

This is an interview conducted by Charles N. Darrah with David Fetterman, for the Society for Applied Anthropology Oral History Project on September 6, 2005, in Menlo Park, California.

[Tape 1, Side 1]

DARRAH: This is an interview with David Fetterman for the Society for Applied Anthropology Oral History Project, interview conducted September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005, by Chuck Darrah.

DARRAH: See if it's too noisy . . .

FETTERMAN: [inaudible]

DARRAH: ['Will?'] test it in a couple of minutes.

FETTERMAN: Yes [inaudible]

DARRAH: What's your current position, David?

FETTERMAN: Director of Evaluation in the School of Medicine, Stanford University. I'm also a professor of education at the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff, a Distinguished Visiting Professor of Anthropology at San Jose State University, and a Collaborating Professor at Colegio de Postgraduados in Mexico.

DARRAH: Okay. And can you just briefly summarize your work history, with maybe an emphasis on what you think were the major turning points in that.

FETTERMAN: Sure. I suppose the, the first time, I had a position in medical anthropology was in Connecticut and that got me turned on to [background noise] doing ethnographic work . . . and I describe some of my work in my book: *Ethnography: step-by-step* so you can get a feel for it. A very brief example in the book that was interesting and fits in with description of my early experiences was looking at folk medicating habits in the northeast where people were dying and they couldn't figure out why, so the last resort was to pick us anthropologists, people in training as anthropologists, so it didn't go to our head because they dealt with epidemiologists first thing when no one else could figure it out they figured we may as well give them a try. We shadowed them all that kind of stuff, we hung out mostly with Puerto Ricans and Cubans and some black faith healers and found out that they were doing things like taking herbal medications like fox glove but they weren't telling the physicians because they were embarrassed and the physicians were giving them digitalis, so between the fox glove from their folk medicators. . . which is digitalis, and the digitalis from their physicians they were getting double dosed.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: So together the untoward effect was usually death because they were overdosing. That got me intrigued with anthropology, sort of cemented my belief in the value of it. Then I moved more over to Stanford and got connected with Spindler with education anthropology. I got interested in ethnography through Medical Anthropology at the University of Connecticut with Pelto but I got more and more interested in educational concerns so he (Pelto) said, he sent me over here and said I should work with Spindler.

DARRAH: This is George Spindler.

FETTERMAN: George Spindler, sorry, yeah, and sort of the father or grandfather of educational anthropology, and I came over and we just clicked, just got along really well and the same wave length and then the next thing you know I was in this doctoral program in the Anthropology Department at Stanford, and this research corporation called Spindler and asked if he knew of anyone who might be interested in serving as an ethnographer for them. He said, 'do you think you want to do that type of thing?' I go 'yeah, yeah!' I thought . . .

DARRAH: That w . . .

FETTERMAN: I thought like . . .

DARRAH: That was, was Spindler. who said that?

FETTERMAN: Yeah, yes, Spindler was thinking you know, he said 'you seem to be that kind of person you like applied kinds of activities, you have a good background with what you've done in medical already, you're comfortable with folks and that sort of thing, you want to try this thing? He asked because he knew that some people might be turned off because its a research corporation but. . . I said 'it sounds good to me!' They want me to roam around looking at dropout programs around the country, from an ethnographic perspective and describe what's going on, the processes. I said: that sounds great!

DARRAH: Did you feel it . . . in retrospect looking at that, that was a real turning point between the kind of academic direction as opposed to a more . . .

FETTERMAN: It cemented my belief in applied.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: I, I was pretty much committed to applied before that both in medical educational but the that research corporation experience absolutely cemented my belief in applied work and the value of it and the quality, integrity, academically as well as in real life, just dealing with day-to-day problems helping people. There's no question. I also found out quite frankly, you can make money! It's a lucrative thing and I think that's

good, I think more anthropologists should be a little bit more entrepreneurial about their work . . . for the good, for the good of others, not just themselves. And in this case, I also could see it was also pivotal for me. I kind of knew that but you don't know until you really experienced it.

DARRAH: Hm-mm.

FETTERMAN: I also learned that you don't have to run through the full year or conduct the work continuous for six months at a time, to do it in an ethnographic way, but that was my first real experience adapting ethnography significantly, to two weeks at a shot then go to the site again in three months, two weeks at a shot again, three months later, and so on. You keep phone contact, email everything else in the meantime, but change the dynamic of how you work with folks and spread the visits over a three-year period in this case. It was one of the first projects where I found it worked, and I felt whoa, you can have another life (a personal life) and that sort of thing and do all those other things and still maintain a long-term record (in the field with folks). It still can't be a one shot deal obviously.

DARRAH: All right, all right.

FETTERMAN: But I learned from that, you don't have to be there all the time every second and still be able to get the core of what you need. It just depends on you and the level of knowledge you're looking for, for that program to have an impact with people, programs, and policies. So that was absolutely pivotal in my career, there's no question. Then I came back to Stanford, sort of partially with a plan and partially just serendipity. Research projects were drying up.

DARRAH: W . . . when was this?

FETTERMAN: [inaudible] like in eighty . . . two I think it was?

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: Do you remember that?

DARRAH: Yeah, yeah!

FETTERMAN: Everything, everything dried up [inaudible]. We were beating ETS and SRI . . . when I was working at RMC Research Corporation, I was a research director and project director for a bunch of other projects, some sort of senior level something or other and . . . it was really cool because at an extremely young age, I was in charge of national projects. No way would it ever happen as an assistant professor, never.

DARRAH: Hm-mm.

FETTERMAN: In fact I was assistant professor, if I recall, remember? We were together?

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And, they'd never give you any kind of leeway like that. And you moved up much faster as long as you show you're responsible, so a lot of things I loved about the early part of my career I moved up faster, and, they encouraged me to write, which I was committed to as well, to document what I was doing, which is I know a problem a lot of my colleagues don't always do . . . take what they've learned which is phenomenal and share it sufficiently.

DARRAH: And the encouragement was coming from who?

FETTERMAN: The Research Corporation.

DARRAH: From the research corporation.

FETTERMAN: I had an unusually phenomenal . . . mentor in a sense, in that regard from Kasten Talmadge who was the president of the company who loved my work. I'll tell you a little a bit more about him if I could.

FETTERMAN: Let me tell you real quick about the RMC Research before I came back to Stanford again, because it's just funny. I remember one time when I first got to RMC Research Corporation, I was still a graduate student and I also teaching a little bit at Stanford and also I guess a senior researcher or some like that, in the research corporation and they needed an ethnographer for our project which was sponsored by the Department of Education's National Institute of Education, and they selected me because of my balance of activities and probably my link with Stanford, I mean that's how the game works [inaudible]

DARRAH: Sure!

FETTERMAN: And I remember in the first month or two, we were in a big conference room and Kast my boss, the president of the company, he was about six foot something, crew-cut in those days, and he always wore expensive box-like suits, so they always look very kind of not ominous but overwhelming at times, and he would be at one end of the table and I'd be at the end, and we would almost be yelling at each other. The first months or two that I worked at the place, he'd be saying "David your work has no reliability. You see it once you write it down, how do you know?" And I said "well, it's better than you, at least I've got validity which is more than you can say" – he was a psycho-metrician, so he, we went back and forth, so everyone figured I'd be fired in about, about a month or two. So they all jumped on his wagon because he was the president, you know, how it works organizationally. Everyone else figured I was the guy not to be associated with. And after the first two or three site visits, he was so convinced about ethnography, so compelled by what I'd found and the authenticity of it, and everything else, that he'd switched his mind completely about the value of this and so I had to be on every project to create a qualitative-quantitative

balance and they (the other research colleagues) were left in the dust just because they had aligned themselves politically instead of intellectually – failing to realize that he actually thinks.

DARRAH: Yeah, yeah.

FETTERMAN: Even though he had the opposite point of view.

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: So, that was pivotal, that whole life experience sort of working with . . . the best thing about, I guess that I've done in my life is work with good people.

DARRAH: Mm, mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: It's where you learn a lot. You argue, you may not agree at all but they're in, they're the kind of people who are not just ideologues, they'll actually listen and they'll change and you change because of that, so that was pivotal because of the kind of people and the kind of work. The only reason I went back to Stanford was because, well the research project dried up.

DARRAH: All right.

FETTERMAN: Even though we were beating ETS, and SRI, all the other comparable research corporations, it was still getting so ridiculous as far as what you could compete for anymore. It was time to come back and there was an opening at Stanford where they wanted someone who did large scale program level assessment from a cultural perspective. What are the odds? You've got me.

DARRAH: Okay. Now would this was the period when you were working in internal audit?

FETTERMAN: Exactly.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: They wanted program evaluation, they wanted it to focus on how does the whole program work and what are the cultures within the organization. Quick example, when I looked at nurses here in the emergency room at the hospital as one of their programs that we looked at, they liked it because I looked at the fact that the Life Flight nurses (who worked on the helicopters) had special uniforms and they didn't associate with the other nurses. Is that a status thing I thought? Are they arrogant, what's the deal? Well, that's what the nurses thought of them, they (the Life Flight nurses) wouldn't help them out in an emergency situations or things like that. So I was brought in to see what's going on, why is this so dysfunctional? While I'm working in the Internal Audit Department I focused on program assessment and that sort of thing. But from a qualitative ethnographic perspective I found that if you looked at the Life

Flight nurses side or perspective you would find that they were wearing those uniforms to purposely distinguish themselves from regular nurses and purposely didn't want to get involved in day-to-day emergency services because if they did they couldn't extract themselves when they were called for an emergency requiring helicopter rescue or transport.

DARRAH: Oh, yeah.

FETTERMAN: So there was a real reason for all this stuff but you wouldn't know that unless you talked to them and found that out. Not only that, but that's where your applied part comes into another level of them sharing that with the regular nurses because they never communicated that. So the nurses never knew what the rationale was for why they needed to maintain that separation.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: It made perfect sense, and the uniform was also functional. It was what they needed to be on a small helicopter.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: So anyway, I had a number of projects like that. It kept on evolving and I found myself more and more tied to the evaluative parts of ethnography and that's how I developed more and more of the area called ethnographical evaluation.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: And became then the president of the American Evaluation Association while maintaining my positions, of course, here and also academically I was a faculty member in the School of Education at the same time. And what it said to me is more about how people are changing the field in evaluation than it did about, anything about my capacity, because they elected me president as to – it wasn't because I'm so special even though, you know, obviously I think I'm fine, I'm qualified in that sort of thing. It's because there were enough hard headed examples, including my own, of how this is a contribution to evaluation ethnographic culture kind of work.

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: That it convinced enough people that you need to have a mixture of qualitative/quantitative and it's respectable, and that became more of a test that they could evalu . . . if they could . . . elect me, it meant that they respected qualitative ethnographic things sufficiently. Fifteen years before that there's no way it would have happened because it was qual

. . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . it was a par . . . pariah approach.

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: So, so part of my position were more a litmus test of how our professional associations are changing and how they're respecting it. I know I'm sort of a . . . sort of a . . . an ethnographer that sort of going into many different areas, in new territory, whether it's technology, or whether it's evaluation whatever, but the common thread is the ethnography that brings through that process and from what's useful about it is it tells me how the professional associations are, or not changing, AERA, drastic change. It's the only quantitative psychometrician kind of mode. Now, guess what? You see more qualitative dissertations . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . on, in articles then you do quantitative.

DARRAH: You also associated with empowerment evaluation and you've been talking about evaluation here. What are the, what do you think of is the defining or core components of empowerment evaluation? What does it have to, what does an evaluation have to have to be . . .

FETTERMAN: To be empowerment?

DARRAH: Empowerment evaluation.

FETTERMAN: Let me, let me show you on one second, let me get this real quick.

[Pause]

FETTERMAN: Two, two things on empowerment, one, I should mention, it's a natural evolution of the anthropological thread in my career. Because actually it's rooted in action anthropology, Sol Tax. people like that, and a community psychology like [Rappaport?] where I'm, instead of doing the evaluation for someone, I'm helping them learn how to assess themselves and simply is action [back ground noise] anthropology, instead of me telling the folks what to do, I use ethnographic tools to be able to have, understand difference [inaudible – background noise] and have them set the agenda for what seems me to go rather than me setting the agenda, that's the parallel so you know the roots between them and what makes it fundamentally empowerment oriented eva . . . evaluation versus something else is that it can be almost the same as regular evaluation, qualitative, quantitative, with only one minor difference. Everything that you knew about evaluation you turn on its head, that's all. So instead of me being in charge, the group is in charge. Instead of there being everything confidential, we open up everything we have to say about the situation openly, put in a big room, because I understand Machiavellian politics where if it's just one-on-one

someone can come back at some one, the dean versus the secretary, so you keep large group. Also it's because I value diversity, I value different perspectives in building where we need to go, not just because you [inaudible] humanitarian or liberal or some like that, because I think it's actually functional and helpful. Those are the key, for empowerment discourse that you're building capacity to do evaluation and to perform better [mumble] program or activity and the ten principles that I won't go into it now are in our latest book that, that just came out this year, 'Empowerment Evaluation Principles and Practice,' and they range from – you have to be focused on improvement, building capacity, huh, huh, huh, social justice, outcomes, respecting local knowledge, respecting expert knowledge. There's, there's ten different principles that guide what it's about to make it more explicit what are those core issues of, o-o-f what sort of focus or . . . defying what empowerment is about.

DARRAH: Okay I, I want you to take a minute and imagine, think back in the past, and imagine a time before there was anything called empowerment evaluation. [Background noise] When was the first time that, that you remember actually using that label?

FETTERMAN: I remember, and you'll get a kick out of this 'cause you know Hank as well.

DARRAH: Yeah, oh yeah!

FETTERMAN: So [chuckle] so Hank and I were . . .

DARRAH: We're, we're talking about Hank Levin [Henry M.]

FETTERMAN: Hank Levin. Right.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: Which yeah, which is our mutual, one of our many mutual links.

DARRAH: Yes [chuckle].

FETTERMAN: And . . . Chuck knows Hank very well, worked under and with him and [inaudible] for a long time at Stanford University. He is at Columbia now but . . .

DARRAH: Hank is a . . . an economist of education.

FETTERMAN: Right.

DARRAH: At, at Stanford.

FETTERMAN: And head of the accelerated school program at the time.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Huh, which was a national education reform movement.

DARRAH: I think very awkwardly here David, we've provided the context for this oral history now [laughter]

FETTERMAN: Yes, yes, exactly we did it sort of a backward way [chuckle] but . . .

DARRAH: Backwards.

FETTERMAN: But we got there, so, so yes, Chuck and I have known each other for many years, many years, and we've seen a lot of the interesting personalities in the fields, but, that, that's another story [chuckle] anyway, we were, I was working with Hank on accelerated school projects and he asked me to help him with what I was specializing at the time which was evaluation but also specifically with gifted and talented children – I have a book on gifted talented education. And his idea was to treat all kids as if they were gifted and talented to take my model what I was working on but apply it to everyone, which is possibly Hank's kind of mode. So, you know, just [inaudible] exact with this, so I was helping him use what I knew to shape it towards the main stream which I believed in doing and I had written in, in the end of my book as well anyway. And it was like about eleven at night, or twelve, something like that. I was working with Hank on one project with the accelerated school pro . . . program which were focused in helping empower teachers and parents to take more charge of their schools again. I was also doing another one out of OSEP [Editor: Office of Special Education Programs] special education program, U. S. Department of Education Project on self determination and kid with disabilities. So, I'd been interviewing kids who like were paraplegic, quadriplegics, and their houses that would help in [being?] identified for a varieties of self determined and learn more and more about what that meant and how they were more self determined and I have all sorts of different stories about what kids have done to take charge of [lives?] even though they were in that kind of situation. And it suddenly occurred to me that everything I've ever been involved in the last three years, and all at the same time with different projects was empowerment, was the underlying theme. And the thing that I tried to do in my ethnographic evaluation work was also empowering, and it suddenly crystallized about that mid . . . around midnight or so, this concept of [empowerment evaluation] and I wrote, and I wrote, I wrote most of the night, and in the morning it still made sense, so I knew something had to be something there. So I ended up, and I also happen to be elected president around the same time of the American Evaluation Association, so I thought, I'm going to give it a shot and I put it in my presidential address like a big trial, a very big trial balloon and it was unbelievable. I thought you had, there was one tiny, I took it from a perspective of a [typical?] academic. There is a little tiny area that I needed cleaning up, my self assessment was very sloppy, very off target. Sometimes done by other folk, just like, just

massive, and it just needed work. So that's all it was meant to be initially was clean up that area that is just, basically got off and just needed to be cleaned up to do it right to help people, because it's to help people if they're doing wrong and everything, you know, I'm making in a mess and undermining the credibility and everything else. So I just – all it is is making it just more systematic and turn it around so they're in charge of it, it gives much more [qualitively?] ethnographic in terms of understanding the ima . . . view of reality and appreciating and respecting it.

DARRAH: So, so in that sense it was grounded firmly in, in the ideas of capacity building.

FETTERMAN: Absolutely.!

DARRAH: That had been there for a long time!

FETTERMAN: Absolutely!

DARRAH: Yeah, yeah.

FETTERMAN: Absolutely, absolutely and, then I found immediately a good percentage of the population in the association around the world loved it, loved it. It was just the right thing to say at the right time. If I had said ten years early it would have been a flop, it just, perfect timing, it was like catching a wave, you know, it just, I just caught the right place about people, not trusting the larger authorities, wanting more control, wanting help to build capacity, there, there are larger things in society, society in the world going on at the same time that converged with this concept.

DARRAH: And what year was this?

FETTERMAN: That was in . . . it was ninety-three.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: And, I mean it was world – it was – I mean it was really like a tsunami, I mean it was like I, I, I, next year I was in South Africa, I've been to South Africa, Finland, Rio, just got back from the UK, Japan, I mean it was like un – believable. Around the world, people wanted help doing this and we're – doing it, like almost immediately, once they had a little assistance. So then I star . . . then I wrote the first book about in eighty, I guess it got published eighty-five, 'Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self Assessment and Accountability.' Then in 2001 evolved into 'Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation,' which is a lot more case examples and the first book had some examples I did with Hank, as a matter of fact . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . where he adopted empowerment evaluation as part of the [national reform?] movement. Later I had more other examples was accreditation and self assessment and other more projects and this latest one

in eighty-y-y, ninety-five is not only interesting because it has the ten principles that were always implicit that we made finally explicit.

DARRAH: Okay, got it.

FETTERMAN: But it has big projects, fifteen million dollar projects that we have with Hewlett Packard helping people bridge the digital divide, using empowerment evaluation, and I'll get, I'll get this one a little bit later. So it was sort of like we've gone to a point where it's, we've gone to a, such a high level of, of people who are taking, who have real money or real serious taking big risk with this thing because they didn't think it was a risk and luckily it paid off big time.

DARRAH: Okay, I want to pick up . . .

FETTERMAN: Good!

DARRAH: . . . on something that you said.

FETTERMAN: Yeah.

DARRAH: You said that the principles book in, in effect has made explicit what was always implicit in empowerment evaluation.

FETTERMAN: Yeah, yeah.

DARRAH: Okay. Now I want to make sure that . . . I understand you correctly. Were there other h . . . has a . . . empowerment evaluation itself changed over time so that there are, are features or characteristics that maybe weren't explicit in the first place but are now, as it's been used in more and more settings.

FETTERMAN: Yeah, yeah. I would say that's true, I'd say that's right. For example, hold on one second that has been buzzing, just one second.

[Pause]

FETTERMAN: Yeah I would say there's couple things. What's been consistent all the way through is building capacity, improvement, it's not a neutral experiment, empowerment evaluation ne . . . is never a neutral experiment.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Its aim towards helping people move forward and improve. That's always been there. Building capacity has always been there, so they can do more and more of it themselves. Social justice has always been there, it deals with social inequities and issues in some way to help people move forward and redress some of those things. What's kind of new is the explicit about evidence based work or another words usually it's been focused on the community knowledge, on respecting the local community which is usually ignored or considered not sufficiently scientific or

valuable, and that's always been there. But what hasn't been there sufficiently explicitly is that we also respect scholars' work. Instead of dismissing them because they burnt communities for many years, misleading them or being disingenuous we go, wait a second, there's just been a misapplication of a very good thing, that's all. So let's see what it is and maybe adapt instead of adopt in some of those things and let's make that. So that's how, that, that's been pie . . . piece meal in empowerment evaluation over the years and now it's absolutely fundamental. Because the bottom line is like saying you only want to do qualitative work. Well you got qualitative and quantitative, there's only one world, use whatever tools you can get to help people figure what, what's going on. Same thing. [Yeah?] ignore knowledge base of a community, but you can't only live by that either.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: So we try, that's, that I think we made more – it's a good question – we, we've made that more explicit.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: It's been, it's been piece meal depending on who's been practicing it in the past.

DARRAH: Okay, okay.

FETTERMAN: So, that's changed, I would say somewhat. And the other ones have all been in there in different ways. Inclusion has always been a major part of it. And one of the reasons I just – quick example of inclusion of why I value diversity from a very pragmatic perspective. When I gave the, my talk on, on empowerment evaluation as a presidential address, I thought well, I should introduce this as a kind of interesting way to the association. It's a whole new concept for them for me too, let's present it with more of a dynamic kind of way. So, I said – I got a special guest speaker help me introduce it. And I got up to my podium and I said, for my first plenary speaker, I'd like to introduce you a very special person, a Nobel laureate, twice over. I've read his work as a kid, I've wor . . . I've read, re-read it as an adult and I'm still in awe and admiration, I could go on for the entire afternoon, or morning, telling you about this person but instead I'd rather just have him speak to you, please welcome Doctor Albert Einstein [laughter]. People went cra-a-zy! It was of course an actor we had hired, I had hired and trained about evaluation in anthropology for about six months before, with the same wild hair, the same kind of tone, and the same phrases, and he was phenomenal – now keep in mind, I was getting this introduction going right in front of these thousands of people, right. I'm

thinking myself, we, we snuck him in a dumb waiter because we didn't want anyone to see him to give it away.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: What if he got stuck in the dumb waiter, they'd think I was crazy. They probably already thought I was crazy.

DARRAH: It's Albert Einstein he would have thought his way out of [inaudible]

FETTERMAN: [chuckle] Yeah, right, right, the problem is he was dead for so many years [inaudible]

DARRAH: [laughter]

FETTERMAN: It was like it was so funny. And then, now but here is the reason for the story. I thought it was a dynamic way of introducing it because he – I talked about innovation and new ideas and how they come to you and then you have to come out and understand them rationally afterwards. So he is talking in one of these remote mikes, right?

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: And the mike is giving out. You know how it sometimes can disconnect that sort of thing? So it's losing the quality of the presentation which shouldn't matter but can affect how I am introducing this whole new approach.

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: So, I'm behind him, like a jerk, pulling on to his hips because that's where the belt clip was, doing a dance behind him looking, you know, which of course is not exactly helping the self presentation, right with this great new approach. And, I'm thinking this is really not flying too well but it's the only thing I can do to keep the voice going so that I don't lose the power of this thing. When you think about it, [inaudible] on Einstein with me, with a cowboy hat, by the way on because it was done in Dallas, Texas and that was the theme.

DARRAH: [laughter]

FETTERMAN: Behind him, so I was thinking, this cannot go for too long, right? Well, there's this one guy who I happen to like a lot, I just think, I just enjoy his company, but he is a pariah, actually in the field, because he only, he's kind of a nerd. He only talks about technology, he always talks about the latest [inaudible] drive, the latest that and everything and I quite frankly like to talk about that, not the only things, but I talk to him when I go there and I can get updated, we can talk about things I've learned, he's learned, etc. I like him and I just happen to like him anyway, but it's true, he will spend the whole time just talking about that, like the A/V guy in high school?

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: That's who he is. I like him, most people don't, they think [inaudible] probably they treat him very poorly and I think inappropriately. Well, guess what? Thousands of people in an audience, major approach that I'm launching is riding on this one presentation to introduce it to the whole field, and I'm taking a risk by having an actor helping me to do this as well, and it's flaking out because of the connection. Who in this entire scenario, this cultural scene [inaudible] large, notices a hand held microphone connected to a cord at the other end of the auditorium and brings it over to save the day? Him!

DARRAH: Whoa!

FETTERMAN: It reminds me, always, if I ever have to forget how important the constant conclusion is, the weakest link in your entire group organization could be the one who saves your life, or the way in which you present.

DARRAH: And did!

FETTERMAN: And did.

DARRAH: In that particular . . .

FETTERMAN: And, and did, and did.

DARRAR: Yeah, yeah.

FETTERMAN: So I mention that example when I talk about inclusion as a fundamental principle in empowerment evaluation. Because also, you know how it is [here?] on a project, it's easier not to include this person or that or whatever 'cause they're too far away, or they're a pain in the neck, or whatever, and it's true to for all of us, for budgetary reasons, for time reasons, and what the principles says is, in spite of those situations err on the side of finding a way of including that person.

DARRAR: There are risks of not including.

FETTERMAN: Big time!

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: Big time!

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: Big time! I did a project on this Palo Alto empowerment evaluation, we did one each Palo Alto, it was a pretty good size one, a five million dollar project, we didn't include some of the neighborhood folks working on housing, ['cause?] we didn't have time, they didn't have the money to develop [so well?] a lot of different good reasons totally logical, fair, honest equitable reasons and it was wrong, it was stupid. They got mad at us, we had to go and have a whole other weekend together which came out of our time and our budget, and you learned your lesson. Of

course they should be included otherwise you have to re-invent the wheel, it looks like we're trying to play some game when you're not, even though for economical obvious [political?] reasons you learn incl . . . err on the side of finding a way of having their voice heard. They'll probably save the day and it w . . . and it . . . of course the opposite is if you don't you're gona to sabotage your own situation.

DARRAH: What are the, what do you think of the conditions under which empowerment evaluations has been most successful?

FETTERMAN: Usually if there's a spirit or philosophy that aligns with it. If there's like in [Gruel's?] work in s . . . in c . . . in L. A. which is in the first book 'Work with African American Community' and . . . drug abuse issues, Aids and all the things of that nature, they're already into the same mind set. They already understand the concept of people should be in charge of their own lives, self determination, that's the other fundamental principle of empowerment evaluation, it's c . . . building capacity and building self determination to functioning by yourself,

DARRAH: So this is not so much a, a case of, of converting people who were not ready for it but more giving form to something that is already – the roots of it, are already there.

FETTERMAN: That's where it works best.

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: We've done it in Texas audit agencies, also where the philosophy is exactly the opposite, top down . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . authoritarian, etc., and it's worked but you know, you reflect in your life and you realize you know when you have so many years left . . .

DARRAH: Yeah [chuckle]

FETTERMAN: Where are you going to spend your life? You're going to spend it fighting to get incredibly small gains just to prove it can work in a difficult situation?

DARRAH: Yeah, yeah.

FETTERMAN: Or you're going to go with people who understand where you are [abouts?] in terms of the spirit of it but don't have the mechanics or the rigor yet.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: [cough] I'm putting my energy where it's going to go like to the s . . . you know, to the, to the sky, you know? To the stars rather than so, some place where it's going to maybe, maybe, maybe get outside the outside the door.

DARRAH: And do you feel that that probably is the . . . one of the, the most common sets of conditions where it's not appropriate when it is kind of imposed from top down . . .

FETTERMAN: Yes.

DARRAH: . . . because somebody is . . . read something in the newspaper column that says this is a good idea to do [it won't?] won't empower everybody.

FETTERMAN: Well, well the irony exactly, the irony though is [even in those?] situations it can be backfire in a positive way.

DARRAH: Yeah, right.

FETTERMAN: Both ways, both ways. It can go [impose?] it and then the reality is once it's in place, people love it, it catches on like wild fire and the people on the top who imposed it felt wait a minute, what did I just do?

DARRAH: Be careful of what you ask for.

FETTERMAN: ye . . . yeah!

DARRAH: Yeah, yeah.

FETTERMAN: Exactly, so I found in many hospitals I worked in, we, the docs didn't really want is to everyone be involved, etc. and we had to, some of the patients come at certain nights by mistake to some of these meetings we were having, and they loved it and totally were informative, I mean a quick example, [Lee Ian?] and some other hospitals we were at, is, they had these docs meeting and they didn't want anyone else yet because they weren't ready [inaudible] they didn't know certain things and so many, some patients showed up on one of our meeting nights [serendipitously?] [chuckle] and they said 'you know, it's a wonder – we had these two kids, one was a breast cancer screening [our?] program, they said this is wonderful you have all this stuff in this measuring information system, but you know what, if I didn't have money to pay my baby sitter and to get a, a bus over here, I could never participate in this. Well he told everyone there that if we don't take care of that infra structural issue, all the work we are doing is worthless.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And they understood then the value of having local folks be involved in it, never mind great ideas, or one of the quick example, in Brazil, I was in Rio, they invited me down there, this is a quick of a story Bob, I'll tell you about it a little bit later. In that one, the president of, of one of the universities, ed . . . now couldn't understand why they had janitors going to the empowerment evaluation workshops and sessions that we had down there. And, you know, what does the janitor know what're

they going to do? The janitor just got up to start speaking about how he whitewashes all the graffiti every day and the president walked in at that time and said, oh my God, that's exactly why we have them there. They understand the philosophy of respect for this institution and they can implement something that can show and demonstrate that we respect this faster than I can and is now demanded that we have every level of person involved at these meetings.

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: Isn't that something?

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: I think when people get that involvement, they understand not initially, but when they get the reality of it and see that they're part of what people contribute, they realize they don't have to be as threatened. It's [inaudible] like being out of a job and not because the classic fear before was, you're empowered to come up with your own goals and strategies . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . I'm here to help you with credible evidence.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Then as your supervisor and manager I'm threatened, right?

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: You know management, you d . . . you studied all management stuff, you know this stuff from inside out.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Well get this! When you then explain to them, no-no, I'm just making your job easier, you're still a supervisor, you're still the manager, you're just in charge of holding them accountable to what they said they're going to do now.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: So, you still have a job [back ground noise] you're still [inaudible] ch . . . in charge, the only difference is you're not just arbitrarily telling them what to do and they're hassling you and argue with you, it's easier because they said they want to do that.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And if it's in too – it's not in a vacuum, it's in the context of what the larger organizational goal are anyway.

DARRAH: Right, right, right. So I, I think the next question you, you addressed in a lot of ways, but I just want to give [it opportunity if?] you wanted to add to it, where do you think of empowerment evaluation fits into the universe of evaluation approaches in general?

FETTERMAN: Good question and actu . . . the, let's put it this way, when I first started, obviously it was the end of zero, I was nothing.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: End of one maybe, or whatever.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: It's now, as I understand it, represented by a fourth of the entire population of the American evaluation Association.

DARRAH: Whoa!

FETTERMAN: Aff . . . is affiliated with the collaborative empowerment – collaborative as history of empowerment division of the American Evaluation Association – which I am the chair of now. So I would say, it is considered a, a, a part of the intellectual landscape of evaluation now.

DARRAH: [inaudible]

FETTERMAN: Form . . . formally. I've had my most critical opponents who really hate this kind of approach . . .

DARRAH: And why do they hate it?

FETTERMAN: They believe it's giving evaluation away and they, they're afraid of it – the way it's been explained to me is there is a guild mentality in any association.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And what I'm doing is giving away the tools to do this which means people can do it in essence for free and you're taking away from the professions' ability to charge for that, so that's what's it's been explained to me at AERA and other places when like [Nick Smith?] has explained that to me and others from the big sessions we've had. Other reasons is that it . . . it rubs against, w . . . I, I think well for whatever it's worth, I should have mentioned this, this thing, even though it sounds very logical and simple and obviously rooted in n . . . action anthropology, has been pheno-o-menally controversial, phenomenally. Not as much now but when it first came out, I wrote tons of articles and back and forth for people who could not deal with who loved it, [it's either] people who fell in love with this thing as if it was the best thing since sliced bread, I mean world wide, global kind of scale or hated it because it is giving evaluation away and would be, they don't need evaluators any more instead of realizing, you still needed evaluating but at a higher level.

DARRAH: You're just doing something different.

FETTERMAN: Yeah, they – and you know what? Here's what can miss a lot of [crucial?] evaluating, by the way, of wha . . . of the utility of this, because I haven't evaluated for, you know me, I've, many, many years.

DARRAH: Yes.

FETTERMAN: A couple of decades, I haven't always been doing empowerment stuff and I know what the regular evaluation is about, and I say, you know, I'm right here in, in the audience here, use ninety percent of your capacity when you do an evaluation, nobody raise your hand. How many sixty-five percent, two hands. Okay thirty-five, okay a good part of the hands went up.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: I say you know what? If folks were already doing some basic level evaluation, which means that they have to have a management information system, they have to have a base line, they have to have some basic things in place, couldn't you function at a much higher level?

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: And they all agreed I was right. I know the, I know the mind set, I know I've been there, I, you know, that's when they started appreciating that this is got a place that's powerful and important that have, that helps them improve the value of quality of their lives, not just the folks that they're working with. Also they realize that more and more clients are not tolerating just the outside expert who's not in touch. They need to be more in charge of that, that plan for their own future. And the thing is with this empowerment evaluation merges together basic planning, implementation, evaluation and strategic planning. You know and I know, the only reason we have terms for those is for pedagogical purposes.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Reality is n . . . you know [inaudible] it's kind of a, it's a . . . it's this trip that's non-ending. It's in . . .

DARRAH: It's [inaudible] simultaneously.

FETTERMAN: Yeah! Of course!

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: We just break a [mallet?] and the reality is they need to be sort of pulled back together again so people institutionalize evaluations as part of their planning and management. It's not something at, you know, it's secondary whatever, and it's informed by ethnography because it respects the imi . . . [imicore?] insider's perspective reality.

DARRAH: Well that's a good safe way to, to the next question [inaudible]. How do you think empowerment evaluation gets in to the universe of evaluation approaches that are typically associated with ethnographers and applied anthropologists?

FETTERMAN: How does, how does empowerment evaluation fit into it?

DARRAH: Yeah, fit into that universe?

FETTERMAN: Oh! Beautifully! I mean It's o . . . for the v . . . for, how does it fit into the applied world in a sense for applied . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . that's why it's always been beautifully linked was Society for Applied Anthropology or what it's not por . . . or what have you, folks in those camps unders . . . have understood empowerment from the beginning, that's valuable – they can see the practical [impact?] they can see the relationship with clients, they can see the relationship with still respectful local interest, using basic tools of ethnography that has been a beautiful synergy and a beautiful link and quite frankly a comfort because you have folks from my own camp or my own tribe that understood what I was about and what I was doing, even though I was in a whole different territory, th . . . and making forays into whole different worlds in evaluation.

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: They knew my roots and could underst . . . could, they could see what I was doing, and for those folks it was, like most of the other countries I've been working in, obviously transparent, the big thing I would have got, in fact when I introduced this to other countr . . . in other countries as David [to?] have a lot of friends ou . . . elsewhere obviously all over, all over the world who are involved with things like this, why did it take you so long to do this, were you, we wanted this for a long time and it's obviously straightforward, which is a dark handed compliment, I thought, you know, [they're?] other things that they were doing.

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: You know it's like [inaudible] and, and the thing is, but in America, it's considered threatening and controversial and scary to a lot of folks, and those are the ones I've been battling back and forth with . . . both symbolically and in literature and that sort of thing. An I value it because It's made my thinking much sharper, more precise, and I think the reason was so controversial, I, I'm still not sure, entirely what has happened with this because it's become so big, I, but I'm understand more about it now as time's gone on. I think the reason it became so powerful good and bad, as far as making people very upset or loving it, is that many people questioned what evaluation is itself, and what an evaluator is. If I'm letting go and you're in charge

suddenly, and I'm the coach and facilitator, what is an evaluator? And if you can assess as a community where you are, what is evaluation, if it's not that independent assessment [inaudible]. So I think I struck a nerve that's

so fundamental to the field that that also it's worth, made it become so big, because even the negative comments that were made put in the limelight because of the key people who had critical concerns [background noise] and those who loved it also embraced it so overwhelmingly that it was called a movement for a long time.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: You know, which it wasn't because, it wasn't like I'm coordinating preferably micromanaging this whole thing. I'm doing a lot of this to lead it, to write an argument organize, but it's been going on independently all over the world, and luck, I'm lucky enough that people check in with me so we can try to keep something in the right direction, but a lot of it has been done independently and they check in to see is this sound okay David?' Great, and a lot of time they don't check in.

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: So, that's why I keep on writing books and articles is to help guide people a direction I think it is so authentic and remains you know, a, a pipe value of high quality.

DARRAH: So if we look ten years in the future and . . .

FETTERMAN: [Laughter] another common link? You'll have to read the paper to understand that one because I [chuckle]

DARRAH: [chuckle] And we looked optimistically . . .

FETTERMAN: Yeah

DARRAH: . . . ten years in the future.

FETTERMAN: Mm-mm.

DARRAH: At empowerment evaluation – what would it look like?

FETTERMAN: One of two things: they will look transparent, like it's just evaluation.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: It'll be so internalized into what people do. The reason I say that is I've already been through this, as you know. I helped to choose a lot of ethnographic evaluation. Well, qualitative forms of evaluation are now just a normal part . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . of what people do in evaluation, they do qualitative and quantitative.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: You know, you're around, I around, twenty years ago . . .

DARRAH: [inaudible] point to it.

FETTERMAN: No way, no way, it was considered a par . . . you were a pariah if you did it . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . and negative, definitely not something that's of any value, shoe . . . it was a negative value, and now it's just part of [inaudible]. You're not doing good evaluation unless you do a combination . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: In my view . . .

DARRAH: Twenty, twenty years ago, I think it, the evaluation was the quantitative part and the qualitative part was kind of context.

FETTERMAN: Yes! Exactly, at best!

DARRAH: Yeah, and, and now that – at best.

FETTERMAN: At best!

DARRAH: And now that should be.

FETTERMAN: Exactly – now equal weight [without?] question.

DARRAH: No.

FETTERMAN: Yo . . . and, you won't and you look the same thing with articles, you'll see, if you see one of the other, you'll see a qualitative insight in what's going on before you'll see the quantitative.

DARRAH: Mm-mm, mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: Same thing with empowerment. I think, since I've already been through this, I've been through where people hated the ethnographic evaluation or loved it, it's the same exact cycle with empowerment valuation, that's already been there, that's why when people get, love it or [inaudible. Background noise] or hated, it doesn't go to your head and you don't get upset. I've seen it, I understand the change process, it's just innovation theory put into practice.

DARRAH: Right, right.

FETTERMAN: That's all it is.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: I'm watching it unfold. I'm just lucky to be riding on the top of the crest at the moment again, and you know what, you crash in that eventually too. Luckily . . .

DARRAH: So it was, that was one thing in the optimistic, what was the other in the optimistic . . . future? [inaudible]

FETTERMAN: The other thing . . .

DARRAH: That it would just become evaluation.

FETTERMAN: The other thing is that it become not just evaluation, but that it also become normative for communities to see that as a normal valuable tool.

DARRAH: Oh.

FETTERMAN: Because you have to remember, we have been socialized, the same way evaluators have been socialized, as community members, to expect someone else to do it for us, or to assess us, we don't like it but we expect it, so much so that when I come to you help you evaluate yourself and, and it gets hard, you go oh no! You, you better do that. And then I have to learn if I'm going to be a good empowerment evaluator, when to jump in and not be a purist or when to say no-no-no, we can do that together or no-no, you should be doing that. So the second part of it is when communities understand and are socialized to get pass the traditional view .

..  
DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . of what evaluation is.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: That's the second level.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: Of where I'm seeing as the optimistic world view for the future.

DARRAH: Okay. And you know what's coming. The pessimistic.

FETTERMAN: The pessimistic of course is the constant fear that I had in South Africa when I was working in townships and that a lot of this becomes high jacked. Republicans love this approach as much as Democrats. Why? Because you're asking people to pu . . . pick themselves up from their own boot straps which I believe in. So both sides love it. I've been approached by the presidential committees to, to be involved with some of the work because they love the stuff? Democrat [are pleased?] without question. The difference between the two is that a lot of Republicans – not all – want to go in the one shot deal of go ahead, I'll help you do this using empowerment evaluation and then you're on your own. And Democrats typically or Liberals tend to realize it's a long return . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . effort. Now having said that, I've met Republicans that understand because they're seasoned and smart individuals who know everything that is substantive, they're meaningful, sustainable, it takes longer.

DARRAH: [Clears throat] Right.

FETTERMAN: You can't do anything in a one shot deal because they're, they're educated. But, if you would were to differentiate it between the two, that's the dichotomy I've seen for why they like this, one likes quick fix, but the same concept, pull your own self up, the other one is more of a long term, and maybe almost too long.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: The d . . . the error on the side of Democrats I've worked with or and the extremely Liberal individuals is that they foster dependency sometimes, trusting too long or always doing it because they don't think some one else has the capacity, instead of letting them make some mistakes but in the, but n . . . you know, but like growing up, a protected environment in a sense . . .

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . to be there with them. And the key in all of this is going to sound very strange. My big mistake when I y . . . first introduced ethnographic evaluation stuff, was I was so, I was so young, I was sort of a purist to didn't do it exactly correctly as [inaudible] ethnographer [background noise]. I'll wait until the truck. If you didn't do exactly right and used, you know, [contextualizations?], emic, edic

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: . . . [dual pova?], than he really couldn't be called that.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: I've learned one big lesson out of that innovation, don't be a total purist, otherwise no one is going to adopt it and they'll adopt something else worse that's a mushy kind of qualitative things [generic?].

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And that's low quality. I've learned just to help people understand it better and better and give them wide attitude to adapt, etc. If I believe in adapting to a local environment, guess what? Same as [inaudible].

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: same [inaudible]

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: In different cultures I worked in too.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: So, that's the, the, the down side part as well.

DARRAH: Okay, final questions . . .

FETTERMAN: Yeah.

DARRAH: . . . what advice would you give the following? A potential empowerment evaluator or practitioner, continue to be sensitive?

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

[Begin Tape 1, Side 2]

FETTERMAN: Take more and more control, if you really believe in it. You've got to allow them to move forward so it's one of the things I would recommend, and caring but at the same time help focused on the idea that you're building capacity and your mission is to help them to become more self determined, not to foster dependency.

DARRAH: What advice would you give somebody entering graduate school in anthropology, a general anthropology program?

FETTERMAN: Huh, I would say don't get too caught up in the status differential between theoretical and applied. It's, it's always going to be there. Find out what you want to do and pursue that, that's number one.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: Number two, think about how you might apply even the most theoretical aspects of what you're studying to real life, because I think that's the fundamental test of a good theory, is life and practice, and then feed it back into a changing theory. If the data doesn't match the theory, you don't modify the data. You just modify the theory, the theory is wrong. This, our, of all our social programs are just theories.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: It's our best guess for what we're doing. Listen to the data, that's my [course?].

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: The condition.

DARRAH: Okay. What advice would you give to the faculty of an anthropology program that emphasizes practice over applications?

FETTERMAN: First, the same recommendation I give to everyone and namely academic setting. Do your best to help your students, foster their talents, understand – be sensitive to what they can do, their strengths and weaknesses and then, and hold them responsible. Once you've got them immersed in real life circumstances. My best first experience, I worked under Bert Pelto and as a medical anthropologist quite frankly he gave us minimal initial training, threw us in the field, and I was in the middle of a massive project, and then, while I was going through the project, he continued the course and the instruction, and then afterwards had this intensive thing, so I had a little bit in the beginning, a lot during.

DARRAH: Mm.

FETTERMAN: He made it real by experiential, so the extent that you can make the applied program real. All of my programs I've ever run in the last two decades have always required [in transit?] as you know, the practical.

DARRAH: Right.

FETTERMAN: And that, as one example of making it real is what's it's all about, because then when you're teaching about these concepts, you're not boring, you're not dry, the real questions they have and they also are etched into their memories beautifully when it's first live with real experience, rather than just an abstraction.

DARRAH: Okay. And final question, what advice would you give to . . . a freshman student who has checked the 'undecided' box next to major?

FETTERMAN: Check out anthropology. No kidding! I was thinking about becoming a psychologist when I first started and I got introduced to anthropology and it gave me . . .

DARRAH: How did you get introduced?

FETTERMAN: I was involved in a couple of . . . programs where they were doing in pharmacy and some other areas they had some interesting jobs on looking at titrations for different herbs, like, and that got me involved in that medical education . . . in anthropology program . . . to see whether these herbs did anything and then I got more and more caught up in it and realized this had to do with the more cultural issue, not a chemical one and instead of just looking at titrations of what the herb, what was in the herbs, chemically speaking, from pharmaceutically speaking and then comparing them with synthetic things I then, it unfolded into it's the cultural practice of perception of the use of these things that was important, that got me immersed in this. Now also, a year or two before that, I lived in Israel on, on a kibbutz for about a year or so.

DARRAH: Oh okay.

FETTERMAN: So, that was the other part as I lived in a different world where I got to become marginal, I got to b . . . so, to see what it, it's like to live in a different culture, ask [Apel Habechmouth?] where is the bathroom. I didn't, I studied Hebrew for many, many years, and I didn't know it at all. I could learn to read it, but I didn't know what I was reading. When you're thrown in a situation you got to know where the bathroom is, guess what, you learn how to speak Hebrew.

DARRAH: Very quickly. [Laughter]

FETTERMAN: Oh! Really quickly, and the motivation is like really compelling.

DARRAH: Yeah.

FETTERMAN: So, I, I learned a tremendous amount about that and the rhythm of the harvest season and all sort of thing . . . and all these things sort of, sort of sensitized me to what, why anthropologies were in my mind I went through [background noise] I felt like I was learning the most and you know, previous to that and in an informal basis, when I was in high

school I used to do what my daughter is doing, go over to the people's houses all the time, different backgrounds, that sort of thing, and I found I was learning a tremendous amount, constantly from all these different families, by going over there, so I, I could see the roots of it earlier and earlier on . . . that, that made me sort of inquisitive about different kind of people's world view and it wasn't a world view or the only one world view that mattered. My mom, I, I, sometimes, my mom sometimes comes to my conferences once in a while. She'll, just to have lunch with me sometimes, as a kick, and all if I'm not too far away.

DARRAH: Mm-mm.

FETTERMAN: And so, what I'll often do I . . . one of them in Boston she flew down just for the day, or for the afternoon, and . . . she'll be in the audience waiting for me to finish my spiel and stuff, but I often have an introductory thing, you know, like unless we have a small group what's your name, what do you do, what do you know, they're about thirty, forty people, not too many, a real small group. And I go, "you look really familiar, you're, you're my mom!" And, and, and people get a kick out of that sort of thing. But before that I mention the example of how my mom used to run out of the door saying, you know, we want to take care of dishes and we want to take care of the garbage, and my mom used to always say, and then we'd all leave and go, we know who we is, are, us. Well, even that gave me a frame of different world views of who's serving power, how things really work, the whole structure of language, what it really means, it's not always it's so literal, all those things I think crystallize into the trajectory by the end of going it, over more of a mimic understanding the mimic point of view and listen carefully to the way in which people use language, all the way through the, through the life, to tell you symbolically [background noise] who they are and what they're about, what their values are, and that sort of trajectory all the way through.

DARRAH: Okay.

FETTERMAN: Beautiful [inaudible]

DARRAH: Anything you want to add?

FETTERMAN: No!

DARRAH: Final word for the record?

FETTERMAN: No!

DARRAH: That sounds like a good final word.

FETTERMAN: Yeah, no, I appreciate why pre . . . we want to thank them . . . John and everybody over here for doing this oral history project because we both feel that that is a contribution that we believe in to build this oral

history so that, you know, each generation can keep on building, so we really want to thank you and appreciate it.

DARRAH: And that's our final word!

FETTERMAN: Beautiful!

[End of Interview]