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**Hillsboro Police Commander Andy Schroder  
Interviewed by Dianne Alcantara  
May 24, 2005**

D: "The following interview was conducted on behalf of the oral history program of Century High School. The interviewee is Andy Schroder. The interviewer is Dianne Alcantara. The interview took place at Hillsboro Police Office on Tuesday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.

D: How long have you lived in Hillsboro?

S: Lived in area since 1963, lived in Cedar Mill. Worked in Hillsboro 1982. Was a reserve in Hillsboro 1977?

D: Describe how it was like until 1980 through now?

S: Things were a lot different in Hillsboro and throughout the surrounding area. Cedar Mill was a bedroom community of Portland, Hillsboro was predominantly a rural community/farm and so did Washington County still had a lot of farms. Hessa pick farm went to Moses Lake, which was the turning point in agriculture in Washington, which basically now you don't see any agricultural component.

Where before south of Scholls Ferry and all of that area from Beaverton to Hillsboro. That's changed a lot, because now there are houses and stuff like that. Hillsboro in particular has been kind of an interesting city in that time because we really experienced movement from a rural city 18,000 to a city over 80,000 and 26 sq. miles. It has really changed that rural type community to an urban, largest employer in the state, with technology industries around . . . a lot of others, we have Sun Micro in the technology business is an entity.

Hillsboro has changed a lot; I remember when the city limits were in present day is the airport. Cooler Tavern was the village inn that was outside the city, it's around BI-MART and around that area. Hillsboro gone out to the Reedville Café, now 185<sup>th</sup> us also crossover Target and that whole area. Vision 20/20 strategic planning for Hillsboro.

Side note: he loves China. He was raised in the time of the Red Scare, he still believes in the big red scare. Paranoid in the big red threat, he still sees the big red empire. He is getting over his phobia.

D: Describe you career? How did it lead you today?

S: Got into law enforcement, because I had problems at school. My principal was a former Marine and I think he was a little insane. He knew that I wasn't in school for an education; it was more of a social experience for me. He put me into the career counseling center my junior year (that was his only class) for a month. The principal made me take all these tests of what I would be, to find my perfect job description. I couldn't leave the counseling center. I did nothing.

He was a Marine and you need to get a job because you're not going to be successful. SO I took all these tests well we really think you would be good forest ranger, biologist, or police officer. Well if figured if I was in the forest there was nobody to date, nothing to

do. I kind of went to the police route and that started my career in the age of 15 or 16. I became an Explorer, I got really into that, and you had to have good grades, and I started getting more academic and doing that kind of thing. And when I got out I became a reserve. I worked for the sheriffs department for a while. I was reformed. The only problem was I was raised in the Beaverton school district. You've got to remember it was after the 60's because I was in the 70's and we were going with all the burnt burritos: they came out of the 60's they're all in school teaching now." "Just kidding"

I kind of had a bad experience with that teacher. I knew that I didn't want to go that route. I was also taught to challenge authority, everything is ok, the very pluralistic thing. I was also a rebel, my career choice was predicated more into my social life. But anyway I love enforcement, I got into it. When I first started I had a big conflict with authority because if you have never been in the military if you've never understood that sometimes you're to do what you are told whether you like it or not. You get fired if you don't. I was a dog master and did stuff for a while, and got promoted and just got lucky and got promoted again, and again. Now I am a commander, its good work if you can get it.

D: So is your job really a racial profiler?

S: No, several years ago, before the New Jersey thing happened. Racial profiling was becoming an issue and of course our boss Ron Louie is a minority chief. One of the things that you go to do in law enforcement is that you kind of have to look for what the next big thing is going to be, if its going to get you sued or fired. We kind of saw racial profiling as a big issue. It was emerging on the east coast. The New Jersey state police pretty much got up and said "Yes, we are doing racial profiling." He got fired, and pretty much put some light into it. A lot of laws were going around, at the (unintelligible) we were worried. At the time Governor Kitzhaber established a community to deal with the issues in a bipartisan fashion: the defense lawyers, chiefs, and stuff and collecting data. That's how I became involved.

D: So it was all the way in the East Coast? How did it affect us here?

S: Yes, trends in law enforcement usually travel from east coast to the west. I don't know why it is. I have some theories, probably because of the population, the metropolitan nature of cities. (Talked about big cities) Metropolitan life is much different, and then living in Portland, which we think is a huge city. It's really a drop in the proverbial bucket. Boston, New York, or Hong Kong are not the same kind of place. . . That's no different from law enforcement, we would expect things like fashion to come from things like that, also social trends. If you're really doing your job as a commander and a chief, you're looking and reading and you're trying to identify new things. It actually started largely in Miami, Miami-Dade County. They have huge beefs politically over the language. Some areas are going to Spanish as a primary language and English as a second language. This created such distance, and then you have police getting into bad things, shooting people, getting into riots, that kind of stuff. Interesting scary fact, eighty percent of the people are on death row are a minority. Probably ninety percent of those are one kind of minority (African Americans). If you look at the justice system, and you say it's blind, I don't agree. In law enforcement, I believe that we don't have an agenda, but clearly when eighty or more percent of the people on death row represent minority groups, you kind of have to look at that and scratch your head and say at some point it

has to go beyond coincidence. There's a certain amount of unconscious racism, if that exists.

D: So what basically is racial profiling?

S: I define it, racial profiling is in law enforcement when you stop somebody you make contact or you initiate some kind of an event solely based on their race. That's how I define it. (Talked about a theory)

If you recall the 9/11, the government came out with the rules between the ages of 18-35. Men between that age of ethnic descent or of the Muslim faith were profiled. When you allow a perception of race to be primary in your mind for your reason of contact, I think you have crossed the moral and ethical line. There is a lot of information why that is wrong. (Talked about kids at school and compared)

S: I'm sure any of your peers in school have given a set of facts, the primary reason why they were stopped because of their particular race. It's like being a kid you get stopped because of your age, well if you looking for curfew then that would be justified. The way our culture has justified some of our profiling . . . Well, if you're Muslim you fall into the category of terrorist. Well wait a second, terrorists are an extremist group in a very small fraction of this Muslim faith which is huge. They've got tons of people just like Catholics are everywhere. SO you can use that, in my view as an indicator. (Talked about a book) Profiled in Justice. The author points out some of the bad things that law enforcement does. What he talks about is don't pick the criminals based on what they look like, pick criminals based on what they do. Behavior based. The 9th Circuit Court has one of the based profiling decisions that probably that came out. Which is weird because the 9th Circuit Court at the federal level gets overturned more than anybody else. There just a bunch of Berkeley people, 60's people, they are just not all with us. But they came up with a great decision. "A guy got on a plane in Hawaii, he walks up to the counter and asks for a ticket. He has no luggage. He's gets no reservation, buys a first class ticket to Florida in cash. Cops are standing there saying, that doesn't look right. Nothing about race, behavior based. Who walks up to counter buys a first class ticket one way to Florida? What's that about? So they follow the guy. He gets to Florida, he picks up the bag, he goes back to the counter buys another first class ticket one way back to Hawaii with his piece of luggage, gets on the plane." They know based on their training experience that often bad guys buy tickets at the counter in cash, fly somewhere, pick up their drugs, buy another ticket and come back. They know that, everything that they articulated was behavior based. It was what the bad guy did. He didn't meet the age criteria, he wasn't one race or another. It was behavior based. The 9th Circuit stood out and said this is a perfect example of how you profile. It was behavior based. There's nothing wrong with looking at individual's behavior and making assumptions about what they are doing. It's not OK, to look at a person's race and make assumptions about their behavior. (Making assumptions) that is kind of comparing and contrasting that profiling is and what isn't.

D: You guys must have some statistics of what race does the most crimes?

S: well we do keep track of what arrests and the race breakdown in jail. (data that he is reading %) for white is 11%, Asian its 10%, Blacks its 9% if you had that information

right. It tells me that if you have all those ethnicities, theoretically. The data shows that you would have to search for the person with the highest hit rate. That would be the white people (in this data).

Now what are the odds of getting searched, verses the hit rate? If you're behavior-based, who would you search? So the odds of being searched for white people are 2.5%, 4.1% are Hispanic, blacks are about the same 2.9%-2.5%, Asian 2.8%, and native Americans are high, but we only have 15 Native American stops. (Grabbed a copy)

I kind of looked at the odds of stops, the other thing that you kind of have to take into consideration. The different stops require, different stops don't if total a car you have to do a search. The other thing you look at especially in data collection is the scientific method. This is very nonscientific, that's one of the biggest errors. (talks about a book, for data collection) We went to a conference in Las Vegas in July 2004 to talk about this and basically the conclusion, scientifically speaking, was that it's really hard to collect good data because you have collector bias. Cops are over here running codes, and ethnicity is a perception. What I enter for ethnicity . . . do I entered you as Asian or do I call you Pacific Islander? So you have this idea of ethnicity, and you have this idea of race. They don't meld. (Talks more about ethnicity comparing and contrasting) Do I want to be Anglo Saxon or Judeo-American or do I want to be Mediterranean? We have these differences. If you look at it different anthropologists who actually study people and culture, they don't identify ethnicity, do they? They identify them by population. By different population sectors. Now that we are so global that you can have people that live in London, or Singapore, or America, their ethnicity could be very diverse theoretically. Genetic ethnicity or one thing anthropologists would call different populations because we are such a global movable society. Another thing I read all is that minority groups are all increasing in size, so that pretty soon the minority groups are becoming the majority groups. In fact there's only one population that you can define that what is termed white. That's going to shift over time.

D: Are there a lot of gangs in the Hillsboro Area?

S: I don't know theirs necessarily a lot of gangs. But I think that there are gangs in the Hillsboro area.

D: are they giving you a lot of trouble? I know there's a new gang coming from California. Is that scaring you?

S: We've had an increase in activity. We've seen things since December kind of get busier for us. I don't know that there are more or less gangs here. But we did see an increase in activity. What we've done is we've instituted a street crime or an investigative unit. That's responsible for being the lead in taking initiative on dealing with that problem. We also have an officer rearranging some gang teams. Washington County coordinates that. That's kind of the stuff we were doing to help do that. There are always people coming from California or different places. We have seen a decrease in activity since we started dealing with those issues. Its behavior based. If you're doing graffiti, or a drive-by shooting, we don't care about your ethnicity -- you're going to get arrested. We are going to deal with people who act and behave in bad ways. That is what street crimes are identifying. (Theory birds of a feather flock together) Who you hang out with speaks as much about who you are and what you do. So we look at people who

socialize together criminals do. You're looking at those relationships. But again you have to start their with their behavior. That's how we deal with gangs.

D: Have you ever arrested any gangs? In what your perspective what race?

S: yes, well some cases. Gangs are in ethnic based. If you look at the history of gangs they are ethnicity based. You have Latino or Mexican gangs, which were formed in barrios of cities where you have these enclaves of Hispanic people. There are actually people who take care of the neighborhoods because cops didn't. They would have these people that would help. They weren't perceived as bad people, they weren't perceived as terror units or anything like that. They were perceived as groups of people taking care of the neighborhood and that evolved into a bad thing. Police ignored the community in the 40's and 50's. There is a lot of racism that wasn't quite so unconscious. If you lived in the poor side of town, you didn't get police service. This was pretty prevalent in the 30's, 40's, and 50's. It changed a little in the 60's not until the late 70's. The other thing is interesting culturally is that if you look at the Asian and the Pacific Islander, you look at how you have different houses. You can be related to different houses. You might have tons of people, and huge family gatherings. The Chief belongs to the house of Louie which is a huge Chinese conglomerate of families, relatives and stuff. If he needed a loan, at one time he would go to the family; if you belong to those houses you can do that. Those were **forcing beds (?)** that were created historically to help people grow financially. We did it in America. In New York, you would have enclaves of Jewish people, Italian, and Polish people. These people were tightknit groups of people that lived in the same areas and they helped each other because they came to a new country and we are dealing with that. Then you have from this Asian culture you have these huge houses that were economically based. If you keep the money in the family, we all prosper -- that's the theory. That's sound economics, that not racism, it's not because I am white I can't get a loan from them. No we want to get rich and prosper and have a better life. The way we do it is keep that money in the family. That's really if you talk about these ideas of gangs and we see them as sinister when you look out the history of them. They actually started out with really good intentions. There were groups of people trying to pull their resources to achieve a better existence in whatever they were at. Because you have them almost globally, you can look at any large gatherings and people would have differences. That's how gangs started. Then from that you have bad guys, in the east you have the triads. In Asia you have these criminal families that said "hey this is really working for the House of Louie and for these other guys, why don't we set up a crime family? We'll call ourselves a triad."

D: Like a mafia

S: The mafia says we'll pull in all our resources and we all do criminal stuff together. We are a force multiplier.

D: So do you think, since it's shown in the media that most gangs are more Hispanics than they're Asians, do you believe that?

S: I believe several things. Hispanic gangs have an agenda. Asian gangs have an agenda and there are Asian gangs around. I always say that some people are smarter than others. I kind of look at it this way. Hispanic gangs have an agenda they want they want to do

something, whatever that is. I don't know what the rules of gangs are. Other gangs whether it's Russian mafia which we have a certain amount of that, which occurs. Asian gangs or black, whatever it is they have something they want to achieve but then they want to create. I think that if Asian gangs are based on criminal behavior they want to make money doing criminal stuff. They are not getting interested in getting arrested; they aren't interested in bringing attention upon themselves, they're not interested in all these different things. So they act and behave in a manner that is consistent with their goals and objectives. Not that they're smart enough to identify those. But maybe they're brighter than the other groups, and are able to say this is what we want to do and to do that we don't want to get into trouble. Frequently that's the case. Currently we talk to police officers in San Francisco and Seattle where they've dealt with these kinds of things is that these other gangs are more into violent aspects. It's about turf and other things that are criminal interest, but aren't necessarily related to the profit of being a criminal. Like the mafia, like some of the Asian gangs, like some of the Hispanic gangs because if you're into selling dope. If you're into making money selling dope, if you want to make money selling dope, you don't want to call attention to yourself; you don't want to be on police department's hit list. I don't know if dressing up in one color, or throwing down your homie-G sign I don't think that's getting it. I'm pretty sure that, either they're not bright or they're not interested in whatever it is that some other people are. Some Asian gangs do have colors and signs, but sometimes it's much more subtle. (Mention the Cobra gang) My observation is, especially when you start talking about ethnicity issues, they have different goals and objectives. If your goal is to be a crime syndicate and we were running it right. We decided to create a crime syndicate, we would probably agree. We don't want to be high profiled. We are not going to all dress alike. We are smart, and we want to look like everybody else. What are they doing in high schools? If you can be different, then that's good enough. Sometimes it's more a social aspect; it's the recognition aspect, it doesn't have to do with anything else. The sad thing is that once you get into a gang you don't have any way out. They said that things can perpetuate, that's the downward for that.

D: What are the severe changes that you see now and then? Or just overall since you've been here?

S: I think the degree of violence is shocking to me at times. We didn't have the degree of violence. In 1982 when I started working, you didn't see how violent things can be. Now we have 18-year-old kids driving by, shooting guns at other people's houses, we have kids doing that.

D: We have that in Hillsboro?

S: Yeah. When I first got hired here, you could get into a bar fight and it was just a bar fight. It was just a knock down, and if you went in and if you were a better fighter. The cops won and if you weren't you get your butt kicked; the bad guys leave you alone. Now they take a gun and shoot you. That's what bad guys do now to cops, so it's that kind of change. Before it was "kinder gentler" bar fight and now it's a little more violent. That from an agrarian community, predominantly agricultural based we were not interested in a big city. (Talking about the Olsen bothers fight)

Younger kids are more involved in violent crimes. That's kind of the scary thing, although violent crimes are down, who's in greater risk? Juveniles. They just had a report in Washington DC, about violent crimes in the schools: 53 deaths in three years in Washington, DC. They are all from a violent crime, all of them female and all of them minority. I think that's the most shocking thing is the nature of violence.

D: so a certain age would be through 18-24?

S: Juveniles, anybody under the age of 18. But that was in Washington DC statistics, talking about violence in school. You look at the types and the number of assaults and second degree. Those are serious assaults; the younger it gets the more shocking it becomes. I think that's kind of a scary thing, the violence. The violence to me is so severe, it's not just that we got into a knock down, drag out, punched nose, and poked his eye out. That's just an example.

D: Do you ever go undercover?

S: No, that is dangerous. But going undercover, that is for the young kids that want to live life in the fast lane and do that kind of stuff.

D: What would you change about your work?

S: I'd like to do less of the budget stuff and more operation involved. To be out on the road more. To be the commander I do a lot of stuff like budgeting and labor stuff. Policy decision and that kind of stuff. The only times I get to go out is when something really significant happens. Like when they had the **white powder replica juvenile justice. (?)**

D: what have you enjoyed over the span of your career?

S: Chasing bad guys. Its fun. I love it absolutely without a doubt. Going out every day, not knowing who's going out to go to jail.

D: Do you like car chases?

S: I've never been a big car chase guy. What I mean by catching bad guys is going out and trying to find out who did the crime. The whole cat and mouse thing, investigating. Bringing them in and pushing them to confess.

(Showing me pictures)

D: What area of Hillsboro gives you the most trouble?

S: That is a really hard question to answer. (Showing me maps) Maps are broken by day, swing, and night, based on density area. I would say that activity follows population. A lot of the activity during the day happens in downtown just because of population. I don't know really. I kind of look at places where people can hang out.