RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALLEN HOWARD

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Paul Clemens: This is Paul Clemens, and I will be doing an interview today with Allen Howard. It is May 18, [2010].

Allen Howard: Tuesday.

PC: Tuesday. We'll be talking together about his life history and about his time, particular at Livingston and then at Rutgers University. Allen, do you want to introduce yourself for the tape here?

AH: Well, I'm Allen Howard, Professor of History, specializing in African history, Atlantic history, global or world history, a lot of undergraduate and graduate teaching. I was at Livingston College from the beginning in 1969. So I've taught at Rutgers forty-one years and I'm planning to retire. [laughter]

PC: That's too bad.

AH: Yes. [laughter]

PC: So, the way I have started all the interviews I've been a part of on this larger project is to ask people to [start], completely off the topic of Rutgers, to talk a little bit about themselves, academically and personally, how they got the point where they eventually became a Rutgers University professor and so why don't we start by just some factual information, which you'll have a chance to fill in part of on the sheets we've given you, and tell me where you were born, when you were born, and we'll go from there.

AH: Sure. I was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in January 1938, and I grew up, though, in Waukesha, Wisconsin, which then was a small town--I think it was maybe 19,000 when I was born--located about sixteen miles from Milwaukee. So, even though I was born in a hospital in Milwaukee, I never really lived in Milwaukee until I went to school there. I went to grade schools, you know, regular public schools, in Waukesha, Wisconsin and graduated from Waukesha High School in 1955. I was very connected to the local surroundings, because both my mother and my father were born on farms in small towns near Waukesha. My father was born in a place called Sussex, maybe a dozen or so miles north of Waukesha, and my mother was born in a place called Eagle, also a farm, about equal distant, and south, and both a little west as well. So, I had quite a lot of relatives.

PC: Let me start back there then. Do you remember the year your father was born?

AH: The?

PC: The year.

AH: Yes. My father was born in 1897.

PC: '97.

AH: Yes.

PC: Okay.

AH: I'm sorry; my father was born in 1894.

PC: '94. Can you tell me a little bit about him?

AH: Yes. My father was born in 1894, on this farm in Sussex, Wisconsin, a farm to which I went on various occasions, but it was no longer in the family. There were neighboring farms, though, that still belonged to family members, so there were family reunions there, and quite a lot of relatives lived on these farms around Sussex or in Sussex. I used to go frequently, for example, to church suppers at a church that my grandmother had attended. My father's father died when he was about four years old, actually, and they left the farm, at that time, and moved into Waukesha, so then my father grew up in this town of Waukesha, where I grew up also. Every year, we'd go, or every summer, we'd go and work on the farms of his uncles, one of whom I actually met when I was a very little kid. I can still remember him. My father told a lot of stories about working on these farms and about living in the city, and he always emphasized the fact that they were very, very poor, and he used to tell me stories about how little he made working all summer on a farm. His uncle would give him like eleven dollars and say, "Allen, you are a good worker." [laughter] His name was also Allen, so I was junior. He, though, actually, got a scholarship to go to college and eventually became a dentist. So, I really grew up in a more middle-class, small-town environment, but very connected to the rural areas.

PC: The period right before you were born, of course, was the Great Depression.

AH: Yes, it was the Great Depression.

PC: So, the notion of poverty must have been quite real.

AH: It was quite real.

PC: Yes.

AH: It was quite real. Well, my mother was born on a farm. Actually, you know, they both were born on the farm, in farm houses. She was born in 1897, and she lived to be 102 years old, actually. So, she lived in three centuries, and she was very proud of that. [laughter]

PC: Deserved to be.

AH: Yes, yes, yes. I know a lot about her family, in particular, her father's side. They were Huguenots, and they came to the United States from France via Holland to New Amsterdam in the 1680s. So, she was, actually, very proud of that kind of ancestry and did a lot of sort of amateurish history, but actually worked very hard at it and put together many booklets of history. The family farm remained and still is in my family's name. In other words, my younger cousin of mine still lives there; although, he doesn't farm it anymore. But when I was a kid, my

grandfather had left the farm and lived in this small village of Eagle, Wisconsin, which I think had about six hundred people in it, something like that, but my uncle lived on the farm, and we would go there all the time, so I had a very strong sense of that farm. When I grew up, well, I mean, when I was a teenager, I worked on that farm. Sometimes much of the summer, I would go there. I also worked on a lot of other farms, because in my high school, perhaps half the kids were farm kids, and they were bused in or drove in, and so I had some very good friends who were farmers, as well as these relatives. So, I've done everything there is to do on a farm, and I know a lot about farming life.

PC: Dairy farm?

AH: Dairy farms, yes. They're all dairy farms in that area. My uncle's farm, again, and this is the farm my mother was born on, was only eighty acres. It was in the Kettle Moraine. This is the terminal moraine area, where the glacier stopped, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: As they advanced, they stopped. It was stony and poor, and, again, I heard a lot of stories about, not only how poor it was when my mother lived there, but when my uncle [lived there], and I observed that. I mean, they just did not have amenities in their house. Even my grandfather's house in the town, there was no electricity when I was first going there as a kid. They had gas lamps and they had the outhouse, and so on, and that was true in my uncle's farm, though they had a windmill that generated some electricity. Yes. So, I had this real sense of farm life. My mother and my father did not get married until 1935, even though my father was a dentist and had a, you know, a better income than most people, at least a stable income--I don't think it was a big income, but it was stable--he would not marry my mother until he had bought a house for my grandmother and until he had totally paid off the house that he and my mother moved into, which reflects what you said, Paul, about the Depression. It wasn't just that heritage, you know, of being on these farms, but this need to feel like you were secure and you had, you know, provided. My mother, though, was a schoolteacher, and she was very independent-minded, I would say, and quite proud of that, again.

PC: Taught at what level?

AH: When she was, I think, at fourteen years old, she left the farm and went to what now is Whitewater State University in Wisconsin, but then was Whitewater Normal School, right, and she boarded there and got a teacher's certificate, one of those normal school certificates.

PC: Right.

AH: Then, started teaching in Kenosha, Wisconsin, which was an industrial town, and she taught English and drama, and then, went back later, after she had taught maybe seven or eight years, I think, to Carroll College and got a full, four-year degree. Carroll College was in my hometown, and my father, actually, also went there. Someone gave him like a scholarship to go there, because he, obviously, he didn't pay for it. So, my mother then went back and finished up her four-year degree, so they both were graduates of this college, and she taught up until she got

married, so until 1935. So, she taught for about twenty years and was very involved in, I mean, she just loved to read and was involved in all these kinds of educational things. For a while, she was on the library board, the town library board. She was, for a while, elected to be on the Board of Trustees of Carroll College. She stayed very active in drama. When I was a kid, she used to do makeup work for all the local plays, in the high school, but especially the sort of independent community drama, that sort of thing.

PC: Were you an only child?

AH: No. I have a younger brother. So you can see my mother was over forty when I was born.

PC: Right. That's very much like my family.

AH: Yes, older, yes.

PC: Same thing, Depression, older parents.

AH: Right.

PC: Because they didn't want to get married.

AH: Yes.

PC: During the depression.

AH: Yes.

PC: So, yes.

AH: Right. So, yes, so I was, my mother was over forty when I was born, and my brother was a year-and-a-half younger.

PC: Yes.

AH: Right. He lives in Colorado. So, we grew up together, my brother and I, and [had] a lot of friends. We lived actually in a house that was the last house in the city limits. There were about three houses beyond it that were outside the city, and then there were farms.

PC: Yes.

AH: This was on the Milwaukee side.

PC: Yes.

AH: So, you know, you always were aware of the farms, that they're right there. You smell them. I knew the farmers and so on. When I was a kid, the farmers, a little bit farther out, there

was a farm with what they used to call spinsters, in those days, you know, two sisters and a brother. The three of them, ran the farm, it was like maybe the third one out, and they would come by in their horse wagon, you know, they had no tractor.

PC: Yes.

AH: When I was a kid, I can remember that very well, and they would always stop and talk with us, and people brought food off the farms and so on. So, it was like very much connected to this rural environment, but Waukesha was also a very interesting place, because it was also industrial. So, for example, there were several foundries, iron foundries, and an aluminum foundry. That meant there were a lot of workers there who were foundry workers, and many of them were Mexican, so I went to school with kids who were from Mexico and whose parents or father worked in these mills, really. My father had actually worked in a factory when he was a kid for several summers too, or a young guy maybe, even in high school and college. But there were also very much more Milwaukee-like industries. You know Milwaukee was very famous for its machine tools and very high level of industry, not just, you know, iron and steel, but making all sorts of machinery. So, in Waukesha, there was the Waukesha Motors, which made engines for oil rigs, and so they sold hundreds of thousands of these gasoline-driven motors that pump oil rigs all over the United States and elsewhere. There were a lot of other places that manufactured. So, one of my good friend's father was a pattern-maker and owned a pattern-making company, because everything in the, you know, these were patterns that you made out of metal or out of some cast, it wasn't concrete, but something else like terra-cota, and then they would pour metal and make all these castings for use in all sorts of machinery or models for making tools and things like this. I worked, for two years, in a bottle-washing manufacturing company and that was just a few blocks from my house. I just went down there one day and said, "Is there a job?" because, I wanted to, you know, [laughter] I wanted to be part of this, you know. The guys we admired were like factory workers, right, so we wanted to do what they did. So, I worked two years in this factory. I was a grinder, a welder, and so on, well, over two summers, I should say, right. I also worked one summer in a canning factory, yes. So, I really watched, that was extremely interesting, and these events had a lot of influence on me, because I saw labor-management issues. I saw race issues acted out on the ground and a whole lot of other things, which were really quite, they opened me up. So, I, you know, was a little less of a sheltered, small-town, middle-class person.

PC: Yes.

AH: A lot of my friends, their parents were, you know, workers. Oftentimes, you know, the father worked in a factory in Milwaukee or in Waukesha, and mothers were "homemakers," or a lot of my friends' mothers worked in like Woolworths. One of my best friend's mother worked there. We used to go see her every time, you know, when we [had] noon breaks and so on, other sort of things like that. So, it was, you know, this combination of a town with a lot of farm orientation, but a working class, a very strong working-class component, and then, you know, a smaller kind of middle class of professionals and, you know, actually, some college teachers and so on. I was in the Presbyterian Church, and my mother had been raised a Methodist, and my grandmother, I think, was a Presbyterian, right, and they were like Scots and Irish, the Howards, and English, and so, I grew up in this Presbyterian Church. I was quite a religious person,

although I'm atheist now. [laughter] I was very involved in, you know, all this kind of church-oriented things that, you know, bible study and so on.

PC: Was it assumed in your family that you would go to college.

AH: Yes, yes. It was assumed that we would go to college.

PC: Your brother went to college as well.

AH: Right and my brother went to college as well.

PC: Yes, yes.

AH: But the other thing that was assumed was that I would become a dentist, right.

PC: Oh.

AH: So, I went to Carroll College for two years, now that we get down to the academic side, and I did mostly science, very little liberal arts. In those days, you could get into dental school in two years. Actually, I mean, I'm not trying to brag, but I did very well in science. The only course I ever had any trouble really with was probably organic chemistry, but I did, you know, I did all right in that actually. Other stuff, I really loved biology a great deal. So, then I went to dental school. I don't know if you ever knew that.

PC: No.

AH: Yes, I did go to dental school, because that's what my father expected of me and, you know, I was the eldest son. I used to work in his office, helping him out, because he wanted to sort of get me to learn about what it meant to be a dentist. He loved dentistry. He just believed in that as a helping profession, and, in fact, he ran for at least twenty years a free clinic in St. Joseph Church. They set up a little clinic there, and he would go and do free dental work, and this goes back to the Depression again, right, but I can remember him going there, you know, in the '40s. Everywhere we would go, we would eat like in local restaurants, people would come up to him, they would say, "Doc," you know, and they would always talk with him about, they would tell us, "Oh, he helped me out so much," right. I heard this a lot when I was a kid, and he believed in this and loved it. He just loved it, and I think partly because it was his ticket to a better life, you know, but, mainly, I think he just was committed to this sense of helping people He also loved to work with his hands, right, and he made other things on the side. Probably the sad thing is that my brother would have been a better dentist than I. [laughter]

PC: He went on to do what?

AH: He went on in business, yes, and worked for various companies. For the last twenty-five years or so, he's owned his own company, which is, really, a one-person company, and he buys and sells art supplies. He used to be an artist representative, so he narrowed that down eventually and built a pretty good business.

PC: Now, the dates that you've given me make me, I think I know the answer to this, but I'll ask anyway. In your immediate family, were there any, are there any who served, and actively, in the military?

AH: My father was in the First World War.

PC: First World War.

AH: Yes, the First World War.

PC: Wow, okay.

AH: Right.

PC: Because I'd already figured out he probably wasn't in the Second World War.

AH: No, no.

PC: But he was actually in the First World War.

AH: He was in the First World War, but he never was in Europe, right.

PC: No?

AH: He was in a dental battalion, and he, actually, was inducted in the Army and so on.

PC: So, a dental battalion would be a group of people who would provide dental services to the troops.

AH: Yes, yes, yes. He had his uniform and so on, and he served at some bases, you know, doing work, but he never was in Europe.

PC: Was he drafted?

AH: I don't know. I think a whole lot of them volunteered actually.

PC: Yes.

AH: Because the pictures of him were with a number of his friends and they were all dentists. I have those pictures, you know. They were all commissioned some way, right, and he was very proud of, you know, having been in the Army, and then, being discharged. He had his discharge papers and all that sort of thing. Yes. So, well, anyway, I, then I went to dental school, actually, after two years at Carroll College, I went to Marquette, which was the same college he went to, you know, just following his path along. Actually, at Marquette, I did human anatomy, same course as medical students. So, I dissected a cadaver; it was a whole year. I did all sorts of other

general biology courses. Interestingly, the courses that I liked, and I think this really influenced the way I think a lot, were physiology, because it was integrative and it was systemic, and I always liked something that was more, you know, I could see things at the systems level. You had to memorize huge amounts of stuff in these bio courses, right, but I always liked that very much. Then, the other one was pathology, so we did a pathology course and we did [an] oral pathology course, but we also did histology, where we worked with slides, you know, a whole range of things that were either general medical courses, and, basically, again, this, more or less, the same courses that the doctors and medical people did, and then, others that were oriented toward dentistry. But I quit actually, which sort of broke my father's heart. We had started to move more and more to working with our hands and I just did not like doing that actually. We had to carve every tooth out of a kind of plastic that was like an ivory. We had to do simulations of dental work in a kind of a skull with rubber lips and so on. They started practicing, I never worked on any person, because I quit after, really after one year and two terms, yes.

PC: That's a substantial amount of time you put into this.

AH: I did. I put a substantial amount of time in, so I did all, it was basically the science courses, but I could see, "This is not something … "

PC: Yes, you didn't want to spend the rest of your life doing it.

AH: No. I did not want to do it, and I just, maybe it was rebellion, but I think it was actually, and my mother always was very supportive of me. My father was too. He didn't give me a hard time, but I know he felt bad about it, but she said, "You know, I could see you weren't happy doing this," right. So, I went to University of Wisconsin-Madison, where I then became more radicalized [laughter] or, very radicalized. If you want, you know, I mean, if I'm going on too long here.

PC: No, no.

AH: Even before I went to Wisconsin, I was very involved in political things, and at first, it was around anti-war stuff, and I really tied that up with my Christian upbringing. So, even when I was in high school, I subscribed to anti-war journals, and I was very involved in a sort of anti-nuclear campaign. I just thought this was wrong, and, you know, just a very bad thing, and it was a frightening thing too for people, in those days. Then, very quickly, I had gotten involved in like civil rights-oriented kinds of things. This is before I ever did anything connected with Africa, because I, again, this was a sense of justice.

PC: I'm trying to get a feeling for time. You were born in '38.

AH: Yes. So, I graduated in '55 from high school, and I went to Carroll College until '57. Then, I went to dental school until '59, and then, I went to Madison.

PC: So, you were getting involved in concerns about nuclear power, not nuclear power, but nuclear war.

AH: Yes, nuclear war, in the mid-'50s.

PC: Mid-'50s.

AH: Yes.

PC: In the McCarthy period.

AH: Right.

PC: It's the height of the Cold War.

AH: Yes, yes, yes, '53, '54, '55.

PC: Yes, right.

AH: Yes.

PC: Did you know who Joe McCarthy was?

AH: Oh, sure.

PC: Yes, okay, yes. I'm trying.

AH: Yes, yes, of course.

PC: You would.

AH: Yes, yes. I mean, Wisconsin.

PC: You would have been a teenager.

AH: Yes. We all knew about Joe McCarthy. [Editor's Note: From 1947 to 1957, Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957) served as a Republican Senator from Wisconsin. During the 1950s, he became well-known for pursuing an anti-communist agenda.]

PC: Yes. You would have been a teenager.

AH: Yes.

PC: Prominent, because he's dead by the middle of the '50s, right? Yes.

AH: Yes, yes, yes, yes, of course.

PC: If I have my dates right.

AH: Anyone who grew up in Wisconsin knew about Joe McCarthy. My father, actually, at some point, became a Republican in voting. My mother was a Democrat, and I think sometimes, though, she would vote Republican because my father did. She would say to me things like, "If I vote Democrat and your dad votes Republican, the votes cancel out."

PC: Cancel out.

AH: Also, I think, there was this kind of a, even though she was, I said, [a] really independent-minded person, somehow there was that, you know, you went along with. So, I'm not sure when he became a republican, but, you know, probably being part of the, you know, the town middle class, belonging to the Kiwanis Club [laughter], things like that. [Editor's Note: The Kiwanis Club was founded in 1915 as a business and networking club for men.] I think what it was, was that they, and especially my mother, were really very ethically-minded people and so we used to talk, you know, in our household a lot about these kind of ethical questions and moral questions, and I was a kind of bible-reading person who was very interested in these kinds of things. Also, we had in the area, a period of my life that was very influential, as I was exploring all these kinds of questions, a minister named G. Aubrey Young. Aubrey Young was a very progressive Presbyterian minister, very. His sermons were like on ethical questions constantly, and he was also then very involved in the Civil Rights Movement and allied with black ministers in Milwaukee. Eventually, my mother used to go to Milwaukee and work with African American women and attend church services in Milwaukee that were efforts to integrate blacks and whites, and this was the same time that there was this tremendous racism in Milwaukee. Milwaukee was a very racist place. G. Aubrey Young, who I really admired, and his sermons were very intellectual and very ethical. I mean, he really would talk about philosophers and quote from Niebuhr and people like this, right, and I started reading all these people when I was pretty young. [Editor's Note: Karl Paul Reinhold Niebuhr was an American theologian and public intellectual.] I read a lot of philosophy and a lot of theologians. He became the first chair of the State of Wisconsin Civil Rights Commission. So, they picked him out as a minister, white minister, right, but who had these links with African American ministers.

PC: About what period of time are we talking now?

AH: He left maybe '57 or something like that, right, you know, shortly after I graduated and went to Madison and took up this [cause], and this is when they started the civil rights commission, and so he was the director of it. So, he was a very influential person, and I think my mother, in particular, was, but then I started meeting other people who were, you know, interested in these kinds of issues of anti-war issues and civil rights issues. When I went to Milwaukee to live, I lived in a house with about ten guys, all in dental school. I think there was one woman in our dental class. Everyone else was male, right.

PC: Even one woman is amazing, frankly. [laughter]

AH: Yes. There were a few African Americans.

PC: I actually find that easier to believe than a woman dentist in the 1950s.

AH: Yes, right, yes.

PC: It just seems really strange.

AH: Yes, well, of course, yes. These professions were very male-oriented.

PC: Yes.

AH: Actually, you know, beside not liking working with my hands, but also [what] really bothered me so much, I had a core of very good friends, and these friends, one of them, particularly, I'm still in touch with, they opened me up to a lot of things. Most of them were older than I was. I was really very young when I did this, right, went to dental school, because [when] I graduated from high school, I was just sixteen.

PC: But in a sense, that's not that unusual.

AH: Yes.

PC: You talked about your mother going to school when she was fourteen, and then working for twenty years before she was married.

AH: Right.

PC: That is a farming American pattern, where you, these things.

AH: Yes.

PC: Compared to today.

AH: Right, it happens early, like I went to kindergarten when I was four, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: In a regular school. It was part of the regular school. Not to lose the train of thought, a lot of these guys in dental school disappointed me. I mean, they were in it, first of all, they joked around. I remember teachers saying, you know, that, "You're in a room with a cadaver, you must be serious," and some of these people screwed around, and I thought, this really bothered me. Then, just their mentality, they weren't like my father, in other words. [laughter]

PC: Yes.

AH: They were in it for something else. Now, I found, you know, as I said, some really great guys to spend time with, and from them I learned a lot. One of my best friends introduced me to classical music, for example. I started going to a lot of concerts and, well, my mother used to, actually, do that too, but I started doing much more of that in Milwaukee, and other sorts of

things like this sort of opened up. Generally, I found it a limiting environment, and so, I went to Madison. You know, what I did is I…

PC: This is when you dropped out.

AH: I dropped out.

PC: Out of dentistry.

AH: Right.

PC: Then, you went to live in Madison.

AH: Yes.

PC: Or you applied to Madison?

AH: No, then I applied, and I went to University of Wisconsin.

PC: Okay. So, you knew from there that you were going to go on in education at that point.

AH: Right, yes.

PC: Get a different type of degree

AH: When I went there, though, I went to be a biology major, so if you look at my degree, you know, and listed anywhere, it says BS.

PC: Yes, that's mine too.

AH: Yes, right, yes, yes, yes.

PC: We're both BS degrees.

AH: Yes, so I was a biology major. I just stumbled into these courses taught by Philip Curtin, the famous Philip D. Curtin. [Editor's Note: Philip D. Curtin, the pioneering, renowned and controversial scholar of African history and Atlantic trade, taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison from 1956 to 1975 and at Johns Hopkins University from 1975 to 1998.]

PC: Yes.

AH: In those days, well, I had, you know, you had to take some distribution.

PC: Yes.

AH: I mean, I didn't have any distribution of anything. I had, you know, so few courses that were outside the sciences.

PC: What year did you get to Madison?

AH: '59.

PC: '59.

AH: '59, right.

PC: Right. So, Phil Curtin was there already.

AH: Yes, Phil was there. So, then he was teaching, there was no African history on the books. He taught Latin American history, because his first book was a book on Jamaica, still a very important book, and he was then teaching African history as part of Latin American history. So, we, you know, he had us read a lot about Jamaica, and I liked this so much. He had us read about Brazil, and we looked at black Brazilians, you know, and I started learning about this kind of thing. "You could actually study this kind of stuff." So, then I went on and took another course with him, which was a course in British empire, and, again, you know, there was no African history, he had us read a lot about Africa. Now, some of these books, you know, are like, now, we would look at them and say they were totally retrograde.

PC: Yes.

AH: They were still, a lot of them come out of old, colonial mold, but that's what was available then, right.

PC: You went there and you started as a biology major.

AH: Yes.

PC: Did you have a notion of what was going to happen with a biology major?

AH: Not really.

PC: It just was an area you knew something about.

AH: Yes, something I knew about. Yes, I was good at it. I, actually, had very high grades in biology.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes.

PC: But anything could have happened. You could have gone on to be a medical researcher.

AH: I could have.

PC: A doctor, whatever.

AH: I could easily have. In fact, yes, if I would've been offered like a research position connected with the dental school. In fact, one friend was. Some senior professor in pathology took him on. I probably would have stayed in that field, actually, because I liked doing the research and I liked some of these kinds of health questions, you know. What I did is I decided I would become a history major, anyway. I didn't really have a sense of being a professor yet.

PC: Yes.

AH: So, I took then courses at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in the summer, and I packed in a whole lot of history courses. Then, I just went to Phil Curtin, and I said, you know, and this was the first year that they opened this program which became the "Comp-Swamp," the Comparative Tropical History Program.

PC: Yes.

AH: He started this in 1960, and nobody had a clue. I mean, you know, this is a brand new program. They didn't have any sense at all about how to really prepare us. There were a couple people who had, who were a little bit farther ahead, who had come into African history through, again, British Empire, like a friend of mine John Rowe, who later taught at Northwestern [University], but there were ten of us who started in that year, and several were in African history.

PC: I'm going to make sure.

AH: It was 1960.

PC: Yes, but I'm a little confused. You're a graduate student or an undergraduate?

AH: No, I was a graduate [student]. I applied for graduate school in 1960.

PC: When you went there in biology, you went there as a graduate student?

AH: No, as an undergraduate.

PC: As an undergraduate.

AH: No, I didn't have a degree. I didn't have a college.

PC: Right, right. That's what I thought.

AH: BA or BS.

PC: So, you made a really quick transition. You didn't need a lot of extra work to get finished at Wisconsin.

AH: No, no.

PC: So, you got your undergraduate degree with a BS, and then, just moved directly into the graduate program.

AH: Exactly.

PC: In history.

AH: Right, in history.

PC: So, you made the break at that point.

AH: Yes, I did.

PC: Okay.

AH: Right, I did.

PC: Right.

AH: Yes, yes. So, I don't know why Curtin took me in, but I was interested in, you know, I had taken these two courses with him. He knew I could do something, but, you know, we were not prepared to do history. I had nothing like a[n] undergraduate history seminar. I had to learn all this as a grad student.

PC: Yes.

AH: It took me a while to really figure out how to do these things, frankly. Curtin was a very good teacher, and then I took courses in Latin American history also with John Leddy Phelan. I took courses in British Empire with some, there were some well-known scholars there, but I did quite a bit of African history. But I had to sort of catch up too, so I spent three years there really as, doing an African studies certificate, African history courses, courses in Latin American and South Asian history, because we all had to do two fields, right. So, I did Africa and Latin America. It was always to be this comparative kind of history, comparative tropical history was what it was called. Michael Adas wasn't there yet. I was doing a minor field in economic history, so I worked with several well-known people, in those days. Then, I did this interdisciplinary course, so I took several courses in agricultural economics with Marvin Miracle and an anthropology, so that's how I first got interested in anthropology and ag econ and urban history.

PC: What did Curtin expect you to do in terms of languages?

AH: Yes, so, we had to do a, well, we had to do a second European language, right, so I did Spanish, and then I did Portuguese, right. No, I did, wait, when did I do that? I passed the language exam in Spanish, but I also did, you know, I can't remember how I did this. I remember, this was so informal too, John Leddy Phelan let me into a Latin American history course, because he put in book in front of me and said, "Can you read this?" and I, actually, I could read it fairly well in Spanish. I don't remember when, but then I studied French and I studied Portuguese. In those days, the African language was just starting, so I did not have to take an African language for a master's degree, and I didn't do an African language, but I did some linguistics courses. The idea was that you would learn these linguistics courses and that would prepare you to field learn an African language, right.

PC: What about Curtin? Did he have an African language at this point in his career?

AH: No, no, he didn't.

PC: I didn't think so.

AH: He didn't.

PC: From what you said.

AH: He had never done any fieldwork in Africa either.

PC: Yes, right.

AH: No, and that became an issue, because eventually [the department] hired Jan Vansina, who was the great oral historian, and who had, you know, just spent years and years and years in the Congo and in Rwanda and elsewhere and was a deep field worker, really knew several African languages, really knew them, total fluency, right. So, Curtin was bothered by this, and in those days, you had to do African field work, right, to be legitimate.

PC: Yes.

AH: The founders of the field, some of them came out of like imperial history.

PC: Right, imperial studies.

AH: Yes, imperial studies.

PC: Where you only need the European language.

AH: Yes. European languages were very important, but it became the thing to do to gather data in Africa, right. So, anyway, what happened was I had a master's degree, I had an African studies certificate, I had this pretty broad training with a lot of history courses in Africa, and then, in these other fields, and then, I did this interdisciplinary work, and I said to myself, "Can I

go and do a PhD if I've never been in Africa?" It just didn't seem right to me. I also got married to Mary Howard, then Mary Dolton, and the two of us went off to Africa together in 1963, and I got a job at the University of Sierra Leone in 1963.

PC: When you say, "You went off," you went off on your own after you got your master's?

AH: Yes.

PC: Or you were sponsored by Wisconsin?

AH: No.

PC: Going over.

AH: No, I went off. I just

PC: On your own.

AH: On my own. I said to Phil, you know, "I'd like to teach in Africa. How do I do this?" He said, "Well, you look in *The Times* educational supplement," right, "and they'll advertise the jobs there," and sure enough, and this was mostly done by telegraph or by mail, you know, so it took a long while.

PC: Yes.

AH: So, I sent, you know, I sent an application to the University of Sierra Leone, which was then, it was Fourah Bay College, and this is this really old and very prestigious college. It was started [1827]; it comes out of the Church Missionary Society. I especially wanted to go to Ghana, because of Kwame Nkrumah [Editor's Note: Kwame Nkrumah was the first prime minister and president of Ghana and an advocate of Pan-Africanism]. You know, we were infatuated with African nationalism and Black Nationalism and so on. I was very involved in all this sort of stuff.

PC: So, remind me, historically, Sierra Leone, at this point in time, is a colony?

AH: No, it had become independent.

PC: Independent.

AH: In 1961.

PC: Okay.

AH: Right.

PC: So, you're going right after independence.

AH: Right, and Ghana had become independent, the first black sub-Saharan African country, in 1957, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: Nkrumah was like, you know, he was the black star of Africa. So, I applied to Cape Coast College, and I applied to Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, and I actually got accepted for a position at both of those places, but as I said, this is by telegram, right. They sent me the telegram, it just, I probably have it somewhere, but I don't know where anymore, and it was like four lines, "We are pleased to offer you a job as an assistant lecturer in history at," you know, "Fourah Bay College," and signed by the president of the college or something like that. So, I wrote back right away and said, "All right, I accept," and then, like three or four days later, I got a telegram from Cape Coast.

PC: Yes.

AH: They also offered me a job, you know, and it would've totally changed my career. That was a very radical place, Ghana, in those days.

PC: Yes.

AH: I could talk on and on about this, of course.

PC: Yes.

AH: Sierra Leone was a much more moderate nationalism. So, I went there and I taught there for two years, 1963 to 1965, two full academic years, and I taught African history.

PC: You were teaching it to primarily the children of [the] urban middle class.

AH: No.

PC: No.

AH: No. That's the interesting thing. Later on, these African universities became, in some ways, quite elitist, but when I went there, it was a mix. There were some children of elites, and some children who were Creoles, you know, from Freetown, who have this long history of literacy in English, four, five, six generations in some cases, but the great majority of students, their parents were farmers, you know, and it was because the system was still uncorrupted and it was still based on merit. So, if you passed these, you know, O-level and A-level exams, which were still very standardized and very British, you could get into the university, and almost all students came there on a scholarship, I mean, passed these standardized exams, administered through a British system, and then, later, through a West African system, but, you know, adhering to a British set of principles, you could get in. So, a large share of my students were from small towns or even villages, and this was marvelous for me, because I bought a little

Volkswagen, you know, and they would take me to their towns and villages. I went all over Sierra Leone with my students, or what's really shaped me a great deal [were] people who were involved in field projects, and the department that was most involved was the geography department. So, very quickly, I started, you know, I wanted to know Africa [Professor Howard says with emphasis], right. So, quickly, I took lessons and Mary, who was my wife then, and we didn't have any kids then, we took lessons in Krio, because if you really were good in Krio, you could go around. It was, you know, it's this language that's actually not just a simple pidgin, as they say, but it's based on Yoruba, it has, but it has a lot of English and a lot of Portuguese. I took lessons, actually, with the daughter of the famous Edward Blyden [Editor's Note: Edward Wilmont Blyden was a nineteenth-century educator, statesman and writer, whose ideas form the basis of Pan-Africanism; although, that term was not coined until after his death.] This was (Granny?) Blyden.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes, and she was a wonderful person. Her son, I, of course, I got to know. He was a Harvard PhD, eventually. Then her granddaughter, the great granddaughter of the famous E.W. Blyden I, teaches at Georgetown.

PC: Ha.

AH: Yes, and who's written a very good book on Sierra Leone actually. This Granny taught us Creole, and she would say, "You [have] got to learn deep Creole." So, this was learning a lot of Yoruba proverbs. I became, actually, very fluent in Creole. I could operate all day long in Creole and I lost some of that now, but I could pick it up again very quickly.

PC: It's still spoken there?

AH: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

PC: Or is it just a transitional language?

AH: No. It was long the *lingua franca*, because it was, even though it was associated with the Creoles, it was in terms of the majority populations, it neither favored the Temne nor the Mende nor any of the other larger populations; and beside, you could just use it everywhere. Well, it was long before I ever arrived, it was the *lingua franca*, so you spoke Creole. Now, you could go places where people did not speak Creole, especially in, you know, what they call up-country in villages and so on. So, when I was there, I also started learning Temne. I was fairly good in Temne, and this is where the linguistics helped me, and I would, eventually, I did a lot of interviewing in Temne. So, when I went back to Madison, eventually, you know, I applied for then a PhD program. I got accepted there, and I got, I had some fellowship, and I was a TA and so on.

PC: Were you accepted to work with Curtin?

AH: Yes, Curtin.

PC: Still that system where you go to work with a particular professor?

AH: Yes, I think pretty much so.

PC: Yes.

AH: I already had done some field research. I had published some things already too. So, I sort of knew what I wanted to do, and I had gone up-country, as I said, you know, a lot, and I knew areas that I wanted to work. I also had started exploring the archives. In fact, the first thing I ever published was in the *Sierra Leone's Studies*, which is the local publication, but actually, it had some very, you know, high-quality stuff. It was on archives and what I did was, and this was when I, you know, was still teaching the first time. They deputized me to go and collect documents in these provincial and district archives, the old British archives, and when I went up there and first sort of sampling these things, I just saw these documents thrown in closets, you know.

PC: Yes.

AH: Or old outbuildings, you know. They were being eaten by termites.

PC: Yes.

AH: They were waterlogged, in some cases. So I went back, and I knew the woman who was the head archivist very well, because she was also the librarian for the college, and she got some official paper, you know, it said, "Allen Howard is designated as an archivist with the capacity to collect," so I used to fill up my Volkswagen with these official documents that they would give me and haul them back to the archives, and then Gladys had a couple of, you know, aids, who archived them and so on.

PC: What was your wife doing over there at the time?

AH: She taught English.

PC: Okay.

AH: Yes, Mary taught English. So, I taught African history, both in a general degree and what they called an honor's degree. I also taught anthropology, so I started teaching African anthropology. Three of my students in this honor's course went on to get PhDs in African history.

PC: Wow.

AH: Yes.

PC: Now, how did you fund yourself when you went to Wisconsin?

AH: Well, first of all, it was very inexpensive, right.

PC: Yes, yes. [laughter] You still have to live though.

AH: But …

PC: When I got there, there was no financial aid.

AH: Right.

PC: That's why I was curious.

AH: Very quickly, I became a TA, maybe from the beginning.

PC: Okay.

AH: Yes, I think from the beginning, because I, you know, I had been in Africa. I had taught in Africa.

PC: Right.

AH: I had taught African courses, and who I TA'd for, I think this must have been the first year I went back, which was in '66, was Jan Vansina.

PC: Ah-ha.

AH: I was his first TA and I remember him typing up these lecture notes. I mean, he spoke English, but he didn't speak English [perfectly]. Well, this guy is so brilliant. Vansina is like one of the most brilliant people that I've ever come across, but he had some, let's say, quirks in the way he spoke English.

PC: Yes.

AH: Anyway, I was his TA, and he would type out these lecture notes on a stencil, and he would give me the blue, the back copy, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes, and I still have these right.

PC: [laughter]

AH: It was like this panoramic way of teaching history, you know. This, actually, a lot of this stuff went into his books on Central Africa. So, I was his TA, and I know they paid me several semesters as a TA, right. Then I became an instructor. Yes, I was still, I didn't have a PhD, and

if you look in these books [Livingston College catalogs] they list me as a PhD, but when I came to Livingston College, I had no PhD. They just listed me as a PhD. I don't know. I didn't misrepresent myself, because, you know, I, obviously, did not have a PhD. I was hired as an instructor in the extension, working under Margaret Bogue. Remember Margaret Bogue?

PC: No, I don't. Oh, you mean at Wisconsin?

AH: She was Allen Bogue's wife.

PC: Yes, right, right, yes, I do.

AH: Again…

PC: I was jumping to Livingston.

AH: Yes.

PC: Yes. I absolutely remember her.

AH: Right, yes, yes.

PC: Yes.

AH: Those were the days in which, again, it was such a male-dominated history department in those days.

PC: Yes.

AH: Right? Margaret Bogue was quite a fine scholar and historian, but she was not in the regular history department. She was in the extension. So, she hired me to teach courses. I taught full-time courses as an instructor in African history in the extension, which was at night.

PC: Were there any women in the Wisconsin History Department? There was only one when I was there.

AH: There, yes.

PC: I can't imagine there would have been.

AH: I can't remember any.

PC: Diane Lindstrom, who was on my committee.

AH: Yes.

PC: Had been hired, I think, two years before I got there. She was an economic historian.

AH: Yes.

PC: Who ended up, not surprisingly, teaching women's history.

AH: Women's, right.

PC: But she was it.

AH: Yes.

PC: In a huge department, there was one woman. That was it.

AH: Yes. I certainly never took any courses with a woman.

PC: Yes.

AH: I can't remember any woman who was teaching there.

PC: There were very, very few women graduate students when I went there.

AH: Yes, yes.

PC: Let alone teachers.

AH: Right.

PC: I would just be shocked if there was a woman there.

AH: Well, I, this is [an] issue that arose. In this class I mentioned, that the ten of us started, there was one woman who was from South Asia, right. She was doing South Asian history. There was my dear friend, who I still am very good friends with, Vicky Bomba, who was, she was Vicky Bomba, she became Vicky Bomba Coifman, and she was doing African history, and then went to Senegal and did a lot of really, again, kind of thing I was doing and everyone was doing, deep history. You know, we did all these oral histories, just gathering, gathering, gathering, just deeper history. There was at least one other woman in that program. There was one African American, who was Bill Brown, and who did this brilliant dissertation, never published another thing, but was tenured at Wisconsin and taught at Wisconsin until he died about two years ago, yes.

PC: I'm surprised. I don't remember him.

AH: Yes. William A. Brown. He used to hold kind of a court down in the Der Rathskeller. He helped so many black students deal with Wisconsin.

PC: Was he in the history department?

AH: He was a Wisconsin PhD in the Wisconsin History Department.

PC: In the history department.

AH: Yes. He taught there for, as I said, thirty-something years. But this issue came up because Curtin, I think that I, you know, I can say this, Vicky Coifman thought Curtin was biased against her as a woman, right.

PC: I wouldn't be surprised.

AH: Yes. But when Curtin died, and Michael Adas and I went down to his memorial service in Pennsylvania, I asked some of the other women, because this, actually, there were a couple people who were saying, I thought it was in bad taste, but, you know, Curtin was just dead a little while, they were saying things that were so negative about Curtin. Other people were saying things that were very positive about Curtin, and it was always that way, you know. Curtin was a very controversial figure all the way through his career. I asked Jean Hay, for example, who then went up and taught at BU and was very influential. She edited for many years one of the two major journals in African history, and I said, "Jean, did you ever feel that Phil discriminated against you?" We were sitting at the table at dinner after this service, and she said, "No." She said, "No. He was very supportive of me," but Vicky felt different, and Vicky left him and went to work with Vansina, even though she did a West African PhD, and Vansina was, you know, Central Africa.

PC: My major professor was a generous, sweet human being.

AH: Yes.

PC: Nonetheless, the women who were in my group of students who went there were all advised to look into high school teaching.

AH: High school teaching.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes, yes.

PC: He was probably right, I mean, in terms of what their job prospects were in the field, at that time.

AH: Yes.

PC: I came out in '74. There were no jobs. So, in that sense.

AH: Right.

PC: He was right.

AH: Yes.

PC: That their chances of getting a job as a historian who happened to be a woman.

AH: Yes.

PC: Was almost zero. [laughter]

AH: Yes, yes, yes.

PC: He didn't say that to me, so.

AH: Right, right, right. I think Curtin, actually, probably changed over time, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: He became aware of the need to change, so to speak.

PC: Yes.

AH: The thing I, you know, related to what you're saying, I think it was always, in a sense, fortunate for me as a scholar in a field that was expanding was that from the beginning, many of the scholars were black, either African American or African, right, and then, many of the scholars were women, and women went and African Americans and Africans went on to have a very significant role in shaping African history, and a lot of them came out of Wisconsin.

PC: Yes.

AH: So right behind me were people like Claire Robinson. Claire was a very strong feminist, but she felt she was discriminated against when she went to Ohio. I know she talked about that a lot. Claire was kind of bitter in certain ways too, so I think they had to fight a lot; but the point is that they really built the field, you know, all of us had a role in that. So from the beginning, there was strong representation of Africans and African Americans and of women, yes. So, I think, there, you know, this was relevant for Livingston College, really. I think the field was dominated at first by these old-time people like Curtin and Roland Oliver and John Fage and others who'd come out of a colonial history background and whose early books were on missionaries and on colonial officials and so on, but that changed pretty quickly. These people remained quite dominant, but they were put under tremendous pressure to adjust.

PC: How did you come up with a dissertation topic when you were there?

AH: I came up with a dissertation topic by doing this sort of early field work that I did, even when I had a master's degree, and then starting to sit in the archives and seeing what I could do

from both sides, and I also, I think, partly because of the students I knew, I started going more to the north than the south of Sierra Leone.

PC: Then, Curtin didn't give you something to work with.

AH: No, not at all.

PC: Yes.

AH: In fact, again, they didn't know how to train people.

PC: Yes.

AH: If you look at who are the big names, they came after me.

PC: Yes.

AH: They were, by that time, Curtin was really good at training people. If you read Vansina's book, he, again, says that there's this early group, those of us included who were in that group of ten, who were not as well prepared, but Vansina, and then, Curtin later became very, very skilled. So, it's a few years later than me that all these people that come along, Joe Miller, you know, Paul Lovejoy and so on.

PC: Who did Michael work with?

AH: Michael then worked first with John Smail.

PC: Ah, okay.

AH: But he also worked with Curtin, right.

PC: Okay.

AH: Curtin always ran, or at least for the first few years, the interdisciplinary stuff.

PC: Okay.

AH: As well as the African stuff, right, or not interdis[ciplinary], inter-area, inter-area, because Curtin had the vision of and was the prime architect of the comparative tropical program.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes. So, Michael worked with, because, you know, his first book, his dissertation and first book were on Burma.

PC: Right.

AH: So, he did Southeast Asia with John Smail, and he also worked with, I think, with maybe Frykenberg, who was the South Asian historian, but he worked very quickly and felt, I think, very, he was very much in a sympathetic position with Curtin, right.

PC: What year did you finish at Wisconsin?

AH: So, well, then I left Wisconsin in '69.

PC: Yes.

AH: Right.

PC: Did you, in any of that time, were you employed other than as a TA? Did you have to work outside the academic world to support yourself?

AH: No.

PC: No, okay.

AH: No.

PC: So your TA stipend was enough to get by on?

AH: Right.

PC: With whatever your wife was making.

AH: Yes, right, yes, and Mary did work too. She also taught, but she was doing a PhD as well.

PC: Yes.

AH: Right, yes, and she also was a TA and taught writing. Then I was at Wisconsin for like a year-and-a-half and then I got a fellowship to go back to Sierra Leone.

PC: Yes.

AH: So, I had a Ford Fellowship, right. So yes, I applied for that, and I got that. So, I was in Sierra Leone. I was supported by a Ford Fellowship.

PC: So, let's pause for a second.

AH: Okay.

[Tape Paused]

AH: So, where were we?

PC: We're picking up on this interview with the hope that we haven't managed to lose a little bit of it. At this point, we are going to go on talking about your experiences in graduate school and how that transitioned and got you over to Rutgers.

AH: Over to Rutgers.

PC: Yes. How did you get to Rutgers?

AH: Excuse me.

PC: This was still the old boy world.

AH: Right.

PC: Somebody made a phone call?

AH: I don't know. I just applied.

PC: You did it on your own, though.

AH: Yes.

PC: Oh, okay.

AH: Yes.

PC: I came out in '74, and they applied for me in '74.

AH: Oh, yes.

PC: I did put in an application for a couple jobs, but the job I got here, somebody at Wisconsin made a phone call to somebody at Rutgers. [It] had nothing to do with me.

AH: No, I applied.

PC: Okay.

AH: I applied some other places as well, but, I mean, I think they got letters from Curtin and Vansina.

PC: Yes.

AH: But they, no, Curtin didn't, or no one called on my behalf.

PC: And they applied for a job at Livingston.

AH: Yes.

PC: It was an advertised Livingston job.

AH: Yes. It was explicitly at Livingston, right.

PC: It was for what? What was the position?

AH: Well, it was to do African history.

PC: Just African, broadly African.

AH: Yes, broadly African history.

PC: Yes, okay.

AH: Yes.

PC: What did you know about Livingston before you got here?

AH: Nothing. [laughter]

PC: Nothing. Okay. That's what I knew about Rutgers. [laughter] That would make sense.

AH: Yes. I did come out for some sort of interview, right.

PC: Who interviewed you? Do you remember?

AH: That was, I was interviewed by Ernest Lynton, who was the dean.

PC: Dean Lynton, yes.

AH: Yes. Seth Scheiner, I think, probably did, yes, and I don't know who else. I can't remember.

PC: My memory is that the very beginning of Livingston would have been--Gerry Grob probably was out by then. He'd already, I don't remember. He left …

AH: Yes.

PC: The Livingston faculty.

AH: No, well, Grob was there.

PC: Okay, so Grob, Gwen Hall.

AH: Yes, but Gwen wasn't here when I came.

PC: She wasn't?

AH: No.

PC: Okay.

AH: No.

PC: But Seth Scheiner was.

AH: Grob was there from the beginning of our teaching in '69, but Seth was part of a transition team.

PC: Ah, okay.

AH: Right, so he had been doing some of the planning.

PC: Okay.

AH: Maybe as early as '67, but certainly '68.

PC: Okay.

AH: I don't think he was part of the core planning group. There was a higher-level planning group that was for the college as a whole, and I don't think Seth was necessarily part of that, but he was the one from the existing history department here at, you know, Bishop House, or wherever it was then, that was designated to work with a Livingston formation process. I think he had a bigger role in that than Grob; although, Grob became, you know, quite influential once he got there. Some people were hired to be part of Livingston as early as, I would think, '67, and probably Seth started working in '68.

PC: When you say "some people," you mean some historians were already hired?

AH: No, I don't think there were any. No, I don't think there was any other historian.

PC: You're probably the first historian or first group of historians who were hired.

AH: Right.

PC: To be at Livingston.

AH: Yes. So, at first, Seth was there as part of this planning [group], and he, plus somebody at, you know, this campus, must have brought on Grob, right, and then, John Wilson and I, so there were four of us who were hired.

PC: Okay.

AH: The first year [1969]. Yes, and we started it up, and a lot of the courses were put on the books in very generic ways, so the courses I taught were called "Studies in African History," and then, "Advanced Studies in African History." [laughter]

PC: Yes.

AH: Then, we just shaped them as we went along, and then, began to put in more formal courses.

PC: Take a drop back, when you were interviewed by the dean.

AH: Yes.

PC: What do you remember about that? How was Livingston's purpose and role explained to you? What [did] they say?

AH: Well, yes, it was explained in terms of it being experimental more than anything else.

PC: Okay.

AH: I think, and it was, it was going to be experimental pedagogically and in terms of curriculum, so we would be part of a building process. We would be creating the college as we went along. That was, I think, made pretty clear, rather than something that was [already structured]. There was some structure there, but we were going to be part of a building process, which appealed to me a great deal. I think, already, when I was interviewed, it was clearly going to be urban-oriented, and the fact that I had done some writing about urban, about Freetown, [Sierra Leone] was an appealing part, I think, for Ernest Lynton. I'm quite sure that there was someone who went ahead and was part of the urban studies who also interviewed me, and I'm trying to think of who it was, because some of these people I got to know very early very well, because I oriented myself to the U.S. urban studies program. So, I can't remember who I met right at the beginning and who interviewed me, but there was someone also who was part of the urban program, and they were very interested that I had written stuff already on the city of Freetown. I had quite a number of publications. So, Lynton and others clearly explained that it was going to be urban-oriented--there would be a lot of African American students, that it was a response to the crisis in the urban cities and New Jersey cities, in particular, and that there would be an effort to, you know, to really address what was going, you know, remedy really, in a sense, what had been happening in New Jersey. I think there was a sense that it was there to overcome some of the negative heritage of education in New Jersey and of the neglect of cities, right. I think it was also, clearly, though, going to be high-powered. I think already by the time I was interviewed, there was this, there wasn't an awareness of the kind of problems that would arise, I

don't think, but there was an awareness that they wanted to create something that was intellectually challenging, and there would be, you know, a lot of publishing faculty there. It would be a place where you would be engaged. You were expected to be engaged, but you were also expected to, you know, be a researcher. I think there was a strong sense of an effort to have quality of education, as well as experiment. So, they were trying to juggle all these things, you know--how to keep it high quality, but experimental, how to address a lot of nonconventional students, but have it appeal to other students as well.

PC: Did you have a sense of where history as a discipline fit in this model of what the school was going to become?

AH: No.

PC: Okay. I wondered if they did, I mean, in the sense that when they conceived of the college in the mid-'60s, I think, '65, '66, '67.

AH: Yes.

PC: Maybe.

AH: Right.

PC: Somewhere in there, whether they anticipated that it would be one that would have an unusual configuration of disciplines, as opposed to replicating what already existed at Rutgers.

AH: Yes.

PC: College. I don't really know the answer to that.

AH: I think it was supposed to be a mix of maybe three things. One would be traditional disciplines, because they wanted a certain legitimacy to it. Then, newer interdisciplinary approaches, and you can see that, even I looked at this catalog here, it reminded me of it. They didn't start with an English department, for example. They started with literary studies, but it had an English branch and it had a comparative literature branch. Then, the third part would have been the much more applied stuff, so that before, you know, the urban studies was over in the Bloustein School, [at Livingston] it was there on the campus. So, I think that there was this idea of having a certain traditional core, history. Interdisciplinary work was always there from the beginning, and I, they probably liked the fact that I was interdisciplinary in my own outlook and had taught anthro and so on. I remember them talking about that kind of thing. From the beginning, we had interdisciplinary courses on the books, and then, this more applied stuff, but the applied, yes, the applied was strongest in the urban area.

PC: Can you remember your first classes at Livingston? Hazily? [laughter]

AH: To be truthful, I can't. I cannot.

PC: Can you remember whether you had a significant number of women in them, a significant number of African Americans in them?

AH: Yes, right. That, I know. I can remember them in some [ways]. Some ways are very specific to my mind. First is that there were no regular classrooms, right, so that we [laughter], we had our offices on the fifth floor--and we stayed there all the time we were at Livingston--of Lucy Stone Hall.

PC: Lucy Stone, yes.

AH: Which wasn't even named Lucy Stone Hall then. Battles over names were quite important, right. But then we taught in the dorms.

PC: Ah.

AH: The dorms, again, this was part of the theory of Livingston. The dorms would be integrated teaching, learning, living places, right. I can remember teaching in one dorm, what later became a lounge, right, it was basically a lounge. Remember, there weren't a lot of students and there weren't a lot of faculty then the very first year. We had to walk there on like two-by-eights or two-by-twelves through the mud.

PC: Yes.

AH: Because it was not landscaped at all, and there was construction going [on] all around us and there [were] demolitions still going on too. There were still barracks in that area where the library was, if I remember a little bit farther along. So, I can remember going into these classes and some of it reminded me of teaching in West Africa, you know, because you taught actually holding a kind of a, you know, wobbly blackboard and writing with it like that, you know, on it. There were a lot of African American students in my classes and quite a number of women, and I think from early on, people had this sense of it being a place where you had to find a way to build the student, sort of, engagement into the courses, right. So, I remember quite clearly thinking, I don't like to lecture, right. I had a[n] ideological opposition to lecturing too much, but I did lecture, right, but we always found ways to try to build a lot of discussion in. We were committed to sort of a democratic approach. Some of it was very democratic. You had to teach in an engaged way. You had to put emphasis on students' participation. So, I think from early on, and you also had to teach skills, so from early on, I was, I put a very heavy emphasis on writing. I always did that, and so we did a lot of writing and we had student revisions of papers. We just wrote and revised and wrote and revised. We had a lot of emphasis on discussion, and then, lecturing as well, right. I can't remember the specific class, you know, like the first time I ever walked into the classroom, maybe because I had actually taught quite a lot already, so it wasn't like [an] earth-shaking experience for me. The diversity of it was very strong. So, I quickly discovered, I would say that for me, it was always good as a teacher trying to get things [to] happen, but also in an environment where people were comfortable and where people would talk. If you had a mix of like roughly fifty-fifty, it could be sixty-forty black, sixty-forty white, as long as it was near fifty-fifty, then students of the different "racial backgrounds" would be more open. What was not good was a class where there were very few black students or very

few white students, and I rarely had those. Most all the classes were really quite balanced in racial makeup. A few Latinos students took courses too, a few Asian students and so on.

PC: Any idea where these students came from?

AH: Yes, yes, I, yes, because I spent a lot of time [with the students]. I knew a lot of the students fairly well. Of course, some of the students were very much involved in student government and those types of activities. So, there was a strong pressure, but, you know, we all believed in it, actually. It wasn't like someone made us participate in things on campus. So, I would go to a lot of events where you would get to know the students outside of the classroom, but it was clear, just talking with the students, because I wanted to find out who they were. For history majors, we did a lot of advising, but we also did a lot of general advising as well. So, a big share of my students definitely came from the larger urban, you know, larger cities in New Jersey, and a lot of them, a very high percentage of black students, but also white students, they were working class, and their parents had not gone to college, a lot. We used to talk, you know, you'd spend so much time with the students, they would express fairly openly, in some cases, their apprehension about success. They felt going back home and hanging out was not easy for some of these students, because, "Oh, man, you're in college, right?" and like, "Oh, you're leaving, you're leaving us," you know, "You're going to be an elite," you know, "You're going to turn your back on us. You're going to leave the ghetto," you know, whatever they would [say], you know, "the hood," or whatever; I don't think people used that term then, right. A lot of students felt guilty about this, and they wanted to find jobs and professions where they would be part of the community and it would give something back. That ethos was very, very strong, and it was part of a nation-building ethos among African Americans generally, and a lot of students were political, right, both whites and blacks and, well, Latinos as well. So there was this political ideology of, you know, giving something back and being an activist, which affected a lot of the faculty and certainly a lot of the students. I don't know like percentage-wise, I mean, many others were not of that mentality, but especially African American students and a considerable number of white and Latino students also, right.

PC: Yes. This was '69.

AH: Yes.

PC: So it was after the black protest movements at Rutgers.

AH: Right.

PC: It was after the Newark riots.

AH: Yes.

PC: It was after Plainfield's riots

AH: Right. But students had lived through those experiences.

PC: Right.

AH: They used to talk about them.

PC: They used to be kids who as teenagers knew about all these things, if they hadn't actually come out of Plainfield.

AH: Right.

PC: Or more likely Newark.

AH: Yes. No, there were plenty of students who came from Newark and from, you know, South Orange and all that area on the north, quite a lot from Plainfield and New Brunswick and areas around here, not so many from the south, I wouldn't say, but some. I also actually got to know quite a few students who came from smaller communities who were African American. You know, there were these small African American communities way down on the river, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: On the Delaware, places like that. I think one student I got to know very well was from a place called (Whitestown?), and there were others I knew from southern New Jersey too.

PC: Most New Jersey suburban areas had small, especially in Central Jersey, had small African American communities.

AH: Right.

PC: In them, and they would be exactly the ones that might have sent their children into a place like Rutgers-Livingston, yes.

AH: So, there were plenty of African American students who also were of more middle class or lower-middle class backgrounds [and] did not come from the main major cities, you know.

PC: So, let's go back to the history department itself. Who was actually teaching classes in 1969?

AH: Okay, well, Gerry Grob and Seth Scheiner and John Wilson and I. So, from the beginning, we had, I just checked this in this book, but I can remember this quite well, we had this requirement, that then became the sort of universal requirement, that you had to do, we didn't say non-Western, in those days. You had to do three of five fields as an undergraduate. So, one was European. That was one field. One was American. That was one field. Then, there was Latin American and there was Asian and there was African, right, and you had to take courses, two courses from three of those fields, so that automatically made people take courses outside.

PC: Right. You had to do two Asians or two Latin Americans or two Africans automatically.

AH: Right, and since, at first, there was no one teaching Asian history or Latin American history on this campus.

PC: [laughter] Yes.

AH: But people, of course, did go to Douglass and did go to, well, I mean, on the Livingston Campus, they did come to this campus, to College Ave., or they went to Douglass, but a lot of students took courses with me in African history, because it was available there at Livingston. So, obviously, Grob and Scheiner were teaching the American history courses, and they were very urban-oriented. Grob was teaching and Seth was teaching courses on urban history and as well as surveys, and John Wilson was teaching, he was the only person doing European history. Of course, John and I were very good friends. We were really good friends, and we talked a lot about these--he was very engaged in teaching, and when he didn't get tenured here he went on to become a dean, and he did a[n] awful lot of work on curriculum. That was something that interested him. So, we used to talk a lot, the two of us, but also with Gerry and Seth as well.

PC: I, by the way, don't remember Wilson at all.

AH: Yes.

PC: It's not a name that even rings a bell.

AH: Oh, yes.

PC: I know the name only because I've seen it in reports.

AH: Right.

PC: He's not somebody I know.

AH: Yes. Well, he taught a course on…

PC: He didn't get tenured, presumably because he didn't publish.

AH: He didn't publish anything.

PC: Yes.

AH: Right. He taught courses on the French Revolution that were very popular, and I taught courses on, you know, revolution in Africa and revolutionary movements, revolutionary and nationalist movements. There was a lot of that kind of thing going on. I also had started teaching, pretty early, a course, it wasn't just on African cities, I don't think you could easily have done that then, but it was on like Third World urban development. It was called something like that. Because I had already a lot of training in Latin American and South Southeast Asian history, I did Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa and Latin America-Caribbean. So, I did that kind of third world urban course. I was always doing that kind of thing.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes.

PC: Okay.

AH: Yes.

PC: Can you remember how additional members of the department got added over the first couple of years? Gwen must have come in there pretty soon.

AH: Yes, Gwen.

PC: And Norman for that matter.

AH: Yes, well, I do remember, it wasn't as democratic and open as it is now.

PC: No, no.

AH: Grob controlled a lot of it.

PC: Yes.

AH: I would say Grob brought Galambos right away.

PC: Ah, right, okay.

AH: So, yes.

PC: I forgot about him, okay.

AH: Yes, so, Galambos was actually, he influenced me a lot. I, to be honest, have always felt closer to him than to Grob, and I, and his interests and mine, actually, fit together in certain ways. I used to sit and talk with Lou Galambos a lot, and I just had a nice relationship with him. I mean, I, you know, I spent time with Gerry, but I didn't mesh with him as much in terms of just interests and so on. He certainly brought Galambos in, and I don't, we had an interview of him, but I think it was clear that, you know, Grob controlled that. Who else did we hire? I have to look it up again. We didn't hire Gwen until, I think, the third year, and there is this funny story, which, I think, is probably true, after, that people thought that Gwen Hall was black, right.

PC: I heard that story when I got here.

AH: Yes, yes, right.

PC: I didn't know whether it was true or not.

AH: I didn't meet her, but I, you know, the story was that whoever met her at the airport or where she stepped off a train or something like said, "Are you Gwen Hall?" because they had it in their minds this assumption she was African American. Well, she was married, you know, to Harry Hall, who was African American.

PC: Yes.

AH: Her children are African American, but Gwen's not, right. Until (Ralph Carter?) came, all the faculty were white, and the first, I'm forgetting somebody, the first four, I think, were all men, right?

PC: Well, Norman is in there too.

AH: Yes, Norman came, I'm trying to think if Norman came, but I don't think he came the third year [1971]. We can look it up right there. [Editor's Note: Norman Markowitz began teaching history at Rutgers University in 1971.]

PC: It's okay.

AH: I didn't get a chance to check that.

PC: Was that true of the Livingston faculty, it's more generally, that there were few African American faculty members?

AH: No, I mean, I think not. It varied a lot from department to department. For example, in English, and this place was amazing really, Livingston College, because from the beginning, from when I first went there, Toni Cade Bambara was a member of the English department, Nikki Giovanni was in the English department, right, and there were quite a few other women and African Americans in English. [Editor's Note: Toni Cade Bambara (1939-1995), an acclaimed writer and social activist, taught at Livingston College from 1969 to 1974. Nikki Giovanni, a world-renowned poet, writer and activist, began teaching at Livingston College in 1969.] In urban studies, again, there were quite a few people who came in pretty quickly who were African American, and then, Latino, like Ed Ortiz came in, but not until maybe the third year or so. Ed became then [an] extremely influential faculty member. Quite a few of those people did not have PhDs, right. In English, obviously, they didn't have PhDs, but they were already very well-known artists, and they had just contributed tremendously in terms of the, you know, the kinds of courses they could teach, and there was no need for them to be PhDs. Other fields, they just hired people who had, oftentimes, a bachelor's degree, but had a lot of experience. They had been involved in, oftentimes, community work or had been in urban government or in Trenton. So, quite a lot of people came in, into urban studies. So, it varied a lot from department to department to department. But certainly, we wanted to hire more people who were African American. That was, you know, was felt a need to do that.

PC: You said you were an instructor.

AH: Yes.

PC: Or you didn't have a PhD yet.

AH: Yes.

PC: When did you actually get your PhD?

AH: I didn't get a PhD until '72.

PC: Okay.

AH: Right. I thought I would finish up early, but I got so immersed in Livingston College. It just took all your time.

PC: Yes.

AH: Teaching, but then all this building of the college that went on and meetings were constant. A lot of the meetings were, you know, really quite fraught with, if not tension, at least with really significant issues that you had to be engaged. People came quite prepared. There were long statements, you know, position papers we were writing and doing all that kind of thing. Even though I was pretty much a junior person, I quickly became part of a couple of significant committees and worked on those.

PC: Did Gerry Grob ever pull you aside and say, "Listen, you really need to do this, this and this, if you're going to get promoted here," or was it just.

AH: Lou Galambos did.

PC: Lou Galambos did, okay.

AH: Yes. And Lou left.

PC: He did that because he was your friend.

AH: Yes, yes.

PC: Rather than because he was department chair.

AH: Right. Grob probably did, but I think who did was Peter Stearns.

PC: Ah.

AH: Yes.

PC: Who was at Rutgers College?

AH: Yes, but he also at some point was listed as a member of our faculty.

PC: Oh, okay.

AH: And taught over at Livingston too.

PC: Did he? Okay, I didn't know that.

AH: Yes, he did.

PC: All right.

AH: He was listed as a member of our faculty. I think Peter, I can remember just sitting in his office, and he was the one who had the clearest sense of, you know, you had to publish stuff, right. Also, he would, Peter was, I liked Peter very much, he had these fine meetings at his house.

PC: Yes.

AH: Actually, Gerry did not, he, Gerry had a couple of, I don't mean meetings, I mean parties.

PC: Yes.

AH: Gerry had a couple of parties at his house, but they were more formal and so on. He was very nice.

PC: Well, as long as we're on Gerry, you can answer something for me about him?

AH: Yes.

PC: In the annual reports that the dean.

AH: Yes.

PC: Did at Livingston.

AH: Right.

PC: There's one year missing, unfortunately, and between the one that does exist and the next one, there's something that happens which involves Grob, because in the follow-up year, after Grob had left.

AH: Right.

PC: The history report that the dean has written up, which I guess must have gone to some upper-level administrator.

AH: Yes, sure.

PC: Said something along the lines of, "Well, now that Gerry Grob has left Livingston, hopefully this next year will be a quieter year."

AH: Yes.

PC: I don't know what that refers to. [laughter] Did that ring a bell with you?

AH: Sure. I don't know specifically what that was alluding to, but I think at first Gerry was enthusiastic about the potentialities of Livingston. Again, there was always this desire to maintain high quality and to reach a wide range of students, but also to serve students who were poorly prepared, and I personally felt that you never diluted standards at all. I really believed in education as empowering. I really believed in that everyone had to be, you worked very hard to make sure people could read and write and be analytic, right, because that gave black students, or any student, power.

PC: Right.

AH: We were fully committed to that. I think Gerry thought that standards were being watered down to some degree, but I don't think that happened in history. It may have happened in some other departments. I mean, you did hear things like that. So, I think he was worried about academic standards. He also, and as this was an honest disagreement, he was unhappy with the governing structure, and I think he and then, and, to some degree, Seth, and then, people like Gerry Pomper, who was much more vocal, Gerry [Grob] was never very vocal in these large assemblies, but they did not like the idea of having this entrenched one-third white, one-third black, one-third Latino, and in the students, it was with also representation, guaranteed representation, for Asians, as well.

PC: You're losing me.

AH: So.

PC: One-third, one-third, one-third.

AH: Yes, so we.

PC: That was in the student population or in student government?

AH: It was the student government.

PC: Okay.

AH: It was also in the faculty government.

PC: Ha.

AH: Yes.

PC: So, in other words, history would get left out, because they didn't have anybody other than Ralph Carter and white males and white females. So, you must have been underrepresented in some way.

AH: No, no, no, not at all. It wasn't, it didn't work that way.

PC: Okay, I'm lost. [laughter]

AH: [laughter] I'd have to explain more of it. Okay, I don't know that, I can't remember it, I have, I wanted to look this up, but how much of this was actually formally done and how much was informal agreement that this was the way we were going to work, but after a certain period of time, the idea was that anything that was passed by the faculty assembly would be done on a consensus basis in which there would be a recognition of an African American and a Latino and a white vote, yes. Now, some people said that was racist, and they said, "How can you be fighting to overcome racism, when you're entrenching racism?" or racialism, at least.

PC: Yes.

AH: Others of us said, "To build trust among people, given the history of New Jersey and the history of American racism, you have to guarantee a voice, and you have to guarantee power to African American and Latino people," right.

PC: Yes.

AH: I believed that, and I stood up for that principle. Grob did not like that principle.

PC: Yes, that, I can imagine. That's a completely legitimate debate, in which there's no easy answer.

AH: It's a very legitimate debate, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: He was also just more conservative in a lot of other ways, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: I think he felt uncomfortable with the kind of, I mean, look, some of these meetings were very raucous. At the very first, there was one assembly with students and faculty having equal [power]. That lasted for at least a year. Then too many faculty said, "Well, you're giving a right

of students to vote on curricular matters. They don't know anything yet," you know, "We're here to teach them." At first, that was there because it was this principle of democracy, and, you know, this whole idea that, well, you had to give everyone a voice, right, and you had to build trust and so on. But after only, I think, one year, they split. There was, what happened was there was then a student assembly, which had this entrenched racialist, if you wish, ethnic, whatever, principle, and then, there was a faculty [assembly], and then, there was a joint body, that we elected delegates, and they elected delegates, right, and then, they came together. So, everything had to be approved both separately, and then, that there was negotiation required to smooth it out it would go to this, you know, kind of, it's like between the Senate and the House of Reps.

PC: Right.

AH: Right, except these were, supposedly, coequal. Then, they began to reserve certain things to faculty in the curriculum, and students could have a voice in it, but couldn't vote on it the way they could at first. Anyway, I think even when we used to meet with the students, and we would meet oftentimes in these huge meetings in what was the officer's club, and then, became the theater. It's right at that (turn table?). It's one building [from Camp Kilmer] that's still standing. There was a big, it was almost like a gymnasium with a balcony, but that had a stage, and we would all pile in there, students and faculty. Some of those meetings were so raucous, and people would yell at each other, and, you know, all sorts of things were said, you know, that you had to have a tough hide for some of this, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: People would accuse each other of all sorts of things. Students oftentimes accused the faculty of being racist or elitist or whatever. There was a lot of posturing. There was a lot of stuff going on. I don't think Gerry felt comfortable in that kind of environment. Even when we no longer had these joint meetings with the students, the faculty meetings were, again, pretty raucous at times. I could tell you some stories. [laughter]

PC: You're allowed to.

AH: [laughter] This is a few years later, maybe three years or four years along the line. Irving Louis Horowitz, who, you know, comes out of a Communist Party background.

PC: Right, yes.

AH: And had written a lot of radical stuff, actually began to become more and more conservative in some of his positions in these faculty meetings. There were students who were there. I think this was not in the first year, it was later, but it was one of these extraordinary meetings we had to have to get things thrashed out, right. So, Irving is up on the stage with a microphone and talking this line, which was, from many people's point of view, very conservative. I remember sitting next to (Cleo McNally?), and she was very upset, and other faculty were upset with what Irving was saying. Then, this African American student gets up, who, I can't remember his name, but he was a very influential student. He was very well spoken and a very commanding personality and so on, and he was an important leader. I can't remember

his name right now. The students were saying, and other people were yelling, "Get off the stage, Horowitz. Get off the stage. Boo. You've had your say. We know what your position is." This African American student gets up and he takes the microphone and he says, "Let the reactionary white motherfucker speak," and everyone shut up. [laughter] Irv finished his comments, you know. Well, that, I mean, that kind of thing, I don't know that I don't know if Gerry was there or anything like that, but that was just illustrative, and I could tell you other stories like that. That one was really burned to my mind, but there were other things that went on like that. I think he did not feel, you know, I don't want to, I'm not saying anything negative about him.

PC: No.

AH: He wasn't the only one. There were many other people who just did not feel comfortable in these environments, and, you know, sometimes I didn't feel very comfortable either, not that I felt threatened or anything.

PC: Yes.

AH: But, you know, it was just, it was so chaotic, right, but some people just thought…

PC: We've done a lot of interviews with people who come from that era.

AH: Yes.

PC: But not from Livingston.

AH: Yes.

PC: I've heard many people comment on just, not negatively, but "They were doing things a completely different way than we were over here at Rutgers College."

AH: Right.

PC: Or Douglass, and "I can't imagine myself being a part of something like that" [laughter], or that they were sort of wrong-headed about it.

AH: Yes, yes, oh, of course. We oftentimes felt under siege, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: That especially over here at College Avenue, people were against us and they were trying to undermine us, and we worked hard to try to protect as much of our integrity and our autonomy as possible, right.

PC: Yes.

AH: To keep going with our principles, our way of doing things. I was really committed to most of this kind of stuff. Some of those meetings were really--you didn't know what would happen. You would go in there; you would not know what would happen. I think that some of that tone of things Gerry didn't like. I think he felt the standards were being diluted, and I think he, you know, he felt more comfortable with certain people over here [at Rutgers College], and then, he just, actually, told us one day he was going to shift his appointment, and he did. Yes, and that was what you.

PC: How would you say, having lived through the first two or three years at Livingston.

AH: Yes.

PC: Did you have a sense that what you were trying to do as a history department.

AH: Right.

PC: Was different than what, of course, you didn't have a background in another department, other than Wisconsin's.

AH: Yes.

PC: But as an undergraduate institution, what were you doing that was different, that was Livingston-esque, if you will

AH: Livingston-esque.

PC: Yes, in the history department itself?

AH: Well, I think probably several things. Partly, it was the, again, the content of the courses that some of us taught. You know we had a lot of emphasis on radical approaches to things, right, and so, that was one aspect of it. Another was the strong interdisciplinary aspect of it. So, quickly, I started teaching courses with a guy named Cy Motisu, with Barbara Lewis in poli-sci, later with Barbara Masekela, who was, you know, then was a major figure in the African National Congress in the US and later went on, you know, to become the South African representative in the UN and whose brother is Hugh Masekela, right. [Editor's Note: South African-born Barbara Masekela taught at Rutgers University as an English professor from 1973 to 1982, worked in the African National Congress, engaged in anti-apartheid activism, and became a notable diplomat, serving as South Africa's ambassador to UNESCO, France and later the United States. Hugh Masekela is a trumpeter, musician, composer and anti-apartheid activist.] Barbara and I taught courses together. I would do African history and she would do African literature. So, I taught a course fairly quickly on--what was it called? It was, actually, a course that combined religious movements and political movements. Then Dee Garrison, after she came, she and I taught a course together that was, I dealt with the South African revolution, you know, in making, it was still an anti-apartheid campaign really, and then other revolutions in southern Africa, I mean, like Mozambique and Angola, but it was mainly South Africa. So, it was called "Revolutionary and Reform Movements," and Dee did the Civil Rights Movement

and women's movement in the US, and I did southern Africa and especially South Africa, so we co-taught that. So, the idea was an interdisciplinary approach. We thought that that really distinguished to us, to go back to your question. We were interdisciplinary. We worked a lot with, of course, you know, I worked with people in African studies, so in poli-sci and literature, in particular, and with people in Africana Studies Department like Ernie Dunn and so on. But then we also worked a lot with people in other disciplines that were not area disciplines, for example, labor studies. John Wilson was quite committed to this, and I was very committed too. So, we had many students who were then double majors, and we put a strong emphasis on double-majoring. We did all so much advising in those days. A significant share of our students were double majors in history and labor studies, for example, or history and urban studies, and I would advise a lot of those students. I think Seth was very committed to this too, right, because Seth was, even though he was, you know, more moderate than I was, he, again, was really committed to this idea of the urban program and taught a lot of courses that were on urban America.

PC: Yes.

AH: Not just African American, but urban America. So, we, I think, we thought that it was not just, yes, it was interdisciplinary, it was the double major. That was another thing that distinguished us. The heavy emphasis on writing distinguished as a department. Then, we went on fairly quickly to develop these level three courses, and I taught a lot of them. I was on the committee that was the level three committee. I was the history representative of the level three committee, so we would take a regular history course and we would add on a fourth credit. The fourth credit was explicitly for writing, and we did this in the 300-level courses, above all. The students had to have had the first two required English department courses, you know, those English composition courses.

PC: Right.

AH: This was the level three of writing. The whole idea, again, was that you would prepare people to write in the discipline, building on what they had learned in these.

PC: This was Livingston-specific?

AH: This was.

PC: They weren't doing this at Douglass.

AH: No, they weren't and we thought that this was a very important thing that distinguished us, again.

PC: What was your class size approximately for a typical class?

AH: Oh, they would vary, but, I mean, in the African surveys, they were oftentimes sixty, seventy.

PC: Of those sixty students, how many would be doing this special add-on?

AH: Well, those typically were in the smaller classes.

PC: Okay.

AH: I did that oftentimes in the, I might have done it in the "Modern Africa" course.

PC: So, it was your option as a teacher whether to offer this to the students.

AH: Right.

PC: Your students could take the course without doing the option.

AH: Ah.

PC: Or was it everybody in the, if it was a level something, everybody had to do this extra one-credit writing?

AH: That's a good question.

PC: I'm just wondering how you managed to handle all the work.

AH: You managed by working hard.

PC: [laughter] Yes.

AH: That's how you managed. You put in a lot of time.

PC: Yes.

AH: A lot of people did not do these level three courses.

PC: Okay, so a level three course probably required that a student do this extra writing.

AH: Yes, I think it, that's what I was trying to remember.

PC: It might not have.

AH: I think you can, you signed on for that fourth credit.

PC: Yes, you signed on for the extra credit.

AH: I think sometimes every student did it in the smaller classes, and maybe in the bigger classes, some did and some didn't, right, yes. Yes, you had a longer research paper. That's basically what it was.

PC: Yes.

AH: Yes. So, we thought we were training people. I think we believed in this making sure everyone had "non-Western" you know, courses. We believed in the heavy emphasis on writing. We believed in a lot of interdisciplinary work, and we oftentimes tried to play down lecturing as much as possible. I talked endlessly with John Wilson and people in other departments about how to do this, and the level three was nice, because it gave us that extra, it was like a section, and you could do more discussion.

PC: Gwen, what was Gwen's field when she was hired? What was she understood to be?

AH: Latin America.

PC: Latin America.

AH: Yes.

PC: So, she and you were the non-Western, if we can use that term, component.

AH: Right, yes. We didn't use like term, but.

PC: Why isn't … [phone rings]

AH: Sorry, I thought I turned this off.

PC: That's okay. We'll pause.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Transcribed and reviewed by Kathryn Tracy Rizzi 8/17/2010
Reviewed by William Buie 12/07/2016
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