

**Williams College Oral History Project Interview with Marty Linsky**  
January 20, 2011

Interview length: 42 pages

Marty Linsky (b. 1940) Williams Class of 1961 is an adjunct lecturer in public policy at the Harvard Kennedy School.

In his interview with Charles Alberti and Robert Stegeman, Linsky discusses being raised in Brookline, Massachusetts, asserting that part of his decision to come to Williams had to do with an interest in leaving the dominant culture he had been part of his whole life, as a middle-class Jew in Brookline. He goes on, however, to describe his difficult first year at Williams, trying to get into a fraternity and find friends in a place that wasn't hospitable to Jews. He attributes some of his trouble to his emotional youth, and asserts that by midway through his sophomore year he had been admitted into Theta Delta Chi.

He discusses the importance of professor Gaudino in his academic and personal development, speaking about how the first course he took with Gaudino turned his life around. He goes into detail about Gaudino's teaching style and lifelong impact on Linsky.

He talks about Elliot Richardson, whom he describes as his primary mentor, and his limited sports activities at Williams. He goes on to talk about earning his law degree at Harvard; his first (unsuccessful) political campaign in 1964 and his subsequent work in the lieutenant governor's office; and his election to the state legislature in 1967, where he served three terms. He talks about the time he spent in the newspaper business after leaving public office; finding a position on the faculty at Harvard; and working for governor Weld from 1992 to 1995. He ends his interview with reflections on being a republican in the majority democratic Massachusetts state legislature and his involvement with a winter study lecture at Williams to talk about his book *Leadership on the Line*.

**The transcript of this interview and the accompanying audio file (if available) may be accessed only in the Archives/Chapin Reading Room.**