RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH JEROME AUMENTE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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BENTONVILLE, VIRGINIA
JUNE 26, 2017

TRANSCRIPT BY

FANTASTIC TRANSCRIPTS

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Professor *Emeritus* Jerome Aumente on June 26, 2017, in Bentonville, Virginia, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for having me here today.

Jerome Aumente: Thank you for your interest. I appreciate it.

SI: I have been looking forward to this interview for a while. Your name has come up in many contexts. First, tell me when and where you were born.

JA: I was born on September 26, 1937, in Jersey City, New Jersey, at the Medical Center.

SI: The Hague Center [The Margaret Hague Maternity Hospital]?

JA: Yes.

SI: For the record, what were your parents' names?

JA: My mother's name was Mildred, my father's name was (Louis?). My grandparents emigrated from Italy, and then, both of my parents were born here in the US.

SI: Do you have any idea how they met?

JA: No, actually. It's a good question. It's too late to get an answer almost; perhaps in the next life, I can ask that.

SI: Do you know what your parents did for a living?

JA: Yes. My father worked with Western Electric and he was in the personnel department. My mother worked in a variety of jobs in terms of clothing making. She worked as an usher at a movie theater in the Greenville Section of Jersey City. Finally, she worked at Western Electric in Kearny, New Jersey.

They both were supportive, they were understanding, of what I wanted to do, even though they didn't understand some of it. For instance, I was one of the first in the family to go to college and ended up majoring in English literature and minoring in French literature, which seemed to be a little bit of a question mark in terms of, "What do you do with that after you graduate?" It's an interesting point in terms of the relationship with Rutgers, in that I went to an English--I was at Rutgers University, in the Newark College of Arts and Science--and I was enjoying the studies, but, then, starting to wonder about, "How do I apply this? I mean, what happens after I graduate?" I went to an English Club picnic in 1956, '57, and I met everybody from the student newspaper, *The Observer*, in Newark, the student paper.

I liked them and I said, "Maybe I could try journalism," and I had no background, no training in it. I said, "Well, what I could do is go down to Camp Kilmer and I'd like to interview young people, of my own age at that point, college graduates or not, who were in the Hungarian Revolution and were temporarily being housed at Camp Kilmer." That was in '56, was the

Revolution; '57, they were absorbed into the life and culture of the New Brunswick area. I ended up interviewing a number of people, young people my own age, who were part of the Hungarian Revolution, wrote a story about it in *The Observer* and that sort of opened up my interest in journalism.

[Editor's Note: Beginning on October 23, 1956, Hungarians revolted against the Communist government installed by the Soviet Union after World War II. Following an invasion and brutal occupation by Soviet forces, most resistance ceased by November 10th. Approximately 200,000 Hungarians fled the country after the Hungarian Revolution. Many settled in the United States.]

It was odd to go back there to Camp Kilmer in 1969, many years later, and have Livingston College being built all around us. I mean, my first, or one of my first offices, at Rutgers was in the camp commander's building, and then, moved to a dormitory for a temporary office, and then, finally, Lucy Stone Hall was built and we were able to move into that building. You can stop me whenever.

SI: No, this is good. I want to come back later to the Hungarian refugee article, because that has come up recently.

JA: Sure.

SI: They had a large conference on that subject last year that our program was involved in.

JA: Yes.

SI: Your article was featured prominently there.

JA: Yes. Well, it's interesting in that, I think it was, is it Jim Niessen?

SI: Yes. [Editor's Note: Professor Aumente is referring to Dr. James Niessen, a World History Librarian at the Alexander Library at Rutgers-New Brunswick. Dr. Niessen utilized Professor Aumente's article from *The Observer* and related archival documents in a presentation as part of the "Cold War at Camp Kilmer: Hungarian '56ers, Cubans, and US Refugee Policy in New Jersey" Conference, held at the Alexander Library on March 2, 2016.]

JA: Had contacted me and said they had found a letter. Actually, I have it in here somewhere, a letter that I had written to the PR people in the Army, thanking them for the help they gave us and assuring them that one of the requests of one of the people I interviewed [would be honored]. He was concerned about his identity, and I was very careful to be sure that there was no identification with him. It was sort of this strange kind of living--in one life as a student, and then, suddenly, going back and finding my place at Rutgers being at Livingston College.

In the way of background, I had been, before that, working with *The Newark Evening News* on the State desk, covering, basically, the Central Jersey region, including Rutgers and Princeton Universities. I started to get the bug, the idea that I wanted to, perhaps, be at a university at that point--didn't know where that was going. I was primarily working for about four years at *The*

[*Detroit*] *News* after I graduated. I became news editor of *The Observer*, and then, editor of the paper. At the same time, I was working at *The Newark Evening News* part-time while I was going to school. So, all the pieces started to come together in a random way, but they started to fit.

Again, it struck me as really unusual that I was back at Kilmer, that most of the barracks had been torn down. The building [of the campus] was going on. There was a lot of mud. I mean, the first student paper at Livingston was called *Mudslide* and the editor of it, Chuck Rose, wrote to me within recent years. He's now a criminal court judge in Colorado and, at the time, was editor of this newspaper.

In any event, I had worked for *The Newark Evening News*. Then, my wife and I decided that we'd like to see Europe. We figured that we had--my wife Mary--we had about six months' worth of "Europe on Five Dollars a Day," if we could do it. [laughter] So, we ordered a Karmann Ghia from Princeton Volkswagen, picked it up in Germany, after sailing across on one of the Holland America Line ships. We lived and worked in Europe for about a year and four months.

SI: What time period was that?

JA: This would be '64 to '65, basically fourteen months, in that period, and we were able to work in Paris, and then, I was doing some freelancing in terms of magazine work. We were able to travel around Europe. So, we got an apartment in Paris, and then, we moved to Spain for the winter, and then, continued traveling, and then, came back. Basically, when I came back--I was in Europe writing back to newspapers, and it wasn't like it is now. I mean, now, unfortunately, a lot of the newspapers are on life support, but, at that point, it was easy--not easy, but possible--to [make a living].

I had gone to Columbia Graduate School of Journalism. I had [completed] undergraduate, four years, at Rutgers, and then, the studies at Columbia, and then, from there, *The Newark News*, *Cranford Citizen and Chronicle*, a weekly paper in New Jersey, and then, as I said, went to Columbia Graduate School, worked for *The News*, went to Europe, came back. I had an offer to go back to *The Newark News*, another from *Look* Magazine, another from *The Detroit News.*

I was really intrigued with *The Detroit News*, because I was all of twenty-five, twenty-six years old, twenty-seven, and they said, "Well, if you come here, what do you want to do?" I said, "Well, I'd like to have a specialized beat in terms of writing, and I'd like to go for a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University," and they said, "All right. If you're any good, we'll support you for both of these things." [Editor's Note: The Nieman Foundation for Journalism, founded at Harvard University in 1938, offers the one-year Nieman Fellowship for journalists and publishes the quarterly *Nieman Reports* journal on journalism affairs.]

So, I selected them out of the three or four offers that I had and became really interested in urban affairs and became a specialist in urban affairs reporting at *The Detroit News*, and then, in '67-'68, went to Harvard on the Nieman Fellowship. So, the more I kept immersing myself in

university life, the more I kept saying, "This is [ideal]." I didn't know where the hell I was going to do it, but I sort of knew that I wanted to be at a university full-time.

Things worked out really well at *The Detroit News*. They were really "fat and happy." They were the largest afternoon daily at that point, four or five hundred thousand circulation a day. They basically were supportive in the work that I did in terms of developing my writing. At the same time I was writing for *The News*, I started writing for things like *City Magazine, Design & Environment*, magazines that dealt with urban issues. So, when I came to Rutgers to teach …

[RECORDING PAUSED]

JA: Well, basically, I had built up a reputation in urban affairs writing and reporting, and, at the same time, I was thinking of the possibilities of teaching at a university. When I came back from Europe in 1964-'65, I knew Mason Gross through my undergraduate days at Rutgers-Newark, and then, after I started covering the universities for *The Newark Evening News*. I got to know the people at Rutgers. [Editor's Note: Dr. Mason W. Gross served as Rutgers University President from 1959 to 1971.]

So, when I came back from Europe, I had an offer to teach at Rutgers College and, besides Rutgers College, to also be the State House Representative for Rutgers University, a liaison in government. I liked the idea of it. I talked to Mason Gross and to George Holsten about this, but, then, I decided I really needed a few more years. I had four or five years of reporting, but I wanted to spend a little bit more time in terms of reporting. So, I decided to wait.

Then, in 1967, '68, after the Nieman Fellowship at Harvard, a possibility came up at Rutgers again to teach. In this particular case, it was at Rutgers College. Dick Hixson, Richard Hixson, H-I-X-S-O-N, was the head of the program there. I was really interested in what they were doing, and actually accepted a teaching position at Rutgers College, but Dick made the mistake of introducing me to Ernest Lynton. [laughter] I don't know if you know Ernest.

SI: Yes, he was the first Dean at Livingston College.

JA: Yes, he was the first. He was really the founder of Livingston. He was a Renaissance man in every sense of the word. He was a physicist, but, yet, his knowledge spanned all the arts and sciences. He was extraordinarily devoted to creating a different kind of place, a socially-sensitive place, an academically-interesting place, an experimental place. He did all of these things.

So, Dick Hixson, in all fairness, knowing that I might get lured away, still arranged for me to have a drink at the faculty club with Ernest. Two hours later, I was convinced that I wanted to go to Livingston College, which was just opening in '69, and not go to Rutgers College to teach.

[Editor's Note: Post-World War II growth necessitated the expansion of the physical plant of Rutgers-New Brunswick. However, space limitations on existing campuses precluded the possibility of major expansion in the City of New Brunswick. The US Army's closing of Camp Kilmer in Piscataway and Rutgers University's acquisition of 540 acres of the former

embarkation base, adjacent to the University Heights Campus (later Busch Campus), furnished the University with more campus space, albeit in Piscataway. Rutgers University planned to build several undergraduate residential colleges on the land, although only Livingston College came to fruition.

In the years preceding the opening of the new college, the shaping of Livingston's mission evolved in response to crosscurrents in society. In 1965, the Curriculum Planning Committee, under the guidance of Founding Dean Ernest A. Lynton, undertook the task of designing Livingston College as an innovative, experimental institution dedicated to the teaching of the social sciences. By 1969, after urban civil unrest across the nation and demonstrations by African-American students at Rutgers protesting racial inequalities, Livingston planners expanded the College's mission to emphasize diversity and began to recruit and enroll minority students.

Under the leadership of Dean Lynton, Livingston College in Piscataway opened in 1969 as Rutgers-New Brunswick's first coeducational undergraduate college. Livingston existed until 2006, when the Rutgers-New Brunswick liberal arts colleges merged into the School of Arts and Sciences.]

The avenue in was a Division of Urban Planning and Community Development that was then--again, one of Ernest's, really, foresights in knowing where things were going. At this point, '67-'68, we had the riots and the civil disturbances, we had the assassination of Martin Luther King--everything was boiling. It was an important place to be if you were in a university and saying, "How do we direct some of our resources toward dealing with these kinds of issues, and in a precise, kind of academic, literal way? At the same time, how do you keep the spirit there?"

[Editor's Note: In April and May 1968, riots erupted in 125 US cities, including Chicago, Baltimore and Washington, DC, sparked by the assassination of Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968.]

So, in any event, Ernest was really interested in the fact that I had done a lot of writing and a lot of reporting in urban affairs. At that point, there was a Division of Urban Studies and Community Development, Urban Planning and Community Development, at Livingston that was being created, and we thought this would be a good fit. I went to; excuse me a minute.

SI: Sure.

JA: Thank you. I sound like Custer talking about the end of the warfare. [laughter] Basically, the Division of Urban Planning and Policy Development was the same unit that then, eventually, became the Edward Bloustein School of Planning and Policy. So, I came in and started setting up a program in Urban Communications within the Division. We were quite lucky, again, in terms of support and timing.

SI: Was this all part of the planning stages for the College, or had it already opened by the time you came?

JA: No. The College had not opened. I mean, it was literally--I mean, I talked with him in the Spring of '69 and by the Fall of '69 was the opening year of Livingston. We started out with a focus on urban communications, "How do we deal with all forms of traditional mass media? How do we build new resources in the way of [new technologies]?"

Cable television was going to save us all at that point. That was the [solution]. Municipalities were setting up cable television licenses. The idea was that, in exchange for a cable company coming in, they would also give channels for municipal, for library, for schools, for learning, for citizen exchange. So, that was sort of one of the first catalysts for some of the stuff that we were doing. Then, I was teaching in the undergraduate program in community development, but, also, teaching in the graduate program, the Master's in City and Regional Planning.

I had a group of hot-shot MCRP students. I had young men--basically, we're pretty close to the same age, maybe five or six years, ten years' difference--but a lot of them were really interested, again, in experimentation. They were visually focused. At that point, in '69, I don't know if you remember--or, actually, have read about it--the idea of Portapaks, the idea of Sony Portapaks, to take television out of the studio?

SI: Okay.

JA: But, to have a portable--heavy unit, but still a handheld unit--that could allow you to get out of a fixed studio place and get out into the field. So, I had a group of [students]. There was Barry Orton, O-R-T-O-N, and Jay Miller, M-I-L-L-E-R, Elon Soltes, E-L-O-N S-O-L-T-E-S. These were graduate students who really wanted to be in communications and in mass media and were attracted to the idea that we would have an urban communications program within their MCRP or at the undergraduate level.

Ernest Lynton was quite supportive of this and, basically, gave us the basement of Lucy Stone Hall. We were able to start getting a series of grants and support to build up the resources at Lucy Stone. We created something called The Urban Communications Teaching and Research Center and that was the vehicle, that we were able to organize students into the program, but we were also able to get a series of support grants. If you'd like, I can just describe some of that, or if you want a break.

SI: Maybe we can go back and unpack some of this.

JA: Yes, sure.

SI: I want to go back to your years growing up in Jersey City.

JA: Yes.

SI: Were you there throughout your youth or did you move around at all?

JA: Yes, [laughter] the moving was to Bayonne, which is only forty blocks away, but, basically, I grew up in Jersey City, in Greenville. We originally were Downtown in all of these

brownstones that are now worth millions of dollars apiece. We had my family on one floor. We had an aunt and uncle on the second floor. On the third floor, we had other relatives.

We were basically renting this brownstone in Jersey City, and, again, it was near the public library, it was near all kinds of little parks. We didn't know what we had. I mean, I'm sort of stunned when I go through Jersey City Downtown now and see the high-rises and the Waterfront development and everything else, but, in any event, we lived there.

My father commuted out to Kearny and my mother also worked for Western Electric and, eventually, ended up doing really fine, fine work that involved electronic materials. My father continued with personnel. It's interesting with him, because he had a very limited education up through high school, and then, had to leave high school during the Depression and ended up with the CCCs, the Civilian Conservation Corps. He was assigned to Idaho, as a matter of fact.

[Editor's Note: The Civilian Conservation Corps was an agency that was part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal, which employed young unemployed males in outdoor conservation projects from 1933 to 1942.]

We talked about this, his work there, but not enough. Like in all the things that you regret as you get older and wish you had talked about this and talked about that, it sort of motivated me to [act]. I'm working on a book now involving the Civilian Conservation Corps and the fact that it built Skyline Drive and the Shenandoah National Park, or helped build it. I am interested in that issue, not only because of him, but because there was something like five hundred families that were displaced in order to build the park, farm families that were up in the mountains. So, I'm in the middle of doing research and doing some writing now about those.

In any event, we lived in Jersey City Downtown. Then, we moved to the Greenville Section. I went to St. Paul's Grammar School and St. Aloysius High School, and this was my experience in terms of being there. The nuns were not happy about my going to Rutgers. They wanted me to go to Seton Hall or to St. Peter's. So, I told them that I wanted to be a pharmacist, which I was seriously thinking about at that point. I said there was a pharmacy school at Rutgers. So, I was able to get my records transferred to Rutgers and was able to go there.

I went to Rutgers and, within a year, was convinced that I didn't want to do pharmacy, that I wanted to write and that I wanted to do something with words. That was coming out, but, in any event, in terms of your question about Jersey City, that you see a pattern there.

SI: What were the neighborhoods like, in terms of were they melting pots or were they primarily one ethnicity more than others?

JA: We grew up in a little bit of multi-ethnicity. We had, the group of kids that I grew up with, a gang. It was called the Cheyennes, actually. We were the Cheyennes and we basically did things--like, for entrepreneurship, we needed jackets. So, we ended up with yellow-and-blue Cheyenne jackets that came out of a little radio that we auctioned off and raised the money through that.

Gangs were fairly harmless then. They weren't the "West Side Story," they weren't blades and guns. They were basically playing streetball and stickball and things like this, but the gang itself, in terms of ethnicity, it was predominantly Irish, a few Italian-American, a few Polish-American, but it was a nice mix. It served our purpose.

I mean, we were not in a really poor neighborhood. We traveled as a gang because there were other gangs around us. I mean, you had to be part of a group, a little bit for self-protection, a little bit more just to have support. So, we had the Cherokees, the Cheyennes--this sounds crazy [laughter]--the Lords, at one point, and, basically, each group had its own territory.

When I was at Livingston and we were having our faculty meetings--and we had the various departments fighting for funds and fighting for policy and things like this--I remember one meeting that was particularly tough. At one point, I said, "Wait a minute. Why don't we just stop, and then, reorganize ourselves into gangs? We can have an English gang, we can have a History gang, we can have a Computer gang. We'll get our own jackets, and then, we can all go our separate ways," and this, in a crazy kind of way, broke the tension that was there for that meeting. For years after that, I had faculty coming up to me saying, "That was a good idea about the gang jackets. Maybe we should've done that." [laughter]

In any event, with Jersey City, there were pockets of real poverty there. We were not part of that, but we were in a working-class neighborhood. Most of the kids would end up going to public high school. The ones who were able to get scholarships--and I was a "scholarship baby." I had a scholarship to St. Paul's School, a scholarship to St. Aloysius, a full scholarship to Rutgers, a partial scholarship to Columbia University, and then, a full scholarship/fellowship to Harvard. So, I'm really sensitive to that, to the need to support that. We've worked out our estate planning so that Rutgers and Columbia and Harvard will all feel the results in a positive way--but ask your questions.

SI: You mentioned, I believe you said, you were the first in your family to go to college.

JA: One of the first; I had another cousin, yes.

SI: Did you have siblings?

JA: A sister, Judith.

SI: Younger?

JA: Younger. She wanted to be a nurse. I supported her ideas of being a nurse, but I insisted that she really should look into a four-year nursing program. So, she ended up doing that, and then, going on to graduate school, and then, doing a lot of medical consulting and teaching.

SI: Did your parents encourage you to look at college or were they more telling you to think about looking at a job?

JA: That's interesting, because they never [pressed] the whole "roots and wings" thing, the whole idea of, "Get off, get on your own, learn something, do something--but, at the same time, don't lose where your roots are." There was a little bit of that, but there was never once any kind of pressure, either to go or not to go. They basically trusted us and were supportive of us, but they did not say, "You have to do this," or, "You have to do that."

Now, in my father's case, he had to leave high school to help support the family. I mean, the way the CCCs worked, they got thirty dollars a month for six months. Five dollars was for them, twenty-five dollars went to the family for food, back home. It was automatically sent back. So, I think they were sensitive to that issue and didn't want to force us into having to do something, "Go to work, do this, do that."

They didn't always understand everything that we were doing, but they were beautifully supportive. I mean, in a way, like, I think I may have carried some of that DNA into the University, to be aware of what it is really like to try to find yourself and survive within a family that is in transition, when your own life is in transition, when your whole livelihood is in transition or there's a big question mark.

SI: You entered Rutgers-Newark in 1952, correct?

JA: It would be '55 to '59.

SI: Okay.

JA: Yes.

SI: At that time, what was the Rutgers-Newark Campus like? Was it still in the old brewery?

JA: Yes.

SI: A hodgepodge of buildings.

JA: I mean, 40 Rector Street was where we [met]--it was one of the main buildings--and it was basically an old brewery. If you looked up at the ceiling, what they did was, they just cut the tops of the brewery barrels, and then, cemented over them. So, if you looked up, you would see the remnants of the brewery, and then, on warm days, you would smell and taste the remnants. I mean, you literally had the beer and the hops and everything else coming through the walls.

The other part of the campus was over near the Newark Public Library, near the park, and the library was there, the administrative headquarters was there. I found, actually, that being news editor, and then, editor of *The Observer* opened a lot of doors to discussions and ideas with administrators that, later on, were useful to me. At the time, I didn't know what it was, I didn't know why or how I would use this, but, basically, it was interesting to see the creation of a university, because Rutgers-Newark was expanding at that point. It's nowhere where it is now, I mean, in terms of a full campus, but it had enough there and enough resources.

[Editor's Note: For more information on the history of the Rutgers-Newark Campus, see Harold S. Wechsler's "Brewing Bachelors: The History of the University of Newark," published in *Paedagogica Historica* (vol. 46, no. 1-2, 2010, pp. 229-249).]

I joined a fraternity called Glove and Stick. It was on Broad Street, nearby. We didn't go for any of the Greek names, but, in this particular fraternity, there were people there like Bob Curvin. I don't know if you know him, C-U-R-V-I-N, but I think he's passed away.

SI: He passed away recently.

JA: But, yes, Pat Curvin was one of the assistant deans at Livingston, and his wife. He was so heavily involved in the history and the fight in Newark for equality, and Bob was a good friend. He was a fraternity member, but there were other people like this as well. So, the fraternity served its purpose, getting us to know each other. You asked about multiple ethnicity, and there, in that fraternity, there was a nice mix--of income levels, of people levels and things like this.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Robert Curvin (1934-2015) co-founded the Newark chapter of CORE (Congress of Racial Equality) and worked on the campaign of Kenneth A. Gibson, Newark's first African-American mayor. He became known for confronting issues surrounding urban poverty in his career in academia, including at the New School and the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers, as a member of *The New York Times'* Editorial Board and as Director of the Ford Foundation's Urban Poverty Program.]

SI: Was the fraternity primarily for social purposes or was there any kind of social awareness aspect?

JA: Well, a lot of us who were in the fraternity--well, it was very small, only like forty. I think our fraternity house was over the little theater that probably showed X-rated movies--I can't remember the name of it--and then, the insurance building was alongside of it, but, basically, it was one large meeting hall. Many of us were involved in the yearbook, in the newspapers and some in sports. I had a feeling that all of us were "fighting the good fight," in terms of trying to stay in school and trying to be able to afford it.

SI: I know that, at this point, at Rutgers in New Brunswick, they were very few minorities as part of the student body. Was the case similar up at Newark or was it more diverse?

JA: No, it was the same. I mean, it was basically a mirror image. It was predominantly white. I mean, Bob Curvin, African-American, black, turned out to be one of the leaders in the State in terms of this, but they were in the minority, really in the minority. When we get to Livingston, there's something that relates to that in terms of training minority journalists, or I could mention it now.

SI: Of course, go ahead.

JA: When I had been covering urban affairs for *The Detroit News*, I was in the middle of what were the civil disturbances of [1967]. I had just finished, I had spent six months on the road

doing a series about the major cities of the Midwest, Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Detroit and Indianapolis. I came back and I was getting ready to go to Harvard for the fall for the Nieman Fellowship. Then, we had the civil disturbances in July of '67. I covered that, and then, went to Harvard.

In any event, in response to your question about minorities, the Kerner Report came out after the civil disturbances and, basically, said, "Look at your newsrooms, look at your radio and TV stations and your newspapers and your magazines. Minorities, Latino and black, are invisible." So, one of the first things that I did at Rutgers, as we were setting up the Urban Communications Program, I worked with the New Jersey Press Association and we said, "We've got to respond to this Kerner Report. The Report is saying we're living in two worlds," I don't know, or three worlds, "that are unequal."

[Editor's Note: President Lyndon B. Johnson created the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders on July 28, 1967, to investigate the causes of civil unrest in Los Angeles' Watts section in 1965, Chicago's Division Street in 1966 and Newark and Detroit in 1967. Chaired by Illinois Governor Otto Kerner, Jr., the Commission issued "The Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders" on February 29, 1968, which named white racism and a lack of economic opportunity as a major cause of frustration in the African-American community.]

What we did was set up a program to identify ten mid-career black and Latino people who wanted to become journalists and had, maybe, something in their background that helped them. We ran a program within the year after I had come to Livingston, and we were able to get ten black and Latino journalists--at that point, they were journalists-to-be--but we taught them for two days a week. We used Rutgers College as a classroom, and at Livingston, and then, three days a week, they were interns at newspapers. All of them had job offers at the end.

This may be when we start getting into about Livingston in more detail. Then, we can talk about it, but that basically was, there was a series of roadblocks and blanks. I mean, we started saying, "Where are the roadblocks? Where are the blanks? How do we start opening this pathway up a little bit?" but I must admit, in growing up in Jersey City, that we had little contact, little or no contact, with minorities. They had their neighborhood, we had ours. I regret that, but, as a nine-year-old, it's hard to do anything about that. I mean, it's hard enough organizing the Cheyennes to get their jackets, never mind trying to do something useful.

SI: Before we leave Jersey City, you went to Catholic school. What did you think of your education there? Did religion play a big role in your life growing up? Was that one of the reasons why you went to Catholic school?

JA: Yes, I mean, it did, yes. We had Dominican nuns in grammar school, and then, we had Sisters of Charity nuns in high school. They were all extraordinarily dedicated to what they were doing and, in a way, we didn't know--we were too young to realize--how much, I mean, they were life-giving.

They gave their lives for this. It might not always be exactly what we wanted to do and there might be a good or bad teaching experience, but, overall, there was an atmosphere of support, in

a time when, if you think about it, in '51 to '55, we were coming out, we were in the middle of, Korea. We were not yet at Vietnam. There were a whole bunch of question marks. We were still, basically, looking toward factories for the jobs that we were going to go to.

We didn't know what was going to happen to us, but the nuns were able to give us a sense that the life of the mind, the life of the soul, is important and, in some contexts, this worked. I mean, at St. Aloysius, we had a high number of people who went on to college and, I think, on to careers. So, I value that time, yes. St. Aloysius is closed. I think St. Paul's--I don't know whether the grammar school still exists--but, I mean, there's been shrinkage.

There's been a lot of shrinkage, and I regret that, but I was grateful for the opportunity to do this, because it opened up, as I said, possibilities, not finishing high school, and then, going on to some kind of a job in a factory. I think my parents were aware of that. You asked before about that, and I think they saw the road out.

SI: You said that you were able to go to these schools because of scholarships. Did you also have to work, though?

JA: Yes. Well, I mean, I started working when I was seven years old, actually. This sounds crazy, [laughter] but we were collecting newspaper and cardboard before the trend toward doing this. We collected our newspapers and our cardboard and we sold it to a wholesaler who came around, weighed it and gave us whatever, X pennies a pound or whatever it was, a penny a pound, or who knows?

SI: Was that during the war?

JA: This would be--I would be about seven or eight years old, I'm seventy-nine now--so that it was during and just after.

SI: Okay.

JA: Yes, it would be, basically, 1944, '42, '43. So, in any event, that was probably my first job, collecting this. In all fairness, it was my grandfather, had a number of jobs that he worked at, but one of the jobs he created for himself was to be a scavenger in a dump. There was something called Boyle's Thirty Acres, which was a dump, somewhat Downtown. He was able to go through this dump in his spare time and collect newspapers, magazines, cardboard, metal, and then, create [an income]. [Editor's Note: Boyle's Thirty Acres, an 80,000-seat boxing venue in Jersey City, was constructed to host a World Heavyweight Championship fight between Jack Dempsey and Georges Carpentier in 1921 and demolished in 1927.]

Basically, he was able to buy his own three-story home, four-story home, was able to build a very elaborate backyard, storage, and then, a garden, and then, vegetables and grape vines. Somewhere downstairs, I think I still have his winepress, but, in any event, the DNA must've, again, passed to me, because I was able to do a little bit of scavenging and do this. Then, we would do things like, at Mother's Day and Father's Day, we would buy boxes of wax carnations--

white if the mother or father were dead, pink if they were alive--and sell these on the steps of the church and earn money. I mean, it was small money, but it was the idea of doing that.

Then, in high school, when I was living in Bayonne, I worked for a drugstore, bicycle peddling all around Bayonne, making deliveries, night-and-day kind of thing. So, I was working, and then, I continued working when I went on to college. I mean, I worked in the bookstore, I worked in the library of the University. I then got a job working four to midnight at *The Newark Evening News* for my last two years while I was going to school, and then, also, editing the paper. All this stuff, I don't want to make it sound like whining, because each thing was useful. It was time-consuming.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

JA: But, in any event, the work continued even in graduate school. I worked part-time weekends at *The Newark News*, had worked as a stringer for *The New York Times* while I was going to Columbia. So, the idea of working was always there.

SI: Were you commuting from Bayonne to Newark?

JA: Yes, and that was a trek. I mean, basically, I used to--I don't think I could do it today, or anybody could do it today--but you know where Rector Street is. Then, there's the--whatever, I can't remember the name of that highway--that was right up against Rector, up against 40 Rector Street, but, then, on the other side was one of the rivers.

I had a '51 Chevy, which I prized. I would drive that out early in the morning, go beyond the docks, down near the river, and then, find a free parking space, leave the car, and then, somehow, at midnight, walk from Broad and Market all the way down. [laughter] I would go at midnight to go get the car to go back to Jersey City. Other times, when I didn't have a car, it was buses, two or three buses at night, or, once in a while, I could cajole my father into driving out and picking me up, if I had a big exam or something the next day that I had to worry about.

SI: I would like to ask about both *The Observer* and *The Newark Evening News*. Let us start with *The Observer*.

JA: Sure, okay.

SI: What kind of material were you writing on and events were you covering? Also, please, describe the newsroom atmosphere.

JA: Yes. Well, we were right across the street from 40 Rector Street, down in the basement. There were connected houses that had been bought up by the University, and downstairs, as you stepped down into this basement, this is where *The Observer* was. We had a good array of socially-conscious people--I mean, everybody who's there because they aspired to be there--not only at the paper, but at the College.

We had to put up with a little bit of, "Oh, you're not really part of Rutgers. You're College of Arts and Sciences." I remember, we had one bloody fight with *The Targum*, because there was an election for one of the student body things--I can't remember what it was--but the ballot box was stuffed. Apparently, somebody got their hands on a ballot box and put some other ballots in that were favoring their candidate. So, we, of course, covered the story. *Targum* freaked out.

The people at *Targum* said, "Look what is happening to the name of Rutgers, that we should take away the name of Rutgers from Rutgers-Newark, because it's sullying the history and the name." So, that was the kind of interchange, that we were always sort of second-best in the eyes of the people. Then, down in New Brunswick, there was second-best and third-best and fourth-best, depending on which of the colleges you went to and what your values were, whatever, or just self-preservation--you wanted to be in the best place.

SI: I know that there was a rivalry between Livingston, Rutgers and Douglass.

JA: Oh, yes, [laughter] I mean, Livingston was "the bad boy/bad girl" of the whole thing. I mean, see, the thing to remember, I mentioned before that Rutgers came about--Rutgers-Livingston--came about in this whole period of, it was the summer of--I was trying to get back to the date.

SI: 1969?

JA: Yes, '69 was basically Woodstock. We had Woodstock, we had a whole series of issues involving the cities, we had, as I mentioned, the assassination of King. So, we were really, really focused on those kinds of issues--but the question again, in terms of Livingston?

SI: I just noted that there was the rivalry between the undergraduate colleges.

JA: Oh, there was.

SI: Livingston, Rutgers and Douglass.

JA: Okay, well, what I was describing was the "soil" that Livingston was planted in. Ernest was really quite aware of the issues of minority/majority and the opportunities to go to college. So, one of the things that was built into the Livingston concept was the idea of a more flexible admission reviewing process. I mean, there were goals--there were goals that we wanted to increase the number of Latinos, we wanted to increase the number of African-American Blacks who had an opportunity, and we did. I mean, Livingston became very visible throughout the State as a place that was doing active recruiting and successful recruiting.

I mean, I remember, there was somebody by the name of Rick Taylor, R-I-C-K T-A-Y-L-O-R, and Rick was an African-American from Plainfield who was one of the most decorated Vietnam veterans in the region at that time. I remember, when I moved into my new office at Livingston, which was a dormitory room temporarily assigned to us, Rick Taylor came in, in the office, and he said, "I heard about the work you're doing." He said, "Can I read some of the things that you've done? Be

cause I want to decide whether I want to do any work with you."

So, I was sort of put in the position of being on trial, which is fair enough. He read the stuff and he came back and became one of my best students that I've ever had. He eventually became Mayor of Plainfield, years down the road. [Editor's Note: Reverend Richard "Rick" Taylor served as Mayor of Plainfield from 1984 to 1990.]

He was just one of many stories like that that I can give you in terms of people who were attracted to Livingston, had doors opening that said, "Think about us," not so much, "Just come in," but, "Think about us, and then, we'll do everything we can to make you succeed." This became part of the Livingston aura, in a way, the idea that you could take people from a variety of groups--and then, another minority, within the white minority, was these kids who came down from Woodstock. I mean, there was a totally different generation of experimentation going on at that point.

The other colleges were supporting it in their own way, but I think Livingston was a place where a lot of things could happen very quickly. This could be, again, as I said, [an opportunity for] these disparate groups who needed more access. At Livingston, we would spend days talking about curriculum, talking about, "How do we get more people involved? What is student involvement all about?" Sometimes, we would shut down the College for the day and it would be, basically, a series of meetings and seminars.

I can't help but think that this was really valuable. I mean, I have--I was going over notes, getting ready for your discussion--and I can't count the number of times where I find students either calling me, sending me books, later on, that they'd written, or being at events, like at the Livingston Legacy events, and then, basically, saying, "You gave me confidence. You gave me the opportunity to do something. That Portapak may have been too heavy to carry as a woman, but I went on to RKO Television from there."

So, we had all kinds of things going. We had the women's rights, feminist concerns. We had, as teachers, Tony Cade, Nikki Giovanni, I mean, people like this, who really could get right to the heart of things. Then, you had urban whites, like myself, who came out of a whole different experiment. I mean, actually, when Ernest Lynton hired us--there were several of us--there was a Carnegie Grant to hire atypical, nontraditional faculty. We didn't come through the usual route. [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.]

Tom Hartmann is a good example. I mean, I noticed that Tom did some interviews with you and they're up on your website--but people like Tom Hartmann, people like Roger Cohen, who was basically with the TV/radio side of Public Relations, and then, used to broadcast the football games, but he basically came to our department that we were setting up. I mean, when we get to the Livingston creation of the Department, that starts to fit.

[Editor's Note: Thomas B. Hartmann served as US Marine Corps pilot in the Pacific in World War II, earned his degree from Princeton on the GI Bill and taught in private schools until 1963

when he became the Assistant Director of the New Jersey Office of Economic Opportunity. He later served as Deputy Director of the Governor's Commission regarding the Newark Riots of 1967 before joining the faculty at Livingston and, eventually, becoming a Professor of Journalism in SCILS at the time of his retirement. His Rutgers Oral History Archives' interviews can be accessed here.]

SI: I would like to ask one question about that, and then, go back. Since you brought it up, the way you are describing how the mission evolved at Livingston in general--usually, the way I hear the story is, it started out with the idea of being an honors college, and then, the diversity mission was superimposed on that after the riots--but the way you are describing it makes it sound more organic, that the two ideas were more woven together. How do you see it?

JA: Well, in all fairness, I mean, my experience starts in '69 and, then, the College was three or four years in the making. The honors college may very well have been a primary motive at that point, because it preceded all the stuff I told you about in terms of social unrest and concerns and, "What do we do about it?" All I do know is that when I talked to Ernest and decided to come to Livingston and say no to Rutgers College, I was aware of his concern about, "How do we build a place that is equal, that is open, that it tries different kinds of things?"

I mean, you have to remember, there's something else going on at that point in '69--'68, '69, '70. There was something called *Change* Magazine, which was a magazine about higher education. It was starting to get some well-respected readership, but it was looking at experimental colleges, Livingston being just one of them, Stony Brook, there were several others. There were five colleges that were doing a lot of experimentation and Livingston was in that mode.

I mean, I remember, I got to know David Riesman, a sociologist from Harvard, very well when I was up at Harvard for my own studies. I remember, at one point, he came to Livingston. He was doing a sort of a study of experimental schools and new schools. Hampton, Livingston and the others that were in this mix, I mean, they were breaking away, saying, "Hey, the three-hour, sit-still-and-don't-move, in-the-classroom kind of thing isn't working anymore, and we need to reshape this a little bit." [Editor's Note: Dr. David Riesman (1909-2002) served on the faculty of the University of Chicago from 1946 to 1958, where he published his landmark work *The Lonely Crowd* (1950), before joining the Harvard faculty where he taught until retiring in 1980.]

There was a sense of building an honors program, but I think, by the time I was there in '69, it had shifted its focus, because of those reasons I described before, to be more socially-conscious. I mean, Ernest was unbelievable in the way he was able to zero-in on people who could really grow and do something in terms of faculty. I mean, you think about it--Eric Krebs started George Street Theater at Livingston, Irv Horwitz started *Transaction* Magazine, brought it from St. Louis. Ernest created the first computer science department, he created the first--what is now Edward J. Bloustein School. I mean, when I say he created, he brought the people together and he encouraged them and he supported them, but there was a lot of unease.

[Editor's Note: In 1974, Eric Krebs, then a Livingston College faculty member, founded the George Street Playhouse, which played a major role in the creation of a cultural center in New

Brunswick amid its redevelopment in the second half of the 20th Century. Earlier, he had started a small storefront theater in New Brunswick called Brecht West.

Dr. Irving L. Horowitz (1929-2012) served as the Hannah Arendt Distinguished University Professor of Sociology and Political Science at Rutgers University, Chair and Editorial Director of *Transaction,* which he founded while a faculty member at Washington University in St. Louis, and Chair of the Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy. He joined the Livingston College Sociology Department in 1969 and retired in 1992.]

I mean, the Statehouse was asking questions about Livingston, and we had some very dramatic openings. I mean, don't forget, the weekend that Livingston officially opened, we had a kid OD in the shower. Now, this, we're sort of used to it now, unfortunately, in terms of overdoses, but, at that point, an overdosed student--and he wasn't a student. He was a friend visiting a student, OD-ed. We had a series of [controversies]--well, you recruit a group of lively people and they do lively things. I'm not trying to excuse what they were doing, but surrounding communities started to ask us, and, of course, the colleges and the University started to ask us, too.

I mean, maybe we should've slowed down--I don't know, maybe--but I think that there was [something special]. The same people who moved into the rest of the University when we became a single university, instead of individual colleges in New Brunswick, I mean, in the English Department, the direction it went into, in your department, John Gillis and people like this, I mean, there were a lot of people coming out of History who were also renegades, in a good sense of the word.

Everyone I'm talking about, I mean, we could play the academic publishing game and everything else and point out that they did significant things and did what was expected of them and more, but I think what they really brought to us was a sensibility, that when we spread out, when we became the Faculty of Arts and Science and the Faculty of Professional Studies, and then, the colleges became inns and the deans became innkeepers at the inns--I'm going to get killed on this one, I can feel it [laughter]--but, in any event, any deans who are listening or reading, eventually, I love you all. [laughter]

In any event, everything shifted. When we get to a little discussion about SCILS, the School of Communications, I can give you some examples, but, in any event, at that point at Livingston, a lot of people were getting nervous. I was nervous. I mean, I came in as an untenured professor at the associate level, and then, received promotion to associate, and then, eventually, full, and then, eventually, P-2 [Professor II rank]. So, I can't complain. I was a nontraditional.

I mean, Carnegie invented me, in a sense. The Carnegie Grant allowed me to do things that, probably, if I came today and applied to Rutgers, I couldn't get near it. I mean, I had Rutgers, I had Columbia, I had Harvard, but I still didn't have a PhD and I didn't go through a typical PhD program. In all fairness, Rutgers was a wonderful support mechanism, both at the administrative level, for the whole University, and for Livingston, where there was a particular kind of support. I'll let you [ask questions].

SI: We will come back to that again. Going back to Rutgers-Newark, you were working at night on *The Newark Evening News*.

JA: Yes, as a copyboy. I mean, the main task was to guard all these Teletype machines, get the stories out, get them cut, get them to the right desk person or reporter, and then, basically, just get absorbed into that whole atmosphere of the night side. The night side was the light side of the paper. I mean, you had reporters and you had a copy desk and you had editors, but …

SI: It was not as busy.

JA: It was not as busy, but it was also, for me, an advantage, because I had, as my tutors, copy desk reporters who, basically, I got to know really quite well. Frank Prial, P-R-I-A-L, went on to *The New York Times*, and then, he became the wine critic for *The New York Times*, other people there, Doug Eldridge--there are a whole bunch of people that, basically, took time out. I was a copyboy, but I also sat with them and we talked and I learned. They started giving me stuff to write and they started showing me things, and then, in a sense, I had sort of a full internship with pay.

There were also some crazy things that happened during that process. I mean, the other duty of the copyboy was to go and get coffee and glazed donuts and all of the other stuff for the people on the desk and collect all the money, and then, be sure that you're correct, and then, do it, come back. *The Newark News* was on Market Street and there were all these cheap dives, these bars that catered to twenty-cent beers kind of thing. They all had security people outside of them, or some of them did.

On one of the nights that I was downstairs getting my coffee, for ten orders, to bring back up, I had to pass a bar. There was a security guard with a club beating a drunk over the head, because the drunk had done something--whatever was wrong. So, I said, "Why are you doing that? You're hurting him," and [I] said, "He can't help himself." He said, "You're under arrest, too." [laughter]

Just at that point, our archrival, *The Star-Ledger*, had a photographer walking by and he ran upstairs to the night side desk and said, "They're beating up your copyboy downstairs," which they weren't--I mean, they had me, they were holding me--so that, suddenly, the whole night side was out on Market Street, editors, reporters, photographers. I'll never forgive them, because they sent for a photographer before they sent the troops out. In any event, the cops came. The night side editor talked to the police, got me sprung right on the spot, and then, we arranged--I found out, the next day--they got the security guard fired.

In any event, it was that kind of atmosphere. I mean, they were very generous--in this particular case, especially generous--but they were very generous in terms of a young kid who wanted to know more about newspapers and was really serious about it. So, that was the one job there. Then, when I went to Columbia and worked on weekends, then, I was sort of elevated to a "super" copyboy level on the sports side, and then, I started again. People started having me do little stories, "Do this. Here's how this works." There was a learning process that was invaluable that is missing from today, I think.

SI: When you were working at *The Observer*, were you writing stories?

JA: Writing stories and editorials, yes.

SI: Do any of those stand out in your memory?

JA: No, the one that really stands out is the first one, because it was important to me because of the issue of the Hungarian refugees. It was too purple. I wrote it as an untrained person with feeling who didn't write what I would write now. I mean, I looked at it and I'd probably give myself a "C" or a "B-," an "A" for energy and an "A" for getting down there and going down to Camp Kilmer, but, I mean, there were more stories like that.

Also, we tended to be more "the life and goings-on" of what was happening at Rutgers--tuition, these little spats with New Brunswick, maybe, "What happens to us in terms of physical facilities?" things like this. We were very much in that stage of growing and changing; not as quickly as it did at Livingston, when it was a whole new campus popped up.

At Newark College of Arts and Sciences, I met some very dear people there who were good friends over the years and teachers who really, really inspired me. I mean, I'm jumping now back to Rutgers-Newark, but, I mean, R. W. B. Lewis turned out to be a marvelous scholar at Yale on contemporary American literature and Stringfellow Barr, who was visiting for the year, was a Classics specialist and professor. I could go through a whole list--Henry Blumenthal in History. I mean, there were all kinds of really good people there, and the scale was not four hundred faces up in an amphitheater, but seminar-sized kinds of things.

I mean, you've awakened a sense of gratitude in me, as I'm thinking about it now, because you don't think about it the same way when you're in it.

SI: Among all of those professors, do any of them stand out as being particularly helpful or took on more of a mentor role than the others?

JA: Well, I know that several of them were trying hard to get me to major in their unit--economics, biology, history--but I think Blumenthal in History, Henry Blumenthal, was, not so much mentors. I had more mentors, I think, in Columbia Graduate School, or I certainly had more mentors at Harvard, because I had taken on a project at Harvard that I can tell you about. Basically, it allowed me, again, to deal with a whole range of people on a one-on-one basis using recorders and gathering materials. I think there's a piece here and a piece there, and then, once in a while, there's a whole figure of somebody who stood out, but, in that group, I would put also the newspaper people, who, again, I was, what, eighteen, nineteen years old? I mean, it was really weird.

When I was outgoing as editor, they had a little ceremony for me and they bought me this attaché case. I had the attaché case--I remember this--and I had to leave the little ceremony that they gave me, walk along Broad Street to where the TV studios were for 13, I think, at that point, before it was New Jersey Public Television. I'm carrying my little attaché case and I had to stop

there because I had to do an interview, on camera, with Mason Gross, who was then doing a regular television program about Rutgers.

So, I had to go, with my little, empty attaché case, go to interview, on camera for Channel 13 TV, or whatever it was, with Mason Gross, and then, go from Mason Gross to being a copyboy down the block, the same day, and then, going out for coffee and doughnuts and making sure they were going to get what they wanted. They paid for it. So, it's sort of like this mix. I mean, some of--the nuns fit in there somewhere--if I were doing a mural, it would be a pretty weird mural in terms of the mix. [laughter]

SI: Did you go directly to Columbia after graduation?

JA: Yes. I spent the summer at *The Cranford Citizen and Chronicle*, working in a two-person newspaper operation. The person whose job I took for the summer was also somebody involved in *The Observer* a few years previous to that. I mean, she had graduated. So, I had a chance to do *Cranford Citizen and Chronicle*, which was two of us putting out the paper, and it was great experience, and then, Columbia right from there.

At Columbia, it was a finishing school for me, coming from Jersey City to Manhattan, and then, really being in the midst of Pulitzer Prize winners and in a room with eighty-five people and many of them are from other countries. I mean, there was a whole process there that I valued.

SI: Do any of the projects from Columbia stand out in your memory? Was that how it worked?

JA: Yes, I mean, with Columbia, well, it was more the people I met, the fellow students, that we stayed together over the years. One of them became Mayor of San Antonio, somebody else became a best-selling author, that kind of stuff, and then, the people who didn't do as well, but did okay. I think one of the highlights [was], you could pick your internship. I'd decided I wanted to go to *Harper's Magazine* to do mine and it was like a week or ten days of intensive, all-day long [work], two weeks maybe.

So, that was important. That was an important kind of getting-into-the-world kind of feeling, and probably gave me my sense of how important it is to do internships, but, in a way, I picked that up by working at *The Newark News* for three or four years, or two to three years, okay.

SI: Do you want to take a break?

JA: Maybe for a second.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

SI: Let me put this back on. We were just discussing one of the other interviews you read of a former student. She had commented on, it was at a graduation, you were wearing the academic attire, but you also had on jeans and boots.

JA: Right, I was. Rosemary was the photographer when we had the Livingston Legacy Awards back in 2001, I think. She reminded me of this, but, then, I was reading your website. She's basically remembered--I had forgotten--that I was wearing dungarees and Frye boots under my academic regalia, under my cap and gown. In a way, this was sort of a little bit of a symbolic thing in terms of what was going on at Livingston. Well, I'll let you [ask questions].

[Editor's Note: Professor Aumente is referring to the Rutgers Oral History Archives' interview with Rosemary Agrista, LC '76, which can be accessed here.]

SI: Particularly in those first few years, up to perhaps the mid-1970s, was there a marked contrast between the Livingston faculty and faculty at other colleges? Were they more outgoing in their presentation?

JA: Yes. No, actually, the advantage that we had with Livingston was, and this was true of Rutgers College and Douglass and Cook, instead of having one University-wide faculty in New Brunswick, we had each of the departments in the College, so that we got to know not only the individual department people at Livingston, but, through them, we got to know others, socially, who were in other parts of the campus. I mean, in a way, when I went on to SCILS and to, now, the School of Communication and Information [(SCI)], I miss that whole [milieu], the opportunity to be with English, History, Computer Science in the same faculty that was discussing policy, that was discussing change.

So, in answer to your question, I don't think we felt isolated as much as we probably had more individual contact. Then, where I then started having more contact was when I created the Journalism Resources Institute. Then, we're meeting at the Provost level, or whatever, the heads of various units, institutes and centers, basically, but, I mean, throughout that whole period, I think there was--the critical years for me for Livingston were '69, when I started, 1969, to, basically, 1980, I think, is when the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, FAS, came out and Professional Studies. When we get to SCILS, I can tell you how that came about.

SI: Let me jump back again. You were at Columbia from 1960 to 1961, perhaps.

JA: It would be, yes, '59 and '60.

SI: Okay.

JA: Yes.

SI: Then, you …

JA: And then, went back. I went to *The Newark News*, and then, was hired full-time as a reporter.

SI: Okay.

JA: So, I didn't skip a beat from leaving Columbia to the next day, then, starting as a reporter with the State desk. Then, it was a really good opportunity, again, because it was an opportunity to cover the universities, Princeton and Rutgers, but, more so, to cover politics, Middlesex County politics. David Wilentz was in power at that point. It was a very exciting time to cover things. [Editor's Note: David T. Wilentz served as New Jersey Attorney General from 1934 to 1944 and gained international prominence as the prosecutor in the trial of Bruno Hauptmann for kidnapping Charles and Anne Morrow Lindbergh's son. He founded the Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer law firm in Perth Amboy in 1950 and played a prominent role in Democratic politics in Middlesex County.]

SI: Do stories from that period stand out in your memory?

JA: Yes. Actually, the one story that was really quite big was, for me, when I first [started]--I'm sort of struck by my own arrogance as I tell you this--but I had started as a full-time reporter on the State [desk], on *The Newark Evening News* state side. I said, "Oppenheimer is down at Princeton," and there's the whole Princeton Institute that he headed. I said, "This would make a marvelous magazine piece." I mean, it had Einstein, it had all kinds of histories, including the current one. [Editor's Note: Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific leader of the Manhattan Project during World War II, served as Director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton from 1947 to 1966.]

So, I had found that the Sunday magazine, which was a fairly substantial magazine for *The Newark News*, was really interested in doing stories like this. I'd spent a lot of time hanging out down at the Princeton facility and getting to know Oppenheimer and getting to know the people around him. Then, it turned out that what I thought was going to be a softball story--the idea that I was going down to describe what was a good thing--turned out to be a mess. His own faculty was in revolt with him and wanted to get rid of him.

So, here I was, I had taken the training wheels off my little bicycle and I was doing two-wheel, higher-speed biking. Then, I'm suddenly confronted with what I thought would be an interesting but neutral story that turned out to be this "World War III," exploding faculty--using me as a conduit to say what they were unhappy about in terms of the operation. So, that's one story.

I mean, there are all kinds of stories that I was able to do, I mean, everything from Kennedy's assassination, going around New Brunswick and trying to get reaction to it. [Editor's Note: President John F. Kennedy was assassinated on Friday, November 22, 1963, in Dallas, Texas.]

There was political, hard-nosed fighting going on in Middlesex County, with David Wilentz as a fascinating politician, and all the stuff involving the 15th. It's the 15th District, I think, Ed Patten, and George Otlowski was involved. There were a whole bunch of really interesting people. [Editor's Note: George Otlowski and Edward J. Patten vied for the Democratic nomination to run for the 15th Congressional District seat in the 1962 election. Patten won the primary and the general election and went on to represent the district until 1981.]

So, it was a great job for getting a variety of different kinds of stories and learning a trade. Rutgers also became an opportunity for that kind of writing. I published four books and I've done a lot of magazine work and I enjoy it.

Again, I'm so conscious of how important it is to build a welcoming environment for a student, or a young person, in learning, so that they feel they get the content, they do the research, they do the writing, but, somehow, if you can force them to do this within the context of, "Let me hear your voice. What are you doing in this? Where does it come from? Where does it go?" Again, as I said, I just happened to be going through some notes. I mean, I mentioned before the black and Latino journalists who we trained quickly to get into the field, right after the Kerner Report came out. I mean, I've heard recently from several of them. One of them sent me a book, a novel that he's written about slavery and African-Americans.

Then, I go to turn on my laptop or my cell phone and there's another student, Kevin Maney, who became the *USA* [*Today*] technology editor, who then went on to *Newsweek* to start doing his column there, who told me that the stuff that we were doing in seminar form at Livingston--not at Livingston, but over at SCILS, too--became the basis for him wanting to study more technology. He pulled out his cable TV paper that he had written, [laughter] he still has, and says that this motivated him to go to the next step, to do more. He's now a well-published book author. These kinds of things are--they're worth it, make it worth it.

SI: Were you still working for *The Newark News* when the Genovese controversy developed at Rutgers, where Eugene Genovese had said …

JA: What year was that?

SI: I think it was early 1965.

JA: No, that would've been before my time. I started in '69. I was at …

SI: No, I meant when you were a reporter covering that area. Would that have been something you would have covered?

JA: I don't know; no, if that was '65, I would've been in Europe.

SI: Okay, yes.

JA: Yes. So, I wouldn't have been on that.

SI: What kind of stories were you covering when you were in Paris?

JA: In Paris, I was working on the desk of the *International Herald Tribune* and we were basically doing roundup paste-ups from *The Tribune* in New York City. It was one of the reasons--I mean, I wanted to write and I really wanted to write big, and so, that was a lesson early on for me. So, when I came back, when I returned to the States and was trying to decide

[where to work], I was really conscious of [saying], "Give me something. I'll give you something back in the way of a solid story."

I can show you a series that we did on the cities, "Urban Challenge: Can the Cities Survive?" when they said, "Just take six months and go ahead and do it." They reprinted that as a monograph, and then, distributed it throughout the US to planners and city officials. I mean, that's the kind of stuff that I brought with me as a sensibility and I think, probably, helped in terms of the things that I wanted to do at Rutgers. I can [elaborate on that] when I describe a little bit of SCILS and with the Journalism Institute, you can see that.

SI: You came back from Europe in 1966 or 1965.

JA: '64-'65, 1965, and then, was at *The Detroit News* for four years, from '65 to '69.

SI: Okay, then …

JA: In '69, I came to Livingston.

SI: When was the Fellowship? I am missing that part.

JA: That was--when was that?--'67 to '68.

SI: Okay.

JA: And then, back to *The Detroit News* for a year or so, and then, to Livingston.

SI: What was the project you were starting to tell me about before, when you were at Harvard?

JA: Oh, at that point, I was doing, as I said, a lot of writing about the cities and about citizen involvement. During that period, after the Civil Rights [Movement] and after the creation of OEO, Office of Economic Opportunity, HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development], all these things that were going on, I was interested in taking a multidisciplinary look at how people get involved.

We could talk about citizen participation. When I was writing for *The Detroit News*, the editor of *The Nation* Magazine Carey McWilliams asked me--he said he was reading the series--would I be interested in doing some articles for *The Nation*? I did that. I started writing one piece, after the riots, especially, "How do you rebuild and how do you deal with citizen participation?" I wanted to look at it from multiple perspectives, and then, tape the interviews, and then, think about it.

So, I just picked out people, from David Riesman from Sociology, [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan, who was then heading the Regional Planning Center at Harvard, [Walter] Gropius, the architect. I went to the Divinity School and talked to some of the people who were really well-known there from a religious perspective. Basically, what I was doing was building up a body of material on, "Why do citizens get involved?" but doing it from different perspectives.

I've used that stuff, a little bit, in some of the work that I was doing at the University and beyond, and I'm using it now to try to do sort of a memoir, a summary of discussions I had with Moynihan, who thought I was being a liberal snob and that I didn't like the suburbs. He really lashed into me. I mean, he turned out to be a really good--you talk about mentors. He made me a member of the MIT-Harvard, or whatever the full title is, MIT-Harvard Urban Studies Center.

[Editor's Note: Senator Daniel Patrick "Pat" Moynihan (1927-2003) served in the White House under the Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon Administrations and as US Ambassador to India and the United Nations before representing New York in the US Senate from 1977 to 2001. He joined the Harvard Faculty in 1965 and directed the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies.]

There were people like this, who were, from a race and Civil Rights perspective, they all sort of, in different ways, brought something to this idea. Again, I used it in stuff that I was writing, but, then, I want to, if nothing else, I want to give it; I'm doing a lot of archival stuff now and I want to get rid of things. I'd like to donate some of the tapes, maybe to Harvard, because I did a history of how the Nieman Program got started. Archibald MacLeish, the poet, was the first curator, the first director, of the Nieman Program back in 1938-1939. I did an interview with him and interviews with others. So, all that stuff piles up, and I'm at a point [where] either it's going to be the dumpster or somebody's archive.

SI: When you were at *The Detroit Free Press*--is that correct?

JA: *Detroit News*.

SI: You said you went there with the idea that you would have your own beat. What did that turn out to be?

JA: It turned out to be I became their urban affairs specialist.

SI: Okay. It was more topical.

JA: Well, there were two things. They also--I think they were trying me out--they said, "Go across, cross over from Detroit to Canada, and give us a piece, give us a magazine piece, about Canada." I did, and they liked it so much, they said, "Okay, why don't you start specializing in covering Canada, Canadian issues, Canadian-American issues?" So, that was one beat.

The primary beat, though, was, I was given the title of urban affairs journalist, or reporter, whatever. So, they kept their word on that and they kept their word on, when I applied for the Nieman Fellowship, they were very supportive of it and I got it. I had also applied for--Stanford had a similar program, but not as prestigious or as old as the Nieman Program. I got a call from the Stanford person saying, "I see that," they'd just announced the Nieman, "so, you've gotten the Nieman. I'm assuming you're going to take that," but he indicated I would've been able to go to Stanford if the Nieman hadn't come through. So, that was [something].

SI: Let us move on to the founding year of Livingston.

JA: Yes.

SI: You have this mission. How do you go about setting up your department?

JA: Yes. This was, well, again, we were Urban Communications, at that point. We were the unit within the Division of Urban Planning and Community Development that became the Bloustein School. We started setting up courses that dealt with the fundamentals of journalism reporting, but, again, from the perspective of an urban metropolitan setting. I mean, there was a School of Journalism at Rutgers College. So, we were not duplicating--now, they had advertising, public relations, they had a whole bunch of things.

So, basically, we focused on the urban communications issues and did it by involving the students in every [aspect]. As we were building, they were building alongside of us. They were doing research, they were doing video. We were working with multiplatform approaches. I mean, everything today is multiplatform, but, at that point, we had audio, we had video, we had text, we had photography. We were forcing the students into thinking about, "What do you do with this stuff?"

We applied for a grant to the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, and they had their funding from the National Arts Foundation. They gave us a grant to do environmental documentation. What we did, for a year, basically, was take issues of concern in the local community--pollution, good schools, bad schools, whatever it happened to be--and we had a team of our students working with high school students from different towns in New Jersey, or even grammar school, and taking on issues and documenting them. "If this stream is polluted, why is it polluted? How do we clean it up? If something else is not working properly in the community, how do you document it? How do you come up with suggestions?"

So, we put together these little modules of multimedia. Dan Newman, who was at Mason Gross, who was in the Arts Department, but was interested in documentation, and I co-taught this thing. So, we had funding to do it in terms of moving students around, buying some equipment, doing this. Then, we even arranged to do it in a way that we would give presentations to the city council, town council, whatever it happened to be. So, again, the students were learning everything, but they were learning it in a real environment of applying this stuff.

We had other [grants]. We had another grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, through the state group, called "Work Ethic." We set about documenting, in video and other formats, what it was like to work in a factory, what it was like, in a New Jersey setting, to be on the farm. We took every aspect of work that we could find and we documented it, and then, we made presentations of this kind of stuff. Again, we got funded for that.

About the same time that we were doing this, the Department of Higher Education, Ralph Dungan was the--I don't know …

SI: I think he was the first.

JA: Yes, he was the first Chancellor, whatever.

SI: Chancellor for Higher Education? [Editor's Note: Ralph Dungan served as Special Assistant to the President from 1961 to 1964, as Ambassador to Chile from 1964 to 1967, and as Chancellor of Higher Education in the State of New Jersey from 1967 to 1977.]

JA: Chancellor, he was Chancellor of Higher Ed. In any event, he was feuding with Rutgers and Rutgers was rightly defending itself in terms of its independence. Just around that time, the New Jersey Public Broadcasting unit was coming into play and Dungan, who was Chancellor, asked if I would be the higher ed. representative to the Board of Directors. So, I spent a couple of years working with the New Jersey Board of Directors, but, then, also, we started to get other grants.

We got a grant--I mentioned cable TV--but, just around that time, cable TV was a big, hot subject. I mean, everybody was talking about cable as being the way of connecting everybody up from the municipal, state and federal levels. We got a fairly large grant to help, to advise, municipalities on writing their CATV franchise, to protect the public interest in this. So, we did that. I'm just trying to think of some of the other [things].

OEO was in operation, the Office of Economic Opportunity, and we received a fairly large grant with Plainfield to create a media center in Plainfield. We actually created, not a mirror image, but we created a studio in Plainfield for high school students. We had video, print, radio, and we had our students working alongside of the high school kids in training, and then, developing these programs, and then, also, working with the town council and the various group leaders. So, in any event, we were building up the resources and building up real-life opportunities for them.

Then, there was an asteroid that landed on us in the middle of all this, and that was this--I told you I came in 1969 and that we had a School of Journalism at Rutgers College, one of the oldest in the United States, one of the oldest accredited schools in the US, going back to 1926-'27. In 1970, there was a new Chair of Journalism who was hired, Richard Budd, B-U-D-D. He decided that he wanted to take the School of Journalism and deactivate it and create a Department of Human Communication, which he did, with the support of the people in the unit.

It drove the publishers and the editors nuts, to suddenly see the School of Journalism disappear and to have in its place a Department of Human Communication, which was a new [entity]--even the concept was, of human communication versus a department of communication. Emmanuel Mesthene was the Dean at Livingston at that point and he and I met with Ken Wheeler, who was Provost at that time. At that point, Rutgers was getting clobbered by the publishers and the editors, saying, "We want our school back. We want a School of Journalism back. We're one of the first ones on the block." [Editor's Note: Emmanuel G. Mesthene served as the Dean of Livingston College from 1974 to 1977.]

So, we agreed to take the Urban Communications Program, which had pretty much the core of a journalism department set of courses at that point, except they were focused on urban [affairs], and we created a Department of Journalism and Urban Communications. This was approved by the Board of Governors with the support of the Provost. So, we then were taken out of the Division of Urban Studies and Community Planning and became a school of--I mean, I'm sorry--

a Department of Journalism and Urban Communications. This is sort of, like, the late 1970s--'78, the Department was approved by the Board of Governors, '79, something called the Journalism Resources Institute was created that allowed us to do outside training of journalists.

So, this is all happening, and I was founding Director of the Institute and, also, Chair of the Department, and then, became full-time Chair, full-time Director, of the Journalism Resources Institute. Then, Tom Hartmann came into the Department, David Sachsman, Roger Cohen, Dick Hixson moved over from Rutgers College, but we were still individual colleges at that point. Then, about 1980 is when they created the Faculty of Professional Studies and we were, all of the units, in a sense, every department, was taken out of the college and put in a federated arts and science or a professional unit.

So, we were floating in those units, and then, the Provost got in touch with Dick Budd, who was the Chair of the Department of Human Communication, and myself as Chair of the Department of Journalism and Tom Mott, who was then the Dean of, or Director, whatever his title would be, he was the head of the Library Science School. The mandate was to create a new school, create a School of Communication, Information and Library Studies. So, we spent about a year, 1980-'81, into '82, creating the school, Tom Mott, Dick Budd and myself, and then, also, Brent Ruben was also heavily involved in this. I don't know if you know any of these people.

SI: Yes.

JA: But, in any event, that's how the School came about, and then, the idea was that each unit had to support it by a vote of their faculty. If they didn't have a majority, then, they could not be part of the School, but Library, Communications and Journalism all voted to, yes, create the School. So, what you see there now, the main building and all the other buildings that are around it, in 185 …

SI: Huntington?

JA: Right next to the main building, near the Library, was the Journalism Institute. Well, we all moved into that, and then, basically, the School has done well, I think. I think it's really [great]. Dick Budd should be given credit for taking the initiative on this, Ken Wheeler for giving us the support that we needed, Tom Mott really was a significant player in this whole thing, because he basically had to take his whole School of Library Science and allow it to become something else. It seems to have worked well. I mean, it's now a School of Communication and Information.

It was during that period of the next ten years that we had programs, well-funded programs, at the JRI for about fourteen thousand journalists who came in. We had a Newhouse Grant [Samuel I. Newhouse Foundation] to do press bar and bench seminars. We had, from Merck, they supported a scholarship program, that we trained science journalists, and then, brought [in] science journalists from ten different universities, a faculty member and an honors student, and then, gave them scholarships.

In the midst of all this, what I had learned at Livingston, I was able to transfer to SCILS, because, again, the idea was to take undergraduate and graduate students and really work with

them and give them a piece of the action, in a sense. One example is, The Times Mirror Foundation, *The Los Angeles Times*, their director heard about what we were doing and said he wanted to visit with the researchers, the undergraduates. He liked the program so much that he said, "We're going to give you seventy-five thousand dollars, to give you, underwrite, one-year undergraduate research fellowships." So, we got that started. Around the same time--stop me if I'm …

SI: No, please.

JA: Okay. 1989, what happened then? That was Poland …

SI: Yes, the Berlin Wall falling.

JA: Solidarity, and the end of the Soviet Union, basically, started then. We had been doing a lot of training and a lot of programs, and I wrote a piece for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* about what we were doing and starting to do in Poland. The State Department had gotten in touch with us and said, "Look, what you're doing here at Rutgers in the JRI, can you do that overseas?" So, I was sent overseas by the State Department to do media needs assessments in Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, and then, later, Russia. Out of this came a whole set of programs that we did.

We did the needs assessments, in terms of what these journalists needed as they emerged out of, basically, no press freedom, no ability to do what they want, that kind of thing. I wrote a piece for *The Chronicle of Higher Ed.* and I got a phone call from--my secretary said, "There's somebody by the name of Bill Moyers on the phone," and it was Bill Moyers, *the* Bill Moyers. He said, "I just was reading your piece in *The Chronicle of Higher Ed*. and I'm the head of," in addition to his own work, he said, "I'm the head of a small foundation, The Florence and John Schumann Foundation [now the Schumann Center for Media and Democracy]. We'd like to help you." He said, "What do you need?"

I basically said, "Well, we're doing work now in Poland. We're trying to get up to speed in these various countries and we really need seed money to develop the programs." He said, "All right, give me a couple of pages." So, I sent him a few pages of what we wanted to do. Schumann funded us for three hundred thousand dollars in discretionary money to set up programs in Poland and elsewhere.

At the same time as we were getting these, we were getting help from the individual newspapers in New Jersey, especially *The Record, The Asbury Park Press--The Home News* played a very important role in our early development. Hugh Boyd [and] Bill Boyd [father and son publishers of *The Home News*] were on our advisory panel. We started developing a series of lectures in bringing in name journalists, and this was funded by *The Home News*. We had John Curley, who was the head of Gannett, Robert MacNeil, from [*The*] *MacNeil/Lehrer* [*Report*], Peter Kann, K-A-N-N, who was the publisher of *The Wall Street Journal*.

It just was, like, a lot of activity that was going on. In every program I taught, I'm describing to you, I can match you up with students who were involved in doing research, building the

background, in some cases, going overseas once we had the programs going. So, I think we earned about five to seven million dollars in grants, in everything I'm talking about. This also gave the students an opportunity to do hands-on stuff, of things that they could then actually point to in their portfolio, or go to and be part of it.

The next real push for me then was going overseas. I've been overseas about two hundred times in terms of, related to, these programs, in addition to the other stuff, when we lived there.

SI: Let me pause for one moment.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

SI: Thank you for the tea. We were getting into your European work. When did that begin, approximately? It was after the Cold War ended.

JA: That started in 1989, basically. We had friends at the State Department, actually through my wife, Mary. We were visiting down here in DC for a weekend, and we were talking about what we were doing with the JRI. They basically said, "Would you be willing to talk about this to some of our State Department people?" So, I said yes, and then, they arranged the meeting.

We met and they immediately then started the ball rolling. We got funding from the International Media Fund. That was then part of a State Department project. We had funding that allowed us to put together a team of professionals and go to Poland, and then, do ten or fifteen cities in Poland.

SI: You were training these foreign journalists to do more Western-style journalism.

JA: Yes, a lot of young people who had been in the underground press and who knew partisan journalism, in a sense, but needed to learn a balanced, multiple kind of thing. We started also getting grants to work with the universities. One of the grants, basically, was, well, in Warsaw, in Poland, we created a media resource center. In a way, it's sort of crazy, but what we learned in Plainfield, creating a media center, had some application when it came to doing things like this in Poland. Then, I started doing work in Kraków and, at Jagiellonian University, we set up, we helped them set up, an international school of journalism.

We started working in places like Bosnia-Herzegovina, University of Sarajevo, helped them set up programs. We had young journalists who came to Rutgers, maybe for a week or two weeks, and then, stayed on campus. We had three to four journalists who spent--sort of like a baby Nieman--they came and spent six months or a year at Rutgers doing studies, and then, being based at the Journalism Institute on College Avenue and SCILS.

Each of these things sort of interconnect. I mean, at one point, someone called me from Meridian International Center in Washington and said they'd been doing some Googling and some looking around on the Internet and they saw what I was doing. Would I be interested in doing some work with journalists from the Middle East? They had some significant grants to do workshops. So, we did about five workshops in the US for journalists from all of the Middle

East countries. In the midst of that, I was asked to go over to Beirut to do a program on new media, and then, we also did a program in Saudi Arabia, but it just started building.

It's interesting. Once you get the critical mass, it then starts to spin off, and then, connect. All kinds of things happen this way, but SCILS was a good place, at that point, to be doing some of this, because we were into a broader set of faculty who could also be involved, like Pam Richards and Betty Turock, people who have [shared interests]--they were doing a lot of work at libraries in Russia at that point--Tefko Saracevic, people who were to global-minded. This helped.

In the meantime, the Journalism Program was doing quite well and it was getting good enrollment. Library [Studies], I think, in the long run, was happier, because you got more resources than you would have done if you had been a singleton. It was just at a point when library schools were closing. Columbia and other schools were closing around the country, and they're taking the leadership at Rutgers in library science. I mean, Tom Mott really did a lot to bring us together and offered his facilities and did a lot of the work that led to where we are.

SI: I was curious, when was the building erected, the one that attaches to the Alexander Library?

JA: Good question. I don't know. You mean the new building that's attached to Alexander?

SI: There has been a remodel, where it is more connected, but that primary building has been around for a while.

JA: It had to be at least, say, ten years. I remember this--when I was on the Livingston faculty, I had several MCIS students, is that right, MCI?

SI: MLIS?

JA: MLIS.

SI: Perhaps just MLS then. [Editor's Note: Professor Aumente is referring to Master's in Library and Information Science, formerly Master's in Library Studies, students.]

JA: Yes, I had several MLS students come to me, with the approval of Tom Mott, saying they wanted to do a graduate level independent study project. It fit very nicely in with what we were doing at Livingston anyway. So, yes, I had contact with MLS students. One in particular, Jude Dratt, I think, D-R-A-T-T, had taken a railroad car and had converted it into a community information kind of project.

SI: Wow.

JA: But, there were all kinds of beginning connecting points and it just made sense to take Library Studies and Communications and Journalism. Once we were starting to be together, we could then start talking about joint programs, joint courses. When we were doing the Poland

work, we arranged to have, in Alexander Library, up on the third floor, the amphitheater that was created …

SI: Yes, the Scholarly Communications Center.

JA: I was the faculty member on the committee from (LIS?) that planned whatever the auditorium was called.

SI: The Scholarly Communications Center.

JA: Yes, Scholarly Communications Center. Myoung Wilson, I think, asked me to get involved in that and also, then, there was the head of the library--I mean, these are a lot of names to be pulling …

SI: That is okay. That is why we let you review the transcript later.

JA: Yes, but, I mean, all these things seemed to start to work. We had very good people in Journalism and Journalism has gotten some really good people. In History, you have a joint appointment with Journalism, David Greenberg?

SI: Yes.

JA: And I think the more that happens, the better. I think, as I said, with Tefko Saracevic, he and I taught a graduate doctoral course. I was teaching in the master's and the doctoral program as well as doing the undergraduate, and I was learning. I mean, I learned a whole mess of stuff about libraries and I was sort of a groupie, hanging out with the Library Science people, but things continued to roll through.

Just getting back to the programs, we were finishing some programs, starting new ones. We were an incubator. The New Jersey Scholastic Press Association came out of the Institute and out of SCILS--not out of SCILS, out of Livingston. These were a bunch of high school teachers who needed a place to coalesce. So, working with Dow Jones Newspaper [now News] Fund in South Brunswick, we, at the Institute, started pulling people together, helped them create their program. It's now--I think it's still an established program--as many as a thousand high school editors and teachers meet at Livingston now once a year for their conferences. We developed programs with (CIT?). They supported a program to create business journalism awards.

I mean, once you opened these doors, or once you knocked down the doors, and say, "Okay, here's the University and it's got all these things happening. Some of them can interconnect and some of them should and some of them can't," but it gives a vitality to what students are trying to achieve. I mean, you're building up their self-confidence, you're building up their file, their portfolio, their knowing that they can do these things and make mistakes and screw it up totally and not be fired for it, because it's an internship or it's an example.

SI: Once you started the Department in SCILS, did you have any further relationship with Livingston College?

JA: Just individually, through friendships, but, basically, there was not a lot to do. I mean, the Livingston Alumni finally organized into a fairly potent group, but, in the early years of switching over …

SI: Yes, the post-FAS period.

JA: Yes, I mean, we were pretty much focused on making [our department]--I mean, the name of the Department of Urban Communications became a Department of Journalism and Urban Communications, and then, it became the Department of Journalism and Mass Communications. Then, the name is the final name that's now on it--it's probably not final--but, for the next few years, it'll continue to be the Department of Journalism and Media Studies. I mean, over the years, I was in touch with people, like, former students, Marty Siederer, I'm trying to think of--Lea Stewart, who became the Dean. Is she still Dean?

SI: I am not sure.

JA: Of Livingston? I mean, the colleges were doing programs, but they were not doing [them] with the robust intensity that happened before. I mean, in a way, I miss that smaller design better.

SI: Had you retired by the time of the SAS reorganization in 2008?

JA: No. Actually, well, this is what happened. I retired in the year 2000, but had an agreement that was worked out with the Provost and with the Vice President [for Academic Affairs]--actually, there's no Provost at that point--but the Vice President for Academic Affairs and with the Dean, Gus Friedrich, who was Dean at that point. It was a very nice agreement. It worked out to be three years to continue as special counselor to the Dean and, basically, give twenty-five days a year to special projects at SCILS.

In the short run, what it did was, it allowed us [continuity]. We were in the middle of several projects at that point. We were doing a lot of training with NJPA and with the journalists. We still had the Sarajevo program going. We had the Merck program going. So, what I did, I was sort of like a cushion. We were able to continue, at the School, doing that as I continued as special counselor to the Dean.

Then, we had John Pavlik became Chair of the Department, and then, JRI Director, and then, Gus was involved. That worked so well that I continued as special counselor to Gus Friedrich for his term of office, for Jorge [Reina] Schement for his term, and then, for Claire McInerney for her term in office.

By then, I had--I'll give you a copy of this--but the book on New Jersey newspapers and what was happening to the field in terms of it being turned upside down. There's a chapter in there about education at Rutgers, but, basically, NJPA asked me if I would do the book. They supported the research. I was able to have some graduate students do research with me on this.

[Editor's Note: Jerome Aumente published the book, "From Ink on Paper to the Internet: Past Challenges and Future Transformations for New Jersey's Newspapers", in May 2007. It won the Society of Professional Journalists' Sigma Delta Chi and Bronze Medallion Award in 2007 for National Research on Journalism.]

During that time, there was an awful lot happening, and I continued doing the programs overseas, and then, in the Middle East and in Thailand, Panama, Italy. I was giving a series of lectures in Spain through Complutense University [of Madrid]. We had a really dear friend there, Felix Segrado, who arranged for me to do, every three years, lectures on new media and libraries. His field was library information, and to do maybe five or seven cities over a two-week period. So, I did this two or three times.

The other work that was interesting, the State Department, in the early 2000s, in the early '00s, I guess, wanted me to do an assessment in Moscow of Moscow State University, in terms of whether they would be a suitable place to do journalism training. I did that, and I said it was. It was a really very good school. So, then, the University of Missouri got the contract and they asked me if I would be the evaluator for that. So, it's been one thing after another like this. All the pieces seem to connect, one to another; some don't.

SI: You were obviously going out, training these journalists. Do you get to form relationships with them or do they just sort of come and go?

JA: Yes, it's a good question. Over the years, I've gotten to know a lot of the journalists, certainly at Rutgers and certainly at SCILS and at Livingston, but there's also a special bond that you create with, say, students from [overseas]. They're journalists, they're fellow journalists; I don't think of them as students. I mean, many of them are seasoned people, and the whole idea is to expose them to new ideas and to also learn from them.

I mean, these things, very often, when we were doing the workshops, we'd go to *The New York Times*, Reuters, in some cases. We met at the White House with George Bush, with a private consultation, and then, we had our pictures taken in the Oval Office. They were being briefed in the Pentagon, in the State Department, in the White House. We would be at *The Post*, we would be at *The News Hour*, PBS.

Yes, you do form special relationships. I mean, many of them are--because of the nature, the reason they're being funded is, they need help--either they are the subject of [censorship]--these are dictatorial, authoritarian kinds of regimes--or their lives are in danger. I mean, I have nursed out several [relationships]. One Iraqi journalist in particular, his son made the mistake of mentioning that his father was going to the United States and was going to be studying there for a while. The journalist was beaten up when he went back to Iraq.

I had another journalist in Beirut. Do you remember the incident with George Bush when the journalist threw his shoe at George Bush? I don't know if you remember this.

SI: Yes. [Editor's Note: Muntadhar al-Zaidi, an Iraqi reporter, threw his shoes at US President George W. Bush during a December 14, 2008 press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki in Baghdad.]

JA: But, in any event, George Bush was in Beirut--not in Beirut, but was in Iraq--with the Prime Minister at that point. One of the journalists who was covering this took off his shoe and threw it at the Prime Minister and Bush. Bush ducked. It turned out that this student, this journalist, had been in my Beirut seminar on new media.

It was several weeks before this happened with the shoe. I mean, he basically had pulled me aside and asked, he said, "I'm undergoing all kinds of Post-Traumatic Stress. I'm having problems." We were in the middle of trying to help him when that incident happened, when he then threw the shoe. I've written a couple of magazine pieces on this, but, basically, that's the kind of thing that you get.

I mean, you get this in the University, too. I mean, if you're interacting with your students and they trust you, they'll come and they'll talk about issues that are personal, that are important to them. They want some kind of guidance, they want some kind of neutral sounding board. Yes, I mean, by the very nature of what we're doing in these countries, these people tend to share with us. We're living together for two weeks. We're traveling on a private bus, we're staying in the same hotels, we're staying in the same places. They are moving as a unit.

They're very conscious of their own reputation--I mean, their country's reputation, their nationality and who they are as journalists. So, yes, there's a lot of that that happens. I build that into articles about how to, for *Nieman Reports*, for instance, how to deal with journalists in an international setting. Even Merck, I mean, when they were [funding us], at one point, they asked me to meet with their personnel to talk about, "How do you work abroad without being an 'ugly American?'"

SI: I would like to go back and ask a few questions about Livingston.

JA: Sure.

SI: One of the ideas that I know was tried in the first few years was having more on-campus faculty integration into the students' lives, by having the faculty live in the dorms.

JA: Yes.

SI: Did you ever take part in that?

JA: We didn't live in the dorms, but I was quite conscious of that, because many of the [faculty did]. Ed Ortiz is a good example. He lived in one of the [dorms]. He was, like, a dorm leader, or whatever the title was, but, I mean, he lived there, I think with his family. There were others that we knew that did. I did not. I mean, I spent a lot of time, many days, many weeks and many years there, but I didn't--I think there was a limit. There's a joke about it, that there's a limit to what you do in terms of maybe not having to eat in the cafeteria every day.

There are two things that I can tell you about that I wanted to mention that sort of fit in with this. I told you that there were these Master's in City and Regional Planning Students who were really, really quite good, very proficient in video production. They became part of the Urban Communications Teaching and Research Center, but they were all so wild. At one point, when video initially came out, it was really seen as a tool for guerrilla television, for people who wanted to bring social change and were willing to take some bumps on the head if they had to.

I remember, one of the first things that these master's students did was to say, "Look, we're hearing from Canada, we're hearing from New York, we're hearing from a whole bunch of people who are doing underground video and guerrilla video television now. Could we have a conference at Livingston and bring everybody together?" So, I said, "Fine, if you're willing to do the work and set it up, I'll get the permission to do this," and they did. We set it up, and it was called "An April Collective."

Basically, what they did was, they brought all kinds of videographers to Livingston, and then, there were two days of sharing and swapping and stuff like this. They even had a T-shirt--I think I've got it in here somewhere--they designed a T-shirt that had the Blessed Mother going into heaven, rising up into heaven--and it's that classic [image], with the clouds behind her--and she's holding the baby Jesus in her arm. They took out the baby Jesus and they put a video camera there or something. Let me see if I can find it--here it is.

SI: Neat.

JA: But, at that point, I was wondering whether I was going to hear from somebody from the State Legislature saying, "You're being [sacrilegious]," whatever. I had to get them to swear that I had nothing to do with the design of the T-shirt, but, in any event, they were doing stuff like that. Then, '69, 1970 was Cambodia. Cambodia was when a lot of the demonstrations took place then.

[Editor's Note: From April to July 1970, American and Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces conducted the Cambodian Campaign or Incursion to eliminate Communist forces in eastern Cambodia. On May 4, 1970, Ohio National Guardsmen fired on students at Kent State University, killing four and wounding nine others. Some of the students had been protesting the United States entry into Cambodia, while others had been passing nearby or observing the demonstration. On May 14 and 15, 1970, students at Jackson State College protesting against racial harassment were fired upon by police, resulting in two deaths and a dozen injuries.]

I was in the crowd out in front of Old Queens. There were, like, two to three thousand people. They just covered all around Old Queens, into the streets. This is 1970. I was standing there and, suddenly, the window opened. It turned out to be the window in the President's Office and somebody had a bullhorn in the office. He said, "Professor Aumente, would you please come to the President's Office?" [laughter]

So, I had no sense of what was [happening]. At this point, this was where all of the universities were in touch with each other, Princeton, Rutgers, Columbia. They were all creating sort of a

network to organize the demonstrations. So, I didn't know what was going to happen. So, I went up into Old Queens and up into the President's Office. My undergraduate Urban Communication majors were running the network. They had organized [it]. They wanted me to see what they were doing. They wanted to know if they could get extra credit for this, [laughter] and I told them no. I told them, "You'd better be sure that not a pin is out of place when you leave this place. Keep it clean and keep it neat," because, at that point, the President's Office had willingly allowed this to happen as a public gesture, as long as nothing violent happened.

In any event, that gets me to thinking about the kinds of students, journalists, the kinds of situations that you become involved in.

SI: Yes, I want to continue on that, but, when they called you up, it was to see these students who were running the network.

JA: [Yes].

SI: Okay.

JA: Yes, they were in both offices and they had the phones set up. They had charts and all kinds of [documents]. So, they were passing along information to each other, coordinating, doing this kind of stuff.

SI: As you have pointed out, there was a lot of political activism, particularly in the early 1970s, late 1960s, early 1970s. Do any other incidents stand out in your memory? I know there were various protests, not violence, but perhaps vandalism, things like that. What do you recall?

JA: Yes, I mean, the Piscataway Police were occasionally called in. In one situation, I remember, the students got the dome light off the police car and left with it. I mean, I have no knowledge of when it happened, I just heard about it, but, in any event, the worst thing you can do is that kind of taking. There were incidents like this, that were sort of funny, in a way. I mean, there were sort of mock theater kinds of things. They were crazy. I mean, they returned the dome light.

They shouldn't have done it in the first place, but they did it. It was just part of this whole crazy 1969 mood that people were in, 1970, but, then, by the same token, it was that energy that led to things like the demonstrations involving Cambodia. It led to a form of free speech that's maybe rough on the edges, but it's important. I think the students had to realize, "What are the limits on what they can do?" but, also, not be told to be quiet. I mean, they were the ones who were being drafted and they were the ones who were [affected].

When I was covering the Canadian issues for *The Detroit News*, I went up to Montréal and Toronto to do stories about draft evaders and had some really very moving experiences there in terms of talking to people about having to give up their own country to go, rather than fight in Vietnam. Regardless of how you fall on whether it should've been done this way or that, I mean, it's important to understand the pain and the craziness that people are going through to arrive at whatever position they are.

SI: When you were at Livingston, did you have students who would come to you seeking advice on what to do about the draft, or what to do in general about serving or protesting?

JA: I'm trying to think; not so much on the draft, but more so on race, more so on issues of--I had a really wonderful photographer student, (Eric Knight?), who was killed in an automobile accident in the year, a year or two, after we started at Livingston. He was really focused on using his camera to express the feelings and the experiences of Black Americans.

I remember, he gave me a photo that he had taken, and he had come down to Washington for the demonstrations. He took a picture of an elderly black man behind a barricade, just sort of sitting there in a very pensive kind of mood, and it said so much. It said so much about what was happening. It said so much about what it was like to be a black in America. I mean, the barrier was just a little fence that was set up to probably keep away rabbits who might eat the flowers. I mean, it wasn't a cage, but it somehow took on the message of, "I'm on this side and you're on that side," kind of thing, "and the fence has to go down at some point. It should go down."

So, there were things like this, that, I mean, students were involved in committees. I mean, I don't know--well, it's true now, still, that you have students on faculty committees--but students played a very big role in the discussions that took place then, so that this was a way of getting the conversation going.

SI: After the Vietnam War effectively ended, many people have noted there was a bit of a drop off in student activism. Years later, issues would come up, like apartheid and divestment. Do any issues stand out in your mind, that your students were passionate about or it was a cause on campus that you got interested in?

JA: I think they were passionate about the media being used honestly, and then, used effectively. I mean, around the time that I was doing this stuff at Livingston, the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith asked me to do a pamphlet about misinformation that would be aimed at high school kids and, basically, get them to understand--it was sort of media literacy, we call it today--but, basically, the idea that you can be in control of what you consume as a media person, a media user. That pamphlet became a book, *Against Misinformation* [(1973)], that ADL published. They published, like, twenty thousand copies of it and distributed it to their book clubs, or whatever it was.

It was basically in there, was the idea that you should better understand the media, you should learn how to use the media, you ought to learn how to communicate, you ought to learn about information and how to use or misuse information, and be careful about it. I think those things were sort of running through some of the feeling and some of the discussion of the Livingston era. I think it certainly carried over. I mean, the stuff that we were doing at JRI with students involved in--I don't know if you remember the case of, there was a surrogate mother issue, the idea that babies …

SI: Baby M?

JA: Yes, Baby M. Well, I had one student who was really interested in that. She did a lot of research on this, but what she was trying to do, I think, was also analyze, "How good or bad is the information, and how do we correct the misunderstandings?" That's where the training comes in. I mean, you basically go in and you get a sense of what is needed and where are some of the misconceptions. Then, you start saying, "All right, is the newspaper a villain in this or do they just need more training? Does a TV or radio station? What are they doing? What are they fomenting? What are they doing in a positive way? What is happening by accident?"

So, I think that spirit keeps running through. I would think that's true of libraries, in terms of, "How do they fit? How do I fit as a library specialist, a librarian? How do I deal with the community?" Right now is a good example, I think, with what we're going through in terms of government. I mean, libraries are central meeting points. I mean, one of the things that we did in the cable TV project was to point out how important it would be for the library not only to be a holder and a giver of information, but, also, a creator of information, the idea that, "Can you take a space in the library and build a small studio there? Can you have discussion groups then talking to each other?"

Now, the problem is that cable TV moved away from its promise, but, then, the Internet came along. The Internet is doing now what could've been done by cable on a smaller scale.

SI: Are there any other activities that you got into as a faculty member? For example, were there any committees, anything on that side of the job?

JA: Yes. I mean, one thing that comes to mind was, actually, not so much Livingston, but Mason Gross was President of the University at that point. There was an OEO, an Office of Economic Opportunity, and there was a Middlesex County OEO Office that did special programs that dealt with Civil Rights issues, race, things like this. Mason asked if I would be the Rutgers representative to them, to the OEO Middlesex program.

So, I got a good set of insights into what was happening in Middlesex County. Of course, I knew it before, because I had reported on that region when I was at *The Newark News*, but it was very interesting to be there on behalf of the University and to see the dynamics playing out in terms of who got housing, who got public housing, who didn't get support, what school needed this, "Why was I ignored?" that kind of thing. It got a little crazy at points, but it was a good learning experience.

SI: Was Rutgers getting resources from that office?

JA: No. On that particular one, Rutgers was named as one of the board members, and then, I was asked to be the Rutgers …

SI: Representative.

JA: Body that showed up [laughter] and got out.

SI: How long did you continue with that?

JA: A couple of years. It was during that whole OEO period.

SI: At this point, is there anything that I skipped over that you would like to discuss? You mentioned *The Mudslide* as one of the first newspapers at Livingston.

JA: Yes.

SI: Did you have any relationship to that paper?

JA: No.

SI: I think you mentioned you had one of the students in your class.

JA: Yes, Chuck Rose was one of the editors, and then, I heard from him by Internet recently, in recent years. He is now a criminal court judge in Denver, I think, in Colorado.

SI: As part of the Urban Communications Department's mission, were they charged with supporting any of the publications on campus?

JA: We did newsletters. Actually, we would contribute to publications, and then, we, of course, would be training people to do this--again, like that environmental documentation, "Here you are, in a local municipal setting--how do you deal with these issues? How do you get them out? How do you get the information out? How do you apply the public pressure?"

A good example, in the Plainfield project, the community was unhappy with the school bus layout. They felt that, in some cases, children were being asked to walk too far to go to school. The Plainfield Media Center worked out a situation where some of the Portapaks, the video Portapaks, actually followed somebody walking to school, to show how far away it was from the school and the home. They then showed the videos to the school board and were able to bring about change that way.

So, we were, again, always trying to show how these tools could be used to do something positively, to bring political change, environmental change, whatever it happened to be.

SI: Is there any other part of your career that you would like to talk about?

JA: I think the important part of Livingston's DNA, that when people moved to other campuses, they brought with them, was the sense of how important, individually, each student is, and how do you work with them and how do you bring them into a process of actually doing things. I mean, it's one thing for us to talk about. I'm trying to think of, with cable television, for example--let me just check.

[RECORDING PAUSED]

JA: Okay, thank you. Some of the other projects that grew out of this one, and even continued after I retired, Johnson and Johnson, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, did a really extensive program in Trenton to try to improve childhood development. We were brought in, at some point, to help them plan out the communications strategies for this. So, there's been a lot of--we piggyback a lot of things or people come to us, or did during this period, and say, "How do I deal with this? How do I work on this kind of thing?"

I think it's in the nature, but it's in the nature of those disciplines. I mean, library and communications and journalism, I mean, if they're worth anything at all, have to be proactive and have to step in as critics and as trainers of future practitioners and say, "Look, you can't be frozen in aspic in forty years ago or thirty years ago or ten years ago," and Lord knows what is going to happen to where we are now.

I mean, the Internet, as fascinating as it is, has disrupted everything. I mean, you know that as a trained library person, and the trick is--and certainly in journalism, we have a newspaper industry that, in some cases, is on life support now, trying to retool itself to meet all this. These are tremendous opportunities and the trick is, "How do we bridge things before you fall down?" We're at the edge of a cliff on some things. I mean, Amazon, in retailing, is an example, books and Internet. You just go through the whole list of things, and the universities have to sort of define their role.

I mean, one of the things I also want to do is not forget about the journalism opportunities I had in Rutgers-Newark, and I haven't told them yet, but I'm including them in our estate planning. I would love to see some of the students from Rutgers-Newark interact with our New Brunswick students and our Camden students. I mean, for years, I was brought back to Rutgers-Newark to look at faculty. They didn't have the core department, but I was asked to go in, and then, review, and then, vote on promotions and re-hires, stuff like this.

One of my best students, eventually, became the head of the Newark-Rutgers program. Then, of those MCRP, the Master's in City and Regional Planning, of those students, three of them were at the Livingston Reunion and have all become faculty members with tenure at different universities, doing the same thing. So, in a way, what we cast out, if it takes seed and if it starts to grow, it's really exciting. It's a good reason to talk about being in a university.

SI: I wanted to ask you about some of your impressions of and interactions with some of the higher-ups in the University, because you have talked about them off and on.

JA: Yes.

SI: It sounds like you had a very high regard for Ernest Lynton.

JA: Oh, yes.

SI: After that, it was Mesthene.

JA: Yes. There was George Carey [Acting Dean from 1973 to 1974] and there was Mesthene, and then, I think there was Bob Jenkins, who was really--I mean, Bob was, again, a marvelous, dedicated dean. I mean, each of them had a different quality that they brought to this. I mean, Ernest, I stayed in touch with after he went to UMass, and he did really well at UMass. I mean, I just wished they gave him a little bit more time to try to do what he was doing at Livingston. I mean, everything was in place, but it was--in a few years, two or three years, you can't do that.

I mean, I was fortunate, also, in having good support at the Presidential level, from people like Ed Bloustein and with Fran Lawrence. I mean, Fran, when we did an overseas visit to some of our programs, he came with us, with his wife, Mary Kay, I think, and others from Old Queens. There was really good support at those levels, all the way up. It's hard to keep them all in order now, but, after Fran Lawrence, Dick McCormick, and Dick and his father were really very good friends of SCILS. Actually, both had offices there at one point, when they were finished with their own.

My office at 185 was Dick Schlatter's office, after he had been Provost, and was a good friend, also. Rutgers is blessed with, really, a great range of people and a great range of good people. I mean, it's nice to be able to say that, after being at one place for so many years, but they're really dedicated, they're really sincere about it. They really care about students. [Editor's Note: Dr. Richard Schlatter, a Professor of History at Rutgers since 1946, served as University Provost and Vice-President from 1962 to 1971.]

We're going through a whole re-examination in the conversation now about, "Is a university worth it? Is it worth the money to go there?" and it really is. Somehow, we have to find a way of dealing with this generation of young people who are really strapped monetarily. It was one of the reasons why I felt that I had to reach out beyond the University for support. I mean, each of those grants and each of those programs did what they had to do, but they also were able to involve students.

Again, there were scholarships and there were study resources that came out of that, but, most importantly, it bumped them right up against Supreme Court justices and judges and lawyers and journalists. You can't duplicate that in a classroom. You can begin there and give the background and set the foundation, but, then, after that, all the other stuff that comes with it comes from that kind of interaction with students.

I think, if anything, getting a long, roundabout [answer] on your question about students, I mean, I think if you can show them that you really care and give them a practical place to work--I mean, I think library people and journalism people have a lot in common. As a matter of fact, I wrote a piece for Tefko, for when he was the head of; I can't remember the name of the [association]. It met in Dubrovnik, I think, over in [Croatia]. It's a library and information conference, and I'll get the name and send it to you.

In any event, I wrote a paper for that, that was in the publication, that really talked about commonalities between journalists and librarians, and not with just librarians, but people that are library professionals, I mean, the same issues of freedom of information, freedom of speech,

technology being a big issue, the role of being in the community and the responsibilities of being in a community, whether it's a university or the smallest town.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Aumente is referring to his paper, "Libraries, Journalism and the Mass Media in the Digital Age of the Internet: Challenges and Transformations" (Colis Digital Libraries: Interdisciplinary Concepts, Challenges and Opportunities, Third International Conference on Conceptions of Library and Information Science, in Dubrovnik, Croatia, May 23-26, 1999).]

I mean, we have a great library here, the Samuels Library [in Front Royal, Virginia]. It's totally organized on a private--it gets public funds from the town and from the county--but it also is pretty much run as a private operation. That place is just overflowing with young people and with kids reading with programs, with training. Somehow, that has to be refined and taken to the next level, in terms of where we want to be.

When I was dealing with students and they were saying, "What about my career?" I would try to get a sense of who they were now. What were they doing? Sometimes, at the beginning of Livingston, I remember, they would show up with their parents. I would ask the parents to go have a cup of coffee and give me a chance to talk with the student, or the potential student. It was all done in a positive way, but it was important for that young person to articulate his or her feelings and not bounce off a parent or a guardian or a mentor or whatever they happened to be, I mean, basically, for that kid to say, "This is what I'm sort of playing with."

The best thing I could do for them was to show, "Here's something that you can do to refine these talents, but more so, not only to refine the talents, but for you to go out and do it," and to get across the idea that, "You're important." I mean, again, in the notes, that I scribbled some notes here the morning after I had met with all of the good students twenty years later, thirty years later, who came, who bothered to come and tell me and say things, the universal theme was, "You gave me confidence in myself."

So, if there's a way to do that, again, it's nice to be able to do it in a journalism/library setting, because of the commonalities that are there. It may be a little bit harder to do it if you're studying the Greek classics, but maybe not. I mean, there are lessons there that are immediately transferable. I mean, good historians are good writers are good researchers are good interviewers.

You're doing a very good job of drawing me out. I mean, I didn't expect to be milked as much, but I'm happy to do it. I mean, it's a talent on your ability to be able to do this.

SI: I agree there is a lot of opportunity and a lot that you get out of that interaction between disciplines and departments. Just to catch us up on your personal life, since we started there, how long have you been married?

JA: 1961. So, that would be …

SI: Fifty-six years?

JA: Fifty-six years.

SI: How did you meet?

JA: There's a journalism angle to the way we met. Mary was visiting a friend at Columbia University. Mary was at the University of Wisconsin and was studying in the field of physiology. She had a friend that she had gone to undergraduate school with at Trinity College, Caryl Rivers, C-A-R-Y-L R-I-V-E-R-S, Caryl Rivers. Caryl was in my class at Columbia School of Journalism in 1959-'60. Mary was visiting her.

We used to have a large classroom at the Columbia "J" School. At the end of the day, we would move all the desks out of the way and we would get--you know the rattan holders for *The New York Times* and for the other newspapers on the rack?--we would take those apart and use them as stickball bats. Then, we would organize into a team. We would play stickball in the Columbia Journalism newsroom.

I remember, I was just about to swing. I was starting to swing and the door opened. Mary came in, as we were playing stickball--totally devastating any claim that we had to intellectual powers. I mean, we're playing stickball and not reading books, etc., etc., but, in any event, that was the first time we met. She went to Europe the following summer, came back, and then, we decided, in '61, to marry.

She's had a really interesting, multiple-career life, too. I mean, she was with the pharmaceutical companies, Squibb in New Brunswick, Parke-Davis. When I had the fellowship to Harvard, the nice thing about it is that the spouse has equal privileges to audit any course in the university. She became interested in social work, decided to get her Master's in Social Work from Rutgers, because, when we moved there, she was in the middle of studies in Michigan. She was a social worker for several years. Then, she decided that she would like to teach in the Montessori School, took her training in Chicago, and then, became a Montessori teacher in Princeton. So, she's gone through a series of career changes, too, and we sort of bounce off each other.

SI: Great. How long have you lived in Virginia?

JA: We've had a vacation house here going back to 1985. I think we bought land in 1981, and then, we had a vacation house on High Knob, which is part of the Blue Ridge, as you go into Front Royal. We had a vacation house there until 2000. Then, we were deciding where we wanted to live. We were thinking of California and a couple of other places, but we really loved it here and, in 2000, after I retired, I was still semi-[employed]. I was still going up to Rutgers on a regular basis. So, for three years, we wanted to stay here, but we found land here. I mean, we have twenty-seven acres that go down the mountain and we built the house, or had the house built for us. It's been a really important place for us.

The other thing is that Mary belongs to an international organization called Self-Realization Fellowship, and it teaches yoga meditation. They have a major five-hundred-acre site at Greenfield, which is just on the other side as you're going out on [Route] 66. I don't know where you came in, but, if you go out on 66, as you're driving [Route] 55, as you're passing all of this

green land, woodland, it's there. She's now been in charge of their youth program, their Sunday school programs for the young kids and for the teens--and teaching me how to meditate. [laughter]

SI: I would like to thank you for all of your time and hospitality today. If you would like to add anything, go right ahead. There is a lot of your life that we could probably still be talking about.

JA: Sure.

SI: If you have anything that you want to add, you can certainly write it down or I could come back. If you are ever up in New Brunswick, it seems like you still go up to Rutgers occasionally.

JA: Yes, sure.

SI: We can do a follow-up audio interview then. I really appreciate it. Like I said, your name comes up a lot in relation to our Livingston project or general University history, the Hungarian project. I think I saw your name a few times in relation to the Black Student Movement as well.

JA: Yes, yes.

SI: It is good to get your story as well.

JA: Well, thank you. I found it, really, was a useful exercise for me, to go back and start pulling notes. I've been thinking about this and I think I have another writing project on my hands, but it's interesting to take your life, and then, come back to a variety of different positions, lower, higher, around it, inside it, outside it.

I think the oral history project is really so important. I was going to mention that to you. I told you before that I'm doing research on the building of Shenandoah National Park. I've come across so much material in the way of oral history, that involved families that were on the mountain who were displaced for the park, people who worked in the park, people in the CCCs, in the Civilian Conservation Corps. I mean, it brings a richness to [the subject].

I was reading over Tom Hartmann's comments a little bit before you came. It brings everything back, the fact that you're doing it not only with text and with words on paper, but with audio and everything else, and then, you've got this magnificent gift of the Internet to send it out.

SI: Yes, I will tell you more about that after I conclude. That has been a huge change and it has tied into some of the things you mentioned. Thank you very much, I appreciate it.

JA: Well, thank you for doing this.

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 10/9/2018
Reviewed by Jerome Aumente 11/27/2018