Michael Hucles (MH) class of '72, interviewed on October 23, 2014 by Martin Froger-Silva (MFS) and Davis Logan (DL) via Skype at the Swarthmore College Media Center.

Michael Hucles was a freshman at the time of the occupation of Parrish Hall in '69 and also was involved in the occupation of President Cross's office the next year. He was a quarterback for the Swarthmore football team during his first two years at Swarthmore. He was elected Student Council Treasurer in the spring of '70. He also participated in racism workshops open to the campus.

The transcription is word for word with the exception of unnecessary conversational words such as "um" and/or stutter starts which have been edited for the sake of cleaner reading and clearer understanding.

Michael Hucles: Which one of you is Martin?

Martin Froger-Silva: I'm Martin.

MH: Hi, Martin. And you are?

Davis Logan: I'm Davis Logan.

MH: Davis? Nice to meet you as well. Can you hear me alright?

MFS: Yes. So before we start, just for the purpose of the interview, could we all go around and introduce ourselves?

MH: Sure.

MFS: So, I'll start. I'm Martin Froger-Silva, class of 2016.

DL: I'm Davis Logan, I'm in the class of 2017.

MH: And you want me to introduce myself too?

MFS and DL: Yes.

MH: Okay. (laughs). I'm Michael Hucles, class of '72. 1972. (laughs)

MFS: [Laughs]. Perfect, so we'll just jump right in to the questions….

MH: Sure.

MFS: … if that works.

DL: So, can you describe first how you became a member of SASS?

MH: Well, let me give you a little bit of a background as to why I came to Swarthmore.

MFS: Okay.

DL: Yeah.

MH: And that might give a little bit of perspective. I actually went to Swarthmore on a recruitment weekend; the black students there were sponsoring one. And I stayed there for the weekend, and I really thoroughly enjoyed it, and decided to apply, and fortunately got accepted. It was my first choice and I immediately accepted that. Now, because the black students were part of that recruitment process for me, I immediately gravitated obviously to the little black student population. I had been active in things in high school already, and so it was a normal process for me to join SASS.

MFS: So, you were a freshman during the occupation of Parrish Hall in January ’69. Can you tell us about the experience, and how you remember the campus climate being in the years after the occupation?

MH: Okay, well first thing I want to mention is that as a freshman I was not a leader: I was a follower. And so I try my best not to romanticize about the past or my role in it, though I was deeply involved in the process. The night before the takeover we had a meeting and the leaders came to us and said, “If you cannot go all the way, leave now.” They did not define what that meant, “all the way.” So most of the black students stayed, there were some who did, in fact, leave, and that was used as a potential wedge later on against the sort of unity that we were experiencing, although those students who did not stay wrote a letter to *The Phoenix* stating that they were in support of what we were doing even though they were not in the building. The day of the takeover there was a little snafu. We got there just a little bit late, the front door was just locked, but fortunately for us at least, there was someone who was able to get into one of the side doors and open up, and we were able to go in. While we were there we clearly felt that it was important that we maintain the integrity of the office, that we do nothing to harm the files or anything that could be used to somehow discredit our being there. And we left, of course, when we found out that the President, Courtney Smith, had his heart attack and passed away. There was a lot of respect for him, and we had that respect, and so we wanted to express that, and so we left admissions office.

The mood of the campus, of course, I think after that, was one of shock. We tried to do the things that we thought were important. I would say we were probably more reformist than radical in the

things that we were doing. We had a lot of support from a majority of students. When I say majority, majority member students. We had support from the community: in fact the community took us in when we left the admissions office and housed us and fed us. So there was some sympathy for what we were trying to accomplish, and we wanted to be sure that the campus and the people who were certainly close to Courtney Smith understood that we had respect for the man and did not want to in any way inflame the situation. So that's why we left the campus. So immediately after, I was sort of divorced from the campus atmosphere at that point and sort of housed in the local black community. When I say local, we were in Chester actually.

DL: What was your sense of the leadership structure in SASS, and what were the roles that different members played?

MH: That's an interesting question that you pose here. One of the things that was very much in evidence in my own mind was the attempt to promote black men. I think of the two Marilyns who were very much a part of the structure, although they did not hold necessarily positions but they were part of that group of initiators. And so there was a conscious effort, at least in my mind, of an attempt to promote black men in leadership. Clinton Etheridge '69 was president at that time, Don Mizell was also in the leadership, but we also had some others who wanted to kind of get out there as well. And so I recall one instance when we had already vacated the Admissions office that one individual decided that he wanted to be in front of the cameras, and speak for the organization. And so we were then approached and asked "Is this one of your leaders?" and we said "Oh, yes, definitely," because you have to have that solidarity. But we got the brother back in private quarters and we sort of let him know that that was not something he should do ever again. The leadership was very much…. through Clinton, he… Remember, I'm a freshman, I'm looking at this, and I'm looking at his leadership's style, and he's very calm, very collected. Just, I wanna say about a year ago, I think he wrote a piece in the alumni bulletin, I'm not sure if you've had a chance to look at that, about the experiences inside. And I read that, and I immediately felt transported back to that time because he sort of captured the essence of the feeling of that time. And I went to the directory, looked him up, got his phone number, and called him. And he said to me "Well, Mike, if you feel the… Write something about that and send it to the editor." That was published the very next issue as well, because I felt that he so clearly captured the feelings of what we were going through inside, and it's because no one had been in there who had written about that time, no one from inside had really written about that piece of history. And I thought that it was very very important for him to sort of get that out.

So I was very much involved with feeling akin with the leadership. I communicate with Don Mizell all the time to this day, and I've had only sporadic conversations with Clinton. But I think there was a camaraderie because we had to be somewhat together given the numbers, the paucity of numbers. There were only what, eight black students in my class. One female decided she didn't want to stay in Swarthmore, she left after freshman year. So there were three black men, and four black women. One of the black men that was in my class, he passed away a number of

years ago. He was a drummer for Grover Washington's [Grover Washington, Jr.] band. And so there's just Russell Frisby and myself left at this point. And I think Russell is in fact going to speak, be on the panel at Garnet Weekend that's coming up.

DL: And just to add a little bit more to, to talk a little bit more about the leadership structure, because this has been a topic that has been contested and has been talked about. for a little bit. Was there ever a reason given why, at least that was understood in the group, why the men were the ones who were presented as the leaders of SASS specifically?

MH: Well they were the officers. They were the officers at that time. So, a moment ago, as I said to you, I got the very distinct feeling that it was important to somehow promote black manhood. And in many ways even though the women were very central to the kinds of things that we were doing, the image that was promoted was that of black manhood. In other words, the thought was that black men had been emasculated and therefore needed to make sure that they are promoted as the persons who are leading the foray, and taking over the leadership roles, and of course, as I said, both Clinton and Don were in fact the officers of the organization, and so it was a natural thing just for them to go ahead and step into that role and function. But black women were always there, always part of the strength of the organization, and lent their opinions and guidance through the whole process.

MFS: So you mentioned, I think you were referring to Clinton Etheridge's *The Crucible of Character* which he wrote in the Swarthmore College alumni Bulletin in June 2005[1].

MH: Oh has it been that long now? Oh boy.

MFS: Yeah. Yeah.

MH: I guess when you get to my age time kind of speeds up a little bit and you know just zippin' on by there. But yes that's the one I'm talking about. (laughs)

MFS: Yeah. So in your response to *The Crucible of Character*, you mention that you were involved in other protests before coming to Swarthmore?

MH: Yeah.

MFS: Could you elaborate on that?

MH: Well, in high school I was in the student government and we, this is growing up in Brooklyn, New York, and it was during the '60's so obviously there were a number of things that were going on, but two things in particular we were concerned about that I recall when around

[1] Correction: the article was published in March 2005.

‘67/’68, just before I graduated. One of the concerns that we had was, the high school that I was predominately black, it was about 95% black I would imagine, and we were concerned about the kind of negative coverage that the school was constantly receiving in the press. And so I recall one time the student government decided that we wanted to lead a march to city hall. So we did that. The other thing that occurred was of course with the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.; that became a rather interesting type of protest that occurred because people felt somewhat frustrated that if this man of peace could be so violently assassinated, what hope do we have for the future? And so when we first heard about this, we were all in high school, the administrators of the school decided that, ok we are going to have a few moments of silence in his memory. Well people thought that that was not enough. So there was a quickly and hastily put together assembly program –now I went to an all-male high school / all male high school in Brooklyn, New York– and so as one of the members of the student government I’m up on stage, we have the male’s chorus behind us and everybody was feeling kind of badly. And this is where it was kind of interesting to see grass roots take over, because, to this day I do not know who this young man was, one of my fellow students got up out of his seat and said, “Man this is … BS.” And said, “Let’s leave.” And everyone, all of the students, got up and left in protest. And then some of us, not to be named, went to other schools to encourage others to do likewise.

So I kind of grew up in an environment, my father had been involved in some things in New York, because of segregation policies, that he led some protests. So I was kind of schooled in some of that. I can’t even tell you all of the things my brother has been involved in. Let’s just say when the Media Pennsylvania FBI office was broken into, and this was the first time I got to see my name on an FBI document, I know that my brother’s file was probably a lot longer than my own. And when he was interviewed during his time for selective service and you’re told to take your exams, your physical and IQ and things like that, he was asked to perhaps be a spy, to infiltrate and he refused to do some things like that and he was taken into an office where he was interrogated for a couple of hours because of his involvement in certain organizations. And so, whenever they asked questions about me, this is what my brother told me, he would simply say to them, “ You know the answer to that,” and then they would move on. And so, given the directive from J. Edgar Hoover about the kind of surveillance that would take place on college campuses at that time and Swarthmore as you probably already know the FBI documents that came to us indicated certain persons involved in being informants for the FBI. We had protested, let’s put it this way, some of us had told our parents that our mail was being opened, our conversations were being listened to and of course we were viewed as somehow… ‘oh that doesn’t happen (waves hand in motion of disregard). You are just being paranoid’ and then all of the sudden, here comes the documentation. Ok, I guess that sort of resolves that issue. And I never knew who had broken into the office until this past year when, all of the sudden, the newspaper articles come out, you know, pictures of a couple of people, and I say ok so I go and I show the stuff to my students in classes that I teach. So yup, and here we are.

DL: So, let's kind of shift back to your time at Swarthmore. Can you tell us about how it was being a football player at Swarthmore?

MH: (laughs) Well you probably recognized the fact that it didn't last very long. Probably the better players ended their career early. I almost quit after my freshman year, quite frankly. When I first got there I was a quarterback. And black quarterbacks tended not to play, or start, on teams that were made of predominantly whites. And for a long time I thought it was racial. Then it dawned on me that it was something else that was going on, that was not necessarily racial. My freshman year, the starting quarterback was white, I was second-string quarterback, and the third-string quarterback was a Chinese-American. I don't think you'd ever have that at any other college. But what I realized was that every person who had a McCabe Scholarship started. And it so happened that the starting quarterback had a McCabe Scholarship. And when he graduated, another quarterback came in with a McCabe Scholarship and all of a sudden he started.

And so I felt that, at one point, I just, I wasn't going to go through this anymore, and I felt that I should have been starting either my freshman year after a particular point in time, and I just said "That's it." After two years, I stopped in my third year and said that was it. And I remember going to the Assistant Coach and telling him I was quitting, and he said "Oh, is it because of academics?" and I looked at him, and he understood. I didn't have to say anymore. It wasn't academics. It was other things. So, needless to say my experiences playing for Swarthmore were not the best, but that has a lot to do with some other kinds of factors besides racial and the like

MFS: So, you were involved in Student Government in high school, and then at Swarthmore, you decided to run for Student Council.

MH: Yes.

MFS: So could you tell us about why you decided to?

MH: I have no idea why I decided to do that. It's funny because if I remember correctly, I was Treasurer.

MFS: Yeah, Treasurer of the Student Council.

MH: I look at organizations and the two most important positions in any organization are president and treasurer and I decided that I wasn't going to be president, but let me go ahead and be treasurer of the Council. At this point in my life it's hard to even fathom what it is that I did on the student Council. It's kind of a blur for me. But yes, I tried to be involved in different things and that was one of the things I decided just to do. To this day I don't remember why I made that decision. But I had been involved in Student Government before, as you said, and so I decided to go ahead and do that again. I wanted to have a black voice there. That's the bottom

line. It's like, ok, if you're not at the table, regardless of what it is, if you are not at the table, they're not going to hear your voice. And so, this was one way for me to ensure that some kind of accountability and some kind of a voice within the affairs of the Student Council and the student affairs at Swarthmore beyond just being a member of SASS.

DL: Okay, so do you think that a voice was effectively influential in the Student Council?

MH: I don't think the Student Council was all that effective, quite frankly. (laughs). There wasn't a whole lot to really be done in terms of any decision making process for the College: we were there. We did whatever it was that we did. I'm just trying to have a perspective there. Okay, so I'm handling the coins and the money counting. I did that also when I stayed as a member of one of the fraternity houses there. We only allowed one person stay in… this was Kappa Sigma Pi. We only allowed one person to stay in the house at a time, so my major function while I was staying there… Cause I really wanted… my parents were paying for my education, I wanted to diminish some of the costs for them. Well my major function was to make sure that the soda machine was well stocked with the Miller High Life that we had stocking the machine. Make sure that the change was taken out, and restocking the machine. And all night long, kaching, kaching, kaching, we had people coming in. For a quarter, you could get a bottle of Miller High Life. So that was the big thing for that particular part.

Also I joined that fraternity, me, Russell Frisby, and I want to say one other, maybe it was Zaddock [Solomon II], that did. We joined because there was really no place for black students to sort of gather together. And, so in many ways, that particular fraternity house sort of preceded the Cultural Center [Black Cultural Center] as a center of activity where blacks students could kind of get together… we partied there, and things like that. It was an interracial fraternity, which is one of the reasons we were kicked out of Nationals I believe. But at least we had a central location and that worked fine for us till we got the Cultural Center.

MFS: With the creation of the courses on Black Studies while you were there, you participated in the Black Philosophies Course, correct?

MH: African, Religion and the New World Philosophies was, I believe, the name of the course.

MFS: Right, um…

MH: I will never forget the opening sentence of the Professor when he said… he started of like this, talking about, "The melody of Europe and the rhythm of Africa." And when he said that it resonated with me because it's not about one being better than the other, but it's about a different style, a different approach. And so we talked about things like Afrocentricity today. It's nothing new; it wasn't new when it first came out, but just looking at and centering the African-descended peoples at the core. Rather, take them off the margins; let's study this. That particular

course, I really did enjoy and incorporated much of that in some of the courses I've taught since that time. And so the Swarthmore education certainly was important to me. I was a Soc/Anthropology [Sociology and Anthropology] major at Swarthmore. Though I'm a History Professor now, I started in Soc and Anthro. But I took almost as many history courses because I was going to be a social studies teacher and I did student teaching at the Chester high school. But, one of the experiences that I had as a Soc Major was going into Philadelphia and writing my thesis on something that took place at this "retarded educable school" (signs air quotes).

That was defined as such, dominantly black school and these students had won this particular kind of physical activity, kind of like a national tournament, they kept winning it. And so they finally barred them from it because their motor skills were too good. So, in other words, if you look at what was happening is that they had these motor skills they were a minority group they're barred because the other students, who were not minority students, did not have the same motor skills and so you start to look at what defines retarded ed school? Why were they placed there? And quite often you'll find that this was so behavioral and social issues more than the actual kinds of –the psychological kinds–the things that students would go through. But that was a wonderful experience for me as well, to go there and know that the school was safe haven because I was in between two gang areas. So that was a safe location.

But I'd be going to Philadelphia, growing up in Brooklyn, to the Penn [University of Pennsylvania] relays just about every year. I had a cousin in Philly we would go up there and go to parties, crash parties. A room that was no bigger than my office here. You just have all these people there just tightly dancing back and forth kind of like this (dancing motions) in this little, small space. But that, Philly cheesesteaks and hoagies, I've got some fond memories of those things.

DL: Cool. Did you take other classes with… So was that… What professor was that that taught that?

MH: I'm trying to remember his name, and right now I just don't remember his name. I think that was the only class I took with him.

DL: Okay, was it… So we have a list of professors here. Did you take a class with Asmarom Legesse, Clem….

MH: I did not take a class with Legesse. No.

DL: Clem Cottingham, Kathryn Morgan, and Chuck James is all we got.

MH: I missed out on Kathryn Morgan as well. And this was the only course I remember taking with a minority instructor.

DL: Okay. And also, there's also a student-run course called "Black Philosophies." And do you remember participating in that as a freshman.

MH: No I don't, I don't recall particularly participating in that particular class at all. Nothing student-run.

DL: Okay.

MH: (laughs)

DL: Cool.

MH: What are your majors?

DL: I'm a sophomore, so I'm prospectively a Political Science Major.

MH: Okay.

MFS: And I'm History and Film and Media Studies.

MH: Oh, interesting. The media studies component for that is very popular now.

MFS: Yeah, the digital humanities.

MH: Exactly.

MFS: That's exactly what I'm going for.

MH: I understand.

MFS: So, the class we were just talking about, do you think that, so you mentioned that it had a significant influence on your thoughts and actions, do you think that it helped you as a student educator during the racism workshops in the spring of 1970?

MH: If I look at everything kind of as a logical progression or evolution in where I was going, I was actually going to be a Biology major and I was going to be a dentist when I first got to Swarthmore. And then I sat in on Inorganic Chemistry and I listened to this lecture where the professor said that we were going to discuss Boyle's Theory of Natural Gasses for the entire session there even though you will never be tested on it, you'll never need to know it, it does not hold true for all gases at all temperatures and then in his monotone he began to lecture on it and I sank deeper and deeper and deeper into my chair, in one of those lecture halls, I just waved the

white flag and I said, "That's it. I'm outta here and I went into Sociology because as I say I changed my thought process and my attitude that I was really going into dentistry because I think my parents were pleased by that more so than I really wanted to do it. So, everything was kind of evolving given the time period and social consciousness and looking at what was taking place. So that the course that I took that was in African religions and new world philosophies just seemed to fit neatly into this overall progression. Now, what happens of course, my sophomore year, the entire school basically shuts down when you have the invasion of Cambodia and you have all these campus workshops –I think our Marxist scholars on campus had a field day at that particular time talking about the problems of the capitalist nature of warfare and things of that nature. Then of course you had the lottery system that evolved so that student deferments were going to be tossed out and white male students were now fearful that they were going to be sent over to Southeast Asia[2]. I had one foot on the boat because of my number. My lottery number was something like… well let's put it this way, it was, I think, less than thirty. So I had one foot on the boat basically but for some reason, at the time I had my physical, I got off, I got a 4F, I'm a proud 4Fer by the way, I got off because of my back. Even though I played football, I had a spinal defect at birth and that showed up in the X-ray and the civilian doctor disqualified it. It was also a particular point in time when they were starting to cut back on numbers that they were taking, so I was very, very fortunate because I really did not know what I was going to do: whether I was going to go to Canada like so many others were doing, whether I was going to jail in protest or whether I was going to serve. And thinking about my own authority issues, I probably would have served. But at that point I didn't have to make a decision, which was good for me. And then I could go ahead and pursue my life apart from having to worry about being shipped over to Southeast Asia.

So during that time period, years we had the takeover in '69 and the very next year we took over the new president's office, Bob Cross. I'll never forget that either because we go in and he basically, very kindly said, "Oh please have my office for the weekend, just be out by Monday morning." And we were. And so, part of it is understanding and knowing who you're dealing with. So what we would do is we would send groups down to the registrar's office periodically to look into the possibility of transfer. We figured that that would mean that that word would get out 'oh all the black students are trying to transfer from Swarthmore. That would mean you know playing on that whole conscious of the school and the climate. Of course we weren't serious about transferring but sending those groups down. And years later I actually met Bob Cross again because he eventually went back to UVA, University of Virginia, to become a faculty member there and when I started teaching here I joined something called the Virginia Society of History Teachers. Their Primary function was to run National History Day in

[2] On December 1st, 1969, the United States Selective Service reinstated a draft lottery system where birthdays were drawn randomly and assigned a number. The lowest numbers would be drafted immediately, the middle numbers had an uncertain fate, and the highest numbers would probably not be drafted. All men of age were concerned, hence the fear of every student who had a low or middle number that they would be sent to war.

Virginia. Bob Cross was the President of that. The next year I was President of that. But when I renewed my acquaintanceship with him, I say, "Hey Bob, remember when we took over your office?" He said, "Yeah, remember I told you to be out by Monday morning and you were?" So, once again, you have a lot of respect for [indiscernible] and you know when and how far and what you can and cannot do and as I said the Swarthmore students were much more reformist than radical in that respect though we were committed all the way.

DL: So, do you believe that the occupation of Parrish Hall in general was effective in pushing Swarthmore towards becoming a more socially just institution?

MH: Oh yeah. My wife [Janet Sanchez '73] came in the next class, so yes. Thirty some odd students. I was very happy to see the increased numbers. I'm sure you've heard of the Quaker Matchbox?

MFS and DL: Uhum.

MH: Well that should really… My physician was in my wife's class, female. My financial advisor, I actually got him to come to Swarthmore, I convinced him to come to Swarthmore. I took him on one of those tours around the campus. There are a number of people with whom we are still very much in contact with: Russell Frisby is my daughter's godfather. So there's a true connectivity that you find with those students who were there at that time. And yes, I think we moved in a particular direction. Now having said that, let me also mention something else. One of the things that happened at Swarthmore, and this is something that… your generation is a lot different from my generation, lot different. But one of the things that we did in the dining hall, we tended to sit together. And so, every now and then we would have a white student come over to us and say "Well how come you're all sitting together? Why are you segregating yourselves?" And our response to them was "Well why didn't you ask those white students over there? Why are they all sitting together, and segregating themselves? Why do you choose to come and ask us that?" And so, one of the things that we felt very strongly was that this was our choice. And given the climate of the times, that was our choice. But that didn't mean we didn't have white support from the white student population. We certainly did. And that was in evidence during the takeover as well.

MFS: Could you talk about that? How the white students supported you or how some white students did support you how some white students did not support you?

MH: Basically what would happen, for example, when the faculty would deliberate about things, sometimes the white students would line the paths going to those deliberations. I'm basing this on what I was told because I was in the office and so therefore I am not actually seeing this. They would line the routes that the faculty would have to take and there was a voice of support. You probably have read that the positions were not that far apart, and that was one of the reasons

when we talked about things about what we were saying, we were like, 'Hey Swarthmore, you said you wanted to increase the number of black students." Well look what's happened. They're decreasing. And you just cannot bring people to campus and just say ok now make it given cultural differences and developmental differences. So there has to be some support systems as well. And plus, you need to make the curriculum more relevant. So, those kinds of things, anyone can resonate with. It's not just the matter of, 'OK you need to somehow give me something that no one else is getting,' just say 'make it more relevant to my understanding, my worldviews, how I'm growing up, how I'm living. And so, people in the community as I said we were taken in by members of the community. The first night we were in this one house I don't even know where it was, and my bed was putting two folding chairs together and sleeping on it that way. And then the next day, we moved to this other location and the food and the supplies that came from the community were overwhelming, we were taken in by the community. And so many people understood that what we were demanding for or demanding was not that controversial. So support came from a number of quarters, from different quarters and I certainly appreciated that and understood that that was the case.

DL: How did that type of support, or lack of support, or even opposition manifest in the black community, at Swarthmore?

MH: Well, as I said, within Swarthmore… you talking about the community around the College?

DL: Well, that too, but maybe first students, other black students on campus.

MH: Well, as I said already, some students did not go into the Admissions Office with us and there was an attempt to drive a wedge between us. And they wrote a letter to *The Phoenix* saying that even though they were not there, inside, they still supported what we were attempting to achieve. So that could not be used as "Oh, look: not all the black students are with this." And so, as I said, there was still that supportive base. Not everyone is willing to do the thing physically, but intellectually they can still sympathize and be supportive with whatever it is that you are doing. So, as I said, we had support from a number of different persons on the campus, off the campus as well. And this was in the black community primarily in the Chester area. We had a lot of sympathy and support from the black community there.

DL: So, do you remember Robert Woodson?

MH: Do I remember what?

DL: Robert Woodson?

MH: Gotta give me a hint here.

DL: So, he was the guy who apparently set up the vans to basically to allow… well I might say this problematically, but kind of the "getaway" car from the Parrish Hall…

MH: See that was something that was done through the leadership.

DL: Okay.

MH: All I did was get in the car.

DL: Alright.

MH: So I wasn't a leader, I was a follower. And so I do recall at times having one or two persons who were not students. I don't think he was a student was he?

DL: No.

MH: Okay. I do recall one or two times seeing persons who were not students sort of meeting with us and advising us in some ways. And that of course probably led to some people believing that we were influenced by outside agitators, or the like. But much of what I recall is that the decision making process was within the organization itself. There might have been some advice from outside, but that was something that happened, you know, you think about the lunch counter sit-ins, you had workshops for those…. Lawson comes in and says "Okay, this time you can conduct a non-violent sit-in at the lunch counters, and here's what's gonna happen."[3] You might have some people who could give you some direction, but once again the decision, all the decisions that were made were made within the organization itself.

MFS: So, quickly, back to the leadership and you as a follower, do you feel or if you recall being influenced by any particular upperclassmen or upperclasswoman in the leadership while at SASS? As a freshman that came in…

MH: Yeah, I understand. I like to feel I am independent minded and that I can make my own decisions given, essentially information and what I'm seeing. It did not take much for me to go along. I guess part of that was what I viewed as the straw that broke the camel's back was the publication of this document that was put in the Library for public consumption concerning black students at Swarthmore from the admissions process. Even though no names were ever mentioned, you cannot have three black men in a class, all from different areas that you can't figure out who they are talking about. And in that you have information that could only come

[3] James Lawson is an American activist and current university professor. In the late 1950s, he moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he enrolled in Vanderbilt University and started leading nonviolent direct action training workshops. In 1959 and 1960, a number of his students led the Nashville sit-ins opposing segregation in downtown stores, which included lunch-counter sit-ins.

from parent's confidential forms: family income, SAT scores, a host of things. That to me was the straw that broke the camel's back. You just can't put that for public consumption. And so I was just willing to, based on my earlier willingness to participate in things, it was not a problem for me to take that next step, that leap to follow along with what the leaders were suggesting and make up my own mind. Like I said many students made up their mind not to participate. I could have very easily done that too, but I choose to stay, not knowing what was going to happen.

DL: So that's all the questions that we have, do you have anything that you would like to add?

MH: Yeah, I do. (laughs). Can't you tell? I'm a professor. This is my opportunity to lecture here.

DL: Go for it.

MFS: I'll get my notebook.

MH: (laughs) Well actually there's one or two more things that I wanted to… The Cultural Center. You're probably aware that James Michener had donated, you know, $100 grand or whatever it was to help set that up. There was a lot of pride that we took in it. Now here, I recall going into Philly to look for things to decorate the Cultural Center. Now I'm not sure if either one of you have been in the Cultural Center, but I think I came back for the tenth anniversary, or something like that. And I have to say I was so glad to see that all that revolutionary artwork that we had put up there was gone. It's that kind of stuff that glows in the dark, the fists and all, the red, black, and green, the tie-dye, we just decorated in certain ways.

Now there was also a potential problem that occurred. We were having a function and we were given word that there might have been an invasion from some local community crowd. And we did not know when that was going to mean. And so I tell my students today, there are some decisions that I made, quite frankly, that had things turned out differently, I might not be here, talking to you all right now. Because I was committed to protection and things of that nature. So I'll just leave it at that, and leave it to your imaginations as to what that might have meant. But those were different times. And students were certainly very much involved all across the country in protests, some that did in fact turn violent. We in fact when we were in the admissions office got word that a particular fraternity on campus was going to drag us out. That particular fraternity actually had confronted some black student athletes at I think it was Columbia University, where there was an altercation that occurred[4]. We were prepared for that possibility. I could tell you all the preparations we made. But we were glad that that did not come to that.

[4] In April of 1968, students at Columbia University protested the building of a gymnasium in Morningside Park, which planned to segregate patrons, and the School's involvement in the Vietnam War by occupying Hamilton Hall. Hamilton Hall housed classrooms and Columbia College Administration offices. To demonstrate that the majority of students were opposed to the protests, a "Majority Coalition," made up of 300 undergraduate students: athletes, fraternity members, etc., formed a human blockade to prevent supplies from reaching the occupiers. On April 29, occupiers tried to penetrate the blockade.

Also, there's this one photograph that to this day I do not know how that photographer got that photograph of us inside the admissions office. It must have been a real small crack, cause we had covered all the windows with paper and things of that nature just to prevent anybody from viewing in. But for some reasons this one photographer got a photograph of the inside of the Admissions Office. And that to me was rather extraordinary given the preparation that we had taken to try and prevent anything like that.

So that's all I've gotta say at this point. A short lecture. Just a little added… just a bits and pieces here that I recall, that have sort of stuck with me over the years. But thank you all for inviting me to speak with you. I certainly appreciate the opportunity.

DL: We definitely appreciate you talking to us, you know, trying to get to different students who were there.

MFS: Thank you.

MH: My pleasure. And by the way when I was first asked to do this, and I was communicating with the faculty member that is doing this, she was saying something about she saw this definitive evolution in my philosophy, my political you know, sort of growth or whatever, and I'm saying, "Well, what was that?" You know, where did you find out? Cause it says something about seeing some things in other people's…. "first start off with football, then next time you mention some other things", so I'm wondering if it's because of the Student Council and other stuff, I'm not sure.

DL: So, when we look at *The Phoenix* from back then, from the '68 through '70 or so, your presence in *The Phoenix* is almost, seems to be almost exclusively in football, and the things that you had done on the field. And then, at one time, when was that, that would have been '70? Or maybe the first semester of '69, the Fall semester of '69, or '70, then all of a sudden, probably for the reasons that you have said, it became about Student Council, and not about football. So it would have seemed to be a progression of some kind, even though from what you said it wasn't quite as drastic or anything.

MH: Well it wasn't that drastic because I think the foundation had already been laid, it's just that when I got to Swarthmore I was playing football. But as I told you I almost left my freshman year, and….

DL: I'm sure that's probably what it was.

There was then a violent clash between the occupiers and the blockaders. The next day the New York City Police forcibly ejected the occupiers, arresting 700 and injuring 150.

MH: Okay, alright. Great. Now what are you guys going to do with all this?

DL: So…

MFS: Well, we're going to… once this is done we're going to transcribe the interview. Each of us are writing a narrative focused on something related to back then. So either the sit-in in '69 or also the sit-in in '70 or the creation of the BCC or… events like that. So each student is writing a narrative focused on that. And also, we are also creating a project, like some sort of creative project to help educate people about what happened.

MH: Right.

MFS: And help people who may not be history students understand what happened. And so because there hasn't been a lot that's been written on this with the original voices -this is why we have been interviewing people who were involved, so we can get first-hand accounts looking back of what people remember what happened.

MH: So I assume that you guys will be involved with the panel discussion on Garnet weekend?

DL: We actually are not.

MFS: Yeah we're not.

MH: Oh really?

DL: Yeah that is something that is being held by the alumni themselves.

MFS: Yeah that was organized by the ... We are going to be there.

MH: I pictured that.

MFS: We are going to be listening and taking notes and asking questions but we weren't involved at all.

MH: Ok, well that's a good sort of addition to what you were already doing.

MFS: Yeah and then in February, there is gonna be a presentation with some of the best narratives written and on all our projects.

DL: And also, this interview, I'm not sure… of course it will be with your permission and everything but this interview itself also may be included in an archive that'll be released on February 2nd of this year. [this academic year: 2014-15; February 2nd 2015][5]

MH: So I deny everything I said right? (laughs)

DL: (Laughs)

MFS: Well, Professor Dorsey will get back to you on all that: on the legal matters.

DL: Yeah she'll get back to you on that.

MH: I understand. (laughs) Well, thank you so much and good luck to you and your project.

DL: Thank you.

MFS: Thank you very much.

DL: Thank you very much.

MFS: Have a good day.

MH: Thank you.

MFS: Bye.

[5] The correct date is in fact February 1st, 2015.