

TRANSCRIPT

SCRC Series: Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project – MC 00191

Field Notes: Randolph T. Hester (compiled November 18, 2011)

Interviewee: RANDOLPH T. (“RANDY”) HESTER

Interviewer: Yona R. Owens

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This interview for the Lewis Clarke Oral Histories Project was conducted at the Center for Ecological Democracy. Randy Hester is a native of Hester’s Store, N.C. and graduated from the North Carolina State University School (now College) of Design in landscape architecture in 1968. He also earned a sociology degree in 1969, and continued on to Harvard Graduate School of Design (GSD) where he earned a master’s in landscape architecture under the guidance of Hideo Sasaki. Over his long and accomplished career, Hester worked for Lewis Clarke Associates (LCA), taught at NCSU, Penn State, and UC Berkeley, created a design philosophy now known as ecological democracy, wrote many books and articles, and founded SAVE International. Recently retired from teaching, Hester lectures and consults throughout the world. An ASLA Fellow, he received MIT’s Kevin Lynch Award in April 2011.

YO: My name is Yona Owens and I’m interviewing Randy Hester at his office at the Center for Ecological Democracy in Durham, North Carolina, on September twenty-eighth, 2011. During his thirty years as a professor at Berkeley, Randy served as chair of the department of landscape architecture and environmental planning. Among his long lists of accomplishments, he’s authored numerous articles and ten books. This past April, Randy received the 2011 Kevin Lynch Award from MIT’s School of Architecture. First of all, congratulations and welcome back to North Carolina.

RH: Thank you.

YO: Before we get into what ecological democracy is about, tell me a little bit about where you’re from and how you got interested in landscape architecture.

RH: Well, I’m from Hester’s Store, over in Person County. It’s the next county up. Our farm is sort of—if you could go from here to Chapel Hill and find the midpoint and go straight up, that’s sort of where our farm is. We always joked that it was thirty miles from Chapel Hill and five generations removed.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: Because most people at Hester’s Store are convinced that Chapel Hill is a communist outpost, so that’s a context that I grew up in. We were tobacco farmers and I was supposed to be a doctor and that’s what—my father had gone to school on a football scholarship, intending to become a doctor, and had wrecked his knee and lost his scholarship. So I was his dream being

fulfilled. About, I think it was my junior year in high school, I decided that I was going to become a designer. Now how, in Roxboro High School, one in the '60s, could decide on their own that they were going to become a designer is beyond me. I had never met an architect or a landscape architect in my life.

YO: Were you taking any art classes in the school?

RH: Well, I was really good in art. There weren't art classes. I mean, the only thing we were taught was French and English and Latin. I took Latin. But Bob Burns was also from Roxboro.

YO: No kidding?

RH: And I knew his sister, but I didn't really know him because he was that much older than me. Anyway, I came home one day and announced to my family that I was going to become an architect. I didn't know what that was, but I explained to them that if I became a doctor I would waste my drawing ability, and that made a little sense to my mother and never made any sense to my father. So then I was advised by the high school counselor that NC State was a great school of design, and so I went to NC State. The first semester Henry did this class that every freshman took.

YO: Now that's Henry Kamphoefner.

RH: Henry Kamphoefner and he invited the faculty to come in, and Dick Moore came in and I never heard a person in my life who spoke more to my heart. I mean, one, he was as irreverent as anyone could possibly be.

YO: Right.

RH: He was even then and he's gotten more so. He talked about landscape architecture and it's the first time I had ever heard of it. I went that week and enrolled in landscape architecture.

YO: From architecture.

RH: Yeah.

YO: What year did you start?

RH: This was 1963.

YO: And you finished in?

RH: '68.

YO: So you were in the five-year program.

RH: It was a five-year program.

YO: When you got there, did you have cross discipline classes, like art, drawing, painting, things like that, that were part of the curriculum for landscape architecture?

05:02

RH: Yeah. Let's see. Well, the first two years everyone—product design, landscape, and architecture—I think all took the same classes. I know all the architecture and landscape were. So, we had one class in our sophomore year that was taught by an architect and a landscape architect together. I think it was our third year that we then started taking the landscape classes separate, so the first two years were all together. With Vernon Shogren we did these hand drawings, of course, of rotations of geometric shapes, so like a dodecahedron and you would have a plan and an elevation and then you were supposed to draw it in some kind of axonometric if you rotated it forty-five degrees, or it was always something like forty-seven. So, those things were very technical drawing, but I think they were inspired from Duncan Stuart and “Bucky” Fuller's work. I don't actually—I think when you first called I said, I was just a freshman. I didn't understand anything, right? I was completely unsophisticated and truly just a farm kid. So I don't know exactly where those things came from. Then every semester we had either painting or sculpture.

YO: Do you remember who the teachers were?

RH: Well, let's see. The one that's most memorable is Bob Broderson.

YO: Oh really?

RH: The reason he's so memorable is that he left before the semester was over, and the story was always that he had run away with somebody else's wife and they had to get out of town. Of course, you know, we were just students, we didn't really know, but he just didn't show up, and other faculty then had to come in and grade our work. Broderson had said, like the first week of school, I am the best artist you will ever have as a teacher, and I am probably going to be the worst teacher you've ever had as a teacher.

YO: [Laughs] Oh no.

RH: But then we had Duncan Stuart for drawing, and everybody's taking this. Those classes, after the technical drawing ones, these classes were a little bit like vacation. Now it was serious work, but it wasn't. You weren't necessarily solving problems like you had to in studio. It was like recess or vacation, and we would paint all night, or Don Collins was making these bumper sculptures.

YO: Now he was a student, Don Collins.

RH: Mm hmm. I think about that time the Gussow, that sculpture, was done in the back. So the arts were a major part of the school, and you took them every semester. I still have a painting that Ron Taylor gave me. I think I had him for several semesters. Anyway, so those were the people that we had in those. You took either painting or drawing or sculpture and you took it. I mean, we had ten semesters of it. It was like an art degree [Laughs] because—

10:05

YO: It's amazing, really.

RH: —we were there for a long time.

YO: Well, in this computerized world, do we still need to get some of those courses in front of the landscape architecture students?

RH: Yeah, of course. I mean, it is one of the worst things that has happened to all of the design professions. You can dismiss drawing and painting. You can dismiss it that it's not—somebody might say, well, it's just frivolous, you don't really need it, you can do all of that with a computer, but the most important thing in drawing is that it's a way of thinking. It's a language different than words, it's a different language than the computer, and to not be able to think with a pencil or a pen is a really serious handicap. I mean, it's like that there's a part of your brain capacity and part of your human potential that's not—it's simply never tapped if the only drawing that you do is on the computer, and it reduces one's capacity to draw on phenomenological data.

Also, it is a way to problem solve in which we are more articulate with drawing, hand drawing, than we ever are with words, and certainly more so than with a computer. Yeah, it's a terrible thing. It's one of the worst things that we've ever done, is to diminish that. It's so easy to just say, oh, it's just the visual arts. We don't need that anymore. If it really were just the visual arts probably it wouldn't be such a serious problem, but it's all of those things. It's a way of thinking and it's a way of problem solving.

YO: I'm glad to hear you endorse the drawing method. Gil Thurlow, Lewis Clarke, Richard Moore, Bob Phillips, Wayne Maynard, Don Ensign, Dick Wilkerson, and Dan Young were the landscape architecture faculty when you were a student, and we could talk all afternoon about the accomplishments of this group, but I'd like to ask you what it was like to study with Thurlow, Moore, and Clarke.

RH: Well, let's see. The major forces by the mid '60s were Lewis and Dick Moore. There was a time when I was a student that Gil was old fashioned. Now, that didn't last. I mean, he was interested in very small scale, a lot of residential work, a lot of very garden-scale—urban public work, too. But Dick and Lewis were going to design the world, and that was hugely appealing to us. So they were the forces. Dick Wilkinson only came at the very end, Wayne [Maynard] came at the end, Don [Ensign] and Dan [Young] came at the end. After Dick Wilkinson came, Dick was obviously the soul of the department, but when I was a student it was really defined by Lewis Clarke and Dick Moore. They were bigger-than-life personalities. They were both unbelievable form makers, and they—

15:05

YO: What do you mean by that?

RH: Well, they weren't teachers in the abstract. They knew how to design. They were teaching us to be able to design as opposed to telling us about it or giving us some history about it. They

could sit down at your desk and show you how to make what you were trying to design better. One of the things that they used a lot was this big model box in which you put your design inside the box and then you could move around and you could see inside. They were incredible form makers and they loved making design. They loved the forming of stuff in the landscape and they were aggressive and assertive and they understood the role that landscape architecture could play. I think it was only years later that I began to understand that landscape was always second class to architecture because those two guys were second class to no one.

YO: [Laughs] Right.

RH: They taught us design. I mean, we had ten semesters of design class, and I can't actually remember if I had—I think for maybe two semesters we had Dick Moore and Lewis Clarke both teaching at the same time.

YO: Oh my God. [Laughs]

RH: And they would spend an hour a week with you on the design that you were doing, and they were big projects.

YO: Did they give you real life situations? In other words, I've seen some of the lesson plans where they've got some imaginary land plot and imaginary problem to solve, but did you work on some actual sites?

RH: Well, I think that all the projects that we—all the projects that I remember were real sites. We designed, I think it was a project that Lewis may have had in the office that was, I don't know, two hundred acres up near Martinsville, Virginia. Now I can't remember if our assignment was simply to develop it to make money, you know, it was sort of an economic context, or if we were assigned for it to become an arts colony. I know my design—I think actually we were given it as an assignment to design it as an arts colony, and it was a real site. It was a very complex site. It was a fairly steep valley, beautiful, exquisite site. We also, I think with Lewis and Dick, designed a big piece of downtown, more at the urban design scale, and then you eventually came down and did a piece. We did all of Raleigh. Now, was it—my memory is that it was—Lewis had already been proposing a green belt that William Flourney really then did the plan.

YO: I think it was in '65 or '66, maybe '67, we have a double spread article in the old Raleigh *News* [actually *Raleigh Times*] and he called it the "green fingers" of Raleigh, and he had drawn out all of the existing green spaces that were in the city limits at the time and said, you know, why aren't these connected? I don't know if Bill Flourney actually saw that article, but there is some evidence that Lewis and Bill may have exchanged ideas at some point, but we're not sure on that. I have to check with Bill on the contact. But, yeah, he did foresee that idea in Raleigh.

20:30

RH: Yeah.

YO: So, did he bring it up in your classes at the time?

RH: Oh, we actually did it.

YO: Oh, you did?

RH: One of our projects—the years now I don't remember, and there were, third fourth and fifth year—third year—[Pause] The years, I can sort of separate them and I can remember some of the projects, but they all sort of go together. But I think it was third, maybe fourth year, we had to design the greenway around Raleigh. I think we had as an assignment both Walnut and Crabtree Creeks. So Lewis' idea—I don't know if Lewis and Bill Flourney ever talked explicitly about this, but there's no question that it was transferred as an idea. Lewis transferred it to all of our class, and then Bill Flourney was a student of mine when I came back and was teaching at State and, as I remember it, he got the money to do his thesis to do the greenway. And then I was city-university coordinator then, so the idea clearly went from Lewis to me to Bill, and it would be really interesting to know if it went from Lewis directly to Bill. Anyway, but those were—

YO: These were big ideas that these guys were bringing to the students, and what impresses me is that the students emerged through the years as just absolutely fantastic designers and top of their field out of the school of that time. Especially the '60s crowd seems to be a remarkable group.

RH: Well, I mean Dick and Lewis were remarkable. I mean, there's almost nobody that I know who has all of their characteristics together. I think that—I mean, I know plenty of really talented designers, maybe not as talented as—Dick and Lewis are as good designers as I've ever known. I mean, they're as good as Hideo Sasaki. They're as good certainly as form makers as, you know, Garrett and Pete and all of the people who are slightly more celebrated than them.

YO: That's Garrett Eckbo and Pete Walker?

RH: Yeah. They are probably better form makers [Pause] than either Garrett or Pete.

YO: That's a pretty high compliment. [Laughs]

RH: But they're—and I have to really think about it, because Garrett loved form making and was extraordinary at it, but they're certainly in that same league, okay, and they had really big ideas. In that regard they had as much confidence in landscape architecture as Ian McHarg. Now that combination is just rare. So as a student you couldn't escape either the skills they were teaching you or the confidence that the scale of the projects they were undertaking was really important.

25:13

So the projects that we designed were substantial scale. We did a sailing club on the coast. See, I think many of these projects were something that was like projects they either had in their offices or maybe did have in their office, or that they were doing as some public service, because we then—we worked in—one of those semesters is when I started working in Chavis Heights. Now, they weren't so keen on that, but that's another story.

YO: Well, I'm going to get to that one in just a minute. Let me ask you this, what message about landscape architecture design were they trying to convey, and is that message something we should continue conveying today?

RH: Well, certainly the message that landscape architecture is critically needed in the society, there's no question that they understood that. They understood that cities would be a lot healthier if they were designed by landscape architects as opposed to city planners or economists or any number of other forces. So that was a clear message and it is absolutely essential that we communicate that and that students understand that. I think they do. I think that NC State continues to do that. I don't think that most schools have people who were mixing it up in the real power arenas like they were able to do. I mean, again I was only a student, but my sense was that Lewis moved in the pretty high circles. If he wanted to be able to talk to somebody in state government [Snaps fingers] it happened like that, that he just understood power and exercised it. And there's not very many schools anywhere in the country today where that message is as clear as it was then. That's unfortunate because I think that we were given skills and they were role models for engaging the most powerful forces of the society, and that's the part that's missing, I think, today.

YO: Maybe that explains why our landscape architects don't lead the projects as opposed to being one of the last ones—as some people have said, the landscape architect's always the last one paid. In other words they're not leading in some places where they might have in the past.

RH: Well, I think that that's partly personality. A lot of landscape architects are—you know Clare Cooper Marcus did a little article years ago about landscape as the “feminine profession” and that by our personalities we were not very aggressive, and I think that that's true of most landscape architects. Now, that was not true of Dick, and it was not true of Lewis—

YO: Right. [Laughs] Back in the day, right?

RH: —and that was a really important thing to us.

YO: Well, let me ask you something about your classmates. Would you like to mention a few of the people that were in your class of '68?

30:03

RH: Well, let's see. Don Collins, of course.

YO: And you have a story about how Lewis and Dick Moore used to pit you and Don Collins against each other.

RH: Well, they were really smart about that because Don and I were both talented and we worked unbelievably hard. We had really working class values. We were quite different. He was older and married. So, yeah, they picked up very early on that they could suggest to one of us that what we had done wasn't as good as the other and it made both Don and me work harder, and not like each other very much.

YO: [Laughs] Oh no.

RH: It wasn't until our fifth year that Don and I were mature enough, maybe, to realize what they'd been doing all this time, and we finally then, our senior year, worked in Chavis Heights on a project together that is still—I mean, I continued to work on it for ten years after we had done the first design. We were trying to stop the urban renewal project in Chavis Heights.

YO: Now this is in Raleigh, and this was a, I want to say low income project, but it was public housing though, right?

RH: No, no. There were some public housing projects—in 1964 when I first started working down there it was the Negro ghetto, in polite company, and in impolite company it was still “nigger town.” It came all the way within two blocks of the capitol, and like most African American communities in this country at that time, the power structure saw them as ghettos and they saw very valuable real estate if they could clear them. So, in Chavis Heights there was an urban renewal clearance proposal that would have demolished, I don't know, forty blocks of housing. Now, it was mostly—it looked largely then like it does today, shotgun houses, but it was not public housing. I moved in down there in the late '60s, and my rent for a whole house was forty-two dollars and fifty cents. So it was very low income, very low rents. Jesse Helms and his family owned a lot of the housing. People of means—it was rental housing for the most part and it was income producing property, but you would have made a whole lot more money, if you were the power structure and the elites, if you could have bulldozed the whole place and reconfigured it for whatever. And this is what we did all over the country. I mean the most famous story is Herbert Gans' *The Urban Villagers*.

34:45

Anyway, and then there was the north-south expressway that would have also gone through Chavis and through Oakwood. It went from the south part of the city to the north and it was basically to Interstate standards. Those two, the urban renewal and the freeway, would have destroyed the African American community in Raleigh. The same proposal, the freeway that you came in on, 147, did that in Durham, and it wasn't stopped. And Hayti was largely destroyed in Durham.

But anyway, in the '60s, I had started working with Dorothy Allen, who was the head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, the local anti-poverty group. And I had gone to her and said that I wanted to volunteer. I was thinking that she would make me like their chief designer or something, right, and she said, well, Randy, we really do need somebody to babysit. You can teach art, right? So after school, I would go down to Chavis to her office and kids who didn't have a place to go after school from like first grade through high school would just come to their office and they would wait until their parents came home. It was, you know, probably twenty-five or thirty kids who would be there every day, so she said, I need somebody to babysit these kids.

YO: So you're a sophomore or junior at this point.

RH: Yeah, yeah, and I actually had a job. My first design job, Dick Moore hired me, and his office was over the Rathskeller, or whatever, where—

YO: Mitch's Tavern, in that little section there?

RH: No, that's on Hillsborough, right?

YO: Mm hmm.

RH: This is on—if Hillsborough was here, Oberlin came in here—Player's Retreat.

YO: Oh yeah.

RH: I think it was the Player's Retreat, and there was something here, and then there was something, and then that building. I don't actually know if it's still there, but Dick's office was above a bar. He paid me two dollars an hour and he was getting divorced at the time and his kids would come by and I would babysit his kids. So, I was a really good entertainer/babysitter.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: So, I then started teaching art to all of these kids in Chavis Heights from like first grade through high school, and they would all be working around two tables down at the center. So that was mid '60s, I think, so that's before I moved in. I didn't move in until later.

But Don and I then did a plan that basically proved that the city had exaggerated how badly dilapidated the housing was, and that it did not qualify by federal standards for clearance, and that it should be rehabilitated. And then we did these interventions of how you could rehabilitate Chavis Heights without ever having to destroy any blocks of it.

YO: And whose attention did you have to get with this? In other words, you didn't just do this over there in the School of Design. You had to have somebody's attention at this point.

RH: Well, the urban renewal authority was—it changed from Godwin, or Goodwin—Godwin, I think—to Cliff Hardy, was the executive director of the renewal agency or public housing. I can't remember exactly.

YO: Who was mayor back then?

RH: Seby Jones.

YO: Okay.

RH: If there was ever a bad guy.

YO: Really?

RH: Seby Jones is the developer of Crabtree shopping center.

YO: Oh yeah.

RH: And everybody said it's going to flood, you're building it in the flood plain, and he had the city staff work on it and they built it and the first year that it was built it flooded.

40:14

YO: Right.

RH: Anyway—

YO: So, going back to this plan you and Don Collins had come up with, and you're students. Did you go to meetings or did you present to the city council or how did you get the message out?

RH: Well, we were doing the plan for Dorothy Allen and she was a part of the black elite power structure and, as the head of the Office of Economic Opportunity, she had a considerable amount of power, but I think that—I don't think anybody—I don't think the city took it seriously until '69 or '70, and Don and I went away. I came back and I was living in Chavis Heights and by that time it was a personal thing to me. I had become involved in the Civil Rights Movement both in Raleigh and then even more so in Boston, and had been involved in trying to prevent the inner belt freeway from being built in Boston and became more and more convinced that this was racism and classism at its very worst.

It was not about school desegregation. I mean there were obviously other issues in civil rights about voting and education, but the great physical manifestations of the Civil Rights Movements were urban freeways that almost always went through poor black neighborhoods, and urban renewal clearance that came to be called "Negro removal," because that's what those were. So I don't think that anybody—we would present it and they would sort of pat us on the head. I'm sure they were patting us on the head and they knew we would go away. Then I came back and took it on as the major cause in my life, and I was determined that they were not going to destroy Chavis Heights.

YO: And they didn't.

RH: And they didn't. And it's still a relatively poor neighborhood, but it's one of the best neighborhoods I ever lived in. If I needed anything when I lived there, a neighbor would help me. This was the time the Jackson Five, Michael Jackson, you know—this was when he was a kid, right? I mean, this is the '60s and early '70s, and I believe most kids in Chavis Heights could sing just as good as Michael Jackson. In the afternoons after school, the streets were really narrow and there wasn't all that much traffic and the kids just played in the streets. They would play football or baseball. But when they came home you would hear—I'd hear in the distance, I'd be working, I had a little studio in one of the rooms in my house and you would hear off in the distance, [Singing] "You and I must make a pact, we will bring salvation back," and it would get bigger, and bigger and then it would be right on my street, on Haywood Street, and then it would go [on.]

44:43

It was an amazing place to live, and still is, and luckily most white people are afraid to live there so it hasn't dramatically gentrified, and it probably is one of the best examples of post-slavery African American communities in the country because it didn't get urban renewed. There's blocks and blocks that are still that shotgun housing pattern and they're close together

and you can sit—you know, it's the new urbanist's dream. The streets are narrow. You can sit on your front porch and talk to somebody across the street. Anyway, it's a terrific place. I learned a huge amount living there and I obviously learned politics, stopping the urban renewal project and stopping the freeway.

YO: That's a remarkable job. So about 1968, '69, I think, you were working for Lewis at that point, but still in school.

RH: Right.

YO: And you said that working there was like being called from the small leagues into the big leagues, I think—

RH: Yeah.

YO: —or going to play for the Yankees, I think you said.

RH: Yeah, yeah.

YO: What was that about?

RH: Well, Lewis was working—again, I was really naïve. I was a farm—

YO: But learning fast, evidently. [Laughs]

RH: I was a farm kid and [Laughs] if Lewis or Dick asked you to work for him it was like the greatest thing you could ever do. So, I think we were working on Tysons Corner. You remember this better than me because all I was doing was the planting plan for this monster shopping center.

YO: It was huge.

RH: I mean—[Laughs].

YO: It still is. [Laughs]

RH: It was really big, and I think that's all I worked on the whole year.

YO: Really?

RH: I would do a drawing, and I don't know if it was the rule—I mean the upper classmen were sort of the bosses, right, and I was the low man on the totem pole, but I think we were told to leave our drawings. Now, I don't know if we were told or if it just—I don't know, but you knew to leave your drawings out and the next day you would come in and they would have been redesigned.

YO: Oh really?

RH: I'm pretty sure that Lewis would come in every night and go over everything that was being done in the office.

YO: Oh heavens.

RH: If you had made some sort of spatial mistake, or even a detail mistake but mostly about space, it would be better the next time you came in. I guess to me the thing I realize, it was an extraordinary teaching opportunity, to have an office that the kids like me could come in and the teacher didn't have to be polite about it. Like if you're in studio and you had sort of a bad idea they would at least try to help you make it better. If you were doing that in the office and it was a bad idea, Lewis said, that's a bad idea, right away, and you should do it this way. It was a different way to teach and it was an incredible opportunity because you could then see from yesterday, this is what I thought, and my God, that's so much better and it really does create an entryway. It invites you in instead of just being some plants that are just sort of blobbing up the front, right?

Anyway, you could see the lesson, and it was a great opportunity. I mean, I don't know, we were obviously getting paid, but it was like another studio. It was another class in which we were learning. I think both working at Dick Moore's and at Lewis' I didn't learn much about the business. Now, if I'd learned about the business from Dick it probably would not have been very good lessons, but if I'd learned about the business from Lewis, it would have been really life changing. But what it gave us was the opportunity to learn more design and how to solve problems and how to—you know, you might think it really doesn't matter how those plants are done around the entrance, but if you do them this way, you can see, my gosh, it really does.

50:46

YO: Well, now this is a kind of complicated period in your life, so help me along here. In '68 you were about to graduate from landscape architecture and you were also working in the office with Lewis, and they had just formally formed Lewis Clarke Associates at that point, so they were really a formal office—

RH: So who was it before?

YO: It was just Lewis, and he would hire some of the students, two or three students to work, but mostly he actually cranked the work out, so it was kind of a watershed year, '68. They picked up Palmetto Dunes that year, Fred Stresau was there for awhile—let's see, who else?—Don Basile, Sally Schauman was there at that time, and Wayne Maynard would come over from the School of Design as well. In your life though, you're getting involved with the Chavis Heights battle, learning design, and graduating, but you also at this point decide to go back to State to get another degree in sociology. Is that right?

RH: Well, it actually is the same time. I don't know if we had to take a sociology class. I suspect that it was in a list of required electives, you know, you probably had some choice, but I think this is '64 or '65. But I'm going to back up. The curriculum was an amazing curriculum. We were taking ecology in 1963. We took a basic biology course and then we took ecology and we

had ecology with Art Cooper, and talk about another transformative experience. Most schools of design weren't requiring an ecology course at that level for ten or fifteen years. This is the early '60s.

So, ecology was required. My guess is that you could take some social science and it could have been political science or sociology or psychology, but I took urban sociology with Davis, and I couldn't believe the stuff. I mean, every day would be something, like—I can make my plan for downtown Raleigh better or I can make my arts colony better by applying this. So I decided that I would get a degree in sociology so I just took extra courses. One semester I took twenty-four units. [Laughs]

YO: Oh my heavens! [Laughs] When did you sleep?

RH: I must not have been sleeping very much. But I did it at the same time. When I finished in landscape architecture, I think I still needed two sociology classes, but basically did it at the same time. So, I'm pretty sure—I must not have gotten the sociology degree until the next year or something.

YO: '69.

RH: It may have been a year later, but it was only one or two classes. I just took more classes. But, boy, almost every one of those classes I could apply to design and it was completely different from what we were being taught. It was all things like Robert Sommer was writing about personal space and he was talking about the difference of yours and my interaction if we're sitting across from each other or if we're sitting at the edge of a table, and there were a lot of people at that time beginning to think about site planning to maximize social interaction, or, in some cases, to minimize it, to provide privacy. The sociology people and the environmental psychology people just had an enormous amount of information that we could use in design.
55:52

So, it was going on at the same time, and certainly by my junior year I was bringing that stuff and pretty aggressively applying it.

YO: So you knew at that point that these two things were going to be part and parcel together through your career, or did you?

RH: I wasn't sophisticated enough to think about the long term, but I knew that they made sense to me and it was—[Pause] It made sense to me. I guess it just made sense. I don't think that—it wasn't until some years later that I realized that it was—well, I must have realized then—that it was different. It was a different approach. It was not decorative. It was about social transformation.

You know, it's interesting. After you asked the question and I sort of said, well, I didn't think about it as career, I knew it was different. I knew it was different. It was a point of [Pause] discomfort in the studio. I remember very well a studio in which we were supposed to identify the most critical problem from Raleigh in a band—I mean this is the kind of project they would do, right?—a band that went from I think along the Neuse River all the way to the coast, from Raleigh all the way to the coast. We were supposed to identify the most serious problem. I said the most serious problem was racial injustice and I drew a picture of a little white kid screaming

in a black kid's ear. And Lewis was really displeased with this, because it wasn't what was defined as a landscape problem. He said—and I think I may have been working in his office—he said in studio, publicly, in a really humiliating way, something to the effect, that's not landscape architecture and if you think it is you should transfer to Georgia.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: Well, Georgia was like sending you to Siberia or something. So, I guess I did—I must—

YO: Things weren't fitting in the box, right?

59:54

RH: I must have begun to realize that this was something that wasn't quite what a landscape architect was supposed to be doing, I guess, and probably it made me more committed to it. This is very complicated for me personally because I grew up really poor. I worked every summer with African American tenant farmers, and they were—I mean, it's so clear. It was clear to me it was one of those instances, except for the grace of God go I. The only difference—they were just as smart as me, everything, except they were black and I was white, and I went to college and they kept tenant farming. Some of the older, like Sandy Richman and Shorty Lawson, who were probably ten years older than me, taught me almost everything I know about farming.

YO: They were tenant farmers?

RH: They were tenant farmers. By the time I was in high school my father had bought a rundown farm, and again, it was beginning to be clear to me that there were advantages that white people enjoyed that black people didn't. And there was no reason that they didn't enjoy the same privileges except for race, and particularly Shorty Lawson. Shorty Lawson and I spent hundreds of days together doing a task, like replanting tobacco, in which he's working one row and I'm working one row and you just talk about everything. I can remember one day he said, Mr. Randolph—that's what he called my father—Mr. Randolph is the hardest working white man I ever knew.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: And it was both a compliment—

YO: And a complaint.

RH: —and it was also an indication that white men, from his perspective, didn't work very hard. Anyway, I must have taken the Civil Rights Movement and the criticism that these kinds of social concerns weren't in the domain of landscape architecture personally. I think I took them personally, and my experience was different than most people. I've never thought about this in quite this way until you asked this question of, did I know that putting those two together was my life's work, but it was. And I guess—when you're that age you don't know what a life's work is, [Laughs] for God's sake. I think I knew—

YO: Well, you knew you were onto something, is what I'm hearing here.

1:04:31

RH: Yeah, and it did become clear, it became absolutely clear when Hideo Sasaki—when I was in graduate school after a project that we did, Hideo said he wanted me to come and work in his office. This was like being asked to work at Dick or Lewis' office. It was extraordinarily flattering and I didn't know what to tell him because Hideo in the '60s by that time was like Hercules or something. I mean, he was a god within the profession of landscape architecture. I remember telling him that I was really honored that he would ask me but that I was working to try to stop the inner belt freeway and I was volunteering in the "hood," the ghetto of Cambridge, and I knew by then that that's what I was going to do, and that's not very long afterwards. So I probably knew before but—

YO: Well, let's explore another little avenue here. After you graduated and worked at Lewis' and before Harvard, in 1970, which means you're not very long out of school, you become a member of the School of Design faculty, right?

RH: Uh huh.

YO: And in the Libraries' Historical State online picture archive there's a picture of you sitting at your desk, and on your lapel you're wearing what looks like a campaign button that says, "I'm for Randy Hester." So tell me a little bit about that early '70s period. You were running for city council, weren't you?

RH: Yeah. I came back to teach at State. I taught for one year at Penn State. After I went to Harvard, I taught for one year at Penn State. Then I came back to State, and Dick Wilkinson hired me. By this time—

YO: He was head of department at that time.

RH: Yeah. Lewis and Dick Moore were not really a part of the faculty and Dick Wilkinson was. So, Dick hired me and I think I was appointed immediately in that first year as city-university coordinator. Again, I'm pretty smart politically now, but there was so much that was going on that I didn't quite understand. I think I was appointed because Walton Jones was the head of the urban extension program and he was really tied in to the Democratic Party. They must have known that I was good at these things, both as a designer and as engaged in the political, so I was appointed city-university coordinator. So I would work with the city manager and set up these programs. And that's when we started a group called Goals for Raleigh with the League of Women Voters. I wanted to just go all out and basically declare war on the freeways and Walton, and Bill Roberts said you can't do that. How can you frame this positively? So we rewrote the anti-freeway research proposal and got funding to do Goals for Raleigh, and I was city-university coordinator and we created Goals for Raleigh, and I continued to live in Chavis Heights and was fighting the freeway, and the city was still—the freeway and the urban renewal project were still on the books. So, I would organize protests against city hall and city hall was paying part of my salary. It was a very interesting time, and I assume that Walton Jones and Bill Roberts and Dean Kamphoefner were protecting me so that—

YO: What gave you that idea?

1:10:00

RH: Well, they just would look at me knowingly.

YO: As a faculty member.

RH: As a faculty member and as the city-university coordinator. And, we did some very positive things for the city. We got millions of dollars in federal funds to expand the park system. We did the greenway plan. Bill Flournoy and I did the greenway plan, mostly Bill, and I was running political interference with A.C. Hall, who was the city planner for the city at the time. So the city was probably getting a lot more good, but they still were supporting the freeway system and I was organizing against it. We did a report. Wake Environment did a report that my students and I wrote that basically alerted every neighborhood in the city that the city was going to destroy the city. Last week when the people from Oakwood were here, I had gotten out this little—it was mimeographed. [Laughs]

YO: Was it? [Laughs] Purple ink?

RH: Yeah, and you could hardly read it, but it said, if you live in these neighborhoods, the Raleigh Thoroughfare Plan is likely going to negatively [impact you], and it was like every neighborhood. It wasn't just Chavis and Oakwood. It was if you lived on Clark Avenue or if you lived on Oberlin Road or if you lived on Dixie Trail. You could go anywhere and the big forces, including the landscape architects, were in all of the developers' pockets and the developers wanted these freeways built. There was a fight over Pullen Park and I asked the local ASLA if they would come to the public hearing and simply read the national ASLA policy, which said explicitly that the American Society of Landscape Architects opposes—and it's all in the context of being pro parks and open space—opposes the taking of any parks or open space for the purpose of building roads. It's in that. I said all I want you to do is come and read this to the public hearing. They didn't show up because—

YO: Who was the leadership of the ASLA?

RH: This was Jeff McLean.

YO: Oh yeah.

RH: Anyway, the political landscape was changing and the profession was committed to the chamber of commerce model, and the chamber of commerce model was getting challenged.

YO: Did you have any backers from the landscape architects at all?

RH: Not when it came right down to it.

YO: Really?

RH: Dick Bell. No, no, I told you wrong. Dick Bell was completely supportive of trying to stop the freeways, and there probably were others. But I think that your question was in the context of coming back to teach, and that was a very interesting time because the world was changing. In 1969 Kennedy and Martin Luther King were assassinated—Robert Kennedy—and there were other points—you're asking this question about was I aware. I remember 1963, I was a freshman, and John Kennedy was killed and NC State played Wake Forest, either the day he was killed or—and I remember thinking, we shouldn't be playing football. This is not a time we should be playing a football game. So, I must have—I don't think it registered intellectually then, as an intellectual construct, that these things would somehow make my life. But anyway, the political landscape in Raleigh was shifting and Goals for Raleigh was created and the Wake Environment, and by that time the freeways were really being challenged, stuff like that.

1:15:40

YO: So between '73 and 1980 you were in Raleigh or you were in Boston? You were in Raleigh?

RH: In Raleigh. No, I taught at NC State for that ten years.

YO: You did?

RH: Maybe the first year I was still doing projects in Boston, I don't remember, but I was basically—

YO: Well, I was a little confused on that because I didn't know when you had gone to Harvard, but I do know that in 1980 you had a project that you had with your students to do some work with Manteo, North Carolina, and from a researcher's standpoint that sort of looks like a prototype for ecological democracy. So I was wondering if you could tell me a little bit about the Manteo project.

RH: Well, I should back up. One of the things that Dick Moore was working on was Texas Gulf Sulfur.

YO: In Aurora.

RH: In Aurora, and I think he actually did an article that was in *Landscape Architecture* magazine about it. When I came back to NC State we were asked—Walton Jones, again. We wrote a grant to do a plan for Aurora. The mayor in Aurora, the former mayor, at that time county commissioner, Frank Bonner, the first time we came to town he said, we hate planning. The last time somebody did a plan I was the mayor and when they presented it to the city council I took every copy and threw them in South Creek.

YO: Oh no. [Laughs]

RH: The town was going to get mined. Texas Gulf Sulfur and North Carolina Phosphate were buying land in the city with the intention of mining it, and they were just going to destroy Aurora, which wasn't much, but people had been living there for two centuries. We did a plan

and it turned out that people were completely anti-planning, even the planning commission, and so they hated the coastal zone management. This was the feds coming in and telling them they had to do these things. Except, we found out that people were really concerned that Texas Gulf was destroying their fishing grounds and places they hunted.

YO: Now we're talking tribal, right?

RH: Yeah, and we then did a plan that basically preserved all of this wetland, all of these upland pocosins, all of these areas of environmental concern. This is an environmental, ecological dream, because people wanted to preserve their hunting and fishing grounds, and it matched completely with the ecological patterns that the feds were trying to preserve. And it was probably as strong an environmental plan as there was anywhere in the state of North Carolina in coastal management. And it was all because we had discovered what was the sacred place construct to people in that community, and it was hunting and fishing.

YO: Right.

1:19:53

RH: So it had entered my mind now. Here is again a place where understanding sociology and articulating it can then be expressed in landscape design. Frank Bonner and his wife, she was then the mayor, Grace, became extraordinary supporters of this plan. I mean, this was strict land use control and really designing, redesigning. They have this really wonderful little museum downtown in Aurora now and you can go and there's a big sand pile and you can look for shark's teeth—

YO: Oh really? [Laughs]

RH: —and stuff because they dig it up from the—anyway, Texas Gulf started boycotting people who they had been doing business with if they supported the plan, and when we presented the plan, the local manager of Texas Gulf Sulfur said, in public—I mean, it was an overflow crowd at the school in Aurora—we presented the plan and he said, we will fight this plan with any means at our disposal, legal or otherwise.

YO: Oh my heavens.

RH: Of course, I had these visions of Karen Silkwood, and it was a pretty scary thing. But they stuck with it and got a lot of national attention because of the boycott, and eventually Texas Gulf was told to back off. I mean, you're breaking the law. You can't boycott someone for these reasons. Anyway, so when we started working in Manteo, I already—and I had done a project at the Harvard Law Childcare Center—sort of consciously doing this exercise that you did with Will [Hooker], that Will and I had sort of developed together, of having—

YO: He was recalling childhood places, right?

RH: Yeah, and I had by that time tried to do it so that—we were trying to tap into the affective domain, and usually if you interview people, they are responding to you with their best

intellectual brain. Just recently I was talking to my dental assistant and she lives over in Person County and she doesn't let her kids play out in the woods. She's afraid they'll get bit by a snake or they'll get Lyme disease.

YO: Oh no.

RH: I said—but I must have just hesitated, and she said, but I played out there every day. And so, that kind of disconnect between places that were great to play and—anyway, we're trying to tap the affective domain and that's really then what we did in Manteo. Henry Sanoff helped. Linda Jewell helped. Brian Scott was a student. The main person was a student, Billy Harper. We were working on the plan and people were clearly—there was twenty-two percent unemployment. It was desperate.

We kept coming up with these economic development strategies and it was going to redesign—each one really shifted things around. We did urban design plans and people were increasingly unhappy about them. We then embarked on trying to figure out what it was—they kept saying you're going to destroy our way of life, or our small town way of life. And we then developed a map based on a lot of interviews, newspaper surveys, behavior observation that Billy did just hours and hours of looking at what people did every day. And we made a map largely based on all of that data that looked just like a land use map except it was places that people valued and didn't want changed. So, “newsing” at the post office, the round table at the Duchess restaurant where everybody, starting at 5 o'clock in the morning, would go and have breakfast and discuss politics—it's how things would get thought out. It was a democratic place. It was a third space democracy space. We made a map of all of these things and Jewel Burris, who was on the city council, came in and he said, you mean all of those places are more important than the churches?

1:25:58

YO: [Laughs]

RH: I said, that's what the *Coastland Times* newspaper survey said, because we had had a long list of places, if you had to sacrifice some places or if you could save some places as economic development occurred, what would they be. And churches were way down here and schools were down here, and they are sacred places in communities, and there were all of these places much higher, including the Duchess Restaurant and including the post office, including Fearing's Drugstore, including—

YO: There was a dock where the teenagers hung out?

RH: Yeah, that was hanging out at the docks, or hanging out at the water, and it was the best place. It's sort of a one—but there were—like Jewell's Park and the wetlands. So, Jewell said that's the sacred structure of Manteo, and it then became the key piece of information. We could have thrown every other traffic study out, we could have thrown out all the building conditions, we could have thrown out all the other analysis—and we'd done dozens of maps—we could have thrown them all out and just used the sacred structure, and that's what we did. We knew then these places we had to fit new development in.

So on the waterfront—by this time Jim Rouse, the Rouse Company, was interested in coming to Manteo and they were going to basically destroy everything and put in a kind of Jim Rouse waterfront. But there was a sacred place right here, Jewell's Park was right here, and you couldn't do it without destroying the sacred structure. So nothing ever came of it. Everything then had to be fit in, in this sort of small scale development, which meant then that local developers could control—it was really about the local economy as opposed to the national savior coming in.

Then one of the most sacred things in Manteo was the front porches. So we then designed the whole waterfront like it was a civic front porch and it made the waterfront thing completely different than any other waterfront. There's locally made furniture as opposed to you buy it out of a catalog, and so the place is different. The first contract, John Wilson, who was the mayor, graduate of NC State, John Wilson and Bill Parker have basically been the stewards of Manteo since 1980, still are. I mean John's not the mayor, but Bill Parker, again a landscape architect graduate of NC State, is still the chair of the planning commission.

YO: No kidding?

RH: And they have basically stewarded the development in Manteo for forty years or something.
1:29:48

Anyway, but the extraordinary breakthrough in Manteo was the discovery and use of the sacred structure, both to tell us what should be preserved and then the form of new urban development, and that it could be used as inspiration for completely new landscape forms. So the idea of the civic front porch grew out of that sacred structure.

Manteo then was far more successful than we could have imagined and it clearly became the poster child of this combination of landscape architectural thinking and social thinking. It's no different than Chavis Heights. It's no different than Aurora. It's no different than the plan we've done for Chigu in Taiwan, but it's still the poster child because it was dramatic and the economy improved. We had suggested that we thought they could bring back the old wooden boat building industry. Anyway, it was sort of targeted employment. Yeah, it was cool, and it really was Billy Harper and Brian Scott, who were graduate students in landscape at the time, [who] were the major forces doing that plan with me.

YO: Well, we have a little project booklet called the *Quadricentennial Celebration of the First Roanoke Colony: Survey of Townspeople for Future Development* in our collection, and this is kind of an obtuse question right now, but I think you'll understand why I'm asking this in a minute.

You did a survey, and it was an interesting way that you did the survey—I'll let people refer to the book on how you did it—but one of the questions was, would you like to be more involved in planning Manteo's future? There were thirty-two yeses, thirty-seven nos, and eleven no responses. So my question is, what method did you develop to sway the community to become involved in the process, because ecological democracy calls on not the self-appointed committee but the residents themselves to come and have input into the process. So how did you talk those Downeasters into participating in your program, besides pointing out the sacred places?

RH: Well, I think that's a really powerful piece. First of all, let me back up and say I think that any time that you can get ten percent of the community engaged in a planning and design activity that's a lot. Aurora was unusual because if there's a horrific threat more people are going to participate. If the threat is immediate, more people will participate.

In Manteo, the economy had slowly declined and unemployment was really terrible, but it had just gone down so gently, the number of jobs had gone down so gently, that it wasn't alarming, I think. I've just been writing about this because I think it's important. The awakening was when we started presenting information to people and it was terrible and more people became involved as more information came out, and part of it was the sacred structure, but part of it was, we really have that much unemployment?

The downtown was basically abandoned. The hardware store that had been there like forever, the first day that I went to Manteo the hardware store closed and moved to a strip location at the beach. I think little by little people became more alarmed. I think that we weren't so sophisticated about it then, but we've become a lot more now. If people aren't involved you have to figure out ways to get them involved and a lot of people will never come to a community meeting. It's not what they do. Some of us go to community meetings every night. [Laughs]

1:35:40

YO: [Laughs]

RH: Marcia [McNally] was trying to call me last night and I went to a community meeting on downtown open space in Durham and I went at 5:30 and at 8:30, we were still there.

YO: Oh my heavens.

RH: Marcia was trying to call me from Massachusetts and she was beginning to worry, and I said, I think if there had been something to drink, we would have stayed there all night. But some people participate, some people don't. In Manteo, the mayor was really committed to getting the broad public to participate, so—low income African Americans. He said, we've got to go and we've got to talk to them. We've got to interview in that neighborhood.

Dale Collins, who was African American, was on the city council, and she really helped us figure out how—[the students and faculty interviewers] were all white, and how are we going to engage with the African American community, and Dale really helped us. But you have to go out of your way to engage people. When we've worked in Los Angeles, the place to really engage if you're trying to design something in the neighborhood is to go to the supermercado. And you set up a table and you have your drawings and as people come in and out of the grocery store—

YO: No kidding?

RH: —they stop and, oh, I'll be happy to talk to you. But they wouldn't come to a community meeting and they wouldn't open their door if you had gone door to door knocking in Los Angeles because it would have been too scary.

YO: Very creative, Randy, very creative.

RH: Anyway, I think that we have to figure out ways to engage the public in nontraditional ways, and then some of them will start coming to the community meetings, and some of them won't and you have to continue those things. But that's a whole other story and it's basically been one of the things that I have done my whole career, is to try to figure out techniques for engaging community participation because that is really one of the bases of having deep democracy, is that we have to participate every day.

You know, you can't just vote every once in awhile, complain most of the time, and consume with vigor. That's not a deep democracy. For us to have a really deep democracy we have to tithe to our local government in the same way that we give ten percent to our church. We have to give something every day to the public or we don't have a democracy.

Anyway, but in Manteo a lot of people who weren't historically engaged in public decisions became [engaged], and it's a really active local democracy, not so much from what we did. I think we may have started something, but mostly from Bill and John.

YO: I enjoyed reading about the Manteo project in your *Designing for Ecological Democracy*.

RH: Good.

YO: It was a very entertaining story. So, I think about 1980 or so you moved from Raleigh to Berkeley. Is that where you met Marcia McNally?

RH: Mm hmm.

YO: Tell me about the firm you two formed, Community Development by Design.

1:40:00

RH: Well, let's see. I think I had written an article in *Landscape Architecture* magazine about Manteo, I'm not sure. I think it was [Pause] "Lifescapes and Land Styles," or something it was sort of mixing these—

YO: I believe I've run across that one, yes.

RH: —words together and it was a kind of superficial description of the participatory process in Manteo. Some people called us from the city of Los Angeles and they said, we were wondering if you all would be interested in bidding on a project. We have interviewed a dozen local landscape architecture firms and we're not happy with them. So we weren't even a business, okay. I think we printed some name cards or something, and I guess we did decide that we were Community Development by Design. I don't actually know. But, we went to Los Angeles, flew down to Los Angeles, and they offered us this job. And it was for the city of Los Angeles to design a hundred and thirteen or a hundred and thirty acre park in Hollywood, and we've been working for that client ever since. We worked for Joe Edmiston, for the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. I mean, he basically was the patron of Community Development by Design.

So Marcia's background, she was studying with Donald Appleyard in city planning and we met through Donald. She was an economics major in undergraduate school with a degree in city planning as her master's, so we combined our joint skills and formed this firm that is basically the predecessor to the Center for Ecological Democracy. We always did about half for-

profit—it was a for-profit business—and half was basically hopeless causes, and we always made enough money—Joe Edmiston knew this, [Laughs] that he basically paid us well enough that it paid all of our overhead and allowed us then to take on about half pro bono work. And so, we could work for really poor neighborhoods and we could take on international endangered species things, and stuff like that.

YO: I'd also like to add long shots, which goes to my next question. You've been involved with what I'd call spectacularly complicated and long shot projects, and one that comes to mind is Reseda Ridge—is that how I pronounce it?

RH: Mm hmm.

YO: Reseda Ridge, which you discuss in your book in a section called, "The Lost Mountain, the Power Map, and the Dirt Contractor."

RH: [Laughs]

YO: Could you briefly describe the project and explain what a power map is?

RH: Well—

YO: This was not a little project. [Laughs]

RH: Yeah. This again is one of the projects for Joe Edmiston, the executive director of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, and again it's a freeway fight. This was to parallel the 405 and part of the freeway was being built and it was being built by a developer who had to build it in order to do his development. A condition of his approval for that project was to build part of the freeway all the way up to the top of the Santa Monica Mountains where Mulholland Drive is. The grading had all been done and they had literally cut down a mountain because the freeway, it was like this.

1:45:09

YO: More than a forty-five degree angle.

RH: Yeah, and Reseda Ridge was gone, and the grading had been completed. So, there had been a valley down here and a mountain up here and they took this dirt, cut it down, filled in part here, and then they had to truck some of the dirt away. Joe hired us basically to do a master plan for these pieces of land that he had acquired in Reseda Ridge.

Some of them only touched—it was like a gerrymandered political district, these pieces of land he had gotten. Marcia told him—Marcia's not the ecologist in our business—and she said to Joe, this thing that you've asked us to design—it was a thousand acres—has no ecological integrity. Joe doesn't like to be told that what he's got is not so good. So he said, well then, what should I do? And we then did a plan that said he needed to buy or acquire ten thousand acres instead of just a thousand because this was right smack in an area that was one of the four most important core habitats for the mountain lion.

We didn't know that exactly, but we then hired an urban ecologist group, wildlife people, and we hired a traffic engineer. And the traffic engineer concluded that if we built this freeway it was basically going to be a parking lot. There were ten thousand trip desires each peak hour and they were going to only build capacity for seven thousand five hundred.

YO: Uh oh.

RH: That's a lot of traffic. I mean, this is a freeway standard that's going to parallel the 405 interstate and it's basically going to be a parking lot because you're going to get on it faster from the Ventura Freeway. You're going to get on it faster, but it empties into Sunset Boulevard and the traffic was already D and F levels there. So it's already gridlock there and it's basically going to be a worthless freeway.

The wildlife people told us that if they built that freeway and the associated expansion of Mulholland that it would lead to the local extinction of multiple species, but that it would become a major barrier for the mountain lion, and by this time the mountain lion has become the poster child for this greenway that we're trying. We're trying now—we've figured out from Michael Soulé's work and Joe Edmiston's politics that we can have a greenbelt around the entirety of Los Angeles. And that the mountain lion will be able to go from the Los Padres Mountains all the way to the first park that we ever did, Runyon Canyon in Hollywood. And that if you break that continuity, and if you don't have some core habitats along the way, you'll lose that whole terrestrial ecosystem. It's really amazing that Los Angeles still has the entirety of its terrestrial ecosystem because it has a top predator, different than around here where we don't have the wolf anymore.

1:49:38

Anyway, so here we are. The traffic guys are telling us now this is a senseless freeway to build, the wildlife people are saying if you build the freeway it's going to lead to local extinctions and basically destroy ten years of your work, and we couldn't figure out why who was supporting the freeway was supporting it.

So, we started doing power maps and we would draw—we would say, okay, here's Joe, and why are those people trying to get him fired, and we'd trace that back and I would draw that. Then we would say, well, who in that organization knows somebody over here, because there's this local group that's really fighting to get the freeway built, and there's another group over here, a local group, that's fighting the freeway and one group is fighting to get it and they have a community meeting and they literally—these are rich people—they get in a fistfight. This is serious. So, we keep making these maps and eventually begin to unravel the politics. And it's a really sordid sex, extramarital affairs and—

YO: [Laughs]

RH: —that kind of stuff. When we lecture on this we call it, "Sex, Lies, and Real Estate," and it is exactly like the movie, *Chinatown*, because there's millions of dollars to be made if you could get this freeway built and Mulholland built in subdivisions that could be made. It actually traced back in this really sick way through a really good city councilman's office, Marvin Braude, who just loved this idea of the greenbelt, and he had run for office like thirty years before on creating this green space. It's like Lewis Clarke's idea of having this greenway around Raleigh and the green fingers, and Marvin never really understood it, but he was environmental.

Anyway, there was a person in his office, his chief of staff, who was actually undermining him at every point and kept saying, you got to build a freeway, you got to build a freeway, you got to build a freeway.

Anyway, you don't need to know the sex details of it, but we finally figured out the politics because the politics ran from the chief of staff to a very unlikely source who was opposing the freeway, and that's where this affair was—anyway, the power map was really useful. We never understood everything until Alan Robbins—I think that's his name, Robbins—was a state senator and he went to jail. He had been caught in some other crime and he had agreed, to get a lesser sentence, to be bugged, and when we were fighting the freeway in the state legislature—it was AB1152, which was to stop the freeway and turn that corridor over to state parks—there was a lot of last minute opposition to that. And Alan Robbins was bugged, and so, he's having all these discussions with people who are trying to get the freeway built and it completely in the end explains these connections that we had only—we knew there was a connection, but we didn't understand them, and some of them were about sex and some of them were about millions of dollars to be made in real estate, and some of them were just lies.

So, a power map—you should always make a power map on any project that a landscape architect does. If it's a project worth doing, there are some big political power stuff being played out and you need to know that, and the good thing is we can draw. So we can draw power so we understood it. So, the freeway is finally stopped, AB1152 is passed, but we still got—the mountain's gone.

YO: This is an eleven hundred foot mountain, if I remember.

RH: Yeah, and so—

YO: Eleven hundred feet of dirt gone.

1:55:02

RH: Yeah, and so one of the staff members—I'd never heard of a dirt contractor, okay.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: I'll bet there's dirt contractors though in Raleigh and Durham.

YO: Yeah.

RH: But in Los Angeles, dirt contractors are big business because there's a lot of earth being moved and the place was growing like crazy. So if you were doing a subdivision in the mountains, you had to get a lot of dirt moved, or after landslides.

So, a landslide closed Hwy 1. There was a really big fire. The next winter the rains then caused all sort of earth slides, closed Hwy 1. Hwy 1 is an artery for some very important people who live in the coastal suburbs of Los Angeles. You've got to get Hwy 1 open or there's no movie industry or city government can't run or real estate can't be bought and sold. So there's these emergency contracts and one of the people that worked for Joe at the conservancy said, you know, we should call some dirt contractors. I said what? And she said dirt contractors. So she had called all of these dirt contractors before and said, you know, when you're disposing of dirt,

when you're doing a project, let us know. Well, Paul Burns got the emergency contract to move all of this dirt off of PCH, Hwy 1, and he had gotten the job assuming that he had to truck it about fifty miles away to dispose of it.

YO: Right.

RH: And the trucking cost of moving dirt is one of the biggest expenses. So, here's PCH, and here's where he's trucking it to, and here's the lost mountain, Reseda Ridge. It's like, if you could have flown with a crow, or a condor, it was probably only five miles away, but it's still probably fifteen miles, but it's a whole lot shorter than fifty.

YO: Right.

RH: So, we got Paul Burns to bring all of the dirt that had washed down from these mudslides, which came from the Santa Monica Mountains, it was local dirt, back and basically rebuilt Reseda Ridge. Now it could never be rebuilt to the same height because the city required us to build it as if a subdivision was going to be built on it. So every bit of it had to be compacted. You had to put like six inches on, it all had to be compacted, you put more six inches on, it had to be compacted, and I think we worked on it for maybe three years.

And Paul Burns would dutifully bring this dirt and by this time he's bringing all this dirt from the whole Santa Monica Mountains because he's getting all these contracts because he's got this place to dispose of it. We were regrading it and if I didn't like something I would say, well, we need to regrade this.

YO: Did he do it?

RH: And he would regrade it, never asked a question. I finally said, Paul, I've never worked with a contractor that will do even the stupidest things that I ask. And he said, you see those—and these are big dump trucks bringing the dirt up there. He said, you see those? How many can you see if you look all the way down? And I think I could see eleven or twelve, ten, eleven, or twelve coming up. He said, I'm making [Pause] thirty thousand dollars—you could tell he was calculating—I'm making thirty thousand dollars an hour that I didn't expect because I bid on this project thinking I had to truck this stuff fifty miles away. He said, I'll do anything you ask me.

2:00:04

YO: [Laughs]

RH: So they basically rebuilt the mountain and then Paul Edelman did the planting and he said, we're going to only plant natives. We're going to only plant within a quarter mile of this site. And so, basically he and I went out and we'd walk and if we could identify a plant we'd say, okay, this is okay on our list. So it was replanted and now you basically—the mountain has healed so from just largely hydro seeding these things and then planting some of the—like lemonade berry and stuff. Within two years you could hardly tell the freeway had ever been there.

YO: No kidding.

RH: It's one of the truly loved parks in that part because the part of the freeway that had been built makes it really easy access for people on bikes to get all the way up there.

YO: [Laughs] That's a wonderful story, Randy. It's a wonderful one.

RH: It's a real ecological democracy story because the politics of it were completely intriguing and there were people who were dedicated to the place. I mean, the environmental group that we had worked so hard with eventually sued the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy because we were planting too many trees, and they actually got an injunction, but we were planting all native trees. Now it is true, we planted some lawn that was completely un-native lawn because I was convinced if there weren't—we had been doing some studies of where Mexican Americans used parks and we were pretty convinced if there wasn't some small pieces that seemed park-like in a—

YO: Traditional sense.

RH: —traditional Mexican American way—the environmental groups didn't want the poor people using the parks.

YO: Of course.

RH: So, they ended up suing and they won because there was a technicality that the conservancy had actually not followed. Anyway, it's a great political story and it's a great ecological story.

YO: It really is. Well, one of several global scale projects that you're involved in and discuss at length under "Selective Diversity" in your book is located in Taiwan and it involves the seemingly non sequitur subject of saving the black faced spoonbill.

However to save the bird you had to rescue its habitat from major industrial development, and to sell the idea of not industrializing a massive size wetlands area you had to come up with ideas that protected existing jobs and expanded possibilities for job growth. The fascinating account reads like landscape architecture on steroids. How did you first get involved with saving the black faced spoonbill?

RH: Well, Marcia and I had been lecturing in Asia for many years. The spoonbill story starts in 1997. That's when we formed SAVE International. We had been lecturing in Taiwan and in Japan, more recently in Korea and China, on community participation, and it's interesting because both of these—in Japan—Japan has a democracy that was largely imposed upon them by us and there's not a tradition of this kind of grassroots activism. Marcia and I would go and lecture, usually paid for by a city government or something, to encourage community participation, the techniques. So we'd been going, and during this time Taiwan went from martial law under Chiang Kai-Shek—who had been our great ally in the anti-communist, the Cold War era—went from martial law to eventually electing its first president. So these are democracies that are youthful or—yeah, they're youthful.

2:05:30

So, we would go and lecture, and once I was there in Taiwan working on a park in downtown Taipei and John Liu, a colleague, said, I want you to go down to the southeast coast

with me, down to Tainan, because they've pumped groundwater so much that the land is subsiding. And this is really similar to Aurora. So, we went and indeed they have over-pumped. They filled in some of the—and it's typical in Asia—they filled in some of the coastal areas, diked them, and turned them into aquaculture, shrimp, and ouou fish, and milk fish, and some of these species prefer fresh water, so they're right at salt water, but they're pumping fresh water and the land is subsiding. It turned out that the bigger issue was that the fishermen in Chigu Lagoon were fighting a major industrial complex. They were basically going to fill—if you took any one of our sounds, the Albemarle Sound, or Pamlico, you took one of them, they were going to fill about half of one of those sounds—

YO: Oh heavens.

RH: —and build this monstrous steel petrochemical plastics and associated industries. This was going to be one of the biggest industrial complexes in the world. Chigu Lagoon and Tainan County is one of the poorest counties in Taiwan, so this was seen as the savior. The problem was that Chigu Lagoon supported thirty thousand jobs in fishing. That's not right. Seventeen thousand jobs in fishing and our expansion led to thirty thousand ten years out.

So, these fishermen were protesting and we had a meeting with the fishermen, and it wasn't about subsidence. Subsidence is a serious issue, but they were trying to save their whole way of life and people had been fishing Chigu Lagoon—it's the most extraordinary oysters. I mean, I love North Carolina oysters. I love North Carolina seafood, but the seafood in Chigu is just exquisite. And it supplies a big part of Japan and a lot of Taiwan. It's an important industry and it's a lot of people, and it's a lot of jobs, and all those jobs were going to be destroyed. The lagoon, half of it would have been gone and the other half would have been so polluted from both sediment and tidal change and the discharge of the stuff from the industries.

So, we did a study starting in 1997 and found out immediately that this was a disaster. The industry and the federal government were advertising that the industry was going to create thirty thousand jobs. Well, those were thirty thousand jobs almost all in construction. If you looked out ten years, the thirty thousand jobs were going to peak about four or five years out and then they were going to decline and there were only going to be a thousand jobs in this entire primary industrial. Now they were going to be other jobs, but we then tried to figure out if you can increase the fishing efficiency, *etcetera*, can we eventually match this, and it was a big advantage that by stopping the industry we would immediately create seventeen thousand jobs, right?

2:10:24

YO: [Laughs]

RH: I mean they were already there. So, our plan that we developed over the next four or five years preserved habitat. It said if you want to build this industrial complex, fine, but you do not build it in a lagoon. If you go five miles inland there's plenty of land that you could buy and build it, but you shouldn't build it in the wetland and you shouldn't build it in this whole zone that was aquaculture and natural wetland, riverine, and then these lagoons. It's exactly the same—the landscape looks—it's a little more tropical, but it looks almost exactly like the coast of North Carolina. There's an outer banks that's fragile, just like Hatteras, *etcetera*. I once made

a presentation to Tainan County in which I mixed in slides of Manteo with slides of Chigu, and it was maybe half an hour into the lecture before people realized it wasn't their landscape.

YO: No kidding? [Laughs]

RH: But I was trying to make this point that you can maintain local control, you can create more jobs that are locally sustainable by having this plan that really grows out of the landscape as opposed to having something imposed. So Manteo was extremely useful there and we eventually stopped the industrial complex and have created a really, really thriving fishing and secondary fish products, and there's now some high tech because so much of the coast is preserved that these high tech communities want to come because their employees, their research employees, want that access to the nature. So there'll be a wildlife preserve and a twenty, thirty-story building like right adjacent to it because the development is really intense right outside the wetland zone.

Anyway, so we were successful in preserving and expanding the habitat in Taiwan. There were only six hundred birds in the world. It's the most endangered spoonbill, and we calculated that if we could raise the population to over three thousand five hundred, which is sort of the minimum population for it to not be endangered of extinction—that was really the concern—how much land would we need, and we calculated that and eventually convinced—there's now a national park that's been created as part of this because it became a real important tourist draw.

There's a national park and a national scenic area and we are now working on converting some of that land that had been diked back to habitat. It's actually in the master plan for this three-county area, Tainan County and Chiayi and Yunlin County, and there are stepping stone habitats of, oh, a thousand, and I can only do it in meters. It's hectares. It's like hundred-hectare chunks that's necessary of open water and then associated.

2:14:49

So we have expanded the habitat and the birds have now expanded where they winter into these places that we have created. The one that we're working now on is Budai that I'm working with people at National Taiwan University on. Then we realized, well, we're going to save the birds' winter habitat, but the bird goes and raises its young in the demilitarized zone between North and South Korea.

YO: Oh heavens. [Laughs]

RH: So we have to preserve habitat up there. So we then started working in Korea, this little nonprofit that we created, SAVE International, Spoonbill Action Voluntary Echo International. So we are now—it's a really unfortunate thing that North Carolina State is engaged in. One of the most important habitats for the spoonbill and it's breeding area is near Incheon, and they have filled part of the bay and have offered to over a dozen American universities a free ride if you'll come and build a satellite campus here.

YO: Oh no.

RH: And North Carolina State was one of the universities. When we originally started working, Duke was also on the list, the University of Southern California was on the list, I mean these are important. So we started fighting the universities in the United States, saying, okay, do you know

what you're doing here? You are contributing to the extinction of a species, you are moving to a site that would be illegal under North Carolina state law, you would not be able to build a campus here, and it may be out of site out of mind, but it is immoral. It is the worst lesson you could possibly be teaching students, and you're going to contribute to it. The new chancellor has not responded very well to this. He said to me, in a letter, that we are not going to build this campus. Landscape architecture was going to have a program there, and it was on the website the last time I checked. He said we are not going to build this campus at this time. The subtext, which he doesn't say, is the university's embroiled in a scandal and the budget's really bad and this is not the time to do this, but we preserve our right to do it in the future. If the university builds that campus there, I will never have another thing to do with them.

YO: Now was this Oblinger or the new, Woodson?

RH: The new, Randy Woodson. It was proposed previously. Anyway, that's just part of the story, because we're fighting all these other—the interesting thing is the faculty who are participating, Stony Brook—we created a great controversy on campus because none of the faculty knew about this. The Chadwick School, private high school, one of the most exclusive schools, has opened a campus there. The president or headmaster at the Chadwick School is a personal friend of the owner of the American company that is doing the development in Songdo New Town.

Anyway, these kinds of things landscape architects have to get involved in and they have to come down on the right side of the ecosystems and of local culture, and unfortunately they don't. When I learned that the landscape program at NC State was going to start a program [in Korea] it was one of the saddest moments maybe in my whole life, because I felt completely betrayed, personally betrayed.

2:19:53

Anyway, this fight is going on now in Korea and in November we will go to Fukuoka, Japan where we're also fighting another—every one of these coastal cities tried to build a big port and every one of them was going to be the greatest port beyond Hong Kong.

YO: Right.

RH: And of course, none of them ever would. Forty percent of them are failures from the beginning. Almost all of them are incomplete and in almost every case they filled a significant part of a bay or wetland to create this new port and new city and they all call them—they're all the greenest new cities. Songdo New City advertises itself as being—their buildings are being LEED approved, and when we were at Songdo it has wonderful green roofs, it has all of these things, and it's built on the habitat of a bird that may go extinct because they're building them.

Anyway, Fukuoka has done the same thing. It's a really important—and it's not just spoonbills. It's hundreds of other species. This is the migration route. So we're trying to convince the mayor of Fukuoka—their new city, they built it in the habitat where the spoonbill used to forage. And spoonbills can only forage in water that's from four centimeters to twenty centimeters. So the coastal zone and the wetlands and the tidal zone is really critical for them to forage.

So they destroyed—they built this island city. It's been unsuccessful and the parts that haven't been built yet, they diked it, and there are parts that are big chunks of land that flood.

There's nothing built on it. So it's inside the dike and it floods and they filled it with bay fill so there's all sorts of shrimp and stuff that – it's a habitat. So, the spoonbills and dozens of other migratory species use these leftover dumps for foraging. So we're trying to convince the mayor of Fukuoka to actually create a habitat in the port.

YO: This is sort of like what you hear all the time: Act locally, think globally. I'm just amazed to hear this news about NC State, but also, I read that the South Korean government has made the spoonbill a national monument. So maybe that would have some influence over the continuance of the development. Also, to point out how successful the original project was, I noticed that the count on the spoonbills in the 1990s was less than three hundred individuals and a 2010 census counted twenty-three hundred. So your effort is paying off at this point. I mean, it's showing through just plain statistics.

RH: mmm... The thing that we're—I'm supposed to read this [Picks up a report] and send it off this afternoon. We've done three plans for Fukuoka. This is the port area and this is the site where it's undeveloped, and we are suggesting one alternative is to intensify the port, build a really big port building here—this is all the, you know, where the cargo containers are stored and stuff—build a really intense development here and then market the products that are brought in, market them actually onsite so that it becomes like a market carnival. This would be live/work space for artisans, like big metal sculpture and stuff, and then this building would be the port authority, but instead of ever developing that, we would convert that to wild bird habitat.

YO: This map that you're showing me reminds me of the Morehead City Port and the idea that you have for marketing the goods onsite is something that sounds like we should try to look at around here. [Laughs]

2:25:06

RH: Yeah.

YO: Very interesting.

RH: Anyway, so the spoonbill fight now is Marcia and I have started a group in Shanghai because there's the Yangtze River. Most important migratory habitats and probably some of the breeding ground is in China. So we're now trying to—and it will be hard I think, particularly in China. Korea's got just the worst president. I mean, he will do more environmental damage in one term, and if he's reelected to two terms, more damage probably than any president has ever done in the history of that country. We're also fighting—he's basically connecting—there are four major rivers in Korea and he is dredging. I mean this is 1930s, '40s, '50s, Corps of Engineers at their worst, is what he's doing to the river system, and it affects the spoonbill. Anyway, these are big fights all over.

YO: They're huge, but you're still in there, so hang in there. What does ecological democracy have to say about sustainable populations?

RH: Well, quite honestly it doesn't say anything literally. It probably should. If you read the entirety of the ecological democracy book it talks more about how depletion of resources—I

think I actually—I don't know if it's that I'm cowardly about this or if it's just that I don't understand it, but it doesn't say much about population control. And I don't know what the carrying capacity of the globe is. So part of it is—I can tell you with absolute certainty now if you don't create this kind of habitat in this big a configuration with these qualities the spoonbill's going extinct. I can't tell you if we don't stop the human population growth at a certain point we will without question lead to our own extinction. I just don't know that. There are people who are smarter than me who obviously sound these alarms, and in the next things that I address, I will try not to be either the Scarecrow or the Cowardly Lion about this, but quite honestly ecological democracy should say something about population growth and it doesn't.

YO: We'll look forward to that. [Laughs]

RH: [Laughs]

YO: Does there ever come a point in ecological democracy when the founding community's wisdom becomes so diluted by population infusion that it should no longer be influential in future planning?

2:29:30

RH: Well, I've had an ongoing debate with one of my closest colleagues, John Liu, the one who teaches at National Taiwan University, about this because probably seventy-five, eighty percent of the work that he does—he's an architect—is with aboriginal people or fisher families like in Chigu, but even more first people than the fishing communities, and they're all natively wise people. I mean, if they weren't they wouldn't survive because they really are subsistence fishermen or they are one step removed from that. The Ami people, for example, they've been driven into the mountains to the most undesirable places in Taiwan and they wouldn't survive if they didn't understand ecological processes in the most minute detail. John Liu, as a result of that, believes undyingly in native wisdom and he tells these extraordinary stories.

They were designing a town on Matsu, redeveloping a town, and the god of Matsu is a really important god and there's a sub-god, a frog admiral, and apparently the frog admiral didn't like John's design. So, they go through this whole ritual of bringing out the frog god, the general, and there are people who are carrying it in this, like a—

YO: A litter?

RH: It's like a litter, and they asked the frog questions and the frog—anyway, that's how they designed this place, this central open space on Matsu. So it's very native wisdom, right?

YO: Right.

RH: John and I are very close and we can have these kinds of arguments and continue to work together and one of the articles that we wrote together, my part of it is, "Native Wisdom and Local Stupidity."

YO: [Laughs]

RH: And I think that, because we've worked in Los Angeles for so long, there are so many people, eighty percent of the people, have no comprehension of the ecosystem functions there. When there is a chaparral fire, they think it's like an act of God. Well, the chaparral burns on average every fifteen years. If it doesn't burn on average every fifteen years, there will be a catastrophic fire before fifty. People in most American cities haven't lived in that city for ten generations. I come from a place, Hester's Store that my ancestors have been there—my grandson is the eleventh generation. Most Americans don't live in a place that long.

My cousin, Donald, is really natively wise and I'm not, out there. I grew up out there, I knew a lot, and I can identify a whole lot of insects and most birds, and I know about strip cropping, so some of the basic things, but you lose that native wisdom. It's a serious problem because we become ecologically illiterate. We've become detached from the place, place doesn't matter to us. As a society we think that if this place doesn't work out we'll just go somewhere else. So I worry about this, and so I think in answer to your question—it's a long preface—but I would never, ever give up the hope that there would be a few natively wise people.

2:35:13

We were working in Mount Vernon, Washington years ago and the natively wise people are frequently marginalized. Zale Young probably was the most natively wise person there. He lived in a junkyard and the junkyard was completely—he lived in the office building. He rode a bicycle. He was considered by all people, a kook. He knew more about the ecosystems. He lived on the river. He lived in the flood plain. He spent probably half of his days on the river, the Skagit River. He knew more about that place ecologically than probably all the city council together. When we worked there, one of our jobs was to gain him political power, to give him a voice. Not that he was going to run for city council, although he did take the Dale Carnegie course so he could get to be a better spokesman.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: His wisdom needed to be a part of the public debate and we, I think, helped facilitate that, and the plan is better for it. Instead of diking the whole town, Zale Young, who also owned a lot of land, said, I'll give you Young's Bar if you will keep this as a natural park. Anyway, I would never give up on native wisdom even if it's pretty skimpy because it's all we got.

YO: Good answer. In these interviews I've sort of asked questions that point out that a landscape architecture degree standing alone is really, I won't say worthless, but it's the minimum that you can expect to participate in the profession. Does the landscape architecture profession have a future in its isolation?

RH: Well, yes. I mean we continue to champion specialization, and it's not just a problem for landscape architecture. I would completely agree with you and I would try to be more politic than say it's "worthless," but almost any single degree that we get today goes in that category, any single degree, because any degree that we get is so narrowly focused on what is important in that one field. It's the same in humanities as it is in landscape architecture or in engineering. I would say that the real challenge for education—I can't remember now if it's Wes Jackson—it's Wes Jackson or David Orr or Wendell Berry, one of those, who says there's no degree in homecoming. It must be Wes Jackson because it's becoming native to this place, I think, that we should give a degree in homecoming. It's not about homecoming as the celebration of the

football team. It's homecoming as in coming home and becoming native to a place. I think that the only degrees that are going to be worth anything in the future are ones that are multidisciplinary, that combine two or more disciplines, the farther apart they seem the better. So if you got a degree in engineering and a degree in the classics that would be a fantastic combination. I think my degrees in landscape and sociology were good. I think if you got a degree in environmental psychology and law.

2:40:09

Anyway, the only degrees that aren't going to be worthless to an ecological democracy—any single degree is worth a lot to the corporate world, but if we want to get ourselves out of these problems that we are creating we're going to have to have people who are able to problem solve truly across disciplines. And it's not just superficial, they have to really understand both and they have to have hard skills from both disciplines so that they can't be Pollyannaish about it. They have to have really substantive knowledge from very different, even opposing ways of thinking, because we have to have people who are able to think with mutually conflicting, almost mutually oppositions, irreconcilable oppositions, in their brain at the same time or we are going to simply keep serving the corporate kind of global corporations that the only real intention is short term profit. That's all it is. It may be dressed up as green—anyway, so we need people who are able to cross disciplines.

We also need people in design who can cross scales, who can design the hell out of a garden and who can deal with these flyways in which these spoonbills are going thousands of miles and they are going through all sorts of political jurisdictions and ecosystems from mangrove all the way to these tiny rock outcrops. You've got to understand scale from the four centimeters that the spoonbill is foraging in to these thousands of miles of flyway. So we have to be teaching, we have to educate people to cross disciplines and to cross scales, and until we are doing that, almost any degree is worthless, in my mind.

YO: What's the one important thing to know about Randy Hester?

RH: Well, I don't think of myself as important enough for anything to be important. I'm one of thousands of people who have a vision of how the world should be, could be, that's different than it is and I go about every day trying to do that, but I don't think there's anything—there's nothing exceptional about that. Maybe—[Pause] When my grandmother was most concerned that I was not going to become a doctor, I can remember she always would quote the Bible. She knew the Bible and she was always checkmating me for my bad behavior by something from the Bible.

YO: [Laughs]

RH: And I remember quoting to her the passage about not hiding your talents under a bush. And it was one of those times that I thought I had really been able to take her on at her own game. So I would say that I didn't hide my talents under a bush. That might be exceptional. And I think I've done it for the public good. I think I've used my skill for the broader public good. It would have been very easy to use my skill in service of corporate design—and that may be exceptional. But I don't think about that much. It's an interesting question, but I learned the most from the question that made me think about did I consciously know that I was on this different track.

2:45:54

YO: Right. [Laughs]

RH: I'm sorry I didn't give a very good answer for it. It's one of those questions about self awareness. You have really good questions about self awareness and I don't think that I am self aware about some of these things.

YO: Well, maybe we'll have to visit these questions again in the future.

RH: I do have another thought though about—when you called and said you were going to do this, it's clear I chose a very different path of practice than Lewis or Dick Moore, and Lewis has never expressed any dissatisfaction with me, but Dick Moore from time to time would say you really wasted your design ability. And Hideo sort of said—he was gentler than Dick—that I wasted my design ability. I don't think that's true. I mean, I would never agree with Dick about that, but I understand what he's saying. We chose very different paths and after you called, I thought a lot about it. I think I've been able to do what I've done because of the skills they gave me—that they taught me. I didn't have those skills. I could not think spatially, I could not design. All of those things that are at the core of what they taught me, which also includes grading and drainage, we couldn't have rebuilt the lost mountain if I had only been a sociologist.

YO: Right. [Laughs]

RH: There are all of these things that are skills, and being articulate as a designer is not just about sort of artistic flurry or something. It is about really critical problem solving, and Lewis and Dick are incredible at that and they taught me that. And they taught me that we should perform on a big stage, and that we had to engage the politic, and that we had skills that were essential to the world. So it was nothing unusual when they said, you've got to find out the biggest problem between here and Morehead City, right?

YO: [Laughs]

RH: I mean we're going to design the whole eastern North Carolina, from the Piedmont. They had a vision of the importance of landscape architecture that I completely bought. So they taught me the skills, they gave me the confidence, both personally and also about those skills, and it was just in the water. It was in the studio, it was in the air that we should take on the biggest things. So I think that as I thought about the contribution that they made to me and the contribution that the school made for me was that it's completely comprehensible that I'm just one of their offspring, that they taught me to do the things they know how to do.

YO: And you just went and did it.

RH: I just went and did it.

YO: Randy, that's all the questions I have today—

RH: [Laughs]

YO: —and I have thoroughly enjoyed this conversation.

RH: Thank you. I'm sorry we went so long.

YO: Oh no, it's worth it, and your contributions have been duly recognized in other sources, but I just want to say thank you from just one person's viewpoint in North Carolina. Thank you for what you've done.

RH: Thank you.

Transcriber: Deborah Mitchum

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