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Interview with
EULINE BROCK
December 1, 1988

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Richard Byrd

Terms: Open

Approved: *Euline Brock*
(Signature)

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Oral History Collection

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Mr. Byrd: This is Richard Byrd interviewing Euline Brock for the University of North Texas Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on December 1, 1988, in Denton, Texas.

Dr. Brock, this is the second time we've talked with you. We talked to you the last time on October 27--last year. Of course, in going over some of the remarks that were made, as well as some of the other interviews I have gone over, I had some questions that still remain. Concerning your interview in particular, I had some questions about your experiences in the 1952 presidential campaign. You had said earlier that there were some episodes that occurred to you as a student down at UT [University of Texas], and I was wondering if you could be more specific about describing some of your experiences while involved in that campaign.

Dr. Brock: Well, actually all I did was with some other students. I wasn't deeply involved in the campaign at all. I suppose there was either a story or an ad in the campus

newspaper, The Daily Texan, that the campaign needed people to do some busy work--to distribute materials and stuff envelopes and that sort of thing. So I went down to headquarters, either on Congress Street or near, and volunteered. I didn't do a lot, but one of the things we were doing was going around to some of the places downtown where most of the activity was then. Now it's all out in malls and things. But that's where all the shopping was, and we were passing out brochures for the Democratic campaign.

There was a great deal of hostility expressed, even though, of course, some people were very friendly. I think that must have been the first election where this whole thing of your loyalty as an American was called into question, because of your working in the Democratic campaign. We saw the same thing come up again in the campaign that just finished. There seems to be a lot of people in the Republican Party now who think that if you are a loyal American you have to be a Republican. Since the Democratic Party was pretty monolithic in Texas in the 1950s, it wasn't quite that clearcut. It was just McCarthyism (the whole climate), the Cold War, the idea that a liberal was suspect and therefore Stevenson was suspect. People said some very ugly things and actually, as I said before, even spat on us, tried to spit in our faces. That was really just one time that that happened,

but altogether it was quite surprising to me, and I guess I am still surprised.

I was surprised over and over again during the recent campaign that people don't seem to have confidence in the democratic process, or they don't believe in a two-party system. We've seen the kind of wild enthusiasm that people use to greet Ollie North and the kind of emotional reaction that he seems to inspire. He reflects the idea that if you question anything you're not a loyal citizen. What scares me about the whole Oliver North involvement in the Iran-Contra case is that it is not just a circumvention but a denial of the democratic process and of our Constitution. For people to define patriotism and loyalty to one's country in terms of approving covert government, I find that very frightening.

I don't know that it was new in the early 1950s, but it was just new to me. I was a new adult (chuckle), so maybe this was becoming aware of what's going on in the world. But there was a strong sense of that. Now Austin was a strange place for it to happen because Austin is real free-swinging. Just after the recent election, we were talking to friends from up there, and we couldn't help but be surprised how the election came out because, living in Travis County, you think everything is going to go a certain way (chuckle). Of course, living in Denton County, we didn't think that. So these were isolated incidents,

but the type of hostility that was encountered was very shocking. I don't know how that's related to race relations, but I think it is related to race relations.

Byrd: These people who were vocalizing their discontent in your group's direction here in 1952, were they whites? Were they identifiably Republicans or the opposing...

Brock: You mean the people in Austin?

Byrd: Yes.

Brock: Well, of course, it would be hard to say if they were Republicans because the Republican Party wasn't really organized in Texas at that time. They probably were conservative Democrats, who pretty consistently voted Republican in the national elections, presidential elections. Texas, as I remember--I think I'm right--did go for Eisenhower that year, and that was the first time that Texas had voted Republican. Of course, it has voted consistently Republican in the presidential elections ever since then.

One time some little things were knocked out of my hand by some young rowdy-types that seemed to think that everybody ought to be supporting Eisenhower (who turns out to be a really good guy in retrospect). I don't know how to identify those people, but I just was surprised. If I'm going down the street and somebody is passing out something I feel hostile to, I just say, "No, thank you," or I step around them or something. But I was surprised that there

was overt hostility. Some of it was just vocalized, as you say, very little that would be physical.

Byrd: I was wondering if this episode had a lasting impact or perhaps a basis or rationale in later times for starting this group up, for instance.

Brock: Well, I don't know that I really even remembered it, until you started asking me, in a conscious way. I have thought about it from time to time, and when certain things happen during an election campaign, sometimes I think about it. I think, "Was that the beginning, or did that sort of thing happen earlier in other ways or in different contexts and I just wasn't aware of it?" I don't think that that experience per se would have had anything to do with it. I think that it went into my attitudes toward society, toward what needed to be done, toward problems that needed to be solved. That would be part of all sorts of experiences that fed into my general attitude.

I guess what it really comes down to--and I guess I hadn't thought about this before--is freedom. I know that you can't ever have absolute freedom, and it probably wouldn't be a good thing. But there were many freedoms that black people in the 1950s didn't have, and in the 1960s, and probably still today in less easily identifiable ways. To think that there were so many places where black people couldn't even walk in the door. There were so many state-supported services, tax-supported services, that were

not available to black people. So I think that the freedom to support a certain political party or to support a certain candidate, to have a wide range of choices available to everybody, is a part of it. There is a direct relationship there, but I don't know if I really ever thought of it in those specific terms at all.

There was never any question, though...I can't remember when the Bork hearings were held concerning his appointment as a Supreme Court justice, but at the time of those hearings, we got a lot of information about his writings and his speeches in the 1960s, particularly early 1960s, about specific civil rights issues. I thought about how in the early 1960s how clearcut everything was, and I found it totally shocking that he was saying the things that he was in the early 1960s. I found it frightening and astonishing. Now there are all sorts of ambiguities, but I don't think that it was just that I was young and naive and idealistic, even though that was a part of it. I know now that there are a lot of good things that are not going to happen. I didn't know that then. I thought that all things were possible. But it was clear that there weren't those ambiguities. Either you were for equal rights for all people or you weren't; and if you started hedging and saying, "That's very well, but what about the damage to our kids if we put all those undereducated people in the schoolroom with them," and that sort thing, once you start

hedging you've forgotten what the game is about. So it was very clearcut. It really was. I don't know whether that's connected with the Stevenson campaign or not, but somehow it all seems to be all part of the picture with me even though I hadn't really thought about it specifically before.

Byrd: Did that have any influence on you in the direction that you as a key founding organizer of the group...

Brock: "Founding mother" (chuckle)?

Byrd: Okay, "founding mother."

Brock: That's acceptable in feminist terms.

Byrd: Did that have any influence on the direction you may have wanted the group to start or head off in as a "founding mother?"

Brock: It really seems to me that what we were looking for in this group was just some kind of opening wedge. I don't think that we had any sort of grand ideas about anything that it might accomplish. I look back on it quite a bit, especially after you interviewed me earlier, and I thought a lot about the kind of paternalism that went into white liberalism as it was expressed in the civil rights movement in the early 1960s. I tried to remember how much of that there might have been in the white women's attitude. Of course, it's impossible for me to know partly because it's a problem of memory and partly because, naturally, it's colored by my own perceptions of what I was trying to do

personally. I personally tried very hard to avoid--and I think the other white women did, too--any sort of "we're doing something for you." I think what we were saying to those black women, although not in these words, is that "By custom we are blocked off from each other, and we would like to do something to break down those barriers. We see this association as a means of getting to know each other as people." That was one reason that I didn't want the group to take official stands as a group on things like urban renewal, because I felt that the association together as equals was too valuable. I know part of that was to meet in everybody's homes even though there was a disparity in the quality of the homes. We didn't want that to make any difference. There still is a lot of paternalism in white "do-gooders'" attitudes, and it's hard to avoid.

Byrd: Can you be more descriptive as to what you mean about paternalism, specifically the white "do-gooder" or to quote Dr. Marcello, the "Denton Professional Liberal?" Can you describe some?

Brock: Yes, and I suppose I'd be one of those. Last night I worked very hard on something I thought was important for a public meeting. I've never been so tired in my life, and I realized in coming over here, "Well, here I am, just another chapter in this 'do-gooder' business." I seem to be incorrigible. Instead of reading books and writing papers the way I ought to be doing, I'm running around to

public meetings and trying to make things happen or prevent them from happening in this case.

There is a great deal of conceit, smugness, self-satisfaction--not much humility at all--involved in what he would probably call the Professional Denton Liberal or the white "do-gooder" in my case. It's hard when I'm working with black people my age, say, in the NAACP now, to avoid their getting in the old-fashioned deferential mode even though some of them know me very well. But one way that I have tried to avoid that is just to be perfectly quiet in meetings until it is time for me to make a report on whatever my little job is, and be willing to do anything such as set the table at the annual banquet or scrub the floor if that's necessary. I take my orders from somebody else even when I don't agree with what the organization is doing. Maybe that in itself is patronizing, but it's the only way I can do it right now.

I think a lot of white paternalism or white "do-goodism" has been in the form of deciding what needs to be done and then laying it on black people. I can't think of really anything specifically. I think maybe urban renewal might have had some elements of that in it. I don't see much of that at all in this organization that we are talking about. I shouldn't generalize by citing one person, but I have a good friend that I talk to a lot who still plugs into the 1960s a lot. She wants the "black

community," whatever that means--and I use that expression, too--to do things that are obviously and logically good for them, and she gets really mad when they don't, when they vote the wrong way or they don't vote at all (chuckle) or something like that. They have the right not to vote at all. I want to work in whatever way they want. I've talked to a couple of friends of mine and said, "Now I'll help in any way I can in getting out the vote. If you want me to help make phone calls or if you want me to go around and drive people to the polls, I'll do it." Nothing ever got organized, but I wasn't going to organize it. But some of my friends do organize that sort of thing. They don't bring black people into the campaign on an on-going basis. They don't have them as officers of our local Democratic Club, for instance, year round. They're not in on policy-making. Not long before the election people get concerned about whether we are going to turn out the black vote. If you look at the two predominantly black precincts, boy, it's just 95 percent or 96 percent Democratic. It could have had a lot more impact if more people had been registered and everybody who had been registered had turned out. I think that's important, but I'm not going to get involved in any white-run or white-instigated effort to do that. For one thing it's bound to fail and create a lot of hostility and be counterproductive. For another thing I think that that might mess up some other positive things

that could happen. What might be achieved by a few more votes wouldn't be worth some of the damage that might occur. I know I need to be more specific than this, but I really can't.

Byrd: I think you have been.

Brock: My husband and I had a discussion the other day. I had gone to have my car washed at the Lone Star car wash, and he said he wasn't going to go down there anymore. I asked him why, and he went through this thing about what happened to his radio antenna. He told me this before--but I didn't realize it was such a big thing--that when he got home it wasn't on. So he called down there, and they said, "Well, we'll look for it; and if we find it, we'll call you." They took his phone number and everything, and then later he found it in the back seat. He put it back on, and he called them back to tell them that he had found it. Apparently he had gotten the impression that they were just scurrying around looking for his antenna. Well, it turned out they had not been, and he didn't get the correct response. He said, "Besides that, they're Republicans. I said, "Well, in that case we won't take the Denton Record-Chronicle anymore. I'll call down and stop it today because, after all, we know how Republican they are." I said, "Now let me see. Let me think of other places. We can't take our clothes to that cleaner," and so forth. He said, "Fred Hill is a black man, and he doesn't have a

right to be a Republican." I said, "Fred Hill has as much right to be wrong as any white person does." Fred Hill, who owns that, is a retired Air Force colonel. He's been on the school board; he owns the black funeral home; he owns a lot of things. He's a very wealthy person. His mother and his sister were two of the people who originally formed this group, and his mother may be turning over in her grave when she sees his picture at some fancy place in Montecito with all these rich people at some Republican gathering. You know, they need their token black, and he's good for that. He has a right to do that. He's made it, and he sees himself as one of the people who has a vested interest in being Republican. And it may be that for idealistic reasons he thinks that Democratic programs have been very damaging to the black community. There are some black leaders who think that and who are not Republican. But what I'm saying is that whatever his reasons are, he has as much right as anybody else does has to be wrong. I think he's wrong. I think he is very wrong. But Patsy Patterson, who owns the Denton Record-Chronicle, is wrong, too, but I still like her. I'm not wiping her off my list of people I know and see and speak to. I still take her newspaper.

So I don't know whether he's going to take his car down there or not. He said he had another place to get it washed. If he doesn't wash it or get it washed pretty

soon...while he's out working in the garden and can't stop, I'm going to take it down there to get it washed because they do a very good job for \$5.75. Actually, I'm not doing anything symbolic when I patronize Lone Star wash. I'm glad to see them a success because I know that the investment was enormous. It scares me to see a black entrepreneur stick his neck out that far. I don't know what his bank statement looks like, but it probably looks pretty good for him to be able to get that kind of loan. Naturally, nobody writes a check for something like that. Even Ross Perot makes loans when he goes into ventures like this.

I think it is patronizing for us to say that black people have to think the way we do or that they have to want to do certain things for their community. I think that's something that for our age group is left over from the 1960s. There is a wonderful film...if you haven't seen these films, you really should as background for this paper. There are a series of films in our media center--it used to be up on the fourth floor in the library--that were NBC specials in 1963, maybe 1962. One of them is called "Mississippi Freedom Summer." There's a whole series of them. By series I mean that they were all part of a pattern. They weren't a serial or anything like that. Once you get one of them, you'll know what to ask for. In this "Mississippi Freedom Summer" they're interviewing the

white kids. Do see that. But to see that episode of "Eyes on the Prize" that's done from the black point of view is really very revealing. I'm sure we have "Eyes on the Prize" in the library. If we don't have it, TWU has it and you can go over there and look at it. But that episode entitled "Mississippi Freedom Summer" deals with people who participated and who are looking back at it. What they are doing is not the black experience at all. They are doing the white experience, and they are interviewing white kids. I'm being unfair because black people in Mississippi didn't get interviewed on national TV. If they were anything close to adults, they didn't have their picture on national TV in 1962 or 1963, so mostly what you have is little kids. But you have white college students feeling so proud of themselves, so virtuous. And they were virtuous, and what they were doing was good. They were literally laying their lives on the line. I don't want to take that from them, but it really would have been wonderful if they could have been doing the same thing with just a little bit of humility and a little more respect for the black people in the movement as equals. I guess that's superhuman for me to ask them to do that.

Yes, "Professional Denton Liberals," you know, white "do-gooders," that's a pretty good title (chuckle).

Bryd: I came across a doctoral dissertation written in the 1970s, but it's about similar groups active earlier in the

century. I was wondering if you could describe if there was a model used for the formation of the Denton Women's Interracial Fellowship, and if so would you identify what that model might have been?

Brock: No, I don't think so at all. I haven't read much, but I have heard indirectly about some of these groups early in the century. I think that one major difference would be that those earlier groups were people who were very prominent in their communities and very secure and well-to-do. These women were professional club women. You know what I mean? They were active. The women's club all over the country, but especially in the South, were really community activist clubs in the early part of the twentieth century and in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The Texas Federation of Women's Clubs did all sorts of things relating to the health of public school children and helping to establish libraries and literacy programs and things like that. Now the Texas Federation of Women's Clubs does some really fine things, but you never see their name in the paper as pushing something controversial. These women, I think--and you'll probably be able to tell me if I'm wrong--were more likely to be "movers and shakers" in their community than we were. As I said in my first interview, we really had nothing to do with the power structure, and we were all of very modest incomes. I think that would not be true of the white women who did

some of these interracial things earlier, for instance, the antilynching movement. Those were women who could afford to stick their necks out and knew that their husbands' banks were not going to be bombed because they had too much power in the community. So definitely there was not a model.

Byrd: I'm struck by some of the similarities, for instance, to the group here in Denton, for instance, networking and things of this nature...

Brock: Yes.

Byrd: ...that seem similar to that and the American Society of Friends. I believe that was a Quaker group that was active at that time. I was struck by that similarity and wondered if you were doing any study or modeling of this particular group based on its earlier successes.

Brock: My perception of how this began...I think at that time in the early 1960s, the national Presbyterian church...and my group of friends were all a part of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A., which was the northern group. St. Andrews was one of that affiliation, and First Presbyterian was in the Presbyterian Church U.S., which was the southern branch. Actually, at that time the Presbyterian Church U.S. was the southern church. U.S.A. was the national church because it had churches everywhere except maybe some areas of the deep South. Now they have joined even though there was a lot of resistance in the U.S. Church.

But racial matters were very much at the forefront of all sorts of Presbyterian U.S.A. thrusts at that time, and women's groups in other areas were doing things. Of course, it was easy for people in Philadelphia, where the headquarters was, to send us stuff here in Texas and tell us what we were supposed to do.

But as far as any models were concerned, I think that probably those white women who were in that core group at the beginning were probably influenced by the current interests of our church. It did seem that the church was at the forefront of meaningful social change. The national Presbyterian officials were participating in the marches--the Selma march, where you had these phalanxes of ranks of the ministers from the various denominations. Well, U.S.A. Presbyterians were very much there. So from that direction we were impressed that this sort of thing would be our Christian duty--and not in a paternalistic way but, you know, whatever you can do. There weren't ever any specific directives.

I mentioned that meeting in Wichita Falls, and that sort of got Dorothy Adkins and me talking about this. We had had it suggested to us that we have this Day of Reconciliation, and I think that that was a sort of a Texas conservative response to some of the overall urging. It was sort of a minimal thing, and we did want to go beyond that.

But I don't think that we had any idea that we were going to make major changes in the community. We weren't down there standing in front of the Campus Theater. For one thing the students were doing that, and I had three little children. I was very much caught up in the domesticity thing, as I told you, and it wouldn't have been acceptable from various points of view; and besides that, they didn't need me. I'm sure the university students were thrilled to be doing that, and it was an appropriate thing for them to do.

So we weren't doing anything daring. What we were doing was really a very timid response to the needs of the time. What we hoped to do was just to break down some of those walls and maybe make it a little bit easier when the changes came--easier in different ways. We weren't the ones who put direct pressure on the school board. Of course, our organization was founded after the school board made the first little timid moves in this direction. I can't see, given what I'm remembering about our organization, that we would have been in the forefront. We weren't that activist to be taking the real initiative. We didn't have the power. We weren't thinking in terms of power. We could have given statements to the newspapers and gone to city officials and done all this sort of thing, but we had nothing going for us that would have made that possible. The kind of people we were were not the kind of

people who easily have influence. I find that in trying to get a moderately restrictive sign ordinance in Denton. There are a lot of people who discount what you say because you are a woman, and they discount you much further and faster because you are an academic. Of course, we as housewives in the early 1960s were not academics per se, but all of us had graduate degrees. That was really odd in 1962, that every single woman in our group...I think I'm right in saying that we all had a master's degree. You know, "Who are those people?" "They're people who read books," and stuff like that. I just find myself, in doing some work in city government, that no matter how hard I work or how skillfully I try to handle a meeting or something, there are a lot of things I'm not going to be able to accomplish that the guy who is sitting right next to me on the Planning and Zoning Commission can accomplish because he's an attorney here. He knows everybody; he's a part of a professional group. When he says something, people listen to him.

We had no power, and we didn't have any courage, either. It didn't occur to us to try to do anything dramatic. We were just making changes in the areas where our lives pretty naturally touched, and in that way we hoped to make some changes in the community. I'm interested in seeing the transcripts of the interviews with the black women to see if they thought that the

organization made any difference.

Byrd: I feel like you are interviewing me (chuckle).

Brock: No, I'm just commenting that I think it would be interesting.

Byrd: I don't know if you can characterize it as dissension, but in some of the interviews I seem to detect the view that "we appreciated what these white women did for us," and that kind of thing, but most of the black women seem to think that there was positive help there. While I have the thought on my mind, let me ask you this. We're still trying to find out a standard date when this meeting was held.

Brock: Oh, goodness (laughter)!

Byrd: And now that you've had a year to think about it...

Brock: I haven't even thought about that.

Byrd: I'm trying to find a copy of that program that was sent out with the script and whatnot in it, and I was wondering...

Brock: Did you ask Ann Barnett about that?

Byrd: No one seems to have that. I was wondering if it might be possible maybe if I could go back to the national church and see if they might have a file copy somewhere because I would like to find that script.

Brock: I'm sure that they would. This is Presbyterial, as I said, so surely they ought to keep files of all their material. That really would be about the best thing I could think of.

Byrd: Would that have been a national thing? Would all the

Presbyterials be holding a meeting on the same day?

Brock: Not on the same day, but within the same quarter, I would imagine.

Byrd: We are trying to find a specific date of that meeting and what took place in the car on the way back.

Brock: Well, it's really interesting how you remember things. It had to be in the late spring of 1963. Does that fit with other kinds of information you have?

Byrd: That's beginning to fit better because I've been given the date as the spring of 1964, spring of 1963, and some have placed it in 1966. I think those were the women who came in a little bit later and who were thinking maybe that that meeting was the first--the one they attended.

Brock: But do you have others who thought it was as early as the spring of 1963?

Byrd: Right.

Brock: In maybe May of 1963?

Byrd: That's it.

Brock: I wouldn't want this to go in the bound volume, but...

Byrd: We'll delete this.

Brock: Do you know what I'm thinking about? I'm thinking about what I wore to that meeting in Wichita Falls, and it was a shockingly expensive dress. I had no business buying that dress.

Byrd: We can leave that in the volume.

Brock: (Laughter) The reason I remembered it was because I know I

told you that there were two reactions to my little devotional that were pretty sharp. I said that we were the ones who were at fault. One of them was that "you really told us what we needed to hear," and the other one was that "you sure look pretty in that hat, Dear," you know, from people who felt compelled to say something nice. These were polite little old ladies, and it was a big red hat (great, big brim), and the dress had black and white checks about like that (gesture). It was a wonderful-looking dress, and I remember the year that I bought that dress. I remember that I wore it for several years. I wore it to a convocation which marked the name change from North Texas State College to North Texas State University. I was speaking to the speaker, and somebody from the campus paper took a picture, and that was in the campus paper. I remember having on the dress. It was very dramatic-looking.

Bryd: You bought this dress in May of 1963 then?

Brock: Well, in the spring of 1963. I know it could not have been the year before because I had a new baby the year before, and I couldn't have gotten in that dress because of the style. It's not that I weighed a lot, but you kind of have to get things back where they belong (chuckle).

Byrd: So far I don't see any need to erase any tape.

Brock: (Laughter) No, I mean the triviality. Can you imagine that I don't remember any of these philosophically profound

things, but I remember what dress and what hat I had on in Wichita Falls (chuckle). That is absurd. But they were both really dramatic-looking, and I think back and imagine my wearing things like that (chuckle). That was another person I don't even remember.

Byrd: I've got the date narrowed down from three years to a four-week span all because of the red dress.

Brock: No, it's black and white checks and the red hat.

Byrd: Red hat!

Brock: Red hat, right. Theoretically, it could have been 1964. It could have been 1964, but it may have been as early as May of 1963. I can't think who could have been taking care of my children, though, in May of 1963 because that was a hard job with children that age--this little boy who was running around pulling stuff off shelves and stuff, a toddler who is now a doctoral candidate. But 1963 seems more likely to me, but it couldn't possibly be later than May or June of 1964. But I think it was 1963. Someone else thinks it was as early as 1964?

Byrd: Yes, some said that. I'm trying to get some consensus built in here (chuckle).

Brock: Yes, it's too bad we don't have some records that we can just go back to. We certainly weren't keeping any minutes.

Byrd: As you suggested earlier, here you have a group of white women, and you all have a master's degree or at least all were college-educated. Some were working beyond a

master's. Again, you were out-of-towners. I don't think there were any native Dentonites among the whites.

Brock: No, not a single one.

Byrd: A lot of them were from out of state, and most of them were teachers. Again, I have "do-gooders," "Denton Professional Liberals" here, as opposed to the black women who at that point in time at best had a high school diploma.

Brock: Right.

Byrd: Virtually all were native Texans, and most were native Dentonites. They were not teachers or anything else in professional ranks. They worked as domestic help and were suspicious of the whites, it appears. How did you expect to get along with one another, coming from such different backgrounds?

Brock: Well, in the first interview I indicated that there was quite a bit of tension at the first meeting especially and that we avoided altogether any mention of the fact that we were black people and white people. We just pretended that we were a group of friends having a little social gathering or that went to one of those notorious coffees that women then had so often. We just made pleasant chitchat. But I think the one thing that we had in common was our children's interests and concern for our own children and other people's children. We all were very active in church work, and so we could talk about that. We were Sunday school teachers; we worked in the women's organizations; we

worked in vacation Bible school. So we talked about that.

But actually those disparities that you're pursuing were not so important at that time because, even though we white women were not working and the black women were more likely to be working...some of them were working because they had low income. Catherine Bell was doing housework; Linnie McAdams, when I first met her, was doing hourly wage housework, if you can believe it. That is as much a measure of the kind of lack of freedom that I was talking about as anything else I could think of. Well, there are a lot of things maybe that are even worse than that--white and colored--but Linnie's life certainly had plenty of "white" and "colored" signs on it. But, really, we were doing what society was telling us to do. I think I and my friends were trying to do this. We were keeping our houses very clean; we were taking care of our children passionately; we were serving homemade desserts twice a day. So these are not things that require a master's degree or a very high I.Q. Well, it requires a high I.Q. to take care of children, but people don't realize that. Until recently that's been one of the lowest paid jobs, is child care.

But I later realized...I had some close friends in my neighborhood during those years when my children were very young, and later, after our children got older, I realized that I didn't see those people much anymore. I didn't miss

them when I didn't see them. I didn't have much to say to them when I did see them, and I think this applies to what we are talking about because just the fact of what we were doing twenty-four hours a day gave us a lot in common with other women, whatever the externals of our lives were.

We all were keeping house. Those black women were working because they had to--not because they found it intellectually stimulating, because the kind of jobs they had couldn't have been. They, too, were trying to meet those standards of being the "superwife," the "supermother," the "superhousekeeper" and "supercook" and exchanging recipes and stuff. When you're operating in that sort of arena, you have a lot in common, and it's not as difficult as you think. It didn't matter that I had written a thesis on Shakespeare. It was an absurdity. It didn't have anything to do with getting up at two o'clock in the morning or cleaning up the floor when the sick child threw up in the middle of the floor. These were things we were all doing. We were more concerned about what to do with the baby's high fever. We were reading different things from what Catherine Bell was reading because we were better educated, but we could read only in little snatches, anyway. That wasn't very central to our lives. I had a friend who read Paradise Lost under the hair dryer while her little eighteen-month-old girl was there playing beside her. Not too many of us were capable of doing that, but

that was how desperate she was for a little time (chuckle). Her children were the same ages as mine. So really there wasn't a lot of difference. There were all sorts of differences in the ways we saw the world.

This fall I've had some experiences in my classes at TWU that have made me despair of ever, ever bridging those racial gaps. They have made me wonder if anything has ever been accomplished.

I know that what they were seeing in those meetings was so different from what we were seeing. I know that their perception of what Denton was like was so totally different from what ours was. I don't want to make light of those differences, but I think that we certainly had plenty to talk about, and that didn't create a problem.

Then once we got past that initial reluctance to mention race and what we really were together for...and we did that in the second meeting, as I remember, when we had that little program. Then people began to express...there were questions and answers that went with it, and that's when Betty Kimble said at the Singer Sewing Shop, "I was next." Then we could begin to start talking about specific incidents and what could be done and how we could facilitate school desegregation and that sort of thing.

I don't know whether you want any general philosophizing about racial issues or not (chuckle). I don't know whether that would be helpful to you. But I was

thinking just today because there was a picture of the man who's name is Bradley in the state prison and who is accused of killing a sixteen-year-old girl at Conroe High School. He's going to be granted a new trial, and there is a lot of evidence that this case was totally mishandled and that he was accused because he was black. There were other people who were much more likely suspects, and there was more evidence against them. I thought about several notorious cases in this area in recent years where people have misidentified a black man in a line-up or something. Do you remember a couple of years ago when there was a case where there was a hold-up and a shooting in a 7-11 in Carrollton and they had it filmed; and they showed the film on TV, and people came forward? The guy that people were identifying weighed thirty or forty pounds less than this guy who was being shown in the film. He was a tall black guy. I think that people are still seeing a black person instead of Mr. Bradley, who's the uncle of one of my students, by the way, a student from last year.

I think that a lot of black students...when I walked into that room that first day, there were ninety-five students up there, and at least thirty-five of them are black. They are entering freshman, and they were recruited by TWU from the lower 25 percent of their high school graduating class. They have a very systematic thing, and we have about a 14 percent black enrollment. It looks

awfully good when you are talking about survival as an autonomous institution. That's one of the big arguments that can be used, that we are providing what nobody else is providing. But when they walked in there...these students would not be at all like the standard black student on the North Texas campus. What they saw up there in the front of that room was a honky lady with blonde hair and blue eyes. In other words, I was an enemy, and I was somebody to be resisted, to be fooled if possible, to be gotten around in some way or another. Immediately, the response is, "How can we work her?" because that's what their lives have been like. Somehow they try to work the system that's stacked against them. I don't know. I think that's different from those signs in 1960 that said, "white" and "colored," but it's still very real.

What I'm saying is, we're still seeing black people in terms of black, and black people are seeing white people in terms of white, instead of "my history teacher who happens to do so-and-so and only incidentally has blonde hair and blue eyes." One day we had a discussion in that class, led by some of the weakest students, about whether a white person who is writing about black slaveowners can be trusted. Somebody asked a question, and it was a black student. Otherwise, I wasn't going to mention black slaveowners. I gave some information that I had about the black slaveowners and mentioned a couple of books they

might want to look at if they had any particular interest in that, and one of my students said, "Don't you think that this man in Statesboro, South Carolina, who owned seventy-nine slaves, was doing that more for humanitarian reasons and because they had a more communal life?" I said, "No, I don't because he was constantly buying and selling slaves. There's nothing very humanitarian about selling slaves." I said, "He kept very careful records, his plantation records. I think maybe he was a much more humane master than his white neighbors were." He had a pew on the lower floor of the local Episcopal church, while all other blacks sat in the balcony. She said, "Were the people who wrote that book--who got this information--black or white?" I said, "Well, they happened to be white." I said, "If you want to read one about black slaveowners, you can read Larry _____ book. He started out to prove just what you're saying, and being a good historian, he couldn't. He couldn't come up with that book. He came up with another one." And I said, "There are people who argue that a white person cannot teach black history, and there are a lot of women who argue that a man either cannot or should not be teaching women's history." We got into a general discussion, and the young woman who asked me that question said, "I don't believe that a white person can teach black history because that person did not have that experience." I said, "You are debating something that's been debated on

a very high level among historians, and what it really comes down to is what is history and can any history book or history research be trusted to have validity." I said, "I cannot accept your position simply because that would mean that I could not teach medieval French history because there is no way I can relate." Then all of a sudden the class, which had been very tense, you know, just leaning forward in their seats, could see that part of it.

I even had a student who asked about the word "black" and hadn't somebody made up the word "black" out of the word "back," meaning that black people were backward. I suggested that she go to the Oxford English Dictionary, which shows all of the word origins. I have a graduate student who's involved in a research project who comes and stays in my class, which is kind of unnerving. If she helped that would be a different thing (chuckle), but she's just there. She was sitting up there saying I was doing the right thing. But this girl said, "Yes, but was that scholar who's writing about the origins of the word 'black,' is he black or white?" I said, "Well, since this came out of Oxford University, I would be pretty certain that he's white." She didn't say so in these words, but the import of what she was saying is, "All white people hate and despise all black people," and therefore he was sitting there writing a falsehood. Well, of course, these are people who have never known anybody who was a scholar,

and they would have no idea of scholarly pride--I mean, how stupid this linguist at Oxford is going to look if he puts his name on that entry and he has made up some stuff. Scholarly conceit would be so much stronger than racial feelings; and actually to think that all white people are thinking in racial terms all the time is in a way conceited. Most white people are not thinking about blacks. It doesn't even come up. It's not an issue because their lives don't intersect or overlap in any way.

After that day I wondered if I was going to be able to get anywhere with any of those students. This graduate student I have is conducting this experiment. They have a TEA grant, a professor in education, and they had a study session. She has a parallel tutoring session that's voluntary. Of the two people that she has had come all the time and really use the study techniques that she is teaching them and so forth, one is a German woman who is married to an American and who is very much concerned about her language. Here I'm making a generalization about typical German intensity and desire to excel and everything. She doesn't want to make ninety-nine on her test; she wants to make one hundred (chuckle). She is so anxious, and she was desperately ill yesterday. That was the first time she'd missed all semester. I knew something terrible was wrong. She called me, and she sounded like the end of the world. She just had to tell me that even

though she wasn't able to hold up her head. Anyway, this is one person, and the other is a black woman, a minister's wife from Dallas who's going back to school after eighteen years. She has children. She has a weak educational background, and she's very much concerned. She wants desperately to make it, so she's going to make it because that's really all it takes. It doesn't even take really a lot of intelligence because we are not operating on that level, believe me, in my class. I hear this wonderful woman, who's this graduate student, talking to her in a certain tone of voice that I had heard. It is a different tone of voice from what she talks to her other tutorees in. This graduate student has some desperate experiences, like people making a twenty-six on their exam or something like that. Well, some of the black students came to her and somehow wanted a magic formula; and their behavior has reinforced her racial stereotype. So you have something very destructive going on here because she is not giving them the kind of help they are asking for, which would be very detrimental to them. They are thinking, well, that she is a white person, and "she doesn't want to help me because I'm black." And she is thinking, "Black people are lazy, and they don't want to pay their dues. They don't want to play the game by the rules." She said, "I got so mad because she told me she was coming, and she didn't come."

Well, I can't expect her to have the kind of understanding that I do because I have read and read and read, and I have a lot of different experiences. I know something about the black culture--maybe just a teeny-tiny bit, not as much as I should know by any means--and what's happening here is very destructive to race relations on both sides.

What does this have to do with 1963, 1964?" I'm not sure that it has anything, except that it's a series of experiences over the years. I have very different perceptions from what I did in 1964, 1965. I was much more hopeful then. Of course, things have changed enormously, and a lot of things that I hoped would happen have happened. Yet they haven't provided any instant solutions or even any obvious solutions to some of the problems. I won't say that it's not better. I think it's a lot better in that anybody who can put down their money can walk into any theater in town and see a movie. I think that's terribly important, even considering the quality of movies they're likely to see (chuckle). Is that too long a digression? You can always chop it out. You can cut a piece of tape out.

Byrd: No, not at all.

Brock: But I think it goes back to this "do-gooder" white, and I think it's all a part of what you were asking about, you know, what motivates white people who get involved in

racial matters. Maybe that's even wrong to think of it in terms of today--in the late 1980s--to think of in terms of getting involved in racial matters. Now maybe the thing is to think in terms of education and not think in terms of only black students who need help. You should understand that those students are molded by the constraints of their own environment but that this is a student whom I'm dealing with as an individual. I think it's very difficult for us to break down the stereotypes of the feeling that "here is the black person; here is a white person."

Byrd: I was struck by a remark in the report of the Civil Rights Commission in 1958--recommendations that were made for improving race relations. There's a chapter or subtitle entitled "Constructive Use of Time," which involved just the activities such as this group undertook--sitting down and getting to know one another. Could you comment on this?

Brock: Yes, well, that's interesting.

Byrd: That came out in 1958. There's a contradiction that I'm unclear about. I've had several interviewees who said the group did not advertise its existence, its meetings (when and where), recruiting members, or what-have-you. On the other hand, I've had several who said it did even to an extent--I think Billie Mohair said it--that they advertised on TV or that there was participation on a TV program by the group. Could you speak to that?

Brock: Well, I think that probably this is a matter of time sequence. I think that when I plugged back into the group in 1969, the meetings were being advertised in the paper. There'd be a story that "the Woman's Interracial Fellowship will have a meeting in the hospitality room of the Teachers Credit Union at a certain night, and any interested person is welcome to come." Probably it happened quite a bit earlier than that. I don't remember it happening before I left in the summer of 1967. I think I can say pretty unequivocally that for the first year or two--I'm almost certain the first two years--that it would have been a very quiet private organization that was not publicized at all.

Byrd: I have another question. Maybe it's based on the clandestine nature of the meetings or whatever.

Brock: Clandestine is a good word, better than "private."
(chuckle)

Byrd: I have a couple of episodes that were brought to my attention in the course of going over some of the other interviews. There seemed to be some resistance or suspicion among people who were not immediately involved in the group--about its motives and this sort of thing. You related a story, I recall, earlier about a rock-throwing episode, I believe, in a park meeting or church meeting or whatever it was by neighbors of the host or hostess.

Brock: Oh, yes. I didn't remember this, but I think it involved Ginnie Nead, who was not a member of the original group

because she wasn't here, but as soon as she came she was involved in that. Her husband was a Presbyterian minister who was out at the center, and she was working with the junior high students. They were having joint meetings with the junior high group at Mount Pilgrim Methodist Church, and they had it in the back yard of their house, which was on Locksley Lane, just off Emerson Drive in northeast Denton. I can't remember specifically anything about it. I think that some other children did throw rocks over the fence. They had a high wooden fence. But the neighbors across the backyard did call Ginnie and Don and say that they didn't want black people coming into their neighborhood, and they objected to their having those meetings of the junior high kids.

Byrd: So Ginnie and Don were a white couple?

Brock: Right, right. Is that what you're thinking about?

Byrd: I'm sure it is. I was trying to recall the events surrounding the incident.

Brock: Well, Ginnie and Don simply told them that they were sorry that they felt that way, but that they would do what they thought was right.

Byrd: Was that an isolated incident, or were there others of similar nature?

Brock: Well, what Ginnie and Don were doing was so unusual that I doubt that there was much provocation for similar incidents, really. As far as I know, there wasn't any

other group in town doing anything like that at that time with the young people; and I think if there had been, it would have been maybe First Methodist Church. I know that Carol Riddlesperger or Katherine McGuire would have been aware of that, and there would have been some discussion of it. You might want to follow up on that with some people who were involved in the First Methodist Church, but I can't think of any other church in town where that might have been happening.

Byrd: This was not specifically a meeting of the children of the group in the Woman's Interracial Fellowship of Denton?

Brock: No, no, it wasn't. I mentioned that there were some family gatherings. Particularly, I know for a while we had Christmas dinners that were sort of pot luck dinners, and they included the husbands, not the whole families. I think that there was a picnic or two in the summertime, and that was sort of an annual event. I think that was done at the time that we left. I believe there was one held maybe in 1967 and then in 1968. Ann Barnett or Jean Kooker would know about that. But by the time those activities were being held in the late 1960s, that would be sort of past the crisis time. Anything that happened before 1965 would have been very noticeable and would have created an immediate response. I'm sure that anybody who was aware that Ginnie and Don Nead had this group of mixed white and black junior high students in their back yard had some kind

of reaction. They would have had to say, "Well, that's okay," or "That's none of my business," or "I'm not going to put up with that," or "Well, there goes the neighborhood." You know, there wasn't any chance of there being no reaction. But I think that by the late 1960s the general feeling of crisis or that you had to man the barricades or that you had to--let me think of some little cliché--put out the brushfires (chuckle) or something would not have been nearly so intense. So as far as I know, there were not any particular incidents.

I know that I thought of the fact that our meetings were at night. All of our women's meetings were at night--they had to be--because that was the only time that we could get together. Our husbands took care of our children for us. The women that worked were off of work and had somebody take care of their children. But they would have been at night, anyway, because if we were going to be "clandestine," to use your word, we needed to have night meetings. To tell you the truth, that's not altogether a non-issue even now. I've never had any all-black group meeting at my house. I know one time Catherine Bell asked me...we had a party that was supposed to be a fund raiser for the NAACP, and it didn't work out too well. We had a bunch of champagne left over that had been donated, and she said, "Could we have a champagne party at your house and just charge \$2.00 so it would all inexpensive?" I said,

"Sure! That would be great!" Then she said something about Sunday afternoon, which is kind of a strange time to have a champagne party. I said, "Yes, that's a good time. It's really about the only time I have free." I did feel just as positive, as the words indicate, that I did think, "Well, there will be a bunch of black people coming on our street, and I wonder what the neighbors will think." Not that I would defer to what my neighbors think or anything, but that was just two years ago. Even two years ago, you know, I still had to think about that.

Last year when I had a birthday that was a significant number, my husband gave a surprise party. We went with these friends to Dallas in the afternoon to a musical, and then we were going to go by our house and pick up something. Then we were going to go to Fort Worth. When we went back to the house, here were all these people in my house, and all this food and drinks and everything just materialized. What Brock had done was to take all the contact people from main parts of my life and pull them together. Usually, when you have a party, you think, "Well, who will go together well?" If you have people who don't know each other, you think, "Well, they would enjoy getting to know each other" or something. But for once that was not a consideration, so there were black people and white people and people who didn't know each other. I thought about my neighbor whom I am very fond of and whom I

spend a lot of time with. We've jogged together at 6:00 in the morning for years, and you get to know each other at 6:00 in the morning, in the dark, on December 12 or some day like that when it's really miserable. She's generally hostile to blacks. Not as individuals. She loves Catherine Bell, who buried her son out there where my friend works. But if she thinks "black" in general, that's a negative feeling. I thought, "Well, this is probably the first time that she has ever gone to a party where there were black people." It didn't make me the least bit uncomfortable, but still I can't help but think about other people's reactions here in 1987, when that occurred. I think that probably after 1967 or 1968 there certainly wouldn't have been any overt hostility expressed toward someone having an interracial meeting, especially if it was an organized group like a church group or a club or something like that. I may be too optimistic, but I really can't imagine an incident of that sort happening later in the sixties as it did to Ginnie and her group.

Byrd: I have a couple of things remaining here. I've got about a page-and-a-half left. Did the group ever have any activities outside of Denton proper? In fact, there's an episode that I'm kind of unclear about. I guess I didn't do the interview myself. Outside the state of Texas...my understanding is that there was a group trip over to Mississippi during voter registration.

Brock: I really don't know. If there was I didn't know anything about it. I don't know of any activity like that that was related to that group, but that doesn't mean it didn't happen, especially because I was away for two years.

Byrd: I was thinking that was probably in 1963.

Brock: Well, that was the time--1962, 1963--of the big push in Mississippi.

Byrd: The remarks didn't address voter registration, but a mixed group drove from here to Mississippi, and they were very concerned about their safety driving--a mixed group of women.

Brock: Well, somehow that seems a little bit strange to me because there was such a need for working in voter registration right here in Denton, Texas (chuckle). I mean, if you want to change the world, you might start where the most immediate and obvious need is.

Byrd: Then again, that was a brief reference, and I wondered if you knew anything about it.

Brock: I don't know anything about it.

Byrd: There are a couple of other things. Another one of the women in the group indicated that she had harassing phone calls after it became known she was a member. Are you familiar with such activities?

Brock: No.

Byrd: She mentioned racial slurs in her classroom that were directed at her, so she thought.

Brock: You mean "nigger lover" kind of things?

Byrd: Right, precisely.

Brock: Yes, I've heard that. I don't ever bother about that anymore. I've been called that so many times.

Byrd: What was the political persuasion of the group?

Brock: Persuasion?

Byrd: I think that's the word.

Brock: I know it is (chuckle) on paper, but it's not an easy word in the mouth, is it (chuckle)?

Byrd: It's not easy to pronounce. I've had folks tell me that the group was nonpartisan, and I've had other folks that have said the group is very definitely partisan, particularly in 1964 and again in the 1968 election.

Brock: The people who told you that certainly thought that it was in existence in 1964. Going back to our dating, see, there is another bit of evidence. You can take it where you can find it. I think probably we didn't think of our group as partisan, but it just automatically was. Going back to what I've said in general about politics of the early 1960s and in the 1950s and my reaction to the Bork hearings and so forth, it just wouldn't have been possible for somebody to be involved in a group like that as a Republican in the early 1960s or before the 1970s, anyway. I just don't see that as being a possibility. I cannot imagine that, and I may be wrong.

Byrd: Was there such a thing as liberal Republicans in Texas or

Denton County?

Brock: Good Lord, no! What do you mean--liberal Republican (laughter)? That in the 1960s in Texas was a contradiction of terms. Liberal Republicans had to be somewhere else. I think that's a possibility. I know that in some states being interested in reform meant being a Republican because of Democratic machine politics and so forth. It's possible that Alice Kjer might have been a philosophical Republican, but she would not have been active in the Republican Party in Texas because, actually, it was Texas Republicans that spawned the Goldwater movement. They had a textbook organizational technique; I mean, it was just wonderful [facetious comment]. As a matter of fact, I got a copy of their textbook--I'm speaking in very literal terms--and used it in the 1964 election. It was just a model for precinct organization. It requires a great deal of time, a great many people, tremendous amount of dedication. But you're talking about people who considered Lyndon Johnson and Lady Bird dangerous radicals, probably active agents of the Communist Party. Goldwater seems (chuckle) such a benign figure today, but in 1964 he was symbolic. The active Republicans in Texas in 1964 were nothing like George Bush, except that they were wealthy and privileged mainly. But they were really radical people, and I'm using the word "radical" in sort of a generic sense, certainly not in the political spectrum. But I cannot imagine an

active, committed, working Republican having been a part of our group, so in that sense it was nonpartisan because that just wasn't an issue. We didn't see ourselves as an arm of the Democratic Party, but if we were going to do anything in politics, it had to be in the Democratic Party because it was the only agency for change in racial matters. It's the only place that there was any support for opening opportunities to all people, so that just wasn't a question.

Byrd: How did you get hold of a copy of the organizational manual?

Brock: Well, there was a little note about it in the Texas Observer, and I wrote Ronnie Dugger, whom I had known as an undergraduate and who was the editor of it then, and said, "I really would like to have a copy of this because apparently it's very effective, and I want to do a model precinct for this election." I didn't hear from Ronnie, but I got a copy of the book from Senator Ralph Yarborough's headquarters in Austin--no note in it, just the book.

Byrd: Was this at the time of the primaries?

Brock: Well, this was for the general election. It wasn't for the primaries. In this case, what it did was it told you how to canvass well ahead of the election. You'd get a card. It even had a little card, and I had some printed up because in 1964 we had some money for the first time

because the bankers and everything were supporting Lyndon Johnson. We had a card on every household in our precinct, and based on the cavassing that we did and then the follow-up telephone calls that we did the last week before the elections, I did a projection of the vote in our precinct, which was then the most likely to go for Goldwater; and out of 3,000 votes, it was about five votes off.

Byrd: Wow!

Brock: It was scary, how effective that system was. I had a coffee for the people who did just precinct work on our precinct, and thirty-seven people came. That's a lot of people working in one precinct. Then there were some people who couldn't come. I actually had about forty-five people doing just precinct work. I don't mean people who went down to the county headquarters or anything like that. That's what it takes, and that's what the Republicans were doing. They were committed, and they were dedicated, and they really believed that the election of Goldwater was the way to save the United States.

Byrd: From this dangerous Lyndon Johnson?

Brock: Right, that wild, radical "Commie." So it changed our group. I've said this several times, but I don't see why even anybody even would think that partisanship was an issue.

Byrd: Were you able to use this for projections in southeast

Denton?

Brock: No, we didn't. The only thing we were concentrating on was registration and voting. I mean, if people voted they were voting Democratic. If you look at the returns in this year's election, it's just about 96 percent. There are a handful of people in that precinct who are white, and I guess they voted for George Bush (chuckle). Looking at those figures, you could almost just put down their race.

Byrd: From the ones that voted?

Brock: Right. So it wasn't just getting out the vote. If you were interested in improving the condition of the blacks, you were working for the Democratic Party. If you saw partisan politics as any part of that solution, you were working for the Democratic Party. That's just the way it was.

Byrd: On the state and local levels.

Brock: Yes.

Byrd: I think we've covered this earlier. You said that the group actually was not running candidates for local political office?

Brock: My perception is that we never did at all. We weren't that organized.

Byrd: Other than perhaps members that just ran on their own.

Brock: Right.

Byrd: Like Carol Riddlesperger?

Brock: Right. I'm sure there were calls made and a general

feeling that we all wanted to get out and support Carol. Maybe she, herself, asked people to help her in specific ways, including maybe some of the black women. I don't know whether she did or not. But I really don't remember it as being an organized activity of our group.

Byrd: Were there any black candidates running for state, local, whatever, offices in the earlier days? Something keeps ringing to me as I've looked over some of the other interviews. It would be awful tough, I would think, for someone to be saying, "We want you to come out and vote for these liberal white candidates," when, as I recall, there was a movement in the sixties or maybe the early seventies, say, promoting Julian Bond as a potential national candidate, maybe Brooke from Massachusetts as a possible candidate even in the primaries.

Brock: And he was a Republican, wasn't he--Edward Brooke?

Byrd: Right. I was wondering if there was any kind of...I mean, was there a perception of "what are these white women doing here? Are they wanting us to vote for these white candidates instead of supporting a black candidate?"

Brock: Oh, no, we wouldn't have done that. There weren't any black candidates, and if there had been, I think all the black women would have voted for them. It wouldn't have been possible for us in that group to ask black women to support a white candidate who was running against a black. It didn't come up, but it wouldn't have been possible, no.

We may have a situation like that on City Council. It could be interesting this coming spring. There is a black man who was on the City Council for three terms and then was ineligible to run again. Now he's been off for one term, and he'll be coming back. Randy Boyd, who lives right down here (gesture), represents black Denton on City Council. There's a little finger of that quadrant of that City Council district that comes up right around the campus, and Randy is in that district. He ran two years ago with the blessing of Mark Chew, who was retiring from the City Council. Mark is a Baptist minister. I think it will be interesting to see what happens. Randy has done everything...in fact, he's alienated some of his white constituents by addressing his constituents in a district newsletter as if they were all black. Actually, there is a very considerable chunk of whites in his area. Township II, down there right behind the mall, is a part of his district. Well, there are a lot of white sections in that whole quadrant of town. So it will be interesting to see what happens, especially since I perceive a considerable amount of hostility to Mark Chew. It will be interesting to see if, in spite of their personal hostility toward him, that they vote for Mark automatically because he's black--if that match-up does occur. And I know Randy is going to run again.

There were black candidates in Texas, but I don't know

exactly when the first serious one ran. I don't remember.
That really would not have been an element locally.

Byrd: Running for a statewide office?

Brock: No.

Byrd: I've covered and gotten into what I call "the demise" of this group. Back in the spring, however, I was talking to a couple of the black women, and I got an imprint that maybe the group has not totally been in demise, and that maybe the black women are still meeting. This is an inferential thing. I was wondering if you might have any suspicion or knowledge or whatever...

Brock: No, I don't know anything about that.

Byrd: ...other than maybe perhaps in an informal sense.

Brock: Yes.

Byrd: I got the distinct impression that they were still meeting and that this was a "black only" type of organization--no whites allowed.

Brock: Well, it may be that there are black organizations that would have the same people because those women are all people who are active in their community. They are women who are in certain things and are also in something else, so it is very possible that there is a group that has exactly those same women in it that's meeting together. They may even call themselves by the same name, but I don't think that would be terribly remarkable. I don't think it would necessarily have to be considered a surviving remnant

of the black half of that group. There may be a group that consciously thinks of themselves in that way, but I don't think that a group of black women who happen to be the same women who were meeting with us in 1965 has to be terribly significant.

Byrd: There just seemed to be an overlap. There seemed to be a consistent reference to a regrouping. I think they had a meeting or get-together last month. Of course, it's different when you're talking to someone in person and then reading what they've said on paper.

Brock: It's too bad that you didn't have a black person as a part of your group to go out and do some of this interviewing. Of course, you probably know that this is one of the interesting things about the WPA interviews with former slaves in the thirties. Some of the same people were interviewed about their experiences, you know, surviving slaves, by both black and white interviewers. Some of the same people were interviewed by a white interviewer and a black interviewer, and the stories were not recognizable (chuckle). Of course, in the thirties that would have been a very different situation. You are dealing with a very old person who has tried to survive and also who maybe is living in the same county with the white master's survivors or descendants of the white masters that she's talking about. She's not going to say that he was the meanest man that ever lived, that he treated us awful (chuckle),

because their survival depended on their not antagonizing those white people. But that's really interesting--those slave narrative.

Byrd: I have one last political question. It seems to me that within this new group, whether there be a collateral membership or overlapping membership, there is quite a bit of support for Jessie Jackson as opposed to Michael Dukakis.

Brock: Yes. We realized after the Dukakis debacle that the reason the primary system is so flawed as a means of selecting an electable candidate is that the people who go to those precinct meetings and who vote in the primaries are not reflective of the electorate at-large at all. People tend to act irresponsibly in the primaries. We vote for someone we like or that someone we would like to see president instead of someone who has the best chance of winning, and that's irresponsible. We were having a post-mortem the day after the election with friends who were very active in the Democratic Party who are relative newcomers compared to the people you've been interviewing. They're professors in two different departments in the College of Business. We all said we were very irresponsible. Of the four of us sitting there, all of us with doctorates and all of us professionals in one way or another, had gone to our precinct meetings, and three of us in the primaries and in the precinct meeting had supported Jessie Jackson. Did we

think that Jessie Jackson had the slightest chance in the world being elected president of the United States? No! We were throwbacks to the 1960s. We were crazy; it was irresponsible. The other man had voted for Dukakis. actually, my husband and I both intended to vote for Dukakis in the primary, and we got in there in the booth without consulting with each other. Both of us did the same thing. We just couldn't resist putting that punch down beside Jessie Jackson's name. I guess we're still stuck in the sixties, too (chuckle).

Byrd: There's something here for a movie, a title (chuckle). I think there's a song out, "Back in the Sixties Again". This is one thing that lingered on. Okay, that pretty much covers the questions that I wanted to ask you at this time. Again, I want to thank you for helping me on short notice.

Brock: I'm sorry I didn't have a better memory.

Byrd: I'm going to hold you to May 1963 or 1964. I want to find that out.

Brock: Well...

Byrd: I'm trying to pinpoint the date of the first meeting. After talking to sixteen people, no one seems to recall the date.

Brock: Well, maybe you could take the wide range of dates and then pick a midpoint there. But I don't think that would be accurate. I really don't. I think you'd need to work toward the earlier rather than the later date.

Byrd: I think 1963 is becoming the date I'll use.

Brock: Have you found out exactly when the first blacks attended Denton High School?

Byrd: Gosh, I believe it would be fall of 1964.

Brock: Fall of 1964?

Byrd: That's my understanding.

Brock: Well, that causes trouble.

Byrd: It does?

Brock: Because at the time of that first meeting, I was already tutoring Norvell Williams's daughter, and she was a senior at Denton High School. She had started in the fall.

Byrd: They would have graduated, then, in 1964 if the tutoring started in...

Brock: Well, the tutoring started right after they started at Denton High School, and it was several months later that our group formed. In the initial interview I mentioned that I had this entree with this woman who was Fred Hill's sister. She brought her mother and her married daughter who had a child. So that had to be...it was after the first desegregation, when the first six young black people went to Denton High. Two of them were sophomores, I believe; one was a junior; and three were seniors, I believe.

Byrd: They graduated in 1964?

Brock: Well, if they did indeed graduate in 1964, then 1964 would be the date of our first meeting, I think.

Byrd: I could double check that.

Brock: My memory was that soon after this conversation that Dorothy and I had, we went right ahead and organized that thing. So that meant that I had already spent some time with these students. It might have been in the fall of 1963.

Byrd: Well, you were talking the...

Brock: That was a hot, sunny day--that day we went to Wichita Falls. That could have been in May, but it could have been later in the year. It wasn't in the fall or anything. It was a hot, sunny day.

Byrd: I remember you all saying it was something like within four weeks, maybe six weeks, I think you said.

Brock: That's what I remember. Did Dorothy remember that?

Byrd: She didn't remember specifically. She was talking about 1964, as I recall. I'm trying to remember back to what her remarks were, and I think she said in 1964 sometime.

Brock: That's not out of the question.

Byrd: But in terms of the advent of the group, then the students you were already tutoring would have graduated in 1965. The first time that the schools did integrate was 1963. It would have been after the court case at any rate.

Brock: Well, that may be...

Byrd: Let me give you my number. If you can figure it out, I'd appreciate it because we'd really like to know that information.

Brock: Okay, yes. There's a man on the Planning and Zoning Commission who for quite a few years was the principal of Denton High School, Ivan Glasscock, and I might call him and ask where we can get that information specifically, you know, where it would be in the school records.

Byrd: Yes, when they first integrated.

Brock: I could call Cliff Black, who's on the school board, and ask him how to get that information.

Byrd: We're pulling teeth here or whatever.

Brock: Yes, Cliff Black and Glasscock and also Dennis Stephens, who is in the administration. Dennis is a black man who might know how to get the information. I'll let you know if I can find out anything.

Byrd: Was there a church program or a church bulletin at the Wichita Falls meeting?

Brock: Oh, yes.

Byrd: What I'd like to do is see what was on the program and see how it was set up.

Brock: Yes, that would be great if they keep records of that sort of thing, which they really should.

Byrd: I hope I haven't imposed too much on you.

Brock: Not at all. If you just have a specific question to ask, you can call me at home, or if I can pin this down a little better, I'll call you and let you know.

Byrd: Thank you very much, Dr. Brock.

Brock: Okay. You're welcome.