

University of Minnesota Sesquicentennial Diversity Project

Interview with William B. Stewart and Ida B. Stewart

Interviewed by Ann M. Pflaum

Interviewed on March 26, 2001

Bill Stewart - BS
Ida Stewart - IS
Ann Pflaum - AP

AP: This is Ann Pflaum on Monday, March 26, and I'm interviewing William and Ida Stewart. This is the continuation of the earlier with William Stewart. This is the first time Ida has joined us. Let me just summarize, Bill, what you are I were talking about, and we can maybe quickly add any things that we need to that we have not completed. We talked about the various programs that had been developed at Morris, the principles behind them, the importance of multiple elements in the programs, and the fact that the numbers in the programs have been very successful and have increased regularly over the years. Bill, let me ask you, can you clarify—you did it for me over the phone—the three E's stand for . . .

BS: The ME3 is Minority Educational Enrichment and Enhancement program.

AP: That was started here at Morris?

BS: Yes.

AP: In the early '70s?

BS: In the 1980s. The basis prior to this was Project SEE, Summer Educational Experience, developed by Dr. Joe Latterell to recruit minority students in the twelfth grade who had an interest in science and would spend five weeks at Morris doing experiments with professors. I have information that I will give you to clarify that. I talked about National Science Foundation money, and then the Eisenhower grant money—the termination of those in view that they wanted to work with teachers, and out of that grew the ME3 program, which worked with teachers in the community concerning science and technology, new developments at the college level. At the same time working with them who had to teach these students such that at the time they did reach the university they would be knowledgeable about those areas. In the five-phase process, I think you had one, was teacher; the second was students here; the third was to go back into the community; the fourth with teachers and parents exhibiting; then working with Gateway program itself; then going back into the community as teachers or back out in . .

. it would supply teachers in the community in addition to sending students out into industry. You have that process.

AP: Yes, we talked about that in the other interview. One of the questions I wanted to clarify, when did you retire as Director of Minority Programs?

BS: In 1998.

AP: That gave you a very long tenure.

BS: Right. 1973-1998, which is twenty-five years.

AP: One of the questions we ask in all the interviews, are there people who were mentors, people that you admire or people that you mentor? Personally, from your very long experience as an administrator, were there figures nationally or here in Minnesota or at the college here that you admire, that were supportive, interesting, creative colleagues?

IS: Silas Purnell and Ada S. McKinley.

AP: Were they both from Chicago?

BS: Yes. That's a funding agency, and Silas actually started the educational program and built it to national prominence. In fact, he has a record of sending 30,000-40,000 students through higher educational institutions.

AP: What was the name of his educational program?

BS: Ada S. McKinley Educational Services.

IS: Wasn't Talent Search a part of it, too?

BS: Talent Search was a part of it, yes.

IS: I think he had two or three connections.

BS: Initially, the program was started by Ada S. McKinley. He did get Talent Search money in addition to . . . He has an Upward Bound program, and he also has a parent's program. Now at this point he's located in the project right across from the Illinois Institute of Technology, which now has a scholarship in his name.

AP: In whose name?

BS: Silas Purnell's name.

IS: Robert L. Fox.

BS: He's the dean of Fresno Community College, former dean of Minneapolis Community College.

IS: Clarence Williams at MIT.

BS: Dr. Clarence Williams.

AP: Is he a scientist?

IS: Clarence Williams contributed to us advice and whatnot, when you talk about mentors.

BS: He was special assistant to the president and adjunct professor of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT.

IS: Manuel Woods.

BS: Dr. Manuel Woods; I don't know if you remember him.

AP: I do, yes. He was at the Twin Cities campus in General College?

BS: No, he was assistant director of admissions. Then he moved over to the department of education before he left. Now he's vice president of Turning Points. Dr. Gloria Williams and Clarence Carter.

AP: Library, right?

BS: Yes. They did the report at UMM.

AP: By "the report," it was a review of programs at UMM?

BS: Yes, and that was a result of black student . . .

IS: He also got the Minority Experience Committee here; he was instrumental in that.

BS: The Minority Experience Committee was a result of that study. They were here an entire year. That report should be in the Archives. If it isn't, we could get that.

AP: The date is about . . .

IS: About 1979.

BS: Here is the data. You can get that report. I suggest that you probably ask me what documents the Twin Cities have relative to our work. That's a question I think we need to talk about, but this would be a crucial one. Those two—Dr. Williams and Carter—they did the study, they did the report, they made the recommendation, and as a result we started the Minority Experience Committee, which is a faculty adjunct committee dealing with educational matters including hiring of faculty, looking at curriculum and those programs, to take directly to the president and the faculty any issues that needed to be resolved concerning minority students. That committee is still in operation. It has done many different things, such as the five-credit program in Gateway, for computers, math can English that students get credit for as they complete that when they arrive. In addition, they have looked at diversifying curriculum. You know the president's funding of faculty members? That's employed in the Twin Cities campus. What has happened in the last two years, we have as a result of that, we have a black professor in music, a black professor in political science, we've had Asian a long time in the science area, Indian professor in art, and Indian professors in other areas, too. We've always had Hispanic and Asian professors, but there has been a lack of, only periodic black and sparsely numbers of Indian faculty. There are two or three at this time.

IS: So Indians and blacks were the least hired people. I look at the university, having a scientific background, I'm going to look at it in terms of history and social science because are those where my degrees and experience have been. As we were a change agent, and being a change agent it began a process when they set up a structure for that process to take place. It's analogous to an evolutionary process that's eternal as far as the universe is concerned, because nothing is static in universe. Everything changes, and it's in recurrent cycles that we deal with. When you get a community of this nature, it's going to occur regardless of who is president or who is in power or whatnot. The most important aspect of it is that it isn't the minority that's changing, it's also those who are not minorities that are changing, too. People normally politically talk only about the minorities, but that's because of the innate structure of our society. Political power means projecting onto the minority that they are the one that's causing the problem because they view their position for being perfect, and that grows out of the Calvinistic history where everything is static, they treat it as if it is. So in a way you get reality versus as if it is reality, and the university becomes a community becomes common ground, whereby one can hide behind all kinds of things—"things" is not the word I want to use, but smokescreens and whatnot. That was one of the reasons that caused the conflict. I need to interrupt myself and ask you a question. Are we allowed to use names in words?

AP: Absolutely.

IS: The assistant chancellor was always reminding us we were in a community of scholars. Being a white community, some of the students who had never lived around white people, eventually they'd had enough of it so that they'd strike out and leave in the beginning. The other thing, and I'm speaking in terms of, not as some radical or nothing like that—I'm trying to be very objective; there's no emotions here and I'm just giving

my opinion of what happened, and this is true everywhere when you get another group of people who move into another population of people. In this particular case, these are Euro-Americans, and when you come here, naturally they are going to stand out, because color is basically a problem in our society. That color rests on principally black people, because the first business with the institution of color, which in a way, they say race, but it really is, but race to me is the control mechanism that the system uses to control its own population, which happened to be Euro-Americans. When they first came here, there was nothing set up for them to adjust, because adjustment and change are continuous, and the students have not lived around all white people before, out here in a one-street town. This created a shock. The shock may express itself many different ways, but because we live in a Herronvolk democracy, the white students and the white people here have a continuity with their community here. Herronvolk, and I'm going to use an example . . .

AP: Can you spell Herronvolk for the tape recorder?

IS: H-e-r-r-o-n-v-o-l-k. It is a German word, "Herron" meaning master or man, and "volk" meaning people or race. Americans in South Africa were a Herronvolk society. What that means is, there is a color bar that divides the races, but it's hidden, and it controls. One wonders, they think it is just segregation, but Herronvolk means the structure doesn't change, but they can manipulate the segregation. That gives you the impression that the core of the structure has changed. It amount to having a house and you want to rearrange the room. Imagine the house being society. So you would take and rearrange one room, and it is changed, but it's managed change, in order to continue to justify the system. When people talk about minorities, they forget that we are a consequence because we have no power. We are powerless and at the same time we are treated as if we are equal. I'm going to remind you of something from *Animal Farm*. Remember the ninth commandment was "All animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." If you look at the Herronvolk, and I'll tell the resources so you can get information on it, it is all races are equal, but some are more equal than others. I'm just transforming that particular thing because this is what Herronvolk means. All whites are equal, but minorities are not equal to them, so they are more to each other. This is how equality is perpetuated simply because they have no idea of how to live with others. That's why you are here, because you are now researching how this came about. This is why I say I'm not talking emotion. In Herronvolk, one can go on, and when we come here, our antecedent determinants have already determined our place. You have members on the faculty who kept reminding us about a community of scholars. The subtext of that, now, we have to do something to bring you up to a functional ability. So now we're going to bring you up, and that's a transforming process, because in the end, Bill and I are not black. We just look black, but we're dysfunctional white people because we came out here to learn all about white people. But the white experience is antecedent determinant, and community is really a common ground to mask the differences. So you treat people equal in order to function unequal. That's the way that goes. The second thing is that we come from schools that were designed by the system to perpetuate merely schooling and treat it as if it is the same schooling they get in the

elitist, or the white, community. It is not the same. We don't have the jobs; we don't have the power, and the tax base isn't there, so they keep us in perpetual dependency. But they use projection to give you the impression we are getting the same education. The schooling is to transform us into white people, and that's the reason whiteness is omnipresent everywhere. There isn't a day or minute that goes by that we aren't thinking white. It's impossible not to think white. I'm going to quote James Baldwin here. This is how the "Problems and Issues of Racism" that I had to start because. . . [IS and BS talking at once]

BS: I don't know if you want a copy of that because that was . . . when the course was introduced, there were only two minority groups here then. It was utilized as a teaching tool also. You can elaborate on that, how to study, because Ida was the one that . . . that's the independent study that students use, how to study, how to outline, how to write papers, what else?

IS: It grew out of the frustrations of the students. I was in education, and most of the students didn't know I was here, because the way the campus is set up, I didn't really have to deal with minority students because that was Bert [Wilbert] Ahern. I forgot who was the first director. He was American Indian director.

BS: Dwane Dunkley, who is now superintendent of schools in Onamia.

IS: Dwane was here, but he didn't have a program. He was the coordinator. He took over from the black person who was in . . .

BS: Dr. Michael Harris, who was a biologist in the biology department, did it strictly on a part-time basis.

IS: But they had no structure. They didn't begin a structure, somewhat of a program until Bill came. That was purely by accident. So the students found out they had a black on the staff, they came over and kind of talked to me and kind of approached me. We all went to see Dr. Imholte, and we got this thing going. Now, these are my own personal feelings, why would a campus invite students here, what is the motive for having students come on the campus that you know extend a community of scholars and at the same time, because a lot of those students were students I taught at Wilson Junior High School—several of the students were my former students—

AP: Where is Wilson Junior High?

IS: It's in St. Paul. I was a teacher. I was recruited here.

BS: On a Temporary appointment for two years when dean Henry took leave. You didn't know Dr. Bruning.

IS: Dr. Charles Bruning used to be here. He was here during the beginning. He was the first chairman of the educational component.

BS: He transferred down to the Twin Cities and was in charge of the TTT program, Teacher Training Teacher program.

IS: He was the first chairperson. Then he went to the main campus, Twin Cities campus, and that's where I met him because I was selected from St. Paul system to participate in the TTT program at the University of Minnesota.

BS: You need that information, I think, in your Archives. Bert mentioned that to me when I talked about ME3. He said it had sentences in the beginning, perhaps it had associations with TTT. That information you need to get.

AP: What is his first name?

IS: His name is Dr. Charles Bruning. He was teaching adult education at the university. I think he just recently retired.

BS: Frank Wilderson knows him well.

IS: Before we get to Dr. Bruning, how I got to the campus was strictly an accident. Somebody recommended me. I was teaching at Monroe Junior or Senior High School. I got this call from Bill Scarborough inviting me out for an interview. Bill Scarborough is dead now. He became chairperson after Bruning. It took a long time for me to make up my mind because Bill was in Washington, D.C., I just had a new kid, and I had just gone back to teaching, and I wasn't thinking about coming to a place like Morris. Anyway, I got here, and I didn't know they had students here. I just thought they only had one or two because most of these campuses have like one or two black students. I just didn't think that I was really going to come, so I came for the interview. I didn't want to go to Washington, D.C., because I felt that I wouldn't be able to deal with the situation teaching there while Bill was there, so I took this position because I'd be closer to our two older children. One was at St. John's and one was at St. Benedict's. I had the two younger children [end of side 1, tape 1]

IS: . . . transportation back and forth from St. Joseph's. I just thought buses ran like they ran in the Twin Cities. Then I get out here and I realized, because St. John's and St. Benedict's let the children come home once a month. I realized I was going to have to go down and get those kids. I thought, oh my gosh, with a baby less than a year old. So when we came here, it was a complete turnaround. But not to hold you up on those matters, but when I came here I did not know they had a social conflict. All hell was breaking loose on campus. Kids were driving back and forth from the Cities to here. They were going to beat up this. They had people from the Twin Cities . . . I didn't even know all this. That's how isolated I was over in Education, because Mr. Dunkley was taking

care of these problems. He had them running around like Musical Chairs. I don't know if I should say it this way, I don't mean it, but because they had no structure, he would say "Come back tomorrow," or "Come back such-and-such a day." It was the institution that had Dunkley having them run around like this. He kept saying, "I'm from nine to five," and these kids didn't know what to do. These were kids who had never handled money. You see, you're admitting students in a good source to see what it's like to admit students on a campus. Sylvester, I forget his last name, was a student from Chicago who was recruited to Harvard University. He wrote "A Guest in a Strange House." He worked for the *New Yorker* or the *New York Times*. I will send you the article. He was recruited there. He went there and found the same thing, that they were living better than their parents. When I came here, these students were living better than their parents. I didn't read that article before I came. I only became acquainted with that after I was here. I could see the parallel, and once you study it, it's in other places, and there's another source that you can look at, "Black Students on White Campuses." There are two different versions, copies of that work, one written by . . . I was in class with him, but I can't think of his name now, and he was at the University of Minnesota. That's where he got his Ph.D. He was among those people, fewer numbers who got Ph.D.s when blacks were not on the fewer numbers. The other one has the name "Cross" or something in it. It's called "Black Students on Predominantly White Campuses." There is another study about teachers or administrators, and that was put out by Harcourt and Brace. That's another source you can use if you want to check out. I didn't become acquainted with those resources until . . . They didn't mean anything to me then. When I say they didn't mean anything, I was not on a white campus. Coming to one, then suddenly these resources meant something. The kids were having a fight. They had some kind of police people out on the campus looking around because kids were driving up in cars. I was in the hospital. One week out of the month I had to stay in there because I'm an asthmatic. Getting adjusted to this place, on the radio I heard that the police had stopped a group of kids coming to Morris. Morris was in the news, or somehow or another the news didn't seem to affect the campus, in the major news all over the radio. But it was really something out here. We had white students walking around with protection. There was one student in my class who wore a machete. This is to show you how serious it was. The niggers were coming. Let's be a little open and say, "They're coming; they're invading us." That was the kind of atmosphere. Dr. Imholte called me and said, "Are you afraid?" I said, "Afraid of what?" That shows you how they had managed to have this problem, but at the same time I was so engrossed in getting the job done, because what you had to do was teach and supervise students, which meant you had to drive all over out here to do that. With two young kids, I was worn out by the time I got home. I think most women know that. You're worn out. Finally, this course was necessary. It was not called "Problems and Issues of Racism," but it changed from the Third World perspective to this. You had students that would spend their money in like a month, because there was nobody to teach kids whose parents didn't make much money. Suddenly, you got money; you've got to have somebody here. All I'm doing is laying the groundwork that was necessary for a structure. I'm giving you the history.

AP: Can you tell me the year you came?

IS: 1972.

BS: I came in the winter of 1972.

AP: You were back from Washington, then?

BS: Yes.

IS: He came to visit us.

BS: I was in Washington, D.C., but I came here and started the position in winter quarter of 1973.

IS: I'm not denying that. I'm saying that you didn't come for a job. You came to visit the family.

BS: Dwane Dunkley quit, and the opportunity was available, and Steve Granger asked me if I would consider.

AP: That would have meant, obviously, leaving your Washington position. That must have been a major decision.

BS: Yes. I was the director of Model Inner City Community Organization, which was the organization that Congressman Walter Fauntroy had before he went into Congress as a representative from Washington. I took that position after he went into Congress. I was there for a couple of years.

IS: What I'm trying to say, the conflict began just like any other place. I'm trying to put this into perspective that it should have been expected. I don't think that any community should be such, whether it be a house, a community, a college, and so on, anybody who teaches history and anybody in education who teaches in isolation . . . I was involved in conducting and constructing so many human relations workshops, I began to think it was just a fad. Unless people understand how the system functions and why it functions, you will have oppression forever. As long as we have a structured society that we have, we will always have this race oppression and whatnot. I look at it this way—heaven, purgatory and hell. Heaven is dominated by the white male. Women became a minority, but actually the other majority. When we say women, now, that's a double speak word. We're not including, but implicitly so, non-white women. But women is considered white. So they are in purgatory. That's their form of oppression whereby they steal, exercise a lot of privilege, they have power, they can do things that people in hell can't do. So that's the way I distinguish between the different types of oppression. We were change agents, but we were a certain type of change agents. Because when, say like the

blacks and Indians come in, they create more visible social conflict. But when the Hispanics came, the Indians and the blacks had already laid the groundwork. When the Asians became a part of the program, the groundwork of the clash, the shocking clash . . . I'm not saying they don't go through shock . . . I am saying that if it's a continuous process, it moves toward the better rather than stay at the worst. If we look at a continuum and we want to measure, the more they become acquainted the more adjustment and the more reality things get better. I'm using "better" here with quotes on it. It isn't the same as it was; it doesn't mean you're going to do it in a year or two or three years. It took considerable years. If we go on events, then we'll say that when we got closer to the middle '80s and '90s, things began to get a little better. I think they got used to being around. The psychologists and all of them on the faculty were telling me, they would say it right in your face, "We didn't expect you to stay here no more than a year or two." Well, why would you have somebody sell their house to come out here? I don't run fast. I don't run fast. You are not going to tear up my life and my family and then tell me you didn't expect me to stay but two years. If Sojourner Truth could go through the hell of slavery, I can withstand all you guys out here. I'll take you on. And I did. I'm not boasting, I want you to get that. I'm just saying that you're not going to tear up my life and then tell me you didn't expect me to stay. Well, who are you? You couldn't go to anybody for help. That's just how bad it was. Herronvolk allowed you to be able to say those things and because we are always dependent victims, they can say what they want because, I'm going to quote James Baldwin, "Whites are trapped in a system they inherited, created, of which they do not understand." I will send you a copy of the article, and you'll see what I mean. James Baldwin didn't write that article; the person just quoted him and I transposed it to include those kinds of things. I'll send you a copy of the article. They would say mean things. Here is something that I didn't realize that white women had a problem with. I grew up in the South where you really didn't know anything about . . .

BS: I'm going to stop you, what time have you got?

AP: I have got two minutes after eleven.

BS: All right, I better get started. What will happen, as you look at this history, transformation and so forth, you go through that stage, second stage, and so on.

AP: Let's start again.

IS: The most important things that grew out of this experience is number one, I think I should mention that the Minority Student Program became the conscience of the conscience raising of the campus.

BS: Talk about our outreach programs and doing workshops and other things outside of the institution.

IS: The most important things I'm going to mention here so you have them. One is that structure helped bind the discontinuity of people of color or non-whites to an all-white campus because you expect clash in the first place. That's natural. That's all part and parcel of the whole change that goes along in the universe. The university is just a small microcosm of what society is, in my way of thinking. Secondly, it is a world. It builds a community where you have parasitic individuals. There are some people on the staff who set up these symbiotic relationships. I'm speaking now, I'm using analogies from biology. They set up these communities and you have parasitic individuals on campus that would bait and switch. They'd have these minority students stealing stuff out of the program, what they thought would help them, rather than come to Bill. Now that's a social thing in the sense that it talks about place, that I don't have to recognize you as a director. Then the student learned what exploitation was all about is many dimensions. They could say that I met you at the water fountain, and then in the report they say, "I had a conversation with Bill," or one of the students, and this and thus. The next thing you see they have written up something. So this presumes a formula. All they have to do is make contact with the person they are exploiting and say they have met several of us, and they could come up with a hypothesized study. These studies oftentimes do not fit the reality of things. Now, there were some faculties that would talk about other students to minority students, and that created a problem. It was just ongoing. It's analogous to the Horowitz on the reparation. You've got the big thing on TV, and then you have Bernard Kalb telling us yesterday . . . I brought it over here that I was going to show you at lunch, where he talks about American universities . . . "campuses free or open in the spirit of inquiry or closed places." Then he goes on to talk about that. Anyway, you had faculty members who seriously wanted to deal with the thing realistically, and so on, the differences, to see how it could work. If the minority is moving from a liberated position—the non-whites—the whites are using to a justifying condition, and this is where a lot of the faculty and the students were. They were trying to justify it. But we realized we would never be them and they would never be us, but they should realize you cannot talk about a serious problem like this out of context unless you want to be political, to justify it. The second most important thing after the structure and after a lot of clashes and a lot of students who lost out but left here with a lot of debt, and so on, this does not mean that white students don't have their problems. But they have more advantages to pay it off than these non-white students because it keeps them in a perpetual state of confusion and they can't sit down and study. It also allowed them to be able to work in groups, especially black students have never learned how to trust each other and sit down and work in groups. That didn't come about until about '89 or '90, when you had a certain group of minority students from Chicago and other places who sat down and were able to study, and they weren't really about competing with each other. It gave the minority students those kind of everyday living skills that people assume because you get eighteen [years old], you suddenly know things. This is what I mean about the antecedent determinants are illusions and reality at the same time. They can't assume because somebody's parents taught them how to budget, that somebody in the slums who never had a budget knows how to budget. I would have thought that the psychology department would have kind of helped along with that. They had no idea a

hundred dollars is like having ten thousand dollars. I was just absolutely shocked out of my mind that these students had no idea how to structure their lives and how to deal with things. But you had faculty members running around, "They don't even know this," "They don't even know that." Look, if you were a history professor, you knew that before you got here. If the professor knows that, he knows about the structure, he knows about antecedent schools, laboratory experimental schools. They are like a colony. They go down to the colony, do the missionary work and then back home again. That kind of saying they know that, but to pretend as Ford talks about in "Future of Illusions," they are treated as if they went to the same school. So in that form of exploitation, students became acquainted with exploitation. Those that survived, survived. I call those people who were mutualistic symbiosis, meaning that both profit from it. They had those students, those people, those wives, because if you don't have no people of color out here, you have to depend on good people like Marva Wagner and all like that, to find people who will benefit. The student benefits as well as the person benefits. You always have predacious kinds of beings from other people, but there were good whites here, so you won't think that this is a strictly white against black, black against white. The other important thing that came out, we had to reach out to the community. We found that it was necessary for us to reach out to the community, so I was put in charge of coming up with some ideas so we could reach the community. That's how World Touch started. It began with a big name—Russell Means was on trial in the Twin Cities and Dick Gregory, and what's the guy's name . . . Kunstler, the famous lawyer, and he had a friend that always traveled with him, another lawyer, and I can't think what his name is at the moment. But those people were here, and that kind of shocked the campus and began to wake them up because Morris was an indigenous college. They focused on just indigenous people. If they wanted a speaker, they wanted someone from this area. You got an impression by their statements they wanted to get away from the city. They didn't want no city problems out here, they didn't want nothing in the Cities, they wanted an idyllic kind of thing. It was very closed; it was hard to live here. It was hard to find anybody to talk to. I would say the past thirty years, I have been the loneliest person on the map, but I've never let that get me down. I never let that get me down because I always know others that have seen tough times. Was written by this famous man . . . he died . . . he has written books on how to win friends.

AP: Dale Carnegie?

IS: Something like that. I've got it. But I remember the days I'd read it over and over and over again, a little booklet that he had, and he always gave the example of the sun and the wind. You have to analyze the problem, and you have to be bold about it. Those little things helped me along. Then I thought, if I can't take this, and those people in slavery took that, who am I? Do you see what I am trying to say? If you are change agents, and I didn't call myself that but I'm aware that when a new element, a new something enters the compound, you've got a new compound, whether the person recognizes it or not. I was very disappointed in the history department because I felt that when I met this professor in MIT, I thought that he would be somebody that understood. But I discovered

that the people who always up front had a secret anti attitude. They were the worst people. I found the people that they label seemed to have a negative attitude, they was the most sincere people you could trust. I also found that in the South when I was growing up that I could trust those people who were up front, that would say, "I just don't like black folks." They were using that word then. "I don't like them." I could trust them. Look what happened to Wallace. Look how he transformed into very understanding, knowing that the world is interdependent and interconnected. But it took a long time, and he had to commit suicide.

The people that I was distant to, like Dr. Spring, suddenly he was a person I could really trust. Now a person who you would right off the bat seem to like was one of those exploiters, you see. The history department was one of them. The students got to dislike him and they'd come over and they would tell me he made statements like this—childishness, or he would stress those things that I guess he thought that was above the students' head. Or he would have students in his class, I got reports that students were watching to see if certain black students would cheat or copy the book and that kind of stuff. If you were teaching black history, you'd think that you would know a lot, but then I discovered another faculty member who said that he teaches classification. I said, what student is doing classification in history? If you are teaching about the black experience, the person only teaches up to the safe point. This doesn't mean to criticize the individual. I'm just stating the differences of people in the community that you had to deal with, but you didn't have anything in your knapsack that you could deal with. This is why I call it purgatory for women. The white women could deal with it—they still had a little power; the door was open just a little bit. They were honorary members and they could say things that blacks could not say. Like Horowitz . . . now they will say to the students at Brown University—this thing is ongoing now—they would say, "You must have controversy in order to have conversation." If you're going to have that back in 2001, then why is there a double standard? If I say something, then it's time to get rid of me. That's what I mean.

The other thing that happened was, after we got the World Touch program, we got the Women of Color. We got them interested in who they are. That's what the course did. It brought the students to a level of awareness and on a process of finding out who they were. Minority students come here not knowing who they are, especially blacks. Indians know who they are. They can explain something about their heritage. Blacks cannot because they have evolved from what? Child of slavery to what? Suddenly, child of slavery is subhuman to now, in the process of being human, blacks are still suffering from the legacy of what? Broken families, slaveries, to now. Now that cycle was completed, then what? Emancipation. Then what? The '60s; then now, we're going back to the cycle again. Okay, that was important. Then the other things is, you got a male director. That was important to the males. One will never understand how important that was when Bill retired, all the boys cried. That was extremely important. Male students got an identity reinforced positive. They never knew that a man could be like a father. That was very important, that came out of the program. The other important thing that

came out of the program, those other programs like Gateway and so on. [end of tape 1, side 2]

IS: [beginning of tape 2, side 1] Other important things that came out of the program: Students learned how to function on a college level. I was more than just a coordinator. I was a tutor, I was a recruiter. I functioned in every capacity. The other thing about the students of color and the programs, you also got the scholarship here in Bill's name. People that went to school with Bill when he was in college, like Jack Decker and all of those that went to Ripon, the same college that Imholte went to, he was there at the time Bill was there but they didn't now each other. The other important thing they got out of it, they had a family model. A lot of students would come and say, "We want a relationship like you and Bill." They didn't know we were catching hell, but we had a way of . . . Many times we'd say, "Why did we come out here? It's enough to break a family up." We just had a student here now who just got married about three weeks ago. Used us as a model. You get my point? They literally came and . . . How we stayed so long—46 years. They were asking us what caused that, that type of thing. As I said, the scholarship and just getting order in their lives. And they should not be falling apart if we don't have full partnership. Because you have a difference don't mean you're going to run to the divorce bank. There are some basic things you have to remember—trust, commitment and respect. That would keep anybody together if you know a person is committed, and so on, and not hung up on if your nose is straight or whatever. You knew that when you said "I do," or before you said "I do." Don't marry anybody that you can't stand. I think that those were important to them personally. There are so many things that are still ongoing.

Another thing we acquainted the students with, you have to make contact, you have to set up networks, and alumni. It took this experience for me to appreciate being an alumna. I hated all them schools I went to except Boston University. But it was my experience here that made me want to be a part, because I caught so much h-e-l-l while I was there. I just didn't care about it when they called. But this experience made me appreciate being an alumna. Bill worked very hard to make that alumni go. This is the first college that I'm aware of that black students and Indian and Hispanics and Asian—I would expect Asians to do that—but least of all I didn't expect Indians and blacks. But we got them interested in Morris. They are still growing. Anywhere Bill goes and we're together, they meet an alumna. They will come. He can get them to come. The alumni learn how to function in groups, communicate with each other. At that retirement, the second one on the Cities, the alumni one was just absolutely something to see. I was surprised at it myself. I make an analogy. When Dr. Snowden was here, all he could think about was running. He didn't know some of the basic things you would expect blacks to do. He was trying to get out as soon as he left. We had students like that. Around white people, no, not going to do that! But most of those students, we got them to see. They're going through changes too. You cannot have change without everything changing. High change is what you want to be able to deal with. High function is change. What's keeping it perpetuating itself, then you have to learn about cause and consequences. Remember,

whites are changing, too. You can determine according to circumstance because you are a victim of your environment. Who creates the environment for us? The structure, the power structure. Who creates the environment for white people? White people create that, too. That's what power does. That's what dominance does. It just doesn't happen in a vacuum. The main thing is understanding how change takes place, and what results from it is something good.

Now the cycle started over again after Bill retired. You don't get the same kind of situation, and that's because they don't have understudy, you don't have a cadre of qualified people. When I say "qualified," I mean to fit into the structure that was built. You get people that come, and they experience dictate at what level they are going to function. This doesn't mean it's bad or anything; it's just their way of doing it. It's the difference between Clinton and Bush. Clinton does it one way in relating to people; Bush does it another. He is a business manager; Clinton can combine the two, if I can use those two for an example. But they got so many scandals going on, I don't know what else to use. That just came to my mind.

What keeps America the same? The Constitution has a built-in structure that keeps it the same, and it doesn't matter if you get some minority program. It's not like that because it's still in process. The Minority Student Program is still in process. As long as you operate in the Herronvolk structure, where the color bar is, and your structure is colonial in a way, because the Herronvolk justifies colonialism, because it must perpetuate the, we like to say democratic, but it's actually capitalist republic that use democracy as a process of execution. They will have this. And believe me, will are going to continue as long as America remains American being an Herronvolk society. Equality would destroy the system. In reality, equality destroys the system. But equality can be used to maintain status quo. They start the hierarchy, the Herronvolk hierarchy of many. Out here, Bill and I are at the top of the color; you'd say we were at the top versus some non- . . . those that do not function with those kinds of credentials. In the Twin Cities, it is still separate and unequal. I go back to *Animal Farm*. All men are created . . . and who justifies this? People like Thomas Jefferson in his notes. He supports the Herronvolk. It's just like the electoral college. Who could vote? White men with position and wealth. Those were the voters. It was the in control to maintain the system. You notice that most people who talked about it did not say that, but they alluded to it. When they had the voting problem in Florida, notice this was a new idea that nobody really ever talked about. After the Florida situation, everybody was talking about the electoral college. I think I taped that one on what is the electoral college, and the person talked about it—how did it begin, what was it for? To maintain the system. If you look at it, it does. If it looks as though, and Bush is a good example, if it looks as though the system ain't going to maintain itself, then other things happen so they will insure that. That's an insurance policy to maintain the system, that and the Constitution, the way it's set up. That structure helps to maintain the Herronvolk hierarchy.

AP: As we draw to a close with this interview, one of the remarkable things I think is the accomplishments that you and Bill have made here.

IS: We have? [laughter]

AP: I think the numbers of students in the program, the success of the students, the regard with which you are held here. The system of course is always changing, and of course there are elements that are less than desirable, but reflect just a moment on your own successes. I think that you have been remarkably creative, energetic, humorous, dedicated, and I think that's important for the record, that for people that come after you that you can make a contribution as you have done.

IS: The people need to understand there must be a continuity. This is what we wanted to demonstrate. At Morris you can do most anything you want to do. You just have to find a way to do it and travel that road. I have never been one, in my whole life, to . . . the only reason I see the importance as you were talking is it came to light. What I'm saying is, one good thing that I can say about being in Morris, I'm away from all these people who say because they have a boat they are better than somebody. I got sick of hearing that. I'm this, or the color stuff. I'm so sick of that. I'm sick of that color here because it broke up my family when I was small. My mother's father was white, and being that, we were always reminded we were dark—not by my mother, but the members of the family. If you have short hair, you never outlive being short-haired, because down South they use color as a divide and conquer thing. It comes from the British binary system. They use that in all the colonies—color and this and that, and you were better. I got sick of hearing that. That's one good thing that I didn't have to . . .

But in the beginning, the students who came from Chicago would not date black girls who were dark. They dated white girls, so we went through a period of interracial problems out here. Bill was good at negotiating and helping people understand these things. A lot of kids left here because of that. Our older kids left here because of that. So my attitude was, if you don't want interracial conflict, don't invite them to your campus. You see what I'm saying? Because you know there's going to be a built in. Regardless of what the law says on the books, there was a problem here. People with a family, my original attitude was, don't come to Morris. I never told anybody that, but that's the feeling you have—guest in a strange house. You'll get that in Sylvester's article. The other good thing about being at Morris, at first I was angry about having made the decision to come here because pioneering is hard on you. When you pioneer, it's no easy job. So I've never had time to sit down and see what I've accomplished. I think I've been so rooted, because now I'm in the Ph.D. program at St. Thomas in the critical pedagogy class. I'll give you a copy of the presentation that Bill and I are going to make. Bill and I are starting an institute. I'll give you a copy of this. This is on the 30th. That's the presentation we're going to do for Pedagogy of the Oppressed in Omaha. This is our fourth or fifth time presenting it. So it's ongoing. This is not a something, and most people say, Well, when you get as old as you all are . . . I'll be seventy in September. I

think learning is a lifelong process. That's why I haven't had time to sit and think, now what did I accomplish? I haven't had time to sit down and do that, like Governor Ventura, "I ain't got time to bleed." You just don't have time to do those things. I think I've got a stomach against it because the things that they would say they are better than you were always to me things that . . . according to whom?

AP: This is a wonderful place to perhaps finish the interview. I always ask people one more question, which is, is there anything that I didn't ask you that you would like to say, or that we didn't talk about that you want to talk about?

IS: I can think of several things that we could have talked about. I think these type of interviews should be clear in the beginning if you want to know a lot of extra. I believe in the paradigm of the whole. If you want to focus on parts, Americans are living in a commoditized market economy type, and that runs through our every thinking, believing and everything, and do not think comprehensively. They don't move from in context thinking, the average American. I hope I'm making sense to you. We focus on parts, and the stores are set up that way. You have to if you are a consumer society and market is important. We focus on the market, but yet we say we are religious, we believe this, but very seldom do you hear people talk about God except on the TV. When you say, I am a compassionate conservative, what does the heck does that mean? It doesn't mean anything because the system continues to function as a whole. I look at an interview the way I look at a human body. It's an interconnected, interdependent whole. You cannot take out the circulatory system and talk about the human body, so we shouldn't be able to talk about anything without in context. It's interconnected and we want to make it function.

So the University of Minnesota Morris is a whole, and we came in to try to function and keep homeostasis within that community. We were allowed to, and when I say "allowed," I'm using it in the context that circumstance permitted it, not somebody gave me permission. But they gave me permission by inviting us here. It does not mean it's going to happen without conflict, because conflict is natural. The kind of conflict that happens here is managed conflict, but you're going to have conflict all the time. Conflict is continuous. The only absolute is change. The universe must be in flux in order to function. It must stay in homeostasis of balance in order to keep functioning. But there must be the conflict. You have earthquakes—these are all examples of conflict. Movement is part of everything, and it works itself to balance. You notice that in humans. This is throughout the universe. This is a parallel. It creates harmony. There must be harmony And it goes on with individuals. When you say that we didn't talk about many things, but I guess you focused on the most important things that came out of that structure. I feel that by going to MAEOPP and all of these conferences, we added enhancement to the campus. It's more than just between a race or something, because we had faculty members part of Mid-America Association of Service Personnel, that's what that is, and making contact with important people other than just street people. They need a variety of people. So we've had a variety of students, not just by race or ethnicity, but

social class. That is important as well. I believe we presented, and we'll be leaving this university with a rich experience, whether they recognize it or not. But that's the way I'm looking at it, and I'm sure that's the way Bill is looking at it. It was a rich experience at that time—it's sort of unexpected, but it finally resulted in, Gee, I'm glad it happened. And we are still contributing to the community. We are hoping that we can eventually get the institute going. Right now we want the opportunity to do an institute for positive self-development. Right now we just have the ideas down. We've had the idea down a long time, but how you make it function in Morris . . . we have some ideas, but we have no money. We want to set up a nonprofit organization to house all of this to begin this, sort of like a World Touch Institute that emphasizes that human beings live together and function in a positive manner. Human beings can, even if they start out aliens, they can live where they all can function.

AP: That's a wonderful place to end. Thank you very much.

[end of interview]