Interviewer: Can you please state your name, title, and affiliation?

Dr. Morris: Title. Lorenzo Morris, Professor Emeritus, Howard University Department of Political Science in Washington, D.C.

Interviewer: Thank you. Can you tell us a bit about your personal background, specifically where you were from, and what was your home or family life like for you growing up?

Dr. Morris: It was, I guess, normal, but maybe pleasant in some ways. My parents were part of the great migration. My mother moved from Florida to Georgia to join my father, who was coming back from the Army in the post-war period. And they moved to Poughkeepsie, New York, a place which, of course, very few people seemed to have heard of. But it's where IBM started, and that's where my father worked. And it has a war link in the sense that Roosevelt was like a 15, it's a statement like a 15 or 20-minute walk away from the edge of the city or town, excuse me.

Dr. Morris: And that walk meant that Roosevelt had a relationship with IBM with where computers started. So it was the beginning of a change for the North and South and for my parents. As I said, I was born two months after my mother got there, so I like to say, in truth, I was born in New York, but I started in Georgia. And it made a difference because we grew up outside of the immediate community as a social group. There were very few Black people present in my life, except for the Black church, which was an important sustainer, and a huge Black family outside of the city that would visit in the summers from Detroit, where the rest of the family went, or sometimes from Washington. And so that gave me a peculiar exposure. I went through the public high school in Poughkeepsie, which was highly rated, so it was a good school. And when the choice came to go to college, I had applied to and been admitted to given a full ride to Cornell.

Dr. Morris: But the racial tensions of the period, 1964, were so great that my parents thought we should consider someplace else. And I eventually got a full ride to Fisk University, which was then, even though I teach at Iowa, it was then the most prestigious Black institution. And I went, and that was a major experience. When I went through high school, there had never been a Black person in my class. There had been in the junior high, but by the time I got into the college prep program in the advanced, or what do they call it, it sort of wasn't gifted by any means, but it was the top level. There were never Black students in my class. But I got to Fisk, they were

everywhere, and it was an amazing transformation that I found that Black people weren't a distant and disappearing minority, which I had been told. So that basically is the background. Except I do want to say one other thing, because it relates to my being in Washington in some sense. The minister of the Black church arranged for me as a young person to go to the 1963 march on Washington. And that was an amazing revelation that even though I didn't see everybody in the world, it looked like everybody in the world was there and that they were progressive and in the Black community. And so my decision to go into political science in some ways was moved by that experience.

Interviewer: That's incredible. And I was going to ask you, how were you introduced to the field of political science if you wanted to expand on that?

Dr. Morris: Oh, yeah. Well, in the undergraduate school, I always tell him this, and he passed a well-known Black economist. He gave a talk. And I always tell people that outside conferences and seminars out of class in the university are so important, they really should be maximized. He gave a talk on the role of inequity internationally and nationally. And that talk focused on the overlap between wealth and government, of course. And he so emphasized what was wrong with the economic aspect of the analysis that it made me even more interested in politics. That and something that happened my senior year as a graduate, as an undergraduate. So I had a choice between political science and economics. You didn't have double majors in it. One had to be a minor. But I had courses that could be switched. And I did an interview of community groups because they were just really getting access to the right to vote. I mean, the Voting Rights Act hadn't passed, but it was expected in Nashville, where Fisk is.

Dr. Morris: So I interviewed Black people in the community around. You didn't go into White neighborhoods in those days. And at least not in Nashville, which is, of course, quite different from my hometown experience. And I finally came across this older Black couple who were very, very politically conscious, knew about everything politically. And so I tried to fill out the forms that I was filling out after they had treated me to cocoa and sweets and everything else. And I said, "Well, who do you plan to vote for?" And they said, "We're not voting." And I thought, "My teacher must be wrong. How can these people be so committed?" Like the people I'd seen in the march on Washington, and they say they're not voting. And that made me think there's a huge gap in the political perspectives on the world that come in the media. Always the more intelligent, the more committed, the more you vote. And I really wanted to know about that. And that was also influenced by the progressive students around me, one of which was Nikki Giovanni, the poet.

Interviewer: And where did you attend graduate school?

Dr. Morris: The University of Chicago. And it was sort of a... Well, first I loved Chicago. It was a wonderful awakening. I went there in part because, not only because of fellowships, but because I was avoiding the draft. And I had... I thought that it was the most progressive place in political science as opposed to its economics department, and a teacher had gone there. When I got there, I remember the opening day very well for my department. The University of Chicago is pretty large. By the way, I got there late. It was like the last minute because I thought I was going to be drafted. I didn't think I would get out. I had already passed everything. It's a long story about how I didn't get drafted. I literally decided the week before to actually take five. Anyway, so the opening session was a perspective on political science around the world from people who... Diverse faculty. I remember Hans Morgenthau, a well-known internationalist, that really fascinated me, although I didn't do that, and other people. And then we were sitting in a large room, about 100 people, and I looked around. I was the only Black person in the room. I think a Black African came in. Well, not into that room, but whatever. It was supposed to come later. And so a few months later, I finally realized there was nobody else coming.

Dr. Morris: And so that gave me an interest in Black politics, of course. But of course, they didn't have a course. And then I discovered they had a course called "Urban Politics," which was really the pre-historic version. And I took that course. I was also very interested in theory, so I had a more analytical interest, but I didn't take courses in it because I had an empirical interest as well. And there was something called the NORC, the National Opinion Research Center, which then had a mass of data on voting and other kinds of things that now has passed to Michigan. It was publicly, I mean federally, sponsored. And I had a professor working there with a new survey research method called I think... I guess I've even forgotten the name of it. Norman. He started one of the first large survey systems. And so I took that course and they locked you in as the only Black person. For some reason, they needed a decorative perspective, I think. Anyway, I couldn't stop taking the sequence for a year and a half.

Dr. Morris: By that time, I was committed and it was interesting to look at data. But I never didn't carry over to my later life because you didn't have personal computers back then, which you're holding on your lap with a bit of mystery. We had to wait until something like midnight to...the crowds would go down at the computer center and you'd take it over with these big cards. They look like giant pieces of money. Well, you can imagine about this size. I always punch in them. I don't know if any of you know. I ask for those and nobody knows. But you could...oh, by the way, undergraduate, I was in the honors courses at Fisk. And They were wonderful. I met great people. But that classified me as a nerd. In graduate school, however, being the only Black

male and there were Black women in the other department, I suddenly moved from nerd to somewhat cool, marginally. I don't want to exaggerate. All right, semi-marginally cool. Anyway,

Dr. Morris: I had...but the stacks of...the stacks of cards were impressive. If people saw you, then they thought you knew what you were doing. But how you knew you had...they would process them and collect the data. And so we collected data that included data on Black voters and other things, which was the first time I'd ever seen that. So that was inspiring. At the same time, I became fascinated with European perspectives on culture and race and things like that. And so I later got into looking at race and other kinds of things in France and places where I had a language advantage.

Interviewer: And were you a first-generation scholar or were you the first in your family to attend college or graduate school?

Dr. Morris: I could say yes, but both my parents went to a community college. But nobody in my hierarchy, my older cousins had gone to college and graduate school, but nobody in my immediate line.

Interviewer: And how would you characterize the political social environment in the U.S. while you were in graduate school? And were you involved in any social or political activism as a student?

Dr. Morris: Yes, a lot as an undergraduate. I mean, the 1960...that's ridiculous. 1968, my graduating year from undergraduate school was a very full year with riots and everything's out. And of course, King was killed. And I was outside. That doesn't sound like a big deal, but outside in Nashville, away from campus, it was a pretty big deal. And so I didn't know what was going on when I heard noises from buildings, which back in discovery that King had been killed. Riots broke out. As an editor of the school, managing editor, not the main editor, I put out a little mimeograph. News alerts every day while we were visiting, we were cloistered in our dorms around the campus. As far as the police came in, I can remember reading, sitting on the steps of my dorm, as about 50 policemen stood across in the campus yard. Guns in hand. And so someone passed around a copy of the Constitution or the Declaration, and I was reading it, but being a nerd, I only got my chance last. And so while I'm reading, the cops begin to approach and everybody runs in the dorm. And I can remember running desperately in the dorm to get away from the cops. The picture of...and they broke a window next to the door. The only reason I elaborate on that is because that picture showed up in the New York Times. And it said, "Students throw each other through window."

Dr. Morris: So the reporting in journalism took another blow in my mind. But those experiences were typical of Blacks in protest areas in that period. I was the first political science graduate of Fisk. The guy who would have been before me, because they just opened the department, was shot in the back of the necks by police, and they said he carried a gun. There was no gun found. He had been a super activist, and there was never an explanation. I don't know exactly when he died because he became a vegetable in terms of abilities. But, you know, it was at the same time an educational experience, and except for the violence, I suppose an inspiring experience. The movie was Sidney Poitier, the first movie I saw in Nashville, in which he slaps a White man and gets away with it. And I thought, “Well times are changing, Even if it doesn't look like it."

Interviewer: Thank you for sharing that. Can you tell us now about your research trajectory? So what was your dissertation topic and what was your current main area of focus? Were there any particular scholars whose work was influential in your thinking and research?

Dr. Morris: A lot. First, my dissertation. A little bit different from my trajectory because I started with looking at more empirical data, and I tried to do a little bit of everything. I was fascinated. I took courses on India. The only thing I didn't take on Europe, of course, I didn't take courses on Latin America because you had to speak Spanish. I mean, literally, you couldn't go in unless you pretended you had it. You could read Spanish or something like that. I hadn't taken Spanish in high school because they canceled the Spanish courses for a Latin course, and this is another true story of history in junior high, which was, they gave us a vote because they ran out of money as to which language we would vote at. The students all voted for Spanish. And so when the Latin teacher was hired, they said, "We decided to go with Latin because there's no point in taking Spanish because who would you talk to? We wouldn't really want to talk to the people." Excuse me.

Dr. Morris: Anyway, my trajectory ended up, I suppose, with my dissertation, which began with that older couple I mentioned. I'd forgotten all about them, but it was in the back of my mind about non-voting, understanding why some Black people in particular don't vote. There was a wealth of literature showing that the more intelligent and ideologically coherent "people were most likely to vote and to participate meaningfully." So I tried to look at participation in a variety of ways. Being fascinated by international phenomena, and I had started reading structural lists like Claude Lévi-Strauss, which gave me my greater French offering because it forced me to read more than one book.

Dr. Morris: In French, it wasn't translated in those days. And Merleau-Ponty, another psychoanalyst, looked at differences in cultural groups and how they perceive the world. So my dissertation focused on how people who are politically and heavily conscious may not vote because of the ways they reclassify things. And I sort of basically argued that the non-voters were people who saw the structure of choices being mitigated to deliberately exclusive perspectives and tried to find ways of measuring it by looking at the ways in which leadership images are communicated in surveys or in discussions and tried to apply it to some kind of a way.

Dr. Morris: Some of the data I collected, the data didn't really fit, but it was an effort to show that the non-fits could not be explained except by conceptual differences in which, between ordinary or active voters and the ways in which people who are culturally excluded perceive the activities involved, how they perceive parties, leaders. I sort of came to a casual conclusion, this wasn't the formal conclusion, that Black people only voted in those days, most people voted to choose between the party, the candidate and the party. Whereas Black people voted to choose between the candidate and the party and the electoral system itself and social system that they felt. And to see themselves with each choice as being a, going into or claiming to be a part of. And one of the defects of voting rights struggles was that it reiterated, reiterated the exclusion from the whole process. So that was the ambiguity that I began to think about exploring as opposed to because I didn't look at voting rights. And my dissertation was called the differential impact of culture on a political participation, which hopefully no one will ever read. The introduction wasn't there.

Dr. Morris: No, my other, as I said, the beginning came when I had to take a French test because in Chicago in those days you had to pass a national test at a high level. And so I had never had a more than one year, two years in French. And I was terrible with it, even though I got a five minute cap and stuff like that as an undergraduate because it's a long story. Anyway, so I took the test and got a regular pass. I thought I wouldn't pass it. So then I took it again and got a high pass. But by that time my mother in sacrifice had paid for a trip to go to France in the summer. And so I went. It was 1970, Nixon, no, whenever Nixon was in office. And that was the summer. None of you would have heard about it, but for some reason all the charter flights that students would have taken, which I was on, and the dollar, the charter flights went out, would not function. And the dollar virtually crashed. So while I was there I was stuck there with very little money for months, two months. I used to be surprised how much French you can learn to speak in a few months. Subsequently when I returned, I went to the Brookings Institution where of course I returned to voting behavior and things like that. And I had been active, by the way, in some student protest groups in Chicago.

Dr. Morris: Oh, there was a big one. I almost forgot about that one where one FBI agent, I was the vice president of the group and an FBI agent contractor was deemed, what do you call it, inappropriate having gone off the wall or something. And he tried to shoot the president of the group, of which I was the vice president. He was actually shown on TV being arrested. So the group, it was not the Black Panthers or anything like that, but it was just a very active Black student protest group. And anyway, when I got to Brookings after finishing virtually all of my dissertation, but I had a fellowship, a research fellowship, it was called the Brookings Institution in Washington, which was a fairly prestigious place. And so I had to be socially well behaved, which meant I was bored to death. But it was a chance to meet many people in the electoral sphere. So I met a lot of people working among the newly elected members, Black members of Congress. I can remember going to Congressman Conners and Congresswoman Chisholm's offices and studying a little bit around the Black National Convention or doing studies, studies around the world, doing some analysis of things related to the Black National Convention where Chisholm had a fallout with Conners and some of the other Black Congress members. I got to be there later on. I think, no, I came back to Washington later on and tried to pick up a little bit where I left off with the Jesse Jackson campaign and I did work a little bit on one of those.

Dr. Morris: But in the meantime, of course, I went to MIT where I ended up being very heavily involved in French stuff. So when the dollar crash while I'm there, some people were willing to lend me money in the student hospital, which I stayed, they were Quebecois. And they insisted on helping me with my French and I thought they didn't speak French, didn't speak English. So when we left and I got my money back and I was able to give them their money back, you know, you could change the dollar. I heard them speaking perfect English to a tourist, helping them. And they were French speaking, but anyway, so they invited me to go there to Quebec. Once we got back, I was going to teach at this school in Massachusetts called MIT. And they invited me to go along. Let me say on behalf of Chicago, the University of Chicago, they had a rig of going. Once they got me the fellowship, I never applied to Brookings. I get this call from MIT and Yale and Yale was not a very pleasant, inviting structure, so I didn't go. But I didn't want to go to MIT particularly either, but it seemed like a good offering.

Dr. Morris: I had this fascination with going to the Peace Corps. But so it didn't make any difference. Once I decided to go and work, I would do that. I had never taught a day in my life. I never had to work. I never had never worked a day in my life except for a summer job at that point. Anyway, so Massachusetts, I ended up teaching some theory courses in urban politics. Again, you couldn't use the word Black in polite society in those days. And I got a lot of foreign students as well as some American students. And so back to the couple in Quebec. One of the guys who married by then married a very prominent Quebecois. I didn't know that. They helped me. I got a grant because I thought it was interesting to study French and English problems in

Quebec and the emergence of the independence group called Le Parte Quebecois that was part of a separatist movement in the 60s, 68 and later. Anyway, I wrote a paper on that with my first publication on the politics of education and language in Quebec. And subsequent to that, I got invited back to do additional research, partly because of the contact of this couple and their very influential associations. However, I stopped and changed my attitude towards being at MIT when I was invited to make a seminar, a discussion group in a room a little bit bigger than this. There were about four generals all over there. They wanted to ask me about what the politics of Quebec. And I decided that the relationship that McGovern would later insist of the political science department, where I was with intelligence concerns, was much more intimate than I had known.

Interviewer: So we're going to shift gears a little bit. What does being a Black political scientist mean to you?

Dr. Morris: Well, that's a very reasonable question, which I have not given a single thought to, of course. I think it means much like the old motto of NCOBPS used to say, which involved commitment to scholarship and to progressive social change. But I also think it means serious investigative and reflective scholarship, which trying to solve or bring an understanding to issues which isn't automatically clear, and doing things in relationship to your students and to society that help them to see beyond the classroom or beyond the immediate structural environment. I think I don't see organizational activism for me on a large scale, though I have become involved in some Democratic parties since I retired. But I do see a kind of sort of like reference point for a Black political science. If you ask me something on politics and you don't have another resource, then I will try to find the answer, even if I only see you passing by my building. And if I see you again, I will try to answer the question. It means, but more and more at a structured level, it means giving advice as a consultant, not necessarily for money, or as an advisor to people who need advice about positive, which I guess for me is for progressive political change.

Interviewer: Thank you. What challenges, if any, have you faced throughout your career, either due to your race or your chosen field of study?

Dr. Morris: I'm not sure about my chosen field of study, but certainly my very first day at the University of Chicago, which was otherwise a very pleasant experience, I took a class taught by a Strausian, which would have been, in my view, in retrospect, something like an intellectual Trumpian, if there was such a thing. And so I was, of course, late. But I was late because, remember, I just decided to go it to a week before and I didn't have a schedule and everything.

And so I remember I sat down and he said, "Well, the deteriora--" all 15-plus years later, "The deterioration of American bureaucracy is commensurate with the influx of ethnic groups." And so I asked him, I said, "I didn't understand what you were saying at the beginning of the class. I must have misunderstood you." And, by the way, ethnic groups were the general term for Blacks and people like them back then.

Dr. Morris: And, of course, I was over the progress of the class. When I walked into every class the first year, it upset the equilibrium a bit. That was true. Anyway, and he said, I don't remember what he said of a substantive nature, and he said, "Well, you know, maybe I need to help you learn how to think." And I was very quiet then, not talking to you like I am now. And I said, "Thank you," and left the office. And I might have said something a little nastier. But anyway, one of the advantages of this is they taught you not to be too self-effacing. Well, they insisted on you not being too self-effacing. But then my next teacher was a guy named Chantaloe, a Southern Jew, who said he was the best, most sympathetic person. And having now told you that I was truly concerned about the draft, well, I wrote a paper on the draft, which, and I figured out by the structure of it how to get out of it without doing anything special, which had to do with the timing issue in which the authority to make decisions about draft days could be made when you protest. So before doing the paper, I sent a protest to the last letter I had received about the new version of the variant of my being drafted, and made sure it arrived at a time where it could not be legally considered within the days they were open. Anyway, so that meant that an unusual form of secretary would respond. The secretary responded with a thousand legal errors.

Dr. Morris: And so I wrote back and said, "You need to explain these." And it took them a year or two by that time. A lottery had come up, and I had a low number, and it was all out, plus other things. And anyway, so the paper went well. Research. I submitted that. And the day he died would look for me whenever he could offer any help. And so I had lots of teachers, like some very famous, some not. My dissertation advisor was not a specialist in the area, but he was a protest theorist and organized protest in some ways. And then Norman Nye, the empiricist, more empirically-based researcher, as I said, brought me into the survey research analysis world. And so those were good experiences. But I took big courses outside. And oh, and I haven't said this in public, but part of what made the tone of my dissertation was, of course, in sociology and, of course, in, yeah, about religion. And the whole course was not religion, but it was on race and religion or something. I don't remember the details. And about how people use language, and it made me decide that the concept of voting as culturally differential could be explored meaningfully. And one of the teachers, a sociologist from, I guess, City College of Columbia, I can't remember now, Alfonso Pinckney, made a sort of cultural analysis and sociology class of the ideas in public sector, discussions that are different in each social group and what they mean

to some communities and not others. And then the theologian that I took had a statement that stunned the class along racial lines. He asked when there were a lot of Catholics and nuns in the class, and he asked, taking a phrase from a preacher's statement, what does it mean to say standing out on the ease of ether?

Dr. Morris: And nobody knew, but the Black students who had gone to Black churches had an idea. And it is, empirically, it didn't mean very much. But structurally, in the context in which he was using it, it had a significance. And it struck me, though, it may not seem as this bad example I'm presenting, that it has to do with the way people receive voting and things like that. And if you're in a powerful situation, it has a very denotative context. You put your ballot, the vote is the ballot, the thing you do. You used to vote by paper. But anyway, so now it's the thing you click or the thing you mail in. When the vote is only what you think to be your, because I don't like Trump now, but it is your choice. And that choice extends to the structural world when you're out of the power system because you have to bring yourself conceptually in it to see the vote as a meaningful expression. And I hope that doesn't sound too theoretical. But anyway, so that complex of experiences made my dissertation orientation. And because I was afraid it would sound too theoretical, I decided to do an international comparison. And having developed some French, having returned, I decided to go to Haiti.

Dr. Morris: But I couldn't because they said nobody would allow me or anybody else who was a graduate student to go to a country that was in that bad a shape. But then I went later after I finished the schoolwork and went on a vacation, had some interesting experiences. And my first grant, externally, they asked, oh, they asked about language and culture. It was to do education, which I'd already had some experience with in graduate school. I co-wrote a book with Charles Henry on education and public policy. It was really just graduate papers. Anyway, it was published. Went into a republished edition. And so I applied for this grant. I can't remember exactly why, but got the grant on the basis of the fact that I had been to Haiti. They didn't. They said, have you been to Haiti? Yeah. You think so? I got to go to Haiti. That led to a long series of grants and development one after the other, mostly in Francophone countries.

Interviewer: Thank you. And in your view, what is necessary in order to further diversify the discipline and make it more equitable and welcoming to scholars of color in the profession?

Dr. Morris: Well, I think it's largely an intellectual thing. But I think some of it has to do with a larger community where people understand much of what I think is important, which are these conceptual and analytical differences. What people take as empirical, like I said, counting the

vote may not be empirical. If you're looking for real differences of opinion and belief and ideological orientation, economists get away with a lot, including extra paid consulting, because they have the dollar, which appears to be equally meaningful no matter where you are. Everything can be integrally related by the amounts. And people want to do in political science that way to the vote plus letters to the congress members, things like that. They all have the same meaning in all circumstances. And so if the political science world, meaning non-Blacks, only are willing to read and perceive the world in that way, then they are not willing to include Black political thought, in my view, because they're not willing to perceive the non-structured kinds of analyses that would bring you closer to understanding those who live in different situations or different perspectives. And some of that goes beyond economic-- a lot of it goes beyond economic deprivation. It goes beyond-- to include socialization and experiences. I didn't mention the most important part of my career, which is getting to Howard.

Dr. Morris: And part of that came from coming to make a talk, give a talk, on Bakke, a case about affirmative action that was coming up where it was supposed to turn around affirmative action. And I effectively argued that affirmative action was for the intergalitarian structures within White American corporations and society to see themselves. And in the educational system, it wasn't for Black people, it was for equity and standardization. Of course, nobody believed me. But anyway, everybody was impressed because it sounded good. And so, when I'm returning to MIT, I got a job offer out of the blue, which was amazing. And they called me up and said, "How much do you make?" Which was chump change. And I said, "chump change?" And they said, "We will double it." And they doubled my salary, and there I was. Well, I had been dating, loosely speaking, a woman at the University of Chicago, and Marsha, who is now my wife. And so, I came to, when I came to MIT, she got a, she decided to become an actuary. She is now the first Black female actuary recognized, and well, she was a long time ago, by the American Actuarial Association. I didn't get that name right, but we needed a fellow of the society. I'll put it that way.

Dr. Morris: And she had came in and got a job there, too. Coincidentally, the week before, she had gone to Washington to consult with a group, and they offered a job. The same day, we both got job offers in Washington the same day. We weren't married then, but we were dating. So, well, it seemed like a logical thing for us to come down to Washington. And of course, if we get to live together, you have to do something to make it, as my parents would have said, appropriate and legal. And we've been appropriate and legal for too long, for me to admit. So, it was an educational experience that overlapped. Now, I've forgotten your question, because I've digressed so much.

Interviewer: No, that was wonderful. Thank you for sharing that. And my next question was, in addition to the existing diversity, equity, and inclusion programming, what is your advice to associations like the APSA or NCOBPS on how best to support Black scholars in the profession as they approach milestones in their career?

Dr. Morris: Good question, because I can't really answer it with concrete recommendations. Well, I do think one of the things to do is to re-tabulate mobility patterns and projections as often as possible, so that if you have a general standard for job acquisition or promotion, you look at the people who are in line to see what it is that would allow them to best fit some goal of the job or the position. So, for example, if you're interviewing a lot of people about admission, you will normally look forward to a university or college. Normally, they look for people who fit the department, not necessarily whether they're brighter or whatever. Well, you can do the same thing with positions. You can look for things that can fit them if those positions are ill-defined or loosely defined, so that you don't change it on an individual basis, but you look across the population to see what is there and how. What your standards may actually be wrong, because they ultimately, as I used to talk about IQ, first IQ tests were based on people who succeeded, and before the Binet test, the initial national, was Binet, and the decency to say that his tests that we adapted later in college IQ tested the validity of the schools and the teaching in context of the individual achievement.

Dr. Morris: Well, the same thing should be looked at with so-called DEI and other things. The structures, as Monsanto didn't admit but implied when they adopted affirmative action, was that there were already rigid structures within the corporations, there were rigid structures there. And they pretended or suggested they were opening up to others, but what was really happening, and they implied, was they could exclude people more easily within their organizations who were White, because the structures would seem to be even more legitimate since they were generously bending them for other people. And in some sense, that is true for everything else. You can only have structured mobility based on what was done, not just for your racial group, but what is in the past. That structure has to be malleable for those people who are not in that past. Some of them are culturally very different. Some may even be culturally similar, so lower income Whitess may have...

Dr. Morris: Where is that place? Some place in the mountains, accents and things. Oh, when I went to Nashville for the first time, it was more of a mountain... I don't know what hillbilly is that word. And though I'd been south with my parents, I could not go shopping because I couldn't understand if I went to the White community. To the point where when I graduated, I had to get gifts for our friends, as I had to take a translator with me to go shopping downtown. And it isn't

that they spoke badly, but I hadn't had any outreach in as far as... If I were in a structured language and English-speaking situation, I would have graded them very poorly, and it wouldn't be true at all.

Interviewer: Shifting gears again, you've held a number of leadership positions in the profession, including past president of NCOBPS. So what in your view makes a good leader? What in your view makes a good leader?

Dr. Morris: Oh God, I knew. Well, first of all, I think being responsive to what you see the organization needs. So you shouldn't just rush into it, you should wait to see where the needs are. And I think you have to learn to be reassuring to everyone who comes to you, and painfully you have to learn to be direct. But as agreeable as possible. In other words, don't try to deceive people about your openness to their mobility or other things if you're not going to follow through. And never share bad things about other people just for gossip and things like that, but more importantly, try to do something that you think will mobilize people to act and always put people to work. Not so much to oppress them, but because people want to be valued, and it doesn't mean you give them orders.

Dr. Morris: You try to be selective and possible about encouraging people. The reason I say this is because I can see myself as a really bad leader, because I don't want to do X, Y, or Z, but I decided when I became chair of the political science department to follow this image. It didn't work pretty well. I mean, I was the longest serving chair in this single period in political science except for the very first one who followed Ralph Bunche, the Nobel Prize winner. And I was really a terrible leader, but they didn't know it because I faked it.

Interviewer: Well, is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Dr. Morris: I don't know. Well, I think that organizations can lead to progressive activities. And I think that's one of the things that I have done a little bit in advising or in academic activity as a chair of the Faculty Senate, for example. It used to be under the president at Howard University, and we had to find a way to get out of it. So I arranged a so-called academic conference with a grant, the largest grant ever given by the president, who didn't understand that if you arranged the academic conferences with certain tones, so a year later we put him out. The point is that I think it's always good to look for opportunities to insinuate in a positive way, not a negative way, academic reflections in the activist world, but not to assume that you are being an activist

automatically, but to try to reach out. So if you're in one organization, you don't try to change that organization, you try to reach out through other means. And I'm hoping that NCOBPS will do more of that, not necessarily to get the academic part of it on the street, but to reach out to the street through venues and opportunities. And I used to hope that other political science organizations would do that too, but right now I think we all are under pressure, and the good thing, finally, about being under pressure is that you begin to see what your real interest and resources are. I'm optimistic because I think that this rather unpleasant looking political time is the beginning of a real awakening.

Interviewer: Well, thank you very much, Professor Morris, for your time today. That concludes our interview.

Dr. Morris: Okay, thank you.