

Interviewer: Dr. Catherine Oglesby

Interviewee: Ella Beatrice Heard Trammell

CO: It is Saturday June the 9th. I am in Mrs. Ella Trammell's home. Miss Ella lives at 55 Gammon Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia. And so for the, this is a note for the transcriber there's no need to type up all of the following information. I'm going to record the information that we put on the data sheet and so I will indicate when you need to start transcribing. [Stopped transcribing for 59:15-45:17/1] Okay, now we can start transcribing. It's right at 15 minutes into the interview so, okay Miss Ella I'm going to start with your very first memory. What is the first thing you can recall from as far back as you can remember?

ET: Ooohh, listen, I can remember far back. Being with a neighbor who was not actually my grandmother, but we always felt that she was our grandmother.

CO: Okay.

ET: And I remember going to her house regularly, it was one house between our house and her house, but we went through the yard of the house that was in between us. I remember her coming to our house every morning getting a little pitcher of milk for her coffee. We had a cow and she would come every morning to our house and get the, a little milk you know? For her coffee. And we always would go there and stay up whenever our mother was away or anything and she, her name was Ella, Mama's name was Ella, and my name was Ella.

CO: So where you, do you know whether you were named after her or after your mother?

ET: I was named for my mother.

CO: For your mother? Okay. Was she sort of a grandmother-type figure, was that...

ET: She was a very good grandmother type.

CO: Okay, alright.

ET: And we...

CO: And how, how long, and you know what, how old do you think your those meant you were when you can recall that?

ET: Three years old.

CO: Oh wow, wow. Yeah.

ET: I really believe I was about three.

CO: So how long did you, did you know her?

ET: I knew til she was a 100 and that, that, that was she died back in 19...she must've died about 19 maybe like 50...1959. So we had known her all of our lives, and she'd been that grandmother figure for us all. She always tells a story about how both my brother and I said little things about her. Said my brother said she was coming up to our house and said my brother was lying on the front porch and said he said why don't that old lady stay at home? And I said, I said to her, see I was swinging the little girl around and 'round. I had her up. I had her under the arms swinging her around and 'round. And so she said to me, "Sister, put her down, you'll be, you'll be drunk doing that." Say I stopped and put the little girl down very carefully and say I said to her, "You ain't got nothing to do with anything." But she said, she never caught my younger sister in anything, you know? Like that. She said but she had brother, said he looked up and said, "Why don't that old lady stay at home." And say I said to her, "You don't have anything to do with me", and kept swinging, and picked that little girl up again and start swinging her.

CO: Now if she died at a 100, was she a hundred when she died?

ET: Yeah, yeah. Right.

CO: She recalls, did she ever talk about the past about?

ET: Oh yes.

CO: She did.

ET: We always enjoyed her; we always enjoyed her telling, telling stories. She was from Acworth, Georgia. And she said when slavery was over, she was a baby and say a White man came and got a dip of water and say he drank out the water, and threw the rest, see she was a little baby, and so he threw the rest of the water that he didn't drink in her face.

CO: That's a pretty vivid memory.

ET: Yeah, well she always told us that story.

CO: So did it make her, did it make her bitter?

ET: Oh no, no, no, no. She, she was a beautiful old lady. And she always told us very nice stories. We didn't have bitterness. You know? We just thought everything was alright. We, see Lakewood Heights was the shopping section and everything where we would go shop for our groceries, and the Lakewood shopping center, it put Lakewood, they fought it, they, I mean they fought it and it did kill off the little section that we had down there.

CO: Who fought it?

ET: Well the White people fought it, because see, they had, we had the bank, we had King (????), you know these were leading stores and I, I believe there was Rogers, see that's a way back dime store. Nobody even remembers Rogers and A&P.

CO: Do you remember it?

ET: YEAH OH YEAH, cause, listen we would walk up and go through a field and go through at our, to get to it. It wasn't that far.

CO: Yeah, yeah.

ET: You know, when you, when you're walkin' when you're young, places are not that, that big. I wouldn't dare think of walking to Lakewood Heights now, but Mama and I, we used to take a bag and put 8 quart bottles in it, because looked like we could get out of, it was very reasonable price, and get a 8 quarts of milk for, very reasonable. And we'd come walking back right to this house with it.

CO: Oh my goodness. Wow.

ET: But it was enjoyable, but it wasn't, it wasn't anything that we would be angry about. Oh we enjoyed it.

CO: So, so back in the 40s and 50s, Lakewood Heights, is that what what it's called?

ET: Yeah, right.

CO: Was a Black community?

ET: NO, NO, NO, NO, NO.

CO: No? No?

ET: No, South Atlanta was the offspring from Lake, you know? Every big White section has a Black section. You know where you go and you, where you go, and wash and iron and clean up and do that. And that, that's what this section was to Lakewood Heights, but I'm thinking to this section, you know, the wealth of Atlanta used to be up and down Prior(?) Street and Washington Street.

CO: So your, your, your family was the, the, the complimentary Black community to Lakewood Heights White community?

ET: Right.

CO: And you shopped at Lakewood Heights and so now would you explain to me what it was the White people were fighting about Lakewood Heights. They didn't...

ET: They didn't want the shopping center that's over there at, on Stewart Avenue. That was where they was then. They, they didn't want, if, if we just did, cause one shopping center didn't do anything but kill off another one. And...

CO: Right, and so what were, were Black people proposing to open that shopping center. Was that the...

ET: Listen, people with the money, you know the big corporations and everything, they have the money and they don't pay, they didn't care about killing Lakewood off, you know? They cause...

CO: Oh I believe it.

ET: ...a Lakewood, oh it was, they had Baker's Shoe Store, Kennedy.

CO: So it wasn't really about race that they wanted...

ET: OH NO!! OH NO! OH NO! We didn't, we didn't want it either.

CO: Okay, alright. That's, that's what I want. That, I, I'll, we'll get to race relations later. I just wanted to be sure that wasn't...

ET: Right, you see one thing about, one thing about us, see White's lived all along there. They were professors at Clark and Gamble, White. And so we had no problem with race. You know? As to, you know, the White folk don't want us near them. But see the White folk that were in *our* section, very prominent, very good teachers, good, we just enjoyed life, really.

CO: So it was relatively integrated here?

ET: Oh we were always integrated. We have never, never, not, and see cause, because one side of Jonesboro Road was White, and the other side was Black and you, you have been on Jonesboro Road.

CO: But you're talking about the professors at the college were White, and so they lived close by because they...

ET: YEAH, they lived on the campus. Had those beautiful houses. We hated to see those go. Beautiful, beautiful great big, great big beautiful houses.

CO: Right, yeah, okay. Well maybe we'll, you can show me some of that when we get out and go.

ET: Well that of course, they have come all that, see Gammon was right at, right, right there at the gate, Gammon, and you know it was a, it had good endowment. They had land out in the West, and it was only, well it was the best theological seminary in the world for Black people.

CO: This university?

ET: Gammon Theological Seminary.

CO: Oh yeah.

ET: I mean it was very, very...

CO: Very prestigious.

ET: Very prestigious, very prestigious.

CO: Okay, okay I'm going to get back to that, but can we just kind of say some more things about your childhood?

ET: Okay, alright.

CO: Can you describe yourself as a child?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay, I'm not just talking about just physically. You can describe yourself physically, but also what kind of child were you?

ET: A bad little girl.

CO: Bad? You were bad?

ET: Well, yeah. Really. Because the reason I said that because see my sister and I we were about the same age, and she never bothered anybody, but you know people who never get both...who never bother anybody, get bothered and so I was always defending her.

CO: Oh okay.

ET: You know? She...

CO: Well that wasn't bad. That was, you were doing whatever you had to do to protect her.

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah, okay.

ET: Yeah, yeah I was always in a fight you know. You better not hit my sister. You better not do that to her and of course she was almost defenseless. She was not a person who would fight. She was very, she had a very good mind and...

CO: So she was more vulnerable than you?

ET: Oh yeah, I, you better not hit my sister. And then when I'd get her out of the fight she would run home and say, "Daddy sister's up there in a fight." And Daddy would come runnin', runnin'. You know? You fight, I'm, I'm on way my home, the fight's all over. It wasn't my fight, it was her fight.

CO: Now, how, how long, how, how old were you when you stopped having to fight for your sister? How long did you fight her battles?

ET: Forever.

CO: Oh okay. Is she still living?

ET: Yeah, yeah. She lives in East Point. Yeah. Yeah. She still doesn't fight back, you know, like I want her to do. Like I do, you know?

CO: So you've been feisty all your life? You've been willing to stand up for yourself and her?

ET: Right, right.

CO: And did you, did you have that reputation as a, as a young women...

ET: YES! YES!

CO: Oh wonderful.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Good, did you teach your students, your daughters and your students that? Did you teach them to stand up?

ET: Yeah, yeah, but they don't. Some of them do and some of them don't, but you know I have for so many weeks this spring, I have gone to students that I've taught. I always thought that was so sad that.

CO: You mean their funerals?

ET: Their funeral.

CO: Oh my goodness that must sad.

ET: It is sad. It is sad. And so many of them were sick or their diabetics or something didn't, you know, this seems to be their trying times.

CO: Oh my, that must be hard.

ET: It is hard. It is hard. It's very hard.

CO: Well can you, can you, you've already said a little bit about them, but can you describe your parents?

ET: My Daddy, I never heard him cuss. I never seen him take, he never drank liquor. He never smoked. And he was very active in his church. He went to the AME church. I said that I always told Dad just that, that he, he followed wherever he could get help, because his parents were not as well as off as my mother's people. But he strived for an education regardless of what.

CO: Now where, where did your mother's family's money come from?

ET: Her father had 500 acres of land.

CO: Whoa. That was huge. That's a nice sized plantation.

ET: Right, it was. And he had seven children.

CO: Now how long, okay your mother's father would've been, would've lived during slavery. Do you know when he got the land?

ET: Well it was after slavery, when you know they were, when Black people could start owning land.

CO: Right and he managed to get 500 acres?

ET: 500 acres.

CO: Wow. And did he hold onto that for...

ET: Yes, and we're down at where he divided when he died. We now, my sister and I, were down to 81 acres, I think it's 81 or 81 acre.

CO: Because you've sold it off?

ET: Not, we didn't, but everybody else's got theirs. They sold it all very quickly. They're the ones who flee, to flee from, you know, let's go to Atlanta, let's go to Detroit, Cleveland, Ohio and, you know?

CO: Now...Yeah.

ET: They scattered.

CO: Where, where was the farm?

ET: In Elberton, Elbert County.

CO: Yeah, wow.

ET: Now we didn't get any of granite land. You know that's the granite, the Granite City of the world. It used to be the South but of the world now.

CO: I was going to ask. Yes, I know. Oh wow, I didn't know that. I know there's a lot of granite in New England.

ET: But not as much as it is in Elbert county.

CO: Wow, so, but you still got 81 acres? You and your sister.

ET: We have 80, yeah right.

CO: Okay, my goodness, so sounds like he was very successful.

ET: He was, but I understand, now I, he died when, well...

CO: What was his name?

ET: His name was Middleton, M-I-D-D-L-E-T-O-N.

CO: That was his last name?

ET: Upshaw is his last name.

CO: Middleton was his first name?

ET: First name.

CO: Okay. Do you have any idea what his birth and death dates?

ET: Now, let me tell ya. I have one cousin who looks up everything she, she, she went over to the archives at Atlanta University, and she said Kit, and I have it written down around here somewhere. I have so much thought, but she said, it was Kit, his parents were Kit, now why, I just, see we went over this. We went over these.

CO: It's okay. Do you, was he born in Elbert County?

ET: I'm thinking he was.

CO: Okay, so, but you don't know when he was born or anything like that?

ET: Oh NO, NO, NO, NO. He must've died about 1924.

CO: Okay.

ET: I'm, I'm gonna say that because Mama kept, Mama kept, see Thelma was born then. Thelma was a baby, and I was a baby. You know?

CO: Okay, that's very unusual though, 500 acres, that's a lot. That's a huge piece of land.

ET: Well see that's when you could buy land and work it and...

CO: Right, right, and so he continued to farm. Did he farm it all his life?

ET: That he never left it. He was down there where, where he, where they built the house and lived til he died.

CO: My goodness is the house still there?

ET: No, it burnt, it burned it, it burned bout 25 years ago.

CO: No?

ET: It looked like, I don't know this as a fact, but so many houses burned down there. They kind of felt that they didn't know what, why those old houses were being, were, were burning.

CO: Yeah, okay. Okay, so, well we were talking about your mother and father, and you were telling me that your father was an active church member in an AME church, was that, was that here in Atlanta?

ET: You see, let me tell you what, Daddy was, Dad had told, I told, I always told Daddy he was an opportunist, now you know what that is. They'll go wherever they can find help and that's what, see because when was he young, in his young age, he was a CME and he went to...

CO: CME?

ET: CME...

ET: But when he got to Athens, see Elberton is not far from Athens. He met up with somebody told him to come to Morris Brown. Well see Morris Brown was AME, but he could get some help going to school. So that, I said, "Daddy you were an opportunist." You followed were help, wherever, and that's really what he did. And he finished Morris Brown.

CO: And then he taught.

ET: And taught the rest of his life.

CO: Okay, alright. What did he teach?

ET: He just taught everything, you know, just he was just a...

CO: Taught, what did he teach high school?

ET: High, he taught elementary and high school.

CO: Okay, alright.

ET: And he was principal of schools.

CO: Okay, and did you tell me when he died?

ET: He died in 1968 I believe it was.

CO: And when did your mother die?

ET: She died in 19...90.

CO: Okay so they were both close to a 100. He was, he would've been 96 when he died.

ET: I think he was 97.

CO: Okay well that's...

ET: That, that's close enough. And she...

CO: Yeah, but no yeah.

ET: Yeah, and she was, she was 90...I always thought Mama was 94 when she died.

CO: Well that's okay. That's close enough.

ET: Okay, yeah, right, right.

CO: Yeah, alright, okay and so what about your mother. Can you say a few things about her? Was she feisty like you?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Is that where you got it?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Well now was your sister more like her Daddy?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Oh okay. That's interesting. So you took more after your mother. Your sister took more after...what about your brother?

ET: Well, see he was the one boy. So I always say he didn't know how to fight. But, but he was, he was very kind, and very good to his parents, and his sisters. He was very good.

CO: Aw, so he was a gentle man?

ET: Yeah, he was very gentle.

CO: Aw, now, you said he's dead. He died. When did...

ET: Yeah, he died in 19...probably must've died, probably been dead about 10 years, so when would that be?

CO: 20, right around the turn of the century 20, 2002, something like that?

ET: Yeah, yeah something like that.

CO: Okay. Okay. Alright, so your mother kind of stood up for herself and stood up for...

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: Okay, that's good. I mean that's, that's, that's interesting, and you took after her?

ET: Right.

CO: Alright. What influence do you think your parents had on you? I mean apparently your mother had an influence in your personality and...

ET: Well one thing about it, my father believed in education.

CO: Okay.

ET: And see we, is that Josephine?

CO: Somebody's coming.

ET: JOSEPHINE!!

[somebody in the distance ET: I knew I was going to get a whooping if I didn't come.]

ET: JOSEPHINE!!!!

JA: Ma'am? Hey.

ET: Well hello...

JA: Sorry I'm late.

CO: We can turn this back on. Now, Miss Ella.

ET: Yes.

CO: We'll break at maybe, can you go for two hours?

ET: I can.

CO: You can go all day? Okay, alright.

ET: I can go, look I can go [inaudible 20:48/1]

JA: Don't forget you have a birthday part to attend this evening at 6 o'clock.

CO: She told me that. So I said we can't last that long. We'll stop. We'll stop before then.

JA: And I can be here for about an hour.

CO: Okay.

JA: Is that okay?

ET: That, that's fine.

JA: Thank you. Because I did not want to get whooping for not appearing.

ET: That, that's right, Josephine.

CO: Okay.

JA: My mother said, "You better call Miss Ella now."

ET: Okay, I'm ready.

CO: Miss Josephine has come and joined us. Miss Josephine Allen was a student, a pupil, of Miss Ella's. We won't ask how many years ago, but...

JA: Well let's see...

CO: Got her information and she's from California.

JA: Yes. I'll be 64 this year so, it must've been about 50 something years.

ET: 50, well 50...

CO: Well Miss Josephine, you do not look 64.

ET: Josephine was the cutest little girl you laid your eyes on and her Mama fixed her so cute.

CO: You don't happen to have a picture of the two of ya.

ET: Yes.

JA: She does, she has a picture of me because you and I need to return the picture you sent to me that you said, "I found it." And I don't know what I did with it. I'm not a good capture, keeper of pictures like you are.

CO: Well if you can be find it, that would be good. I would like to see it.

JA: I'll find it, I'm gonna get it.

JA: I think I know where to find it, but she probably put her hands on me.

CO: Yeah, well I brought a scanner. I can scan it.

ET: Josephine did I really let you have it?

JA: You mailed it to me.

ET: Okay, and I asked you to mail it back and you didn't.

JA: You did.

[Beeping]

CO: Uh oh.

JA: Oh no. Okay.

CO: Okay.

ET: Alright.

[Beeping continues]

CO: Well now you were telling me about your mother.

ET: Yeah.

CO: And telling me about, no, actually what we had gotten to the part, what influenced they had on you, and you said your father was a big promoter of education.

ET: Right.

CO: So, but it sounds like they both were.

ET: Yeah, right.

CO: What about your mother's, your mother's parents. They had all that land and was that a big, was education a real concern for them that you'll.

ET: Oh, that, that, that was a real concern for all of her family. Her uncles and her aunts, that was a big thing for them because they sent their children up here to Clark and to Morehouse, and they just believed in education. They...

CO: Now did your gran... do you think your grandfather wanted his children to take over the land, or did he want them to...

ET: He wanted them to take over the land, but they wanted to take over Atlanta.

CO: Oh okay. Oh well. That's good. I love that.

ET: But, but, but one, one of his sons stayed there in Elberton, or stayed on the farm and one of his daughters, they stayed all around cause he, he gave 'em land and they stayed on that land.

CO: Okay now it is hard for one farm, well one, one planter to farm five hundred acres. Who helped him? Who were his workers?

ET: His children.

CO: Just the children? He didn't have to hire, did he have a share of croppers? Or?

ET: Of cour...Of course, yes, he had share croppers. You know they come and work and get their part of the crop.

CO: Yes ma'am, I do.

ET: They, they, they did that.

CO: But now were they Black or White.

ET: They were Black.

CO: Okay.

ET: But after Mama moved up here, her sister told her, she said, they called her sugar, said, "Don't turn the White boy." He tried to buy Mama's land, and she said to him, he, she said to her, she said, "Sugar, do not turn the White folks loose here on us." Because they were all down there together.

CO: Right.

ET: But...

CO: Now did, did, who, who owned the adjoining land to your grandfather's property? Do you know that? Do, was it White people or...

ET: As far as I know they were Black people.

CO: That owned surrounding...

ET: Surrounding land, right.

CO: Wow, I gotta look Elbert County up. So when the, the children and children's children sold the property, did, were they...

ET: Yeah.

CO: Were they careful about who they sold to? Or did they...

ET: They, they, they didn't care, they...

CO: Just who would, who wanted it.

ET: Anybody who would pay them a little money. They made it up among themselves that "Oh we gonna sell this land. We gonna sell it." But Thelma and I have decided that we gonna fix it so our children can't never sell it.

CO: Uh oh.

ET: That, and, and we have, we have got, we have sold timber off of that land, and...

CO: So you just continued to, to use the resources on the property.

ET: Yeah, right.

CO: Okay.

ET: And we went for oh, the last man we sold it to, we had person who knew how to, who get dealt in forestry, and, it was real funny. He did it down to the penny. He paid the tax. He took his part off the top, and he made my check out to me and made her check out to her. And he said that he was going to get somebody to...give us some seedlings, for trees. But I think when--- he didn't know we were Black--- and when he saw that we were Black, we didn't hear any more from him.

CO: Oh my goodness. Wow.

ET: But we met him down in Meriwether County. He was going on a hunting trip. And he had worked all of this out. We met him at a McDonald's down there.

CO: Now that had to be fairly recently, or they might be past 15 or 20 years.

ET: Oh no, no.

CO: No?

ET: That's been...within the last 6 or 7 years.

CO: Okay, cause I'm actually from, I mean that's where I spent my teenage years, in Meriwether County.

ET: Yeah.

CO: So I know that McDonald's has not been there forever.

ET: Oh no, no, no, no.

CO: Yeah.

ET: We went...what did we do...we go down...does 20 go? Twenty doesn't go into Meriwether County. Whatja, what, what, what highway goes into Meriwether County?

CO: 85 goes through it. Georgia 85.

ET: Well we might...because..because...my sister's son was the driver.

CO: Okay. Okay. So that's interesting. So he didn't want to help any more after he found out you were Black?

ET: No. He didn't. Well, we, we don't know why. We don't know what happened to him.

CO: Okay. Well and so is the land lying fallow now? Is it...

ET: Well, but, you know...he, he...told us how we could plant the trees and plant them close together and you, in five years, you know, they would be seeding out, you, you could cut the timber off of it, and you know, then every year, the, you take some out, and then, you know maybe two or three years, take some out. And the other would grow and grow and grow.

CO: Okay, alright. I definitely want to come back to that dynamic. In your relationships in dealing with people, in business dealings especially. So we'll, we'll come back to that. What about your extended family? You've already said a little bit about that, but were you close with your grandparents and uncles, and aunts, and cousins, and...

ET: Well see my, my, like I told you my grandfather died when I must've been about two and...bout, bout, maybe about...I couldn't have been three because...my sister...my mother carried us down there. But we were very, my mother's family was very, very close.

CO: Very close. Okay.

ET: Very, very, very close. They really loved each other.

CO: And they sort of had the means to be.

ET: Yeah.

CO: They were, they were had, had resources and...

ET: Yeah, yeah right.

CO: could remain close together.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay, you know it's been interesting to me to talk to women of your generation. By the way the average age of the women I've talked to is, is, is 87. That's the average age, but I, I talk to one woman who's a 109. Yeah, and so, but anyway, it's been interesting to me when I talk, when I ask them about their relationship to their mothers, and that their mother's relationship with her mother, they like, you know, today it's almost a given that mothers and daughters have troubled relationships during adolescence, yeah right. See her generation knows.

JA: No, my adolescence, my daughters 28.

CO: And you're still having trouble?

JA: No, it's just, you know, she's an adult. So she has her opinions and I'm still thinking she's a little girl and that's...

ET: Right.

CO: That's right.

ET: Right, you, you will always think that.

JA: Yes.

CO: But, but...

ET: But you don't believe Creflo Dollar! [Creflo Dollar is a Televangelist who lives in Atlanta; preaches "Prosperity Theology"]

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, I heard what happened this week.

ET: Wasn't that sad?

JA: Sad.

ET: And I like Creflo Dollar.

JA: And well no, this is, the point is that his action demonstrated that if we spoil, if we spare the rod, we spoil the child. Well he did not do that. He told her not, she did not have permission to go to this party. She's fifteen; she attended the party. She came home. He reprimanded her by whipping her or whatever and she called the police. Where was the mother to...

ET: That's what I want to know.

JA: I didn't understand that.

ET: I didn't either. I didn't either.

JA: Where, so, the did that mean that her mother agree with what she was doing for calling the police on her father, who was protecting her, or thinking of where you going at fifteen in an environment that I know nothing about and that was all it was about that I understand.

ET: That, that was, but I said...

JA: And he went to jail, and he stayed in jail overnight.

CO: Is that, is this something that happened recently?

ET: Yeah.

JA: Yes ma'am, two or three days ago.

ET: Yeah, yeah, yeah, listen here, yeah, day before yest...yeah.

CO: Oh, okay.

JA: Just two or three days ago. So I just, you know, though we try to reprimand them, now physically is not the option because what she called the police, you know.

ET: Police, right, and, and, and...

JA: So, but, when you're trying to mind to mouth and then that reason with you, then sometimes you do have to tap them.

ET: That, that, listen...

JA: She needs to be tapped.

ET: What the Bible says was spare the rod spoil the child.

JA: That's cause he didn't do that.

ET: But, but, but what, what, but what it shows you that he's human too.

JA: That's right, of course.

ET: And, and...they have all the resources. See I mean, Creflo Dollar is rich, rich, rich, rich, rich, and I like what he did when the federal government got after him. He and Ed Long and Jimmy Swagert and Haygood and all those people, he says I'm not going to do anything, because I'm not doing anything wrong. And when you can stand up like that, I'm not doing anything wrong, and, and I'm not going to adhere to what you're saying and doing.

CO: Yeah.

ET: And...he did that, and now you can't even chastise your own child.

CO: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Well, that, that goes, see when I talk to women of your generation, they, they're just, they have, they don't, they don't connect with that troubled adolescent mother/daughter relationship. They, they say, you know, they were taught to respect their parents and if they didn't respect their parents they were backhanded or punished otherwise.

ET: Right, right.

CO: And so, so they don't, they say their mothers typically had harmonious relationship with her mother and...I mean there's some exception to that, but it's not the kind of...I mean some psychologists claim that it's just an inevitable right of passage that daughters and mothers are going to conflict and so, but did you, how did you get along with your mother during those years of transitioning from...

ET: Well listen, let me tell you bout me and my mother. Whatever my mother said do, whatever she said, it was the law and the gospel.

CO: And you did it.

ET: It was the law and the gospel.

CO: Okay. Did you father back that up?

ET: Oh 100%.

CO: Okay.

ET: I mean.

JA: Now what was that you said again? The whatever your mother said what?

ET: Whatever she said what, what, it was the law and the gospel. We did it.

CO: So did you, did you ever question it? Did you ever question...

ET: Oh, I question everything now. Sometimes I wonder, I said I wonder if my Mama is in here, but with the way she would do us, you know? I mean...okay.

CO: You obeyed, even if you questioned you obeyed her. You didn't think to not obey her.

ET: Today I do not look back in church. I do not chew chewing gum in church. I do not, you, you, I don't get up and go out of church you know. Some children jump up and go out, say they got to go to the restroom. Some children chew chewing gum and now they say it's good for you to chew gum and chew anywhere. They say it's good for your nerves. My Mama would get a piece of paper and you had to spit that gum out in that, and she didn't, you spit it out [slams hand on table] you didn't...

CO: You didn't, you didn't argue about it.

ET: Oh no, oh no, and whatever...see one thing about my brother, my sister, myself, we have never, never complained about whether we didn't have this or we did...we went with whatever we had.

CO: Okay, okay, now what about you and your daughters, did they, well did you...

ET: Well, well, well, you see times were different. Both of my girls had brand new cars when they, we didn't, we were glad to have carpet.

CO: So, but, so then you attribute the, what, did, was your relationship with your daughters as...

ET: Harmonious?

CO: Yes ma'am as, as that with you and your mother?

ET: Well no, because the times were changing.

CO: Okay, alright. So...

ET: I told my daughter to go to one high school, she went to another one.

CO: Well which of those two relationships do you think is preferable?

ET: The one I had with my mother, but times have changed. People just don't know children are raising themselves now.

CO: Okay.

ET: We had that experience at our Vacation Bible school. Those had beautiful time. It's very good, very good instructors, because my daughter had well, younger children and that's what she has. She has pre-K at her schools.

CO: Mmhhmm.

ET: Oh pastor's wife has a PhD. in education, and the other one is a retired school teacher. So we had very good, but those children never got quiet. They never not turned around. They never did stop giggling. They never did stop this and, but they, oh they would come and just eat, and eat, and eat, and eat, and eat, and eat, and eat, and eat.

CO: So you, so, do, to what do you attribute that, because we know that one of the primary health issues today is childhood obesity. What, what do you think is making those children so voraciously hungry?

ET: I think, I, but you, you do be, well to eat like that you would be hungry wouldn't you.

CO: Well I, you know, we don't know if it's habit, or, or the...

ET: That's what I say. I s...you know when I see children misbehavin' and they never, never get quiet or never be still, I attribute to the home training.

CO: Mmhhmm, okay. Alright, okay now, there's one thing. It's the home training, and then you also said you believe it's the, the times.

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: So, so those two factors together. They kind of, they're, they're kind of one, they're, they, they're not, they're not separate factors. They're, they're interrelated factors.

ET: And you see...the government now has it so parents can't do anything with their children, just like this Creflo Dollar thing. If our mothers or fathers or anything like that, if they'd have done that to us, we wouldn't have done anything but, we would've pouted. You would've pouted, you'd have been...

CO: So do you think that there are legitimate cases of child abuse?

ET: I think when you neglect your children, that's child abuse.

CO: Neglect is more abuse?

ET: Mm...abuse.

CO: You don't think theirs physical abuse of children?

ET: Listen, we had this **Ventriloquist**. Very good girl who did a show for us. She, it was beautiful. She had a broom, and, in, in, in one of the scenes and it said, "If you could take this broom and sweep some of the troubles, or some of the problems that you had, what would it be?" The little girl sang, "If I could sweep away some of my problems, I would sweep away being cussed at." And she, I think this little girl must be about 10. And I thought that cause, you know, most of us said

they'd sweep away diabetes, heart problems, you know, sickness, and things like that, but this little girl said she would sweep away being cussed at.

CO: Well isn't that telling? She can't see, she can't see the larger social issues, because she's trapped in that abusive situation.

ET: Situation.

CO: She can only want for rel...relief, escape.

ET: And, and the day before that her hair was standing all over her head. Looked like it hadn't, hadn't been combed or anything. Yesterday she came in there her hair was, had been, we call it straightened, and pushed all back with the little head band on and she looked so pretty. And we said to her, "What happened...?"

End of Audio Track 1

ET: That's what he did. But for some reason, my mother had gone to South Carolina State and their family was died in the wool, it was every neighborhood had its own Methodist/Episcopal church. She had an uncle, [whose] name was Sebrum, and he went overseas, and when he came back he brought some water from the Jordan River, and my mother was baptized in some of the water from Jordan river. And you know that made her better than anybody. [laughter]

CO: You think that's why, she's in heaven, that's why she's there.

ET: Yeah, yeah she was baptized in the water from the Jordan River.

CO: Okay, well were your, even, even all the way back to that grandDaddy that, that owned the plantation, was your family aware of things going on outside the household? Were they conscious of national news, global news, or was it more that you were just sort of taking care of life at home?

ET: Taking care of life at home and sending their children, getting 'em ed...see they even had to send...I, I don't know whether it was the seventh grade or, I, I would think seventh grade, they had to provide their children with education. They would send them, because I know my mother said that her sister went to Rome to deal with one of the Uncles, you know, to get her, because they had beyond the seventh grade, and...

CO: Now with your family being so conscious of education, the need for education, were, were they cognizant of the sort of controversy, the debate between, Booker T. Washington and W. B. Dubois, especially since Dubois was here in Atlanta.

ET: No.

CO: No?

ET: They were not, but when they, when these children would go back home from these colleges here in Atlanta, you know, that's when they started, you know, trying to teach and get the older people interested in that, because I know my aunt said that when the Pastor would come she would, "Yeah! I gave them a quarter." For Gammon, Yeah, I paid a quarter. And that was big money.

CO: Yeah, sure.

ET: Yeah, back there then.

CO: But so, so the, the, the, the, the, the, the subject of their difference of opinion about what kind of education ought to be available to the Black community, your parents, did they ever talk about that? Were they aware of that, that debate over what kind of, cause you're right here in the heart of where...

ET: Right.

CO: ...real education was taking place, so maybe they didn't, maybe it wasn't an issue, but that, I would be interested to know if they had some awareness of that.

ET: My parents did, because they were right here where it was. But back in Elberton, Georgia...they were...they only knew what their children brought back to them.

CO: Mmhhmm. And how did they, how do you think they felt about that? I mean, did they, was your grandfather, for instance, did he want to be sure your mother got a real education?

ET: Yeah.

CO: As opposed to learning to, you know, a trade, learning to use her hands on the...

ET: No, they, they, listen, they didn't think about trades or anything like that 'til Booker T. Washington started Tuskegee.

CO: Mmhhmm. And so, and that, that, okay, that's what I'm trying to get at. Did they have strong opinions about that because there was a...you know that was a real...

ET: Issue.

CO: Source of contention in the Black community.

ET: Right, but they were not...that much involved in that.

CO: Okay.

ET: All they wanted their children to do was to have an education. They did, they weren't interested in teaching them how to farm or anything like that...

CO: So that they really, they really did believe in a classical education well you can say that they were in that case, they would've been much more in the camp of Dubois.

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah, okay, alright. I just wonder how, I mean I haven't talked to that many native Atlantans. You know there aren't, there aren't many around and

CO: Well...

ET: But she's out in California.

JA: But I'm a native Atlantan [born at] Grady hospital.

ET: Well, yeah, native...right, you're, you're a Grady baby.

JA: I'm a Grady baby.

CO: Well you're the fourth native Atlantan that I've talked to, but the other three were White. So I was really, I was, I was just determined I was going to talk to you, a Black native Atlantan, especially with your age.

ET: Right, right, but, but all of us were born in the same room, and Dr. Martin was the doctor. And then everybody, you know how everybody else told, comin' in saying, "Yeah, I have granted you".

CO: Well, let's see. Okay, I think I'm going to stop it with that. I, I think that's enough about childhood, and adolescence and so forth. Miss Josephine, do you need to leave?

JA: I'm getting' ready to, but I want to give the address to...

ET: Brought him back and had his hanging mace with to hang 'em.

CO: I don't know. I didn't know, did, I missed that.

ET: Well that you remember when he [George W. Bush] went to hang his picture up in the White house. He said and it, it was funny, because I laughed you know. He said, "Oh well, it was so nice for you to invite all the people back here ...to, to do this hanging.

CO: For his hanging?

ET: Hanging, right, for his hanging.

CO: Okay, well we're gonna move on from and I get through. I just have a few questions on what, what kinds, sorts of things, your family was very invested in education, did you all do anything for recreation, like did you vacation? Did you read books? What did you do for entertainment?

ET: Oh listen, we read every...look, when we...I read true story books. You remember them? *True story*. And I, the one that stuck in my mind was *When Death Rode the Wind Storm*. There was one story in there, and I just thought somebody was killed or there was a wind storm, and they never found out who killed them.

CO: *When Death Rode the Wind Storm?* Aah. Yeah.

ET: The windstorm. And our, and you know, we, we...

CO: So you like, did you like fiction? Did you read much fiction when you were growing up?

ET: Well we read most anything that we could get our hands on.

CO: Ah okay.

ET: We, we, we, see my sister was a real good reader. I was more domesticated. I liked to clean up and sweep the yard, and...

CO: So you were home body?

ET: Yeah, and, and you 'member, you remember when ladies wore all pink. Their panties were pink. Their slip, and I would buy a ten cent red dye, and dye everything and put 'em out, just hang all of everything. You know how can't get...

CO: So you want, you liked pink?

ET: Well that was the style.

CO: Yeah, yeah, sure. Oh it still is.

ET: Well it still is.

CO: Yeah, yeah.

ET: Yeah Victoria's Secret can...

CO: Lots of pink there.

ET: Right, right.

CO: Well can we move on to educating; can you tell me from the time you started school until you got your last degree, your educational background.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: We, we didn't have kindergarten. It started off in the first grade on Brown Avenue. And, that was the dividing line between the city and the county.

CO: Brown Avenue was the dividing line?

ET: Dividing line.

CO: Okay.

ET: And that's on our way down there. And, while I was in the second grade they built this school over there where Price High School is now, and...when they built that school, school's used to go to the seventh grade. They added the ninth grade over there. And Fulton County High School went to the 11th grade. And the city would pay for Blacks to go to Washington High School. That was the only high school in the city of Atlanta for Blacks. We skipped the 10th grade and went to the 11th grade.

CO: At Washington?

ET: At Washington High School.

CO: Right.

ET: So, we never were in the 10th grade, because the city, the county wouldn't pay for but two years because they went....Fulton County went to the 11th grade high school, you finished in the 11th grade. And...

CO: Did that, did, do you think that hurt you when you went off to college; not having that extra grade?

ET: We studied so hard.

CO: You were going to do whatever it took right?

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah.

ET: And that's what we did. We did whatever it took.

CO: Okay, okay. Did, so, and, and you went from Washington High to where? Clark?

ET: To Clark, we came right, right out here in the community.

CO: Okay. Mmhhmm.

ET: And we went up there two years. They, that's when they changed it from Clark University when we were, our sophomore year, they changed it to Clark College?

CO: That would have been about '36...30...

ET: That was the, that was the, see we finished Washington High right up there, I think in 1939.

CO: Oh okay.

ET: That's when we finished in 1939.

CO: Okay.

ET: We went up there two years, and we went to the Atlanta University summer (???) two years.

CO: Okay, alright, okay, and then...

ET: That wasn't really no incentive, but if you were going to college you just studied hard and, and, and, see most children left their books in a locker. We brought them books home.

CO: You were able to bring them home and you...so, and it was really a very different from high school.

ET: Oh yes.

CO: Yeah.

ET: Because the classes were smaller and, but I cannot say anything at that particular time Washington High was a very good high school.

CO: Well, it is shocking still for students, some, some of them who go from high school to college. They're just not ready.

ET: No, no, no, no.

ET: It's harder now...they have the like the tests and thing they take and...

CO: Yeah, yeah. That, I, I won't, we won't get started on that, but so did you go to graduate school?

ET: Oh yeah. Oh...see every summer you had to go. You know. After you got on teaching in the city of Atlanta. Could you imagine a Black person saying this: that she couldn't understand anybody being poor.

CO: Who said that?

ET: That's what the supervisor said. That she didn't understand people being poor. But she was Black now.

CO: Where did she, . . . what rock did she climb out of? I mean...

ET: Well she, she was never married.

CO: Mmhhmm. So her family background solid middle class as far back as she could remember? Was it, did she not have any...mmm...wow. She was a superintendent of the school?

ET: She was the supervisor.

CO: Oh supervisor.

ET: See we had a Black supervisor that was named Miss Perry and when anybody went to see her color, they say she White. But she was Black and all of her nieces and thing, they were...very...she favored them, you know? They got jobs. And...of course, it, and, if you, we had a private high school which was Atlanta, they called it Lab (????) High. It was from our Atlanta University. A girl finished...9th grade, we finished the 7th grade. You didn't have a big graduation for 9th graders. There was just kind of a transition break. But the 7th grade was a real, where you had the graduation and everything. This girl went to Lab High. They put her back in the 9th grade.

CO: Mmm...mmm.

ET: When we finished the 9th grade they put us in the 11th grade. So when, so she had finished two years before we had. But when she came to Clark we were all freshman together.

CO: How did she do?

ET: Evidently she had, she didn't do so well on the test they gave her at Atlanta University.

CO: Do you mind if I have my, would you like to get some water?

ET: Oh no.

CO: I'm, I need some.

ET: Did you want some ice?

CO: [Indicates no]

ET: You want a straw?

CO: No, no, this is good. This is good.

ET: Okay.

CO: Okay, so you did go on and get a graduate degree?

ET: Right. Right.

CO: Okay, and, because they really sort of insisted on that.

ET: Right, right.

CO: ...at the school. Okay.

ET: Yeah, they insisted on that.

CO: And so you continued to go to Clark.

ET: Yeah.

CO: And what became University

ET: That was real funny. It was...you know. Morehouse...was not interested in taking over Atlanta University. Spellman said they had carried Atlanta University long as they were going to carry them. They weren't gonna take them anymore. Well I don't know what made Clark think they were so hot stuff that they could take them on and do well, because the merger is very, very, very, very hard.

CO: Yeah.

ET: Because you have the, we had the Atlanta University professors...then...when all the students didn't show up, you still owed those professors.

CO: Yeah.

ET: So that made it very, very, very hard for Clark. And...Morehouse has shared the buildings with Atlanta University. So...have you ever heard of Marvin Arrington?

CO: Mmm...

ET: He was the first Black to get his law degree from Emory University.

CO: Mmm...

ET: So they made him [inaudible 43:14-13/2].

CO: Absolutely, what spell his last name. Was it Harrington?

ET: Uh huh. Arrington. A-R-R-I-N-G-T-O-N.

CO: Okay.

ET: Marvin Arrington.

CO: I'm sure that I have read about him.

ET: Yeah.

ET: Because they honor him. They really honor him. But he was a smart student now. He usually...

CO: So did, did he come back and teach in Atlanta?

ET: Oh no.

CO: No?

ET: He just kept up [inaudible 42:48/2] with the Morehouse.

CO: Oh okay.

ET: With, cause Morehouse and Spellman had a lot of their...bookwork at Atlanta University. And Marvin told them he had, they had to get out and Morehouse didn't want to do it because they took their graduation picture on the steps of the Atlanta University. Marvin told them they were, he wasn't gonna let them do that anymore. And Morehouse told Marvin Arrington, said we gonna sue to get it. He said that's okay, you sue. He said...I'm trying to think of this old boy, he was a judge. He said "I'll be Clark's lawyer, and whatever this little boy wanna say, he'll be their judge." So ya'll go on. Don't, don't do that. And [laughter] the, those were the kind of things, so...but, if you think, if you really think deeply...there's not going to be a need for these Black colleges.

CO: Right.

ET: Morris Brown is already gone . . . they let the lady take millions of dollars. I hate to see Morris Brown go, like it's going, because my Daddy went to Morris Brown. Clark will be, I don't know which will be next. Clark or Morehouse. Spellman's going to last longer because they have the better endowment. But all of them gonna be Georgia State. Because they all...I understand that Georgia State can't even wait to get Morris Brown because they want that stadium, their stadium for a soccer field.

CO: Oh wow. Mmm.

ET: And they all in the ghetto, they in the slum. All of them in the slum area. Even Georgia Tech. Georgia State, they all in the slum area. And then they gonna allow Georgia Tech students to take pistols. Now you know that's no way to solve problem.

CO: So what do you think about Georgia State acquiring the historically Black colleges here. What do you think that will do...how do you think that school will change as a result of that?

ET: Well Georgia State is buying up everything, and I tell you they can't, they tell me they can, 'cause see Morris Brown is really downtown.

CO: Mmhhmm.

ET: It's very close to downtown. You just walk up Mitchell Street or any of those streets and you're downtown. So...

CO: And so how does the Black community in Atlanta, generally, do you know how they feel about that?

ET: Well you see we have so many...the Black colleges are so expensive now.

CO: Mmhhmm.

ET: So...They're very, very expensive.

CO: So you think most people feel that it's... it's really a matter of survival and so the, they, they're not all that distressed about them being...

ET: When those students at Spellman, Morehouse, and Clark, when they get to the place where they can't pay their tuition, they just chancellor right on down to Georgia State.

CO: Yeah. So you think the faculty will just be absorbed? Do you...

ET: Well they gonna take the best of everything.

CO: Yeah.

ET: And the others that...I don't know what they're going to do with the Atlanta public school system. See they...really makin' a hassle outa that thing. That is the saddest story, I've ever heard of.

CO: What's that now? The...

ET: The, the, you know, this cheating scandal.

CO: Oh.

ET: That Atlanta school has.

CO: Right.

ET: That's the saddest thing.

CO: Yeah, yeah.

ET: Oh that's so sad. That's so sad. That's sad, sad, sad, sad.

CO: Well do you think that's because now, everything's about the test.

ET: Yeah.

CO: It's not about what you're learning. It's just...

ET: Oh no, and then, let me ask you this. If you have a school in the Black area that's doing well, performing well, meeting all the requirements, because attendance there is low, you gonna take these children and send them to a, a school that's not performing so well. Why can't they take some of the good teachers they have and some of those good students they have, and send them, and the schools are good, nothing's wrong with them. They have all the equipment. They have this and that, and the other. Now why do you, and some of these schools are very good schools. Some of them are new. They're new. And they're closing them down. Now the school that my daughter, Brenda, went to...she started that school in the third grade, and went through the seventh. And then she went way out there somewhere, [and some folks said, this is just too far **inaudible 36:44-42/2**], but I wanted my children to have the experience. Because they're not living in a Black world. They're living in an integrated world. And...my...

CO: What do you think about that Miss Ella? Is, is that better, is better to be in an integrated world or do you think that the quality of life is better sometimes when you live in your own separate world?

ET: Integration hurt Blacks worse than it did Whites. Because we lost our Valedictorians; we lost the Salutatorians and we lost our high honors and what ya. And see White people are still running. They're still running it. Now they're run to

the boondock our way out. Now they're running back to the city. From can't to can't [inaudible 35:35-34/2] can't where we going, can't see when we get back home.

CO: So you think integration was not progress? Do you think it was...well you, you can just comment on that. That, how do you...it's not quite our subject, but since we're talking about education. How, well how did you feel at the time, and this is getting way ahead of ourselves, but, but when, when that was the, the goal of the, the Movement.

ET: Movement, right.

CO: Yeah.

ET: Was to integrate.

CO: Yeah.

ET: This is going, this is going to cure up, this is the cure all.

CO: Right, right. So how did you feel about it then?

ET: Oh I felt good.

CO: You believed that?

ET: Yeah, because I sent my children to that. Sandra finished seventh grade right up here, Jessie May Jones over...nice elementary. Brenda I took her out so we, they, we will be going the same way. We wouldn't be going different. Sandra went to Berry College. You know where that is?

CO: Yes, yes.

ET: Up in Rome. Brenda says she didn't want to go to Barry and be known as San's little sister. So she went to Georgia State.

CO: But your daughters weren't hurt by integration were they?

ET: Oh no. 'Cause see, I threw up the shield like I said. Like I said, I threw up this shield for them. Whenever anything came up, where they, they, they had to con...confront anybody, I was always there.

CO: Did that happen very often that they wound up in a confrontational setting?

ET: Whenever anything came up, like Sandra says she wanted to play some kind of ball or something, and this was a math teacher. Sandra came and said, "Somebody"...when she got there, the girls didn't accept her or something. So I went to this teacher. And I told her what had happened, and she looked around over her shoulder and she said maybe they didn't want her. I said okay. Next thing I did, I went to the principal.

CO: The principal?

ET: I went to the principal. He said don't worry I'll take care of that. Next thing I knew Sandra was on the team playing real well. But when Sandra finished high school, guess what this teacher told her? She called her Trammell. She said, "Trammell, if your Mama ain't able to send you to college I'll send you."

CO: Wow. Now was she White?

ET: YEAH SHE WAS WHITE! But you see I got, I, didn't take what she said to me...I went to the principal he said, "That's alright. I'll take care of that."

CO: So what do you think changed her mind?

ET: Sandra was a good, Sandra was very humble. She was a very good student, and...whenever this lady, she found that out. See Sandra was a, in the 8th grade when she went down there. But before she finished the 12th grade, this teacher found out that Sandra was a humble student. Got her lessons and everything. Sandra was very good when Sandra come in here she said I've got to get Mrs. So-and-so math, and all the little children be out playing. She'd be in here getting her math. And this teacher liked that. She liked her whenever this teacher wanted anything she said, "Trammell go do so-and-so" when teacher busted in the, when the students bust in her room again, she said, "Sandra...Trammell go down there and tell, tell the principal to this and that. And she said, "Sandra if you don't, if your Mama can't send you to college..." Sandra said, "Yes she is going." She said, "But if your Mama not going to send you..." She said, "I'll send you to college."

CO: Wow, so she seemed to be closed minded, but when your, when somebody proved to them, themselves to her...

ET: To her.

CO: She was, she was more open.

ET: Right, and, and see she had to deal with me, and I wasn't going to stop at the principal. I would go to the United States Supreme Court if they, if, if they weren't doing what was right. [banging on the table]

CO: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Now how many times, Miss Ella, did you wind up having to do something like that?

ET: That...that one lasted... that one time. That was all...

CO: That was it.

ET: But she did, she, she had another run with another teacher. Because Sandra, now let's see was it Sandra's teacher? Hold on. Oh that. Now I don't protect anybody if they're wrong. Even if it's me. My children or anybody. What this. . . . girl was a young teacher. I'm trying to see what did she say or what did she do? But whatever she did, I...wrote...a certified letter and sent it to the principal. The principal called me. I said I'm fixing to call Hosea Williams or somebody. I'm fixing to call them right now. He said, "Don't do that. Don't do that." [laughter] I'm trying, I'm trying to see what this teacher, oh! She sat behind me. And she was talking about the Fulton High School students real bad. And was giving another, it was a Black school, something like Mays High School giving them all the praise. Look how good they look. Look how pretty they have it, and look at all those students down there. Look how bad they lookin', and that, honey...I would have jumped on her physically, if I hadn't a had...well my children wouldn't a had no way to get home. I didn't want to...

CO: Yeah, yeah. Does it now...I don't understand, I don't understand the dynamic there. She was, she was talking bad about the Fulton County Schools?

ET: Fulton High School.

CO: Fulton High School?

ET: The students.

CO: A Fulton students, and but she was [inaudible 28:36/2]

ET: Praise, praising...

CO: The...

ET: Mays High School which is an upper high school.

CO: And you said it was all Black?

ET: Yeah, yeah.

CO: Mays. So whi...so this was a White woman praising the Black school, but...

ET: But, but, but down in the school where she taught.

CO: Now why was she doing that?

ET: Well she was a fool [inaudible 28:17/2]. With the wait down, see we ain't through with this story. I went down there and I talked with the principal in this and that. He said, "She getting"...oh, then this crazy woman told another student what I had done, because the principal had called her in and gotten on her about it. What she had done, and she told...see I didn't tell Sandra. I didn't tell my daughter what I had done. *She* told another student, and the student told Sandra. I didn't open my mouth. I didn't say yes. I didn't. I didn't say no. I didn't do it. I just looked at her. I didn't open my mouth.

CO: Now was this woman White?

ET: SHE WAS WHITE! Okay. The lady across the street was...they have a school named for her now, but she was big. She wasn't a principal, but she was very good. I mean she was a very *dedicated* teacher and everybody knew it. Mr...the principal down there at Fulton High fired her. Didn't come back the next year. She went to Clayton County to the school where this lady across the street from me was the principal. And we talked about her. And yeah, she said, "Yes, she crazy. She acting a fool down here." So when I told her what, she said, "She getting away from here?"

CO: And did she fire her?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Where'd she go?

ET: She went to another county, and Ms. Harper say she found out she was acting up over there too. She's just a fool anyways, so.

CO: What do you think was wrong with her?

ET: Everywhere she went she had to be bothered with Blacks, Black children and I don't think she really like that.

CO: So it really was a racial prejudice.

ET: Yeah.

CO: And well, and, and so I'm trying to understand why she was praising that Mays school.

ET: Well they did look good. They had on beautiful clothes.

CO: But was it because they were not integrated and she, she was trying to promote segregation or an all-Black school?

ET: Well she was not trying to promote anything. She was just a lose-mouthed woman.

CO: Okay. Alright.

ET: She wasn't married, and...

CO: Maybe she just had an axe to grind, and she just...

ET: And she grind it right on the right stump. I was her grinding stone.

CO: Right, right, right, and you didn't take it?

ET: Well do you think, do you, now she's working Fulton High School.

CO: Now?

ET: That, oh no. I don't know where she is now, cause she, she went from city of Atlanta to Clayton County and Ms. Harper told me where she went somewhere to another county. Since she wasn't doing well there.

CO: Well it sounds like she was just a troubled person, and...

ET: Well she did sound like, so, but I wrote to this and the principal called me. He say, I say, "I'm fixin' to call Hosea Williams" something. One of them real persons who really love they, cause, cause Hosea Williams was a rebel rouser.

CO: That's right.

ET: And he, and Martin Luther King sent him along in front of him to rabble rouse and stir up things.

CO: Yeah, well he's good at it.

ET: And he was good at it [inaudible 24:48/2] at it. He was good at it. So I told, I told, I, I [inaudible 24:42/2]. I said I'm fixin' to call him right now. I got his telephone number in my hand. I'm fittin' to call him. He said, "Don't do that. Don't do that."
[laughter]

CO: Well it's good it didn't take, you just had to threaten, and...yeah.

ET: Yeah. But I would have now.

CO: Right, right.

ET: I mean if it had taken that.

CO: Yeah.

ET: because, I thought was very...very liberal of her to be talking to a student at Fulton high school about another school and about how good they were looking, and how bad...

CO: Right, right, right.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Yeah. Well let me switch just a minute. We'll come back. I want to talk about your work, but let...say a few things about your...early marriage, because you, you were...you were on up in age when you were married, right?

ET: I'm, I was 30...I was 30 something.

CO: Right, you...

ET: Because when Sandra was born I...

CO: If you married in 53 you were 32.

ET: Right, okay.

CO: 32 years old.

ET: Right.

CO: So...so what did you do from the time you finished college until you married. That's when you taught those years.

ET: Yeah, I taught those years.

CO: And then, and then you got married in '53 and Sandra was born in '56.

ET: Yeah.

CO: So did you continue to teach after you married?

ET: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: I, see 'cause Trammell was in school up here at Gammon. See he hadn't, he was from Mississippi, and had come here to Gammon to study the ministry.

CO: Oh okay, alright. What did you call your husband?

ET: I called him Trammell.

CO: Trammell. Okay. So your, is that how you say your last name, Trammell?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: But let me tell you. I always said this...you know. He was down there in the country. [laughter] Don't we call it this.

CO: Alright. Alright.

ET: We just, you and I to Rust college. See had finished Rust College. The that, that four years, he, he...

CO: Where was that? Rust?

ET: It's in Hollow Springs, Mississippi.

CO: Okay.

ET: And it's a Methodist College.

CO: Okay. So he's all, he's, coming to Atlanta...to Gammon...was that really what made him...

[phone rings]

ET: Excuse me one minute.

CO: [inaudible 22:06/2]

[phone rings]

ET: All his friends, and all they all came up here to Gammon together.

CO: OOOhhhhh!

ET: So they didn't...

CO: Were they all going to be ministers?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Oh.

ET: But listen. See they didn't know nothing 'bout that Tram.MELL's thing.

CO: They didn't know he was TRAM.mell?

ET: That they didn't know he was a Tram.MELL.

CO: Oh I gotcha. So at Rust, he had, he had already become TRAM.mell.

ET: Yeah, right. When he, when he left [inaudible 21:40/2] Silas, Mississippi, he went to Rust and he, he elevated himself out of Tram.MELLto TRAM.mell. And you know folk just had all kinds of spelling, because it, every...everybody 'round here know T-R-A-M-M-E-L-L - spells Tram.MELL.

CO: Yeah, well...well but it's his name, you know?

ET: And, and, and that, but, but they say if it's your name you can spell and pronounce it anyway you want to.

CO: That's right. That's right. Well okay, ya'll married, you were married, but, what, was he your first love or did you, had you dated must when ya'll.

ET: OH WELL YOU KNOW, WHEN I WAS A LIL' SASSY and I, I, you know...see...like I told you. We were very appreciative making a sacrifice to send us to college.

CO: Mmhhmm.

ET: We were very appreciative for what they did, but I was always a hard worker. I started workin', makin' me a lil' money when I was 7 years old.

CO: Mhhmm. Wow.

ET: I, listen...I have people laughin' and I say, "Didn't"... the lady was a German lady. And you know White people didn't like Germans. This lady stayed around Black people her whole life, in our community. And...this little girl said to me, she said, "Sister, you wanna go and we, rake some leaves for Annis Trumple?" I said, "Well I have to go at home and ask Mama." So I went by home. She gave me a, a biscuit with a pear preserve in it. And that wa...and a glass of milk. And we went on to work. And child we raked and we seven years old. We raked them leaves, honey. Oh, we just raked them. And she said, "Oh ya'll did such a good job." Look like she gave a, looked like I can remember 15¢, and she said I'm, I'm going to give you all something good. And she went in there and got a big bag of potatoes. And the potatoes were frost bitten [inaudible 19:18/2]. You ever had any frost [inaudible 19:17/2] bitten potatoes? You ever?

CO: No.

ET: I can them old frost bitten sweet potatoes home and Mama tried to make 'em edible. [laughter] And none of us ever tasted a frost bitten [inaudible 18:59/2] sweet potato.

CO: Now did you, did you have to give you 15¢ to your Mama or did she let you keep it? You have it?

ET: No, no, no, no, no. No, I kept the 15¢. I, I won't never, I, I won't ever remember spending any. 'Cause I was, I could hold on to money.

CO: Eh, oh, you were thrifty.

ET: Thrifty. I'm very thrifty.

CO: Okay, well now let's go back to romance, because...

ET: Well I had boyfriends and this thing and that thing. But see we, I didn't want to, we, see, like I tell ya. We were appreciative of getting an education. I was teaching and my sister was teaching.

CO: Uh huh, mmhhmm.

ET: We wanted the streets down there were we gonna we weren't paved. We didn't have lights. We didn't have running water, and...so...we started saying, "Well we gonna find a place and we gonna move." When the house was nothing but a shack. And when we move, but Mama was working up at Gammon, and we

were accommodating her. See we, but, we loved each other, and so we, we were courting, but we didn't want to get married right then.

CO: So you wanted to save up. You wanted to be more...financially secure by the time you married was that your purpose.

ET: No that wasn't the purpose of...we wanted to be, have our mother and father out from down there where there wasn't no light...

CO: Oh, I see.

ET: No gas.

CO: I gotcha. Right, okay.

ET: And we went, we all sat down. When we be laughing. Mama says she wanted a gas stove. I said I wanted a toilet.

[laughter]

ET: That way you didn't have to go outdoors.

CO: Right, right, right.

ET: We had the, we had the outdoor toilet.

CO: So is that when you moved here?

ET: That's when we moved here.

CO: Okay. Wow.

ET: In, in, in, in, in...

CO: In '48?

ET: In 1947 or '48.

CO: Okay.

ET: But either one do.

CO: Alright. And they moved, you moved in this house. It had running water. It was...

ET: It was broken down. It was a double tenant house.

CO: It was a what?

ET: [laughter]

CO: Oh a tenant house?

ET: A DOUBLE TENANT house.

CO: Double tenant. I gotcha.

ET: Ones that, this was one side and that was one side.

CO: Okay, okay. But now you, but you have the whole house.

ET: OH YEAH, YEAH. OH YEAH! We, we kind of made it, you know, real nice.

CO: Yeah, as a double tenant house, how many bathrooms?

[phone rings]

ET: It's still, it had two bathrooms, but we converted into one.

[phone rings]

ET: I'm going to have to bring, get this phone and bring it in here.

CO: Well...we were just talking about you, you were telling me about boyfriends before you married and you were talking about just how you appreciated your parents. What they did for you so you and your sister were...going to make sure they were settled and...so you lived here once too?

ET: OH YEAH, YEAH!

CO: [inaudible 15:56-55/2]

Somebody enters and sayTN: A long time.

CO: Okay.

TN: Mmhhmm.

CO: Yeah well you can talk about that then. That was, so you moved here in '47 or '48, roughly.

ET: Yeah, yeah.

TN: Yeah.

CO: Okay. Now when did you get married Miss Thelma?

TN: When did I get married?

K: 1955.

CO: Okay so that was a year before...

ET: Well...you, I, see, I, I married in 1953.

K: She married Daddy in 1955. August 15th, 1955.

CO: Alright so you married first.

ET: Yeah.

CO: You married first. And then when, what, who's, how many children?

K: You went to.

[Transcriber has difficult time keeping up with who is saying what]

K: I have one brother.

CO: Okay. And is he older or?

K: He's younger.

CO: Younger. So when were you born?

K: 1957.

CO: Okay.

ET: When was he born?

K: 1958.

CO: AAhhh. So...

ET: Ya'll 11 months apart.

K: 11 months. Mmhhmm. Two weeks from being a year.

CO: That must've been difficult.

ET: Well see she and I, we, we're less than 2 years. See she was born in, in, in January.

Mmhhmm [14:40/2]

ET: And I was born in, I was born in May, the 30th. And see she was...we was very close. See, 'cause we went from first grade to college together.

CO: Yeah. Yeah. So you all...yeah. You, you were close to proximity as well as just close bonded.

ET: Right. Oh yeah, we were bonded then.

CO: But so both of you were in your 30s when you married.

ET: Yes.

CO: You were, now how common was that in...was it, it was not that uncommon in the educated Black community.

ET: Right, right.

CO: Okay.

ET: Because...but they had begun to allow, they didn't allow...

CO: Marriage...

ET: Females in the teaching field in Atlanta.

CO: Right, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, so but, but by the time, but you still taught after you married. Did you teach Miss Thelma? You taught...did you teach too after you married?

K: She did.

TN: Yes, yes. Everywhere I went. [inaudible 13:38/2]

ET: Now Kathy, Thelma can speak for herself. Thank you ma'am.

[laughter]

CO: So you both, you both taught?

ET: Yeah.

[inaudible 13:30/2]

CO: What about after your children were born?

ET: Oh yeah, after that, cause see I taught in Mississippi. And she taught in Florida for 30...for 30 years.

[inaudible 13:20/2]

CO: Oh wow, you lived in Florida 30 years?

TN: No it wasn't 30 years because I was going, see my husband was a minister and we were going from place to place.

ET: But you were teaching though.

TN: Yeah I was teaching.

K: Yeah she taught.

CO: So where in Florida did you live? All over?

ET: Yes, yeah just say all over.

K: All over.

ET: From in the, when I said in, when I tell people in the Atlantic, they say, "Ella stop that tale." But it was in the Atlantic.

TN: Atlantic.

Somebody. Atlantic. In the Atlantic.

ET: In the, in, in the Atlantic.

CO: So you taught up and down the Atlantic Coast in Florida? Is that what...

ET: From Jacksonville to...

K: [inaudible 12:36/2] Jacksonville all the way down to Fort Lauderdale.

CO: Oh my. Wow. So that's where you really grew up.

K: Basically in Florida. Yes.

CO: Yeah, yeah. So...

ET: When they weren't, when they weren't here. Now all other time they were here.

K: We were here.

[lots of mmhhmms]

ET: In this house.

CO: So but what about, what were, did your husbands know each other before ya'll got married?

ET: They were at Gammon together.

CO: Oookkkayy.

[laughter]

CO: Oh my goodness. Now...

K: Hello?

CO: You, you married a Mr. Newman? Reverend Newman?

TN: Mmhhmm.

CO: Okay, alright, alright. Well, so ya'll have so much sitting in your background. Both of you married Methodist preachers. Wow.

ET: Right. And he got to be, her husband got to be a bishop.

CO: Woah. Is he still living?

K: No.

CO: No.

K: It's alright.

CO: How different was it to be married to a Bishop then a minister?

TN: It was good.

CO: Was it?

TN: It was good.

CO: Did you move much after that? After he became a Bishop.

TN: [signals no]

CO: No?

TN: He was the first Black bishop.

CO: Wow.

TN: Mmhm.

CO: Your husband was the first Black bishop in, in Georgia, in Florida, or?

TN: Oh when we...left...

K: He was the first Black bishop of the Southeastern jurisdiction. Once the conferences merged he was the first Black bishop.

CO: Wow, when did that happen?

K: When did dad become bishop? 19...was it '89[inaudible 10:51/2]

TN: No.

K: I think it was in '89 because I was in Germany.

[The Methodist Church website

<http://www.umc.org/site/apps/nlnet/content3.aspx?c=IwL4KnN1LtH&b=2429867&ct=5863745> suggests it was 1984, not '89]

TN: Mhhmm.

K: I think it was about '89 [inaudible 10:42/2].

CO: What was his name?

[inaudible who 10:41/2] One of them

CO: What, what was your husband's name?

K: Bishop Ernest W. Newnan.

CO: So you, you enjoyed that part of his...

TN: Oh yes.

CO: His...

TN: Mhhmm.

CO: Wow. And so where was he, where was he, his, what was the...

ET: In Nashville, Tennessee.

CO: Oh, did you like Nashville?

TN: Yes.

CO: So that was in...You think that was '89.

K: I believe it was '89. I, I think it was.

CO: Well that, that's ri...the Presbyterian. You know the North and the South Presbyterian churches came together in mid-'80s. So that's about the same time that...is that what you're talking about the Northern... the two branches of the Methodist church? No?

K: No it was the two, it was two conferences. Well you could say that. The two conferences that merged.

CO: Yeah, yeah it was like that in...yeah, yeah, yeah there was a movement to try and bring them back together in the '80s. Yeah, yeah.

ET: Right.

CO: That's really interesting. Wow. Okay. Well I'm trying to get Miss Ella to talk about romance and she just keeps skating around it.

ET: Well, well I told you we, we did a lot of romancing but it wasn't, it wasn't anything that we really wanted to be finalized in because we were busy fixing this house. We put the floors in. We put...changed the bathroom. We changed these lighting fixtures. We just did, did, just, busy right.

CO: Yeah you were busy.

ET: Yeah, yeah right.

CO: Now when ya'll met your husband, did you meet him about the same time?

ET: Yeah, they were classmates.

CO: Oh, alright. Kathy thinks that's funny.

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: Tell everyone what's funny about that.

K: The way they met. They were coming off the campus and Mama and Auntie was in the front yard washing blinds and that's how they met them. They were walking by.

TN: She knows more then we know.

ET: Yeah, that's right. We, well we, we'll let her say that.

CO: They told stories that they forgot but you remember?

K: Uh huh.

ET: And she wasn't here now.

CO: Right, right.

[laughter]

CO: So did ya'll flag 'em down? Or how, how did you...

TN: [inaudible 8:12/2]

CO: How did you get their attention?

ET: Hard working Black women.

CO: AAhhh.

ET: Is that what everybody...let me tell, that's what every Black man want, is a hard working Black woman.

CO: Harding working Black woman. Yeah, okay.

ET: And so...

CO: And obviously you were that, because you were out, you were doing work outdoors.

ET: Look at them washing windows and...

CO: So did you know automatically were, was, were you attracted to...to Mr. Ernest and you were attracted to Trammell? Mr. Trammell?

ET: I don't think not, not quite because we always said we didn't want no preacher.

TN: We didn't want no preacher.

[laughter]

ET: And, and...

CO: You sure got 'em though.

[laughter]

ET: Oh lord. Oh lord, oh lord.

TN: [inaudible 7:23/2] They were there on the campus. And her name was there and what was it Newnan told her?

ET: I don't remember

TN: It was comical.

CO: You called your husband "Newnan"?

TN: Yes.

CO: And you called yours Trammell?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Well, but you see, I mean that's, that's not a, not everybody does that.

ET: Oh no.

CO: Did he ever go by Ernest?

TN: [inaudible 6:54/2]

ET: Yeah.

TN: That, that Ernest was his first name.

CO: Right, but you called him by his last name.

TN: Mmhm. I called him En...[inaudible 6:43/2] anyway.

K: You called him...you called him Vaughn, Vaughn, that was her pet name.

TN: Really, really, Vaughn.

K: Vaughn she called him Vaughn.

CO: Oh, so ya'll met them together.

ET: Not really.

CO: No?

ET: 'Cause Newnan sent somebody, somebody went, sent him down here to get something. Typing done wasn't it?

TN: [inaudible 06:25/2] No it wasn't, but they, yeah, [inaudible 06:19/2] but they in, Vaughn...went up to Gammon that night. I don't know where they went. But...this has been so long.

CO: Well but then, so how long before you started seriously, you know, romancing, dating, courting?

ET: It was all up to...well then she was started saying "Woh, you all listen that, and you know we were fine clothes, and you know looking good." When are ya'll gonna get married? So-and-so's already gotten married. OOOhhhh Young as I am, I got married!

[laughter]

CO: Do you have pictures of ya'll? Did you get married close together? Well, no, because you married in '53.

ET: And I, yeah, and I mar...

CO: And you married in 50...

K: 55.

ET: Get out. I don't lie, well I didn't work. It's been a long time, so just laughing.

K: Got married in '55.

CO: So...did you start dating first? Dating...

ET: No we started. It was about the same thing.

[inaudible 05:07/2]

K: Dating the same time.

TN: What is this you are doing?

CO: Taping.

K: Ya'll started dating about the same time.

ET: Lis...lis...listen who talking.

K: Ya'll started dating about the same time.

CO: See she heard the stories when they were fresh many years ago.

[laughter]

CO: She's probably got them taped somewhere. You don't know about it. See I got permission to do this. I've gone through all the bureaucratic red tape.

ET: Yeah, and Kathy you better not say nothin' 'cause we'll sue you. We gonna sue you.

K: I'm not. I'm not saying anything.

CO: Well and now, okay, you're just not going to go along with my efforts to find out what it was like to date. But that's really what I would like to know. Like, when you grew up did you have, growing up as girls, some idea about, what you know, what would be like when you met the man you were gonna marry? Did you...

ET: Oh we talked about everything. You know how...

CO: Right, right.

ET: See we were real close. We, we aren't twins, but we were like twins.

CO: Mmhhmm. Yeah.

ET: And we oh, we ta...we talked about, you know what we wanted and what we gonna have and what we were gonna do

CO: But you didn't want Methodist ministers?

ET: Oh, we didn't want a Baptist or no kind of man other than that.

CO: I can imagine.

ET: And let's make, let's make that very clear. We just didn't want no preacher.

CO: Well, but you wound up with one.

ET: We wound up with a preacher.

CO: So how did you do that? I mean how did you come to terms with that?

ET: Have you ever seen people just do whatever they say, well...

CO: Oh yes ma'am. Don't say you won't do it.

ET: Do...th...and then, don't say...we had one cousin, "It used to be the Spellman girls didn't get married, but now it's the Clark girls that are not getting married." And so she married then, wasn't long after that we married, you know. You just get married.

CO: Mmhhmm, mmhhmm. What about children? Did you want children?

ET: Oh, my husband told me, he said if there ain't no children we callin' it off. We ain't...

[laughter]

CO: OOoohhhh. So he wanted children. What about yours?

TN: Yes. Yes.

CO: But you only had two. Each of you only had two. Did you want, was that what you talked about? Is that what you wanted?

ET: Didn't it say replace yourself?

[laughter]

ET: Replace yourself. That's what you're supposed to do. Replace yourself. It didn't say have no house full of children you can't take care of. And they're hungry and raggedy. And you know that, that was the way of, way you, pictures used to be. They were the raggediest, hungriest, barefooted, children in the world, but my husband said, he told folks said, "Don't bring me your sour milk."

CO: Yeah.

[laughter]

CO: So two is all you wanted.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: Two was all we could afford.

CO: Okay, alright.

ET: I don't know about you, but that was all we could afford. See she had hers real quick. They were both born in the same year.

CO: Wow.

K: Not quite the same year now.

ET: Now I, but, what I'm talking about, was in.

K: Was close, close.

ET: No, no, what I'm saying is within a year of each other.

K: Yeah, mmhmm.

CO: Okay well I know it probably is not considered polite subject, but it is 2012.

ET: Yeah.

CO: So can you talk about birth control. I mean how did you manage to just have two children? What did you learn about birth control?

ET: Well you see back in, back in that time it was getting to be very popular that you just did not have a house full of children. And so we practiced birth control.

CO: Okay, okay. Alright. But you knew, I mean you knew from young, as young women that you just wanted two children?

ET: We had seen too much poverty. See we came along in the Depression days.

CO: Well I got a little section on history. I was gonna ask you questions about what that was like, being, living through the Depression, so but we'll get to that.

ET: Okay.

CO: I, before I started working on this project, I was working on...motherhood at the turn of the century. Turn of the 20th century. 19-20th century. So I have, I'm interested in, in the role of mothering and how that shapes a woman's identity, but

you were both already in your 30s when you had children. You already had a sense of who you were before you became mothers, right?

ET: Right, ca...correct.

CO: You...you had a, a firm, strong identity really as professionals. You were both professionals before you ever had children.

ET: Yes.

CO: So, so how then did...did the role of mothering change you. Did it change you? Did it, did it make you in any way different?

ET: Well my husband said that I didn't know anything about mothering because I didn't know how to hold the children affectionate.

ET: You know. And...

CO: So who taught you?

TN: She taught herself.

ET: Well, you learn. You learn.

CO: But okay, so you didn't have cousins or you weren't around babies?

ET: No.

CO: No.

ET: No.

TN: No.

CO: Okay, alright. Was the same thing, did you learn Miss Thelma from, from, from Sandra. From her having Sandra or did you learn, or were you all living close by?

ET: No, I was in Mississippi she was in Florida.

TN: No, no, no.

CO: Oh my goodness, wow. Well what was that like to have your babies by yourself.

TN: You didn't [inaudible 59:26/3]

ET: I came back. We both came back home to have our babies.

CO: Okay.

[laughter]

CO: Because your mother was here to help?

ET: Oh yeah, yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: Yeah.

CO: So, so, so your Mama maybe kind of helped you decide how to hold the baby and that sort of thing?

ET: See my mother wasn't such a baby-lady herself 'cause she didn't have but three children. And see she was the youngest in her family. So she didn't know too much about handling babies. She, she fed us and kept us clean.

CO: Okay, alright. Did you...well okay, alright, you had your babies, did you, when did you go back to teaching? When did you go back to work?

ET: Well my husband said he didn't want, I, he didn't want me to work. He said he wanted me to stay at home and take care of the babies. See he didn't want nobody else taking care of those babies.

CO: So did, and did you do that?

ET: Well sort of.

CO: Sort of?

ET: Sort of.

CO: Okay. What does that mean?

ET: It means I did work in Mississippi. I did teach some.

CO: You did?

ET: Yeah.

CO: What does that mean though, you taught *some*? Would you do substitute teaching or did you?

ET: Yeah, sort of. Yeah.

CO: And so who kept the babies, the children, when you were doing that?

TN: I had full-fledged teaching, and one piece.

CO: You taught? Oh, okay.

TN: I taught.

CO: Who kept your children?

TN: I taught.

ET: Well she said who kept your children?

TN: My husband.

[laughter]

CO: So, but, he's preaching, so...

TN: That's alright. That didn't stop him from preaching.

CO: So he just took the children with him when he went to the church and...

TN: No, see, no. I'm, I'm...

ET: Well then you don't teach on Saturday and Sunday.

TN: And see...this is...altogether different and we got along very well. And we...

ET: He from a family of 14.

CO: Her husband, well...

ET: Well didn't Newnan have 14 brothers and sisters?

K: I thought it was 16.

[laughter]

K: I thought it was 16.

CO: So taking care of babies was nothing to him?

ET: No, right, it wasn't nothing to him.

K: No he would keep us during the day.

CO: What was that like?

K: Oh, I loved it.

CO: So he was a, he was a good nurturing father?

K: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Mama would get up, go to work. Daddy would get us dressed. Feed us, and we'd hobnob with Daddy all day.

CO: Oh.

K: Mmhhmm, until we went to school.

CO: But now you know, when you went to school...there probably wasn't a whole lot of other children in your classroom who had that background at home.

K: I don't know about them.

CO: But I ask all my classes. I'm very interested in this. I want to know children dynamics.

K: I don't know about them. I can only speak for me. I can't speak for them. I can only speak for me.

CO: But it shapes the way we see men and women and how we are as mothers and fathers. I mean clearly it, it, it's a, you have different expectations if you see a man who takes care of children, than if you see a household where a mother does all of that, you know? So...it really, it really does, it's a completely different dynamic in the household where men do, where men share especially child care.

ET: Child, childcare right.

TN: For years I didn't teach nothing but White children.

CO: In Florida?

TN: Mmhhmm, yeah.

CO: Now that too is another, how did that happen? Even, you mean when, when she was small.

TN: Yeah, yeah. [inaudible 55:15-14/3] we didn't have any problems.

K: There weren't any problems. School was being integrated. Schools were being integrated.

CO: Okay. So in the 60s was this, when, when did you start teaching in, almost, was it almost completely White schools? Was it integrated at all?

K: No it was *all* White.

TN: *All* White.

K: This was *all* White.

CO: Do you remember when that was? I'm talking to Miss Thelma now.

TN: I went out to the, I really couldn't tell you.

CO: Okay.

ET: Well when I was in Mississippi well it was all, they were very segregated schools. Very segregated.

CO: And you taught all, yeah well this was Mississippi.

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah, so you taught an all-Black school.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay, alright. What was it like Miss Thelma...

TN: White students?

CO: Right, yeah.

TN: They everybody liked it, it was no problem, and when...

ET: I told you she was different from me.

[laughter]

ET: Didn't I tell you that?

CO: Well you did and, I guess I, I, I see that now. She had a different life.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Right. Yeah, okay. Was this in Jacksonville where you were, you were teaching in an all-White school?

TN: No, let me see.

K: Yes, it was in, it was an all-White school Mama. It was in Jacksonville.

TN: Oh, I was just trying to find out. [inaudible 53:39/3]

K: Which it was [inaudible 53:39/3] It was at Artiga [inaudible 53:36/3]

TN: Then but you know what, believe it or not during that time, you were teaching with White teachers, and then the we would, every day we did something different. And when we were doing all in different things, teachers would look in your room and see what you were doing, and if you were doing, they had to come in there and see what it was and they kept it. We had no problems and they were pretty good.

CO: So you didn't have any issues with it yourself. You didn't mind?

TN: No.

CO: So did they move you to the White school? Or did you go there and apply?

TN: Well see the thing about it is this...when after a conference, my husband would move. And the first thing that the pastor of the church wanted to know [was] what did I do? My husband told him I was a teacher, so he asked him what grade did I teach. He told him. And when I got to school the man had this nice room and White children. And they had fun. And they was very...

ET: They didn't go home and tell their Mama they sent the maid today to take care of the children...that was...that's what... that's what you learned was the thing.

TN: But I could tell the difference in the Methodist Church I don't know anything about the Baptist Church, but...

ET: That they sent the maid.

CO: So was this a Methodist school?

K: No.

ET: No.

TN: No, no, no

[inaudible 51:32-28/3]

CO: Oh I see.

ET: These, these are the officials, 'cause when they get, when you get there they would...the people in charge, they want to know what you do. What your wife does and then, then you tell them you teach school. They'll send you to a school, you don't have a problem finding a job.

CO: Right, but they sent her to a White school, I'm just, it really is important to, to try to figure out when that was, because it, it, I mean there are many places where you know that just wouldn't happen.

ET: Happen, right. But, and cause Florida's turning backwards again, you know.

CO: Oh God.

ET: They, they, Florida's getting terrible. You know? Because we went down there. Every...I don't know. We were in Miami and Kathy was a little White girl, that girl right there, Sandra, Brenda, and Bubba, they would little, they were brown, they weren't, you know, jet Black or nothing like that, and here was I was everybody could look at me and tell, I ain't White. We went to the Holiday Inn?

TN: Holiday Inn.

ET: We stopped the traffic up there, here this little White girl is with these three little Black children. They stopped the traffic in Miami looking up there at her...I don't know whether this was the first time Holiday Inn had you know, did the, but that's what they actually did. And many of the folk would look around at me with they thought I was Kathy's maid.

CO: Mmhhmm, mmhhmm. So had, had you me...all of your life "passed"?

K: Well, even through school, you know, I got picked on. I got teased a lot because I was so much lighter than everybody else in my class. So you know I grew up with that, but it didn't bother me.

ET: Because Mama, you see her, and you see me. We would be standing down, right down on Liquid Avenue. A White man pushed me and Thelma back and let Mama on a street car.

CO: Because he thought she was White?

ET: She thought she was White and I don't know where he thought those little Black children come from. Cause we went on.

CO: What did she say?

ET: Nothing cause it, it was a quick thing.

CO: That she took off and left you?

ET: Oh no.

K: No.

ET: Listen, he got between Mama and us. So, he let Mama step up on the street car. He stepped up on the street car and of course, me and Thelma stepped up.

CO: Oh, you went on, okay, I see.

ET: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

CO: Now do you know when that was?

ET: Well Thelma was about, I guess she was about 5 and I guess I might've been about 6. And so that'd be 80...84. 84 years ago.

TN: [inaudible 48:20/3] Thelma, I am concerned about what is this you are doing.

K: Mama, that's the tape recorder.

[Stopped to get Thelma's consent signed]

CO: Okay, I, I, we're, can, can you all just saying something about the experience of mothering. I mean did, I think I got sidetracked by hearing about how you were, you were, cared for by your father, you and your brother. So many people romanticized and sentimentalized motherhood. Do you all miss mothering at all?

ET: We might, I mothered. Now, I, I, I mothered my children.

CO: Right, and I know Miss Thelma did too.

ET: Cause see, Brenda wasn't but... but, Brenda wasn't even two years old when Trammell died.

CO: Oh my. Okay. Well so then you had to mother and father.

ET: I, I mothered and fathered, but see I had the support of my mother and my father and my brother, and his wife.

CO: Did ya'll move back here?

ET: Yes.

CO: Did you live in this house?

ET: Same house.

CO: Wow, okay. So your, your daughters actually grew up here in this house?

ET: They grew up here in this house.

CO: Wow.

ET: Went to school out of this house.

CO: Okay. Alright. So they had more than...so they had two mothers really. They had their grandmother. Did your mother... was everybody in the household?

ET: I became a child when I came back. I was mothered by mother and they were too.

CO: Okay. What was that like? Did you like that?

ET: It was...Oohh I just loved it.

CO: Oh my. I bet you...okay. So that made mothering easier.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. Well that's important. So Miss Thelma you didn't come back home, did you?

TN: No.

CO: No. So do you, is there, do, are you all nostalgic at all about that time in your life? Do you miss it at all?

ET: Well... you change with the times. See I never had hurt knees 'til I got old.

CO: Yeah.

[laughter]

ET: Well that's true.

K: Yeah.

ET: And everything about you's changed. I never had hurting shoulders. I never had...eyesight going, and I don't hear as well. I don't smell or...taste with false teeth you don't...you know? You change.

CO: Yeah, right.

ET: And you have to, you go, I couldn't stay young forever. If I could I'd go back to 19.

CO: Well that's a question. You're getting ahead of me. I was going ask what age would you go, would you go back if you could go back to a particular age. What would it be. You named 19.

ET: 19.

CO: Well in your mind are you still 19?

TN: NNOOO. No you're not.

ET: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Listen, look here I'm 91. I just turned it around.

TN: No you're not.

CO: But you know that I do, I ask that question and some people know exactly what I'm talking about. They'll say, "I might look in the mirror. I might see one person, but in my heart and in my mind, I'm still whatever...25." Whatever age they, you know enjoyed most. Apparently [addressing Ella] you're one of those people, but you're [addressing Thelma] not. How old do you feel Miss Thelma?

TN: 80...

K: No, how old do you feel? Not how old are you?

TN: But you know what, oh,...

K: How old do you feel Mama?

TN: I'm trying to...

ET: How old do you feel? 101.

[laughter]

TN: No, I don't feel...I don't feel that old.

CO: Well you look like 42, so.

TN: Well I feel like about I'm 85.

K: You feel like you 85?

ET: ...like you 85?

[laughter]

K: No you don't.

CO: Well you surely don't carry yourself that way. You look like a very young woman. Is that because of health problems. Is that your...

TN: I don't have all them health problems. Don't have all of them.

CO: Well that's good.

ET: That's good. Why, I told you little girl said she wish she could sweep away the, the way folk cuss at her.

[laughter]

CO: Yeah, yeah.

ET: Yeah, yeah, cause when she...

CO: So neither one of you really misses mothering? You don't.

ET: No.

CO: Do you think it's easier or harder to be a mother today than it was when ya'll had your...

ET: Oh it's much harder.

CO: It's harder?

ET: Because see like I told you, see last week, it was heart breaking to see the children. They didn't mind anyone.

CO: Okay.

ET: They didn't mind anyone when I'm not talking about just the teach...they didn't mind their own parents.

CO: Right, okay.

ET: They were...

CO: Well why do you think that is. Why do you think that it's harder to be a mother today, than it was?

ET: Because the times have changed.

CO: Okay, alright.

ET: The parents, the children are raising themselves and their parents.

CO: Okay, well can I ask each of your each, can sort of take a turn at this, it's going to be hard with you sitting here Kathy, but what do you admire most about each of your children, Sandra and then Brenda? What do you admire most about Sandra?

ET: I admire her for keeping on keeping on.

CO: So her perseverance?

ET: Her perseverance. What I admire most about Brenda, she doesn't care anything about anybody but herself.

CO: So you admire that?

ET: Yeah, but if she didn't bother me I would admire her even more, I'd enjoy her more better (laughs).

CO: So, she doesn't care about anybody but herself, what does she bother you with?

ET: Everything that she does, everything, yes.

TN: She doesn't have.

CO: Oh, I got you. So Mrs. Thelma what do you admire most about your two children? What's your son's name? You have a son right?

TN: Ernest, Ernest.

ET: Excuse yourself Kathy, so your mother can answer the question honestly, because they'll get you for lying. Would you please excuse yourself. Go out on the front porch and close the door. (Laughs)

CO: Tell me what you admire most about your son while she's leaving.

ET: She's destructive (laughs)

CO: She brought her mother here.

ET: That's what I say, and walk fast (laughs).

TN: Now what is it you want to know?

CO: Well, just what you admire about your children, each of them separately.

TN: Alright, Kathy will do more than Ernest. Ernest, he wants you to do more for him, you know? Kathy will get up and go to work and he'll, you know, just fiddle about and then when it's time for anything to be yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

CO: So, what do you think explains that, that she's more independent and she's more ambitious and what do you think?

TN: She'll get up and do more than him and whatever she gets done he might put two or three more words in it, but she does more.

CO: So does she have more ambition than he does?

TN: Yeah.

CO: What does Kathy do, what's her work?

TN: She doesn't do anything.

CO: Right now.

TN: Uh huh.

CO: Okay, alright. Well, can I talk about your work life, your professional life? You both taught, but now Mrs. Ella, the way I know you is through some people you worked for Michael Begeman's aunt, right?

ET: Right, right.

CO: So what did you do, besides, okay was that after you retired?

ET: Yeah, right, oh yeah.

CO: Okay what did you do for her?

ET: I worked in, listen I was her right hand. We were with her children, Jan is legally blind and John was a (laughs) he grew up, he was a boy, but he grew up to be a fine young man.

CO: So you stayed with her children, did you teach her children? Were they homeschooled?

ET: No, no they're well educated because her only daughter finished Yale, and John finished Emory and then he got his Masters in Social Work, and Jan is a minister, she's been to Notre Dame, she's been in Pennsylvania, she's just been all over, she's very educated.

CO: So what did you do for them? What did you do for Jean, her name is Jean?

ET: Yeah.

CO: When did you start working for her and what did you do for her?

ET: I started working for her, (inaudible 37:30-37:28) because listen, she had all these parties and had all these people at her house and I met so many people, I met Liz Carpenter, I met the lady who was, she was running for president, and I met, first of all the people I met Bishop Desmond Tu Tu (SP).

CO: You met at her home?

ET: Right, all of these people.

CO: So she was politically active?

ET: She was politically active.

CO: And obviously a Democrat?

ET: Oh yeah, very much a Democrat.

CO: Okay and so while she was involved in all of that you were helping her with the children?

ET: And the parties and everything.

CO: Okay, alright, so you enjoyed that?

ET: I enjoyed meeting all of those nice people.

CO: Yeah, yeah, okay.

ET: Rosalyn Carter, Liz Carpenter, I just met all of them, big dignitaries.

CO: So what was it like meeting Bishop Tu Tu?

ET: It was, it was very rewarding because he had done so much for his people there in Africa.

CO: Right, yeah, yeah. He's so imminently quotable I love quotes by him.

ET: Oh yeah, I love his quotes. I have a book. Kathy! I need you bring me, I have all of those books, I have Desmond Tu Tu, I have Grace Hamilton, I have this lady who just died, well she's been dead now about a year and I have, I met Flannery I just met so many nice people there.

CO: You met Flannery O'Connor?

ET: Yeah!

CO: Oh my gosh! She died in the 60's.

ET: Well, I started working for her back, no I didn't it must have been the 80's, but I have the book.

CO: So how many jobs outside the home have you had besides teaching, that was one, did you do anything else?

ET: Yes, I did. I did some personal home care for a lady that was paralyzed, was paralyzed in an accident on her neck down.

CO: So, how long did you work for Ms. Jean?

ET: Around 30, around figure, well that wouldn't be a round figure, but around 35 years.

CO: Good heavens wow, so when did you quit working for her? Were you still working for her when she died?

ET: Oh no, no no no no, I'd say about 5 years because her second husband's health was failing him and her health had gone through failure and they were moving into Castlebury Court.

CO: So Ms. Thelma what about you, did you do anything besides teach?

TN: What have I done? See if I can remember.

ET: No.

CO: No, she's always just taught? Okay. So this question won't matter, but it will to you Ms. Ella, what was the most rewarding job you did?

ET: Working with Jean Robitscher Bergmark (inaudible 33:41/Last name?) (33:40-33:38)

CO: So that was more rewarding than teaching?

ET: Well, let me say teaching was the most rewarding.

CO: Okay.

ET: Because I have some children that I taught has a Ph. D, I have some that have done real well. Well, Kathy do you want something to eat or something?

Unknown: I'm going to take her to get something to eat.

ET: Where are ya'll going?

TN: Don't you want to go?

ET: No, because we are trying to get as much done here because Josephine is going to pick me up and take me to [someone's birthday party] (inaudible 32:51-32:50) and very few of our family have strayed away from Methodism.

CO: Okay, alright. But sounds like all of you have had pretty, you're experience of integration has not been troubled.

ET: No.

TN: No.

CO: And you attribute that to your husband's being a preacher, a minister in the Methodist church.

TN: And being the first Black bishop.

CO: But you integrated a neighborhood?

K: Yeah.

CO: Your father integrates...

K: He was the first Black pastor of an all White church in Florida.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Now when was that?

K: That was...

CO: First Black pastor?

K: First black pastor of an all White church in Florida.

CO: What church, do you remember?

K: Plantation United Methodist and it had a membership of roughly 2,000.

CO: God! Wow, this was in Jacksonville?

K: This was in, no this was in Plantation, Florida, a suburb of Fort Lauderdale.

CO: Alright, wow, and then how long after that did he become Bishop?

K: It wasn't long, because he left the plantation and he became...

ET: (inaudible 31:16-31:13)

K: No, after he left Plantation he became Conference Counselor Director. He was in Lakeland for 1 year.

CO: So this was roughly the late 80's? Because you said he became a Bishop in 89'. [It was actually '84]

K: I believe it was 89' because we were in Plantation. I can tell you, we were in Plantation in the late 70's, late 70's because I got married in Plantation Church in 1980, so about, what was it about 2 years later, he went to Lakeland and became Conference Counselor Director, stayed there a year, and then went on to District for, Deland District, he wasn't District Superintendent long. He was Superintendent for what, 6 to 8 months, then he was elected into the Episcopacy, I think that was

about 1984. I think about 1984 because I was in Germany, I couldn't make it home for the consecration service, it was about 1984, I think he was elected in 1984.

CO: As Bishop?

K: Uh huh.

CO: Wow.

K: I think it was 1984.

CO: Well that will be easy enough to look up.

K: I think about 1984, as a matter of fact I can look it up on my phone.

CO: So what was your father's, how did he experience all of the turmoil and, you know, just the fall-out from the movement of the 60's? How did he deal with that?

K: Well, he dealt with it very well, because, let's just call it what it is, my Daddy was light-skinned like me. He was light-skinned like me so, he didn't have all of that.

CO: So, how did he respond to things like the (Emmitt Till 28:46?) lynching and Montgomery Bus Boycott, and then as the violence escalated, how did he respond to that? I mean, he's in the pulpit.

ET: We went, that's just where we went in, we went to Mississippi when the Emmitt Till thing...

CO: That was 55', 54'. No, it was right after the *Brown* decision so it would have been in 55'.

ET: Right, that's right it was in 55' and it was real hot in Clarksdale because that wasn't fair from Clarksdale. They were passing out hams to Black people and calm them down, and one man said, "Give them back, give them back." One man said, "I can't give it back because I eat it up."

CO: So how did you feel about that Ms. Ella?

ET: Well I was trying to get adjusted to Mississippi in the Delta.

CO: Well that was a very, that would have been hard enough, you know?

ET: Just going down there, going to the Delta where the cotton grew up at the front door at the front porch and all of that. Oh, those were some trying times, because see they were having integration, that and where was that, was it in Arkansas?

CO: That was 57', right in Arkansas, Little Rock, but that was just a few years, I mean this stuff kind of...

ET: Yeah it kind of stair-stepped, right after the other, but, that's what really killed Trammell, he got involved in that stuff, he was younger than the people who were actually in it.

K: Okay, here it is, elected Bishop, 1984.

CO: Okay.

ET: Yeah, so that was not easy.

CO: Well, right, I mean of all the times to be in Mississippi, 54'.

ET: 54', 55', '56, 57' 58' 59' 60'.

CO: So your husband died in 60'?

ET: 62'.

CO: 62' and that's when you left?

ET: And that's when I left.

CO: Okay, well it wasn't nearly resolved by then.

ET: Because Medgar Evers, you remember Medgar Evers?

CO: Absolutely!

ET: Medgar Evers came to me, you know, and greeted me goodbye that Sunday, but 2 weeks after that, it might have been that same week, he was killed.

CO: Right, oh my goodness. What do you mean he greeted you?

ET: You know, he came to Clarksdale to tell me goodbye, because I was coming back to Atlanta.

CO: Oh, I see, I see this was after your husband died.

ET: Died, right.

CO: So how did you react to White people in Mississippi?

ET: You know, it was real funny. We lived at 404 Yazoo, and that street went on downtown, and I could mark White folks to the N'th degree, I told you I was always into something. One White lady said, called me up on the phone, see, she didn't know I was Black, and I then I fooled White folks, she said, "You know, some of them Niggas called over here talking about they want Mrs. in front of their names." I said, "Sho Nuff, they want Mrs. in front of their name." I said, "Well what you going to do about it?" She said, "I'm just not going to put it." I said, "Me neither." (Laughs) I really just had fun off of them; I just played with them. And a girl, she really looks White and she was a classmate of ours here in Atlanta, but her father had some people in Mississippi. A White lady came to the door. She said, "I'm trying to find somebody to work for me." I said, "I am too." (Laughs)

CO: (Laughs) What did she say?

ET: (Laughs) It didn't take her long to find out (inaudible 23:49/1).

CO: You weren't available?

ET: No, I told her I was looking for somebody to work for me too.

CO: Did she give you some suggestions?

ET: That lady got off of that front porch so fast. She didn't know what to do.

CO: She wasn't up for the job?

ET: She wasn't up for the job, I said, "Yeah, I was looking for somebody to work for me too." What was this little girl's name? She married, they were all good friends from Texas. Anyways, she came to my door and she said, oh when she found out we were just sitting there laughing and talking. She said, "Ella. I'm looking for someone to pull my child's tooth. I just left from around there from Dr. Hill and his equipment looks so old and outdated. I said, "Wait just one minute, let me call this lady." This was Hazel's sister, and this woman, this doctor she had been to, well it was this lady's husband and I didn't know it. I called Mrs. Hill, I said, "Mrs. Hill," I said, what was her name, the kids, she looked, she was act, really, because she looked like a White person. I said, "I'm looking for somebody," I said, "This girl is at my door and she said her baby was crying all night long because he had a tooth ache, and point her to a dentist, and she just left this dentist office around here, and his equipment looks so antiquated." Now this was her husband now. (Laughs) I

didn't know what to say, I don't know how I finally got out of that. I didn't know anything to tell this girl what to do.

CO: So you all have had a very different experience of a movement that affected so many people's lives. You feel like you didn't experience it negatively because your husband managed to be sort of integrated into his profession and in the neighborhood, you all just moved into the neighborhood. So how did that make you feel, or how did you feel about the fact that other people were experiencing it very violently? How did you feel about Martin Luther King, how did you feel about his rise to a position of leader, how was that? You were just a baby.

K: Yeah, but I remember.

CO: You remember it?

JA: Uh huh.

ET: I remember a riot in Jacksonville. They had a downtown church in Jacksonville and the rioters came right there to the corner. We were upstairs on the front porch looking at them.

CO: Now when was this?

K: This was when, about, I want to say about what, 60?

ET: Yeah, this was in the early 60's.

K: This was in the early 60's, I'd say about what, 64', 65'?

ET: About 63'.

CO: So was it your Daddy's church?

ET: Yeah.

K: Yeah.

CO: How'd he handle that?

ET: We stayed upstairs.

K: We were just in awe, we just looked at them.

ET: We just looked at them, we saw them.

JA: We were still (inaudible 20:06/1) and we were like, "Okay." We just didn't get involved.

TN: And listen, I was, like I said, I was always into something, that was a very, what kind of section was that, it was a terrible section, but I'd take all of the children and we'd go walking up in there in the night, in the dark. I wasn't afraid, because we weren't doing anything wrong. We were just looking.

CO: But were you going into a White section?

TN: No, we were going into a very bad Black section.

CO: Okay, How did you all feel about once the tides sort of shifted and the movement becomes the Black Power movement or that's a part of it, how did your husband, did he have any interaction with people who were involved in that wing of the movement?

TN: One thing, we were in Florida, wait and let me get it together. He was the richest man in the city, he was the richest man in the city.

CO: You talking about a White man?

TN: Yeah, a White man. Alright, well, the congregation was White, the congregation was fine and then when this man was not a Methodist, but he decided he would go down here and hear this Black man preach. He decided he would hear. You know what, he went down there and the first night he joined.

TN: (Laughs)

CO: Your husband's church?

TN: Uh huh. And the congregation almost went wild. He was the richest man down there. And he joined this Methodist church.

CO: Your husband's church?

TN: Uh huh.

CO: Did he bring his money with him?

TN: No, see, he didn't know come, the first time he came to that church, he joined.

CO: Wow, that's quite a statement. Okay and did he continue to come faithfully?

TN: Now Von left there I think about 2 years after, but when we left he was still there.

CO: Goodness, wow. Okay, but your husband didn't have any, did he preach any sermons on [racial justice]?

ET: Listen, you know what? I feel, because like I said, we've been in the Methodist Church all of our lives. I think a Methodist Church dictates to their preachers what the preacher what to preach and what not to preach.

CO: Wow okay.

ET: Like all of this going on now, even though we have a very good preacher, I like his preaching; he prepares his sermon, then reads the sermon and I like him very much because they are not long and all of that, but all of this stuff like Creflo Dollar and Eddie Long, and all that; he never mentions any of that.

CO: And you want him to?

ET: I do my own preaching. God gave me brain, just like he gave you one, gave you one and gave you one, and I have the right to think like I want to think, even though I want to be a Christian, I want to be a better person, I want to help people who are down and out. I don't believe in kicking a person because they are down. I believe in trying to help everybody who needs help. So, my preacher doesn't have to preach to me, I can think for myself.

CO: Yeah, okay, alright.

TN: Well I'm sorry, Kathy, we got to go.

K: You ready to go?

TN: Yeah.

ET: Well, I sure glad you all came by and I'm glad you met Dr. Olgesby.

CO: Yeah, I'm so glad you came by.

ET: See you all are our second people.

CO: Yeah, my interviews have not, this is an unusual interview (laughs).

ET: (Laughs)

TN: (Laughs)

CO: What am I doing? (Interview jumps 15:00)

CO: Do you know anywhere here you got a picture of you and Ms. Thelma? You can get it later, but do you think you got one you can find before I leave?

ET: Of me and her together?

CO: Well, just to the two of you.

ET: Yeah, oh yeah, I have, you see I have plenty of pictures, this house is covered. You can go in that room because, see, and then that room, but everything is jumbled up everywhere, and that's alright.

CO: Well you just get, you can just find me one I can either take out of a frame?

ET: Oh yeah, I do.

CO: Okay.

ET: Let's see how far we get.

CO: Okay, if you could go back and train for any job other than what you did, is there anything you would like to have done besides teach?

ET: Well I went back and I worked for Jean Robitscher Bergmark (last name? 14:04) and I worked for this lady that was paralyzed. I was a caregiver for her. I would like to go back and get some training on family living, how families should stay together.

CO: So Psychology or Sociology, one of those, like a degree in Social Work?

ET: Social Work, that would cover all of that, yeah, Social Work.

CO: And would you, perhaps, like to have been a counselor yourself, to counsel people?

ET: Well, that would have been a good thing. Then I would have missed a lot of those other things.

CO: Right, right yeah. You can't have it all.

ET: You can't have it all.

CO: Okay, are there any jobs that you think women ought not to do?

ET: I think, I really think that women were God's chosen people, because we have a soft touch, our hearts are into what we do. We want to see people do well, we want to see loving families, loving people, we want, and when we speak to people we want them to respond kindly. This is one of my gifts for my birthday and I thought it was so nice, it says, "Live simply, love generously, care deeply, speak kindly, and leave the rest to God." That's what I believe in. Because, some people you want them to change, but seeing that they will not change.

CO: Yeah, yeah, okay. When your daughters were growing up, did you encourage them to go take care of themselves?

ET: Yes.

CO: In case they had to be heads of households?

ET: Yes, because my daughter moved--- when she came from Berry---the first thing she wanted to do was move out, but that was the beginning of new things, because usually girls stays at home until they were married.

CO: Yeah, yeah. Did she live on her own at all, after she left?

ET: Oh yes, she and her dear friend, up through high school, moved together, but they were alright, but I just, I always thought that you stayed at home until you could get on your feet and, you know, had some money, you had, you know, things were taken care of.

CO: Well when you retired from teaching, you were pretty young.

ET: Yeah.

CO: So you didn't stay retired very long, did you?

ET: No. I have been retired about five from Jean Robitscher Bergmark

CO: And you're 92?

ET: 91.

CO: 91 years old, so, what's it been like since you retired?

ET: It's been very busy. Like, this week, we had Vacation Bible School, I went to a Civic League meeting that Monday night, and Tuesday morning I had to get up and be at Emory at 8:30, and then come back to Bible School at 2 o'clock.

CO: Oh my goodness.

ET: Then Wednesday morning, what did I do, I went somewhere. Then Thursday morning, I went down to Southeastern, they were having their anniversary and they have a room down their named for me.

CO: Oh wow. This is a school?

ET: This is a senior citizens center. And Thursday, I went to Adamsville, they opened up a new medical center out there, and then back to Vacation Bible School. Then, today I'm with you, and tonight I'm going with Josephine to a party, then in morning, I get and go to Sunday School, church.

CO: Wow. Well so, about money, are you better off financially than your parents were?

ET: Let me say, not really, I mean, after my Daddy retired he, see, he didn't drink, he didn't smoke, and the only thing he had to do, is have something to eat. My brother was very nice to him, he worked at Rich's, he bought him all kinds of nice suits and things like that and Daddy was very well taken care of, and my mother was the same way.

CO: So would you say that your family has considered itself, at least all of your life, to be middle class?

ET: I think not. I don't think we were middle class. I think we were just above poverty level, because see, my Daddy, he wasn't making that much money.

CO: Even in the Black Community you would consider yourself poverty, just above poverty?

ET: No. See, we knew that, but other people thought differently, you know, because we didn't hang around bad people.

CO: So culturally, in the Black Community, you would have been thought of as middle class because it sounds like kind of set a standard, and most of the Black Community would have seen you as middle class.

ET: Yeah, they would have because we learned to attend to our own business, we went where we had to go, and, you know, we didn't hang out.

CO: So what would you do if you won the lottery?

ET: If I won the lottery, I would buy up all of that vacant property around my church, I would get my children stabilized.

CO: And what would you do with the property around the church?

ET: Okay, I would build a recreation center, an educational building, and, you know, things like that, and I would have like a baseball field, if we had the room.

CO: So you would focus on young people?

ET: Right.

CO: Okay, well that's understandable given your background teaching. Let me just ask you a few more questions on regional identity. You've always lived in the South.

ET: Right.

CO: Have you traveled outside the South very much?

ET: Yes.

CO: You have?

ET: Yes.

CO: How long ago, like, what point in life did you travel outside the region? Were you a young woman or?

ET: Well yeah, young, yeah a young person. You know, it's very funny to say that you don't realize how close places are to you, like you can go to Michigan on a plane within a couple of hours, and way back yonder, you thought you were going to the other side of the Earth. And, you know, we have even ridden the train to Chicago, and thought we were really going somewhere, going and getting on bus and going to Tuskegee.

CO: Right, right, well, so what was it like, what was the experience of being, because the South, you know, I mean we know that every region in the country has

its own bias and its own prejudice, but the South is known, famous for being, you know, virulently antiracist.

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: Or racist.

ET: Right.

CO: Did you experience race attitudes different outside of the South, did you experience them being different outside the region?

ET: You see, when like, we go to Chicago, we'd go to the baseball game, to Wrigley Field, all of that meant a whole lot to us because we had not experienced that. See the Braves weren't here yet, and but I'm trying to see, no.

CO: No?

ET: No, because see, when we went to Ponce De Leon Park, to the cracker (???) there was a rope; what's the difference a rope going to make? White were on this side, Blacks were on that side and, you know, the Whites couldn't come on your side and you couldn't go on that side.

CO: Now was this in Chicago?

ET: No, this was out here Ponce De Leon right in front of the Sears Robuck building.

CO: Oh okay, alright.

ET: But in Chicago, you know, everybody, you sat in the section you were able to buy a ticket.

CO: Now, Ms. Ella, do you remember when, as a child, you realized that it meant something, that the color of your skin meant something; that it had consequences socially? Do you remember that awareness as a child? Can you talk about that?

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: That's what I'd like to hear.

ET: When we were, we had the streetcar here in Atlanta, Mama let me go to town. I got up on the streetcar and I didn't go all the way to the back. I sat, maybe like middle way, I remember this White conductor come touching me on the shoulder,

he said, "Would you move back." It looked like he was even embarrassed to say it, because I was a little innocent child, just sitting there, learning how to go town.

CO: How old do you think you were?

ET: 13.

CO: So that would have been in the 30's?

ET: Right, right.

CO: Okay, clearly, clearly busing, you were relegated to the back on the bus. Now, okay you were 13. Is that the first time you were *aware* of it, or was that the first time that it actually happened to you?

ET: It was the first time I was aware of it, [and] it was the first time that it had happened to me. And the bus, the streetcar wasn't full or anything, but I just wasn't, but the sign clearly read "Colored" will seat to the back toward the front. Whites would seat from the front toward the back, but I was kind like in the middle.

CO: Okay did you purposely not go to the back or you just weren't thinking?

ET: I wasn't really thinking. It looked like it just would have been more comfortable, you know I could just see out of the windows from both sides. I don't really remember . . . (Audio stops)

Tape #3 ends #4 begins

ET: On the streetcar but me.

CO: So, okay, can you talk about how that felt, okay there's a sudden awareness that this is not right. Did you have that awareness, that this is not right?

ET: I felt humiliated.

CO: Okay, that's what I want to understand.

ET: I felt, I said now, I'm not bothering anybody, I'm doing just what my Mama told me to do.

CO: Did you Mama tell you about what to expect?

ET: No, no, no, no. Look like she thought that I might should have known it. But it wasn't, he touched me on the shoulder, but what really got me is, I did what he said do, and I wasn't used to that.

CO: Oh, so you didn't challenge him.

ET: Because it was just me and him look like on the streetcar.

CO: Yeah, so how did that affect you afterwards, did you come home and tell your parents about it?

ET: No.

CO: No? So up until then though you.

ET: We had many challenges after then.

CO: How many I mean up until then, up until the time it happened you didn't have the experience. Well what about when your mother, you were talking about your mother looking White, and she got on the streetcar and a man got between you and Thelma and her, that didn't make you feel bad? When did you realize what had happened then. Was it later, when you got older?

ET: After, when we really started to high school, this girl who was light skinned, we were going out Mitchell Street, and I don't know if you can remember how it had this long seat, when you first go on the streetcar. A White lady was going to Southern Railway, that hauling place. She was on there, she was just very nice, but there wasn't anybody on the seat but her and the streetcar was full of Black children going to Washington High School, this girl is mean as the Devil, she's mean until this day, she's the only one in her family that's really living. When she got on that bus and all that, this woman as occupying this one seat by herself, this girl sat down, like that, she did it belligerently, and this White woman jumped up. She said, "You coulda waited until I got up." (inaudible 52:00/1)", She said, "I'm just as good as you."

CO: Were you on the bus?

ET: Yeah, this was a streetcar, yeah I was there.

CO: What did you think about that? How did you feel about that?

ET: That's when I really saw things, I said, things are going to change in this world.

CO: Now when was that?

ET: That was in 1937.

CO: Okay, so you got an inkling from that?

ET: That things were going to change.

CO: Yeah, did you think you would be a part of it?

ET: Yeah, because I, yeah I thought that I would be a part of it. And after that we had many challenges like I said, we were downtown, we had probably been to a football game, basketball game or something, and we didn't know anybody else was going to get on the streetcar. My sister, back again I tell you, stepped up on the streetcar and he pushed her, when he pushed I whopped him just as hard as I could!

CO: The conductor?

ET: No this was a passenger who ran, he looked like he was with a female and ran got off of the bus and my sister had stepped up on the bus, so he and my sister was on, he and this White person, female, got on and when he got on, he pushed her in the back. Of course she was scared as a fireball, and when he did that, I whopped him with an umbrella. Then he came down and we were just a fighting, ooooo we were going at it. Okay.

CO: Now were you a teenager?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Oh my gosh, you were fighting a teenage boy?

ET: Yeah, he was a man. He was a man!

CO: Oh my goodness. Ms. Ella, I'd like to hear more about that story. How did it end?

ET: Oh well the conductor came back there and looked like he gave us some tickets and put us off of the bus, off the streetcar.

CO: You and your sister were put off of the streetcar and let that couple ride?

ET: Uh huh, and so we had to catch the next streetcar.

CO: Oh my goodness.

ET: See, she just gone back there and sat down, and felt bad about it, but I whopped him with that umbrella.

CO: Now how many times did you...?

ET: How many times I, see and then another time, we were all on the streetcar and right down here off of Jonesboro Road, coming off of (Lakewood Ave?(49:02), see these White students got on because they had Fulton High School up on Washington Street, and we didn't never get a seat on the bus until we passed Washington Street, but this time we were coming home. You see, Black men were afraid of White, because they would lynch them.

CO: Absolutely, absolutely.

ET: So, this White boy, I don't know what he said, something, that involved me, all of us Blacks. So he said, I don't know what he said, something, but when I got off, we stepped off of the back of the streetcar. These little boys were saying something, I took a umbrella and before I could get the umbrella out of the door, I had broken the streetcar glass. You talking about flying.

CO: You ran?

ET: My sister and I, we flew.

CO: Did you get away?

ET: We got away! Look here, by the time the conductor stopped the streetcar and got back there, we were half way up the block, we were flying, because she was known for running (laughs). Honey it was so funny.

CO: Now this was in the 30's.

ET: This was in the 30's.

CO: The worst was yet to come, you know the worst in terms of the violence and so forth was in the 50's and 60's.

ET: 50's yeah, but I was working then, in the 60s, so, well of course we were teaching non-violence. If you let anybody beat the fireballs out of you, and don't you say nothing.

CO: Alright, that brings up the point about King's philosophy of nonviolence. What did you think about it at the time, I mean it's one thing to look back on it.

ET: Okay, we were never allowed to go to any of these marches. My Mama never did let us go to any of these marches, so we circumvented all of that we never went because anybody knew that if anybody hit me, I was going to hit them back.

CO: So your mother was worried about you getting hurt?

ET: Right. So we never participated. Do you know when they integrated Rich's Magnolia Room, my brother was working and we happened to have been here from Mississippi, and Trammell had Sandra on his shoulder, we were right down there with them. Chief Herbert Jenkins, they had police cars bumper to bumper, bumper to bumper, all around Rich's. We went across the street and watched Herbert Jenkins, and see there were some Whites that were going to do something. Guess what Herbert Jenkins told them? He said, "Ya'll better get back over there and let *us* handle this." So that went very smoothly.

CO: Well did you go to Rich's yourself, were you part of the integrating of Rich's?

ET: I told you that we went across the street and stood and looked at them.

CO: Oh you watched?

ET: We watched.

CO: Okay, alright. Yeah I knew that, but I thought you would have gone back.

ET: No, no.

CO: But did you know the people, the Black people who went to Rich's?

ET: Yeah, people like Martin Luther King, Hosea Williams.

CO: So it was high profile leaders in the Movement?

ET: Oh yes, oh yes. And Dr. Clements, who was the president of Atlanta University went to Rich's because they had, restrooms right by where they were serving the Blacks hotdogs and whatever, but you know what they told Dr. (name? 44:17)? He said, "Don't worry, because soon..." They knew this was in the making, that they were going to integrate everything. Now we use to have to go to, it was two, the Terminal Station and the Union Station, the union station, have you heard about the Union Station?

CO: I don't know, heard of what?

ET: There were two stations downtown. Blacks used to have to go Union Station to go to the restroom. Okay, I told you I was always into to something. Daddy carried us over there to Union Station, it was the most beautiful marble building you've ever seen.

CO: Union Station was?

ET: Union Station and I never knew why they tore it down because it was really an historic mark. Daddy carried us over there, Thelma and I went over there to use the restroom, you had to pay a nickel, I climbed over (laughs) I climbed over the top of it, and used the restroom and then I pushed the door open.

CO: And let Thelma go? (Laughs) So you've always been a little bit of a rebel?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Well can you go back to Dr. King's philosophy of nonviolence at the time he was sort of preaching that philosophy, were you questioning it then? You were a grown woman.

ET: Yeah, I was very well, I was grown then but my mother had instilled into me, you know, don't go out asking for trouble.

CO: But you did it anyway? I mean, if the opportunity arose you were willing to challenge.

ET: Oh yes, yes.

CO: But did you at the time, you know, when things were getting this nonviolence was not working against violence, did you question it at the time?

ET: Yeah, you know, see that's what's happening today. It's...people are jobless, they're homeless, and they're hungry.

CO: Do you attribute more, Ms. Ella, to poverty, do you believe that the main issue is economics or do you see that race is still a central issue in this country, in the world really?

ET: Right, but people, when you're hungry.

CO: Right, right. So you see economics as a real issue?

ET: Right.

CO: Okay, alright. Do you think that people were, if somehow or other the economy could become more stable that race would...

ET: It would be less.

CO: It would be less of an issue?

ET: Yes.

CO: Okay.

ET: You know, I have a job, I have a decent place to stay, you know I can pay my bills, I can take care of family.

CO: Yeah. Right, right. So, okay, do you have, you know, it's fundamentally different for the White women and the Black women, what did you think about the Women's Movement, did you, I mean, you know, it's not like the Civil Rights Movement was over because things weren't settled.

ET: But I think, you see, remember when Lockheed started hiring women? That was a bad thing, because that was when latch-key kids started. You know, it used to be that child didn't go to the house by themselves, you had to go and stay with somebody until somebody else, a grown person got home, but at that particular women started working at Lockheed but started giving children the key, and that was a bad thing. That's when children started having children.

CO: But do you attribute that to the Women's Movement, do you think the Women's Movement was responsible for that social situation?

ET: You know, women used to go out and work, but they would tell the folk they had to be home by a certain time because that was when children got out of school and they had to home when their children got there.

CO: Okay, alright. Did you, yourself, ever experienced any discrimination because you were a woman, not because you were Black, but because you were a woman?

ET: Not really.

CO: No?

ET: No.

CO: Alright. Do you think your, when you just have said that your mother just wanted you to stay out of trouble, do you consider your ideas about race and your willingness to challenge, is that different from your parents?

ET: Well what about amalgamation? Now you see more real dark people, I see more dark people now than I have ever seen because we had so many mulattoes.

CO: Okay, and what point are you making by that?

ET: Amalgamation was going to make things better for everybody.

CO: The fact that the races are more integrated because of intermingling.

ET: Intermingling, yeah.

CO: So you think that that has served to lessen racial bias, there's no such thing as a pure black person anymore, purely...

ET: Like I told you, my grandmother's, my mother's mother said she was from India, she had Indian blood in her. We're seeing more people now who are really from Africa.

CO: Oh, when you see a person, so you're saying that when you see somebody who is really dark, they're not American, they're African. Is that what you're saying?

ET: Yeah.

CO: But most Americans have mixed blood.

ET: Right.

CO: Okay, alright. Do you think that things have changed? Is race, are our ideas about race anymore evolved since we've had a Black man in the White House? Has that helped, do you think?

ET: Oh yeah. It helped, it has helped, if nobody but his family---- they can always say they lived in the White House.

CO: But, okay, yeah, but do you think it has trickled down into society, has society, do you think White society has become more accepting of Black people?

ET: Yeah I do because it was enough White people not to have elected him. I can't say our race put him in there because it wasn't enough of us.

CO: That's right, that's right. Okay, alright. (Interview stops)

CO: Okay, now we're back on. Is that blowing on you?

ET: I'm fine, I'm fine.

CO: Okay, now we're going to go up this way and go around?

ET: Yeah, just go out this way and we won't have to worry.

CO: Okay.

ET: Now see Jones to (inaudible 35:08/1). I'm going to show you.

CO: Am I going through the light?

ET: Yeah, yeah go through there and make a right and this is old Gammon and Clark. It was Clark University.

CO: You want me to turn this way?

ET: Yeah turn.

CO: So was that an administrative building or is that a church?

ET: That's where Clark, was before they moved over to Atlanta University System. See, they had more land out here than the whole university system got over there now.

CO: My goodness.

ET: But they said oh come over here, you know, that was going to be Heaven to us (inaudible 34:21/1).

CO: Am I going out here?

ET: Yeah, just keep going around the little circle.

CO: Okay.

ET: And this was Magnolia Lane and beautiful houses were all around here.

CO: That's where the faculty lived?

ET: That's where the faculty lived. It was simply beautiful. Left, wait a minute, yeah, you're going to make a...

CO: Right?

ET: Yeah. Houses used to be over there.

CO: Where that warehouse is?

ET: All of that storage and all of that. Now stay to your right.

CO: Okay.

ET: All this used to be residential. See that's Gammon right there.

CO: Okay.

ET: All of these used to be the Methodist built all along here, our church was very outstanding at that particular time.

CO: What's the name of you church?

ET: Henry M. White United Methodist Church.

CO: Henry White?

ET: Henry M. White. And right down this street is [inaudible].

CO: Okay.

ET: It's historical, it's beautiful.

CO: This is your church?

ET: This is my church.

CO: Wow. How old is this building, do you know?

ET: It's over 100 years old, I think it is built here in 1920.

CO: Will somebody come get you to come here to church tomorrow?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Did you ever walk?

ET: Oh Lord, listen, we walked all of our life to this church from the...left right here. Listen, walking wasn't anything, probably just entertainment.

CO: Now was most of the people that lived in this neighborhood Black?

ET: All of them, yeah, it's turning White.

CO: Whites are moving in?

ET: Oh yes. And this used to be the dividing line and the school was down in that block about 3 or 4 houses down.

CO: What's the, is it there now?

ET: Oh no.

CO: What the...?

ET: This was the Fulton County side, that was the city side of Atlanta. This church right up here on this corner was the Sanctified Church.

CO: Whites?

ET: Blacks. All of this was Black.

CO: Oh so back that way was White and all of this way is Black?

ET: No. Whites are further on over.

CO: But what was the dividing line, oh the dividing line was between the city and the county.

ET: Right, this was the dividing line, but all this was Black.

CO: Okay. Am I still going right?

ET: You are going right. And this was the Baptist Church, it was just, now you are going to make a right, right here. Yeah, this was the Black church, it was a basement when we grew up and we used to come and play in it in the summertime. And see that's a high-rise up in there now. Turn right, turn. They had something down here today. Maybe it was clean-up campaign.

CO: Now what is this place here?

ET: This, all of this belongs to Mount Pleasant Baptist Church. All where you see the cars, now wait, go slow and make a left right here. See, they'll put houses and things on this corner. When we were walking down here it was vacant inside some of the lots. And this was the "Never Die" Church all you had to come here, say you "never die."

CO: (Laughs) Was it a big membership, did they have a large membership?

ET: I never went. Go slowly. It used to be a big two-story house right there and right here is where we used to come out, go slow and just look back there.

CO: Is that where your house was?

ET: Nuh uh, the house is still standing I'm just looking at the, there was a house right here on this corner. Now make a right, right here. Now, go on down a little bit, stop right here. Right here, the men rides the bicycle all over town.

CO: You going to go in?

ET: Look at all of the stuff.

CO: Oh my goodness.

ET: And my Daddy had those steps put there.

CO: You were born in that house?

ET: We were born right here, you see where those gables are sticking out right there, all of us were born in that same room, my brother, my sister, and myself, in the same room.

CO: Oh my goodness. Now who owns the house now?

ET: We sold it to some company or another because we couldn't keep the folks out it. They were, I don't care what we do, just like they said, they would put debris they would put debris right here you know, just put all kinds of rubbish there, oh it was terrible.

CO: Is anything about it now, like it was when you were little?

ET: It's like that, I mean, it was a big bay window right under that gable and the front porch and everything was just like it is now. He's just adding to it.

CO: So is it just one man that lives there?

ET: One man and he's White.

CO: Oh it's a White man. (laughs)

ET: Yeah it's a White man.

CO: I don't know how else to do this but turn around here.

ET: Hey, can we stop just one minute?

CO: Okay.

ET: (inaudible 26:13-26:10) Now if you could look back, back of you, that's Price High School, can you see it?

CO: Oh uh huh, sure.

ET: That's Price High School.

CO: That's huge.

ET: Yeah, now turn right here.

CO: Right?

ET: Now this used to be a bridge and a...right here...and a big deep hole, it's a spring up under their house and they are not supposed to do that. And this is the end of Hardwood??? Street, now take the left.

CO: Okay.

ET: See that house is vacant, the one next to it is vacant, and I understand that this street is very, is not very good. They do all kinds of bad things.

CO: That's a nice looking house right back there.

ET: Well it's some nice looking house along here.

CO: Yeah, those are nice houses.

ET: Look up, look up. Isn't that pretty?

CO: Uh huh.

ET: That used to be where children would go and play. Now this house right up here, this is where we worked the yard and the neighbor gave us\$.15 a big bag of Frostbitten sweet potatoes, you here? Now take a right.

CO: Okay.

ET: See our post office is right there. Now this is Lakewood Heights and that section we came through was south Atlanta, that was the Black section for Lakewood Heights. Now go here and take a right.

CO: Now, I'm going to have to wait on the red light because it says, are we turning down Rhodesia right there or...

ET: No, no, we're going straight on, but listen, but don't you take no turn on red.

CO: I know, but the point is we're not going straight that way, we're bearing to the right, right there.

ET: But you see that red light?

CO: No, I'm not going to go, I'm not going to go.

ET: Please don't, because look, I had a cousin that said he looked on down the street and said he pulled out there and the police pulled out. Now there is our bank SunTrust, but it's having a hard time since June Motors moved, we don't have that many people going through that thing. It's terrible.

CO: Well, it will be closed before you know it.

ET: That's right and then we won't have a bank, right here used to be King Hardware, right down Rhodesia? and next to it was the bank, my Daddy could go in and borrow \$15 on his face.

CO: Oh my goodness. When \$15 meant something?

ET: Turn right.

CO: Now is his still Jonesboro?

ET: No, no we're on Lakewood Ave, Jonesboro went straight.

CO: Okay. Now is this bus just stopped here for a minute or is it going...

ET: You got to get the light. They weren't poor, poor, poor white folks. They were just above the poverty level.

CO: Yeah.

ET: But now all these down here, an integrated couple lives right there (laughs). Now these were the houses, original houses, that you know, that be like that, we'd come and get our \$.50 job.

CO: Do you have strong feelings about interracial marriage?

ET: That's amalgamation isn't it?

CO: Well, I guess you could call it that, but does that bother you?

ET: Can't you see I'm mixed with something?

CO: Well, right, but, -----the price of gas is high here.

ET: Honey that's down, cheap honey, that's cheap.

CO: It's higher than where I just came from. There's Atlanta Public School stadium.

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah, okay. What is this over here?

ET: Boy and Girls Club.

CO: Okay.

ET: And this is **Southbend** Park, that's our park area.

CO: That's beautiful!

ET: And over on this side is Lakewood Park that we had...look at the police just a flying.

CO: What's that going on there?

ET: Something that they got, if anybody rent something, they would do this or do that or do the other. They selling stuff.

CO: It looks like a flea market or something.

ET: Yeah, you're right. And see they been down there **(inaudible 19:41/1)**.

CO: Yeah, there's a grass skirt. It's cute.

ET: See they're down there having a good time.

CO: Now Ms. Ella where am I going?

ET: Go right. Then go straight. Now we have a neighborhood center, John Birdyne Center down here. This is very nice, you can go up here for a lot of different things, but we think the city of Atlanta is going to sell it to Lakewood Amphitheatre.

CO: Now I'm going to have turn up here or get into the other lane.

ET: Turn down and get on 166.

CO: Right here?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. Okay can we talk about religion a little bit?

ET: Yes we can.

CO: And when you see, you can interrupt me and say turn or straight or whatever.

ET: We are going straight because we're going...

CO: How far are we from where we are going?

ET: Well, not far. How far is 'far' for you? But we can talk.

CO: Now I don't need to exit right here do I?

ET: No, no, no. I'll tell you when to exit so just keep going, stay in this lane.

CO: Because I don't want to get on 75.

ET: No.

CO: Alright so what do you believe is the, this is not necessarily religion but, we were talking about values, what is the chief value that has driven you throughout your life? What is, you know you described yourself as feisty, what is it think makes you that way?

ET: I think that, a little streak of having that fear of people, things happen to people because many time they do not say anything ---keep going--- I think what makes me that way and I think so many things would be different if people would just speak up.

CO: Yes okay, so how did, what's the most important thing to you, the most important value for you?

ET: Like what? A home, food, clothing, and shelter.

CO: So basic...

ET: The basic necessities of life.

CO: Okay, that's not really associated with a value, like let's see, for some people, the most important thing to them is honesty.

ET: Honesty, truthfulness and honesty are the most valuable things to me in life, as I always say the truth will set you free or the truth will get you killed.

CO: Okay, alright. When the truth gets you killed?

ET: Alright, if, like I said if somebody asked you, do you know man's wife and the killer said yeah he would shoot you, but in the first place, the truth will set you free. When we tell the truth, you really don't have to remember what you said, you can repeat it over and over again. If you tell a lie, you have to remember, this is not the truth, and I know it's not the truth and everybody else is going to find out it's not the truth, then you will be in trouble.

CO: Okay, you know you've said you've been Methodist all of your life, and your parents were Methodist, have you ever questioned the Methodist Church's beliefs and doctrines?

ET: Yes I have.

CO: You have? Can you tell me more about that? What is it that you question?

ET: I question their honesty sometimes, do you know, my pastors told me that somewhere during the week that somebody stole \$3 Billion from the Methodist church.

CO: Goodness. Somebody who worked in the church?

ET: Yes. They said it was an inside job.

CO: So it was embezzled?

ET: Yeah embezzled. And you see one thing, our Conference claims are very high, and when we have to send them money and our toilets and things at our church need to be fixed in the church.

CO: Okay, can you tell me then independent of your church, what are your religious beliefs?

ET: I believe that we should follow the Bible and we should believe in the Word of God and the Bible, I believe people who experience things.

CO: Okay so you, what do you mean by people experience things, what does that mean to you?

ET: That means that if you have patience, whatever God has promised you, it's just for you and nobody else can take it away.

CO: So you believe in the promises in the Bible?

ET: I believe in the promises of God in the Bible.

CO: Okay, what about the belief in the virgin birth and the resurrection?

ET: Let me say this, a man has been buried in the grave and just get up and his whole body get up and go somewhere. I go along, but I question that. I think if a man's whole body has been placed in a tomb I believe he would stay. I don't believe that the stone rolled away and his whole body got up, I just really don't understand.

CO: So you don't believe in the resurrection? It's okay a lot of people don't. At least you question that.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. What about the virgin birth -- do you...well okay let me ask you do you believe that Jesus is the son of God?

ET: without him having ?????? I question that.

CO: Okay, well when did that start, your questioning that? Am I going to exit on Greenbriar Parkway?

ET: Yeah, yeah, that's right. But, yeah, I believe that, I heard a man asking questions, right, right, everything right.

CO: You heard a man question that?

ET: Yeah, he wanted to know if Jesus, if Mary was all straight, he didn't believe...then you're going to take a right.

CO: So he didn't believe in the virgin birth?

ET: No.

CO: And that made sense to you? Am I going to turn right, right here?

ET: Yeah, turn right.

CO: So his questioning made sense to you?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Now what is the consequence of believing that, what does that make you think about Jesus?

ET: It was making me think that Jesus was a bastard.

CO: Okay.

ET: And then it makes me think, and then I heard, see sometimes I listen to this preachings.

CO: Am I turning up here?

ET: Yeah, you're going to turn right. Go on down, go on down.

CO: Well, I'm already in here now, can I go in right here?

ET: Right here, right here.

CO: Okay, so what do you believe about the person of Jesus Christ?

ET: I do believe that there are some spirits

CO: Okay. So you don't believe that Jesus is divine? Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus?

ET: Well, somebody, yeah I believe there's a power greater than us.

CO: So you believe in God?

ET: Yeah, I believe in God.

CO: Okay, you're just not real sure about the divinity of Christ?

ET: I always had, go on down, we're going to Picadilly.

CO: And where is it?

ET: Go on down to the end.

CO: Okay.

ET: I heard a man ask, and it really upset me, he wanted to know if Mary was a prostitute?

CO: Now Mary Magdeline or...?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay, a lot of people believe that. Do you?

ET: You know, that really upset me, that means something about the virgin birth.

CO: He was talking about Mary Magdeline not Jesus' mother probably because a lot of people believe that Mary Magdeline was a prostitute, but I don't know, I haven't heard anyone say that about the Virgin Mary. Now can I put you out of the door, so you won't have to walk?

ET: I don't mind walking.

CO: Well I can get as close as I can. Is that it right there?

ET: Hold it.

CO: Is that it there at the end of the...

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. I'm going to go around and try and get a place over there.

ET: Yeah, I've been listening to a lot of these other preachers, sometime I feel I shouldn't do that, because it gets you confused.

CO: And where do you hear them?

ET: On the radio.

CO: Oh okay.

ET: I don't. Now I have been to Eddy Long's church, I've been to Creflo Dollar's church.

CO: See I don't know those names. Ms. Ella, I'd like to park in the shade, so let me put you out and come back and park over here.

ET: Okay, alright, alright. Now listen, I like walking a little bit.

CO: But can you walk from here all the way down there?

ET: Yeah I can walk, but it might take a little longer.

CO: Well I don't mind it taking longer, but I don't want you to get.

ET: No, no I can walk now, and I like walking.

CO: Well if it's not going to bother you.

ET: No, it's not going to bother me.

CO: Okay, I'm going to take this with me. Want me to come around and get you?

ET: Oh no.

CO: So one of those men you just mentioned, does he preach that, does he question that?

ET: Well one preaches (inaudible 04:30)

CO: Okay.

ET: The other one preaches (inaudible 04:20-04:15) a real outstanding man; his name is T.D. Jakes.

CO: Yes and I know that name.

ET: See, he's a very good man with Eddy Long (inaudible 04:09-03:56) told ???? to change the name of the church from Baptist to ????? and when he got there the deacons wouldn't do it. There just been a Baptist Church (inaudible 03:48).

CO: So which one of them questions the fundamentals?

ET: I would say Eddy Long. He has such a great following.

CO: Now is he the prosperity preacher?

ET: No.

CO: No.

ET: The prosperity preacher got locked up two days ago.

CO: For his daughter.

ET: Yeah.

CO: Yes, yes.

ET: You can't trust these people because they can't chastise their children; where was the mother who let the daughter call the police on her father.

CO: Now would you spell his name for me, I want to look him up.

ET: Creflo Dollar? It's C-R-E-F-L-O D-O-L-L-A-R.

CO: Okay, is that his real name?

ET: Yeah. And he's from a section not far from me.

CO: Oh okay and he preaches the prosperity sermon?

ET: Oh yeah and it's good.

CO: It's good?

ET: Yeah, it's good.

CO: Okay, but he also questions the Virgin birth?

ET: Oh no, no. He doesn't do that. He doesn't preach nothing but money.

CO: Oh okay.

ET: And how to save it and how to build and I like it.

CO: So do you think it works?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. Does he preach tithing?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay.

ET: Giving.

CO: Giving, okay.

ET: And he used to, he has an airplane, and he used to fly to New York every Saturday evening and have service and then fly back to Atlanta.

CO: Is he actually in jail now? They haven't gotten out of jail?

ET: Oh yeah he's out, he's been out. See, I haven't had time to read [the paper] (inaudible 01:25-01:22) well he thinks that (inaudible 01:21/1).

CO: How are they going to know if he does?

ET: She will tell.

CO: Oh she'll tell? Let's go straight across here Ms. Ella because if we don't we might get ran over.

(Cannot understand anything on the rest of the audio file 01:00-00:00).

CO: Okay, we just finished our lunch and it's almost 4 o'clock (laughs). So, now we were talking when we last, before we closed down, about religion and we were talking about beliefs, and you were saying how you had come to questions some things that were considered, or *are* considered, the fundamentals and I mentioned the Virgin birth and you said you'd been listening to some people who sounded pretty persuasive about the questioning the divinity of Christ. Do you know when you starting questioning, how long has it been?

ET: Well, this particular person has been very recent because we go to Bible study, and you know you get involved in that.

CO: Right. So is this someone that's in the Methodist church?

ET: No.

CO: No.

ET: This is just somebody that was on the radio or something and they're talking and you listen. And it starts your brains to working and thinking, you say, well you know I've heard this all of my life and you kind of feel brainwashed.

CO: So can you tell me what does it mean if Jesus is not the Son of God, or if Jesus is not divine or God, what difference does that make in whatever or anything in your mind?

ET: In your way of living, I mean does this change, what would you do differently?

CO: Exactly and how, what would you do differently if Jesus weren't God, how would that affect your life?

ET: I'd be very frightened if that would happen because you wouldn't have nobody...

CO: Should I go out this way?

ET: Yeah, you're going right.

CO: Okay. If it were true?

ET: You'd feel more strongly about it.

CO: But what would be frightening about it?

ET: I might have been doing something different.

CO: Can you think of something, something you would have done differently in your life?

ET: No. See, that's Macy's, Jameson's was Macy's and that's where Rich's was.

CO: I just can't believe it's gone.

ET: And it will be to your left.

CO: Right here? Out this way. I think it is. I'm going to get on that road right there and take a left, isn't that correct?

ET: Right.

CO: Okay. But now, Ms. Ella, what makes you, what makes this man's message persuasive?

ET: He's dynamic in it, I mean, you know, he sounds so positive that he knows what he is talking about.

CO: Well, okay, but, I'm just trying to figure how different, what difference it would make, I'm going to turn left. Turn right or turn left?

ET: Turn right.

CO: Right here yes.

ET: But then you turn left. Go up there...

CO: (Laughs) I'm going to turn left here.

ET: Yeah and we are going to get on 166. Stay on 166 until we get to Lakewood Ave. Get in the far right hand lane. When you get up here at 166 take a right.

CO: Okay. So okay, do you believe that, what do you believe happens to you after your body dies? Do you believe there is life after death?

ET: I just want to believe that when you die, your soul goes to Heaven.

CO: You do believe there's life after death, that your soul.

ET: Yeah. Because I believe your body is through, yeah I do believe in going to Heaven.

CO: How many people do you think are beginning to question the divinity of Jesus, how many, now is this a Black or a White man that's preaching?

ET: It's a White man preaching, a White man.

CO: A White man. How did you find him, how did you find him?

ET: Accidentally on the radio.

CO: So you were just flipping stations?

ET: Right.

CO: Okay. Well, we'll move on and talk about some, let's see, you were born in 21' so you were still a child in the early days of the Depression. Do you remember much about the Depression?

ET: Oh yes.

CO: How it affected your family?

ET: Yes. You know, if anybody got homeless anywhere, they just were come to your house and stay until, you know, they could help themselves.

CO: Did your parents have to put anybody up?

ET: Oh yes.

CO: Were they Black?

ET: Yes. (inaudible 32:02-31:59).

CO: So did it affect your, did your father lose his job?

ET: No.

CO: No?

ET: He could always find a job teaching.

CO: Oh okay. And what about World War II, was anybody in your family in World War II?

ET: My brother.

CO: Your brother. Okay, so what did he do?

ET: He went to Maryland.

CO: Okay, did he go...

ET: And then he went overseas.

CO: Do you know where he was?

ET: In Germany, I think.

CO: Oh wow, okay. So how did World War II affect your family?

ET: My brother went to the service.

CO: Okay, were your parents afraid, do you remember them talking about worrying about your brother would come home?

ET: We always felt that he was coming back again.

CO: Okay do you remember much about those years afterwards in the 50's when the country was experiencing the Cold War, but in the South the Civil Rights Movement was about to break.

ET: Right, right.

CO: So do you remember much about the Cold War, the fear of nuclear bombs?

ET: Yeah it was very frightening, because we didn't have to have a...give them...they might drop something for something (inaudible 30:05).

CO: But do you remember, you said your husband was involved in the Civil Rights Movement in the early years.

ET: Right.

CO: Do you remember, and what made him stop being active, well he died.

ET: He died. Because he was running for some office or something, I'll probably find it when I get home, I think I know right where it is.

CO: Okay. Do you remember when, what do you remember about the Black Power Movement and the Black Panthers.

ET: They were very frightening to me.

CO: Malcolm X and...

ET: They were, you know, somethings were...all of them went to the extreme. They went to extremes.

CO: So you thought the Panthers were extremists?

ET: Oh yes, yes. Yeah.

CO: And when Martin Luther King was assassinated, do you remember how that, what happened in Atlanta after that? Should I go there ???? Road?

ET: Go straight, go straight.

CO: Was it, I'm not going to downtown Atlanta.

ET: Go straight. This is 166.

CO: Yeah. Now do I need to get into the right lane?

ET: No stay right here.

CO: Okay.

ET: You're turning left.

CO: Okay. What are they parking there for?

ET: I guess for whatever they are having.

CO: Oh. Oh goodness. Well it looks like they are having a good time.

ET: Oh yes. It's a beautiful day. I'm on a committee where we get about \$50,000 to give to the community, different organizations, but the most you can get is \$2500.

CO: So they have to apply for it?

ET: Yeah, yeah.

CO: And you read the applications and help decide?

ET: Yes.

CO: I love giving away money (laughs).

ET: I do too. Yeah, they give us \$.25 out of every dollar they make over their expense. They used be able to make big money, \$10,000 and all of that but they don't do that anymore. The highest is \$2500.

CO: Before you pass on, you will have resolved this issue about the divinity of Jesus, you think you'll resolve it in your mind? We got to get right? (Interview skips here).

[Back at Ms. Ella's home]

CO: Even though we were talking about history, we'll go back to religion because I didn't have my questions in front of me. What has been the most profound spiritual moment in your life?

ET: When I joined the church.

CO: As a young girl?

ET: As a child.

CO: What was that like?

ET: When I joined, then my sister joined, then a lady that we had for a teacher came down there and stood with us.

CO: So that had a feeling to it, did it feel?

ET: It felt very good.

CO: Okay, alright. Do you feel the presence of a spiritual guide inside you sometimes?

ET: Oh yes.

CO: You do? How does it feel? How would you describe it?

ET: I feel no worries, no sickness, no pain, just feel good.

CO: Okay, so it's a good feeling?

ET: It's a good feeling.

CO: Have you ever experienced something you would consider a miracle?

ET: Not really.

CO: No?

ET: But I do believe in miracles.

CO: Do you know anybody that has had a miracle or miracle healing or something like that?

ET: Not really.

CO: No? Okay, alright. What single experience in your life has given you the greatest joy?

ET: Repeat that.

CO: What has given you the greatest joy?

ET: The birth of my first child.

CO: Okay. That would definitely qualify. Okay. Do you feel at peace in yourself?

ET: Oh yes.

CO: You do?

ET: I do.

CO: Okay. Are you certain of anything?

ET: Yes. I'm certain of every...that you are going to die.

CO: Okay, so you're certain of death.

ET: Yes.

CO: Okay. And I asked you before do you believe in the afterlife and you said the soul lives on.

ET: Yes.

CO: Okay, alright. Okay, what has been the most difficult loss for you in your life?

ET: I would say my husband, because see, Brenda was less than 2 years old, and he died suddenly, so that was a shock.

CO: Sure. What happened?

ET: He had a heart attack.

CO: Goodness gracious. He wasn't that old.

ET: 34...35 or something like that.

CO: Have you ever thought about remarriage?

ET: No. I didn't want any man over my children.

CO: Right, okay, alright. Can you recall other experiences of loss besides death that have been difficult to deal with. You've talked a lot about how times change and that sometimes means a loss, but can you think of anything else?

ET: Well, the loss of my brother, because he was like a father to my children. They were very attached to him.

CO: Alright. You remember what happened when you were a lot younger and you thought about, you know, you had a certain impression of what it meant to be old. Like when you were 15, what was old?

ET: 60.

CO: Yeah, right.

ET: (Laughs).

CO: Okay and I asked you and Thelma both about how old you felt in your mind and heart today and Thelma said something like what, 60 and what did you say, you felt 19?

ET: (Laughs) Yeah.

CO: Yeah, some people do. So what has been the most difficult part of aging for you?

ET: The pain that comes, I mean, I've never had pains in my knees before, you're your balance.

CO: Yeah, your center of gravity changes.

ET: Right, right. Then you think you have vertigo and think you have everything that deals with balance and falling. I try to be very careful not to fall.

CO: Right, right. You have to be careful all of the time, don't you?

ET: Yeah, right.

CO: Yeah, okay. Well what is the most rewarding part of being 91?

ET: Being in my right mind. (laughs).

CO: Okay, so being 91 and being in your right mind, there's got to be something about that that's just...there's got to be advantages to that.

ET: Oh yeah. To be able to get up, on my own, fix my food, and move around, and get around, and do things for myself and then trying to help others.

CO: Now you just said you feel 19, but given how your life has gone, is there a time in your life that you recall with nostalgia, that you look back on and you like to think about that time as a good time?

ET: Oh yes, yes. You know when you look back when you're young and going and buying beautiful clothes and expensive clothes and going places and doing things.

CO: Was there one particular time you look back on most nostalgically?

ET: Yeah. When we got a new car.

CO: When would that have been?

ET: 1950.

CO: Oh wow. Okay. So you drove?

ET: Yes.

CO: So you got to drive the new car?

ET: Yeah.

CO: What kind of car was it?

ET: A 1950 Pontiac.

CO: Oh. What color was it?

ET: Black.

CO: Oh. So you would have been 30, almost 30.

ET: Right, right.

CO: You would have been 29, so that was a good time. But you didn't have children yet.

ET: Oh no. I wasn't married then.

CO: Oh yeah that's right. You weren't even married.

ET: My sister and I bought the car together.

CO: Wow.

ET: She needed a car, I didn't. (Phone rings) Excuse me.

CO: Okay, I think we've done enough with that. Okay we're on the last section. You know, I'm trying to determine cause and effect. We know that our life is both circumstances beyond our control and some of it is decision that we make.

ET: We always in a condition, or whatever is happening, because of the decisions we have made.

CO: Right. I think it's off the hook again. So my question is, in your own life, do you feel like the outcome of your life more to the decisions that you've made or more to circumstances beyond your control?

ET: Circumstances beyond my control.

CO: Okay. So both good and bad?

ET: Both good and bad.

CO: Alright, alright, I just asked you about the time that you looked back to most nostalgically, would you consider that the happiest time of your life, when you were 29 and getting a new car? (Interview skips).

CO: Alright, just a few more questions.

ET: That's okay I'm alright.

CO: So I asked you what was the happiest period and you didn't quite get around to an answer.

ET: Well we've had a lot of happy moments. When we moved from 80 (inaudible 15:40) to 55 Gammon that was a very happy moment because my mother & father were under better circumstances. You know they had paved streets, gas, plumbing.

CO: Okay. And you said...

ET: The car and then the birth of my first child.

CO: Your baby. Okay. And what has been the unhappiest, the hardest time?

ET: That's had been when my husband died. That was the hardest time.

CO: Okay, alright. And what has been the most crucial decisions you've had to make or that you've made rather you had to or not?

ET: Well, that's to move back home or you know, just stay in Mississippi, but my decision was I moved back home with my family.

CO: Right, right. And I should have told you when we first started that, I just didn't think about it but, part of the, one thing that people who take life reviews or looking for is turning points in your life. Could you name 3 turning points? You just named 3 really.

ET: Right.

CO: So, moving here, getting your parents moved here was a pretty significant turning point, of course your marriage, but moving back home. What about since then, since you moved back home what's been a turning point for you?

ET: Well when my children left home that was a turning point because Daddy was already dead, and Mama was still living and again, like I said, we bought a house in East Point and I thought Mama was going to move and we were getting ready to

move and she says, "Sister come on, I have something I want to say to you, tell you." She said, "I'm not going over to the new house. I'm staying here because I'm near my neighbors, I can walk to my church, and I think if anything would happen to me over there, those people out working to pay for those houses. (Phone rings).

CO: Okay, do you have any regrets?

ET: No. I try to be positive. I try not to have a lot of negative feelings like regret. I try to reason things out.

CO: Okay, alright. Does listening to that prosperity gospel help with that?

ET: Oh yes, I enjoy, I don't even think I would go into his church, but it's just something uplifting to try to get people on the right track to save, to try to show you how to save some money, it's just make you go through, if you have some money, you can go through your misery easier.

CO: Right (laughs). Sure.

ET: Right, that's what I say. It may not do a lot of things for you, but it can make whatever you are going through easier.

CO: Absolutely, absolutely. Is there anybody to whom you would like to make amends or apologize to or anything or any unresolved issues?

ET: No.

CO: No. Okay. If you live your life over again would you do anything differently?

ET: Everything.

CO: Everything?

ET: (Laughs)

CO: (Laughs) But you just said you didn't have any regrets.

ET: That's right, but I do, whatever I've done I don't regret it. But I wouldn't want to do it over, I'd do things differently. It might make it easier for all concerned.

CO: Oh okay, alright. Has there been a single individual or even more than one who has changed your life, has really influenced you?

ET: Oh yes. Yes. You know.

CO: Who is the first person that came to mind?

ET: My mother and father.

CO: Okay. Alright.

ET: Because they always lived a good, Christian life before us. Like I told you, I've never seen my Daddy take a drink of liquor, I've never even seen around liquor, I've never seen do anything that wasn't morally, I thought good.

CO: Okay and what do you consider the most valuable lesson you've learned in life?

ET: Is to not listen to other people giving me advice. (Laughs)

CO: (Laughs) Listen to yourself?

ET: Right.

CO: So what now gives your life meaning or purpose?

ET: To want to see people change. Want to see change in people. I want the violence stopped, I want the people to...

CO: Do you believe people can change?

ET: Oh yes I do.

CO: What does it take for people to change?

ET: Self-satisfaction through work.

CO: Satisfying work?

ET: Yes. Peaceful living, love and kindness.

CO: Okay, what has been the greatest inspiration or motivation for you in your life?

ET: Seeing other people succeed, if they could do it, I could do it too.

CO: So other people's successes have influenced you?

ET: Yes.

CO: Alright. Okay, what are you the proudest of?

ET: Well, to see my daughter get her Master's degree.

CO: Is this Sandra?

ET: Yeah.

CO: Okay. And what is the most important thing to you today?

ET: Is to see Dynasty continue to be happy like she is. She was only 13 when she went to Baylor, her first semester she made 4 A's and 2 B's, and the next semester she was in a play, and she was a very obedient person, I want her to stay that way, and I hope she has a desire she wants to go to Princeton, I hope she can.

CO: Okay, now you say she's obedient and you hope she stays that way, but what if she encounters something that you and she both would consider unjust and unfair, because making people go to the back of a bus, you weren't obedient to that, and thank God somebody was not obedient or you would still be sitting in the back of a bus.

ET: Right, right, right.

CO: So are there times that being obedient is not the best thing?

ET: I would not like to see her become involved in things because I feel she would not have anyone to really protect her, in the right way.

CO: Okay. What are your greatest hopes and fears for your life today?

ET: My greatest hopes for my life is that I would not become a burden or dependent upon, you know.

CO: Right. Let's say that's also your greatest fear that that will happen?

ET: I try not to have the fear that it will happen, because see, how many people linger after they get 91 years old?

CO: Right. How would you like to be remembered? What do you want your legacy to be?

ET: That I tried to help people.

CO: Okay, alright. Is there anything your children or grandchildren or friends or family or whatever don't know about you that you'd like for them to know?

ET: No, when people know more about you they can change their thoughts about you. I want the people to remember all the nice things that they say about me, I want them to remain that way.

CO: Okay, alright. Is there anything that we've left out that you would like to talk about, say something about?

ET: Well, we've talked about religion, we've talked about life, we've talked about working. We've talked about a lot of things.

CO: Right, but have we talked about everything you'd *like* to talk about?

ET: Yeah I think you covered everything, because I've talked about my street, I've talked about my neighborhood, I've talked about how things have changed, I've showed you where we used to live and now you see where I live.

CO: Over in that neighborhood where we just came from hours ago, was that exclusively a Black community when you were living there?

ET: Oh yeah.

CO: Yeah. And what did most of the people who lived there where did most of those families, where did the men work?

ET: See back then, some of them had to create their own jobs like painting, and carpenter work, being mechanics and doing whatever they could to improve themselves.

CO: Yeah. Alright and then finally, nobody likes this question, so you don't *have* to answer, you don't have to come up with anything, but the question is what would you title your life story? Ella Heard Trammell: What would the rest of it be?

ET: I would want to help people less fortunate.

CO: Okay, alright. We could probably turn that into a title.

ET: Yes.

CO: Okay, well that sounds good. Well I think we'll wrap it up there.

ET: I think this was very helpful and...

CO: Inspirational in what way? Did it make you think of some things you haven't thought about in a while?

ET: Right, a lot of things like what made me the happiest, when was I the happiest? How did we get out of the struggle that we were in? And we did because, like I said, we were not devastated with the situation we were in, we were not that poor. But we acted, our actions, you know your actions can make you feel differently, and people can see you differently. People thought that we had more than we did, but we always made it, and we're satisfied with what we had.

CO: So, again, you really, rather you had middle class income, you had middle class values.

ET: Right, because my Daddy really wanted to see us educated. He wanted to see us not be----he didn't want us to be drinkers or hang out or do things like that.

CO: So you think he satisfied with how you and Thelma and your brother, what was your brother's name?

ET: Willie.

CO: Willie. You thought he was proud of how ya'll turned out?

ET: Oh yes, because my brother bought a very nice home off of (inaudible 00:24) and I always lived alright and always had car, and so my sister married a Bishop and he was quite well off so you know that made him feel good.

CO: So you all were well taken care of?

ET: Right.

CO: Yeah, okay.