

Interview with Dr. Myra Rose (MR) by Patricia Gutiérrez (PG) and Olivia Ortiz (OO) at the Swarthmore College Black Cultural Center on October 31, 2014. Myra Rose, class of 1970, majored in Chemistry and Biology. She was a member of SASS and one of the Seven Sisters. She participated in the take-over of Parrish in 1969 as well as SASS actions in the following school year. 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

There were technical difficulties with the audio at the beginning of this October 31, 2014 interview with Dr. Myra Rose '69. The audio resumes as Dr. Rose is responding, mid-sentence, to the following question: Can you briefly share your memories of your time at Swarthmore prior to the events of the spring of 1969, including a few words about your educational background and what drew you to the college?

MR: ... high school there, and they wouldn't let me go where my friends were going, so I had to go to Norview High School. I think there might have been ten of us in the whole school. But I had been accustomed to doing well in school, and so I did. I ran into the usual sorts of things from the guidance counselors and from other people telling me all kinds of things. I remember one time my mother actually had to go up to the school to yell at one of the teachers because I had a 99--my average--and she gave me a B. So my mother was not pleased. So that's the sort of background that I came from. I always knew I was going to go to college. I didn't know where. I always thought I'd go live in North Carolina, Virginia, sort of an area. And I happened to be sitting in the guidance counselor's office, and Swarthmore's catalogue was sitting there. I had never heard of Swarthmore. No one in my family had ever heard of Swarthmore. I didn't know where it was, but there was something about that. I believe in fate and destiny and all that other kind of stuff like that. I said, "Okay. I'll go ahead, and I apply." I applied, and they wanted me to come for an interview. I had never been that far away from home. We didn't know where it was. My parents didn't know. But they had an alumnus in Yorktown, which is not too far from Norfolk, and my cousin drove me up there for this interview in this woman's home. I don't know what I did or what I said or any of those other sorts of things, but I end up getting selected to enter Swarthmore. I got accepted to every school that I applied to, but it just so happened that Swarthmore gave me full tuition and two hundred dollars for books. I was the oldest child, and my parents couldn't afford to do anything for me, so I said, "I'm going to Swarthmore." So I didn't know anything about the school. I just showed up here. My Dad and my Uncle drove me up here and dropped me off in Willett Hall, said goodbye, and they were gone. And I really didn't find out much about the college until after I was here, in terms of being a Quaker school and what that meant, in terms of the kinds of students that came to this school, that kind of thing. I was always accustomed to being the smartest person in the room, so it was a very different experience coming to a place like Swarthmore. Also being with people who went to Country Day schools. I didn't even know what a Country Day school was. So it was a different sort of a time. I think that when I was here there may have been somewhere between seven and ten black students in our class, and that was a lot--that was a whole lot for Swarthmore. And we were all around. My roommate was a girl from-

-I know her name. Her name is Beth Mayer. She ended up being a doctor, too. And she's from Ohio, I think. Somewhere around Cleveland, or something along those lines. So she and I were roommates, and my other best friend at the time that I met was Bridget [Van Gronigen] Warren. She was down the hall, or somewhere. And I think Jannette Domingo was the other person. She was somewhere in Willett. Aundrea [White] at the time lived in Parrish, I think. So those were the first people that I met and that I hung out with. Is that sort of what you were looking for, or did you need anything more?

OO: Yeah! No. I think that was fine. If you have any memories of particular events or things you spent your time doing.

MR: I remember the first meeting that they had with--and I think it was just the women students, with one of the deans. I remember her because she had the pearls and the gray hair and all that sort of stuff, and it was in the Meeting House. It was very interesting. I forget what her name was. That was a very interesting meeting to me. I said, "What kind of place am I in?" It was really kind of different. But I've always thought it's a beautiful, beautiful campus. It's just so peaceful... and quiet here that I really liked it. It also helped, in terms of all the different things going on on campus, you could just kind of experiment with all kinds of things depending upon what you were interested in or what you thought you were interested in. For instance, my roommate was a classical--I think she played the cello, if I'm not mistaken. She'd take me to all the classical musical things around the college, and it was interesting. It was interesting. I'd never done that kind of thing before. That's the sort of thing I remember in my first days at Swarthmore, if that helps.

OO: Thank you. So next question is how did you become one of the Seven Sisters? How do you remember the Seven Sisters functioning in SASS? Could you describe your relationship with the other women in the Seven Sisters?

MR: Well, the first three that I met, of course, were Bridget and Jannette and Aundrea because we were all in the same class group. Bridget was a science major. She wanted to be a doctor. She ended up doing something else, but she was a science major. I was a science major, too, so we bonded early on there. Beth was a science major, too, so all of us were together. I started meeting these other people. We eventually met the Marilyns¹--we called them the Marilyns--and, of course Joyce Baynes. Joyce was, I don't know how to explain it. Joyce seemed like a member of my family and, in my estimate, she was the mother of the group, whether she felt that way or not. She was the oldest. She looked like my Aunt Doris. She talked like my Aunt Doris. That's my mother's sister, and it's like, "My God! Aunt Doris followed me to college, and here she is!" Joyce tended to be the more stable. I shouldn't say stable, but she was older! And she was a little more settled, I think, than the rest of us who were still out banging our heads and trying to figure out what it was that we were trying to do. It was like a family--it was like a family. And the four of us who were all in the same group, who were all freshmen, were all the same age.

¹ Marilyn Holifield and Marilyn Allman Maye, class of 1969

And we had older sisters, the Marilyns, who were one level above us, and then Joyce was the mom, as far as I was concerned. Or the biggest sister, or however it is that you wish to say it. And we would just sort of gravitate, in the eating hall--Sharples, I guess, is what it was called, and just talk about different things. They were very different from me. I came from a relatively small city, compared to everybody else. I was from the South. I talked funny. Most of them were from New York or Boston. Bridget was from somewhere in South America, I'm trying to remember the place. Guiana. British Guiana. I'd never gone anywhere outside of Virginia. Coming to Swarthmore was my first trip out of Virginia. It was very different, but somehow very familiar. We would just talk about stuff over lunch or dinner or something along those lines, and then started doing other sorts of things socially together. How we came to be named the Seven Sisters--it came from one of the guys. I'm pretty sure it came from Sam Shepard. He was an upperclassman. He was either in the Marilyns' class or the class ahead of that. He was always a very serious kind of an individual, and he had a unique sense of humor, I think. I just remember somewhere along the lines him calling us the Seven Sisters, or saying something to me about the Seven Sisters. He was referencing the colleges because I didn't know anything about what the Seven Sisters were but they're apparently these women's colleges. Swarthmore's always mistaken for one of the women's college--still is, by the way. Because there were seven of us, they called us the Seven Sisters. We said, "Whatever!" and the name just sort of stuck. It's interesting to me that it's still around, or that people even remember that moniker that was given to us. But we did, for the most part, coalesce around mealtimes and that kind of thing. There were even people who thought that that was a terrible thing for us to do, for us to sit together for meals. Really, we were criticized for that. They were talking about reverse segregation or something along those lines--I'm very very serious. We never saw it like that. We were just people who had things in common who needed to talk, and we did. But there were at least comments from other people about us sitting together and talking together, but we had a great time. We didn't care.

OO: Mentioning Sam Shepard... so Clinton Ethridge, as you know, was SASS chairman, and Don Mizell was vice-chairman in the 68-69 school year, and Sam Shepard was the first chairman of SASS. Did you know Sam, and can you share any memories of him?

MR: Like I said, Sam was just very bright. Sam was always smoking. That's what I remember about Sam; he was always smoking. He was always a very serious sort of an individual, very thoughtful kind of person. He just always seemed like the kind of person that you could rely on. I had forgotten that Sam was the first president of SASS. Interesting. I remember Clinton and Don.

OO: Dr. Ava Harris Stanley had mentioned that you were on a SASS committee with her but did not state which one, possibly a steering committee. Do you remember which student committees inside or outside of SASS you were on?

MR: I have no idea. [laughs] I can't remember back then. I remember Ava. She was a little, I think a year or two behind us. She ended up being a doctor, too. I keep in communication with her from time to time, but I don't remember. Sorry. We're old

OO: It's fine. So we know that, in 1969 the sit-in in Parrish, you were one of the, I guess, the second wave of students to join after a letter that Michael Fields, I believe, read and was also published in *The Phoenix*². You all entered, and you signed that letter. Can you talk about your decision to go in and join the other members of SASS in Parrish, and whether you felt pressured to do so?

MR: I didn't even realize that I was a part of the second wave, but if that's what you say then I guess that's what it was. I was not part of the smaller group, I think, that planned the whole thing. I saw myself more as a foot soldier than any kind of a leader, or anything along those lines. I think we were all united in the fact that we had to do something because it just got to be intolerable. And so there was really no hesitation as far as I was concerned in terms of going ahead and doing this. It just never occurred to me not to.

OO: Can you describe what was happening in the Admissions office at that time? We have a photograph of you, I believe, trimming someone's hair.

MR: [laughs]

OO: Trimming Tralance Addy's hair during that time.

MR: I did? I never knew that I did that.

OO: The photograph was taken by--

MR: I don't remember Tralance being there! [laughs] I do remember being surprised at how many other black students joined us because, you know, there was a core kind of a group that was very interested in what SASS was about and the kind of politics that went with that. In addition to what we were doing at the college, we ventured outside of the college into other campuses, into Philadelphia, and other things along those lines. So we were, it was quite a political education I think is the way to look at it, in terms of the kinds of things we were exposed to and the kinds of things we got to see. As a part of that group, of course there were some other educational things that opened up for us, not only here at Swarthmore, but we attended some of the other colleges and things like that. So it was just a very, it was a great political education, I think, in terms of that sort of thing. And remember I was a science major, so I was in lab. The thing that was always interesting is that I'd be having a great time at lunch and then I'd have to go to a lab [laughs] in the afternoon. And all my friends were social science majors so they could hang out and do all kinds of things. So it was different in that way. Did that answer your question?

OO: So, as SASS chairman Clinton--during the occupation, Clinton was at the continuous faculty meeting. Several times he made statements there. Do you recall who was involved in writing those statements that he made?

² The Phoenix, January 14, 1969

MR: When I think about SASS from the formation to the occupation, all of that, to me the generals of SASS were the Marilyns. They were the intellectual heart, I guess is what I would call it, of all of SASS, really. They were, at least in my mind, more politically active or astute or connected in some fashion compared to somebody like me from little old Virginia who was just getting exposed to some of these kinds of ideas. I know that the Marilyns were a part of it. I know that Don was a part of it, and Clinton. And those were the people that I saw at the core of the writing sort of a thing, and the responses to the information that was coming in to the group and coming out from the group. They were always huddling somewhere. Not always, but you know.

OO: Cool. So, trying to parse out whether--I think it was Thompson Bradley, or maybe it was another radical professor who we've heard was involved in a food run but haven't quite found a piece of evidence that's fully saying it was.

MR: I can't remember what we ate! I really can't remember what we ate. I know there was food. I know there were things to drink. I have no idea, you know, we were fed and everything there. I remember stuff coming through the window, and I remember, I think, food trays or something would come through the window, or, like a tray or big thing that they've serve people, or something along those lines. I remember going out the window when we left. But I remember stuff coming through the window.

OO: Do you know--just trying to visualize this in Parrish, do you remember whether it was a window on the front side of the building or--

MR: It was on the back side of the building. If I don't recall, we came in this way, and there was stuff here, and there was stuff going back here, and there were these windows going around like this, and I think it was that back side of the window was where we--I know I remember climbing out. It was fun. I'm not a climber, so. Getting out through that window.

OO: Okay. Speaking of going out the window, the day that the sit-in ended in Parrish, Robert Woodson organized the caravans to transport SASS students to the Media Fellowship House. Were you a part of that group that left with him, and can you describe what that experience was like? Did you feel that it would have been dangerous for students to stay on campus after the death of Courtney Smith?

MR: I did. I remember when we heard that he had died, and we were all very sorry that that had occurred, and we all kind of instinctively knew that that was it. We really couldn't continue with this with the president being dead. I don't know that I necessarily felt unsafe. I don't think I did. But I think that the people who made the decision to remove us from there and off the campus did the correct thing. It gave us a chance, I think, to get out of that situation and to decompress and to just sort of settle down before we then came back to our normal lives, I guess, if that's the way

you want to look at it. The only thing I remember is going out the window, to tell you the truth. I can't remember a whole lot about what happened after that, where we were, what we did, how long we stayed, when we came back. Maybe someone else-- maybe when all of us get together and they start talking about it, I'll remember a little bit more about it. But that's about what I remember. But I do remember that that was very distressing, to hear about the president. It was even worse when people said we killed the president, and the thing that really got to me was that, later on when I became a doctor, and I thought about it, I said "Oh, he probably had plaque in his LAD." And at that time, we didn't know. He should have taken an aspirin and gone to try to get re-vascularized somewhere along the line. In those days, people died of heart attacks much more commonly than they do now.

OO: Thank you.

PGF: I interviewed Bridget Van Gronigen Warren two days ago, and she remembers, not that she herself received threats, but that some members of SASS received threats upon the death of Courtney Smith. Do you have any memory of this?

MR: No, I don't. It wouldn't surprise me if it happened. It would not surprise me. There were quite a number of people, seriously, people thought we killed him, and I'm going, like, "We weren't there, we didn't kill him." He's a middle-aged man who, during those times, that's what middle-aged men died of, heart attacks. I've learned this later as I went along further, but still, that was the feeling, that we had killed him. I never accepted it and I still don't.

PGF: So, after participating in 1969 sit-in, did you participate in any of the 1970 actions? For example, the writing of the March 11th, 1970 letter, stating that Black students were no longer participating in "business as usual" at Swarthmore, or the March of Torches, on March 9th, or the 24-hour vigil at Cross' house on the 13th.

MR: I may have, but I don't remember a lot about it. That was my senior year and, in terms of what was personally going on with me at Swarthmore, somewhere towards the end of my sophomore year, I realized I was really not a chemistry person. I think it was when I went to the second semester of Physical Chemistry and I said, "Oh no." Physics I knew was not... I was just so happy to get out of physics, I was ecstatic, but when I went to the second semester of Physical Chemistry I said, "No, I can't do this as my full-time career." And I met some people who were going to medical school, I met some women who were going to medical school. I never knew that women could become doctors. I know, I'm from a small town we didn't have any, not a small town, but we didn't have any women doctors. And, it just sort of inspired me to say, "Well, if they can be doctors, I can be a doctor, too." So, I added a second major. I did do a Chemistry major, but I added Biology. So, all during that year I was catching up, I was doing a lot of Bio. Luckily I had all the Math and the Physics and, you know, the Chemistry part of it was behind me. All I had to do was just finish up all the rest of my Chemistry classes and go ahead and just take a lot of Biology, and so I did. So I

ended up doing Chemistry and Biology, so once I did that I said, "OK. Let me go ahead and apply to medical school," and, so, that last year I spent applying to medical school. And, it was a process. I think I ended up applying to six or seven medical schools and I had to go to interviews and write essays and all kinds of stuff like that. And, of course, make sure that I finished my major and did well. But, I'm sure I participated in stuff. I don't doubt that I did.

PGF: And then also, just because we're in this building, if you were involved in the choosing the location of the Robinson House as the preferred site for the BCC?

MR: No, I was not involved in that. That, I don't remember having anything to do with.

PGF: Thanks.

MR: You know, I preferred the modern buildings. I loved Willets and the other building that I lived in. I never lived in one of the older buildings. I couldn't stand Parrish Hall, I thought it sucked. And the other building was a relatively new building. We were, I think, the first class, or one of the first classes, that had co-ed buildings at the time. I know that's not too radical for you all, but back then it was. And there were different kinds of flavors of that. In the building where I was, women were on one floor, then men were on the next floor, that sort of thing. They weren't truly intermingled. But, yeah, so I had nothing to do with Robinson House. It was a dorm, I think. Wasn't it a dorm?

OO: I know some of the buildings that aren't even sort of dorms right now, people did live in at the time.

MR: Yeah, I think it was. See, this is one of the older houses where people, all these odd-shaped rooms and whatever, it was a dorm of sorts. We had a lottery back then and you got to choose, depending upon all kinds of things, in terms of where you want to live, and there were people who liked living in this sort of stuff and then there was me, who liked more modern at the time.

PGF: So, how did your participation in direct actions with SASS influence the rest of your academic career at Swarthmore? And do you think the Black student protest movement on campus had an impact on your life after college?

MR: There's no doubt that it did. Participating in SASS really changed my life in many different ways. As I said, I met women who wanted to be doctors, I became a doctor. I came into Swarthmore wanting to be a teacher and I was going to teach Chemistry, teach high school Chemistry, something along those lines. I worked in Upward Bound two or three years here, both during the school year and during the summer times, that kind of thing, and I really did love that sort of thing, but I ended up becoming a teacher in medical school. That's what I do, I teach medicine to people. And so it was a very interesting combination that came out of this, that, you

know, I got introduced to the fact that women could be doctors, and that I could eventually go ahead and end up teaching science, but teaching science to doctors. It also, I think, helped me because I was so science-focused when I came here. I wanted to be a scientist, I thought I wanted to be a chemist, but the liberal arts courses that I took here really helped bring out the artistic side of me and, if any of you are going to be doctors or you know anyone who are going to be doctors, yeah, you work on a lot of science, but there is a lot of art involved in that, too, and a lot of indescribable sort of things that come into making a decent doctor. And, so, those thing were very important. I remember an English class, it was a required class, I remember an English class, I remember the Economics classes, I remember the History classes that we took here. We had a famous Black historian come and teach a class here, I think his name was Sterling Redding, or something, anyway, he came and taught a class here³. Unheard of! He came from Lincoln, I think, or maybe it was Philly, I'm not sure. But anyway, he came in to teach us a course in Black History. I also went to classes at Lincoln and other places, so there were things that we did within some of those classes. I had had people in my family who were in alternative religious institutions, I suppose, but one of the field trips I remember very vividly was going to see Daddy Grace⁴. You don't know anything about him, he doesn't even exist anymore, but it was a cult sort of a religion and just very interesting sorts of things and activities that I got to do. So, being at Swarthmore really helped widen my interest in terms of, not just science, but humanities and literature and history and all those things like that. So, I truly think it made a big difference. When I left Swarthmore and I went to medical school, it was pretty much science and I just concentrated on that and going through those sorts of things. You go through four years of medical school and then you do three years of internship and residency and then you decide if you're going to specialize and, so, I did. And, along the way, once you got the science down and you understand what that it and what's that going to be like, the other parts of your life start to come into better focus and help you to figure out what it is that you want to do. I ended up in Atlanta, Georgia, in the South, at a time when a brand new medical school was starting, called Morehouse School of Medicine, and there was no question in my mind that I wanted to be a part of that sort of thing. And, my experiences here at Swarthmore really helped me to understand and crystalize that part of me, to understand that that's what I wanted to do and it eventually became my life's work. I spent thirty years, I'm still there now, I've spent over thirty years helping to build that institution and helping to move it in directions that I think were important in terms of training the kinds of doctors that we need. One of the things that Morehouse was founded on happens to be a very very powerful mission statement that had to do with being a leader and teaching doctors to take care of the underserved, whether that was in rural Georgia or inner-city Atlanta or internationally, or whatever that might be. And it was a

³ J. Saunders Redding, a famous scholar of Black literature and poetry.

⁴ Marcelino Manuel da Graça, popularly known as Daddy Grace, founded the first United House of Prayer for All People in 1919. Dr. Rose may be referring to Father Divine [Reverend Major Jealous Divine] whose Universal Peace Mission Movement relocated to Philadelphia in the 1940s.

message that really spoke to me, I think, because of the kinds of experiences that I had here at Swarthmore and was just in keeping with things that fed my soul. And so, that is the sort of thing that kept me at a small institution with limited resources, but big dreams, that I was able to help, in terms of growing. So, I think that Swarthmore helped teach me a couple of things along those lines, not only in terms of understanding the things that you want to do and focusing on that, but the fact that it is absolutely possible to lead without being the leader, and I learned that here. I really did, so, it worked.

PGF: In your memories, how did the atmosphere within SASS, and around the campus in general, differ between the 1969 and 1970 actions?

MR: Again, I think I was in a different place, in terms of focusing on getting into medical school and that sort of thing, and I felt that the '69 action was the action. What happened in the '70 action and going forward, because I know there were other things that occurred, were more of, I don't know how to put it...The soul of the movement was the '69 occupation and the '70s and beyond were institutionalizing things, essentially, and consolidating ideas and moving forward with those kinds of principles, but the, and I don't want to call it a sit-in like one of the original sit-ins or something along those lines, but it was a similar sort of, "This can't stand anymore, we've got to do something," and I think that's what the '69 was and the ones after that said, "OK. Let's go ahead and make sure something really does happen after this."

PGF: Interesting. And, so, the next question you touched on a little bit, but hopefully we can get in a little deeper. So, five of your classmates in 1969 graduated with a concentration in Black Studies, did you have an interest in pursuing such a concentration? And, did you participate in any of the student-run Black Studies courses, or travel to Lincoln for classes, or take classes with Professor Asmarom Legesse?

MR: I did. I did all of those things. In spite of doing two majors, in spite of, you know, being a science major who had to go to labs in the afternoon, all of that because it was important to do that. This was just not information that I could get anywhere else. Even though I grew up in the segregated South, you know, we learned a few things in terms of the classical sort of stuff, the Booker T. Washington stuff, the W. E. B. Du Bois thing, that kind of thing, but the kind of in-depth study and understanding of various portions of Black history were not available to me and I learned much of that here, at least, how to find it, how access it. Back in those days the library was actually a place that you went to study, you know, you looked up things on cards and wrote things down and all kinds of stuff like that. So, it was a very interesting thing. And, I remember going through some of the old books, you know, both here and at some of the other places that we went, and being able to go to those kinds of sources and reading, and finding that information, and looking at the old literature, that kind of stuff was really quite good, so, yeah, I did all that stuff.

PGF: Do you remember any of the specific classes that you took, either at Lincoln or here?

MR: Yeah, I took, as I said there was someone, I think his name was Sterling... I don't remember if it as Sterling Redding or Otis Sterling, or maybe I'm mixing him up with Otis Redding, I don't know. Anyway, he was, at the time, he was a fairly famous Black historian, educator, and he, I'm not sure if he was at Lincoln or one of the schools in Philadelphia, but he actually came out and taught an evening class here and I participated in that class. I also took a class, and I'm not sure who taught it, at Lincoln. And, I think several of us went because I'm pretty sure Harold⁵ went and a couple of others, because Harold had to drive us. You know, we had to get to Lincoln in order to get to go for that course. Those were evening courses, so this was like an addition. You went to your day courses, you went to your labs in the afternoon, and then I'd have to do these other evening courses, but it was worth it to do those courses because I couldn't get them anywhere else. These were not traditional courses here in the college, even the ones that were here at the college were evening courses, they were not during regular hours.

PGF: Interesting. And, can you share your memories of the social or cultural climate of Swarthmore?

MR: Woah. The social climate, OK.

PGF: Just in terms of other non-academic extracurricular activities you were involved in.

MR: Swarthmore was very.. there was a lot, you know, depending on what you wanted to do. Back in those days we had something called collection. Do y'all still have collection? It was mandatory back then. You had to go to collection. I don't know if it was every week or once a month or whatever it was that schedule for collection. And, we were exposed to all kinds of stuff at collection, which I thought was interesting. They would bring all kinds of different artists here, whether they were musicians or poets or different kinds of exhibits and things like that. So, there was always something going on here you just had to figure out what it was that you wanted to do. When I finally figured out that, yeah, classical music was alright, but that wasn't really where my heart was, but then, you know, but I had some exposure to that for a fairly long time before I figured out that that just didn't speak to me. So, there was a lot of different stuff going on. There was even dance. You know, there's always been that kind of cultural diversity, I suppose, in terms of the arts here at Swarthmore and if I wanted to see something that was Black or African-American, I had to go somewhere else. We were, I think, successful over the years in bringing some groups on board. There were a few that came, but it was for the whole school. We also had some activities that would occur, where were these places? These little cottages, or something, that were over here on the side.

OO: The lodges?

MR: Where?

⁵ Harold Buchanan, class of 1969.

OO: The lodges?

MR: The lodges! The lodges, because you could reserve a lodge for any kind of thing. So, we would have, sometimes we would have meetings in the lodges, sometimes there would be artists that would come. I remember, Billy Paul, you don't even remember him, he's dead now, but he was a Jazz singer in Philadelphia and he came out and sang here at Swarthmore. And there were other things like that, that we would have to bring here or we'd have to go other places to see. I remember in some of the emails that had been going back and forth, that, you know, actually brought us here, someone mentioned about James Brown. I remember we saw James Brown at Lincoln. We went to Lincoln to see James Brown. And, it was interesting because there were all kinds of people who went for that, you know, people who weren't necessarily core group in SASS or anything along those lines, but you couldn't see James Brown here so you had to go to Lincoln to see James Brown. So, there were lots of stuff like that. We'd go into Philadelphia, there was a venue called the, I think it was the Spectrum or something. Anyway, there were different kinds of artists that were there and, you know, I suppose it'd be akin to going to see Taylor Swift or somebody for you all. I watched the Today show yesterday or something. But, anyway, Black artists like that that we would go to see. I think we went to see Isaac Hayes. There were lots of people like that, so we would.. We saw Aretha [Franklin], we saw lots of different people, you know, but we had to travel to do that. We did a lot of traveling in order to do that, so there were offerings here at Swarthmore, but we also went to lots of places outside of Swarthmore in order to get what we felt we needed to see, or what we wanted to see. I didn't go to Woodstock, luckily we decided not to go to Woodstock, but there were lots of other things along those lines. I remember participating in a rally because, you know, there was not only the Black liberation movement, but there was the Vietnam War going on, too, and so there were lots of rallies in Philadelphia and that kind of thing. And, so, we would go to that, too. I remember one in particular, the police in Philadelphia are an interesting group of people, but they had these horses and their crowd control methods were not humane, shall we say? So, I remember being involved in one of those kind of clashes, fortunately I didn't get hit, but, so, there were lots of different kinds of experiences around.

PGF: So, for even going into rallies in Philadelphia, were those SASS-organized events?

MR: Not necessarily SASS-oriented. They were just people who wanted, you know, something was going on and we wanted to go. It tended to be the Seven Sisters or some, not all of us, but some portion of us. You know, the Seven Sisters was kind of a fluid kind of group. We didn't all just sort of walk around in a little huddle, you know? It was really kind of fluid and people just sort of moved in and out and had other kinds of interests and that kind of thing, too, but as I said before, I think we were more of a family, a sisterhood, a kind of family thing, but people did their own things and moved around, did different stuff. The rally, I remember three or four people who went to the rally in Philadelphia, but not everybody went to everything or did everything.

PGF: OK. So, you talked about how some of the older Seven Sisters were sort of like mentors or it was family-like and you could look up to them and there was Joyce, who

you felt like took care of y'all. As you became a senior, maybe, or just an upperclassmen, did you find yourself making those kind of relationships with the younger Black students who were coming in to Swarthmore?

MR: Yeah, yeah, I remember the younger women who came in. I mean, Ava⁶ was one of them. Some of us worked together in Upward Bound and in other venues like that as well as, of course, doing some things with SASS. Some of us were science majors and so we were running into each other in the various buildings and that kind of thing. But, yeah, yeah, I did. I can still see some of their faces. What we used to do a lot of times is that people would just sort of all, you know, I'm sure y'all do that, too, everybody just goes into somebody's room and you spend half the night talking or braiding hair or doing something along those lines. And so, yeah, that sort of thing happened. Actually, not only women, but some of the younger men, too, would come around. Maybe I was somebody's mother, I think I was. I was somebody's mother figure. But, yeah, that sort of thing did carry forward.

PGF: Awesome. Well, that's all the questions we have prepared, but if there is anything else you'd like to add, we'd like to hear it.

MR: I don't know. You know, so many things have just sort of come up as you all have brought these things to our attention. I mean, to my attention. You'll probably get it off-camera, I'll remember something and go ahead and bring that up. Because I had forgotten about the lodges until you started talking about stuff like that, but yeah, I remember those things. Those are nice little places over there.

PGF: Well, speaking of off-camera, because the camera wasn't actually rolling when you were talking about how one of the students would play that record. Would you mind repeating that to the camera?

MR: It came up in an informal panel discussion that happened several years ago where we were talking a little bit about SASS. I think, maybe, Clinton's book⁷ had just come out or something along those lines, and someone in the audience asked the question about whether or not we were afraid, in terms of when we were there and, you know, I said, no, we weren't and that it was really kind of a peaceful sort of gathering and that I remember Aundrea⁸ brought in a record player and some records and that there was a particular album that she would play by Jose Feliciano to wake us up in the morning and to put us to sleep at night. It's one of my more vivid memories. It's one of the constant memories that I have of that particular time, other than, of course, going out the window.

PGF: Awesome. Thank you so much.

⁶ Ava Harris (Stanley), class of 1972.

⁷ Clinton Etheridge, class of 1969, published an article in the *Swarthmore Bulletin* titled, "The Crucible of Character: A personal account of Swarthmore's crisis of 1969," in March 2005.

⁸ Aundrea White (Kelley), class of 1972.

MR: So, one of the things that I remember, when you were talking about some of the things that we would do, we would actually go to church in Chester, or somewhere out in that area. It was a AME church⁹ and I really enjoyed doing that sort of thing. We would also have some other kinds of gatherings where we would cook, and I don't know if it was the lodges or where that would occur, but there was a cooking place somewhere here on the college and we'd get to together and we'd make meals. We'd have, it wasn't quite competitions, but you know my recipe for baked beans is very different from Aundrea's recipe for baked beans. So, we had this kind of informal competition. One of the people that I remember very vividly, I don't know if you, he's dead now, JB, Baton?¹⁰ Y'all don't know him, but he might've been in the '70's group, but anyway. So, we would cook sometimes. The college had some great cooks, I don't know what they're like now, but they were great cooks, but every now and then there were times when we wanted something different, you know, because we would get homesick and stuff. And, we would do some dinners and things like that. So, that was another thing that happened in terms of the cultural things that would go on. So, I just thought you ought to have that one, too.

OO and PGF: Awesome. Thank you.

⁹ African Methodist Episcopal Church

¹⁰James Batton, class of 1972. G. Isaac Stanley, class of 1973, and Ava Harris Stanley, class of 1972, endowed the James H. Batton '72 Award in honor of James Batton. It is awarded to students who demonstrate personal growth or career development.