

Richardson: In the first place, I'd been to Chicago just as a youngster a couple of times. My grandparents had brought me over earlier, and I'd seen Marshall Field and Company and I'd seen downtown. I'd seen the Art Institute and taken bus rides on the upper deck buses and so on, so I was a little familiar with Chicago. The town I lived in in Mississippi, which I was used to, was a town of, I suppose, ten thousand people. It was the Deep South and of ten thousand people, I suppose, at that time, there were maybe four thousand whites. I can't remember. I summered in St. Joseph [Missouri] which was much larger, at that time, it must have had about sixty thousand. So I was jumping between those environments. We lived in a large place with plenty of space out in the country and out on the edge of town and so forth. Plus, we were socially oriented. I mean, my family had been modestly successful—I mean, they weren't well-to-do, but certainly early on they were more than well-to-do. We were members of the country club, and we were socially acceptable people, certainly in the South. Both my mother's and father's families were old families from Missouri and St. Joe, so we were established socially, if you see what I mean. Then we were suddenly plunged into this four-thousand-student high school.

Blum: Hyde Park High School?

Richardson: Hyde Park, which was a marvelous school at that time. No question about it. There were marvelous teachers. But it was very frightening for young kids, the three of us. My sister was too young to go to Hyde Park, but my brother and I, didn't know a soul, and being a high school kid with no social life whatsoever was really grim. As far as the city was concerned, as I say, we began fitting into it pretty well. We were right near the university there. We lived in a nice area on Woodlawn Avenue. At that time, of course, it was not nearly so dangerous. It took us a while to get adjusted. We began making friends at Hyde Park and found our own niche and, as I say, we were always culturally encouraged. I told you I went to the Art Institute a lot. We went to the Field Museum a lot. I'd take bus rides out to Garfield Park to see the conservatory. My first year at Hyde Park, I was a sophomore. We came in late and so we didn't have much choice of electives, but we had to take a