LOWERY TUNGOVIA, Hopi - Tewa

October 18, 1975

Ganado, Arizona

This transcript is one of a series of interviews with American Indian people throughout much of the United States by S. I. Myers of the History Department of St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley, St. Louis, Missouri, 63135.

The purpose of these interviews is to bring the Indian peoples' own comments to students in classrooms, and to foster greater understanding among the peoples of the United States by providing Indians the opportunity to express their ideas and opinions to a wider audience.

This transcript has been edited for clarity and ease of reading, but every effort has been made to preserve the original feeling. Conversations and opinions were encouraged on any subject of interest to interviewees; questions and responses do not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the interviewer, the National Endowment for the Humanities, or St. Louis Community College.

This transcript series was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and by support from St. Louis Community College.

Copyright © S.I. Myers 1978
THE NEW YORK TIMES ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

LISTENING TO INDIANS

NO. 72

LOWERY TUNGOVIA, Hopi - Tewa
October 18, 1975
Ganado, Arizona

Glen Rock, New Jersey

Microfilming Corporation of America

1978
Sam Myers:

Today, on a beautiful October Saturday morning, I'm at Ganado College at Ganado, Arizona, and I'm talking to Lowery Tungovia. You're the president of the student senate?

Lowery Tungovia:

Yeah.

SM: Now is this your first year here?

LT: I was here last semester, I started second semester last year, last school year, and I'm still a freshman.

SM: So this would be your second semester.

LT: My second semester, but it's my first year of college.

SM: Well, you must have made an impression on the student body if they've elected you president of the senate already.

LT: I couldn't say.

SM: You're modest too.

LT: I guess you could say.

SM: Well, you know, being elected student president you've got to have something on the ball, or else at least the people think you have. Do you live around here?

LT: My original home is on Hopi land.

SM: That's west of here. Are you part Hopi or all Hopi?
LT: I'm part Hopi and part Tewa.

SM: The Tewa people are pueblo people too, aren't they? And the Hopi people live in pueblos, or villages or communities.

LT: That's right. I live in Polacca.

SM: Oh, you live in Polacca? Did you know a man named Frank Ami? He used to live in Polacca, he said.

LT: I know a lot of Amis, but I don't know Frank Ami.

SM: He made a beautiful kachina, a morning kachina, that I saw once.

LT: There's a lot of Hopi men out there, boys, do a lot of good carving.

SM: This was a gorgeous thing. It was worth almost $1,000 on the market, if he sold it. In the old days they didn't used to sell kachinas, did they?

LT: No, it's a craft now, too.

SM: But now they're made for the market too. Lowery, did you go to school out there then at Polacca?

LT: No, I didn't. My kindergarten year I went to school there, then I moved off--went down there to Poston, Arizona. That's in the southern part of Arizona.

SM: You were out of Hopi country then?

LT: Yeah, I've been livin' off Hopi country all my life. When I moved off and down to Poston, I moved from there to Parker, which is 30
miles from Poston, and from there I moved real closer back to the reservation, moved down here to Snowflake. It's back up north, I'd say about 160 miles south of the Hopi Reservation. So that's how close I got to home, and I lived there for quite a while, and then I left from there. My mother decided to transfer—she was workin' for the BIA—so she transferred out here 30 miles west of here in Ganado, to a new boarding school called Toyei—I think this is its eighth year it's being used—and lived there since, so I never really actually lived on the reservation.

SM: Is your mother Hopi?

LT: No, she's Tewa. My father's Hopi. Well, my mother's got a little Hopi blood in her.

SM: Did you learn about the Hopi ways, the old traditions?

LT: No, not really, because, like I said, I've been livin' off the reservation all my life.

SM: You lived with non-Indians about as much as Indians?

LT: Well, I'd say I've lived with non-Indians longer than I have with Indians. I was raised in those Anglo communities, and went to school with them practically all my life.

SM: Is that how people usually refer to non-Indians or whites . . . as Anglos?

LT: Well, that's the way I refer to them, because see, to me, I'm not a prejudiced type of person. I respect everybody just for what they are, and to me, another living body, human body, is just the same as me, but the thing is we're just different colors, so most of the
people, when they'd talk to somebody, they call them white men, like Colored, they call them niggers. Well, blacks now too, it don't sound too much prejudiced in there, so I try to ... like I said, I'm not prejudiced. I try to keep it soundin' like I'm not prejudiced, so that's the way I refer to them.

SM: Fair to everybody. Well, now if we don't say anything else in this whole hour we've planned here, I think you've already said enough to make it important, just by that comment of yours. Now if all of us across the country can achieve that same attitude, we'll have a better world to live in, won't we?

LT: Yeah, that is true.

SM: Well then, Lowery, you went to school in these various towns, usually public school, was it?

LT: Yeah.

SM: Did you have any problems in any of those public schools?

LT: No, I'd say I was about a B average student.

SM: Any problems with prejudice and that kind of thing?

LT: No.

SM: There are lots of Indians in Arizona, so that in lots of towns and communities the Indians are the majority, aren't they?

LT: Yeah, you can say that.

SM: But in the schools, oftentimes you were a minority?
LT: Um huh. In the schools it was, because see, the kids that live here on the reservation had BIA schools they went to, like the Phoenix Indian School and Sherman Institute over in California, and Chilocco, I think that's in Oklahoma. Haskell was another. And down on the reservation they usually went out to those schools, those Indian schools. So you don't find very much of them on these public schools.

SM: So there are comparatively few then?

LT: Uh huh.

SM: So you usually were in a minority?

LT: Yeah.

SM: But you still had no problems to speak of?

LT: No, I didn't have no problems.

SM: Well, you're a friendly guy.

LT: It's just people, you know. I like to talk to people, be friendly with everybody, anybody.

SM: That's probably one of the reasons you became president of the student senate, because you are the kind of personality you are. Were you in the Service too?

LT: Yeah, I was in the Service.

SM: After high school?

LT: No, after high school I planned on goin' on to college, but I just
couldn't find no place to give me some ... you know, any grants to help me go on to school. So I stayed around, did a little work.

SM: Where are you living at this point?

LT: I was livin' in Toyei then. I finished at Snowflake, and came over here to Toyei, and then after that, I did a little work here and there for different companies, and then I got drafted. I went in, and went down to Fort Bliss for my basic training, and after the basic training I was shipped to Vietnam. I stayed down there for quite a spell, then I came back home.

SM: What branch of the Service were you in?

LT: I was in the Army.

SM: Did you get into some of those jungles, slogging around in there?

LT: I did a lot of that.

SM: Did it bother you a lot?

LT: It did, you know, because I've never killed a person in my life, and I didn't intend to do it. But I was made to do it.

SM: Well, the Hopi people are very peaceful people anyway, aren't they?

LT: Um hm.

SM: Have you been taught that by your father?

LT: Well, I guess you could say that. I guess when I was young I was taught that. That's the reason that I have the kind of personality
that I do, I'm friendly with everybody, so I guess I was taught that then.

SM: Do you speak Hopi?

LT: Just a little.

SM: I got this out of a book, but it said the Hopi called themselves, "peaceful all people." Is that right? And that's the famous Hopi way, a famous anthropological and sociological concept, the peaceful attitude toward life. We can learn from you, you see.

LT: Yeah, that's true.

SM: How long were you over there?

LT: I was over there one tour--that's twelve months.

SM: What did you do then?

LT: Well, I came home. While I'm away to Nam, I got married.

SM: You got married over there?

LT: No, I was on a 30-day leave to go down to Nam, and I got married.

SM: Is your wife from here?

LT: She's from south of here. It's called Klagetoh.

SM: Is she Hopi?

LT: She's a Navajo.
SM: Do you have any children?

LT: Three.

SM: So they're Hopi and Tewa and Navajo. Sometimes we find people who are full-blood Hopi or full-blood Navajo, but not too many any more, I guess.

LT: Yeah.

SM: Do you know any people who are 100% Hopi?

LT: I don't think so, but my dad has. He's deceased now. It's been about 10 years. Well, his whole family is 100% Hopi.

SM: They grew up on the reservation over there in Hopi land?

LT: Yeah, they did.

SM: Then you were married while you were on leave?

LT: Then I came home from Nam, and came to my wife, and I had a kid while I was in Nam. That's why I had to get married before I left. So I came back, and came back to the new family that I didn't even know, you know. So then I did a little work, then I decided to go back to school.

SM: Did you work at anything you liked?

LT: No, not really. 'Cause, you know, I've always wanted to work in medicine. It's hard to get into a medical job when you don't have no background.
SM: Were you in the medics in the Army?

LT: No.

SM: Sometimes that helps a little.

LT: Yeah, it does, and so I worked on these jobs that I didn't like. I wasn't satisfied with the job, and I wanted to help people, that was my thought all the time.

SM: Do you have anything in mind, like helping your own people, or just people in general?

LT: Just people in general.

SM: So you weren't concerned with just going back to the Hopi Reservation or the Tewa Pueblo?

LT: Just people as a whole, because, you know, like I say, I don't like war. That mutilates people. You know, that hurts them, and I like to see people happy, especially when they have all their limbs and their whole body there with them, in one piece, you see. And so I'd rather see people that way. I like to see them happy. So that's the way I've always wanted to be, and that's why I wanted to go into medicine. I need four years to get a bachelor's degree before I go to medical school.

SM: You've got the GI bill haven't you?

LT: Yeah, and I've got BOG. That's a basic educational opportunity grant.

SM: Can you make it with that now?
LT: Well, they're givin' me $1,400 a year, a school year, and that don't cover it all. This semester it cost me $1,260 to go to school.

SM: Is that tuition, or is that board and room?

LT: That's everything included.

SM: You got a grant of a little over $1,000 for the year, and it's costing you that much for the first semester?

LT: Um hm.

SM: So you won't have enough now.

LT: Yeah, that's right. And they got me under the Hopi census over here in the Hopi Tribe, and I wrote and asked them if they could give me a grant, which they could help me at least finish another semester, because I'm pretty sure I'll be leaving out of here this coming summer, the end of the summer. I'll be leavin' the college and goin' into the University of New Mexico, over in Albuquerque, the main campus. I'll go for another two years. I'll be gettin' my bachelor's there.

SM: You're going to finish the two years here?

LT: Um hm.

SM: If you can get these grants put together.

LT: Um hm.

SM: Now how are your wife and the three kids getting along?

LT: Well, they're doin' O.K. She's workin', and I got a little boy going to school. He's in first grade, I think it was. Yeah, he's a first
grader, and I got two little girls at home. And the GI bill, you know, comes in. It's hard to go to school on that, use it just for yourself. $535.00 ain't too much for a month when you've got to think about the kids.

SM: Where are your wife and the kids living now?

LT: They're over in Toyei living with her mother.

SM: So now you were thinking of going over there to see them this weekend, weren't you?

LT: Yeah, I was plannin' on goin' this afternoon. I've got a lot of studies to do, so maybe I might go tomorrow instead. I'm carryin' 20 hours.

SM: That's a big load.

LT: It really is.

SM: But you're not working now, are you?

LT: I've got too much to do to get a job.

SM: Do you live on campus here in the dorm?

LT: Yeah, I do.

SM: And then you go home week-ends to see your wife and the kids?

LT: Uh huh, when I'm not busy and I don't have too much homework, then I go home.

SM: May I ask you, Lowery, how old you are now?
LT: I'm 27.

SM: What are you going to major in?

LT: Well, here in college I'm a pre-med student. I'd like to get into medicine bad.

SM: You don't want dentistry or some other phase of medicine, but you want to be a regular, practicing physician?

LT: That's what I'd like to be.

SM: Where do you plan to practice, if you make it?

LT: Well, the way I see it, see I was married to a Navajo girl, and I understand a little Navajo.

SM: How about Hopi, do you understand that?

LT: Yeah, I understand Hopi pretty good. Well, not really that good, but I can understand Tewa real good. I can speak it fluently, and I can understand it. But the trouble is back in New Mexico the Tewas there speak a little different from the Tewas from here and on the Hopi Reservation. I'm a Tewa, and I became a Tewa when I went into the religion of the Tewa. You see, the Hopis have a different religion from the Tewas, and I went into the Tewas.

SM: Can you say hello in Tewa?

LT: We don't have a word for hello. But it's a greeting, you know, like, "how are you doin'?" But if I do finish medical school, I get my internship, I get my residency done, I'd like to come pretty close to this part of the country, because this is the biggest reservation
there is in the United States, the Navajo Reservation, and we don't have no doctors, full medical doctors. They're mostly interns. The reason for that is all the hospitals we have here on the reservation are PHS.

SM: Public Health Service, that's under HEW?

LT: And so it's a government thing.

SM: And all the young doctors come out here to put in their residency, internship?

LT: And they're not civilians. Most of the doctors we got out here are in the Service.

SM: If they come here and put in a year or two or three, then that will satisfy their service requirement?

LT: Uh huh. Well, they're only interns really. See, you find maybe about two qualified doctors in the hospital.

SM: Do you mean this hospital here?

LT: Well, this hospital here was run by Project Hope here in Ganado, and they had some good doctors here. Well, they already had their internship and their residency done, and they were workin' for Project Hope here, and when Project Hope moved out of the hospital, I don't know where they moved to.

SM: Were they Anglo doctors?

LT: Uh huh. And when they moved out, then the doctors and nurses that were under Project Hope decided they'd rather stay here than move on,
so they stayed and I think the Navajo Tribe took over the hospital.

SM: This one right here next to the school?

LT: Um huh. On the reservation I'd say this is the best hospital you can find. They got qualified doctors, but they don't have instruments, you know, machines, the equipment for a lot of things like these major surgeries. They can do minor surgeries here, but not major. They have to move them out to the Public Health Service hospitals in Fort Defiance or Gallup.

SM: This hospital right here now looks like it's on the same grounds as the college to a stranger as you drive in, but it's separate, isn't it?

LT: It was in the same place as the college. I mean, before this was a college this was a high school, run by the Presbyterian missionaries, and the hospital was under that too. It was run by the Presbyterian Church, and before this place was turned into a college, the hospital went under Project Hope, because the Presbyterian denomination couldn't really put enough money in to keep it goin', because of all the equipment it was gettin' was costin' too much, so they didn't have the money for that, and so they did away with that. So they came up with a college. The Presbyterian mission is putting in some money, and there's some other money comin' in from different sources.

SM: This is a private college, isn't it? And it isn't a BIA school, and so they have to depend on contributions from wherever they can get them. Do you call it Ganado Community College?

LT: No. The College of Ganado.

SM: And then the hospital, what's it called?

LT: That's Sage Memorial Hospital.
SM: And that's one of the best hospitals in the area?

LT: Yeah, it is, 'cause they got qualified doctors there, where the PHS's have mostly interns, and then you find a qualified doctor there, and what they do, they make him the administrator of the hospital, and that's where it hurts the people, because a qualified doctor is sittin' up there somewhere working on paper, where he knows more than what the interns are doin'.

SM: So your ambition then would be to finish med school and become an M.D. and come back to an area like this, or some place in this area, and work with the people here. Now you're part Hopi and part Tewa. Would the Navajos welcome you here as a doctor?

LT: Well, most of the people I talk to say they probably would because they probably would have more faith in an Indian, because the language barrier is there. See, some Navajos still don't know how to speak English, so they come to the hospital, and they try to tell the medical doctor their ailment, and he sits there and thinks, and he don't know what he's talkin' about. They don't know what they're talkin' about between each other.

SM: It's hard to treat a patient that way.

LT: Yeah, it is. And then they call in an interpreter, and when the interpreter comes in, then the person that can't speak English, he talks to the interpreter, tells him what's wrong with him, and he understands--in his language he knows what's goin' on--but when he starts interpreting it, the interpretation is a little ... you can't really get exactly what the person said. He comes in, there might be something really wrong with him, and then the interpretation gets mixed up, you know, and he really don't tell the medical doctor how it's supposed to be, because translating from an Indian language
into the English language is kinda different. I mean, you say different, but it means somethin'.

SM: Sometimes you don't even have the same words. Like you didn't have a word for hello in Tewa. The word you used means more than hello.

LT: Yeah. "How are you doin'?" and "How are you?" Or somethin' like that, and if I said that in Tewa, then he tries to interpret "how are you?" To try to interpret that into English, it don't mean hello. It means, "how are you" and he's tryin' to find a word to say "hello" but, you know, "how are you" and "hello" are two different things.

SM: That's as close as you can come?

LT: That's as close as you can come, so when the patient comes in, that's what happens, and sometimes they might give a wrong prescription to the patient that would have a side effect of some kind, and they don't really find out what's wrong, the patient can die.

SM: It could be very serious, couldn't it? Or miss the ailment entirely, misunderstand it. Now then, you know some Navajo now, and as you go along, you're going to learn more. If you're going to practice here among the Navajos, you're going to try to be able to speak their language, aren't you?

LT: Yeah. And since I'm an Indian, it's pretty easy for me to catch on to the other tribal language.

SM: Your wife speaks Navajo?

LT: She speaks Navajo.

SM: If you could just have her coach you and have her talk to you in Navajo a lot, instead of English.
LT: Well I guess I could get it. It's not really hard.

SM: Well, it seems awfully hard to me, but now it doesn't seem hard to you because you've grown up here living with some of the people, so that you're used to it.

LT: Um hm. Well, my own language--I didn't know my language when I first came back to the reservation.

SM: Hopi or Tewa?

LT: Tewa. I didn't come back to the reservation until I was a freshman in high school. My freshman summer I finally came back on the reservation, and all those years I've been speakin' nothin' but English. And my parents, they spoke English to us all the time, they didn't speak no. . . .

SM: I suppose they compromised. Your father spoke Hopi, right?

LT: Uh huh.

SM: And your mother spoke Tewa, and so they spoke to you in English so that they would be speaking the same language?

LT: Uh huh. See, my mother can't speak Hopi. She can understand Hopi. But then my dad's a Hopi and he can't speak Tewa, and he can't understand Tewa. That's somethin' that happened back . . . an agreement made between the Hopi chief and the Tewa chief, and they made this agreement sayin' that the Hopis won't understand Tewa, or they won't speak Tewa. So I guess the Hopi chief spat in his hand and buried his arm all the way up to his shoulder, and then after that, from there on, Hopis never could speak Tewa or understand it. We've got an advantage over them out there. We can understand their language,
and we can speak it—the Tewa's can—and I guess that's the reason why, in order to get to us, like if my mother's talkin' to us in Tewa, well, she hardly ever did that when we were young, but now she does. When my dad was there if she spoke to us in Tewa it would make my father feel. . . .

SM: Left out?

LT: Yeah. So I guess that's the reason why she spoke to us in English all the time.

SM: Later on you spoke more Tewa with your mother?

LT: No, I didn't learn it from my mother. I learned it from my grandmother, and it took me one summer, about two and a half months it took me.

SM: This was after high school?

LT: No, I was still in high school, and I learned it in about two and a half months. I didn't learn the real hard words yet, but I learned it pretty well, because, the way I see it, I don't think you ever forget your own language. That's the way it is. I know from experience, because I've been gone for so long from the reservation—I spoke nothin' but English all the time—I came back, and then in just two and a half months at the most, I think, that's how long I stayed with my grandmother out on the Hopi Reservation. You know, she talked to me in Tewa. When I first was out there she'd say somethin' to me in Tewa and I didn't know what she was talkin' about. I'd just sit there, and then, after while, it started comin' back to me. Then I picked it up in that time, so I guess you don't ever really forget your own language. That's the way my wife and I were doin' to our kids, teachin' them to speak English, you know, because
if they're gonna have to get a good life in the world now, English is the basic language. In all schools you gotta speak English and all this, and you have a hard time learnin' all those. If a kid, while they're still young, started speakin' their own language, if I taught them while they're young instead of let them go, you know, teachin' them our own language now, they'll have a harder time goin' through school, where they will need that education in the future, you know, if they want a good life, and so it is better they speak English, because when they get older, if they decide they have gotten their education, they decide they want to live here on the reservation, they'll catch their language back simple.

SM: In other words you and your wife are not teaching the kids to speak Navajo and Tewa, but instead English. If they want to learn Navajo or Tewa, that's up to them later.

LT: Uh huh.

SM: Now if one of your children, your son, wants to be a medical doctor like you, and help the patients here, he'll probably have to learn one of the languages, whichever one he's going to work in, as you were saying.

LT: Uh huh. That's the language barrier. I wanted to become a doctor long ago, since I was a kid, and then I started changing my mind, I wanted to do this and that. Like I said, I was frustrated when I came back to the reservation, and I went over to the hospital, and I seen how it was, you know—we didn't have civilian doctors, all we had was these military men. I guess they're the Navy. I didn't know that at the time, but now I know they're the Navy, because of the uniform they're wearin', and I was told that they were mostly interns. Instead of serving their tour of duty on the military base, they're servin' it in civilian life, at these hospitals, and they're puttin' in their regular tour of duty in the service. It's just like livin'
in civilian life, you know, and they're just interns, and they didn't even know what's happening. And I didn't believe that, and after a while I found out that it was true. So instead of havin' these interns usin' the people as guinea pigs out here, I decided I'd become a medical doctor and come out here and help my people as much as I can. But if I can't get a job here in the PH's hospitals or any other thing, because it's gonna be hard to put up a practice here on this reservation....

SM: Yes, it is probably better to work in a hospital like this. Then you have the facilities, because otherwise you'd have to build a whole set of facilities yourself, wouldn't you?

LT: Uh huh. But even if you do get all the facilities and everything, the thing is gonna be, how many Indian families do we have on these reservations that have a pretty good income where they'll come to you for medicare? Well, you walk in, just to pull out a file they charge $5.00, and all the clinic and all the prescriptions, that all amounts to so much, and the average family on the reservation don't have that good of an income. They can't really pay for their medicare.

SM: They just about have to come into the hospital.

LT: So they have to go to a PHS hospital where it's free to them. They don't pay anything there. So if you want to make a practice on a reservation, it's gonna be hard to make a go of it.

SM: Well you could reach more people and help more people working in the PHS hospital then.

LT: Probably that's what I'll do.

SM: I hope you can make it through medical school all right. It's a long,
tough row to hoe, but then you're not afraid of that, you're going to try it anyway. You know it's going to be difficult and long, and it'll be a worthy cause. You'll feel good about it if you can do it, won't you?

LT: Yeah, I will.

SM: And you can have your own little kids in mind there all the time, that'll keep spurring you on, because they're going to need help once in a while. Most kids do. They get measles and they get mumps, or whatever. Your kids are all healthy now?

LT: Yeah, they are.

SM: Where does your wife work?

LT: She works at the hospital here.

SM: So she's right here close by every day. You can see her then every day. Now here at school, you've become student senate president. You were elected this fall?

LT: Uh huh. As a matter of fact, last week Friday.

SM: Well, did you have to campaign for the job?

LT: Not really. Just on election night I made a speech.

SM: Did you have a gathering of the students here somewhere?

LT: We had a gathering in the gym.

SM: I see. All the students were there?
LT: Not all of them.

SM: And you made a speech there?

LT: Uh huh. There was three of us runnin' for president.

SM: Who were the others?

LT: There was a girl named Delphine Yazzi, and one of my friends, his name is Allan Woody.

SM: Did you all make speeches?

LT: Yeah, we all made speeches.

SM: Did you make them any political promises?

LT: No, I couldn't do that.

SM: I'm pulling your leg a little. Politicians usually make promises. You didn't do that though?

LT: No, I couldn't do that though. You know, I've seen politicians make promises, and when they made the promise they don't usually keep it, because there's always something says they can't do it. So that's what I had to do. I couldn't tell the students that I was gonna make a promise. The student senate here is your interpreter into the administration or board of regents, so it's your voices that come to the student senate, where I can try to carry all this out, and all the things you need you come to the student senate, and I'll be willing to help you put it through into the administration of the board of regents.

SM: That was the substance of your speech?
LT: Um hm.

SM: That you would represent the students to the administration, the board of regents? So they must have believed you, they elected you.

LT: I couldn't promise nothin'. The girl, she promised quite a few things. At the end of her speech she said, "I will not promise anything," but the way she made her speech it sounded like she was promising the students all the things she was gonna do, so I guess that blew it for her. I just told them how it was, because that really is only an interpreter there into high places, and the students' voices that comes in from the student senate, we just carry it on up there. So I guess that's how I got it. And I was wondering. I thought the girl would get it, 'cause of the speech she made, but it turned out different. I came up with it.

SM: Are you elected for one semester or one year?

LT: The whole school year.

SM: So you'll be student senate president until next spring, and then they'll have another election next fall?

LT: Uh huh.

SM: Does it take a lot of time being president?

LT: It does, 'cause it seems within this week like I was . . . even the faculty came to me for this and that, and it seemed like if they needed something they had to come over to me for an O.K. on it, and some things that come up . . . well, there's a lot of things that you could go through the administration to find the kind of student he is, what his character, and it seemed like I had to be the one that knew it.
SM: Sounds like the faculty sort of leans on you too for help. Well, it's a good thing they come to you, instead of just ignoring the students' opinions, isn't it?

LT: Yeah.

SM: It's a pretty nice place here, isn't it?

LT: Yeah, it is.

SM: It's an old school. It's been here a long time?

LT: It has been.

SM: Some of the buildings are old, and some of them are very attractive, these old stone buildings. You like it here pretty well?

LT: I do. It's pretty quiet. I went to the University of Texas at El Paso. I went down there for almost close to two months, and that was a big campus, and you hardly ever saw your instructor. I came here, at least you get to see your instructor instead of watching television.

SM: I don't think that's a good way to teach.

LT: No, because you don't have individual attention like you do here.

SM: They do have it here, though?

LT: Uh huh.

SM: How many students do you have here?

LT: I think there's 150.
SM: And do you know how many instructors you have altogether?

LT: No, I couldn't say. New ones are comin' in this year.

SM: And the instructors, they're all non-Indian, aren't they?

LT: Well, yeah, except for silvercraft.

SM: Oh, do you have a silvercraft shop or class?

LT: Yeah, a silversmithing shop class, and I think there's rug weaving and Navajo language, I think.

SM: They're taught by Indian people?

LT: There are all Navajos teaching these classes.

SM: Well, so far then your experience here has been a pretty good one?

LT: Um hm.

SM: And it's a nice quiet spot where you can get a lot of work done?

LT: It really is.

SM: Except for your duties as senate president?

LT: Yes. There's somethin' about that, you know, that kinda gets. . . .

SM: Well, that's good experience too, though. It'll be just like taking another class. You'll have the experience of the problems that come up, and coping with the administration and all that sort of thing, and helping the students, and that's what you're sort of dedicating your life to.
LT: Yeah, and learning leadership. That's one course we oughta have in school, a leadership course, 'cause, look at our politicians. What happens? For instance, the Watergate case. If we had good leadership this wouldn't have happened, and when the Watergate case happened it kinda made society . . . not have much respect for the government.

SM: Yes, it hurts.

LT: There oughta be a leadership class somewhere along the way, so you know what it is.

SM: Do you have classes here in political science?

LT: I don't know.

SM: Well, I certainly hope that you're able to achieve your goal, Lowery, because it's certainly a worthy one, and I imagine your wife is back of you all the way.

LT: Um hm. My kids would be too if they were old enough.

SM: When they get old enough to understand. Are you going to go to medical school at the University of New Mexico?

LT: I'd like to put in my application for the University of New Mexico, and down in the University of Arizona, and then down into the University of Miami in Florida.

SM: And then take whichever one you can get. I don't know, I guess you have to apply, and then sometimes you can't get in. So if you apply to several you have a better chance of getting in. It's just like law school. There seems to be more applicants than there are spaces in the schools.
LT: I was talkin' to one of the advisors and he told me, he says, "You got a pretty good chance of gettin' in the medical school, wherever you apply I'm sure you can get it, because of the fact that you're an Indian."

SM: The whole nation has developed more and more of a conscience about this sort of thing, and so there are more grants and so on. That's helping, isn't it?

LT: Yeah.

SM: Well, I certainly hope it works well. Lowery, I appreciate your coming over to talk to me today. I hope everything goes well for you. Take good care of those little kids.

LT: Yeah, I will.

SM: And your student senate responsibilities. You've got your hands full, haven't you?

LT: I really do.

SM: It's been good talking to you.

LT: Same here.

SM: Thanks!