

FNP 25

Interviewee: Beatrice L. Hines

Interviewer: Nicole M. Arnold

Date: October 19, 1995

Q: So, basically, start from the beginning.

A: You mean how I started at the *Herald*?

Q: Actually, let's just start with your family first and your childhood.

A: Well, I was born in Williston, Florida, which is near Gainesville and my parents separated when I was five and my brother was two. My mother moved here with us to Miami. I went to school here, and graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in 1956, before you were even thought about. A year later I married a young man named James Fredric Hines. I had a scholarship in voice to Huntsville college, but it was a small scholarship and my mother was afraid that she would not be able to keep me there, and she did not want me to be disappointed. So the idea was we were going to work and save our money, but then this guy that I had a crush on since I was nine years old swept me off my feet, and we used the money for a wedding. I was twenty-four when he was killed; he was twenty-seven. I had two sons. Rick, who is my older son, and Shawn, who is a student at the University of Miami in the Law School. This is his last year in law school. They are both married and Rick has three children, three daughters. Shawn has one daughter. My mother is seventy-six years old, and just had knee replacement surgery. Otherwise, she is as strong as I do not know what.

My life is not that colorful. It is just sort of ordinary. I was working as a maid when I read the paper. I was reading the paper one Sunday and saw an ad. I wanted to get a better job, because the job that I was on, the people were nice to me, but there were no benefits. I could not take my children on vacations, and I never got a paid vacation. And so at age twenty-seven I was sitting down one Sunday afternoon after church reading the comics section to my children and then I was looking over the ads. I saw an ad that said, "We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer," and it was *The Miami Herald*. They were looking for a file clerk. At the time I was waiting for an answer from a bank to be a teller trainee and the woman in the employment office at the bank told me that I was one of two finalists. So I was almost sure I was going to get that job, but in the meantime someone said not to throw my eggs in one basket, to keep looking. This was in 1965 when things were changing for black people in Dade County, and I had purposely looked for the ads that said, "We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer," because that meant that they would possibly hire black people. Not everyone who said that, though, meant that they had to do it because it was required. I know I went through a lot of phone interviews where when they realized that I was black they would tell me that the job was filled as of that

moment. That kind of hurt, so when I saw the ad from *The Miami Herald*, I decided that I would not call, that I would write a letter of application and I sent a resume. I really believe that it impressed them that I knew what a resume was, although it said all of nothing. I had only finished high school, and that was nine years prior, and I said so on the resume. I used to type forty words per minute. I was real honest. Not realizing that I would even be thought of and to my surprise they sent me a letter. I mailed that letter that Monday, and the next week I got a letter asking me to come in on my next off day which was Wednesday for an interview. That is how I got the job. That is how I got my feet in the door at *The Miami Herald*. I started work, this was in December of 1965, and I started working at the library January 4, which was a Monday, 1966. I did not know at the time that this was a first kind of situation, a first black situation at *The Miami Herald*. They had a white person working on the clerical position in the editorial department. There were blacks working there when I started, but the blacks who were working there were either in the Social Security department, because the Social Security department agency rented space on the sixth floor at the time, so black people were working in the building, but not for the *Herald*. Except for the pressmen, the guys who would mix the ink and the maintenance crew. But they did not have blacks in any clerical positions. I was so naive I thought gee, these people are so good to work for, they are taking me around. The managing editor took me around and introduced me to all the big shots, and I thought that is what they did to all of the employees, the new employees. I realized some time later that they did it because I was black, and this was the first thing. It was a new beginning for the *Herald* and a new beginning for me.

Q: Did they hire you purposely because they wanted to start hiring blacks into the *Herald*, and you just happened...

A: It just happened that I am sure other people applied for that position, but I prayed about it, and I believe that the time was right for them to accept a black person. I think that it was open to anyone, but they did have, "We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer." So I am sure I was one of many people who applied. As a matter of fact, I did not see any other black people applying for that job when I went. I am just really glad I had the nerve to write that letter.

Q: Were a lot of blacks scared off?

A: I think so because, yeah, they were frightened because for instance when I would call certain ads, answer certain ads in the paper, and they would say, "We Are An Equal Opportunity Employer," and they really were not. They had to do that because the government required them to do it, and so many times I got my feelings hurt, and so I was almost not going to do this, but I said all they can do is say no, and to my surprise they said yes! So, I worked in the library for a year before I started back to school at Miami-Dade. I was studying education at

first; I thought I wanted to teach art to children. I love art and I love children and I love music, so it was going to be one or the other. My mother did not think I could ever get a job as a journalist in Miami, in the South, and she would not keep my children if I had told her I was studying journalism.

Q: Did you work while you were going to school?

A: I worked. I went part-time for a while, then I went full-time and I was still working. But my mother was a tremendous help to me because my children were little. When I started at *The Miami Herald* Shawn had just turned five I believe, he is thirty-four now, so, let me see, I will be there thirty years in January, so he was four. He had just turned four. Anyway, my mother and I, after my husband was killed, we lived together for a long time, for twelve years.

Q: Do you mind me asking how your husband was killed?

A: He was killed in a bar room fight. It was a terrible thing. I normally do not like to even talk about it. It happens, you know? Anyway, we lived together for good while, about twelve years. So, all the time I was in school my mother was such a help to me. But it was so funny, one day I had this wonderful boss in the library at the *Herald* who would allow me to, his name was Luis Bueno, and he just really is a wonderful man in my book because I needed somebody to understand that I was trying to better myself, and a lot of employers wouldn't have cared about that, and I told him I was going back to school and he said when you get your schedule of classes we will work your schedule around your classes. That is what he did. So, one night I was working in the evening and the book editor at the time for *The Miami Herald* was also the vice-president of development for Miami-Dade, and we became friends because we worked, he would be in there picking up the books to review and I would be working at night and we would talk and one night I asked him if he would look at a paper I had to turn in. He did and he told me it was an excellent paper and asked if I had thought about a career in journalism. He told me that he was serious and that I had a future here and that things were not going to be this way always. I thought to myself that he knew what he was talking about. So, he talked me into changing my major to journalism and he told me he wanted to look up my teacher. Her name was Barbara Garfunkel and he wanted me to get in her class. That is how I got hooked on journalism.

Q: Was this at Miami-Dade?

A: At Miami-Dade Community College. I had always liked writing. I always thought that maybe one day I would write this great novel and that would be my contribution. I had no idea that I would ever be able to write for *The Miami Herald*. Which I loved. I love that paper. I always read it cover to cover. I

recognized different writers even without reading their bylines; I knew who wrote this or that article because I was so familiar with their style. At that time my two mentors there were Juanita Greene, who is retired now, and Charlie Whited, who died a few years ago. Oh, I just loved him. I love Juanita. She is retired and lives in the Keys now. But I knew their writing so well. When I came to work there I was just so thrilled. I remember the first day, I had been there for about two days when Charlie Whited came to the library and introduced himself. He said he was Charlie Whited and welcomed me aboard. It just made my day. I went home and told my children. Everyday I would go home and report to them what happened at work, because they were little and they wanted to know about my job at *The Miami Herald*; at the "newspaper," as they would call it. So I would tell them things that happened to me, and that particular day I told them about Charlie Whited coming in and I showed them his picture in the paper. Every day from then on for the longest [time] when I would leave for work, Ricky would ask me to tell Mr. Charlie Whited we said hi. He was nice to their mom and they liked that. They were proud of that.

I was there for four and a half years in the library when I got the job as a reporter, and I had not finished college. I still had some hours to go. I have started back many times, but things keep stopping me before getting a degree. The way it happened is that we had had a black reporter, two as a matter of fact, two men, who were there briefly. One was a guy who had gone to school with me from elementary school. He is a teacher, actually he is an assistant principal now at Douglass. But at the time every other city was going up in flames, riots were happening, it was right after Martin Luther King was killed, and they were trying to avoid that from happening, to keep that from happening in Miami. They hired Thuralee Smith, who was a dear friend of mine, he was the first black reporter they hired. Thuralee worked for a while, but he really did not want to do that. Teaching was his heart. Then they hired another guy named Grandville Reed, who worked full-time. He left to go to work for a TV station, I believe, in Tampa, Florida. For a while we had a young black guy who worked part-time in sports, his name slips my memory right now, but he used to be president of the National Association of Black Journalists. Bobby Reed. He worked part-time in sports, but I was the first full-time black woman that they all hired. I was hired to cover general assignment in the newsroom. I got my job in June of 1970. It was so funny, everybody knew I had been moved up to that position but me. I was off on a Monday, and my friend in the library, Hazel Ashmore, called me and asked me why I did not tell her I had been promoted. I asked what she was talking about. I thought maybe promoted to head picture editor in the library, you know? I said, no I had not been promoted. Luis had not said anything to me. She said it was all over the newsroom that I was going to be a reporter. I nearly dropped the phone. I asked for Luis' phone number because he was off on a Monday also. Let me call him because I don't want him to hear this silly rumor and think that I've been trying to get out of the library without first talking to him

because he had been so nice to me. So I called Luis at home and he told me it was true. They called him up on Friday and said that they wanted to know about my personality, and the kind of person I was, and they would be calling me in tomorrow. Well, I could not believe it. It was like pinching myself. I told my mom not to tell anyone because it may not be true. I will go and see what happens. So, I went in the next morning and Larry Jenks, who was the managing editor, called me over and said we would like to give you a chance. Juanita Greene and a woman named Helen Coram, who is now dead, she would have been my age, who was the associate editor of the Women's section at the time, that is what we called it, the Women's section. She and Juanita Greene went to Larry and showed him some of the stuff I had been writing for Miami-Dade. I would share my writings with them because they were always so interested in what I was doing. One day they came in and asked me for some copies, and I thought they were just going to share them with some other reporters. They went to Larry Jenks with it and did not tell me. They were two good friends, I tell you. They are basically the ones who went to bat for me, and Larry Jenks looked at my articles and told me they were going to try me on a trial basis for three months. I was so excited I did not care. It could have been for a week. He asked me if I understood that if this did not work out I would have to go back to the library. I said I understood and that was fine. I got a ten dollar raise. I was so excited. Not about the ten dollar raise, I did not even care. I would have done it for nothing.

Sometimes bad things happen, but good things can come from them. He talked to me on a Tuesday. He said I would start two weeks from today. The day before I was to start, a riot broke out in Liberty City. And I did not even know about it because we did not have a television. At the time I did not want a television for the children, you know, I did not want them to get glued to the TV. And I was not there to supervise them. So, they did not have a TV. They had books and radio. My brother was stationed at Homestead Air Force Base, but he was living with us in Liberty City, and he had been sick. We had taken him down to the base that night for an appointment. On the way back I was going to get off the expressway at 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue and come home that way, but for some reason I did not. Had I gone that way, I would have been smack in the middle of the riot. Instead I went the longer way. I usually would get off at 22<sup>nd</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> to keep from paying the toll. It was fifteen cents toll at the time. I decided to pay the little fifteen cents toll, and get off at 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. It would be closer to the house. That is what we did, and avoided the riot. Probably our car would have been stolen, somebody would have been hurt because they were just throwing rocks at cars. We got my brother comfortable, and I went to bed. The next morning I got up real early because it was my first day on the job, and I got in the office at eight o'clock. Larry Jenks was already there and he said there was some trouble in Liberty City and did I know about it. I did not know about it. I said I lived in Liberty City! But I did not know about it. It was west of where I lived. He asked if I would like to go and cover it. I told him I lived in Liberty City and I know the people there. So that was

my first story that I wrote for the *Herald*, and it ran on the front page. It was about Iceberg slim. This was a guy who was a pimp, who was saying that the riot was hurting his business. Kind of funny. It was like a light side to a serious situation. They ran it on the front page of the A section. I was just so thrilled.

I had a time trying to decide what name I was going to use. I wanted all my classmates to know what I was doing. I just wanted everybody to know that, so I used Beatrice Johnson Hines as the byline. Johnson was my maiden name. That was my first byline. But that was so long. Then I shortened it to Beatrice J. Hines. I didn't like that, it didn't look glamorous enough. Then I just said Beatrice Hines—did not like that. Then I did B.L. Hines, but that sounded too masculine. Then I did Bea and then just Hines, and then somebody was calling me Ms. Behinds. So then I put the L., the middle initial. It was so funny. Larry Jenks came up to me one day and said it has been interesting to see your stories because I never know which byline you are going to use. So I stuck with Bea L. Hines. You know, B-E-A and then the middle initial L., then Hines.

I have done a lot of things at the *Herald*. I have written a column, an issues column. I have covered education, I worked in the "Living Section," which became *Living Today*. I worked there for four-and-a-half years. I have just done a lot of things. My biggest enjoyment was doing the issues column. I did that four-and-a-half years.

Q: What kind of stuff did you write?

A: Well, I wrote about everything. Anything that bugged me or bugged you. You know, people would call me with their special gripes and stuff, and if I agreed I would write a column about it.

Q: What section did that run it?

A: It ran on the front page of the "Local Section." It was just called "Bea L. Hines."

Q: How long ago was that?

A: I stopped writing it in 1985. I wrote that for four-and-a-half years and I enjoyed it and the year I stopped writing it, *Savvy* magazine, which so longer exists, it was a women's magazine, named me as one of the top five woman columnists in the country. I was so thrilled.

Q: That is such an honor!

A: Yes, it was an honor. And now I write periodically a column called, "Parenting Again," it is about grandparents who are rearing their grandchildren for whatever reason. Maybe their children are in jail, maybe they died, maybe they had AIDS.

One of the columns that I did was about a sixty-five year old grandmother who was rearing eight of her grandchildren, the youngest one was eleven months old. Eight or eleven months, I do not know why eleven months sticks in my mind. The daughter was in jail for drugs.

Q: And the father was no where?

A: Of course the father was nowhere. I kind of like doing that column because it sort of connects me with people. So now I cover religion, local religion, which runs in *Neighbors*, and I write a column called, "Neighbors in Religion," and that's fun.

Q: How long have you been working on *Neighbors*?

A: Since 1981 I believe, because I did *Neighbors* and the issues column at the same time. The issues column ran on the Local front page and I also did a "Friends and Neighbors" column in "Religion and Lifestyles" for *Neighbors*. When I look back I do not know how I did all those things. My platter is not as full now. But I am enjoying it just as much. I do a lot of public speaking. One of my pet things is going to schools, talking to children [and] trying to encourage them.

Q: To elementary schools?

A: To all schools, even college. I have done several workshops at colleges. At Savannah State, several times I've been invited to Savannah State; the University of California at Berkeley, FAMU, and Memphis State College, University I guess. When I tell my story of a maid to reporter, the kids really like that. I always tell, especially sometimes I have friends or I meet people who tell me they would like to do something but think they are too old. I tell them I was thirty-two when I became a reporter, when I got my dream job. All my friends had been working at their dream jobs for ten years at least, they were ten years out of college. I was thirty-two with two children. A widow. I say if I can do it, you can do it.

Q: So, when you go speak to students at schools and colleges, are they amazed that you did not go to college, that you don't have a bachelor's degree?

A: They are amazed. I went to college three years, it is just that I do not have a degree.

Q: Yeah, but that you got your job before you got your bachelor's?

A: Yeah, but I always encourage them to not look at that. Actually, I went to college longer than three years, because I have gone back to get courses since then. It

is just that I have put it all together, and gotten a degree. What I tell them is that for some reason I was there at the right time, they needed me, this thing does not usually happen. I mean, it has happened to other people. I think Charlie Whited was one who did not have a degree, he might have gone back later on. There are some other people there who did not have a college degree in journalism. [But] not anymore. The younger people that they hire must have a four-year degree, at least a four-year degree.

Q: In journalism?

A: In journalism or some related topic like political science, or history, or English. I just tell them that this happened to me and I am grateful that it did. I have not planned not going back. It is just that when I got the job, my career just took off, there was no time to go to school at the time. Then I had my children. [I] was working these long hours because I was so excited about the job, and my children were still young. There was no time to go back to school. My plan was when they got out of school, and then I would go back, but there was always something. They got out of school, they get married, I am babysitting. I am the grandmother now. So there is always some reason for me not to go back. But now there is a lull in my life. Maybe I can go back, you know, because I have always wanted just to get that degree.

Q: Do you do the "Religion" section for any special reason, because you are active in your church? Or is that just what you got?

A: I sort of fell into that when I was a new reporter, which is fine. Adon Taft knew that I was active in my church. He was the Religion editor at the time, and so whenever he was on vacation, or had to go out for whatever reason, he would ask me to fill in for him. At that time, we had two pages to fill, and I was just so excited, and I think what happened is that it let the editors see what I could do. I was just so excited about being able to fill his shoes, those were big shoes to fill. He had been the editor for a long time, and I was so excited, you know, to do that. So I just sort of fell into this position which is fine. I like doing it. I like learning about all religions. I have a good rapport with people of all faiths, and I like that.

Q: What is your favorite part about your job?

A: My favorite part is the fact that I meet people. I have met so many wonderful people. I am not talking about celebrities, I am talking about just everyday Mary and Joe's, you know? People who are unsung heroes, people who are doing things in their community, behind the scenes, who you would never know about. Sometimes I am able to put a little something in the paper and they are so thrilled. They appreciate it so much, and if I can make somebody happy, make

somebody's day, that has made my day. That sounds corny, but that is it.

Q: Do you have any least favorite part of your job?

A: My least favorite part is that I don't like it when some editors really want to be writers and change my stuff. You know, I have had editors who have changed my stuff to the point where I have told them take my name off it, because it is not me. I feel like I have a certain style that people recognize, and it is a warm style, and I do not want my stuff to read cut and dried. I like color in my stuff.

Q: Yeah, like your article today about the reverend that got his doctoral degree, how it was first person in the first few lines.

A: I know him, and I could write those things about him because I know him. So I do not mind them [the editors] changing it if it is going to make it better, but if you change it for the sake of change because you are the editor and you can do this, I do not like that. That is the thing I do not like. And I have had editors who said they think it would sound better if we say this, and we change this around, or put this sentence up top. Hey, I am all for that. Because sometimes you are so close to something you do not really see how much better it can be, especially if you are working on deadline. If you have an editor who is sensitive enough, and I have had plenty of them, and a few of the other kind. So if there is anything I did not like about the job, that would be it. Otherwise, it has been a great journey.

Q: What direction do you see the print media taking as far as going into the twenty-first century? Around the University of Florida, all we hear is about how all these print journalism majors are going to have no jobs, not because there are no jobs out there, but because there is nothing left to do because everything is so computer-oriented, television-oriented, even radio-oriented.

A: I would like to believe with my heart, and I believe that we will be around. There is a need for print journalism, I just love getting up in the morning and opening my paper. I think millions of other people do also. I am sure it is fun to sit in front of the screen and hit buttons and stuff like that, but there is nothing like reading the full thing in the print, in the newspaper, with a cup of coffee, or a cup of tea, or whatever. I think millions of people all over the world will want to do that for a long time. We may see a change. The newspapers may be smaller, but I think they will always be around. I would like to believe that, anyway.

Q: Do you still think today, in 1995, that people look at you different because you are black, or because you are a woman? Because I know that you came face-to-face with that.

A: Oh, did I! Even when I hit the newsroom I was sent out on wild-goose chases

and the whole nine yards. They would send me to assignments that did not exist, [just] because they were men. First of all, they did not want women in the newsroom. Here is a black woman who was a fresh reporter at thirty-two. They did not know what to do with me. After the riot was over, they do not know what to do with me. So, they would send me out. I would come in in the morning...I think they thought because she is black she cannot go and interview a white person. I proved them wrong. I have interviewed people of all nationalities with ease. They seem to want to help me when they know I do not speak the language, they are so eager to help me. I have never, ever had a problem interviewing anybody of a different race. I have never had anybody tell me they do not want to talk to me because I am black. Never, in all the years that I have been writing. It says something for the community. I think at first people were so awestruck when they saw me, I was a novelty, you know. They had never seen a black reporter. So, the icebreaker was [when] they would ask me how I got this job. I would sit the first thirty minutes telling them how I got the job. Then the rest was so easy. I always got my story.

Q: What is your favorite story that you have ever done?

A: Oh, there has so many. I do not know. I mean, we are talking at least thousands of stories over the years. And I have had some real touching stories that I remember. I do not know if they would be my favorite, but touching situations. Like one of the first stories that I did after the riot was about a little boy named Scotty who was leaving home to die. He had some terrible brain disease that his parents noticed. First, he lost his hearing. Then one morning he was bumping into things and he was going blind. I can not remember the name of the disease, but it was a rare disease that attacked the brain. He was five years old. It was the first day of school and his little friends were scurrying around getting their new socks and shoes on, and getting their little books ready for the first day of school. The ambulance was pulling up to Scotty's door to take him away to die. I did that story and I was crying. I was so embarrassed. The TV people were there. It was a very touching story. I remember coming back to the office and I was so embarrassed because I thought somebody else would tell them I was such a crybaby. I am going to tell them myself. I remember Ben Burns was the editor then. He was a big guy. Tall, not fat, but tall. Like six feet eleven inches. He played basketball in college. He was such a nice guy. We called him, "Gentle Ben." He said do not be ashamed of having feelings and showing it. That is what makes you the writer that you are. So, that is a story that sticks out in my mind as one of the most touching stories. It was really touching. I remember that well.

But there were happier pieces that I have done. Oh, I remember once I did a story. This little old lady fell in the lake behind her apartment. This older man, both of them were old, jumped in to save her. It was the cutest story. I said something about how the day looked. The sky was blue, and it was a beautiful

day. But it is also the day that she could have died. He saved her from a tragic death. But when the story ran, somebody called me the next day and told me that do you want to know why she almost died? She was beating the ducks with a stick. It cracked me up! I told my editor, here was this beautiful story. I thought she was feeding the ducks, in fact, that was what she told me. Somebody told me she was actually beating the ducks. She does not like the ducks. She was beating them away in front of the lake. That cracked me up. Of course, we did not do a follow-up, though. It was funny. That was a funny one that we did. But, I have done lots of things. Like right now not too much comes to mind.

Q: Have you ever thought about doing something else besides working for the *Herald*? Not for the *Herald*, but writing, as far as being a journalist?

A: Well, I have done some freelance stuff. I did a couple of articles for some magazines. I have wanted to write a book for years. I have started it. I have written a children's book that has not been published, yet. I have got to find it because somebody told me they wanted to see it. So, I have got to dig in my papers to see if I can find it. I do not think I have ever wanted to do anything else but write.

Q: Who were you inspired by?

A: Well, actually to go back, I was inspired to write by my high school journalism teacher, Miriam Shannon. She is still alive. She is so proud of me. But, after I got the job, this is what I have wanted to do. Oh, I have had my periods when I thought I would leave town! To some where else and get another job. But if I am leaving, I cannot seem to get out of here!

Q: Yeah, Miami seems to have that hold on people.

A: Yeah, well, my roots are here. My family is here. My mom, my children, my grandchildren, and for a while, my grandmother. She died two years ago. I have too much to lose. I would have to give up too much.

Q: What role do you feel religion has played not only in your career, but in your whole life?

A: It is the influence in my life. I try to treat people the way I want them to treat me. I am not perfect, you know? I make mistakes. But I really believe that if you try real hard to live the Ten Commandments, God will help you. I pray daily. When you came, I was just getting ready to read the Scripture. I think everyone needs religion. I prayed about the job. I believe that the Lord blessed me with this job. I believe it is God who has kept me on the job. I will tell you something. It has not always been peaches and cream. When I thought I could not take it anymore,

for some reason I would get strength and then it would pass over. You know, whatever the trial I was going through at the time.

Q: And your kids have passed this on to their children, also?

A: I hope so. You know, you can only live your life and hope that your children; I never tried to push my belief off on them. I just tried to live it. My son now is going to law school. He is having a tough time financially. We are not rich people. I do what I can to help him. I always tell him that God is able and if you just try hard and pray, God will help you. We have seen those things happen. We have seen them happen.

[Conversation went on about religion and getting strength from God.]

Q: Do you have any words of wisdom, so to speak, for aspiring journalists or people that are trying to get into journalism?

A: I would tell them not to give up. Remember me. I did not have a degree, and I got a job. Again, we go back to the faith thing. You do what is right and then you put your trust in God . . . and just go by faith. Never give up. I do not care how many doors slam in your face. I cannot tell you the number of doors that were closed in my face. But I never gave up. I just had that hope in my heart that somebody is going to give me a job. I am not going to be a maid all my life. Somebody is going to give me a job where I can have some benefits, so that I can have some time to take my children to where ever, to the beach. A simple trip to the beach meant a lot to me then. I could not do it. I did not have any time for my children. After I got my job as a reporter, I did not have as much time with my children. After I got my job as a reporter, I didn't have as much time with my children on a daily basis, but we always had the dinner hour. We were always sat around the table and talked about what happened during the day. Sundays were always ours. I always gave them Sundays. We went to church together. Sometimes when I did not have a car we would take the bus ride just to the end of the line, and we would get off at Biscayne and Bayfront Park. Bayside was not there at the time, but it was still pretty. You can always find someone strolling through the park, and there were vendors. They loved that. We would stop and have hot dogs and watch people singing and dancing in the park. Then we would get on the bus and go home and be in time for evening service at church.

Q: Do you think those are the kinds of things that make life worthwhile?

A: Yes. We never had a lot of money. I do not have a lot of money, now. We never had a lot of money. But, we had each other, and I was there for my children. I am still there for them. I am very close to my grandchildren. I have got one who is going to be twelve at the end of this month. And another one who was eleven

on the seventh. That is my younger son's daughter. We are just very close. I make them all of their Easter dresses. I made their Christmas dresses.

[Hines tells a story of making dresses for all of her granddaughters and their friends.]

Q: Anything that you want to share that I have not covered?

A: Oh, I think you have covered it all. I will probably think of a thousand things that I should have said when you leave. I would like to encourage anybody who will ever hear this to never give up hope. If you have a dream, and I tell the children this when I go to the schools to talk; when I first told somebody that I wanted to be a journalist they laughed at me. I mean, ha, ha, ha, right in my face. I was embarrassed. Not for myself. I was embarrassed because they did not know about my dream; they did not have faith in my dream.

Q: Was that just part of the era?

A: Yes, it was part of the era. They were laughing at me because there were no jobs for black people in journalism. And very few in other places. I had taken my son Shawn to kindergarten when he was five years old. I had just started back to school at Mimi-Dade, and his teacher asked me what I was studying. I told her I was studying journalism. She was a friend. She just laughed. She said, "Girl, where do you think you're going to get a job in journalism when you're black?" I said that I would like to think that one day the *Herald* will open its doors to black journalists and I wanted to work there. She did not say anything. She looked at me so strange, like what a fool.

Q: Did you ever think about working for *The Miami Times*?

A: To be truthful, I did. When I was working in the library, Fred Shaw gave me a book to review. It was Leon Sullivan's, *Build, Brother, Build*. And this was in 1968. When it ran in *The Miami Herald* in the Book section, I was so proud of it that I took a copy of it and sent it to *The Miami Times* and told them that I would be happy to rewrite this article for their paper if they wanted to use it. Leon Sullivan was a black man. He is a big shot in Philadelphia. Started the OIC programs. I never heard from them. But when I started writing, after I had been writing for *The Herald* for two years, Garth Reeves did invite me to join them. But I was so excited about working for *The Miami Herald*, he was two years too late.

[We then continued to talk about *The Miami Times*, the purpose it serves in the black community, and my sister, who goes to an all black school. It was very light-hearted. She wanted to know my opinions and personal experiences in dealing with discrimination, the black community, and prejudice. We also talked about bussing, magnet schools, and the like. We shared stories about religion and how it ties into both

of our lives.]

A: Oh, speaking of magazines, I am also going to be working with a young woman who is starting her own magazine. Her name is Donna Gehrke. She is starting a magazine called, *Rising Women in South Florida*. The look of print journalism may change. For instance, already *The Miami Herald* is changing. If you notice we don't have the big "Food Section," anymore. We have a front section, and then the back of it is "Living." We used to have two, the "Food Section." and "Living." So, the look of the paper will change, but I think we will always have print journalism.

[We continued our talk about how much we like reading the paper, and the impact that it make on the lives of Americans living abroad.]

Q: So, you're happy?

A: I am happy. I always say I could be happier. But I am not unhappy. I am thankful. I always wanted to get married again, and have a lifelong companion. But sometimes that is not in the cards for everybody. So you have to make your own happiness. I am into all kinds of projects. I sew, as I told you, and I write, and I sing with different groups. There are so many things to keep you happy. You just make your own happiness. You can either be a hermit. I can just sort of go in a closet and just die away, you know, wait for death. Whatever. Or I can live, and enjoy this wonderful life that God has given me. So, I'm going to live. There is a lot to enjoy. Companionship isn't the only thing in the world. Who is to say that I would find a guy and he would be perfect for me? You know, it is a chance you take. So, I am just happy as I am. If it happens, it happens. If it does not happen, it does not happen. You got to [have a positive attitude]. A beautiful day like this, I am not going to sit up and be worried about what I do not have. I have so much. White clouds, the green trees, that is important to me. Thank you again.

Q: Thank you very much.

[Closed with some small talk and a hug. Bea L. Hines is truly one of the most friendly, easy-going people I have ever had the pleasure of talking to. Thank you.]