

Interview of Professor Deborah Bell by a University of Mississippi law student

(Starts mid-sentence)

DB: ...who was a professor at the law school, was talking about the influence that Joshua Morse had on him, and that the ripple effect that that has, and one of the things that struck me is they, they talk about that ripple effect and they also talk about one of the things that Josh Morse did was he created North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, and he linked the students—including Sam Davis, our current dean, some of our speakers—to North Mississippi and put students in the community helping low-income, black residents. And I went to law school in 1976, and one of the first courses I signed up for was A.C. Wharton's poverty law class, and went into his class one day, and he started talking about housing issues in Mississippi and it was, it was like the one class in law school that absolutely inspired me. And so, I went on from there and spent the next twenty years working on housing law issues. I got hired back at the law school, and when I came back to the law school, I started a clinical program. We linked back with North Mississippi Rural Legal Services, and today in the audience, there were four people who are attorneys at Legal Services now, some African-American students from the law school, who are now teaching in the law school in the clinical program, and that's a long circle to say that that influence that Josh Morse had in the '60's on A.C. Wharton filtered over to me, filtered over to the clinic, and it, and it led back in a circle so that we still have that link with North Mississippi. And I just think it's a great example of how one person affects one life, who affects somebody else's life, and it, it continues. So, it's just amazing to me that he started that, that cycle that still continues, and you can sit in a room like that and trace the ripple from one person to another.

Interviewer: Do you have any more, any other comments about Dean Morse?

DB: No, no, I never met him and never knew him, but I knew—I, I met the first generation of people that he affected: Reuben Anderson, A.C. Wharton, those were my heroes. And so it just continues on. Thank you.

Interviewer: Thank you!

END INTERVIEW.