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Interview with Khadija DeLoache

Interviewer: Douglas Medina

**May 6, 2014
New York, NY**

Douglas Medina: Today is Tuesday, May 6, 2014. I'm here with Khadija DeLoache. Khadija, let's start with you telling me about yourself, where did you grow up?

Khadija DeLoache: I grew up in Harlem, I went to boarding schools for a considerable amount of my life and I spent lot of my summers in the South. So, my family was very much committed to making sure that I had a very well rounded experience in life. And I spent a good portion of my time in the South, in Florida, Georgia and also I went to school in New Hampshire and I went to school in North Carolina.

Douglas: You have siblings?

Khadija: I do. I have one brother of another mother, no, of the same mother and I have a sister of another father but we were all family, and even their brothers – we just all lock hands and say 'we can'.

Douglas: Got you. Your parents, while you were growing up, what did they do for a living?

Khadija: Well, my father he came from World War II and as well as I can remember he got a job with the city as a conductor for the subway because at that time they had conductors helping people on and off the subway. He was a demolition expert during World War II so he definitely was not going to find a comparable kind of job coming out. My father was not afraid of working extra jobs and he loved driving so he was usually a chauffeur as well. He loved that. And he gambled, he was a gambler.

Douglas: What about your mom?

Khadija: My mother was a social worker and then she became one of the kind of like 'Rosie the Riveter' girls during World War II. She and my father got together, I was born and then they took me from my mother when I was about 2 years old, maybe, or something. And I don't really know much of her life after that except that I found her at 15 and she had multiple sclerosis and she was dealing with other variables. But we became best of friends and she died very shortly thereafter which was very traumatizing for me, very traumatizing.

Douglas: I see. Which high school did you attend?

Khadija: I attended a few. I mean, if you really want to know real quick in a hurry, coming from the foster home and all of that and getting to elementary school and being exposed to a Catholic school for the first time with a racist nun – on my very first day at school I was destined to be difficult. And so I spend a good portion of my first few years in the principal's office from grades 1-6 until they expelled me.

And I wasn't bad, I was just difficult because I was, I just didn't, I saw a lot of contradictions, Douglas. I saw a lot of contradictions and you don't have to be a brilliant kid to see contradictions. And I saw them and in my little system of self I was rebelling against it. And I grew up during a time, which is important for you to understand about all of us. We grew up in a time of major turbulence, okay.

My family, I was collecting shoes for the Montgomery Bus Boycott as a kid because the shoes were worn-out. They were asking us to gather shoes and send them down to Montgomery, Alabama for the boycott. So I've been mired and my family has always been very politically active.

And so I've been mired in activism, it's in my DNA to be a fighter or a contradiction raiser or whatever...

Douglas: Mm-hmm. I like the way you frame that. And you said contradiction, so tell me about those contradictions. Can you think of some of those contradictions that field your activism?

Khadija: Almost certainly. You mean growing up?

Douglas: Yes.

Khadija: Oh, absolutely. I can tell you three very crystal clear – Jennifer Jones was a beautiful, young, dark-skinned Black girl and at that time

color was still an issue. And so Jennifer was very, very dark-skinned. I had so much stuff going in my head I didn't know what color I was. I mean – not color but I wasn't too busy with that because I had larger things like where was my mother.

So Jennifer used to – you know, every day was supposed to go to the bathroom right after recreation. Jennifer's body didn't work like that, the nuns would let her pee on herself while we said Rosary every single day. And I can smell the urine, I can still the little brown – because we still use them today in our world, which is interesting, the little brown paper towel, that I would help her wipe up her urine because she always stood in front of me.

And every day the nun knew it was going to come, you could see Jennifer wiggling – her name was Jennifer Jones and you knew it was going to come. And sure enough it would come. The 1st grade nun immediately started making fun of my name, calling me DeLoache. So the kids would go, 'DeLoache, DeLoache, the roach'.

So you had to toughen up and these were contradictions so I wasn't somebody that went around beating up people or stealing their money or anything like that. I just didn't take in any crap.

Douglas: Do you recall your parents or people who care for you who were...?

Khadija: My father and my grandmother and my father's family.

Douglas: Did they encourage you to think this way in terms of 'don't take crap from anyone'?

Khadija: No.

Douglas: Where they politicized?

Khadija: Well, we were politicized but we weren't politicized. We were politicized in 'watch out for the dangers of the south' which I hadn't really experienced yet, I think I started going south about, in junior high school. So you saw the contradictions when you went to the south. And that's where Seku and I began to bond. But, I mean, I have quite a few other experiences before I got to junior high, I mean City College.

Douglas: Sure. So you graduated from which high school?

Khadija: I graduated finally from Julia Richman.

Douglas: Okay. Where is that located?

Khadija: 2nd Avenue and 68th Street, New York.

Douglas: Okay. What kind of experience did you have in high school? What was it like socially, did you experience racism there as well?

Khadija: Well, I experienced social BS when I was at Commerce High School because I went to Commerce first which is now Brandeis. And when I went there I'd wanted to join the cheerleaders and I was ostracized because there was a clique, I made it, I made the team physically whatever the try-outs were but I wasn't part of the clique. So that pissed me off. But the next year it didn't matter because I was going down South.

So I went down South and I just convinced the principal to let me start a cheerleading squad because they didn't have one. And knowing nothing about cheerleading, I got my roommate who knew about cheerleading and I made her co-captain. So I saw myself as – you know, I don't think of myself like that because you're just busy taking in breath and surviving and doing what you have to do. But when I reflect on myself I see – and Seku and I definitely reflected on ourselves.

I see that it's been in my DNA since day one. My family we always believed in, I grew up hearing about Jim Crow, I grew up watching the kids down south trying to go to school with the dogs and hoses. I mean, and if anything will set your brain just really tight is Emmett Till. And then, I think what really crystalized it for me – I was in New Hampshire going to the boarding school at the time, Catholic boarding school. I experienced prejudice but that wasn't it, it was in the textbook – and I tell people this, it was in the history book. And I have always been an avid learner, I may not behave the way you want me to but I've also been an avid learner and a smart person.

So I'm reading ahead, you know, and every chapter, Sharman, the Emperor, it's real cool, and Queen Elizabeth, Victoria, they're all looking cool, with their stuff. And then there comes in the chapter of the American Negro, and they have that classic picture of the three men hanging from a tree. It's the classic picture. And that was in the book. And I remember sliding down in my seat and being so angry, so angry.

So, you know, I was always raised with Black pride, and my folks are from the South and we always had pride and when we drive down south the chain gang folks would be out, we'd honk the horn and say,

“Hey, there. How are you doing?” and letting them know, “We love you and you know we got you as best we can.” And I’d ask, ‘why do you do that?’ And that’s what they would say. And what really cemented – and Seku and I talked about that quite a bit because when we first met and we talked about the South and whatever, both of us had been Northern children going South because our families wanted us to. I guess, like in your case it would be Puerto Rico or...

Douglas: El Salvador.

Khadija: El Salvador, yeah. Okay, so you got it, you know what I’m saying.

Douglas: Oh yeah.

Khadija: So you go back home and be with the family. So we would go back home and be with the family, get out of the inner city. And I’m used to going to 125st and get my little sugar doughnut and my soda, I mean, these were routine and I will nail polish and you sat at the soda fountain, that is what we did, we thought we were big girls going out to lunch. So when you go down South as a little teenager junior high, you buy the things, whatever it is, you honey bun or Coca Cola but you had to come outside and sit on the sidewalk, okay, the curb.

And I remember so clearly seeing – and I told students about this when I spoke after the Seku passed, we talked about this, seeing so clearly the – for colored only. Like you would come out of the washroom or the drinking fountain – now people would not even because we drink bottled water, wow, but back then it was drinking fountains and one was as clear as crystal sparkling clean and I could never understand what was it that stopped you in my head from cleaning this one – and the ‘for colored only’ is right here and it’s nasty as hell. Oh my gosh.

And Seku and I used to talk about that all the time and the freedoms that we thought about but then we talked about the contradictions too.

Douglas: Right, do you feel like. It sounds like education really played a role in you sharpening those contradictions or thinking about those contradictions, directly or indirectly, right?

Khadija: Well, yeah. My family was very big on education. Experiences, education, whatever you could give a child to open up their nostrils to reality of any sort was always important. And I believed in that too. My family prior to my generations, previous generations in my

family education was always a priority. In my house when I was growing up – that’s why my house is dusty. Because I could be in the room – what are you doing in there? Oh, I’m studying. Oh okay she’s studying. I could have been reading. That time we were reading things like the Tropic of Cancer which was an X-rated book, now these kids have all kinds of other stuff.

And I tell my students about that. Oh leave her alone, she’s doing her work, her schoolwork. So education was always a priority and it was a priority for any Black family that had that level – Charles too, we were all of the same generation so you got to understand that it wasn’t open enrollment then but it was ‘let the Blacks in’ whatever the term you write. So every Black family across this country especially families that, you know, historically Black colleges who may have had money or the means to go.

Now every working class family, even if you didn’t get a scholarship your child still had a chance to get in there. So we were the first ones to walk in that door and we knew that.

Douglas: So going to college was not even an option, you had to go to college.

Khadija: Oh yeah, I mean – hold on...

Douglas: Sure.

(Break in audio)

Douglas: So education is important, college is a must – so what year did you graduate high school?

Khadija: Well, that’s a whole other situation. I graduated in – I was supposed to graduate in ’65 but I started showing signs of what eventually became Crohn’s disease. And so in ’65 I think it was, the beginning of that year, I used to do a lot of playing hooky because I would go ice skating. We learned how to put pennies in our tongue and make the mercury in the thermometer rise, the copper.

We’d go to the nurse, ‘I’m so sick, I’m so sick’. And so we’d get excused...

Douglas: By the way, I’ve never heard of that trick. I have to remember it now.

Khadija: But, you know, it won't work now because we have digital thermometers.

Douglas: Oh, that's right.

Khadija: Yeah. So to make a long story short I had to have emergency surgery and after that, things just went downhill and because I had played hooky all my teacher felt sorry for me except for one English teacher that knew I had been playing hooky before I got sick and she was not having it, she was a Black teacher. And thank God for her because I had to go through summer school and by that time was getting consistently sick. So I didn't really officially graduate, I had to have home school for the last six months just for that one English class.

So I was with the class of '65, you know, the prom and all like that, I never walked and so I got my diploma, I think in '66

Douglas: And which colleges were you considering? At what point did you look at City College or...?

Khadija: Well, the way I got to City College – God is always good. My family didn't know how to do a college process but when I did do was I, of course you know, you take the PSAT's and the SAT's and all that. And I was looking at Boston College of Fine Arts because my art teacher in high school would put my work on exhibit, she thought I was just so talented and she just thought that I would make the greatest interior designer of all times.

So my family was like, 'you want to be what? Can they make money? Do they have Black people doing that? You can only decorate windows...' because at that time for interior designers, the need didn't kind of bubble like it did now. And so they didn't see any forecast in that.

And unfortunately or fortunately I happened to have been teaching art at the time at the Harlem YMCA. I met a certain young guy and got pregnant and so going away to college was not an option, but the Harlem YMCA told me about the SEEK program. So that's how I got to the SEEK program.

Douglas: I got it. What year did you enter through the SEEK program?

Khadija: I entered the SEEK program in the fall of '66.

Douglas: So in the fall of '66 what did you encounter?

Khadija: The fall of '66 I encountered some down to earth teachers. I met Addison Gael and he was awesome. I was pregnant at the time so I was really preoccupied with morning sickness. The SEEK program had counselors and everybody was really nice to me and they suggested, because I was going to school and regurgitating and trying to work and all like that – everybody said take it easy and come back in September of '67.

So fast forward, my daughter is born and I come back in September '67. I encountered a group of really terrific progressive young Black people, students. We were all friendly and we all used to hang together. Now, how we managed to hang together I'm not quite sure because there were two connecting a social environments so there's North Campus with the cafeteria and south campus with the snack bar.

And we did have a group of Black kids on campus who for some reason or another they weren't part of the SEEK program so they thought that they were just much better than us and we were just little poor-ass nigger children or little Latino children just like, you know, thrown up there for whatever reason.

And there was a lot of discrimination, is it discrimination, segregation, there was a lot of segregation between us.

Douglas: What did you decide to study, by the way when you arrived at City College?

Khadija: I know I ended up being pre-med. I probably started with theatre because I always liked the theatre and I was doing theatre so I probably started with theatre. But my family weren't able to convince me, no one could make me change my mind. I changed my mind for a variety of variables. And one of them was basically coming out of the takeover.

Douglas: Okay. So you mentioned segregation and it sound sounds like there were some class issues, right?

Khadija: Class issue with these Black students, because they had maybe scored -- or came out of different environment because part of the criteria for the SEEK program had to be intercity. And so if you don't know the dynamics – I'm sure you probably heard, but back in the '60s if you were upwardly mobile middle class family, you broke

your neck to get your family out of Harlem and get them to Queens or the better neighborhoods.

So these kids came from better neighborhoods even though they were Black and they just thought that they were better than everybody else. And they made us feel that way, there was definitely a distinction between us. Even we had a thing called “coke tails “ every Thursday night, which was basically like cocktails, but it was “coke tails” made us all feel important. So we had this coke tails and the status quo – those kids that weren’t part, and they were Black, part of the SEEK program they were all to themselves all the time and we were always to ourselves all the time.

And that changed in 1968, the night that Martin Luther King was assassinated.

Douglas: Now. Before that – so of course you were part of SEEK but were you also part of other groups, subgroups, of Black and Puerto Rican students – before we even get to the actual struggle? But were you part of any groups and were the other Black student’s part of any groups?

Khadija: Well, we, those of us who I know really closely that were part of the initial setting up and I can tell you that arena – I want to let you know that, I don’t want to spend a of time on this. But the initial part of that whole thing, the inception – but before the inception – again, my family was very political, my grandmother was a communist and she would go to the communist parties.

So that kind of thinking had always been in my house. And then my uncles were gamblers, they weren’t gangsters but they were gamblers. And, so gamblers do run in the company, often times, of the gangster world. But they wanted to raise us to be just perfect little sweet children, but no, we weren’t part of any – at that time I wasn’t, well, I had just won a beauty contest and I wasn’t trying to be beautiful, I was trying to get money for furniture for my daughter and replace the T.V that had been stolen.

I’m a practical person, turn that - he and I were talking and he was always flirting with me but but but, I was like ehh, we really became very good friends. I know we became friends by ’67 but I’m not sure where – I was dealing with a lot of other things. But we would always talk...

(Break in Audio)

Douglas: So you were telling me you met Seku in 1967 and you upset about the coattails party of event that happened. Was it every week?

Khadija: Every Thursday we would have it. It was like campus opportunity to let your hair down and I don't know if it was just with Black kids or Whites kids were there too, I don't remember, I just remember us being divided and feeling very left. You know, but we had enough entertainment because – we would call it the lumping back in the day because back in the day it was customary to discuss Marx and Engels and all kinds of theoretical ideas, you know, that was how guys got some. Nowadays they just make these debased rock songs or hip-hop songs but back then you had to be intelligent.

So we often talked about the contradictions and working class and we knew that those kids were working class kids and how dare they treat us like that? But everything came to a really big head – I think we did try to take over the student union administration building a year earlier, I think, I think we did. Because we would get together – there was a social climate, we played cards, you had to be a big risk player.

Now, meanwhile, I was a mother so I always had to stand on the peripheral to some degree with things. My daughter was a lot of the inspiration too. But we, so we talked about various things but in...Martin Luther King was assassinated, I came home from modeling that day and I was still in all of my make-up and *badaboom badaba*. And I remember calling Seku, because we were always saying, we have to do things, we have to take steps, we can't just talk and not do things.

So we went up to coke tails because it was a Thursday for some reason or another – because I checked on my grandmother and she was okay, I knew she was going to be really worked up about Martin Luther King. And for that time, we had been talking about things, taking over the campus, contradictions, and I called Seku and I said, you know – I don't know what I said but I know I said something. And I said we got to do something, let's go run up to the campus and organize we can no longer just be divided.

And Seku was very charismatic and good looking, of course, I never really went for him for the good looks, I went for him for his mind. But he was very charismatic, if he said, 'everybody, jump up and throw me your paycheck' they might do it because he was just that

kind of way and I saw that very early in the game. And see he and I used to write poetry together and we'd perform. I think it was Baruch or something someplace downtown.

So we did a lot of things together and we were already talking about various things and contradictions, so when this happened we both said, man we got to do something this is it. So we went up – you know, we don't have time for any more of this bullshit, we have to organize and be together.

So that time we all joined forces, we left the campus, we came down Convent Avenue, we met, then Mayor Lindsay who was opting for a photo-op and so he joined in and we all kind of came this way across 125th Street together and that was that. And then comes the time when we all start to talking about planning...

Douglas: Let me get this straight. So there was already talk of organizing but the death, the murder of Martin Luther King was sort of like a catalyst for you, for...

Khadija: It was a catalyst for anybody who was displeased with anything in the world, will be like, we've had enough now, and they've killed the king of love. And in today's world, it sucks we're going to kick ass. And that was how we saw it. And if they killed the king of love why do we have to have respect for theories, ideas, patience, anything – like get our word out there and our word at that time was – because I think we had been there long enough to experience the contradictions that we felt was it was not a degree ranting – and we made quite a few accomplishments which I'm want to tell you about, more so.

But we were there in college and we didn't have – we felt at the time, which nowadays I would look back and say, is it really critically important? Perhaps it is – a degree granting Black studies department. And we felt that, you know...

(Break in Audio).

Khadija: Yeah, where were we?

Douglas: So the contradictions and the catalyst of Martin Luther King – you were ready to just take action it sounds like.

Khadija: We had all been playing cards and in a social environment constantly discussing contradictions. It wasn't like we were in a fox hole, we knew that there were things that weren't right, we felt like

we were a laboratory group of students who come in because SEEK meant seeking, evaluating education – something knowledge...

Douglas: Seeking Education Elevation and Knowledge.

Khadija: Right. And basically what we felt was it was the government's way of saying, if ghetto kids could learn, [laughs] to see if Black ghetto kids could learn, that was exactly how we felt because the consistent criteria was that we were from the ghetto, we were not necessarily from low income because I grew on Sugar Hill. But we were from the ghetto and that they wanted to see if we could learn. Seku came from the Projects on the eastside.

And there were a lot of young brothers and sisters who came in, who were very intelligent and also had met the criteria but they had been street kids, I mean, real streets kids, which was good because – you see the flavor of the struggle never comes from the elite intellectuals, it comes from, and that's why I so wanted to get to talk to you because a lot of these people – and you see the opportunities and when we study history we study the elite, 'oh yeah, Rosa Parks was so cool' and yes she was. Martin Luther King was so cool and poor Bayard Rustin gets knocked down because he was gay and he was the one that brought that ingenious concept of non-violence.

Douglas: Absolutely. At one point we're going to get to this but I want you to expand on that because I think that political figure had something to do with that and making sure that there was political support but at the same time you have to wonder, could have done more and if they could have supported the struggle in a more powerful way to sustain the revolutionary potential for it; right?

Khadija: Well the political powers that were at that time created – I'm sure you can get the real people, but they were all political community leaders who developed this idea and educators of course. And it was endorsed by the leadership of the time because it was a good idea, who knows. Well you know, there were a couple of other things going on. There had been some riots about two years earlier than the onset of '69 in Harlem and those riots had been due to a racial incident – you can find that out, that was before Martin Luther King.

I can date that back to when I was dating my boyfriend because I remember watching the riots from his window and that would have been in 1965/1966, it was a summer and there were a series of

riots. And so everybody was concerned about racial unrest in the city, particularly. Now, I only know about Harlem because that's where I was living, maybe Brooklyn, Bronx, different. But at that time Harlem was like the hub of everything, I mean Castro was coming to Harlem, so anything that happened in Harlem needed to be address.

And so they were concerned about intercity youth in this whole thing. So that's when all these programs came up; you name it there were all these programs, and, you know, the embezzlement of the funds and all that.

Douglas: Maximum feasible participation; do you remember that phrase? It was part of the federal government's attempt to get community to become involved for government programs and funding to have the most impact and that was part of the war against poverty.

Khadija: Exactly, the war against poverty. And that came out of the Kennedy Administration, basically, I believe. So there we were. And this was politician's idea of an academic – and it was an excellent thing because I don't think that I would have gotten to go to college had it not been for this. It would have made it much more difficult for me. But, again, when you're young and you're thrust into the academic environment – you're smart, you know you're supposed to do your schoolwork but we all got distracted with other things because we saw contradictions.

Seku and I and quite a few others – again because it was the times, you know, people don't smoke today, well people didn't open their eyes without making sure that they saw everything around them, you know. So contradictions, and we discussed it, it was as natural as talking about a baseball score or something.

Douglas: Now, there are two things I'm interested in. Number one, what was the process for crafting the demands? And if you can walk me through that process, the processed of creating the organizations, the Black and Puerto Rican Student Community and the crafting the actual five demands? Why not 10? Why not 12? How come 5? And, then I have a second part to the question which is the ideology that informed the group, the individuals within the group. What were you drawing from? Marxism, socialism, black nationalism, black power, so if you can talk about that.

Khadija: Okay, let me go back to the evening or afternoons in Seku's mother's

apartment because somebody did ask me on Seku's timeline, interview me about something and we got right to the exact date. But somewhere in '68 we were all tired of bullshit. Of course, Martin Luther King, Martin Luther King was killed in April, so that meant that we probably came back after the summer and all of us had a social consciousness by that time that had really escalated because of all the riots and everything.

And we all got together and we said we were tired of the bullshit. Because we were, we grew up in a Black and Latino world, especially Seku, because Seku was very much in a Black and Latino community, and the schools we all went to, the public schools – so we all knew Black and Latino kids. So it wasn't like, oh you're Black or you're Latino. It's like look you want to come over here into this meeting because we're tired of this. Yeah or you know this is some bullshit and we got to go through this this and this. It was that kind of gathering. And Seku had some very good street guys and back in the day – excuse me recorder but they were street niggers. “Man you know if it wasn't for the street niggers, you know, you little bourgeoisie people,” Seku would always tease me because I was you know, I was from the hill I was a little bougie girl. And you it's the workers of the world and the street people who are down with program.

But, Seku and I were always head-to-head on ideology and thinking, you know I said, “Well listen,” – I said, “If that's where you feel let's really, really get some folks together, let's get this bad boy on and popin. And we were tired and it some something that set us off, I can't remember now, hopefully it will come to me. But we were tired of the bullshit. So it was Seku, Seku's brother which is very important, Quipo who was a Latino brother from the street, no nonsense guy.

And it was 10, I don't know – Leroy Hodge, now Leroy Hodge is dead – but so far I've named, Seku, Rasiq, Quipo, myself, I don't know if Henry Arce would have been there. It wasn't 10 of us but it was enough of us then and it as two things it was; Rasiq's Hernanda's brother who had just come from the military and he was up on strategic military. So while all these armchair revolutionaries were blah, blah, blah I had already– I'm trying to think, we had all been in women right's thing, it wasn't like you just joined one thing.

If something wasn't happening right, if women weren't being treated right or it was time for us to burn our bras or whatever you were part of that time where the consciousness was that's what you did.

You know, it's like now you don't like the way things are. You walk for AIDS, you walk for cancer – you follow?

Douglas: Absolutely.

Khadija: Right. And so Rasiq came up with the idea of the strategic plan. The committee of 10 was based on – it wasn't the committee of 10 but 10 was an integral number and 10 was a number that was decided because we all knew that we couldn't go out there and gathered masses but if we could all take an easy number of 10 that would make our ranks tighter. So each one of us went out and got 10 more people and that's how the Cells became the Cells.

And in those cells we spread the consciousness and the plan of action. I know I was with the active group, but each one of us – I'm sure someone has mentioned – did anybody give you names?

Douglas: Absolutely. I've talked to James Small.

Khadija: Oh you spoke to James, he's overseas.

Douglas: Well, he came back. This was about a month or so ago.

Khadija: Okay. Because there were 10 groups and Serge, Mallory, Rick Reid – Rick Reid passed...

Douglas: Both names have come up.

Khadija: Those names have come up. And all of us were like part of a group, so I was part of Seku's group and his brother and so forth like that...

(Break in Audio)

Douglas: So this strategic number of 10, it's easy to get 10 members. So tell me more about the ideology that informed your – because some people had mentioned – Franz Fanon they mention the Battle of Algiers as sources of inspiration and, planning, strategic planning.

Khadija: Well the Battle of Algiers we did talk about because the women were, talked about being– disguised like the women were on the Battle of Algiers. I mean, there were films at that time, like Burn with Marlon Brando all of these films did not necessarily – for me they motivated, but, we didn't, what was it, well, the music, I mean, you got to understand that the Air, Marvin Gaye, Curtis Mayfield, everybody was talking about conditions, even in the love songs, you know, they were talking about conditions.

And so conditions were ever present most of the time in our stuff in a strange kind of way. But Motown was replete with conscious-raising songs. Not just Motown but even in the blues and things like Rufus, well Rufus was a little bit later, but I mean everything in our lives was really about political consciousness, it really was. You know, my aunt was very light skinned and she always got acting jobs but they were extra jobs, right, because no one would hire because she was light skinned and when they wanted Black people and Black wasn't really in there. And this is like in the '50s.

And I remember every time there was just a Black person on television, 'there's a Black person on T.V' and everybody would run from the whole house, 'where, where?' "He just walked across the street. And now we have our own shows and blah, blah, blah. And you know, to think about the changes that had taken place and those kinds of things. So back then everything was big, Castro comes to Harlem, big. I grew up in a community where everybody wanted to come to Harlem. So we saw Sydney Poitier, we saw all of our singers and actors.

125th Street was a haven for stuff. So it was all in our world, the music, everything. And for those of us that it wasn't our world, it was a sincere part of it. Panther Party and those kinds of things were from people who I do believe were sincere and then as time went on you got the peripheral of people who just kind of came into it because they believed in it too but it may not have been the integral part of their DNA.

But like, for Seku and most of us who came on that campus – and Serge Mallory. Serge was a scholar from the West Indies and he was deep into understanding the social climate of what people had gone through in the West Indies. We knew Harlem, Seku and I knew the south. I remember one of the – and she went on to marry Philippe. But she and I started out in high school together and I was the junior class president, I ran for junior class president and I just did that because I wasn't trying to be politically correct, the gay chicks were after me.

So I thought if I run for junior class president they would think that I was, you know, like a goody two-shoes and leave me alone. So that's what happened. And Iris Morales was my vice president and Iris Morales ended up at City College, Iris Morales was with the young lords and no offence to her ex-husband who I could go eww but she

was a righteous sister and she was at City College.

So were like, there were people. And we were like, hey, let's have this meeting. You know, you're meeting in class, you're taking about things, you're taking courses that you have a voice in for the first time. And college is liberating in and of itself, and then you're in a period of social liberation and climate and in a decade that was like no other. And people need to really understand, the '60s was like no other. I mean the veil of idealism, and purity and consciousness all of that just went right on out the window because we saw a man get killed on live television, live TV, Oswald.

And then the assassinations, one after another, after another and you have the words of King, you even have Kennedy because, "Ask not what you could do for your country," and everybody made him out to be the greatest man in the world, what was it, Camelot and all the girls, you know, the propaganda was thick, the fashion, everything.

And then that happens, and then you have Martin Luther King, I'm not sure how the sequence went but, Martin Luther King who was the King of love, I mean, if you killed the King of love then what the fuck is left is there, excuse me. And that's how everybody as thinking. And then everybody was like, oh well, okay, now we're going to get Bobby Kennedy. Now we've seen Oswald get killed so gun smoking and all that stuff is nothing now.

And now we get Bobby Kennedy who's supposed to be the hope after John Kennedy and somewhere in there Malcolm gets killed, you know assassinated and we didn't expect that and then we find out that his own people did. So it was like, is there any truth in the world at all? And so here we are at 69 and the world is besieged with contradictions, we have had enough BS. So that's how everybody ended up just kind of going through a whole thing...

Douglas: Transformation.

Khadija: Major transformation.

Douglas: I mean, it sounds like it was a combination of social, political and historical factors that really led you to really take action on the ground.

Khadija: Absolutely. And it's, you know, in science we have a thing where nothing can take place until time and conditions are favorable. And

time and conditions became favorable when the social consciousness was at a point where, you know, I could call you up and say, 'Douglas'. And you'll say, 'yeah, I know what you're talking about, I'm tired of this bullshit. Listen, let's meet' and you call so and so, we meet and we talk. And we're going to do this and we're not going to back down.

And then the five demands came out of having - after we raised all this hell, we're raising this hell for what? So that's when the five demands came up.

Douglas: How exactly? What were the meetings like in discussing - all right we want something, what do we want?

Khadija: Well, we took over the campus because we wanted something and then once we took over the campus we held meetings. And now I remember us meeting in Great Hall which is North Campus which wouldn't make sense because I remember people interrupting. We also met in Finely Hall in some big room and everybody talking and so forth and so on.

The intellectuals, you know, what happened was I was a shift in the lumping as we called them, street brothers and the intellectuals. So the intellectuals definitely began to come up and you saw more of them quite naturally. And the street brothers kind of began to take a back seat. And you're looking like, 'why is that?'

Douglas: Tell me more out that because no one has actually mentioned that. The distinction between the street brother and the intellectuals, say more about that.

Khadija: Well it wasn't a schism, everybody was cool with one another but street brothers do what street brothers do. If you've got heart you're going to take over the campus, I was not a street brother or one of the street sisters but I'm an action person. So in most of the things that I've ever been involved with I'm about the business of action. Women's organization, I'm about the business of going and working with female addicts and getting them to get their heads together. I'm not about writing position papers or discussing Marx or Engels. You follow what I'm saying?

Douglas: I got you.

Khadija: And so action people. And nowadays it just seems like the brothers and sisters who were action people had more heart. And they had

more heart because maybe – in my case because of the way I grew up, I grew up in a petty bourgeois environment but because my beginnings were so contorted. In my system of self I'm a no-nonsense radical too because I've been in all of that so I don't have a problem getting into fights or not fights but, you know...

So that's what happened. So, the intellectuals began to rise because they would have the biggest voices and they were able to convince the population to understand the idea or whatever. And so it came to pass that, well, what are we going to ask for? Well, everybody agreed on open admissions. There should not be any place where all Black and Latino students – this is a City College so it shouldn't be some program that lets us in and then little lily White kids and other Blacks that think they've arrived in because they've got high scores on the SAT or whatever.

It should be opened for everybody because it's a City College and it's in a community that needs that. So that was definitely one of them. We all felt at the time and years later because I'm more into science and technology but everybody was very strong about a degree granting program because Israel and all these other kids, they can come to college and study whatever and get a degree in it. Whether it'd get you a job or not we don't even deal with that.

But at that time we felt like if they can do it, we can do it. It's uneven, we want this. And we needed it because as we all – well I came into the college understanding a certain amount of black consciousness. When I started teaching Art at the YMCA I'd run into a lot of people. Again the climate of Harlem was – we had a place called the Truth Coffee Shop which was on 7th Avenue, it's a beauty salon now or some bullshit.

But you know, like in the village, the Beatnik Generation had certain tendrils of coffee house and places where people could sit and talk and discuss and exchange ideas. It wasn't the Starbucks of the time but it was places where you'd see the radicles. You know, like, there goes, so and so, or what's up my brother, – coffee talk, discuss a film. I remember Doctor Shivago had just come out and I knew nothing about it being a love story because it was related to the Russian Revolution. And I'm like, oh yeah, there's a whole lot of love and sex going on in here, how did I miss that? That kind of thing. So it was the atmosphere it really was. If you were alive and breathing, you had to be part of that. There just was no way, unless you were part of the bourgeois that just didn't see the contradictions.

Douglas: Did all the students come together ultimately to support the five demands? Or were there some students who said, you know, what that's theoretical, you got to take it easy?

Khadija: That would have been discussed in preparation and development but we wanted a significant number and we wanted to go and organize when we finally did have access to talk to the president. Because when we took over the campus we wanted him to be aware of our demands and we all said that we'd keep it simple in a doable objective. So we didn't go in there with 15 demands or anything like that.

I'm not sure if Columbia didn't kind of – we didn't compete with Columbia's takeover but it was happening simultaneously. So whatever demands that we thought of that we thought were very, very important. Open enrollment was definitely one. I was definitely for bilingual education because I grew up in the Catholic school so I had the kids from Puerto Rico were treated. And I used to have to go back there and give them my candy, really.

So when you ask, this is the stuff I saw in first grade. So this is why I can account for who I am. And I didn't get into any of this because of a boyfriend. I was pushing Seku into it, now that I think back on it, go do this go do that, they'll listen to you and they did because he was very charismatic. And Serge had a way, tall in stature and his pipe – and then we ended up getting a lot of – people calling them infiltrators or whatever. But the actual 5 demands were created. Name them for me.

Douglas: Well, the first one was not explicitly open admissions but rather the portion of students who graduate from New York City high schools. Their ethnicity should be reflected on the students who were admitted into City College. So for example if you have 12% graduating who are Black from City High Schools, 12% should be abetted into City College. So some call it a quota.

Khadija: Is that how the five demand ended up being answered?

Douglas: Well, no, it went beyond that. In many ways what the administrator said was, well, it's a hot potato if you start to flank off a certain percentage. And you have the Jews, you have the Italian, you have the Irish, the ethnic population, basically saying what about us? So their political response to that was that everybody as long as you

have an 80 GPA and...

Khadija: Okay. But I think when we were, fighting for it, or talking about it we felt like – because I remember it being called open enrollment because I remember by the time I graduated I was pissed because I remember walking around the campus, not that we didn't do it but there were a lot of kids just sitting outside, Black and Latino kids, just sitting outside chewing the fat smoking pot and I'm like, 'is this what I fought for?' I was genuinely pissed.

Because by that time I had gotten a consciousness of med school and 'let's keep it moving, let's get some skills and get on out of here and do what we got to do'. So I remember – maybe I called it open enrollment, it could have been me. But I remember, we wanted the doors opened and maybe in discussions because you see that the discussions of the five demands became qualified. I'm giving you the raw data. So they became qualified as time went on. And at that point I'm not even going to say that I was part of that because I wasn't.

At that time I had already decided that I was going to go on and work on my major and graduate because our families came down on us. I had my daughter there, you know. And I got to tell you about that part because that was a very pivotal part too for day care. I'll tell you about that in a minute. I'll tell you about the daycare in a minute.

But the five demands...

Douglas: The School of Black and Latino Studies, six students were demanding participation in the hiring and firing of staff.

Khadija: I remember that. Seku and I had good counselors, most of them were good and dedicated but every now and then somebody would have a complaint or something and they felt like we should have control of that. So that was three.

Douglas: And also students in the education department should be required to take courses in Black and Latino history.

Khadija: Right. Because if you were an Ed major Black and Latino history were considered electives and some cases you could take it and some cases – as you know, as a student you can, you can't. But it wasn't like it was an integral part. So if a student took it they may not get the same credit towards graduation. Yeah, I remember that. What was the 5th one?

Douglas: I thought that was 5. So open admissions, Black studies, hiring SEEK staff, education students taking history classes – oh my goodness.

Khadija: And a degree granting department in Black studies.

Douglas: I think that one was folded into the Black studies, I'm actually blanking out on the

5th one

Khadija: Is it because we're dark in here?

Douglas: It could be.

Khadija: We can go in here.

(Break in Audio)

Khadija: Dr. Lenard Jefferies was nowhere in any way affiliated with the takeover of '69, that's really important.

Douglas: Absolutely.

Khadija: Because he heralds himself and he touts that he has been. And Seku and all of us just – but usually with the films and stuff, with you doing a real study I want the truth told and that's what I told Sholler and all of them, I said, well I didn't hear about this, "We sent it to you," and I said, "I got to speak to this brother, I don't want Jefferies trying to brain this one." Hell no. That's how history gets distorted. And I think that the most important part about this is that history comes out of the stomach and the yearning of real people because everybody looks for the messiah – I don't want to sound like an evangelist but it's within us.

Like for example, I'm going to get to that. It was a selfish reason that president's house is now a school up there. And it was part of my selfish reason and a few other mothers because we were up there taking over the campus and we had nobody to watch our kids, so somebody else would watch the kids or whatever while you did your tour of duty for security that was my thing.

And my mother's like, 'get my grandchild out of there'. And my daughter was always on my back, "Power to the people." So we decided that the Ed majors got together and developed a daycare thing. And because the president, we had forced the president off the campus we felt like he shouldn't have a house on the campus and a

house upstate, wherever he lived. And this was wasted real estate.

So we took it over. And during the takeover we demanded that we hold on to it and that's how that school got started over there, they got grants after that, it became a haven for Ed majors to go over there and do internships, not haven but you follow where I'm coming from. So that was one of the things that came out of that. I think that people need to understand that nothing happens from a great person, it happens from one who is uncomfortable and has courage to speak on it.

Douglas: And connect as solidarity with others and organize them.

Khadija: Yes, and organize because we recognize the commonality and that's what we had. We recognized what we had in common. And we also felt in a way, which we thought was egotistical at the time but we also felt that history has placed us in that spot for some reason. I remember Seku being interviewed years later and he gave you what I told you about, the climate that we were in. But we also felt like the talented 10th and that's where everyone quotes Fanon and Dubois.

We always felt we were the talented 10 because we were the 10 or the 10th of the race or the people that had been given this opportunity at this time in history. So that's where 10 came from. The consistency in number 10 because we felt that we were part of that talented 10th theory that Fanon had spoken about.

Douglas: By the way, I remember the 5th demand. It was SEEK students demanding a separate orientation program. Do you remember that?

Khadija: I could see where that would have been necessary...

Douglas: Because certain needs were difference.

Khadija: Right.

Douglas: So that was the 5th one. It's interesting because when you think about the talented 10th or a small group of elite individuals – and I'm not using elite in terms of wealthy or having all the resources but individuals were essentially taken the lead, how do you know that group is really representing the masses especially from a political perspective?

Khadija: Well, we were very sophisticated and we all knew the politicians were full of shit even though my family had been very active in Harlem politics, I mean I could walk down the street and Charlie

Manga would recognize my last name and ask how my uncle Charlie was, that kind of thing and my Aunt Peggy. My boyfriend's mother was very involved with the mayor so we all got our summer jobs.

We were kids, well, I grew up in boarding school in the bourgeois part of High school Harlem politics, you know the key schools and the gentlemen of class and stuff like that. Seku grew up a little differently. When we all got to college and realized that we were there, we really kind of, – because we knew that we were the first ones walking in the door we weren't the kids in Alabama that went through the door with the police escorts but we knew that in New York City we were the first ones walking into this experience. And SEEK never let us forget it because everything was brand new, this is new, we want to see how you all can do and we believe that you can do.

And it helped me to believe – I mean I kind of believed it anyway but it secured my thinking as a teacher that with the right components just about anybody can learn and grow, you know. And they tried to meet all of our needs, for example, I was a pregnant unwed mother at the time so they met my needs that's why they told me don't go to school in the spring of '67, wait until the fall, have your daughter.

So they did all those kind of things for us and guided us, don't take too many course. So they were there for us.

Douglas: Got you. Now, you had support in terms of faculty and staff supported you when you presented the five demands. There was a group, actually that was formed. I think it was called the Group of Constraint Faculty.

Khadija: Yes.

Douglas: But you also had detractors, people who just, 'what do you mean open admissions', right? Do you remember the resistance to open admissions and the demands?

Khadija: You know, when I read your piece – I read the piece about the guys, the film people that were interested and they say that one of those guys was there back then. Some of those facts, I think he has distorted but then again I wasn't everywhere at every time I do want to talk about the organization and the cohesiveness of that unit because it blossomed but I'll answer your question first.

The resistance; I do remember that there were some White kids who wanted to get themselves all revved up and try to act like they were

against it or something. And truth be told I think we whipped their behinds so fast. I don't think it was a big 'to do'. They say that there was an altercation at the back gate. Now, having grown up in that neighborhood – because I grew up right across the street from City College so I know Convent Avenue I know St. Nicholas terrace I know the whole area because as kids we used to go into the campus and mess with all the students so I know it all. I grew up across the street I could literally look at Finlay hall. So, because it was a convent.

And you see, that's what made the dynamics of south campus so effective, more effective than Columbia because we were a self-contained unit. South campus was a convent back in the day as a systems of catacombs underneath and everything. And some of the people found the catacombs but because we were self-contained the med students immediately opened up a first aid center and got support from Harlem Hospital. Did they tell you that?

Douglas: No.

Khadija: That was important because the community supported us mega. Harlem Hospital gave us vitamins because we were standing out in that rain and people were getting sick. The Black faculty they supported us, we had White faculty that supported us. Shullman was one that I remember very well but I'm sure that he's dead now because he was an older man then.

We did have a lot of White faculty that supported us and most of them were CP, Communist Party, one might think. And the communist party was rather healthy at that time because, what's her name, what's her name, I don't like her, Angela Davies – and I had reasons for that, Angela Davis was very active then in Berkeley so the communist party had been – you know, the communist party had been trying to do a lot of different things here and there for years, in the '40s and '50s. So here comes the '60s, they're dying out, more, what do you call it, they still had intellectual influence. Am I making sense?

Douglas: Yes. Because that's an interesting story, people opposed opposed admissions and the movement itself but you want something but how would you characterize what you achieved, I don't want to put words in your mouth

Khadija: What we achieved?

Douglas: Yeah, what did you actually achieve?

Khadija: I think we achieved quite a bit, I think achieved, I think we achieved quite a bit, we never underestimated the potential of what we did. We did not realize that it would be interesting to other people because when you're living the moment you never think about what others are going to think about years from now, so this is all, every time we're asked to think about it. But for me I think we achieved a hell of a lot because everybody that came out of that experience that I know of – there were some who may have died of OD. I'm dealing with the small numbers now, maybe one or two out of that large number, massive of students, maybe three may have died of an overdose.

They would have had the potential to do other things. There may have been maybe three or four that I know of who I felt were just incestuous opportunist, if there's such a word. There may have been some infiltrators so that would give us maybe 15% but I guarantee you that the other 85% of us went on to become really great people. Now, none of us would feel ourselves as great and so I'm not even thinking of myself as great but I know the woman that I became and the politics that I believed in and the practices...

Because I got into the movement deep in my heart, in my DNA and I never deviated from it. So I took from that the courage, the political understanding, the consciousness, I realized that I was an integral part of really getting that thing, light the matches to that whole thing. It scared me at first because I was being preoccupied with being a mother, having to work two or three jobs, being an activist but I went on to do other activist things I went onto...

(Break in Audio)

Khadija: I used my political ideology and my consciousness, I went onto, there were several things that I went on to do.

Douglas: What year did you graduate, by the way?

Khadija: I graduated in '73. Another thing we did, we decided that – we got tired of the Jewish kids going to Israel and working in the kibbutz's and getting college credit for it. It pissed us off so we demanded that. And we got Stevie Wonder to do our – did they tell you about that?

Douglas: No.

Khadija: We had a fundraising event at BAM, we got the college to okay it. So

they thought, 'well, okay we'll allow it but they're never going to make it a reality'. So we got a fundraiser together, we got Stevie Wonder at that time and he wasn't, he was popular but not quite as he is now, of course. And he did the fundraiser for us at BAM, threw his tambourine in the audience, I caught it. I held on to it for years, I took it all over the world with me.

And we ended up going to Guyana that year, it was a 6 credit course for the summer. We worked in the jungles, working on Pan-American Highway, which never came to pass and I didn't realize then we were destroying the rainforest. But I think that's why they stopped the Pan-American Highway. But we went down there and we participated in [inaudible 1:19:58] we met with students from all over the world, revolutionary kids from Angola and all kinds of places and Cuba.

Many students would go into the Venceremos Brigade, I couldn't go because I was a mother and I didn't want to leave my child. So in my world everybody was doing the same thing, it was like hip-hop, everybody was doing it, we were doing it you know. And then years later I run into people that I went to high school with and they were bankers and stuff. We went on to become journalist, doctors – one doctor who is quite famous and did a lot of advance work in AIDS research back in the '90s, Dr. Barbra Justice.

She finally got disgusted and went on out to California and went into psychology. She was interviewed many times. Francy Covington who was very active and was one of the negotiators – because Francy was a born, she should be a congresswoman or something today, I know she went on to do good things I can't remember what it was but she would have been a congresswoman because she knew how to communicate, lay down the plan and very, very, very intelligent.

We all realized the appreciation of Black studies because we were just beginning to discover the real connection with Africa. Alex Halley hadn't come out yet. We were all really understanding, where we had come from and our roots as a people. So all of that was a fascinating time for us. Did I answer that question?

Douglas: You did. So you graduated in '73. So you really weren't around for the imposition of tuition in '76.

Khadija: Oh no, I left. I was in California in graduate school.

Douglas: Okay.

Khadija: So the only thing I can give you is that there was something – I think it's the dynamic of the working class, I can't talk about anything I graduated in '73 and I pretty much didn't really get involved – after Jefferies came I saw a lot of negativity that just disgusted me and years later now I realized that it can be encompassed in the understanding of the seven deadly sins, you know, greed and importance, and you know, people where in leadership positions and all of a sudden they just changed overnight and everyone was just – you know, and I'm like, okay, this is not where I'm at so it's time for me to cut out of that.

And then I got involved with the Black Panther Party, I got involved with female organizations that came out of SNCC and out of Black Panther Party I worked here for a quick minute with the party and then when I went to graduate school I worked with Bobby Seal at the – it was the people's free health clinic which was a clinic that the Black Panther Party had started out there.

Douglas: In San Francisco?

Khadija: No, in Oakland. And I worked with Erica Huggins – well the people's clinic was in Berkeley but out of the Oakland chapter. I worked with Erica Huggins because they had a school out there, Elaine Davis. And I worked very hard on the school, I sent my daughter to the school. I had internships for my high school students who would participate at the Black Panther Clinic doing internships –

I taught high school science, so high school biology. So I was able to integrate a curriculum for them working in an internship at the clinic, so that was more free help. We did sickle cell testing during that time and that was very big for us...

Douglas: So you continued your organizing thrust and it hasn't stopped for you. What are you doing now?

Khadija: Now I'm sick of everybody. No, what I'm doing now is I'm really looking at the need for woman like myself to give wisdom and understanding to so many of these young girls out here, these young mothers and women. Well, I'm doing a couple of things because I'm getting ready to fully retire from the City University but I've been teaching for 48 years and every day that I walk into my classroom it's not a day that I don't take my political consciousness with me.

And when my students don't do their homework or they got a problem, honey, we have an issue. Because I have to go, you know, I don't teach history and then some of them afterwards say, 'professor, you should teach history'. But I've never been a history teacher but I give them the Full Monty, In terms of consciousness – what I'm doing now has kind of pushed me – I was pushed into this because of survival. But I believe everything happens for a reason and purpose.

So for the last four years I have housed many kids from all over the world, primarily Europe. They come here and they need lodging. So at first it was an economic thing but because I love to talk, I talked with all these young people so I've become it's my home but I've become like...

Douglas: Surrogate mother?

Khadija: Not surrogate mother. But you know dorm mother. And so I talk to these kids and they're very intelligent. I raised their consciousness, they raise mine. I encourage them to meet so I might have somebody from Germany meeting somebody from France. And I'm like, next time you all get ready to start a war you all think about being together and what a good time you all had and remember me, just don't drop anything on my head.

But you know, that Harlem consciousness and raising the culture. I'm very big on integration and understanding cultures, diversity. I've designed a few diversity training projects of which I haven't let go yet. I went on into Film because of my background with Stage. I eventually went into film, promotional films and documentaries, again, keeping the cultural and political vine.

I'm accomplished as an actress and film production and teaching, those are my three areas of accomplishment and they've all had the same thing, I mean, I can't approach anything without having it be – consciousness is part of my entrails and I see that that's one of the reasons why we were intelligent kids because we had something to connect to, a social dynamic. These kids don't have a social dynamic, they don't care. When hurricane Katrina hit.

Because anytime there's an issue, I go in the class and we have a discussion. And I went in and asked them what they thought of Hurricane Katrina. This is where Katrina hit, forget Sandy. And they all go... – I said, 'don't you remember you're from Puerto Rico, don't

you remember Andrew, when Andrew hit the island – Dominican Republic. And they were like...

Douglas: I mean, you have multiple talents, by the way. It's impressive and that's part of why I'm doing this because – yeah we have the historical convictions but we don't have the consciousness to go along with it. Everybody is out for themselves, there's no sense of solidarity, there's no sense of struggle it's all about identity politics to a certain extent; right? It's about me and it's about my issue.

So part of what I'm trying to accomplish here is to craft the message for our generation and future generations to figure out how to think about struggle. So what would you say to that? How should we think about struggle?

Khadija: Well, I'll tell you like I just did on that trip, that crazy ride we took, the one that I got this boo-boo. We had to interlock arms, like the slave shad to interlock in the slave ship, like the Native Americans have to interlock in the teepee during bad weather. You get where I'm coming from? You have to interlock arms. We cannot do this in isolation. It disturbs me that – I have a friend and her two children are grown and they're living back home and she's pissed as hell because she doesn't want them back there.

I keep telling her that the economy is what has them back there. There's going to come a time when guys don't want to live with anybody. They don't want to be married and they got plenty of babes and they don't want to have one solid woman. When we're out there trying to survive on our own as individuals we just cannot do it, we have to understand in this economy – that's why I open up my home because we have to lock arms, we have to be connected and we say a common purpose. But people are too selfish, everyone is thinking of their own individuality and their own individual needs and we don't have a common core of values.

Douglas: So what can we do to have that conversation or start that conversation? What should we be doing?

Khadija: Well if you ask me, because I'm not your typical person, but if you ask me and I was a young person I would think about the value of family, I would think about the value of bringing children into this world that we know we cannot build as solid human beings, I would think because we have a whole... I can't even call it a group but we have a lot of people who are not complete human beings because

their bodies have been brought into this world but their souls have not been housed, some will survive and some will not and some are literally being fabricated for the prisons as we speak.

So when a boy and a girl or two young people understand the value – whatever, they understand the value of family and values. You take those values and you reincorporate them into your life then you're going to meet a guy and a woman and you're going to get together and incorporate that into your life. And in some ways, even though our children come out -- believe me, I know – they come out really crazy but if you've laid a good foundation they will come back home to the foundation.

So in the value thing, it's got to be core values. And I'm not a catholic or any of that but I'm a spiritual person, but in short, so I don't talk forever. It's like the Ten Commandments, there are certain things that you just know and when you know them, you place them. And if you want to see your community grow economically, you do everything in your power, in your heart, in your sinew to make that a reality. So you support Black businesses, you support Latino businesses.

Consciousness, I think that it's a global world, nowadays Latino people, Black people pretty soon – like one of my genetics teacher said in college, pretty soon it's just going to be café au lait, and culturally café au lait. So I don't know where the strong cultural morays are going to be reinforced in a family, like an Asian family and a Black family. You can mix pig feet and sushi but can you get the discipline? You know what I'm saying.

Douglas: Right.

Khadija: Those kinds of things.

Douglas: Well, one thing that can be said is that all of us live under the dominating paradigm of capitalism. So yeah we can link arms but ultimately there are those who are in power who define the terms of the relationships we have, they control social relations. And you mentioned values, I want to get to my closing questions, one dominating value seems to be the idea of the meritocracy, right. You were challenging that in '69 because City College was an elite institution, it was public but it was elite.

You challenged the idea of a meritocracy – access based on

meritocracy through democratic means, you know. The contradictions of meritocracy versus democracy. But we seem to be going back to that again, I don't know if you've been keeping up with City College, I'm sure you have. But you don't see as many Blacks and Latinos anymore. And the academic standards keeping going up but there are people who are being left out.

So, I guess the question is, how do we challenge the idea of meritocracy when it's so deeply embedded in the broader capitalist structures in the United States? If you try hard, you can make it, right?

Khadija:

Well, you know, I guess over the years my focus has been, one of the things that made me successful or helped me get through, definitely my doctoral program; was being able to see the correlation with science and the continuum of different things. So everything is cyclical. So when I look at issues now, I don't look at the groups of people. I look at the tighter unit, I'm in the microscope now, not the macroscope.

So in the microscope that's why I said family. In terms of the struggle that's going on with City now, this is a cyclical – now, I'm thinking of CUNY today. And I don't like CUNY today and I am so disillusioned with school as a teacher for 48 years, I'm ready to go on YouTube and really start saying some real stuff, okay.

Because I saw on Facebook the other day, where this mother said, I'm not sending my child to college and he's college material. She said – you know – and they were a middle class family. Bottom line, and she wrote all this stuff; bottom line, she said, "Well my lights had a problem, I have to go out of my community and get an electrician. So I'm hoping that my son is going to use all of his talents that he shows, that he could get into Carnegie Mellon but that he's going to learn something; that he's going to have a job and have a business and provide a service."

We have too many marketing majors – you know – so we're selling kids a bill of bullshit. And the college institutions now, I don't know if this is answering your question – I don't even know if I can, because right now a college education is nothing more than a bunch of bullshit. It's for people to make money, and because my rent is paid on that same premise, I have to have a little bit of – you know. You too, so ...

Douglas:

Absolutely.

Khadija: Yeah. But you know it; you know the ...

Douglas: Absolutely; conscious of it. Yeah.

Khadija: And with open enrollment came big business. Publishing companies, all of a sudden every book has to be revised; and you're looking for the revisions. You're the teacher and the revision is one sentence on page 56. Bullshit, you know – students having to pay for little ridiculous grades; \$100 for a book for a class that's not even their major. Forget majors, okay. Why, because the publishers have figured out – I teach dynamics of learning, so all of those tools and everything that you use for your mind to learn; how your mind learns, the books have already put it in there and it's pretty low charge and charge people all this money.

Okay, and they make revisions every year. And the students are just caught up in bullshit– bullshit. The schools are not - The governing – the academic bodies of the institutions don't give a damn about the students; they advise them inappropriately and they don't spend enough money on orientation. So these students come in there and they get switched around – (hi darling) – they get switched around, and then if they don't meet the status quo, they get tossed out on their heads; financial aid has been absorbed and now they have no career, no future and a bunch of bullshit; and then they wonder why they go out here and they do the things that they do. Okay, you know and for years the institutions have been promising one thing and not being able to follow through. Good education, good jobs – well, we know that the jobs and the education because of all the social and political dynamics didn't quite line up properly. But ...

Douglas: Well, I don't think – it sounds like part of what you're saying then goes back to the issue of democracy; right. Who is actually crafting curriculum at CUNY, right. Pathways, it's one example; right. It comes from the top-down, from people who actually may have never even taught before.

Khadija: Never taught in the classroom.

Douglas: Exactly.

Khadija: And they're busy – they may have ...

Douglas: So who controls the debate; right. That's part of the question.

Khadija: Yeah, and who controls the debate. Education is just as corrupt as the rest of the political climate out here, but in the mean time – you

know – kids are told to get a good education, and your whole life hangs on that. And it does in many ways; but then, they're doomed before they start. This whole bullshit about students – ESL – oh that breaks my heart. Oh that breaks my heart. I fought for ESL, and all I see is they are abusing the Latino students. And the Latino students are allowing them to abuse them; do you understand that dynamic?

Douglas: Mm-hmm.

Khadija: This whole thing of not learning English; they know you're not going to learn English – so what do they do, they make these courses and you sit up there and you use your financial aid because you go up the street and you go between some gates that say welcome to City College or Hunter College; and you think you're really going to college but all you're doing is learning English. And you could have learned that at the community center; if the churches or somebody would take on that responsibility and at least let Education be for what it is.

And then I'm not happy about the testing; the assessments, I'm not happy about any of it. And this semester, our students just got switched all around. What class do you – you teach a graduate course?

Douglas: Oh no, I'm the Associate Director of the honors program at Baruch; and what I do, the Freshmen seminar – you know – and at one point I was teaching at BMCC, American Government and Politics and I had to stop though because I needed to get this dissertation done while working full time. But yeah, I mean it's – most of my students when I was teaching at BMCC were Black and Latino students. I was teaching the night class, so they're coming in with their uniform straight from work; trying to make it happen. So, but – yeah.

Khadija: And then they – dumb down – you know – there are so many students who come in here, Latino students and Black students and a lot of African students and they come in here with that gusto – boom – you know they're going to do it. And I work with – for years I worked with nursing department at Bronx Community College, and that was so full of kaka. And it was so full of BS because what happened was – not what happened was; but what is happening is that – you know – that program is being – you know, programs are run by personalities and human fault. And in academia you have the most maladjusted human beings going; you really do.

Because in other fields they might admit that they made a mistake, but in academia they're not going to make a mistake, okay. So nobody wants to admit they made a mistake and everybody's covering it up. Like CUNY first, CUNY first was the dumbest thing going – that is the dumbest thing going; and somebody's son-in-law saw and wanted what about five or six years ago when it wasn't perfected – they thought it was a great idea because that's how these things get signed in. And they got us all applying for jobs and students registering and they can't find their registration data and all this crap because the system was never perfected before they launched it for such a broad ranged institution like CUNY.

Douglas: And it's designed for corporations and businesses ...

Khadija: Exactly. And here they ran that little plan and people bought into it. And now we're so confused and everybody hates it but now it's in there – and there was a point there where you could go in there and put in anything you wanted to. They had me in there with a doctor of divinity, and I'm the biggest sinner in the world. I said, how the hell did that happen?

Yeah, and then afterwards they straightened it up but come on. But in the mean time you're losing two or three years of student population that are shuffled, disillusioned, drop out of school, don't want to have anything to do with college, don't believe in higher education. And higher education needs to be defined. And lastly, we're still using the model that we used at the turn of the 19th, 20th century at the industrial revolution. The educational model is the same.

Public education: to educate masses to be producers of work, not to be critical thinkers. Because masses cannot be critical thinkers because then you'll have a revolution, okay. And I believe like Paulo Freire, education is for the empowerment of people. So I took all of my consciousness that I've had all my life and I pierce it into my students; I inject it into ...

Douglas: That's what we have to do as educators. What you're talking about is the commodification and corporatization of education. And that's happening nationwide. Interestingly enough, it started really in the 1970s, and we were the ground zero of that. Once CUNY became a tuition paying institution – you know, you had to pay

tuition. That's where it all began; what some people call the rise of the neo-liberal agenda; right. Let the market figure out and take care of your human needs. So we need to fight back against that; right. And education is a source of struggle – it's a site of struggle; it can be a source of inspiration but we're not seeing that; are we? Which is why it's important to study the 60s and the 70s.

Khadija: When I left City College, I travelled quite a bit. And I never set out to be a teacher, that was my goal. I set out to be – I'm an artistic person so when interior design fell through for me, I was still acting and performing and doing a lot of theater, okay. And then as a mother – and back then, to be successful in theater, you had to go on tour. So I couldn't go on tour, so as a mother I never really could make it in theater.

But I did make it in film production; I studied film production, I went to Third World Cinema; I went to the New School and all like that – all like that, and did a lot of things with film and so forth. Started my own company for a while, Vanguard Videos but that was way back in the day when video cameras were like this, okay. I have mine up here on a mantelpiece. And then because life took certain changes I had to kind of take a little break from everything and use my strength and my resources for my family. But one of the things that I think young people need to realize is that with numbers, with raising contradictions; because that's what we did. We raised the contradictions, we made it known.

And now it's social media. I mean, I was quite taken when that summer what we had – in that zone over there in the Middle East where three countries were liberated almost like in about four months. And the first one came out all through social media; they staged every – do you know the one I'm ...

Douglas: Egypt, sure.

Khadija: Egypt, right. Am I putting you to sleep?

Douglas: No, no.

Khadija: Yeah, and social media. So I think young people have a lot more fervor to get information out. Like now with these kids in Nigeria. Now see my generation right now; I would be at a meeting some place and we would be organizing either to walk the streets and raise the consciousness about it or something. And today when I saw it; and I said – because I got it on Facebook about a few days earlier;

and so when it finally hit the mass media, I'm like okay well there must be somebody organizing to do this. Where should I go for the protest rally ...

Douglas: But the level of oppression has also increased. I mean, there was COINTELPRO, right. In the 60s, 70s. But now, I mean look at what happened with Occupy Wall Street; right. I mean, it was – this young lady, Cecily was just found guilty of hitting a cop because she was occupying an area in Occupy Wall Street. Which is a bogus charge but yet she was found guilty. But that's designed to repress people's desire to go out in the streets.

Khadija: Frighten them. But you know right now, I don't understand why we don't have – I mean, this is my own personal beef. Even though my brother was National Rifle Association Member – and when he passed and I took his car, I kept the decal so nobody messes with me. But I don't understand why people – you know – why our kids are still dying the way they are with this gun stuff. There are lot of issues that people could take charge of but I think people – because like you said, the level of repression, people have been – they've been silenced because of fear or – a lot of people, it's apathy. It's apathy. I think it's more apathy than anything else.

Because when it was time for people to get off – to join the underground railroad, either you did it or you didn't. And if you didn't it was because you were scared or whatever.

Douglas: Well, to an extent, being an individual and thinking that if you fail it's your fault; that idea has been naturalized. So in that sense the elite have won; they have led us to believe that it's our fault if we fail. This is the land of opportunity, if you can't make it that's your damn fault. What do you mean, we don't let Blacks in or Latinos; you just didn't get high enough on the SATs. You're not the one in school; it's your fault you can't get into CUNY, or Harvard or Penn, Cornell, whatever.

Khadija: Well, see that's another thing that people – again, I've never been your average thinking person since I was born, I guess. But I don't label myself – I had cancer and I don't use that word because you need to know the word; I'll refer to it as situation. And my family, and of course they know I'm very intelligent said, "Why aren't you going to the Sloan Kettering, what's wrong with you."

And I said, well first of all – I always go to my colleagues, my friends.

And back then – now, everybody is retired but back then I had a lot of doctor friends. So I went to my doctor friends and they pointed me in the right direction to whatever I needed because I trusted them. And so one of my doctor friends whom I trusted was affiliated with Harlem Hospital. I happened to have been working there on a Tuberculosis research project and everybody treated me like I was a star. And that makes so much difference to me, and my family like, well why don't you go in to Sloan Kettering, you know that's the best.

You see, people get hung up on clichés and they let the cliché determine their thinking and so forth like that. For me, Harlem hospital with all of its bad press and everything else was a better place psychologically for me to manage my world of all of that that I had to deal with. So I say to people, when students say oh I got to get into this college and that college. I just say, well is that going to make you a better producer of the work that you're going to do or is it going to make you a better human being? Will it make you more informed?

I think not. I really think not. I think that no matter where you go, if you're an intelligent individual and you're seeking information, you're going to be successful at finding or doing what you have to do. And the only people that put labels on things, I got this bag at Coach; well is this Coach bag going to hold my money and my keys any better than another bag – you know – and I'm not going to have it for a life time because I know I'm not going to like it that long; you follow?

Douglas:

Sure.

Khadija:

So our values are based on things that don't even make sense. So there I go back to values. What do you value – that you're an intelligent individual and that you can go to Hunter College and be just as – and success is relative, and that's a thing that we need to redefine. Success is relative; and in academia, success is supposed to be – you know – exemplified by the amount of money you have, the status you have, the title that you hold. Now, here we are at Bronx Community College, you taught at BMCC. You know the clientele and you live in the Bronx so you know the clientele.

All right, everybody in my department – my department is Education and Reading. We teach people how to read critically, that kind of thing, and become teachers, okay. And also we work with the nursing department, introducing them to scientific theory and medical terminology; boom. Why the hell does everybody in our

department have to walk around calling each other doctor so and so. Dr. Douglas, Dr. DeLouche; Dr. Lisbon, Dr. Wilson. And I have to say to them every now and then, and they think I'm crazy. I'm like, is this a hospital?

Because we don't need to be walking around here calling each other by titles. The very thing in a community college, which is why I was there is because I'm down to earth; I've got down to earth information to share to people who are down to earth and ready to receive it, and they can be empowered. Not for me to have to walk around and boost on my ego, doctor this and doctor that. And they go in the classrooms and the students, so I'm doctor so-and-so and I'll be teaching such-and-such. And I know you have to have a label; and it's okay, because I know when you get your doctorate you want to be called – what's your last name?

Douglas: Medina.

Khadija: Dr. Medina I got it – you know – I got it.

Douglas: [Laughs] but I'm with you on the whole title thing though.

Khadija: And when you're in the corporate – when you're in the administrative meetings, everybody can do what they want to do. And you can still call yourself doctor and still be down to earth. But by virtue of the fact that you feel it's necessary to be addressed that way and address everybody else that way in a down to earth environment where we're supposed to be role models and facilitators of knowledge; for me, it's a contradiction.

Douglas: Right. And I suspect it comes from insecurity too, from those individuals – to an extent.

Khadija: Of course it does, and you see that's the other thing that – academia doesn't admit its foibles. They don't admit their foibles – so as a result of that everything gets hidden or goes into a cloud of confusion. Nobody knows how this is supposed to take place, and then they're sending around all these memos. And the teachers are the ones that get the end result of everything. And while CUNY is doing pathways, they need to be doing something about all of these students who are coming out of the service, who are suffering from post traumatic stress, and all this other stuff.

And we being the frontline, giving these students all this confusion, they come into the classroom and they take it out on us. Okay.

Douglas: Mm-hmm. Absolutely.

Khadija: And poor advisement. I mean, I had one student come to me and because he had – he spoke better English than I did; and because he had a Spanish surname they had him in the ESL class. I'm like, what are you doing in the – I don't know, professor, they just gave me because my last name is Garcia or something. Come on, come on!! You know – just assuming. I've seen some of the smartest people stuck in an ESL class that they have no business being in; and that's bigotry. Just assume because of somebody's last name that they can't speak English or that they're not capable of performing? Oh my gosh. Okay, I've been ...

Douglas: Khadija, you have been so kind with your time and insights. Is there anything else that you want to tell me that I haven't asked about? We've covered a lot of ground.

Khadija: I just wanted you to know that grassroots people are the impetus for most things, and that, that part of history gets lost. And while you're covering this on an academic level, the energy behind it came from kids who had guts. And I say that those kids had guts, because as I described Coattails to you, and our group; our group had guts. The Coattail kids had been there for a few years, okay. They had never felt like they were alone and wanted more Black kids into the campus. It was this program that brought all of these Black kids in.

And if they wanted you to seek is a model for inspiration; what was it you said, seeking education, evaluation ...

Douglas: Elevation and knowledge.

Khadija: Elevation and knowledge. Well, they succeeded; they found – they sought the education, they saw that we had it; we were elevated or however that process is supposed to go – but– you can have knowledge, but if you don't have heart; it's a waste of time. And heart is– Kwame Nkrumah said, the secret of life is to have no fear. And you see, we read; we quoted Padmore who was a communist. Padmore, I can't remember his first name but he was good friends with Kwame Nkrumah. And again, that energy was fresh. Kwame Nkrumah was in Ghana at the time and he was doing his thing. So again, the African nations were bubbling up, seeking independence; and then right after that, we all started moving into the South Africa movement to erase apartheid. And I remember that because when

Mandela died, that just brought all of those memories back. Anything else I could tell you?

Douglas: You tell me. I mean, you've said so much; this is great. This is great.

Khadija: Did I talk – I talked more than probably everybody else – I know, I know.

Douglas: No, this is all right. It's about average. Is there anyone else you can think of that I should talk to? I mean, I've talked to a lot of people so far, but even if you can't think of someone now, let me know in the future.

Khadija: Well, you're going to talk to Sholler because she said she was going to get in touch with you. She is – Afiya – I know Diane, Afiya; we're all good friend. So she knows, and I think she met you already; because she was the one who told me about it. So you're going to be talking to her.

Douglas: I've also spoken to Allen Ballard; I called him, we had a phone interview. Remember Allen Ballard?

Khadija: Allen Ballard – that name sounds ...

Douglas: Political Scientist at City.

Khadija: That name sounds really familiar. Leroy is dead, Seku is dead. Seku's brother, who remembers the takeover but he's a little comme ci comme ca. And he would be giving you this part of it. Ezra Stuart – did anybody tell you Ezra Stuart? He lives in Brooklyn, Ezra Stuart; he was one of the later negotiators.

Douglas: Okay.

Khadija: One of our favorite teachers who was really fabulous, she died. She was up at City College, you might remember her – I can't remember her name now. Do you know any other people from the Black Studies department?

Douglas: I'm trying to think.

Khadija: One of the intellectuals that was there and he taught at BCC for a long time, and he should be on something. Because we had quite a few teachers that were there – oh if you can find him; and he was good in the negotiations too. His name is Aldwin George Murray. He was one of the faculty supporters.

Douglas: Aldwin, A-L-D-W-D-I-N?

Khadija: Yeah, I guess. George Murray. But he would have been – he changed his name, but I think he is – he was a teacher up there for many, many years; and then he’s taught in the social science department for a thousand years. He is probably retired; but you can get him from the SEEK program. I’m sure there is – if not, I know his wife, I can go that way. Seems like you’ve talked to quite a few people – I was going to name Charlie Powell.

Douglas: Yeah.

Khadija: Yeah, he lives right in here, so.

Douglas: Okay.

Khadija: And we see each other all time, but now we’ve associated each other as neighbors.

Douglas: If you see him, tell him I said hello.

Khadija: I will. We’ve associated each other as neighbors so we don’t really deal with this anymore.

Douglas: Well, if you think of anyone else let me know.

Khadija: You know Jenny, that’s the Atlanta people; and DC people, as soon as you leave there’ll be a whole bunch of people. And I did want – and I was spouting off names the other day and Shola said, but you should write them down, and I’m like okay I will but I didn’t.

Did you have enough cookies darling?

Douglas: Oh, God, I did. Thank you so much.

Khadija: Who were some of the other people – oh God, I wish Seku were here. And do I ever wish that Louis was here.

Douglas: Yeah, they always come up.

Khadija: The always come up. And anybody from the paper; did you talk to anybody from the paper?

Douglas: Well, James mentioned it; and that’s going to be the next step. I think right now I’m just going to process all these interviews.

Khadija: Okay, well put down Ann Doris.

Douglas: Ann Doris, A-N-N?

Khadija: Mm-hmm. D-O-R-I-S.

Douglas: Okay. Who was she; from the newspaper? The Paper?

Khadija: She was affiliated with the paper, and when you came up talking about this, she had just called me about something with The Paper. So ...

Douglas: Great.

Khadija: I can put you in touch with her.

Douglas: You think she has access to the archives; from the first issue back then?

Khadija: I doubt it; that would be people at City.

Douglas: Yeah, that's something that's on my list to do; go through the archives for the paper. Well did Chandra have?

Khadija: Well, Chandra, she had everything. But I would imagine at City College, the paper would have it; unless they had a fire. Wait a minute, what kind of bull's crap is that?

Douglas: They had The Campus, but they don't have The Paper.

Khadija: Oh, The Paper was different.

Douglas: The Campus was – you guys were independent, which is what made you so special.

Khadija: Oh, it might have been something Seku hooked up too; because he was always hooking up something. Now, the reason why his name doesn't go down in history as part of the negotiators of the Committee of Ten is because Seku had a problem at the time. Did anybody tell you that?

Douglas: No, but I read about it.

Khadija: How did you read about it?

Douglas: Well, you know, there's this great website that talks about his life. I think you mentioned it before.

Khadija: Yeah, I'm on it; my grandson's wedding.

Douglas: Yeah, yeah – very nice. It gives a timeline.

Khadija: Very very nice, and it gives the timeline. So it tells – and yes, and then later on in life he went on to do a great piece. I'm talking about

the heroin piece. And I'm not tooting my own horn, but I didn't know Seku was on heroin when I met him. And of course I fell in love with him, we became just totally connected and the summer of '69 we were supposed to be going to Washington to do something with the Urban League in the state of Washington; and he didn't fill out the application. And that's how I found out; because I went up to his house. He hung the phone up on me, and then he gave me – I got over there and I got that stark reality of what was happening with him.

And by that time I had fallen in love with him, and I knew his potential. And I saw – I mean, I'm not tooting my own horn but some people you can just see. So all through the years, he'd be in the hospital at 1:00 a.m. And then I said, see you should be using this as your – I was like his muse – I said, you need to go write about this; write about that. You sitting up here, write about that. And we stayed as friends until the very end.

And his second wife, which I doubt if she would be able to tell you anything about '69. But he was – yes, so he went into rehab that fall and that's why he was not there. I tried to figure out for the life of me how the political thing had shifted and Rick Reed became very-very active and all of a sudden, all this stuff was happening. And that summer when I found out that Seku was using heroin, my whole mind was blown and I was into a whole other thing.

And so – and I was never really – when the intellectuals started taking over and it started becoming all of that; I just decided that it was more important for me to deal with my family, get myself out of college because I was – that was another thing. That year that the teachers gave us a break, my biology teacher didn't give us a break. I think we had to do some hard work – you know – because we had the option. The teachers had the option, and I don't think my biology teacher gave us a break.

And I was really kind of mad about that, and that I was stuck having to still do all that I had to do, because I was a pre-med major and then, you know, I devoted all this time to the struggle. And now, all these opportunists because once we got notoriety, the opportunists popped out from everywhere, and to me it just soured the whole thing. It wasn't pure struggle for the people.

I saw opportunists just grabbing at things, and I can't remember their names. But there were so many of them and all of a sudden they had a job in the Black Studies Department. How the hell did you

get there, you didn't even graduate yet – you know. You weren't even there in the rain when we were there. So it was all like that kind of thing.

Douglas: And that's why it's important for us to know that history. To know that opportunism is always an issue, is always a problem. Khadija, thank you so much. I really appreciate this.

Khadija: I enjoyed talking to you.

Douglas: I'm so glad – I'm so glad.

Khadija: Yes, well I wasn't going to let you – I had two concerns. I wanted the historical part but the energy. You know, because when I read your piece, I said I really should tell him; don't even come because I'm not in that level with what he's talking about. But then I said no, I really want to tell – because – you know – and I knew that you understood that because just by – I'm not assuming but by virtue of your last name, I knew that and being a doctoral student; I knew that you knew the struggle of the people. And it never comes – I mean, Che and Castro; they just didn't pop up overnight. The things that happened that brought that together, and it was the dissatisfaction of the masses who had the – the small people who had the guts to say, hey check this out. Then the intellectuals leap on it because they had the ability to then manage the negotiations and all that other part.

But for the historical aspect of it; and I definitely do not want you thinking that, that ...

Douglas: [Laughs]. Yeah.

Khadija: And you know, he's got people very intelligent, well-educated people thinking that – you know. And I remember when he came down to Guyana. Because that was the first time – we hadn't. And I will tell you who will tell you everything about Jefferies and that negotiation, will be George Murray. Okay. George Murray. Now, if you have difficulty getting numbers let me know. And I will – but approach them like Ann Doris; because Ann lives in DC now; George Murray lives in Manhattan and in Harlem. And I can put you in touch with them. And anything else I can do to help you, I'd be more than happy...

Douglas: Thank you so much, Khadija ...

Khadija: How old are you?

Douglas: 39. Going to be 40 later on.

Khadija: When will you be 40?

Douglas: July.

Khadija: Oh you have time.

Douglas: Yeah, I got some time, right.

Khadija: You are going to be just fine.

Douglas: But believe it or not, I started really early my reproductive years. I got a 23-year-old son.

Khadija: Oh, Lord have mercy. So you got some motivation to get – are you going to send your son to college or are you going to ...

Douglas: He lives in North Carolina. No, he lives in North Carolina but you know what; he's scared of school. He's afraid to fail. And there's the dad in me and there's the educator in me that's trying to balance what kind of advice to give him right, right.

Khadija: Yeah, I got you. Yeah, yeah. Well, you know when my daughter – well, my daughter just went totally off the edge because she was always in a ...

[End of Audio at 2:11:50]