

TRANSCRIPT—JOANNE PEERMAN

Interviewee: JOANNE PEERMAN

Interviewer: Bob Gilgor

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START OF SIDE A

BOB GILGOR: This is February 24th in the year 2001 and this is Bob Gilgor interviewing Joanne Peerman at her sister's home at 530 Piney Mountain Road.

Good morning, Joanne.

JP: Good morning.

BG: First I want to thank you for driving down here from Virginia yesterday and giving me some of your time and some of your life. I really appreciate it.

JP: Well, thank you for including me.

BG: I would like to start by asking you a broad question: what was it like growing up in Chapel Hill—if you did grow up in Chapel Hill?

JP: Yes I did. My earliest memory was, I believe, second grade, when we moved here from Southern Pines, North Carolina. I entered the school system in the second grade and we went through to twelfth, graduation.

It was a normal childhood as far as I recall. It was just Chapel Hill. Chapel Hill seemed to be different from some other areas of North Carolina that were very racially tense. Chapel Hill had the university so there was a lot of diversity here already. You would walk down the street and see people dressed in foreign outfits. It was diversity from day one almost. Everybody had their differences.

The black community stayed pretty much to themselves. We had our own areas of town: the funeral homes, the restaurants. The school system and the churches were the biggest form of entertainment and outlet from what I recall as a child. Activities at school, everybody's lives revolved around those. We waited until the weekend to go to athletic activities, either football or basketball games. It was just a fun

time, either out at a stadium or seeing a parade. Everybody pretty much stayed to themselves. The black community stayed to themselves. And the white community, you know, was separate and apart.

BG: Did you grow up in Northside or did you grow up in this house here on Piney Mountain Road?

JP: The early years, from maybe second through fifth grade, was on Caldwell Street. Right near the Smiths, and the Caldwells, and the Hargraves. We lived in that neighborhood. Then my parents built a home out here. It was very rural at that time. This was pretty much the black elite that lived out here—not the elite elite—but up the street was a principal and those who could afford to build their own homes rather than rent. There were only five or six homes out here along with the folks that actually owned land out here and lived in the older homes.

For the most part I grew up out here. That was probably a blessing. It kept us from getting into mischief by being too young to drive up town and get involved in what may have been going on on a rowdy Friday or Saturday night because we weren't close enough—[phone rings; tape stops]

BG: Joanne, you mentioned the term "black elite." I wonder if you can speak to that, what you meant by that.

JP: Well, reflecting, I think it was just a slip of the tongue. What I really felt was that the middle class folks, the folks that had worked hard enough to be able to actually buy land and build a home. Of course, there are those who are renters all of their lives, or those who, when they do purchase, have to settle for something already constructed.

But as a child, thinking back on it, we were just very proud to be able to build our own home and own land. It just showed that we were not trapped in some system. It showed us as children that this is what you do when you grow up and raise a family. This is something to aspire to.

We were also proud that our home was built by a black contractor at that time, George Tate. He built most of the homes out here. He and his family still live down the street. I went to school with his son Travis. It was a very close-knit community; everybody knew everybody. It was just rewarding.

We were very proud when we moved here. We were a family of five, a mother, a father, and three daughters. We moved from a two-bedroom home to this three-bedroom home, which of course gave us a little more space and room to run and play. It was a great place to grow up. We had horseback riding down here. Some kids down the road had horses and they'd come up on Saturday mornings and we'd ride bareback. We'd make mudpies.

The old couple across the street would keep us when we were sick. Both of our parents were educators so they had to go to work. But there was a very old couple across the street, the Pardins, who owned acres and acres of land out here and sold it. The whole Timberlake area was owned by them. We used to go up there—that was the far fields—we'd ride with him in his horse and buggy and go pick corn and come back. It was country. It was very rural.

BG: So this was farmland up here, and owned by black people?

JP: Yes. Yes. I have fond memories. It was great. There was a plum tree across the street. We used to pick plums and put them in a tub and squash them with our feet, making wine. By the end of the day, we were drinking our wine out of Coke bottles and it was nothing but plum juice. You know, it was something we saw on *I Love Lucy*. It was great. We'd make baloney sandwiches and go hiking all day. Just whatever we saw off the TV, we'd try it as long as it was within reason.

BG: So you had an African-American community here with other children to play with. You didn't have to import them from Potter's Field or Windy Hill or places like that?

JP: No. We had our own little community of people out here. There were maybe six or eight neighborhood kids. We visited each other's homes, played board games, Monopoly or whatever. You know, sleepovers, pop popcorn. Monopoly was a big thing back then, because that game would take hours. The mothers would love it because it would entertain us. They would feed us bowls of M&M's and Kool-Aid and we'd just sit over here or across the street—they had a nice basement-type reckroom that kids would frequent over there.

It was just a normal growing up childhood. The only time we saw anything out of the ordinary—my youngest childhood memory of racism was going to a parade up town. I remember some friends at school had said, "We're going to be in the parade, we're going to be in the parade." And I was telling Momma that I wanted to be in the parade and they said that they were going to get paid five dollars for being in the parade. She wouldn't let me participate. We just parked at the other church where we always watched our parades from. When I saw my friends walking down the street with these placards on—apparently they were hired by UNC because the placards front and back said something like "spooky Duke"—it was a Duke-Carolina game, and there were black kids, and I guess they were the "spooks," and it said "spooky Duke." And that was racism. I didn't know either until my mother said, "You see, you

wanted to be in the parade, you wanted five dollars. I'm glad I didn't let you go." Because I almost cried begging her. I almost begged her, could I be in it. She said no. Something told her not to let me participate in that. When I saw my friends I said, "There they are." And I read it and it said, "spooky Duke." I was still waving, I didn't know. When we got home my mother explained to me what that meant. She said, "That's the name they call us." I was just crying. And she was fussing, crying almost. It was just very traumatic. I learned about mothers' intuition at that time. I learned that maybe I should listen to my mom.

That showed that we were part of the North Carolina myth. We were in the thick of it and we didn't even know it. There was like ten or twelve kids walking behind a float or a banner. I don't know what kind of parades. There used to be parades all the time. Not just the Christmas parade. That's all they have nowadays, just one or two parades a year. But back then, they used to have parades if there was a big game between Carolina and somebody. The high schools would have parades if it was Homecoming. This was entertainment for the community at large because this community was much more rural back then, too. This was the early '60s.

But all in all, growing up out here was very healthy, it felt very normal. You know, church on Sunday, occasional visits out of town. Most of our relatives lived out of town, either in Virginia or in Weldon, North Carolina, near the east coast. It was a normal life.

BG: A little different from some of the people I've interviewed who had aunts and uncles and grandparents living nearby. You didn't have that?

JP: No, and it often made us feel lonely and out of place not to have relatives right here in town. Even in school, people would say, "my cousin so-and-so." Or if you got in little spats, you knew that your cousin was backing you up or whatever. But we really had no one other than just friends that we had made—who were true friends, but they were not relatives.

BG: I want to go out to this economic stratification in the community. You came out here, you built your own house. A lot of people had rented. And the implication is that there weren't very many people out here in the black community who could afford to build. What are your memories of the economic situation in Potter's Field, Smith—Northside, excuse me? What do you remember about the kinds of jobs that people had, their economic status, and how people saw one another?

JP: For the most part, the employment was either at the hospital or at the university. Our parents were both educators so they were actually working within the school system. Most of the people we knew either worked in some of those places. Also some of my friends had parents who were employed as more or less nannies or worked in the homes of professors from UNC or whatever. Everything revolved around UNC and the hospital. [BACKGROUND VOICE; INAUDIBLE]. Right. That was much, much later.

You know, the black community had their businesses. One of the ladies they employed out here ran the Bar-be-cue. There was Mason's Barber Shop. That whole area up there between Chapel Hill and Carrboro. [tape stops]

BG: If you don't remember it, that's fine.

JP: My memory of black businesses is pretty much limited to the funeral homes and the restaurants and the barber shops. As for medical services, we often went over to Durham because we did have a relative there who put us in contact with eye doctors and dentists and the like. My parents believed strongly in patronizing black professionals to handle medical situations. They just felt more comfortable with it. If you could find trustworthy—which we couldn't find in Chapel Hill, that's why we went over to Durham. Durham was much bigger and had a lot more black business over there. Our dentist was black, our eye doctor was black—we all wore glasses—and our pediatrician was our uncle, who was my mother's brother.

Those were great role models for us to see growing up, to see that black people could be the doctors and the dentists that you go to. A lot of black kids, I assume, are exposed only to white professionals handling medical conditions. For us to see and know that people of color could do it just as well. It was a good role model for us to know that we could be anything that we wanted to be. It had a residual effect. Not only were they patronizing blacks but they were showing us that we could grow up to be anything that we wanted to.

BG: Were there many black businesses here in Chapel Hill?

JP: Not that I'm aware of. The cab stand, I believe, has always been—the Carolina Cab—has always been a black business. Mostly just service type businesses—restaurants, barbers, beauty parlors, you know.

BG: And on Durham you had Lincoln Hospital. Is that where you went for medical care?

JP: Not that I recall. My uncle was in private practice, so he had an office on Pettigrew Street. We went directly to his office for regular checkups, or a cold that lasted too long, or a cut on our foot, or whatever. It wasn't often but it was also a way of Mom visiting our brother. We probably went once a month whether we were sick or well.

BG: Let's get away from the economic area for a while, then come back and revisit it. I would like to hear what your mother was like.

JP: That's a big question there. She was just a very strong, supportive, typical black mother as I recall. She always taught us to behave ladylike and have morals. She taught us a lot of etiquette, a lot of, you know, setting of tables, using the right silverware, please and thank yous, the normal things that moms do. She just had a whole lot of love to share. She hugged all the time—two or three times a day you got hugs. There was no lack of love in this house whatever. That was real high on her list. She was just a normal mom. She cooked meals for us, made sure we had something in the morning before we left for school.

Had a hot dinner every night—hot sit-down dinners. Whenever Dad got home from () or football practice, basketball practice, track—whatever practice he was having. She would work all day. He had a full schedule too, but we always had dinner together as a family, every night. The only time we had breakfast together was on Saturday mornings. And sometimes Sunday because we knew church would make for a long day. But definitely Saturday morning you had the sit-down breakfast. All of us sat around the table in the kitchen and prayed together. It was just lovely. It was great.

BG: Was she the disciplinarian in the house?

JP: They both were, but she was pretty much so, because she knew Dad was a big guy and she didn't want him hitting on us. Because we got whippings. Back then it was no problem to get a whipping. But she would rather do it than have him do it because she knew that he was (). He wasn't one to lose his temper much. He just left it to her. Yes, she was. And she didn't use switches. She just kind of cupped her hand just right and would just hit you real fast like a machine gun. She would hit you ten times and it was over. And you would go to your room and cry for about an hour and then she comes back and hugs you and "I love you more," you know. The same old same old. No switches, it was just her hand--.

BG: On your rump?

JP: Pretty much anywhere that was closest. Maybe thigh area, or it could have been up on the upper arm. It was just like a machine gun—it would go so fast, and then it was over. You know, “Go to your room!” We’d go. And that would be the end of it. Either she or Dad would come about an hour later—we’d just lay there until somebody came for us. That’s how it would be. Usually we all three would get a whipping at the same time. Usually all of us did something wrong, so they didn’t want to just punish one, they punished all of us.

BG: What was your dad like?

JP: He was—he was bigger than life. It’s really hard to remember, as a child, what he was like. He passed away when I was eighteen. The early days, the childhood days, he spent more time at school and with his boys—either football players, basketball players, whatever sport was in season—he really gave of himself. So he spent I would say sixty, seventy percent of his time away from the home. Either at school or working with athletic activities. Our best times were weekends or summers. That’s when they were off work and that’s when we had family time together. A normal school day would be, you know, get up, everybody get you some toast or cereal and get on out to the bus stop. And then you go to school all day, you come home and have a sit-down dinner. Then maybe watch one of two shows on TV and then it was time to go to bed. So it was only maybe three or four hours spent together daily.

I knew him more from at school than from at home. I could see different sides of his personality at school—how he handled other people, how he stressed that they excel, that they do well, that they, you know, “Put your shirt tail in,” you know. He was at two schools that I attended—he was at Phillips and he was also at Chapel Hill High. Him being in the same school, it really cramped my style. I had no boyfriends [laughs] or very few, because they were afraid to talk to Coach Peerman. It was kind of hard being in the same school that your parent worked at. You saw him anytime, because he patrolled the halls to make sure that nobody was skipping classes. He was just around, he’d just show up anytime. It was quite awkward but it was fun at the same time.

BG: Could you describe him physically?

JP: He was maybe 6’ 3”, 240 pounds, tall, dark, and handsome. He wore glasses. He had graying hair. He wore a military-type crew cut kind of—he never gave in to the Afros. As much as we begged him to grow an Afro, he would not think of it. He was just very clean-cut, always very neat. Since he worked in

phys ed, he often wore sweat pants and light golf shirts and tennis shoes. Except for game days, they would all dress. He'd make his players dress, and he would dress for game days. That was part of the discipline of teamwork I guess.

BG: How would the players dress, jacket and tie?

JP: Well, definitely shirt and tie. To ask them to wear suits or jackets may have been a bit much for across the socio-economic strata. You didn't want to make anybody feel guilty about not having something to wear. But he felt they all should have on a suit and tie. And street shoes, he called them—not tennis shoes, street shoes. And I think this probably went on at other high school across the nation. It wasn't only this area that did it. I think it started at the away games because they always wanted the players to look nice going away to other schools. But then they instituted it where any game day—if you were a player, you dressed on game day. And you could see a special pride in the guys who were dressed. You could see their whole attitude change on game day. They had a special look in their eye like they were business men or something. Because otherwise the only other time they had on a tie was on Sunday or something. So this gave them another time to get dressed. And it changed attitudes. I think dress codes are really lax now. Back when I was in school we had dress codes. Girls couldn't even wear pants for a while, I think even until junior high. Early on, there were dress codes. It's a shame that that has changed because that has deteriorated the whole public education system. It's been a contributing factor anyway, allowing people to wear anything, anything goes.

But that was important, that the guys dress. Usually there was a pep rally or something and they'd all come out. You could just see beaming faces, nice combed hair, you know. I remember Dad riding the streets of Chapel Hill the night before game night, making sure his players were in. He'd go up to the pool hall and run them home: [booming voice] "You know you got a game tomorrow, get outta here boy!" You know [laughs]. You'll find a lot of people who imitate him. Because he had a very low, commanding voice. When he told you, they would just run. And it wasn't out of fear, it was out of respect. He said, "Get up. Get in my car. I'm going to take you home. You know I require eight hours of rest before a game." So he would ride the streets before a game, making sure his guys were in. Because there were certain hangouts that he knew his guys would be at anyway. So he'd ride definitely by the pool hall. And take the guys home. And a lot of mothers thanked him for that, too. Because sometimes they didn't even know where

their kids were. Or they knew, but they knew that he had a hand in trying to make sure that they were well rested and ready for school and games the day after.

BG: I had someone describe your father to me as a daunting figure. "In one regard," he said, "I didn't fear him." But then a few sentences later, there was fear there. So it's interesting to hear your take on it that his players respected him. But someone said, "You didn't mess with Coach Peerman." Could you speak to that?

JP: That's how we felt being his children. Whatever he said, it was for your own betterment. It was not to hurt you. There would be an ultimate lesson in the end. He was trying to tell you what he felt was the right thing to do, the right way to go. I grew up, like I said, in the same school with him, most of my junior high and high school life. So I heard this from my own friends, "Uh-oh, here come Coach Peerman." And then I'll be like, "Oh Lord. My friends are scared of him." But it wasn't fear. It was fear, but it was not a fear that he would hit them or anything like that. It was just a fear of doing wrong in his presence. Which to me, I had no problem with, because I knew I wasn't going to do no wrong in his presence [laughs], you know.

When I was at the junior high school, the nation was full of racial tension. A lot of the schools were having marches and sit-ins and protests. We, too, were doing the same. That was early integration. The blacks and whites had only been together maybe two, three years prior to my junior high school years. And so we still felt that we were not being fairly represented on cheerleader squads or having enough black teachers that we could relate to. These were some of the things that our little marches were about.

When we did have marches, a lot of times the principal, the people didn't know how to handle us. They were always peaceful, they were always non-violent, but it was just a matter of us refusing to go to class and sitting in. It was more like a sit-in. We'd just be out in the hall, in the lobby of the main school, sitting there and singing some Black Power songs we'd heard off of TV that didn't even relate to the situation. But we felt this is how it was supposed to be done. But we were young—seventh, eighth, ninth grade. Just refusing to go to class.

And of course, that created an uproar. The bell would ring and the white students would have to walk between us and try to get to their classes. We'd be sitting in the hall singing and picking our Afros. Eventually, after about two hours, the school system often called somebody that they thought could drive

the students back to class or come to some solution. Oftentimes, that was my dad. And that would embarrass me. That would make me feel like, "Wow, he's the Tom. Here he comes. He's going to mess up everything." For a while, I was seriously militant. I was seriously revolutionary. I was against even them, because they were part of the establishment.

I was embarrassing him. I remember one night coming home from school and he was coming home from whatever, practice. And he said, "I don't want you participating in any more of those marches. If you do I'm going to tie you to a tree and shoot you with my shotgun." That was the maddest that I had ever seen him at me. I think, just like I was embarrassed that he came to break up our sit-in, he was embarrassed that I was participating. He just looked at me and shook his head and said, you know, "You need to go on back to class, now." During those sit-ins and marches, even though they were non-violent, a lot of kids got expelled—well, not expelled, but suspended for like a week or three days or whatever. And I never did. And that made me feel bad. I think it was because of my dad's connection to the whole situation. Because I was right out there with them. Because they got suspended and I didn't and that made me feel bad. And that created tension in the home, that he was part of the establishment.

BG: Did you perceive him as wanting the same rights for black people that you wanted? Maybe you didn't. How did you perceive him?

JP: At that time I just perceived him as a disciplinarian and part of the other side that was just trying to break us up and send us back to class and not listen to what we had to say. And eventually, two or three months down the road, everybody came to the realization—probably not him, but probably their discussion of how we're going to handle these students that keep having sit-ins—they made us form a committee who wrote down demands. They would meet with a smaller group of the black students. They felt like that was a better way of handling it. And it was, to a degree. As I said, we were just young and we were following in the footsteps of what we heard was going on at the high school. A lot of us—not me, but a lot of my friends—were sisters and brothers of other kids who, "They're going to march on Friday; we're going to march too." It was just more or less, we were just following a path. Sometimes we didn't even have a purpose or anything. And that's what these student representatives showed us, by, you know, "OK, five students will meet with the principal and two teachers and we'll write down your demands." And they

had those little meetings. We didn't even have any great concerns. Or if we did, a lot of them were resolved.

Even the players on some of the teams participated when we were trying to get more black cheerleaders. Because they had cheerleader tryouts. All the cheerleaders were white, and all the team was black, with the exception of a few—it was like 80-20. We really felt like we should have more cheerleaders to support the team. And so even the team said that they would not play if we didn't have more—. It got to be more organized. It came together for a purpose. We won some of our demands.

BG: If I could go back here—and please validate what I'm saying. My interpretation of what you just said is, you were in junior high school. This is in the later '60s, after the new Chapel Hill High School had opened, the integrated, merged, consolidated high school. You're in junior high school, Phillips Junior High School, your dad is coach there. You're influenced by what's going on locally in the high school, and did you say nationally?

JP: Yes. What we see on the evening news—if we see Angela Davis with a big Afro talking about Black Power, we wanted to be like the leaders or whoever we saw on the evening news.

BG: And your demands were similar at the junior high school to what the demands were at the high school. You saw the same thing—I don't want to put words in your mouth—did you see the same thing in junior high school that was seen by the high school students?

JP: We took most of our desires, our wants, our utopian feelings of how it should be from the high school. And from just knowing that by us being merged, everything still should not be all white. You know, there were talented cheerleaders. There were talented people who needed to be recognized all over. We just felt like we wanted our share. We weren't requesting that half the squad ought to be black because this was a white school and a black school. We just wanted some representation. When all the girls tried out, and there were people who were equally as good, it showed because they actually went back—it was a compromise more or less, I don't remember the exact breakdown—maybe they originally had ten cheerleaders and maybe one was black and all the rest were white. What they did to resolve it was to form a squad of fifteen and you know, it turned to be almost five black cheerleaders to the ten whites. So it was a compromise of sorts. What they did was to increase the number rather than kick girls off because that would have been heartbreaking to--.

But what we wanted, we got ideas from, as I say, what they were doing at the high school, whatever we saw on TV, or maybe whatever we heard in our homes. Especially along the lines of more black educators, more black guidance counselors, more black principals. We may have been fighting for something that we didn't even want at our particular school. We just wanted it in the school system period, we just wanted to see more blacks. It was just a sign of the times, as I say. Sometimes we didn't even have a purpose. We were just going to sit in, because we were, you know--.

BG: It sounds like you were angry.

JP: Yes. I believe so, thinking back and looking back. I haven't talked about it this much . . . ever. So, looking back, we probably were angry.

BG: Can you go back over your school years and where you were? You came here and you were in second grade--.

JP: Yes. I went to the brand new black elementary school, Frank Porter Graham, which was over by Lincoln. Went there from second to fifth grade. And sixth grade, which was around '66, that's when integration hit really hard. They put all sixth grade students in the town of Chapel Hill at one school, and that was Lincoln. And I was just elated to be going to Lincoln because that's what we were all looking forward to anyway—that was the natural progression after elementary school. At Lincoln, I was there for one year. And then seventh through ninth grade, I was at Phillips.

BG: What were those years? It's tough to go back and remember--.

JP: I think it was '67 to '70. '69-'70, I think, was my ninth grade year. And Dad was there two of those years. My ninth grade year, he was not there. And that's when they used to call him over because we were having our little sit-ins and they'd call him over to the high school to "calm these black students and get them back to class."

BG: They didn't have any white disciplinarians?

JP: We weren't listening to any white people at that time, unless they had shown some solidarity to our cause. We had one white teacher in particular who taught civics. I cannot remember his name, but he was very liberal, he was great. We really liked him. He had a different teaching style that any of the other teachers we had ever encountered. He was very open. He even kind of had an Afro—he was kind of like the guy who taught the Sweathogs, Mr. Kotter—he had that kind of rapport with us. We got along well. He

encouraged us, and probably put some ideas in our minds, as to what we should ask for during our sit-ins. He kind of gave us some focus, "If you're doing this, what are you asking for?" So he put some ideas in our minds and made us think that we had to be doing it for a reason. Don't just do it because you see it on the evening news.

BG: So it wasn't as though you saw all the white teachers as against you, or all whites as against you, at that point?

JP: No, not particularly. But he may have stood out in my mind, and he did for several others, but I can't say everybody got along with this one particular guy. I know I did because I had him for a class.

BG: His name wasn't Mr. Vaughn, was it?

JP: It doesn't ring a bell.

BG: Were all of your teachers white teachers when you went to Phillips?

JP: Um, not all of them. Not all of them. There were a few, but there were not many black teachers. Maybe two out of the six, we had maybe six classes. It just depended what schedule you got.

BG: What about the activities, the clubs, other sports, student government, the newspaper, things like that? Did the black students have the same representation in those areas that white students had?

JP: Not really. I don't recall a lot about that. I remember the little newspaper and I don't think there were any black reporters or black articles. If there were, they were just far and in-between or just token or quota-type, "Let's put one picture or one article or whatever."

Clubs and activities? Not at Phillips, but definitely at the high school. I remember us trying to integrate as many clubs as we could. In fact my mother used to call me and my friend Mary "Inter" and "Gration" because we would infiltrate any club. We didn't want any all-white clubs. We were like, "They might be in there talking about the Ku Klux Klan. They might be planning something." So we joined, you know, theater groups—I was in *The Mouse that Roared*. I didn't know or care anything about the mouse that roared but I was just going to have a black person there because "we need to be monitoring what these white folks are doing." We were working in the office, working at the snack shack, working in, you know, we just tried to make sure that there were black people in everything. Even if it was just one or two, we just tried to infiltrate as many clubs as possible. So that was a goal, that was a direction that the black community at large really had. Get involved in something. Always try to be in something. Don't let there

be anything all white because you don't know what's going on. If they want integration, they're going to have integration. That was the feeling. When we found out about things that were predominantly white we tried to join ourselves or get friends or encourage other folks to join. And then just suffer through it whether you were interested in it or not. I mean, there were always other—the chess club, or the golf team—there was always something that people just didn't have an interest in. There were all-white clubs, but we tried our best to integrate.

[INAUDIBLE QUESTION]

JP: Yes, we did. That's kind of vague, but back then that was Black History Week. They would give us one assembly, one one-hour period where we could display anything that we wanted, any talent that we had in our communities or whatever. We had some talented dancers. We'd work maybe the whole month of January on our Black History Week program. It was nice. That was part of one of the demands of the sit-in, now that this is coming up. I can remember because before that, there was no black history program.

BG: So you didn't have any black history taught in the schools before that?

JP: There was at the high school, yes. Not everybody took the course, ironically.

BG: So it was a separate course?

JP: Yes, it was elected. It wasn't for academic credit, you didn't have to take it, you just signed up for it. And mostly it was black people that signed up for the course.

BG: What about your civics and history class in general? Social studies, did they include black accomplishments or black history?

JP: Rarely. As I say they may have used the month of February to bring out a few names in history. But otherwise it was pretty much what was in the textbooks. I recall vividly having a teacher, Mrs. Abernathy, at Phillips, who could not say "Negro." She said the "nigras" this and the "nigras" that. I remember correcting her myself and I got applause from the class, white and black. But I just had been hearing it all year and I was tired of hearing her say the "nigras" this or the "nigras" that. I told her to say "Negro" or "black" or "African" or say something, but it's not "nigras." She just kind of stared at me. She didn't apologize or anything but she just turned red. People were clapping and I just continued to sit there and I just felt so relieved. I couldn't believe she just openly said that word!

BG: So you did go to an all-black school?

JP: Only in elementary.

BG: In elementary. Can you remember back in the difference in teaching styles or differences between going in elementary school to an all-black school versus going to an integrated junior high school—how you were treated, how the teachers dealt with discipline, and so forth?

JP: All-black schools seemed to give you more moral support, more caring, more loving. If you did well on your paper, you might get a hug from your teacher. On Valentine's Day you might get a Valentine's card. Each kid would get one of those, you know, "Be my Valentine." Teachers were very supportive. They often knew your parents. They would call your homes and let parents know how things were going. School activities were a highlight in the black community. PTA meeting were really stressed and really a social activity. Parents would come and the kids would come. Usually we'd have some kind of little song we'd have to sing or play our tonettes or bales or something. This is the kind of activities we had for the black community. It wasn't like we could go to a restaurant. I mean, there was no integration in that fashion in my elementary years. So it revolved around the school system, going to high school football or basketball games [tape stops].

END OF SIDE A

START OF SIDE B

BG: You want to continue on with what we were just talking about?

JP: Well, it seemed like the black teachers cared about your well-being both academically and morally and self-esteem. They preached excellence and preached etiquette and proper dressing. Always told you that you had to give 110 percent because it was going to be rough out there. That black people always had to try harder because this was a predominantly white society so to get anywhere black people had to try much harder than the norm, much harder than your white counterparts. Just stressed excellence at all times, just do the absolute best you can do.

Educationally, I remember trying to make for well-rounded students. I remember Lincoln providing music lessons for elementary-age kids. Mr. Goldston, who was the band director for Lincoln, who had an excellent band, of course, I remember taking clarinet lessons from him, myself along with maybe fifteen or twenty students. Maybe two times a week, Tuesdays and Thursdays, from four to five, maybe one hour, in the basement where Lincoln's band practiced.

BG: At Lincoln High School on Merritt Mill Road?

JP: Yes.

BG: So you would go there after school a couple days a week and take lessons from the band director at Lincoln?

JP: Yes—I don't sure what the financial arrangements—it was probably for no pay. He was just that type of guy. He was a great guy. He's still around. I hope you'll get to speak with him.

BG: Is it Leon Goldston?

JP: Probably. We, as kids, never knew anybody's first name. We just knew "Mr. Goldsten." That's all we knew. Leon? Does he look like a Leon? [laughs]. We never knew people's first names.

But that was rewarding. We had to start from scratch. We couldn't even read music. Some of it started off in theory. It took weeks before we even blew our horns. And there were trumpets and trombones, just regular band instruments. And we were very proud of ourselves.

And it paid off, because when I got to Phillips I actually signed up for band. I wasn't in the marching band, but I did take a band course. I was second clarinet. Some weeks I was first clarinet. Some weeks I was shot back down to second clarinet. But I knew that it was because of his tutelage that got me my start. There were very few people in band in junior high—they couldn't read music. So I felt fortunate. And that was something that my parents instilled in us early, that we needed to play an instrument and we learn how to read music. It was just all part of kind of rounding things out.

BG: To be a well-rounded person.

JP: Mmm-hm.

BG: It seems to me that performance—at assembly on Friday, before the PTA, sports performance, the band, operettas—was very important. And competition. Both of those were important in

the African-American segregated schools. I wonder if looking back you would agree with that, or whether you think it was really not important. And if it changed when you went to the integrated schools.

JP: I think it [performance] was very important. But as I said earlier, I think it was important because it was a form of entertainment for the black community. Because we were not allowed into restaurants and nightclubs and the like. So anyone who wanted to go to wholesome family activities would go to school activities and sporting events and musical concerts given by the chorus from school. School played a very, very significant role in the black community. It was right next to church—church and school, church and school and work, that was just a vicious cycle. That was just pretty much all we had.

BG: I've heard some people say that the school was just as important as the church.

JP: Very much so. We got a lot of our discipline there. As I said, teachers knew parents. They had no problem with capital punishment, with hitting you with a ruler or their hand. They'll tell you in a minute, "I'll tell your mother, so don't you worry. I'll take you home and tell her I whipped you today." So most of the teachers had permission from the parents to discipline the kids in any manner they saw fit. Because parents trusted the educators. They knew they were trying to better the kids, to prepare them for the outside world.

BG: I've heard some people say jokingly that today the discipline would be considered physical abuse. I wonder if you would speak to that.

JP: That is society's feeling of course. Capital punishment in the school system has been more or less banished or outlawed whereas back then it was practically--.

BG: Physical punishment.

JP: Right, and not capital. Physical, OK. I think integration played a large role in that because black mothers didn't want white people hitting on their kids. That's how I saw it. So that's what changed the whole disciplinary picture in the school systems. And vice versa, white parents didn't want black teachers beating on their kids. So it could go virtually also.

BG: Let me ask you another question. I don't mean this in a bad light, but—and I've only had one other person I've interviewed speak of this, but I think it's worth bringing up—did you think of how the whites saw the school change as the blacks entered the school?

JP: Um, not really, because we were entering it together. When integration came, this was the first time for whites to be with us—I mean this was their first time at Phillips, period. So it wasn't any different. They had never been at Phillips as an all-white school. When we came, it was—we were all forced in there together. Just like at the new high school. That's why they didn't use Lincoln or the old high school. They made a brand-new high school so that there couldn't be any visions of, "Oh, I remember when the halls used to be all-white." No, they can't remember that, because this is a brand-new building, a brand-new school. And so that's how I saw integration at the various places I went. It was new to everyone who came in at that time. I was never in an environment where—and the reason I say this is that it started when I was in sixth grade. We were all forced together in a new school. It was all of us together, so we couldn't say, "What are they doing here?" because it was their first time here and it was our first time here.

BG: So Guy B. Phillips opened as a new school when integration occurred?

JP: As far as I can recall. That's how I saw it. I saw it as all being somewhere new for the first time. It was not like we were once an all-black school. The only all-black I remember is elementary years. After that, after integration and busing and forced here and there, you know, everybody was forced together. It's no memories of anything else other because you were at another school. It seems like they did it at a breaking point. Again specifically, it was very unique for my class to have that sixth-grade class together. That kind of wiped the slate, like "OK, the races are together now in this one school. And from here on, wherever you go, you will be together." And that was more or less putting a stamp on it. So I was unique, so I can't speak to that. Other classes, other people, it did hit them at different times. But it hit us all in one grade, all in one school, all in one age group.

BG: When you were in the first classes that were integrated, did you hear racial slurs? Was there physical abuse? Was there fighting in the hallways, in the schoolyard?

JP: No.

BG: None of that? That was junior high school, 196-?

JP: Well, it was really, at Lincoln, the sixth-grade, '66, was the first integration I had. But previous to that, my fifth-grade teacher was a white teacher and that was the first white teacher I had ever had. And that was very uncomfortable for me.

BG: How so?

JP: Well, I had a problem in that I had the same name as another student in the class, Joanne, so there were two Joannes. And Joanne happens to be my middle name. This particular teacher decided that I should use my first name, that I should use Martha. So she called me Martha the whole school year. And for me to have a first white teacher and for her to change my name, and this "Martha," which wasn't familiar to me at all, it just rubbed me wrong. That was just my first experience with a white teacher—tell me what I'm going to be called. It just put a damper on the whole experience.

BG: Did it also have something to do with the fact that white people used to make up other names for blacks, like calling a man "boy," or calling them by some other name rather than what their real name was to put them down? Did you feel that?

JP: No I didn't. Because I was only in fifth grade, so that was a little bit deep for me. It was bad enough to have the name that you always had used for ten years--. I mean, not even my parents called me Martha, nobody called me Martha. And because there were two Joannes in the class, I was now Martha all day long. I was just miserable—I'm about to cry just thinking about it. So I had trouble with her. I had big trouble with her.

I got into my first trouble at school behind this white teacher. I called her a black motherfucker. Because of that—I guess it had pent-up hostilities—I was sent to the principal's office, Mr. Edmunds, who lived up the street here, who was in my mom and dad's wedding twenty years previous to that. And he in turn called my mom and dad. And my mom and dad and me and Mr. Edmunds were sitting in the principal's office. He said he wasn't going to suspend me. The only thing he wanted me to do—and he thought this would be punishment enough—is to repeat what I had called my teacher in front of my parents. So I had to sit there and say . . . those words. I know that my parents could not believe what was coming out of my mouth. And they were just so embarrassed and so hurt. I said it. And I know it rolled off my tongue a few minutes ago. All of this is just coming back to me here.

So when we got home that night, they didn't whip me or anything, but they kept asking me, "Where did you hear that from?" There was really no profanity here in the house. Daddy would say like, "What in the ham fat are you doing--?" He would just use any other kind of words besides--. Daddy was almost crying, "Where in the world did you hear such language?" Finally I admitted that I had heard it at football practice. A lot of days after school we would go over to Lincoln and watch them practice football

because they would push Daddy around on this thing that the coaches ride on and the guys--? And they would have to run up and down hills and he'd fuss and them. So I heard that term from one of his players who was cursing under his breath when he had to do something. So when I told him that, he stopped us from coming to practice because he knew that the guys had foul mouths. You know? When they fall or get tackled or get hit, they might have to do twenty laps for something, they're cursing under their breath or something.

That was something else. [Speaking to other person there] You remember that? You don't remember that? That was the first time and really only time—I didn't like to disappoint my parents. They could easily be hurt by things like that.

BG: How did your mother see you when you were sitting in at the junior high school asking for more rights. Your father came in and broke up the demonstrations. What was your mother's viewpoint? Did she talk to you about it?

JP: She knew that we were going through our rebellious-type stage. And it seems like she had very little to say. She kept stressing—they both stressed—the Martin Luther King non-violent method of talking things out. Sit-ins are fine as long as you're not, you know. It was more or less, you know, if you feel you're right, as long as you're not hurting anyone, I support you. But she always said, "But you better not get suspended." And like I said, several times friends got suspended, and I was right there with them. So that really kind of hurt me. But they didn't want anything on my school record to follow me through. But she was supportive, more or less. She said very little because she didn't want to get involved either way, it seemed. She didn't want to be contradictory to what Dad had said. I think Dad was only there because the school had requested him, the principal had called him. He wasn't there out of his sense of, "Let me go over here and see--." He was supposed to be at the hospital [high school] teaching. He was just only doing what his employer had assigned him for that particular day. So it's not necessarily true he felt we should break up and go back to class.

BG: By your mother's not saying anything, did you take that as tacit approval that it was OK for you to sit in, or did you not really think about that much?

JP: Um, as more or less a silent approval. I never remember her saying "absolutely not." And that day that Dad was really mad, I remember her not saying very much at all. So I saw it as a silent approval.

She wasn't as adamant about it but she didn't see it in progress either. Because Dad saw it. He came out there and saw it.

And it was non-violent for the most part, definitely on my part and the girls. But there were black guys who would go around beating up white boys. Especially those that had done something to them, or called them "nigger" or whatever. Some that the black community or the black kids knew had parents who were red necks—you mentioned Big John, if Big John had a son there we would know that he was a descendant of. I'm not saying he did, but some people knew the families of, they knew "this boy's a redneck. Let's beat him up and take his wallet."

See, Daddy saw that part of it because he was out there. We saw it too and we'd be just standing on the sidelines, "Yes, get him" or whatever. We wouldn't do anything. But it wasn't totally non-violent. But there wasn't blood. It was just a matter of throwing him down on the ground and saying, "you better not mess with no black people in this school." It was just a feeling of power for us. It was fun. It was fun growing up during that time. It was a learning experience.

BG: Did you perceive the white students from Carrboro different from the white students from Chapel Hill?

JP: Just a little bit. Because that was just a little bit further from the center of things and from the school and from cultural activities. A lot of Carrboro was even more rural than Chapel Hill so we saw them as more prejudiced maybe, more racist, less bending, not seeing black people that often so not really knowing us. But really Chapel Hill and Carrboro are sister towns, sister cities. It's all one place, more or less. Back then it was anyway.

BG: Did you see Chapel Hill as a liberal community?

JP: In my early high school years I began to see it that way.

BG: What made you see it that way?

JP: Just because there were a lot of blacks and whites working together for the Civil Rights Movement. Even before that, I worked with Howard Lee's first mayoral campaign. And that was very rewarding. He had headquarters across from that Midway Barber Shop area. I was very young—maybe twelve or thirteen—and I stuffed envelopes. I worked in the headquarters. I felt very involved in the political scene. And that was good at my age. And it was so rewarding to have a black man running for

mayor—it was just great! Especially someone that we knew, someone that had been to our house and we had been to theirs. So I did some phone bank calls and I did some stuffing of envelopes.

BG: Now this answer, it's interesting. I was asking you about the liberal aspect and you perceived Howard Lee's election as a sign of the liberal quality of the community. Did you see whites helping him in this campaign also?

JP: Yes. That's what made me think about that. This was not only a black endeavor. He had the support of black people and couldn't have won without the support because they were the majority race at that time. So that's what made me think of Chapel Hill as being liberal to where you would have a black mayor. That's why that word and his name came.

BG: I want to go back to the emotion that I saw on your face when you said Lincoln High School, there was a broad smile on your face and your eyes lit up. You don't remember it. But it was very clear to me that Lincoln High School meant something to you, to the black community. Maybe you can address that—how you perceived Lincoln High School, how the black community perceived Lincoln High School.

JP: To me it was just one place for bettering one's self. A lot of kids at that time may not have been able to go any higher than high school. So that may have been their last () of academically bettering themselves. To get a high school diploma at that time was the ending point for a lot of black kids. So if you succeeded there, if you met all the rigors that all the teachers were putting you through—and they were tough, those teachers were tough! Even though I was never there, you could just see it in the yearbooks, and you could see it on the expressions on their faces, and you can see how students acted in their presence, how they would even stand up straight for anything, if they were around a teacher. It was just a place of excellence. When you go into Lincoln, you act like you got some sense. Don't come in here with none of that street stuff. This is almost like church. It's just a place of reverence, a place to get your act together and preparing for the outside world.

It was also a place for learning to play instruments, learning to use your voice and sing, learning to excel in athletics. It was a place for entertainment. Weekends, Friday nights you had games, either basketball, football, whatever the season is.

The basketball games were great. I remember the smell of popcorn in the air. Music playing in the background. It was just so festive. Everybody was happy at these athletic events. It was just parents and

students and teachers and sisters and brothers, everybody sitting in the stands shouting and yelling. It was just a very community-bonding experience. It was great.

Even at the football stadium in Carrboro. It was that same feeling of community. All rooting for, you know, everybody happy, everybody on the same accord. No worrying about getting shot or checking on metal detectors.

And there was the smell of liquor in the air at those games. There were certain sections that you knew these men were rowdy and laughing and talking a little too much in between touchdowns. And there was the smoke hovering over the air from people smoking their cigarettes. But it was all in fun. You can tell everybody was enjoying in their own special way.

Lincoln was a family. Lincoln was a family.

BG: Let's hit on a negative thing here. You mentioned the smell of alcohol in the air. How much alcoholism did you see in the African-American community?

JP: Not much at all. We were secluded from that from living out here in the country. We really didn't see that much of it. I feel like it was there. I heard various friend speak of family members with drinking problems. I guess people did it in their homes or did it at clubs. I don't know.

BG: You didn't see it out here?

JP: The only time I saw the public use of alcohol—or really it was more smelling it—we were kids; they probably had it in a brown bag and turned it up when nobody was looking. We could definitely smell it at games in the air. If you passed by a certain area, "Woo, that smells like liquor." In fact, we weren't even allowed to say the word "liquor."

BG: So your dad didn't drink?

JP: Yes, he drank. Socially. He wasn't a big drinker. He liked beer, watching games. Otherwise most of his drinking was probably socially or holidays. I don't recall--. My mom drank beer. They were mostly beer drinkers.

BG: I never did ask what your mother did in the educational system. What did she teach?

JP: She taught special education at the junior high level. Originally her degree was in home economics, but she went back to school to get a degree in special education. So in her early years, she taught (). And in even a different career, because of her home ec background in nutrition and food and

what not, she worked in the cafeteria as one of the cooks. I believe she was probably the supervisor of the kitchen staff at the elementary school Frank Porter Graham. Looking back I remember her saying that was her way of breaking into the school system. Because she had a teaching degree at that time but that was the only thing that was open, available, when she was job-hunting. She worked there for maybe three or four years and eventually got up () teaching ().

BG: Was special ed teaching learning disabled children?

JP: Yes.

BG: Did she work with Frances Hargraves?

JP: I don't recall. I know they were good friends. In fact, we called her Aunt Frances as we grew up. Ed's parents would call his parents Aunt Pearl. His mom was Aunt Pearl. Because we all lived on that street and it was just, everybody raised there by Aunt Pearl () Aunt Frances has to.

BG: So everybody parented you.

JP: Yes. That whole school parented. People talk about them. The Smiths. Mr. and Mrs. Smith. We would've called them Aunt and Uncle probably, but they were in the school system and Mom and Dad didn't want us seeing them in the hall and calling them Aunt. It was just a matter of respect that we called their old friends Aunt and Uncle. They weren't blood relatives.

BG: We haven't talked about Chapel Hill High School. You went to the high school in '70?

JP: '70 to '73.

BG: And that was after the riots had occurred?

JP: Yes.

BG: Can you remember what it was like, at Chapel Hill High School?

JP: It was pretty normal I guess. I think that the riots of sit-ins or marches had paved the way so that when we got out there we did have more voice and more representation on various clubs and squads. I was a cheerleader in high school for two years there.

It was basically all right. We felt very powerful. We felt like we had made change, we had made our stand. The news was full of information on black things going on around the country. We felt we were right in there with it. We were comfortable. We didn't feel intimidated or anything. We felt it was our

school as much as theirs. We all came there together. We didn't feel like it was their school. It was a new school so it was new to both races.

BG: Did you feel the walls that people have described between the races in the high school?

JP: Not really. I didn't because I had that attitude of always forcing my way into anything that was all-white or anything that tried to keep black people out. If this was supposed to be integration, we're going to integrate this sucker, you know. We're going to make sure there's a black person, if it's just one token black person. We're going to be sitting in there listening so you all are not planning on, you know, poisoning the lunches on Friday or whatever. We just felt like we had to have our nose in as much as we could.

BG: Did you see racism at the school from the teachers?

JP: Not really. It was just like some were more cold than others. It was like they had learned to hide their feelings. None of them showed any love or caring. A teacher was just a different being. The white teachers, anyway. We never thought that they really cared about us. They were just there to earn their paycheck, to convey information. Some of them really stressed excellence, but not many. They weren't trying to prepare us for anything after high school—they didn't want to make doctors and lawyers out of us or anything.

The guidance counselors—luckily we had Mrs. Edmunds, who was the wife of this principal up here who was also in the wedding—so she was my guidance counselor. I don't know if I was lucky or she—I think she kind of chose the black kids, pushed them in the direction once she saw various scores and transcripts and whatnot and she felt like they had the potential to do something different. She advised people on vocations and all that. Of course she helped me fill out my college applications and encouraged me to take classes so I'd have enough to get into the colleges that I had an interest in.

But racism at the high school, it really wasn't that bad. Because we still kind of stayed separate. We had some friends that were white. Most of my white friends came from my junior high school years because this was my first time being around white people and realizing that they were nice. And I would go spend the night and I had a little friend down on Lakeshore. I'd go spend the night with her and she'd come over here—Lilly, Lilly Shipman.

But the newness of it wore off after a while. By high school we weren't even friends anymore. I don't know what happened. It went back to the blacks staying with the blacks and the whites staying with the whites. You know, you go to classes together, you go to other functions together. But eating lunches, you know--.

BG: You stayed with the black community.

JP: Yes. Right.

BG: Did you feel that the white teachers didn't give you the same attention as they gave the white students? If you raised your hand to answer a question, were you called on as frequently as the white students were called on?

JP: We didn't have a problem with that. If we did, we would speak up and say, "I've had my hand up and you're going to listen to me." We were outspoken. We were, like you said, angry. If we wanted something, we took it. If we wanted to give the answer, we wouldn't wait to be called on, we would just raise our hand and shout it out or whatever.

BG: Would you do that in the black schools?

JP: No.

BG: So the discipline that was there at the black schools wasn't there at the white schools is what you're saying, is that fair to say?

JP: Absolutely.

BG: What about the black teachers? Would the black teachers tolerate that?

JP: No. Not for the most part. It was mostly the white teachers that were run over if they did not treat us fairly. As I say, I think teachers just became numb or cold and just going through the motions. They tried not to show favoritism either way. I didn't really see a lot of favoritism. And if I did, as I say, we would speak up and say, "You saw my hand up. Why you not calling on me, because I'm black?" We just challenged them right there. We just put them right there on the spot. Because that's what we saw on TV—Mr. Kotter, like I said earlier, that's the kind of stuff that was going on and we would just bring it right to the front. [Imitating frail woman's voice] "Of course not, excuse me a minute." And she'd go outside or whatever and come back. So we tried to be as intimidating as we could, because that was the only kind of thing that got through.

But they had their ways of getting back at us by either giving lower grades or whatever. It was subtle. We may have thought we were getting over but they had the last laugh, more or less. Because they had the power. They were the teachers. So if we didn't have the grades to back up something, or the papers, whatever. I remember one course in particular—I was up above average, I wasn't an A student, but I was definitely an A-B student—and one course I had particular course with was chemistry. And that man was the most cold, distant person. And I think that's why I did poorly in there, because he put nothing of himself in his teaching. It was "read the first three chapters and we'll talk about them tomorrow." It may have been the subject matter. It may have been a poor subject for me. But that was one of my worst grades. I think I got a D in there one semester and I think I brought it up to a C—it ended up being a C average in that class. That was very disappointing to me because I wasn't used to those kinds of grades.

BG: In our discussions you have mentioned that when you had gone to the all-black schools that some of the teachers would hug you and that meant a lot to you. Did you see any of this at the integrated school, of either white or black teachers hugging students? The feeling of caring, I guess, is what you received from this--.

JP: Right. But since we're talking about it and since it's coming to light, it may have been due to the age group. Maybe high school kids aren't as huggy-feely as elementary kids. Maybe elementary kids do need more nurturing and hugging and praise and reward for doing well. So I don't want to put it all on the race thing. It might be that we were maturing and we were supposed to get a different kind of praise—a star on our test paper or whatever—or maybe it was a different kind of praise that we were receiving. There was definitely not a lot of hugging going on at the high school between students and teachers.

BG: Was there smoking in the school yard, pot or cigarettes?

JP: Yes. Cigarettes. And pot out in the woods. There were certain students who always made their trips down to the woods near the football field, anywhere down in there. But the smoking area was between the A and B buildings. And I was a smoker. People could not believe in front of my dad. Coach Peerman would come through there and say, "Joanne, come to Daddy." And I was like, "alright." You know? And I think that helped them to see that he wasn't what myth had made him out to be. Smoking at that time was OK for teenagers. It had not been talked about like it is now. That was late-'60s, early-'70s. And they had smoking areas right there at school so you know it must not have been as bad as they make it out to be. So

yes, we smoked out there in the commons. We could not smoke inside the building. The teachers could smoke in their lounge.

BG: So it wasn't forbidden that you smoke on campus, apparently?

JP: No. But that was the smoking area.

BG: I see. What about alcohol? Did you see any alcohol on campus?

JP: No, not that much. There were certain students who dabbled in that kind of stuff. Everybody knew who they were. And they would disappear at lunchtime. Some people would go to the cafeteria. Some people would drive away and go off-campus for lunch, because we were allowed to do that. Some people just took a walk in the woods and I guess drink or smoke pot or whatever they did. And when they came back, they'd be giggling and eyes all squinty and we'd know what was going on. We just knew who they were, what they were about.

But they were definitely the minority. They were maybe one to five percent of the student body. They were the bad kids. They were the ones who weren't going to be anything when they grew up. They were ().

BG: So it's not as if it pervaded the school.

JP: Not drugs. And alcohol. And not drugs and alcohol during the school. But it seems like there was some drinking among some students during games. Like I said, during the Lincoln years, there were adults drinking. During the high school years, it was your friends or any of the guys that weren't playing on the field. They were sitting in the stands. They were drinking or drunk or had been drunk. Alcohol was pretty normal during high school years.

BG: When you were there from '70 to '73, was your father the head coach of the high school football team?

JP: From what I recall, I believe so. (). He coached those three sports while I was there. I don't remember whether he was head or what because that was such a touchy subject in this household. When integration came, a lot of black people lost their status as being the head or the principal. They were put in subservient roles or second roles. It was just a subject that was best not talked about, especially by children. That was adult talk. That was grown-folks talk, to know exactly what somebody's profession was. All we knew is he was the coach. We didn't know about head or--. We knew at first that he wasn't head,

something was going on. Some people weren't happy. We knew something was going on but we didn't know quite what because that was grown-folks stuff.

BG: So they didn't talk about that—

JP: --in front of us.

BG: But when he went to the integrated high school, he was no longer head coach the way he was at Lincoln?

JP: Right. We gathered that much.

BG: Do you remember how successful he was as head coach at Lincoln the last few years there?

JP: No more than—it seemed he was very successful. We were young so I don't know anything about records or whatever. I know a lot of games had scores of 100 or over 100 for football and that was miraculous. We know that he was invited to coach at a shrine bowl over in Durham, which is some big thing that some of the best black coaches get invited to. That's a nice activity. So we knew that he must be having some degree of success because there was much happiness here at home and in his career and he stayed in the same job for years and years. We felt like everything was fine, that the teams were doing well. We () games where they'd win, so we'd see that they were having winning seasons.

BG: Did he make it to any hall of fame?

JP: I believe at his college alma mater he did.

BG: Where did he go to college?

JP: NCCU. It was NCC, I believe, when he went. But he went right over in Durham.

BG: How about you? Where did you go to college?

JP: I went to Morgan State University in Baltimore, where, as a matter of fact he coached for one year. That's what inspired me to go there, because he always talked about coaching at Morgan. Morgan had a rich football heritage, that was back in the fifties. He coached there before I was born.

BG: Not while you were there? [laughs].

JP: No. No. But the coach that was there remembered my dad and had coached with him. So that was rewarding after I introduced myself to him.

BG: What did it mean to you, going to an all-black school in college?

JP: It just felt so good. I felt like I was returning to my roots. I felt like integration had been forced upon me and now that I was able to choose what school I could go to I was going to choose to return back to my community where I knew that academics would be stressed in a totally different kind of way. Learning would be received and taken in a very different kind of way. Black schools have such rich heritages. They have such bonds, such togetherness, such—the activities, the bands, the choruses, the football. I wanted to return to that whole feeling that Lincoln—it felt like I was trying to rekindle a Lincoln-type spirit, something that I had seen in Lincoln, anyway. So when I had a choice to go, I chose a black institution. It felt good. It was problematic that it was so far from home. There was some family illness during that time and I wasn't able to be around like I'd like to. But I learned a lot, and I wouldn't trade it for a thing.

BG: Are there any other things that you'd like to talk about that I haven't asked you, or some things that I have asked you that you want to revisit?

JP: No, not that I recall right now. Other than Lincoln has a very rich heritage and I'm sure that, if this project is successful and reaches the people like it should, that it's going to be very successful, very beneficial. I thank you very much.

BG: That's great [tape stops]

You're on.

JP: The proudest I ever was of my Dad, at a high school assembly for Black History Week, those assemblies always started with the singing of the Black National Anthem, "Lift Every Voice and Sing." When he stood there and raised his fist along with all the rest of the black students, I just really got a chill. I was just very emotional because he showed that we were with us and he understood that we were going through. He looked just like the guys at the Olympics that first raised their fists when the National Anthem was being played. That was a very memorable moment for my dad sharing with the black community.

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END OF INTERVIEW