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This is an interview with Ricardo Wyngaard, and itâ\200\231s Monday the 18" of August (2008). Ricardo, on behalf of SALS Foundation in the United States, we really want to thank you for taking the time and agreeing to participate in the LRC Oral History Project.

Youâ\200\231re welcome.

Thank you. I wondered whether we could start if you could talk about your early childhood memories, growing up in South Africa under apartheid, and where you think your sense of social justice and injustice developed?

I grew up in the...in a place called Grabouw, which is about seventy kilometres from Cape Town. Itâ\200\231s fairly rural and ja, I think, I...in the community where I grew up it was still deeply, you know, a racist community and itâ\200\231s in that mindset that I was also...that I grew up. So, I...and I canâ\200\231t recall a sense of social justice thing, you know, at the time that I was growing up. In 1990 was when I was in Matric, and I think in that year, and the year prior to that, there was some political activity at the school which, sort of, enlightened my understanding of where the country is at that...or where it was at that particular moment and...but, I guess I wasnâ\200\231t yet quite...it wasnâ\200\231t too revealing for me, because I think, overall, you know, there were always that...the mixed messages coming out of the community itself. Although I must say, I mean, there were a few more progressive-thinking people within the community, and...but that was also that...the period that marked the tran..., you know, the end of racism, sort of, when it was announced...I remember at that Matric when it was announced by de Klerk at the time that, you know, we...they were entering into a new arena. And it was more when I started my tertiary education, the following year in â\200\23191, that there was more an awareness and that was...I studied at the University of the Western Cape and Iâ\200\231m very glad I studied there, because I think it just enlightened my understanding, and it made me more aware, you know, of the South African context. It...and also because I was taken out of that...you know, although I travelled still home, but it was in a different environment, you know, different perspectives to what Iâ\200\231d been used to at that...where I stayed in Grabouw. And I think from that period onwards, from \*91, and I was there until \*95, that was the period that, for me, was, ja, you know, that opened my eyes, and itâ\200\231s traditionally known as the home of the left. But it just now...looking at courses like this Afrikaans, it looked at it within a political context, the same with history and, you know, for me it was just...I learnt so much in that particular period, and it was also a time when I was exposed more to other races in South Africa. Where I grew up, you know, there wasnâ\200\231t that exposure, it was only the small community and...ja, it was limited, so, I think up until I was at school, it was still...my thinking was still â\200\230old schoolâ\200\231, if I can put it that way.

Right. I'm also wondering, in terms of...in terms of growing up in Grabouw, which I think is more rural, wouldnâ\200\231t you say?

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Yes.

And then coming to UWC, in terms of understanding the kind of difficulties that people of different colours, do you think that...you arrived at that political consciousness at university, or do you think it came earlier from family, your observations, etc?

I think it came a bit earlier with the developments at school, because I remember we were involved with, you know, a big protest march...marches that took place at the...especially the final year, at school...

...which was 198.?

It was 1990.

1990, right.

...and in fact a year, 1989 as well, and you know, we had...there were instances of, you know, where the Riot Police would come and would disperse the pupils. I guess it was...the experience for me was, you know, it made me realise to some extent, you know, that thereâ\200\231s a problem here somewhere, but I donâ\200\231t think Iâ\200\231d actually understood at, you know, at the time, what the problem was. I guess it was to some extent, more excitement, you know, in terms of this development within our community, but I...And I think there was also, to some extent, an acceptance that something...there is something thatâ\200\231s wrong, but I wasnâ\200\231t quite clear on that, because my whole life Iâ\200\231d been conditioned, you know, in a certain way, this is whatâ\200\231s right and this is whatâ\200\231s wrong and...ja. It did play some role but, I think, in terms of the actual understanding, it was...it was more...it was...it actually happened, you know, after that.

Sure. But when you...in terms of wanting to become a lawyer, what do you think prompted that? What were some of the influences that might have wanted you to study law as opposed to anything else?

To be honest with you, I didnâ\200\231t have any inspirations to study law when I was at school. I remember I was reading a lot at school and there wasnâ\200\231t a...I mean, I wasnâ\200\231t, at that time, prompted by a sense of justice to go and study law. In fact, I had other ambitions, one of that was to...to give expression more to a different side of me, in terms of design, you know, and in terms of art, but my application to the Technikon wasnâ\200\231t received, and the second application, which was now to UWC, that was the one that...that was accepted. And so, I almost reluctantly pursued that option, but...and I never regretted that this isnâ\200\231t, because, you know, at the first year I was able to realise that, wow, this is a, you know, itâ\200\231s something that I find interesting, you know, itâ\200\231s...And because Iâ\200\231ve learnt so much in terms of my...you know, compared

to where

I grew up, and what happened at a tertiary level, I think that, you know, just inspired

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me to continue with my studies in that direction, but there unfortunately it wasnâ\200\231t prompted by a sense of injustice (laughs).

Ok. So, you got to UWC, were you involved in the Law Clinics, during that time at uwce?

No, not in my first year. And it was partially because I was travelling from Grabouw to university and I did that with public...through public route...actually meant about four hours a day, commuting. So, for the first three to four years, I just didnâ\200\231t get involved in the activities at the university. It was only the...in my last two years that I had some involvement with the...I think it was the Law Studentsâ\200\231 Journal, when I actually got a job here in...close to the university, and I was able to stay there and actually be involved in it more.

And then how did you get to LRC?

At...when I was studying, during that time, when this consciousness developed, to the extent that I wasnâ\200\231t interested in pursuing a career as a Commercial Attorney. And so,

I wanted to work in an environment where I donâ\200\231t have to charge people a fee, and I can just be able to, you know, to help people. And I worked in a project...that was now in â\200\23196 till â\200\23198, in a place called Caledon, which is close to Grabouw and itâ\200\231s

fairly rural and it was quite nice because we worked in a pilot project in trying to expand legal aid. And, you know, at the time a family was evicted...well, five families were evicted and the systems were not quite in place to assist people, and I, you know, I witnessed that, and they were my clients, and I, you know, I was upset, because, I mean, to see people now being evicted and not having any...And I just thought, at the time, the magistrate was also unfair, you know, in the assessment of the case and we couldnâ\200\231t appeal and...and at that point it further stirred my interest to

do Public Interest work. For a time I worked with Lawyers for Human Rights, but I also knew that Legal Resources Centre was actually there, you know, â\200\230Theâ\200\231 Public

Interest Law firm in the country.

How did you know that? At what point did you get to know about the Legal Resources Centre?

I guess itâ\200\231s when [ started my Articles...

...you did that at a law firm?

...yes, yes.

Was it a Commercial Law firm?

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It was a Commercial Law firm, yes, but itâ\200\231s in the context that we were able to...because it was a project by Lawyers for Human Rights and the Legal Aid Board, it wasnâ\200\231t...we werenâ\200\231t, in the, like, conventional Articles setup, we were able to do, you know, to visit advice offices and so on. So, it was in that time and while I was working at Lawyers for Human Rights, that I started reading also about, you know, the Legal Resources Centre. And itâ\200\231s just a sense of an organisation being on the cutting edge of developments in our country, especially on the constitutional issues. And it was, sort of, on my agenda, that sometime, you know, I wanted to work at the Legal Resources Centre. But, on the other side I was also enjoying what I was doing in...with my Articles, and also with the Lawyers for Human Rights. But I was...you know, at the end...at...well, not at the end, but, after my second year with Lawyers for Human Rights, I was keeping a look-out, especially, you know, with Legal Resources Centre, and when I first saw the opportunity, I decided to apply. And there was a vacancy in the non-profit organisationâ\200\231s Legal Support Project. It wasnâ\200\231t what I was actually looking forward to, but I thought itâ\200\231s a nice opportunity just to get into the organisation (laughs), and somehow I stayed in that project for four years.

So, tell me about that project and what you did exactly, while you were at the LRC. So this is from 2000 to 2004?

Yes.

Ok.

The project was about providing legal support to non-profit organisations. For me, it was a new area of law, and ja, it was something that I was completely unaware of, and...But my intention was just to get in, and, you know, to later focus on other stuff. But, the project, when I arrived here, you know, I realised that there was a need for this kind of project, because it worked with non-profit organisations and as I, you know, grew into the project, for me it was just the...I think one of the key events that happened was, at the time there were parts of the Income Tax Act that were being revealed, and the NPO Project worked on that whole campaign, together with another organisation. And they were all waiting for a draft list of public benefit activities to come out, so, you know, the whole process of publicly campaigning, you know, could start. But, when the list came out, when it was published by the Revenue Services, the attorney that was heading up the project here, wasnâ\200\231t...she was on leave Mary Honey .

One of the other experts that also worked on this...you know, on non-profit law, he was out of the country, and the attorney that worked at the other organisation was also on maternity leave, and there was a problem, because now, I was, sort of, the newest person working in the project, but there was nobody else to...no legal person that could take forward this whole campaign, you know, when it came to the public workshops. And, I was now called upon, and that was after about four months since Iâ\200\231d been at the organisation. I was very nervous, but there was one thing that I realised

that with this...in this area of law, there were not many attorneys, you know, focusing on that, so I...and I was called an expert on the topic, which was nice at the beginning, until people started asking me questions, and you realised that (laughs) rather not. But it was...it was in that context that there were not many attorneys focusing on that area. But, I think for me, in my mind that was one of the reasons why I thought: you know

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what, I wanted to stay with this...with this particular project. And it was quite exciting for me, and also working with different organisations and different communities, different provinces, and it's the kind of work, as an attorney, you're not often exposed to. It wasn't necessarily as exciting as doing the Public Interest work, or the normal Public Interest work that LRC was doing, you know, going to court and all of that which I think, you know, it's great work. But I also, I think, internally, there was always that confirmation of the importance of this project. I remember at one point, Vincent attended a meeting that I had with...well, not that I, but what I was part of, with donors, and they were asking questions and I was just sitting and listening, and just, you know, his perspective on why there's a project like this in South Africa, why it...the timing is so important, you know, I mean, for me it was just, it was just confirmation that, you know, it is an important project, and it is exciting work to be part of.

Right. Working at the LRC but being very involved in one project, did you feel isolated or did you really feel part of the Cape Town office, what were some of the experiences of working in the Cape Town office organisationally?

I...being at the organisation and with, you know, with all these reputable attorneys and staff members within the organisation that, for me, was a huge benefit. To listen, the experiences, and the thing is that the lawyers here were very much willing to share their experiences, whether it's a case that they're working on, you know, in terms of Richtersveld, or whether it's a TAC matter. And for me, that was, it was...although the project was non-profits, it...being exposed to that environment was...was hugely beneficial. And so...and even just talking to some of the lawyers on some of the issues that I was battling with, that was, I mean, I didn't feel that it was quite isolated, you know? Also they had a, like this normal litigation committee meetings, and even that environment, it gave me an opportunity to discuss some of the issues I was dealing with. In addition to that it was...there were other staff members as well, working in the project; when I started out I worked with Mary Honey for just over a year, and after that when she left, Thami (Mbatha) started working on the project. And throughout, there were always the candidate attorneys as well that were involved. Ja, so, I think it's one of the things that I miss now, the fact that, you know, the other organisations that I've worked, subsequent to the LRC, were smaller organisations, and you don't always have the benefit of just going to somebody next door, and just ask: listen, give me some advice on this issue. Ja, although it wasn't...non-profits were never...it wasn't quite the area of speciality for other lawyers, their experience that they've had in the sector, it gave me much, you know, perspective in terms of the work that I was doing. And, ja, to do that in a...with that kind of support, I think, for me, was a huge benefit.

I'm also wondering, in terms of a mentor,...I know you worked with a lot of the lawyers, but, in particular, was there someone in the organisation that you found extremely helpful in terms what you were doing, and who somehow helped your development as...and shaped you as a lawyer?

There were a couple, I think, when I started here it was the...my direct supervisor Mary Honey. Her experience on the content work was, you know, very useful for me,

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and I managed to work with her for a one year period, and I just saw that as a learning opportunity. And I guess that also motivated me to continue with this kind of work. The other two more...well, it's difficult to single out people, because I think most people have been, you know, open and approachable, but, I've liked in particular, also having worked with Chantel (Fortuin) and Vincent (Saldanha) and also with William (Kerfoot). I mean, they've been hugely inspiring for me, you know, just sometimes, just talking about other issues (laughs) besides the, you know, the legal stuff, I've appreciated them, like, you know, it was in a context that I could feel to, like, I could talk to them and they opened...you know, they're willing to listen, although they were quite busy I never had the feeling that, listen, you're not welcome now. Ja, so that was...And then that's the things that I'm...I really miss them.

So, subsequent to working at the LRC in that project, what made you...prompted you to leave then?

I...it was a difficult decision, because I think I...there wasn't a conscious decision in the third year of my stay here, that I will leave the LRC. But it was in the context that I actually got a scholarship to go and study overseas.

Where did you go?

At the University of Illinois.

Ok.

And that was, I think, the beginning of 2004 if I'm not...But I knew that, you know, if

I had to go and study overseas, there were some challenges, because I wanted my wife to also go with, and I got the sense that I would actually be required to resign from the LRC, which was, for me, a bit of a risk because, I mean, for...I was going to be on study leave for one year, for a one year period, coming back to look for a job, that was a bit of a risk for me. And then I actually got an offer at the other organisation, the non-profit consortium. Now, they have actually made me an offer, after my first year at the LRC, and we worked together very closely, and ja, it was at the fourth year I thought, you know, just in line with the...I was...they were a bit smaller and it was easier to negotiate. And they said to me, well: I could come back to them after the...after my studies, and in fact they saw me as an employee during that whole...you know, when I was on study leave, and I managed to do some work for them as well. Which I think...it wasn't quite possible at the LRC, given the fact that it's a much

larger organisation, and with the other organisation there was a bit more flexibility. And then...but, you know, it was, sort of, an opportunity that doesn't come around every day, so I thought, you know, I'll take that, um...

So, have you stayed in Public Interest Law since then?

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If you see Non-Profit Law as Public Benefit or Public Interest Law, and I see it that way, then yes, I have...

You have stayed in that, so you currently...you work for this consortium or...?

They actually closed down now in...at the end of May, so Iâ\200\231'm working at another non-profit organisation Inyathelo. They focused also at philanthropy and...so, itâ\200\231s similar work. I think, ja, in essence, the work that I started out with at the Legal Resources Centre has remained largely the same, you know, so, emphasis maybe on different aspects, but itâ\200\231s still the same kind of work.

Right, Iâ\200\231'm wondering, if you had to reflect on those four years that you spent at the Legal Resources Centre, what do you think were some of the highlights in terms of the particular legal work you did, and how do you think that shaped your decision to then remain in Non-Profit Law?

I think some of the highlights were, for me, being...the organisation being instrumental with regards to the tax legislation, as well as the Companyâ\200\231s Bill; itâ\200\231s been published now recently.

The LRC helped do that?

Yes, yes.

Ok. Could you talk about that?

Yes. In terms of the...well, there were indications...I think it was in 2003, that...where the Department of Trade and Industries said that they would work on them, reviewing the companyâ\200\231s legislation, and you would see these bits and pieces in the media. And, in fact, it was...and this is where the experience comes in: one of the attorneys, Steve Kahanovitz, he actually pointed out to me, at one point, and he said, you know: this...itâ\200\231s going to be important for this particular project to work on, because embedded in that...in the Companyâ\200\231s Act is the non-profit company, and the existing legislation isnâ\200\231t conducive so much to non-profit companies because they basically...this long Act...and then thereâ\200\231s one section saying you can have a non-profit company, and then itâ\200\231s saying: well, for all purposes...for all relevant purposes, itâ\200\231s deemed to be a public company which is for profit. So it wasnâ\200\231t a useful kind of legal entity in the South African context then. And so, Steve (Kahanovitz) just pointed out to me, you know, and...I donâ\200\231t think I would have realised the magnitude of that...of the work, but as soon as the first policy document was published, we were able to meet, together with the non-profit consortium, to meet with the relevant people at the department, and just



to say to them: listen, this is what we would like to do. And the relationship has emanated out of that meeting, which I thought was hugely beneficial for the non-profit sector. Because what happened was, at a practical level, the department went to different provinces to meet with key stakeholders and just to popularise, you know,

the policy document. The Legal Resources Centre and the non-profit consortium went with, on those...on the road trips. We were at every public meeting and, in fact, the notices in the media had the LRC's logo, the NPC's logo and the Department of Trade and Industry's logo on it, which I just thought, you know, the Company's Act, it's about...mostly about commercial companies, but now the non-profits (laughs) are featuring in their advertisements. Even at the...at the actual public meetings, you would often find that there are more non-profits than commercial companies, or stakeholders, at the meetings. And, for me, it was significant, because in the context of an Act that's not really friendly towards the non-profit sector now, part of the campaign is also, you know, highlighting non-profits. And secondly, it's an opportunity to shape the legislation, and the Bill that we've got now is an example of that. I mean, it was published now in June, but it makes, you know, the non-profit company features prominently in the Bill, which is, I think, a substantial improvement compared to what we've got, you know, in terms of the existing legislation. I think after a while, you know, it just...at the department's side, they've embraced the need to do this. And, ja, in my memory, you know, I reflected to one of the attorneys pointing that out, you know and saying, you know, this is going to be an important aspect, and I don't think, I mean, the other organisation that I actually worked with, they didn't see it because...and they were also focused on non-profit legislation, but here it was a more senior attorney. Non-profit organisation wasn't like his focus, but yet, you know, he was able to just point us in the right direction. And I think it's those key guidance that...or areas of guidance that was actually useful for me. But that was a huge highlight for me. The other one was also focusing on the Income Tax Act, which is fairly technical. I wasn't too excited about tax, you know, but I realised that the interventions were important, because it basically, in line with that company's...also now it provided more focus on the CSI, because the legal environment was conducive for that, to the extent that the...apparently there's over three billion going from corporates to the non-profit sector, which I think is...it's quite significant. For me, the most exciting part was being able to work with communities, the...we had lots of workshops with communities. And just to have that interaction with organisations and people at the workshops, and to be able to work on material that was beneficial for organisations. One day, I had a...we did a workshop, I think it was somewhere in the Eastern Cape, and at some point I spoke to one of the ladies at the workshop, and then she told me about a booklet and she explained, she said: you know, I went to this interview and this booklet was very useful. And she actually went for a job application as a HR person, and she said this booklet, which dealt with some of the, you know, duties of employers. She read through it and it helped her with the preparation of the workshop and with the interview, and she said when they asked her the questions at the interview, she was able to respond, and she actually got the job. And I was getting excited about the booklet (laughs), you know, that she was talking about because we were working with non-profits, and I thought, you know, if this is something that's...that's...because she said it was...it was...she was applying at a non-profit and she said...and I thought, you know, if this was so helpful for that...for her and for the organisation, I would like to see one. And she said: mind you, I've got the booklet here in my bag. And she took it out and it was one of the booklets that we produced here at the Legal Resources Centre. I thought, you know, that was...to be able to hear that and to hear the difference it made, for me, was, you know, it was a very humbling experience (Laughs).

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Absolutely, yes

Ja, so that was at...The other legal work about lobbying and advocacy that was exciting, but, for me, it offered me an opportunity to work at a different level with communities at...where I wouldn't normally work as a litigator or as a Commercial Attorney. Ja, and in terms of my own skills, if I look back, it was very useful.

Were there any particular challenges for you, working in the organisation or in the LRC?

I think it's the...maybe the challenge of, you know, with the organisation being a prestigious organisation and they set a standard in the legal fraternity, and for me, it was trying to keep up with, you know, with that standard.

For yourself personally?

Personally, and also for the project that I was working in. It was made easier because there were always others that were able to help, but there was always this...you know, just the knowledge that here, you have experienced people, they're talked about across the world, and to be...and just to keep up to that standard, I think that was one of the challenges. Although it wasn't too difficult, the fact that there were those people and who were able to guide me personally and in the project, was...I think it was good. The...I think the other challenge...and again it wasn't such a big challenge, was the fact that the project itself wasn't...it was almost a complimentary project, you

know, within the organisation, sometimes it was referred to as a 'stepchild' within the

LRC (laughter). But even in that regard I feel that my own personal mission, within the organisation, and one of it was to introduce more attorneys and to make more attorneys excited about the project, and I feel I've accomplished that, you know, when

I left the organisation, because there were more attorneys that have developed an interest, I think. When I got...this is my perception, but when I came into the organisation, there wasn't that much excitement about...amongst candidate attorneys,

it was more, we're going, you know...they work in a project for three months. And I wanted that experience to be, you know, a learning experience but also an enjoyable experience, and I can't say that it happened for everybody, but I think it was most of

the attorneys, or candidate attorneys, that have been part of the project, you know, when they decide well, after the end of the three month period, well, we're going to

keep on working on our client files, we're not going to transfer it to anybody else.

And for me, that was an indication that there's been that interest and excitement about the...you know, the project.

I'm wondering, in terms of...I've asked you a range of questions, I'm wondering

whether there's something I've neglected to ask you which you feel ought to be

included as part of your Oral History interview?

Iâ\200\231111 think about it, and...(laughs)

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(Laughs) You can add it in the transcript perhaps?

Yes.

I wondered whether we could end the interview if you could talk about a particular memory...whether it's working with a particular client, in the community, while you were at the LRC or a particular lawyer, whether it was Vincent (Saldanha) or Chantel (Fortuin), a memory that you feel embodies what you did...achieved at the LRC, and what your experiences of the LRC are, something that you treasure? Could even be a challenge, actually...?

Mm, mm. There are two things that, for me, was significant and it's not quite...it didn't quite happen internally here. But the one was in 2002, I went on a three-week

course in Canada, it was a Human Rights course and I went shortly after...Ashraf Mohamed, one of the other attorneys, went the previous year. And...so the following year, I went, it was my third year or my second year at the LRC, and at...there were two things that came up at that workshop. The one was the whole...the Grootboom case, that was...came up as a case study and it was discussed, you know? I felt overwhelmed, because it was the first time, actually, I'd travelled outside of South

Africa, but now to be in a...in Canada, and to talk about a case where the LRC has been involved in, that was just, you know, it was mind-blowing, for me. And it wasn't

merely like an academic discussion, it came out that...that people were saying, you know, when the judgment came out it was like...it spread like a wildfire in Canada. And people were interested in terms of, you know, what has happened in the meantime? And for me to know that I'm part of this organisation and, I mean, some people were now expecting me to come up with answers and I didn't work on the case, but I just felt so proud, you know, that I was now part of the Legal Resources Centre. And to be able to see, this is the impact of the organisation. So that was the one. And there was another lady also there and, I mean, for her it was also overwhelming...from South Africa. So that was the one incident. The other one was when I studied at the University of Illinois, and I read...I did a course on Tax Exempt Organisations, and one of the areas that they were looking at was Public Interest Law firms in the US. But they had a specific example where they explained how this organisation worked, and when I was reading it, and it was an organisation...I mean, the case note was in 1975, so when I read through it I thought: wow, this sounds like the Legal Resources Centre. But, I remember, I mean, the LRC was established in 19...

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.79, yes. And I could recall that some people actually went to the US...

...sure, sure. To meet Jack Greenberg, etc, to talk about the NAACP.

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Yes, yes. And the...this case note referred to this organisation in the US doing, you know, like, the litigation committee meetings, and that's what we're doing, you know, at the LRC. And I'm not sure if that organisation is still existing in the...

In the US.

...US, but I thought: wow, for this organisation to have been established in '79 and to have been so successful in, you know, in South Africa and still, you know, being on the cutting edge. Just to be...to have been part of the organisation, although it...four years is not a long time, but for that time, I...you know, and I think even today still, I would tell people it's the organisation that I feel has made the most significant impact, you know, in terms of my career, because there are...just the things that I've learnt in it as well, it's valuable, and it sort of gives you direction, you know, in terms of your understanding as a lawyer. I think that at UWC I had a better understanding in terms of the South African context, but here...and I think Thami also mentioned it at one point, where he said that here it's...you realise that, you know, I can be part of shaping legislation, or shaping, you know, the...what comes out of the court, you know, the Constitutional Court. As a student you just understand you must interpret the law and apply the law, and that's it. But here it's a different...a different...it's a different understanding, you know?

Ricardo, before I end, I did want to ask you, in a post-apartheid context,...once you left the LRC, do you think the LRC's maintained a kind of high profile, or do you think that...what's your sense of it?

Definitely. I think...you know, I remember with myself and Thami (Mbatha), we worked for...for, you know, a long time in...within that period on the...in the NPO Project. And we were still fairly new in this, we were learning, I guess, as we were working in the project, but the one thing was clear, if we had to do a submission in the Parliament, the fact that we're coming from the Legal Resources Centre, people may not know us as individuals, but, the organisation, it was...it has put a different perspective on things, and people were, you know, more willing to listen and, you know, to...and to be attentive to what we were saying, so, for me, that was...and it changed somewhat, I think, when I moved over to the other organisation (laughs).

In what way?

In the sense that, I mean, the other organisation was...was a smaller organisation, it was new...well, not new, but it was much younger than the LRC. So, when you engage with the outside world, there isn't, you know, quite this seriousness in terms of: ok, what you're saying is valuable. It was different with the LRC, when you tell people, well, I'm from the Legal Resources Centre. And it's, for me, it was in the context that the organisation was still on the cutting edge of, you know, development. And it made an impact and, I mean, that's what the mission and the vision about the organisation is, is to make that impact in society. In...you know, I don't want to

now

mention another organisation, but my...one of my previous employers, you know, at the Lawyers for Human Rights, before I actually worked there I was excited, and it

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was nice working for the organisation, but I discovered at some point that the organisation wasn't that effective, compared to what...the role that Lawyers for Human Rights played prior to 94, and they didn't quite make that shift, post '94. And even now...but, they're still playing a role...but it's not that reputable organisation that it used to be. It has...it has, I think, it's a bit smaller now and even now, if you look at this whole refugee, not refugee, but the crisis with the foreign nationals, you know they've interviewed the media, and all of that, but in terms of actual, say, making an application to court, you know, you don't see that...someone so...and I think they would have been much...if that organisation was faced with that kind of challenge prior to 94, there would have been a different, you know, response that would have been more impactful, but it didn't happen, but, now, with the Legal Resources Centre it's been...it's been, you know, you can point to strategic issues where the organisation has been involved, in post 94, and those issues were pertinent. For example the Canadian thing that I spoke about earlier, it was on board; people were actually waiting for the judgment to come out. And to that extent, I think, the organisation is making a substantial contribution to our democracy.

Ricardo, I want to thank you very, very much for your time and for sharing your experiences about the Legal Resources Centre.

You're welcome. Thank you for inviting me.

Ok.



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