

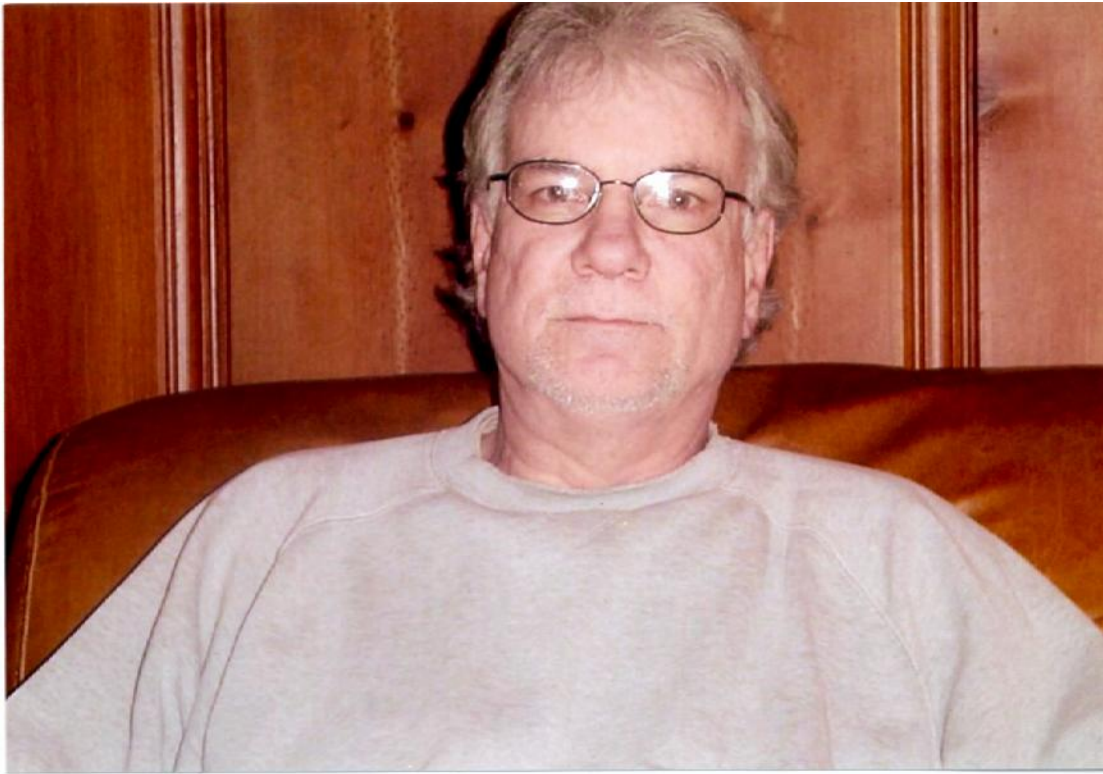
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University of Baltimore
1420 N. Charles Street
Baltimore, MD 21201

Dear Tom Caewey

The University of Baltimore is launching a two-year investigation called "'68 Riots and Rebirth," a project centered around the events that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., their effects on the development of our city. UB administration and faculty members in the law school and in the undergraduate departments of history and community studies are planning a series of projects and events to commemorate the 40th anniversary of this pivotal event. We are currently working with the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History, The Jewish Museum of Maryland, Maryland Public Television and the Enoch Pratt Free Libraries to pursue funding for projects that may include conferences, a television documentary and a library traveling exhibit.

Your potential participation in an oral history project would contribute to the very foundation of this project – the memories of Baltimoreans who lived through the riots and saw the changes that came about in response to them. Your life story can fill in the limited knowledge we learn from newspaper accounts and the television footage.

If you choose to participate in the project you would be interviewed by students from the University of Baltimore who are currently taking "The New South and Civil Rights." Their work in this course will inform their questions, but your memories will determine the direction of the interviews.

If you agree to serve as an oral history informant in this project, you will meet with a team of undergraduate students on three different occasions. On the first meeting, the students will take a still photograph of you. In addition, if you have a photo of yourself in or around 1968, we would greatly appreciate it if we could borrow it, scan it, and return it. We would reserve the rights to reproduce those photos and use them in the documentary, conferences, exhibit or publications.

The students may conduct the interviews at a location of your choice, or you may meet them at the University of Baltimore Langsdale Library for your interviews. During the interviews, your recollections will be recorded in two forms: audio and video. The students will be responsible for operating the equipment. You can expect the interviews to last for a minimum of 30 minutes each.

The general topics for the three interviews will be:

- 1) Your life before 1968
- 2) Your experiences of the events of April 1968
- 3) What you see as changes that came about as a result of the riots

You will be interviewed three times to give you a chance to process the questions and make sure you are giving the fullest narrative possible. Sometimes talking about events that occurred decades ago will unearth forgotten memories. Undoubtedly, some of those remembrances will be negative. We greatly appreciate your willingness to take the risk of exploring a potentially painful past so that your life experiences will be recorded.

After the interviews the students will transcribe your oral history. They will provide you with a copy of the transcription for your review before the transcription is published. The transcription, video and audio records will be archived in the Langsdale Library Special Collections and will be accessible to the public. Your name will be attached to these documents. The University of Baltimore may use your image and/or your words in any future documentaries, exhibits, conferences or publications. Participants in the oral history project agree to waive their confidentiality.

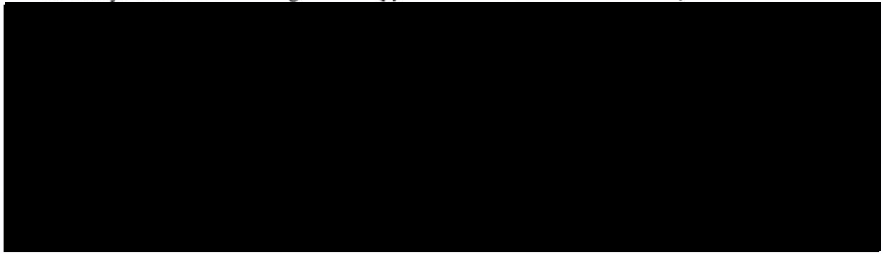
If at any time you are uncomfortable with participation in the study, you are free to drop out. Participation is strictly voluntary. While your participation is requested and highly valued, you are free to decide whether or not to continue participation at all times. You may decline to have your name published with your reminiscences.

If you have any questions about this project, please feel free to contact me at 410-837-5296. Thank you for your participation.

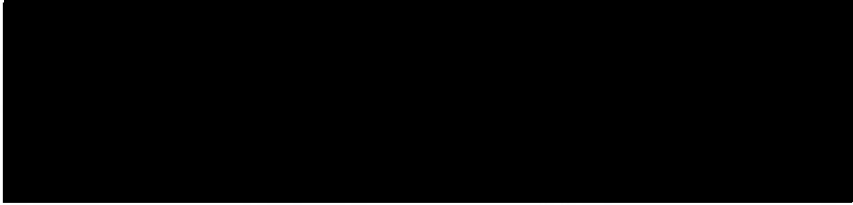
Sincerely,

Elizabeth M. Nix, Ph.D.
Visiting Assistant Professor
History and Community Studies
The University of Baltimore

I have read and understand the information provided above, and consent to participate in the study. I have also been given a copy of the informed consent for my records.



I, Thomas Carney, have read the transcript of my interview with Alison Carney and Shannon Chorba pertaining to the 1968 Baltimore Riots. I agree with the information transcribed and give my permission to use it in the study at the University of Baltimore.



Baltimore Riots Interview with Tom Carney
Professor Elizabeth Nix- Instructor
Alison B. Carney with Shannon Chorba
December 5, 2006

Part I- Before the Riots

My name is Tom Carney. I grew up in an area that is known colloquially as Pig Town; which is interestingly enough about 15-20 minutes from here. It was an area of the community of factories. My father, my uncles all worked in factories. The people who lived there lived there to be close to work. It was a racially divided area that was not integrated; as we describe integration. There were certain streets where blacks lived and there were certain streets where whites lived. The area was divided by Catholics, Non-Catholics, Germans, Italians, and Irish. I lived in the Irish sector of Pig Town.

The neighborhood was bounded by Route 1; which was called Washington Boulevard, on the other side it was bounded by another large street which was called Monroe Street; named obviously after James Monroe. Our backs were against the harbor, which is now the center of Downtown Baltimore where the Galleria and all the shops are. It was the back end of our community. Every one went to separate schools and there were no blacks in the Catholic school that I attended. There was a Catholic School for each neighborhood that you would find. The German community had their Catholic school, if they were Catholic and their public school if they were non-Catholic. They had their fire station, their library. They were all self-sustained with the stores that you would shop in that met the criteria of your ethnic background.

As with most families, ours was very close. My mother was one of ten children; my father was one of three children. My aunt, who was my father's sister, lived 5

minutes away, three streets away. I had two aunts on my mother's side that lived the same distance away. We all went to the same church, my other aunts and uncles had moved from the area; but did not move from the city. They did not move to the outskirts in the county they moved to other areas of the city; surprising close to the area where those that they had chosen to marry had grown up. They still worked inside of our community, still worked inside the same factory where they had worked as teenagers and young adults so they had never really left the area. They moved away but their work and their socialization was all in this area. My mother's youngest sister lived at the end of the same street that we lived on probably four city blocks away. Another sister lived two streets away at the other end of the same street. We saw each other almost daily. My cousins and aunts and uncles were always coming to the house; in fact, we lived in the house that was my Grandfather and Grandmother's house; so it became the meeting place, the stopping place on a daily basis for all the extended family.

I went to school at St. Jerome's school; it was three blocks from where I lived. Most of my family went to the same school. The school was adjacent to the church on Hamburg Street. The school was at 877 Hamburg Street and the Church was at 885 Hamburg Street. My mother worked for the Telephone Company; which was also on Hamburg Street. A big event in our lives was to walk across Hamburg Street which was a large bridge spanning the railroad tracks and watch the railroad cars delivering whatever it was that they were carrying to the area which is now Camden Yards; the baseball stadium. It used to be a large warehouse for all the products that the trains delivered; which is how Pig Town got its name. That area is where they ran the pigs off the cars and through the streets to the butcher shops which were on the lower part of Pig

Town; adjacent to Monroe Street. The ethnic makeup of our area, as far as the church and school, it was all white; entirely white. There were absolutely no Hispanics, no blacks; there were no Asians. Just all white, Catholic kids.

On many occasions, being a white child, a white teenager, I saw members of the African-American community but never interacted with them. They lived on streets that we bypassed; and we bypassed by direction. Their father's and mother's worked in the factories and did the cleaning chores, the sweeping, the trash removal. They also worked in some of the stores in our neighborhood doing some of the same activities. In fact, there was a grocer that my mother frequented, and my cousin worked for, called Jake's. Jake Franz, who was a butcher and a grocer, was out of the German Catholic community and his delivery service was provided by a young, black male named Reggie. My only interaction was letting Reggie in and out of the door and giving him his tip when he delivered our groceries on Saturday. For the most part we did not wave, we did not speak, we did not have any social or communal action with the members of the opposite race at all. We rarely, if ever, spoke to non-Catholics. It was a very ethnically controlled community and you tried to date, meet, greet, on this same level that your were asked to do by your heritage. We had a saloon as every neighborhood had one on the corner of some main street; and inside that saloon were members of the same religion and same ethnic background. They would congregate when the paychecks would come in and they were entirely catholic, entirely Irish or entirely German.

My memories for the most part are of being very happy as a child. I liked the friends that I had; I liked the fact that I had one hundred friends in a three block area. You could play any sport, play cowboys and Indians. There was a very large park, Carroll

Park which housed the Carroll Mansion, named after one of the founders of the country; if you believe history. In that park we could swim, we could play baseball, we could play basketball, and we could anything that we wanted. The path to the park took us past black streets. Again, we did not walk down those streets, we walked past those streets and those individuals did not greet us and we did not greet them. The interesting thing about the park was that even though it was given to the city it was not to all the occupants of the city. It was a strictly white used park. The time frame of this was the early to mid 1950's when legislation was being talked about but not being enacted. You saw only white faces in the buses, only white faces in the cabs, and only white faces walking the streets buying products from the multitude of stores on Washington Blvd. , or Route 1. This was a major access road prior to the building of Interstate 95. You were tied by the streets that you lived on and tied by the transportation systems and; therefore, quite happy and quite ignorant. You were happy where you were; life was good.

How did we know what streets not to go down? It was handed down much like the secrets of families. It is part of what we do in America. It is part of the unspoken racism, rather than the outspoken, blatant racism. As you were leaving the house you were asked where you were going. When you delivered the response you were asked : “Do you know how to get there”. “Do you know how to get there....” Was not a question that sought out whether you knew the directions, it sought that you knew the path. And the path was those streets that was where non-whites lived and non-Catholics. It is passed down in the secret way where you observed conversations, you observed behaviors and you took walks as a child with your parents and you took the streets that they took, the directions that they took. You observed their behaviors. Much of what we

do is what we observe and what we understand; rather than knowing the meaning of it.

My father was a very adamant individual about doing things his way. There was no second way. It was his way, or, as they say today, the highway. He was less than open, he was less than agreeable about having individual socialization with members of the opposite communities; meaning the black communities or the non-Catholic communities. If he heard, saw, that you had such communications, such socializing, to use the words of the day, you were grounded. One of the interesting things about our community, much like many communities on the East Coast is that it had its own little network. Relatives lived in close proximity and they saw your behavior, friends of theirs saw your behavior, members of the church saw your behavior; the eyes and ears were out and about. So if you happened to have a conversation or engaged in a game with other than a white Irishman or a white German your parents knew about it before you got home and their was a questioning and a reckoning. The reckoning was usually a single speaker, my father, detailing the way and the manner by which your behavior would be acceptable and you were to “knock it off.” And if you did not “knock it off” there was punishment to follow which was physical. This is how they lived, this is how they sought to control their environment, this is the way in which they sought to make sense of their environment. No matter how restrictive it was this is what made sense to them. This is what they wanted me and my sister to follow and the herds of relatives and friends in the neighborhood were there to keep the process in place and they expected our family to do the same for them. The networking was essential to keeping it white, keeping it Catholic, and keeping it safe.

My house was a row home in the middle of the 600 block of Scott Street occupied by my sister and me, my father and mother and on alternative weekends or for periods of 3-6 months or 2-3 years my uncle, who was my mother's brother. He rarely worked; he was an alcoholic and he made the tour of the brothers and sisters of my mother homes; whoever could put up with him the longest kept him. A lot of tension in that house existed because of the rivalry between my father and my uncle, testosterone fights that they would get into because there were too many alpha males in the house. He was a very well-educated man but he had no desire to work. If he did work it was only to make enough money to find his way to the front door of the local saloon and spend it playing pool or drinking.

My mother in many cases was really the Mayor of the neighborhood. She was the one with the eyes and the ears that controlled the traffic, did the shopping, directed the responses, and ran a very elegant and efficient network where she had the phone lines going so she knew everything going on in the neighborhood. She worked at the school library; she worked at the parish house for the priests, and inside the church. There was probably no one in the community that she didn't know, whose parents she didn't know, whose ethnic background she didn't know, there was nothing that my mother didn't know.

At the same time she was a very afraid, fearful woman because of the dominance of my father; but she was very intelligent, had a lot of street smarts, very cagey in the way she got things done. To many she was a saint; to her children she was something less than a saint; but she was a good woman.

To some extent she was a peacekeeper in spatial rivalries mostly between my father and my uncle. In many cases she stirred up commotions as well as settled them. As I said, she was the master of the communications network. She was the one who saw and reported and she was the one who got others to see and report. That reporting could be about anything; drinking, smoking, socializing. She was the one who reported what stores to go into, who raised their prices, who lowered their prices, who had sales, who didn't have sales. Peacekeeper on one side; combustible on the other side.

To reflect on a fairly well known figure the television character, Archie Bunker, was a screaming liberal in comparison to my father. My father was a person that at 14 was forced to quit high school and work to earn a living for his mother and his two siblings. He lost his high school career and lost his advantages. In a very true sense he was angry at the world and he was angry at every one who got a place in front of him; be they white, black, male, or female. His rule was iron. There were no exceptions, there were no comments, and there were no discussions. We ate the food that he wanted us to eat. We wore the clothes that he wanted us to wear. We shopped where he demanded that we shopped. We watched the television shows that he wanted us to watch; and on those nights where he was not coming home, the television was not to be turned on. It was not an instrument of recreation for anyone in the family but him. There was no recreation for anyone in the family but him; he was the master. He was tied up in many emotional knots simply because he was a person of mixed feelings. He was very outgoing and very generous to my cousins and generous to anyone who did not have what we had; which was not a lot. For the children inside of the family, and for his own

wife, he was extremely controlling; and would only allow those things which he approved to enter the front door.

The neighborhood evolved over time. It evolved economically. The factories employed most of the people in the neighborhood. There were two major factories, Koppers Company that my father worked for; they supplied mostly parts for trains; such as wheels, large assemblies called couplings that connected trains and their cars. The other company, Revere Copper and Brass which was a factory that was started by my grandfather, as apart of the Revere Brass and Copper in Massachusetts actually founded by Paul Revere. Both factories at some time after the war started an economic downturn in the late 1940's and into the 1950's. There was less military spending, less guns, and less tanks, all those things which created a loss of jobs inside those factories. Those who had lost their jobs went to find other jobs, and with that picked up and moved out of the community. Inside of the neighborhood it became more and more racially mixed; not really racially integrated, only racially mixed. In fact, the streets that were purely all white in my earlier years had become racially mixed. There was now a predominant number of blacks that had moved into the area, and the factories hired people who would accept lower wages.

The area began to change. My father began to change. It began to change in the late 1950's and early 1960's as the war spending decreased. World War II had run its course. When Kennedy died it began a period of anger. You could see it in everyone's faces, you could see it in the way they talked and the way they walked. It began as an establishment of us against them. An interesting point, as the neighborhood began to change racially it also started to change philosophically. The "Old Joes", my father and

the white males who were in charge of all the community activities, were bypassed by their sons. Their sons and their daughters had heard and seen the President get shot, had seen Lee Harvey Oswald get murdered on television. They had started to hear a different history. They heard the different history from getting away from the local schools and going to high schools and seeing kids who had other ideas and other ways of describing the events that were in front of them. In essence we stopped believing in the ways of our fathers. We stopped believing that it was only good if it was white; and was only good if it was Irish.

I had Italian friends, I had German friends, I had many friends with different backgrounds at my high school. Unfortunately, we had only 1 black student. But, I was very lucky. His last name was Brown and my last name was Carney so he sat in front of me for four years in every class; because we were arranged alphabetically in the class seating. I did see it from his side because we did become friends. He described to me that he was the only black student in his elementary school; so he had been through this for nine years and at the end of our career in high school he had then been through it for twelve years. He had told me stories about his family and it did two things: One, his family had the same fears, the same hopes and dreams and he had the same imagination and the same mental capacity, he had the same learning instincts that I did, and he became a very, very good friend of mine. Two, the world of the white master, my father, began to shatter.

With that his world began to shatter. He became very isolated from the rest of his family. His path was from home to work; from work to the dinner table and from the dinner table to his room. That was when his socialization with his family became less

and less active. His demands became less and less. His control became less and less and it was sad to see. As controlling as he was, it was difficult to watch your father not be able to evolve to meet the changes that were coming. In many cases he spoke of the exceptional talents of a Black American by saying they were “a good N.” I am sure that you can figure out what the “N” means. He never ever walked away from the fearful and insecure statements that he held very close to himself; which were there to denigrate anyone that would attack his position and try to be equal to him.

As our neighborhood changed it became angry, it became upset, and it became inhospitable to the unspoken lies that the Governments, the American Governments, the state, local, and federal governments were foisting upon them. Maryland had recently, when I graduated from high school going into college, elected Spiro Agnew as their Governor. The policies, the language, and the rhetoric of that election had probably been one of the most vicious in the history of Maryland politics. Agnew’s positions basically were cut and dried; they were pretty much that Maryland needed to return to a white only culture and that Maryland needed to return to a conservative culture; and that police needed to be beefed up and made capable to handle any disturbances, any insurrections, any anything with force and there was no doubt in anyone’s mind exactly what he was talking about. What he was talking about was when other than white people were seeking equality they were to be beaten, they were to be arrested, they were to carted off in any manner to continue the denigration and demeaning of their culture. With that election began a large set of behaviors in our neighborhood which were adversarial at best. On the streets where blacks had moved in my youth they had now emerged onto the streets that were white. They would walk those streets as if they were the owners of those

streets in the eyes of the white person. The white person became fearful of them. They became angry at their desires to possess things that were white things. They became angry at their desire to have equality and it caused more and more little pockets of unrest; which would start to grow into major pockets of unrest. This was also happening around other major cities of the United States. The black populace was emerging and asking for their rights and their equality and whites were very afraid. The police were very abusive in their desires to keep black Americans at bay.

Agnew was elected in 1968, four months later, all that he preached na dall that he publicized that white people should fear now came. There was no mixing. It now changed where blacks that had stayed on their own streets, now walked on white streets. The dynamic that happened was where white were when I was a child, walk where they want, do what they want, it became the opposite. White people fled back inside their homes. It was the fact that blacks had a voice in Martin Luther King. The Civil Rights Movement was active and with his marches they marched. They marched down the streets that before they could not walk down. That was their demonstration. The world had changed. Kennedy had been shot, the economy wasn't great, there was a war going on in Vietnam, people were getting drafted. The culture of the paternal white father was gone and their children were being sent off to Vietnam to die. Their cooks, their cleaners, and their sweepers were now out on the streets saying, "No More, we are not doing this any more." "We are not going down this road ever again." That is where King and all those combustible forces, the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, CORE, NAACP, the Black Panthers, the Weathermen, they were all out there.

I wasn't afraid because I didn't do anything to them. The fall of 1967 was the beginning of an eye opening experience for me. I had been brought through the Catholic school system which was the shirt and tie and matching school uniform and I landed on the campus of UMBC and saw my first Hippie, saw my first large group of black students. I saw mixed professors; some tall, some short, not in uniform, some black, some white, females, males; no nuns no brothers no one of the cloth as we say. My first day of college I showed up in a shirt and tie, a pair of slacks and a sports coat, and dress shoes like I would have every day in high school. People looked at me like I was from Mars. They didn't get me and I didn't get them. Later on I understood as I listened, and had conversations with other students why they were the way they were; why they dressed the way they dressed, and why they believed what they believed. In the beginning they were very different and I was very fearful. There were many forces at play; coming out of the roots of America that I had never heard of: the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee, CORE, NAACP. Names like Rap Brown Martin Luther King, Eldridge Cleaver, the Black Panthers, Jerry Garcia, Jimi Hendrix were people that I had never heard about. These were people that had existed on this Earth that I knew nothing about because those waves of communication had never made it into my neighborhood. I was almost an infant again. I was learning about a culture that had begun to exist with a passion in the mid 1960's that was beginning to grow into a fury. As I said before, it started with the assassination of a president it gained momentum with a war in Vietnam, it gained more momentum with policies and procedures about keeping minorities in their place, and it caught fire with minorities having no voice in politics; even though Congress had passed the Civil Rights Act of 1965 stating that everyone was

equal in this country. Every one had the same rights and everyone had the same rights to education, but the world of the Orval Faubus's and the world of the George Wallace's still were in place. There was still a Southern Caucus in the Senate as a block, and everyone's nerves were raw and their fears were high and everyone in America and in my neighborhood were about to face a battleground. These issues were going to get played out and they were going to get played out on television, they were going to get played out on the street of America. Frankly, part of me was ready for it because of the friendships that I had made in college. In talking to these people I was able to find a voice for my own feelings; being impoverished if you will.

Insert your section here.

Part III- After the Riots

Immediately after {the riots}, I guess they just calmed down. Everything just calmed down. Everybody just tried to go about their way of life and sort of forget that it happened.

My self, I had two months left in the house and I was still finishing out my last semester of my first year of college. I had my own ideas about what I was going to do and where I was going to do it. I think probably the biggest thing I was looking forward to was getting out of the neighborhood, getting out of the area. I didn't know where I was going. But I was ready to leave it all behind. I went to Ocean City which was a place where many of the locals went for the summer. In the process I found out that I had erred in the process of dropping a class which made me not a full time student, at which point I was in receipt of letter that congratulating me on the fact that I was able to serve in the United States military. I got drafted and exercised my right not to join them in

their party that was going on in Southeast Asia. So with that I had left my parents home and the last time I went back and visited and proceeded to spend the summer in Ocean City. Then, interestingly enough, I applied at the University of Baltimore which did not accept me. I then went to Loyola College and never looked back on the neighborhood. I just went back on different occasions to see my parents and things like that. The last time I returned or the next time I returned, I should say, was after I was married and my wife and I moved to an area very close by to where my parents lived.

It [the neighborhood] had changed absolutely radically. In that time period which spanned twenty to twenty-five years, the factories had not only closed, they were no longer there. They had torn down the downtown area which was adjacent to that in probably fifteen minutes in walking distance. All the major department stores had gone. Through the efforts of Donald Schaefer when he was the mayor and later on the governor, he tried to build up the inner city with the Harbor Place and the Galleria, and tried to spur some vigor and some spirit back into the city. It took hold for some city blocks but it did not take hold across the city. It was still a city where there was not much revenue inside the city. I think the population, at one point, when I was living in the area made Baltimore the sixth largest city by population in the United States. I don't even think it's close to that then and I don't know where it is now. But of the revenue, a lot of the businesses had moved out and moved out for good after the riots.

I don't think my parents lives changed at all after the riots. St. Jerome's, their church didn't change immediately but it changed over time. What changed was, in my case and the case of many of my parent's friends was many of the people who went to St. Jerome's, the children of the people who were the cornerstone of that church, of that

neighborhood moved. They left and didn't come back so as they passed away there was no legacy left. There was no one left in the city that was their child, their cousins, their nephews, they were all gone. The neighborhood went down and by went down, I meant both economically and criminally. There was a lot of crime in the area. There was, probably from the time we went back, or when I went back with my wife, I think it was probably five to ten minutes between sirens. There was a lot of vandalism, a lot of boarded up homes. While it was never an upper middle class neighborhood, it was a stable neighborhood. It was lower middle class and stable. Businesses in my childhood were enjoying being open. They enjoyed the clientele and they obviously did enough business to stay in business. The people who inhabited the neighborhood enjoyed going to those businesses. I think in that there was not a recognizable face, I mean that when I went back, any store that was there was not there any more. They were all gone.

The neighborhoods are the active part of this whole thing. I don't believe that simply looking at the effects of what happened on the neighborhood tell the whole story. A neighborhood shows the symptoms and shows the injuries and the bruises and the scars of everything that happens when the business owner, the man in charge, the white guy, if you will, decides he is going to take his chips and move somewhere else. All those people who depend on that business, who depend on that income, who depend on that revenue must follow the business if the business leaves, unless another business comes in. Post 1968, that didn't happen. The laws that were in place to protect people and the laws that were in place to force, if you will, equality, had no clout behind them because there were no people who were in power who were going to enforce those laws and make equality happen. It's a symptom of what happened in Detroit. It's a symptom of what

happened in Baltimore. It's a symptom of what happened in Washington. It's the angriness and the outrage, calmed down over time, and people got it out of their systems until it was allowed to grow anew, but it became a splintered country. It was a splintered country around women's rights; it was around equality of African Americans and other minorities. It was about the Viet Nam War. It was about all the things we wrestled with, post WWII that caused the explosions and the assassinations that occurred in 1968 and prior to that. As a result of that, the enormity of white voters went to polls and elected Richard Nixon, and made him president. So as Nixon becomes president, you have an extended period of continued white power, of continued white interest and it just keeps going and going.

In fact there were no neighborhood patrons at all in the neighborhoods. The stores closed. The stores changed hands so many times it's hard to say, and again, I'm speaking from observation not from participation because I wasn't there. The population of the area became predominately African American as the whites who were there moved out to follow the jobs. The houses were sold for very little money. My parent's house was sold years later after they passed away. It was sold in the early '90s for; I can't remember how much it was. It was a few thousand dollars. But the area, my area turned predominately African American. Close by, as I said, in the shopping district of Baltimore, there were large merchandise stores, that were department stores and they had all closed because what had happened is the new idea became the mall. And in the malls, the malls that surrounded the city became an easy place to shop and you could go there without fear of crime, and have a place to park, and be able to sit down. But that's what the new shoppers believed was the place to be. All we do is move around the inequality,

we move around the crime and we move around the secondary results of our anger and our outrage and create new places to go where the people with money feel the most comfortable giving their money to the shop owners like in the mall and the places like. We continue to maneuver and manipulate around the system that does not give equality. It's never changed. It's going to be a long time before it does change. The immediate effects, to me, of the riot were in one case a release of anger, in one a sense of dread and a sense of fear from the white community, a lot of burned buildings, a lot of homeless people. But we've never corrected it and we've never fixed it because we've, to this day, never said, "You're an equal. Come be part of us". Until we do that, I don't think we'll ever have made any inroads into the inequalities that we create simply because we riot or simply because we burn some buildings. Until we get the opportunity to share in the wealth and share in the power, it won't happen.

Prior to the riots, and I think I said this earlier, life was great. It was about being white. It was about being Catholic. It was about living in a neighborhood, going to the church that was five minutes away. It was about going to the school that was five minutes away, surrounded by my friends and my family. This was what it was all about, what I thought life was. I realize that it began prior to the riots. It began with the assassination of President Kennedy, followed by Lee Harvey Oswald, the assassination on TV, leading up to the riots that I began to realize that there was a different world out there. Life wasn't bounded by the little streets I walked down and the little streets that I played on. There was another world out there that I was completely and utterly ignorant of. I think that what the riots did, more than anything, is got my attention and got inside of my psyche and my fear and made me pay attention to a lot of things. I made of that time and

most of those years when I started reasoning and understanding what was going on, and for probably fifteen of those years, I was quite sedate, quite happy, as you can imagine, and this was great. From the time of the riots which was somewhere in April, to the point where I had been selected by the United States military to go into the draft, my ideas and my sensibilities and my passions had all changed. I realized that there was a lot of wrong going on. There was wrong. It was illegal. It was a violation of peoples' rights and their persons. I didn't know how to stop it. I didn't know where to begin, but I knew I wanted to be part of stopping it. It was just dead wrong. And so, I sort of changed my outlook. I changed my visions. I changed my views and I realized that many of the people we revered as politicians were actually telling other than the truth. Many of the people that we believed in as good and holy people, were telling us other than the truth and that whole systems that we had set up in the country were set up to do that which the powers wanted them to do as opposed that they were supposed to do or needed to do. They were paying lip service to equality. They were paying lip service to helping. They were a stamp of the people in charge who made appear that we are concerned and we are doing something about this problem. In fact, the opposite was true. It was old idea that beneath that either to do something, for example, in Viet Nam, we were so committed to doing something, we will select your son to go die in our behalf. We believed in that so strongly. I thought that was so utterly contradictory to what life should be about, what the system should be about, and the commitment should be about. I couldn't turn back from what I saw which was the whole erosion in this belief of what the world was that I used to live in.

Oral History Project
Transcription for Interview # 2

SC= Shannon Chorba (interviewer)
AC= Alison Carney (interviewer)

TC= Tom Carney(interviewee)

SC: What was the feeling around Baltimore before the riots?

TC: I don't know that I was in touch with the feeling. I can only speak of my feelings. I was a freshman in college going to UMBC. Totally confused, totally in a world that I'd never recognized. As I spoke before I was raised Catholic, it was the first time I had ever gone with a diverse population of kids my age many of who were not Catholic. Some who were taller, shorter, darker all those things so I was feeling my way through. I'm sure there was looking back one of the things that you find was there was an enormous amount of turbulence going on in America. And I am not sure that I was in touch with it, the war and the Civil Rights Movement, women's movement was beginning at that time. Gloria Steinem and people like that were out and about speaking and I think I was completely unaware of it for the most part. The names I had heard but the issues, the real in the street issues I don't know that I was in touch with. I was just trying to get good grades.

SC: Okay, What was the atmosphere around the college campus? What was that like during this time?

TC: It was different than anything I had ever seen. There were anti-war protesters; there were students who were apart of the Civil Rights Movement. There were some students that I had known from going to high school. But it was a very different atmosphere from anything I had seen it was almost in my eyes chaotic because it wasn't controlled. People weren't wearing suits, ties, button-downed white shirts, they weren't wearing school colors, and they weren't wearing their athletic letters, their athletic sweaters and their coats. They were dressed completely differently than I was. Because they were wearing jeans and I was wearing slacks, they were wearing tennis shoes. And as I look back I believe clogs had made it to that school at that time. I am sure sandals had made it. Long hair, anything that you could imagine was there. It was completely alien to me.

SC: What do you remember when the riots first broke out?

TC: I remember a number of things. It's very mottled on how it happened. I remember being in school and I remember coming home and my sister who was still living at home at the time was working in a department store in downtown Baltimore, after hours, after school hours. And she came home and said turn on the TV that Martin Luther King had been shot. And my father who owned the only TV said "What station? What station?" and we turned it on and the riots had not started yet. But he had been shot and the news of the shooting, I guess was sweeping across the country. I guess a few hours later it was confirmed that he had died. I didn't know what to expect because the next day was

Friday and I had school. It's not to be insensitive to it but I had school. So I went off to school and it started to hit strike me there. There was a group of black students that I actually had become friends with and had spent a lot of time with. They had taught me to play a card game in between classes called tonk and I used to sit down between classes in the student union and it was the only other building on campus at UMBC at the time, other than the classroom building. We used to sit there and just mess around and play this game. But they were all crying and they were all upset. I didn't know why they were upset. It didn't get me. I didn't understand I didn't feel it at that time. And I went over and asked them what was wrong and they told me that Martin Luther King had been killed and didn't I understand. And I didn't understand and I went and set down at another table, which is interesting because it was the last time I ever sat with them. But half the campus was crying and upset and very upset and the other part of the campus was like me they didn't understand, they were there to go to classes. Since there was no real past in that college, it was only the second year that that college was formed having classes. There was no organized anything. It was people who knew each other but drifting to class to class. So there was nothing the college was doing there was nothing anybody was doing to sort of have a sounding board for feeling. There were no microphones, no rallies. It was just a bunch of people who were upset with good reason and people who didn't understand why they were upset. Again it was even more chaotic than was normal because I sort of understood why people were upset but I didn't understand the alien feeling that they had, which was don't talk to me, get away, stay away.

SC: What was going on in your neighborhood at the time?

TC: The neighborhood was as it was before. It was still asleep, still had its borders and its boundaries. People came and went to work; cars drove up and down the street. Every now and then you would hear a police car, a fire engine. But the church, which was down the street, had its normal services. It was the beginning of holy week I remember so there was a lot of bustle about grocery stores. And people shopping for the food for the week. And things like that there was nothing that was odd that day. And I speak of the day afterwards. I'm sure people were talking about it all over the place. The paper was delivered the milk was there. In many cases it was just another day maybe it was because we had seen the President die we had seen Lee Harvey Oswald die. Maybe it was just another death. Maybe we had just turned our ears and kept going forward and going to the factories and coming home and doing what you did. It was about to change obviously with the riots, which had probably already begun in at least Washington D.C., Detroit. But I think probably as those reports started on the news and people thought about it, especially people inside the black community thought about it understood and started to move from sorrow to anger it began to change. Phone calls, I remember the phone ringing in our house almost constantly. Where someone who was a relative who was in an area started to see problems would call and say be careful, give us warnings. I remember the old saying that my Aunt had told my mother take your stockings out and tie them to the antenna of your car and no one will touch it, no one will fire bomb your car but there are burnings over here and they lived over in the area where there was beginning to be a problem. Mostly people from the black community were beginning to

get out on the street and beginning to demonstrate their anger, their own sorrow, their own fears if you will. And they called and as I said my own mother, being the mayor, as I said the last time we talked, being the mayor started calling people and then she would get calls back. Network started the communication started. The news was always on the TV was always on my father had come home from work and everyone was sitting around that Friday waiting to see what had happened.

AC: Who told your Aunt about the stockings? And what was the significance?

TC: I actually don't know what the significance of it was. I remember my Aunt Ellen had called her. She lived in an area that was just North and West of Johns Hopkins Hospital and that is where probably one of the earliest "Get out of your house! Show your anger, show your sorrow!" demonstrations started. And I believe she probably had heard it in the stores on the streets in her area because that's where I say the problem was. So she was calling and as I say she was passing it on. If you tie a stocking, a silk stocking a nylon stocking to your antenna of your car they would not burn it they would not destroy it.

SC: Would you like to start speaking about the National Guard in your neighborhood? And also when it came to a head.

TC: I think probably the best way to explain this is to me it was like being in a room with a stereo and someone turns up the volume higher and higher and higher and higher and higher until it starts reverberating on you. There were so many reports on the radio there were so many reports television, so many phone calls. People coming to the house saying their rioting and it's close and it was physically close but it was never physically in our neighborhood but it almost bounded our neighborhood. Our neighborhood was five, ten minutes from Camden Yards, where Camden Yards sits today. And we know that there was rioting and demonstrating as close as Freemont Avenue which was and still is adjacent to Martin Luther King but that was a predominately black community street. We didn't go up that street as I spoke before we knew the streets to go up and not to go up and that was one we didn't go near. But the rioting had started there and I guess that was the evening after the death of Martin Luther King. And it had traveled across parts of Monroe Street, which bounded us on the other side. It was on the other side of downtown Baltimore, on Gay Street and that's the area interestingly enough that is where they have the open market on Sunday and they have all the grocers come. So it was very close, it wasn't in our neighborhood but it was very close. Our neighborhood was fairly settled, fairly peaceful. There was a predominance of white people in our neighborhood they outnumbered blacks probably ten to one. But there was a calm but also a sense of foreboding that something big and something very bad was about to happen. Or was beginning to happen and the place to be was inside. So pretty much we stayed inside. But we received a call from our Aunt Betty who lived down the street from us. She told us that her son, my cousin, Joseph's National Guard unit had been called up and he had been deployed and he had been told to report five minutes away from here the 5th Regiment Armory where all the National Guards were reporting and being deployed from that sector. So when it starts getting inside of your family like that the tension does build

and my Uncle George and Aunt Ellen were in the midst of the activity. They lived in a very racially diverse, racially mixed area that was not predominately white but which was probably fifty fifty. So it had already hit them and my cousin had been called up and it was in our area what I remember is just endless phone calls endless sirens, endless noises of fire engines. You could smell it in the air you could just smell it all the burning all the smoke in the air no matter where you were it was wafting across the city. In fact I remember it being a very windy, windy evening. Wind was blowing and how I can remember that is I can remember looking out and seeing all the cars that had tied nylon stockings to their antennas and just seeing all the nylon stockings blowing in the wind. And probably the biggest thing I remember the most is just being scared. Not being able to come to grips with the issues that made so many people so angry. I was ignorant to it; I was completely ignorant to it. But I knew they were angry and at the first point you started seeing some reports some live reports not from a very close distance obviously of reports of buildings burning. As I say on Gay Street, which was a very, very involved area in the beginning and those winds came right towards us. But I remember seeing the reports and then a little later, a few hours later it started hitting national reports, national TV started picking up the things that were going on in Detroit, Washington D.C. and Baltimore. It's funny but I think my fear turned to embarrassment at that point because your city is on national TV for something like this. That's not what you want; it's crazy the way a teenager's mind works. But two years before that the Orioles had won the World Series and I was thinking "Boy, That was great!" And here we are two years later and our cities our burning this is nuts. But it was a lot of feelings but mostly you sit and hope that it goes past you and it doesn't hang around very long. You don't know what it is and how angry these people are you know it's something you can't touch. It's almost a helpless feeling.

AC: You said you could smell the smoke, could you see it from the captain's window?

TC: No, In fact one of the interesting things I would have to give you a little side on my Mother and I hope you don't mind. My mother was very fearful of anything, noises, in fact when we would have a thunderstorm she would turn all of the lights off in the house and sit in a stairwell that went from the first floor to the second floor. And later on I learned it was because her father used to lock her out of the house when there was a thunderstorm. That's another issue for another day. But what she kept saying during the whole time was "Don't go near the window! Don't go near the windows! Don't go near the windows!" So I would look from a distance but the way that our house sat, because it was just a series of row homes and row homes and three story row homes you didn't really have a look over the top of anything unless you climbed to the top floor where my uncle was at the time so we did not go there. But no you couldn't see it but you could certainly smell it. You could smell without a problem.

SC: To what extent would you say the National Guard was effective in Baltimore?

TC: Probably zero extent and it wasn't. There was no power that was in this country at this time that would've been effective. And we could use look at what the word effective was. They probably were effective because they allowed the rioters to see some level of

law enforcement on the streets that was not the police. And learning what I know now its ok to look back and say “yeah they hated the police” but in those days I didn’t understand the hate I didn’t understand the abuse the black community went through at the hands of the police. But I think they probably formed a line of demarcation that said ok hey don’t go here. And I think the interesting thing is looking back and I know that’s not always fair but looking back the National Guard was placed at places that said “You don’t go past this line cause there is white homes on the other side of this line. You want to burn your own stuff you have a great time”. Sort of the racist basis of the city and the state at that time saying “You can’t go here. You can’t go here. And if you want to burn on your lines that’s fine.” But I don’t think they were armed with anything other than bayonets. I know they had their bayonets attached. But I think their effectiveness was only that they created an ora of “we mean business” and there is some crowd control but the riots went on at least forty-eight hours after they deployed the National Guardsman. So what effect they have is they were able to guard the policemen and guard the firemen who were putting out the fires. So they allowed the city to save some its structure and it not be a total loss. But as far as being able to control the rioters, the black communities to quell the anger, no they were useless.

AC: Did people attend Church on Sunday?

TC: You bet! And I’m sure they prayed for everything they could possibly pray for. Yes they did. And it was Palm Sunday I believe.

AC: What happened on Monday?

TC: Monday, believe it or not, schools were opened. Factories were opened. I don’t know if state or local office buildings were open. But I do know that my father went to work and I went to school. But there was almost no one there. There wasn’t many transit busses because busses, and I took a transit bus because I didn’t have a license. But I took a transit buss and I know there was nobody on it. And I thought, “Wow, This is weird” and there was nobody on it and nobody on campus so I turned around and went home. And the campus was twenty minutes from my house but busses go across North to South or East to West and the bus system I took went east to West so it would’ve had to have come across the path of the riots. So I’m imagining that’s why many people weren’t riding the bus and using the bus and there were and I didn’t see any students hardly at all. And there were trickles of them at UMBC, not many. And I think they officially closed offices and closed buildings, closed schools but I may be wrong on that because I don’t know if that was ever officially done. But I think people said, “I’m not going out!”

AC: Do you remember anything about your ride on the bus? Was there anything unusual other then the bus was empty?

TC: I don’t remember the ride other than wondering why there was nobody on the bus and I was reading. And that’s what I did. Not that was a different behavior. I always read on the bus. I was very shy in those days. I read I did not speak to anybody. I did not look to anybody. I didn’t know what the world was that I was entering into. I went from

a pure Catholic world to an open world where I wasn't around a whole bunch of Catholics anymore. I didn't know so I kept to myself and minded my own business.

AC: You said that schools were open on Monday. When did they start closing the schools and the stores?

TC: I think as it continued.

AC: Your neighborhood.

TC: Well my neighborhood as I said, my neighborhood pretty much stayed open. And the reason I say it stayed open is many of the people who owned stores in my neighborhood lived in my neighborhood. They didn't come from some other area so they would open their store. There was a High's across the street that was opened and most of the stores that were on the Boulevard were opened because the path of the National Guard was to block anyone from going across Washington Boulevard. It was Route 1 it was going to stay open. And the National Guard and my cousin had the eastern most boundary of Washington Boulevard where it butts up against Camden Yards now. That's where he was stationed he was down there with his National Guard group keeping that road open. And there were National Guardsmen all the way across the Boulevard. And that goes all the way to Monroe Street and where the old Montgomery Wards was. All across Washington Boulevard were National Guardsmen keeping anyone from coming down any of the other side streets.

AC: And you were only a block away?

TC: Yeah, two, three, four. I was about four blocks away from my cousin. I was about two blocks away from where the National Guardsmen with bayonets were. But I think in that environment the shop owners felt safe. They knew that nobody was going to attack them there that they had to get past the National Guardsmen. And as I say it hadn't reached our community it was still predominately white. So they were blocking that access off. So it was as normal of a day you could imagine with National Guardsmen with bayonets and nylons flying from antennas. And everybody sort of looking out of their windows from a distance. Other than that it was normal. Still you smelled the smoke, you still heard the engines, you still heard the sirens of the police cars because they really were no more than ten streets away from us. They were beyond the Boulevard, north of the Boulevard and east of it. They were there and I mean it was close. So the normalcy of the day was there was nothing going on in the street directly in front of my house but it was adjacent and it was enough noise and enough smoke, enough talk and enough news so you didn't feel safe so you just kept calm, kept cool and stayed inside.

AC: Had they started building the projects yet?

TC: I don't remember. I think they had. I think there were projects in existence at that time.

AC: But it was north?

TC: The projects were closer to actually where we are here at University of Baltimore. They were in between downtown Baltimore and here. They had not made their way that far west, if you will, yet. They were still eastern area. They were to accommodate that area that bounded what today is Martin Luther King and Dunbar High School. Which is on the other side, I can't remember the name of that bridge. But Flat Street Bridge or one of those bridges that goes over takes you over east of here on the path of Route 40.

AC: Was Hollins Street Market open?

TC: Hollins Street Market, the funny thing is that is where my Aunt used to shop all of the time. Hollins Street Market had closed because it was in the path. And that path is where the B&O Railroad Museum is and Fulton Street and all that area had been struck and there were burnings up there and there were looting up there. So I believed Hollins Street Market had closed. My aunt had called my mother and told her that Hollins Street Market had closed and asked her if my mother would pick some stuff up from the grocery store for her. Because she never went to the community store she always went. Very interesting where people find themselves my aunt always went west of where she lived even though she was only three blocks away. Her community was west of us not with us. Ours was here and hers was where she was and west. So she frequented Hollins Street Market all of the time.

AC: Did she try and walk there?

TC: No she usually took a cab or went with a friend of hers of who drove. So she had her own transportation. But she was bounded by the activity that went on, as I said, across the top of our community by the B&O Railroad Museum all the way over to Monroe Street. She was bounded by the Monroe Street side coming down. That was her area where she wouldn't pass. She would never go that way which is what we know today what was then Carroll Park. That area was the boundary you don't go past that.

AC: There was a remark in here about a killing on Kerry but it was questionable. Did you hear anything about that?

TC: No I don't recall hearing about any murders. If there were any and I don't think there were any murders associated with the death in our community or our neighborhood. I certainly don't think there were any deaths at all that had anything to do with that because there was never any burnings or shooting immediately in our neighborhood.

SC: Your mother was very hesitant as stated before. Did the National Guard provide her with any ease at all knowing they were present?

TC: I think she felt better. It was one of those double-edged swords. And I'll tell you another funny story about my mother that was very odd. But she wanted me to walk with

her on Sunday afternoon because she was going on up to where my cousin was positioned to take him lunch, which you can't quite do because they are in the army. She wanted to do that. So I said that I would walk up with her and she was fine she wasn't scared and she wasn't afraid. I think she made a point of talking to as many of the National Guardsmen as she could reminding them that we lived at 602 Scotts Street, it was two blocks down and in the middle of the block. And things like that, making small talk with them, hoping that they are okay. But she wanted to make sure that my cousin was okay and I think it was good for her to see that she was protected if you will. Not that they could have done anything if the rioters had decided to come down our way. They couldn't have stopped them but at least it gave her some sense of safety. And again it was more for the communication network and the phone calls she could make when she returned home of what she saw and who was out there and all the troop trucks that were parked at the end of our street and that they were letting off National Guardsmen and they were tall and things like that. So there was a little humor inside this whole thing but.

SC: Do you think the presence of the National Guard caused more resistance?

TC: No I don't think they caused more resistance at all. I think what was going to happen was going to happen and it was going to run its course. I think the bottled up anger, the total sense inside, as I speak to you now I know this now but did not know this then. I am speaking with some separation and some experience. Looking back I don't think the National Guard did anything. The anger of being a second-class citizen and the anger of being pushed into a ghetto economically severed from the rest of the country had its own anger. And that is an anger that bullets don't stop and guns don't stop and bayonets don't stop. They stop one but they don't stop the anger and they don't stop the sense of outrage inside those people. And there is no force here that is human that could stop that. They stood in a place and said, "Don't come down this road!" and whether or not the humans came down that road the anger did, the outrage did. And I think at the end it was as if you almost wished it had come down that road. You wished it had hit you and cleansed you and touched you, but it didn't. So you were left untouched still being economically and physically unaffected by it but emotionally and psychologically you certainly were. Me personally I had to find out why someone could be so angry. Because I understood anger, I got angry at my sister, I got angry at my parents and things like that but level of anger, that level of continuous anger, continuous for four days almost five days that is just a level I could not touch. I could not find it in me to stay angry that long. I don't think I could nor do I think the police made a difference, not that they didn't go out there and try, not that they weren't brave, not that they didn't go out there when they were shot at and having things thrown at them. But they were also creators of the system, creators of the situation; it probably was only fair that they were out there. To sense it and feel it at the same level of retribution I think was due.

AC: Was there at any point you thought your neighborhood wasn't going to be safe?

TC: Yes, Absolutely! Yes there were points in time where it again comes from the news reports; it comes from nothing that I saw first hand. But it comes from the news reports and the phone calls it comes from all those things where you just don't think that you are

going to be spared. Let me go back and give you a similar feeling. During the Cuban Missile Crisis we were pulled out of classes more than once in a day and I don't know what triggered these things. We never found out what triggered them. All of a sudden we were told to line up and the bell would ring and we would all hustle over to the basement of the church. And we knew it was about Cuban Missile Crisis and there was a time talk about the perfect storm there were a number of things that were going at the same time. As we were walking across this, which in those days it was a long school yard to the church there were planes flying overhead and I thought they were going to bomb us. I thought they were the attack planes from somewhere, from Russia, from Cuba, who knew. And this was it we're done. And in many cases it's a series of sequences that caused that and I think the same was true with the riots. I think they were getting closer and closer, the smell, the smoke was all that you could smell at that time, there was no fresh air. There were so many things burning at once and the wind blowing it was just there all of the time, it was in your clothes it was all over the place. The sirens of course, the bayonets of course I thought this was the war. I thought it was going to happen and at any moment thousands of angry black rioters were coming down our streets and it was going to be on. Whatever it was going to be was going to happen. And I don't think you could avoid it. I don't think you could avoid feeling that way unless you were totally removed from the city and you were in the county at some point. And the voices were angrier and the voices on television were angrier. The politicians were pleading and getting no result. The governor had issued a warning and then I guess put in an 11 o'clock curfew until daylight the next morning. I think it was something like that or maybe even earlier. But it's funny when it seems like all authority has lost control, there is no control what then would stop them? I don't know of anything that would've stopped them had they decided to come down our street. But they didn't. So it was a helpless feeling an alone feeling even inside of your house. You know a house wasn't going to stand up to a Malakoff cocktail. It wasn't going to stand up to bricks, it wasn't going to stand up to guns; it wasn't going to be there. So there was some real fear there.

AC: Did Mary go to work or your Dad? Did Copper's ever close?

TC: My dad went to work. Wasn't no damn rioter stopping him from going anywhere. He believe it or not on the Sunday of the rioting not only did he get up and go out he went and played golf. So there was not much that would stop him from doing the things he did. Yeah he went to work everyday and Copper's was open.

AC: Could your Mom get food at the store?

TC: Jake's was open. I remember Jake's was open. Jake had sold the store to his assistant named Vernon. But Vernon had the store open because he lived in the area. He just had to walk two or three blocks to open up the store so that wasn't a problem.

AC: Was there food on the shelves?

TC: Yes, Absolutely.

SC: What did you think about Governor Agnew's address and the response of Baltimore officials to handle the riots?

TC: I'm not a fan of Governor Agnew. I never was. I didn't think much of him when he was running for office. He had run for office and you had asked the question before and this would be a good time to talk about it. He had run for office before against a man by the name of George P. Mahoney. And the reason why Agnew was elected was that George P. Mahoney's whole campaign was on the slogan "Your home is your castle. Protect it!". And it had really set different sides, the state and the city against each other because "your home is your castle. Protect it." Came down as a racist slogan. It came down as a slogan against taxes, against this, against whatever you want it to be. But he had narrowly beaten George Mahoney for governor. And Agnew was a former democrat who chose to run republican for governor when he couldn't get the nomination as a democrat, so he changed sides. But I think it demonstrated to me is an unfailing desire to blame someone else for that which he didn't take care of. He called the black leaders into his office and went after them with some very belligerent language. Basically saying this is your fault, this is all your fault for not being able to control your people. You are responsible for the deaths and you are responsible for this. And the fact is who was responsible for it, again a fact I know now that I didn't know back then, were all the white people who didn't include black people into the government, into the society, into just the mix of this country. But Agnew certainly profited by it because he became vice president but I think at that time people just saw him for what he was which was a man of little texture, a man of little talent and a person who was just a blamer and believed that every problem could be solved with ultimate force. And there wasn't much thinking that was going into anything, there wasn't much comprehension of the situation, compassion was gone and there was no way he could cobble together any feelings of okay where do we go from here he just struck out at the black leaders of this city and said "it was your fault". "It's your fault these crazies are out there running around and it's your fault you can't control them." Without already understanding the divide that was already there he widened it. He really said "I am a white leader with no compassion for you! And if you don't fix this I'm going to bring down every gun, every bayonet on you and I will kill them all if I have to, to get them all back in their homes!" "Now what are you going to do about it?" And that's who he was; throw force at a problem instead of trying to understand it. And even in that situation the black leaders I don't know that they could've done anything. Had they said anything, you can't stop the anger. Looking back I was oblivious to it but the Civil Rights Movement had taken on two or three pieces. There were those inside the Civil Rights Movement who did not believe that Martin Luther King was being effective. The radical movement had already started away from "We don't want equality, we want what is ours! We want it back! We want it now and we want power!" So even those forces inside of the Civil Rights Movement were divided so that if you will the "Uncle Tom" black leadership that was allowed to exist in a white state, a white city, was basically ineffective because all they could do was voice their complaints without getting any results because the white power structure was not going to give it to them anyway. So they were ineffective, everybody was ineffective and that's usually what happens before something explodes.

SC: I know before you spoke about the curfew. Did it have any effect on you or your neighborhood specifically?

TC: No and that's the interesting thing. As I was saying I was not going out, I did not have an automobile, things like that and at the time the transit systems were sporadic. To tell you the truth I think I did go out but I was back before curfew because again as I say it was sort of safe there. There was nothing going on dead center in our neighborhood. And as far as the curfew, they were arresting people who were out after the curfew but there were so many people out after the curfew I don't think the police had enough jail cell space, had enough cars, had enough anything to make it stick. Okay, "I'm going to arrest you if you are out." There were five hundred of them out in from of you, what are you going to do? Are you going to arrest them? All of them? I don't think so you don't have enough police cars to arrest all of them. I think what the police were doing was hoping that it would stop the border line people, the observers or the people who didn't want to get in trouble and get them back in their homes. But the ones who were angry and the ones out in the streets were acting out their part of this drama. They weren't going back in the house. There was no way they were going back in the house. And a bullet wouldn't have gotten them back in nor a threat or a bully pulpit, nothing. They were out there and they were out there to be heard. And I would say in most cases that the police knew it when they said it. It was something they had to say rather than it having any real clout. Because again you don't stop anger with logic in many cases because the anger has got to run its course, and it did.

SC: How was the media during the time? How do you think it affected the riots? Or what way do you think it was leaning?

TC: The media was biased. At the time there were three major black radio stations in the Baltimore area. And I listened to them because I like soul music. I listened to Motown and southern soul music a lot. So I did like their stations. The guy I listened to the most was a guy in the morning called "Fat Daddy". And it was an interesting difference between WBAL, which is probably the flagship station of Baltimore, and the black stations. The black stations were trying to calm their populations they really were. They were talking about "Let's focus on what Martin Luther King meant. What did he mean? He was a non-violent man and we are not honoring his legacy by doing this." I think the typical white station was saying, "We are reporting the news here. Angry negro mobs." And angry this and angry that and talking about, when I say this I don't mean to slight the police, but talking about the brave police. And the overwhelming job they had to do and the overwhelming responsibility of the mayor, Thomas Dallesandro. The overwhelming responsibility of Governor Agnew. They were putting all of their remarks couched again as we do with the power. They were apart of the power elite they were going to speak to who was in charge and say they did the right stuff. Where I think the black stations were basically trying to get people to go back inside their homes because that's what Dr. King would've wanted them to do. Again futile because I think most of the people that were out on the streets were not people who had continued to align themselves with Dr. King. They were people who began to align themselves with

Stokely Carmichael and A. Trap Brown and people like that. People who were a lot more demonstrative in their anger against whites.

SC: Was the local news different from national? Did they have the same sentiments?

TC: No the national news obviously was just reporting this as a five to ten minute blip along with all of the other news they had to report. Obviously what was going on in Moscow and what was going on in East Germany and West Germany and all those other things you get into an hour news it was certainly reported and it certainly was probably the lead in. But the local news was all over it. Local news had, I remember, it would have news cut-ins to all of the TV programs. Like every half hour there would be news, this is going on, this is going on. As if it were a blizzard or a nuclear attack. They would have those spot reports come on especially when they called up the National Guard and then we called up the federal troops all those things. And you would lose programming for an hour or two hours while they discussed things and they would have some official, some white official on to discuss what this means and how to stop the rioting. It was if you will an in your face reporting, we're out there, the news guys are out there and this is what they are saying and this is what they are hearing. Also this is what the police chief is saying, this is what Governor Agnew's office is saying, it was just there it was just always out there. Where as I say the national news just reported at ten or six and eleven or seven and eleven, whatever was your local news time.

SC: Was the national news more sympathetic to the rioting?

TC: I think they were more about the assassination. I think the riots were, talked about the riots, and were a part of the story. I think most of the story from the national side was the lead in on the assassination of Dr. King. The potential identification of who the assassin was, where it was, what time of day it was. And I even remember the strangest thing was they had someone on the news that was going back in forth as to what trajectory the bullet must have taken, where they must have been to shot at that angle and hit him at that angle. Things like that really doing the scientific side of it. Almost as if it were a launch of a space flight or an Apollo flight. It was like here is the trajectory of this and all that and they were concerned about the whole story. The riots were apart of it but this enormous human inside the country had just been killed. And there were also tangential stories about the series of killings, the John F. Kennedy killing, the Lee Harvey Oswald killing, Dr. King's killing and was our country turning violent and for more on that here is so and so to talk about the violence and the number of this and this. So the riots were a piece of it but they were everything here and the news was all about that. And in fact I they probably talked two hours about the riots and ten minutes actually about Dr. King. Because that's not the story, your city is burning is the story. Your city is burning and there is a war going on in the streets. It's authority versus lack of authority. It's what's bringing this country down versus what's holding it together. The fabric of the city is at stake here and all those sorts of push me pull you things.

SC: Did the portrayal of the riots on the news affect you personally?

TC: Absolutely! I think it's one of those things you don't know at the time but it changes you forever. We spoke the last time about seeing a human shot live on TV a few years previously, Lee Harvey Oswald. It's the death of Kennedy; all of these things weren't supposed to happen. And your childhood is supposed to be calm and peaceful and caring. Vietnam is going on all these changes are happening before you can ever sort them. Once said a professor in college probably the most insidious thing that happened during this whole period was all these things not only got inside of your head but they got inside of your family, they got inside of your heart and your soul and you were making determinations for the rest of your life of what's right, what's wrong, what's correct, what's not correct. You grow up to believe that authority is good, the police are good, the army is good that they are your safety net and they are looking out for you. And then you realize they really are but there is a whole side of a population of this country that they are not looking out for that they don't care one wit about them. And those things come to reckoning when you see something like that happen you realize subliminally but you realize it never the less, what I said before how can somebody be so angry, what did somebody do to make them so angry. Because that number of people don't walk around just that angry that's just not going to happen. So it triggered a lot in me to go find out why. What happened? What really happened? What is this all about? Who are these people? Who is Medgar Evers? Who is Martin Luther King? Who are all these people who are getting shot in front of their homes or getting shot in front of their hotel rooms? And who's shooting them? Why are they shooting them? Why do we just decide one day if I don't agree with someone I get to shoot them? It's a bizarre way of living. It took me back to the stories I had heard about Wyatt Earp and Billy the Kid who were gunslingers that walked the streets of the country, I mean gun battles. I thought the worst was happening. I thought for a long time the country was going to split, fall apart. Civil War whatever that looked like I wasn't sure forces inside of this country were bound and determined not to give in over here and over here take whatever I want. Simply because that's the only way I'm going to get it. So it did, it changed me forever, absolutely.