

7-15-2005

Oral History on Bloomfield, CT

Norma LeFebrve

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cssp_ohistory

Recommended Citation

LeFebrve, Norma. Oral history interview on Bloomfield, CT by Aleesha Young for the Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project, July 15, 2005. Available from the Trinity College Digital Repository, Hartford Connecticut (http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cssp_ohistory/).

LeFebvre, Norma

Oral history interview on Bloomfield, CT by Aleesha Young for the Cities, Suburbs, and Schools Project, July 15, 2005. Available from the Trinity College Digital Repository, Hartford Connecticut (http://digitalrepository.trincoll.edu/cssp_ohistory/).

Consent form: LeFebrveNorma_consent20050715

Copyright: Trinity College

Location: 65 Prospect Avenue, Bloomfield, CT

Recording format: n/a

File name: n/a

Length: n/a

Transcribed by: Aleesha Young

Additional files: n/a

Abstract: As a white parent who moved to Bloomfield in 1959, Norma LeFebrve recalls her time as a member of the League of Women Voters, and the Board of Education from 1964 to 1972. She favored increasing the salaries of teachers and advocated for students to be in a diverse environment, and recalls details about several school administrators and other board members. She also reflects on how she worked with the Intergroup Council to address housing discrimination, strongly supported the racial census of students in public schools, and opposed voluntary busing as a solution to racial imbalance.

Speaker key:

AY: Aleesha Young

NF: Norma LeFebvre

[all comments by transcriber in brackets]

AY: I'm interviewing you because you lived in Bloomfield during the 60's and 70's, but before we focus on your role where did you live prior to the 60's and 70's?

NL: Well, we moved to Bloomfield in '59 from Windsor.

AY: Why did you move from Windsor?

NL: Well, I was expecting my third child. My place in Windsor was a two family house and it didn't have enough room for the new kid. We liked the house; it was on Woodland Avenue. It had more room for us.

AY: So you've been in this house since you moved from Windsor, I mean Woodland Avenue?

NL: We were there until our fourth child was on the way. So I have 3 boys and a girl. We needed another bedroom for her and she was born in 64.

AY: Just so I can follow your story, can I have your children's names?

NL: My eldest is Mark.

AY: And when and where was he born?

NL: He was born in Hartford Hospital and we lived in Windsor. Then my second child, Jene, a boy and he was born in Hartford Hospital. We lived in Windsor when he was born. My third child was Neil and he was born in Hartford Hospital. This one we moved to Bloomfield, we needed more room for him and he was born in '59.

AY: And you said you had a daughter?

NL: Right, she was born in Hartford Hospital and she was a baby when we moved to this house.

AY: And what was her name?

NL: Alison, and actually this house was bought from lady named Maher [spelling?]. I used to look in the paper for listings. This house was in the paper, but apparently she had put it on the market and then she changed her mind, put it on the market and she changed her mind. So we made an offer and she changed her mind again. But I kept reading the real estate ads. So I looked and I said it looks like there's a house on Prospect Street. So I called her up. By then quite a bit of time had gone by, so she finally sold the house. But we lived; we rented it for one year before we closed on the house.

AY: I know you said you have four children, where did they attend school?

NL: In Bloomfield.

AY: Which elementary schools?

NL: When we lived on Woodland Avenue, no, they went to J.P Vincent School. There was a redistricting and they went to the Laurel school for one year and then when we moved back here; they went to J.P Vincent school. Its J.P Vincent School that's right over here?

AY: Yes, that's right.

NL: They used to be able to walk to school.

AY: What were your experiences with these schools seeing that your children attended them? What kind of feelings did you have about the schools?

NL: Well, I liked living...one of the reasons why we lived in Bloomfield was because I felt that the kids should live in a town and go to school where the population was representative of the population as a whole. I had gone to Board of Education meetings, let's see, I got on the Board I think in '64, but I had gone to the Board of Education meetings. I used to belong to the League of Women Voters. I had gone to Board of Education meetings for 4 years or 8 years before I actually decided to run for the Board. 4 years, frequently, I was the only one at a board meeting

unless there was something controversial on the agenda. Then another person who attended and I thought he attended because he was interested in schools, but actually he wanted to run for the Board too, was a Republican. I'm a Democrat. I've been a lifelong Democrat. What concerned me was, the board goes, and I remember the board as it was constituted, when I used to attend the meetings. One of the people said he wanted to shop for teachers the way he shopped for an appliance; you want to get the best appliance possible for the lowest price possible. Now I didn't think that's what Bloomfield should do. I pushed for teacher salaries, that was my main thing, having teacher's salaries comparable to those in Hartford because we were one of the few towns that had minority population because of redlining. Bloomfield was one of the few places blacks were shown houses, so that was one thing and I was just interested in education because when my daughter was in second grade, I started to go to graduate school. I got a masters degree in education with a specialty in early childhood education. My interest was in, my primary interest was in having good salary's and small pupil student-teacher ratios. Because I think when Mark, my first son was in school, I think, it was kindergarten, first grade; I think there were 28 kids in his class. We, and there were eventually other parents who wanted them to split the class, which I think they eventually did, I'm not sure.

AY: What were your children's experiences? Were they any different? How did they like it?

NL: They were fine, they liked it. The thing is though; when we started J.P Vincent was white, because most of the blacks lived in...

AY: The Blue Hills area?

NL: Yeah, the Blue Hills area. I thought the kids; all kids should go to school with a diverse group of students. On my first term, I made a motion that we conduct a count of whites versus blacks in the schools. The guy that was the chairman of the board was Howard Wetstone, a doctor who lived over on Kenwood Circle.

AY: Ok, I thought I read he was the superintendent or something.

NL: No, he was the chairman of the board. The superintendent was Jack Rogean.

AY: Ok, sorry, I keep getting them mixed up.

NL: Howard was like the silent partner superintendent really, 'cause he and Rogean used to talk a lot to each other. Finally in my first term, one of my first years I made a motion that I take a count of whites versus blacks. I remember Howard saying that it was like Nazi Germany and we were gonna have people wearing the Star of David. And I said gee, I really don't think so Howard. But nobody seconded the motion.

AY: Before we, well I do have some questions about detail on that, but how has the quality of schools changed since the 1960's?

NL: Since the 60's. There was a time when the other superintendent who succeeded Jack Rogean, was Herb Chester; Herbert Chester who died a few years ago. He has been assistant

superintendent and Herb worked very hard to get black teachers and to keep the pupil-teacher ratio. Under Herb, we got a great person to head up the special education. So I know for a fact that people moved to Bloomfield because the town where they lived didn't have teachers or programs for kids who were developmentally challenged or who had problems; it might be emotional and social, it might be learning problems. Gradually under Herb, I know that we had kids who went to great schools. A lot of people used to take their kids out of Bloomfield schools at the high school level. Two reasons, they didn't want them dating blacks and they didn't think they could get into good schools coming from Bloomfield. I know a lot of people moved to Simsbury, that was one of the places in particular. Well, after Herb, Herb had two great assistants, Joe O'Donnell who was the director of elementary and Ben Dixon covered the other thing. Ben Dixon worked with a man in Hartford who started an alternate High School; it was Simsbury or Granby with more open class rooms and not conventional groupings and organizations. Ben Dixon was black and I thought he would be super, but the chairperson of the Democratic town committee had a daughter who I don't know if she was retarded, she wasn't that bright and he never felt that the teachers ever did right by her. He came, you could tell, people on the board could tell, the people on the town committee used to tell me how to vote or what to ask. And I wasn't a handmaiden to the men. People used to say to me, "Don't you have 4 kids?" And I used to say, "Yeah I have 4 kids and they have a father." And they said, "why don't you take care of your kids," and I said "because their father is home as father's should be." And that was Ward Pinney, one of the people who said some of those things. Anyway, the schools were great, and the person, and the psychologist who was head of the special education, was Jack somebody but I cannot remember his last name. I think he went to work for CREC, the Capital Region Education Council. Schools were great because children were getting into very good schools and my kids all had very good experiences. My eldest son went to Laurel school. He and this other boy were the best readers in third grade because when we moved here Mark was in the third grade. They all had very positive experiences in the Bloomfield School system.

AY: I read that you were active in the School Board from, and correct me if I am wrong, 64-72?

NL: About 63. Alison was born in 64, the election is in November; she was born November 11th. I used to go to Board meetings and ask questions, but I think it was 64. I think it was an even year because I was pregnant with her when I ran for office, when I campaigned, that first term.

AY: And why did you stop in 1972?

NL: I had gotten my master's degree and I wanted to teach.

AY: Were you active in any other governmental or non-governmental organizations in Bloomfield? You mentioned that you were on the League of Women Voters..was there...

NL: I was very active in the League of Women Voters.

AY: How long were you involved?

NL: Lord, let's see. My son Neil was born in '59. I think he was a baby when... it wasn't the league. One of my best friends started the League; she lived in Windsor for a while. She started the league again in Bloomfield, so Neil was born in '59, so it must have been since '59.

AY: And why were you involved?

NL: Because I do believe that you can't have a democracy unless you have an educated elector.

AY: I don't think I asked why you become involved in the Board of Education.

NL: Because I had kids.

AY: During the 60's and 70's there were debates on several issues can you tell me how you were involved in each of these? The first one is racial imbalance and voluntary busing from the Blue Hills elementary school.

NL: Well I made a motion that we take a count. The second time I made the motion they did count. We redistricted so that each school would have a school population which was representative of the population as a whole in the town.

AY: I actually have the article (1 Jun 1969 "Voluntary Busing Asked to Gain Racial Balance" HT) about how you felt about the plan.

NL: Right, I didn't think voluntary busing would work. Where did I say it, looking at the article?

AY: Right here. (pointing to Lefebvre's comment).

NL: See I also belonged to the Intergroup Council.

AY: And how long were involved in the Intergroup council?

NL: As long as it was in existence. This lady named Buddy Sanderson who worked, she worked for the state and I don't remember what she did. A whole group of us got together. There were blacks and whites that were truly as a group. One of the main focuses of that group was to work on racial steering in terms of real estate. Actually, some of the people went and blind looked at houses, blind testing. And we found, we used the census '67. The population of Bloomfield has gone up in 10 years 135%. We used the other census figures the other times on East Hartford which had certainly alot of [buses?] And was easily accessible to people who worked in Hartford. [East Hartford] had a very low black population and Windsor had more than, more than most suburbs, but not as many as Bloomfield, and Simsbury has next to none, Wethersfield had next to none. What were the others ones?, Simsbury had next to none, in fact later, there was a woman who I worked with, and Avon had next to none, whose daughter had gone to the Avon school and actually the woman's husband was superintendent of schools I think in New Britain. She went to Boston, to Simmons and she couldn't handle being in a town with so many blacks, she couldn't and she transferred. I thought that was the saddest thing for that kid. For so many years, people wouldn't go into Hartford for that reason. In the 60's, there were things like riots

and people [inaudible] where they would melt down and Alvin Wood who was on the Town Council worked to block places that wouldn't serve blacks. So the Intergroup Council worked very hard on that. There was somebody from the State Human Rights Commission who worked with our group. I can't remember his name either.

AY: Now we are also trying to figure out where redistricting, the boundaries. I know we touched on redistricting a little bit. I actually have a few maps; we're trying to figure out where the lines, the school zones would be? Do you think you could help in identifying these boundaries?

NL: No, I don't remember that.

AY: Not even for the Blue Hills School?

NL: All I know is that there's a vast majority of blacks who went to the Blue Hills School and most of the kids who lived in Bloomfield were bussed anyway. People were like, well they are gonna have to be on a bus forever. A lot of the kids were on the bus a long time; they lived over there on the west side and they went to the Vincent school or something, that was a pretty long bus ride. There were kids who lived on Woodland Avenue, my kids used to go on the bus. We lived... Woodland Avenue is 3 miles long and we lived a mile and a half from the center and they were on the bus, so it would be a long bus ride for them. It was a ridiculous objection and I thought voluntary was wrong because in Project Concern, it's where kids went to school in the suburb. They used to go from Hartford to whatever school participated. So to make it a voluntary plan, to me was ridiculous and redistricting is never popular for, no matter whatever reason because people say, gee we bought a house to be near the schools. Well nothings permanent, and so I don't remember just where or how they did that. That would be in the administrative details.

AY: What about blockbusting, racial steering by real estate agents, and the town lawsuits against them?

NF: I was on the council, but people involved in that, among them there's a church on the corner of Wintonbury, near Brown's greenhouse.

AY: Are you talking about, is it near First Cathedral?

NF: No, its closer to the center near a Methodist church and the minister of that church was on the Intergroup Council. Both the...when the council started the minister, he went somewhere and the person took his place in the Intergroup Council. In the Intergroup Council there were many people. As a matter of fact, Herb Chester's' wife [inaudible]. And there were those who, and he was assistant superintendent who questioned whether or not she should belong to a group such as that, because her husband was assistant superintendent, and it was considered a conflict of interest. Zelda, Zelda Chester, she was also a member of the League of Woman Voters and we became very good friends. And I, well, the friend who started the league lived over in the Wintonbury area and when she was looking for a house, the realtor said gee, I can show you a house just like this in Windsor or whatever and I don't know if this is the word, it's a diverse population, and she said well, that's what I want and I don't think you should have tried to steer me to another place. So Jerry came from North Carolina, and she couldn't take the cold winters,

mainly because she didn't wear hats and she didn't wear wool things and her legs were always cold. Her folks were in North Carolina so she wanted to be close, but, and I think the League studied it too, but I don't remember. We had to take a position, that's one of the things Leagues do, take a position. The league does two things, there's an educational arm, you know vote and has candidates, and the other is, they study issues and they come to a consensus, and then they will work together to get the funding for the public schools, such that the town's that need the most money, got the most money. Whereas towns like Greenwich, towns down at Fairfield County, would get as much. Connecticut was one of the lowest states in terms of state contribution to education, and I think it still is. At the time the league did the study, I think Delaware used to contribute I think 40% to public education. Now, I don't think Connecticut has ever gone much beyond 23% or 25% and we're one of the richest states in the country.

AY: Were there any other issues about race, schools, and housing that I have not asked about that you can think of?

NL: Well I know there was a lot of controversy, people yelled at each other at Board meetings. I don't know, are you gonna talk to other people?

AY: Yes I am.

NL: You should really talk to Howard Wetstone.

AY: Yea I am. He is on my contact list.

NL: Oh, he is the smoothest speaker you've ever heard and he is amazing. The meeting would come to order and they had Board time and then they had questions from the public and Howard would start, and he would talk from three quarters to an hour, articulate. Then the board members could respond and we then we had a commentary, so there were people in the running who didn't want any part of this forced busing and integration and they used to really go at each other, they never punched each other, it never got to that. And then the council, the person has been the chairperson of the Board of Ed before Howard, was Phillips Brown, he was the original owner of Brown's Greenhouse.

AY: And he's no longer alive?

NL: I don't think so. Howard Wetstone, he didn't have a private practice, he was a Hartford Hospital doctor, but one of his patients was Philips Brown, so they were...and besides he and Rogean being close with Howard, Phillips Brown was close with Howard too. I think when I ran and there were people who were perturbed about Brown and the way he conducted the meetings, they encouraged me to run, and I think, in my first term, I got the highest vote.

AY: Why did they encourage you?

NL: Well, they wanted to diffuse Brown. They didn't want to do it by not nominating him or fighting at the town committee nomination, they were gonna go in the backdoor.

AY: I know you talked about people asking you to run, is there anything else.

NL: One of these people who asked me to run was Dr. Cone who either was on the town council, he ultimately ran, became, it was in the general assembly; he was amongst the ones that encourage me to run. He's dead, his wife just died she was 91. And his son, I think his daughter-in-law was apart of the Intergroup Council.

AY: I am actually looking for other people to interview to obtain more information on people's experiences; can you take a look at this contact list, and let me know if any of these people sound familiar? I know you said Howard Wetstone, right?

NF: Yea, I know that one of the people on the board, the Republicans because [inaudible] were in their first term, republicans were in the majority. The second term, there's a guy who used to work for the travelers meteorology department, but he went to work in Washington. So let's see, Adelle Wright, she's good, but see you did talk to her.

AY: I have interviews for Adelle Wright and Irene Llewellyn.

NF: You should talk to Ed Stockton, that's another thing, Ed Stockton, was mayor, he was on the town council and Bloomfield had one, was it a local award for...

AY: for being the All American City

NF: Yes, and I said as an All American City, you know, well they didn't like that because they didn't want to sully their reputation of Bloomfield by having a, having this discussion about integrating schools. We'll I don't remember Brian Hollander; I don't know that much about his. Cliff Vermilya has moved. It's Lewis Rome, not Romes. Don Harris, he became a member of the board, but Don didn't, well two things about Don, now you don't have to put this in the article, but he didn't like women who were assertive; and neither did Howard (Howard Wetstone). As a matter of fact, I don't know if it was around this time or when I was running the first or the second time, the man who was the chair person of the Republican Town Committee who was a judge, he's dead. Somebody in the Hartford Courant called me up and said I had said something about if Jesus registered with a party he would register with the Communist party or something like that. That would imply that I was communistic or something. So the Hartford Courant reporter called me and I called up this man...his last name is ...Anyway I said if you say anything in the Hartford Courant and that's printed, I'll sue you for libel. And I think I called Howard also. So there was nothing in the paper. So Clifford Vermilya is not here anymore. Lewis Rome might be interesting talking to him. He was chairperson of the Board of Trustees for the University of Connecticut for a while and also was on the town council. Lavine...is dead. Homer Foster...I don't know if he still lives in Bloomfield. Arnold Aronson, he was the town attorney so... Ossie Coletta, that's the guy that said he wanted to buy teachers, shop for teachers the way you shop for...and he used to live on Prospect Street. I don't know if he lives in town anymore. Dick Turner, no he doesn't live here anymore. Cutler, I think she's dead and I don't know where William Sanders is. James Swomley... he lives, [inadible] on the Town council very agreeing. Berry Greene, he lives in West Hartford, he's a lawyer and I used to kid him because he had white hair and the time I was on the board my hair was going white, I would say to him,

we have the same hairdo and look the same, I liked Berry a lot. Mackerel, MacKrell is not in Town anymore. Ed Goodwin, John Stewart, he was on the fire department in Hartford. I think Barry Hill is dead...Frank Thaller...

AY: I actually have an interview with him on Monday.

NF: I don't remember his being on the Board of Education. Diane, I think she was the secretary. Paul Copes, remember I told you I thought Ben Dixon would be terrific to take Herb's (Herbert Chester) place because he was involved the school, involved in diversity. He had great ideas about education, but because Bennett Milstein who was chairman of the Democratic town committee was dissatisfied with teachers that his daughters had, they went and got Paul Copes from Hartford. Paul Copes started out ok, but he just didn't...

AY: Yeah I know they didn't renew his contract.

NF: Another person, there was a woman who was secretary to a person who became [inaudible] teaching and got her PhD, in charge of applying for grants, and I see her, I love her, I see her daughter, she was blonde, she looked like Alice in Wonderland, blonde hair. But she was secretary, this lady, secretary for grants. Mary Eberle, Mary Eberle was on a council for the general assembly, she was somebody who abided by the people on the town committee. Mary Eberle used to work for CIGNA, and then she went into politics. But her husband has a different name, I can't remember, they were both lawyers. I think from the Board of Ed, she went to the general assembly. Bob Barrow, he's dead. We bought our house from Bob Barrows. His wife and my husband were in the same class in Windsor High. Nice guy, I liked him a lot. Michael, that's Dr. Cohen's son. Ma [inaudible].....was in real estate now, but she wasn't then. Irene Llewellyn was the daughter of

AY: Beatrice Woods

NF: Yes, that's right Alvin Woods and Bea Woods. That was Irene Llewellyn, their daughter, very tall woman

AY: Yes, I have already interviewed her.

NF: Bonnie Bercowitz, well she's the daughter of one of the owners of Copacco, and she's very liberal, her father was very liberal, her uncle, Herman Bercowitz, he's [inaudible]. He lives on Oak Rd. Kay Pollands, well I don't know who Kay Pollands is Alan DeLorenzo, well his wife is now the...

AY: Would that be Anita?

NL: Yes, she's the chairman of the Bloomfield Town Committee now, and Gil Hollands, well he doesn't live there any more. Lillian Harris, yea. Lillian Harris I think Don Harris' wife. Nice, nice lady, and Don Harris who is now the principal at Bloomfield High, he was the head of the athletic department.

AY: Do you know what years he worked there?

NL: Well, I worked at Bloomfield High for about 6 years. I used to tutor kids for the verbal SAT'. So I worked with them 6 years. I went to work for CIGNA in '82, so if he's the principal now and he was the head of the athletic department, he was young. He used to in his office a lot and eats donuts and coffee because I worked out of the reading lab when I had the class for the verbal SAT. Then he married a very sharp lady, and she worked at the Watkinson School. [looking back at the contact list] Michael and Naomi Cohen, I think they live in Bloomfield, I think they live up in Ballgrey. And she took her father-in-laws place on the general assembly. She was on the board and then I think she was on the general assembly. [inaudible] Fortunately, when they hired the most recent superintendent, and he came from Waterford, which is near, surrounds new London, and he had a PhD and he went to Harvard, got his PhD at Harvard, Title was his name, and they interviewed a lot of people for the job and I didn't think they'd vote for a white guy, but I am glad they did, because my sister is director of Children's Services at the Prossor Library and teachers would talk to her, because she is on the [inaudible] committee. They would talk about the superintendents after Copes left and the Superintendent that lived in Hartford.

AY: Did your sister live in Bloomfield during the 60's and 70's?

NL: She, well, my daughter was 4, when my sister went for her Master's degree at Wesleyan, so Linda lived with us while she was getting her Master's degree. My folks who are both dead now lived in Ansonia, which is near Hartford [referring to New Haven not Hartford]. So that's 68, yea. My sister used to be a nun, and she came out of the convent when she was 4, when I made the motion and it wasn't accepted.

AY: Whats your sister's name?

NL: Linda, and her last name is Gabianelli. Don Harris, his first wife went to the University of Hartford, she was homecoming queen, gorgeous looking girl, but they split, I don't know why and I think he had some children from that marriage. When he came to be principal...superintendent he was looking towards retirement, he was looking to do it for X number of years, and then Title came in. Title had a lot of contact with teachers and a lot of them left under the man who was interim superintendent. They were looking for a replacement and a lot of teachers left because they couldn't stand...he was rude, I am talking about Berelli. And people lived in Bloomfield for years. But now the teachers really like Title and they love their job. They can't wait to come to work in the morning, and they do great things with the kids. Linda works with kids from the High School because she works with kids when they have assignments and that works with teachers. So anyway...

AY: There were also some people who were nominated for the redistricting committee [show the Board of Education minutes]; do you know how helpful they would be for this?

NL: Mary Lee is great, but she's dead. Ed Goodwin, I don't think Ed Goodwin lives here anymore. Rose Metzker, he's not here anymore. I think Mary Hill is dead, I think Debbie Surkis still lives here. Ed Goodwin was great. You have Frank Thaller, I don't remember that he was

ever on the Board of Ed. Well, there's another person you should talk to, Dan Arnold, he was on the Board, and everytime he talked about something, he would say, well what you think she voters would think, we should consider a poll. And I used to say Dan, we represent the people, we were voted and we're supposed to representative of the population of Bloomfield. We can't take a poll on a revote because he... In my mind Dan didn't want to do anything to make people not like him, he's ok. And then when we had terrible superintendents, teachers were leaving, Dan said [inaudible] we're going to call Howard too, because Howard and I had the same votes, eventually we were working for higher salaries and smaller student teacher ratios. But he had to do it through the back door to satisfy the Republicans. He worked for CIGNA and then he had his own insurance firm, but I'm 70, you can figure you can do the math and Dan's younger than I, but, he doesn't want to get involved in politics again and I don't either, but at the time, it was worth it. It's a shame, all the good things we put in place. And then, like I said, it's much much better than it was. I know that there were people in these neighborhoods that planned to send their kids to High School in a different place, but they haven't moved, and their kids are going to good schools. And when I worked at the high school, the '76-'82, we would get results on the SAT tests and there were a number of kids who simply just aced it, who got perfect scores. I loved that, I loved that, I had more fun with those kids. When the Board of Ed was fooling around with the budgets, they would keep the number of hours, but they would decrease, no they would keep...I used to work 30 hours and either they cut back on the hours...because I never made anything more over 6 years, and I was a tutor, I wasn't eligible at that time to be a part of the education association. Then I had a friend, who worked with the Personnel at CIGNA, then I got a job in '82, and I went there. Years ago, I worked at Fox's; I was the Assistant Department Manager. And Fox's was downtown; do you know where Fox's is?

AY: Yes.

NL: It was a privately owned store.

AY: Ok, thank you, and if don't have anymore to add, that concludes our interview.

NL: Yea...there are Republicans in town, her name as Clare [inaudible] she was one of the few Republicans that I knew who had a Barry Goldwater sticker on her bumper and became secretary and she ended up being President of the Secretaries Association. So see this conservative person being on a union [inedible] in effect so the Republicans didn't like the NEA or the, the National Education Association or, what was the other one? There were two teachers associations, anyway... I know they used to feel intimidated by both Phil Brown who had been the chair before Howard, and Howard, when they would go into negotiations, for salaries negotiated. It was a contract and you have to honor that contract. Everything having to do with salaries was fixed and you can't cut it or... and then the council, you know people didn't want the taxes collected and we have to keep paying for this and that, and I said, hey I am young now, but I think when I am a white haired old lady I'm gonna say paying for education is one of the most important things if you want to maintain a democratic society. I think they wouldn't even sell it to him and Norman Baker was a realtor I think he said too. And he was one of the one's that really steered blacks over there. No he was a realtor in Bloomfield, he was a steerer, and there a couple of people involved in the Intergroup who don't live here anymore. Well anyway, as I said Adelle Wright had a boy living with her, I think his name was Roman, and Alison actually went

to the senior prom with Roman. There were people who said something about her dating blacks, a couple of times when she went to college; she went to Northeastern. She's a physical therapist; she's been in the navy almost 20 years. The people there said something about her dating blacks or something like that. So I would say all my kids take after me. You don't sit here and say things are bad, but they get the picture.