isn't equal access to jobs, equal access to quality education and there isn't equal access to all the different institutions in our society. Then you are not bringing people together with equal power. And if you coming to the request of equal power, then institutions that are created out of the integration, continue to have an imbalance of power. So there never has been, I don't think a real model of finding new forms to share power because we still live within the complex of racism.

But when I think about our experiences when Jennifer was in school in New York, or you have a very diverse neighborhood, that to me was -- I don't know how you get there, I don't know how you achieve that -- a community was just predominantly white. But when a community where whites were minority, you had a great school. And there was -- People really did feel empowered, partly because it was community school, there was close connection not only between the parents and the school, but people who didn't even have children, like the grandparents they talked, they cooked and so on. They didn't have

children there, but they felt that this was their community. So part of the problems we face are when people no longer have communities.

But that -- that's only a piece of it. I'd like to think that we can continue to really work towards something like that, or there was not just integration but real equality, where you really have everyone empowered, to have a voice, to work for change. But I think the issue of, -- black parents want to have a black school, that they can be proud of or they feel that they won't be struggling against racism all the time, certainly it should be seen as challenge for us to think of: are we going really to change the system we see? I'm not sure if it's solution, but certainly I'll be interested about another black parents' thought about that. I would imagine if I were black parent, I would prefer to have my kids go to Chapel Hill High.

LAI: Because?

LEWIS: If I was black parent, I would feel so discouraged about the situation. It will be very hard to -- not want to put your child in a situation what they would feel more empowered, more respected, more listened to -- but the challenge I think, for me is not to figure out what a black parent wants us. For me it's a white person figure out how to be a better ().

LAI: So, if you were black, you would prefer your kid going to a white high school?

LEWIS: I think I would almost prefer them to go to the Lincoln High School than to Chapel Hill High School because Chapel Hill has done such a poor job. Not just Chapel Hill, so many schools in the south around the country. I don't think that's the best solution. But we are so far from the best solution.

And that's certainly we did the same in the 60s -- we went from a civil rights movement, which was black and white's together to African Americans and civil rights struggle, saying we need to develop our own institutions, and we need to kick white activists out of the civil rights struggle, which is a lot of what happened. The white activists were no longer welcome in many of the civil rights organizations. And primarily black institutions were formed -- "black pride". People were so frustrated by the fact that whites in the civil rights movement who were well intentioned still didn't understand about that dynamics or appreciate the issues we've seen in the schools, but on a larger scale that there was a very, [Pause] a struggle around the issue of black institutions, and the more liberal whites, I think many of them were very bitter about that: they felt, "I risked my life, and now I'm being felt like I'm not welcome." I think for other white activists, some of them developed an understanding that in fact this was very important and rather than denouncing it or criticizing it by saying, "okay, now how can I continue to be a good white activist and continue to carry on this struggle?" But, you know, the development of -- [Pause]

It's not new for African American community to say we need to develop our own institutions because we've lost a lot of them through integration -- not just integration in the schools, but I'm certain it's part of it. [Pause] As a white person I think one of the biggest challenges that white people have to really address the question of racism, even people who say you are not appreciating how much progresses have been made, you shouldn't just look at the negative -- [Pause] I feel, well, that's true, but we've spent too much time just talking about the progress have been made, and not enough fully grappling the difficult issues.

LAI: Thank you very much.

LEWIS: There will be, I think people can pull some essence from that, to be share with future activists, or whatever, the community. There are lessons have to be learned. So, whatever little part I can share in terms of dredging up my memories before I forget them all, I'll be glad to share them. Call me if you have any question.

END OF INTERVIEW