

INTERVIEW OF DR. EVA B. DYKES FOR ACHE TELEVISION PROGRAM

I: INTERVIEWER

D: EVA BEATRICE DYKES

I: WHAT IS YOUR FULL NAME?

D: EVA BEATRICE DYKES

I: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

D: AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE IN HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA.

I: WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

D: IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

I: WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?

D: TEACHER.

I: HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN PUBLIC SERVICE?

D: APPROXIMATELY FORTY-NINE YEARS. ONE YEAR AS TEACHER OF ENGLISH AND LATIN AT WALDEN UNIVERSITY IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE; EIGHT YEARS AS TEACHER OF ENGLISH AT DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON, D. C.; THIRTEEN YEARS AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D. C.; TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA. AT THE END OF THIS TIME, I RETIRED. IN 1968 I WAS CALLED BACK TO ASSIST IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT. I TAUGHT FOR THREE YEARS. TWO YEARS FULL TIME AND ONE YEAR AS A PART TIME TEACHER.

I: WHAT SCHOOLS HAVE YOU ATTENDED?

D: I FIRST WENT TO THE TEACHER-TRAINING SCHOOL AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY AS A FIRST-GRADE PUPIL. I RECEIVED MY TRAINING IN GRADES FIVE THROUGH EIGHT AT THE LUCRETIA MOTT SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON, D. C. THEN I WENT TO M STREET HIGH SCHOOL, LATER KNOWN AS DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL. I WENT TO HOWARD UNIVERSITY WHERE I RECEIVED A B.A. DEGREE SUMMA CUM LAUDE.

I: WHERE DID YOU STUDY AFTER THIS?

D: I RECEIVED A B.A. MAGNA CUM LAUDE, A M.A. AND PH.D. FROM RADCLIFFE COLLEGE.

I: THIS WAS A REMARKABLE ACCOMPLISHMENT TO RECEIVE A BACHELOR'S DEGREE AND A MASTER'S DEGREE WITH HONORS FROM RADCLIFFE, ONE OF THE NATION'S EXCLUSIVE IVY LEAGUE COLLEGES. WHAT YEAR DID YOU COMPLETE YOUR DOCTORATE?

D: THE DOCTORATE WAS CONFERRED IN 1921. IN MARCH OF 1921, I COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE.

I: YOU WERE THE FIRST BLACK WOMAN IN THE UNITED STATES TO FINISH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORATE, BUT YOU WERE ONE OF THE THREE FIRST NEGRO WOMEN AWARDED THE PH.D. DEGREE IN 1921, WERE YOU NOT?

D: YES. THE OTHER TWO RECIPIENTS WERE GEORGIANNA SIMPSON FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO AND SADIE TANNER MOZEL FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

I: WHAT SUBJECT FIELD DID YOU SPECIALIZE IN DURING YOUR EDUCATIONAL TRAINING?

D: I SPECIALIZED IN ENGLISH, LATIN, GERMAN AND GREEK.

I: YOU BECAME A MEMBER OF PHI BETA KAPPA?

D: YES, THE IOTA CHAPTER.

I: WHEN DID YOU LEAVE HOWARD UNIVERSITY TO TEACH IN ALABAMA AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE?

D: IN 1944.

I: ARE YOU NOW PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF THE OAKWOOD COLLEGE FACULTY?

D: YES.

I: WHAT ARTICLES AND BOOKS HAVE YOU WRITTEN?

D: I HAVE WRITTEN PERIODICAL ARTICLES FOR THE NEGRO HISTORY BULLETIN, JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY, AND MESSAGE MAGAZINE.

I: YOU ARE THE AUTHOR OF WHAT BOOKS?

D: THE NEGRO IN ENGLISH ROMANTIC THOUGHT IS THE TITLE OF ONE BOOK, AND I HAVE WRITTEN A MANUAL FOR BEGINNING TEACHERS OF LINGUISTICS IN A SECONDARY SCHOOL AND A MANUAL OF ENGLISH FOR GRAMMAR.

I: WHO WERE YOUR PARENTS?

D: MARTHA ANN HOWARD AND JAMES STANLEY DYKES.

I: WHAT WAS THE OCCUPATION OF YOUR FATHER?

D: MY FATHER WAS A PRINCIPAL OF A SCHOOL IN HAGARSTOWN, MARYLAND WHERE WE LIVED WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, AND LATER HE WAS A GOVERNMENT WORKER IN WASHINGTON, D. C.

I: DID ANY OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY GRADUATE FROM HOWARD UNIVERSITY?

- D: YES. MY UNCLE, JAMES HOWARD, RECEIVED HIS BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE IN 1870; HIS M.A. FROM THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS, AND HIS M.D. DEGREE FROM THE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY IN 1883. MY UNCLE JOHN RECEIVED HIS BACHELORS FROM HOWARD AND MY FATHER, JAMES DYKES. MY MOTHER ATTENDED HOWARD, BUT HAD TO DROP OUT BECAUSE OF ILL HEALTH. MY SISTER, FLORENCE, GRADUATED FROM THE COMMERCIAL COLLEGE.
- I: WHO INFLUENCED OR INSPIRED YOU TO ACHIEVE YOUR HIGHER EDUCATION?
- D: MY UNCLE, DR. JAMES DYKES. MY UNCLE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE GOOD FOR ME TO GET MY BACHELOR'S DEGREE FROM AN ACCREDITED SCHOOL. HOWARD WAS AN UNACCREDITED SCHOOL AT THE TIME I RECEIVED MY DEGREE FROM THERE. I STAYED TWO YEARS AT RADCLIFFE AND RECEIVED MY BACHELOR'S IN 1917. IN 1918 I RECEIVED MY MASTER'S AND MY PH.D. IN 1921 WHILE I WAS TEACHING. I WAS FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO RECEIVE FIVE SCHOLARSHIPS.
- I: WHEN DID YOU BEGIN TEACHING AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY?
- D: IN 1929. I WAS INVITED BY PRESIDENT MORDECAI JOUNSON TO JOIN THE FACULTY.
- I: WHO WERE SOME OF THE STUDENTS YOU HAVE TAUGHT THAT HAVE ACHIEVED SUCCESS?
- D: AMONG MY MANY STUDENTS, I REMEMBER CHARLES DREW, PIONEER IN BLOOD PLASMA RESEARCH AND FORMER CHIEF SURGEON AND CHIEF OF STAFF AT FREEDMEN'S HOSPITAL IN WASHINGTON, D. C. I ALSO REMEMBER WILLIAM HASTIE, WHO IN 1944 WAS APPOINTED GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS, AND BEFORE THAT HE WAS DEAN OF THE LAW SCHOOL AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY. I ALSO REMEMBER JOSEPH JENKINS WHO SERVED AS A TEACHER IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT TUSKEGEE INSTITUTE FOR SOME YEARS.
- I: WHO WERE SOME OF YOUR COLLEAGUES AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY?
- D: TODD DUNCAN, BARITONE SINGER; ALAIN LOCKE, WHO WAS THE FIRST COLORED MAN TO BE A RHODES SCHOLAR; CHARLES WESLEY, FORMER PRESIDENT OF WILBERFORCE UNIVERSITY; RALPH BUNCHE, DIPLOMAT AND U.N. MEDIATOR; ERNEST JUST, A BIOLOGIST OF UNUSUAL FAME; CAMILLE NICKERSON, CONCERT ARTIST AND TEACHER; AND LOUIA JONES, A FAMOUS VIOLINIST.
- I: I UNDERSTAND YOU ARE A MUSICIAN ALSO.
- D: YES. DURING MY LIFE IN WASHINGTON, D. C., I ACCOMPANIED SOME OF THE WELL KNOWN SOLOISTS, SUCH AS MADAME FLORENCE COLE TALBERT OF MEMPHIS; LILLIAN EVANTI OF WASHINGTON, D. C.; CHARLOTTE WALLACE MURRAY, A WELL KNOWN CONTRALTO OF NEW YORK; JOSEPHINE MUSE OF THE WASHINGTON CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC; LOUIA VAUGHN JONES AND WESLEY HOWARD, BOTH SKILLED VIOLINISTS, AND CLARENCE CAMERON WHITE, COMPOSER AND VIOLINIST.
- I: WHAT COURSES HAVE YOU TAUGHT DURING YOUR TEACHING CAREER AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE.
- D: I HAVE TAUGHT FRESHMAN ENGLISH, JOURNALISM, WORLD LITERATURE, REMEDIAL ENGLISH, ENGLISH LITERATURE, AMERICAN LITERATURE, RENAISSANCE LITERATURE, MEDIEVAL LITERATURE, VICTORIAN LITERATURE, MODERN LITERATURE, COLLEGE GRAMMAR, METHODS IN TEACHING SECONDARY ENGLISH.

I: IN YOUR BASIC ENGLISH CLASSES, YOU STRESSED THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE "MINIMUM ESSENTIALS" AND "AUDIBILITY", DID YOU NOT?

D: MY EMPHASIS ON THIS WAS AND STILL IS TRIGGERED BY THE FOLLOWING COMMENT, "WE FIND THAT SOME COLLEGE GRADUATES CANNOT READ, SPEAK, AND WRITE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CORRECTLY. I BELIEVE THAT IF WE STRESS CLEAR AND DISTINCT SPEAKING, WE WOULD ENJOY WHAT WE HEAR BETTER THAN SOME OF US DO." QUOTED FROM AN EDUCATOR.

I: MANY OF THE STUDENTS YOU HAVE TAUGHT AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE HAVE MADE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS ALSO, HAVE THEY NOT?

D: YES. THE PRESENT PRESIDENT OF OAKWOOD, CALVIN ROCK, WAS ONE OF MY STUDENTS AND THE FORMER PRESIDENT BEFORE HIM, FRANK HALE. MANY FACULTY AND STAFF MEMBERS OF THE COLLEGE WERE TAUGHT BY ME AND MANY RELIGIOUS LEADERS AND MINISTERS IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH.

I: WHAT HONORS HAVE YOU RECEIVED?

D: ALTHOUGH I WAS THE FIRST TO COMPLETE MY WORK FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS AT RADCLIFFE, I HAPPENED TO BE THE LAST TO RECEIVE THE DEGREE BECAUSE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES WERE HELD LATER AT RADCLIFFE THAN THE EXERCISES FOR THE OTHER TWO COLLEGES WHERE THE OTHER WOMEN ATTENDED.

I HAVE RECEIVED A CITATION OF EXCELLENCE IN RECOGNITION OF OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD PROGRAM OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. I RECEIVED THE ALUMNI AWARD FROM HOWARD UNIVERSITY FOR THE HIGHEST GRADE POINT AVERAGE ATTENDED DURING UNDERGRADUATE YEARS. BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY, I WAS SELECTED AS THE BEST ALL AROUND TEACHER OF THE FACULTY, AND I WAS A RECIPIENT OF THE ANNUAL ALUMNI AWARD CONFERRED BY THE TRUSTEES OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY FOR DISTINGUISHED POST GRADUATE ACHIEVEMENT IN EDUCATION. THERE ARE SOME OTHER AWARDS.

I: WHAT PART DID YOU PLAY IN THE FIRST FULL ACCREDITATION OF OAKWOOD COLLEGE?

D: I WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE THAT WORKED FOR THE FIRST FULL ACCREDITATION THAT OAKWOOD COLLEGE RECEIVED IN 1958.

I: THE PRESENT NEW LIBRARY BUILDING AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE WAS NAMED IN YOUR HONOR AND DEDICATED IN 1973, WAS IT NOT?

D: YES.

I: WHAT IS YOUR BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE THAT HAS ENABLED YOU TO MAKE SUCH AN OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO BLACK CULTURE AND ACHIEVEMENT?

D: