

OAKWOOD COLLEGE
ARCHIVES

ACHE TELEVISION INTERVIEW PROGRAM
OF
DR. EVA B. DYKES

I = INTERVIEWER
A = ANSWER

INTRODUCTION - THE HOST OF THE PROGRAM WILL GIVE INTRODUCTORY REMARKS TO INCLUDE THE INTERVIEWEE'S FULL NAME, EVA BEATRICE DYKES; PRESENT RESIDENCE, OAKWOOD COLLEGE, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA; WHERE SHE WAS BORN, WASHINGTON, D. C., AND HER OCCUPATION AS A TEACHER. PERSONS WHO WILL INTERVIEW WILL BE IDENTIFIED BY THE HOST.

- R. I: I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU RECEIVED YOUR ~~EARLY~~ TRAINING IN GRADES 1 - 4 AT THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY TRAINING SCHOOL; GRADES 5 - 8 IN LUCRETIA MOTT SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON, D. C. THEN AT M STREET HIGH SCHOOL, LATER KNOWN AS DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL; AND THEN YOU RECEIVED THE BACHELOR OF ARTS AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY, SUMMA CUM LAUDE.
- A: YES, THIS IS CORRECT.
- I: WHY WERE YOU CALLED BY DEAN COOK OF THE BUSINESS COLLEGE OF HOWARD "A DAUGHTER OF HOWARD."
- A: MY MOTHER ATTENDED HOWARD BUT WAS FORCED TO LEAVE BECAUSE OF ILLNESS. HOWEVER, BEFORE I WAS BORN, THREE UNCLES AND MY FATHER, JAMES DYKES, ATTENDED THE COLLEGE. AND LATER MY SISTER FLORENCE, NOW DECEASED, GRADUATED FROM THE COMMERCIAL COLLEGE OF HOWARD.
- I: DID YOU RECEIVE ANY HONORS AT HOWARD?
- A: I RECEIVED AN ALUMNI AWARD FROM THE AKA SORORITY OF HOWARD.
- I: WHERE DID YOU STUDY AFTER THIS?
- A: I STUDIED AT RADCLIFFE COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.
- I: WHO WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN CAUSING YOU TO CHOOSE RADCLIFFE COLLEGE?
- A: MY UNCLE, DR. JAMES HOWARD.
- I: ^{But} IF YOU ALREADY HAD A B.A. FROM HOWARD, WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO GET ANOTHER B.A. FROM RADCLIFFE?

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A: BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT HOWARD AT THAT TIME DID NOT HAVE THE STANDING IT HAS NOW; AND BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THE REGISTRAR AT RADCLIFFE WOULD ADMIT ME ONLY AS AN UNCLASSIFIED STUDENT, MY UNCLE THOUGHT IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO RECEIVE A B.A. FROM RADCLIFFE, A RECOGNIZED INSTITUTION.

I: WHAT DEGREES DID YOU RECEIVE AT RADCLIFFE?

A: I RECEIVED A B.A. MAGNA CUM LAUDE, AN M.A. AND A PH.D.

I: DID YOU RECEIVE ANY FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FROM RADCLIFFE?

A: YES, I RECEIVED FIVE SCHOLARSHIPS OF \$500 EACH. THIS MONEY, COMBINED WITH THE FINANCIAL AID OF MY UNCLE, DR. JAMES HOWARD, ENABLED ME TO FINISH MY EDUCATION AT RADCLIFFE.

L. I: THIS WAS A REMARKABLE ACHIEVEMENT TO RECEIVE YOUR B.A., M.A., AND PH.D. FROM RADCLIFFE; ONE OF THE NATION'S EXCLUSIVE IVY LEAGUE COLLEGES. WHEN DID YOU COMPLETE YOUR DOCTORATE?

A: THE DOCTORATE WAS CONFERRED IN JUNE, 1921. I COMPLETED THE REQUIREMENTS IN MARCH OF 1921.

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

A: YES, THE OTHER RECIPIENTS WERE ^{Wise}GEORGIANA SIMPSON FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO AND SADIE ALEXANDER FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

I: I UNDERSTAND THAT YOU ARE A MEMBER OF PHI BETA KAPPA.

A: YES, THE IOTA CHAPTER.

I: ALSO, I UNDERSTAND THAT THE TITLE OF YOUR DISSERTATION WAS POPE AND HIS INFLUENCE IN AMERICA FROM 1715 - 1850. NOW, LET US LOOK AT YOUR TEACHING EXPERIENCE. YOU TAUGHT ENGLISH AND LATIN ONE YEAR AT WALDEN UNIVERSITY IN NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE, WHICH NO LONGER EXISTS; 8 YEARS AT DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL IN WASHINGTON, D. C.; 14 YEARS AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY, WASHINGTON, D.C., AND 24 YEARS AT OAKWOOD COLLEGE, HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA. IN 1968 YOU RETIRED, AND IN 1970 YOU WERE CALLED BACK TO OAKWOOD BY DR. FRANK HALE, PRESIDENT OF OAKWOOD AT THAT TIME, TO ASSIST IN THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT. YOU TAUGHT TWO YEARS AS PART TIME TEACHER FROM 1973-1975, MAKING A TOTAL OF FIFTY-ONE YEARS. AND NOW YOU ARE PROFESSOR EMERITUS.

A: YES, THIS IS CORRECT.

I: IN CONJUNCTION WITH YOUR TEACHING, YOU HAVE DONE SOME WRITING. FOR INSTANCE, YOU HAVE WRITTEN ARTICLES FOR SUCH PERIODICALS AS THE NEGRO HISTORY BULLETIN; THE JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY; THREE ^{From the S.D.A. Church?} ADVENTIST PERIODICALS: THE YOUTH INSTRUCTOR NOW KNOWN AS INSIGHT; THE REVIEW AND HERALD, AND CURRENTLY THE MESSAGE MAGAZINE. YOU HAVE WRITTEN A BOOK, THE NEGRO IN ENGLISH ROMANTIC THOUGHT; AND YOU CO-EDITED READINGS FOR NEGRO SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES AND A MANUAL OF ENGLISH FOR FRESHMAN ENGLISH. HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO WRITE THE NEGRO IN ENGLISH ROMANTIC THOUGHT?

A: WHEN I WAS TEACHING A SURVEY COURSE IN ENGLISH LITERATURE AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY, I NOTICED THAT FREEDOM WAS THE WATCHWORD OF SUCH ROMANTIC WRITERS LIKE SOUTHEY, COLERIDGE, WORDSWORTH, AND OTHERS. I WAS INTRIGUED BY THEIR INTEREST IN FREEDOM AND ESPECIALLY THE FREEDOM OF THE NEGRO; THIS FACT INSPIRED ME TO WRITE THE BOOK.

R. I: WHAT WERE SOME OF THE COURSES YOU TAUGHT AT OAKWOOD?

A: I TAUGHT ENGLISH COMPOSITION, ^{RE}REMEDIAL ENGLISH, ^{IN}JOURNALISM, ENGLISH LITERATURE, WORLD LITERATURE, AND PERIOD COURSES SUCH AS THE MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD, THE ELIZABETHAN PERIOD, THE ROMANTIC PERIOD, THE VICTORIAN PERIOD AND THE MODERN PERIOD. I MAY INCLUDE HERE A COURSE IN MILTON, WHICH COMPRISED THE PURITAN PERIOD.

Award I: I NOTE THAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED CERTAIN HONORS IN BOTH SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, BOTH AS A STUDENT AND A TEACHER. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU RECEIVED AN ALUMNI AWARD FOR YOUR WORK AS A STUDENT WHEN YOU GRADUATED FROM HOWARD UNIVERSITY. BY UNANIMOUS VOTE OF THE HOWARD UNIVERSITY FACULTY YOU WERE SELECTED AS THE BEST ALL AROUND TEACHER OF THE FACULTY.

IN MARCH, 1945, ON CHARTER DAY YOU WERE A RECIPIENT OF THE ANNUAL ALUMNI AWARD CONFERRED BY THE TRUSTEES OF HOWARD UNIVERSITY FOR DISTINGUISHED POST-GRADUATE ACHIEVEMENT IN EDUCATION. YOU ALSO WERE THE RECIPIENT OF A PLAQUE FROM THE CHICAGO CHAPTER OF THE OAKWOOD ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FOR DISTINGUISHED TEACHING. *^*

I - THE COLLEGE LIBRARY AT OAKWOOD WAS NAMED IN YOUR HONOR ALSO.

A: YOU ARE CORRECT. WHEN I LEARNED OF THESE HONORS, I WAS VERY MUCH SURPRISED.

I: YOU ALSO RECEIVED A CITATION OF EXCELLENCE IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION FROM THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS FOR YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENT IN THE AREA OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION. WHAT PART DID YOU PLAY IN THE FIRST FULL ACCREDITATION OF OAKWOOD COLLEGE?

A: I WAS CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE WHICH WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF EVERY OAKWOOD WORKER FINALLY EFFECTED THE ACCREDITATION THAT OAKWOOD RECEIVED IN 1958.

R. I: I HAVE KNOWN YOU AS A MUSICIAN BOTH AS SOLO PIANIST AND AS ACCOMPANIST FOR MANY NOTED ARTISTS LIKE LILLIAN EVANTI, ONE OF THE FIRST BLACK WOMEN TO RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION AS A SINGER IN THE OPERATIC AREA.

~~WILL YOU ADD TO THIS LIST?~~

A: YES. AMONG SOME OF THE FAMOUS BLACKS I HAVE ACCOMPANIED I MAY MENTION ONLY A FEW - WESLEY HOWARD, LOUIA JONES, AND CLARENCE CAMERON WHITE, NOTED VIOLINISTS. THE LATTER WAS ALSO A NOTED COMPOSER.

(NOTE - DR. DYKES MIGHT PLAY A PIANO SELECTION HERE)

I: WHO WERE SOME OF THE WELL-KNOWN STUDENTS YOU HAVE TAUGHT?

A: I TAUGHT WILLIAM HASTIE, GOVERNOR OF THE VIRGIN ISLANDS; CHARLES DREW, PIONEER IN THE BLOOD PLASMA AREA; AND OTHER FAMOUS BLACKS. I ALSO TAUGHT MANY OF THE PRESIDENTS AND OFFICERS IN THE REGIONAL CONFERENCES OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS. THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF OAKWOOD COLLEGE WAS ONE OF MY FORMER STUDENTS, UNDER WHOSE PRESIDENCY THE ENROLLMENT HAS INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. Dr. Mervyn Warren, ~~Academy Dean of Belknap~~

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

A: I WAS TAUGHT FROM A CHILD TO DO MY BEST IN ANY UNDERTAKING WHETHER I LIKED IT OR NOT. THE SATISFACTION OF DOING MY BEST BRINGS A GREATER REWARD THAN THE ACTUAL ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MY AIM.

CONCLUSION: THE HOST OF THE PROGRAM WOULD MAKE THE CLOSING REMARKS.

Walter Krsack
Class of 1938

Words:

Salley Douglas
Graduated
1929 - Park
1942 - Plymouth
Chicago
Institute
of Musicians
the
only
female
faculty
member
who
owned
an automobile