

# American Sociological Association Opportunities in Retirement Network Lecture (2017)

## William V. D'Antonio

**Introduction by Ronald E. Anderson:** The "A Life in Sociology" lecture is the highlight of the ORN activities at the ASA annual meetings. This year, ORN is very proud and honored to have Bill D'Antonio speak about his life in sociology.

Before graduate studies, he took a job teaching Spanish at the Loomis School for boys in Windsor, CT. There he not only distinguished himself as a teacher of Spanish, but also as a winning wrestling coach. When asked the secret to his success as a coach, Bill said I read the boys excerpts from Winnie the Pooh.

In 1950, Bill married Lorraine and they had six wonderful children, no doubt from getting the Winnie the Pooh treatment.

William V. D'Antonio (Bill) earned his PhD in Sociology and Anthropology from Michigan State University and then joined the faculty of the University of Notre Dame. He served as Professor and Chair of the Department there from 1966-71. He moved to the University of Connecticut in 1971 as Professor and Chair.

In 1982, he took a leave from Connecticut to become the Chief Executive Officer of the American Sociological Association, where he served until his retirement in 1991. He received Emeritus Professor Status from the University of Connecticut in 1986. He was a Fulbright Senior Fellow in Italy in 2004 and served as president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion; and as editor, during 1980-82, of Contemporary Sociology.

In 1993, he joined the Sociology faculty at The Catholic University of America as a visiting Research Professor, and he remains there as a Senior Fellow of the Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies. Dr. D'Antonio is the coauthor or coeditor of a large array of books including *American Catholics Today: New Realities of Their Faith and Their Church*. He continues to write dozens of articles. Bill remains an unusually amicable, kind, generous, warm and genuine person. He also is well known for his smile and wit.

**Lecture by William V. D'Antonio:** Thank you. Can everybody hear me? Okay. My talk is entitled "My Life and Sociology, or How Did a Third-Generation Italian-American Catholic Find His Way to the ASA's Executive Office?" all in 49 minutes.

I begin with a reading, a quotation from our dear friend Robert Merton that I felt was perhaps helpful to you to understand my story. Merton says, "The narratives that constitute the stories of our lives and their interpretations tell of reference groups and reference individuals, the significant others that helped shape the changing character of thought and inquiry. Full-fledged sociological autobiographers relate their intellectual development both to changing social and cognitive microenvironments close at hand, and to the encompassing microenvironments provided by the larger society and culture. Such accounts bear witness that one's experiences and foci of interest, one's accomplishments and failures, were in no small part a function of the historical moment at which one has entered the field."

The Italian-American experience and being part of the greatest generation -- that's what somebody wrote a book about, and so I found my age fitting the book -- so a part of that generation both contributed greatly to the microenvironments of my early years.

I was born in 1926, the second of four sons, and brought up in New Haven, Connecticut, in the same neighborhood that my father had been born into some 27 years earlier. By 1926, the neighborhood was overwhelmingly Italian, with an Irish family still found around the fringes here and there, vestiges of the fact of their earlier dominance of the area.

My father was the third of nine children. He finished high school and spent 45 years in the U.S. Postal Service, most of it at Yale Station, which I'm sure was some influence on my life. My mother, the eldest of five, went to work out of necessity, sewing in a lady's garment shop in New Haven at age 12. She had to, because her father had become injured and nobody else in the family was capable and was as old as she was. She was 12. My mother managed to get on to night school eventually and in time became a nurse's aide. I must add here that she also had a lovely singing voice and sang at banquets and family weddings such as ours. Those early years were times of close family support and value placed on education and church. If I had more time, I would talk much more about my mother than about my father in the way I felt that I have been influenced.

Religion also played a significant role in the microenvironment of my early years. Beginning in second grade, we began the morning with saying *The Lord's Prayer*. The problem was I was not in a parochial school. I was in a public school and the teacher was, as not uncommon, Protestant, one of the many Protestants who taught in the New Haven public school system in the first half of the 20th Century. The classroom was mixed -- the eight or nine Italians, 10 or 12 of Irish descent, five or six Protestants, and Jacob -- the one Jew who went through grammar school and high school with me, was always there, and always at the head of the class, too. The only Jew. Now Ms. H, we'll call her, began the morning with *The Lord's*

*Prayer*, "Our Father which art in Heaven." Well, the Catholics said, "Who art in Heaven." She said, "Forgive us our debts," we said, "Forgive us our trespasses," although it sounded more like trust passes as I think about it. And after we all said, "Deliver us from evil," the Catholics stopped, having been warned by our parents and the Sunday school teachers, I have to admit, that to say the Protestant prayer somehow was going to mess up our souls. So, we never got caught that way.

Looking back, the most interesting effect of the morning prayer, as I see it now sociologically, was that for at least one minute, sometimes two minutes, every day the Irish and the Italian kids stood together against the dangers of sin and hellfire. And then of course there was poor Jacob standing there, not wanting to say any of our prayers. So, in retrospect, the event went on all the way until sixth grade when we suddenly had a Catholic teacher and she didn't do any of that, has probably helped plant the seed for my interest in the sociology of religion. Of course, at the time, I was really only concerned about my soul, and then I discovered later how sociology can also help you there.

In the sixth grade, we had our first Catholic teacher. I knew that because I saw her at church on Sundays, and she introduced me to the ideas of social mobility and the American Dream while reminding me also of my Italian heritage. Now, how did she do that? As we approached the two birthdays of February in 1937, it would be early 1937 -- Lincoln's and Washington's -- she gave me a short story to read. It's in poem form, and she wanted me to read it to the class. It was written by one Thomas Augustine Daly, an Italian Irishman, a native of Ireland of course who moves to the Philadelphia area and wrote poems and short stories in

dialect about Irish, Italians, Poles, and so forth, which enjoyed -- as I took some time to read about it -- a broad popularity during this period of time, the first half of the 20th Century.

The poem Ms. Brown gave me to read to the class was titled *Leetla Giorgio Washeenton* written in 1901. It goes something like this: "You know w'at for ees school keep out dees holiday, my son? Wal, den I gona tal you 'bout dees Giorgio Washeenton." The poem tells the story of course of how leetla Giorgio chops down the cherry tree. He explains to his Pop, well, that he is "justa trying to help hees poor old Pop." If you can imagine, I'm reading this in sixth grade. It keeps the house warm, you know. The poem ends with the following line, "Like leetla Giorgio, don't play so mooch, but justa stop. Eff you want be som' good, an' try for help your poor old Pop by carry home som' wood; An' mebbe so like Giogio you gona grow for be so great you gona be da Presidant of dese Unita State'!" This in sixth grade. Well, I dida worka hard and I get to Washington, only not 1600 but 1722. Not so bad.

New Haven's Hillhouse High School had an excellent academic faculty, sending more than 50 students out of 200 that were in the college prep program every year to the Ivy schools. It also had an active "Greek" life with sororities and fraternities organized along strictly ethnic lines. We had two Irish fraternities and two Irish sororities, two Italian fraternities and two Italian sororities, and so on. Oh, only one WASP but I think the rest of the WASPs were in private schools. They were not in our high school, there's one small group. This was continuing evidence, as I think back on it, of emphasis on the ethnic factor in our lives. I mean the high school did not separate it. It organized our social lives around our ethnicity.

To my knowledge, no one was ever pledged outside his or her ethnic group. However, in my senior year, my fraternity joined with a Jewish fraternity to sponsor the big winter dance,

with two bands in the largest dance hall in the city. If you're going to unite Italians and Jews, you might as well do it big.

Well, that's not exactly the way our parents thought about it. Our parents were shocked, thought "It's a bad idea. What are you trying to do, stir things up? Leave things alone." But of course, we ignored them and, in the end, it turned out to be the biggest dance of the year. As it was 1943 and with class members being drafted in big numbers to the military, our senior prom was cancelled. So we had our dance to remember.

Fifteen students from Hillhouse received scholarships to Yale in 1943 and I was one of them. But just as I was beginning to enjoy what Yale and New Haven had to offer at that college level, in 1944 I was drafted and joined the Navy. I was sent to signal school and then landed on a destroyer escort, whose main duty was protecting convoys going to and from Oran, Africa from Norfolk, Virginia. The second-in-command in the signal gang was a Boston Irishman who loved being from Boston and especially being Irish, and on top of that, being a Jesuit-trained Catholic. Now when he discovered that I had never seen a Jesuit priest, he took it upon himself to teach me the virtues of being a Jesuit-educated person. And when life went on, more and more of incidents were explained to me by him about sin and non-sin. For better or worse, his enlightenment, this matter of what's a sin and what's not, included some rather unique ways of defining sin. Seemingly, from his viewpoint, the sin of being drunk overrode the sin of visiting "the ladies of the night" -- I guess if you're young, this is very important -- so, as an evening that included both activities only counted as one sin from a confessional perspective by my dear Irish buddy.

The date was August 6, 1945. The war with Germany was over and our ship was now in New London, Connecticut, working with submarines and airplanes simulating the submarine and Kamikaze attacks we were going to encounter when we got out into the Pacific. On that particular day, August 6, I was one of 25 members of the crew going out on overnight shore leave. As our shore boat from ship to shore reached the New London dock, we heard a kid screaming out, selling newspapers I guess it was, shouting something about a bomb that had just been dropped on Japan. Well, we were off the ship, we didn't know anything about that on the ship. We ran over to him, he showed us a headline that talks about an atom bomb, and we all cheered and went home and celebrated the victory.

Some 45 years later, Lorraine and I were in Japan with Ed and Marie Borgatta -- you all remember Ed and Marie -- to attend the biannual meeting of the International Institute of Sociology. A former student of mine from Notre Dame, Fr. Robert Reiner, was at that time the President of Nanzan University in Nagoya, and when he saw my name on the program, he wrote and offered to be our tour guide.

Well, he arranged to take Lorraine and me and Ed and Marie by train to Nagasaki, where we toured the city and witnessed its remarkable rebirth after being hit by one of the two bombs, and met the mayor, a devout Catholic who during the war had been a Japanese military officer, struggling with the challenge about the Kamikaze pilots with the Catholic concern about sending people into suicide, which is what a Kamikaze pilot was doing.

It was an extraordinary meeting, listening to him talk about the experience in the war of being caught in what was for him a real terrible dilemma. He later on, after the end of the war and after his term as mayor of Nagasaki, we see some international medals of honor for

working for peace in the war, connecting cities in the peace movement and anti-bomb movement against the atom bomb.

I finished my military service in July 1946 and quickly reenrolled at Yale. As an undergrad, I took only two courses in sociology, the more impressive one being by a guy named Raymond "Jungle Jim" Kennedy's Race and Nationality was one of the most popular courses for undergraduates at Yale and I was really impressed by it. But at that time, it never dawned on me that I should think about sociology as a major. As a matter of fact, my attention was focused on Latin America, and my senior adviser was an anthropologist presumably preparing me for a doctoral program in anthropology someplace in Latin America. I was trying to decide where to go to pursue a graduate degree while also thinking about maybe taking the exams for the State Department, maybe I could help them out.

Sometime during the fall of 1948, as I was thinking about grad school or a job or something, I dropped by the Yale Placement Bureau for an interview with W.R. Grace and Co. Well, they were impressed with my Spanish but not with my business acumen. So, that took care of that.

I was about to leave the second floor of the building when I noticed the sign, it said, "Teacher Placement Office." "Hmm," I said and wonder what that's about, and I literally walked over and said to the woman, "What's this teaching about?" And so, she told me about the many prep schools, mostly along the East Coast but all the way down to New Jersey and even Virginia, where graduates of the Ivy League schools were often hired to teach English or French or whatever. And so, she said, "What can you teach?" "Well," I said, "I think I could teach Spanish."



Who knew? And she said, "Well, you want to fill out this form?" And so, I actually filled out a form, listing Spanish as my teaching skill.

A day or two after Christmas I received a phone call from the Yale Placement Office. The woman in charge said that there had been an unexpected opening for a Spanish teacher at the Loomis School in Windsor, Connecticut. A teacher there teaching Spanish had had a nervous breakdown. I thought that was impressive. It turned out he was from Harvard and so I could understand the problem. Would I be interested in teaching Spanish for a semester? I was like filling in. "Oh," I said, "why not?" I didn't have anything else to do at that moment. I was trying to finish my senior essay.

So, the next day I took the train to Windsor, Connecticut, walked a mile to the school, and discovered that the chair of the Modern Language Department was much more interested in my mental health than in my Spanish accent. So, he took me to meet the Headmaster, a Harvard-bred Mr. B, Mr. Nathaniel Hawthorne Bachelor. The Headmaster decided I wouldn't have a nervous breakdown, and he offered me the job, room and board, telephone, laundry, and \$200 a month. And I said yes and I moved to Loomis.

I should say it was an interesting job. It was challenging, it was fun, it was a post-graduate education of a sort, and with a faculty of 36 very talented faculty living in close quarters. I found this to be really an additional education, graduate kind of education. The school itself had a strong Unitarian/Protestant ethic about it, all of which I found interesting and challenging. As a matter of fact, Mr. B, the second week I was there, cornered me about my Catholic religion and how serious was I about being a Catholic and all this, and it was an interesting conversation, and especially this is the big headmaster who had founded the school.

And so he finally says, "Mr. D'Antonio, is there a place in your Catholic heaven for a Unitarian?" And I thought, "Oh, what the hell?" I said, "Oh, you know, Mr. B, we have rooms up there for all kinds of people -- Methodists and Episcopalians," and I said, "we have a closet for the Unitarians." That went over well with him. By the way, nobody mentioned any Muslims in heaven at that time. I was thinking about that now, it would have changed the story. So, anyway, that was my meeting with Mr. B.

Within a few weeks, the Language Department decided that they might want to keep me if I was interested as the Spanish teacher, so I said yes. And to help my Spanish, I decided to go to Mexico that summer and I studied at the Mexican National University. I improved my Spanish, began to get a better understanding of the Mexican Revolution of 1914 and '17, and the control of Mexico by PRI as sort of something that was interesting and may or may not have some future for me.

By the late Fall of 1949, Lorraine and I had been frequent visitors to Loomis and the Loomis faculty seem to welcome her, so we decided to get married and the school offered us a nice little apartment.

And so, we got married and went off on a honeymoon to Wisconsin to begin my graduate work for a master's degree. It turned out that the school was eager to support faculty to work for advanced degrees, and I discovered that Wisconsin had an interesting program in Hispanic Studies as it was called. The school would provide some funding, and I still had some money left over from the good, old GI Bill, so off we went to Wisconsin for four happy summers. I should say that those summers included a lot of good dancing in Spanish dancing and any other kind of dancing we could find. And just to show what a loyal wife Lorraine was, I

was a hotshot on the softball teams out there, and Lorraine decided if she had to go to these softball games, she's going to learn how to keep score with the game, with the technical scores that you do for baseball and softball. And by God, she became such a pro at it that after our game was over, the next team would come out and say, "Can you stay here for a while and do the game for us?"

But anyway, Wisconsin was kind of an exciting experience of doing a lot of dancing, and the fourth year I had to make some decisions about what I was going to be doing after that. We decided that 1954 would be our last year at Loomis and we're going to do something else, not quite sure what. So, it turned out also that that summer of '53 was a career changer not in the way we had anticipated -- I was waiting for the State Department to call me up to send me out to Guam or somewhere -- but I had this elective course at Wisconsin, and I looked over the course listings and there is this course called Latin American Social Organizations and Institutions taught by one Charles P. Loomis. "Oh, Loomis," I said, "isn't that interesting?" A head of the Department of Sociology at Michigan State but visiting professor of Sociology that summer at Wisconsin for [indiscernible] Bill Sewell there.

It turns out of course Loomis was Chair of the Sociology and Anthropology at Michigan State, the course sounded interesting, that name Loomis had intrigued me, and so I signed up for the course. We met, we met Charlie, and then we met his wife, Zona, and we met their three children, and we had two and our kids got to playing together. And I found the literature much more fascinating now and I was looking at it differently, and I spent a lot of free time chatting with Charlie, with Lorraine and our children becoming friends, and so there was a sort

of an informal network and here I am now, was finally finishing my MA degree and this is the guy who's running the program at Michigan State.

Charlie then tells me about a program that he had going in Turrialba, Costa Rica. He mentioned this possible RA opportunity in Turrialba. I had no idea where Turrialba was but I knew where Costa Rica was, and he told me that he could get some extra funding to help support our growing family to do a year of research in Turrialba and come back and get a Ph.D. at Michigan State just like that. And so, I was interested but at the same time I had taken the State Department exams -- I forgot to tell you about that -- and so, I still thought they needed a Secretary of State and I was going to be growing into that job pretty soon, and so I had passed the written exam and now I had to go and take the oral exam in the fall of 1953. So, a lot of exciting things are happening in '53. I told Loomis this is my last year and I'm going to do something.

Meanwhile, I was writing my Master's Thesis on *The Political Philosophy of the Mexican Revolution* seen through its novels and other books. My thesis advisor was a political scientist with whom I had taken a number of courses but I never thought political science as a way of going with my future, so the master's degree with this dissertation never went anywhere beyond that. He did tell me I should publish it and I thought he was kidding me so I never -- but anybody here who would like to read it and think if it's still publishable.

But again, trying to cover a number of possibilities, I had also made an appointment to meet with my senior advisor at Yale, good old Wendell Bennett, the anthropologist. And so, the day after Labor Day I was supposed to have a meeting with Wendell Bennett in his office and he would give me some more advice about anthropology and he was sure maybe I should stay at

Yale. Well, I went to his office the day after Labor Day and everybody was crying. He had died of a heart attack the day before. And so, in my mind, well, that ends my contacts. I never thought about sending my vita with all my grades and stuff with anybody. I've always worked with people thinking that was what I had to do. So, with that came the end of my thinking about anthropology.

So then I thought about the State Department, "Oh, I had passed the written exam and they had decided to invite me to Washington for oral exam in the fall." On a sunny morning in the fall, I met with the State Department personnel -- six men, no women. After a two-hour session -- remember, this is John Foster Dulles' time -- after a two-hour session and a long waiting period, the gentleman in charge called me in and said that the panel had split -- three of them thought they should offer me a job immediately and the other three, never. So, they decided that in order of making a decision either way, they invited me to another interview which would take place after six months but before two years were over. Well, that sort of left us with fewer options. I had already notified the headmaster at the Loomis School that I would be leaving with the graduation of the class of '54 and the school would have to get not only a new Spanish teacher but a new wrestling coach, which I had become by a strange set of conditions. And I must say, Lorraine was a good assistant in helping me learn how to coach wrestling. We won't go in any more detail at this time. If you need any information later, we could explain it to you.

So, now, what were the options? Well, there was Charles P. Loomis, remember him? With the State Department less certain, I made contact with Dr. Loomis again. He seemed eager to have me join the Turrialba Project. He invited me to meet him for lunch at Columbia. He was

coming from Michigan State to Columbia and he said, "Can you drive down from Loomis for a luncheon meeting?" which I said, "Oh, sure." So, at luncheon at Columbia, he then informs me he had just received a grant for \$150,000 from the Carnegie Corporation for the Study of Social Change across the U.S.-Mexico border with four possible sites, beginning with El Paso and Ciudad Juarez. He suggested I might like to find my own topic on the border. Mostly he was putting forth enough financial aid and suggested I could accomplish a number of goals with a year on the border. He assured me I would be working with a good professor, a senior sociologist, who would be leading the project. And given my fluency in Spanish, I would probably be able to gather enough data in one year to have the basis of a dissertation. I'm sure some of you must say, "Is this how you go about getting yourself into grad school?" This was despite my having never seen a research methods book, much less done any depth reading of people named Weber or Durkheim or Parsons or anybody else.

So, I was enthusiastic. Somebody was offering me this opportunity, I had become fascinated by the readings that I had done on the Mexican Revolution, and I had no idea how unprepared I was for such an undertaking. That's very helpful for you in this situation. Totally irresponsible, never questioning whether or not this was something I could do.

By late spring Charlie Loomis informed me that I would be working with Bill Form and we would spend the fall semester in El Paso and Ciudad Juarez with Bill. And then in January, he was going off to Mexico City because they were opening a new automobile plant there and he wanted to interview some of the executives down -- boy, don't tell Donald Trump about this going on. But there was Bill going to go off to Mexico City after four months and I would be in charge of the border. So, I thought this was a great idea, and Lorraine and I talked it over, and

this shows she has real courage because we decided that this would somehow help not my going to become an academic but my knowledge about Mexico that might help me with the State Department because I still have the State Department in my mind. So, I was off to El Paso with daughter, JoAnne, a bit over two years old, and Albert, about seven months, and no air-conditioning in the car either.

Bill and his wife, Millie, met us and it turned out that they had two daughters just slightly older than our two, and it turned out of course that this was not only a nice greeting but that Bill was treating me from the very beginning as a colleague, not a totally untrained graduate student. I can't imagine in retrospect anybody who could have been better suited to tutor me in the basics of sociological research and sociological theory and sociological knowledge in every which way. Bill was patient, he was kind, he fixed the plumbing in our house when it went bad. He was just a great guy, and I want to acknowledge this.

Bill recognized my enthusiasm for studying the different ways in which El Paso and Ciudad Juarez strived to solve problems like building new hospitals, holding elections, and encouraging cross-border business and politics. And then, Bill gave me a copy of Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structures*, a book that had just come out but he was aware by now that I had a kind of interest and I was always enthusiastic when I came away from the mayor's office and learned some new gossip about what's going to be happening in the mayor's office. I couldn't wait to get back to next day because the county secretary found me an interesting person to chat with. So, at any rate, Bill saw that, gave me a copy of Floyd Hunter's *Community Power Structures*, which I think is probably the first book on community power structures of

that period that went five or six or eight years. And so, I got very excited about this business of the study of community powers.

Back at Michigan State, of course, Bill fortunately was highly respected by the Michigan State Sociology Department and he helped me get accepted as a somewhat unusual, unconventional grad student, who was protected by Charlie Loomis. Well, now, Charlie was getting lots of money and everybody was pretty quiet as long as Charlie managed get money for about anybody in the faculty who was looking for any money. And so, he's building this department and gaining a lot of national attention, and so nobody says very much about this strange grad student who had never had a course in sociology besides the ones totally about race and ethnic relations.

So, the situation in East Lansing for Lorraine and me was rather tricky. And we came of course, if you could imagine after five-and-a-half years in the prep school where cocktail hours were manhattans and martinis and nice finger food, and going to join in with these grad students, mostly from the Midwest for beer and chips. So, we had a couple of interesting experiences the first and second time that we had invited them to our apartment. And we had all these martinis and manhattans out there with nice finger food, and these people come in with the chips and beer, but it all worked out in the long run.

I was soon seen as a kind of a plus in the department primarily because I liked to teach. I had come to have such a positive feeling about teaching that I was extraordinary. I mean, people looked strange, like, "This guy really likes to teach?" And so, I was given a chance to run the teaching program for grad students at Michigan. And it turns out at the same time that not as many people are interested in the border project as Charlie had anticipated, and none of



them knew Spanish. So, I got this extra bonus of \$2000 every summer to go down to the border and take anybody with me who would go with me to help keep on this border project, which also of course helped me gather the data from my research. Well, the data gathered eventually of course became my dissertation about the business and political leaders on both sides of the border saw each other, the title of dissertation being *National Images of Business and Political Elites in Two Border Cities*. If nothing else, nobody else had done this before.

Meanwhile, I was finishing my dissertation, I became aware there is a market out there, you know, for sociologist at various colleges. Well, there was one opening in a small college in Pennsylvania, and for teaching four courses, the pay was less than I was getting at Michigan State as a grad student, so I said that's out. And I can't remember what the other one was but it was the same sort of thing. This was in 1956, 1957. So, the market was suddenly not all that exciting and with now four kids and plans for a couple more, it was time for looking seriously for a job. So, I headed to Chicago. Remember that second verbal exam at the State Department, and I thought, well, this is where I'm going to finally win the confidence of these people. But I forgot this was John Foster Dulles' time, the Cold War was in full swing, and my rather progressive view of what we should be doing in Latin America did not fly with the people who met me. I remember what the gentleman said as they closed the interview, "Mr. D'Antonio, ours is a free enterprise system, and we do not feel that you could help sell free enterprise abroad." I've always remembered those words because that helped me to feel a little bit better about not going into the State Department. It probably was good for both them and me.

Meanwhile, at Michigan State the Dean of International Relations was Professor Glen Taggart, and Glen and I played handball together. Don't ask me how I had time to play handball

but it was a way of keeping myself busy. And because of where I was, he wondered what I was going to be doing, he asked if I had given -- believe it or not, out of nowhere he says, "Have you given thought to the CIA?" Remember, this is 1957. I said, "No. I'm not sure what the CIA is." And then he says, "There may be a position for you. I have some contacts there. They're going to be giving the exams here in a couple of weeks. Why don't you take the exams and see how it goes?"

Well, I took the exams and it was easy enough to pass, so it was late March, early April, and within three weeks I get a phone call from Washington by the CIA. It was an amazing experience meeting with seven men, no women in this group. But these were Latin American experts and they were good but they were absorbing my stuff, and I was having a good time being as crazy radical as I could be, and when I got through they say, "Stay overnight," that they're meeting in the morning, so we rearranged that. And of course, the main time [sounds like] in the morning was meeting their psychiatrist. By the time I got through with that, I was sure I was going to go home, but instead at about two hours later they called me and this person said, "We'd like to offer you a GS-11, a G-11 appointment." "Gee, a G-11." That's a pretty good salary, \$5800 a year. Wow. The CIA. I did not really know very much about it. They talked about research and doing research on this and that. I said, "Yeah, that's what I like to do, research."

So, they gave me a contract to take home with me, said, "Take the time. You've got a week. Talk it over with your wife and whatever." So, we went back to Michigan State, and mostly I talked to Loomis and then I talked to Glen Taggart, and then Loomis sort of nodded about it, and then I signed the contract and mailed it back to Washington. And then, a few days

later Charlie Loomis calls me. He says, "You know, Bill," -- this is exactly what he said -- "you like to talk," he said, "and in the CIA you do more listening than talking, Bill." And then, he says, "You know, I have to tell you a bit about Washington." And he spends a day or two telling me all about Washington, the ups and downs of working for the government, pluses and minuses. And then finally he says, "What's the CIA going to pay you?" And I said, "\$5800." And when I said it was annual, he said, "Oh, hmm, I want to think about that for you. Come back in two days, I want to talk about that."

So, within two days he calls me in and he says, "The university has made possible a position in the Sociology Department and the Basic College joint." And he said, "The salary would be \$5800 for nine months," he says, "and then the other two months we'll send you down to the border for another \$2000." "Wow," I thought, "this was pretty good." And so, I said, "Wow." And then, he continues, he says, "Well, to take the pressure off," he said, "I think I can assign you a secretary to type the dissertation." A very big relief in the days when you had six or seven copies for your damn dissertations. "So, the semester after obtaining your Ph.D.," he says, "you'll be an assistant professor in the department." I thought, well, this is pretty good.

So, Lorraine and I talked it over and we're talking over all the time what are we doing and within -- I don't know if this sounds crazy but this is exactly how it happened -- within the next two days we decided to stay at Michigan State but I had to send the CIA guys a letter. So, we wrote a careful letter to the CIA expressing the decision to stay with academe and I got the nicest CIA letter back saying, "that if you change your mind the next two years, please contact us, phone here, and we'll be happy to renew the offer." Wow. Who knows what's going to be happening?

So, I continued to work on the border until 1970 mostly with Loomis money but other border money also, and as the project and the financial support took twists and turns, it produced several articles in the ASR and Social Forces, and then the book that was rather well received, *Influentials in Two Border Cities*, co-authored with Bill Form.

By this time, one of my collaborators on the border project was Julian Samora, whom some of you may have known, and Julian was an assistant professor at Michigan State who was to become a very close and lifelong friend. Bill Form, meanwhile, good old Bill was going down to Notre Dame to participate in a conference on Values in America. If you know at that time if you were at grad school, values was a big deal, "Values this and values that." So, there's this big conference going on at Notre Dame, Values in America. And Bill says, "Well, you know, I'm going to Notre Dame and I don't know what happens if I run into a bishop. I better have you guys along to protect me from any bishops." We said, "Fine." He's now talked to Charlie and see if Charlie could put up the money, "because it's Values in America, that's part of your study, isn't it?" And so, Bill convinces Charlie to pay for the hotel room and the meals at Notre Dame. And of course, while we're at the conference, Bill goes and introduces us to all the Notre Dame faculty, friends of his.

So, we meet these faculty, and by the time we're ready to go back to Michigan State, they have already signed us up to come in for interviews because Fr. Hesburgh decided that it's time to build a real Sociology Department. So, we didn't say anything. We got back to Michigan State and we get these interviews to come down. Well, by the time we get down there, the only question that a colleague that I had at Michigan State who was concerned who was Milt Rokeach, the Psychologist of Dogmatism Scale. Milt and I played handball and he said, "Bill,

wait a minute." "Wait a minute," he says, "you're a friend of mine now." "You're not going to go down there to that place," he said. "Have you forgotten Vatican I," he said, "and all the things they did to Catholics in Vatican I?" And he said, "And now they're going to have another Vatican II with this new Pope John or whatever." And he says, "It'll be the same thing. You know what, come on. You want to be able to do your research and not have it all censored down there."

Well, Milt was a really good friend and I appreciated everything he said. I said, "Milt, you're wrong. You're wrong. This Fr. Hesburgh's different." So, as it all turned out, both Julian and I were offered and really such nice offers that it just seem like they have half the class size and everything else and have the opportunity. So, we decided to take the jump and go to Notre Dame. And one of the things that always gave me great pleasure was that the next year I invited Rokeach down to give two lectures and played two games with me on Notre Dame handball courts, which he did. So, that took care of Milt.

Now that leads us into Notre Dame in 1959, and we were at Notre Dame from '59 to '71. Fr. Hesburgh's support was extraordinary and there are -- I just want to tell one incident of it. It occurred in the middle of the '60s, '65-'66. Somehow there was a priest at Notre Dame quietly working with family planning, a Planned Parenthood or Guttmacher of New York, and he got me working with them. And I'm just amazed because I sort had carte blanche to work on this whole business about family planning and the funding of it, which was a very extraordinary experience. And actually in 1966 I had organized a national group of Catholic scholars supporting this family planning clinic, and somehow or other, we've managed with a Georgetown lawyer to calm the bishops. And there is the bill which now, my God, it wouldn't have a chance. I mean the bloodbath is being fought over that which in 1966 flowed with both

parties working with groups of people such as myself. So, it was an extraordinary experience and it was a way of knowing that the government can work and can achieve this.

Well, I had one more incident here that I want to chat as I go through this and it was in the 1960s, I was aware -- if you think about it, the '60s, this is the eruption of the black movement in the South and South Bend was not a very friendly place at that time for blacks. So, I wrote an essay on *The Race Myth and the Christian Conscience*, and I sent it off to my father and he was saying, "You, young people, you don't understand how it is. We Italians had to wait for the Irish to let us in," and all this ethnic stuff. And so, it was moaning and groaning. Then two weeks later he calls me up and he says, "You have any more of those articles?" I said, "I thought you didn't like it?" He said, "It doesn't matter whether I like it." He said, "Some friends of mine saw it and one of those guys are from Notre Dame and he wants a dozen copies if you have them. I always say this is an interesting way in which family works, doesn't it? I'm sure some of you have that experience. And so, I send him off the copies.

Well, to bring this towards a close here, there were a couple of other things that happened that brought us into the American Sociological Association and that is in '70 came a call from Charlie Glock who was at Columbia and he was the head of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, asking me to become the Society's executive secretary. And I took that and I hired Lorraine to kind of straighten out the books for a month or two. Well, 29 years later, she finally retired from that job. And at that time, SSSR went from being totally broke to having stocks in the stock market. So, I would be remiss if I didn't recognize the important role that Lorraine played in all of my journey.

Might I just say that I've summed up 11 years at UCONN, got to Washington and joined the ASA and probably the most important thing I did at the ASA was to get council to authorize me to restructure the ASA, and one of the best evidences that was a good move is the fact that Karen [Edwards] is still here as a result of that change.

Let me just say finally -- I have a hard time saying "finally" in these talks -- and that is that there are some other things that I did that you'll find in the report that I think are still relevant today. Meanwhile, I just have to be, as I look back, it's really been an experience that I had never anticipated as a kid in second grade in New Haven's public schools. But I've enjoyed the journey and I've enjoyed the fact that my wife has been a patient follower, not always sure that I was going in whatever direction, but helping me whenever I tripped and fell. And I want to add that the one daughter that's here, I'm happy to see that she's finally found truth in life by becoming an academic herself at George Mason University.

Thank you very much.