

Interview with Casey Hayden, October 17, 1994, Tucson, Arizona

Q: Why don't we start with explaining how you became involved in the movement.

A: Well I came from a very conservative family. Texas was so...but I never understood that until I was a senior in college. The schools were segregated by law and so my reaction to that was that it was kind of insulting. [Cat screams...pause] So that was sort of my orientation. My mother was a single mom so I had a lot of church...so I came out of this southern liberal tradition. But I was raised by my grandparents until I was twelve. My grandfather was a sheriff, very, very traditional, so I kind of got both sides. So I went into the University of Texas with all of these things happening to me....and then the church was a very strong influence too. So I got to the University, I went to Junior college two years and then my mother, I guess I should say this too, my mother worked for this guy who owned this chain of movie theaters in south Texas. He was a Christian Scientist, and he employed the only Mexican who was in a management position.... So she had this working relationship with this black guy who was a good friend of hers, so that was very important because Mexican Americans and blacks... The Latinos went to school with us but at the same time socially it was very taboo to mix. So I had that happen to me. Then when I went to the University I wanted to join a sorority, but I didn't get into the sorority I wanted. So I got involved and became active in the Y [YWCA], and the Y was sort of

a hold over from the social central gospel theology, and of course the Y helped women, provided housing for them and helped them to get jobs in offices. So those two things, and then it was integrated. At that point the University of Texas was integrated but the housing was not. So in the Y I met most of the black students and then I lived at the Christian.... I had graduated in '59 and went back to school in the spring of '60. I had taught public school a semester then I went back to school. I went back to get my masters in English. So I had by now become a national student Y officer. In these regional meetings in the national Y meetings they were liberal so they had these sections of study. One was on peace, one was on race, one was on meaningful workplaces. So I got all this training and started training thinking about this stuff. I met a lot of black kids, and I got it on a personal level. So I was already very involved with all this stuff. So I got into the sit-ins. I heard about it first from Connie Curry who went out recruiting for her southern student relations group. She got a big grant through the national student association and it was for Connie to recruit, I think she took sixteen southern student leaders over the summer and went to a human relations seminar which was run by the national student association. She was recruiting me to go to that, but when I met her she told me all about the sit-ins and I remember we sat in this restaurant in Austin and cried while she telling me about the sit-ins. So I was well into it by then. And then we had a woman who was chairperson of the Y, a black woman...I didn't sit in, I can't remember who sat in... So then that summer that I went to Connie's seminar which was in Minneapolis Saint Paul for students. And afterwards I went to (inaudible). Well Connie can tell you

more about what the seminar was like. But it was pretty regional oriented. It really captured the mind of the south, a lot of close relationships and anthropology, and just a lot of stuff targeted at race relations in the south. And then at the conference the big debate at the national student congress was whether to support the sit-ins, and I was on this panel of southern white students to talk about the sit-ins. Well I gave this big speech and it was a matter of whether we had the vote, so all the sudden I was like this heroine. From that I sort of got swept into this liberal caucus which was this thing that Al Haber organized at the congress to support the liberal sides of issues at the National Student Conference. And that's where I met everybody. That's basically where the people who formed SDS found each other. So Tom Hayden was there and Al and a lot of people. I'm blanking out. So there was sort of a movement to draft me to run for national vice president of NSA and Tim Jenkins was there who's a black guy (inaudible). But I thought it would be better if Tim ran. I don't think it occurred to me that it would be important for a woman to run. It just seemed important for a black man to run. So he went on to lead and that gave him some leverage and he later argued stuff, training for some of the SNCC orientation. Then I went back to the University of Texas and Connie and Jane Stembridge and Ella Baker were organizing the Atlanta the second SNCC meeting, and called and said I should come and they sent me some money. So I already knew a lot of SNCC people because they had come to the NSA meeting to try and get support for their activities. So I had met them there. And Chuck McDew who was the first chairperson was in Connie's Seminar so I knew Chuck very well. So I already knew quite a few people.

Q: How did you know Ella Baker?

A: I think I had met Ella somewhere around the Y stuff, but I'm not sure. At Christmas I went to see Tom in Ann Arbor and we put together a food drive and a fund-raiser for SNCC. The food was for farmers and people who were registering to vote in western Tennessee. And then on spring break I drove up from Texas and he drove down from Michigan with all this food. These trucks full of stuff and we took it to these people. And then I acceptedAt the midterm I took a teaching assistantship at the University of Illinois and went up to run the Y. I thought I would be closer to Tom. That shows you how parochial I was. It was hours away from Ann Arbor. Then we got engaged. The Y offered me a job in the beginning of the fall working for Ella, traveling to southern campuses (inaudible). So Tom and I got married in the fall in Austin. That summer we spent in New York (inaudible) SDS ran this. (phone rings) So then we to Atlanta. We did this study group and we went to the conference. So I was working for Ella and traveling. So I would go on campuses like a black campus and go to the meetings and I would recruit people for race relations workshops. So it was all very sort of underground. So we got to Atlanta and then was when Bob's southern Mississippi efforts were just blowing up. And we knew all these people because Tom was speaking and I was traveling. So I knew all the SNCC people. And we were having a lot of meetings and we were just like (inaudible). There wasn't much staff and Ella was there all the time. So it was really like the Y was there but doing SNCC stuff. I was taking the minutes of all the meetings. I guess Bob was always there. (inaudible) So we did the Freedom Rides to Albany and Tom and we sat in the courtroom. I can't remember if Tom was

with us. We were both pretty much living on my Y salary because Tom was the SDS secretary.

Were you there when the Port Huron statement was drafted?

Yes, yes I was. But I'm trying to remember when that was. I think it must have been '62. But we both really involved with both. Then we stayed in Atlanta that year I did my stuff and traveled with the Y. And that summer I think we might have gone back to New York. I think we both went to the NSA conference. Tom went back to school that fall of '62 and we went to Ann Arbor but then I left. That fall there was a SDS national convention and I stayed in (inaudible), and then I went back to Atlanta and started getting paid by SNCC. I had actually been on the staff before but I was getting paid by the Y. I didn't really get paid that much but I did get an apartment. And I got the title of northern coordinator and what I did was organize the Friends of SNCC on campuses and sent out mailings and press releases. I put together Friends of SNCC materials and I helped get a lot of personal contacts up in New York and Chicago. So I did that and then Bob was sitting at the (inaudible) and he had a big plan to do this literacy project in Mississippi which was designed to create self-instruction. And I was an English major so I thought this was my kind of project. Doris Dorby, Helen O'Neil, John O'Neil, me, and this white guy from somewhere in the northeast, and this philosophy teacher. So I went to Mississippi and started getting paid by this literacy project. (inaudible) Helen, and Doris, and I lived in this house. It was standard operations for SNCC and it was called the Freedom House and we stayed there until '66. So I was there for the beginnings of the Freedom Love and all that. After the literacy project we organized the summer

project. I helped put together the summer project. The main thing I worked on was researching the challenge to the seating. Getting hold of the stuff (inaudible) and training all the (inaudible) to do that. And somewhere in there was the March on Washington. Somewhere in there was a big Vietnam rally.

Was that with SDS?

I think that was with SDS. I can't quite remember the circumstances, but I got arrested. So that was through the summer of '64. In the fall of '64 people left who were all sort of at loose ends trying to figure out what to do next. After the Challenge we didn't know what to do...it was awful. So I was living at the Toogaloo literacy house and Mary King was there, Elaine Baker, Emmy Schrader, Jane Stenbridge. You know I found out subsequently that all these white people who just stayed, got hired. Eighty-five people got hired by a staff meeting. So suddenly we had all these people on staff, mostly white people.

Q: You weren't present at this meeting?

A: No. I think Elaine was there. You know, Elaine Baker would be a good person to talk to. Elaine was teaching at Toogaloo and she wasn't in SDS, but she's just really a good person to talk to. She came down with a bunch of people from Radcliff and Harvard to be the summer staff at Toogaloo College in '63, '64. She kind of got drafted to help with some stuff on the summer project. Those were the women who were all at the literacy house. Elaine was at the meeting in Jackson. But Elaine wrote this memo that Mary King and I wrote. Elaine was in that too. In fact I think she wrote that for SDS.

Q: The first memo?

A: Yeah. Yeah. And I think Emmie Schrader was involved in that too. We put it together in the literacy house. I always remember it as this group effort, but I sent out my very first...when Sarah was writing her book, Mary found me and said this woman is writing this book she really wants to talk to you. So I read this and I thought...and Sarah had originally thought that Ruby Doris wrote the memo. But I knew I wrote part of it but it seemed to me like a whole bunch of us worked on it. So I sent out a mailing to everybody that was at Toogaloo and said, "Do you remember this memo?. Here's a copy of this thing. Did you write part of this?" Nobody ever responded. So then Mary wrote a book and she had her version of how it all happened. But now Elaine is back, who hasn't even thought about all this stuff. She doesn't even know that all this history has been written, or anything. It's so funny when people write these books. I read Mary's book in first draft and Tom's in first draft. People don't know anything. Nobody remembers anything, so they just pad it. You read these books and you think I could never write a book like this, they remember all this stuff. But no, nobody remembered anything. We can't even remember how we supported ourselves, and it's hysterical. It is just hysterical. And then you read it and it sounds like this is the way it really was. People just patch it together. They go around and ask other people. Or they send drafts to other people and ask them to fix it, and they do. I mean I wrote tons of Mary's stuff and Tom's. So historians are reading some of this and getting the totally wrong idea. But it wasn't what happened. That's why we have to write this book. Get everyone to write their own story. But anyway, that's why it would be good to talk to Elaine. I can never understand about

that memo because it was Mary who...it was about all that stuff in Atlanta, and Mary wasn't in Atlanta. She was in Mississippi. And nobody was telling her all this stuff because people weren't talking to each other in the fall of '64. I mean black people weren't talking about it. I mean you couldn't go around and interview black women and get any information. But Elaine was at the meeting, at the Atlanta meeting, and that's where we got all the information. So this memo says oh, this and this, and this happened, because she was there so that's where all of this came from. I could never figure that out.

Q: In her book, Mary said that this all started because the two of you, and Dorothy were talking about the second class citizenship of women.

A: Well a lot of people were talking about it. It wasn't just us. Well you see the Y, the YMCA was a women's organization. So Mary and I both had experience in a women's organization, where it was run by women. Sarah's notion of safe space is quite good. I think what happened was that we had safe space. [end of tape]

Yeah. I think that. But we were all into it at the Toogaloo literacy house that was really where it started. Here we were, five or six young students living there all who were talking about deep stuff. Elaine came up with the draft. You should talk to her. I have something that she wrote about it that's very specific about what led her to that, but I don't think I should talk about. But you could ask her about it. Now I think it's true that Elaine drafted it. I was really bothered with structure stuff. It was probably just to get it off our chests and get it

out in the open. I think it said, "Hey, look at what's happening." It was sort of a nightmare. I don't think it was meant to solve anything. I was more concerned about what we were going to do next. That was more where I was.

Q: How did you see the future of SNCC at that time?

A: Well, we didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to do. I had just finished running this Challenge and it was over, so it was like, now what am I supposed to do? And that's what I saw was wrong with SNCC at the time. But in retrospect, I don't think that's all it was. That wasn't a problem who worked in Mississippi, just southwest Georgia. I don't know why we kept all that Mississippi staff. We had just done the Mississippi summer project and that was over, and we just had the Challenge which had failed. So did we really want to keep doing voter registration? Plus, the summer project was over, so all of the logistics and all the work that was involved just trapped folks.

Q: In your opinion, what was the staff's reaction, especially black staff members, to the summer project after it was over?

A: I think as long as the summer went, I think as long as it ended and went away, it would be okay. You see the problem was that everybody didn't go home. Then we had--so we couldn't go back to the way it was before, which isn't the way it was supposed to be. People just stayed and evidently -- I can't quite sort it out. I can't find anything written about it that answers my questions of how it happened that all these people got put on SNCC staff. Previously, people got put on SNCC staff in really

different ways. But basically project directors decided who that wanted on staff. But somehow that was not the case that the project directors hired these people. So you had the black staff, Mississippi staff that been project directors, so now they were project leaders, and they had staff. So it should have been that they could decide whether or not those people got hired. But in fact that was not the case. Because by the time we got to Waveland, all these people were still there and there didn't seem to be any way to get rid of them, and I don't really understand it. It was just a big mess. So that was making everybody crazy. Elaine knows all the positions. She has all the papers and local staff meetings in Mississippi that summer. She was called Federal Projects Coordinator. Her job was to help people understand how to get people off welfare--all the federal projects that were supposed to be happening. So she was traveling. So she was at all these meetings and has all these papers. There were all these people there, and it was like what are all these people still doing here? And the other thing was that there was no money. Nobody was paid. So had could they have all these people? Meanwhile, you see this was the other thing I saw that was the problem at that point was that we weren't getting any money for anything. Jim Forman bought this huge office building and this professional printing press and that's where the money went that was supposed to be coming to the workers. Jim had his own agenda and he had this idea of how the organization should be. He good take all the money and do what he wanted with it. So those were the things that seemed to me to be the problem. There was a lot of anger and hostility and we didn't know what to do with it.

Q: Did this tension have anything to do with the inter-racial relationships that formed during the summer project?

A: Well, there were definitely inter-racial relationships in SNCC. No doubt about it. Lots of lots of relationships and sex. Not meaningless either. I had a lot of sex with a lot of black guys and so did most of the other women. Certainly the woman who were in Mississippi prior to the summer had relations with lots of black male staff members. My impression was that when people came down for the summer project there wasn't so much of that because ---the way I think about is several ways, four or five different ways. It started out with Jane and me and Dorothy, sort of sudden. Then Dottie (inaudible). Then there were volunteers. My impression is that the volunteers didn't have a lot of sex with black guys because it was too tricky then. But privately.... We were all living together and we were all very close. We all lived in a house the size of this room. So if there was no bed, "Hey you can share my bed". It was like that all the way around. You have to expect that because of what you are about is breaking segregation the rule of segregation is sexual separateness. If you get a bunch of people that are set on breaking a taboo of segregation, it going to happen. The only place the line was drawn was homosexual relations. The only place where a lot of flack happened was Jim Forman's relationship. There was a lot of flack. (inaudible) But that's the only one I really heard of that was a big problem. I guess there weren't a lot of successful marriages. I remember in the wake of the Jim mess, he got on my case. You see Dinky took my position as northern coordinator and she sent the Freedom Singers on a tour that lost a lot of money.

So part of the rumor of what was happening was that she was being allowed a lot of flack for having lost money and that was really partly had to do with her and Jim. Part of the flack she was getting really originated from her and Jim being together. And so most people's reactions was to take sides. So at Waveland, I remember Jim--that was the first time he decided to get on me about being high on freedom, acting impulsive and irresponsible and then complaining that the people that come after don't have what it takes to do the job. But he was talking about me you see because I had left Mississippi. It was just inaccurate. She should have just done it. How hard was it? You just had to write letters. It was just a routine job. So I thought wow, Jim is coming down hard on me because of this stuff with Dinky. But that's the first time the term Freedom High was used. See so that had to do with sexual tension. But I don't really remember a lot. When things got heavy with inter-racial hostilities, what happened was that people stopped talking to each other. So that if there was hostility later, I didn't hear about it. So there have been hostility that I was never aware of.

Q: So after Waveland, what did you do?

A: Well those of us at the literacy house...well after Waveland nobody still talked. The same problems were still all there. So we--what it looked like to us had happened was that everybody had left Mississippi and Mississippi still didn't have a subscript or support. So there were a lot of pieces to that, but one piece was the photographers had left and there were no more black photographers left in Mississippi. There was no darkroom. So we decided to start a photography project. So we started all working

in photography. Our idea was to raise money to set up the darkroom and teach black Mississippians photography and assign them to projects. See our idea was to strengthen local projects because no one was spending any money anymore on them. So my idea was to --see I had come through the Y and I had come through relations, human relations stuff, so my idea of structure was very task oriented and was very small group oriented. My idea of what we should have done at Waveland was break into small groups and come up with what we wanted to do. These task groups could then send someone to the general group which would provide a plan to get control. That's what I thought we should do, which is very structured. It's not like we weren't structured, we were. But we were not into a hierarchical structure. We wanted a small group task force. (inaudible) But the problem was that people had problems that they felt needed to be solved immediately, and so it just started all over again. So what we wanted to do was this photography thing. We went to Mississippi to be trained to be photographers. Mary King, Emmie Schrader, and me. Emmie wanted to make filmstrips. She made filmstrips about making co-ops for farmers. We started trying to turn out material to be used for organizing and raise money for photographers. The other part of this idea of structure was that communities in the north had agreed to send money send money directly to the town or projects they were sponsoring. So what we were trying to so was circumvent this large hierarchical system. We were into a different kind of structure. So would couldn't get that. That just got to be cat calls, and we left. Elaine went off to Batesville. Jane Stembridge organized a poetry workshop. Mary went off with Dennis to this (inaudible) project. But after the Atlanta meeting it was

clear to me that whites were in the way. Between Waveland and Atlanta the people who were for a more centralized structure they were in power positions--and by the time we got back together in Atlanta there was so much hostility. Black power had come in, but the general sense was --it was a different orientation. I came out of this human relations, spiritual position, and SNCC had been that. That is what SNCC had been for me, and then that's not what it was anymore. No matter how much SNCC changed that is what it once was for me. It wasn't that anymore, it was something else. So it looked to me at that point that the best thing to do was to (inaudible). So I cut a deal with SDS and Jim Forman that SNCC would still pay me, but I would go to the SDS office and work there. So I went to Chicago and spent the summer of '65 in Chicago. By then I was older. The women from Toogaloo were now in New York City. So I went to various places for two years.

Q: Could you tell me more about your overlap with SNCC and SDS?

A: Well there was a lot of overlap in the national council. Dorothy was there. A lot of the same people were involved locally, but it was SNCC who ran things. Bob Zellner was in both. Charlie Cobb, Ivanhoe....

Q: What did members of each organization think about the other group?

A: Well SDS thought that SNCC was favorable partners. They were the existential group, they were someone to emulate--that's where the ERAP come in. Tom's idea was (inaudible). It was trying to build a white constituency that could jive with SDS's philosophy.

Tom went to Atlanta with me because we got married and I had a job there. I was making the money. Tom couldn't have ever gotten in because the SNCC people didn't like Tom. He was very ambitious. They didn't like him because he wrote that pamphlet and SDS sold it and kept the money even though it was about SNCC. Forman didn't like Tom either. When we went down to those Georgia counties to take that food, Forman was there. And Forman was with this other faction. There was always sort of this tension between Jim and Tom. Jim was an old right guy. The new left was more about indigenous America. SNCC was more spiritual and more regional. I approached SNCC and SDS as a segregationist. I was sort of a liaison between SNCC and SDS. SDS --both were very male dominated. They were both macho. SNCC had a lot of female influence because it was nonviolent, because southern rural culture was feminine, it was nurturing. But, the guys who got the glory were the black guys who got out there and sacrificed their bodies. After Diane Nash died, it was really more about how gutsy you were. And for me, I couldn't be that because as a white woman I was just never willing to endanger people with whom I was working. So I always -- it was like when I chose to not (inaudible). It was more like support in the background activity, doing research and training people, all that. But the way I'm reported historically with Bob Zellner (inaudible), so it really is a traditionally female role. The same thing in SDS. In SDS it was more like--writing speeches, and arguing positions. It was civilized.

Q: The women were arguing and presenting papers?

A: No the guys were. They were very theoretical. I wasn't interested in it. I think Sara is right that once ERAP happened women came to support SDS. ERAP was task oriented instead of strictly theoretical and that's what attracted the women.

(inaudible) So I think that's true. Once we left that theoretical, macho debate style, women could be more effective. But also in SDS you have projects, for instance in Chicago we were organizing welfare women and Winnie Davis was there. Winnie Davis had to deal with these juvenile delinquents who were terrorizing her welfare women. So the project was a lot of incoherence around class, race, and sex. And also because I could see (inaudible).

Q: Was SDS's term participatory democracy meant to be applied internally or was it an external philosophy for America?

A: Both. Well, I don't think there was that kind of split.

[end of tape]

I think what it really meant was non-alienation. Alienation was a big thing, a big idea for existentialists. A sense of our own distance from outsiders, how at odds we were with the socially and cultural norms of society. (inaudible) So I think what it really did talk about was the opposite cult and for a minute in our personal lives it was a sense that we were fully engaged. It was a sense of being honest and straightforward and willing to alter power. (inaudible) Tom well...I guess the best way to explain it is that I went to this SDS reunion a few years ago and Connie Brown was there and we had a women's session. It was supposed to be a workshop, but it was a whole day long thing. We talked about

what it was like for us as women when we were in SDS, and how we viewed our politics now that we were all sort of preveluted in women's culture and how we as women have access to what our issues are and our problems, and expectations--all that stuff. But from that perspective had we really worked? It was just a kind of long healing, sharing special end. And Connie Brown, she was talking about what was happening to her then and she said the stuff I was hearing, she said, "Yeah, people were talking about all the guys in SDS were so macho and intellectual. The stuff I was hearing, the style was awful but the content was true." Especially Tom's stuff--he was such a great writer. So there was a lot of community and inter-person loyalty. And there was a lot of sex there too. We used to have this saying (inaudible). And it did. Every was just very incestuous. And there weren't very many of us. That's the other thing when I look back. There were so few of us. We were so young. I can't believe we did all that. And so I think that inter-sexual stuff was in a lot of ways really a part of it. That's where we lived it out. You know when you have a lover there is a lot of energy. There was just so much energy bouncing around. Sexual energy. So that's what of part of what we are doing--we're going back and working it all out. See, we were all sleeping with the same guys but we weren't talking to each other about it. That's part of the problem we trying to fix at this workshop. So now we go back and reassess these guys, and it's like a breakthrough. Women didn't talk to each other like that then. Part of what is happening is healing stuff up.

Q: How would you assess the effect these unspoken relationships had on other women in SNCC and SDS?

A: Well, in my own personal life it's taken me thirty years to work through what happened then. For me, given my personal plan in life--what was going on there? So needless to say, I fell adrift. All of those things has really bruised all of our pasts. But it also was an expression of camaraderie and our love for each other. We all loved each other and (inaudible). There really were just each other. So it was a bond and it just kind of naturally flowed that we took each other to bed. And everybody did it unprotected. And also another thing you have to understand is that we had the pill. Just like all the sudden you could do this kind of thing and not get pregnant. It was like whoa the lid was off. And that all happened and there it was. We were the first generation. So that was a major, major part of it. So sex involved everybody in any setting. We happened to be in this setting, so that's what we were doing. We were all traveling a lot, we were having all of the intensive experiences together, we learning adult strengths in a lot of ways so we were more ready to do this. And then we were reading about married sexual lives and stuff. The women that were heroines were the women who never married and weren't constrained by marriage. Previously women had to be more cautious because they were the ones who got pregnant. But now it's like oh, we can be like the guys. Except that the guys' sex was part alienated. But we, it was very hard for us because the difference in the sexual experience--but we didn't know that. So we thought that once we were independent we would be fine. But that wasn't true. As you can see thirty years later we are crazy and seeing psychiatrists. What happened back there? We didn't know. It was so weird. And it wasn't just us either. I mean everybody was doing the same thing. Any woman that got

hold of the pill was like whoa, nobody knew what to do with her. I still don't think people understand the impact of that. It's like a basic cultural switch just like that. Women can control in a sexual capacity. For us it's taken all this time to figure out. We all got together at this reunion we were all saying, "Oh, wow! It happened to you too!" Maybe it was the pill? I mean the answer to these things are so simple. And all these books make it so complicated with all these theories, and it's really very simple. It's things like the pill, people stopped talking to each other, and it's just real basic.

Q: But then the real question becomes why did people stop talking to each other? Why did you stop talking?

A: Well I think that the structure question was something to soothe the super ego. I think it was a scapegoat for real problems. People had problems to solve and they didn't know how to do it. We had all these black people (inaudible). There wasn't the money when we needed it. So if you didn't have money (inaudible). We had all these white people who we couldn't get rid of. We couldn't function. And we didn't know what to do. So we all stopped functioning. Why couldn't we solve these problems? My perspective on all of this was that we needed to be in small groups--it was very simple. Plus, ideologically we were stuck. We couldn't identify what tactics to use and which areas to attack next. It was awful. And then all these white people that had somehow got on staff, it was like how do we get rid of them? I don't even know how they got on staff in the first place. I really want to find out. I'll tell you where you could find it -- the minutes of that Atlanta staff meeting, that's where it

happened. Plus there were all these other people who weren't on staff who were just there. It's not that, I don't believe that the problem, see those black staff people were very strong. The black Mississippi staff were very strong. And when I read in the books how the whites were dominating, I don't believe that. First of all because the whites idealized these black staff. And secondly, because these black guys were very strong. I just don't buy it. I think it was that there were some people who somehow got to stay after the summer that you couldn't get rid of. And that's where I think this notion of white people leading came from -- that's the problem. We had very different ideas about what we were doing. You see I didn't realize this until I read Jim Forman's book. I felt that we just thought that Jim was this militant revolutionary, centralist Stalin. Then I read his book and found out, yeah he really was militant centralist. And he really did think SNCC should be a mass membership organization to create a revolution in the ghettos or something. And that's what he was doing buying that building and buying that printing press and all that stuff. Which wasn't at all what I thought we should be doing. That's a power conflict. And when I read Jim's book that's when I realized that after Waveland he realized he had a power conflict on his hands. He identified what was happening as a faction fight and he went around and badmouthed people and lied to everybody--lied to the field staff in order to have this centralized power. So by the time we got together at that Atlanta meeting there had been a lot of badmouthing and racial stuff. It was the worst thing that ever happened to me. I could have died and I left. It was my whole life. People wouldn't talk to me. It was awful. Nobody was on our side. We just all withdrew. But

then I go back and read these books and it's ridiculous. That I dominated and filibustered. Give me a break! I was a human relations expert. That I wasn't sensitive to black people? You have to be kidding! I ran race relations workshops. This Stoper book was the worst. She did all of her interviews in '68. I come up sounding like...there were all these terms like hard-liners. They were all involved in faction fights--all this stuff that never happened. Who was fighting? It's so inaccurate. The two things that I think are really important--the two big glaring pieces are the way history gets written --how much people know when they start out. And the other thing is the level of which people address these issues. So it's in term of ideas like structure--well that wasn't really it. That wasn't exactly the issue. But really it was about what were we doing. It's about very simple goals--and mass movements are like that. It's a unifying tradition to get together and try and solve these problems and then it falls apart. It's just the nature of movements. Somehow we stopped moving in the right direction. But these theories and structure don't explain it. What ever you call it--non-violent direct action, it was a certain mold --and all these discrepancies like Are we building a revolution or are we supposed to (inaudible)? Is participatory democracy and external idea? The thing was all that was part of it. It was the unifying experience internally working. But no one was willing to keep doing that. We stopped talking. The one central thing that was happening to me had to do with unifying your sense of internal and external power. It happened in SDS and SNCC. I used to think--I went through this period around the time of the Trinity conference, and I really took the position that SNCC was great

before while SDS was paralyzed. But now I think that both of them had this macho ego but in different ways, and that women could be more affective in SNCC because it was more person to person and task related. SDS did ERAP. In SNCC there wasn't much writing. In SDS all the men did it. I was a guardette. That's what we all decided we were. Dorothy and me, and Leni, and Sharon-- guardettes.