

PRESERVING MEMORY: NEWARK AND RUTGERS  
IN THE 1960'S AND 1970'S

An Interview with

DELORA JONES-HICKS

Conducted by

Gilbert Cohen

September 11, 1991

INTERVIEW: Delora Jones-King

INTERVIEWER: Gilbert Cohen

DATE: September 11, 1991

GILBERT COHEN: This is September 11, 1991. This is Gil Cohen, and I'm meeting with Mrs. Delora Jones-Hicks in her office at Rutgers University in Newark. [Break in recording] We are back, and we were talking before about how we would proceed. And I think one of the helpful things would be is to give a brief bio-slash-job sketch.

DELORA JONES-HICKS: You want just the Rutgers stuff Gil?

COHEN: Oh, if you could go into educational background.

JONES-HICKS: Well, I attended the public schools in East Orange at a time when public schools in East Orange were among the best in the country...that was a long time ago. And attended a number of colleges and universities in the late fifties, sixties, and through the seventies, before finally getting a bachelor's degree in English. I have over the last thirty-five or forty years done numbers of different kinds of work. I made light bulbs at Westinghouse. I made lipstick tubes for Revlon. I worked as a saleswoman at the old Krezge Newark department store in downtown Newark. And I was a secretary at the Business and Industrial Coordinating Council in the sixties. And was eventually promoted to director of Women's Training Programs there. It was an agency co-sponsored by business and industry in Newark and the government, the federal government, there, Department of Labor. And from the BICC I came to Rutgers in Newark in 1968, the Public Information Office, which was then called the Public Relations Office, as a writer. And we were then at 53 Washington Street, the old YMYWCA Building. The university administration offices were there, chief administration offices, that is the office of the vice president, who was then Malcolm Talbott. And in that building was our office, of course. The registrar was there. The personnel office was there. And physical education was in that building...I think primarily because the building contained a swimming pool, having been an old Y. And a gymnasium and lockers. That building, in more recent years, has been turned over to the Newark Museum for their expansion project.

And I remained a writer in the Public Information Office, Public Relations Office, until five years ago when I transferred to the graduate school to work in the Public Administration Department as their public relations person. I planned the receptions, parties, commencement exercises, did registration of new students, edited for faculty workshops and conferences. And I also wrote and edited a quarterly newsletter for the department, among other tasks, whatever came down the pike. I am back just from the first of July this year at the Public Information Office, which I consider my home at Rutgers in Newark, as the public information officer, a new title, with some new responsibilities. I'm writing again. But in addition to that, I'm editing. And we'll see what other kinds of things I'll do as well.

COHEN: How did the job evolve? You said that's a new title. I thought you always were a public information officer?

JONES-HICKS: Well, it's true. But for the purposes of identifying more specific tasks. I think public information officers are considered, are titled writers, staff writers, editors, officers, directors, just I think for specificity.

COHEN: Mm-hmm.

JONES-HICKS: The difference between my new work and the old work as a writer, I think, chiefly lies in the fact that I will be called upon to edit university publications for Newark. One of the concerns of the provost has been for several years—a good number of years, perhaps more than several—is that university publications at Newark have been, while beautifully put together, graphically beautifully put together, have not always been well put together language-wise. And he is concerned about that, and felt that the campus needed to have a person to look over the written copy for university publications that come out of Newark. And so I am that person. Graphic art and design is an office that is part of our department, part of the Public Information complex of which Bob Clark is overall director.

COHEN: Yes. So the job first was writer, is that what you were doing?

JONES-HICKS: Yes, yes. Staff writer.

COHEN: And so it's evolved...How has the office grown, personnel, over the years that you've been here?

JONES-HICKS: Well, we have.... The office has always been very small. When I came on board in 1968, there was only one writer position, and that was my own. There was a writing director. And there was a speakers bureau within the office. The speakers bureau was run by a woman named Edith Sozio [sp], now deceased. It was considered a very important part of the office work, to get professors and administrators and staff people out into the community to convey the university's message to keep the university visible in the community. So Edith's job as speakers bureau person was clearly very important to the university and important to Malcolm Talbott, to keep the university visible...to have people in the community understand that the university was there not just as an educational source, but also as a service—had many services to offer, many services. And there was one writer, a speakers bureau person, and a writing director. And the position had been held before I filled it as writer, by a man who had been a reporter, a sports reporter, at what was then the *Newark Evening News*.

COHEN: Who was that?

JONES-HICKS: I don't remember his name. In fact I never met him. He was gone when I came on board. But there were then two large dailies in Newark, the *Newark Evening News* and the *Newark Star-Ledger*. The *News* went under several years after I was here. I had nothing to do with it. [Laughter] We were anxious in the sixties and the early seventies to get the word out, to make friends in the community, to have the community, the Newark area community, friendly

towards the university. And the university wanted to be welcoming to the community. So that was our job. Our job was to do just that, to convey that kind of message. After Edward Bloustein came on as president, our focus changed considerably. Malcolm Talbott went to—who was a tenured law professor as well as vice president—went to New Brunswick as vice president for public affairs; I believe that was his title. In any case, Public Information or Public Relations was one of the offices that came under his bailiwick. And we began to focus less on our relationship with the community and more on our relationship with a much broader community; a national image was what we were trying to develop. And some of the avenues we used, not just by our office but the university generally, was to bring more of an emphasis onto graduate education and onto the sciences, to bring in world-renowned scientists, etc. So we began.... We, for a long time, until just two years ago, perhaps three years ago, focused on writing news copy; that is, it was very important to us to get a lot of news releases out. And we were churning out a lot of news releases on what our people were researching, what our people were writing, on activities within the campus.

And just a couple of years ago, the emphasis changed—yes, again. Because we discovered that newspapers and television people, television people in particular, were not so much interested—in fact they were oftentimes angered and frustrated by this flurry of paper. They don't want to see a lot of press releases. We had suspected this for a long time; kind of having put ourselves in their position, they were flooded with this stuff. But finally it was determined that the—that was two years ago—it was determined that this office would respond to the concerns of media that we spend not so much time writing copy, but instead doing very brief news advisories, we called them, which reflect our own response to what's going on in the world. For example, the recent upheaval in the Soviet Union produced a lot of interest all over the country. And the newspapers and television were using a lot of time and space to cover that event—or those events. What we did in this case was immediately respond to the headlines and to the news stories and examined our faculty to understand who it was who could deliver expert opinion, expert oversight, to these issues. We'd use people like...we offered up to the media experts on our campus such as Taraz Hanzak [sp], who happens to be in the Ukraine teaching. And Misaslava Zayenko [sp] and, what's-his-name from history.

COHEN: Peter Goldin?

JONES-HICKS: Peter Goldin and another historian, from Hungary actually.

COHEN: Oh, yes, you mean Gabor....

JONES-HICKS: Gabor Vermesh [sp].

COHEN: Yes.

JONES-HICKS: So we offered up these people as experts. And we found over these last couple of years that this method of producing our people for expert commentary works very much better than various and sundry news stories and flurries of paper to newspapers and to television and radio. When we offer up an expert, for example, on whatever particular issue, that person becomes a part of a file at the newspaper or the TV station, and they will use these people again

and again, we find. So we spend a lot of time then understanding precisely what it is each of our faculty persons, each of whatever staff people—and we do use staff people sometimes as well—can offer up in a specific situation in a specific development. And so very little time is spent anymore writing news copy. We spend more time on the telephone. We spend some time doing brief news advisories. And assisting television and newspaper people—magazine people sometimes—in getting together with an appropriate faculty or staff person, somebody who can respond quickly and directly to that reporter’s need.

COHEN: I want to go back to the first stage of that. You mentioned doing public relations work with the community. And if you could go into that in some detail. What community and how the relationships were established in communicating with them? That sort of thing.

JONES-HICKS: Okay. Well, I’m talking specifically about the Newark area community that is Newark, Orange, East Orange, South Orange, Irvington, Elizabeth. Most of these people are—or many of these people, I should say—to whom our PR was directed are black; increasingly they became Hispanic as well. And one of the reasons we were interested in getting to this community and to having this community understand that we have services here at the university that were valuable to them. And that we were welcoming of them as students. One of the reasons why, of course, is that we had on the planning board in the sixties—

COHEN: The planning board?

JONES-HICKS: We had on the planning board in the sixties, on our planning board—

COHEN: That was your office?

JONES-HICKS: No, no, the university did. The notion of expanding in the community. We had been all around. Our facilities at the Newark campus had been all around town. I mean the College of Pharmacy, which then was in Newark—now it’s in New Brunswick—was way down on Lincoln Avenue, way at the end of North Broad Street. Some of our facilities were out on Rector Street across towards the river side of Broad. And we were dotted about in the middle of the city, to the north of the city. And the interest was in developing a central campus, a campus where the buildings would be...perhaps new ones and perhaps also within walking distance of each other. We understood that this would require upheaval of a rather large area of the city’s resident population. And so it was thought, too, that developing a connection with the community which we’d be dismantling would make the development of our campus, the new construction of our campus, easier for everybody...for ourselves as well as for the people who were kind of upheaving.

Malcolm Talbott, I think had always had a concern that—and Mason Gross, who was the president at the time of the university—had also a genuine concern for the necessity of including the kind of underclass, that the university would not be perceived as elitist. And so that was another reason for the effort to work within the community and to do a lot of extension kinds of things. We also had a large extension division here at the university, which offered service as well as it did offer courses for no credit for people who were not prepared to enter the university under the normal admission requirements. So we did a number of different kinds of things to

include this community. We instituted an annual celebration of black history on this campus that attracted thousands of people here when the program was in its heyday.

COHEN: What year was that?

JONES-HICKS: During the seventies. Throughout the seventies the program, that black history program, was probably one of the finest anywhere. It was very...the cost for it was underwritten by the university, and it was the vice president and then the provost, James Young after Malcolm Talbott went to New Brunswick; James Young supported that program very well with not just cash but also by his own presence at the events. They were usually week-long or month-long. It started out month-long programs with activities practically every day, very nearly every day and every evening. And we brought in famous speakers and launched exhibits and had famous choirs and entertainers on campus. And the emphasis was to get the community to come on campus, to come here and to feel comfortable here. And it was also thought to be a good recruitment tool. We felt that when people were comfortable on the campus that by word of mouth it would transfer back into the community, back to parents and to students as well, prospective students. We had a number of efforts to recruit minority students after the 1968—was it? 1968 Conklin Hall....

COHEN: That was sixty-nine, February of sixty-nine.

JONES-HICKS: Sixty-nine Conklin Hall.... Yes, I should remember that because it was that Conklin Hall takeover occurred on the very day that I had planned my very first big event on campus, after I'd come here in sixty-eight. My first real task was to develop a brochure that was kind of a show-off piece about new facilities, new buildings, going up on campus. I did that; I was real proud of that. And then I was given the task of bringing a radio station—or several radio stations, a series of radio stations—on campus to broadcast from the plaza, to talk with students and to be here all day. So I got WNJR to come in and be here all day on campus and to broadcast from the plaza. And on the day that they showed up here, the students decided that was indeed going to be the day they'd lock up Conklin Hall, lock themselves in. And we had a brouhaha here that.... And I just...I never stopped kidding those students, many of whom I still see, that they really, really messed up my first large event. What happened, of course, is that WNJR got in on the top of the pile of reporters covering this event because they were already set up here. They had come in with cables all over the place and were already set up when the takeover began.

Then I guess over the years I've seen, I'm sorry to say, a regression that began in the late seventies, I think—probably peaked somewhere around eighty-two or eighty-three—of our efforts to connect with the black community and to bring in more black students. There was at one point a notion that the average black student out of the Newark area should be encouraged to come to Rutgers University at Newark. I think we decided early on that the best and the brightest were probably not going to come to Rutgers in Newark because Rutgers in Newark at that time had no housing. We were still without much green on the campus. The landscaping hadn't had a chance to catch hold. It was not a real attractive place for a kid who had grown up in the city anyhow. So these best and the brightest went to places like Yale and Harvard and William and Mary and wherever else. The Ivy League schools would offer them scholarships and lots of money. And during that period, there was a lot of competition from those large schools for these

students. So they had no...and we being a state institution, didn't have that kind of money either to offer those students even if they had had a will to come here, if they had wanted to come here. So the smart people inside the university decided that we would shoot for the average student and have that average student build up his potential—or her potential—through the Educational Opportunity Fund Program, which was established I guess all over the country at about the same time. And it was a program that enabled even some students who just didn't come up to muster, but whose intent, whose determination was picked up in personal interview.

[Break in recording]

Those students who it was determined, after a personal interview, had real potential and wanted to...

[Break in recording]

COHEN: Back again. And we were talking about...

JONES-HICKS: The EOF Program...the EOF Program. The EOF, the Educational Opportunity Fund Program, allowed these students who came from schools, public schools, in the area that didn't prepare them well for college...maybe they came from homes where there had never been a college student. Maybe they came from homes where there was no encouragement for them. So these students were sort of cradled in the EOF Program. And for the first year or so, for the first summer preceding their entry into the College of Arts and Sciences—and nursing, too—and for the first year or so, sometimes two years, were given the kinds of educational backgrounds that they needed in order to catch up and to get to a place where they needed to be for college. A lot of support, a lot of counseling support. A lot of time was spent determining where each of the students needed to do their studying—on campus maybe rather than at home, as some of these kids came from homes where there was no place to study, there was no atmosphere in which study was possible. They were taught to study in cases where they didn't know how to, hadn't been taught to study in high school or junior high. Many of these students—most of them I should say, and I guess Jim Ramsey is a person who would know more specifically about these kinds of things at EOF than I; he has all the statistics in his head, I'm sure—but most of these students, they did well, they did very well indeed. Many of them today have gone on to graduate school, are lawyers. Many of them went on to medical school. And the Organization of Black Faculty and Staff here at Rutgers in Newark, which was established...the OBFS was established, I believe, in 1967, the year before I came on board. A man named Eikelberger [sp], believe it or not a black named Eikelberger....

COHEN: I remember him.

JONES-HICKS: Do you remember him?

COHEN: Yes.

JONES-HICKS: A minister he was, I think. Established the Organization of Black Faculty and Staff with Roy Hill, who was the first, I believe the first, black tenured person on this campus; he

was in English and did establish the Black Studies Department. Which now is called the African-American Studies Department.

COHEN: I just wanted to touch on one thing, you mentioned the EOF Program. But I guess for the record, to make it clear though, I guess what we're talking about is the Academic Foundations Department.

JONES-HICKS: Yes.

COHEN: Implemented it, actually carried out EOF, the financial end of it.

JONES-HICKS: Yes. The EOF is the financial end; the Economic Opportunity Fund Program was the financial end of the Academic Foundations Department. You're right, absolutely right. So the OBFS, the Organization of Black Faculty and Staff, was established in 1967. And when I came on in 1968, I was asked to be secretary of that organization. It supported the EOF students in whatever ways it could, mentoring them. There was some financial support that we were able to give. And at the end of every year, we selected from among the students, a number of them, sometimes as many as twenty, who got achievement awards from the organization. And the achievement awards are still presented to selected students. They're book awards and book certificates. The Organization of Black Faculty and Staff is still in existence, although it's not nearly as strong as it used to be, for reasons that...there's been some dropping off through retirement and whatever have you of the people who were initially involved in the organization. And as people have also gotten tired, you know, just got plain old tired.

The OBFS was support not only for students, but it was also support for black faculty and staff. And I incidentally...I've been chairman—chairwoman—of that organization for the past, I guess, fifteen or sixteen years. And it has come to the aid of blacks in trouble with the administration, and it's come to assist in cases where—and many times over the years it has been true. We found that there were “too few” blacks on the faculty. Blacks were not being promoted or being tenured at the same clip as others. And so we worked through the years to try to address some of that, and we've had really good cooperation, I think, from our people at Newark, the faculties at Newark, and the administration at Newark. By the administration I mean the various, the several provosts who have.... We had good support from Malcolm Talbott. And the dean of Arts and Sciences then was Blumenthal, who attempted to bring in black faculty, and did, in fact, bring in a lot of black faculty. And after him then Norman Samuels was dean of Arts and Sciences. I don't think there was any....

COHEN: Well, there were some people, yes.

JONES-HICKS: In between.

COHEN: Gil Panson was acting.

JONES-HICKS: Panson was acting.

COHEN: Richard Robey.



JONES-HICKS: Robey, Richard Robey. Yes, and then Samuels. So there's been some progress, there's been some attrition, there's been some regression over the years.

COHEN: Yes. You mentioned—you mentioned regression in two connections. One is the appointment of—I'm assuming regression in appointments and promotions of black faculty.

JONES-HICKS: Mm-hmm. Faculty.

COHEN: But earlier you mentioned also regression as far as—

JONES-HICKS: Students.

COHEN: —black and minority students.

JONES-HICKS: Yes.

COHEN: In what respect—going back to the student question—why was there regression there? What was the nature of their regression? What was actually happening then compared to what was happening earlier?

JONES-HICKS: Now, I think there came a time when there was a perception that enough had been done. That enough had been done, that there were enough blacks in the student body. That there were enough blacks on the faculty. And that, you know, there was not a need to continue this effort.

COHEN: Why do you think that occurred?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I think it occurred probably because there was a—it was part of a general trend. I think there was a general trend across the country. People began to feel that, you know, they were tired, they were tired of the movement. They felt that enough progress had been made and enough already. We don't need to do anymore. People now have gotten bootstraps, and they've taken hold, and they can make it without further program assistance, without further formal programming and that kind of thing. So it was not just at Rutgers-Newark that it was happening. It was happening all over the country.

COHEN: Well, how did the question of levels of preparation of students enter into the discussions at that time, starting with, let's say, with Conklin Hall, where the chief grievance was about the need for more admission of black students.

JONES-HICKS: Black students. Also faculty. I think those students were really....

COHEN: Yes, and black faculty. From your perception, what was the main grievance, let's say, going back to 1969, what was the main grievance of the students who took over Conklin Hall?

JONES-HICKS: They had two concerns: Their concerns, I think, were, one, that there were, that the university was not earnestly, actively recruiting black students. And that also one caveat there is that they felt—this I know to be true, too—that they felt that the university was not admitting—was deliberately not admitting—black students who would have qualified for admission. There was a lot of policing that went on in the late sixties, early seventies by black and white faculty—Bruce Franklin was among Faculty Admissions Committee people who watched over—and Michael Layson [sp] was another one—watched over the applications of black students to the colleges. They watched over to be sure that qualified black students were admitted. They watched over to be sure that people who maybe didn't meet quite the criteria for regular admission were funneled through the EOF/AFC Program. So there was a perception that there was not enough attention paid to—or that there was a deliberate exclusion of black students.

COHEN: And this perception was abroad in what year, would you say?

JONES-HICKS: In sixty-nine, sixty-eight, sure, in sixty-nine. It was verbalized. It was verbalized in sixty-nine and seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two.. And also that there was not a formal—I don't know that there ever was—formal recruitment program for black faculty. And there was a concern about that on the part of students. The black students who participated in the Conklin takeover, for example, were concerned about enrollment of black students. But they also—that is the admission and retention of black students. But they were also concerned...they were concerned because they felt, for one thing, that there were no black faculty here which, if the situation had been different, they felt would have attracted more black applicants to the school. And they probably were right about that. There remain very few tenured black faculty on the campus.

COHEN: What was your perception about the level of preparation of students who were admitted, let's say, in the early seventies, seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two? Enrollments went up to about, I think, something like forty-five hundred—it peaked. And students were brought into the university who probably had not been reached before. What was your perception of how well prepared they were to deal with college work?

JONES-HICKS: I think the students in the early seventies were probably very well prepared. Those black students were well prepared in the early seventies. And those students who came in in the sixties had come from schools, even the schools in Newark from which they came—from which many of them came—had prepared students well for college-level work. It was in later years, it was in the late seventies, when the public schools in the area began really kind of spiraling downward. And we found that students were just not reading, not coming here with the math that they needed, even the minimum levels of math or comprehension that they needed.

COHEN: Was that across the board regardless of ethnicity?

JONES-HICKS: Probably across the board, but certainly.... There was a de-emphasis on science, there was a de-emphasis on math, I think, across the board. But it most seriously affected black students and poor students who were in poor school districts, in districts like Newark's, which did a really poor job of preparing students for college. And did a real poor job

of counseling students for college; that is, we found students were not being informed about the possibility [that] they should expect to go to college, prepare for college, start preparing for college long before the senior year, etc. So it was a public school counselor failure. It was a public school curriculum failure as well.

COHEN: I wanted to go back to 1967, July of 1967, when the riots occurred. What, in your perception, was the immediate effect of that event—or those events—on the campus?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I wasn't here. I wasn't on the campus when the riots occurred. I was working a few blocks away from here at the Business and Industrial Coordinating Council when the riots occurred. And I think the people inside the community were, however they were perceived as rioters, as looters, that was a handful of people. And I think that most of the people in the community were terrified. I think they were scared to death and remorseful when the smoke lifted. They were frightened when the tanks were rolling in the streets and the police and, you know, the state militia was called in, and there were guns. I saw... I was on Clinton Avenue near Osborne Terrace during the time there were tanks in the street. And I had come up in a taxi. I lived in East Orange, and I had come up in a taxi. And I wouldn't have been able to get a taxi into Newark had it not been for the fact that my uncle owned a fleet of cabs, and he himself drove me to see a friend who was sick and needed food but couldn't get out. The stores were closed. People couldn't buy bread. It was just.... And people were being shot at if they stood in windows, you know, in their homes. And it was just—it was a war zone. It was like.... I remember just being absolutely astounded, horrified at the activity in the street. And the way the buildings had been assaulted with windows broken and windows broken by bricks, by gangs that had gathered run through the streets. But also by gunfire, by shotguns. And people were assaulted by police on the streets. It was real frightening. And I feel it probably scarred forever children who had lived through that period in Newark.

COHEN: When the troops were called, what effect did that have...well, on you, on people you knew? What was the perception?

JONES-HICKS: Well, it was.... I think that people didn't feel.... I'll tell you what they didn't feel. They didn't feel protected because they didn't feel that the troops were being called to protect them. I think they felt on the other side. It probably hardened the attitudes of people who might have been much more moderate through this situation if the troops had not been called. Because these troops did not...they didn't differentiate between law-abiding persons and persons who were looting, law-abiding persons and persons who were traveling in gangs. Children were wounded by gunfire. I had a friend who was wounded standing in her apartment. She was shot through the window by a trooper who said he thought that she had a gun. It was very devastating. It was a devastating time. It was a time, I think, that—and an event—that finally isolated...it severed the relationship between—it polarized, severed, forever polarized it. I think we're still working, many of us are working at trying to redevelop the relationship between blacks and whites that we had in the earlier part of the 1960's. But I think it severed that relationship, at least for those people who were witness to this event in Newark.

I had been an officer at the time in CORE, the Congress Of Racial Equality. And I remember that at around that time the organization, which had been absolutely integrated, the officers and the

membership, just kind of dissolved. It was an anger that developed on the part of many blacks in the organization who insisted that the whites, who had been members of the organization and helped develop the organization, leave it. And that was, you know, kind of the beginning of the dissolution of the civil rights movement in this area. Then of course it happened all over the country. It was kind of a domino effect.

COHEN: Were those the years when Bob Curvin was the chair?

JONES-HICKS: Bob Curvin was, yes. He was regional chairman of CORE. He was northeast regional chairman.

COHEN: What link do you see—organizationally and ideologically, I guess—between the riots, the riots of sixty-seven, and the takeover of Conklin Hall in February of sixty-nine? If any.

JONES-HICKS: The relationship between....

COHEN: Yes, organizationally, personnel, previous contacts, perception of accelerating.... Well, of course in 1969 our perception was to accelerate social change of some sort. What was the effect, if any, of 1967 on what happened here specifically on campus?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I think that....

COHEN: In your perception.

JONES-HICKS: Well, in my perception it was a time when people, especially young people, these students, felt that things were slipping away. There was an erosion that was beginning. And they felt that they needed to grab hold before this occurred, this erosion, you know, would dissolve the progress that had been made, that they felt was still an active part of what would propel them into better lives for themselves and their families. I think it was a desperate time because people felt leaderless, they felt powerless for the first time in a long time. I mean the power business, that Black Power stuff in the early sixties—late fifties, early sixties—had gotten blacks to feeling that they could make gains. We began for the first time, I think, maybe ever, as a whole people—I mean there had always been individuals who believed that we could empower ourselves and that we could be working with whites, with the Jews, I think, in particular, with the Jewish community, we felt empowered for the first time. My mother, for example, had—and my father, too—had.... And it wasn't an unusual home, we thought. I grew up in a home where they pretty much ignored or tried to ignore the color business. I mean you know I was encouraged to be as close to white as I could be because that was the way that you got by. You learned the language well. You learned to speak well. You learned to assimilate as best you could. And that was how you got by. And they pretty much ignored talking about the color thing. It was something we knew existed, but I tell you I think I must have been twelve or thirteen years old before I really ever gave it a thought. And that was because I was visiting in the south and was confronted with it. On the way back, we drove back, and I was confronted at a segregated roadside ice cream stand. So it was....

But in the sixties, in the late fifties and the sixties, the blacks began to feel that they could change things, that things would change. So this rioting business kind of exposed an ugly underside that for maybe ten or twelve years had been hidden. These kids didn't know that it was there at all. I mean they didn't understand what had happened in the fifties, you know they had been infants—toddlers. They didn't know what, you know, the segregation during the Second World War and then, too, their fathers, their grandfathers. So they felt that something was happening. Their rights, their hopes, their dreams were eroding, were being taken away from them, and it was being done violently, too, because of this riot business. It was a violence that was being perpetrated on them. So they were angry, and they were demanding. And they held up Malcolm X, and they held up the radicals. They held up Malcolm X, they held up Amiri Baraka, they held up Ron Karenga as leaders who espoused their philosophy, their hopes and their dreams more than the moderates like Dr. King. And these radicals were saying, you know, you've got to be more vocal, you've got to retaliate, you've got to maybe provoke some violence in order to get what you want, to achieve what you want. So there evolved a couple of different thinkings, a couple of different....

[End of Tape #1]

COHEN: We are back. And about the other students and their thoughts about making social change. I wanted to ask.... Yes. You mentioned Dr. King, who was assassinated in 1968. How do you think this affected the students? Do you have any perception of that in their decisions, movements?

JONES-HICKS: Well, since King was our principal moderate, this was just another indication to the students, the kids, not his age contemporaries, it was just another indication to them that the moderates were maybe on the wrong side. They were affected. I mean after all if this man were shot down and he was talking moderation, what hope was there that moderation would work? So I think it fueled the anger and the frustration, his death fueled anger and frustration among young people for sure.

COHEN: Since we're on the subject, general subject, of activism on the campus, what was your perception of the effects of the anti-Vietnam War protests on the campus? I see on your wall here...that is a poster, end the war.

JONES-HICKS: Yes, that's an original. That's an original.

COHEN: Join the moratorium.

JONES-HICKS: Yes.

COHEN: Rutgers, October fifteenth. Was that...

JONES-HICKS: Sixty-nine—sixty-eight... sixty-eight. I think that was sixty-eight. Anyway, that helmet became, with the flower in it, became a national symbol for end-the-war protesters.

COHEN: Is that a sunflower?

JONES-HICKS: It's a sunflower, yes. And it was used all over the country as a symbol by the protesters. And I'm very proud of that poster because it was given to me by one of our own activists here on campus many, many years ago.

COHEN: Who was that by the way, do you recall the name?

JONES-HICKS: Mike—oh, Lord! I'm getting old, Gil.

COHEN: Me, too.

JONES-HICKS: Mike I-something. Oh, dear. It'll come to me. It's an original silkscreen. I'll remember his name.

COHEN: I think the name has come up before in the *Observer* probably the Alumni Relations Office.

JONES-HICKS: Yes, indeed. Absolutely. He incidentally has earned his Ph.D. now. He's written a couple of books. But anyway, the movement was really strong here at Rutgers in Newark. And during that time there were some funny things that I remember, particularly—I mean funny now. They weren't funny then. I remember that these kids were so outspoken, and we all kind of—we grownups that is—all kind of walked very softly. We walked very softly around them, you know, so as not to...we didn't confront them at all. I think many of us were peaceniks ourselves, you know, who felt too far along in the aging process to participate fully with these kids in their protest... many of us, that is. But I remember, for example, that some of the peace—flower children as we called them then—were meeting once in the provost's conference room with the provost and some top-level administration. And there was a young woman who had an infant with her, and she sat at the long conference table in this very elegant room, whipped out her breast, and breastfed this child at the table. We all tried not to bat our eyes. [Laughs] That was the kind of thing that we withstood and never...

And there were also...my friend and then colleague, Adele Kaplan, once just blew it, though. She couldn't take it anymore. We left a meeting with these kids who were yelling and screaming at us, about I don't know what-all. They were angry about the war, and they were angry about everything. And she came—we left the meeting, and we walked into my office, and she threw her handbag down, and she said, "I can't stand it anymore!" She said, "I'm so tired of that word 'suck.'" She said, "They say everything sucks! The university sucks! The sun sucks, this car sucks, this street sucks! Everything sucks!" She said, "I can't stand it another minute." [Laughter] But that was one of the...there was nothing that we could but what they'd say "That sucks!" You know. But it was very...it was an exciting time. And I think...Oh, God! I don't know how much longer would we have been in that war if it weren't for those kids and the hell they raised about it.

COHEN: About what year did that occur? New campus, old campus? [Laughs]

JONES-HICKS: That was old campus. I think we had...you know that was kind of old campus. That must have been earlier. That was sixty-nine, sixty-nine. I guess we had Robeson Center.

COHEN: Sixty-nine. Well, sixty-nine would be new campus.

JONES-HICKS: Sixty-nine. Yes, yes, yes. That was sixty-nine. Yes. We had Robeson Center up, and I think Boyden and Conklin probably. Yes.

COHEN: What was your perception at the time of these divisions among the faculty on the whole question of the war?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I was on the antiwar side. And I thought—I've never supported any war at all in my memory. But we had...I think I was not aware of a lot of—we knew there were conservative faculty. There were moderate faculty, and then there were radical faculty. I think, you know, we were very excited when we got Bruce Franklin here. I was very happy about it. I was real pleased about it, very proud, as were many other people. But there were some detractors among the faculty in particular when Franklin came on board, he having come from I believe it was Stanford, was it? Where he and his wife had been arrested for having destroyed government records of draft-age youngsters, young men. But anyway, government files they destroyed—burnt them, I think. Got into the building somehow, a federal building, and burnt those records as a protest against the war. So we were proud of him and his role and others here who participated in the antiwar movement. And I think it made a stronger university. Those people made a stronger university. And by and large I think they made all of us look better, feel better, because their cause was so righteous. It was so, it seemed to me, clearly right that.... We weren't at all clear in this country why we were involved in this war, why our boys were being killed, what we were doing there. We knew that other countries had failed, had been there, had done the same kind of thing, had waged the same kind of war in this area, in that area of the world, in that part of the world, and had failed. And had all backed out after a time. But after so much loss of life and so much expense.

And then of course there was also the point being made that the government was spending an awful lot of money to keep this war going. And at the same time, whether the perception was real or not, programs, social programs, in this country had begun to receive less and less support. That program at the Business and Industrial Coordinating Council that I mentioned to you earlier, where I had worked, for example, which was largely supported, financially supported, by government, was disbanded despite the fact that it was real clear it had picked up people who'd been on welfare, hundreds and hundreds of people....

COHEN: The BICC?

JONES-HICKS: Yes.

COHEN: Yes.

JONES-HICKS: And got them training at companies like Mutual Benefit Life and Hoffmann-La Roche and New Jersey Bell, the major banks in the city. Got them training, got them through

counseling, got them motivated. The government stipends allowed them to get babysitters and carfare to training.

COHEN: What were the years of that, Delora, the BICC, roughly?

JONES-HICKS: BICC, 1963 through 1970.

COHEN: What else were you saying?

JONES-HICKS: These people who had come through the training had actually gotten themselves placed within these companies. First, the very first black bank tellers in Newark were women who had been trained at the BICC. The first telephone operators and company reps had been trained at the BICC. And this was true throughout all these big businesses in town. These people had been on welfare and had children. I mean they were absolutely, you know, they were going to be statistics. I see some of them now, and they are, many of them, women my age, who have had kids graduate from college. They have done so well that there's no question—and there never was a question—but that they would do well. The program trained not just women but men as well. They trained the women in the clerical areas, in bank telling and that kind of thing. Men were trained in factory jobs, factory skills, skilled factory work. And every one of the people who came through the program—and there were hundreds and hundreds of them; I guess over time probably thousands—but I saw many hundreds of them come through, graduate their training programs and get placed. We had placement people, job placement people, on board who matched the graduates with jobs. Those people just did very well. And that kind of thing doesn't exist anymore. There's no more. So the antiwar activists made a direct connection between—they saw a connection between the closing down of programs like the Business and Industrial Coordinating Council to the escalation of and the maintenance of the war in Vietnam.

COHEN: You mentioned Bruce Franklin's appointment. How did this office, the Public Information Office, deal with the publicity that was generated around that appointment?

JONES-HICKS: Well, we didn't at all. We were told not to. We were told to refer any inquiries to the Office of Public Information at New Brunswick. The president made a couple of statements back then, I recall. And of course Bruce Franklin was probably an unusual case. I mean he was not just a professor of mediocre status. He was a brilliant young man when he came on board here, who had already authored many books and articles. He was considered a very, very fine scholar and was already becoming world-known as a science fiction expert. So there was no way to pick at him I mean from the academic standpoint. His credentials were impeccable.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. We've been talking about changes on the campus over the years. I was wondering if you could comment on changes in relationships between white students and black students or among the students of various ethnic groups generally if you can.

JONES-HICKS: I think before the Conklin Hall takeover, there probably was a better relationship going between black students and white students. White students felt violated because they were, as everybody else was during those few days' period, were denied access to



the building there, the classroom building. But I think—and I may be wrong—but I think that over the years there's always kind of been...the ethnic groups on our campus have always kind of been isolated one from another. I don't mean to say that there was an angry kind of isolation or separation. But we have always attracted, I think, a large number of—by “we” I mean Rutgers-Newark—has always attracted a large number of kind of blue-collar, working-class students who come from families, I mean white ones, who come from families where there haven't been previous college graduates; that still is true. And that class of people tend to kind of hang together and not to do a lot of mingling; it still is true. We've always recognized that, but there has never been very much done about it. I guess, you know, there weren't problems about it, so there hasn't been much done about it until recently. I think that James Criedel [sp] over at the Robeson Center is a dean of Multicultural Affairs, he's called...has begun to do some things over the last couple of years to bring together ethnic groups. They're doing what's called an annual Multicultural Olympics, for example, which will, you know, help to bring—and it's designed to bring, it's clearly by design, to bring people together, bring students together to share their ethnic backgrounds and to encourage them to kind of hang together.

COHEN: Concerning staff at the university, what have been the effects of affirmative action, personnel policies, recruitment, promotions on this office and generally, here?

JONES-HICKS: On this office it's had no effect whatever. I have always been the only black professional in the office. We have a black secretary; she's been on board, I guess, for about nine years. It's just been in the last couple of years in New Brunswick that they've ever hired a black at all, and it was at one point....

COHEN: In Public Information?

JONES-HICKS: Public Information. Eight or nine years ago, the Public Information Office in New Brunswick had upwards of ninety employees and not a single black. The last couple of years, the last three years, four years, the situation has changed. The director is retired, and the situation changed somewhat. There are a couple of blacks in the office at New Brunswick, some of whom are heads of units. The affirmative action emphasis served women better than it did blacks here. Actually there was a time when our affirmative action regulations, the university's affirmative action regulations, stipulated that there should be an affirmative action coordinator for each division on campus: that is, administration, staff....

[Break in recording]

COHEN: We're back.

JONES-HICKS: And then I was too—as Lincoln was, too—and there was another person whom I don't remember now who was also doing affirmative action coordination for the university at Newark, was set to look at these sheets, to look at the data, understand whether there was or there wasn't a real broad cross-section of applications. And sometimes we were—he was supposed to sign off on this sheet before the job was actually offered. So it would have been a very kind of powerful position to be in if in fact it had been taken seriously by the powers that be. It was not. I sometimes—once or twice I think—refused to sign off on one of those sheets. It

just resulted in making people very angry at me. And I didn't have, you know, we are staff—I am staff. You are in a different category I think. What happens is that staff people are not protected by any union, professional staff.

COHEN: Oh, professional staff. Yes.

JONES-HICKS: Were not protected by any union, were not protected by any tenure situation. And so, you know, we feel very, kind of, in limbo. And there's...you don't do a lot of questioning of your supervisors and whatever other people. Well, Lincoln, I know, held up a lot of faculty appointments in cases where he knew that there had been a proper search, you know, where there had been proper interviews.

COHEN: He held them up?

JONES-HICKS: He held them up by not signing off the affirmative action.

COHEN: You mean if there hadn't been.

JONES-HICKS: If there had not been. By not signing off the affirmative action sheet, because the coordinator's signature was necessary in order to do the hiring. When and how—exactly when and by what means, I don't know, a good number of years back, seven years back, six, seven years ago, we stopped getting those sheets. We stopped getting the applications, we stopped.... There was no more contact between us and the personnel office or anybody else either in New Brunswick or anybody else about hiring.

COHEN: Nothing was being done locally to take the place of that function?

JONES-HICKS: There was nothing now. There's no oversight of affirmative action in Newark.

COHEN: For staff.

JONES-HICKS: For staff or for faculty either.

COHEN: Numerically, what was the effect of the affirmative action efforts that were made through the seventies into the early eighties?

JONES-HICKS: Through the seventies I think it was probably good...it was probably the best in the seventies through 1976 or so, seventy-seven.

COHEN: What was the impact on staff working relations among people on the staff?

JONES-HICKS: I don't know. I don't think there was any detrimental.... You know people learn to work together; they even learn to like each other if they're given a chance. I don't think there was ever any...I don't know of any problems that ever resulted from the efforts, the university's efforts, to implement affirmative action. I think there probably was a little bit of friction between men and women here on the faculty over affirmative action. The women were

very aggressive and did a lot of lawsuit stuff, you know. There were a lot of class action suits against the university on behalf of women who had been overlooked for promotion and tenure. Much of that stuff we won, some settled out of court, other stuff was won in court. So there was some friction between men and women. But not between the races I think.

COHEN: Yes. And again, just one more question on the effect of affirmative action on recruitment, what can you say about the level of preparation of the people who were recruited who may not have been recruited in some earlier years?

JONES-HICKS: Oh, there's no question that they were as good as could have been gotten. Absolutely. There's this huge pool out there, you know, of so-called qualified blacks and Hispanics who just haven't been given a shot at work within university settings. And, no, they were good people. I don't think that the university made very many mistakes at all in the hiring of minorities under affirmative action programs. I can think of one or two mistakes in recent years—very recent years—that, you know, probably had nothing to do with affirmative action. They were just kind of, you know, hirings that were, you know, people who disappointed us, didn't work out.

COHEN: During the late sixties and through the seventies, into the eighties, obviously there were changes on campus. Also changes in the public perception of Rutgers at Newark. How would you characterize that?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I think there's still some feeling in the community that Rutgers is not welcoming blacks. I know that to be true. That it is an elitist institution that does not really want to integrate its.... And I don't know that.... I think that this attitude may change. I think that this new president, Francis Lawrence, is interested in proving that, you know, to be untrue—that notion—to be untrue. Well, we've got to see what he's going to do. He hasn't really made a move yet, but his intent, it seems, is that he is interested in changing that perception.

COHEN: What is the basis of that perception?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I think there are real incidents...you know there's nothing that travels faster than word of mouth. I know there are some real incidents that have promoted that perception. I mean I have, if I didn't.... I have a daughter. My third daughter, who is a Rutgers graduate, graduated from Newark, as a matter of fact, but she applied to the university having come from private school. I mean she was....

[Break in recording]

COHEN: Okay.

JONES-HICKS: Well, I was about to say that my daughter, who had come from the Morristown Beard School, had been really well prepared for college—she was not a kid who worked real hard in school, but she's bright, a bright girl who did well. Applied to Rutgers University using that application which allows you to apply to as many as three at a time.

COHEN: What year was that?

JONES-HICKS: This was in eighty-two, I guess, eighty-two. She applied to Rutgers College, to Douglass College, and to Rutgers-Newark. She was accepted at Douglass College and she was accepted at Rutgers College. She was refused admission to Rutgers-Newark. Okay?

COHEN: Okay.

JONES-HICKS: So what she did—I didn't make a fuss. I didn't make a fuss about it, Gil. I could have gone over to Cecile Stolboff, and I could have jumped up and down and screamed and yelled and carried on. Cecile didn't do it herself. Somebody else did it, you know. The kid's name was Jones, and the... Well, I don't... Anyway, she went to Rutgers College. It cost me a mint to put her up down there and stuff. So she went to Rutgers College; she was down there for a year and hated it. She hated it.

COHEN: Did she?

JONES-HICKS: Oh, she hated it! She said she that felt like an outsider. She felt a constant aura of a kind of veiled bigotry. She was just—she was very unhappy there. And so she transferred after the first year to Rutgers-Newark, and they accepted her as a transfer. And then she lived at home. Now there's a case, I know....

[Break in recording]

There's a case where I know firsthand that she was prepared to get into Rutgers-Newark. Rutgers-Newark has—and I know this kind of thing, this kind of weeding out of applications....

[Break in recording]

COHEN: Okay. We lost about a minute or so because the tape stopped.

JONES-HICKS: Okay. Alright. Well, let's backtrack....

COHEN: So if we can back....

[Break in recording]

Okay. We are back. We were talking about methods of admission and applications and the public perception of admissions at Rutgers in Newark.

JONES-HICKS: Yes. So there are many real instances where students have applied to Rutgers in Newark and rejected for not being prepared adequately. But accepted at places like Kean, Jersey City State, Montclair, Upsala. And so there evolved this perception by the community that the university is closed to them. That, despite some efforts that are made on behalf of the university to attract black applicants. James Ramsey heads a minority recruitment and retention program; it's many years old now. They distribute pamphlets, they go out to high schools, to

PTA meetings and to church groups and talk with students and the parents and attempt to get these kids to apply. Now, it seems to me that the recruitment process is not totally at fault here then because a lot of these efforts going on. But where some problems have evolved is in the admissions office. And, you know, I don't know what's ever to be done about it. It's still a problem. But there are efforts to zero in on it.

COHEN: What have been some of the major events that you, in your capacity in this office, have covered over the years?

JONES-HICKS: Well, a major event is always around the openings of....

COHEN: [unintelligible]

JONES-HICKS: Oh, my! Opening buildings. Major events...I think the opening of a new building is always a major event for us. We're real excited still about adding to the campus; especially this office, I guess, is aware of what expansion of the campus, physical expansion of the campus, means to the university's public image. So those events are exciting. I think there have been some cultural events occurring here at Newark that have been very exciting. Around the expansion, the first expansion, of Robeson Campus Center, for example, we had the late Sarah Vaughn here on campus in concert. And that was very exciting. There was a real, real big conference of writers, famous writers, who had written on urban matters or had written urban backgrounds in their work, here on campus. That was the Conference on Literature...Conference on Urban Literature, was it?

COHEN: City and Literature, I think it was.

JONES-HICKS: That was absolutely exciting. We had people here that we'd never dreamed of seeing. I mean they had James Baldwin and...I just can't even begin to think of all the writers, internationally-known writers, who were here attending that conference. Of course the inauguration of Edward Bloustein as president of the university was a big event here in Newark as well as it was in New Brunswick because we gave him a big party. We in Newark are good for throwing good parties, and people in New Brunswick know that.

COHEN: It's true..

JONES-HICKS: So they let us have our own inaugural party here for Bloustein. We held it over at Symphony Hall in the grand hall. And it was a great party. Everybody had a grand time, and everybody had a chance to dance with Bloustein. And it was a lot of fun. Yes.

COHEN: Let me ask.... You remarked that Newark has a reputation for throwing good parties. We often get this from the librarians, too, when the librarians throw their parties. Why is this? Why has this characteristic of the Newark campus that we throw the best parties?

JONES-HICKS: You know I think there's one thing that is unique about the parties that we have here—the big ones anyway—is that we really go all out to mix up. I mean we really get all colors, and we get everybody all going at these parties. And I think that's part of the charm, part

of the wonder of a party at Newark Rutgers, is that we kind of get this wonderful mix going. Oftentimes we even do ethnic foods, you know, and we summarily do that without even thinking about it, I guess, without much planning. And it's just however people, you know, go off from the party and stray from the notion of kind of a meld, you know, melting pot or a meld, if you will, a *mélange* of ethnic diversity. And we do it real well at a party at Newark. And that was true at Bloustein's party. I mean we did polkas, we had jazz, we did all kinds of stuff. Everybody was there. There were people from physical plant dancing with the president. There were secretaries drinking with full professors. We had a grand time.

COHEN: What recollections do you have of notable faculty on the campus in your years here?

JONES-HICKS: Notable faculty. Well, of course, Malcolm Talbott always comes to mind when you talk about notable faculty or administration. He was both. He was a man committed to developing this wonderfully good relationship with the community, devoted to that. He was known, you know, in New Jersey as Mr. Rutgers. He was known as Mr. Rutgers.

COHEN: Was that actually a term....

JONES-HICKS: Actually a term used synonymously with Malcolm's name. He was known as Mr. Rutgers, which didn't take anything away from Dr. Gross. Mason Gross was a charming, wonderful gentleman of a person, who was not at all jealous of his role, or of anybody else's notion of getting Rutgers into the forefront in education in the city. So he permitted, and in fact encouraged, Malcolm Talbott to go about the state and to have people fall in love with the university, and to engage wherever he could people who would better understand the university, to improve interaction with them. And then of course there are people like Sydney Greenfield, who was—not too long ago, not many years ago retired from the faculty. But he was a very colorful figure. A person who was the surprised recipient of an organization of a black faculty and staff award.

The award that we gave to...well, Malcolm was a recipient of it, and there were two or three Supreme Court judges who—the Justice Douglas Award it is, that we, not every year because we don't find people who we think are deserving of it every year; but on occasional years we present this award to some person—normally it's somebody within the university but not always. So when we made the announcement, we were allowed to present this award at a faculty meeting. When we announced that we were going to present this award to a faculty member, of course everybody thought, all the faculty thought, that it was going to Bruce Franklin who would get it. Not that Bruce Franklin wasn't deserving of it. But that particular year it was...it was particularly interesting to watch the reaction of the faculty, not the least of whom was Sydney Greenfield, surprised, when he got that award. He had had a little-known background working with blacks as a young teacher who had worked with poor blacks in the poorest sections of New York at night school, teaching at night school. And encouraged many of them to go on to college. And he had, in his own very kind of quiet way, had done a lot for a great number of black students coming through the university over the years, and had gone unheralded. And I don't think he was ever looking to get a pat on the back. So it was a great surprise to him, and he was very grateful for that award. I was happy that Malcolm Talbott, received his before he died—in fact he was unable to attend the ceremony at which we would have presented it here on

campus because he was sick in a hospital in Ohio. And Jim Young.... The organization couldn't afford to fly anybody out to give it to him, but we knew that he was very ill and was desperately ill. Jim Young, who was provost at the time, paid for my airfare to go out to Cleveland and to give the award to Malcolm at his bedside. And he was very moved. But it was the last time I ever saw him. He died, in fact, three days after I went out there.

Let's see, who else. I keep mentioning Bruce Franklin's name. But Bruce Franklin is a person whom I feel...just such an altogether wonderful man. He's an impeccable scholar, he's a fine writer, he's prolific. And I can't tell you, I guess he must have written thirty or forty books, to say nothing of articles and other kinds of research he's done. Now he's a consultant to the Smithsonian.

Henry Blumenthal was a fine scholar and a good man, a decent man. Oh, dear, I can't think of the former dean of—Edward Heckel. I can't forget his name now. Former dean of the law school was the person under whose tutelage the minority student program at the law school was developed. And he fought hard for that, and he fought hard to keep it clean and keep it working and to institutionalize it at the law school. So he's a hero of mine. And I think Michael Ason [sp], formerly of the Math Department at NCAS, was a fine teacher but also a person who worked real hard for human rights and for inclusion of blacks, of black students, in the College of Arts and Sciences. And I think probably Norman Samuels will be remembered in the same way. I think that he's a very decent man who is often misunderstood by not just blacks, but by the faculties and the staff here in general. I think he is probably the most moral individual I know—and this is not...I mean I would say nothing at all other than just....

[Break in recording]

COHEN: We're back.

JONES-HICKS: Okay.

COHEN: You were recollecting, reminiscing about notable faculty.

JONES-HICKS: Notable faculty. Roy Hill.

COHEN: Oh, yes, I remember him.

JONES-HICKS: I remember Hill. Roy Hill, who was...I guess he was the first tenured black on this campus. I think he was tenured out of English. Yes, English. And he was a real colorful guy who went about the campus in great red capes flying behind him and huge sombreros and cowboy hats. He was a very controversial figure. Roy Hill, in fact, was also chairman of the Black Studies Department. And his leaving the university was not something that he wanted to do. Roy was tenured and left the university because he was not any longer...it wasn't a comfortable place for him to be anymore. Black students at the time—of course the political thinking of young black people has changed somewhat in the last several years, and so this kind of thing probably wouldn't happen today. But Roy was literally driven away from the university by pressure put upon him from black students. He was homosexual, and he didn't make any

bones about it. And at the time—that was late sixties—it just wasn't a pill that black activist students could swallow. They did not want him heading up the department. And they made it clear to him, and Roy left. Sadly, I think, because he worked very hard for minority students. Well, I think he probably didn't pay enough good attention to the development of Black Studies here. He was a good person. He now is in—I think he's in Alabama.

COHEN: In an academic position?

JONES-HICKS: Yes, yes, yes. He's teaching.

COHEN: Do you know where?

JONES-HICKS: I don't know. I haven't talked with or been in touch with Roy now in several years. He's at one of the black colleges. And I remember Chris White, who was not faculty, but he was at the Jazz Institute from its very beginnings. Chris is still in the area, a jazz musician who's recording and, you know, club dating around. We've had some stars like Dorothy Dinnerstein, who's a cognitive psychologist, who has written books that few interviewers have been able to completely understand. [Laughs] And we've had stars in the law school and stars—we've got stars in criminal justice, stars like Frieda Adler and Gerhart Mueller and Ian Campbell. So we have, there are.... I guess I just can't....

COHEN: How about outstanding students that you recollect?

JONES-HICKS: Outstanding students? Well, Joe Browne is a student who was president of BOS at the time that that organization took over Conklin Hall. And Joe Browne is now in our law school; he came back to law school. Joe remains a good friend. And what other students? I don't know. A young woman named Arlene James, better known as Wanini [sp] James, who now is a lawyer. Grew up in the projects in Newark. And her family has done real well. The children in her family have done real well. That kind of would belie that notion that you can bring up a family in the projects and the kids can do well. And she's a lawyer and doing very well. Her sister is chief-of-staff for Congressman Pinyon [sp]. That young woman also was an activist in the sixties. She was a part of the BOS movement. Actually not BOS, but it was another as active, little bit more radical black student organization called Harambe.

COHEN: On campus?

JONES-HICKS: On this campus, yes.

COHEN: Oh, could you tell me a little about that because it doesn't ring a bell at all?

JONES-HICKS: Well, it was called Harambe. Its members all wore traditional, what is called traditional dress. They wore African clothing. They were American kids, but they wore African clothing. They were very closely aligned with Amiri Baraka and an activist leader from California named Ron Karenga. They were very kind of rigid in their philosophy. The leader of that organization was a young man named Paul Sanders, who was perhaps better known as Nikawa [sp]. And he died suddenly of a stroke about three years ago. These students were very



active on campus, very outspoken on campus. Also for the faculty and the staff because of the dress and because they seemed so absolutely tunneled. These students, the Harambe students, in fact, were the students who petitioned the board of governors to name the Paul Robeson Campus Center, which was then just the Campus Center, the Paul Robeson Campus Center. They successfully petitioned the board of governors. It was Paul Sanders—Nikawa—who addressed the board of governors and made the request to change the name. He was so well received by them—I mean they were really awestruck by his eloquent presentation—that they turned that vote around to yes in a week or two. Yes. So it was that organization that was responsible for the naming of the Paul Robeson Center and the celebration that ensued afterwards... celebration on campus.

[Break in recording]

COHEN: We're back. Okay.

JONES-HICKS: I think we were talking about Harambe, the other black student group here in the sixties and seventies. Harambe did not last many years after its founders graduated. The people who would have been Harambe members joined the Black Organization of Students, BOS, and worked within that organization. But it was a very colorful group. It was...the students were really very bright, some of the very best students. They were history-oriented. I mean they really knew their black history. They were students of serious scholars. And they were absolutely dedicated....

[End of Tape #2]

COHEN: We're still talking about

JONES-HICKS: The spelling is H-A-R-A-M-B-E.

COHEN: Any other outstanding students?

JONES-HICKS: Well, you know, the students attached to the drop-in center on Central Avenue really should be remembered. Those students were also an extraordinary group of—an interracial group I ought to add—who were inspired by Adele Kaplan, a woman whom I've mentioned before. Adele Kaplan now is sixty-six or sixty-seven years old and is in semi-retirement. She works at NYU Extension Division part time. She puts together a series on world affairs for them. Lives in New York. The mother of David Leaderman [sp] of David's Cookies.

COHEN: Oh!

JONES-HICKS: Yes.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Okay. Adele was—what did they call her? She worked out of the dean of students' office when she first came here from Princeton. And she was an assistant dean. She was in charge of planning and programs for students and student organizations—service organizations. She established the CHEN Daycare Center which still goes on. She established the

drop-in center on Central Avenue. I don't know if it's still on Central Avenue, but it was on Central Avenue near Washington Street. The drop-in center serviced Vietnam veterans who were returning home slowly at the time. But returning home, many of them with dishonorable discharges. There was a peculiar thing going on after during that Vietnam conflict where these guys, many of them had either...who were over there had returned home wounded or returned home addicted or in some other way afflicted by the war and were not given honorable discharges. They were given some kind of medium-discharge, the name of which I can't remember. Not dishonorable but something else that somehow prohibited their getting all the benefits and whatever the name was.

So Adele saw the need—Adele and students—saw the need for addressing that kind of discharge and to turning around those discharges. And the drop-in center at Rutgers became the first organization in the country to begin doing that. And they actually did turn these discharges around for I don't know how many—countless veterans out of that drop-in center down there. The drop-in center also was a counseling center for students who felt themselves in trouble. There was a drug problem on campus greatly during the late sixties and early seventies. So students got counseling there until Adele was successful in getting some funding through the university for a drug program which she also founded. And it was housed on James Street. It had a small staff: There was a psychologist and a couple of student counselors. Eventually Adele Kaplan went over to the...when there was no more funding and less interest in this kind of program, this kind of outreach program for students managing it, she went to the business school, and she became director of the Small Business Development Center at the business school, which was the Rutgers Small Business Development Center. And then eventually became the New Jersey Small Business Development Center until she retired from the university about five years ago.

COHEN: Delora, you've been here under a number of administrations, administrations of vice president, provost, deans of schools. I wanted to zero in on the vice president's office, the provost's office and then the deans of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences or anyone else you can think of. I have some names that I was going to bring up. You mentioned Malcolm Talbott several times. And I was wondering, you know, what your assessment of his contributions to the university in Newark.

JONES-HICKS: Well, they were large. His contributions were large. I think he'll be remembered most for having attempted to bring together the university and the community. He had in fact helped to found the Council for Higher Education in Newark—CHEN it was called; it still exists—which brought together all the colleges in Newark, along with community organizations and business and industry. He was a member of the United Community Corporation, which is the anti-poverty agency in Newark. And he was, as I said before, known as Mr. Rutgers throughout the community and throughout the state. He was a man who visited in black churches. He was an honorary of black organizations, community organizations, in the city. And when his...when the intention of the new president to—when it was announced that it was the intention of the new president to fire Malcolm, there was an enormous uproar, a tremendous outpouring of protest from the community that was carried on the front pages of then the *Star-Ledger*, which was the, or maybe it was... I'm not sure which. Anyway, Robert Braun, who now is the education editor at the *Ledger*—was the education editor at the *Ledger*, I guess it

was—carried front-page stories for, I guess, a week or more on this notion that Malcolm Talbott was not any longer going to be in Newark, that he wasn't going to be heading the university at Newark, that he was not going to be available to people in the community. Well, all hell broke loose here in Newark. And there were telegrams, there were phone calls—the phones were ringing off the hook in our office and in New Brunswick as well. And of course Malcolm was not really let go. That is he did not go back to the faculty; it was perceived that he should be kept on in an administrative post. And so he retained his vice presidency as an associate provost, I guess—no as vice president. I guess he remained vice president. There was a new structure in which the vice presidencies were kind of....

COHEN: The foundation, I think.

JONES-HICKS: Yes. He went to the foundation.

COHEN: In New Brunswick.

JONES-HICKS: Then he went to vice president for Public Affairs. And he remained there for maybe three years or so. I'm not sure. A very short while. And then came back here to the law faculty. But he was just very well loved. He was also a person who inspired us as party planners here at Newark. He was a great lover of the entertainment process, the entertain-company process. And the university maintained a ten-room apartment for Malcolm as vice president in the city in a very elegant building over in the North Ward. And it was part of Malcolm's responsibility to entertain on behalf of the university. And he did that in a real splendid fashion. And he escorted—we used to joke a lot about it—he escorted a lot of rich widows to the ballet and to symphony orchestra performances. And then he got a lot of endowments. He got lots of money for the university through his kind of elegant entertaining of these ladies, old ladies.

COHEN: How would you assess his role in the negotiations in the Conklin Hall takeover?

JONES-HICKS: Well, he was very...he remained very calm and very open and very much interested in what these students were saying. He never attempted to deny the inequities that they claimed. In fact, at some points during this period there was talk about bringing police or troops or whatever in to force the kids out. He refused that. When there were protests in his office—sometimes there were sit-ins in his office—he never called for police to protect him or to take students out. It was open the door. He always told about that he wanted to be remembered as the vice president with the swinging door, swinging in, swinging out. And he wanted to hear people out. And he did that. He handled it all very beautifully, very well.

COHEN: Your perceptions of Henry Blumenthal's deanship.

JONES-HICKS: Well, he kept an orderly house. He kept an orderly house. He was absolutely pro faculty. And I think the faculty appreciated him for that.

COHEN: Do you have any recollections of William Gilliland's deanship?

JONES-HICKS: Very little...very little. Yes, very little.

COHEN: Let's see. For a year after Henry Blumenthal resigned as dean, Gilbert Panson was acting dean for year. Do you have any recollections of his deanship?

JONES-HICKS: Well, I don't think Dr. Panson made much of an impact. I think he was kind of holding. And I don't think that he made much of an impact. I don't think much happened during his tenure as acting dean.

COHEN: The next dean was Richard Robey. Any perceptions of his deanship?

JONES-HICKS: Now Richard Robey was another story. Richard Robey was a brilliant young man, very young man for the role. And much more controversial than any of the deans that had preceded him. He was brilliant, hard to know, I think probably perceived as elitist. There was some talk.... Well, I don't know whether I should even talk about this. I don't know whether I should talk about this, I was going to say something, but maybe I shouldn't...the other party is a matter of fact still here at Rutgers.

COHEN: Mm-hmm. Okay. And he was succeeded by Norman Samuels.

JONES-HICKS: He was succeeded by Norman Samuels.

COHEN: As dean.

JONES-HICKS: As dean, yes.

[Break in recording]

COHEN: We are back. We were talking briefly about your assessment at this point of Norman Samuels as dean of the college after Richard Robey.

JONES-HICKS: Yes. Norman Samuels was...I think he'll be remembered as a good dean. But there were some controversies. He had faced a kind of a period where there were angry blacks because of the small number of black faculty that was tenured or retained. There were a number of blacks who came onto the faculty during Norman's tenure, but few of them were tenured. Many, many people came on during the latter period of Richard Robey's tenure and kind of held over for Norman. But they were not—they weren't tenured. They were people who stayed through their contract, contracts didn't get renewed and they left. So he kind of came under...he was criticized on that level by blacks. But I think that he was a faculty dean. And those faculty deans, people who are perceived to be—by the faculty—perceived to be on the side of faculty, do well as deans. So it's hard to juggle that, it's hard to juggle those people. I think he did a good job of keeping that, of keeping it balanced and keeping their goodwill. It was interesting, I think, when he left—he was a real fine scholar, you know, a good teacher, too—a fine teacher. It surprised me when he left the teaching to take on the provostship. But it was clearly something he wanted; although I think maybe he has some regrets. The provostship is a real fulltime job, and it disallows for scholarship. You just don't have time. And that's something I think he regrets. I know he regrets that.

COHEN: Another dean who's been here a long time, not in FAS but in University College, Cassie Miller and I wonder what you could say about his contributions.

JONES-HICKS: Well, I think Cassie [sp] has endeared himself to students, especially University College students with whom he works. He's a real student advocate.

[Break in recording]

COHEN: A couple of windup questions. One, is there anything that we've talked about that you'd like to go back to, Delora?

JONES-HICKS: No, I think not, Gil. If anything occurs to me, like for example, Mike's last name....

COHEN: Oh, yes!

JONES-HICKS: I keep thinking Ionaro [sp], but that's the guy at... I will call you. Okay?

COHEN: Alright.

JONES-HICKS: And I'll keep in mind that I should remember Mike's name.

COHEN: Yes. Because I'm trying to get contacts—students, alumni. Maybe he'll be in the files.

JONES-HICKS: Mm-hmm.

COHEN: Anything else that you....

JONES-HICKS: No, I think not.

COHEN: Okay, okay. Anything we haven't touched upon, questions I haven't asked which perhaps I should have asked?

JONES-HICKS: No. I think your questions have been good ones. Your research has been really good. I think not. I think I would just emphasize that the inclusion of that—mention of that—Harambe, that group of black students which was activist and differed from the Black Organization of Students in that it was a more radical, more rigid, more disciplined...and of course its members dressed in that West African garb; they wore it to school, they wore it to work, they wore it just, you know, in the streets. Very, very tunneled in that way.

COHEN: What was the idea, the radical content?

JONES-HICKS: Well, it was a pride in being an African-American. They used that designation, incidentally, many years ago.

COHEN: African-American?

JONES-HICKS: African-American.

COHEN: Before or....

JONES-HICKS: Before. It's now become the way to identify black people. But they had...they used it many years ago. And they encouraged the use of—not use of—but knowledge of some of the African languages. Each of them was very nearly fluent—I know many of them were fluent in Swahili and Hausa. So they learned—they were serious about this African heritage thing. And probably much more conscious of the importance of the emphasis on African heritage and history than the BOS students.

COHEN: Were they the students who introduced the campus to Kwanza?

JONES-HICKS: They were, yes. They did the Kwanza celebration. Yes, every year around Christmastime. Yes.

COHEN: Anything else we haven't covered or you want to go back to?

JONES-HICKS: I think not. I think not.

COHEN: Well, thank you very much.

JONES-HICKS: You're very welcome.

[End of Tape #3]

-----[End of Interview]-----

Reviewed and Edited by Catherine Carey 6/10/2013