The University of Baltimore is launching a two-year investigation called "Baltimore'68: Riots and Rebirth," a project centered around the events that followed the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and 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 website 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. They will ask you 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. 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 on the website, 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.

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.

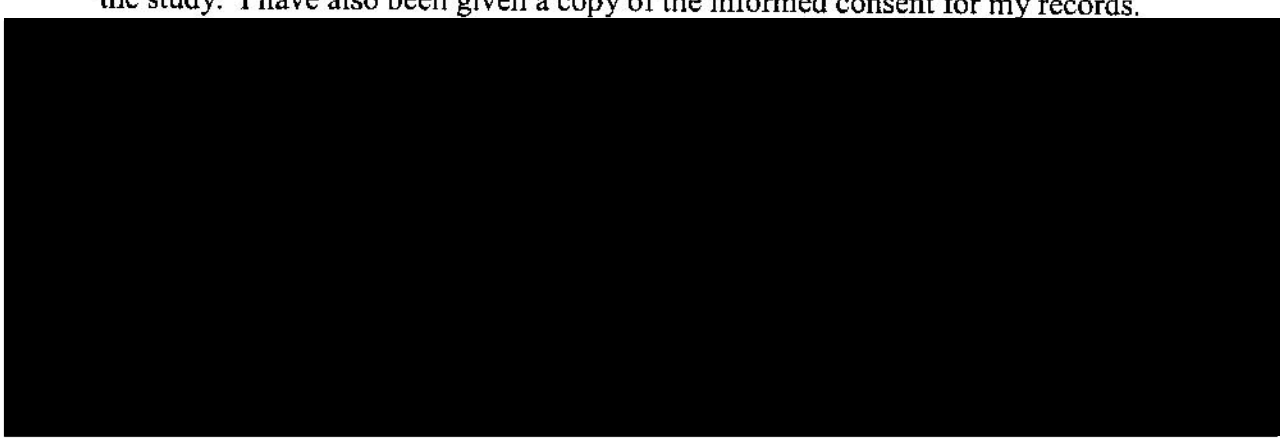
If at any time you are uncomfortable with participation in the study, you are free to drop out. Participation is strictly voluntary. While your participation is requested and highly valued, you are free to decide whether or not to continue participation at all times. You may decline to have your name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



UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE
HISTORY 300/EXPLORING THE PAST
DR. ELIZABETH NIX
Desirée C. Barnes

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL INTERVIEW / PART I OF DOROTHY LAMOUR HURST ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2007

INTRODUCTION

My name is Desiree Barnes. I am a student at the University of Baltimore in the class, Exploring the Past. Today is Monday, September 24, 2007 and I am currently conducting an interview of Dorothy Lamour Hurst for the project entititled *Baltimore 1968.* Ms. Hurst currently lives at 1660 Winford Road, Baltimore, Maryland 21239.

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL INTERVIEW

BARNES: Please state your full name and please spell any unfamiliar names.

MS. HURST: Dorothy Lamour Hurst. L-A-M-O-U-R is my middle name and Hurst is my last name, H-U-R-S-T.

BARNES: Ms. Hurst, can you tell me a little about your situation in the 1960s; namely around 1968. How old were you?

MS. HURST: I was about 23 years old around that time; 1968; yes.

BARNES: Okay. Where did you live?

MS. HURST: At that time, I lived on Decker Avenue, Um; I think it's like 1560 Decker Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland.

BARNES: Okay. Did you work at that time?

MS. HURST: Yes. I was employed at the C&P Telephone Company of Maryland.

BARNES: Where was that located?

MS. HURST: 5711 York Road, Baltimore, Maryland.

BARNES: Where did you go to school around that time? I know that you were probably finished school then.

MS. HURST: Yes. I had graduated from Eastern High School.

BARNES: And where was Eastern High School located at?

MS. HURST: It was located on; well, 33rd and um Loch Raven. 33rd Street. Yes.

Across from the Stadium.

BARNES: Where it presently…? Well, the building is there now.

MS. HURST: The building is still there now, yes.

BARNES: I know this question may deviate a little from the questions that I've been asking you, but um…where did you shop?

MS. HURST: We (Chuckle), I used to shop during those times; I think we shopped at, basically downtown Baltimore. There wasn't too many malls. I can't remember; but it was mostly downtown Baltimore. Yeah, downtown Baltimore…yeah, downtown.

BARNES: Can you remember what stores you shopped in down there. What some of the names of some of the stores were?

MS. HURST: Ah ha, we went to Brager Gutmans. We went to, um, The May Company. Um, we went into…actually those, um, Hahns Shoe Store. Those basically were the ones we shopped in. Maybe it was May Company, Brager Gutmans, Hahns Shoe Store, Hess Shoe Stores, and that's basically; and of course, we went to Lexington Market.

BARNES: Okay. Now, um, before the riots, what kinds of interactions did you have with people of other races? And I encourage you to just be very honest and very frank, um, in answering the questions.

MS. HURST: Well, it was… Let me say…I guess you might say that it was a casual or a cautious type thing because I worked in the telephone company that was predominately white and I guess we, everybody was polite, and you know, you stayed away from certain subjects and you knew that; at least I felt as though being black, I would have to do a hundred percent more to maintain my job than some of my other white counterparts 'cause you could see that in your daily work; that we had to work even harder for just menial jobs as a typist. So it was kind of, you know, you talked, but you didn't talk. You avoided but you didn't avoid. So you know, everybody was like walking on eggshells, I might would say.

BARNES: Okay. Um. How would you describe the racial mood in Baltimore before the riots?

MS. HURST: It wasn't really all that good. You know, they lived in their sections. We lived in our sections. Um, before we started going to school with them, that's the way it was. We were separate…until I started going to Eastern High School and started working at the phone company, that's when we started really intermingling with them, but basically, you know, we, I didn't have that much to do with them.

BARNES: What do you remember about the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

MS. HURST: Ahhhhhh, it was horrible. Ummmm, I felt betrayed. (Pause: She starts crying). It was horrible. You felt like you had lost your only friend. It was horrible. A part of you died, because when he was living and you were in the movement, you felt like, finally we're going to overcome, but when they killed him, a part of you died. It's like you wanted to say, well, that's it now. We don't have nothing to do now. We have no one else now to take us through.

BARNES: You just said the word "movement." Um, can you define for me what that term means?

MS. HURST: Ah, yes. I was in CORE, the Congress of Racial Equality.

BARNES: Can you tell me what that is?

MS. HURST: Um, what they did, we did, was we went around and we tried to open up restaurants, you know, to get blacks to be able to come in. Ah, we did a lot of picketing of different locations throughout Baltimore City; some of the department stores had things of that nature.

BARNES: So, you lived during the time when blacks were not able to use the same, eat in the same restaurants as whites were?

MS. HURST: Yes, there were some restaurants that we could not eat in and there were some stores we couldn't even go in to shop. Ah, I laugh at it now because the Hecht Company; of course it's Macy's now, but you couldn't go; you could go in there but you couldn't try like hats on. You couldn't try anything on that would touch your body. And, we couldn't go into one store was Hoschild, Kohns and Hutzlers, they didn't let us; and Stewarts, um, we couldn't go in there. We could go in there, but you would feel like, you know you were some type of monster or something. So, we couldn't try on hats and different outfits you couldn't try on.

BARNES: Okay. Well, we know that around the time that shortly after the time that Dr. King's assassination, um, that the riots started.

MS. HURST: Yes.

BARNES: How did you hear about the riots starting?

MS. HURST: Well, we heard about the riots because of course on the news, on the T.V., and even in Baltimore, there was a little; some rioting in some areas. Then, they put the curfew. We had a curfew. We couldn't go out after a certain time, and um, it was really kind of strange to me because one of the girls that took us to work, um, she was the senator's; she was Caucasian; her father was the senator, and she had to come in my neighborhood to get me to take me to work. It was really; um, but after meeting her; she was one of the first, I think, I guess I'll say white people that I began to work with and we became real good friends. But she would come into the area. It wasn't really funny then, but it's funny now, but she would come into the area and pick me up and take me to work and bring me back, yeah.

BARNES: What did you think about her doing that?

MS. HURST: I thought she was, well, after working with her and meeting her family and meeting her father, it was just a, just something, it was new to me because she really didn't, they really didn't care, her family really didn't care if you were green, I guess. But she was a new experience for me and I thought it was very brave of her, first of all, to come in and pick me up and take me to work. But, um, that's how we did it, yeah.

BARNES: Do you remember her name?

MS. HURST: Um, I…It will come to me. I can't think of that girl's name now. I can see her face, though. I can't think of her name. She was just a lovely person. Her father, her whole family was. It didn't really matter. I know she lived down there in Highlandtown. I can't think of that girl's name.

BARNES: Okay. During the riots, what information did you get and where did it come from?

MS. HURST: Most of the information we got, we got it from the television or the radio, or from reading the Afro. Ah, or just hearsay.

BARNES: So the Afro was, um, being published at that time?

MS. HURST: Yes, it was. Ah ha.

BARNES: Did you…here's a redundant question, but did you; you did watch T.V. coverage of the riots?

MS. HURST: Yes. We watched it to keep informed. Because you had to know what was going on because they had curfews and you wanted to know what you should do; what you couldn't do; and yes, you had to stay informed so you would know just how to live your daily life.

BARNES: What is your impression of the reporting of the riots? You know, how they were reported?

MS. HURST: Well, to me, if my memory doesn't fail me; it just seemed like it was just kind of negative and like they really couldn't understand why we would be so deeply emotional about the losing of Dr. Martin Luther King. I don't think people really realized how important he was to us, or the magnitude of what we felt for him. I don't really think they understood that until after his death.

BARNES: How do you think the national news portrayed the situation in Baltimore, because I know rioting was all over the country.

MS. HURST: It was all over the country, you know they portrayed it like the rest of them. It had a tone of negativity towards us. Ah, towards Blacks, during that time.

BARNES: What I mean; when you think back about the national news, did they make it look as though, um, it was mass rioting or did they make it look like there was just a little bit of fallout.

MS. HURST: Like a mass rioting. It was just out of control type thing.

BARNES: Now, what was your impression of the neighborhoods that were affected by the riots?

MS. HURST: Some of the neighborhoods that were affected by the riots, um, the areas were already kind of bad areas anyway. I mean, it was like they were just destroying…The areas weren't the best areas, okay. You; it was the ghetto and they destroyed their own stuff, you know what I mean? They didn't go and destroy anywhere; somewhere nice. They were just bombing the ghetto really. That's all I can say about it. They tore up their own areas, which probably should have been tore up a long time ago (she chuckles). I guess this was just the time to do it, you know.

BARNES: What type of violence occurred? What kinds of things did they tear up? What did they do?

MS. HURST: They just, like, you know, broke into stores and uh, trashed their own area, or just threw trash, and just breaking and entering. It's like somebody gets mad and the only thing they can hit is what they see in front of them. That type of thing.

BARNES: What about the arrests? Do you think there were a lot of people arrested? What was the extent of the arrests?

MS. HURST: Well I think they arrested those that they could, because, you know, when you have a whole bunch of people ripping and running and bombing; I mean a whole lot of stuff going on… I think they got the looters. That's who they were trying to get; those who were looting. I think they did the best they probably could do.

BARNES: Now, did you see National Guard Troops in your neighborhood?

MS. HURST: No, they weren't in my neighborhood. No. I do know they were down further. If I'm not mistaken, they were like down in further into the City, but no, I did not see them in my neighborhood.

BARNES: Well, just being aware that they were in Baltimore, how did that make you and your neighbors feel at that time?

MS. HURST: You know, it's mixed emotions. You know, you felt glad that they [Army National Guards] were there because they had to maintain some type of peace and order. Then you felt sad that this had to come to this.

BARNES: What was the mood in your area during the riots?

MS. HURST: You mean, where I lived at? My immediate area?

BARNES: Ah ha.

MS. HURST: Well, the folk were concerned, and like I said, we were devastated that Martin Luther King had been killed and folk…just mixed emotions. You didn't know whether you were happy or sad. It's funny…I can't describe the moment. You know. You don't know what you felt. You know. You didn't want to have these riots. You didn't want the place to be looted. Then another part of you; you felt like you had to do something because look what they've done. Look who they killed. You know.

BARNES: How did your life and activities change during the days of the riots. Now, at that time, you were young, ah 23 years old, and you were married?

MS. HURST: Yes.

BARNES: With two children?

MS. HURST: No one, I think. One, yeah.

BARNES: Well how did your life and your activities change during the days of the riots?

MS. HURST: Well, it was pretty strict because you went to work and you came back home. Because at that time, they had curfews. That's basically all you could do. Go to work, pick up the child, come home.

BARNES: Now were the curfews just for certain groups of people, or was it for everybody.

MS. HURST: It was for areas, certain areas of the city, you had to be in. I'm not sure. I don't know if it was 10:00 or 9, but I know they had certain areas and my area did fall into the curfew time; even though there wasn't any looting or anything in my area. I don't recall but the area; it was all of Baltimore City, if I remember correctly; or a good bit of it; put it that way.

BARNES: But you were still able to go to work…

MS. HURST: Oh yeah, I was still able to go to work. Yes, go shopping as long as you got to. I don't remember the curfews being that long where I was, but I know that it was a curfew and you still could go shopping; to the grocery store; go to work.

BARNES: Now what about your church services? Were you going to church at that time?

MS. HURST: Yes. We still went to church. Yes.

BARNES: Did you still have nightly services?

MS. HURST: Well, we generally had service earlier than the curfew. Yeah, it was earlier.

BARNES: So, you were able to have these services and get out of services.

MS. HURST: You were still able to go. You could come on out.

BARNES: What kind of church did you go to at that time?

MS. HURST: At that time, I was going to a Holiness church.

BARNES: Do you remember the name of your church?

MS. HURST: I believe that I was at 27 South Caroline Street with Bishop Showell's church, if I'm not mistaken, was there.

BARNES: Could you say for the record what the name of that church was?

MS. HURST: Ah, at the time, it was called First Apostolic Church.

BARNES: First Apostolic Church?

MS. HURST: Yes, ah ha.

BARNES: And it was located on Caroline Street then?

MS. HURST: 27 South Caroline Street, ah ha.

BARNES: And the pastor's name was?

MS. HURST: Bishop Winfield Showell.

BARNES: Okay. How do you think Baltimore changed after the riots?

MS. HURST: After the riots, um, there was some anger in people. Um, there was a lot of distrust; a feeling of here we go again; do we have to start all over again type thing. It was a lot of anger and a lot of mistrust. Um, people didn't trust; they just didn't trust anyone; and you know; what we gonna do from here? Are we going to have any type of equality or what? So that's basically what it was—a lot of mistrust and confusion

because different people was trying to take over the "movement" from Martin Luther King and it was just a lot of mumbo jumbo.

BARNES: Now when you say distrust, do you mean Black people didn't trust other Black people, or Black people didn't trust white people?

MS. HURST: They didn't trust white people. We were kind of skeptical of some of the people that were trying to take over. See, you have to remember that Martin Luther King was such a magnificent, forceful person; kind person, that you did, other Black people that would come behind him, you didn't know whether to trust them or not because they did not have what he had in him. They didn't command the people. They didn't seem to convince the people like Martin Luther King did. So you were kind of skeptical of them, a little bit, but you knew you had to; we knew that something would have to take his place, but yet you didn't know who was going to take his place, because who in the world could take his place?

BARNES: So do you think that the riots brought about any good change for Black people?

MS. HURST: Not really. I mean it just…to me the riots were just an expression of emotions. I don't think it brought about any different changes. Some things may have gotten fixed in the neighborhood, but I really don't think so. It was just an emotional time.

BARNES: How did you immediate neighborhood change?

MS. HURST: Well, my neighborhood was basically still the same. People were still talking about it and; but the people where I lived were just a little more; they were a working class people and they had more stuff invested in the future and working and going to work; with their children. So, they sort of just went on and did what they had to do.

BARNES: Okay. In your experience, what businesses were affected. Just based on the businesses that you patronized at that time. Which ones were affected?

MS. HURST: Um, I want to say Mom and Pop type stores. Um, some of the grocery stores, small chains, and some of the little stores that you go shopping in that we had to shop in. A lot of them were affected. I don't think that some of the bigger stores downtown may not have been affected too much.

BARNES: Can you remember the name of any of those Mom and Pop stores or what streets they were located at? And even if you could give me like a corner or something?

MS. HURST: Okay. There used to be a little; a little store located on Oliver Street. I can't think of that name. It was a little grocery store there. Um, some of your little stores where they would go in and; some of the black-owned stores, you could go in there and buy candy. Ah, that type of thing, you know. I think they may have gotten a little bit more busier during that time.

BARNES: And then, other than your, you said you had a close relationship…

MS. HURST: I'm sorry, I remember that store now. It was called the M&P Supermarket. Yeah, they were one of the ones that…Let me say something about them.

M&P was a little market place there and they catered to a lot of Black people, but you know one thing, they always sold little; I want to say second grade stuff. I think after the riots, people really realized how bad it really was and we just didn't go. Something about the riots and after Martin Luther King died that sort of opened your eyes to a lot of things that were going on, you know--how they were selling you the second class meat and the rotten meats; but you know, stuff that wasn't always up to par.

BARNES: Um, and did your interactions with people of other races change? I know you said you had a close friend who worked with you who was white, and would pick you up. So it sounds like that relationship was strengthened. What about your relationships with other people of other races besides that person?

MS. HURST: I worked at the telephone company and that's where I ran into most of the other races. It was rocky for a little bit because for some reason, they didn't think that or they didn't realize the importance of the Civil Rights Movement or of course, Martin Luther King. If you are not being oppressed, then you don't really know; you can't understand it, okay, and they, some of them really were not aware or could understand what you were going through. And, of course, um, you always tried to maintain during those times. I did anyway; that you were black and that you were proud of being black and that's just what you were glad to be black, so much so that my group that I worked with at the phone company; they gave me a doll. I believe I still have it upstairs and it had on there "Black is beautiful" because they told me that I was one of the first blacks that they had met that was really proud and glad to be black. Um, and it was a struggle during that time because, here you are maintaining to be black and you want them to know that, yes, I'm black. I can still do the job even though I'm black. And then you had another group of people who were trying, as we say, the oriole cookie, or trying to be white. So, there was a struggle there. Um, you trying to be black and the other side trying to be as far away from black as possible, okay. So, ah, ah, but you just had to work through it. But, by the grace of God, you just had to work through it. I can't even; it's just something you had to do.

BARNES: Um, can you…

MS. HURST: And, me, of course, you know, I was one of them ones who was just proud to be black and I was glad to be black and I could still do that job as well as anyone could. And I would get very annoyed with people who wanted to be other than black and I used to think they were sell-outs. But I guess, looking back on it now, people probably did what they thought they had to do to get ahead in the world. It's a strange thing though, they didn't get any further than I got.

BARNES: All right, now. You just talked about the grace of God. Um, and I know that you are a devout Christian now and so I surmise that you were at that time, as well. Um, can you just um share with me, um, what kinds of things that you did um, in your church to help you get through this part of your life?

MS. HURST: Well, mostly, during those times when I was in the Apostolic church, we did a lot of fasting and a lot of praying. That was basically what would get you through. Just praying and talking about it and that's basically it. Just praying and they would have little groups to talk to – talk your feelings out. But what really helped me get through the whole process, um, more so; I mean the church helped, but my working with different

types of people. Today, I can see that it's so important to work with people. When you start working with people and sharing the ideas and going out to lunch, then you understand them and they understand you. Because, heretofore now, people have one thing in their mind about you, and never met you--then that's what they have in their minds. But when you meet people and start talking and getting to know people, that's when you learn to deal with it.

BARNES: Okay. What do you mean "working with people." What kind of people.

MS. HURST: Any people, of any background. I worked with Orientals. We worked with everybody at the telephone company and then you had to get in there and work. And then, through your work, through seeing them everyday; you saw them every day for eight hours a day; you had lunch with them. Then you started talking to them; then you start going out to dinner with them. Then you start meeting their families and then you start seeing what they liked and then they would say what they thought and you'd say what you thought; and that's when you get to know people. When I was in the Civil Rights movement, there were a lot of people in there who were of a different race who really spent a lot of money and time and supported us. They didn't really have to do anything. So, I feel that once we started working with them and talking to them, and you got to know people. Then you said, okay. You're not all—you know. Because that was one thing that Martin Luther King had taught us, was the character of the person; not the color of their skin; and you can't get to know anybody's character if all you do is look at the skin and don't ever talk to nobody. You've got to sit down and talk to people. And once you start having a little fellowship; we all would go out together; go bowling or whatever we did. We went to dinners together and ah, talking together. And then you say, oh my, they are human too.

BARNES: Well, I know that I have come to know you as a person that has always stood up for what you believed in and over the twenty years that I have known you now, um, there have been instances where, um, remarks and comments have been made by prejudiced white people against black people, and you've always said, don't shop there. That's how you make a difference, is not to support those kinds of stores. Um, did you do; is that something that you learned from being in the Movement? Can you talk to me a little bit about that?

MS. HURST: One think that I've learned, the best thing to me to get people's attention is boycotting, especially businesses. If you don't buy their products, they don't make any money and because they are in business to make money. So, if you don't buy their products, they don't make any money, you get their attention. And then, you can sit down and talk about it. Ah, boycotting is still the best way to me. Um, there are certain people who make comments about blacks, so you don't buy their products anymore because we know that blacks are big consumers. We spend a lot of money and a lot of these brand name people would not be as rich as they are today, if it were not for us spending the money on them. So, if you don't buy their products, you get their attention, because they are losing money and they are in business to make money, not lose money. And then you can come to the table and say okay, let's talk about it.

BARNES: Well, Ms. Hurst, Dot, (laughter) on behalf of the University of Baltimore and my history class, *Exploring the Past,* I want to thank you for this interview. Um, I'm

going to sign off now, but I'll probably be coming back to you to do the video portion of the interview, and thank you for helping us to establish Baltimore 1968 and its history.

THE END OF PART I

UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE
HISTORY 300/EXPLORING THE PAST
DR. ELIZABETH NIX
Desirée C. Barnes

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL INTERVIEW / PART II OF DOROTHY LAMOUR HURST ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2007

INTRODUCTION

This is Desirée Barnes and I'm meeting with Dorothy Lamour Hurst on Saturday, October 6, This is Part II of the oral interview of Dorothy Hurst. We are going to begin this interview naming the theme of today's meeting. I'd like to obtain an oral history of the life of Dorothy Lamour Hurst. Today, we are going to reflect on her life prior to 1968. **The beginning…**

TRANSCRIPT OF ORAL INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWER: Dorothy, please tell me about your beginning. Where you were born; your parents; your siblings; the hospital you were born in. Here you go…

MRS. HURST: I was born May 21, 1943 to Louise and Sidney White. They both were from Virginia. Um, and I was born here in Baltimore at, um, it's called City Hospital. I think it's now Johns Hopkins, but at that time, it was called City Hospital. I was born there. I weighed nine pounds (laughter), but I was born and, um, you want me to go on… I went to elementary school at, well; at that time when I was born, I used to live on Calhoun Street. Uh, rewind that. I lived on Aisquith Street, the 200 block of Aisquith Street. Then they moved from Aisquith Street to Calhoun Street and then my mother and all, um, we moved from there to 1604 East Preston Street. I attended elementary school at 135, which was on Rutland Avenue and McDonald Street, well actually, Rutland Avenue. That's where that school was. Then I went to school 453—Fairmount Hill. That was where I went to junior high school. Then from there, I

was one of the classes that they came up to our school and interviewed us to go to Eastern High School, which at that time, did not have that many blacks going there; and I was selected to go to Eastern High School and I went there for my senior year—

INTERVIEWER: So where did you go before Eastern High School?

MRS. HURST: Before Eastern High School—at 453, Fairmount Hill. Um, I call it junior high school—yes, it's junior high school—Fairmount Hill.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, so you are saying that you went to Eastern for your senior year of junior high school?

MRS. HURST: No. My senior year. I graduated from Eastern. I went to Eastern--10th, 11th, 12th grades were at Eastern. And I was at; let me see, I'm going backwards—9, 8, 7—7th, 8th, and 9th grades were at 453/Fairmount Hill on Fairmount Avenue. I think that school's torn down now.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. I just want to back up a little bit and ask you a couple of questions about…You said you were born in City Hospital?

MRS. HURST: Ah, ha.

INTERVIEWER: Were you the youngest or oldest, or the middle child?

MRS. HURST: I'm the oldest.

INTERVIEWER: You're the oldest of three kids?

MRS. HURST: Of four kids.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. You told me what streets you lived on growing up—Rutland Avenue, Fairmount Hill.

MRS. HURST: No. Those were the school addresses.

INTERVIEWER: I'm sorry. You said Aisquith Street, Calhoun Street, Preston Street.

MRS. HURST: Ah, ha.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. What area or what community of Baltimore were these streets located? Was it east Baltimore?

MRS. HURST: Ah, ha. Of course, Calhoun Street was west and Preston Street was east.

INTERVIEWER: Can you remember and can you share with me any event that you feel that was significant, um, during the years that you were growing up? Anything that sticks out in your mind.

MRS. HURST: Well, I guess I can think of… We were a happy bunch. I mean, we didn't have much. I always laugh because we didn't know we were poor until somebody told us. Um, we had hard times. My mother did an excellent job raising, um, raising us up, because by the time we got to Preston Street, um, my father um, had left my mother. So, she raised us by herself—all three of us by herself; and we had fun. We didn't have much, but we, my mother was a very strong person. So, there was a lot of family unity there. She taught us a lot. Um, we were raised, you know, with some values, by herself. She did a good job.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, that's good. Um, were you exposed to other races or cultures as a child?

MRS. HURST: Not as a child because where we lived, it was predominantly black. I did not get exposed to other races until I entered into senior high school.

INTERVIEWER: And that was at Eastern High School?

MRS. HURST : At Eastern High School, yes.

INTERVIEWER: And so, that's basically where you were first exposed to, um, whites and other ethnic groups, or was it basically whites?

MRS. HURST: Um, basically whites at that time.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Now, Dorothy, I know you've been married for many years to Leo Hurst. Can you share with me how you met your husband?

MRS. HURST: Um, I met my husband (laughter), when I was working at Johns Hopkins Hospital. Um, he also worked there and that's where I met him, when I was at Johns Hopkins.

INTERVIEWER: And, how long have you been married now?

MRS. HURST: Ah, about 47 years maybe.

INTERVIEWER: Wow! That's a long time.

MRS. HURST: That's about 47 years.

INTERVIEWER: And how long have you lived where you presently live; here in this lovely home, at 1660 Winford Road?

MRS. HURST: Let's see, we've lived here. I want to say that when I came here, my son was five-years old and he's thirty-something now. So, it's been about twenty-five, thirty years.

INTERVIEWER: Wow! That's really a long time.

MRS. HURST: Say, twenty-five years. That's about it.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. How did you go from being a dietary aide at Johns Hopkins to working at C&P?

MRS. HURST: While I was a Johns Hopkins, I was in dietary, but I left there. I was still in the Dietary Department, but I left; I got promoted to work in the dietary offices. I became like; a room that we did all of the tabulating and I was introduced to computers at that time; when we were tabulating all of the foods that everybody had to order. Then, um, excuse me. My brother-in-law, um, my husband's sister's husband, told me that the telephone company was hiring. They said, "You're a smart, girl. You ought to go down there and work for them." So, I went down to—I'll never forget it—320 St. Paul Street. And I applied for the job and they gave me this test.

INTERVIEWER: What kind of test did they give you?

MRS. HURST: Well that the time, they were hiring for, what they called, service order typists. So they gave me a test on typing and a written test. I don't recall exactly what it was. But it was a written test and some typing and asked me some questions. And then they called me back and told me that I was hired.

INTERVIEWER: All right. So, what did you do there when you first started?

MRS. HURST: When I first started at C&P Telephone Company, I was called a service order typist. We typed all of the service orders that, um, came in. All of the requests that came in for telephone service. We typed all of the orders. Then I left from that job to be what they called a reviewer and I had to review all of the orders. In other words, we had to check every order to make sure there were no errors in any orders before they were sent out to the installers. Then, from there, I got promoted to service rep. Um, service rep, which that was the person that would talk to the customers; take care of any billing inquiries; place any orders; things of that nature.

INTERVIEWER: So, before this interview you said you wanted to correct the date that you started at C&P Telephone Company.

MRS. HURST: Yes, it was 1966.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. 1966 and you worked there about 25 years?

MRS. HURST: Yes, about 25 years there. Then I went on; when they had the big split, I was with AT&T and then when I retired, I was with Lucent. So, it was a total of about maybe, I guess a total of thirty-something years.

INTERVIEWER: So you were actually working at C&P when Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated?

MRS. HURST : Yes, now that it comes back to me, yes.

INTERVIEWER: Can you recall how—whether there was any response to what had happened from C&P or if there was anything said; anything that was done? Did they reach out to black people in any way during that time or did they publish any kinds of articles or newsletters? Was there anything said about it?

MRS. HURST: I don't recall any articles or anything, but in my sector, where I was, the managers and all, they expressed sadness. Because, remember, Martin Luther King was just somebody that was for everybody. He was just a—I don't like to say he was a man for the black cause. He was for the human cause. It was sad and people expressed their grief. Of course, we [black people] took it probably a little harder than the white, but they were kind.

INTERVIEWER: Did you see any changes come to C&P Telephone Company as a result of what Martin Luther King preached, or what he stood on; the things; the events and things that happened? Can you think of anything; that any changes

that happened and can you think of around what years those things did happen, if you can think of them?

MRS. HURST: No. I can't think of anything that changed.

INTERVIEWER: Everything stayed the same?

MRS. HURST: To me, it did. How do I want to say this? Um, I don't recall a whole lot of changes, I mean we started… Well, let me back up. Maybe we did have more blacks, ah, being sent down to be assessed for managers and we did see more blacks being promoted. So, yes. Let me not just say they did not do anything. But as time went on, it seemed more blacks being promoted; ah, to being a manager and more blacks in positions that traditionally were held by whites. Yes.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. I actually, um, in the time that has gone by since I was here interviewing you for the first interview. I've been to the library and I've done some research on C&P Telephone Company and the Congress of Racial Equality. Um the library has some news articles; photos, a lot of information on C&P Telephone Company. One of the things that I noticed that the operators. They had pictures of the operators around that time and they consisted of a room full of white women. Um, can you remember if and when that ever changed?

MRS. HURST: Well, I don't know because, see, most blacks when they started with the telephone company, you started off as an operator. They would put you somewhere in that position. But when I started, I started as a service order typist, so I'm assuming that that's when they started making these changes. I'm assuming that when I went into service order, they started—people started—blacks starting going into being

operators. But when you started with the telephone company, some were operators first—but I never was an operator.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Well, that's interesting, because what I was reading something that showed how they had to learn—they actually had to go through training on how to talk; how to answer the telephone. Um, even as in-depth as showing how you respond to a caller if you can't answer their question; how to refer them to someone. And so, you're saying they put blacks—are you saying black women—or blacks in general—male and female in those positions?

MRS. HURST: I'm just saying blacks. I want to say blacks in general. I knew mostly women that were operators. I did not know that many male operators. Um, I didn't, but they…See the operators; as far as the telephone operators, that was a part that I was not that familiar with. I only know from girls that I met later on about how grueling and how prejudice it was being an operator. But I can tell you that, when I was a service rep, they did not want you to sound like you were black. They wanted you to sound like you were white.

INTERVIEWER: In your position as a service rep?

MRS. HURST : They did. They would want you to sound, um—I had one boss who told me that I didn't sound black. Of course, I took kind of offense to that, because I am black and I wasn't trying to sound anything but black, but they didn't want you to sound like you were black, because they wanted a particular image over the telephone. So, the callers, and let me…; this is going to be funny. Some of the callers, by my name being Hurst; a good bit of my people that would call in, thought I was German. I even had one client that told me that I had blond hair and blue eyes. He knew

I was a good German girl. Of course, I did not burst his bubble by telling him anything other than that. I just laughed and kept going. I didn't take anything personal because it was just a phone call, you know. So, we had problems there and they didn't think that we could do certain managerial jobs. But, however, as time went on and as we worked hard and proved ourselves, we got promoted. I left there and went to the phone center organization when they just started opening up and I was a manager at one of the phone center stores. Um, I started off as the manager at the phone center store that was on Lexington Street and then I spent most of my time as the manager. I'm sorry, I went from Lexington Street to the phone center store on Monument Street, and then from Monument Street, I went to work for a good bit of my time at Mondawmin Mall. The phone center that was in Mondawmin Mall.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. I know that Mondawmin is the predominantly African American patronized mall. Was it at that time, like around 1960s, 70s—so it's always been?

MRS. HURST: Yes, it's always been. As far as I could see when I was there, it was predominantly black—very busy store; very profitable store.

INTERVIEWER: I think I remember going into a phone center.

MRS. HURST: Well now, remember that the telephone company also had public offices where you could go in and pay your telephone bill. There was a public office on Charles Street and there was a public office in Mondawmin. So, we had two—Mondawmin was a public office as well a phone center store. One side was the public office and the other side was the phone center store.

INTERVIEWER: All right, I'm going to turn your attention a little bit to some other questions that I need to ask you about the way conditions were around the time that Martin Luther King preached and then also subsequent to him being assassinated. As a result of the cause that he preached, which was non-violent change, did you march in any of the marches that were conducted during the time that he was living or after he was assassinated?

MRS. HURST: I participated in some of the marches with CORE but they were like local—some of the local stores—local establishments here in the city. Cause I wanted to go nationally—but my mother wouldn't let me go. She didn't feel I was as soft spoken or as non-violent as Martin Luther King. But he—you felt like you wanted to go and do whatever it was that he wanted you to do in a peaceful way.

INTERVIEWER: So your involvement in CORE, was that before you were married?

MRS. HURST: That was before I was married. Ah-ha.

INTERVIEWER: And, what kind of work did you do with CORE, besides the marches.

MRS. HURST: That was basically it. You marched and you met people and you learned different things about life. But that was basically it. Just the marching; participating and sit-downs, demonstrations.

INTERVIEWER: So CORE was basically like--which means Congress of Racial Equality--was a local chapter of like; something that spinned off from the NAACP?

MRS. HURST: Yes. Something like that. They were –I don't know if it was the NAACP or not, but they, yeah, they were like a little spin-off. Walter Carter was the President.

INTERVIEWER: Is that Walter Carter the pastor of …

MRS. HURST: No, not the pastor. What's his name? I can't think of the man's name. Oh, it will come to me. When you look it up, it has his name on there. He was the CORE—our local president here—put it that way—Baltimore City. What was his name—Walter—I want to say Walter.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Well, um, I'm going to come back to you again when you tell me it's okay and hopefully, the next time I come back, we will be able to come with a maybe a video and get some copies of some pictures or artifacts that you have from around 1968. It doesn't have to be confined to that period. If you want to share with me anything that you might have in your life—we'll include that in this report. Thank you.

MRS. HURST: Thank you.

INTERVIEWER: I appreciate it.

THE END OF PART II

Addendum: Subsequent to Part II of the Oral Interview of Dorothy Lamour Hurst, she told me that she had also worked at or in the following capacities during her lifetime: owned a travel agency; was owner of D'Lamour Hats; worked with the Census 2000; served as property manager and facilitator of The Alliance (Welfare Right to Work Program) which was operated out of her Church's Center. She

currently works several months out of the year for the Baltimore City Youth Works program placing youth and adults in summer positions all over Baltimore City.

Ms. Hurst shared with me that during the 60s, everyone wanted to be a light-skinned black person and even made efforts to lighten their skin by using products that contained skin bleachers. Mrs. Hurst shared that during the year that Martin Luther King was assassinated, the Viet Nam war was going on.