

10-28-2011

## Interview with Kenyon Professor Emeritus Roy T. Wortman

Rebecca Katzman

Roy T. Wortman

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digital.kenyon.edu/ps\\_interviews](https://digital.kenyon.edu/ps_interviews)

---

### Recommended Citation

Katzman, Rebecca and Wortman, Roy T., "Interview with Kenyon Professor Emeritus Roy T. Wortman" (2011). *Interviews*. 19.  
[https://digital.kenyon.edu/ps\\_interviews/19](https://digital.kenyon.edu/ps_interviews/19)

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Spaces at Digital Kenyon: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Interviews by an authorized administrator of Digital Kenyon: Research, Scholarship, and Creative Exchange. For more information, please contact [noltj@kenyon.edu](mailto:noltj@kenyon.edu).

**Accession Number:** PS-MS-TR-KATZMAN-102811

**Interviewee:** Kenyon Professor Emeritus, Roy T. Wortman

**Interviewer:** Rebecca Katzman

**Subject:** Public Life in Knox County

**Place:** Ascension Hall, Office 010

**Duration:** 44 minutes, 54 Seconds

**R:** Rebecca Katzman

**W:** Roy Wortman

R: This is Becca Katzman. I'm here with Professor Roy Wortman. It is Friday October 28, 2011, and we are here to talk about public space in Knox County. Where do you live?

W: Gambier.

R: Gambier? And how long have you lived in Knox County?

W: 41 years.

R: And what do you do for a living?

W: I am Professor emeritus of History in my 41<sup>st</sup> year at Kenyon. I worked full-time at Kenyon for 34 years, and am teaching now on a part-time basis. I fold the tent this June, and will no longer teach on a part-time basis.

R: And what are the Masons?

W: The Masons are an ancient order, very misunderstood, deeply rooted in history, liberty, and individual conscience. Um, they emphasize relief, truth, and brotherly love; mutual support. And historically for the most part, the nasty people in history didn't like us and don't like us. Good credentials.

R: When did you become a Mason?

W: I became a Mason in 1998 formally. Informally, I became a Mason when I first found out about it from my mama about her daddy, my grandpa Theodore.

R: What do you mean informally?

W: I always wanted to be a Mason.

R: And how do you become a Mason?

W: All you have to do is ask. There's no aggressive recruiting, we are very low profile. If you show an interest and have the slightest question, all you have to do is ask a Mason. If you don't know a Freemason, one can go to the website of the Masonic grand lodge in his or her, correction, in *his* state or province. The gender specificity is detailed because there is a separate group for women known as The Order of Eastern Star, and groups for young women called Job's Daughters, and Rebecca's Daughters, okay?

R: So the Masons are a male group?

W: Yes. But we do not discriminate in any way against others.

R: How many people are in your group, specifically?

W: Uh, in Ohio Lodge 199 approximately, I'll guess about 170 to 175.

R: And, how often do you convene?

W: Formally, stated meetings once a month. Informally as needed; for various committees, sub committees, socializing, dinners, banquets, or to help other Masons or community activities, or fundraisers. So twelve times a year definitely. Plus as needed elsewhere.

R: So will you elaborate a little bit on those community activities and fundraisers?

W: Yes community activities. We support throughout the state the Special Olympics for the developmentally disabled. We do that, uh, we've done some other work for other charitable organizations. We have fundraisers for our lodge. In fact, your two classmates stopped by the Knox County airport on that rainy fall day when we had a fundraiser for the Heart of Ohio Tour. And that's how by accident I met Rebecca and Dan from your Rural Life Seminar at Kenyon. We also have picnics; sometimes a pork chop barbeque that one of our members expertly does to raise funds. We used to sell Christmas trees, but change in the shopping center where Kroger super market is chased us away from our sales spot, so we don't have a big fundraiser anymore.

R: What do you mean?

W: We would sell Christmas trees to the general public to raise money to help support our lodge. We had space donated at the gas station at the Kroger shopping center on Coshocton Avenue, are you with me so far? And Kroger purchased the gas station from Bullocks, which was the private person who owned the gas station and tobacco store, and since then, we've not been able to sell Christmas trees, so we don't have that as a fundraiser. Do you understand me?

R: Yes.

W: Okay.

R: Thank you. Uh, so did I ask you how often you convene?

W: Yes you did. I told you once a month, twelve times a year, for formal stated meetings.

R: Okay, and what are, uh, the goals and motifs for your meetings?

W: A very good question. Actually, uh, a tough question, even though it sounds simple on the purpose. Uh, the conceptual goal is fellowship. The everyday keep the lodge afloat goal is, to keep the business of the lodge going and to keep our heads above water; maintain the lodge and its members.

R: And what are some of the challenges in keeping the lodge going and maintaining its members? Will you elaborate on that a little bit?

W: Yes.

R: Thanks.

W: A challenge would be to keep the membership involved: to keep them active, to keep them coming, and to maintain their interest, commitment and support. In any voluntary organization to the best of my knowledge, I am not an expert on this I am not a sociologist, but to my knowledge working with other groups in voluntary organizations when there are no mandates—unlike the army or a corporation or a business, you don't have to be there. So if ten percent of the people show up, you're lucky. Okay?

R: Okay. So could you describe, maybe there isn't a typical meeting, but could you describe maybe from start to finish what would occur and everything at a typical meeting?

W: Mm hmm. Yeah, sure. Mm hmm.

R: Thanks.

W: Sure. No secret at all. And by the way, we are not a secret organization, I hope you know that.

R: Yes.

W: Okay. Uh very simply, we adjourn, we gather in the lodge building generally informally in Bladensburg, Ohio although there are other places in Knox County—Fredericktown, and for example, Mount Vernon. The master of the lodge calls us to

order. We thus assemble, convene, do our business *and* if need be ritual, and then adjourn. The meetings take from as long as three hours to as short as forty minutes, and after every meeting we always have fellowship, which involves sociability in the room we use for refreshment. There are two concepts in the Masonic lodge: one is called labor, and the other refreshment. Labor is when we do our work, whether it's ritual or business. Refreshment is when we release ourselves from our craft and we enjoy ourselves socially and blow off steam. In Ohio, by vote of the membership, Masons do not drink in lodge. In Canada, in Scotland, in New Zealand and Australia, Masons come home very very happy because they *do* drink in lodge. But Ohio has a more conservative membership as far as alcohol goes—I'm not among them by the way, but I don't advocate going to a country lodge and then driving home with alcohol under my belt.

R: Yeah.

W: Okay?

R: So, do people drink in other states in the United States, or just...

W: Yes.

R: Um, so you talk about ritual versus refreshment. Do both of those, in terms of time and in terms of energy, carry the same weight at your meetings?

W: Smart question, the answer is no. Uh, ritual takes a lot of time. Sometimes we wish we had more time for refreshment. But I think it's an excellent question because what you're cutting at to the heart of that sharp question, I think it's a very sharp question, is the meaning of it all. And there are at least two kinds of Masons broadly speaking: there are the ritualistic types, and the fellowship types.

R: Two kinds of Masons as in the people at any given lodge? Or two kinds of Mas...

W: Okay I'm sorry, I was unclear and you're correct in bringing this up. There are no two categories of Masons, all Freemasons put on their pants the same way and we're all equal, we're on level. And the level is one of our symbols, okay? But some Masons, by personal preference, prefer ritualistic work and are deeply involved in it; and other Masons while they appreciate the ritual work, because behind the ritualism is wonderful meaning and symbolism and morality, they, while honoring that, like the sociability of just breaking bread. Okay?

R: Uh huh.

W: Am I clear, or did I...

R: Yes, Perfect.

W: Okay.

R: So would you consider yourself to be more of a, um, ritual Mason or a refreshment Mason?

W: Both.

R: Yeah, equally?

W: Yeah.

R: Or does it depend on a given day, or...

W: Yes.

R: Yeah?

W: Yeah. Too much ritual I personally can't take, because it takes a long long time and my attention span, while not impatient, is not as patient as it should be for lengthy rituals.

R: Uh huh. What do you mean exactly by rituals?

W: A ritual would be a process; for example, when you graduate from college you go through a ritual. If you go to a religious service in some faiths, you have ritual. It's a...

R: So you have the same rituals each meeting?

W: Sometimes; and sometimes we don't, all depends on which ritual we do, that is to say yes we have the same format in each meeting, but the rituals vary with the kind of initiation or degree that a person steps into. No secrets, it's on the web. That is to say, if you wish to become a Mason you become an entered apprentice, just as in ancient days you became an apprentice in crafting the stone for the buildings you were building, okay? And then after a period of time you become a fellow of the craft, a Fellowcraft, or the second degree, and there is a ritual for that which has a parable to it. And then after a period of time, there is the third degree: the final degree and the most important degree, the Master Mason degree, in which one is raised, R-A-I-S-E-D, to the degree of Master Mason, the third degree. Ever hear the term so-and-so got the third degree? Yeah? what do you think it means when you hear someone say; oh the cops gave him the third degree?

R: Well I usually think of third degree like a burn.

W: Okay okay. Or in questioning, in pretty tough questioning. It comes actually to the best of my knowledge, from the Masonic ritual of going through the third degree,

which is not arduous at all but rather, quite pleasant and a wonderful learning and teaching experience.

R: So you're of the third degree?

W: Yeah, no big thing.

R: How long does it take?

W: Uh, for me it took approximately nine months to make it to third degree. Some people do it in three. It all depends on the lodge and whether or not a person and his work schedule permits the examination to take place. The Masons are very generous in being flexible, at least in my lodge and this district about schedules, time. We have some people who are in the service and they've been deployed overseas, so they had to wait months to go to another degree. We had another person who had a learning problem, so that took time. But you can do it in at least, to my knowledge, in at least three months under ideal situations, assuming meeting once a month. Okay?

R: What would you say the average age is of your group of Masons?

W: I would say it's, well I can't say with accuracy but I would guess it's in the early sixties now. I could be wrong, we're growing younger. Oddly enough, more and more young people are joining Ohio 199, I don't know why. In Washington DC, the lodges are flooded and I don't know why, in Cambridge Massachusetts and at Harvard. Young people are joining out on the West Coast in certain areas there's a growing membership. In the Middle West, the high planes, the prairie towns of Canada, membership in small towns is declining. In the urban areas, to my understanding there is growth.

R: Why do you think it's declining in small towns?

W: Oh that's easy enough. If you go to North Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Saskatchewan, there is an aging population. The people of European descent, by planning and birth control, do not reproduce. When they do reproduce, rural life is not very romantic; it's extremely harsh, it's very tough. Young people don't want to stay on the farm. And with the exception of for example North Dakota which I know a little bit, I know it 43% as a matter of fact, I just took a quiz about North Dakota—one of my favorite states. With the exception of the sudden influx in the [Belkin?] range for mineral, work, oil drilling around Williston North Dakota, going through Montana, Wyoming, Saskatchewan, Alberta; with that exception, the population of North Dakota is the same today as it was in the mid 1930's. There's a decline of agricultural America—you need to know that, okay? The population at any rate, but you probably know that already.

R: Do you and your fellow Masons socialize much outside of meetings?

W: Sometimes. In Masonic functions or Masonic-related functions. Otherwise I do not as a matter of course, socialize with them on a daily basis or weekly basis. But if I need help or they need help, or there's a Masonic function, we gather. And we feel comfortable with each other, and I can tell you they are very good people.

R: Do you have any more to share on that, or any anecdotes or anything?

W: I can only say that they are good people and I'll tell you this: that when I first came to Knox County and I wasn't a Mason, but I knew about the craft from my mother who told me about her dad, my grandpa Teddy, and on my wife's side, her people were Freemasons. Long story short, I thought highly of them. And as I matured as a historian, I read about them and I always wanted to be a Freemason, but I never had the time because my job ate me alive. And after my kids left home, after our girls graduated from College, I had a little breathing space and I said, it's time. And so, I saw the post master of Gambier, Charles Woolison, he was behind the counter...

R: Will you say his name again?

W: Charles Woolison, W-O-O-L-I-S-O-N, I think I emailed his name to you?

R: Yes?

W: Good, then I remember correctly. He is the sweetest man I've known in government service, he's absolutely [unclear word], doesn't have a bad bone in his body, and one day he wore a little tie tack with a square and compasses on it. And I looked at his tie tack when I purchased the stamp, and I said those are good people, my grandpa was one, and he beamed and said thank you. Charlie, you mind if I talk with you? Sure Roy. And a few weeks later, people assembled in the lodge in Bladensburg on a Wednesday night, and I was taken in for the first degree; initiated as an entered apprentice, Okay? No secrets at all, I simply saw a little tie tack on Charlie Woolison's tie.

R: Wow.

W: And he was such a good person. So to get back to the point: since I came to Knox County, I didn't know this; the people I most looked up to, the people I most admired, they never advertised it—they were Masons. Turns out, they're Masons. My mama was right. My grandpa was right.

R: So could you describe your lodge to me? Like physically what it looks like, in as much detail as possible?

W: Yeah. I'll refer you to a photograph. Did you get it on the web? The picture of the building? Okay, well we can call it up and save you time.



R: Okay.

W: Okay? But I can give you specific measurements, colors, two stories plus a basement, various additions made to it. Uh, we have a pretty good kitchen. We do a lot of cooking. We have a recreation, not a recreation hall but we have a meeting hall downstairs, and then we have our ritual work and lodge upstairs that's beautiful. And I would invite you, in fact I'll see if I can invite you if you wish, when we have some kind of friendship night to the lodge so you can see for yourself. There are no secrets; we don't have a hidden armory with firearms, okay?

R: I would love that, thanks.

W: Okay.

R: Uh, so how many rooms are there?

W: Basically, two large main rooms, okay? A public meeting room for refreshment; a dining room. And upstairs for the ritual work, we have one large lodge, L-O-D-G-E, a large lodge room. Then we have a few other rooms: storage rooms, a pantry, and a basement that's not very habitable. We are the tallest building in Bladensburg, Ohio.

R: Have things changed over the years?

W: Great question. There's an old joke Becca, how many Masons does it take to change a light bulb? None; the Masons never change. Uh, things have changed. Sometimes in a high degree, sometimes not. So I'm not playing games of yes and no. The root foundations have remained the same over the centuries: about liberty of conscience, individual dignity, so forth, but there have been some service changes. I can give you an example since you can connect with this as a sociologist. Two people have to work in a family now to survive. It's no more patriarchal daddy, and mama stays home. That's a make believe world that I don't think ever existed except for, well it just never existed for the most part, okay? So that's changed, number one. Number two: for voluntary organizations across the board in the United States, there is a decline in membership because the pace of life, the demands for making a living, and the intensity of trying to juggle and balance in the time famine are so great, that one doesn't have time for other things. It's as simple as that, and I need not go on.

R: So how are these changes in rural society that you've seen over the years reflected in um, your Masonic group? Or are they?

W: Yes, I think.

R: I guess, do you have any specific ways, or specific examples of how your group has changed throughout the years?

W: Yes, yes. We've become more multi-religious—we have three Jews, we have a few Catholics, a few ex-Catholics. We have a lot of Protestants, many of whom are deep but not fundamentalistic believers, others of whom are nominally Protestant Deists—live and let live, and they're all pretty good people. Um, in my lodge we are not multi-racial because there's not much of a multi-racial population here in Knox County. In California lodges, DC, New Mexico, Arizona, New York City, multi-lingual, multi-national. For your information I've struck up a friendship with a francophone in Washington DC, a Quebecer—I've worked in Canada, and I've got an appreciation for Canadian francophone culture. As I did some research for him, for entry into the craft in DC, it turns out that there's a francophone lodge in DC. It's an international city, so it maintains cohesiveness among francophones, be they from Africa, France, Belgium, Canada, okay? So there are language affinity groups in a place like DC. There are nationality groups, historically, in the Bronx New York—there used to be a lodge called the [Kosciusko Lodge?] named after [Tidies Kosciusko?].

R: Would you spell that?

W: I'll spell it out for you in a minute.

R: Okay, thanks.

W: But if you don't know about him, he was a Polish military man who volunteered to fight in the American Revolution, he was a Freemason. Michael [Jahimchick?], one of my students when I first came here, he became a freemason and became master of the Kosciusko Lodge in New York City. The members of the Kosciusko Lodge are for the most part of Polish Catholic background. The formal hierarchy of the Church of Rome does not smile upon its members joining the craft, and when I asked this of Michael, he smiled and said, we just look the other way.

R: So besides the makeup of the members, have any of the rituals changed?

W: Yes, and only in one way: symbolically. It used to be that Masonry was open to any man freeborn of good report who was able-bodied. Now if you think about it, a veteran who comes back from the war missing a body part is not, quote unquote, able-bodied. That veteran is of course welcome by any lodge. So, maybe at one time the able-bodied applied. I'm really dubious about that, but certain things we don't take literally, okay? And especially for veterans or the disabled.

R: Has the space itself changed?

W: Slightly. It was enlarged several times, from approximately 1851 it expanded a bit.

R: What do you think of the space itself? Do you think it's conducive for what you're trying to do as an organization and what you need to accomplish?

W: Yes, and I think it's a good question because spatial relationship and ascetics are very important: I think it's a beautiful space and it fits us just fine. We're an ancient building; we're not a modern office building, I don't think we want to be. Although, there are modern office complexes and modern Masonic buildings. Now as we chat, I'm gonna see if I can call up for you a picture, okay? [Begins navigating the computer].

R: That would be great, thank you.

W: And I'll give you two examples: my youngest daughter who is in Tokyo now, her husband is stationed in Tokyo, and she's with him, she's with him working there. Long story short, she sent me a picture of the Tokyo lodge, which is a beautiful innovative bit of Japanese architecture, okay? [Typing] and we'll contrast that to, let me just get this down... [Typing] I had a concussion two and a half weeks ago, so

R: Oh, I'm sorry

W: That's okay. Alright let's go, let me just get, thank you for your, but I'm doing okay. Anyway, that's why I'm a, I'm coherent, clear, I've been examined. I am sharp, my memory works, I'm doing just fine, but...

R: That's good. I'm sorry to hear that.

W: But a little, little you know, injury on the hand, so my manual dexterity isn't what it was three weeks ago, but it's getting better.

R: Good.

W: That's why I'm a little slow on the keyboard. Okay? Now, here's what we're going to do for you [typing; presumably searching for the lodges on Google]. Oh man.

R: Maybe if you clicked images.

W: I'm going to hit images, exactly so dear. Now let's see if we can get... nope, not good enough, not good enough.

R: That's alright.

W: No, it's not alright. We're going to get it because [typing], it's possible okay?

R: Okay.

W: [typing] FAAM is free and accepted Masons. Sometimes it's AF and AM, or ancient free and accepted Masons, okay?

R: So you're looking at Ohio 199 FAAM?

W: Yes.

R: Okay.

W: Let's see if we're gonna get it. Here's what we're gonna do. That didn't come up, so here's what we're gonna do: we're gonna put in the formal name, okay?

R: Okay. So you're googling the Ohio 5 199 Bladensburg, Ohio FAAM?

W: [typing] here we go, okay. That's the building, okay?

R: So the building, it's, it's a white building with five windows. There are symbols in the windows, there's an American flag out front. It's kind of a simple looking building,

W: Yes.

R: Uh, it has written on the front of it, Ohio Lodge 199, Chartered October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1851?

W: Yes.

R: Glenwood Chapter 703 chartered October 27<sup>th</sup>,

W: 1909.

R: 1909.

W: That is the Order of the Eastern Star, which is, the order for women in the craft, okay?

R: Oh, okay.

W: And the symbols we simply added on, they were decals, okay?

R: They're nice.

W: And this is, this is the major symbol, and then we have a,

R: Would you, would you mind describing the major symbol? Is that what I see on your ring?

W: Yes, it's simply the square and compasses. The compass to circumscribe our actions, the square to keep us sharp and on the level. And you'll sometimes...

R: What about the leaves? On the ring.

W: The acacia leaf, that is the symbol of eternal life, okay?

R: It's nice.

W: Thank you. This one is an ancient ring that comes from Birmingham, England. I am honored to have it.

R: That's so nice.

W: And I chose to wear one. I don't always wear it, but I've been wearing one for the last dozen years, okay?

R: Okay, thanks. Uh, how have the Masons, uh, did I ask you how have the Masons contributed to the public space in Knox County throughout the years?

W: No you did not.

R: Okay.

W: I don't know that we do in any way, I know that this is the topic of your seminar and you're supposed to ask questions about it, I suppose the only way we contribute to public space is by being and existing. There is an interesting ascetic, it's no longer a Masonic lodge, but if you go to downtown Mt. Vernon in the square, the most beautiful ancient building on the town square is the old Masonic building. The woodwork inside was stunning, but it was so expensive to maintain and support, and the stairs were so difficult for the elderly and infirm, even with a little escalator or elevator. Um, and the utility so high that members of Mt. Zion lodge gave it up, and they now moved to the Eastern Star Home. They have a lodge room in the new community room of the Order of Eastern Star, about two miles from Gambier on 229.

R: So what's the building from downtown Mt. Vernon used for now?

W: I don't know.

R: Okay. Um, what has your group done for rural space in Knox County?

W: I don't know that the group has done anything consciously. However, members of my lodge and of other lodges are farmers, and by virtue of some of them serving as farmers and stewards of the land and landowners, they intrinsically contribute to the preservation of space. And sometimes they sell land, as is their right, and so

they don't contribute to the preservation of space. It all depends. But those farmers I do know take their work seriously, they're not romantic about farming—it's not anything you'll learn in the sociology course about rural life, okay? My daddy grew up in a rural area; I wouldn't wanna have gone through what he went through when he was a boy, and there's nothing romantic about it unless you're a gentleman farmer, okay? Am I clear?

R: Yes.

W: Okay.

R: So what makes, what do you think makes the lodge work? In terms of, often times, public spaces are inclusive to everyone. So putting that fact aside, I would consider your lodge to be a public space, just because it's a place for all of you to convene and do your ritual thing; do the refreshments; gather. So what, what do you think, like physical aspects and just like stuff in the nature of the space, what do you think makes it work?

W: I'll answer your question, but let me backtrack. Why are you constantly pushing public spaces? Is this what your professor wants you to focus on?

R: This is what our class is focusing on for our project.

W: Who made the, who made the decision to focus on public space?

R: Um, I think it's, it's part of a grant called the McGregor Grant...

W: Okay. I understand, it comes back to me now in a flash, I understand. Let me tell you what makes public space: physicality, and people. And then ordinances that either allow or don't allow. And the free market which either allows building or doesn't allow building. And population expansion and commercial expansion, or not. And finally, the people themselves if they decide on what public space is. Public space can be something in a crowded city: in downtown Cleveland or Columbus; and it can also be something near Danville, Ohio in the acreage. It all depends on how you play the game. And I'm not being clever here; I'm just being a historian.

R: What do you mean, on how you play the game?

W: How you define public space, do you understand me?

R: Um, yeah.

W: Yeah. And then there's private space which is public space, you know?

R: Yeah, so would you say that your lodge is more private?

W: Uh, great question. Um, the Masonic order is a private organization. It is not owned by the public, but it is open to those who wish to inquire, okay?

R: Okay. So do you have anything else to say about um, how the lodge fits in with public space in Knox County?

W: I think it speaks for itself in two ways: number one, its actual building and physical presence. But number two, there's a spiritual public space which is taken up by the members of the lodge as we go about our business everyday; in commuting to Columbus, Fredericktown, Cleveland, uh, work. Two kinds of public space. And sometimes public space is private, and sometimes private space becomes public—I'm not being cryptic, are you with me?

R: Yes.

W: Okay.

R: Thanks. What do you think that the role of my class, my Rural Life Fieldwork class, you know, we're doing this project on public space, what do you think our role should be in promoting and developing rural space in Knox County?

W: I don't know. If I had an answer I'd be an authority, wouldn't I? And I'm not an authority. I'm a plain person. I am not special, I am not an expert, and I don't bullshit

R: But I value your opinion.

W: Thank you. I don't know what the role of your seminar should be.

R: Is there any, I heard you before mentioning a little bit about, um, just how rural life over the years has changed. Is there anything that you'd like to see happen or that you'd like restored?

W: Yes: fewer cities, more land, fewer people—it's not going to happen. I also believe that voluntary population control, voluntary birth control, is not a bad thing. But it cannot be mandated in a free society, as it is for example in a place like China. Okay?

R: So any other, any other suggestions...

W: For your seminar?

R: Yeah, or advice, anything?

W: Excuse me, the jury's still out on that one. I'm sure Professor Sacks has some answers, does he not? I don't; maybe he does.

R: Well our research is inductive. So we're going out, there's 14 people in my class I believe, and we're going out to various people who we think just have kind of the whole perspective, and we're trying to... we don't have a project or a theme in mind, we're just trying to talk to the people, get something from them, hear what they have to say, and then make a project from that.

W: Okay, I have a perspective as a historian. And as an individual, the people who have far deeper perspectives than I, I will name them.

R: Great.

W: They are humble, modest people; better than I am, and that's all I'm gonna say. And maybe your seminar can tap their brains. I can't speak for them, but I look up to them. They don't have,

R: Do you have any?

W: Go ahead.

R: No you please.

W: They don't have formal education. They have great character, and they're smarter than a lot of academicians, okay?

R: Do you have any names of people you think might be good?

W: Yes, but I don't think I want that recorded.

R: Okay, that's fine.

W: And I'll tell you why: because a few of them are sick and ill, and I don't want them being bothered by telephone calls or interviews. Not that I speak for them, but I know their physical situations. If they feel up to it, I can find out. And I would recommend that *you* talk to them, I would not recommend because I don't know the other people that they talk to them, but you have established confidence and credibility with me. And if you do talk to them, I would talk without prepared comments or questions written down in advance, unless they want to see it.

R: Okay, sorry.

W: That's okay, just listen to them. Look, you're doing what you have to do in your sociology course—you're doing exactly what you're supposed to do. I do not fault you for that, okay?

R: Okay, thanks.

W: And I'm not critical of that either.



R: Okay, um is there anything else that we haven't talked about, or anything we've talked about that you can think of more that you'd like to say?

W: Yes, but now's not the time.

R: Okay. Are you sure?

W: I'm positive. I'll tell you why: talk is cheap. A lot of people like to hear themselves talk, okay? I try to be succinct; I've said what I had to say, I tried to do so honestly and accurately. I've done my best to be truthful to you. I will not be evasive to you or your seminar, I respect the endeavors of your seminar. I think I would have to give everything else some thought. And things don't come instantly, although we have to keep in mind that we live in a snap snap world of bites, sound, computer, texting, and so on—not my world. I still have a little bit of reflective powers left, and I believe in reflective powers and the power of the contemplative written word. So, I'm not *with it*, okay?

R: Okay. Um well maybe we can stay in touch, er...?

W: I'd be pleased. Tell you what: if you email me, I'll respond.

R: Thanks.

W: I don't like people who don't respond. When someone emails me I respond to them. And people who don't respond to me, I cut them off. When they do respond to me I don't cut them off. Okay?

R: Well thank you so much for talking to me.

W: You're welcome.

R: It really really was great, helpful, I really appreciate it.

W: Okay.

R: Um,

W: You wanna turn that off now?

R: Yes.

[End of Recording]