



Voices from the Rwanda Tribunal

Official Transcript: Christine Graham (Part 7 of 13)



Role:	Senior Appeals Counsel
Country of Origin:	Sweden
Interview Date:	29 October 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewers:	Robert Utter Donald J Horowitz
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Christine Graham discusses the considerable length of ICTR cases, due in part to the unusual nature of the crimes and to an initial lack of infrastructure. She reflects that judicial systems usually are built over hundreds of years, yet the ICTR was tasked with building a justice system in roughly a decade. She observes that while the Tribunal contributes to reconciliation by providing a judicial response to the genocide, the mandate for reconciliation had little influence on the judicial procedures.

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Part 7

- 00:00 **Donald J Horowitz: You said that you were at the London School of Economics when you first heard about the Rwanda situa-, the Rwanda genocide, or . . .**
- 00:08 Yes.
- 00:10 **DJH: . . . what-, whatever you heard. Can you remember specifically when you first heard about it and what you heard?**
- 00:18 I remember seeing headlines in the newspaper but I also remember seeing television images of people floating down a river. I think that was probably in the – some student, you know, common area . . .
- 00:35 **DJH: Mm-hmm.**
- 00:35 . . . or if we were in a café or something with other students . . . I was not at home for those specific images but, but that is the first image I have of the, the genocide. Yeah.
- 00:52 **DJH: Okay, can you describe for us in a, you can do this narratively, what the next period of time was? In other words, what did you next learn over the course of the next few days and what was your re-, personal reaction? Was it a big thing for you in term . . .**
- 01:12 Yeah.
- 01:12 **DJH: . . . there were lots of things going on in Europe at that time . . . (___).**
- 01:14 It was a lot of things going on at the s-, at, at the same time. It was the release of Mandela’s and, you know, that whole period was very lively in terms of news and events. But, you know, studying public international law and “UN law” as one of the subject, obvi-, obviously, we focused a lot of the actions, the debates in the UN and the actions of the Security Council so I can’t, you know, my images are not as vivid as that first television screen but obv-, we spoke a lot about it.
- 01:53 But I would say we probably spoke more about the Yugoslavia conflict than the Rwandan one, because it was, it was closer geographically.
- 02:02 **DJH: Right, and that would be you and other students (_____).**
- 02:03 Yeah, sorry, yeah. Definitely.
- 02:05 **DJH: Okay, and so when, when was it you decided – that was 2004, when was it you decided . . .**
- 02:15 No, 1994.

- 02:15 **DJH: 1994, of course. I'm sorry. (_____) . . .**
- 02:17 Don't take, take away, ten years away from me now.
- 02:19 **DJH: No, no, no, that's exactly right. That, that was 1994.**
- 02:22 Yeah.
- 02:23 **DJH: And when was it – how long after that did you decide to go to work for ICTY, or, or, or the UN and . . .**
- 02:33 That . . . I, I . . . yeah, I started work at the ICTY 1st of July, 1998 and decision was probably made about a month before that so in between that, I had worked as a volunteer lawyer in London for a little bit, for Human Right.
- 02:49 **DJH: Volunteer, for Human Rights?**
- 02:51 Yeah, for Inter Rights, it's the organization called.
- 02:54 **DJH: What kind of work did you do?**
- 02:56 It's . . . Inter Rights in an organization that only deals with the legal aspect of human rights so it gives legal opinion to – many times other countries, other human rights organization, it was very vol-, very much involved in, you know, the former eastern bloc and they changed from going in to becoming democratic countries.
- 03:19 So it was a lot of legal research, constitution versus human rights law, et cetera. And that I did for six months. I forgot to say that when we spoke about what I had done before, after I had finished my Master's at London School of Economics. And then I returned home to continue to clerk.
- 03:39 **DJH: To continue to clerk?**
- 03:41 Or, yeah. I was still clerking at that, that point. (_____) . . .
- 03:44 **DJH: Okay. Still thinking of a judicial career?**
- 03:47 Yes, exactly, yes.
- 03:48 **DJH: Okay, and then you made the decision to change your career . . .**
- 03:53 Yes.
- 03:54 **DJH: . . . at least to some extent.**
- 03:56 Mm-hmm.

- 03:56 DJH: I s-, I guess you still have the option of going back.**
- 03:58 I don't think so. To be honest, I don't because I left so early into the judicial training and what had happened, I had – I finished clerking in, must have been 1995, th-, maybe June, 1995, then I started the Court of Appeal in later that year; December, something like that. Then I did that for about nine, eight, nine months.
- 04:32 Then I ha-, had a child, my first child. And I was on a maternity leave for a year. And wh-, (), I was supposed to go back to the Court of Appeal but the, The Hague, the ICTY came in between so I never went back. I went to The Hague.
- 04:45 **DJH: Okay. And you j-, you decided to – did they seek you out or did you seek them out?**
- 04:51 Well, I got a phone call saying, “We are looking for people and, and why don't you apply?” And I did apply.
- 04:54 **DJH: Okay. That was that friend of yours.**
- 04:58 Yeah, and that was an informal phone call.
- 05:00 **DJH: Yes.**
- 05:01 And so and I, and I, I a-, applied and I got interviewed.
- 05:06 **DJH: And you were, worked there for how long?**
- 05:08 Close to four years.
- 05:09 **DJH: Okay, and was, w-, was the work you did there any of the trial work? Or . . . okay.**
- 05:15 No, I was in chambers so basically I was – I had then been moved from being within the judiciary as a clerk or, or a baby judge or whatever you want to call it – to being a clerk on the international level.
- 05:28 **DJH: Okay.**
- 05:28 So I, I assisted, I worked initially as an assistant, legal assistant to a judge . . .
- 05:35 DJH: Mm-hmm.**
- 05:35 . . . Judge Lal Chand Vohrah who was a Malaysian judge. And . . .
- 05:40 **DJH: Can you spell that name for us?**
- 05:42 Lal-, yeah, it's L-A-L C-H-A-N-D, and now he's going to kill me for V-H-O, no, V-O-R-A-H. It's always a problem if the H in Vorah comes after V or after () or . . .

05:59 **DJH: At the end. Okay.**

06:00 At the end, yeah.

06:01 **DJH: All right. So you worked for Judge . . .**

06:03 Lal Chand Vorah. Mm-hmm.

06:05 **DJH: Lal Chand Vorah, yeah. And was that the, your whole time there pretty much or?**

06:10 For a couple of years, and then I worked more as a coordinator within the chamber.

06:15 **DJH: Okay. And what then took you to Rwanda, to the ICTR?**

06:20 Well, as, as you know, the Appeals Chamber for the ICTY and the ICTR is technically two but it's the same set of judges.

06:30 **DJH: Yes.**

06:31 And the judge that I worked for, he was on the Appeals Chamber so as his assistant, I dealt with cases from both the ICTY and the ICTR.

06:43 **DJH: Mm-hmm.**

06:44 And so I had a fair idea of the case, the cases at the ICTR and there was a colleague of mine who was employed by the ICTR who was in Registry but base-, he was based in The Hague.

06:59 And he was actually the one that became the first head of the Military One case so he said, "Christine, I'm going back to Arusha. I'm going to head the Military One trial. Why don't you try, why don't you go there as well? Why don't you, you know, try to get a job?"

07:20 And I had, I was pregnant at the time and I wasn't so keen to take a newborn to, to Arusha. I didn't know how things were here. So it took me about a year and then eventually I . . .

07:32 **DJH: Okay. (____) . . .**

07:32 . . . we decided to go here.

07:34 **DJH: Okay. And it's – that was in 2000 . . .**

07:37 And -2.

07:38 **DJH: -2, okay.**