

Communication Scholars Oral History Project  
Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives  
University of Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, PA

# OSCAR H. GANDY, JR.

interviewed and transcribed by

JEFFERSON POOLEY

recorded by

ANDRES SPILLARI

*July 22, 23, & 24, 2019*

Tucson, AZ

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## BIOGRAPHY

Oscar H. Gandy, Jr. (1944–), professor emeritus at the Annenberg School for Communication, University of Pennsylvania, is an influential political economist of communication. Gandy has made significant contributions to the study of privacy, data brokerage, public relations, framing, and the representation of risk. He is the author of four books, including *The Panoptic Sort: A Political Economy of Personal Information* (1993), a widely celebrated work that—among other things—anticipated Silicon Valley’s business model of surveillance capitalism. Gandy, born in 1944 in Amityville, on New York’s Long Island, was raised by an aunt in nearby Hempstead. He was educated at Catholic institutions, including an all-boys high school where he was the only black student. After securing an associate’s degree in social sciences at Nassau Community College in 1964, he matriculated to the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque. At UNM Gandy majored in sociology, participated in anti-Vietnam War and anti-racist activism, and worked as a research assistant to radical sociologist Harold Meier. After his 1967 graduation, Gandy moved to Philadelphia to pursue a master’s in social work at the University of Pennsylvania (Penn), with the aim to work as a community organizer. He soon dropped the program and—after a stint living in Oakland, California—returned to Philadelphia to join a master’s program at Penn’s Annenberg School for Communication. There he was mentored by the School’s influential dean, George Gerbner, and produced a thesis on the effects of television camera movement on viewers. While at Annenberg, Gandy produced the *Right On!* community affairs program for the local CBS affiliate. After his Penn graduation in 1970, he took up a post at the University of San Diego California (UCSD), teaching television production, where he worked alongside critical communication scholar Herbert I. Schiller. In 1973 Gandy moved to the Bay Area to pursue doctoral studies in Stanford University’s Communication program. At Stanford, Gandy took a number of courses from radical economists and education scholars, and created a model of development communication, TrEE (Transformation, Effectiveness, and Efficiency). After completing his dissertation on the Defense Department’s subsidies for educational technology in 1976, Gandy moved to Tanzania in an unsuccessful attempt to apply his TrEE model. He soon returned to Philadelphia and the Annenberg School, as a post-doc under Gerbner’s sponsorship. In 1977 Gandy moved into a position at Howard University in Washington, DC, where he spent a decade on the faculty. At Howard, Gandy published *Beyond Agenda Setting* (1982), which developed the influential concept of the “information subsidy,” whereby resourced organizations help shape news coverage by providing ready-to-use materials for journalists. He also took an active role in communication policy work in this Howard period, with the DC-based Telecommunications Policy Research Conference in particular. In 1987, Gandy—by then an established member of the community of radical political economists who gathered at the Union for Democratic Communication (UDC) and the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conferences—assumed a tenured post at the Annenberg School, where he would remain for the balance of his career. His landmark book *The Panoptic Sort*, whose research was improbably supported by AT&T, was published in 1993, to great and lasting acclaim. In this same period Gandy began working on news framing, including research on proactive framing for social justice ends, with special attention to race. That work culminated in a 1998 book, *Communication and Race*. Fueled in part by participation in a Penn seminar on racial statistics and public policy in 2002 and 2003, Gandy developed an innovative research program on the representation of risk and probability, leading to *Coming to Terms with Chance* (2009), a major if unheralded work that connects the prevalence of probabilistic decision-making with unequal life chances. Gandy retired from the Annenberg School in 2006, moving to Tucson, Arizona, where he resides with his wife Judith.

## ABSTRACT

### Session Four (July 24, 2019)

The interview mostly covers Gandy's post-retirement years in Arizona, from 2006 to the present, though it begins with a recounting of his participation in a University of Pennsylvania seminar on racial statistics and public policy organized by sociologist Tukufu Zuberi. Also discussed is Gandy's collaboration with Chanita Hughes-Halbert on race genetics and African Americans' health representation. Gandy explains his decision to relocate to Tucson, as well as his involvement in local politics and activism. He describes his research and writing process, in the context of his home office. The interview covers Gandy's attempt to think through the concept of a racial class, and engagement with rational discrimination and cumulative advantage, especially in relation to his 2009 book *Coming to Terms with Chance*. The implications of the representation of risk, in relation to unequal life chances and policy, is extensively discussed. Gandy recounts his recent engagement with neuromarketing, and with behavioral economics.

## RESTRICTIONS

None

## FORMAT

Interview. Video recording at the home office of Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., in Tucson, AZ. One mp4 file of approximately two hours.

## TRANSCRIPT

Transcribed by Jefferson Pooley. Audited for accuracy and edited for clarity by Jefferson Pooley. Transcript reviewed and approved by Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., Jefferson Pooley, and Samantha Dodd.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY AND CITATION FORMS

### Video recording

**Bibliography:** Gandy, Oscar H., Jr. Interview by Jefferson Pooley (session four). Video recording, July 24, 2019. Communication Scholars Oral History Project, Annenberg School for

Communication Archives, University of Pennsylvania. **Footnote example:** Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., interview by Jefferson Pooley (session four), video recording, July 24, 2019, Communication Scholars Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Archives, University of Pennsylvania.

### Transcript

**Bibliography:** Gandy, Oscar H., Jr. Interview by Jefferson Pooley (session four). Transcript of video recording, July 24, 2019. Communication Scholars Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Archives, University of Pennsylvania. **Footnote example:** Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., interview by Jefferson Pooley (session four), transcript of video recording, July 24, 2019, Communication Scholars Oral History Project, Annenberg School for Communication Archives, University of Pennsylvania, pp. 24–25.

# Transcript of Interview conducted July 24, 2019, with OSCAR H. GANDY, JR. (session four)

Tucson, AZ

Interviewed by Jefferson Pooley

Q: This is session four of an oral history interview of Oscar Gandy conducted by Jefferson Pooley in Dr. Gandy's home in Tucson, Arizona. The interview is part of the Communication Scholars Oral History Project of the Annenberg School for Communication Library Archives at the University of Pennsylvania. And the date is July 24, 2019. So Oscar, we ended our last session with your retirement from Annenberg and the University of Pennsylvania, and one thing that I neglected to ask you about, but which I'd like to circle back to, is your collaboration with and friendships with figures who are at Penn, but outside the Annenberg School. And in particular, I was curious about Tukufu Zuberi, a sociologist, and your work on racial statistics and public policy for four years. It looked like you had a seminar that was funded. So anyway, I wanted to ask about that.

GANDY: Sure. I mean, there's so much to say about Zuberi, Tukufu, his importance at the school, my relationship with him, and how important that was for me. This seminar, funded by the university for four years—not a lot of money, but enough to bring in scholars from around the nation, primarily, that were dealing with matters of race. We had a research assistant, one of my students, Jessica Davis, was working as an assistant in order to make this thing occur. It was beneficial for me in terms of introducing me to so many people that I later cited in my work, in that they had particular kinds of insights, many of them being lawyers, but also famous critics in the area of race.

He, that is, Tukufu, is not only a specialist about race, he's a race guy. There's no question that that's what he does. But he is also a sociologist, a demographer in that regard, but he's also, and I've lost the title of his program now [*History Detectives*], but he's a television star. He's this magical figure who travels all around the world and goes to the museum and the like and tells people about them all. So he really is one of these multi-powered kinds of persons—so it was a good part of my work at the university. He was also part of kind of an organization of black scholars or scholars who worked in the area. He got funding for a center [Center for Africana Studies], a center which has grown since I left and continues to attract scholars and provide events that builds the status and the visibility of black scholars at the university. Very important fellow at Penn.

Q: And that series of statistics-oriented seminars, it clearly had something to do with the work that you would eventually publish as a book in 2009. Is there anything in particular that you were exposed to during those four years that seems important?

GANDY: So a lot of it, despite having noted the role of statistics, encountering other scholars who also talked about statistics and talked about the representation of African Americans in statistics and in data, was also a part of those visitations there. So many, I would say maybe five, of the speakers who came wind up in some of my writing. So that's what a seminar is supposed to do. I mean if it's not for credit, it is supposed to expose you to other people's positions and understanding. Many of them really caught my attention and had me read their material in ways that I wouldn't have. I didn't have to agree with them all. They were just powerful presentations, so it was an enjoyable experience for me.

Q: Great. Well, I wanted to ask also about a second collaborator or person that you worked with, Chanita Hughes-Halbert, on race genetics, African Americans' health representation.<sup>1</sup> So, can you say something about that?

GANDY: Sure. I mean, as you noted, I guess I had a long-time interest in health, kind of maybe the first paper that I wrote with colleagues and classmates was really about health.<sup>2</sup> So this is, Chanita is a, I'm not sure whether she's a physician. I think she is probably not. She might even be in nursing in that regard, and she'll forgive me if I don't locate her correctly. This was, and I think it is a correction of my statement that I didn't do any more experimental research. In fact, we did something that approximates an experiment. But it's kind of a simple—that is, it assigns people to groups and asks the questions in slightly different ways, so one can see about the framing of the question, how it influences their responses. So she was part of this study, of which there are many at the University of Pennsylvania about smoking, about African Americans and smoking. But it was the connection between African American smoking and genetics, and whether or not those respondents, those participants, those subjects in our research, would participate in a study of genetics.

So given kind of the history, yes, of African Americans and scientific research and research having to do with genetics and the identification of African Americans and all of that, we wanted to understand, What is it about? You know, that subject matter and its presentation that might lead people to say, Yes, we'll volunteer to be subjects or not. So we did a series of studies that were related to how we presented the choice to have genetic studies about tobacco and whether or not they would participate. The question was really how we could and how the field could get more African Americans to participate in research given the history of African Americans and biomedical research in this regard. I'm not sure what our conclusions were. I

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<sup>1</sup> Chanita Hughes Halbert, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., Aliya Collier, and Lee Shaker, "Intentions to Participate in Genetics Research Among African American Smokers," *Cancer*

*Epidemiology Biomarkers & Prevention* 15, no. 1 (2006): 150–53; and Chanita Hughes Halbert, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., Aliya Collier, and Lee Shaker, "Beliefs about Tobacco Use in African Americans," *Ethnicity & Disease* 17, no. 1 (2007): 92–8.

<sup>2</sup> June Fisher, Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., and Noreene Janus, "The Role of Popular Media in Defining Sickness and Health," in *Communication and Social Structure*, ed. Emile McAnany, Jorge Schnitman, and Noreene Janus, 240–62 (New York: Praeger, 1981).

don't think they were that strong, But that was the nature of that work. I want to say that those articles that we wrote involving one of my undergraduate—one of my graduate research assistants—has gotten a lot of citations. So that's an attribute, if you will, of medical research, health-related research. Lots of people gather all of that material to make references to it. And here was a study about African-American subjects that was deciding whether they would or would not participate in research. So it's gotten a lot of visibility.

Q: I also wanted to just ask if there were any other either Penn-based or Philadelphia-based intellectual friendships that were outside the Annenberg School? I'm not fishing for anything—just curious if there's anyone who was important to you during your years of living in Philadelphia in those terms, who might have been at Penn, maybe at Drexel, Temple, whoever, wherever.

GANDY: Sure. There's a colleague who was at Penn [University of Pennsylvania] and went away to Washington to become the head of a massively important research institute, who went away. And we were very friendly before she left and we made friends again when she returned back to Penn, so—but again that's in one sense of a connection with a scholar who has power within a Republican administration and that stayed in a Democratic administration in an independent organization. So very powerful. Her name won't come to mind, so she'll be embarrassed if she finds out that I never mentioned her, but very powerful great scholar, friend, in terms of research—research that had a public impact in a whole range of areas, not just including health, but education and the like. And I'll think of her name in a minute, but can't—

Q: OK. And anyone else?

GANDY: I suspect that—that's all I'm going to pull up at the moment.

Q: Right. OK. Fair enough. And why don't we then turn to your post-retirement life? In fact we're sitting in a room that I want to ask you about, but before that, I'm curious about your decision to move to Tucson and your research life post-Penn, how that has been structured, how it's worked, that kind of thing.

GANDY: So let me invite a correction then. I left the University of Pennsylvania as an emeritus professor, so I didn't leave the university in that regard. What I managed to do was escape classroom teaching [laughs]. I did not cut off the rest of my connection to the university or the Annenberg School, and therefore continued to be a productive scholar who credits and who signs his name as an Annenberg—as an emeritus professor at the university. So that's a distinction that I want to make clear there.

I would say that the process of winding up in Tucson was one that took quite a lot of time. I would say it was probably a four-year process in winding up in Tucson. Our daughter lived in California. I went to school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, so all of those were potential sites for our making a new home in that regard. California was far too expensive. Arizona, nowhere near as attractive as Tucson is, as a community, although it still has friends there. So that was really the choice, except that it also had to be where in Tucson, then, is it that you're going to put your

house. And we spent a lot of time, and we had a fine realtor that took us around and around and around, here and there, and all of these neighborhoods. But this was the neighborhood that we chose because it was in walking distance of the University of Arizona.

I did not expect and did not really develop a close relationship with the University of Arizona, one of the graduates from the Annenberg School is, in fact, is a professor here and did connect. Another policy person also came to Arizona and got me to give a lecture, but that's really as close to the university as I have been, other than a presentation or two that I have been invited to, or our use of the university for some of my own political activity. It's a fine university, but it's there. That—my relationship with that university changed because the political economy of universities changed. The resources at the university that were available to us as residents of the city, which were free, later came to have a price. And that limited our use of the university as a resource. And it's a great university in terms of the variety of things that we did and might still do if they didn't charge us for them.

Q: That's telling, for sure. I want to then ask about this space and your work life. I understand that Judy [Judith Gandy] had different plans, your wife, for this space when you moved in and that you managed to convince her to allow you to have this office. And it's been the site of your scholarly production since.

GANDY: Well, so it wasn't a great struggle. She imagined that this might be rented out. But the people who owned the house before us had a daughter who lived in this space. And so it reflects that daughter's sense of self, the bathroom actually was a photography studio. So if there are spaces or buildings or furniture in that space for a photographer—and the power is for a photographer. And you know, use the table in that space there. So this room had all of these—I didn't put these bookshelves in there. They were put here. The desk was here.

So this space was designed as an office. So it didn't take much to say, Why can't it be my office? When we first moved here, we stayed in what has turned out to be Judy's office. She is an editor and continues to edit. But it had one of these pull-down-from-the-wall beds [laughs] that we stayed in until all of our furniture got here and we moved. And then she turned that into her office. So both of us have offices. They are almost the same size. She doesn't have as many bookshelves as I do, because she's producing other people's work in that regard, so that's the difference. But we managed to negotiate a good space for both of us.

Q: And we haven't really talked about your work process, and I know it must be very different when you have collaborators to when you're actually working on your own, but what is it like if you sit down to, let's say, deliver a paper at IAMCR [International Association for Media and Communication Research], and how is it that you go about producing a paper or even a book project?

GANDY: Sure, but let me answer a question you didn't ask, but I want to make a note that I continue and continue to work with other people. So there's a lot of collaborative work, so that part of my work has not changed. It is only really the books that represent just my work. I mean, certainly there are other—there are book reviews, that's my work as well. But it's kind of a



different kind of structure. You read the book and you think about it, and you say, Alright, this is what I want to say about this. And there's almost a formula for writing a book review, at least that I follow, whether or not there is a published formula for writing a book review or not that I do or do not follow. So I haven't got a special way for doing that other than sitting down and reading it and then having it before me when I go say, All right, now it's time to turn that into a review in this regard and go back through and find examples in that book.

My own work is one that is kind of reflective of how I use the computer. I use files in the computer. Before retirement, much before retirement, I used paper files. I still have a lot of those paper files now. But now I have PDF files, so almost everything that I use despite the books that are in this room—came to me in PDFs and are organized in PDFs. And I can write on them. I can underline them on PDFs, and I can search and find things on PDFs, organize them now in that way. Although, because I have a number of different buckets—an inequality bucket and a race bucket and a production bucket and a policy bucket and other kinds of buckets—well, I have those buckets on my desktop. There are those files there and I read something and it'll go into the bucket and I can find it in the bucket. Or if I can't, I'll search for it and the computer will find it for me in that bucket.

So my work, even though I don't have a project in mind, and I will now confess, it is primarily shaped by *The New York Times*. So I get up very early in the morning and I read the local paper and then I read *The New York Times*, and *The New York Times* has become, if it wasn't always, a major source of my reading, because of the articles filled with hyperlinks. So that is, I can read and someone will make reference to something and provide a hyperlink and I'll capture it. And there it goes into a file—well no, there it goes on the desktop to be read and then it'll make its way into a file and it will be annotated. All of those files and all of those annotations and the ability for me to search and, What did I think about that at that point in time?, is available to me when I go writing. That's the process, putting things into files.

Now, then, there's another step. I suppose that's the way other people do it, but it's certainly the way that I do it. That is, I have an outline. That is, I need to get to an outline. What are the sections of this book or of this project? And that's the way the pieces get into it from their place within this outline. I mean, outlines in Microsoft Word are not fixed devices, they are adjustable. One can move things around. This doesn't work [laughs]. This one has outgrown its space. So that's kind of what my work project is like. Here's the overall subject. Here then becomes the outline for that. And here are the segments that I think that belong in that, which will get changed. Here's the order for them. This is the one that has to come first, which means I might have to change something else and talk about this, which I'm going to do, but that's, if you will, that's the structure of my work.

Here's this project. Here are the components of the project. Here are the moments or the minutes, if you will, of that project. Here is the relationship between them. Here's the path that I'll take through them, which again, which I will often alter. Here is the review process, where you say this is not doing it. I mean, so some chapters disappear. They're not there at all. I can't think of what else might be of interest.

Q: How about writing itself? Do you find that to be a pleasurable activity? Do words come quickly or do you prefer the outlining and the conceptual work that predates the writing process?

GANDY: No, that's good. I mean, I used to—I don't think I write as easily as I used to before. And so I think I did write well, so that I think writing was a creative process, as well as the scholarly process of gathering the materials—and so I enjoyed that. I actually enjoy my work more now when I go back in and look at it and say, Did I really write that? Was that me? And that was actually done rather nicely, Oscar. I mean, so I think writing came fairly easy to me. When I was teaching, writing was limited. And there's [airplane noise]—people should know that I live near a Defense institution. So not a commercial air force, but a military Air Force. And planes can get to be a real problem. And it's not just a problem for me. I mean, it's a problem for the family—in that they sometimes make their space available. We may have to stop because you don't know whether or not they're doing a training for the Air Force or whether they rent out the space and our airspace for others who are training their pilots in that regard. So I don't know whether that particular exposure to the impact of the air is going to continue on, or not. We can continue on. Yes. So that's part of living here.

So while we chose to be next to the University of Arizona, we're not that far from the Air Force, which chooses this space. I mean, kind of the politics, as maybe we'll find a point to talk about, kind of the politics of our relationship to the Air Force has gotten to be an important part of life here. There's a mobilization of people to try to adjust that location. Please.

Q: Well, I do want to ask about your life in Tucson outside of your work in this office. And we talked last session about the role of a critical scholar and the kind of intellectual interventions that, and policy interventions that, a scholar might make. But since you don't have undergraduates, and when you're not working, I'm curious if you've been involved in local politics. You just mentioned the Air Force and the mobilization around that—what has your life been in public terms here?

GANDY: Super. I have been more involved politically in local organizations than at any point in my history. So, that is, I've certainly been involved in organizations that had a political purpose, but they were connected in one large sense to me at the academy—professors participating in this activity. Not long after I got here, I became a member of something called DOG, Democratic Organizing Group, and it was really a response to the citizens movement and the movement that the court that gave corporations more and more and more and more rights that belonged to human beings, not to corporate entities in that regard. So the DOG was organized in part to respond to that court decision about granting rights to corporations. And we're trying to say, Can we mobilize? This can't go. This can't stand. We need to deal with that one.

But that was not a working organization. Indeed, somebody who came to one of our meetings said, This is not a healthy organization. And we said, Yes, all right. So we got a better organization after that, which had a name which kind of reflected our sense of ourselves. It was called the—can I do it? Oh, I lost its name for the moment. So it was really about what you put into something in order to bake it, in order for the flour to rise in that regard. So it was really

about [laughs] that device, that thing which you would enter. And we were going to make movements rise, movements grow as a result of that. I'll find it at some point in that regard. It is and was a lovely organization—people from around the town who were political activists, who were concerned about the need to mobilize and to address corporate power. So I've got a bumper sticker on my car which still says that corporations are not the people. So that was the movement. And this group, I wish I could think of its name, this group organized meetings. It invited a nationally known group about community rights to come here and do a three-day seminar in order to mobilize and inform people about the nature of rights, the history of rights, and the organization of rights, and the importance of rights in this regard. These became close friends—close friends at the University of Arizona. Close friends within the community. Close friends who were teachers. Close friends who were nurses. I mean, really a good group of politically active and politically concerned people here that I still love, every single one of them. So that was one kind of organization.

What was another organization that I became involved in, yes. So another part of my identity is related to environmental activists. So an organization of environmentalists into some—that's not its name either. I'll think of it eventually, perhaps after we're on something else, but nevertheless a very well-organized, continuing-to-exist organization that's focused on environmental concerns, environmental activism, and, again, saving Tucson, making Tucson survive in terms of its environmental policies. I eventually became a member of its board—one of my, I guess—because of me at a typewriter—one of my roles has been secretary. I've been secretaries of lots of organizations because I can take the minutes for those organizations. So, I was a board member and then the secretary of that organization—I can't think of its name—of Tucson. But it was really environmental Tucson survival in that regard.

Many kinds of educational functions, many kinds of attempts to influence the government here in Tucson, whether or not we were actively involved in or in support of or against political figures. It's important to understand Tucson as being southern Arizona, being very different. So we currently have a Democratic mayor and six members of the city council who are also Democrats. And that's kind of unusual, with Phoenix and with our current governor in terms of his being a Republican and the northern part of the state being very Republican in that regard. But this is then a left progressive city in all of the ways that one can identify a progressive city being. Tucson is that and has been that, although its city council members are not all in identical districts. They differ in terms of their population and they differ in terms of their politics, but it is still Democratic. And it's variations along those lines.

I'm currently involved in another organization called Tucson Residents for Responsive Government. That's what I'm struggling with, primarily because its identity is shaped more by, if you will, homeowners. And so there's a different kind of political economy of homeowners and homeowners' interests and their orientation to government policy with regard to its influence on homeowners. So there's a little bit of tension within the organization in terms of the extent to which we have attracted non-homeowners, that we have not attracted the transient population. We have not attracted others who live in Tucson and are affected by city policy in that regard. So that's a constraint. I don't know how long that's going to last. I mean, indeed, I

had research proposals which I presented to this organization and did the research anyway, but they did not identify it. They did not make it one of their projects in that regard. So that's part of this tension, about the kinds of projects you choose as a scholar, making a contribution to a policy organization with the expectation that it would influence policy locally, and it did not, and I'm not sure that it is going to.

I was a member of, perhaps because of the environmental group, a member of the Imagine Greater Tucson. So here's a project, which is part of the responsibility for the city every 10 years to do a new plan. So this was a project that I was going to do the next plan, and it involved me doing part of the community meetings in order to talk about how they understood the plans and the changes in the city. But it was also me as a statistician, as part of me doing the data analysis from the surveys that they did. And I'm so pleased that one of the members of this three-member team that did the analysis for Imagine Greater Tucson is actually going to be a very powerful actor in what I may get involved in next, transportation. So he is working for the new transportation secretary for the city of Tucson in that regard.

The last thing I'll say about this process, which maybe is a source of tension and I thought it might not have been a good thing, but I did it anyway Our city council member is a magical person. He's an ideal city council member, but he was a Republican. And he was such a good city council member that my wife and I were going to vote for him as a Republican, but he became a Democrat. He fought so much with the Republicans in the city, in the state, that he changed horses in any event and so we had—in any one of those organizations, we had a lot of contact with Steve Kozachik, is his name. He's really special. So Steve actually put me on a committee, a commission actually, a public safety commission. And when he made that recommendation I talked to myself a lot about whether I really wanted to do that. That is, I'm going to be on a commission that was somehow going to be dealing with the expenditure of a substantial amount of money by police and fire in that regard. But I had spent so much time with Steve and had such trust in Steve, I could only say yes.

But it actually turned out to be a benefit in that it provided more motivation for me to study body-worn cameras. So the police are involved in this kind of surveillance, and this kind of surveillance technology. I started, as I do, reading like mad, writing out everything I could about body-worn cameras and police surveillance and monopoly within this industry. Indeed, the major source of this technology now was identified, I believe, last week as having the third most well-paid chief executive—is one that produces tasers and body-worn cameras. But in any event, I have learned a lot about, and indeed, whether or not I'm going to get to be a thorn in the side of the police group and the representatives. I mean, the representative, the head, the second level police commissioner, has responded to my questions. And he said he was pleased that he knew something about this stuff before, but I have so many more questions to ask about this technology and the role of the manufacturer and marketer in the associated services related to the processing of data that are captured by the ownership of data. So it's going to be a lot more interactions between me and the police on that commission. So that was a good move, and I said yes to Steve.

Q: Great, well, I wanted to turn to some of the work you were doing—it might have been in this first case work that began while you were still living in Philadelphia, but either way this, I think, important paper from 2007 on the formation of an isolated racial class, where you're talking about the kind of damage to a black public sphere.<sup>3</sup> In some ways, the political economy and cultural studies debate that you've carried on a little bit before crops up here again.

GANDY: Sure. I mean, that's an important kind of distinction, right—so part of the response from cultural studies folk but also from political economists—more from political economists that are focused on class and therefore not focused on race, right, as a point of contention, a part of struggle. So I tried to find a way, alright, to bring race into this discussion, and to at least explore why it is that political economists need to pay more to race. But also to understand why they don't, and part of that is that we're not going to get a racial class, alright. That is, there are so many signs both then and now that we're not going to get a racial class that will have that kind of political force that we'd expect class and class consciousness to have in kind of developing an alternative to capitalism. That's not going to happen on the basis of African American organization in that regard.

And so this was an attempt to understand what a racial class would mean. This was an attempt to understand what would get in the way of the development of a racial class that would be a political force in that regard. In order to understand whether or not consumption of media—again, connection back to [George] Gerbner and the notion of people looking at different kinds of content, but also kind of strategic manipulation, strategic shaping of the kinds of content that African-Americans would expose themselves to and the extent to which that would build a racial class.

I'm so struck now—though that's not a comment on that work—I'm so struck now by what seems to me to actually be a political strategy to erase class identity. My wife and I sit down and watch ads on television where more and more and more and more of these families are mixed families—multiracial families in that regard. And the kinds of early arguments within the university about whether or not the black kids would check that box, and they felt they were able to check the box and identify themselves as being black rather than being mixed or blended or some other kind of construction. So the possibility for a racial class emerging was not at all clear to me as a possibility at that point in time. And it is much less clear now that a racial class that will have a political influence, a powerful influence—I mean, think about our black president and the extent to which he's shifted. I mean, he is a mixed-race child. He was attacked for that status, but he became America's president. He became America's president for two terms in that regard. Clearly, he's not going to stand then as a figure for the mobilization of a black class and a political—that could be a long discussion about kind of the history of black political mobilization and the kinds of organizations and the variety and the character of those different groups have kind of evaporated. I mean, there are still black Muslims that retain a particular kind of racial identity but also a religious identity and a political identity as well. But they're not going to come along the path that those Black Panthers that I talked about were

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<sup>3</sup> Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Privatization And Identity: The Formation of a Racial Class," in *Media in the Age of Marketization*, ed. Graham Murdock and Janet Wasko, 109–28 (New York: Hampton Press, 2007).

moving toward any more. I think that that black racial class has not any possibility of—despite even Black Lives Matter in the current moment, that was a reach—not for black people to make this argument—that was a reach for white people to recognize black lives matter in that regard so understand, no racial class coming out of that, as I understand it. So that’s my sense of what that work was—trying to engage but not winning that debate with Marxian scholars about black racial class, but in fact saying, OK, that’s not going to happen.

Q: I mean, it really does feed well into the book that I want to talk about next, the one that you wrote in 2009, in some ways a culmination of the project that got underway in the Freedom Forum year, way back in 1993, with the turn to risk and framing and race. The book’s title, of course, is *Coming to Terms with Chance*, and I really wanted to ask you about the two terms in the subtitle, because they’re both really important in the book, and they don’t really appear before in any of your writing.<sup>4</sup> The first one—well, I’ll read the subtitle: *Engaging Rational Discrimination and Cumulative Disadvantage*. And first, I guess, just the notion of rational discrimination. Maybe you could talk about where the idea came from and what its importance was.

GANDY: So both of those are more recent, right? And so engagement, that’s a good question. I mean, the engagement with rational discrimination came out of that seminar that I did with Zuberi, alright? So that is, the scholars that came and talked about rational discrimination. I can’t bring up the name of the primary source of that work who was really compelling in kind of having us engage rationality with regard to discrimination. I lost the name that he would use. So there were two of those presentations that dealt with this question about rational discrimination and whether or not there was a justification for the kinds of choices that made, or whether or not those kinds of decisions were the reflection of racial thinking, rather than some attempt to be justified, in terms of the kinds of choices that we’re supposed to make as economic man and woman in that regard.

So rational discrimination is an economic—out of the Chicago School in large part—notion that we’re supposed to make choices based upon the consequences that flow from the choices that we make. However, there was not, and there is not, a sensitivity to the consequences that flow from making use of data, making use of sense of self, making use of goals that were generated, that were reinforced, by things in the past and therefore are, in one sense, irrational in terms of their application to present circumstances. The second part of that, then, talks about how rational discrimination contributes to cumulative disadvantage and again, black scholars were certainly part of an attempt to develop measurement of discrimination.

And cumulative disadvantage is part of the reflection that was made in that work, that body of work that says, What does it mean when a choice is made that’s considered rational by some actors that actually works in building upon, adding more, adding another block to the constraints on the development of African Americans as competent participants in the social sphere. So that’s this cumulative disadvantage that—this thing which we had from birth, based

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<sup>4</sup> Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., *Coming to Terms With Chance: Engaging Rational Discrimination and Cumulative Disadvantage* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

upon what neighborhoods we were living in, based on segregation, based on a whole host of things that have to do with racism, accumulate when people make rational decisions based upon, well, what kind of job did you have? How far did you go in school? How well did you do in school?

All of those are rational considerations about how you choose someone, although colleagues at Howard [University] and colleagues at Penn would say, Well, now, wait a minute. People still succeed, still make positive contributions despite where they went to school, despite how they were measured on this test, despite—other kinds of benefits explain the way people don't fall where they're predicted to fall. And indeed, if I ramble a bit, part of data and predictions talk about means. That is, talk about centers of distribution. Don't talk about people on both ends of those distributions. And you want to make sure you're not making decisions that constrains people's life choices, where the ones who could be and who could perform on the upper end of the distribution, on the end that everybody would consider to be beneficial but they never got a chance—because somebody made a rational decision about the mean of that distribution and said [negative noise], so those folks are not going to be.

That's part of what that project is about, is about what's the nature of the kinds of decisions that are perceived as being rational but have, we would certainly agree, irrational consequences, especially with regard to people of color, people of certain class, and that's really what that book is about. How do these constraints get reproduced and distributed in special groups in society?

Q: And so in that respect, it's very much in keeping with your, I would say, career-long focus on life chances, even if you didn't always use that terminology. The deck is stacked, you said, in the game of life, in that introduction. And in particular, what's so exciting about the book, if I might, is the focus on statistics and statistical reasoning and even actuarial logic, as you put it. And the insurance industry turns out to be important in this story. So maybe you could talk about that aspect, the way in which statistics and a statistical way of seeing even seems to be important to this cumulative disadvantage story.

GANDY: So I didn't know that our current focus these days on big data would be part of this process through which statistics in research and evidence in argument and, as we talked previously, prediction. But those are all based upon computation and statistics, analysis about what happened in the past and predictions of what's going to happen in the future. Taking the past as being, if you will, a predictor of what's going to happen in the future. So maybe it's just commonplace to me, but it seems that it is in statistics, it is in analysis, it is in prediction, and it is in the insurance industry, which is kind of the leader of the specification of what we ought to pay attention to in terms of risk. And I think I made reference to that before. That is, the idea that risk primarily talks about things you want to avoid, things you want to minimize.

I mean, you could certainly say that you have predictions about benefit. Who's going to succeed in school? Who's going to become the president? Who's going to do all these other things? But the focus primarily of insurance is to avoid negative risk. Avoid cost by avoiding those folk that are more likely to be associated with cost to us rather than realization of profit. So that's the

aspect of risk that's important in that work. But it is also, I think, spread across policy. I mean, the extent to which public policy focuses on the benefits that are likely, rather than the harms that need to be avoided, is not something that I really explored—I guess to the extent that I probably should. But again, maybe that has to do with the nature of political economists, and here I go making my connection to Herb [Herbert] Schiller again.

We talk about the bad stuff. We talk about the harm. Not only that, we talk about the harm in terms of its accumulation, in it's piling more harm on the harm that was there already, rather than focusing on the way in which information subsidies might talk about the benefits. Clearly, government talks about and focuses on, we need to make investments in this area. We need to provide support in order to realize the kinds of benefits, realize the growth, realize the development, realize the employment, realize the futures that come—but I think critical political economists talk about, let's not talk about the benefits, because they're going to do that anyway. They're going to use that as part of their information subsidies. Let's talk about the harms that are going to come. Let's talk about the distribution of harms that are going to come. Let's talk about the people whose life chances are worsened. I mean, part of—I think you've gotten a sense of inequality and the ways in which focuses on inequality are a part of my work and a part of the future, of my future work and the work that comes up in this book, talks about inequality as distinct from poverty.

So a lot of work talks about the poor, but that's talking about a group. And it's distinct from this construction of inequality as looking at the whole array of forces and how in which the bulk of the resources from capitalism are distributed to a smaller and smaller and smaller and smaller share of the population—and that's why, for me, inequality is, I'm not sure I could say more important, but it's important to keep on the table and not just talk about poverty, not just talk about the poor, not just talk about the unemployed, not just to talk about it. Yes, it's important to talk about the poor people who are harmed by this kind of exploitation of resources in society, but it's important to talk about them in terms of their relationship along this distribution. And there's something really powerful to talk about—one fraction of 1% that captures more and more and more of the resources produced within the system. So that's part of my focus. I may have stepped over where I should have gone.

Q: No, no. It's completely perfect, actually, in terms of a summary of a kind of way of thinking, I think, that suffuses that book, but also lots of your work before. And I did want to ask about the—you discuss in the book a lot about the authority of statistical thinking, especially as it's represented in policymaking and in media representation—the way in which numbers have a particular purchase and expert authority almost. And maybe it goes hand-in-hand a little bit with what you also talk about in the book, which is the way economics and economic logic have gained traction in policymaking especially.

GANDY: That's exactly where I was going to go, alright? So, you know, again, as a political economist, why wouldn't I talk about economists [laughs]? But maybe I kind of misperceive the extent to which public policy and public policy discourse focuses on, makes use of, the work of economists. Remember now, I talked about earlier on, that is, the policy group—that is, the



public policy meetings that happen every year, a big part of my life [Telecommunications Policy Research Council]. Well, economists played a major role and these were mainstream economists. They were not political economists. Political economists snuck the way into—snuck our way into—that space and maybe were responsible for the shrinkage of those policy research conferences.

But clearly economists have come to be, I would say, dominant voices in kind of the structuring of policy choices in terms of talking about risk and talking about the distribution of benefits there. And the models that economists use in order to say, This is how we're going to move, this is how we're going to benefit in that regard. And here are the major actors in the field. There's no question in my mind that economists are very powerful actors in policy formation and policy evaluation. So I don't know what more to say about that.

Q: And it is connected somehow to statistical reasoning and evidence and representation of that evidence.

GANDY: Yes, but it's a point to make, maybe, kind of the distinction between statistics that are used by another part of my community, historic community, but experimental scholars. They use statistics as well. But the economists—I mean, there is a school of experiments in economics, but they're just kind of on the margin there. But the data that are used by economists in order to characterize changes within the economy and the site and the locations and the future is statistically based. And the extent to which insurance, and risk as framed by the insurance industry, and the economists who work for and with the insurance industry. I guess I haven't written that much about the elevation of risk or even how risk became the term of art here in my work. I don't actually know how that came to be. You know, who were the people who could claim authorship of the shift toward risk—but clearly, it is dominant in our thinking about our presence and our future in terms of risk and its avoidance in that regard.

Q: Let me ask about the conclusion of that book and the sort of focus on social movements and policy. And maybe I'll pair that with a question, since we didn't really talk about it when it first appeared earlier in your work in the 1990s, but the ironies of investigative journalism—that investigative journalism ironically can sometimes undermine the would-be effort to expose and thereby invite a policy response through the framing of risk and statistics.

GANDY: So it's a challenge, right? It's a challenge for sources, which I certainly wrote about. But it's also a challenge for the journalists who take some material from sources, but they don't take it all. And they have their own ideas as journalists that have an identity. They want their names to matter in that regard, but they may also be influenced by the sources that they identify with. And so it becomes really a challenge to say, Alright, how do I take the statistics and turn them into a statement about the nature of the problem? How do I take those statistics and turn it into a statement about the responsibility for the problem? And again, how do I use my work to frame— and I don't know how much I've said about framing—I mean, it's important to understand framing as the way in which journalists and sources and all of the rest of us kind of try to influence how we make sense of the story.

And I suggested, and will say again, the way we make sense is to say who, what's the nature of the problem? Who's responsible for the problem—that is, who caused the problem, but also who is responsible for changing the problem because the problem really matters in that regard? And so it's frames. It's how you tell that story, how you capture attention, how you move people through the story that you're going to tell them, has to do with how you frame that story. And so framing is a very important part of the process of journalists telling us about things that's supposed to guide our behavior as, if you will, as citizens, as members of our local community, members of our global community, for example, with regard to the environment. And how it is you frame the problem of the environment and the future, and our children and their lives, please.

Q: Yes, well, that actually feeds really well into a question I had about this body of work, which must have been tied to some of your local politics. But in around 2013, up to the present, but certainly 2016, working with a former student, Mihaela Popescu, on environmental justice, mass incarceration—a separate but related project—and inequality.<sup>5</sup> In each of these papers, you were talking about what I would call proactive framing, or framing for social justice or something like that. How framing might be used as a counter-response to the information subsidies that the more powerful and more resourced bring to bear.

GANDY: Mihaela's work, and my work with her, you know, early on and continuing, is really important in this regard. And it even makes a link, alright, back to the black identity. And indeed, who gets to make decision about black identity and the identity of communities. So the work that we published—just they're' marvelous stories about Mihaela going out to do field research in order to gather what people thought about in different parts of the United States that mattered. So here's this question about, how is it that a community, a black community, a minority community, was going to be able to argue that they had standing in a deliberation about polluting their environment and their neighborhood? And so it became a question about the extent to which they were members of a black community, and therefore the decision in order to poison their community was made on a racial basis for which we're not supposed to do in the United States.

And the ability to be able to frame that critique in terms of a racial act, where a community that might have just become black, or was moving toward becoming black [laughs]—I mean, the argument that black people move to risk, black people move to danger, certainly can be explained in terms of the cost of access to housing and schooling and other kinds of things. But we said—we looked at the struggle that we're faced in terms of identifying a community as a black community and identifying their abuse by licensing, as being oriented toward racial comments of black communities, is part of what we were doing in that work.

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<sup>5</sup> Mihaela Popescu and Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Whose Environmental Justice? Social Identity and Institutional Rationality," *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation* 19 (2004): 141–92; Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Wedging Equity and Environmental Justice into the Discourse on Sustainability," *tripleC: Communication, Capitalism & Critique* 11, no. 1 (2013): 221–36; Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Choosing the Points of Entry: Strategic Framing and the Problem of Hyperincarceration," *Atlantic Journal of Communication* 22, no. 1 (2014): 61–80; and Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Toward a Political Economy of Framing: Putting Inequality on the Public Policy Agenda," *Political Economy of Communication* 3, no. 2 (2016): 88–112.

Q: OK, good and then you—and so you’ve taken it in this later period to other topics, and thinking about how you might frame, as a social movement, your issue in a way that will resonate with the public or policy makers or both.

GANDY: So here’s me being an interventionist then.

Q: Yes.

GANDY: Alright? So saying, alright, so here is what I’ve learned about framing. Here’s what I’ve learned about information subsidies. Can I help movement organizations frame their arguments, frame their subsidies to the press in ways that will mobilize the population? So that becomes kind of a challenge. What can I learn about what works and what doesn’t work in that regard? And looked at it in terms of the environment, and indeed I published a piece which talks about how do I insert—I’m not sure that’s the term that I used—ethics and race and environment into the discourse about environmental issues.<sup>6</sup> So struggle about what do we know so far about?

That was another organization who leapt into some prominence in my reading, and then again also with my contact with them, and indeed in my hopes in order to get them to work with media groups and political economy groups and telecommunications policy groups—that is the FrameWorks Institute, I think it’s called the FrameWorks Institute. So here’s a group of communication scholars who study framing. They study framing through surveys, they study framing through interviews and the like, through experiments, in order to inform progressive organizations about how they ought to frame. So I thought I’d kind of make a contribution, at least explore the problem of frames and framings, and what works and what doesn’t work, and what we might use in order to frame environmental comments, in order to frame privacy interventions and the like.

From what I learned from FrameWorks, I could write about, then, the kinds of things that appear to work and the kinds that don’t work. They were just marvelous in terms of exploring and reporting from their work about the hard, the challenges that you run into in trying to move people in one direction with regard to the substance that you provide, and where the risks are—for people to slip back into a dominant cultural set of assumptions about how things work. And that was the attempt in my work in order to say, What have I learned and what could we learn in order to improve the ability to engage in framing, to deliver information subsidies, to move a movement in the right direction?

Q: Right. No, there’s something poetic about that, given that you started with information subsidies and you kind of have worked on them from the opposite angle now in your later career in order to deploy them as resources—

GANDY: Nicely said.

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<sup>6</sup> Gandy, “Wedging Equity and Environmental Justice.”

Q: —for the under-resourced. Yes.

GANDY: That's true.

Q: Now, and I want to just move on to ask about some much more recent work, or I guess in the same basic era, but I think of you writing in the 1980s about targeting and segmentation and the kind of dystopic future that you predicted seems to have come about. And in particular, neuromarketing was one recent project you had—remote sensing and neuromarketing. It's an obvious extension, I suppose, of panoptic sorting, but I wanted to ask you how you got into that and what the project was.

GANDY: Super. So when you, quote, retire, or when you at least leave the classroom, people say, Let's get Gandy while he can still speak and make presentations. And so I've been invited to make another, I mean, a good number of these old-guy lectures. And one of the old-guy lectures I made was to, in Spain actually, so it was to a privacy group. And one of the people in the audience, Selina Nemorin, came up and introduced herself to me and said, You introduced—you shaped my life, all this work you are doing on privacy. And I said, OK, and what are you doing now? She said, Well I'm working on this and that and the other thing. And one of the things that she was working on was neural marketing. I said, Well, that's very interesting. And we started to work. And she was in London. I guess I actually wrote a recommendation for her for the London School of Economics, which worked, and she got a job there, so we continued to work while she was there.

I didn't know anything about neuromarketing. So I had to learn an awful lot about neuromarketing, and indeed we wrote an article that got reviewed twice by the *International Journal of Communication*, and one of the reviewers was incredibly kind in providing citations is to make sure that I—we—knew what we were talking about, we were going to challenge neural marketing. And indeed it was going to challenge him or her own research in that regard. Very generous. A wonderful experience. Learned more about it. But neural marketing didn't die because I wrote a piece about it, we wrote a piece about it. It's growing. It's not going away. The ability to be able to understand what people feel, without depending upon what they say they feel is an important part of neural marketing, and the kind of inferences that they are able to draw about how target audiences do respond from their too-small samples, but nevertheless good enough—small enough samples for them to be able to say, This is how the average person is going to be able to respond. They're still going to struggle with the demand for more precision than the average person. They're going to want to know about different kinds of persons. Whether or not they're going to get data, because neural research is very expensive in that regard in terms of the information. It's not like having a focus group, it's not like having a laboratory experience with undergraduates. It's a very different kettle of fish in that regard.

Q: Well, great. And I'm excited if you continue to work on that. And I want to turn to another paper that was just published last year. It's wonderful, on smart cities and nudge, and the nudge, I would say. And in a way it's a picking up of a thread of [Amos] Tversky and [Daniel] Kahneman, and the way they've helped—their work, anyway—has helped shape this behavioral economics field and its policy offshoot has made major inroads in the UK and the US, famously

around nudging.<sup>7</sup> And I'm just curious about this paper and where it came from and its argument.

GANDY: Alright, so this paper is also a jointly authored piece with with Selena Nemorin. We decided to do it while we were waiting to get our other paper published. She's interested in smart cities, she's interested in technology, she's interested in big data analysis. I guess she was not so much interested in economics in that regard, but economics clearly played a role in it—and behavioral economics played a role in it. So this paper then grew from this interest in behavioral economics as being the source for one kind of intervention in the development of smart cities. And it's the extent to which behavioral economics could be used in a kind way, in a useful way, in an important way—although because, as a political economist, I'm a critic, they're not using it in a way that I think they could or should. That is, I think, and I guess we think, since it's both of our names on that paper, that they should be not manipulating people, which they are doing, even though they say that they're manipulating them in the same way people would choose to be manipulated if they knew what the environment was and the circumstances were.

I don't believe that. That is, I believe it's important to make education. So again, it's important for you to agree, again, that I'm still stepping on my own toes in terms of manipulation, because my trying to get people to frame, my attractiveness of FrameWorks Institute—my trying to get FrameWorks Institute in order to partner with my democratic communications people is manipulative, alright? So here's this constant struggle we engage in. I mean, so in one sense, you know, as [Martin] Carnoy says, education is imperialism. So it's also information subsidies. The extent to which we are able to adopt social responsibility for informing and enabling people in order to change their life, change their practices, become smarter about—I'm not sure that the work they're doing with nudges are educational in the same way that I think that they might.

Indeed, I would say that the nudging that they do and I was critical of, is designed to be not identifiable. It's designed to be sub rosa. It's designed to be, they don't know that I'm being—they could at least say, Let me make material available. You want to read more about this? You want to understand more about this? Here's the material that can help you understand how it is they are and we are nudging you along a particular kind of path. But I'm still interested in, we, Selena and I are—presented in Madrid at IAMCR a third paper that we're going to do, and this is really a content analysis of a marvelous project, because it fits our skill. Some 80-plus states—cities, I'm sorry—submitted to a U.S. Department of Transportation [USDOT] grant opportunity and award to be a primary source for a model for smart cities with regard to transportation. So what's transportation and smart cities and USDOT funding research into? And so ours is a critical discourse analysis of those proposals.

We did 70 of them. Curiously, that is, my software could not translate eight of them. Could not turn it into text for me to do the kind of analysis that we wanted to do with it. But it is a fine

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<sup>7</sup> Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., and Selena Nemorin. "Toward a Political Economy of Nudge: Smart City Variations," *Information, Communication & Society* 22, no. 14 (2019): 2112–26. Selena Nemorin and Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., "Exploring Neuromarketing and Its Reliance on Remote Sensing: Social and Ethical Concerns," *International Journal of Communication* 11 (2017): 4824–44.

discourse analysis in order to try to understand what were—then again, here are my pointing to George [Gerbner] again. What is it about the characteristics of those cities and the people in those cities and the power of the people of those cities and the nature of political development in those cities? And we finished the paper by saying how wonderful it would be, although how hard it would be, to do a second study that would include measurement of the level of activism by minority, black, and other activists in that city—and does that explain the nature of the city’s proposal about how they would be a smart city? It’s a good life.<sup>8</sup>

Q: Speaking of fortune and luck and life chances and the rest, all of those themes that are part of your work, how would you reflect on your own fortune? And I ask that half in jest, but—

GANDY: I think I’ve probably used it many times during this discussion here, but luck is an important part of my sense of my life. I was, as you might remember, I was raised as a Catholic. I did 12 years of Catholic school, including in high school, so God is supposed to play a role in that. But luck has been the winner in my sense of my life. I have been very lucky throughout life. Some people would say I’ve been blessed, which is alright. I’ll accept that in regard, but I don’t think I’ve ever said in anything that I’ve written that I’ve been blessed in that regard. That’s not how I identify it.

I see myself as being lucky. I’ve been lucky to be in the presence of people who were willing to give me an opportunity, to make an opportunity available for me. So my life now is a reflection of my having made an acceptance of the opportunities people gave me. I’ve stepped away from other ones, but I took advantage of ones that shaped me, that have provided me the next opportunity. So I’ve been very lucky. And I’ve made some of my own luck, and I’m so pleased.

Q: Well, that is a perfect way and point to wrap up this series of interviews. And I just want to thank you immensely for agreeing to conduct them and for providing such insight over the last few days. So thank you so much, Oscar.

GANDY: Well, thank you as well. This was a challenging experience for me. I have to tell you that I was anxious about it, even though you suggested to me that I shouldn’t be doing homework. I had to be able to look at my work. So thank you so much.

Q: Thank you.

## END OF SESSION FOUR

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<sup>8</sup> Subsequently published as Oscar H. Gandy, Jr., and Selena Nemorin, “Transportation and Smart City Imaginaries: A Critical Analysis of Proposals for the USDOT Smart City Challenge,” *International Journal of Communication* 14 (2020): 1232–52.