# Alabama State University 50th Anniversary Participants Session (Afternoon)

February 25, 2010

Alabama State University Celebration

# SUMMARY KEYWORDS

students, alabama, people, day, courthouse, state, talking, started, movement, stay, happened, remember, city, place, night, jail, question, north carolina, home, years

First Transcriber: Wesleigh Wright – 9/04/2020 Second Transcriber: Mary Bennet – 6/10/2020

Janice Franklin 00:00 And good afternoon, everyone.

#### 00:04

We are so happy to have you with us today to celebrate this 50th anniversary of the sit-in demonstrations led by Alabama State College students in 1960. It is an honor and a blessing, I must say, for me to be able to stand here with some of my schoolmates and commemorate this great event.

#### 00:42

I was a student in 1960. I was a freshmen.

I think Rebecca Moore, back there, Rebecca and I– Rebecca Dixon and I came about the same time and... I don't know, I think Rebecca was downtown marching up but I'll tell you where I was. My mama called and she said, "Now, you stay in the dormitory; don't you go marching up and down those streets."

#### 01:12

So, I was in the window, in Bibb Graves Hall looking out at y'all.

I was a wide-eyed, innocent, scared to death freshman student doing what my mama told me to do. But feeling a sense of great pride all the while.

#### 01:39

Now I know you don't want to listen to me because we have with us today the participants – many of the participants – in that sit-in demonstration downtown at the courthouse. And I'd like for you to meet them, first of all, and we want to have this to be a very casual, informal, you know, kind of laid back, you know, discussion so that we can get to know you and understand why you did what you did. And you can tell us, we have the benefit of history – living history –

right here with us. And we want to make sure that we are able to share that...

# 02:34

I did watch the interview with Governor Patterson, and one thing I remember him saying is that there were nine students who were expelled as a result of their participation in the sit-in. And he said that these nine students were out-of-state students.

# 02:59

Now I think that's one biff or one error that we can correct because I know that some of the nine students – and I don't know if their names are in your program or not; they should be. And also, their hometowns are there. And there were ones from Alabama, and one person, I know, from right here in Montgomery. But what I would like for us to begin doing– first of all, I would like for each one of you to take just a moment, and right now, I don't want you to go into a lot of detail, but I want you to tell us who you are and what you're doing now and where you were born and grew up, and how you came to Alabama State, and just some things about you. Briefly now and not too long 'cause we want to get into your activities in the city and so, McFadden, let's start with you.

James McFadden 04:12 Good Afternoon.

# 04:13

My name is James McFadden and I too - Well, first I just want to start off by thanking Alabama State University and all of the people who made it possible for this event because I know Dr. Autrey and Dr. Franklin, Dr. Robinson put a great deal of energy into making this happen. I want to thank them, and thank Alabama State, first of all, because it's an honor for me to be here and be on this stage.

#### 04:35

I was born in Clark County, in Thomasville, Alabama. My parents moved to Prichard, Alabama when I completed junior high school. I graduated from Central High School in Mobile, Alabama in 1956. I arrived here in Montgomery in September 1956 and, you know, the boycott was already in progress.

#### 04:58

And I was excited when I got here because I had been taught by my parents that if you find injustice anywhere in the world, you have a responsibility to change that injustice to just[ice]. And with the movement already in progress. I became a young student soldier, at that particular time, I was what they would call a communicator. My job was to deliver leaflets from the Montgomery Improvement Association to as many houses as I could in Montgomery.

#### 05:33

And I graduated from the Bus Boycott to the sit-in movement. And there were a lot of things that Dr. Patterson said that we're going to talk about them a little later on, but I just want to tell you two other things about myself. One: as the expulsion happened and I moved on, I became a soldier and ambassador for justice and that's who I am. If you look at my bio or my card you

will find that I have done many things. After The sit-in movement, It was Africa for a year, from Africa it was back to the States – two years in the military and every day since then I've been a soldier for justice. That's basically who I am.

#### 06:16

I worked for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I retired from that. I retired from the school district in Philadelphia as a consulting teacher for 27 years; I did that in November of 2000.

# Janice Franklin

#### 06:30

Okay, okay. And McFadden was one of those nine students who was expelled and you see, he's from Prichard, Alabama, right? Okay.

#### William Renfro

# 06:41

My name is William Renfro, and I'm originally from Tuskegee, and I was talking to someone today and they asked me, "So, how did you end up at Alabama State and not attending Tuskegee?" When I arrived in Alabama State in '57, the tuition was \$45 a quarter and I couldn't afford the tuition at Tuskegee so I decided to attend State.

#### 07:05

But after leaving State– Alabama State I, of course, I spent time in the Air Force. And then I ended up teaching for a very short time in the state of Alabama, and then I moved to California. So, I've been in California now since... 1957. And I'm still there. I've been retired 10 years and I attended graduate school there. I finished my doctorate there at Pepperdine University and I also retired as an assistant director of research for LA Unified School District. So, I've been retired. All I'm doing now is traveling around. I came back here for this program and I too want to thank the administration for inviting me back to get to talk about what happened 50 years ago. Thank you.

Janice Franklin 08:03 Thank you very much. We're glad to have you.

#### **Cornelius Benson**

#### 08:05

My name is Cornelius Benson. I'm from Birmingham, Alabama. I'd like to thank the university for having this affair. When you do things, you don't ever know what's gon' be the outcome, you young people. It's been 50 years ago that all this happened and it was all over in my mind but you see what happened today. I came to Alabama State on a football scholarship and my coach, William Cole, was an All-American kid. And I graduated from high school in '56, you know, so he wanted to know where I could get in. And so I told him, "I'm going to Alabama State." So that's how I got here.

#### 08:43

And I did play football for two years. I got hurt; I didn't play anymore. My father was a member of the NAACP in the '30s and '40s and I can recall having to take the NAACP bucket around in the

community as a youngster and, I guess, this was the way I got involved. But I'm happy to be here. When we came to Montgomery– we came to Montgomery September of '56 and the Bus Boycott was already eight months old, nine months old. So, the stage was already set for us that knew about the struggle that we were having. So, I want to let you know I'm just happy to be here today. I'm happy to see these young people out there.

Joe Reed 09:40 I am Joe Reed.

#### 09:44

I grew up in Conecuh County. Wherever it was, was the county seat. We got the mayor about 10 miles from downtown. I came here in 1958 as a young veteran. I'd just left Korea. I was 19 when I got here and I worked as a janitor in what we then called Kildan Hall, where the radio station is now. Six of us in the room. I worked for 25 cents an hour. I flushed the stools other folks may wouldn't flush and cleaned the floors other folks may dirty.

# 10:17

And I worked there for a while 'til the sit-in movement started. And I was asked to go by Arthur B. Faust, who is now deceased, invited me to go with him and the others– St. John and the others down to the courthouse; course we went. Later on, I lost my job as a janitor. And of course, prior to getting reassigned that summer, my room – I was one of those put on probation, not expelled but we had to go see Dr. Trenholm before we could get room assignments that next fall.

#### 10:55

I've been in Alabama for the most of my life and I worked in education, worked with this university and others for some time. It's a pleasure for me to be here and certainly to be with my colleagues here that joined the movement where we all worked together. It's just good being here. I think those of us who are here are still blessed 'cause there are some who are no longer here.

# St. John Dixon

#### 11:21

Good evening. St. John Dixon. Native to Jackson, Alabama now San Diego, California. So, I'm gonna stop here because that's what the moderators asked us to do.

# Eleanor Moody-Shepherd

#### 11:36

My name is Eleanor Moody-Shepherd and I was born in Macon County, Alabama and I was born in Shorter, Alabama but my family moved to Tuskegee. And I started the journey at Tuskegee University where I started my freshman year. And, the Dean Gomillion had already started the Montgomery– the Tuskegee movement and I was bitten by the bug then. And once that had started, I wanted to come to Alabama State University because it had already started the movement by the Bus Boycott. And I came to Alabama State University and that's when I started the movement– started working in the movement. But now I live in New York State and work in New York City as the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean at New York Theological Seminary, and I am a Presbyterian minister.

Aner Ruth Young 12:41 Good afternoon. I hope I'm speaking into the id.

# 12:46

I am Aner Ruth Young. I was born in Bullock County, about 22 miles south of Union Springs, Alabama. I was born 68 miles southeast of Montgomery. I'm the second of eleven children.

# 13:05

When I was in the eighth– in ninth grade, I had to go away to school because our school offered was only through the eighth grade so I went to Merritt High School for one year. And I told my father I did not want to stay away from home to go to school the next year, go to Union Springs to see the superintendent and have them add the 10th grade up to Carver High School. And he asked, "What are you going to do if you don't?" I said, "I'm going to stay home." He asked, "Where are you going to live? I said, "I'll stay somewhere; in the crib where the mules are." He asked, "What will you eat?" I said, "I'll eat the peanuts out of the hay." He said, "You're not going to eat my mules' peanuts." I said, "I don't care if I have to walk the road and eat the corn out of the mules' s[\*\*t]." Daddy went to Union Springs, talked with the superintendent. They added the 10th grade on to Carver High School. The next year, for the 11<sup>th</sup> grade, there were other students who came back to Carver High School for that 10th grade year. I told Daddy, "You may as well go on to Union Springs and tell him to add the 11th and 12th grade next year." He did.

#### 14:31

Daddy joined the NAACP in Bullock county. We'd started buying some land around Jan Pak, which is 22 miles south of Union Springs. The president asked for his money– the president of the bank asked for his money because he had joined "that colored folk organization." He said, "I don't have the money." He said, "I want my money Saturday or I'm gonna foreclose your deed– your bill." I said, "I can send" – well, he asked me if I could send him \$3600, that's what he was owing. I sent him \$3700, he took it to the president of the bank, said "Here's your money". He said, "Oh please, you know, I was joking." He said, "No, you weren't." Daddy pushed it back over the counter. The president of the bank pushed it back to him. He says, "Hell, take your damn money, give me my damn deeds." That's what happened and those 397 acres are now of land are still down there.

# 15:43

I was active before I came to Alabama State and it was a natural for me to become active with the national organization. I was the only female who went to North Carolina when we organized SNCC. We rode up there in a little pink car and we came back. We had a good time that weekend. All the students... I don't know what Joe said, but he was one of those who went to North Carolina also. Bernard Lee was another one. Who were the other three guys, Joe? Yes, anyhow turn your watches over. Bernard Lee, Rich Berg... who? Rich... [distant talking from Joe Reed]

Anyhow, ask him. I think I'm a few days older than he is. But my name got put on the "Do not hire" list in the South. I was blackballed in all of the southern states. I told one of my ninth-grade classmates that I could not get a job teaching in the South. She asked, "Why don't you come to San Francisco? They're hiring teachers out here". I asked, "Where will I stay? She said, "You can stay with us until you get a job and you find someplace else to stay."

# 17:13

I went to San Francisco. I was a physical education health major, an economics minor, the concentration in clothing, furniture refinishing and interior decorating. Supervisor of physical education called me one night. I was so mad at Mr. Walton because he made the two females pass swimming. The supervisor asked, "Do you swim?" I said, "Yes."

"Can you teach swimming?" "Yes." "Do you have your WSI Water State Instructor's certificate?" I said, "Yes." She said, "Be in my office tomorrow morning. I have a job for you." So learn to swim. Keep your first aid, CPR certification up. Go to college, get a good education. If you have a 4.00 grade point average Alabama State will give you a full scholarship. Thank you.

# Joseph Peterson

18:18

My name is Joseph Peterson.

# 18:22

I was at Alabama State for a couple of reasons. I was a veteran at that time, I had spent three years in the United States Army as a military policeman primarily. And I had spent about a year at Miles College. I did not have my high school diploma at that time. I had taken the GED while I was in the army, so I decided, after Miles College lost its accreditation, I decided to come to Alabama State. What I remember mostly about the campus at that time is... We used to spend a lot of time up on the– I guess, on the square up at the– at Sam's. It was a lot of conversations among students about what was going on in the world. We were able to read the paper. In fact, maybe three or four people read the same paper and had a lot of discussion.

#### 19:23

When the sit-ins started in Raleigh– in Greensboro, North Carolina. I'm sorry; Raleigh is where they started SNCC. But in Greensboro, North Carolina, it immediately started in Alabama because the students had already been discussing these issues. At the same t– at that time I had just joined a fraternity: Sigma. I think most of the people that were sitting by at that time, participating and I think maybe at least three or four of those people was expelled from Alabama State. And I think the question really was, how did I get myself involved in civil rights or get second– sensitized to discrimination. If you lived in Alabama, there was no way that you could not be sensitized to discrimination, particularly at that time. Anywhere you went– you couldn't– you really didn't have a place to stay, if you decided to come stop; you really didn't have a place to go out to eat, unless it was in a segregated facility.

#### 20:41

In 50 years, I've seen a lot of change In Alabama and I'm glad to be back. That's part of my story. Hopefully, you get a chance to tell Russell.

#### Janice Franklin

#### 20:52

We most certainly will. We have two young ladies on the panel today, who were involved; who were participants in the movement. My information is that you didn't actually go down and sit down in the café. Am I correct? But you did have kept– have some very intense involvement. Now, my information further is that you– the young men wouldn't let you go with them to sit down because they feared that you might be abused in some way if you were arrested and taken to jail. Can you comment on that? Is that correct? Is that information correct?

# Eleanor Moody-Shepherd

# 21:48

That information is correct. We were to meet early in the morning, and I was the lone female that showed up that morning, and they were afraid that if we were arrested, that I would be isolated from them and there would be no witness. So, that the– they declined my tears and all of my begging them to let me go and to protect me. So, no, I wasn't one of the ones who went down.

Janice Franklin 22:18 Were there other young ladies involved?

Eleanor Moody-Shepherd 22:20 I was the only one that met that day but there was others involved in other events.

Janice Franklin 22:26 Okay. Aner, want to say something?

Aner Ruth Young

22:32

I was one of the two Alabama State students who was arrested when the students came down from Nashville– from Tennessee. And they wouldn't allow us to stay in jail because the guards were raping the Black women at night. So, they – we told them to leave us in jail and let us serve our time. They didn't.

Janice Franklin 23:02 I understand that you witnessed a lynching? Ms. Moody... -Shepherd?

Eleanor Moody-Shepherd 23:09 Yes, I did witness a lynching.

23:12

One of my– we were– in my family, the women and children would gather, when the men would be– would go off to work.

#### 23:23

And so, that day we were gathered at our house; my family home. And a friend of my father's had came over in the middle of the day. And he was running from a gang of the- well, people would cheat. And so, what had happened – we found out what had happened – was that he had gone home in the middle of the day and found his wife in a compromising position with a white man and out of indignation and rage he shot him. And so, the-we-the people in sheets showed up and tracked him, had tracked him to our home because he and my father were best friends and they expected him to be in our home. So, he came and with that group was our family doctor, and the people we knew, because we knew their voices. And so, they asked him to come out, and we were sequestered in the back bedroom, but he was in the front of the house, and he had a gun. And so, they tried to get him to come out and he refused to come out because he knew what would happen: he would be lynched. So, he refused to come out so they shot up the house, and they shot the house until we couldn't live in the house after that. They shot in the house so and they killed him. And then they brought him out into our front yard and they shot his brain out and they kicked his brain in the dirt and-well, they, first went into the house and brought us out and had us watch them, shoot him and kick his brain out. And they wanted to make an example out of all of us by killing all of us, but our family doctor wouldn't let them do that. So, they left and left his body there in our front yard, so that we were - we had to, you know - to have someone come, and take his body away. So that was my experience of having experienced that horrendous event.

Janice Franklin 12:48 How old were you at that time? How old were you?

Eleanor Moody-Shepherd 25:50 I was about nine years old.

#### Janice Franklin

#### 25:56

Okay, St. John Dixon. St. John Dixon, your name is the name that we first see on the court case, St. John Dixon versus State of Alabama Board of Education. I just want everybody to know that; raise your hand so they will– so they can see who you are. And it was this decision... it was this decision that made it possible, young people, for you to have due process in public higher education; in other words, you cannot be just expelled and mistreated and sent away without being given a due process hearing and without being given your rights. So, this gentleman here was the lead plaintiff in that St. John Dixon case. Now, you did mention North Carolina A&T, and as we all know on February 1st 1960, students from North Carolina A&T staged a sit-in and later on students at Alabama State College, February 25th 1960. Some of you I'm sure were influenced: you said you were reading and reading the papers, and keeping up with everything that was going on at the time. Is that true of all of you? I think I remember a conversation with McFadden, talking about the Sigmas meeting at the Hornet Grill.

#### 27:41

You all don't know what the Hornet Grill was, do you? When I saw them, tearing down the Hornet Grill, I didn't know what was going to happen. And I came over to this campus and I said, "How can you do that without giving it a proper sendoff?" We need a ceremony, you know. Do you understand what the Hornet Grill meant to those of us who were students here in the '50s and '60s and, probably, before that as well? But McFadden can tell you what the Hornet Grill meant and how they sat in the Hornet Grill and plotted their strategy for this sit-in. Is that correct?

James McFadden 28:26 Absolutely.

# Janice Franklin

#### 28:27

And somebody else– you can call some of the others who were there with you to respond as well.

James McFadden 28:37

Thank you, Dr. Almon (Find Program and check for woman's name). One of the things that I've frequently said was that this was not an individual effort; this was a collective effort. There was a number of us, systematically. And if- I want to start off by saying those of you who have heard Mrs. Abernathy, I would echo the things that she said and some of the other things that you heard today. And I think we need to take part of this time to straighten those things out. Now I'll stick to the question first. We were – we were not like – we were not blessed like students are today to have a real large campus and many places where you could meet and socialize. We didn't have that kind of space on campus, and the Hornet Grill served us that purpose. And in order for us as progressive students at Alabama State to stay abreast of what was going on, the Hornet Grill was the best place for us to be. We could not afford an individual newspaper; the newspaper was a major way of transcending information at that time. So, if we got one newspaper, all of us – all of us meaning the students that were interested – could get a chance to read that paper and discuss that paper during the day by passing through Hornet Grill. But early in the morning, a number of us from time to time, would get the newspaper, and the newspapers would vary. Most of the time we were reading the Montgomery Advertiser, but if somebody was coming through town, or we were able to get to one of the larger newsstands, every now and then we would get the New York Times, which would give us the cutting edge of what was taking place in the nation.

#### 30:13

And by doing so, the governor of the day, as you saw– sometimes things happen to our memory, and what's put out is not necessarily the truth. But one of the things that the governor didn't remember was some of the things that he was saying, because he was a young person at that time, too, in order to satisfy his constituents and justify the position that he had in the state. And one of the things that he said that was bold during that period of time that his constituents in the state of Alabama did not have to worry about the students at Alabama State or the

students in Alabama, moving with that kind of activity that had already taken place in North Carolina at AT&T because we were the second set of students, but that outraged me. I just said to myself then, "The audacity of the governor to think that the students at Alabama State did not have the courage or the character to move forward." And I wanted to make sure that he was absolutely wrong. And that was– that was how we was moving. That was what we was thinking, and that was how we was moving. And we tried a number of strategies from that, from our discussion at the Hornet Grill there were times that we would move right down the street to Cabin Inn. Cabin Inn was another one of the establishments that the owner felt free enough to let us students come in and have discussions in various places there. And the third place that we could go and have conversations and strategies was the grill that was on the next street which was the Regal Café up on the hill. So, those were the institutions that we could gather in off-campus, aside from the Hornet Grill. The Hornet Grill was at– Vincent was one of the students that was always there. St. John was there. And Joseph Peterson was too; he was a part of that inside discussion on a daily basis.

# Janice Franklin

#### 32:20

Okay, Mr. Peterson, do you want to say something about how you got involved through conversations at the Hornet Grill, the Cabin Inn and the Regal Café?

# Joseph Peterson

#### 32:41

The Regal Café. I vaguely remember what happened there that day, this was 50 years ago some white students came from– I hadn't thought it... Some students came from somewhere. I'm not sure what state that was from; it's written here somewhere. But as soon as we arrived at the Regal Café, the police showed up. And I guess now thinking back 50 years ago, how did– we didn't have Black policemen on the police force, so how did the Montgomery police know that we were taking some students over to the Regal Café at that time unless somebody in the neighborhood told them?

#### 33:30

We, as soon as we arrived, students was arrested for... one reason was, I think they gave that there wasn't a ten-foot bar between a Black person and a White person at that time. There was some law on the books of the state– of the City of Montgomery that said that you couldn't eat together. And so students was arrested and taken into court. The White students was let go and some of the Black students was charged and had to go to court. I think Fred Gray or Solomon Seay was the attorneys that handle that case for the students primarily. Looking back 50 years ago, I don't remember if I even went to jail. I used to have an argument with Mrs. Abernathy all the time about how "Joe Peterson I'm surprised that you didn't go to jail!" I'd always say, "I wasn't trying to get myself locked up." I had been a police officer before and it didn't make sense for me to go to jail. It's stupid to be in jail when people might abuse you, might do anything to you. In the state of Alabama, do not go to jail if you don't have to. It really don't make sense to me, particularly then. You might get thrown in the Alabama River. Nobody ever know what happened to you.

Janice Franklin 35:12 Okay. Aner, did you have a comment, a very brief comment....?

#### Aner Ruth Young

#### 35:20

This is about a relationship. He said his memory 50 years ago- he went to jail that day; that's the same day I was taken to jail. He went to jail. We, the females, were bailed out. The guys were bailed out later in the night. But the women were not allowed to stay in there. So- and we would go to First Baptist Church also and strategize. And Mrs. Abernathy would call down and say "They are throwing acid. When you get ready to leave the church, put your coats over your head, so that acid won't get in your eyes, it's okay for it to get on your hands because you won't get blinded that way". And Reverend Abernathy would say, "Children, let us pray"- and I still start my prayers with 'Let us pray. Dear God.' And we had a joke, a serious joke about Reverend Abernathy, Reverend Seay, Reverend King, the ministers would have there right – Peterson would have his left eye closed. I would have my right eye closed. We have two eyes open. I would have my left eye open. Eleanor would have her right eye open. Two eyes open. And we would tease each other about how Ralph and Martin had their eyes open; all of our eyes were supposed to be closed for praying. And we kept it going, but we made it. Thank you.

#### Janice Franklin

#### 37:11

Okay, thank you very much. We want to make sure that everybody has an opportunity to respond. So, Joe, let's start with you and let's hear how you became involved in the movement. We'll start with Joe and then we'll come to Mr. Renfroe...? Okay and then...

#### Joe Reed

#### 37:33

There are a few testimonies that I think that students need to have a feel for, as well. I may have mentioned how I was involved; it was very simple. Arthur Faust came to me one night and said, "We're gonna have a sit-in tomorrow. Do you want to join?" I said, "Yeah." That's how I got involved in the sit-in movement. And we walked out the next morning, we stayed involved. A few things I think, you gotta think about Alabama at that time; you gotta think about the climate. I think Mrs. Abernathy talked about it now. Montgomery: White Montgomery was mad about the success of the boycott. And this was just another threat to their good old system. And that is the old system of segregation. I had a couple of things to correct. For example, once we went in, and had the sit-in, the White Citizens Council called on the governor of Alabama to release the names, and hometowns of all of the participants who went down, was in the sit-in. That was some 29 names released, and this was in March. During the time of March, the Alabama State Teachers Association met in Montgomery. At that time, we did not have the hotels we have now so Dr. Trenholm shut Alabama State down. Students would go home, teachers would come for Spring Break, teachers would come and live in the dormitories, because they had no other place to stay. Then as the students had to go home, the ministers were afraid to go home. Why? Because their names had been published in the newspapers, across the hometown newspapers, as well as the daily papers that we had at that time; two out of Montgomery, Birmingham and Mobile, and I guess Huntsville had one or two. But anyway, then that was one of the big challenges that students had to face; and that was to go home, not only to face parents who had told them not to participate in the sit-ins, but also face the White community that was mad because you had to participated in the sit-ins.

#### 39:45

So those were very, very tense moments. And then of course, coupled with the fact that many students, or some of the students had been expelled some of us had been put on probation. So that was the climate by which we were operating. Things were very tense. Things were dangerous. And students were not very comfortable because of the situation perhaps. I will just bring that part out. It was just not a cake walk. There were a lot of threats out there. I remember, Mac, I was wonder whether that was – was it you or was it Marzette Watts? – at that time we wore our shoes shined. I mean, we had one necktie like everybody on campus wore; it was a thin necktie, we changed the necktie every day. So we just swapped the necktie, borrow it out to someone, borrow it out again and then borrow it the next day. So we used that necktie, but we kept our shoes shined. And I've been trying to figure out whether it was you or whether it was Marzette Watts that this policeman stopped one day down on South Jackson Street and said, "Your shoes are shined mighty pretty" and he took his foot and put it right on top for your shined shoes. Was that you or was it Marzette?

James McFadden 40:52 It was Marzette.

Joseph Peterson

40:55

It was Marzette? I remember that. This is the kind of provocation they had.

#### 41:01

We got shined shoes, the police would stop and just look at your shoes, took his foot and just spin it on top of your shiny shoes, your shoes that you just shined today, and just smash on the top of them. That is- they were trying to provoke people there. You had no- we didn't have any votes at that time; the Civil Rights Movement had only gotten a few folks registered to vote. But then you got a police department that was against you. You had the judge - like John said this morning - we had Judge Walter B. Jones, who wrote a column in the Montgomery Times that "I speak for the white man". You're going to that crowd for justice. You're going to that crowd and then you got the local judges. Everybody's- the only sign of moderation, now I said sign, of moderation probably was Max M Butler. I think he probably came out the only one with somesome semblance - and you notice the word I'm using - some semblance of moderation. But this was the climate in which we had to operate and I'm talking about Dr. Trenholm this morning. I'm not gonna get into that, somebody else covered it, but Dr. Trenholm could not stop an idea whose time had come. And then there was that person whose name I will not ever repeat. He's dead now, but – and we found this out later, after I got to be a grown man – that the messenger had come to Governor Patterson, "If Dr. Trenholm can't make those children behave, let me come out and be president and I'll make them behave."

#### 42:33

You know. I mean, there was Black folk sitting out in the wings waiting to succeed Dr. Trenholm if John Patterson wanted to get rid of him. And I think Patterson was right on one point – white people in Montgomery, you know we were operating in our own separate station, so they didn't have a serious problem with Dr. Trenholm until the movement came because we purchased a

lot of [indiscernible]. Then – I'm going to close with this – but then L.B. Sullivan. L.B. Sullivan. What did he do? L.B. Sullivan called for the close of Alabama State. He was a Police Commissioner here in Montgomery. And you see– well, at that time we didn't have a city council. And so when L.B. Sullivan called for the close of Alabama State then he went on – went one step too far – he said, "Look, the teachers of Alabama" 'cause ASGA, the Black association at that time (we had not merged; ASG and AE had not merged. They merged back in 1969; this was 1960), and the Black teachers were coming to Montgomery – some 5-7,000 of them come every year to the Teacher's Convention. While they were here, they bought all their clothes for the summer and the spring and Easter. They bought their clothes.

# 43:43

So when L.B. Sullivan said, "Well, let's shut the school down; let's not have a Teacher's Convention" white folks said, "Whoa, wait a minute here. He fixing to cut off some money we supposed to be making off them colored folk." So the bottom line was Sullivan had to soon back off of that. But here's – that whole point was to retaliate. So the point I'm trying to make here is that that was not smooth sailing; everybody was trying to find some way to retaliate against somebody at that point.

Janice Franklin 44:13 Okay.

# St. John Dixon

#### 44:13

One of the things I'd like to bring out now is the reason why we didn't want the ladies to go down is we wanted Ms. Young to be there and, in case we got busted by the police, we wanted her to tell the people where we were. You know, we knew that there was a possibility that some major things could happen. And I'm not gonna say that some of the people were not afraid to go – sure they were. But when you get it in your mind that you are going to do something and you see a movement in the country that is actually moving, then you wanted to be a part. And I was one of the first to say, "Hey, if anybody goes, I'm gonna go." I'd just like to say in the courthouse, when we was sitting there, when we walked in the – you know, the press that was already there at that time jumped up and ran and said, "the n\*\*\*\*rs are here!" Okay. We– and they told them. One of the policemen said, "What's your name, boy?" And, you know, back in the day I probably would have said, "Did you mean Roy?" But, hey, listen I'm in the state of Alabama.

# 45:20'

So what happened is that I said, "Am I under arrest, officer?" And he said, "No, you're not yet but if you don't leave, you know, you're gonna be arrested" I said, "Well, I'd rather remain anonymous." And, hey, you know, nobody talked to a policeman like that. So what happened? My involvement in the movement started when, even before the Montgomery Bus Boycott because I was going through little demonstrations at the high school that I went to. We didn't have a lunchroom, you know, I pull the students together and say, hey, let's shut this school down if we don't have some hot lunches. So when I look at my background, it leads me to believe that that was one of the reasons why it was easy for me to get into a movement like this. And I remember staying up all night that night. Shining my shoes and getting my little old blue serge suit together with my little old tail and, if you notice in pictures that you see of me, you always see me with my little tail on.

#### 46:16

Okay, but – and I wanted to be clean. I wanted to be smelling good. I wanted to be really on top of it. And when we walked in there, we were ready. And when they told us to go into the hallway to get out of the lunch- to get out of the area where they were eating, I was punched in the side, right above my shoulder- under my shoulder blade here, with the baton. We used to call those "headache sticks" and what happened, for years later, I would make a certain kind of movement and I could feel when that happened. But – and listening to Dr. Martin Luther King when I was going to his church, you know, I was there when we marched up to the - were gonna march on the Capital. And they were telling us, "You can't do it" and all. And I said, "Well, if you go, I'm going." And I was very active and animated in terms of going on these demonstrations, and almost a catastrophe happened then, but the police force and all the stepped between us, it's like, "If you don't stop, we gotta turn the hoses and everything loose on you." So we said, "Well, we had done what we'd planned to do." We started and we knelt right there in the street. And we prayed. So I say to you, yeah, there are mentors out there. And Dr. King, he was one of my mentors. And, you know, every time I hear his speeches, you know, I choke up and I'll never forget how he said, "You gotta be non-violent. You can't go out fighting and doing the same thing that they're doing. Because if you do, you as wrong as they are."

#### 47:52

And so therefore, we gotta have a mechanism in terms of dealing with this. And he got his spirit, I think, from Mahatma Ghandi in terms of the non-violent resistance movement. And I think that was the only thing that would have worked at that time. We was spit on – I mean, they were doing all kinds of stuff to us, but we were able to actually withstand, and I can stand here today and say, "Thank God, I made it."

#### Janice Franklin

#### 48:18

Okay, we have two participants who have not spoken at all, okay. Cornelius Benson(???)

#### 48:22

I would like to add this to it. I recall the night prior to us going to the courthouse, to the capital. And I haven't heard his name called: Floyd Coleman. Coleman was the president of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity. And he called me that night. And he asked us and told us in the same breath – said, "I want y'all to come down to the courthouse with me in the morning– to the capital building in the morning; we gon' sit-in at the lunch counter." And he was telling us at the same time and we said, "Well, okay." But what I want to get straight today with myself is I don't remember how we got there. It wasn't many cars. I don't know whether we walked down there or if we walked back. I don't remember that. But I know Floyd Coleman was very instrumental in getting us to go to the courthouse that night– that next morning. We got up the next morning– we went to the courthouse and we went in like they said– we went into the courthouse we sat down and stayed for a while and they put us out. And another thing that I don't really remember is why they didn't beat us. They was beating everybody else but they didn't do anything, though; they just let us stand in the hall. We stood in the hall a long time because we wanted to see if they were gonna open it up, and we were going back in there. So that's how we got there and I never heard Floyd Coleman's name called today. Floyd Coleman was the one that got us together that night prior to the sit-in.

#### William Renfroe

# 49:58

Okay, I wanted to just share some details that I haven't heard today. On the 24th, which was the day before to sit-in, six of us met at Hall Street and Turtle Avenue near Miller's Grocery Store. Those of– and we met there and we was talking about, the six of us, was talking about what was happening in North Carolina. And someone raised issue and said, "You know, we might be able to do something like that here in Montgomery." And the Abernathy's lived directly across the street and so we said, "Let's go over and run this by Reverend Abernathy." We went over to Reverend Abernathy's house and we rang the doorbell.

# 50:44

He invited us in and he asked, "What do you boys want?" And so we told him that we would like to do something similar to what has happened in North Carolina, here in Montgomery. And we sat around his dining room table and his wife sat there with us. And the question that his wife asked. "If you're talking about sitting-in-" (and I don't whether Mrs. Abernathy will remember this) she said, "Well, when are you going to sit in?" And we said, "Give us two months. If we can get two months we can organize and strategize and be effective." And Mrs. Abernathy said, "No. If you gonna sit-in, you gonna sit-in tomorrow morning, for some way, somehow everything that is said here tonight will be known by the authorities tomorrow morning." That's how it was organized. And so then we start strategizing. Reverend Abernathy said, "Now where we gonna sit-in?" And we said, "We don't know." And so he knew about the courthouse and he said the courthouse would be the best place. How much money should you have in your pocket? At that time I think a donut was five cents. And a cup of coffee was something like 10 cents. Reverend Abernathy said, "When you go downtown tomorrow, make sure you have at least \$2 in your pocket." And yeah- and we really was just talking about it across the street. Now we were really involved in the beginning of the sit-in. So now, I guess, Floyd- I don't really know whether Floyd was there; I don't remember exactly who was on the corner that night. But when the students who were in the dormitory went back to the dormitories that night, they were the ones spreading the word about what we had planned to do. And from that point on, we went downtown and we carpooled. We couldn't walk downtown. That was a long way.

Janice Franklin 52:43 Why did he select the courthouse?

#### William Renfroe

#### 52:45

Reverend Abernathy – Why did we select the courthouse? Of course they were sitting-in in the Woolsworth's in North Carolina. And so we left it to Reverend Abernathy and he said that the courthouse, you know, a lot of people there and that would be the best place and we accepted that. And then, what about going to jail? And he raised that question. He said, "You probably gonna go to jail tomorrow." And he said, "Leave it to me; if you go to jail, I will make sure that bond money is put up for you." And so we expected to go to jail. And that's why we encouraged

Eleanor not to go the next day when we arrived on campus. Now the next day when I arrived on campus, there was 25 students that was coming from dormitories. They were not with us when we initially sat down and strategized at Reverend Abernathy's house. Including the 26<sup>th</sup> person was Eleanor, and we encouraged her not to go because we knew– we thought we was gonna go to jail.

# Janice Franklin

#### 53:42

Was there something about the courthouse being a public facility?

# William Renfroe

# 53:44

Well, people says that— no, it was never raised that night. I've heard a lot of talk today about why the courthouse was selected. The courthouse was selected that night because Reverend Abernathy suggested that that was the best place, but now I hear a lot of other details about why this and why that. That was not the issue that night. It was that he said that the courthouse was the best place and as students we didn't know. We said, "Okay, Reverend Abernathy, we'll go for the courthouse."

# Joe Reed

# 54:13

One of the reasons, though, that– one of the reasons is that the courthouse was a public facility and the law had not been settled on the issue of a private facility. Because Woolworth's, those stores were privately owned. But the Montgomery County courthouse was a public facility. And that was one of the drawing lines. Yeah...

# William Renfroe

# 54:41

It wasn't an issue about whether it was private or public. It was just that Reverend Abernathy said, "Go to the courthouse." He said, "The courthouse is the best place" and, sure enough, it was the best place because when we arrived at the courthouse the next day, they had Southern fried chicken stacked across the counter. And it was a good place. And we had our money and we was refused service. And I– and of course I was not one of those who was suspended but we were refused service. It was the best place.

# Janice Franklin

# 55:04

But wasn't– the courthouse was a public place. But was the cafeteria there, the restaurant, was it a privately-owned facility? It was not, okay. The facility was the whole– okay...

# James McFadden

# 55:21

I just want to talk a little bit, too, about the climate because as we look at history, these were not systematic things that were automatically taken. Like William was saying, we had a number of meetings at a number of different places that talked about the various strategies that was going to take place. We had discussions about Woolworth's or Kresty's or wherever. These

discussions had taken place. But I want to say to the students, and everybody here, these times required special skills in order to move forward. And if you've noticed in the array of gentlemen and women that are sitting here today, we all arrived at this place based on our experiences that we had had before. Because after every day going from February 1st to February 25th, that was some type of sessions that was taking place. And at the end of that discussion, wherever it was, whether it was six of us or whether it was 25 of us or whether it was a larger group, we would conclude that if you're still with us, show up the next day. And we had no idea how many people would show up, but it was known. One of the things that the governor said that was extremely important, and we didn't know at that particular time how the movement - as small as it was at that point – was infiltrated. It's important to know that the governor said that and that was very true. We didn't know how things were getting out. But because of the Bus Boycott and the things that had happened during the Bus Boycott, people who were mentoring us would let us know that you have to have a strategy and move guickly with it because you would never know what would happen. And that was the same thing that we were operating with; that's why we would move our meetings from place to place. We may start out in the morning at Hornet Grill. If we were talking that afternoon, we would be at Cabin Inn.

#### 57:24

Or later on during the day, we would be some other place because it was dangerous, folks, I say that this was a dangerous time for all of us. But it takes courage. And I just, if this is concluding for me, I want to say this, because President Barack Obama said something two years ago that is essential: "If change is gonna take place, and we know we need change, it's up to each one of you. Each one of you to decide upon yourself that you are going to take some of this responsibility on and it can be different." Attorney Gray said it today: "We all do different things but what we must know and leave here with today is that we all must do something." And that was what we decided back then.

# Janice Franklin

# 58:10

Okay, thank you very much. We'd like to acknowledge our guests from the LAMP Program. They have to leave. They're going back to school. We're very happy that you came. Thank you so much. We hope you got a lot out of this today. This is so interesting...

# Joe Reed

# 58:37

Another point I'd like to make. And that is– I've always said in every movement when Blacks were trying to move forward, we always have some white allies. No movement we've had, where we didn't have some white allies, even in the crowd we had some voice of moderation. I raised the question– I mentioned Max M. Butler (and I'm not going to dwell on that now) but I'm going back now to another time that we had a big challenge during this sit-in movement. We got ready to march from Dexter Avenue for the prayer service we was gonna have on the Capitol steps. Some of you will remember, we went down to there– we was obviously leaving Dexter. We came out there was 5,000 mob– a mob of 5,000 white folks out there. I mean, it was dangerous. It was absolutely frightening. And they were– Max M. Butler brought his mounted police in. And then of course, another person that played a role in that that was just – I thought was second to none (I got to know them at the time) – and that was Floyd Mann. John Patterson was a prosecutor; he's ready to charge. Floyd Mann was more the delivery negotiator. And as some of you may remember when we left Dexter Avenue that Sunday afternoon, we left like two

by twos, walking out of that church because that mob was so big. And it was so frightening that we were afraid that if we had just been turned loose (and Floyd Mann took that position) that we would have been mobbed. If there wasn't 5,000 folks out there, it wasn't two. And they were all there to do us harm. They had sticks, billy clubs, guns and everything else. And except for the fact that Floyd Mann took the leadership – took the leadership – in getting us out, walking out the side door of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church back down on Decatur Street, we would'vesome of us probably would've been killed. I just wanted to mention that because sometimes there are voices of moderation that you don't know about and they are there; when you look back at it, they were helping. So that's what I wanted to say. Floyd Mann – you might not know he's dead now – he was a great guy and even we gave him an award one time later on because of what he had done in his career. And finally, you know, he's the one also that when the Freedom Rides came the next year; when they was beating John Lewis and the other folks down at the Greyhound Bus station, it was Floyd Mann who pulled his pistol out on one of the mobsters and said, "If there's gon' be any killing today, I'll do it." So that kind of thing. So there's been some moderation in some of these struggles we've had. We've always had some white allies. The newspapers, some of our allies as well.

#### 61:46

I want somebody to address one thing before we leave. Everybody heard the song "We Shall Overcome". When did it start? 'Cause the first time I heard it was in Montgomery, Alabama. "We are not afraid; we are not afraid." Some folks say it started in other places. I don't know where it started. Does anyone know where it started? I always claim Montgomery as the root of it. Some of y'all may have a better idea, I'd like to know that myself.

# Dr. Eleanor Moody-Shepherd

62:16

I believe it was Albany, Georgia, 1961. I believe – Albany, Georgia, Albany Movement, I believe.

Joe Peterson 62:22 We were singing it here in 1960. St. John Dixon 62:24 It started at the Bus Boycott. "We Shall Overcome" became....

Janice Franklin 62:26 Okay, Mrs. Moody-Shepherd? Okay.

# Dr. Eleanor Moody-Shepherd

#### 62:32

Yes. What I wanted to say is that many parents have been given a bad rap during this sit-in movement because of the students here, but many of us had parental support. And I think that's very, very important. And many parents lost their jobs and they still supported us and the movement and families struggled. It wasn't just us, many of our families struggled during the movement as well. So we were supported by our communities, by our local churches. And so

we- it was a community affair, even though we represented the community. And I also wanted to give a shout out for Beta Phi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha because we were there.

# Aner Ruth Young

#### 63:30

Chet Huntley and David Brinkley was up in the trees, on top of the buildings, time we went out in the streets on the sidewalk to march, they were there.

# Janice Franklin

# 63:45

They don't know who Chet Huntly and David Brinkley were. Students, do you know who she is talking about? Chet Huntley and David Brinkley? Tell them who they were.

# Aner Ruth Young

# 63:52

They were– national news. Were there every day. Same with the anchormen for NBC News. They were there every day. They went down the streets with us. They were in the trees back on campus, they were on top of the buildings on campus and they went down, followed us wherever we went; we always had the national news with us. The local news– and I wanted to say something to the students also, to encourage them to find something worth working for. If they have– if the students have teachers who are not teaching – and I did this when I was teaching – if a principal did not do something he was supposed to do– matter of fact, a principal told me that I was trying to teach my students too much. And he called the superintendent and said, "I want her out of my school by Monday morning". He talked to the wrong person. I called the California Teachers' Association. They called NEA. The NEA sent three lawyers, California Teachers Association sent two lawyers, San Francisco Classroom Teachers Association sent their executive secretary. The principal was transferred.

# Janice Franklin

#### 65:13

Okay, we want to- our time is kind of getting away from us. But we do want to hear two questions. Does anybody in the audience have a question that you're just burning to ask? That just must be answered... today? We'll take two. Do we have any questions?

[Audience member asks a question that cannot be heard]

# Janice Franklin

# 66:02

# Did everybody hear the question?

"Can you compare what's happening with the Tea Party Movement today with the Dixiecrats and Jim Crow-ism and you know, in the past. Can you compare the Tea Party now with what happened in the past?"

# Joseph Peterson

# 66:25

I think we can take a look at it. Mrs. Abernathy talked about Newt Gingrich making a speech

sometime this week. I didn't read about it. But my attitude is that Newt Gingrich and George Wallace are basically the same people. And I think people have to understand that. And the Tea Party is there basically to destroy Obama if they can and that might not be there purpose. And people continually talk about states' rights. It's- the states has not been able to handle that part of the Constitution in the past. Because if you leave it to the states, then I'm not going to be treated well. I have to be treated well. And the Tea Party are people that's talking about letting the states take care of the problem. The state of Alabama didn't take care of my problem in the past; why should I think they gonna take care of it now?

Janice Franklin 67:36 Okay, one more question.

[Audience member] 67:38 No, ma'am. I just had to come in about that part, is that alright?

Janice Franklin

67:43

Sure.

# [Audience member]

# 67:43

Okay. I just wanted to build on what Mr. Peterson had just said. You know, what I understand about this Tea Party is that they are definitely for states' rights. But in in addition to that, they want everything to be done like it was in the '60s, you see. They want to revert back to the time that they had full control of all of the various levels of government. And because of that they are disappointed because of some of the improvements that have been made. But they let you know that they really want – and I don't want to talk about the people in the sheets and crosses and all that kind of stuff – but if they could revert to that, if they could just discard every progressive move that has been made, this is what they really want to do. And they want to go back to the '60s and '50s.

# Janice Franklin

# 68:42

And they have said– they have said– one thing I remember vividly is some man saying we need to go back to the way we were 100 years ago. Now, you know what that means for us, okay. Then another person says, "We want our country back. I want my country back." Who deserves to have their country back? Ask yourself that question. Okay, one more comment from here.

# James McFadden

# 69:10

I just wanted to comment because I think this is extremely important because a lot of times we're confused. The strategies change, but the situation is still the same. The strategies change. And I think that's something we really need to look at. The governments hit us with different strategies. Different people said they had no strategy. But there are strategies that

exist. Because if you look around, racism has not gone any place. Racism is alive, it takes on various forms at various times and I think we need to be very clear on that. There are now things that take place now- if I had said it (in my position) if I had said what Newt Gingrich has said, or if I had said what Ralph- what Limbaugh had said, I would be in jail, there's no question about it. You know that that would happen because that represents the form of treason against government officials; we need to understand that. If we are going to understand the strategies. You have to be aware of what's taking place. Dr. King said many days- many years ago that we have some difficult days ahead and each one of you sitting there know that we have difficult days. It was just last week in Huntsville, at the University of Alabama Huntsville where a professor killed three other professors at that particular time. It was just two days ago, that about 10 miles from the high school where there was mass killings, where two people were shot. We are living in some difficult times and the strategy and the form of what's taking place would take a different form. And if you want to be calm and relax and feel that we have arrived, and feel that 50 years ago that the moves that we made solved the problem, then you missed the goal. It's what our President has said: "Each human being at this juncture must stand up, move forward and take some responsibility."

Janice Franklin 71:14 Okay, two more questions

#### Joe Reed

71:16

Just one point. I think this group, that's called the Tea Party. It's a group that has never and will never accept Obama's election. Never. And nothing he says, nothing he does will change– if they are just against his being elected... Secondly, I think it's basically cause they're racist. Basically, again, we go back to Obama's. They not ever gon' be for him; I don't care what he does, nothing he can say, nothing he can do will ever pacify or satisfy those folks.

#### Dr. Eleanor Moody-Shepherd

#### 71:49

Okay, the reason why I want to say that– I would say that it was Reconstruction because that ushered in Jim Crow. And I think what you're looking at is– because there were people during Reconstruction that were in government and state government. And though they wiped out that whole era and moves... So I think what this is happening, we're having a new era where we have a shot at reconstruction and deconstructing what has happened in the last few years so that it can do the same thing that the reconstruction did: usher in Jim Crow; it's a new form of Jim Crow that they are calling for.

Janice Franklin 72:39 Okay, thank you very much. One more question.

[Different Audience Member] 72:56 Good afternoon.

# 72:59

First, I would like to thank Alabama State University for having this great forum; it's been so informative. And so I would like to thank everybody for their involvement. I would like to ask your opinion.... Much has been said about young people's involvement in the success of President Obama's presidency. And so that our students can have some perspective about the sit-in and the comments that were made earlier about young people being involved in understanding what role they can play and should play. Much has been said about how the internet and how technology change really the platform for President Obama's success in winning the presidency. And in that there may not be a name of any young person or people in general who were who were part of the Obama movement, compared to the sit-ins where you made your voices heard. I would ask you please to comment on what your thoughts are about how young people – the younger generation – can and very much involve themselves in politics through the internet and other technology platforms.

#### Janice Franklin

# 74:27

How can young people involve themselves today in– through the internet? How can they be active and activists through technology today?

# St. John Dixon

#### 74:41

Well, I think they can actually be very active through the internet. And I feel that they're— the amount of votes that he actually won and had to do with their use of the internet in terms of getting to people. So the one thing that you have to do is to get to people to let them know and tell them what they want to hear as well. You know, they want to change; they don't want the same old things that's over and over and over. So by use of the internet, you can get to your representatives and they'll give you addresses of some of your representatives in your area. So that will– we can get together and we can do these things. And now you can get to a whole lot more people by utilizing technology than you can in terms of private forums or grassroots group out here because everything is so diversified, it's very hard to get a group of people together. So what you want to do is get on the bandwagon. I mean, read your papers – read your newspapers. I mean, talk to your representatives and so forth, and let them know how you feel. And I think that's one way to actually be a part of what's going on now.

Janice Franklin 75:50 Okay. One other comment?

# Joseph Peterson

#### 75:53

Well, one of the things that young people have to do is use the technology that's available to us. If you notice, President Obama, when they started– I think one of the ways that you could make a contribution was really join Facebook and donate five bucks. I think a lot of folks got on to that and, that's not the only reason that he won. He had a good message; you have to have a message also. But the computers here, I really can't – I have to depend on my grandchildren

most of the time to help me with my cell phone, but people need to learn to use the technology that's been put there. When I was at Alabama State, they didn't even have a computer yet...

James McFadden 76:40 I just wanted to say two–

# Joseph Peterson

76:41 – it came along right after that.

# 76:43

I just want to say two things to young people that I think are very important. Number one: if you notice one of the unique qualities about the First Lady of the United States and the President of the United States, they are very brilliant people. Take every opportunity you can to develop your mind. Number one. Number two: share that with another student or several other students. Get together in groups of twos and threes after you have developed your mind. And then the third thing: find something that is wrong, wherever you are – whether it's deals with the university, whether it deals with the city, or whether it deals with the state, or whether it deals with the country – and do something about it.

#### Janice Franklin

#### 77:25

Okay. Thank you, thank you, thank you all very much. I have one closing comment that I would like to make. I remember a quote from Attorney Fred Gray's book. And this is that quote, he says, "A pebble cast in the segregated waters of Montgomery, Alabama created a human rights tidal wave that changed America." He's talking about the Montgomery Bus Boycotts, okay? Now that event indeed did change America. The tidal wave continued. We have the boycott that started in Montgomery, that really was a springboard for the civil rights movement across the nation and across the globe; globally. We have following that, the sit-ins and we have following that, the Freedom Rides and we have following that the, Voting Rights March. That's why we can go to the polls and we can vote. Now, let us remember, that Alabama State University – the faculty and the students here during that time – were intimately involved. They were in the forefront of all of these great movements that created this tidal wave that changed America. But let us remember as well, although we know a lot of change has taken place; we have witnessed it. These participants in the sit-ins here witnessed it but as has been demonstrated here today as well, there is much more change that needs to come. Thank you very much, and let's give everybody a break.

James McFadden et. al., interview by Dr. Karen Boyd, "ASC 50th Participants Session," *College Students Change the World*, audio recording, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2010, <u>https://www.csctw.org/</u>