

Interviewee: CHARLES BOYCE
Interviewer: MARY EMMA HARRIS
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[BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1]

MEH: Charles, how did you hear about Black Mountain?

CB: I'm not entirely certain. I believe that my brother had mentioned it to me. When I got out of the army in early 1946, I was totally fed up with the army, its bureaucracy. I had been to Indiana University for a year before I went into the service and found that a most disheartening experience, so that I wanted very much to find a college that spoke to me – without being entirely clear in my mind exactly what that meant. So, I bought an old car and began to travel about the United States, taking a look at different colleges. I didn't know a great deal about them, but I thought, "There has to be someplace in the United States where there would be a university that I would find compatible." So I looked at a number, and somehow wound up in North Carolina. As I recall, my brother-in-law was doing something in the area, and so, maybe I'll stop by and visit him. And that put me into the area.

I drove out to the college. I knew virtually nothing about it. But as I believe I mentioned in the very small essay that I wrote for you, I do recall vividly driving onto the campus and driving by the community building, where the dining area was, and seeing a group of students sitting there. There were obviously some people with an Asian background. There were one or two Blacks. There was a mixed group, dressed very casually. At least in my mind's eye I see someone playing the guitar, which was rather unusual at that time. I stopped and talked with them a little bit. I recall vividly saying to myself, "This, this is the place for me." I went up to see Dr. Miller and Bill Levi. I had expected if I got in to see them at all it would be a very short meeting, but I spent the rest of the afternoon talking, mostly with Dr. Miller. At the end of that conversation he said,

"You're in. We need your record, we need the transcript of your grades, but we would very much like you to come."

Parenthetically, I've been to six colleges and universities and gone to every one of them in the same way. I never recall submitting my transcript or letters of recommendation prior to sitting down and talking with someone. I understand that that's rather unusual, particularly currently. So, it wasn't as though I had read the articles in the '30s about the college. It wasn't that I knew about its background and breaking off from Rollins and what they were trying to do, nor did I realize that it was as strongly influenced by the arts as it was, or that they had a number of their professors there who had come from Europe, and — in a number of instances — were having difficulties finding their way into academia. So, it was easier for them to come to Black Mountain than it was, say, to find their way maybe into Yale or Harvard or any of the other leading universities. But something in the environment, you know, resonated. In that respect, I was not mistaken. It, it did for me what I needed to have done.

MEH: Going back a little bit, and then we'll come back to Black Mountain. You're from Indiana?

CB: I'm from Indiana. I grew up in a small town. My — It was not a fundamentalist family, but it was a traditional family, with traditional values. We attended the Methodist church regularly. I had done well in high school. I graduated with a scholarship to Indiana University. My acquaintanceship was rather large for someone coming from a very small town. That was pure happenstance, because the little town was on a lake, which was used as a summer resort, and the big dance bands traveling from Chicago to Cleveland, for example, would spend a night there. So they would play. So there was an era when relatively few people lived permanently on the lake — the cottages were for rent. So groups of students, young people from around the state, would rent a cottage for a week and then go to the resort hotels — there were just a couple of hotels — and dance in the evening. So, I knew a lot of people. I expected that when I finished school and went down to Indiana that I would know a great many people and find it a very pleasant environment. I found it very very different than I had expected.

MEH: You mean when you returned.

CB: When I went to Indiana University in '42. Because I had no money, you see. I literally showed up on the campus with ten dollars in my pocket. So there was no possibility of my being able to organize and join a fraternity. So that — I had no social life because of that. I had to work. I worked two or three jobs always. The University, rather than having the best professors to handle freshman and sophomore courses so that they would excite the students and they would be encouraged to learn, were the worst usually, and the least experienced. Some of the courses were taught by those who were still working on their Ph.D.s and would be assistants of one kind or another. So from the social point of view, from the intellectual or educational point of view, from the bureaucratic point of view, I found the experience very negative.

Then I went right into the army. I was in the infantry. Had some dreadful experiences there, just dreadful.

MEH: Where were you?

CB: I was in Europe. But it was there that, really, my basic orientation toward life and the ideas that I had absorbed as a young person came into conflict with harsh reality. So that when I finished there, I was pretty much at sea, emotionally and intellectually. I realized that in order to survive, I had to have an opportunity to sit back and reexamine my most basic premises about life and about people, the organization of society, history of society. So, I needed that kind of environment in which I not only had the time but I had colleagues who would respond to that, to those needs. So, when I saw how informally Black Mountain was organized and learned that they didn't have, for example, an athletic program, organized gym, for example, but what you were expected to do was to work. You worked with other students and you worked with the professors and their families, the administrators, so that one was not separate. When you got through a class with a professor, you might work together on sidewalk maintenance, or you might shovel coal, or you might — So that there was not that kind of break. This, of course, for me at that time was absolutely necessary. It was fundamental to the environment which I required,

and I was fortunate to befriend or have befriended a number of, I felt, extraordinary human beings.

MEH: Did you have any idea, when you went, what interested you in studying?

CB: No. No. I had learned a couple of things. I had learned when I was in Europe, and I was in the first group of GIs who took a short leave in Paris soon after the liberation. The euphoria was still in the air. And I remember I spent four nights and three days in Paris. I remember walking the streets and saying to myself, "There's a world out there. There's a world that you would never ever have imagined, and somehow I have to learn about that world. I have to incorporate that."

Then I've always been interested, I think by nature, interested in people, the way that they organize themselves, go about their lives, and so I was interested in taking courses with John Wallen, with Bill Levi, with Karl Niebyl, because all of them were looking at aspects of society in different ways.

MEH: So that's a wonderful combination of people, if you consider their tremendously different points of view.

CB: Oh yes, yes. (OVERTALK)

MEH: – some really interesting background.

CB: Well, Karl Niebyl was very important in that he had — he was quite didactic. He had a set of ideas, which he had organized extremely well that were extremely controversial.

MEH: Was he a communist?

CB: A Marxist. He was so adamant about his ideas, and we read — He had a book that was still in manuscript form, that we used, so the group of us — this started almost from the first day, the first moment that I came to Black Mountain — would get together in the evenings to discuss what we had been talking about, what had been presented, see whether or not we agreed with it. If we didn't agree with it, why not? What was the significance of this? Did we have counter-arguments? If we had counter-arguments, what kind of information or data did we have or could we get that would support the contrary view? So it was very stimulating, extremely so. John Wallen's course was much more —

was very different. And the one that I took from him that I remember most vividly had to do with group dynamics. I don't even know that the term had been developed or popularized at that time, but it had to do with attitudes and one's perceptions of oneself, of others, and I discovered there that I had certain, had picked up certain stereotypes in terms of ethnic groups and that kind of thing, that again I was kind of forced to examine. Where'd they come from? What the significance of it was. So that the courses that I took and enjoyed the most were those where ideas clashed. Bill Levi's courses, incidentally, I would put in that category, too.

MEH: You mean ideas within his class?

CB: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. All of them had substantial reading connected with them. All of them required term papers or papers to be written. That I found extremely useful, because you were forced to organize your thoughts and not simply to take an examination or a short essay. You had to organize certain ideas. And then they responded, and they responded very well.

MEH: Now, if you were looking — It's interesting to me because I hadn't made this connection before — that Niebyl, who had a very clearly worked-out political point of view. If you look at Wallen, he was really exploring very early ideas about group interaction, the group dynamic. Now how would you describe Levi within this triad?

CB: Well, Levi had a very interesting course that was based on a series of books which one read during the year. I don't recall whether it was a year or a semester, but there were five or six different books, each one of which presented a series of views about the organization of society and how people would respond to that. I don't recall all of the books of course, at this particular time. I remember one of them was Karen Horney's The Neurotic Personality of Our Time, a book, parenthetically, that I happened to take a look at again maybe six or seven years ago when I was going through my private library. I was thumbing through it, and I thought "My heavens, we've so absorbed this into our national consciousness that it has no value at all anymore," It was extremely interesting and forward-thinking at the time. Ruth Benedict's The Patterns of Culture was another one of

the books. But they all had to do with perceptions of society, organization of society, and the response of individuals to that, so that for me they constituted a well of intellectual interest, because they stimulated conversation in the class, they stimulated conversation outside of class when a small group of us would get together and talk about what had gone on and what the significance of this was. And very important for me, very important, because I recall despite the fact that I'd gone to an accredited high school, as I say I did well and got a scholarship out of it, I knew nothing! I was about as ignorant as a young person could be, it seemed to me, could still be at that age. And the group — I don't know, I can't remember all of their names — Schaffler was one who went on to an interesting teaching career. Ed Adamy was another, and the name escapes me right now but he's a man who lives out around Stockbridge now, as I —

MEH: Resnik?

CB: Resnik, yes. He was one too. Very, very bright, articulate, energetic young man. We had a number of fascinating conversations. I found that I knew nothing about the Labor Movement, for example. I mean nothing about the Labor Movement. I couldn't believe it. I was Republican at the time. Why? Because my parents were. So I knew much less, when I arrived, I'm reasonably certain, than almost any of my colleagues who had come from New York City or who had gone to — had grown up in a more cosmopolitan environment than I had.

MEH: You've mentioned Niebyl, Levi, and Wallen. Did you take any courses with Herbert Miller? Did he figure into this pattern?

CB: I don't believe I did. No, I'm certain that I did not. Upon reflection, I don't know why, because I liked him. But I don't know whether or not there was a conflict, or I couldn't take any additional ones, but I liked him very much. But I just don't recall why I did not take any courses with him at that particular time. I do not believe that he was teaching a great deal. I think he was — He was rather old at that time and was slowing down, quite perceptibly.

MEH: You said the students would take courses with these different people and then there would be a tremendous conversation going on, comparing ideas, and whatever. What about these three men themselves? Was there that much communication between them? Would you find Niebyl and Wallen sitting down debating their ideas?

CB: I don't believe so. Niebyl was a maverick within the context of the college. He was such a staunch believer in Marxism. His economic orientation was so pronounced, and he was so adamant in his own views and so dogmatic, that his personality did not lend itself to easy exchange with someone such as Levi or Wallen, who were much more open. Their ideas may have been just as adamantly held, but they didn't spill over in their intellectual discussions about matters. They were much more apt to ask you how you felt about certain things and then kind of test that with questions. They were much more in the best of the Western tradition of pedagogy.

MEH: Do you remember Niebyl's leaving the college?

CB: Yes, in that I had been there — I was there two years. As I say, I had been to the University of Indiana for one year, so I went to Black Mountain for two years, and I was scheduled to graduate the following year. I had already taken that three-day eight-hour-a-day examination. We'll get into that in a moment. And so my advisors were going to be Niebyl, what's the historian's name? Corkran. Lovely man, lovely human being. And one other. Those were the principal ones. The history and the economics. There was meant to be one other.

And the group that I was close to socially, that was the group that went to Portland.

MEH: With John Wallen.

CB: Yeah. And for me that was a major loss. Now they had asked me to come with them. They wanted me to be part of their group, but I was not an artist, I would not go there in order to enrich my artistic talents because of my proximity to the group. Nor would I need the financial support in order to have time to develop my art and not become too commercial with it. So I was not going to follow that lot. And then Niebyl left to go to New

Paltz, and Corkran became ill. So they were not going to be there. At the eleventh hour I said, "Gee, there's no one there who knows me and who could work as my advisors," because the final year mostly is doing paper, doing original research – quite, quite different than at an established university .Because then you were expected to be interviewed by a panel that would come in from other colleges. So at the eleventh hour, really, I transferred back to Indiana University. It was literally the eleventh hour. It was during registration. And, of course, they didn't know Black Mountain from Adam. But I was able to convince them that it existed, and because I'd been there before and had a good record, they said sure, you can come up.

MEH: Did they give you credits?

CB: Oh sure. I don't think they were legal, because they had to make up the grades because they hadn't given me grades at Black Mountain. But again, because I'd gone there originally on a scholarship and had performed well, if I said that I'd gone to Timbuktu it would have been alright. I was a returning GI, too, you see, so that counted in my favor. With a few smiles and knowing glances, they said okay, Boyce, you come on. So, I completed one year and finished, and then I went on to graduate studies.

I also knew that Indiana University, at least for a while, had changed. I mean the GIs came back in hordes, and they were not interested in sororities. They were not interested in fraternities. They were not interested in the semi-pro football that was practiced. They came back and they were very serious, and so I took courses and graduated.

MEH: Going back to Black Mountain for a while, you made a reference to the exam between the junior and senior division — the three-day eight-hour-a-day –

[END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 1; BEGINNING OF SIDE 2, TAPE 1]

MEH: We were talking about the exam.

CB: Yes, this pertains really to that, the paper that I wrote a number of years ago for the archives of the University of North Carolina.

When I came to Black Mountain in 1946, Josef Albers was not there. He was, I think he was teaching at Yale —

MEH: He was in Mexico.

CB: Was he in Mexico — okay.

MEH: And Harvard. He did teach at Harvard, too.

CB: Okay. Ilya Bolotowsky had come. Ilya and I became good friends. It had nothing to do with art. I did take an art course from him, because I liked him and I was interested. Arts were common at Black Mountain, and I wanted to experience and to grow because of that environment. But we liked each other personally, and — I didn't know Albers at all, except when he returned my second year I had friends who studied with him and I developed a negative feeling about the dominant-submissive relationships which he had a habit of developing. Because I was a personal friend of Ilya Bolotowsky, Albers unquestionably identified me with the Bolotowsky group. I was not. I was not. But at any rate, Albers and I had virtually no contact with one another. I didn't take any courses from him. I was never on a work crew or anything, as I recall, where we had intimate exchanges. But I took the examination, this three day, eight hours a day, which presumably was to test your general knowledge, perceptions and to determine whether or not you qualified to specialize the last part of your time there. So, it covered physics and mathematics and history and art and all kinds of things — subjects that you hadn't necessarily studied, but they wanted to know what your level of knowledge was in as broad a sense as possible, to see whether or not — yes, you are ready to specialize now. You had to address each one of the different areas of interest, one of which was art. The visual arts. And there were a series of questions. Now, a number of them, a predominant number, you either knew or you didn't know. It was not a question of guessing because you would usually have to write some kind of essay.

Well, the ones that had to do with knowledge, I'm reasonably certain I handled those in an acceptable manner. But then there was one question that was extraordinarily interesting. It was: "Design an apple that shows the third dimension without the use of

shading." So, okay. What I did was I took a pen, a drawing pen that had a relatively wide point, and I began to experiment with drawing distorted circles and imagining an apple that would be turned in a skewed manner, looking down through it so you could see the stem, you could see the bottom of it, you could see the contours of it, and by manner of weaving that back and forth you would get the sense of the apple — but never any shading. You see, I thought it was rather clever.

When you finished the examination, the different parts of it were given to the professors whose specialty pertained to a particular section. For M.C., for example, she looked at the part that had to do with literature, and somebody else in history, somebody else — okay. Art. That went to Albers. Albers responded in a scathing manner, a scathing — The implications of his remarks were that my response to that question about the apple demonstrated such a "supercilious" — I remember the word "supercilious" — attitude towards education, towards — my very presence at Black Mountain — that he could not possibly recommend that I was qualified for anything, not even qualified to stay at school.

MEH: Did these comments come in writing?

CB: I'm not certain whether they did or not, but they were a subject of discussion with all of the faculty as well as the student representatives who served on the board of the school. Ilya Bolotowsky perceived this as an attack on him, because of my identification with him, so he rose in defense of my apple! The discussions became quite, as I was told, quite acrimonious. Now, there followed this discussion on the bulletin board as one walked into the Studies Building. Someone pasted my apple on the bulletin board. Someone attacked it. Someone defended it. This went on for quite some time.

MEH: Did people put written comments on it?

CB: Oh yes, yes, yes. And it went on for days. It finally closed down when someone used a quote from Henry Miller. I don't recall the book, but it was one word: "Shit." That ended it, you see. Well, needless to say, I was not dismissed from school, but it served to crystallize the attitude of a number of people as to the anti-intellectual aura that

surrounded Albers and a small core of his group. Because those who were closest to him and his rigorous defenders, of course, took exception to my apple. Those who were in the Bolotowsky school, they sought to defend my apple. As far as I was concerned, I thought it was absolutely scandalous — you know — because I could see the trap that Albers fell into. He couldn't really. If, you know something is true or untrue, okay, you might have an opinion on it, but it's not going to help you very much. But when you get into that kind of argument, then anything that you want to say is not subject to any kind of proof. At any rate, it ended there.

Kind of as a sequel — Years later I was walking down Fifth Avenue, a major street in New York City with my wife, and she said to me, "Oh, here comes Josef Albers." I believe he saw me at the same time that I saw him. Our faces went rigid, and we walked by as though there was nothing in the world that could make us speak to each other. You see. I thought it so very, very strange, so very strange, because there's no way that I could have been of any real significance in this man's life. I was not an opponent in any way. While I didn't like the man, so what? I didn't broadcast it, because there was no particular occasion for me. I didn't care for his art. But again, there's a great many people's art that I'm not particularly interested in or feel it lacked something. But that's of no particular moment. But the fact that my apple would get so blown out of all reason I thought was extraordinarily interesting. Now, I mean later, I can see partly the humor of it, but not at the time, because if he had prevailed, it would have been a very sad day for me.

MEH: What do you remember about the work program? What sorts of things did you do?

CB: The first year that I was there, I worked on the road and sidewalk maintenance. That's what I did. You know, fill the potholes and clean the sidewalks and keep the paths open. I found that very gratifying. I enjoyed it. Worked with a number of the professors and colleagues. The second year I worked on tree cutting, and cutting wood up for the fireplaces and the kitchen — that kind of thing. We had a team of horses, as I recall, and we would cut the trees down and snake the wood out and cut it up. Those were the

general ones that I did, and then of course everybody worked on the coal. When the coal would come in, we'd get in the trucks and go down to the railroad siding and shovel the coal, get coal dust all over us. There were little special assignments like that, and then there was kitchen duty periodically and — So, I found that quite acceptable.

MEH: Did you work on the farm at all?

CB: No. No. At least not in any sustained way. I believe I harvested or assisted in harvesting corn at one time and then going through and cutting down the stalks later and, you know, that kind of thing. But it was not on a regular basis. I mean I did not regularly milk the cows or feed the cows or that kind of thing. No, mine was more urban.

MEH: What do you remember about Black Mountain's sports program?

CB: Oh, it was delightful. Absolutely charming. Baseball — we had our softball groups. I don't know, we may have had — As I recall, all of the baseball games were pick-up games.

MEH: Did you play at a particular time? Were they scheduled or just pick-up, whenever--

CB: They probably became a little bit more formalized without thinking about it, because we always had teams. I played third base, and enjoyed it — played it sufficiently well that I enjoyed it, and I'm certain that the others enjoyed it, although I was no star. I found that a lot of fun. Also we played — Well, that would have been in the spring, I believe. Football would be in the fall. And it would be touch football. That was a great deal of fun too, because with baseball, you need a minimum. I don't know that you need all of the nine players, but if you get less than seven you might be in a little trouble. But with the football, it's almost — you almost can't get too small or too large. Somehow you could fit them in. I'm certain that you have information about some of the formal games that — Not formal. But *ersatz* formal, you know.

MEH: Tell me.

CB: Well, I remember one time we had the teams and I think we — One had a name and the other one had a name, and we went through all of the ritual but with a tongue-in-cheek approach. We had cheerleaders and all of that kind of thing. And during one of those games was when Dick Roberts caught a pass, which I recall vividly. I recall it vividly. I can

see him going up and catching the ball kind of in an odd way and scoring a touchdown.

But there was a tongue-in-cheek approach to it.

MEH: Did you have helmets or..?

CB: No. No, no, no, nothing like that. And then, as I say, I don't know that there was any other play – We might have had one or two other tennis player — But really Larry Fox and I were the tennis players, and we had a number of matches. I remember one match, with another group, in which I beat the person who had been a state champion for high school players. As I recall, he was not all that great. But then Larry and I played doubles. Now that was done on much more of a pick-up basis, because we really didn't have a "formal team." I don't know how the arrangements were made, but we would call somebody and challenge them and we'd get together.

Then I also played golf from time to time. Now let's see, I probably would have done this with Bill Levi and some others, and I believe John Bergman, and the way that we would work the handicap is that we would put a number of cold beers in our golf bags, and if you won a hole you had to drink the beer. Okay? Well, if you won three or four holes in a row, by that time you would kind of even matters up. I thought well that's not a nice way to handicap. But that again, I mean it was just, you know, going out and playing and having fun. So the sports were done in a way that I found eminently acceptable, but obviously much less rigorous, much less formal than something that is done at, say, at a university. I attended a game, football game of Harvard several years ago and I found that very acceptable. Obviously the students were well-trained, they were in good condition, they had the proper uniforms, but no one took it seriously. It was all just a lot of fun. So, I found the manner in which athletics figured into the life at Black Mountain was an appropriate one. If you wanted to participate, fine. If you didn't want to participate, fine, too. And it was done in such a way, I never remember anyone becoming injured. I never remember anyone becoming upset about a win or a loss or anything of that nature. It was just a part of the releasing one's tension and getting out and having some physical exercise in a pleasant manner.

MEH: Did you take any courses with M.C. Richards?

CB: No. No. And I regretted that, because I liked her. But again I think there was a conflict there.

MEH: Scheduling conflict.

CB: A scheduling conflict that I couldn't – I remember having a conversation with her after I'd taken that three-day examination. I believe she asked to talk with me, and I remember the conversation. She said, "Your responses to the questions were insightful and well-expressed, but it's obvious that you don't read enough literature. So you should correct that." Because, as I recall, one of the questions had "What are the books that you have enjoyed?" — "What are the novels that you have enjoyed the most?" I believe. She could tell from the list that I had made and my comments about them that my knowledge of Western literature was not profound, or at a level that one should be pursuing where I was in school.

MEH: Did you ever leave campus?

CB: Very seldom. Very seldom because we provided our own entertainment. On Saturday nights, Friday nights, whatever, sometimes plays, always a dance with music. There would be every once in a while an errand, and it was not comfortable to be in the area outside of the college. We were so obviously foreigners, and I recall one time — I don't know what led to it, but I went, I was doing something – maybe one of those coal businesses. I don't know. But I was with a couple of young women students and we stopped into a kind of tavern. So, there were just two women and myself, and a couple of young men came over to the table and began to insult me. My accent was different. I probably dressed somewhat different although it didn't seem to me, but then to be there with those women. They probably – It was obviously embarrassing. And I was very anxious about it, because, first of all, I didn't know if I took them on whether I could whip them. Second, even if I couldn't, or even if I could, it would be a nasty business because it was obvious that these were the kind of people who if things got tough would be completely at ease breaking a bottle and using it to fight. There were the women with me.

I remember being very uncomfortable about it, thinking this is not — I think probably because I felt alienated or different from the community there, and that's not usual for me. I go anyplace and do anything. As you know, I've worked and lived all over the world and often in a quite modest manner, and I've never walked with fear, anxiety. I've never felt strange, although obviously at times I would, I mean, look different. But there it was so obvious that we were different. You know, we had people who stayed with us who were testing the interstate commerce provisions and —

MEH: Freedom Riders.

CB: The Freedom Riders stayed with us. I think there might have been one or two other groups that came down from time to time. It was known that we harbored those kind of Black people. In addition, there were rumors that it was a kind of free love place, and so there was the stigma on the women as well as the men, and — So without really — I never remember a conversation about it, but we just found it much more agreeable just to be on campus. We didn't go to the movies. We had our own — I learned to play the guitar there. I've always liked to sing. I'd been in high school a member of a barbershop quartet. We had a barbershop quartet at Black Mountain. Oh, yeah. The elder Rondthaler and Manvel Schaufler and Ed Adamy, and myself. That's four of us. That made a quartet. From time to time there'd be a fifth, and be a sixth. We'd practice, and we performed on a number of occasions, singing old barbershop songs. So, that was very pleasant, as well as all of the other kind of entertainments, and Arthur Penn directing some things, or the dances, and then the studies. So, there was enough to do. We didn't — And our drinking, I never, I never knew that drugs were around. Wine, cheap wine was what we did. At least in my mind's eye, the reason that I learned to play the guitar was that when we would get together in the evening for kind of a social hour, it was not unusual that if you sang a song or played a song, why then the bottle would get passed to you. So, I wanted to be part of the group that got the bottle, so I would play a tune. It was the era of Woody Guthrie and that kind of thing, so labor songs —

MEH: Was Mickey Miller there when you were there?

CB: Did Mickey have another name?

MEH: I think her real name's Mary Ellen. She collected folk songs in the area.

CB: No, I don't remember her. There was another young woman by the name of Miller who was very close to Ed Adamy. They were a kind of pair for some time. Lovely, lovely young woman. But she was not someone connected with the folk –

MEH: Who taught you to play the guitar? Teach yourself, or – ?

CB: No, Ed Adamy and the others, they were playing, and the nice thing about a guitar is that with three little chords, that's enough for you to do anything with. You could transpose — put everything in the key of C and do it. If it didn't go into C, well forget about it. I liked that. I played the guitar for a number of years, but I ran out of colleagues who played the guitar, too, and the way that I advanced was — two of us would play and I would teach that person a song, and then that person would teach me a song, and so — I never learned to really read music and to translate that on the guitar. It was a fun thing to do, a relaxation thing –

[END OF SIDE 2, TAPE 2; BEGINNING OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2]

MEH: You were talking about –

CB: I don't recall the last subject that we were talking about, except music. And my learning music there. So, that kind of music does not form a part of my life now. Now, the music that I listen to and enjoy is opera and classical music at concerts. Well, Cambridge/Boston is such a musical center.

MEH: Was there a chorus?

CB: Oh, yes. Oh yes. A choral group. I participated in that. An a cappella group.

MEH: Who directed it then?

CB: Oh, I don't recall. It was the –

MEH: Male or female?

CB: Male.

MEH: It would have been Erwin Bodky or Edward Lowinsky.

CB: Edward Lowinsky. That's it, yeah. But again that was done relatively informal. We had our regular practices, and it was a fun thing to do. Obviously, there were people there who were studying piano. A few who were studying voice. Some rather serious musicians. But my level of interest in the music that was being performed, that I performed with, was much more casual, much less serious, really. So, that that was part of the release that one had if one was going to sing for an a cappella choir, group, choral group, or if one was going to put together a barbershop quartet presentation — We had some really knockout numbers from the barbershop era of the 1910s and 1920s, and that kind of music, as well as some of the good labor songs, particularly the radical ones and the country music at the time. That's essentially what that was. It was simply an interest in being part of the community and you do something for presentation at one of the Friday evenings or one of the Saturday evenings or that kind of thing, but nothing more than that. It was not something that I thought about a great deal or participated in in any exceptional manner.

MEH: Do you remember Mush Day? Was that part of your period? That was a day when people gave up one meal a week or whatever and sent money to Europe?

CB: I don't recall that that was a part of our culture at that time. That was the academic years '46-'47 and '47-'48. I don't believe that that was part of our activity. No.

MEH: What do you remember about Arthur Penn?

CB: I liked Art and I realized that he was talented, and indeed I had the — But we were not part of the same social circles. The closest that we ever got to one another — We returned to Black Mountain one time from New York. Why I was in New York at the time I don't recall, but I had a sister who lived there and it's possible, probable that I was visiting her. Art Penn and I took the train back to Black Mountain together, and he was talking about the number of unemployed actors and actresses who were, I believe, members of the Actors' Union, and saying what a shame it was and how many he'd seen over the period he had been in New York. What he wanted to do was to put together a traveling group, theatrical group, and would I be interested in doing that with him. I presumably

would handle more of the business side, the management, and he'd handle more of the artistic side. I remember replying to him that I think it would be an interesting activity for him, but not for me. The same reaction that I gave to the group that went out to Portland. I could see that this would be an extremely valuable experience for them, and they would be able to sustain themselves financially and to reinforce their talents and to grow as artists with economic security. But there was nothing for me — to manage the farm or all of the activities like that. I would have to be — If I was going to join a group, whatever that group was, then whatever that group did or was formed for, that would have to be a part of what I did, although I wasn't quite certain at the time what that was. The fact that Art did so well in terms of his artistic professional career, I was not prepared for. I didn't know that his level of excellence was of that magnitude. Parenthetically, I have a very close friend in Puerto Rico who — an architect — who several years later lived with Art Penn in Rome when they were doing some postgraduate work there. But I didn't know Art really well. There were two or three very close friends that he had, and they had — He had his little group. I admired him, and liked him, but I was never close to him.

MEH: Getting back to Niebyl, do you know what happened to him?

CB: No. He went to New Paltz for the, part of the State of New York –

MEH: To teach?

CB: Oh, to teach. Sure. I know he was there for a number of years. I doubt whether his book ever got published in the United States. I thought that was regrettable, because in terms of a very lucid presentation of Marxism, in terms of advancing that line of ideological thought through the decades, from the era of a hundred years, really, from Marx, it would have been an important contribution. Niebyl was a man who generated controversy. He was not a person easily known. He was a man who encouraged disciples, not colleagues, not people whom he stimulated to have an independent approach, whose ideas might be quite different from his but he could find acceptable because they seemed to have a certain rationale and were defensible and presented in a way that was cogent and logical. So, he pushed people to extremes, and there were a number of faculty

meetings, I know, about him — whether or not he should be permitted to remain, or whether he should be thrown out of the school. And to the degree I entered into those discussions, and it would have been in an informal manner, I always defended him, because I felt that if he was able to operate in the context that he was at Black Mountain, where the groups were small — His classes were small, they were open to discussion, and you were able to respond. There were some intelligent people there, not terribly well informed because they were very young, but they had points of view and would argue them vigorously, and this is what education is about. So, I thought that I learned a good deal from him, so that I was sorry that he left. But I do not know. I never thought that he had been asked to leave. Now he might have been, without my knowing about it.

MEH: I can't remember clearly. I'm trying to remember.

CB: But I would assume that a number of people in the faculty meetings would have expressed their displeasure at his presence. But my sense of the situation was that he had another offer, and it was a little bit more secure, in a more traditional place, so he left. Now, there's obviously more to the Niebyl story than I know about. But I felt as an intellectual stimulus, he was very important, as were some of the other professors who were also very didactic. But in an environment where — almost claustrophobic — where exchanges became heated and — well, I found that very stimulating. And not threatening. I think some of the professors who were not Marxists felt, I'm certain, that he encouraged people to become disciples and that that were not proper. But I didn't, I don't believe that that actually happened. He was too disagreeable. (LAUGHS).

MEH: There's something I was going to ask you. Oh, did you take any courses from Max Dehn, the mathematician?

CB: No. No. And I hardly remember him being there. I had very, very little contact with him, and I don't know why except that as I recall he seemed such a private person, and not socially at ease. So, that I never remember sitting at a table with him, because he sat with his little group. So, he was not the kind of person who walked into the dining hall and "Oh, hi. May I sit here?" And quite possibly would choose that particular place because

he hadn't talked with them or seen those people or interacted with them for some time, and therefore would be open to discussion and say, "What are you studying this semester?" and that kind of thing. So, he existed almost completely out of my ken. I knew he was there, but he walked some particular way and that served to isolate him. So I never really had any contact with him.

MEH: Where was your study? Was it in the Studies Building?

CB: The first semester, first year, yes. And it was cheek by jowl with Ken Noland. And the reason I remember that is that he was very much interested in the ladies, and I remember his calling me in, quite possibly simply because I was next door, to give him some reaction to the manner in which he had laid the room out and the colors that he had used, and the lighting, because he saw that as kind of a trap. (LAUGHS). He wanted to have a certain allure. So I remember that with considerable amusement, because he was obviously a painter with some talent, and that he would even ask my opinion. It hadn't to do with the fact that he thought that my artistic abilities were of any note but simply as another fellow, you know, whether or not I could — seem to think that this was the best that one could do. So that was the first year. I shared that study with Manvel Schauffler and with Ed Adamy. Parenthetically, we also roomed together. We roomed in one of the barracks, the army barracks, and that worked out very well. I always thought — and I'm certain that it was not done with any forethought by the faculty — but I came back — I had won a number of awards in the army. I was awarded a Silver Star and a Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart with the cluster — and Ed was a conscientious objector and he had spent time in Chillicothe Federal Penitentiary. So I thought, "Wow, isn't this interesting, that we find ourselves together." I loved the man. I thought he was one of God's gentlemen. Very, very thoughtful and lovely human being. Brought out the best in people. He had a number of lady friends, and they were always *crème de la crème*. The nicest human beings you could possibly imagine. So he was nice to have around. It worked out very well. And Manvel Schauffler was extremely agreeable and went on to quite an interesting career, I

thought. I don't need a parenthetical phrase, "I thought." It was a very interesting career.

You know about his theatrical work?

MEH: At Black Mountain or –

CB: No, no, no. When he became a teacher.

MEH: With Catlin Gable.

CB: Yes. I think that was the name of it. He became a jack of all trades. He knew he wanted to be head of a small private school, and he aimed for that. And to do it, he drove a bus, taught gym, all kinds of teaching, all of that. And at one time he was asked whether or not he might take over theatrical courses, because the teacher was gone. He thought about it and said — now this is Manvel Schauffler talking to me about this, usually — thought about it and came back and said, "Yes, if I could do it on my own terms." He did absolutely marvelously. Part of this was that he would not just do a play which was for the parents. He wanted the students over an extended period of time, and he got a school bus and took the kids around during the summer performing, and then he extended this to Europe and took the kids around Europe. And there was an article in the New Yorker magazine about — I think called "The Yellow Bus." You took his course in theater, and you were expected to stay during the summer. They would make their own costumes, they would do the sets, and they would perform in Europe. Very, I thought very interesting. Then later there was John Bergman, and he and I roomed together for a while, the second year.

MEH: This is John.

CB: Not Hank.

MEH: John had polio?

CB: Yes. That is correct. Unbelievable that he would be the one, because he was by far and away — No. I was going to say he was far and away the finest athlete at Black Mountain. There was one other, who's out on the coast. His name will come to me. Who were truly fine athletes. I mean the rest of us, we'd play. We'd play for fun. But they were really,

really very good, very well coordinated, very fast, very strong. That was another level of excellence.

MEH: When you left the college — I'm sorry, I interrupted you.

CB: No, that's okay.

MEH: You went back to Indiana?

CB: Went back to Indiana, for my final year.

MEH: Briefly, go through your career. The sort of things that you've done.

CB: Well, I went back to Indiana University, as I said — at the last moment — graduated in economics, didn't know what I wanted to do but I knew that I wanted to do some kind of public service work. I had one more year of the GI Bill available to me, and I was going to take every advantage of it, so I took a graduate degree in Public Administration at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Decided not to go into a large bureaucracy — I didn't work to work at the national level, particularly coming in as an intern or the very lowest levels, or didn't want to work for a big state like New York whose state government is very much like the federal government. And decided that I would go into city management and blocked out the country and that kind of thing. Sent out some eighty letters, individually typed at that time, to city managers asking whether or not they could use an assistant. Got several replies. When one of them came from Michigan, drove out there, got a job as the assistant to the city manager — not assistant manager, assistant to the city manager. Worked there for three years. Marvelous man to work for, marvelous — unbelievable supervisor. I had to report to him every day at five o'clock, the end of the work day, explain what I had done, why, what had gone right, what had gone wrong, and then he would assign me things to do the next day. I worked in every department of the city, doing everything. I worked for the DPW, waterworks, treasury, road inspection, buildings, everything, everything. At the end of that my apprenticeship was finished. I went to work as a city manager in Pennsylvania, but I knew before I left my first position that I was really not interested in the management of the so-called housekeeping activities of cities, that I was more interested in why is a

city located there, and why does it grow, and how does it change, and what is its economic base, and what happens to that economic base, and that kind of thing. How does one city relate to another city.

So, after a couple of years as city manager, I took another graduate degree. Went to Harvard, and took a degree in city planning. Unbeknownst to me — Well, I fell in socially with a group of Latinos, one of whom, unbeknownst to me was the vice-director of the Puerto Rico Housing Corporation. We were just about to graduate at the same time, when he received a communication from the director of that corporation asking him, my colleague, if he knew of a consultant who might help the corporation put together an urban renewal program. Urban renewal at the time had a specific legal definition. It was the Federal Housing Act of 1954, which introduced the concept of renewal, conservation, rehabilitation, in contradistinction to redevelopment where you simply cleared the land. And he asked me if I would be interested in coming down. At the time I had several very good job offers, excellent job offers, but the possibility of going to the sunny Caribbean, exotic Caribbean, and serving as a consultant to the Commonwealth government of Puerto Rico, and putting together a new approach to urban improvement — I was just overwhelmed. So, I went there, and oh, I prospered. I loved it.

Unfortunately, our son was three and had a speech impediment and my wife and I felt that it was necessary to get to a place where we could put him in a speech clinic or have a speech clinic available, because we didn't know whether or not this was caused by tension in the family, or what it was. So, we went to New York and were there for a while and I was still interested in international work — Even though Puerto Rico is part of the United States, is a possession of the United States, has all of the perquisites of a state, yet because it does not pay federal taxes is not represented either in the Senate or the House. The fact is that it's a Latin culture, so for me it was the same as if I had been in the Dominican Republic or any of the Central American countries.

So, I had an opportunity a few years later to go — the Ford Foundation supported a program in municipal improvement in Venezuela -- and to be the project

manager and assist in structuring a federal agency, an agency of the national government, whose responsibility would be to improve city management. It was all to do with city planning, with taxation, with all the services. So that kind of sealed it. One thing led to another. Somebody heard about some of the things that I was doing there and the Organization of American States asked me to do some work for them. The World Bank asked me to do some work. That just set it going, and my wife took a graduate degree — she had graduated in literature — English literature. She took a graduate degree in library science, because —

[END OF SIDE 1, TAPE 2; BEGINNING OF SIDE 2, TAPE 2]

CB: And so one thing just led to another, and I was very fortunate in that I came onto the international scene at a time when Americans were very welcome. I came in in a manner in which I did not become narrowly identified with a region or a particular specialty which precluded interest in other — Part of that was happenstance, part of that was strategic on my part. I consciously tried to avoid becoming stereotyped: "Oh, he's a houser," or "He's a trainer," or "He's somebody who knows about urban renewal." So, that I prospered in a way that a number of my contemporaries did not. Either, one, they might even not be Americans, and Americans at that time, as I said, were very welcome. In addition, I think early on I got a reputation for being competent and honest. Not necessarily a world beater (leader?), but someone who if an assignment were made, it would be done and they would not have to worry about it, and they could sleep at night. That sounds pretty modest, but if you're working in a situation where there's a great many things happening, and it's hard to keep track of them all, yet all of them have the potential for blowing up or being — Simply to give it to somebody who's (UNINTELL WORD) and then they could wash their hands of it, is very important.

In addition, I came onto the scene when money was more easily come by than now. The United States was prospering financially, economically. The United Nations was relatively new as well as the World Bank and others of the international aid community — so that despite the fact that I was a private consultant working on my own,

I never doubted that I could make a living. And so I think I went through my career easier and with less stress than many of the others who were working in the field.

I also became very early on identified with having a very special interest in training, so that any program or project that I was associated with I always made certain that there was some kind of training component built into the activities so that to the extent possible all of those with whom I would come into contact professionally would have the benefit of some kind of improvement of their professional skills and knowledge. Training was much less common than now, and perceived often differently. Now, our major corporations are very conscious of the fact that the skills of their professional staff need to be constantly upgraded, and time off is given for them to take courses and they're encouraged to, and often go back or take courses at night, so the company will pay for some of these – But then, when I started out, that was not perceived, but various of the organizations thought that, "Gee, I think that would be a useful adjunct." And then I began to do a good deal of work in that.

So professionally I think I did, in the scale of things, well.

MEH: Tell me a little bit about the project you're working on now.

CB: Well, this has a rather interesting history in that a number of years ago I was doing some work in Pakistan and was the project manager there, and I had arranged a guest house for all of those coming to work as consultants on our project. One of the men I was talking with one evening – and he'd been in the field of international development for some fifteen or sixteen years. In a moment of easy exchange and of confidence he said that he felt rather discouraged because he had never been associated with a success. That after all of those years in the field that he had never been in a position where he could look back with pride on some activity he'd been involved with. Well, I moved to lift his spirits and to anecdotally talk about some of the activities I had been involved with and the positive results. But later I began to ponder on it. Perhaps I had been too glib. Outside of snippets of information, some hearsay, I really didn't know the actual results of some of

the principal activities that I'd been involved in. Okay? So I kind of carried that in the back of my mind.

Then several years after that, the editor of InterPlan — it's a contraction of International Planning, which is the newsletter of the International Division of the American Planning Association — anyway, the editor of that at the time was a friend of mine. We were talking one time, and we got involved in talking about our careers and some of our work, and he asked me if I might contribute several articles to the journal that reviewed some of my activities. So, I did. They were relatively short and pithy. On the basis of that, several people talked to me and said, "Why don't you do this more seriously?" So at any rate, I knew people in various international aid agencies, one of them being the Organization of American States, and I approached them with the possibility of my getting some kind of research grant in order to permit me to travel, because there was no way that I could do this without returning to the scenes of the crime.

So, at any rate they did. Well that sealed it, because once you have a research grant, then there's a certain level of responsibility that's connected with it. At the same time, although the money involved was modest, it gave my work a professional cast. That is, I could contact people in Venezuela or Mexico or wherever and say, "I'm Charles Boyce. I have a research grant from the Organization of American States to write about X. I understand that you know a great deal about this. I would love to come and see you." Well, that created an entirely different hue. So that's what I've been doing the last couple of years. I probably have another year to go.

MEH: Of research and writing?

CB: That's right. I'm writing and researching at the same time. I just finished last week writing the first draft of the remaining chapter that I didn't have anything written on. So there is something now on every one of the experiences. I would say that 95, 98 percent of all of the basic research is done. That which remains is kind of difficult to get at and probably will keep going on in some way. I sought to treat each experience in an isolated manner,

keep my mind free of all other activities, and just concentrate on that particular one. Now, I have to go back and go through each one and what was to be learned from that that was most important, that quite possibly was similar or dissimilar from this experience here, and what do I make of that? Do I tie them together some way? Do I make reference to them in some way in those chapters? Or do I wait and do a final chapter that is a summary? Or some of those might I put in an introductory chapter, that kind of thing. So that's the stage that I'm at now, and as I said earlier, it's in many ways a labor of love because it's an opportunity that's granted to few to do. I've titled it — I have it in my mind's eye, whether or not this will be the actual title — The Education of a Development Consultant. It's more than what I learned. What is there to be learned from these experiences? It's not a novel. These are practical results. They affected people's lives in a way that one should know about and international agencies and others are learning about — efforts to lift those from the less developed countries to greater prosperity and possibility and directing their destinies at a more prosperous level. So I've cast it in terms of knowledge, or education. What I believe is to be learned from these experiences. You don't have to be directly involved. Anyone who is interested in the manner in which international development efforts work their way out should be interested in this. Whether or not some will be depends upon how well I do it.

[END OF RECORDING ON SIDE 2, TAPE 2]

[END OF TRANSCRIPT]